

Chapter 20.150

DEFINITIONS

Sections:

20.150.010	Meaning of Words Generally.
20.150.020	Meaning of Common Words.
20.150.030	Common Acronyms.
20.150.040A	Meanings of Specific Words and Terms A through D.
20.150.040B	Meanings of Specific Words and Terms E through H.
20.150.040C	Meanings of Specific Words and Terms I through L.
20.150.040D	Meanings of Specific Words and Terms M through P.
20.150.040E	Meanings of Specific Words and Terms Q through T.
20.150.040F	Meanings of Specific Words and Terms U through Z.

20.150.010 Meaning of Words Generally.

General. All of the terms in this title have their commonly accepted dictionary meaning unless they are specifically defined in this chapter, or the context in which they are used clearly indicates to the contrary. (Ord. M-3692 § 8, 02/28/2005; Ord. M-3643, 01/26/2004)

20.150.020 Meaning of Common Words.

- A. *Tense*. All words used in the present tense include the future tense.
- B. *Singular/plural*. All words used in the plural include the singular, and all words used in the singular include the plural unless the context indicates to the contrary.
- C. *Gender*. All words used in the masculine gender include the feminine gender.
- D. *Use of shall, should, will and may*. The words shall and will are mandatory, the word should is directory, and the word may is permissive.
- E. *Use of building and structure*. The word building includes the word structure.

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- F. *Use of 'used for'.* The phrase used for includes the phrases arranged for, designed for, intended for, maintained for and occupied for.
- G. *Use of land and property.* The words land and property are used interchangeably unless the context clearly indicates to the contrary.
- H. *Use of occupied.* The word occupied shall included premises designed or intended to be occupied.
- I. Use of person. The word person shall include persons, association, firm, partnership or corporation, as well as the individual. (Ord. M-3891 § 3, 11/03/2008 – Effective 12/3/08; Ord. M-3692 § 8, 02/28/2005; Ord. M-3643, 01/26/2004).

20.150.030 Common Acronyms.

ADA The Americans with Disability Act

ADA Also, Average Daily Attendance

ADT Average Daily Traffic

ADU Accessory Dwelling Unit

BAS Best Available Science

BFE Base Flood Elevation

BMPs Best Management Practices

CAP Critical Areas Permit

CAR Critical Areas Report

CARAs Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas

CDD Community Development Department

CFR Code of Federal Regulations

CMZ Channel Migration Zone

CRZ Critical Root Zone

CUP Conditional use permit

DAHP Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

DBH Diameter at Breast Height

DFIRM Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map

DNS Determination of Non-Significance

DNR Washington State Department of Natural Resources

DOE or **Ecology** Washington State Department of Ecology

DS Determination of Significance

EIS Environmental Impact Statement

ESA The Federal Endangered Species Act

FAA Federal Aviation Administration

FAR Floor Area Ratio

FBFM Flood Boundary-Floodway Maps

FCC Federal Communications Commission

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency

FIRM Flood Insurance Rate Map

FIS Flood Insurance Study

FTE Full-time Equivalent

FWHCAs Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas

GLA Gross Leaseable Area

GMA The Washington State Growth Management Act of 1990

gsf Gross Square Feet

HGM Hydrogeomorphic

LOS Level of service

MDNS Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance

NAICS The North American Industrial Classification System

NFIP National Flood Insurance Program

OHWM Ordinary High Water Mark

PHS Priority Habitats and Species

PUD Planned Unit Development

RCW Revised Code of Washington

RMA Riparian Management Area

RB Riparian Buffer

SEPA State Environmental Policy Act

SF Square Feet. Also s.f. and sq.ft.

SPTH Site Potential Tree Height

SRO Single-Room Occupancy

SWCCA Southwest Washington Clean Air Agency (formerly SWAPCA)

TDL Total Developable Land

USC United States Code

USGS U.S. Geological Survey

VMC Vancouver Municipal Code

WAC Washington Administrative Code

WDFW Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Ord. M-4402 § 3(C), 2023; Ord. M-4017 § 10, 2012; Ord. M-3692 § 8, 2005; Ord. M-3643, 2004)

20.150.040A Meanings of Specific Words and Terms A through D.

Abutting. Contiguous or adjoining with a common boundary line, except that where two or more lots adjoin only at a corner or corners, they shall not be considered as “abutting” unless the common property line between the two parcels measures eight feet or more in a single direction. It shall include the terms “adjoining” and “contiguous.”

Accept. To receive as complete and in compliance with all submittal requirements.

Access or Access Way. The place, means or the way by which pedestrians and vehicles shall have safe, adequate and usable ingress and egress to a property or use as required by this title.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). One or more rooms with private bath and kitchen facilities comprising an independent, self-contained dwelling unit within or attached to a single-family dwelling or in a detached building on the same lot as the primary dwelling unit. An ADU is distinguishable from a duplex in that, unlike a duplex, it is clearly subordinate to the primary dwelling unit, both in use and appearance.

Accessory Equipment Structure. An unstaffed structure that is subordinate and clearly incidental to the principal use or structure on the lot and may be used to house and protect the equipment necessary for processing wireless communications signals. Associated equipment may include air conditioning and emergency generators.

Accessory Structure. A building or structure which is clearly incidental to the primary structure on the same lot.

Accessory Use. A use of land or portion thereof which is clearly incidental and subordinate to the principal use of the land located on the same lot or premises.

Acre. A measure of land area containing 43,560 square feet.

Actual Construction. The actual placing of building materials in their permanent position, fastened in a permanent manner, including any excavation.

Addition. Means the same as enlargement.

Adjacent. Abutting or located directly across a street right-of-way.

Adjoin. Means the same as abutting.

Adult Bookstore. Any premises from which minors are excluded and in which the retail sale of books, magazines, newspapers, movie films, devices, slides or other photographic or written reproductions distinguished or characterized by their emphasis on matter depicting, describing or relating to specified sexual activities or specified anatomical areas is conducted as a principal use of the premise; or as an adjunct to some other business activity, but which constitutes the primary or a major attraction to the premises.

Adult Entertainment Shows. Any premises from which minors are excluded and in which live entertainment is provided, or any device is provided in which the subject matter is distinguished or characterized by the emphasis on matter depicting, describing or relating to specified sexual activities or displaying specified anatomical areas as the principal use of the premises or is shown as an adjunct to some other business activity which is conducted on the premises and constitutes a major attraction; and wherein fees of any kind are charged.

Adult Motion Picture Theater. Any establishment from which minors are excluded in which motion pictures, slides or similar photographic reproductions are shown depicting adult entertainment as the principal use of the premises, or are shown as an adjunct to some other business activity which is conducted on the premises and constitutes a major attraction; and wherein fees of any kind are charged; and wherein such movies are shown on a regular basis, and not to include a theater showing adult movies less than 5 percent of the total showing time of the theater.

Agent. Any person authorized in writing to act on behalf of the legal owner.

Agriculture, Existing and Ongoing. Those activities conducted on lands defined in RCW [84.34.020\(2\)](#), and those activities involved in the production of crops or livestock, for example, the operation and maintenance of farm and stock ponds or drainage ditches; the operation and maintenance of ditches, irrigation systems (including irrigation laterals, canals, or irrigation drainage ditches); changes between agricultural activities; and normal maintenance, repair, or operation of existing serviceable structures, facilities, or improved areas. Activities that bring an area into agricultural use are not part of an ongoing operation. An operation ceases to be

ongoing when the area on which it is conducted is converted to a nonagricultural use or has lain idle for more than five years, unless the idle land is registered in a federal or state soils conservation program, or unless the activity is maintenance of irrigation ditches, laterals, canals, or drainage ditches related to an existing and ongoing agricultural activity. Forest practices are not included in this definition.

Airport Approach Surface. The surface which is longitudinally centered on an airport's extended runway centerline, extending outward and upward from the end of the primary surface. An approach surface is applied to each end of the runway based upon the type of approach procedure permitted. Because landings under instrument flight rules, using the Portland International Airport Localizer Directional Aid, are an approved procedure at Pearson Field, the following approach surface dimensions have been applied:

Width of approach surface: 500' at inner end, 4,000' at outer end (inner end begins at end of primary surface)

Length of approach surface: 10,000 feet

Slope of approach surface: 34:1 (one foot vertically for every 34 feet horizontally)

Airport Conical Surface. The conical surface is an inclined plane beginning at the edge of the horizontal surface and extending outward at a 20:1 slope for a distance of 4,000 feet.

Airport Horizontal Surface. The horizontal plane 150 feet above the established airport elevation. The shape of the plane is determined by striking arcs from the end of each primary surface. The radius of each arch is connected by lines tangent to the arcs. For Pearson Field, the radius of these arcs is 5,000 feet for runways 08 and 26.

Airport Transitional Surface. The transitional surface is an inclined plane extending outward from the primary and approach surfaces at a 7:1 slope. From the primary surface and approach surface, the transitional surface slopes upward to the horizontal surface. The transitional surface extends outward from the approach surface a distance of 5,000 feet.

Aisle. The corridor by which vehicles enter into and depart from parking spaces.

Alley. A public right-of-way or private easement not over 30 feet wide which provides a secondary means of access to abutting lots, not intended by the city for general traffic circulation.

Alteration of Watercourse. Any action that will change the location of the channel occupied by water within the banks of any portion of a riverine waterbody.

Alteration, Structural. Any change in a supporting member of a building, such as a bearing wall, column, beam or girder, floor or ceiling joist, roof rafters, roof diaphragms, foundations, piles, or retaining wall or similar components.

Altered. Structurally changed.

Alternative Mode. Refers to any means of commute transportation other than that in which the single-occupant vehicle is the dominant mode.

Alternative Work Schedules. Programs such as compressed work weeks that eliminate commuting trips for affected employees. For the purposes of this chapter, changing the time of when an affected employee begins his work shift shall not be considered an alternative work schedule if it only moves trips out of the peak period and does not eliminate trips.

Amateur or Ham Radio. Radio facilities operated for noncommercial purposes by individuals licensed by the FCC with an interest in construction and operation of radio equipment, usually as a hobby or avocation.

Amendment. A change in the wording, context or substance of this title or the comprehensive plan, or a change in the boundaries of a district upon the zoning district map or the boundaries of a designation on the comprehensive plan map.

Amenity. A natural or created feature that enhances the aesthetic and functional quality or makes more attractive or satisfying a particular property, place or area.

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. The ADA contains requirements for most developments including accessible parking stalls, entrances and exits, pathways, and public facilities such as restrooms.

Anadromous. Fish that migrate up rivers and streams from the ocean to breed in fresh water.

Annexation. The incorporation of a land area into the City of Vancouver with a resulting change in the boundaries of the city.

Annual Average Day/Night Sound Level (Ldn). Calculated in decibels, the Ldn is the 24-hour logarithmic average sound level from midnight to midnight, obtained after adding 10 decibels to sound levels in the night from midnight to 7 a.m., and from 10 p.m. to midnight (0000 to 0700, and 2200 to 2400 hours), and then logarithmically average day-to-day over a 12-month period.

Antenna. A device used to transmit and/or receive radio or electromagnetic waves between land- and/or satellite-based structures; any device commonly consisting of poles, panels, rods, reflecting discs or similar device use for the transmission or reception of radio frequency signals, typically mounted on a supporting tower, pole, mast or building.

Apartment. A dwelling unit in a multiple-family building.

Apartment House. Means the same as Dwelling, Multiple-Family.

Appeal. A request for an impartial review of a land use decision or interpretation of land use-related codes rendered by community development department, its employees or any review body of the city of Vancouver.

Applicable Pretreatment Standards. For any specified pollutant, city prohibitive standards, city specific pretreatment standards (local limits), State of Washington pretreatment standards, or EPA's Categorical Pretreatment Standards, whichever standard is most appropriate or most stringent.

Applicant. A person submitting an application for development.

Approach Surface. The surface which is longitudinally centered on an airport's extended runway centerline, extending outward and upward from the end of the primary surface at a slope of 20 feet horizontally for each foot vertically. In plan, the perimeter of the approach surface coincides with the perimeter of the approach zone.

Approach Zone. An area at the end of an airport's runway which is 250 feet wide and expands outward uniformly to a width of 1,250 feet at a horizontal distance of 5,000 feet. The centerline of the zone is a continuation of the centerline of the runway.

Approved Plan. A plan that has been granted final approval by the appropriate approval authority.

Archaeological Interest. Capable of providing scientific or humanistic understandings of past human behavior, cultural adaptation, and related topics through the application of scientific or scholarly techniques such as controlled observation, contextual measurement, controlled collection, analysis, interpretation, and explanation [WAC [25-48-020\(12\)](#)].

Archaeological Object. An object that comprises the physical evidence of an indigenous and subsequent culture including material remains of past human life including monuments, symbols, tools, facilities, and technological by-products [WAC [25-48-020\(8\)](#)].

Archaeological Resources. Any material remains of human life or activities that are of archaeological interest. This shall include all sites, objects, structures, artifacts, implements, and locations of prehistoric or archaeological interest, whether previously recorded or still unrecognized, including, but not limited to, those pertaining to prehistoric and historic American Indian or aboriginal burials, campsites, dwellings, and their habitation sites, including rock shelters and caves, their artifacts and implements of culture such as projectile points, arrowheads, skeletal remains, grave goods, basketry, pestles, mauls, and grinding stones, knives, scrapers, rock carvings and paintings, and other implements and artifacts of any material [WAC [25-48-020\(10\)](#)]. This shall also include any material remains of human life or activities from historic periods which are located at least partially below the ground surface necessitating the use of archaeological methods for study or recovery.

Archaeological Resource Survey. A procedure by which an archaeologist makes a determination of the actual existence (presence or absence) of an archaeological site in a disturbance area, a preliminary assessment of the site's potential significance, and a recommendation for further evaluation, avoidance, mitigation, or recovery of resources in compliance with the provisions of this chapter.

Archaeological Site. Land or water areas that show evidence of artifacts of human, plant or animal activity, usually dating from periods of which only vestiges remain.

Archaeological Site, Known, Recorded. An archaeological site that has been recorded with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) or its successor.

Archaeological Site, Potentially Significant. An archaeological site which:

1. contains archaeological objects at a density of at least 100 per cubic meter per stratigraphic or cultural unit; or
2. includes at least one feature; or
3. includes at least one relatively uncommon archaeological object; or
4. contains skeletal remains; or
5. is otherwise considered potentially significant by the archaeologist.

Archaeologist, Professional. "Professional archaeologist" means a person with qualifications meeting the federal secretary of the interior's standards for a professional archaeologist. Archaeologists not meeting this standard may be conditionally employed by working under the supervision of a professional archaeologist for a period of four years provided the employee is pursuing qualifications necessary to meet the federal secretary of the interior's standards for a professional archaeologist. During this four-year period, the professional archaeologist is responsible for all findings. The four-year period is not subject to renewal. RCW [27.53.030\(8\)](#).

Area of Shallow Flooding. A designated zone AO, AH, AR/AO or AR/AH (or VO) on a community's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) with a one percent or greater annual chance of flooding to an average depth of one to three feet where a clearly defined channel does not exist, where the path of flooding is unpredictable, and where velocity flow may be evident. Such flooding is characterized by ponding or sheet flow. Also referred to as the "sheet flow area."

Areas of Special Flood Hazards. Lands in the flood plain subject to a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year. Designations on Flood Insurance Rate Maps always include the letter A. Also referred to as "frequently flooded areas." "Special flood hazard area" is synonymous in meaning with the phrase "area of special flood hazard."

Arterial. Any principal arterial, minor arterial, or collector arterial streets.

ASCE 24. The most recently published version of ASCE 24, Flood Resistant Design and Construction, published by the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Assessed Value. The value at which property is appraised for tax purposes.

Attached Antenna. An antenna is that affixed to an existing structure other than a wireless communication support structure.

Attached Sidewalks. Those sidewalks abutting the back of a curb.

