



CHAPTER 10

Abbreviations and Glossary





ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

This glossary explains the technical terms used in this General Plan. Definitions come from several sources, including the California Office of Planning and Research, the California Institute for Local Government, and the American Planning Association *Glossary of Zoning, Development, and Planning Terms*.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA-T	Arts Degree for Transfer
AB	Assembly Bill (State)
ABAG	Association of Bay Area Governments
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
AMI	Area Median Income
AS-T	Associate in Science Degree for Transfer
AV	Autonomous vehicle
BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BART	Bay Area Rapid Transit
BMR	Below Market Rate
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
BUILD	Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development
CalEnviroScreen	California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalOES	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
Cal Water	California Water Company
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CAP	Climate Action Plan
C/CAG	City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level

CIP	Capital Improvement Program
dB	Decibel
dba	Decibel “A-Weighted”
du/ac	Dwelling units per acre
EAS	Emergency Alert System
EBT	Electronic Benefit Transfer
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EMS	Emergency Medical Service
EMID	Estero Municipal Improvement District
EV	Electric Vehicle
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
FAST	Fixing America’s Surface Transportation
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FRAP	Fire and Resource Assessment Program
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GPA	General Plan Amendment
GPS	General Plan Subcommittee
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems
JPB	Joint Powers Board
LAFCO	Local Agency Formation Commission
Ldn	Day/Night Average Sound Level
LID	Low Impact Design
LOS	Level of Service
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
MFD	Multi-Family Dwelling
MJHMP	Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
MTC	Metropolitan Transportation Commission

ODS	Objective Design Standards
OneShoreline	San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District
PCE	Peninsula Clean Energy
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PSPS	Public Safety Power Shutoff
RHNA	Regional Housing Needs Allocation
SB	Senate Bill (State)
SLR	Sea Level Rise
SPAR	Site Plan and Architectural Review
SFD	Single-Family Dwelling
SFPUC	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
SF RWS	San Francisco Regional Water System
SMC Fire	San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department
SMCTA	San Mateo County Transportation Authority
SMPD	San Mateo Police Department
SOI	Sphere of Influence
SR-	State Route
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SVS	Social Vocational Services
TAC	Toxic Air Contaminant
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TIA	Transportation Impact Analysis
TNC	Transportation Network Company
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VHFHSV	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
WUI	Wildland-Urban Interface

TERMINOLOGY

21 Elements. A multi-year, multi-phase collaboration of all 21 San Mateo County jurisdictions, along with partner agencies and stakeholder organizations.

Acreage. The land area that exists prior to any dedications for public use, health, and/or safety purposes.

Action. A measure, procedure, or technique that helps the City achieve a specific goal. An action is something concrete that can and will be completed. (see “Goal”)

Adaptation. Making changes in response to current or future conditions (such as the increased frequency and intensity of climate-related hazards), usually to reduce harm and take advantage of new opportunities.

Adaptive Management. A flexible, iterative decision making process that can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties as outcomes from management actions and other events become better understood.¹

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

Affordability, Housing. The relation of housing costs to household income.

Affordable Housing. A for-sale housing or rental housing affordable to households whose incomes do not exceed 120 percent of the area median income (moderate- or lower-income households).

Archaeological Resource. Material evidence of past human activity found below the surface of ground or water, portions of which may be visible above the surface.

Assembly Bill (AB). A State law or bill originating from the State Assembly. The abbreviation “AB” preceeds the specific bill number.

Association of Bay Area Governments. The regional planning agency for the nine Bay Area counties, including San Mateo County, and the 101 cities and towns within these counties.

Asset. A valued feature of a community that may be harmed by climate change. Assets may include buildings, infrastructure, community services, ecosystems, and economic drivers.

Below Market Rate Unit. A below market rate unit is an affordable housing unit (see Affordable Housing definition).

Buffer. An area established between potentially conflicting land uses, which, depending on the potential impact, may use landscaping or structural barriers such as yards or roads.

