13 Glossary of Terms



Accessory Housing/Accessory Dwelling: Dwelling units constructed within and subordinate to an existing single family home, or detached from the primary house, for use as a rental unit. An "accessory dwelling" is another separate dwelling, including kitchen, sleeping, and bathroom facilities. Also known as "mother-in-law apartment."

Affordable Housing: Affordable housing is generally defined as housing where the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including utilities, and meets the needs of moderate or low-income households. While affordable housing is often thought of as subsidized housing, this is not necessarily so. Market housing, meeting low and moderate income targets, with affordability controls in place, may also qualify.

Allowed use: Means a permitted use or conditionally approved use.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A 1990 federal law designed to bring disabled Americans into the economic mainstream by providing them equal access to jobs, transportation, public facilities, and services.

Aquifer Recharge Area: Point of interchange between ground water and the surface. Recharge refers to the addition of water to the zone of saturation.

Arterial, Minor: Intra-community roadways connecting community centers and facilities. Examples of minor arterials within the city include SW 152nd Street and 8th Avenue S.

Arterial, Principal: Inter-community roadways connecting largest community centers and facilities. Examples of principal arterials within the city include Ambaum Boulevard SW, 1st Avenue S, and SW 148th Street.

Best Management Practices (BMP): State-of-the-art technology as applied to a specific problem. BMPs are often required as part of major land development projects. The BMP represents physical, institutional, or strategic approaches to environmental problems, particularly with respect to nonpoint source pollution control.

Burien Analysis Zone (BAZ): A defined set of geographic areas that comprise the entire city. These blocks are used as a basis for deriving information pertaining to such considerations as housing, land use, transportation, and demographics.

Capital Facilities or Capital Improvements: Capital facilities generally have a long useful life and include city and non-city operated infrastructure, buildings, and equipment. Capital facilities planning does not cover regular operation and maintenance, but it does include major repair, rehabilitation, or reconstruction of facilities.

Capital Facilities Plan: The Capital Facilities Plan is part of the Capital Facilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Future public works needs and facilities are included in a financial plan to fund those facilities. The Growth Management Act requires that capital facilities plans include at least a 6 year financial plan.

Capital Improvements Program (CIP): A program of capital facility development, usually covering six years, and typically expressed in a list of projects with estimated date of construction and other basic information. The CIP should be updated and adopted annually as part of the City budget.

Census Tracts: A division of area used by the Federal Bureau of Census to collect demographic data.

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

Cohousing: An intentional community of private homes clustered around shared space. Each attached or single family home has traditional amenities, including a private kitchen. Shared spaces typically feature a common house, which may include a large kitchen and dining area, laundry, and recreational spaces. Shared outdoor space may include parking, walkways, open space, and gardens. Households have independent incomes and private lives, but neighbors collaboratively plan and manage community activities and shared spaces. The legal structure is typically an HOA, Condo Association, or Housing Cooperative.

Commercial Use: The use of a building, land, or other for non-residential and non-personal use involving retail sales, wholesale sales, office uses, entertainment uses, or similar uses.

Complete Streets: Roadways designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users, including, but not limited to, pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Specific aspects of a complete street are dependent on the context in which the roadway is located (urban, rural, heavy traffic volume, numerous pedestrian destinations, etc.), and may include: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible transit stops, frequent crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and more.

Comprehensive Plan: A coordinated policy statement of the governing body of a local government that sets forth guidelines and policies for the future development of a community and may be adopted pursuant to the Washington State Growth Management Act (Chapter 36.70A RCW).

Concurrency: A planning or regulation concept that seeks to ensure that new private development is supported by adequate public facilities "concurrent" with the approval of such facilities. Under the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) it refers specifically to a requirement which mandates that public transportation infrastructure (e.g., arterials and transit routes) needed to maintain adopted level of service standards is available within six years of development. The GMA mandates also allow local jurisdictions to establish their own concurrency requirements for other necessary public infrastructure (e.g., water, wastewater, and stormwater). The term concurrency is also used as a planning concept for assuring that improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts of development are in place at the time of development approval.

Conditional Use/Conditionally Approved Use: A use that requires approval through a formal review process. This usually requires that conditions be reviewed for approval or that the proposed use meet certain conditions.

Condominium: A system of separate ownership of individual units, usually in a multiple tenant building. A condominium consists of a single parcel of property with all the unit owners having a right in common to use the common elements, with separate ownership confined to the individual units, which are serially designated.