Automobile Wrecking. The dismantling or disassembling of motor vehicles, or the storage, sale, or dumping of dismantled, partially dismantled, obsolete, or wrecked vehicles or their parts. Three or more dismantled, obsolete or inoperable motor vehicles on one lot shall constitute a wrecking yard.

Average. The arithmetic mean.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA). Regarding School Impact Fees, the average number of students attending an elementary or secondary school and used for the design of the facility.

Awning. A hood or cover which projects from the wall of a building, of a type which may be retracted, folded or collapsed against the face of a supporting building.

Banner. An on-site sign such as those used to announce an open house or a grand opening, or to make a special announcement. Normally, it is constructed of fabric and is without a rigid frame.

Base Flood. The flood having a 1percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. Also referred to as the "100-year flood." Designated on Flood Insurance Rate Maps by the letter A.

Base Flood Elevation. The elevation that the base flood is expected to reach. Also referred to as the "100-year flood elevation."

Basement. A portion of a building included between a floor, with its level 2 feet or more below the level from which the height of the building is measured, and the ceiling next above said floor. For the purposes of VMC [20.740.120](#), Frequently Flooded Areas, basement means any area of a building having its floor subgrade (below ground level) on all sides.

Base zone. The zoning designation applicable to a parcel of property irrespective of an Overlay District as reflected on the Vancouver Zoning Map.

Beach Nourishment. With respect to bank erosion hazard areas, beach nourishment is the placement of sand or soil to fill an eroding bank.

Berm. A mound of earth, typically linear in form and generally used as a buffer between uses or properties.

Best Management Practices. Systems of practices and management measures that:

1. control soil loss and reduce water quality degradation caused by nutrients, animal waste, toxics, and sediment; and
2. minimize adverse impacts to surface water and groundwater flow, circulation patterns, and to the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCAs), wetlands and buffers.

Bike Lane. Lanes on an improved street which are designated for use by cyclists and separated from vehicular traffic either by striping or small concrete barrier.

Bikeway. A pathway, paved and separated from streets and sidewalks, designed to be used by cyclists.

Binding Site Plan. A type of land division that segregates a portion of a legal lot created for the sale or lease of commercially- or industrially-zoned property; placement of manufactured homes or travel trailers on leased sites; and creation of condominiums pursuant to [58.17.040](#) RCW.

Bioengineering Techniques. Techniques that apply the principles of the biological, ecological, and soils sciences and structural engineering to build structures which, using live plant materials as a main structural component, stabilize the soil against erosion, sedimentation, and flooding. Also referred to as "soft armoring techniques."

Biomass Generation. A major utility facility that provides for the production or collection of organic materials such as wood and agricultural residues and municipal solid waste that are primarily organic materials and the conversion or use of that material for the production of heat, electricity, or substitute fuels through several processes including, but not limited to, burning, pyrolysis, or anaerobic digestion.

Block. A group of lots, tracts or parcels within well defined and fixed boundaries.

Bog. A type of wetland where (1) organic (peat or muck) soil layers comprise at least 16 of the first 32 inches of the soil profile; or (2) there is more than 70 percent cover of mosses at ground level and more than 30 percent of the total shrub and herbaceous cover consists of species listed in Table 3 – Characteristic Bog Species in Washington State found in Hruby, 2004, Washington State Wetlands Rating System for Western Washington, Ecology publication #04-

06-025, or as revised by Ecology. Many bogs have soils classified as peat or muck, are nutrient poor, have a low pH (acidic), and are fed largely by rainfall rather than streams or groundwater.

Boundary Adjustment. The minor alteration of the boundary between two lots or tracts which does not result in the creation of any additional lot(s); also known as boundary line adjustment.

Breezeway. A structure for the principal purpose of connecting the main building or buildings on a property with other main buildings or accessory buildings.

Buffer. An area that is contiguous to and protects a critical area from incompatible uses and which is required for the continued maintenance, functioning, and/or structural stability of a critical area.

Building. Any structure having a roof and walls, used or built for the shelter or enclosure of persons, animals or property of any kind.

Building Envelope. That portion of a legal lot exclusive of the areas required for front, side, and rear yards and other required open spaces and which is available for siting and constructing a building or buildings.

Building Height. The vertical distance from the average grade to the average height of the roof peak of the building, except in a shoreline jurisdictional area, in which case the height shall be measured from average existing grade (prior to development) to the highest point of a structure (see also WAC [173-27-030](#)). For exceptions subject to airport height limits located within the approach, transitional and horizontal surfaces refer to Airport definitions and Sections [20.570](#) and [20.630.050](#) VMC.

Building, Main. A building within which is conducted the principal use permitted on the lot, as provided in this title.

Building Permit. The permit required for new construction and additions pursuant to Title [17](#) of the Vancouver Municipal Code (VMC).

Business Complex. Any building containing more than one business, or any group of buildings in close proximity to one another sharing parking, ownership, and ingress or egress.

Caliper. The diameter of a tree trunk measured at 6 feet above the ground for up to and including 4 inches caliper size, and one foot above the ground for larger trees.

Canopy. A permanent roofed structure attached to and supported by the building.

Canopy, Auto Dealership Plan District. A structure, enclosure, or shelter constructed of fabric or pliable materials supported by any manner, except by air or the contents it protects, and open without sidewalls or drops on 75 percent or more of the perimeter, consistent with Vancouver Fire Code Title 16, Section 16.04.060 and the International Fire Code (IFC).

Capital Facilities Plan. The City of Vancouver Capital Facilities Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan adopted pursuant to Chapter 36.70A RCW and RCW 82.02.050, and as such plan is amended.

Caretaker Residence. A single unit providing a complete independent living space for one or more persons, including permanent facilities for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation (same as Dwelling).

Central Business District. This area is the section of Vancouver defined as the commercial business district bounded by 4th Plain Boulevard to the north, Columbia River to the south, I-5 to the east, and Lincoln Avenue to the west. This can apply to other areas as developed in the city, with similar zoning.

Certificate of Concurrence. A document issued by the transportation manager pursuant to Section 20.980.120 VMC indicating: the location or other description of the property on which a development is proposed; the type of development application for which the certificate of concurrence is issued; an identification of any affected transportation corridor and TMZ; the specific uses, densities, intensities, and any transportation system improvements, strategies, or other mitigation measures that were considered in the determination to issue the certificate, and which are authorized or required for development of the property; the amount of capacity within the affected transportation corridor or TMZ that is reserved for the development described in the certificate, and a statement that the reservation of capacity is nontransferable to other development(s); any conditions required pursuant to Section 20.980.120 VMC; and an effective date.

Change of Use. Any use that differs from the previous use as defined in Chapter 20.160, Use Classifications.

Channel Migration Zone (CMZ): The area within which a river channel is likely to migrate and occupy over a specified time period.

Citizens Band Radio. Two-way radio facilities operated for a short-range personal and business communications, without necessity of a federal license, pursuant to [47 CFR Part 95](#).

City. The City of Vancouver, Washington.

City Council or Council. The City Council of the City of Vancouver, Washington.

City Standards. Shall mean standard specifications, technical drawings, detail drawings and other information the city has adopted as minimum standards.

Clark County Cultural Resources Inventory. The comprehensive inventory of historic resources within the boundaries of Clark County including resources identified in the Clark County cultural resources inventory and other inventories by local jurisdictions within Clark County.

Cleaner Fuels. Liquid or gaseous fuels produced from renewable sources or that have low or no emissions, including the following:

1. Carbon-free fuels that generate no carbon emissions including green hydrogen or fuels that are certified by state or federal responsible agencies as net-zero carbon emissions.
2. Any credit-generating fuel under the Washington State Low Carbon Fuel Standard (HB 1091 2021-2022) as allowed by the Washington State Department of Ecology.
3. Any biomass renewable fuels approved by the federal Environmental Protection Agency under the federal Renewable Fuel Standard ([40 CFR Part 80](#)) as regulation exists or may hereafter be amended and meeting any future federal renewable fuels regulations.
4. Alcohol fuels meeting the requirements of RCW [19.112.010\(1\)](#) as that statute exists or may hereafter be amended.
5. Biodiesel fuel meeting the requirements of RCW [19.112.010\(3\)](#), and renewable diesel meeting the requirements of RCW [19.112.010\(9\)](#), as those statutes exist or may hereafter be amended.

6. E85 motor fuel which meets the requirements of RCW [19.112.010\(2\)](#) exclusively for the propulsion of motor vehicles upon the roads, or RCW [19.112.010\(6\)](#) for other motors, as those statutes exist or may hereafter be amended.
7. Alternative fuels that are not fossil fuels and that produce low or no carbon that meet state or federal requirements not otherwise listed above.

Clearing. The destruction or removal of vegetation from a site by physical, mechanical, chemical or other means. This does not include landscape maintenance or pruning consistent with accepted horticultural practices, such as those recommended by the Washington State University Extension Service, which does not impair the health or survival of the trees or native vegetation.

Closed Record Approval Hearing. An administrative hearing to approve or deny a project permit that is on the record to the City Council following an open record predecision hearing as defined by WAC [197-11-775](#) before the planning commission or hearings examiner.

Co-location. The use of a single wireless communications support structure or the use of a site by more than one wireless communications provider.

Commercial Nursery, or Tree Farm. A licensed plant or tree nursery or farm in relation to those trees planted and growing on the premises of the licensee, which are planted and grown for sale through retail or wholesale channels in the ordinary course of the licensee's business.

Commission or Planning Commission. Means the Planning Commission of the City of Vancouver, Washington.

Compatible. The capability of being able to function in a consistent and harmonious manner with others and surroundings.

Compatible Design. A building and/or site design which blends with the surrounding area. This might include a pitched roof of a similar pitch to surrounding roofs, trim, shutters or other architectural window detail; horizontal siding and/or brick exterior; and similar unit size or scale.

Comprehensive Plan. A long-range plan intended to guide the growth and development of a community or region that typically includes inventory and analytic sections leading to recommendations for the community's future economic development, housing, recreation and

open space, transportation, community facilities and land use, all related to the community's goals and objectives for these elements.

Concurrent. Means that the existing capacity of an affected transportation corridor or transportation management zone is sufficient to accommodate the projected transportation impacts of a proposed development; or that transportation system improvements, strategies, or other mitigation measures which will achieve or maintain an operating level at or above the applicable level of service for the affected transportation corridor or management zone: and are planned, reasonably funded, and scheduled for completion no later than six years after development approval as reflected in the most recent version of the Six-Year Street Plan; and will be available and complete no later than six years after development approval, as provided by a voluntary financial commitment (where appropriate) by the applicant that is in place at the time development is approved by the Development Review Authority.

Conditional Use. An activity specified by this title as a principal or an accessory use, permitted when authorized by the appropriate approval authority and subject to certain conditions.

Contiguous. Means the same as abutting.

Contributing. A property which dates to the historic period and retains sufficient physical integrity so as to convey its historic character.

Contributing Area. When referring to wetlands, the land and/or water area adjacent to a wetland that drains into that wetland.

Conversion Option Harvest. A timber harvest as established in DNR's Forest Practices Regulations and Chapter [20.770](#) VMC, Tree Conservation, whereby a property owner is allowed to harvest a limited amount of timber from their property within the City of Vancouver, while still maintaining the rights to convert their property to a use inconsistent with growing timber.

Conveyance. A mechanism for transporting water or other liquids from one point to another, including pipes, ditches, and channels.

Co-tenant. A person who resides with the applicant for the deferral and who has an ownership interest in the residence.

Court. An open, uncovered, and unoccupied space within an allotted property line.

Court Height. A measurement from the floor level of the lowest story in the building in which there are windows from rooms served by the court, to the highest point of the enclosing walls of the court.

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas. Areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water as defined by the Washington State Growth Management Act. Critical aquifer recharge areas are regulated under VMC [14.26](#).

Critical Areas. Critical areas include FWHCAs, Wetlands, Frequently Flooded Areas, CARAs, and Geologic Hazard Areas as defined by the Washington State Growth Management Act. Critical aquifer recharge areas are regulated under VMC [14.26](#). The others are regulated under VMC [20.740](#).

Critical Facility. Facilities that serve vulnerable populations, house emergency services, meet the definition of a Class I or Class II Operation under VMC [14.26](#), or perform other functions that would pose significant safety issues in even a slight landslide, flooding, erosion, seismic, or other natural hazard event. Critical facilities include, but are not limited to: schools, nursing homes, hospitals, police, fire, and emergency response installations, installations which produce, use, or store hazardous materials.

Critical Root Zone (CRZ). The area where the tree's roots are located. This root zone is generally the area surrounding a tree trunk at a distance equal to one foot for every inch of tree diameter at breast height (dbh). This area is described as the radius of a circle around the tree.

Crown. The area of a tree containing leaf- or needle-bearing branches.

Crown Cover. The area within the drip line or perimeter of the foliage of a tree.

Cul-de-Sac. The circular turnaround at the end of a dead-end street.

Cultural Resources. The historic or prehistoric or archeological sites and standing structures, cemeteries, burial grounds and funerary objects and distributions of cultural remains and artifacts.

DAHP. Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

Decibels (dB). The measure of noise loudness on a scale weighted to approximate human ability to perceive sound (A). Each decibel is a measure of the difference in energy of a sound compared to another sound which is used as a reference. The reference sound is barely audible

to the human ear, and each interval of 10 decibels indicates sound energy ten times greater than before. The A-weighted scale generally places zero dB at the threshold of hearing and 135 dB at the threshold of pain.

Dedication. The limited grant by a property owner allowing the use of property by the public for specified purposes by means of a deed or transfer to the city.

Dedication, Fee In Lieu Of. Payments in cash as an alternative to dedication of land or construction of improvements.

Deed. A legal document conveying ownership of real property.

Demolish. To raze, destroy, dismantle, deface or in any other manner cause partial or total ruin of a structure or other improvement.

Density. A measurement of ratio comparing the number of dwelling units with land area in relationship to a specified amount of land, expressed as the number of residential dwelling units per acre of land or the amount of land area expressed in the square feet of land assignable to each dwelling unit in a residential development.

Density, Net. The development density derived by dividing the net buildable area of the subject property (gross area less the total aggregate area required by the city for public or private streets, schools or other public facilities, not including parks and public or private recreation facilities dedicated or created as an integral part of the development) by the applicable lot size or area per unit.

Density, Gross. The development density derived by dividing the gross area of the subject property by the applicable minimum lot size. Gross density is used to determine the maximum number of lots that may be achieved on a parcel being developed.

Department. The Development Review Services Department, Long Range Planning Department, Public Works Department, or any division, subdivision, or organizational unit of the city established by ordinance, rule or order.

Destroy any tree. To damage, disfigure or cause injury or death which may include, but not be limited to, topping, excessive pruning not consistent with nationally-accepted standards, poisoning, and trenching or excavating in such a manner as to make the tree root system no viable.

Detached Sidewalks. A sidewalk separated from the back of curb by a uniform width planting strip.

Developer. Any person, firm or corporation undertaking the development of any parcel of land.

Development. Any humanmade change to improved or unimproved real estate including but not limited to: mining, dredging, filling, drilling, grading, paving, or excavation, storage of equipment or materials; any subdivision or short platting of land; the construction or reconstruction of residential, commercial, industrial, public or any other building or building space, and the placement of all types of manufactured homes defined herein. Development also includes the change in use of a building or land if approval is required pursuant to the Vancouver Municipal Code, Title 17 (Building Code). As related to the Tree Conservation Ordinance, development shall mean 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, landfill, clearing or land disturbance.

Development Application. Any application (including supporting materials) for approval of a development to which the provisions of Title 20 VMC apply.

Development Review Authority. The planning official, the City Hearings Examiner, the Planning Commission, or City Council, each having authority to approve a development application pursuant to Title 20 VMC.

Diameter at Breast Height (DBH). A tree's diameter in inches at 4 1/2 feet above the ground. On multi-stemmed or -trunk trees, the diameter shall be the diameter equivalent to the sum of trunk areas measured at 4 1/2 foot above the ground.

