



## X. GLOSSARY

For the purposes of these Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines, the following words and phrases defined in this section shall apply.

**Access road.** A vehicular access roadway greater than or equal to 20 feet in width and serving more than two single family dwellings.

**Accessory ~~structure~~ building.** A detached ~~structure~~ building, the use of which is incidental to an allowed use of the property but which is not designed, constructed, or used for living quarters. Accessory ~~structures~~ buildings include garages, equipment sheds, barns, decks, fences, and similar nonhabitable ~~structures~~ buildings.

**Accessory dwelling unit.** A detached or attached dwelling unit. It shall include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation and is generally smaller and located on the same parcel as the primary dwelling unit. An accessory dwelling unit also includes efficiency units and manufactured homes.

(1) A detached accessory dwelling unit is physically separate from the primary dwelling unit.

(2) An attached accessory dwelling unit is physically attached to the primary dwelling unit.

**Attic.** Use definition in Attic Policy adopted under Council Resolution 2002-167, or as may be amended.

**Average slope.** The rate of vertical change of ground surface averaged over the site and expressed in percentage or degrees. Average slope is calculated as follows:

$$S = \frac{.00229 IL}{A}$$

Where:

.00229 is the conversion factor for square feet;

I = contour interval in feet;

L = combined length of all contour lines within the parcel;

A = area of parcel in gross acres.

**Balance.** The cutting and filling of a site which does not require the export or import of earth material.

**Barn.** A building designed for the storage of farm products or feed and/or for the housing of farm animals or farm equipment. To qualify for an exclusion from FAR a barn may not be habitable floor area.



**Basement.** ~~Partially below grade floor area that does not qualify as a cellar.~~

**Cellar.** ~~Use definition in Cellar Policy adopted under Council Resolution 2002-167, or as may be amended.~~

**Contour.** A line drawn on a plan which connects all points of equal elevation.

**Contour grading.** A grading concept designed to result in earth forms which resemble natural terrain characteristics. Horizontal and vertical curve variations are often used for slope banks. Contour grading does not necessarily minimize the amount of cut and fill occurring.

**Cut.** The mechanical removal of earth material.

**Cut and fill.** The excavating of earth material in one place and depositing of it as fill in an adjacent place.

**Cut-off standards.** A standard of light emission wherein light rays emanating from a source are shielded, reflected, or refracted at angles that direct and cut off the light at an angle less than 90 degrees.

**Defensible space.** Established areas where vegetation is planned and/or maintained to reduce fuel load to minimize a structure's exposure to wildfire.

**Density.** Applying to residential developments, density refers to the number of people living in a certain area, generally expressed in terms of the number of housing units per acre.

**Driveway.** A vehicular access road less than 20 feet wide and serving not more than two single family dwellings.

**DRC.** Development Review Committee (DRC).

**Effective bulk.** The effective visual bulk of a building when seen from a distance either from above or below.

**Emergency Accessway.** An approved secondary access roadway for the exclusive use of fire department apparatus.

**Erosion.** The process by which the soil and rock components of the earth's crust are worn away and removed from one place to another by natural forces such as wind and water.

**Export.** Excess earth material that is removed from a grading project and deposited off-site.

**Fill.** A deposit of earth material placed by artificial means.

**Finish grade.** The final elevation of the ground surface after development, which is in conformance with the approved plan.



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**Floor area, gross.** ~~The sum of all enclosed or covered areas of a building measured to the exterior faces of the enclosing walls, columns or posts~~ The entire enclosed area of all floors that are more than four (4) feet above the proposed grade, measured from the outer face of exterior walls or in the case of party walls from the centerline, but excluding the following:

- A. Areas permanently open to the sky.
- B. Exterior areas under roof eaves, trellises, porches or cantilevered overhangs.
- C. Attics.
- D. ~~Cellars~~ Below grade square footage pursuant to Section 29.40.072 of the Town Code.
- E. Garages up to 400 square feet.
- F. Elevators and stairwells above the first floor.
- G. Barns and stables.

**Floor area ratio (FAR).** The gross floor area of a building or buildings on a lot divided by the area of the lot. The allowed floor area ratio is a numerical guide, not a goal, and may not be able to be achieved on every lot.

**Grading.** To bring an existing surface to a designed form by excavating, filling, or smoothing operations (Refer to the Town's Grading Ordinance).

**Hardscape.** All artificially produced impervious surfaces such as concrete, asphalt, pools, sport courts, and wooden decks.

**Hillside lot.** A parcel of land that is shown on the Hillside Area map (page 8) regardless of zoning district.

**Intensity of development.** The amount of development that may be placed on a site as governed by building square footage and envelope criteria, such as floor area ratio, setbacks, height, lot coverage, etc. Also see slope density formula.

**LRDA (Least Restricted Development Area).** Least restricted areas on a property where development would have a minimal impact on the natural landscape and environment.

**Manmade slope.** A manufactured slope consisting wholly or partially of either cut or filled material.

**Minimal grading.** A grading concept designed to minimize excavation and filling. Allows the movement of earth for projects such as individual building foundations, driveways, local roads, and utility excavation. The concept is associated with roads conforming closely to natural contours and with buildings being built on natural terrain.



**Natural slope.** A slope that is not manmade.

**Net lot area.** The area of a lot exclusive of rights-of-way or ingress-egress easements for public or private use.

**Ornamental landscaping.** Exotic, non-indigenous, non-naturalized plant materials.

**Pad.** A level area created by grading to accommodate development.

**Remodel.** An improvement or alteration to the exterior or interior of a building that requires a building permit.

**Ridgeline.** A line connecting the highest points along a ridge and separating drainage basins or small-scale drainage systems from one another.

**Riparian corridor.** An area comprised of habitat strongly influenced and delineated by the presence of perennial or intermittent streams.

**Scar.** A visible cut in a hillside with a slope greater than 1 1/2:1 in which all topsoil has been removed and vegetation will be unable to establish itself after a significant period of time (five years).

**Site Analysis.** A process where a homeowner meets with staff before development plans have progressed substantially to discuss potential site constraints, conceptual plans, design considerations, neighborhood compatibility, and general standards and guidelines in designing a home.

**Slope.** An inclined ground surface, the inclination of which is expressed as a ratio of the vertical distance (rise), or change in elevation, to the horizontal distance run. The percent of any given slope is determined by dividing the rise by the run, multiplied by one hundred.

**Slope density formula.** The size of lots allowed in a new subdivision based on a formula that increases the minimum lot size allowed as the slope of the site increases. See Chapter IV. Development Intensity.

**Slope transition.** The area where a slope bank meets the natural terrain or a level graded area either vertically or horizontally.

**Stable.** A building with stalls or compartments in which domestic animals are sheltered and fed.

**Viewing platforms areas.** Specific locations on the valley floor or surrounding hillsides selected as vantage points from which field observations are made to assess the visual impact of development within the Town's hillside areas.



**Visible home.** A single family residence where 25% or more of an elevation can be seen from any of the Town's established viewing ~~platforms~~ areas (see Chapter II, section B).

**West Valley Hillside Preservation Strategies.** A document developed through a joint planning review by the Cities of Cupertino, Saratoga and Monte Sereno, the Town of Los Gatos, and the County of Santa Clara that establishes strategies to protect the scenic appearance of the west valley hillsides (available for review at the Los Gatos Community Development Department).

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