



## Memorandum

Date: April 11, 2022  
To: Tree Board  
From: Brad Medrud, Planning Manager  
Subject: City of Tumwater and Planning Terms Glossary

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### Issue

Similar to other professions, planning and city government use many terms and acronyms as shorthand to describe things. While it can be useful to reduce the number of words used to define something, for those who do not know what the acronyms or terms mean in a particular context, terms and acronyms can be a barrier to effective communication.

The following terms and acronyms are used by the City of Tumwater and planning.

For an expanded list of terms and acronyms used in planning, the Municipal Research Service Center (MRSC) has a Planner's Pocket Reference for terms here: <https://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Planning/Information-Resources-and-Tools-for-Planners/Planner-s-Pocket-Reference.aspx>

### Terms and Acronyms

**Access Management** – The process of providing and managing access to abutting properties while preserving the flow of traffic in terms of safety, capacity, and speed

**ADA** – Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), for purposes of planning and land use, federal law that generally requires that businesses and public facilities and conveyances be accessible to individuals with disabilities

**ADT** – Average Daily Trips made by vehicles or persons in a 24-hour period

**ADU** – Accessory Dwelling Unit

**Adverse Impact** – A negative consequence for the physical, social, or economic environment resulting from an action or project

**Aging in Place** – The ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level

**AICP** – American Institute of Certified Planners

**Annex/Annexation** – To incorporate a land area into an existing district or municipality, with a resulting change in the boundaries of the annexing jurisdiction

**APA** – American Planning Association

**APA-WA** – American Planning Association of Washington

**Appeal** – When a person believes a decision was made in error, an appeal may be filed so that a higher decision-making body can review the case

**Aquifer** – An underground, water-bearing layer of earth, porous rock, sand, or gravel, through which water can seep or be held in natural storage that generally hold sufficient water to be used as a water supply

**Arterial** – A major roadway carrying the traffic of local and collector streets to and from freeways and other major streets

**Articulation** – Variation in the depth of the building plane, roof line, or height of a structure that breaks up plain, monotonous areas and creates patterns of light and shadow

**BANANA** – Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anything

**Base Flood** – In any given year, a 100-year flood that has a one percent likelihood of occurring, and is recognized as a standard for acceptable risk

**BMP** – Best Management Practices

**BPA** – Bonneville Power Authority

**Brownfield** – An area with abandoned, idle, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion, redevelopment, or reuse is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination

**BSP** – Binding Site Plan

**Buffer** – An area of land separating two distinct land uses that softens or mitigates the effects of one land use on the other or protects a critical area from development or vice versa

**Building Code** – Standards adopted by the state governing the construction, alteration, demolition, occupancy, or other use of buildings used for human habitation.

**Building Official** – Person responsible for the administration and enforcement of the building, housing, plumbing, electrical, and related codes

**Build-out** – Development of land to its full potential or theoretical capacity as permitted under current or proposed planning or zoning designations

**Built Environment** – Buildings, roads, parks, and all other improvements constructed by people that form the physical character of a community

**Bulk Regulations** – Zoning or other regulations that control the height, mass, density, and location of buildings intended to provide proper light, air, and open space

**Business Improvement Districts** – Public-private partnerships among property owners and commercial tenants who collectively contribute to the maintenance, development, and promotion of their commercial district

**CAD** – Computer Aided Design

**Capacity** – The maximum rate of flow at which vehicles can be reasonably expected to traverse a point or uniform segment of a lane or roadway during a specified time period under prevailing roadway, traffic, and control conditions; usually expressed as vehicles per hour per lane

**Carbon Sequestration** – The process of removing carbon from the atmosphere and storing it in a “carbon sink,” a fixed molecule in soil, oceans, or plants

**Carrying Capacity** – (1) The level of land use, human activity, or development for a specific area that can be accommodated permanently without an irreversible change in the quality of air, water, land, or plant and animal habitats; (2) The upper limits of development beyond which the quality of human life, health, welfare, safety, or community character within an area will be impaired; or (3) The maximum level of development allowable under current zoning

**CCRs** – Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions, a term used to describe restrictive limitations— usually recorded as covenants—that may be placed on property and its use, and which usually are made a condition of holding title or lease, typically intended to preserve the physical nature and character of the development