Direct-to-Home Satellite Service. The distribution or broadcasting of programming or services by satellite directly to the subscriber's premises without use of ground-receiving or distribution equipment, except at the subscriber's premises or in the uplink process to the satellite.

Disturbance Area. Regarding archaeological resource protection, the geographical area in which archaeological resources could potentially be adversely impacted by a proposed ground-disturbing action or activity. It includes equipment or material staging areas; utility installation areas; temporary roads or haul routes; or other areas outside of the proposed building footprint(s) that could be disturbed during construction. The disturbance area shall not be smaller, and will generally be larger than the area of the property proposed for development. In

no case shall the disturbance area be smaller than one acre or the area of the parcel(s) upon which the property proposed for development is located, whichever is less.

Regarding critical areas, a pronounced, temporary change in environmental conditions within an ecosystem. Disturbances often act quickly and can alter ecosystem composition, structure, and function.

Dog Day Care. A facility where dogs may be groomed, trained, exercised, and socialized, but not kept or bred, sold, or let for hire.

Domestic Animal. Any animal other than livestock that lives and breeds in a tame condition including, but not limited to: dogs, cats, small birds and other animals kept as pets.

Doorway Identification Nameplates. A nonelectric sign that is limited to the name, address, and number of the building, institution or person and is limited to the activity carried on in the building or institution or to the occupancy of the person.

Downed Woody Vegetation. Shrubs, trees, or their branches that have fallen and are on the ground or in, across, or dangling above streams, rivers, lakes, or ponds; also known as large woody debris.

Drive-Through Facility. A facility or structure that is designed and intended to allow drivers to remain in their vehicles before and during participation in an activity on the site.

Driveway. A private way providing ingress and egress from one or two lot parcels or tracts to a public or private street.

Dwelling. A single unit providing a complete independent living space for one or more persons, including permanent facilities for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation.

Dwelling, Efficiency Living Unit. Any room having cooking facilities, and used for combination living, dining, and sleeping purposes for not more than two persons, and designed as a separate apartment, not merely rooming accommodations. Each efficiency living unit shall be provided with a separate bathroom meeting the requirements of the Building Code.

Dwelling, Houseboat Moorage. A facility that provides moorings for houseboats.

Dwelling, Multiple-Family. A building or portion thereof designed or used as a residence by three or more households and containing three or more dwelling units.

Dwelling, Single-Family. A building designed or used for residence purposes by not more than one household and containing one dwelling unit only. Such dwelling units may be either detached (i.e., free-standing) or attached (i.e., sharing) common walls with other such units.

Dwelling, Single-Room Occupancy Housing (SRO). A building wherein furnished rooms without cooking facilities are rented for compensation to three or more nontransient persons not included in the family unit of the owner or tenant of the premises.

Dwelling, Two-Family, or Duplex. A building designed or used for residence purposes by not more than two households and containing two dwelling units. (Ord. M-4402 § 3(C), 2023; Ord. M-4380 § 2, 2022; Ord. M-4325 § 3, 2020; Ord. M-4289 § 4, 2019; Ord. M-4179 § 61, 2016; Ord. M-4170 § 5, 2016; Ord. M-4034 § 2, 2012; Ord. M-4024 § 4, 2012; Ord. M-4024 § 3, 2012; Ord. M-4017 § 11, 2012; Ord. M-4002 § 2, 2011; Ord. M-3959 § 3, 2010; Ord. M-3922 § 2, 2009; Ord. M-3868 § 2, 2008; Ord. M-3844 § 3, 2007; Ord. M-3840 § 3, 2007; Ord. M-3832 § 1, 2007; Ord. M-3733 § 2, 2006; Ord. M-3709 § 2, 2005; Ord. M-3701 § 2, 2005; Ord. M-3692 § 8, 2005; Ord. M-3667 § 2, 2004; Ord. M-3663 § 2, 2004; Ord. M-3643, 2004)

20.150.040B Meanings of Specific Words and Terms E through H.

Early Notice. The city's response to an applicant stating whether it considers issuance of a determination of significance likely for the applicant's proposal.

Easement. A grant of one or more of the property rights by the property owner to and/or for use by the public, a corporation or another person or entity.

Ecology. The Washington State Department of Ecology.

Egress. An exit from a building or site.

Electric Vehicle. Any on-road vehicle that operates, either partially or exclusively, on electrical energy from the grid, or an off-board source, that is stored on-board for locomotive purpose. "Electric vehicle" includes: 1) a battery electric vehicle; 2) a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle; 3) a neighborhood electric vehicle; 4) a medium-speed electric vehicle; and/or (5) a battery-powered scooter.

Elevated Building. For insurance purposes, a nonbasement building that has its lowest elevated floor raised above ground level by foundation walls, shear walls, posts, piers, pilings, or columns.

Elevation, Architectural. A scale drawing of the side, front or rear of a structure.

Elevation Certificate. An administrative tool of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) that can be used to provide elevation information, to determine the proper insurance premium rate, and to support a request for a letter of map amendment (LOMA) or letter of map revision based on fill (LOMR-F).

Emergency Repair. The work necessary to prevent destruction or dilapidations to real property or structural appurtenances thereto immediately threatened or damaged by fire, flood, earthquake or other disaster.

Emergent wetland. A wetland with at least 30 percent of the surface area covered by erect, rooted, herbaceous vegetation as the uppermost vegetative strata.

Employees. Refers to all persons, including proprietors, working on the premises.

Employer. A sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, unincorporated association, cooperative, joint venture, agency, department, district or other individual or entity, whether public, nonprofit or private, that employs workers.

Endangered and Threatened Species, Federally Designated. Fish and wildlife species identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or NOAA Fisheries as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, [16 USC Section 1531](#), et seq.

Endangered, Threatened and Sensitive Species, State Designated. Fish and wildlife species native to the State of Washington and identified by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife as sensitive, threatened, or endangered species.

Energy-Efficient Construction. A structure designed and built which encourages the efficient use of energy. Construction standards qualifying for this shall be as specified by the State Energy Code. Design or construction methods that can be proven to provide equivalent or better energy conservation performance may be allowed as an alternative.

Engineer. An individual licensed by the State of Washington to practice civil engineering.

Enhancement. Actions performed to improve the condition of an existing degraded critical area or buffer so that the functions provided are of a higher quality. See also Wetland Enhancement.

Enlargement. An increase in size of an existing structure or use, affecting the physical size of the property, building, parking, and other improvements.

Entertainment. Regarding Adult Businesses, any exhibition or dance of any type, pantomime, modeling or any other performance.

Entertainer. Regarding Adult Businesses, means any person who provides sexually-oriented adult entertainment within a public place of amusement whether or not a fee is charged or accepted for such entertainment.

Equity Value. The amount by which the fair market value of a residence as determined from the records of the county assessor exceeds the total amount of any liens or other obligations against the property.

Erect. To build, construct, attach, hang, place, inscribe, suspend or affix any sign or to paint any wall sign.

Erosion Control. The design and installation of measures to control erosion and sedimentation during and after construction and to permanently stabilize soil exposed during and after construction using a combination of structural control measures, cover measure, and construction practices.

Erosion hazard. These are areas containing soils which, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey Program, may experience significant erosion. Erosion hazard areas also include channel migration zones. See VMC 20.740.130 for designation of erosion hazard areas.

Essential Facility (Applies in Frequently Flooded Areas). This term has the same meaning as “essential facility” defined in ASCE 24. Table 1-1 in ASCE 24-14 further identifies building occupancies that are essential facilities.

Essential Public Facilities. Public facilities and privately-owned or operated facilities serving a public purpose that are typically difficult to site. They include but are not limited to: airports, state education facilities, state or regional transportation facilities, prisons, jails, other correctional facilities, and solid waste handling facilities. These facilities are of state-wide and regional significance, as opposed to facilities which only serve Clark County. Therefore, local transit service is not considered an essential public facility. Essential public facilities will be allowed in locations appropriate for the services provided and the people served.

Exception. Permission to depart from a specific design standard in this title.

Existing Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision (Applies in Frequently Flooded Areas). A manufactured home park or subdivision for which the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including, at a minimum, the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads) is completed before the effective date of the floodplain management regulations adopted by the community.

Exotic. Any species of plants or animals that are not native to the area.

Expansion to an Existing Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision (Applies in Frequently Flooded Areas). The preparation of additional sites by the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads).

Extraordinary hardship. Extraordinary hardship occurs when strict application of the provisions of 20.775 VMC Wetlands and Water Bodies Protection would prevent all reasonable economic use of the subject parcel.

Façade. Any exterior building face, from corner to corner and finished floor to eave, exclusive of any roof area.

Face. To front upon.

Family. See Household.

Feature. An artifact or set of artifacts which, due to its size and complexity, loses its integrity when moved, and therefore, cannot be transported as a unit to a laboratory or museum for study or display (e.g., a hearth, an ash lens, a storage pit, a cache of related artifacts, or a house floor).

Fence, Sight-Obscuring. A fence or evergreen planting constructed or arranged in such a way as to obstruct vision.

Findings. A written statement of the facts determined to be relevant by the approval authority as the basis for making its decision. The approval authority applies the relevant facts to the approval criteria or standards to reach its decision.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCAs). FWHCAs are areas that serve a critical role in sustaining needed habitats and species for the functional integrity of the ecosystem, and that, if altered, may reduce the likelihood that the species will persist over the long term. These areas may include, but are not limited to, rare or vulnerable ecological systems, communities, and habitat or habitat elements, including seasonal ranges, breeding habitat, winter range, and movement corridors, and areas with high relative population density or species richness, including locally designated important habitats and species. These areas also include habitat for Endangered, Threatened and Sensitive species; Priority Habitats and areas associated with Priority Species; Riparian Management Areas; Habitats of Local Importance, and water bodies;; water bodies; forage fish spawning areas; naturally occurring ponds less than 20 acres; waters of the state; natural area preserves; natural resource conservation areas; and state wildlife areas. Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas do not include artificial features or constructs such as irrigation delivery systems, irrigation infrastructure, irrigation canals, or drainage ditches that lie within the boundaries of, and are maintained by, a port district or an irrigation district or company.

Fish Habitat. Habitat which is used by any fish at any life stage at any time of the year, including potential habitat likely to be used by fish which could be recovered by restoration or management and includes off-channel habitat.(WAC [222-16-030](#))

Flood or Flooding.

1. A general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas from:
 - a. The overflow of inland or tidal waters.
 - b. The unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source.
 - c. Mudslides (i.e., mudflows) which are proximately caused by flooding as defined in subsection (1)(b) of this definition and are akin to a river of liquid and flowing mud on the surfaces of normally dry land areas, as when earth is carried by a current of water and deposited along the path of the current.
2. The collapse or subsidence of land along the shore of a lake or other body of water as a result of erosion or undermining caused by waves or currents of water

exceeding anticipated cyclical levels or suddenly caused by an unusually high water level in a natural body of water, accompanied by a severe storm, or by an unanticipated force of nature, such as flash flood or an abnormal tidal surge, or by some similarly unusual and unforeseeable event which results in flooding as defined in subsection (1)(a) of this definition.

Flood Elevation Study. An examination, evaluation and determination of flood hazards and, if appropriate, corresponding water surface elevations, or an examination, evaluation and determination of mudslide (i.e., mudflow) and/or flood-related erosion hazards. Also known as a Flood Insurance Study (FIS).

Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). The official map on which the Federal Insurance Administration has delineated both the areas of special flood hazards and the risk premium zones applicable to the community. A FIRM that has been made available digitally is called a Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM).

Floodplain. The relatively flat area or lowlands adjoining the channel of a river, stream, watercourse, or other similar body of water that has been or may be susceptible to being inundated by floodwater. The floodplain includes the areas of special flood hazards (frequently flooded areas).

Floodplain Administrator. The community official designated by title to administer and enforce the floodplain management regulations.

Floodplain or Flood-Prone Area. Any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source. See "Flood or flooding."

Flood-Proofing. Any combination of structural and nonstructural additions, changes, or adjustments to structures which reduce or eliminate risk of flood damage to real estate or improved real property, water and sanitary facilities, structures, and their contents. Flood-proofed structures are those that have the structural integrity and design to be impervious to floodwater below the base flood elevation.

Floodway. The channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. Also referred to as "regulatory floodway."

Floor Area. The area of all floors, finish wall-to-finish wall, included in surrounding walls of a building.

Floor Area, Gross. The total enclosed area of all floors of a building measured to the outside face of the structural members in exterior walls and including halls, stairways, elevator shafts at each floor level, service mechanical equipment rooms, habitable basement or attic areas, and structured (not surface) areas for vehicle parking and loading.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR). A mathematical expression determined by dividing the total floor area of a building by the total area of the lot. It is determined by dividing the total gross floor area of all the buildings on a lot by the area of that lot, excluding public easements and right-of-ways, landscaped areas required under the requirements of this chapter and Chapter 20.740, Wetlands and Drainage Areas. For example, a floor area ratio of 2 to 1 (or 2:1) means that there are 2 square feet of gross floor area for every 1 square foot of lot area.

Frequently Flooded Areas. Areas of special flood hazards.

Front. Each side of a lot abutting a public street except state or federally designated highways.

Frontage. That portion of a parcel of property that abuts a dedicated public street, highway or approved private street, from property line to property line.

Fronting Street. Shall mean a public or private road providing for vehicular access to the boundary of a parcel of real property being proposed for development.

Full-time Employee. A person other than an independent contractor scheduled to be employed on a continuous basis for fifty-two weeks a year for an average of thirty-five hours or more per week.

Full-time Equivalent (FTE). The equivalent number of full-time students attending a post secondary school such as a trade school, college or university.

Fully Complete. Regarding land use applications, the determination by the Review Authority that the application and associated documentation contain sufficient information and detail to reach a final decision; such determination shall not be interpreted to mean that the application meets applicable standards.

Functionally Dependent Use (Applies in Frequently Flooded Areas). A use which cannot perform its intended purpose unless it is located or carried out in close proximity to water. The

term includes only docking facilities, port facilities that are necessary for the loading and unloading of cargo or passengers, and ship building and ship repair facilities, and does not include long-term storage or related manufacturing facilities.

Functionally Disabled. With respect to a person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities; has a record of having such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. Such term does not include current, illegal use of or addiction to a controlled substance.

Functions or Functions and Values of FWHCAs. Functions or functions and values are the beneficial roles served by FWHCAs. FWHCAs provide habitat for breeding, rearing, foraging, protection and escape, migration, and over-wintering. FWHCAs affect the quality of habitat by providing complexity of physical structure, supporting biological diversity, regulating stormwater runoff and infiltration, removing pollutants from water, and maintaining appropriate temperatures.

Functions or Functions and Values of Wetlands. Functions or functions and values are the beneficial roles served by wetlands. Wetlands improve water quality, maintain watershed hydrology (for example, by providing base stream flow during dry periods and controlling flooding), and provide habitat.

Garage, Private. A paved, covered, and enclosed motor vehicle parking space with a locking door, either attached or detached from the living unit. An accessory building or an enclosed accessory portion of the main building designed and/or used for shelter or storage of vehicles, boats and/or other vehicles owned or operated by the occupants of the main building.

Garage, Public. A structure or portion thereof other than a private or community garage used for the storage of self-propelled vehicles or trailers. Any garage, other than a private garage, open to use by members of the public.

Geographic Barrier. A natural or constructed land form or feature such as, but not limited to: a promontory, a ravine, a large or fast-moving body of water or a dike.

Geologic Hazard Areas. Geologic hazard areas include landslide, seismic, and erosion hazard areas designated pursuant to VMC [20.740.130\(A\)](#) and are defined as areas that are not generally suitable for the siting of commercial, residential, or industrial development consistent with public health or safety concerns unless determined otherwise with a critical areas report

provided by a qualified professional in accordance with VMC 20.740.130(B) and in compliance with the performance standards of VMC 20.740.130(C).