Consistency: A measure of whether any feature of the Plan or a regulation is incompatible with any other feature or a plan or a regulation. The Growth Management Act requires the Plan be both internally and externally consistent.

Countywide Planning Policies: As required for the Growth Management Act, the King County Council adopted, and the cities ratified, a series of policies which embody a vision of the future of King County. These policies are intended to guide the development of city and county comprehensive plans.

Critical Areas: See Environmentally sensitive areas.

Density: The number of families, persons, or housing units per unit of land usually expressed as "per acre." There are several different ways of measuring density, including:

- Net site density: Units per site area after allowing for or excluding streets, parks, open space, or a public facility.
- Gross density: Units per gross site area before dedication, covenants, or designation of a portion of the site as unbuildable or open space.

Density Bonuses – Housing: Incentives provided to a developer in order to encourage the construction of affordable housing units. The developer is allowed to build more units on a site if a certain number of housing units affordable to low-income households are provided.

Detention – Storm water: The process of collecting and holding back stormwater for delayed release to receiving waters.

Development activity: The division of a parcel of land into two or more parcels; the construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation, or enlargement of any structure; any mining, excavation, grading, landfill, drainage, removal of vegetation, or disturbance of land or water; and use of land or water or the intensification or extension of the use of land or water that creates the additional demand for school, street, utility, or other public facilities.

Development standards: Fixed requirements or standards imposed on new development by regulation or ordinance. For example, a setback is a development standard.

Development regulation: Controls placed on the development or land use activities including, but not limited to, zoning ordinances, official controls, subdivision ordinances, and binding site plan ordinances.

Drainage Basin: An area which is drained by a creek or river system.

Duplex: A single structure containing two dwelling units, either side by side or above one another.

Dwelling Unit: One or more rooms located within a structure, designed, arranged, occupied, or intended to be occupied by not more than one family and permitted roomers and boarders, as living accommodations, independent from any other family. A food preparation area within the room or rooms is evidence of the existence of a dwelling unit.

Easement: A right or privilege that a person may exercise over another's land, such as access to streets or utilities.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): A document intended to provide impartial discussion of significant environmental impacts which may result from a proposed development project or problematic action. If the responsible official determines that a project or action may have a significant adverse effect upon the quality of the environment, the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requires that an EIS be prepared. The purpose of the EIS document is to provide the government decision makers with information to be considered prior to determining a project's acceptability. The Draft EIS, which is circulated for review and comment, describes the action, analyses the impacts of the action, and proposes alternatives and mitigating measures. Comments on and revisions to the Draft EIS are included in the Final EIS, the findings of which are appealable.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas: Those areas, designated, mapped, and regulated by environmentally sensitive area regulations. These areas have existing site conditions which require development standards to minimize specific on-site and off-site adverse environmental impacts including stream siltation, hillsides, and reduction of wildlife habitat. ESAs include wetlands, riparian corridors, steep slopes, slide-prone areas, areas subject to liquefaction, known-slide hazard areas, hazardous waste sites, floodplains, and wildlife habitat areas.

Essential Public Facility: These are public capital facilities of a countywide or statewide nature which have characteristics that make them extremely difficult to site. Such facilities may include, but are not limited to, utility and transportation corridors, airports, wastewater treatment plants, solid waste landfills, higher educational facilities, correctional and in-patient treatment facilities, and energy-generating facilities.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): A measure of development intensity. It is gross building area (i.e., square footage of the total floor area) divided by net on-site land area (i.e., square feet). In planning and zoning, it is often expressed as a decimal. For instance, .50 indicates that the floor area of a building equals 50% of the total on-site land area. FAR is also indicated as a ratio which expresses the relationship between the amount of gross floor area permitted in a structure and the area of the lot on which the structure is located.

Functional Street Classification System: The grouping of highways, streets, and roads into distinct classes. It defines the primary role a route serves within the total existing or future highway network.

Gateway: An important and definable point of entrance into Burien.

Gross Acre: The total horizontal acreage of a particular area of analysis

Growth Management Act (GMA): Refers to the 1990 State Growth Management Act (ESHB 2929) as amended, requiring urban counties and the cities within them to develop comprehensive plans to deal with growth in Washington State over the next twenty years. The GMA is codified at RCW 36.70A and other chapters.