Bicycle Class Facilities. A classification system for bicycle paths and roadways identified in the California Highway Design Manual.

Shared-use paths (Class I): Off-road pathways designed for people walking, biking, and rolling (e.g., skateboard or scooter).

Separated bike lanes (Class IV): A designated lane separated from vehicular traffic by a buffer with vertical protection (e.g., flexible posts, planters, parked vehicles, curbs).

1 U.S. Department of the Interior, 2009. *Adaptive Management, The U.S. Department of the Interior Technical Guide*, page 5.

Buffered bike lanes (Class II): A designated bicycle lane adjacent to vehicular traffic separated by a striped buffer area on the pavement.

Standard bike lanes (Class II): A designated bicycle lane directly adjacent to vehicular traffic.

Bicycle boulevards (Class III): Bicyclists share a lane with vehicular traffic and are identified with bicycle signage and pavement markings to increase driver awareness of bicyclists and aid bicyclists with navigation; however, bicycle boulevards include traffic-calming treatments and are solely implemented on low-speed (i.e., less than 25 mile per hour) and low-volume (i.e., less than 3,000 vehicles per day) streets to ensure they are low-stress facilities.

Bicycle routes (Class III): Bicyclists share the lane with vehicular traffic and are identified with bicycle signage and pavement markings to increase driver awareness of bicyclists and aid bicyclists with navigation. The City is phasing out this type of route within the bicycle network and upgrading to other facility types.

Building. A structure with substantial walls and roof designed for the shelter, enclosure, or protection of persons, animals, chattels, or property of any kind. (see “Structure”)

Building Code. Standards adopted by the State governing the construction, alteration, demolition, occupancy, or other use of buildings used for human habitation. The State regulations are substantially the same as those contained in the most recent editions of the Uniform Building Code, Uniform Housing Code, Uniform Plumbing Code, Uniform Mechanical Code, and the National Electric Code. Local governments may have stricter standards under certain circumstances.

California Environmental Quality Act. Legislation and corresponding procedural components established in 1970 by the State of California to require environmental review for projects anticipated to result in adverse impacts to the environment. (see “Environmental Impact Report”)

Capital Improvement Program. A program that schedules permanent improvements, usually for a minimum of five years in the future, that fits the projected fiscal capability of the local jurisdiction. The program generally is reviewed on an annual basis for conformance to and consistency with the General Plan.

Carbon Neutral. Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to zero, either by entirely eliminating all GHG emissions or by balancing out all remaining GHG emissions through carbon removal practices so that the “net” emissions are zero.

City. City with a capital “C” generally refers to the City of San Mateo government or administration. City with a lower case “c” may mean any city or may refer to the geographical area.

City Limits. The legal boundaries of the geographical area subject to the jurisdiction of the City of San Mateo’s government. For example, development applications for properties located within the City Limits must be reviewed by the City.

Clean Air Refuge. A building with efficient air filtration and improved air quality that is opened to community members during poor air quality days.

Climate Change. Long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns that have come to define the Earth’s local, regional and global climates. In the context of this plan, this term refers to changes brought on by human activities, also known as anthropogenic climate change.

Compatible. Capable of existing together without conflict or ill effects.

Complete Street. A transportation facility that is planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide comfortable and convenient mobility, and improve accessibility and connectivity to essential community destinations for all users and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as pedestrians, bicyclists, wheelchair users, public transportation riders, or drivers. Complete streets are especially attuned to the needs of people walking, using assistive mobility devices, rolling, biking, and riding transit.

Complete Streets Act. A law that requires all road construction and improvement projects to evaluate how the right-of-way serves all who use it, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

Conservation. The management and use of natural resources in a sustainable manner. Conservation results in land and water areas that are protected and managed for durability to sustain functional ecosystems, both intact and restored, and the diversity of life they support.

Conserve. To manage natural resources sustainably.

