



Glossary

Glossary of Key Planning Terms

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act.

Anchor Tenant / Shopping Center: The most important tenant in a development project whose lease is usually instrumental in securing financing for a commercial undertaking. Anchor tenants form the core of key shopping areas.

Big-Box Retail / Power Center: A term applied to very large floor plate, one-storey retail outlets, usually operated as part of a chain that locate on individual sites or that cluster on a large site, sometimes adjacent to each other. Big-box retailers, also known as "superstores", "power centers", "retail warehouses" or "large format retail", serve a regionwide market and typically locate at highly-visible locations at major intersections or adjacent to highways.

BP: British Petroleum.

Compatibility: Compatibility refers to the characteristics of different uses or activities or design, which allow them to be located near or adjacent to each other in harmony. Some elements affecting compatibility include height, scale, mass, and bulk of structures.

Conservation District: An area designated to protect local resources.

Economic Development: A term generally applied to the expansion of a community's property and sales tax base or the expansion of the number of jobs through office, retail, and industrial development.

EIS: Environmental Impact Statement, a detailed statement regarding proposed actions having an effect on the quality of the environment.

FIRE: Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate.

Freestanding Retailers: Retail buildings not physically connected to adjacent retail uses.

Frontage: The side of a lot abutting a street or road right-of-way usually regarded as the front of the property. The amount of frontage tends to influence what is perceived to be the residential density of the area.

Density: The average number of persons, households or dwellings per acre of land. Developments at higher densities may be beneficial to a community if quality design features are utilized. Higher density development may make transit service more effective and maximize public infrastructure costs.

Design Guidelines: Formal set of guidelines (with oversight by a board comprised of area stakeholders, neighborhood representatives, and design professionals) for use by investors doing projects within priority areas. Guidelines address character and quality levels and frame discussions with staff.

Design Standards: Formal set of standards (either administered through an appointed design-review committee and/or municipal staff) for development, which require certain development character and quality levels for the built and natural environment.

Gateway: An important road or path that serves as a major entry into the city, into a district, or into a local area. Gateways are also created where a road or path intersects with key areas, and are often signified by entrance features, landscaping.

ICED: Independence Council of Economic Development.

Heritage District / Zone: A heritage district provides policies and guidelines for management, protection, and enhancement of the area's heritage resources, streetscapes and vistas, as well as for ensuring compatibility of future alterations, development and redevelopment of properties within the district.

Improvement District: Both an organizing and financing technique for area revitalization. Districts provide stable stream of income for activities and projects considered special to area or in addition to general municipal services. Districts are vehicle for providing additional services for a fee and not to substitute for services funded through traditional tax revenues.

Infill Development: Development of new homes, commercial and/or retail buildings, and public facilities on unused or underused lands in existing communities.

Infrastructure (Public) - Public facilities provided to a site so it can be developed, including roads, bridges and utilities like sewerage and water.

Land Assembly: Land assembled by public, private or non-profit entity in effort to position for development of larger projects. Assembly can happen through purchases of properties, vacating and/or rerouting streets, alleys, etc.

Land Banking: The purchase of land by a local government for use or resale at a later date. Banked lands have been used for development of low and moderate income housing, expansion of parks, and development of industrial and commercial centers.

Landscaping: The change and enhancement of a site by:

- soft landscaping consisting of vegetation such as trees, shrubs, hedges, grass and ground cover;
- hard landscaping consisting of non-vegetation material such as brick, stone, concrete, tile and wood, excluding monolithic concrete and asphalt; and/or
- architectural elements consisting of wing walls, sculptures and the like.

Live-Work Unit: Buildings that offer the opportunity for individuals to live and work in the same structure. Units may be rental or condominium. Purchase of home and office may be accomplished through a single mortgage.

MARC: Mid-America Regional Council.

Mixed-Use: A project or limited area of development that combines different land uses, such as housing, retail and office uses.

Multi-Modal Transportation System: A transportation system that accommodates a variety of transportation options, including automobiles, public transit, public safety vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles in a balanced way to maximize access and mobility and to minimize congestion throughout the community.

