

## GLOSSARY 2008

**Accessory Apartment**-An independent rental unit on the same property as a single family detached dwelling. Sometimes known as a cottage apartment, the rental has separated kitchen, bathing, and sleeping areas from the primary residence. The accessory apartment is often occupied by elderly persons or adult children, with the main structure occupied by close relatives or friends.

**Affordable Housing**-Housing available at a sales price or rental amount that does not exceed 30% of the total monthly income. For homeowners, the mortgage payment, taxes, insurance, and homeowner association fees should not exceed 30% of monthly income. For renters, the rent and utility costs combined should not exceed 30% of monthly income. For purposes of targeting needed housing in the community, affordable housing is aimed at families earning between 30% and 120% of Area Median Income

**Agribusiness**-An industry engaged in the production operation of a farm, the manufacture and distribution of farm equipment and supplies, and the processing, storage, and distribution of farm commodities.

**Agricultural and Forestal District (AFD)**-A formal method of assembling tracts of land into large, contiguous parcels for the purpose of short or long-term conservation. Terms can vary from four to ten years at the discretion of the landowner and landowners are offered reduced tax assessments based on land use values.

**Area Median Income (AMI)**-An income level calculated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for specific geographic areas correlating to the U.S. Census. Income levels are established for family sizes of one person up to eight persons and the figures are updated annually. HUD uses these income levels as criteria for their various assistance programs.

**Aquifer**-An underground geological formation or group of formations containing water. Aquifers are sources of groundwater for wells and springs.

**Bathymetry**-The measurement of water depth at various places in a body of water.

**Beach**-A strip of sand or gravel along the shore separating land from water. To gain beach designation, this strip must extend 25 feet in width between the dune or bank and landward of the mean high tide or normal high water.

**Berm**-A long, narrow, raised strip of ground used as a sight or sound buffer or for landscape enhancement. A berm can also be effective for erosion and stormwater runoff control.

**Best Management Practice (BMP)**-A practice or combination of practices that is determined by a state, local, or regional agency to be the most effective, practical method of preventing or reducing the amount of pollution generated by nonpoint sources to a level compatible with water quality goals.

**Bikeway**-A pathway, often paved and separated from sidewalks, designed to be used by bikers.

**Blighted Conditions**-An area, property, or structure that endangers the public health, safety or welfare due to dilapidated or deteriorated conditions which violate minimum safety standards.

**Blueway**-For the purposes of this plan, the term blueway and water trail are used synonymously and are typically oriented for use by non-motorized watercraft. Blueways and water trails are managed systems of access points and support facilities that allow trail users to plan multi-day trips with assurances that access points, camping sites, rest stops, and re-supply sites are clearly identified on maps and on signs visible from the water. A trail may include both public and private lands, with some or all of the latter open only to users specified by the owners.

**Branch Library**-A smaller unit than the administrative headquarters, this facility brings major library services to outlying sections of the locality. Branches are located in areas that are more than 15 minutes from the administrative headquarters.

**Broadband**- A high-speed, high capacity transmission medium that can carry signals from multiple independent network carriers. Broadband technology can support a wide range of frequencies; it is used to transmit data, voice and video over long distances simultaneously. Examples of broadband include DSL and cable Internet.

**Buffer Strip**-A land area used to visibly separate one use from another or to shield or block noise, lights, or other nuisances.

**Capital Improvements Program (CIP)**-The CIP is the scheduling of public physical improvements exceeding \$50,000 in expenditures and over a specified period of time. The CIP is an important device to assist in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Certificate of Occupancy (CO)**-A document issued by the County Codes Compliance Division allowing the occupancy or use of a building and certifying that the structure or use has been constructed or will be used in compliance with all the applicable County codes and ordinances.

**Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (CBPA)**-All lands in James City County designated by the Board of Supervisors pursuant to part III of the Chesapeake Bay Regulation and the *Code of Virginia*, section 10.1-2107 of the Act. Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (CBPA) shall consist of resource protection areas (RPAs) and resource management areas (RMAs).