Grab Sample. Regarding solid waste regulations, a single sample which is taken from a waste stream without regard to the flow in the waste stream and without consideration of time.

Grade. As defined in the City Adopted Building Code(s).

Grading. Any excavation, filling or combination thereof.

Grading Permit. The permit required under Chapter 70 of the City Adopted Building Code(s).

Gross Floor Area. Means the same as floor area.

Gross Leasable Area (GLA). The total floor area designed for both tenant occupancy and exclusive use. This includes both owned and leased areas.

Ground-disturbing Action or Activity. Any development, construction, or related operation which could alter the site, including but not limited to: tree or tree stump removal, road or building construction or grading.

Group Living. Living facilities for groups of unrelated individuals that include at least one person residing on the site who is responsible for supervising, managing, monitoring and/or providing care, training or treatment or residents

Guest House Dwelling. A detached accessory building designed, constructed and used for the purpose of providing temporary living accommodations for guest, or for members of the same household as that occupying the main structure, and containing no kitchen or kitchen facilities.

Guyed Tower. Any wireless communication support, using guy wires which are permanently anchored.

Habitable Floor Area. The total heated floor area in a structure devoted to living, sleeping, eating or cooking. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces, and other similar areas are not counted as habitable floor area.

Habitat Corridor. Habitat corridors are areas of relatively undisturbed and unbroken tracts of vegetation that connect Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas, priority habitats, areas identified as biologically diverse, or valuable habitats within a city or urban growth area. Habitat

corridors as required for Option 3A wetland buffers must meet the specific requirements outlined in VMC 20.740.140.

Habitats of Local Importance. FHWCA's which are not designated as Priority Habitats and Species by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife but are designated as locally significant by the city.

Hard surface. Hard surface is an impervious surface, a permeable pavement or a vegetated roof.

Hazardous Material. Any product, substance, commodity or waste in liquid, solid or gaseous form that exhibits a characteristic that presents a risk to water resources. Risk may be due to ignitability, toxicity, reactivity, instability, corrosivity, or persistence. This definition extends to all "dangerous wastes" and "hazardous substances" that are defined in WAC [173-303](#) (State Dangerous Waste Regulations). It also includes the chemicals and/or substances that are defined in the Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA) and/or the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA).

Hazardous Waste. Means all dangerous and extremely hazardous waste as defined in RCW [70.105.010](#) except for moderate risk waste.

Hazardous Waste Storage. The holding of dangerous waste for a temporary period as regulated by State Dangerous Waste Regulations, Chapter [173-303](#) WAC.

Hazardous Waste Treatment. The physical, chemical or biological processing of dangerous waste to make wastes nondangerous or less dangerous, safer for transport, amenable for energy or material resource recovery, amenable for storage, or reduced in volume.

Hazardous Waste Treatment and Storage Facility, Off-Site. The treatment and storage facilities that treat and store wastes from generators on properties other than those on which the off-site facilities are located.

Hazardous Waste Treatment and Storage Facility, On-Site. The treatment and storage facilities that treat and store wastes generated on the same geographically contiguous or bordering property.

Headwaters. Springs, lakes, ponds or wetlands that provide significant sources of water to a stream.

Healthy Soil. Soil that is of good quality with the capacity to sustain plant, animal, and human life by providing nutrients, air and water space to infiltrate, pollutant absorption and filtering, and habitat.

Heritage Tree. A tree or group of trees designated as such by the city in Chapter [20.770 VMC](#), Tree Conservation.

High-Intensity Land Use. Land uses which are associated with high levels of human activity or substantial habitat impacts including Residential, Commercial, and Industrial zoning districts.

Historic District. A geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, linkage or continuity of sites, buildings, structures or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

Historic Structure (Applies in Frequently Flooded Areas). Any structure that is:

1. Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places (a listing maintained by the Department of the Interior) or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register;
2. Certified or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary to qualify as a registered historic district;
3. Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior;
or
4. Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places in communities with historic preservation programs that have been certified either:
 - a. By an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior,
or
 - b. Directly by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs.

Home Occupation. A use conducted entirely within a residential building, which use is clearly incidental and secondary to the use of the dwelling for dwelling purposes, and complies with the criteria established by [20.860 VMC](#) Home Occupations.

Homeowners Association. A nonprofit corporation or association operating under a recorded land agreement through which:

1. Each person owning or purchasing a lot in a planned unit or other described land area is automatically by such ownership or purchase a member; and
2. Each lot is automatically subject to a charge for a proportionate share of the expenses for the organization's activities, such as maintaining a common area and improvements.

Household. An individual, two or more persons related by blood or marriage, a group of two or more disabled residents protected under the Federal Fair Housing Amendment Act of 1988, adult family homes as defined under Washington State law, or a group living arrangement where six or fewer residents receive supportive services such as counseling, foster care, or medical supervision at the dwelling unit by resident or nonresident staff. Up to six residents not related by blood or marriage who live together in a single-family dwelling or in conjunction with any of the above individuals or groups, shall also be considered a household. For purposes of this definition, minors living with parent or legal guardian shall not be counted as part of the maximum number of residents.

Hydric Soil. Soil that is saturated, flooded or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part. The presence of hydric soil shall be determined following the methods described in the Wetlands Delineation Manual defined in this chapter.

Hydrogeomorphic (HGM) Classification. System used to classify wetlands based on the position of the wetland in the landscape (geomorphic setting), the water source for the wetland, and the flow and fluctuation of the water once in the wetland.

Hydrophytic Vegetation. Macrophytic plant life growing in water or on a substrate that is at least periodically deficient in oxygen as a result of excessive water content. The presence of hydrophytic vegetation shall be determined following the methods described in the Wetlands Delineation Manual defined in this chapter. (Ord. M-4325 § 3, 2020; Ord. M-4179 § 62, 2016; Ord. M-4034 § 2, 2012)

20.150.040C Meanings of Specific Words and Terms I through L.

Impact. The effect of an activity on designated critical areas, their buffers or sensitive resources.

Impact Fee. The fee levied as a condition of issuance of a building permit or development approval to support necessary public improvements affected by the development such as the transportation system, park acquisition and development, and schools.

Impact, Indirect. Impacts resulting from activities in the environs of a designated critical area, its buffer or a sensitive resource. Indirect impacts can result from construction activities nearby (e.g., producing sediment that enters a wetland or noise that disturbs a species listed under the Endangered Species Act). Other examples of indirect impacts include: changing the hydrology of an area such that it reduces water flow to a wetland or water body; introducing a barrier to wildlife movement through an area (such as a road or facility with bright night lighting); or reducing the size of a resource such that it can no longer perform the functions at its former level. The relationship of a designated critical area, buffer or sensitive resource to its surroundings must be considered in evaluating indirect impacts.

Impact, Permanent. Impacts that result in the permanent loss of a designated critical area, its buffer or a sensitive resource.

Impact, Temporal. The long-term effects of an activity or development where functions can be replaced eventually but cannot and do not achieve a similar functionality in a short period of time. For example, replacing the functions of song bird habitat in a tree canopy provided by a 50 year-old palustrine forested wetland, may take over 20 years to develop at the impact site.

Impact, Temporary. Short-term effects lasting for a limited time and where functions can be replaced in a relatively short period of time (about one year). For example, replacing the functions of habitat for small mammals or water quality for palustrine emergent (PEM) wetlands (those principally vegetated with grasses and forbs) may be done in one growing season if the disturbance is not severe.

Impervious Surface. A nonvegetated surface area that either prevents or retards the entry of water into the soil mantle as under natural conditions prior to development. A nonvegetated surface area which causes water to run off the surface in greater quantities or at an increased rate of flow from the flow present under natural conditions prior to development. Common

impervious surfaces include, but are not limited to, structures, roof tops, walkways, patios, driveways, carports, parking lots or storage areas, concrete or asphalt paving, gravel roads, packed earthen materials, haul roads and soil surface areas compacted by construction operations, and oiled or macadam or other surfaces which similarly impede the natural infiltration of stormwater.

Improvement. Any permanent structure including building, paving, or infrastructure that becomes part of, placed upon, or is affixed to property.

Infill Development. Development that occurs on underutilized or challenged parcels.

Infill Development Plan. A plan that is required to be submitted with infill development which identifies the existing and proposed lot characteristics, including applicable standards and incentives.

Infill Land Division. The division of an infill parent parcel using some or all of the standards contained in the Infill Development Ordinance.

Infill Parcels. Parcels that meet the eligibility criteria of this chapter or those parcels created by the land division of an infill parent parcel through the application of the standards in the Infill Ordinance.

Infill Parent Parcel. Regarding Infill Development, the larger parcel of land from which infill parcels are divided.

Ingress. Access or entry.

Inordinate Light Source. Lighting source that is exceptionally bright or outside normal industry standards as found by the planning official.

Integrated Pest Management. A sustainable approach to managing pests by combining biological, cultural, physical, and chemical tools in a way that minimizes economic, health, and environmental risks.

Intermittent stream. Surface streams with no observable flow during 30 consecutive calendar days in a normal water year.

Junkyard/Salvage Yard. A place where waste, discarded, or salvaged materials are bought, sold, exchanged, baled, packed, disassembled, or handled, including auto wrecking yards,

house wrecking yards, used lumber yards, and places where such uses are conducted entirely within a completely enclosed building, but not including pawn shops or establishments for the sale, purchase, or storage of used furniture and household equipment, used cars in operable condition, or salvaged materials incidental to manufacturing operations.

Kennel. Shall mean any premises on which four or more dogs older than 5 months are kept, excluding veterinary clinics, animal hospitals, and dog daycare facilities.

Kitchen. Any room or rooms, or portion thereof, used or intended to be used for cooking or the preparation of food.

Land-disturbing activity. Regarding erosion control regulations, any activity that results in a change in the existing soil cover (both vegetative and nonvegetative) or existing soil topography. Land-disturbing activities include, but are not limited to, demolition, reconstruction, construction, clearing, grading, filling, and excavation.

Land Form Alteration. Any man-made change to improved or unimproved property including, but not limited to, the addition of buildings or other structures; mining; quarrying; dredging; filling; grading; earthwork construction; stockpiling of rock, sand, dirt or gravel or other earth material; paving; excavation or drilling operations located within the area of special flood hazard.

Landscaping. To beautify or improve a section of ground by contouring the land and planting flowers, shrubs or trees. Landscaping may also include nonvegetative improvements such as courtyards, fountains, pedestrian walkways, plazas, and medians.

Landslide hazard areas. Areas subject to landslides based on a combination of geologic, topographic, and hydrologic factors, including areas susceptible to landslide because of any combination of bedrock, soil, slope (gradient), slope aspect, structure, hydrology, or other factors; this includes, at a minimum, the following:

1. Areas of historic failures, such as:
 - a. Areas delineated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service as having a significant limitation for building site development;

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- b. Areas designated as quaternary slumps, earthflows, mudflows, lahars, or landslides on maps published by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) or DNR;
 - c. Areas with all three of the following characteristics:
 - i. Slopes steeper than 15 percent;
 - ii. Hillsides intersecting geologic contacts with a relatively permeable sediment overlying a relatively impermeable sediment or bedrock;
and
 - iii. Springs or groundwater seepage.
 2. Areas that have shown movement during the Holocene epoch (from 10,000 years ago to the present) or that are underlain or covered by mass wastage debris of this epoch.
 3. Slopes that are parallel or subparallel to planes of weakness (such as bedding planes, joint systems, and fault planes) in subsurface materials;
 4. Slopes having gradients steeper than 80 percent subject to rockfall during seismic shaking;
 5. Areas potentially unstable as a result of rapid stream incision, stream bank erosion, and undercutting by wave action, including stream channel migration zones;
 6. Areas located in a canyon or on an active alluvial fan, presently or potentially subject to inundation by debris flows or catastrophic flooding; and
 7. Any area with a slope of 40 percent or steeper and a vertical relief of 10 or more feet except areas composed of bedrock. A slope is delineated by establishing its toe and top and measured by averaging the inclination over at least 10 feet of vertical relief.

Lattice Tower. A wireless communications support structure, which consists of a network of vertical and horizontal supports and crossed metal braces, forming a tower that is usually triangular or square in cross-section.

Ldn. Annual Average Day/Night Sound Level. The "Ldn, Day/Night Sound Level," in decibels, is the 24-hour logarithmic average sound level, from midnight to midnight, obtained after adding

10 decibels to sound levels in the night from midnight to 7:00 a.m., and from 10:00 p.m. to midnight (0000 to 0700, and 2200 to 2400 hours), and then logarithmically averaged day-to-day over a 12-month period.

Legal Owner. The owner of record, as shown by the records of Clark County.

Livestock. Any horse, beef or dairy cattle, sheep, goat, llama, alpaca, mule, jack, jenny, burro, domesticated hare, rabbit, emu, ostrich, poultry or similar animal.

Liquefaction Hazard Areas. Liquefaction hazard areas are areas typically underlain by cohesionless soils of low density, usually in association with a shallow groundwater table, that lose substantial strength during earthquakes.

Load Space or Loading Area. An off-street space or berth on the same lot or parcel with a building or use, or contiguous to a group of buildings or uses, for the temporary parking of a vehicle which is loading or unloading, merchandise or materials.

Local Public Facility. A land use designed to serve the needs of the local neighborhood or community affected by the impact(s) of development. Local Public Facilities include, but are not limited to: elementary, middle, and high schools; fire stations; police stations; parks; and transit facilities. Local Public Facilities shall not include land use(s) of regional or community-wide significance, such as airports, colleges, hospitals, regional parks or community centers.

Logo. A group of letters, typically stylized, or symbols that represent a word, group of words or business name.

Lot Area. The computed area contained within the lot lines; said area to be exclusive of street or alley rights-of-way or access easements, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) easements, water detention/retention ponds, wetlands and wetland buffers which are delineated and recorded on plats and short plats.

Lot, Corner. A lot abutting upon two or more streets at their intersection, or upon two parts of the same street; such street or parts of the same street forming an interior angle of less than 135° within the lot lines.

Lot Coverage. That percentage of the total lot area covered by structures, including all projections except eaves, balconies, bay windows, or uncovered deck 42 inches or less above grade.

Lot Depth. The average distance measured from the front lot line to the rear lot line. In the case of a corner lot, the depth shall be the length of its longest side lot line.

Lot, Estate. A lot in a subdivision that contains a house and outbuildings constructed prior to the subdivision. The estate lot cannot be larger than one acre in area, and is exempt from the minimum density requirements of any residential district.

Lot, Flag. A lot generally in the shape of a flag where access is typically by a narrow, private right-of-way or driveway.

Lot, Interior. A lot or parcels of land other than a corner lot.

Lot, Legal. A parcel of land used or which is capable of being used under the regulations of this title, lawfully created as such in accordance with the subdivision laws or ordinances in effect at the time of its creation.

Lot Line. Any line bounding a lot as herein defined.

Lot Line, Front. The property line abutting a street or the edge of a private street, or primary access. For corner lots the front line is that with the narrowest frontage. When the lot line abutting a street is curved, the front lot line is the chord or straight line connecting the ends of the curve. For a flag lot, the front lot line is the shortest lot line adjoining the pole portion of the lot, excluding the unbuildable portion of the pole.

Lot Line, Rear. A lot line not abutting a street that is opposite and most distant from the front lot line.

Lot Line, Side. Any lot line that is not a front or a rear lot line.

Lot of Record. A lot shown on the records of the County Auditor at the time of the passage of an ordinance or regulation establishing the zoning district in which the lot is located.

Lot Size, Minimum. The area determined to be the minimum average lot size for each underlying zoning district prior to application of any lot size reduction allowed.

Lot, Through. Lot having front and rear frontage on two streets and/or highways. Lots with rear alley frontage shall not be considered through lots.

Lot Width. The horizontal distance between the side lot lines measured within the lot boundaries or the average horizontal distance measured halfway between the front and rear setback lines.