Health: Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV): Generally, a vehicle carrying more than one person, including a carpool, vanpool, or bus.

Historic Resource: A district, site, building, structure, or object significant in national, state, or local history, architecture, archaeology, and culture.

Housing Type: Different varieties of dwelling units, including: single family detached; townhouses; multifamily apartments (including, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes) or condominiums; accessory dwelling units (i.e., mother-in-law apartments); and manufactured homes.

Impact Fees: A set fee imposed on developers to help pay for the cost of providing public facilities needed to serve new development. The use of impact fees was authorized by the Growth Management Act.

Impervious Surface: A surface that cannot be easily penetrated. For instance, rain does not readily penetrate asphalt or concrete pavement.

Inclusionary Housing: Inclusionary housing is an affordable housing production mechanism which requires a specified number of affordable and/or low-income units within new housing developments. Inclusionary units are generally provided through density bonus incentives, requirements for cash contributions to a pool or minimum percentages of affordable units, or combinations of requirements and incentives.

Infill Development: Development consisting of either 1) more intensive development in an area which is mostly developed, or 2) new structures among existing structures.

Infrastructure: The basic installations and facilities on which the continuance and growth of a community depend, such as roads, public buildings, schools, parks, transportation, water, sewer, surface water and communication systems.

Intermodal: Involving more than one transportation mode or type of service.

Land Use: A term used to indicate the use of any piece of land. The way in which land is being used is the land use.

Level of Service (LOS): A qualitative rating of how well some unit of public facility or service (e.g., street, intersection, transit route, water and sewer) meets current or projected demand.

Local Improvement District (LID): A specific area assessed to finance a particular public improvement or facility. Property owners are assessed on the basis of a special benefit to their property provided by the facility, including streets, water, and sewer facilities, and other special benefits such as sidewalks. The value of the benefit must be at least as much as the assessment to the owner. The assessment is usually used to pay debt service on a bond issued to finance the facility.

Low Impact Development: A stormwater management strategy that emphasizes conservation and use of existing natural site features integrated with distributed, small-scale stormwater controls to closely mimic natural hydrologic patterns in residential, commercial, and industrial settings.

Low-income Housing: Housing affordable to households with incomes between 0-50% of area median income.

Manufactured Housing: Factory built housing that meets standards established by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Mixed Use Development: A project which combines more than one use, either in the same structure, or in different structures located on the same site.

Mixed Use Structure: A building which combines more than one use in the same structure; such as a building occupied by retail uses on the ground floor, and housing on the floors above.

Mobile Home: "Mobile home" means a "manufactured home" that is a structure, transportable in one or more sections, which in the traveling mode is eight body feet or more in width or forty body feet or more in length, or, when erected on site, is three hundred twenty or more square feet, and which is built on a permanent chassis and designed to be used as a dwelling with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities, and includes the plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, and electrical systems contained therein.

Mode of Transportation: Types of transportation such as walking, a bicycle, an automobile, or a bus.

Moderate Income Housing: Housing affordable to households with incomes between 50% to 80% of area median income.

Modular Home: A dwelling structure located on a permanent foundation and permanently connected to public utilities, consisting of preselected, prefabricated units or modules, and transported to and/or assembled on the site of its permanent foundation.

Multifamily Use: A structure or portion of a structure containing two or more dwelling units.

Multimodal: Referring to accessibility by a variety of travel modes, typically pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and automobile modes, but may also include water and air transport modes.

Natural System: Interdependent components of air, water, land and biological resources. An ecosystem is an example of a complex natural system that includes plants, animals, organisms, weather and landscape.

Net Acre: A measure of horizontal area for calculating development potential. At the area-wide planning level, net acre refers to the gross acre less the estimated area to be transferred (e.g., sale, dedication, or donation) to public ownership from individual parcels. Net acreage is typically 67-75 percent of gross acreage and depends largely on the amount of road right-of-way. At the site development level, this is the total acreage of a parcel less the area transferred to public ownership. The remaining net acreage is the basis for determining development density and potential. Net acre typically includes easement areas.

Nexus: A bond, link, or tie; a connection between things. Used to refer to the connection between a development and its impact on a specific facility, especially a public facility. In order for a jurisdiction to assess mitigation, a nexus must be identified between a development and its impact on a public facility (streets, schools, parks, etc.).

