



Appendix A: Glossary

This Appendix provides a list of key terms used throughout the General Plan Policy Document. Many of the definitions were taken from the State of California 2003 General Plan Guidelines.



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100-Year Floodplain: Area that has a one percent chance of being flooded in any given year. Over the long term, the area will be covered with flood waters on an average of once every 100 years.

Archaeology: The study of historic or prehistoric peoples and their cultures by analysis of their artifacts and monuments.

Aquifer: A deposit of rock, such as sandstone, containing water that can be used to supply wells.

Best Management Practice (BMP): Any program, technology, process, siting criteria, operating method, measure, or device that controls, prevents, removes, or reduces storm water pollution. The most effective, or "best" techniques are applied to each specific circumstance depending on the pollution problem and physical and geopolitical setting.

Buffer: An area or band of land or mechanism that serves to separate or protect potentially incompatible land uses, such as residential areas and heavy industrial uses or residential areas and intensive agriculture.

Business Incubators: A business incubator is an economic development tool designed to accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services. A business incubator's main goal is to produce companies that are financially viable and freestanding. These incubator graduates have the potential to create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, commercialize new technologies, and strengthen local and national economies.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): A State law requiring State and local agencies to regulate activities with consideration for environmental protection. If a proposed activity has the potential for a significant adverse environmental impact, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared and certified as to its adequacy before taking action on the proposed project.



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Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL): 24-hour energy equivalent level derived from a variety of single-noise events, with weighting factors of 5 and 10 dBA applied to the evening (7 PM to 10 PM) and nighttime (10 PM to 7 AM) periods, respectively, to allow for the greater sensitivity to noise during these hours.

Congregate Care: Elderly housing licensed by the State Health and Welfare Agency, Department of Social Services, typically for residents who are frail and need supervision. Services normally include three meals daily, housekeeping, security and emergency response, a full activities program, supervision in the dispensing of medicine, personal services such as assistance in grooming and bathing, but no nursing care. Sometimes referred to as residential care or personal care.

Congregate Living Facilities: Apartment housing, usually for seniors, in a group setting that includes independent living and sleeping accommodations in conjunction with shared dining and recreational facilities.

Decibel (Db): A unit used to express the relative intensity of a sound as it is heard by the human ear.

Design Guidelines: As used in specific programs in this Policy Document, these guidelines would promote concepts and urban design principles for planning for new development to implement General Plan policies to foster new pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly development. These would not include specific building material requirements.

Detention Basin: A basin to provide temporary storage of storm runoff in order to attenuate peak runoff and provide water quality treatment benefits.

Development: The physical alteration of land by humans. Development includes subdivision of land; construction or alteration of structures, roads, utilities, and other facilities; installation of septic systems; grading; deposit of refuse, debris, or fill materials; and clearing of natural vegetative cover (with the exception of agricul-



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tural activities). Development does not include routine repair and maintenance activities.

Discretionary Development: A development project that requires the exercise of judgment or deliberation when the City approves or disapproves a particular activity. This is distinguished from situations where the City must determine whether projects have conformed with applicable statutes, ordinances, or regulations.

Discretionary Review: A review taken by a governmental agency that calls for the exercise of judgment in deciding whether to approve and/or how to carry out a project.

Drainage: The control and removal of excess rainfall runoff or groundwater by the use of surface or subsurface features or drains.

Drainage Channel: An open channel (e.g., swale, constructed channel, natural drainage course) that may convey, store, and treat runoff.

Easement: A limited right to make use of a property owned by another (e.g., a right-of-way for access or ingress and egress across a property).

Economic Base: The portion of the local economy that primarily sells its goods and services to customers outside the county or local region. These industries draw income into the county that is then recirculated in local-serving “non-basic” businesses such as retail and service establishments.

Effluent: Treated wastewater that is discharged from a wastewater treatment facility.

Emerging Industries: Industries that currently have low concentration in the county, but are growing rapidly.