Low Impact Development (LID). Low impact development is a stormwater and land management strategy that strives to mimic pre-disturbance hydrologic processes of infiltration, filtration, storage, evaporation and transpiration by emphasizing conservation, use of on-site natural features, site planning, and distributed stormwater management practices that are integrated into a project design.

Low Impact Development Best Management Practices (BMPs). Low impact development best management practices are distributed stormwater management practices, integrated into a project design, that emphasize pre-disturbance hydrologic processes of infiltration, filtration, storage, evaporation and transpiration. LID BMPs include, but are not limited to, bioretention, rain gardens, permeable pavements, roof downspout controls, dispersion, soil quality and depth, vegetated roofs, minimum excavation foundations, and water re-use.

Low Impact Development Principles. Low impact development principles are land management strategies that emphasize conservation, use of onsite natural features, and site planning to minimize impervious surfaces, native vegetation loss, and stormwater runoff.

Lowest Floor. The lowest floor of the lowest enclosed area (including basement). An unfinished or flood resistant enclosed area below the base flood elevation, usable solely for parking of vehicles, building access or storage, in an area other than a basement area, is not considered a building's lowest floor, provided that such enclosure is not built so as to render the structure in violation of the applicable nonelevation design requirements of VMC [20.740.120\(J\)\(8\)\(c\)](#), [\(J\)\(10\)\(d\)](#), or [\(J\)\(11\)\(e\)](#).

Low-Income Housing. Housing for which the monthly housing expense is no greater than thirty percent of eighty percent of the median family income adjusted for family size for Clark County, Washington, as reported by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. For multi-family housing, this definition shall apply only to the number of units within such housing development as are required to comply with this limitation on monthly housing expense.

Low-Intensity Land Use. Land uses which are associated with low levels of human activity or low habitat impacts, including Open Space Greenway: Lettuce Fields and Vancouver Lake Lowlands and Open Space Natural zoning districts.

Low Noise Impact. Interior noise levels of Ldn 45 or less, considered for the purposes of Chapter 20.520 VMC, Noise Impact Overlay District, as acceptable for residential purposes. (Ord. M-4179 § 63, 2016; Ord. M-4154 § 2, 2016; Ord. M-4034 § 2, 2012)

20.150.040D Meanings of Specific Words and Terms M through P.

Main. See Water Main.

Maintain. To allow to continue in existence. When the context indicates, the word shall mean to preserve and care for a structure, or to improve in condition an area to such an extent that it remains attractive, safe, and presentable and carries out the purpose for which it was installed, constructed or required.

Major Thoroughfare. The principal, minor, collector arterials, and State highways, as shown on the Arterial Street Plan adopted in compliance with Chapter 35.77 RCW.

Management Plan. A plan detailing how operations and maintenance activities subject to the provisions of VMC 20.740 will be performed.

Manufacture. Includes production, processing, assembling, packaging or treatment of semi-finished or finished products from raw materials or previously prepared materials or components.

Manufactured Home, Designated – means a manufactured home constructed after June 15, 1976, in accordance with state and federal requirements for manufactured homes. Conforms to federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards (HUD Code – “Red Label”) rather than to the Building Code (“Gold Label”) requirements.

Manufactured Home, Mobile – Means a structure transportable in one or more sections, which is built on a permanent chassis, and is designed for use with or without a permanent foundation when attached to the required utilities. (Generally built before June 15, 1976). "Mobile manufactured homes" are not "recreational vehicles".

Manufactured Home, Modular – Means any home built in modules at a factory. Modular homes conform to all state and local building codes. Modules are transported on truck beds, and then joined together at the site. They are inspected by local officials. (Regulated under the IBC standards – State Building Code).

Manufactured Home, New – means any manufactured home required to be titled under Title 46 RCW, which was not titled to retail purchaser before July 1, 2005, and was not a “used mobile home” as defined in RCW 82.45.032. (Regulated under the HUD construction and safety standards).

Manufactured Home Development. An existing site containing spaces with required improvements and utilities that are leased for the long-term placement of manufactured homes. This term shall also include "mobile home parks" as that term is used in other titled of the Vancouver Municipal Code (VMC).

Manufactured Home Subdivision. An existing subdivision created for the placement of manufactured homes on individual lots.

Marquee. A roofed structure attached to and supported by the building and projecting over public property.

Master Plan. A comprehensive, long-range site plan for a development project. The project may be located on a single parcel or on several contiguous parcels which are owned by one or more parties working cooperatively and collectively, and is usually implemented in phases.

Mean Sea Level. For purposes of the National Flood Insurance Program, the vertical datum to which base flood elevations shown on a community’s Flood Insurance Rate Map are referenced.

Meandering Sidewalks. Those sidewalks separated by a nonuniform planting strip from the back of the curb.

Micro Facility. Regarding wireless communication facilities, a single antenna, or group of antennae, co-located on an existing tower, building or other appurtenance that is small in size and visually unobtrusive.

Mitigation. Mitigation is a six-step sequencing process used to reduce the severity of effects from activities that potentially affect sensitive resources:

1. Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action;

2. Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation, by using appropriate technology or by taking affirmative steps to avoid or reduce impacts;
3. Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating or restoring the affected environment;
4. Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation, and maintenance operations during the life of the action;
5. Compensating for the impact by replacing, enhancing or providing substitute resources or environments; and/or
6. Monitoring the impact and taking appropriate corrective measures.

Mitigation, Compensatory. Compensation for potential impacts to functions and values of critical areas (including fish and wildlife habitat, frequently flooded areas, geologic hazard areas, and wetlands) and their buffers.

Mixed-Use Development. The development of a tract of land, building or structure with a variety of complementary and integrated uses, such as, but not limited to, residential, office, manufacturing, retail, public or entertainment, in a compact urban form.

Mixed-Use Structure. A single structure containing at least two complementary, integrated, or mutually-supporting uses (such as housing, offices, manufacturing, retail, public service, or entertainment). The structure must achieve physical and functional integration within itself.

Moderate-Intensity Land Use. Land uses which are associated with moderate levels of human activity or substantial habitat impacts including Open Space Parks and Open Space Greenways: General zoning districts.

Mode. Refers to the means of transportation used by employees, including single-occupant vehicle, carpool, vanpool, transit, bicycle, and walking.

Monopole Tower. A wireless communications support structure, consisting of a single pole to support antennae and connecting appurtenances.

National Register of Historic Places. The national listing of properties significant to the nation's cultural history because of their documented importance to history, architectural history, engineering or cultural heritage.

Naturally occurring ponds. Ponds less than twenty acres and their submerged aquatic beds that provide fish or wildlife habitat, including those artificial ponds intentionally created from dry areas in order to mitigate impacts to ponds. Naturally occurring ponds do not include ponds deliberately designed and created from dry sites, such as canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, temporary construction ponds, and landscape amenities, unless such artificial ponds were intentionally created for mitigation.

Native. Native plants are those species on the City of Vancouver's Native Plant Species list (available from the Planning Official).

Native Vegetation. Vegetation that encompasses both that occurring naturally and vegetation well adapted to current and anticipated environmental conditions in this region.

New Construction. For the purposes of VMC [20.740.120](#), Frequently Flooded Areas, "new construction" means structures for which the "start of construction" commenced on or after September 5, 2012.

New Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision (Applies in Frequently Flooded Areas). A manufactured home park or subdivision for which the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including, at a minimum, the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads) is completed on or after the effective date of adopted floodplain management regulations by the community.

Noise Contour. The graphic depiction of the spatial extent to which an average noise level affects the area surrounding a source of noise. The contour is a line depicting equal points of impact.

Noise Contour, 65 Ldn. The most current 65 Ldn Noise Contour, as annually updated by the Port of Portland for the Portland International Airport using the criteria and methodology adopted by the Federal Aviation Administration for the purpose of establishing noise contours as a part of airport planning, or as provided by other objective sources for noise generations other than the Portland International Airport.

Noise, Environmental. Shall mean the intensity, duration, and character of sounds from any land use, measured at the property line of the receiving property.

Noise Impact. The extent to which a level of noise interferes with the full utilization of land.

Nonconforming, Legal. A use of land, building, structure or use which lawfully existed at the time of the adoption of this title or of any amendment thereto, but which does not conform with the use or development regulations imposed by this title or such amendment thereto.

Noncontributing. A property which either does not date to the historic period or has not retained sufficient physical integrity so as to convey its historic character.

Normal water year. A twelve-month period (October 1-September 30) with average precipitation based upon data from the past 50 years.

Noxious weeds. Non-native plants which are destructive, competitive, and difficult to control as defined by the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board.

Nudity. Regarding Adult Businesses, the showing of the human male or female genitals or pubic area, the showing of the female breast, with less than a fully opaque covering of any part of the nipple, or the showing of the covered male genitals in a discernibly turgid state.

Obligate, facultative wet, and facultative. Groupings of plants according to their frequency of occurrence in wetlands. Obligate wetland plants almost always (99 percent probability) occur in wetlands under natural conditions. Facultative wetland plants usually (67 percent-99 percent probability) occur in wetlands. Facultative plants are equally likely (34 percent-66percent probability) to occur in wetlands or nonwetlands. Such groupings are more fully defined in the Wetlands Delineation Manual defined in this chapter.

Obstruction. Any dam, wall, embankment, levee, dike, pile, abutment, projection, excavation, channel modification, bridge, conduit, culvert, building, wire, fence, rock, gravel, refuse, fill, structure or matter which is in, along, across or projecting into any channel, watercourse or regulatory flood hazard area; and which may impede, retard or change the direction of the flow of water, either in itself or by catching or collecting debris carried by such water or which is placed where the flow of water might carry the same downstream to the damage of life or property.

Occupant. Any individual living or sleeping in a building or having possession of a building or space therein. Unless otherwise stated, occupant is synonymous with tenant.

Occupancy Certificate. A city certificate allowing the use of a building or structure after it has been determined that all the requirements of applicable ordinances have been met.

Off-Site Impact. A condition that creates, imposes, aggravates or leads to inadequate, impractical, unsafe or unhealthy conditions on a site proposed for development or on off-site property or facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, noise, glare, and odor.

Off-Site Improvement. Improvements required to be made off-site to address impacts identified from an application for development and including, but not limited to, road widening and upgrading, storm water facilities, and traffic system improvements.

100-Year Flood. The flood having a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. Also referred to as the “base flood.”

100-Year Flood Elevation. The elevation that the 100-year flood is expected to reach. Also referred to as the “base flood elevation.”

Open Record Predecision Hearing. An open record hearing as defined by [197-11-775 WAC](#), which is held before the Planning Commission or Hearings Examiner prior to the closed record approval hearing before the City Council.

Oregon white oak woodland(s). In accordance with WDFW’s Priority Habitat & Species (PHS) List, these are stands of oak or oak/conifer associations where canopy coverage of the oak component of the stand is twenty-five percent, or where total canopy coverage of the stand is less than twenty-five percent, but oak accounts for at least fifty percent of the canopy coverage. The latter is often referred to as oak savanna. In non-urbanized areas west of the Cascades, priority oak habitat consists of stands less than one acre in size. In urban or urbanizing areas, single oaks or stands less than one acre may also be considered a priority when found to be particularly valuable to fish and wildlife.

Ordinary high water mark. (OHWM). That mark which is found by examining the bed and banks of a water body and ascertaining where the presence and action of waters are so common and usual, and so long continued in all ordinary years that the soils and vegetation have a character distinct from that of the abutting upland area. It also can also be established by fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as a clear, natural line

impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas. Where the ordinary high water mark cannot be found, it shall be the line of mean high water in areas adjoining fresh water. [WAC [173-22-030\(11\)](#)]

Ordinary Repair and Maintenance. The work for which a permit issued by the City of Vancouver is not required by law, and where the purpose and effect of such work is to correct any deterioration or decay of or damage to the real property or structure appurtenance therein and to restore the same, as nearly as may be practicable, to the condition prior to the occurrence of such deterioration, decay or damage.

Original Parcel. A lot, parcel or tract created in compliance with all regulations in effect at the time it was initially conveyed, that constitutes the basis for considering the appropriate provisions of this title for platting or short platting; provided, that any lot, parcel or tract conveyed in its present configuration prior to December 18, 1978 (the passage of the short plat ordinance, M-1930) which complies with current zoning requirements, shall be conclusively presumed to have been lawfully created.

Overlay Area. A special geographic area designated in a capital facilities plan to be served by a system improvement, which area is not generally contiguous with an established service area. An overlay area may be local (i.e., covering only a portion of a single service area), regional (i.e., covering portions or all of several service areas), or county wide (i.e., covering both incorporated and unincorporated areas).

Overlay Zone or District. A designated area within a base zoning district for which specific land use regulations apply, in addition to the base zoning requirements.

Owner. The owner of record of real property as shown on the tax rolls of the County, or a person purchasing a piece of property under contract. For the purpose of this title, in terms of violations and binding agreements between the city and the owner, the owner shall also mean a leaseholder, tenant, or other person in possession or control of the premises or property at the time of agreement, violation of agreement, or the provisions of this title.

Ownership Interest. A property interest in an existing single-family residence under a recorded deed or under a contract of purchase, recorded mortgage, recorded deed of trust or recorded lease by which the applicant is responsible under penalty of forfeiture, foreclosure or default for payment of real property taxes and/or local improvement district assessments. The

term shall also include a share ownership in a cooperative housing association, corporation or partnership if the applicant can establish that his or her share represents the specific unit or portion of such structure in which he or she resides.

Painted Wall or Wall Graphic. An advertisement painted directly on the wall of a building.

Parking Area, Public. An open area other than a street or other public way, used for the parking of automobiles and available to the public whether for a fee, free of charge or as an accommodation for clients or customers.

Parking Space. A permanently surfaced and marked area not less than that specified in Chapter [20.945](#) VMC Parking and Loading, excluding paved area necessary for access, for the parking of a motor vehicle.

Parking Storage. A location where vehicles are placed or left for maintenance, repair, sale, rental or future use.

Partition. See subdivision.

Party of Record. A person or group who makes an appearance in a proceeding through the submission of either written or verbal evidence. Groups shall designate one person as a representative or contact.

Pedestrian Area. Any sidewalk, walking trail, courtyard, plaza or other area intended primarily for use by pedestrians.

Perimeter. The boundaries or borders of a lot, tract or parcel of land.

Permitted Use. Those uses allowed as a matter of right within certain zoning districts provided that such use is in accordance with requirements of the particular district and general conditions stated elsewhere in this title.

Permittee. The person who is proposing to use or who is using the land pursuant to any permit required herein.

Person. Any individual, partnership, co-partnership, firm, company, corporation, association, joint stock company, trust, estate, governmental entity, or any other legal entity; or their legal representatives, agents, or assigns. This definition includes all federal, state or local governmental entities.

Person with Functional Disabilities. A person who, because of a recognized chronic physical, mental condition or disease, is functionally disabled to the extent of:

1. needing care, supervision or monitoring to perform activities of daily living or instrumental activities of daily living;
2. needing supports to ameliorate or compensate for the effects of the functional disability so as to lead as independent a life as possible;
3. having a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities;
4. having a record of having such an impairment;
5. being regarded as having such an impairment, but such term does not include current, illegal use of or active addiction to a controlled substance.

Pervious Surface. Pervious surface is a surface material that allows stormwater to infiltrate into the ground. Examples include lawn, landscape, pasture, native vegetation areas, and permeable pavements.

Petroleum. Crude oil, gases (including natural gas), natural gasoline, and other related hydrocarbons, oil shale, and the products of any of such resources.

Petroleum/Oil Refinery. An industry engaged in refining crude petroleum/oil into refined petroleum/oil. Petroleum/oil refining involves one or more of the following activities: 1) fractionation; 2) straight distillation of crude oil; and 3) cracking.

Planned Action Ordinance. The applicable city ordinance establishing the geographic boundaries, impact thresholds, and mitigation measures for the particular planned action subarea in which a planned action project is located.