Critical Facility. A facility whose continued functioning is necessary to maintain public health and safety following a disaster, and where damage or failure could pose hazards to life and property well beyond their immediate vicinity.

Cultural Resource. A historic, archaeological, tribal, or paleontological resource or human remains. Cultural resources include tribal cultural resources, as defined in California Public Resources Code Section 21074, regardless of whether a tribe is federally recognized.

Decibel (dB). A unit used to express the relative intensity of a sound as it is heard by the human ear. The lowest volume a normal ear can detect under laboratory conditions is 0 decibel, the threshold of human hearing. Since the decibel scale is logarithmic, 10 decibels are 10 times more intense and 20 decibels are 100 times more intense than 1 decibel.

Decibel, A-weighted (dBA). The “A-weighted” scale for measuring sound in decibels, which weighs or reduces the effects of low and high frequencies to simulate human hearing. Every increase of 10 dBA doubles the perceived loudness, even though the noise is actually 10 times more intense.

Dedication. Giving private land for public use, and the acceptance of land for such use by the governmental agency having jurisdiction over the public function for which it will be used. Dedications for roads, parks, school sites, or other public uses are often required by a city or county as conditions for approval of a development. (see “In-Lieu Fee”)

Density. The number of permanent residential dwelling units per acre of land (du/acre). Densities specified in this General Plan are expressed in dwelling units per net acreage, excluding land area that may be devoted to public right-of-way, including roadways..

Development Review. The comprehensive evaluation of a development and its impact on neighboring properties, the environment, and the community as a whole, from the standpoint of site and landscape design, architecture, materials, lighting, and signs, in accordance with a set of adopted criteria and standards.

Development. The physical expansion and/or construction of non-farm land uses. Development activities include subdivision of land; construction of a single-family dwelling on an existing lot; construction or alteration of structures, roads, utilities, and other facilities; grading; deposit of refuse, debris, or fill materials; and clearing of natural vegetative cover (with the exception of agricultural activities). Routine repair and maintenance activities are not considered development.

Development Fees. Direct charges or dedications collected on a one-time basis for a service provided or as a condition of approval being granted by the local government. The purpose of the fee or exaction must directly relate to the need created by the development. In addition, its amount must be proportional to the cost of the service or improvement. Fees can be broken down into two major classes: (1) service charges, such as permit fees covering the cost of processing development plans, connection, or standby fees for installing utilities, or application fees for reviewing and considering development proposals; and (2) “impact” fees levied on new development to cover the cost of infrastructure or facilities necessitated by development. (See “Impact Fee”)

Disability, persons with. A physical impairment or mental disorder, which is expected to be of a long, continued, or indefinite duration and is of such a nature that the person’s ability to live independently could be hindered unless improved by more suitable housing conditions.

Duplex. A free-standing house divided into two separate living units or residences, usually having separate entrances; or two single-family detached dwelling units on a single lot.

Dwelling Unit. The place of customary abode of a person or household, which is either considered to be real property under State law or cannot be easily moved.

Ecosystem. An interacting system formed by a biotic community and its physical environment.

Electric Vehicle. A zero-emission vehicle that uses electricity stored in a battery to power one or more electric motors and can be plugged in at home, work, fleet, or public charging stations.

Environmental Impact Report. A study required pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act that assesses all the environmental characteristics of an area, determines what effects or impacts will result if the area is altered or disturbed by a proposed action, and identifies alternatives or other measures to avoid or reduce those impacts. (see “California Environmental Quality Act”)

Equity. The state in which each individual or group is allocated or has access to the resources needed to reach an equal or fair outcome.

Equity Priority Community. A low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. This is the term the City of San Mateo uses in place of “disadvantaged communities,” as named in Senate Bill (SB) 1000. SB 1000 defines disadvantaged communities per Health and Safety Code Section 39711, specifying CalEnviroScreen as the primary screening method for identifying these communities.

Erosion. The process by which soil and rock are detached and moved by running water, wind, ice, and gravity.