**CBD** – Central Business District

**CDBG** – Community Development Block Grant, a grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that allots grant money to cities and counties for housing rehabilitation and community development, including public facilities and economic development

**Certificate of Occupancy** – An official certification that a building or place conforms to the provisions of the zoning and building codes, and therefore may be used or occupied; a structure cannot be occupied without a certificate of occupancy

**CFP** – Capital Facilities Plan

**Collectors** – Streets serving short trips that are intended for collecting trips from local streets and distributing them to the arterial network

**Compatibility** – The characteristics of different uses or activities that permit them to be located near each other in harmony and without conflict

**Complete Streets** – Streets designed to accommodate all modes of travel and enable safe access for all users, allowing Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to move safely along and across a complete street

**Comprehensive Plan** – A long-range policy document detailing how the City plans to manage growth and development of the community, ensuring that growth in unincorporated portions of the county is adequately served by public facilities, and following Washington state law that requires jurisdictions operating under the Growth Management Act (GMA) to develop and implement comprehensive plans (36.70A RCW)

**Concurrency** – Required under the Washington State Growth Management Act, the installing or operating facilities and services needed to meet the demands of new development simultaneously (or concurrently) with the development

**Conditional Use** – A use that may locate within a zone only upon taking measures to address issues that may make the use detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare and will not impair the integrity and character of the zoned district

**Condominium** – A structure of two or more units, the interior spaces of which are individually owned; the balance of the property (both land and building) is owned in common by the owners of the individual units

**Connectivity** – The ease of travel between two points, including the degree to which streets or areas are interconnected and easily accessible to one another by direct routes

**Conservation Easement** – A partial interest in land that severs the right to develop the land from its basic use, like low-density uses, open space, or agriculture

**Covenant** – A private legal restriction that places a burden on a parcel of land in favor of another parcel, typically recorded in the deed

**Cumulative Impact** – As used in SEPA, the total impact resulting from the accumulated impacts of individual projects or programs over time

**CUP/Conditional Use Permit** – A discretionary permit issued by a hearing body to allow a conditional use that may or may not be allowable under the zoning code

**Dedication** – A grant of private land to a public agency for public use that are often imposed as a condition of development

**Density** – The amount of development per acre permitted on a parcel under the applicable zoning

**Design Review/Citywide Design Guidelines** – Regulations and procedures requiring the exterior design of structures and development to be suitable,

harmonious, and in keeping with the general appearance, historic character, and/or style of surrounding areas

**Development Agreement** – A legislatively approved contract between a jurisdiction and a person having legal or equitable interest in real property within the jurisdiction that “freezes” certain rules, regulations, and policies applicable to development of a property for a specified period of time, usually in exchange for certain concessions by the owner

**Development Rights** – The right to develop land held by a landowner or by a party other than the owner who has obtained the rights to develop, including such rights usually is expressed in terms of density allowed under existing zoning

**Displacement** – When long-time or original neighborhood residents move from a gentrified area because of higher rents, mortgages, and property taxes

**DOE** – Washington State Department of Ecology

**DNR** – Washington State Department of Natural Resources

**DU** – Dwelling Unit

**Easement** – The right to use property owned by another for specific purposes or to gain access to another property, such as a utility companies often have easements on the private property of individuals to be able to install and maintain utility facilities

**EIS** – Environmental Impact Statement

**Eminent Domain** – The right of a public entity to acquire private property for public use upon the payment of just compensation

**Envelope** – The skin of a building, including the windows, doors, walls, foundation, basement slab, ceilings, roof and insulation, that separates the interior of a building from the outdoor environment

**Environmental Review** – Consideration of fourteen different environmental factors as required by the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)

**EPA** – Federal Environmental Protection Agency

**ESA** – Federal Endangered Species Act

**FAA** – Federal Aviation Administration

**FAR** – Floor Area Ratio

**FEMA** – Federal Emergency Management Agency

**FHA** – Federal Housing Administration

**Finding** – A determination or conclusion based on the evidence presented to a hearing body in support of its decision

**FIRM/Flood Insurance Rate Map** - the official map on which the Federal Insurance Administration has delineated areas of special flood hazard and the risk premium zones applicable to that community.