Planned Action Project or Development Application. A project or application for a project which meets the criteria for designation as a planned action under the provisions of Section [43.21.031](#) RCW, Section [197-11-164](#) WAC, Section [20.790.630](#), and the particular planned action ordinance for the planned action subarea in which the project is located.

Planned Action Subarea. A specific geographic area, less extensive than the city's jurisdictional boundaries, for which a subarea plan under Chapter [36.70A](#) RCW and an EIS under Chapter

[43.21C](#) RCW have been prepared and adopted to provide for prospective environmental review and comprehensive planning for future development.

Planning Commission. The Planning Commission of the City of Vancouver, Washington.

Planning Official. The city official within the community development department charged with administratively approving land use permits or her/his designate.

Planting strip. The area from the back of curb and the front of sidewalk or the area in the raised median used for grass or approved landscaping plants.

Plat. A final map, diagram or written document containing all the descriptions, specifications, and provisions concerning a subdivision of land.

Plat, Final. The final drawing of the subdivision or short subdivision and dedication prepared for filing for record with the Clark County Auditor and containing all elements and requirements set forth in this title and in state law.

Plat, Preliminary. An orderly and approximate drawing to scale of either a proposed subdivision or short subdivision showing the general layout of streets and alleys, lots and blocks, and other required submittals which shall furnish a basis for the approval or disapproval.

Poultry. Domesticated fowl such as chickens, ducks, geese and similar, and all game birds which are legally held in captivity.

Predetermination, Archaeological. A procedure by which an archaeologist makes a determination of the probable existence (presence or absence) of an archaeological site in a disturbance area and a recommendation to proceed or not to proceed with an archaeological resource survey in compliance with the provisions of this chapter.

Predominant. Regarding Infill Development, the most frequently occurring residential design characteristic along both sides of the road frontage from intersection to intersection (or block face).

Predictive Model. The classification of property according to the probability of its having archaeological resources. The probability levels are low, low-moderate, moderate, moderate-high, and high, which are based on a combination of information from inventories and predictive models provided by DAHP, other agencies, tribal governments and local permit

review. The probability levels within the urban growth boundary of the city are generally shown on maps provided by Clark County Geographic Information Systems.

Premises. A lot or number of lots on which is situated a building or group of buildings designed as a unit, or on which a building or group of buildings are to be constructed.

Preserved. Leaving in the present condition.

Primary. The largest or most substantial use or element on the property, as in “primary” activity, residence, entrance, etc. All other similar elements are secondary in size or importance.

Priority Area: The area within a Priority Species’ natural geographic distribution within which protective measures and/or management actions are need to (1) support viable populations over the long term and (2) avoid creating isolated subpopulations.

Priority Habitat: A State of Washington habitat type with unique or significant value to many species; an area with one or more of the following attributes: (1) comparatively high fish and wildlife density; (2) comparatively high species diversity; (3) important breeding habitat; (4) important seasonal ranges; (5) important movement corridors; (6) limited availability; (7) high vulnerability to habitat alteration; or (8) unique or dependent species. Examples of Priority Habitats include, but are not limited to, instream, riparian, Oregon white oak woodlands, and freshwater wetlands.

Priority Habitats and Species (PHS). Priority Habitats and Species are important fish and wildlife species and habitats as determined by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. Priority Habitats include endangered, threatened, sensitive, candidate, and vulnerable species and habitats deemed priorities of WDFW and reflective of best available science.

Priority Species. A State of Washington fish or wildlife species requiring protective measures and/or management actions to ensure its survival. A Priority Species fits one or more of the following criteria: (1) is a State-listed endangered, threatened, sensitive, or candidate species; (2) has vulnerable aggregations; or (3) is of recreational, commercial, and/or tribal importance. Examples of Priority Species include, but are not limited, to steelhead/rainbow trout, bull trout/Dolly Varden, great blue heron, cavity-nesting ducks, fisher, and elk.

Private Open Space. The space included within a development for recreational use.

Process Type. Shall mean the process by which a land use decision is rendered.

Process Type, Legislative. A legislative action or decision is the making of law, as opposed to the application of existing law to a particular use, such as the adoption of or amendment to a comprehensive plan or development regulation.

Process Type, Quasi-Judicial. Refers to an action or decision that requires substantial discretion or judgment in applying the standards or criteria of this title, and usually involves a public hearing.

Prohibited Use. A use that is not permitted in a base zoning, overlay or plan district. Any use that is not specifically enumerated in this title as a permitted or conditional use or has not been determined by the planning official to be a legal nonconforming use.

Project Area. The portion of a site where development activity will take place.

Project Improvements. Project improvements shall mean site improvements and facilities that are planned and designed to provide service for a particular development project and that are necessary for the use and convenience of the occupants or users of the project, and are not system improvements. No improvement or facility included in the capital facilities plan shall be considered a project improvement.

Project Permit. Any land use or environmental permit or approval for a proposed action which is subject to the procedural provisions of Chapter [20.210 VMC](#).

Protected Area. All land where no construction activity, tree removal, vegetation removal or soil compaction is allowed and includes the CRZ of those trees to be preserved.

Public Facilities. Regarding the Public Facilities Master Plan Ordinance:

1. Governmental facilities such as civic centers; libraries; auditoriums; police, fire and other public safety facilities; public streets; parks, open space and recreational facilities; and water, sewer; and storm water treatment facilities;
2. Public transit facilities including airports, train stations and transit centers;
3. Publicly and privately-owned medical centers;
4. Public and private elementary, middle and high schools;
5. Public and private colleges and universities; and

6. Religious institutions.

Public Improvement Plans. The technical drawings of the design and proposed construction of such items as streets, water and sewer systems, drainage and erosion control systems, meeting the requirements established by the City of Vancouver, Washington.

Public Place of Amusement, Public Amusement/Entertainment, and Public Entertainment. An amusement, diversion, entertainment, show, performance, exhibition, display or like activity, for the use or benefit of a member or members of the public, or advertised for the use or benefit of a member or members of the public, held, conducted, operated or maintained for a profit, either direct or indirect. (Ord. M-4402 § 3(C), 2023; Ord. M-4380 § 3, 2022; Ord. M-4325 § 3, 2020; Ord. M-4179 § 64, 2016; Ord. M-4170 § 6, 2016; Ord. M-4034 § 2, 2012)

20.150.040E Meanings of Specific Words and Terms Q through T.

Qualified Professional. A person with experience and training in the pertinent scientific discipline, and who is a qualified scientific expert with expertise appropriate for the relevant critical area subject in accordance with WAC [365-195-905\(4\)](#).

1. *Urban Forestry.* Qualified professionals in urban forestry must have academic and field experience that makes them competent in urban forestry. This may include arborists certified by the International Society of Arboriculture or foresters certified by the Society of American Foresters. Qualified professionals in urban forestry must possess the ability to evaluate the health and hazard potential of existing trees, and the ability to prescribe appropriate measures necessary for the preservation of trees during land development.
2. *Critical Areas.* Qualified professionals in critical areas must have obtained a BS or BA or equivalent degree in biology, engineering, environmental studies, fisheries, geomorphology or a related field, and two years of related work experience. In addition:
 - a. A qualified professional for frequently flooded areas or a must be a registered professional engineer or hydrogeologist licensed in the State of Washington with experience in the analyses required for the relevant

hazard(s). A qualified professional may also be an architect where provided by state or federal law.

- b. A qualified professional or specialist for wetlands must have a minimum of five years experience in wetland science, including experience preparing wetland reports for review by regulatory agencies or professional certification (Professional Wetland Scientist Certification).
- c. A qualified professional for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas must be a qualified ecologist; biologist; or person with an environmental science degree, professional experience, certification, and/or licensure related to the relevant type of habitat in question.
- d. A qualified professional for Geologic Hazard Areas must be a Washington-licensed geologist or engineering geologist or a Washington-registered professional geotechnical engineer.

Reasonably Funded. A mitigation measure or other transportation system improvement scheduled for completion and designated as funded upon adoption of the most recent version of the Six-Year Street Plan.

Reasonably Safe from Flooding. Development that is designed and built to be safe from flooding based on consideration of current flood elevation studies, historical data, high water marks and other reliable data known to the community. In unnumbered A zones where flood elevation information is not available and cannot be obtained by practicable means, “reasonably safe from flooding” means that the lowest floor is at least two feet above the highest adjacent grade.

Recreational Vehicle. A vehicle which is built on a single chassis, 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection, designed to be self-propelled or permanently towable by a light-duty truck, and designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling, but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use.

Regional Industry. An industrial or commercial land use which provides significant community-wide or regional economic benefit through the creation of new economic growth and employment opportunity.

Regional Public Facility. A land use which is designed to serve the needs of the community or region affected by the impact(s) of development. Regional Public Facilities include: airports, colleges, hospitals, regional parks or community centers.

Regulatory Flood. The flood used to define the outer boundary lines of the Flood Fringe. The 100-year flood will be the regulatory flood for the purposes of regulations contained in this title, but a lesser or greater flood limit may be set in any ordinance applying FF (Flood Fringe) or FW (Floodway) zoning to any land. The regulatory flood shall be based upon Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) provided by the Federal Insurance Administration (FIA).

Remodel. An internal or external modification to an existing building or structure that does not increase the site coverage.

Remove or Removal. The act of removing a tree by digging up, cutting down or any act which causes a tree to die, significantly impacts its natural growing condition and/or results in diminished environmental benefits or a hazard tree: including but not limited to, damage inflicted on the root system by machinery, storage of material or soil compaction, changing the ground level in the area of the tree's root system, damage inflicted on the tree permitting infections or infestation, excessive pruning, paving with concrete, asphalt or other impervious material within the drip-line or any other action deemed harmful to the tree.

Residential Care Center. Any state or federally approved facility, other than a clinic, used as a residence for the care or rehabilitation of dependent children, the elderly, and the physically and/or mentally handicapped. Residential care centers shall provide care to seven or more residents.

Residential Care Home. Any state or federally approved dwelling used as a residence for the care or rehabilitation of dependent children, the elderly, and the physically and/or mentally handicapped. Residential care homes shall provide care for eight or fewer residents.

Restoration. Measures taken to restore an altered or damaged natural feature including:

1. Active steps taken to restore damaged critical areas or their buffers to the functioning condition that existed prior to an unauthorized alteration; and
2. Actions performed to reestablish structural and functional characteristics of the critical area that have been lost by alteration, past management activities, or catastrophic events. See also wetland creation, re-establishment, and rehabilitation.

Right-of-Way, Public. The property held by the city or other governmental jurisdiction for existing and/or future public access including land occupied or intended to be occupied by a street, crosswalk, pedestrian and bike paths, railroad, road, electric transmission line, oil or gas pipeline, water main, sanitary or storm sewer main, street trees or other special use. The usage of the term right-of-way for land division purposes shall mean that every right-of-way hereafter established and shown on a plat or map is to be separate and distinct from the lots or parcels adjoining such right-of-way and not included within the dimensions or areas of such lots or parcels.

Riparian area. The area adjacent to aquatic systems with flowing water (e.g., rivers, perennial or intermittent streams, seeps, springs, or lakes) that contains elements of both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems which mutually influence each other. Riparian areas are three dimensional: longitudinal up and down streams, lateral to the width of the riparian ecosystem, and vertical from below the water table to above the canopy of mature site-potential trees. Riparian areas are defined differently in and for the purposes of the Vancouver Shoreline Management Master Program.

Riparian Buffer The Riparian Buffer is the area extending from the Riparian Management Area outward a specified distance and functions to protect the Riparian Management Area and stream, river, or lake. In situations where a channel migration zone (CMZ) is present, this occurs within one site potential tree height (SPTH) measured from the edges of the CMZ. Together, the Riparian Management Area and Riparian Buffer are the areas that have the potential to provide full riparian functions and combine to form the Riparian Area. See Figure 20.740-1 or Figure 20.170.030-6.

Riparian Management Area. The regulated area that includes the land adjacent to a lake, stream, or river measured horizontally from the ordinary high water mark to a specified distance from the waterbody. Together, the Riparian Management Area and Riparian Buffer are the areas that have the potential to provide full riparian functions and combine to form the Riparian Area. See Figure 20.740-1 or Figure 20.170.030-6.

Road. Means the same as street.

Roof. The exterior surface and its supporting structure on the top of a building.

Roof Line. The uppermost line of the roof of a building or, in the case of an extended facade, the uppermost height of said facade.

Runway. A defined area at an airport designed and constructed to accommodate the landing and takeoff of aircraft along its length.

Satellite Earth Station. The facilities used for reception and processing of programming services from a satellite prior to transfer to terrestrial distribution systems or for processing of programming and services from a terrestrial source before transmission via satellite.

School. An institution primarily engaged in academic instruction for all or part of the K through 12 educational program, public, parochial or private, and recognized or approved as such by the state. A school may also include the following uses: common accessory uses such as associated meeting rooms, auditoriums, athletic facilities and support facilities related to school district operations (e.g., offices, kitchens, counseling centers, head start, childcare, adult education, and family support centers) except for transportation, warehouse/storage, and maintenance facilities.

School, Pre. An institution primarily in child training and academic instruction prior to the mandatory first grade.

School, Specialized Instructional. An institution providing instruction and training in a specific service, art, dance, driving, and music. Includes vocation or trade such as business, real estate, travel, auto machinery repair, welding, and skill center.

Search Ring. Regarding wireless communications facilities, a geographic area identified by the communications service provider as necessary within which to locate a wireless facility or to enhance or expand its service.

Secure Community Transition Facility. A residential facility for persons civilly committed and conditionally released from a total confinement facility, operated by the Secretary of Washington Social and Health Services or under contract with the secretary pursuant to RCW [71.09.020\(10\)](#) as described in RCW [71.09.250](#) or as amended.

Seismic Hazard Area. These are areas subject to severe risk of damage as a result of earthquake-induced ground shaking, slope failure, settlement, soil liquefaction, or debris flow. See VMC 20.740.140 for designation of seismic hazard areas.

Senior Housing. Housing limited to persons aged 62 years or older.

Sensitive Areas. For the purposes of Chapter 20.770 VMC Tree, Vegetation, and Soil Conservation, this includes streams, geologically hazardous areas, fish and wildlife habitat areas, wetlands, and their associated buffers.

Sensitive Resources. Any of the following types of sensitive areas and resources or cultural resources, when properly identified, designated or recorded as such by the applicable local, state or federal regulations:

1. Known archaeological and historical sites (to be recorded with the state);
2. FWHCAs (as identified in VMC 20.740.110);
3. Frequently Flooded Areas (as identified in VMC 20.740.120);
4. Geological Hazard Areas (as identified in VMC 20.740.130);
5. Wetlands (as identified in VMC 20.740.140); and
6. Tree tracts, set aside for the preservation of tree groves, as defined in VMC 20.770 and approved by the city's Urban Forester; and
7. Riparian areas, as identified in the Vancouver Shoreline Management Master Program.
8. Natural soils and native vegetation preserved as part of a low impact development.

SEPA. State Environmental Policy Act, as amended.

SEPA Rules. Chapter 197-11 WAC, as adopted, revised, and amended by Ecology.

Service Area. A geographic area described in the city capital facilities plan in which a defined set of public facilities provides service to development within the area, provided, that the service area for schools shall be the applicable school district. Service areas may be separately described for each type of public facility.

Serviceable. For the purposes of 20.775 VMC, Wetland and Water Bodies Protection, serviceable means presently usable.

Setback. The minimum allowable horizontal distance from a given point or line of reference, such as a property line, to the nearest vertical wall or other element of a building or structure or edge of vehicle parking area as defined herein. Where a sidewalk or private roadway is

placed in an easement, the setback shall be measured from the back of sidewalk or edge of easement if there is no sidewalk.

Sexually-Oriented Adult Arcade and Sexually Oriented Adult Arcade Premises. Any premises on which any sexually-oriented adult arcade device is located and to which patrons, customers, and/or members of the public are admitted.