**Cluster**-A development design technique that concentrates buildings in specific areas on the site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, and preservation of environmentally sensitive features.

**Community Activity Center**-A community activity center typically provides open space, ample parking, and a building designed for a variety of intensive uses. Athletic activities, classes, meetings and special events are routinely scheduled at such a facility.

**Community Character Area (CCA)**-A designation given to certain areas in the County that, due to their scenic or historic character and/or location, deserve a higher level of design and development standards.

**Community Character Corridor (CCC)**-A designation given to certain roads in the County that, due to their scenic or historic character and/or location, deserve a higher level of design and development.

**Community Park**-Community parks are typically between 10-100 acres and primarily support active recreation activities, both organized and informal, for the entire family. While capable of withstanding intensive use, they still should contain a fair amount of natural open space for passive activities such as wildlife watching. Community parks serve several neighborhoods. Access is more often by car, transit, or bicycle than by walking. An example would be Upper County Park.

**Comprehensive Plan**-A plan which establishes the goals and objectives for the County's development and guides future decisions on land use, transportation, public facilities, economics, resource protection, housing, human services, and recreation. Virginia law requires the Comprehensive Plan to be reviewed every five years.

**Conservation Easement**-A voluntary agreement by a landowner to limit development on a piece of property. Easements are held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation or other authorized body for not less than five years.

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**-Techniques utilized to plan spaces and uses on a site more appropriately to create areas that reduce or eliminate the opportunity for crime and where people feel safe and where opportunity for crime is reduced or eliminated.

**Demographics**-The study of people, usually in conjunction with a specific geographic region. Statistical data related to population (a count of the people in a given region) and other subsets of demographics such as age, race, and gender are typically expressed in the aggregate, and offer the reader insight into the region being examined.

**Density**-A measurement of the number of people or dwelling units in relationship to a specified amount of land. Density is a measurement used generally for residential uses. *Gross Density* is defined as the total number of acres divided by the total number of units permitted within a development. *Net density* is defined as the total number of developable acres divided by the number of units permitted.

**Ecotourism**-Environmentally responsible travel to natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact, and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples.

**Effluent**-Wastewater--treated or untreated--that flows out of a treatment plant, sewer, or industrial outfall.

**Estuary**-Region of interaction between rivers and near-shore ocean waters, where tidal action and river flow mix fresh and salt water. Such areas include bays, mouths of rivers, salt marshes, and lagoons. These brackish water ecosystems shelter and feed marine life, birds, and wildlife.

**Eutrophication**-The slow aging process during which a lake, estuary, or bay evolves into a bog or marsh and eventually disappears. During the later stages of eutrophication the water body is choked by abundant plant life due to higher levels of nutritive compounds such as nitrogen and phosphorus. Human activities can accelerate the process.

**Functional Classification System**-The identification of a hierarchy of road types according to the character of service they are intended to provide.

**Geomorphic**-Pertaining to the processes that affect the shape of the surface of the earth.

**Globalization**-The development of an increasing integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheap foreign labor markets.

**Green Building Techniques/Green Design/Green Construction**: The practice of using eco-friendly materials, reducing the amount of construction waste entering landfills, and maximizing energy efficiency in new buildings. Programs such as EarthCraft, LEED for Neighborhood Development, LEED for Homes, and the National Association of Home Builder's National Green Building Program and equivalent programs serve to quantify and certify that the construction process and final product meet minimum standards.

**Green Infrastructure**-An interconnected network of protected land and water that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources and contributes to the health and quality of life for communities and people.

**Greenway**-Linear open spaces that are managed for conservation, recreation, and/or alternative transportation uses. Greenways often follow natural features (such as ridgelines, stream valleys, and rivers) and cultural features (such as canals, utility corridors, abandoned rail lines, zoning buffers, roadways). Greenways include networks of natural open space corridors that connect neighborhoods, parks, and schools to areas of natural, cultural, recreational, scenic, and historical significance.

