



OVERVIEW

Definitions are provided for plain language convenience and are not intended to limit the statutory authority where the same term is defined within local government legislation.

DEFINITIONS

Accessory Dwelling Unit: A residential use clearly ancillary and subordinate to the primary residential dwelling on a lot. Examples include secondary suites within the primary dwelling, and garden suites located in free-standing accessory buildings.

Accessory Uses: A use that is normally incidental or normally associated with and subordinate to the principal use.

Adaptive Capacity: The ability of natural and human systems to accommodate changes with minimum disruption or minimum additional cost.

Adaptive Management: A structured, iterative process of learning from planning and management successes and failures, with an aim of improving policies and reducing uncertainty over time.

Advanced Technology: Areas of economic activity involving research, development, manufacture and trade of high-tech products, such as: computer software and hardware, telecommunications, electronics, robotics, biomedical devices and nanotechnology.

Affordable Housing: Housing that falls within the financial means of a household living in either market or non-market dwellings. Total costs for rent or mortgage plus taxes (including a 10% down payment), insurance and utilities should equal 30 percent or less of a household's gross annual income. Housing affordability is influenced by household income, and cost and supply of housing.

Aging in Place: A concept that supports the opportunity for residents to remain living in their own neighbourhood or community as they age through the availability of appropriate services, facilities and housing options.

Allotment Garden: A plot of land operated by member gardeners that is used to produce food, flowers, native and ornamental plants, edible berries and food perennials on public or private lands, and where products are mainly for the personal consumption of members.

Apartment: A dwelling located in a multi-story, multi-unit building that accesses the ground via shared corridors, entrances and exits.

Art in Public Places: Original artwork selected, commissioned, created or donated for location in public space, and created by an artist.

Arterial Road: A street that typically emphasizes a high level of traffic mobility at higher speeds and volumes and a low level of property access, serving longer distance trips including those between major activity centres and regional destinations. Secondary arterials represent a sub-classification of this street type.

Assisted Living: Self-contained dwelling units for seniors and persons with disabilities, who can direct their own care but need some support services to live independently, such as services for mobility, personal care and daily meals. May be operated by private, public or non-profit sector.

Attached Dwelling: A building used or designed as three or more self-contained dwelling units, each having direct access to the outside at grade level, where no dwelling unit is wholly or partly above another dwelling unit.

Attached Housing: Any form of housing where more than two individual dwellings are structurally attached including duplexes, townhouses, row-houses, and apartments regardless of tenure.

Bicycle Boulevard: A roadway that motorists may use, but on which bicycle traffic is given priority through the use of various treatments. Through motor vehicle traffic is discouraged by periodically diverting it off the street. Remaining traffic is slowed to approximately the same speed as bicyclists.

Boarding House: Dwelling in which rooms are rented and meals are provided to multiple occupants other than members of the family of the occupier. A boarding house does not include a dwelling in which meals are prepared within the rented room, or a community care facility.

Capital Region: The geographic area generally from Port Renfrew through to the Southern Gulf Islands including the Victoria Metropolitan Area, that comprises the jurisdiction of the Capital Regional District.

Capital Regional District (CRD): A local government established under provincial legislation, providing coordinated regional services to both urban and rural areas on southern Vancouver Island, comprised of a federation of municipalities and electoral areas managed by a board of directors appointed from the member municipalities and directly elected from electoral areas.

Climate Change Adaptation: Initiatives and measures to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems against actual or expected climate change effects.

Coastal Sediment Processes: The forces that erode, transport and deposit sediment along shorelines. Natural coastal sediment processes support habitat for marine life, maintain an equilibrium between erosion and deposition, and create distinct forms of shoreline (e.g.: estuaries, sandy beaches, rocky shoreline, sand and gravel bars).

Collector Road: A street that typically balances traffic mobility with access to property, distributing trips from arterial streets through to ultimate destinations and collecting traffic from local streets in residential areas and channelling it to the arterial system.