Evacuation Route. A roadway designated in the General Plan as a potential recommended route to travel when evacuating from a hazardous condition.

Evacuation-Constrained Parcels. Parcels located on a single-access road that do not have at least two ingress/egress routes.

Exposure. The presence of people, infrastructure, natural systems, and economic, cultural, and social resources in areas that are subject to harm.

Farmers' Market. A mobile or non-mobile market: (1) operated by a local government agency, one or more certified producers, or a nonprofit organization; (2) certified by and operating in a location approved by the County Agricultural Commissioner; and (3) where farmers sell directly to consumers agricultural products or processed products made from agricultural products that the farmers grow themselves.

Fault. A fracture in the earth's crust that forms a boundary between rock masses that have shifted.

Fire Hazard Severity Zone. An area of significant fire hazard based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant hazards.

Flood, 100-Year. In any given year, a flood that has a 1 percent likelihood (a 1 in 100 chance) of occurring, and is recognized as a standard for acceptable risk.

Flood, 500-Year. In any given year, a flood that has a 0.2 percent likelihood (a 1 in 500 chance) of occurring.

Floodplain. The relatively level land area on either side of the banks of a stream regularly subject to flooding.

Floor Area Ratio. The size of a building in square feet (gross floor area) divided by gross land area, expressed as a decimal number. For example, a 60,000-square-foot building on a 120,000-square-foot parcel would have a floor area ratio of 0.50. The FAR is used in calculating the building intensity of development.

Garden, Community. A shared, semi-public space where people in the surrounding neighborhood share the work and harvest of maintaining a plot of fruits, vegetables, or other plants. Community gardens provide residents with an opportunity to grow fresh produce, flowers, or other plants on land that they do not own. Community gardens can also serve an educational function, especially when operated by community organizations or educational institutions..

Gateway. A unique transition point in topography, architecture, or land use that serves as an entrance to the city or specific neighborhoods within the city.

General Plan. A collection of City policies regarding its long-term development, in the form of maps and accompanying text. The General Plan is a legal document required of each local agency by the State of California Government Code Section 65301 and adopted by the City Council.

Geographic Information Systems. A combination of approaches, programs, methodologies, and technologies to map, gather, store, manipulate, analyze, present, and interpret spatial information and data.

Goal. A description of the general desired result sought by the City. Each goal has one or more policies and/or actions associated with the goal. (see "Policy" and "Action")

Greenhouse Gas. A gas that allows sunlight to pass through but reflect heat radiated from the earth's surface, trapping heat in the lower atmosphere. Common greenhouse gases (GHGs) include water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and nitrous oxide (N₂O). They may be emitted by natural or human processes.

Groundwater. Water that exists beneath the earth’s surface, typically found between saturated soils and rock, and is used to supply wells and springs.

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

Hazard. An event or physical condition that has the potential to cause fatalities, injuries, property damage, infrastructure damage, agricultural losses, damage to the environment, interruption of business, or other types of harm or loss.

Hazard Mitigation. Sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property through actions that reduce hazard, exposure, and vulnerability.

Hazardous Material, Hazardous Waste. A substance or waste that, because of its physical, chemical, or other characteristics, may pose a risk of endangering human health or safety or of degrading the environment. This does not include household hazardous waste, universal waste, or electronic waste, as they do not contain the quantity, concentration, and/or types of products significant enough to pose a substantial risk to human health and safety or to the environment.

Historic Resource. A historic resource is a building, structure, site, or district that has one or more of the following characteristics:

- Listed in or determined to be on or individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or California Register of Historical Resources.
- Identified as a Downtown Historic District or Glazenwood Historic District contributor building as designated in the 1989 Historic Building Survey Report.
- Determined to be eligible through documentation contained in a historic resources report.

Horizon Year. The year through which the General Plan is intended to be effective, or 2040.

Household. All persons occupying one dwelling unit.