Fault: A fracture in the Earth’s crust that is accompanied by displacement between the two sides of the fault. An active fault is defined as one that has moved in the last 10,000-12,000 years (Holocene). A potentially active fault is one that has been active in the past 1.6 million years (Quaternary period). A sufficiently active fault is one that shows evidence that Holocene displacement occurred on one or more of its segments or branches.



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Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): The Federal agency that regulates floodplains and manages the nation's flood insurance program.

Floodplain: Land adjacent to a stream, slough, or river that is subject to flooding or inundation from a storm event. FEMA defines the floodplain to be the area inundated by a 100-year flood.

Floodplain Management: The implementation of policies and programs to protect floodplains and maintain their flood control function.

Floor-Area Ratio (FAR): The ratio of the gross building square footage permitted on a lot to the net square footage of the lot. For example, on a lot with 10,000 net square feet of land area, an FAR of 1.00 will allow 10,000 gross square feet of building floor area, regardless of the number of stories in the building (e.g., 5,000 square feet per floor on two floors or 10,000 square feet on one floor). On the same lot, an FAR of 0.50 would allow 5,000 square feet of floor area and an FAR of 0.25 would allow 2,500 square feet.

Form-Based Code: A method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-based codes create a predictable public realm by controlling physical form primarily, with a reduced focus on land use, through city or county regulations. Form-based codes address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. The regulations and standards in form-based codes, presented in both diagrams and words, are keyed to a regulating plan that designates the appropriate form and scale (and therefore, character) of development, rather than merely distinctions in land-use types. This is in contrast to conventional zoning's focus on segregation of land-use types, permissible property uses, and control of development intensity through simple numerical parameters (e.g., FAR, dwellings per acre, height limits, setbacks, parking ratios). Not to be confused with design guidelines or general statements of policy, form-based codes are regulatory, not advisory.

Form-based codes commonly include the following elements:

- *Regulating Plan:* A plan or map of the regulated area designating the locations where different building form standards apply, based on clear community intentions



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- regarding the physical character of the area being coded;
- *Building Form Standards*: Regulations controlling the configuration, features, and functions of buildings that define and shape the public realm;
- *Public Space/Street Standards*: Specifications for the elements within the public realm (e.g., sidewalks, travel lanes, street trees, street furniture);
- *Administration*: A clearly defined application and project review process; and
- *Definitions*: A glossary to ensure the precise use of technical terms.

Frequency: How often an event will occur expressed by the return period or exceedance probability.

Gateway: A point along a roadway into a city at which a motorist, pedestrian, or cyclist gains a sense of having left the environs and entered the city.

General Plan Planning Area: Land within the city limits and adjacent land outside the city limits which in the City's judgment bears relation to its planning.

Goal: The ultimate purpose of an effort, stated in a way that is general in nature and immeasurable.

Groundwater Basin: The above-ground area from which water flows or seeps into a particular aquifer or series of linked aquifers.

Hazardous Materials: Defined by the California Code of Regulations (CCR) as a substance that, because of physical or chemical properties, quantity, concentration, or other characteristics, may either (1) cause an increase in mortality or an increase in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating, illness; or (2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, or disposed of (CCR, Title 22, Division 4.5, Chapter 10, Article 2, Section 66260.10).

Hazardous Wastes: Materials that no longer have practical use, such as substances that have been discarded, discharged, spilled, contaminated, or are being stored prior to proper disposal. According to Title 22 of the CCR, hazardous materials and hazardous wastes are classified according to four properties: toxic, ignitable, corrosive, and reactive (CCR, Title 22, Chapter 11, Article 3).



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Historic Preservation District: An area of the City having historic, architectural, cultural, or aesthetic significance and designated as a Historic Preservation District under the provisions of the City's Planning and Zoning Code.

Implementation Program: An action, procedure, program, or technique that carries out general plan policy. Implementation programs also specify primary responsibility for carrying out the action and a time frame for its accomplishment.

Important Farmlands: Collective term for farmlands designated as Prime, Unique, or as Farmlands of Statewide Importance under the State Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.

Ldn: The energy equivalent level, defined as the average sound level on the basis of sound energy (or sound pressure squared). The Leq is a "dosage" type measure and is the basis for the descriptors used in current standards, such as the 24-hour CNEL used by the State of California.