Sexually-Oriented Adult Arcade Device. Also known as panorama, preview, picture arcade, or peep show, any device which, for payment of a fee, membership fee or other charge, is used to exhibit or display a picture, view, film, videotape or videodisc, live show or other graphic display of specified anatomical areas. All such devices are denominated under this ordinance by the term sexually-oriented adult arcade device.

Sexually-Oriented Adult Entertainment. Any entertainment conducted in a public place of amusement where such entertainment involves a person appearing or performing in a state of nudity, as defined herein.

Sexually-Oriented Adult Entertainment Premises. Any premises to which the public, patrons or members are invited or admitted and wherein an entertainer provides sexually-oriented adult entertainment on a regular basis and as a substantial part of the business operation.

Shorelines of the State. Shorelines as defined in the Shoreline Management Master Program.

Short Plat. A map or representation of a short subdivision.

Sidewalk. A facility made of concrete or other approved material for the conveyance of pedestrians usually adjacent to a street or between streets.

Sign. Any structure, device, advertisement, advertising device or visual representation intended to advertise, identify or communicate information to attract the attention of the public for any reason.

Sign Area. Means the entire area of a sign on which graphics, letters, figures, symbols, trademarks and/or text is to be placed, excluding sign structure, architectural embellishments and framework. Sign area is calculated by measuring the perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of the module or sign face containing the graphics, letters, figures, symbols, trademarks, and/or text; provided, however, the area of any sign using individual letters, numbers or symbols with a canopy, awning or wall as the background, without added decoration or change

in the canopy, awning or wall, shall be the area within the shortest line drawn to include all letters, design and tubing which are a part of the sign or structure. For illuminated awnings the area shall be limited to the area within the shortest line drawn to include all copy and graphics, excluding illuminated areas outside of these lines.

Sign, Awning. A sign attached to or incorporated into an awning.

Sign, Billboard. An outdoor advertising structure, 12 foot by 25 foot or larger, designed and constructed to carry posters.

Sign, Business Complex. A sign which is typically free-standing and is designed to identify multiple businesses in a business complex.

Sign, Canopy. A sign attached to or incorporated into a canopy.

Sign, Commercial. Any sign that advertises a product, service, entertainment or commodity sold or offered on the premises where it is located.

Sign, Complex. (Auto Dealership Plan District). A sign with the purpose of identifying the area and/or containing more than one manufacturers brand.

Sign, Construction. A temporary sign giving the name or names of principal contractors, architects, lending institutions, or other persons or firms responsible for construction on the site where the sign is located, together with other related information.

Sign, Directional. A sign designed and erected solely for the purpose of traffic or pedestrian direction, and which is placed on the property to which or on which the public is directed.

Sign, Electronic Message Center (EMC). Electronic message center (EMC) means an electrically activated sign whose message content, either in whole or in part, may be changed by means of electronic programming.

Sign, Elevation. Regarding sign regulations, the portion of any building exterior enclosing the applicant's place of business, measured horizontally by width of occupancy and vertically by height of occupancy on the street building frontage. In the case of a single-story building, vertical height of occupancy is measured to the eave or parapet line. For partial occupancy in a multi-story building, vertical height of occupancy is measured from floor line to floor line.

Sign Face. Means the portion of the sign on which the graphics, letters, figures, symbols, trademark or text is placed.

Sign, Fascia. A flat sign which projects less than one foot from the face or wall of the building, including parapet, upon which it is affixed, painted or attached, running parallel for its whole length to the face or wall of the building, and which does not extend beyond the horizontal width of such building.

Sign, Flashing. Any sign which contains an intermittent or flashing light source or which includes the illusion of intermittent or flashing light by means of animation or an externally-mounted intermittent light source. Time and temperature signs are excluded from this definition. For the purpose of this Title, EMC's (consistent with the standards of VMC Section [20.960.060 I](#) and Section [20.960.070 I](#)) shall not be considered flashing signs.

Sign, Franchise. (Auto Dealership Plan District). A sign that identifies the manufacturers brand and/or name.

Sign, Free Standing. (Pole Signs and Monument Signs). A sign that is not attached to a building and is erected on a frame connected to the ground. Pole signs and monument signs are specific types of freestanding signs. A freestanding sign does not include a portable sign.

Sign Height. The vertical distance measured from grade at the point of support to the top of the sign or the sign's structure.

Sign Maintenance. The repair or refurbishment of a sign, sign structure or any part of each.

Sign, Marquee. A sign attached to or incorporated into a marquee.

Sign, Messages Without a Cabinet, Area of. The area of any single geometric shape which encompasses all lettering and/or graphic message.

Sign, Monument. Means a sign and supporting structure which is attached to the ground and has similar top and bottom dimensions and is constructed as a solid structure or one which gives the appearance of a continuous and unbroken mass, with no separations between the sign and the base.

Sign, Multi-faced. A sign with more than one face. These types of signs shall be considered one (1) sign for the purpose of determining the number of signs allowed.

Sign, NIT. A measurement of brightness used to rate luminous displays. NIT is expressed in "candelas per square meter".

Sign, Official. Means the same as Public-Sector Sign.

Sign, Off-Premises. A third-party sign that advertises goods, products, services or facilities or directs persons to a location different from where the sign is installed.

Sign, On-Premises. A sign which carries only advertisement strictly incidental to a lawful use of the premises on which it is located, including signs or sign devices indicating the business transacted, services rendered, goods sold or produced on the premises, name of the business, and name of the person, firm or corporation occupying the premises.

Sign, Pole. A sign that is supported permanently upon the ground by poles or braces and not attached to any building.

Sign, Political Campaign. Any temporary sign which displays the name and/or picture of an individual seeking election or appointment to a public office or which pertains to a forthcoming public election or referendum or which advocates political views or policies.

Sign, Portable - Permanent. Permanent portable signs shall be defined as "onsite" signs placed in the right-of-way along the business frontage and on the same side of the street of the building or establishment which it advertises. Permanent portable signs shall be meant for continuous display during the hours the business is open and shall have the primary purpose of identifying the business.

Sign, Portable - Temporary. Temporary portable signs shall be defined as "off-site" signs placed in the right-of-way advertising an approved business or use. Temporary portable signs shall be displayed during the hours the business is open and shall have the sole purpose of identifying the business or providing directions.

Sign, Private Non-Commercial. Any sign under 6 square feet that does not advertise a product, service, entertainment, or commodity sold or offered on the premises where it is located.

Sign, Projecting. Shall mean any sign other than a wall sign, which is attached to or projects 12 inches or more from a structure or building face or wall.

Sign, Public-Sector. Any sign erected by any federal, state, county or city governmental agency or at the direction of any such governmental agency or court.

Sign, Public Service Information. A sign that provides general public service information to the public such as time, date, temperature, weather or directional information.

Sign, Reader Board. A sign constructed for the placing of advertising messages, which messages are changeable by use of manually removable or electrically changeable letters.

Sign, Rooftop. A sign erected upon the roof of a building, the entire face of which is situated above the roof line of the building to which it is attached, and which is wholly or partially supported by said building.

Sign, Rotating. A sign, any portion of which moves or is movable by any mechanical manner.

Sign, Secondary. A second free-standing sign on a given frontage in excess of 300 linear feet.

Sign, Sidewalk. A portable sign, typically in the shape of an inverted V, with two sign boards attached to each other at the top of the sign; also known as a sandwich board or A-frame sign. Each board shall be considered a separate sign face for purposes of determining allowable area of sign.

Sign, Temporary. Any sign that is not permanently installed or affixed to any sign structure or building, and not displayed for longer than 30 consecutive calendar days. In the case of construction project signs, they may be maintained for the duration of construction.

Sign, Time and Temperature. Means the same as Public Service Information Sign.

Sign, Vehicle. Any sign attached to or placed on a parked vehicle or trailer used principally for advertising purposes, rather than transportation, but excluding signs relating to the sale, lease, or rental of the vehicle or trailer and excluding signs which identify a firm or its product on a vehicle operated during the normal course of business.

Sign, Video. A sign providing information in both a horizontal and vertical format (as opposed to linear), through use of pixel and sub-pixel technology having the capacity to create continuously changing sign copy in a full spectrum of colors and light intensities.

Sign, Wall. Means the same as Painted Wall or Wall Graphic.

Sign, Window. Any sign affixed to (or painted on) the inside or outside of a window and intended to be viewed from the exterior of the structure.

Single Impact. An individual incidence of noise, actually measured in decibels, which may be heard on a property and which may be greater or lesser than the Ldn value, which is derived from the logarithmic averaging of single impacts within a period of time.

Significance. A quality of a property which helps one understand the history of the local area, state or nation by illuminating the local, statewide or nationwide impact of the events or persons associated with the property or its architectural type or style in information potential. The local area may be as large as Clark County or Southwest Washington or as small as a neighborhood. Local significance may apply to a property that illustrates a theme that is important to one or more localities; state significance to a theme important to the history of the state; and national significance to property of exceptional value in representing or illustrating an important theme in the history of the nation.

Single Room Occupancy (SRO). Occupancy by a single individual of a unit that contains no sanitary facilities or food preparation facilities or contains either but not both types of facilities.

Site. Any plot or parcel of land or combination of contiguous lots or parcels of land.

Site Class. The classification of a site based on the productivity of its dominant tree species. Site classes vary based on local differences in soil nutrients and moisture, light and temperature regimes, and topography. Site classes are typically described as most productive (I) through least productive (V).

Site Potential Tree Height (SPTH). The average maximum height of the tallest dominant trees for a given age and site class.

Six-Year Street Plan. That portion of the city's Capital Facilities Plan which inventories planned street and road construction and improvement, and which designates such construction projects and improvements as funded or nonfunded.

Slope. The deviation of a surface from horizontal, usually expressed in percent or degrees.

SMA. The State Shoreline Management Act of 1971, as amended.

Soft Armoring Techniques. Techniques that apply the principles of the biological, ecological, and soils sciences and structural engineering to build structures which, using live plant

materials as a main structural component, stabilize the soil against erosion, sedimentation, and flooding. Also referred to as “bioengineering techniques.”

Sound Transmission Reduction. Reduction of sound or noise from unit to unit utilizing the standards of the City Adopted Building Code(s).

Special Provisions. Street construction requirements peculiar to a special project that are not otherwise thoroughly or satisfactorily detailed and set forth in the standard specifications or standard plans.

Special Valuation Tax Incentive Program. The local option program that makes available to property owners a special tax valuation for rehabilitation of historic register properties under which the assessed value of an eligible historic property is determined at a rate that excludes, for up to ten years, the actual cost of the rehabilitation.

Specified Anatomical Areas. Regarding Adult Businesses, less than completely and opaquely covered: human genitals, pubic region, buttock and female breast below a point immediately above the top of the areola; and human male genitals in a discernibly turgid state even if completely and opaquely covered.

Specified Sexual Activities. Regarding Adult Businesses, human genitals in a state of sexual stimulation or arousal; acts of human masturbation, sexual intercourse or sodomy; and fondling or other erotic touching of human genitals, pubic region, buttock or female breast.

Standard Industrial Classification (SIC). A classification pursuant to the Standard Industrial Classification Manual issued by the United States Office of Management and Budget. This system was replaced by the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS).

Start of Construction. The start of permanent construction or substantial improvement activity on a site within 180 days of the issuance of a building permit. Permanent construction activities include the pouring of slab or footings, the installation of pilings, construction of columns or any work beyond site preparation, excavation, setting of temporary forms or the placement of accessory buildings; or the placement of a manufactured home on a foundation. For a substantial improvement, the actual start of construction means the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor, or other structural part of the building, whether or not that alteration affects the external dimensions of the building.

Stealth Design. A wireless communications facility's support structure, antennae or accessory equipment structure that is designed to blend in with the existing physical environment, and reduce visual impacts to the extent possible.

Storage, Open. Storage of property outside of a fully enclosed building.

Storage Space. Sufficient space, either in individual dwelling units or common storage rooms, to provide adequate, secure, and convenient storage for items owned by building tenants.

Stormwater. Stormwater is that portion of precipitation that does not naturally percolate into the ground or evaporate, but flows via overland flow, interflow, pipes and other features of a stormwater drainage system into a defined surface waterbody or a constructed infiltration facility.

Stormwater Conveyance. Parts of a stormwater facility (such as pipes, culverts, swales, etc.) that are constructed specifically to transport water from one point to another. See Stormwater Facility.

Stormwater Facility. A constructed component of a stormwater drainage system, designed or constructed to perform a particular function or multiple functions. Stormwater facilities include, but are not limited to, pipes, swales, ditches, culverts, street gutters, detention ponds, retention ponds, constructed wetlands, infiltration devices, catch basins, oil/water separators, biofiltration swales, bioretention, permeable pavement, and vegetated roofs.

Stormwater Manual. Stormwater Manual means the Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington, which is the 5-volume technical manual prepared by the Washington State Department of Ecology Water Quality Program, December 2014, Publication No. 14-10-055 (a revision of Publication No. 12-10-030), 5 volumes, and as hereafter amended.

Stormwater Permit. Stormwater Permit means the City of Vancouver's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit issued August 1, 2013, which was modified, Effective January 16, 2014, by the Washington State Department of Ecology, and as hereafter amended or reissued.

Story. That portion of a building between the surface of any floor and the surface of the next floor above it; or, if there is no floor above it, the space between such floor and ceiling.

Stream. Water contained within a channel, either perennial or intermittent, and classified according to WAC [222-16-030](#) or WAC [222-16-031](#). Streams also include natural watercourses modified by humans. Streams do not include drainage ditches which are not modifications of natural watercourses.

Street. A private or public way designed primarily for vehicular traffic. It includes the terms road, highway, avenue, boulevard, thoroughfare, or other traffic way, and usually includes improvements, including curbs, sidewalks, and street pavement within the right-of-way.

Street Frontage. The linear frontage of a parcel of property abutting a single public street.

Street Functional Classification System. The adopted hierarchy of street use as it relates to volume, speed, regional, area-wide, and local characteristics.

Street, Private. A thoroughfare that is privately owned providing a means of access to a property or properties.

Street, Public. A thoroughfare or right-of-way dedicated, deeded, condemned or otherwise acquired by the public for use as such, other than an alley, which affords the principal means of access to abutting property including avenue, place, way, drive, lane, boulevard, highway, road, and any other thoroughfare.

Structure. Anything constructed or built, any edifice, building of any kind or any piece of work artificially built-up or composed of parts joined together in some definite manner, which requires location on the ground or is attached to something having a location on the ground, including swimming pools, wading pools and covered patios, excepting outdoor areas such as paved areas, walks, tennis courts and similar recreation areas. For the purposes of VMC [20.740.120](#), Frequently Flooded Areas, a structure is a walled and roofed building, or a gas or liquid storage tank that is principally above ground.

Subdivision. The division or re-division of land into ten or more lots for the purpose of sale, lease or transfer of ownership. The term subdivision also applies to an area or tract of land that has been subdivided.

Subdivision, Short. The division, re-division or partition of land into nine or fewer lots, tracts, parcels, sites or divisions for the purpose of sale, lease or transfer of ownership.

Substantial Damage. Damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its pre-damaged condition would equal or exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred.

Substantial Disturbance. Disturbance such that little or no useful archaeological data could be obtained.

Substantial Improvement. Any repair, reconstruction, or improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure either:

1. Before the improvement or repair is started; or
2. If the structure has been damaged and is being restored, before the damage occurred.

“Substantial improvement” is considered to occur at the start of construction. “Substantial improvement” does not include either:

1. Any project for improvement of a structure to correct existing violations of state or local health, sanitary or safety code specifications which have been identified by the local code enforcement official and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions; or
2. Any alteration of a structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places or a State Inventory of Historic Places.

Substantial Noise Impact. Exterior noise levels greater than Ldn 65, which impact necessitates special sound insulation to produce noise levels of 45 Ldn or less within the interior of a residential structure.