Commons Garden: A plot of land where community volunteers produce food, flowers, native and ornamental plants, edible berries and food perennials on public or private lands, and where all citizens are free to harvest the products.

Community Care Facilities: Facilities that provide care to dependent people in child day care, child/youth residential and adult residential settings.

Community Cultural Development: Engagement of artists, cultural organizations and citizens in planning and community development to build a sense of shared culture and identity and to enhance resources such as facilities and programs.

Community Services: An inclusive term that encompasses the broadest range of services to people, including social, health, recreation and education, provided by the public, private and non-profit sectors.

Community Well-Being: A concept that refers to an optimal quality of healthy community life. Community well-being is only possible when the basic needs of all citizens are met and citizens have the skills and abilities to contribute to their own well-being, and the well-being of the community.

Commuter Rail Transit: Rail-based public transit focused on peak periods and peak directions intended primarily to link suburban communities with an urban region's business core, providing a safe, convenient and more environmentally friendly alternative to automobile travel for journey-to-work trips.

Complete Streets: Transportation facilities that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users – pedestrians, cyclists, public transit passengers and vehicles, commercial vehicles and automobiles. Users of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a Complete Street. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.

Cooperative Housing: Housing owned by a non-profit cooperative association, where residents have a share of ownership and often pay a monthly housing charge.

Core Housing Need: A household is said to be in core housing need if its housing falls below at least one of the standards for adequacy (not requiring any major repairs), affordability (costs less than 30% of total before-tax household income) or suitability (enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of the resident household), and it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that meets all three housing standards.

Critical Infrastructure: Physical and information technology facilities, networks, services and assets, which if disrupted or destroyed, would have a serious impact on health, safety, security or economy vitality in a community or the effective functioning of government.

Cultural Industries: Areas of creative work and cultural production, such as: advertising, architecture and interior design, art and antique markets, artisan crafts, fashion design, industrial design, performing arts, print media and publishing, radio and television and visual media.

Cultural Landscapes: Geographic area or property with character-defining elements that are the result of human interaction with the environment, or which represent the social, cultural or heritage values of a community.

Cultural Spaces: Places for the arts and cultural development including performance venues, exhibition spaces, studios and industrial, office and retail spaces such as live/work housing.

Destination Retail: Regional-serving retail that is focused on attracting consumer spending from outside the city.

District Energy System: The provision of heating, cooling or electricity through the production of steam, hot water or chilled water at a central plant that is then distributed through piping to individual buildings in a larger neighbourhood or community.

Duplex: A two family dwelling.

Dwelling Unit: Any room or suite of rooms, intended for use by one household exclusively as a place of residence.

Ecological Function: The physical conditions, habitat, and ecological processes that sustain a particular biological community. A change or disruption to ecological function can result in a change or loss in habitat type, with resulting loss of species that depend on the specific habitat type.

Ecosystem Services: The transformation of natural assets (soil, plants and animals, air and water) into things that people value. They can be viewed as “provisioning” such as food and water; “regulating”, such as, flood and disease control; “cultural” such as spiritual, recreational, and cultural benefits; or “supporting” such as nutrient cycling that maintain the conditions for life on Earth.

Employment Uses: A mix and range of office, industrial, warehousing, transportation and logistics, construction, communication, technology, commercial and financial services, retail and wholesale, institutional, research, education, public service and similar or related land uses and activities.

Evaluation: A rigorous, structured, and clear sighted assessment of ongoing or completed activities to determine the extent to which they are achieving stated objectives.

Fee Simple: Private ownership of property with no strata-title ownership or obligations.

Five Pillars: A coordinated, comprehensive approach to addictions that balances public order and public health to create safer and healthier communities. The five pillars approach addresses: (1) prevention; 2) harm reduction; 3) treatment and supportive recovery; 4) stable housing with supports; and, 5) enforcement and aims to dramatically reduce the amount of on-the-street consumption, deaths, and disease association with addictions. A Five Pillars approach is distinct from traditional Four Pillars approach in that it recognizes housing as its own pillar.