Labor Force: Persons that are either employed or are actively seeking work in a geographic area.

Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA): A system for accessing the agricultural productivity of selected parcels, to determine impacts from conversion and possible mitigation. It is generally used to assess tracts of land being considered for development or conversion to non-agricultural uses.

Large-Scale Developments: also known as "big box" developments comes in a variety of types and sizes including those selling the following: large general merchandise, grocery items, specialized products, resale merchandise or outlets, and warehouse clubs. Development exceeding 20,000 square feet of retail floor area is considered large-scale. The Fortuna Zoning Code lists Major Retail Development for projects in excess of 80,000 square feet.

Levee: A dike or embankment constructed to confine flow to a stream channel and to provide protection to adjacent land. A levee designed to provide 100-year flood protection must meet FEMA standards.



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Level of Protection: The amount of protection that a drainage or flood-control measure provides.

Liquefaction: A process that occurs in soils and sediments during some earthquake events, when material is transformed from a solid state to a liquid due to increases in pore pressure (spaces between soil particles). Earthquake-induced liquefaction most often occurs in low-lying areas with soils or sediments composed of unconsolidated, saturated, clay-free sands and silts, but it can also occur in dry, granular soils or saturated soils with some clay content.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED): A building rating system, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, that provides standards for environmentally-sustainable construction.

Level of Service (LOS) Standard: Used by governmental agencies to measure the quality or effectiveness of a service or the performance of a facility.

Level of Service (Traffic): A scale that measures the amount of traffic that can be accommodated on a roadway segment or at an intersection. Traffic levels of service range from A to F, with A representing the highest level of service, as follows:

- *Level of Service A:* Indicates a relatively free flow of traffic, with little or no limitation on vehicle movement or speed;
- *Level of Service B:* Describes a steady flow of traffic, with only slight delays in vehicle movement and speed. All queues clear in a single signal cycle;
- *Level of Service C:* Denotes a reasonably steady, high-volume flow of traffic, with some limitations on movement and speed, and occasional backups on critical approaches;
- *Level of Service D:* Denotes the level where traffic nears an unstable flow. Intersections still function, but short queues develop and cars may have to wait through one cycle during short peaks;
- *Level of Service E:* Describes traffic characterized by slow movement and frequent (although momentary) stoppages. This type of congestion is considered severe, but is not uncommon at peak traffic hours, with frequent stopping, long-standing queues, and blocked intersec-



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- tions; and
- **Level of Service F:** Describes unsatisfactory stop-and-go traffic characterized by traffic jams and stoppages of long duration. Vehicles at signalized intersections usually have to wait through one or more signal changes, and “upstream” intersections may be blocked by the long queues.

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO): A statutorily-required commission in Humboldt County that reviews and evaluates all proposals for formation of special districts, incorporation of cities, annexation to special districts or cities, consolidation of districts, and merger of districts with cities.

Major Projects Financing Plan (MPFP): The Capital Improvement Program adopted by a city that schedules physical improvements, usually for a minimum of five years in the future, to fit the projected fiscal capability of the jurisdiction. The program generally should be reviewed annually for consistency with the general plan.

Magnitude: Earthquake magnitude is measured by the Richter scale, indicated as a series of Arabic numbers with no theoretical maximum magnitude. The greater the energy released from the fault rupture, the higher the magnitude of the earthquake. Magnitude increases logarithmically in the Richter scale; thus, an earthquake of magnitude 7.0 is 30 times stronger than one of magnitude 6.0. Earthquake energy is most intense at the point of fault slippage, known as the epicenter, which occurs because the energy radiates from that point in a circular wave pattern. The farther an area is from an earthquake’s epicenter, the less likely it is that groundshaking will occur.

Net Acreage: The developable area of a lot or parcel, excluding streets and rights-of-way.

Niche manufacturing: A business that addresses a need for a product or service that is not being addressed by mainstream manufacturers (e.g. specialty agriculture or dairy manufacturers that add value to locally produced raw materials and commodities).