Human Scale. Buildings, structures, streetscape, and other urban design elements that are of a size and proportion that relates to the size of a human to create a comfortable and inviting experience.

Impact, Climate. The effects (especially the negative effects) of a hazard or other condition associated with climate change.

Impact Fee. A fee imposed on a proposed development project by a jurisdiction to address impacts to city services or infrastructure, based on the number of units, square footage, or acreage. The fee is often used to offset costs of schools, roads, police and fire services, housing, and parks. (See “Development Fee”)

Implementation. Actions, procedures, programs, or techniques that carry out a plan.

Infill Development. Development that occurs on vacant or underutilized land within areas that are already largely developed.

In-Lieu Fee. A fee that may be required of an owner or developer as a substitute for a dedication of land or an asset for public use, such as public art, replacement of trees, or parking spaces, usually calculated in dollars per lot, and referred to as in-lieu fees or in-lieu contributions. (see “Dedication”)

King Tides. Abnormally high, predictable astronomical tides that occur about twice per year, with the highest tides occurring when the Earth, Moon, and Sun are aligned.

Land Use. The occupation or use of an area of land for any human activity or purpose.

Land Use Designation. One particular land use category, from a range of land use classifications, assigned to a parcel as established by the General Plan Land Use Element.

Landslide. Movement of soil and/or rock down a slope, which typically occurs during an earthquake or following heavy rainfall.

Liquefaction. The transformation of loose, wet soil from a solid to a liquid state, often as a result of ground shaking during an earthquake.

Local Agency Formation Commission. A five- or seven-member commission within each county that reviews and evaluates all proposals for formation of special districts, incorporation of cities, annexation to special districts or cities, consolidation of districts, and merger of districts with cities. Each county's LAFCO is empowered to approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve such proposals.

Maximum Development. Development of land to its full potential, or theoretical capacity, as permitted under current or proposed planning or zoning designations.

Micro Agriculture. The practice of growing and processing fresh food in an urban area.

Micromobility. Transportation via small, lightweight vehicles, typically electric assisted, operated by the driver, such as electric scooters and bicycles. Vehicles typically do not exceed 15 miles per hour and are often available for rent for short-range travel within a defined area.

Mitigation. A protective measure or modification of a project to avoid, reduce, minimize, or eliminate a negative impact. There are various types of mitigation, including environmental impact mitigation, hazard mitigation, greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, and more.

Mixed-Use. Any mix of land uses, including mixing residences with commercial, offices with retail, or visitor accommodation with offices and retail. As distinguished from a single-use land use designation or zone, mixed use refers to an authorized variety of uses for buildings and structures in a particular area. When the mix of uses is within one building, it's called vertical mixed-use. A type of mixed-use development where uses are behind or next to each other but in different buildings on the same development site is called horizontal mixed use.

Multimodal Level of Service. A scale that measures the performance of vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities.

Municipality. An incorporated city or town.

Neighborhood. Relatively large residential areas that have some common characteristics, such as a common history, neighborhood association, or common physical characteristics (e.g., architectural style), a common meeting place, intangible characteristics (e.g., a psychological sense of cohesion), or clear physical boundaries (e.g., waterways or major roads).

Noise Contour. A line connecting points of equal noise level as measured on the same scale.

Noise-Sensitive Use. A location where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could adversely affect the use of land, such as residences, schools, and hospitals.

Non-Conforming Use. A use that was legally allowed when brought into existence, but no longer permitted by current regulation. “Non-conforming use” is a generic term and includes: (1) non-conforming structures (because their size, type of construction, location on land, or proximity to other structures is no longer permitted); (2) non-conforming use of a conforming building; (3) non-conforming use of a non-conforming building; and (4) non-conforming use of land. Any use lawfully existing on any piece of property that is inconsistent with a new or amended General Plan, and that in turn is a violation of a Zoning Ordinance amendment subsequently adopted in conformance with the General Plan, will be a non-conforming use. Typically, non-conforming uses are considered “grandfathered in” and permitted to continue, subject to certain restrictions on discontinuance or rehabilitation.