**Grey Water**- Domestic wastewater composed of wash water from kitchen, bathroom, and laundry sinks, tubs, and washers.

**Historic Preservation**-The protection, rehabilitation, and restoration of sites, buildings, structures, and artifacts significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, or culture.

**Hydrology**-The science dealing with the properties, distribution, and circulation of water.

**Impact Analysis**-A study to determine the effect of a proposed development on activities, utilities, circulation, surrounding land uses, community facilities, environment and other factors directly, indirectly, or potentially affected.

**Impact Fee**-An impact fee is a charge on new development to pay for the construction or expansion of off-site capital improvements that are necessitated by and benefit the new development.

**Improvement**-Any man-made, immovable item which becomes part of, placed upon, or is affixed to, real estate. Examples include the following: streets, sanitary sewers, water lines, stormwater management and erosion control facilities, monuments, signs, sidewalks, and streetlights.

**Infill**-The completion of an established development pattern through the development of similar or compatible uses and densities on vacant parcels.

**Infrastructure**-The facilities and services needed to sustain industry, residential and commercial activities. Infrastructure includes water and sewer lines, streets and roads, communications, and public facilities such as fire stations, parks, etc.

**Land Use Plan**-A guide for policy makers and citizens when making decisions about land use and development within the County. This plan is usually, but not always, consistent with the Zoning Ordinance, which is the legal document by which government classifies land.

**Lane Capacity**-The hourly rate at which vehicles can reasonably be expected to traverse a uniform section of a lane during a give time period.

**Large Retail Stores**-Also known as “big box retail” a large retail store is any combination of retail establishments occupying a single building comprising more than 40,000 square feet or more of total gross floor area. This building may or may not be situated within a larger shopping center.

**LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)** - an internationally recognized certification system that measures how well a building or community performs across the following metrics: energy savings, water efficiency, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

**Level of Service (LOS)**-Qualitative measures that characterize operational conditions within a traffic stream and the perception of these conditions by motorists and passengers.

**Life-Cycle Costing**-An analytical process which considers all cost (and revenue) impacts directly attributable to a public facility over the life cycle of that facility.

**Light Rail**-A railway system characterized by its ability to operate single or multiple cars along exclusive rights-of-way at ground level, on aerial structures, in subways or in streets, able to board and discharge passengers at station platforms or at street, track, or car-floor level.

**Limited Access Highway**-A highway with no right-of-access given to property by virtue of its frontage on that highway. Access is granted by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

There is no functional classification difference between a limited access highway and a controlled access highway. An example is Route 199.

**Local Road**-A road classification intended to provide direct access to adjacent properties and characterized by lower speeds and lower traffic volume.

**Low Impact Development (LID)** - A term used to describe a land planning and engineering design approach to managing storm water runoff. LID emphasizes conservation and use of onsite natural features to protect water quality. This approach implements engineered small-scale hydrologic controls to replicate the pre-development hydrologic regime of watersheds through infiltrating, filtering, storing, evaporating, and detaining runoff close to its source.

**Median Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI)**-A measure of median income calculated after deductions for taxes are made.

**Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)**-A large population nucleus, together with adjacent communities which have a high degree of economic and social integration with that nucleus. These are defined by the Office of Management and Budget as a standard for federal agencies in the preparation and publication of statistics relating to metropolitan areas. James City County is part of the Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News Metropolitan Statistical Area.

**MPO**-The Metropolitan Planning Organization was established to create a cooperative, coordinated, and comprehensive regional transportation planning process. James City County is a member of the Hampton Roads MPO.

**Neighborhood Park (or Mini-Park)**-A park where the primary function is to provide space for impromptu close-to-home recreation activities for the entire family within easy walking distance. It is not intended to generate revenue. Neighborhood parks can serve a variety of age groups and can include active and passive recreation areas. Neighborhood parks serve the immediate neighborhood, should have activities tailored to the needs of neighborhood residents, and tend not to attract visitors from outside the neighborhood. An example of a neighborhood park is Ironbound Square.