Floor Space Ratio: The ratio of the total floor area of a building to the area of the lot on which it is situated.

Food Security: A situation that exists when people have secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth, development and an active and healthy life. Food insecurity may be caused by the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, inappropriate distribution, or inadequate use of food at the household level.

Food System Infrastructure: Physical, social and economic elements necessary to support food production, processing, distribution and waste management in a given area , such as abattoirs, warehouses, vehicles, veterinarians, seed distributors and grazing pasture.

Foodshed: The geographic area that supplies a population centre with food.

Frequent Transit: Transit service that provides medium to high density land use corridors with a convenient, reliable, and frequent (15 minutes or better) transit service all day long. The goal of the Frequent Transit network is to allow people to spontaneously travel without having to consult a transit schedule and is characterized by transit priority, right-of-way improvements, a high level of transit stop amenities, and corridor branding.

Functional Classification: A system in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they are intended to provide.

Garden Suite: A building designed or used for a self-contained dwelling unit located on a lot with a single family dwelling and does not include a strata lot.

Gateway: Physical and spatial elements that mark a primary point of entry to a defined area within a city, that may include open space, buildings, decorative structures, signage, or other special design features.

Green Infrastructure: An adaptable term used to describe an array of products, technologies, and practices that use natural systems – or engineered systems that mimic natural processes – to enhance overall environmental quality and provide utility services.

Greenways: A city-wide network of pathways and bikeways situated on streets, along shoreline areas, and in natural corridors that link parks, employment districts, urban villages and other destinations along routes that give priority to walking and cycling and feature an attractive, well landscaped ambience.

Ground-Oriented Dwelling: A residential unit that has individual and direct access to the ground, whether detached or attached, including single-detached dwellings, duplexes, rowhouses and townhouses, as well as the principal unit and secondary suite in single-detached dwelling.

Group Homes: Private residences accommodating a maximum of six residents that enable adults with disabilities to live as independently as possible in the community through provision of housing and support services.

Happiness Index: A framework for the measurement of community well-being that incorporates economic, social, health, cultural and ecological dimensions.

Harbour: Portion of Victoria's marine waterfront extending from the Ogden Point breakwater to Selkirk Trestle, designated Working Harbour on Map 2.

Harbour Ecological Rating: An assessment of a shore area's overall ecological value. Criteria include: species diversity, habitat diversity, and the presence of key life cycle areas and natural habitats.

Harbour Pathway: A currently incomplete public multi-purpose pathway running along the Victoria Harbour south and east shore between Ogden Point and Rock Bay.

Health Care Services: The use of premises by professions in which persons exercise skill or judgement or provide service related to the preservation or improvement of the physical, mental, or emotional health of individuals, or the treatment or care of individuals who are injured, sick, disabled or infirm.

Heritage Character: Overall effect produced by traits or features which give heritage property or an area a distinctive appearance or quality.

Heritage Conservation: Includes, in relation to heritage, any activity undertaken to protect, preserve or enhance the heritage value or heritage character (including but not limited to character-defining elements) of heritage property or an area.

Heritage Designation: Bylaw to protect a heritage property that is formally recognized for its heritage value from exterior alterations, removal or demolition without the approval of City Council.

Heritage Property: A structure, building, group of buildings, district, landscape, archaeological site or other place in Canada that has been formally recognized for its heritage value.

Heritage Register: A list of property that is formally recognized by the local government to have heritage value or heritage character.

Heritage Value: The historic, cultural, aesthetic, scientific or educational worth or usefulness of (heritage) property or an area. The heritage value of a heritage resource is embodied in its heritage character.

High-Rise (Tall) Building: A building ten storeys and greater in height.