Nonessential Idling. Unnecessary operation of a gas-powered vehicle while it is stationary when none of the following circumstances are met: the vehicle is stuck in traffic; idling is necessary to inspect or service the vehicle; the vehicle is transferring power via a power-takeoff device; the vehicle can’t move due to adverse weather conditions or mechanical failure; the vehicle is a bus with passengers on board. See California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Section 2485, for a full definition.

Overlay. A land use or zoning designation that modifies the basic underlying designation or designations in some specific manner.

Parcel. An area of land that is a legally created lot.

Park. Tract of land set aside for public use, aesthetic enjoyment, recreation, or the conservation of natural resources.

Regional Park: Regional Parks are of a relatively expansive size and their unique natural and cultural attractions draw visitors from the entire region. These parks usually have many uses and require a higher level of management when compared to smaller parks such as city parks, neighborhood parks, recreation centers, and pocket parks, which have fewer activities and primarily serve local residents.

Community Park: Community parks serve the needs of a range of people, from several neighborhoods to the entire city. They typically contain a wide variety of facilities for active and passive recreation, and organized sports. They also provide amenities typical of neighborhood parks for use by the surrounding residents. Parks containing fewer elements but that contain facilities that serve the entire city may be considered to be community parks.

Neighborhood Park: Neighborhood Parks provide for the daily recreation needs of nearby residents, with primarily passive and informal recreation facilities. Neighborhood parks often include play areas, picnic areas, open turf areas or green space, basketball courts, and tennis courts. The neighborhood parks also may contain play fields.

Mini Parks: Mini parks are small parks, generally less than one acre in size, that accommodate the daily recreation needs of nearby residents. They typically include children’s play areas, sitting areas, and limited green space, but are not large enough to contain play fields.

Policy. A specific statement that guides decision making as the City works to achieve a goal. Policies represent statements of City regulation and set the standards used by decision makers when considering proposed development and actions. A policy is ongoing and requires no further action (see “Goal”).

Reach Code. A local municipal code that exceeds the State Building Code requirements. A reach code must be at least as stringent as the State Code, cost-effective, approved by the California Energy Commission, and updated and re-approved with each State Energy Code update.

Reconstruction. Redevelopment of a building or structure, after being damaged or destroyed in a disaster, to its original state.

Resilience. The capacity of any entity—an individual, community, organization, or natural system—to prepare for disruptions, recover from shocks and stresses, and adapt and grow from a disruptive experience. Community resilience is the ability of communities to withstand, recover, and learn from past disasters to strengthen future response and recovery efforts.

Rewilding. Returning land to its natural state to regenerate natural areas. In contrast to restoration, rewilding focuses on returning ecosystems to their former states as close as possible while allowing for plant, animal, and other ecosystem substitutions to account for changing future conditions.

Riparian. A habitat and vegetation zone that is associated with the banks and floodplains of a river, stream, or lake. Riparian trees and shrubs are typically phreatophytes, plants whose root systems are in constant contact with groundwater.

Risk. The potential for damage or loss created by the interaction of hazards with assets such as buildings, infrastructure, or natural and cultural resources.

Roadway Classifications. Roadway classifications define the function of various street types in the transportation network. The City of San Mateo classifies its roadways using the Caltrans Functional Classification System.

Local Streets and Alleyways: Local streets and alleyways make up the majority of the roadway system and typically have lower speeds and vehicular traffic volumes.

Collectors: Collectors link neighborhoods together and allow travelers to reach places outside of their neighborhoods. They have higher speeds than local streets and can handle more traffic volume. Collectors are important segments of San Mateo’s existing and proposed bikeway network.

Arterials: Arterial streets connect the regional roadway network with collectors. Most intersections along arterials are signalized, often with a coordinated and interconnected signal system. Compared to collectors, arterials have higher capacity to accommodate traffic volumes, and they provide for longer, continuous movement throughout the city.