Node / Neighborhood Center / Activity Center: These areas provide commercial and civic services to serve the everyday needs and also tend to be community gathering points. Higher density residential uses may be located in or near these areas.

NWCDC: Northwest Communities Development Corporation.

Market / Trade Area: A statistical area that represents the local retail, commercial and employment market. A trade area generates the majority of the customers for an area.

Overlay Zone: A zoning district applied over one or more other districts that contains additional provisions for special features or conditions, such as historic buildings, wetland or steep slope protection, or a mix of land uses.

Pedestrian Enhancements and Linkages: Various public, private and non-profit initiatives to improve the pedestrian environment in a designated area, i.e., permanent and temporary streetscape elements, sidewalk widening, reduced speeds, etc. Resulting environment designed to accommodate needs of pedestrians, as well as through and destination traffic, by incorporating select infrastructure improvements, design elements, and traffic management mechanisms.

Pedestrian or Human Scale: The pedestrian scale is an informal and relative standard. It suggests that the relationship between the person and his or her environment, whether natural or man-made, is comfortable, intimate, and contributes to the individual's sense of accessibility.

A Planned Area Development: An area intended to encourage innovation and flexibility in planning the development of land so development is compatible with the site's physical and environmental characteristics. This district allows for flexibility in zone district requirements.

Redevelopment: Planning, development, replanning, redesign, clearance, reconstruction, or rehabilitation of an area.

Retail: Space for selling merchandise.

Retail Pull: Attractiveness of locations to potential retailers (positive or negative).

Rezoning: Either city-owned and initiated, or petition-based, through an organized effort initiated by the "advocacy entity" to enlist the support of property owners within a designated area – request for a change in property zoning designation (to mixed-use); the objective is to provide landowners the incentive and economic strength to maintain and redevelop a high-quality environment and react more swiftly to market trends.

Riparian: The transitional zones between aquatic and terrestrial (or upland) environments. Therefore, riparian areas occur as a belt along the banks of rivers, streams, and lakes.

Signature Street: A street that embodies desirable design elements, which can be applied to other areas.

Smart Growth: Growth management program, which combines incentives, disincentives, and traditional planning techniques to promote a pattern of growth that achieves economic, environmental, and quality-of-life objectives.

Specialty Centers: Retail areas that cater to specific market, such as the elderly.

Streetscape: The distinguishing character of a particular street, within the public right-of-way, including paving materials; and the adjacent space extending along both sides of a street, including landscaping, sidewalks, medians, lighting, street furniture, and signage.

Strip Commercial: A long, narrow development style usually found along major thoroughfares with a series of commercial establishments. This style is characterized by a strip of buildings oriented solely toward the nearest roadway with no connection to adjacent land uses or neighborhoods. It is often no more than one lot deep, but extends for miles cumulatively and has a large parking lot adjacent to the major road.

Traditional Neighborhood Development: Planned neighborhoods that offer alternatives to conventional, use-segregated developments by providing greater variety in type, design and layout of residential and nonresidential uses. This mixed-use development pattern seeks to connect people to places by combining a variety of housing types with limited office, retail and civic uses into a pedestrian-friendly setting.

Traffic Calming: Street design measures that slow traffic down, restrict the areas in which cars are allowed, and otherwise manage the flow of traffic to make other forms of transportation, such as walking and bicycling, more attractive and feasible options.

Transit-Supportive Development: A development pattern that reinforces the use of public transportation through efficient, pedestrian-oriented land use design and higher densities. The development, within walking distance of the transit station, center or stop, offers a variety of housing and commercial activities.

Vernacular Housing: Vernacular is relevant to our own time. The principles often prescribed to historic vernacular architecture are those that are generally applied, today, to the meaning of sustainability. Buildings of simple quality, reusable and adaptable, produced from materials that are freely available and economic to produce and use in construction.

Zoning Ordinance: A legal document that spells out the requirements for each category of land use. Each use has a specific set of requirements regarding the amount of a site that can be covered with buildings, how far the buildings must be set back from the street, the heights of the buildings, the amount of parking required, and the amount of landscaping or open space required.