**GHG** – Greenhouse Gas

**GIS** – Geographic Information Systems

**GPS** – Global Positioning System

**GMA/Growth Management Act** – Adopted in 1990 to address the consequences of population growth and suburban sprawl in the State, the GMA requires all cities and counties in the State to plan for growth, and has more extensive requirements for the largest and fastest-growing counties and cities in the State including guaranteeing the consistency of transportation and capital facilities plans with land use plans

**Growth Management** – Strategies used to direct the timing, location, and type of development in the City

**HAP** – Housing Action Plan

**HCP** – Habitat Conservation Plan

**HOA** – Home Owners' Association

**HOV** – High-Occupancy Vehicle

**HTF** – Housing Trust Fund

**HUD** – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**IBC** – International Building Code

**ILA** – Interlocal Agreement

**Impacts** – The effects or consequences of actions, such as environmental impacts are effects upon the elements of the environment (WAC 197-11-752)

**LEED** – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

**Local Streets** – Streets that provide direct access to adjoining properties within a neighborhood where through trips are discouraged and parking is allowed

**LOS/Level of Service** – The City has adopted level-of-service (LOS) standards transportation and public utilities to determine if development is meeting concurrency.

**MF** – Multifamily

**MH** – Manufactured Housing

**Mitigation** – (1) Avoiding impacts altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; (2) minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation by using appropriate technology, or by taking affirmative steps to avoid or reduce impacts; (3) rectifying impacts by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; (4) reducing

or eliminating impacts over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; (5) compensating for impacts by replacing, enhancing or providing substitute resources or environments; and/or, (6) monitoring impacts and taking appropriate corrective measures (WAC 197-11-768)

**Mode** – The means by which travel is accomplished, which include walking, bicycling, auto, bus, light rail, airplane, ferry, etc.

**MOU** – Memorandum of Understanding

**MPO** – Metropolitan Planning Organization

**MRSC** – Municipal Research Service Center

**MU** – Mixed Use

**NEPA** – National Environmental Policy Act

**NHPA** – National Historic Preservation Act

**NMFS** – National Marine Fisheries Service

**NPDES** – National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

**PAW** – Planning Association of Washington

**PDR** – Purchase of Development Rights

**PUD** – Planned Unit Development

**RCW** – Revised Code of Washington, containing all the laws of the state of a general and permanent nature

**RFP** – Request for Proposal

**RFQ** – Requests for Qualifications

**RHC** – Regional Housing Council

**ROW** – Right-of-Way, property held by the City for existing or future public roads or other public improvements

**SEPA** – State Environmental Policy Act, the state law requiring agencies to consider the environmental consequences of their decisions (WAC 197-11-790)

**SF** – Single Family

**SMA** – Shoreline Management Act

**SMP** – Shoreline Master Plan

**SRO** – Single-Room Occupancy

**TCMP** – Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan

**TDM** – Transportation Demand Management

**TDR/Transfer of Development Rights** – A program that can relocate potential development from areas where proposed land use or environmental impacts are considered undesirable (the “donor” site) to another (“receiver”) site chosen on the basis of its ability to accommodate additional units of development beyond that for which it was zoned, with minimal environmental, social, and aesthetic impacts

**THA** – Thurston Housing Authority

**TMC** – Tumwater Municipal Code

**TDR/Transfer of Development Rights** – A program that can relocate potential development from areas where proposed land use or environmental impacts are considered undesirable (the “donor” site) to another (“receiver”) site chosen on the basis of its ability to accommodate additional units of development beyond that for which it was zoned, with minimal environmental, social, and aesthetic impacts

**TRPC** – Thurston Regional Planning Council

**UGA** – Urban Growth Area

**USFWS** – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**VMT** – Vehicle Miles Traveled

**WAC/Washington Administrative Code** – Regulations of executive branch agencies are issued by authority of statutes, like legislation and the Constitution, regulations are a source of primary law in the state, and the WAC codifies the regulations and arranges them by subject or agency

**WDFW** – Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife

**WSDOT** – Washington State Department of Transportation

**Zoning** – A map and ordinance text which divides a city or county into land use “zones” and specifies the types of land uses, setbacks, lot size, and size restrictions for buildings within each zone.