Noise-Sensitive Uses: Land uses that involve activities where excessive noise levels could cause adverse health effects or disrupt the activity. Noise-sensitive uses include residential neighborhoods,



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theaters, auditoriums, music halls, meeting halls, churches, hospitals, and nursing homes.

Open Space: Any parcel, area, or waterway that is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use. Under Section 65560 of the California State Government Code, open-space land is broadly defined as land designated for preservation of natural resources (i.e., lakeshore and watershed lands); managed production of resources (i.e., lands for agriculture, forestry, recharge of ground water basins); outdoor recreation (i.e., parks, scenic highway corridors, and areas with outstanding scenic, historic and cultural values); and public health and safety (i.e., floodplains, unstable soil areas).

Particulate Matter: Dust and other airborne particles that come in a range of particle sizes. Federal and State air quality regulations reflect the fact that smaller particles are easier to inhale and can be more damaging to health. PM₁₀ refers to dust/particulates that are 10 microns in diameter or smaller. PM_{2.5} refers to dust/particulates that are 2.5 microns in diameter or smaller.

Policy: A specific statement in text or diagram form that guides action and implies a clear commitment by the City.

Primary Treatment: Treatment of wastewater prior to other forms of treatment involving settling and removal of suspended solids.

Quimby Act: A 1975 act (California Government Code §66477) that allowed local governments in California to take a critical role in the effort to set aside parkland and open space for recreational purposes. Cities and counties have been authorized since the passage of the Quimby Act to pass ordinances requiring that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of park facilities.

Retention: Long-term storage of water runoff with no outlet provided. Retained water would infiltrate into the soil or evaporate.

Riparian Habitat: The biotic (i.e., vegetative and wildlife) areas adjacent to rivers, streams, and lakes. Riparian areas are delineated by the existence of plant species normally found near fresh water.

Secondary Treatment: Treatment of wastewater that typically follows primary treatment that involves biological processes and set-



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ting tanks to remove organic material.

Sensitive Natural Community: A biological community that is regionally rare, provides important habitat for wildlife, is structurally complex, or in other ways of special concern to local, State, or Federal agencies. The CDFG tracks sensitive natural communities in the CNDDDB while CEQA identifies the elimination or substantial degradation of such communities as a significant impact.

Service Area: The area for which a purveyor is responsible for distributing water supplies.

Site Assessment: See Land Evaluation and Site Assessment

Social dislocations: The forced movement of a group of people as a result of development that conflicts with applicable land use plans or aircraft hazards.

Soils [Class 1, 2, and 3]: Class I, II, or III soil classes define the suitability of various soils for agricultural uses, based on limitations of the soils, range of usefulness for agriculture, the risk of environmental damage such as erosion when they are used for agriculture, and how easily their limitations can be overcome by remedial measures. Class I soils are soils that generally have few limitations, support the widest range of uses, and carry the least risk of environmental damage. Class II soils have some limitations that reduce the range of potential crops or require moderate conservation practices. Class III soils have greater limitations on range of potential crops, require special conservation measures, or both. Class I and II soils are considered to be “prime” agricultural soils – those soils whose characteristics make them most suited to agricultural uses.

Specific Plan: A State-authorized legal tool adopted by cities and counties for detailed design and implementation of a defined portion of the area covered by a general and/or area plan. A specific plan may include detailed regulations, conditions, programs, and/or proposed legislation that may be necessary or convenient for the systematic implementation of any general plan element(s).