Nonconformance: Any use, improvement or structure established in conformance with City of Burien, or King County if prior to March 1, 1993, rules and regulations in effect at the time of establishment, that no longer conforms to the range of uses permitted in the site's current zone, or to the current development standards of the code due to changes in the code or its application to the subject property. A "nonconforming building lot" for the purposes of this plan is a lot that does not meet the standards set in policy RE 1.3. A "Nonconformance" is also referred to as "grandfathering."

Non-motorized Mode: Any mode of transport that utilizes a power source other than a motor. Primary non-motorized modes include walking (i.e., pedestrian) and bicycling.

Nonpoint Source Pollution: Pollution that enters water from dispersed and uncontrolled sources (such as surface runoff) rather than through pipes.

On-site Retention: Permanent impounding of stormwater, or a large part of it, in man-made or man-modified lakes, ponds or other holding facility; often required for developments.

On-street Parking: Parking spaces in the right-of-way.

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 open space.

Peak Hour: One-hour interval within the peak period when travel demand is usually highest, e.g., 7:30-8:30 a.m. and 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Peak Period: Daily time periods when travel demand is usually highest, typically 6:00-9:00 a.m. and 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Pedestrian Amenities: Features of the built environment that improve the quality of foot or wheelchair travel, including ground floor retail uses in adjacent buildings, landscaped walkways, limited interference from automobiles, street furniture, etc.

Pedestrian Friendly Orientation: An area where the location and access to buildings, types of uses permitted on the street level, streetscape and storefront design are based on the needs of the customers on foot or in wheelchairs.

Permitted Use: A use that is allowed outright by a land use code, usually in a zoning ordinance.

Point Source Pollution: A source of pollutants from a single point of conveyance such as a pipe. For example, the discharge pipe from a sewage treatment plant is a point source.

Public Access: A means of physical approach available to the general public. Public access may also include visual approach, usually applied to shoreline areas.

Public Facility: Any use of land or physical structures, whether publicly or privately owned, for transportation, utilities, or communication, or for the benefit of the general public, including streets, schools, libraries, fire and police stations, municipal and county buildings, powerhouses, recreational centers, parks, and cemeteries.

Public Health: Public Health is the science and art of protecting and improving the health of communities through education, promotion of healthy lifestyles and research for disease and injury prevention.

Public Services: A variety of services such as fire protection and suppression, law enforcement, public health, recreation, environmental protection, etc. Available to the public and provided by government, contracted for or by government, or provided by private entities subject to public service obligation.

Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC): Formerly the Puget Sound Council of Governments, the PSRC is a regional planning and decision-making body for growth and transportation issues in King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. Under federal transportation law, the Council is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for regional transportation planning and programming of federal transportation funds in the four counties. It is also the designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization for the four counties. PSRC manages the adopted regional growth strategy, VISION 2050.

Residential Use: Any land use that provides for living space. Examples include artist studio/dwelling, boarding house, caretaker's quarters, single family, multifamily, special residence, and mobile home parks.

Rezoning: Reclassification of a currently zoned area for a different use.

Right-of-Way: Land in which the state, county or city owns the fee simple title or has an easement dedicated or required for a transportation or utility use. The right-of-way is the right to pass over the property of another. It refers to a strip of land legally established for the use of pedestrians, vehicles, or utilities.

Sensitive Area: See Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

Shoreline Master Program: A program to regulate activities and uses in shoreline area as authorized by the Washington State Shoreline Management Act (adopted in 1974). The program contains goals, policies, and regulations to guide actions and development affecting the City's shoreline.

Single Family Unit: A building containing one dwelling unit that is not attached to any other dwelling unit by any means and is surrounded by yards or open space.

Shall: Means obliged to. Shall is mandatory. If a policy contains shall, it is required that the decision maker follow the policy where it applies, unless there are very significant and unique circumstances that warrant a different action. See also should.

Should: Means ought to. If a policy contains should, the decision maker is to follow the policy where it applies unless the decision maker finds a compelling reason against following the policy. See also shall.

Short Plat: The administrative division or redivision of land into four or fewer lots for the purpose of sale or transfer of ownership.

Significant Trees: A tree six inches or greater in diameter at breast height in good health of a preferred species or of significant visual impact on the surrounding area or a landmark tree.

Single Occupant Vehicle: Vehicle carrying only one passenger.

