

# glossary

**Action:** A provision or task to implement adopted policies.

**Affordable Housing:** The cost of housing as a percentage of household income. Housing is considered unaffordable when housing costs exceed a threshold percentage – nationally that standard ranges from 25 to 33 percent. Housing costs considered in this guideline generally include taxes and insurance for owners, and sometimes include utility costs. When the monthly carrying costs of a home exceed 30-35% of household income, then the housing is considered unaffordable for that household.

**Alignment:** When everyone is working together harmoniously as a unit toward the same objective or purpose.

**Baseline:** A baseline is a description or measure of the current state. It is the starting point from which an organization improves.

**Benchmarking:** Method of measuring performance against established standards of best practice.

**Bicycle Boulevard:** Bicycle boulevards are low-traffic neighborhood streets that have been optimized for bicycling. They are a facility shared with motorists and identified by signs and occasional pavement markings.

**Bikeways:** A term that encompasses bicycle lanes, bicycle paths and bicycle boulevards.

**Built Environment:** Refers to the human-created surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, ranging from large-scale civic districts, commercial and industrial buildings, to neighborhoods and individual homes.

**Buy In:** A state of mind that occurs when an individual or group understands and commits to a common goal or action plan.

**Carbon Neutral:** Being carbon neutral refers to the practice of balancing carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere from burning fossil fuels, with renewable energy that creates a similar amount of useful energy, so that the net carbon emissions are zero, or alternatively using only renewable energy.

**Centers:** compact, mixed-use areas of high-density housing, employment and retail that are pedestrian-oriented and well served by public transportation and roads. Centers are defined as the central city, regional centers, town centers, station communities and main streets, as defined by Metro. Mixed-use centers in the metropolitan region include the central city (Portland), seven regional centers (the downtown areas of Hillsboro, Beaverton, Oregon City and Gresham, as well as the

Clackamas Town Center, Washington Square and Gateway shopping areas), 30 town centers and numerous main streets and station communities.

**Central City:** Downtown Portland is the Portland area's central city and serves as the hub of business and cultural activity in the region. It has the most intensive form of development for both housing and employment, with high-rise development common in the central business district.

**City Beautiful Movement:** The architectural and town planning style of the early 20th century that advocated the treatment of a city as a work of art.

**Collaboration:** Any cooperative effort between and among governmental entities (as well as with private partners) through which the partners work together to achieve common goals. Such collaboration can range from very informal, ad hoc activities to more planned, organized and formalized ways of working together. They share a sense of public purpose, leverage resources to yield improved outcomes, and bridge traditional geographic, institutional and functional boundaries.

**Community garden:** Small plots of land rented by individuals from some organization that holds title or lease to the land. The City of Portland runs a Community Garden Program that includes 30 garden

sites with over 1,000 plots.

**Compact urban communities:** Urban locations which offer transportation, housing and shopping choices that reduce the need for automobile travel and support an efficient development pattern.

**Complete Street:** Designed and operated to ensure safety travel for all users – pedestrians, cyclists, transit-riders and motorists. Typically, complete streets include sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes and other features and amenities.

**Comprehensive Plan:** A document that identifies that guides growth and development for a local jurisdiction.

**Congestion:** A condition characterized by unstable traffic flows that creates stop-and-go movement on a transportation facility. Nonrecurring congestion is caused by actions such as special events, weather, and/or traffic accidents. Recurring congestion is caused by problematic facility design at a key location or constant excess volume compared with capacity.

**Conservation:** The management of resources, such as water and energy, so as to eliminate waste or maximize efficiency of use.

**Density:** A measurement of the number of people, dwelling units, or lots in rela-

tionship to a specified amount of land. Density is a measurement used generally for residential uses.

**Design Guidelines:** A set of design parameters for development that apply within a design district, subdistrict, or overlay zone. The guidelines are adopted public statements of intent and are used to evaluate the acceptability of a project's design.

**Development:** Any physical alteration and/or improvements of land which leads to subdivision of land; construction of any building or structure; road development; installation of utilities; grading; mineral extraction; the deposit of refuse, debris, or fill materials; or the clearing of natural vegetation cover with the exception of agricultural activities and trails.

**Economic Development:** A process to influence local economic conditions by stimulating private investment in existing and potential firms, thereby expanding an area's employment opportunities.

**Green Building (also, Green Design):** Building design that yields environmental benefits, such as savings in energy, building materials, and water consumption, or reduced waste generation. Green development minimizes energy consumption and minimizes pollution and the generation of wastes, while maximizing the re-use of materials and creating healthful

indoor environments.

**Green Street:** A street designed and constructed to integrate a system of stormwater management within its right of way in order to reduce the amount of water that is piped directly to streams and rivers. Green streets typically incorporate green infrastructure, such as street trees and landscaped amenity zones, both for aesthetics and to enhance the environment.

**Greenhouse Gas:** Components of the atmosphere that contribute to global warming, including water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone. Human activities have added to the levels of most of these naturally occurring gases.

**Greenspace:** A term applied to open spaces in urban areas, including parks, preserves and public or private lands.

**Greywater:** Domestic wastewater that does not contain human wastes such as tub, shower or washing machine water that is recycled especially for use in gardening or for flushing toilets.