Freeways: Freeways are high-speed roadways without intersections that allow residents to reach destinations outside of the city, either by car or transit. US Highway 101 and State Route 92 run through the city, while Interstate 280 is just west of the City Limits.

Safe Routes to School. Pedestrian and bicycling routes that provide children with safe access to and from schools.

Scenic Roadways; Scenic Trails. Land that is visible from, adjacent to, and outside a roadway right-of-way, and is made up primarily of scenic and natural features. Topography, vegetation, viewing distance, and/or jurisdictional lines determine the scenic corridor boundaries.

Sea Level Rise. The worldwide average rise in mean sea level, which may be due to a number of different causes, such as the thermal expansion of sea water and the addition of water to the oceans from the melting of glaciers, ice caps, and ice sheets, including as a result of climate change.

Seniors. People 65 years of age or older.

Sensitive Habitat. Land containing unique, representative, threatened, and/or endangered plant and animal communities, or ecosystems.

Sensitive Receptor. A use that is highly sensitive to impacts from other uses, including homes, schools, playgrounds, sports fields, childcare centers, senior centers, hospitals, and long-term healthcare facilities.

Sensitivity. The level to which a species, natural system, community, or government would be affected by changing climate conditions.

Severe Ground Shaking. Intense ground movement resulting from the transmission of seismic waves during an earthquake.

Specific Plan. Under Article 8 of the Government Code (Section 65450 et seq.), a legal tool for detailed design and implementation of a defined portion of the area covered by a General Plan. A Specific Plan may include all or a part of detailed regulations, conditions, programs, and/or proposed legislation that may be necessary or convenient for the systematic implementation of any General Plan element(s).

Sphere of Influence. The probable physical boundaries and service area of a municipality or special district, as determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission of the county.

Stormwater. Water that comes from a rain event.

Structure. Anything constructed or erected on and permanently attached to the ground, except fences six feet or less in height (see “Building”).

Sustainability. Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs in three key realms, or pillars: economic viability, environmental protection, and social equity.

Toxic Air Contaminant. An air pollutant that may cause or contribute to an increase in serious illness, or that may pose a present or potential hazard to human health, according to California Health and Safety Code Section 39655.

Traffic Calming. Measures designed to reduce motor vehicle speeds and to encourage pedestrian and bicycle use, including narrow streets with fewer lanes, tight turning radii, sidewalk bulbouts, parking bays, textured paving at intersections, and parkways between sidewalks and streets.

Transit-Oriented Development. The clustering of homes and jobs at higher densities within a half mile of a rail station or bus service with 15 minute headways or less.

Triplex. A free-standing house divided into three separate living units or residences, usually having separate entrances, or three single-family detached dwelling units on a single lot.

Unincorporated Area. Land that is outside of an incorporated city and falls under a County’s jurisdiction. Development proposals in unincorporated areas need County review and approval.

Use. The purpose for which a lot or structure is or may be leased, occupied, maintained, arranged, designed, intended, constructed, erected, moved, altered, and/or enlarged in accordance with the City Zoning Code and the General Plan land use designations.

Wastewater. Water that contains other elements, such as sewage, small pathogens, organic matter, and inorganic contaminants. This term is also used to refer to water generated in industrial plants and commercial activity.

Wetland. An area that is seasonally or permanently inundated or saturated by surface water or ground-water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a distinct ecosystem with a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, commonly known as hydrophytic vegetation. Wetlands may be coastal or inland.

Wildland-Urban Interface. An area that includes both houses and wildland vegetation, creating a significant threat to human life or property from wildfires.

Zoning. Zoning implements the land use policies of the General Plan. The adopted codes of a City by ordinance or other legislative regulation that identifies districts or zones citywide. These zones specify allowable uses for real property, as well as standards for buildings constructed in these areas.