Solid Waste Facility: A facility that handles solid waste. State law defines solid waste handling (RCW 70.95) as including the management, storage, transportation, treatment, utilization (including recycling), processing and disposal of solid waste. Landfills and other large disposal or processing facilities would not be applicable within the city limits of Burien.

Special Needs Housing: Housing that is provided for persons, and their dependents who, by virtue of disability or other personal factors, face serious impediments to independent living and who require special assistance and services in their residence. Special needs housing may be permanent, long term or transitional basis.

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA): Chapter 43.21C RCW. The state law passed in 1971 requiring State and local agencies to consider environmental impacts in the decision-making process. A determination of significance must be made for all non-exempt projects or actions which require a permit, license, or decision from a government agency. If the action does not have significant adverse environmental impacts, a Declaration of Non-significance (DNS) is issued. If the action or project could have major impacts, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required, through the issuance of a determination of significance (DS). In some cases, conditions may be applied to a project which if followed would allow a determination of nonsignificance (DNS) to be issued (in this case the DNS is referred to as a "mitigated" DNS).

Streetscape: The visual character of a street as determined by elements such as structures, access, greenery, open space, view, etc.

Subdivision: The division of a parcel into two or more lots according to the responsible jurisdictions land use regulations.

Tax Lot: One more platted lots or other parcels of land in a continuous ownership combine for the property tax records as one tax account and recorded as such with the county assessor.

Through Traffic: Traffic traveling through a specific area to a destination beyond.

Townhouse: A form of ground-related housing where individual dwelling units are attached along at least one common wall to at least one other dwelling unit. Each dwelling unit occupies space from the ground to the roof and has direct access to private open space.

Transit: Public transportation, referring in this document to public bus, trolley, or light rail.

Traffic Calming Devices: Facilities or devices intended to reduce the speed of automobile traffic, especially in residential areas. These devices include but are not limited to speed humps and traffic circles.

Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ): A TAZ is the basic building block of the analysis for transportation modeling of vehicular trips. A zone is delineated by having similar uses that result in similar trip generation levels. In this Plan "TAZ" refers to such areas as designated by the PSRC. Burien has subdivided these TAZs into Burien Analysis Zones (BAZ). See also Burien Analysis Zone.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): Refers to policies, and public and private programs that manage the demand placed on transportation supply. TDM measures are frequently directed toward increasing the use of transit and carpools.

Trip: A one-direction movement which begins at the origin and ends at the destination. For example, a trip movement from a residence to a workplace is a trip from home to work.

Trip Generation: The second step in forecasting the number of trips generated by the forecasted land use. The number of trips made to and from each type of land use by day. Trip generation provides the linkage between land use and travel.

Undergrounding: The construction or relocation of electrical wires, telephone wires, and similar facilities underground.

Vanpool: An organized ridesharing arrangement in which a number of people (typically 6 to 15 people) travel together between fixed points on a regular basis in a van. Expenses are shared and there is usually a regular volunteer driver.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT): A measurement of forecasted travel demand; equivalent to one car, bus, or truck traveling one mile.

VISION 2050: VISION 2050 is the plan for growth for the four-county central Puget Sound Region applicable to King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties developed by the member cities and counties with the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). VISION 2050 is a plan for the long-term

that sets forth a regional growth strategy and multicounty planning policies consistent with the Growth Management Act.

Visual Access: Non-physical public use of the shoreline or other areas, including views of the water from indoors or out of doors, and visual.

cues to the water's presence that are provided for the benefit of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and occupants of buildings near water bodies.

Vulnerable population: Those population segments identified to be especially at risk in a public health emergency as defined by Seattle King County Public Health.

Watershed: The geographic region with which water drains into a particular river, stream, or other body of water. A watershed includes hills, lowlands, and the body of water into which the land drains.

Wetlands: Areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or ground water 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. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from non-wetlands sites, including, but not limited to, irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, and landscape amenities. However, wetlands include those artificial wetlands intentionally created to mitigate the conversion of wetlands.

Zero Lot Line Development: A development pattern of single family houses constructed immediately adjacent to one side lot line, (i.e., no side yard setback) coupled with an easement on the adjacent lot in order to maintain 10-foot separation between structures. This helps to preserve privacy and usable yard space, especially in small-lot areas.

Zoning: A type of development regulation that manages the use and development of land. Burien's zoning regulations are included in the Burien Municipal Code.

Zoning Map: The official Zoning Map which classifies all land within the City with one of the zoning districts.