Homelessness: Homelessness can be understood as those individuals who currently lack adequate dwelling (or space) over which a person and his or her family can exercise exclusive possession; lack the ability to maintain privacy and enjoy relations; or lack a legal title to occupation. Homelessness is a broad condition, and includes people who are roofless (e.g. living rough, staying in a shelter); houseless (e.g. women's shelter, transitional housing); and those who live in insecure or inadequate housing.

House Conversion: The change of use of a building constructed as a single family dwelling or duplex, to create a duplex, multiple dwelling, boarding house, rooming house, housekeeping apartment building, rest home – class B or a preschool.

Housing First: An approach to housing where homeless residents are provided immediate access to a place of their own without requiring treatment or sobriety as a precondition for housing. Residents are provided with options for support services and programs for their recovery and integration into the community.

Housing Spectrum: A framework for understanding the range of housing choices available to meet differing needs, life stages and circumstances within a community, organized by tenure.

Human Scale: The experience of comfort and fit between the size (height, distance, areal extent, details) of physical surroundings and its natural and built elements relative to the size of a human person with normal vision, hearing and walking ability. In contrast, automobile scale represents a built environment where buildings, sites, and signs are designed to be apprehended and reached by an observer moving at the speed of an automobile.

Indicator: Indicators are discrete, mutually exclusive units of measurement that measure inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes, as well as other aspects of performance that need to be monitored, such as service quality and cost. Process indicators measure inputs, activities and outputs. Outcome or impact indicators measure intended results.

Indoor Recreation Facility: Public space that supports indoor recreation, sports and leisure activities, such as arenas, gymnasiums, swimming pools, fitness centres, community centres, seniors centres, but not including private spaces, facilities or residences.

Intensification: The development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through: a) redevelopment, b) the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas; c) infill development; and, d) the expansion or conversion of existing buildings.

Landmarks: Natural hilltops and built structures that by their prominence or distinction from the surrounding context, visually punctuate the physical profile of urban areas and express its skyline character. Landmarks generally are taller than the surrounding built fabric of a city, are visible from a distance, may exhibit a higher level of architectural design detail and articulation, and often serve important civic functions.

Light Pollution: Excessive or obtrusive artificial light, and resulting impacts on adjacent development, ecosystems, human health and illumination of the night sky.

Local Circulating Transit: Transit service designed to connect locations within a relatively small geographic area where there is a significant intensity of uses and destinations.

Local Roads: Streets with low levels of traffic mobility and a high level of land access, serving residential, commercial and industrial areas that fall under the conventional functional classification of local streets.

Local Transit: Transit network and service designed to connect neighbourhoods to local destinations and to Rapid and Frequent Transit services. In some cases smaller transit vehicles can be utilized to better match passenger demand and operating conditions on local roads.

Lock-Off Suite: A self contained accessory dwelling unit within an apartment unit with a door onto the common hallway.

Long-Term Residential Care: Type of community care facility that provides 24-hour professional care and supervision in a protective, supportive environment for people with complex care needs who are not able to live independently. Facilities may be publicly-funded or privately-funded. May be operated by public, private or non-profit sectors.

Low Barrier Housing: Transitional housing with on-site staffing that targets those with mental health and/or addictions, where abstinence is not required as a condition of tenancy. Ideally time-limited, with goal of transition to 'next-step' or permanent housing.

Low-Income Cut Off: A Statistics Canada measure of the income level at which a household may be in straitened circumstances because it has to spend a greater portion of its income on basic needs (food, clothing, and shelter) than an average household of similar size. The Low-Income Cut Off varies by household size and by community.

Low-Rise Building: A building four storeys or less in height.

Major Roads: Streets in urban areas that are multimodal in nature and fall under the conventional functional classes of arterial and collector streets.

Market Failure: When a free market has failed to allocate the goods and services that are required for an acceptable minimum standard of living. Governments, organisations and the private sector often respond to market failure through direct or indirect provision of public goods, such as health care, or non-market housing.

Market Rental: Private rental housing with rent determined by the market. Subsidies may be provided to individuals so tenants can access rental housing that is otherwise unattainable at current income.