Special-Status Species: Those plants and animals that, because of their recognized rarity, vulnerability to habitat loss, or population decline, are recognized by Federal, State, or other agencies. Some of



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these species receive specific protection that is defined by Federal or State endangered species legislation. Others have been designated as “sensitive” based on adopted policies and expertise of State resource agencies or organizations with acknowledged expertise, or policies adopted by local governmental agencies such as counties, cities, and special districts to meet local conservation objectives. These species are referred to collectively as “special-status species” in this report, following a convention that has developed in practice but has no official sanction. The various categories encompassed by the term, and the legal status of each, are discussed in Section 10.3.3 “Regulations That Affect Biological Resources.” For the purposes of this assessment, the term “special-status” includes those species that are:

- Federally listed or proposed for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 17.11-17.12);
- Candidates for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act (61 FR 7596-7613);
- State-listed or proposed for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (14 CCR 670.5);
- Species listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) as a species of concern (USFWS), rare (CDFG), or of special concern (CDFG);
- Fully protected animals, as defined by the State of California (California Fish and Game Code Section 3511, 4700, and 5050);
- Species that meet the definition of threatened, endangered, or rare under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines Section 15380);
- Plants listed as rare or endangered under the California Native Plant Protection Act (California Fish and Game Code Section 1900 et seq.); and
- Plants listed by the California Native Plant Society as rare, threatened, or endangered (List 1A and List 2 status plants in Skinner and Pavlik 1994).

Soil Quality: The capacity of a specific type of soil to function, within natural or managed ecosystem boundaries, to sustain plant and animal productivity, maintain or enhance water and air quality, and support human health and habitation.

Sphere of Influence (SOI): The probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of a local agency (i.e., city or district), as deter-



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mined by the Local Agency Formation Commission.

Standard: A specific, often quantified guideline incorporated in a policy or implementation program that defines the relationship between two or more variables. Standards often translate directly into regulatory controls.

Standard Project Flood: The Standard Project Flood is defined as a major flood that can be expected to occur from a severe combination of meteorological and hydrological conditions that is considered reasonably characteristic of the geographical area. This is also known as the 500-year flood.

State Point of Historical Interest: An historic structure or site of local or countywide interest.

State Historical Landmark: An historic structure or site of local or statewide interest.

Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP): A document submitted for approval to the Regional Water Quality Control Board that describes how a city will reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater to the maximum extent practical and effectively limit non-stormwater discharges into its storm drain system.

Surface Water: Water on the Earth's surface, as distinguished from subterranean water, typically found flowing in natural or man-made water courses (e.g., rivers, streams, or canals) or contained in lakes or storage reservoirs.

Sustainable Development: Development that maintains or enhances equity, economic opportunity, and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Tertiary Treatment: Treatment of wastewater that follows secondary treatment that involves filtration processes to remove fine suspended and colloidal material.

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND): An approach to land-use planning and urban design that promotes the building of neighborhoods with a mix of uses and housing types, architectural



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variety, a central public gathering place, interconnecting streets and alleys, and edges defined by greenbelts or boulevards. The basic goal is integration of the activities of potential residents with work, shopping, recreation, and transit, all within walking distance.

Urban: Areas generally characterized by moderate and higher-density residential development (e.g., three or more dwelling units per acre), commercial development, and industrial development.

Wastewater: Sewage (either treated or untreated) from residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional sources.

Wastewater Collection System: The totality of the pipes, pump stations, manholes, and other facilities that convey untreated wastewater from various sources within the Planning Area.

Water Quality: Chemical purity of water measured in terms of a variety of constituents or parameters (e.g., turbidity, metals concentration, organics concentration, salinity).

Watershed: Similar to a groundwater basin, the area or region from which surface water flows to a particular water body.

Wetlands: Wetlands are ecologically complex habitats that support a variety of both plant and animal life. In a jurisdictional sense, the Federal government defines wetlands in Section 404 of the Clean Water Act as “areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support (and do support, under normal circumstances) a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions” (33 CFR 328.3 [b] and 40 CFR 230.3).

Under normal circumstances, the Federal definition of wetlands requires that three wetland identification parameters be present: wetland hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic vegetation. Examples of wetlands include freshwater marsh, seasonal wetlands, and vernal pool complexes that have a hydrologic link to other waters of the U.S. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the responsible agency for regulating wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, while the Environmental Protection Agency has overall responsibility for the Act. CDFG does not have jurisdiction over wetlands unless they are subject to jurisdiction under Streambed Alteration Agreements (affecting the bed, channel, or bank of a waterway) or they support State-listed endangered species.