**Groundwater:** Water under the earth's surface, often confined to aquifers capable of supplying wells and springs.

**Growth Management:** The use by a community of a variety of combined

techniques to establish the amount, type and rate of growth desired by the community and to channel that growth into designated areas. Growth management policies can be implemented through growth rates, zoning, capital improvement programs, public facilities, ordinances, urban growth boundaries and other programs.

**Habitat:** The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.

**Historic Preservation:** The process of preserving part of a community, from an individual building or part of a building to a whole neighborhood (including roadways and waterways), because of its historical importance.

**Household:** All persons residing in a single dwelling unit.

**Household Size:** All of the persons who occupy a housing unit.

**Ibid.:** (Latin, short for "ibidem," "the same place") is the term used to provide an endnote or footnote citation or reference for a source that was cited in the previous endnote or footnote.

**Impervious Surface:** Surface through which water cannot penetrate, such as a roof, road, sidewalk or paved parking lot. The amount of impervious surface

increases with development and establishes the need for drainage facilities to carry the increased run-off.

**Implementation:** Actions, procedures, programs or techniques that carry out policies.

**Infill Development:** Projects that use vacant or underutilized land in areas that were previously developed.

**Infrastructure:** The physical systems and services that support development and people, such as streets and highways, transit services, airports, water and sewer systems and the like.

**Initiative:** An initiative is an activity that supports accomplishment of an objective.

**Light Rail Line:** A public rail transit line that usually operates at grade level and that provides high capacity, regional level transit service. A light rail line is designed to share a street right-of-way although it may also use a separate right-of-way or easement.

**Mixed-Use:** In land-use and transit planning, generally refers to different compatible land uses located within a single structure or in close proximity to each other.

**Mobility:** The ability to move about the region from one location to another.

**Mode:** A particular form of travel (e.g., walking, bicycling, driving alone, carpooling or vanpooling, bus, train, ferry or airplane).

**Open Space:** Any open land or other space (such as a river) which is predominately lacking in structural development. Open Space includes natural areas, wetlands, open water, wildlife habitats, farmlands, grazing areas and park recreation areas.

**Passive Recreation:** Recreation activities that require limited physical exertion on behalf of the participant. Examples include bird watching, walking or photography.

**Pedestrian-Oriented Development:** The development and siting of housing, commercial space, services, and job opportunities in a manner that accommodates walking. Such development is intended to create more vibrant urban areas and to reduce dependency on automobile travel.

**Program:** An action, activity or strategy carried out in response to adopted policy to achieve a specific objective. Policies and programs establish the “who,” “how,” and “when” for carrying out the “what” and “where” of goals and objectives.

**Public Art:** works of art in any media that has been planned and executed

with the specific intention of being sited or staged in the public domain, usually outside and accessible to all.

**Public Services:** Facilities and infrastructure, including sanitary and storm sewer systems, water supply, energy, telecommunications, public safety and emergency services, schools, libraries and other facilities.

**Recycling:** The process by which waste materials are collected and reused as “raw” materials for new products.

**Redevelopment:** The restoration and/or improvement of an existing structure or property.

**Social Capital:** The value of social networks that people can draw on to solve common problems. The benefits of social capital flow from the trust, reciprocity, information and cooperation associated with social networks.

**Solid Waste:** A general category that includes garbage, trash, refuse, paper, ashes, metals, glass, plastics, construction debris, rock, soil, abandoned vehicles and machine parts, discarded appliances, yard wastes, manure and other materials.

**Stakeholder:** Those individuals, groups, and parties who either affect or are affected by the organization, both internally and externally. Stakeholders are involved

or consulted as part of the strategic planning process so that their views, needs, and concerns are given consideration during the development of organizational goals, objectives and strategies. They may also provide input related to outcome measures.

**Stewardship:** Taking responsibility for actions affecting the natural or built environment. Positive stewardship demonstrates acceptance of this responsibility through the continuous improvement of environmental performance by individuals, communities, the private sector and governmental agencies.

**Strategic Plan:** A strategic plan is a disciplined, coordinated, systematic, and sustained effort that enables an organization to fulfill its mission and achieve its vision.

**Transit-Oriented Development:** The development of housing, commercial space, services, and job opportunities in close proximity to public transportation. Such development is intended to reduce dependency on automobiles, as well as better linking residences to jobs and services.

**Universal Healthcare:** State in which all residents of a geographic or political region have access to most types of health care. Universal health care is provided in most developed countries and many

developing countries across the globe.

**Urban Design:** The attempt to give form, in terms of both beauty and function, to selected urban areas or to whole cities. Urban design is concerned with the location, mass and design of various urban components and combines elements of urban planning, architecture and landscape architecture.

**Urban Sprawl:** Haphazard growth or outward extension of an urban area resulting from uncontrolled or poorly managed development.

**Walking Distance:** The distance which an able-bodied person would reasonably be expected to walk. Commonly understood as ¼ mile, or about 10 minutes’ walk.

**Watershed:** The land area from which surface runoff drains into a stream, channel, lake, reservoir or other body of water. Large watersheds, like the Mississippi River basin contain thousands of smaller watersheds.

**Zoning:** The division of a city by legislative regulations into areas, or zones, which specify allowable uses for real property and size restrictions for buildings within these areas; a program that carries out policies of the City’s Comprehensive Plan.