Mid-Block Walkway: A defined crossing of a public street located approximately at the middle of the block, with pedestrian priority improvements including such things as a painted crossing, curb bulbs, signage, pedestrian refuges, and pedestrian activated crossing signals.

Mid-Rise Building: A building from five to nine storeys in height.

Mixed Use: Different uses in relatively close proximity either in the same building (apartments above a store) or on the same or site or, when referring to an area or district, on an adjacent site (light industry adjacent to an office building).

Monitoring: A continuous, systematic process of collecting and analyzing information using indicators to track progress towards intended results.

Multi-unit: A building containing three or more dwelling units, also referred to as multi-family or a multiple dwelling.

Natural Capital: The source or supply of resources and services that are derived from nature (e.g. minerals, water, waste assimilation, carbon dioxide absorption, habitat, fossil fuels).

Non-Market Rental Housing: Housing that is rented at a price that is not set by market forces but set and controlled over time by some other means. Non-market rental housing is usually delivered by non-profit or public agencies. Social housing is a subset of non-market housing.

Open Space: Land that provides outdoor space for unstructured or structured leisure activities, recreation, ecological habitat, cultural events or aesthetic enjoyment that is generally publicly-accessible, and that is not a designated City of Victoria park. Open space includes private lands, public lands and City-held property.

Outdoor Recreation Facility: Public space that supports outdoor recreation, sports and leisure activities, such as parks, beaches, sports facilities and fields, playgrounds, and pathways.

Overnight shelter: Short-stay housing for overnight use only. Service is often temporary or seasonal, typically in response to “extreme weather” conditions.

Panhandle Driveway: A strip of land that is used principally as a driveway, the end of which forms the boundary between the lot of which that strip of land is a part of and:

- (a) a street;
- (b) a right-of-way easement giving access to the lot if there is no street abutting that boundary; or
- (c) the nearest public highway if there is no street or right-of way easement abutting that boundary.

Panhandle Lot: A lot that has less than 10% of its perimeter adjoining a street and/or in part consists of a panhandle driveway.

Park: Land managed by the City of Victoria that provides outdoor space for unstructured or structured leisure activities, recreation, ecological habitat, cultural events, or aesthetic enjoyment, not including planted areas within street rights of way.

Place Character: The combination of street and lot patterns, landscape features, building forms, and activities that collectively determine the experiential and visual character of a place.

Placemaking: A holistic and community-based approach to the development and revitalization of cities and neighbourhoods, that creates unique places of lasting value that are compact, mixed-use, and pedestrian and transit-oriented with a strong civic character.

Priority Frequent Transit: Transit service that provides medium to high density land use corridors with a convenient, reliable, and frequent (15 minutes or better) transit service all day long. Priority Frequent Transit differs from Frequent Transit, as it includes a semi-exclusive right of way on portions of the route for transit vehicles.

Public Vantage Points: Defined public outdoor locations from which a view or vista is obtained.

Rapid Transit: Transit service designed to move high volumes of passengers between major regional destinations along key transportation corridors. Services are very frequent (15 minutes or better) and stop less often than traditional transit services. To improve travel time and reliability Rapid Transit utilizes an exclusive or semi-exclusive right of way to eliminate or significantly reduce the impact of general traffic on transit vehicles. Rapid services use high capacity transit vehicle technologies such as light rail and bus rapid transit vehicles.

Recreational Facilities: Public spaces that support both indoor and outdoor recreation, sports and leisure activities. (see Outdoor Recreation Facility and Indoor Recreation Facility)

Rooming House: Building in which rooms are rented, and tenants pay a fixed sum periodically for accommodation without board.

Row-House: An attached dwelling on its own legal parcel with a formal street address.

Secondary Suite: A secondary suite is a legal rental suite, located within a single family detached house.

Semi-Attached Dwelling: A building used or designed for use as two dwelling units, each having direct access to the outside at grade level, and where neither unit is wholly or partly above the other.