**Neo-traditional Development**: Also known as new urbanism, the integration of multiple uses that are all accessible through a variety of practical transportation options, including automobiles taking multiple routes, pedestrians, bicycles, and mass transit.

**Nonconforming Use**-The otherwise legal use of a building or structure or of a tract of land that does not conform to the use regulations of the zoning ordinance for the district it is located either at the effected date of the ordinance or as a result of subsequent amendments to the zoning ordinance.

**Non-point Source Pollution**-Runoff originating from no specific identifiable source, such as agricultural runoff in streams.

**Nontidal Wetlands**-Also known as freshwater wetlands, nontidal wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to

support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

**Open Space**-Any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment or for the use and enjoyment of owners, occupants, and their guests of land adjoining or neighboring such open space. Open space may include active or passive recreational facilities. Its purposes may be for recreation, historic and farmland preservation, viewshed protection, or environmental conservation.

**Overlay Districts**-A zoning district that encompasses one or more underlying zones and that imposes additional requirements above that required by the underlying zone.

**Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI)**-The total income received by all persons divided by the total population of the locality.

**Point Source Pollution**-An identifiable pollution source, such as a specific industry.

**Prime Agricultural Soils**-As defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, all Class I and II soils not limited by wetness.

**Primary Service Area (PSA)**-A principal tool used by the County to manage growth. The PSA is the area where the County encourages most growth to occur and where the bulk of public facilities and services will be provided over the next 20 years. The PSA has as its main goal to promote the efficient delivery of public facilities and services.

**Proffer**-Contributions to the government from private developers offsetting the cost incurred in the development process. These costs may include, for example, installation of water and sewer lines as well as construction of access roads and reparations to adjacent properties whose land has been disturbed.

**Public Benefits**-Public benefits include mixed-cost housing, affordable and workforce housing enhanced environmental protection, or development that adheres to the principles of open space design. For further information, please refer to the Residential Development Standard of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)**-A voluntary program for landowners interested in preserving their property. It allows landowners to enter into agreements to sell the development potential of qualifying property to the County while maintaining the right to continue to own and use the property. Property in the PDR program is put into a conservation easement that places permanent limits on future development of the property and binds all subsequent owners of the property.

**Recreation Center**-A community center typically providing open space, ample parking, and a building designed for a variety of intensive uses. Athletic activities, classes, meetings and special events are routinely scheduled at such a facility.

**Regional Park**-The regional park is the largest park category and serves the recreational needs of the entire locality and often of adjacent localities within a 15-25 minute driving time. They may also attract visitors from up to 60 miles away. Although regional parks often have a combination of active and passive facilities, they are likely to be predominately natural resource based parks. Regional parks include recreational opportunities such as golf, boating, camping, conservation, wildlife viewing, and fishing, which often cannot be provided at the neighborhood or community level. They should also be linked to major trail systems and other area parks. The Warhill Sports Complex is an example of a regional park.

**Response Time**-The amount of time between receipt of an alarm or call for service and the arrival of the first vehicle to the scene.

**Right of Way**- The property within the State Department of Transportation's jurisdiction that is open for public use for purposes of travel.

**Riparian**-Pertaining to the bank of a natural watercourse (as a river) or sometimes of a lake or a tidewater.

**Runoff**-That part of precipitation or irrigation water that runs off the land into streams or other surface-water. It can carry pollutants from the air and land into receiving waters.

**Scenic Easement**-An easement for which the purpose is to limit development in order to preserve a view or scenic area.

**Screening**-A method of visually shielding or obscuring one abutting or nearby structure or use from another by fencing, walls, berms, or densely planted vegetation.

