

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

(adapted from Virginia Code § 15.2-2201; 15.2-4302, § 56-265.1, etc., Virginia Department of Transportation, as well as the US Census Bureau)

As used in this Comprehensive Plan, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Affordable housing" means, as a guideline, housing that is affordable to households with incomes at or below the area median income, provided that the occupant pays no more than thirty percent of his gross income for gross housing costs, including utilities. For the purpose of administering affordable dwelling unit ordinances authorized by this chapter, local governments may establish individual definitions of affordable housing and affordable dwelling units including determination of the appropriate percent of area median income and percent of gross income.

"Agricultural products" means crops, livestock and livestock products, including but not limited to: field crops, fruits, vegetables, horticultural specialties, cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, poultry, furbearing animals, milk, eggs and furs.

"Agricultural production" means the production for commercial purposes of crops, livestock and livestock products, and includes the processing or retail sales by the producer of crops, livestock or livestock products which are produced on the parcel or in the district.

"Agriculturally and forestally significant land" means land that has recently or historically produced agricultural and forestal products, is suitable for agricultural or forestal production or is considered appropriate to be retained for agricultural and forestal production as determined by such factors as soil quality, topography, climate, markets, farm structures, and other relevant factors.

"Company" means a corporation, a limited liability company, an individual, a partnership, an association, a joint-stock company, a business trust, a cooperative, or an organized group of persons, whether incorporated or not; or any receiver, trustee or other liquidating agent of any of the foregoing in his capacity as such; but not a municipal corporation or a county, unless such municipal corporation or county has obtained a certificate pursuant to § [56-265.4:4](#).

"Conditional zoning" means, as part of classifying land within a locality into areas and districts by legislative action, the allowing of reasonable conditions governing the use of such property, such conditions being in addition to, or modification of the regulations provided for a particular zoning district or zone by the overall zoning ordinance.

"Development" means a tract of land developed or to be developed as a unit under single ownership or unified control which is to be used for any business or industrial purpose or is to contain three or more residential dwelling units. The term "development" shall not be construed to include any property which will be principally devoted to agricultural production.

"Forestal production" means the production for commercial purposes of forestal products and includes the processing or retail sales, by the producer, of forestal products which are produced on the parcel or in the district. "Forestal products" includes, but is not limited to, saw timber, pulpwood, posts, firewood, Christmas trees and other tree and wood products for sale or for farm use.

"Historic area" means an area containing one or more buildings or places in which historic events occurred or having special public value because of notable architectural, archaeological or other features relating to the cultural or artistic heritage of the community, of such significance as to warrant conservation and preservation.

"Incentive zoning" means the use of bonuses in the form of increased project density or other benefits to a developer in return for the developer providing certain features, design elements, uses, services, or amenities desired by the locality, including but not limited to, site design incorporating principles of new urbanism and traditional neighborhood development, environmentally sustainable and energy-efficient building design, affordable housing creation and preservation, and historical preservation, as part of the development.

"Landowner" or "owner of land" means any person holding a fee simple interest in property but does not mean the holder of an easement.

"Local planning commission" means a municipal planning commission or a county planning commission.

"Median Family Income" according to the US Census Bureau, is the mid-point for family incomes with half of families earning more and half earning less. Whereas a "family" is defined as two or more related persons living in the same residence, a household includes all residents, even those for single people or unrelated groups of two or more

"Median Household Income" according to the US Census Bureau, is the mid-point for household incomes with half of households earning more and half earning less. A "household" includes all persons occupying that housing unit. Also see previous definition.

"Mixed use development" means property that incorporates two or more different uses, and may include a variety of housing types, within a single development.

"Official map" means a map of legally established and proposed public streets, waterways, and public areas adopted by a locality in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 (§ [15.2-2233](#) et seq.) hereof.

"Per Capita Income," according to the US Census Bureau, is the average income as computed for every man, woman and child in a geographic area.

"Planned unit development" means a form of development characterized by unified site design for a variety of housing types and densities, clustering of buildings, common open space, and a mix of building types and land uses in which project planning and density calculation are performed for the entire development rather than on an individual lot basis.

"Planning district commission" means a regional planning agency chartered under the provisions of Chapter 42 (§ [15.2-4200](#) et seq.) of this title.

"Plat" or "plat of subdivision" means the schematic representation of land divided or to be divided and information in accordance with the provisions of §§ [15.2-2241](#), [15.2-2242](#), [15.2-2258](#), [15.2-2262](#), and [15.2-2264](#), and other applicable statutes.

"Poverty rate" is determined by the Census Bureau using a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps).

"Preliminary subdivision plat" means the proposed schematic representation of development or subdivision that establishes how the provisions of §§ [15.2-2241](#) and [15.2-2242](#), and other applicable statutes will be achieved.

"Public utility" means any company which owns or operates facilities within the Commonwealth of Virginia for the generation, transmission or distribution of electric energy for sale, for the production, storage, transmission, or distribution, otherwise than in enclosed portable containers, of natural or manufactured gas or geothermal resources for sale for heat, light or power, or for the furnishing of telephone service, sewerage facilities or water; however, the term "public utility" shall not include any of the exceptions provided for in State Code § 56-265.1.

Road classifications such as arterial and collector, according to the Virginia Department of Transportation, are as follows: since cities and larger towns generate and attract a large

proportion of the relatively longer trips, the arterial highways generally provide direct service for such travel. In Rural areas the intermediate functional category, the collectors, serves small towns directly, connects them to the arterial network, and collects traffic from the bottom-level system of local roads, which serves individual farms and other rural land uses.

"Site plan" means the proposal for a development or a subdivision including all covenants, grants or easements and other conditions relating to use, location and bulk of buildings, density of development, common open space, public facilities and such other information as required by the subdivision ordinance to which the proposed development or subdivision is subject.

"Special exception" means a special use, that is a use not permitted in a particular district except by a special use permit granted under the provisions of this chapter and any zoning ordinances adopted herewith.

"Street" means highway, street, avenue, boulevard, road, lane, alley, or any public way.

"Subdivision," means any division of land. The term includes resubdivision and, when appropriate to the context, shall relate to the process of subdividing or to the land subdivided and solely for the purpose of recordation of any single division of land into two lots or parcels, a plat of such division shall be submitted for approval in accordance with § [15.2-2258](#).

"Wetlands" means those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas.

"Zoning" or "to zone" means the process of classifying land within a locality into areas and districts, such areas and districts being generally referred to as "zones," by legislative action and the prescribing and application in each area and district of regulations which could include building and structure designs, building and structure placement and uses to which land, buildings and structures within such designated areas and districts may be put. Each district could have automatic "by-right" uses in which no approval is needed. Each district could also have "special uses" which would require specific review by the Planning Commission to determine with the scale and impact of the proposed use was appropriate for that district and location.

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