Sense of Place: The subjective experience of a place as having physical and social attributes that make it distinctive and memorable.

Shared Accommodation: Category of housing that includes rooming houses, boarding houses and other forms of housing which is occupied by persons who do not form a single household.

Short-Term Stay Shelter: Short-stay housing of 30 days or less, which may provide single or shared bedrooms or dorm-type sleeping arrangements, with varying levels of support to individuals.

Social Housing: Non-market housing supplied by the public or non-profit sector and targeted at a range of incomes, most often at the low or moderate end of the scale, with few, if any, on-site supports provided. Housing costs are subsidized through various sources, and may be geared to income.

Social Services: Services and programs delivered by public, non-profit or charitable agencies to meet people's basic needs and improve living conditions. Social services address needs such as food, clothing, health care, employment, income assistance, skills training and other issues.

Statements of Significance: Written analysis of a heritage resource, or property, that includes a physical description, an assessment of heritage value, and a list of character-defining elements.

Street Wall: A generally continuous edge of building facades that collectively define streets and sidewalks, and include portions of building facades above the ground.

Supported Housing: Permanent housing where on-going supports may be provided on an on-going basis to residents who have difficulty living independently. Supports can be on-site or provided through case management and outreach. This form of housing may be located in purpose-designated housing, housing cooperatives or other government-funded housing for people with low incomes.

Supportive Housing: Transitional housing with on-site staffing that targets people living with mental illness and/or substance addiction. Residency is often limited (1–3 years), with the goal of transition to more permanent housing. Support services can be provided through outreach or on-site.

Target: A specific, measurable, time-bound object of policy described by a statement that contains a verb, a qualifier (minimum or maximum), a target level, an object, a level of geography and a timeframe, as illustrated in this example: “Accommodate [verb] a minimum [qualifier] of 15% [target level] of the region's cumulative new dwelling units [object] within the City of Victoria [level of geography] to 2026 from the baseline year [timeframe].”

Traffic Calming: Physical or management measures taken to mitigate the negative impacts of traffic.

Transition House: Housing targeted to women (often with children) fleeing violent or at-risk domestic situations. The goal is to provide safe and secure housing on an interim basis, often up to one year, as well as access to support services.

Transitional Housing: Housing from 30 days to two or three years that includes the provision of support services, on- or off-site, to help people move towards independence and self-sufficiency. Transitional housing is often called second-stage housing, as well as housing for women fleeing abuse.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): A wide range of measures, policies and initiatives to encourage more people to make more trips using sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling, vanpool and public transit, and fewer trips using single occupancy automobiles.

Two Family Dwelling: A building consisting of two self-contained dwelling units which share a common wall or an area that forms the floor of one unit and the ceiling of the other and are not linked by a trellis, deck, breezeway or similar connection.

Unbundled Parking: Parking is rented or sold separately, rather than automatically included within the cost of building space.

Urban Design: Urban design is concerned with the human-made environment. It is a discipline that is dedicated to the relationships among the fields of urban planning, architecture and landscape architecture. The concerns of urban design range from a broad level, such as the layout of entire cities, to particular aspects of designed environments such as architectural detailing, landscaping and street furniture.

Urban Forest: Sum total of all trees and their associated ecosystems, including understorey and soils, within the City of Victoria. The urban forest is the entire collection of trees located on both public and private lands, including parks, boulevards, remnant ecosystems, residential yards, commercial and industrial lands and open spaces.

Urban Form: The form of a city and its elements at every scale from neighbourhoods and districts to streets, blocks and sites.

Visitor Accommodation: The commercial use of land or a building for the temporary accommodation of visitors, and includes hotels and motels.

Verge: The part of the right-of-way between the roadway and the boundary of adjacent lots.

Wayfinding: A system of signage, distinctive physical features and information that aid in the navigation of urban areas, primarily but not limited to pedestrians.