**Soft Second Mortgage**: A tool used to assist qualified home buyers in purchasing property whereby a portion of the purchase price is secured by a third party. The amount borrowed by the homebuyer from traditional sources is reduced, but when the borrowed amount is combined with the soft second amount, the total contract price remains at a market rate. The soft second amount, or "discount," is forgiven to the homeowner over a period of time as long as the property is not sold or leased. Should the homeowner sell the property at the end of the established period, all sale proceeds go to the seller. Should the homeowner sell the property before the designated period expires, either the entire amount or a prorated amount of the soft second is repaid to the third party.

**Special Use Park**-The size of these areas depends on what recreational opportunities are being offered. Purposes can vary depending on the type of park, but are likely to serve special activities such as a boat launch. An example is the Powhatan Creek Park.

**Sprawl**-Uncontrolled growth, usually a low-density nature, in previously rural areas and some distance from existing development and infrastructure. Also known as suburban development, this pattern of growth tends to separate uses as commercial and residential areas, requiring automobile transportation to reach most destinations.

**Standards**-A guide of how various uses should be accommodated in a manner harmonious to the natural and man-made environment. The standards in this Comprehensive Plan provide a basic framework for evaluation in rezoning, special use permits, site plan, subdivision and other review processes and are presented in the form of recommendations.

**Strip Development**-Commercial or residential development oriented to a roadway with multiple access points which often results in increased traffic hazards and adverse visual impacts.

**Substandard Housing**-Housing lacking some or all plumbing and/or housing of poor exterior and/or interior condition. Overcrowding and unsanitary conditions are also factors usually considered.

**Supratidal**-The area adjacent to and above the high tide level.

**Sustainability**-The ability to meet present needs without compromising those of future generations, primarily in terms of the Counties economic, social, and environmental well being.

**Swale**-A low area relative to surrounding land, especially moist or marshy ground, usually serving as a drainage way for surface water during rainy weather.

**Topography**-The geographic surface features of a place or region.

**Transfer of Development Rights**-Transfer of development rights is a device by which the development potential of a site is severed from its title and made available for transfer to another location. The owner of a site within a "sending area" retains property ownership, but not approval to develop. The owner of a site within a "receiving area" (typically an area where additional growth is planned) may purchase transferable development rights, allowing a receptor site to be developed at a greater density. Transfer of development rights is a tool often used in farmland preservation.

**Transitional Uses**-Land uses of an intermediate intensity between a more intensive and less intensive use (i.e., locating an office building between a residential use and a business). Land uses of this type act as a buffer between two land uses with their purpose being to preclude the more intensive uses from "creeping" into the less intensive zone.

**Turbidity**-A cloudy condition in water due to suspended silt or organic matter.

**Unemployment Rate**-The unemployment rate represents the percentage of the employable people of a population who are not working but are actively looking for employment.

**Value Engineering**-The systematic application of techniques to identify the function of a public facility, establish a worth for that function, and provide the needed functions to accomplish the original purpose of the facility at the lowest life-cycle cost without sacrificing the quality of the proposed facility.

**Walkability**- The ability to reach various destinations as a pedestrian. This concept includes having pedestrian-friendly connections to points within five or ten minutes (one quarter to one half mile in distance) from residential units.

**Watershed**-The land area that drains into a stream; the watershed for a major river may encompass a number of smaller watersheds that ultimately combine at a common point.

**Wireless Communication**- The transfer of information over a distance without the use of electrical conductors or wires. Wireless communication encompasses various types of fixed, mobile, and portable two way radios, cellular telephones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), wireless networking, etc.

**Workforce Housing**- A term that can generally be used interchangeably with affordable housing. For purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, workforce housing can refer to residential products aimed at families earning between 80% and 120% of the Area Median Income, though the specific income range has yet to be definitively established. See also Affordable Housing.

**Zoning Ordinance**-The legislative process/document by which a local government classifies land within the community into areas and districts referred to as zones. Zoning regulates building and structure dimensions, design, placement, and use. Requirements vary from district to district, but they must be uniform within districts.