Survey, Archaeological. Regarding archaeological resource protection, a procedure by which an archaeologist makes a determination of the presence or absence of an archaeological site in a disturbance area, a preliminary assessment of the site’s potential significance, and a recommendation for further evaluation, avoidance, mitigation or recovery of resources in compliance with the provisions of [20.710 VMC](#).

System Development Charge (SDC). The connection fee charged so that the property upon which it is imposed will pay its equitable share of the costs of water-sewer system facilities which are system-wide in nature and are not site-specific needs, including such property’s

equitable share of the amount required to upgrade such system to meet the demands imposed by the development.

System Improvements. Public facilities that are included in the capital facilities plan and are designed to provide service areas within the community at large, in contrast to project improvements.

Telecommuting. The use of telephones, computers or other similar technology to permit an affected employee to work at home or at a location closer to home than the affected employer's principal worksite.

Temporary. A period not to exceed one year except as otherwise provided in this title.

Tenant Improvements. Construction improvements typically made to the interior of a nonresidential building to fit the building to a particular tenant's needs, or to create separate tenant spaces. Typically it involves such things as adding or removing walls, ceilings and doors; re-wiring for electrical outlets and lighting; and providing plumbing, sprinklers, counters and walk-in coolers, often as part of a separate lease space in a building.

Through-Ventilation. The encouragement of natural cross-ventilation.

Total Developable Land (TDL). That portion of the subject property remaining once sensitive areas are subtracted from the total acreage of a property or collection of properties proposed for development.

Tract. A piece of land set aside in a separate area for dedication to the public, a homeowner's association, or other entity, (e.g., open space, recreational facilities, and tree preservation) wetland or other sensitive lands.

Traffic Study. A study of traffic behavior by a licensed engineer.

Transit. A multiple-occupant vehicle operated on a for-hire, shared-ride basis, including bus, ferry, rail, shared-ride taxi, shuttle bus or vanpool.

Transit Facility. A development provided by a public transportation provider, which is designed to aid or encourage community use or multi-modal public transportation system, such as bus and van/carpools.

Transitional Surfaces. An area extending outward at 90 degree angles to an airport's runway centerline at a slope of seven feet horizontally for each foot vertically.

Transitional Zone. The areas beneath the transitional surfaces.

Transplant. The relocation of a tree from one place to another on the same property.

Tree. Any self-supporting perennial woody plant that matures at a height greater than 26 feet and is generally referred to in the nursery and landscape industry as a tree.

Tree Farm. See Commercial Nursery.

Tree, Hazard. Any tree with a combination of structural defect and/or disease and a proximity to persons or property which makes it subject to a high probability of failure, as recommended by a qualified arborist.

Tree, Mitigation. A tree planted and retained to achieve the required tree density for a parcel or to replace a tree removed in violation of city ordinance.

Tree, Nuisance. A tree that is causing physical damage to property or has been damaged by past maintenance practices, and for which horticultural practices cannot correct the problem.

Tree Preservation. The retention of a tree or trees during and after construction.

Tree, Specimen. A tree that has been given greater than standard tree density value by the planning official through the evaluation process.

Tree, Street. A tree located within a street right-of-way or street tree easement, adjacent to public or private streets, including undeveloped areas.

Tree Tract. A separate deeded tract of land, specifically set aside for the preservation and/or planting of trees. Stormwater retention/detention facilities, sensitive areas, and other common areas may be considered tree tracts if they currently support the growth of trees.

Tree Unit. A unit of measurement based upon the size of the tree as set forth in Chapter [20.770](#) VMC, Tree, Vegetation, and Soil Conservation.

Tree, Vegetation and Soil Plan. A plan that contains specific information pertaining to the protection of healthy soil, and the preservation, and planting of trees and native vegetation pursuant to Chapter [20.770](#) VMC, Tree, Vegetation, and Soil Conservation.

Tree, Vegetation and Soil Protection Area (TVSPA). A separate tract of land, which may or may not be deeded as such, specifically set aside for the preservation of healthy soils and the preservation or planting of existing and/or native vegetation and trees. Stormwater retention/detention facilities, critical area buffers and other common areas may be considered TVSPA if they currently or are improved to an extent where they can support healthy soils and the growth of native vegetation and trees. The purpose of these areas for preserving healthy soils, preserving and/or planting native vegetation and trees is stated on the face of the plat when applicable.

Tribe or Tribes. Regarding Archaeological Preservation, any federally-recognized or other local Native American government organization which may consider the site to be of historic or cultural significance.

Truck, Heavy. Trucks, including truck tractors and similar vehicles, with two or more rear axles.

Truck, Light. Trucks and similar vehicles with single rear axles and single rear wheels.

Truck, Medium. Trucks and similar vehicles other than truck tractors with single rear axles and dual rear wheels. Truck tractors are in the Heavy Truck category. (Ord. M-4402 § 3(C), 2023; Ord. M-4325 § 3, 2020; Ord. M-4179 § 65, 2016; Ord. M-4034 § 2, 2012)

20.150.040F Meanings of Specific Words and Terms U through Z.

Undevelopable Area. An area that cannot be used practicably for a habitable structure because of natural conditions, such as slopes exceeding 20 percent; severe topographic relief; water bodies; or conditions that isolate one portion of a property under another portion so that access is not practicable to the unbuildable portion. Undevelopable area also includes man-made conditions such as existing development restrictions that prohibit development of a given area of a lot by law or private agreement; or existence or absence of easements or access rights that prevent development of a given area.

Undeveloped. Regarding the Tree Conservation Ordinance, a parcel of land on which no buildings or other facilities are located and which is to remain without improvements for a period of six years.

Uniform Plumbing Code. The current version of the Uniform Plumbing Code as adopted by the City of Vancouver at the time construction commences.

Urban Area. For the purposes of 20.775 VMC, Wetlands and Water Bodies Protection, urban area means the area within the Vancouver urban growth boundary.

Urban Forestry. The art and science of planning, managing, and protecting natural and planted vegetation in urban areas.

Urban Growth Boundary. The boundary of an urban growth area designated in the Clark County Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Use. An activity or purpose for which land or premises or a building thereon is designed, arranged or intended, or for which it is occupied or maintained, let or leased.

Utility Facilities. All physical facilities necessary for the provision of the following services:

1. Sewer;
2. Water;
3. Electricity;
4. Natural gas;
5. Telephone;
6. Cable television;
7. Storm drainage; and
8. Transportation.

Utility Facilities, Essential. Those facilities which are necessary to support principal development and involve only minor structures such as:

1. Overhead lines and poles;
2. Underground lines and pipes;
3. Transformers and regulator stations; and

4. Private, on-site facilities such as septic tanks and wells.

Utility Facilities, Major. Those facilities which have a substantial public impact, including but not limited to:

1. Administrative offices and operation centers;
2. Sewage treatment plants and lagoons;
3. Electric generation facilities including biomass generating facilities; and
4. Essential public facilities as defined in Chapter [20.855 VMC](#), Essential Public Facilities.

Utility Facilities, Minor. Those facilities which have a local impact on surrounding properties and are necessary to provide essential services such as:

1. Transmission and distribution substations;
2. Pump stations;
3. Water towers and reservoirs;
4. Public wells;
5. Outfalls;
6. Telephone switching facilities;
7. Cable television receiver and transmission facilities, excluding wireless communications facilities as defined in Chapter [20.890 VMC](#) Wireless Communications Facilities;
8. Catch basins, retention ponds and related facilities; and
9. Water treatment facilities.

Variance. An administrative or quasi-judicial decision to lessen or otherwise modify the requirements of the development code.

Vehicle, Accessory Recreational. A vehicle with or without motive power, which is designed for sport or recreational use or which is designed for human occupancy on an intermittent basis such as vacation trailers and fifth-wheel trailers. A camper is considered an accessory

recreation vehicle when it is standing alone. A recreational vehicle also includes vehicles designed for off-road use:

1. Off-road vehicles;
2. Dune buggies; and
3. Recreational boats.

Vehicle, Commercial. Any vehicle the principal use of which is the transportation of commodities, merchandise, produce, freight, animals, or passengers for hire. (Per RCW [46.04.140](#))

Vehicle, Featured Display (Auto Dealership Plan District). Featured Vehicle Display is the "showcasing" of motor vehicles outdoors within the plan district.

Vehicle, Motor. Vehicles that have their own motive power and are used for the transportation of people or goods on streets. Motor vehicle includes motorcycles, passenger vehicles, trucks, and recreational vehicles with motive power.

Vehicle, Passenger. A motor vehicle designed to carry ten persons or fewer including the driver. Passenger vehicle also includes motor vehicles designed to carry ten persons or fewer that are constructed on a truck chassis or with special features for occasional use. Passenger vehicles include cars, minivans, passenger vans, and jeeps. Passenger vehicle is intended to cover the vehicles identified as passenger cars and multi-purpose passenger vehicles by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter V, Section 571.3. See also Recreational Vehicle and Truck.

Vesting. A legal right of applicants to have their development application reviewed under the regulations in effect as of a certain date when the application has met certain timing and completeness requirements. For example, an application determined by the Review Authority to be fully complete is vested under the regulations in effect at the time of such determination, regardless of subsequent changes to development regulations.

Vesting, Contingent. A legal right of applicants to have their fully complete development application, when submitted within 180 days of the pre-application conference, reviewed under the development regulations, not including fees, in effect at the time of the pre-application conference.

Vision Clearance Triangle. An area, typically triangular in shape adjacent to a driveway or at a property corner where two streets (or an alley and street) intersect, that must be maintained clear of visual obstructions to provide visibility to motorists and pedestrians.

Visual Obstruction. An obstruction of vision through landscaping, structure or device in those areas near intersections of roadways and motor vehicle access points where a clear field of vision is necessary for traffic safety.

Walkway. A facility for pedestrian use to or through a parcel for the general public which may or may not be adjacent to the street. Walkways may differ from sidewalks in standards, alignment, shape, location, construction materials, and overall installation.

Washington Heritage Register. The state listing of properties that are significant to the community, state or nation, but which do not meet the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places [Ord. [M-3243](#), 2 (part), [M-1996](#)].

Wastewater Facility. In Chapter [14.12.020](#) VMC, Water and Sewer Facilities, the City of Vancouver's industrial wastewater collection system and industrial wastewater pretreatment facility constructed in 1979, and sometimes known as the pretreatment lagoon.

Water-dependent. A use or portion of a use that requires direct contact with the water and cannot exist at a nonwater location due to the intrinsic nature of its operations. Also see the Vancouver Shoreline Management Master Program.

Water-enjoyment. A use or activity which facilitates or provides public access to the shoreline, and through its location, design, and operation assures the public's ability to enjoy the physical and aesthetic qualities of the shoreline. A water-enjoyment use or activity must be open to the general public, and space within it must be devoted to fostering public enjoyment of the shoreline. Parks, piers, restaurants, trails, promenades, museums, aquariums, reserves, and resorts are examples of water-enjoyment uses and activities. Also see the Vancouver Shoreline Management Master Program.

Water-related. A use or activity which must be located close to the land/water interface to support a water-dependent use or activity either by its own operation or by the provision of the services it houses. The economic viability of a water-related use or activity is dependent on a location near the waterfront. Warehousing of goods transported by water, seafood processing

plants, hydroelectric generating plants, and log storage are examples of water-related uses or activities. Also see the Vancouver Shoreline Management Master Program.

Watershed. A topographically delineated area draining to a single surface water system as identified and mapped by Clark County Public Works.

Weekday. Any day of the week except Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays.

Wetland or wetlands. Areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does 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 (but not as mitigation for impacts to wetlands) from nonwetland sites, including, but not limited to irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and landscape amenities or those wetlands created after July 1, 1990 that were unintentionally created as a result of the construction of a road, street or highway. Wetlands shall may include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland areas to mitigate conversion of wetlands.

Wetland Buffer. An area that surrounds and protects a wetland from adverse impacts to the functions and values of a regulated wetland.

Wetland Creation. The manipulation of the physical, chemical or biological characteristics present to develop a wetland on an upland or deepwater site where a biological wetland did not previously exist. Activities typically involve excavation of upland soils to elevations that will produce a wetland hydroperiod, hydric soils, and support the growth of hydrophytic plant species. Creation results in a gain in wetland acres and functions.

Wetland Enhancement. The manipulation of the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of a biological wetland to increase or improve specific functions or to change the growth stage or composition of the vegetation present. Enhancement is undertaken for specified purposes such as water quality improvement, flood water retention or wildlife habitat. Activities typically consist of planting vegetation, controlling nonnative or invasive species, modifying site elevations to result in open water ponds or some combination of these. Enhancement results in a change in certain wetland functions and can lead to a decline in other wetland functions. It does not result in a gain in wetland acres.

Wetland Preservation. The removal of a threat to, or preventing the decline of, wetland conditions by an action in or near a wetland. This term includes activities commonly associated with the protection and maintenance of wetlands through the implementation of appropriate legal and physical mechanisms, such as recording conservation easements and providing structural protection like fences and signs. Preservation does not result in a gain of wetland acres or functions but may result in a gain in functions over the long term.

Wetland Re-establishment. The manipulation of the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of returning natural or historic functions and environmental processes to a former wetland. Activities could include removing fill material, plugging ditches or breaking drain tiles. Re-establishment results in a gain in wetland acres and functions.

Wetland Rehabilitation. The manipulation of the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of repairing natural or historic functions, and processes of a degraded wetland. Activities could involve breaching a dike to reconnect wetlands to a floodplain, restoring tidal influence to a wetland or breaking drain tiles and plugging drainage ditches. Rehabilitation results in a gain in wetland functions but not in wetland acres.

Wetland, Scrub-shrub. A wetland with at least 30 percent of its surface area covered by woody vegetation less than 20 feet in height as the uppermost strata.

Wetlands Delineation Manual. Approved federal wetland delineation manual and applicable regional supplements.

Wind-firm. A tree which has a high probability of withstanding windstorms.

Wireless Communications Facilities. The site, wireless communications support structures, antennae, accessory equipment structures, and appurtenances used to transmit, receive, distribute, provide or offer wireless telecommunications services. Wireless communications facilities include, but are not limited to, antennae, poles, towers, cables, wires, conduits, ducts, pedestals, vaults, buildings, electronic, and switching equipment.

Wireless Communications Support Structures. A structure erected to support wireless communications antennas and connecting appurtenances. Wireless communications support structures may include, but are not limited to lattice tower, monopoles, and guyed towers.

Wireless Communications Systems. The sending and receiving of radio frequency transmissions and the connection and/or relaying of these signals to land lines and other sending and receiving stations (cell sites), and including, but not limited to cellular radiotelephone, personal communications services (PCS), enhanced/specialized mobile radio (ESMR), commercial paging services, and any other technology which provides similar services.

Writing, Written or In Writing. These terms refer to original signed and dated documents. Facsimile (fax) transmissions are a temporary notice of action that must be followed via mail or delivery of the original and dated document.

Yard. Any open space on the same lot with a building or a dwelling group, which open space is unoccupied and unobstructed by any structure from the ground upward to the sky. Required setback areas shall be considered yards as defined herein.

Yard, Front. An open space defined by setbacks extending the full width of the lot between a setback line and the front lot line, unoccupied, and unobstructed from the ground upward, except as specified elsewhere in this title.

Yard, Rear. An open space defined by setbacks extending the full width of the lot between a setback line and the rear lot line, unoccupied, and unobstructed from the ground upward, except as specified elsewhere in this title.

Yard, Side. An open space defined by setbacks extending from the front yard to the rear yard between a setback line and the nearest side lot line, unoccupied, and unobstructed from the ground upward, except as specified elsewhere in this title.

Yard, Street Side. On corner lots where two streets intersect, an open space defined by setbacks extending from the front lot line to the rear lot line, along the side of the lot which fronts on a street and between the setback line and side street lot line, unoccupied, and unobstructed from the ground upward, except as specified in this title.

Zoning District. A geographic area which corresponds to a comprehensive plan designation and which specifies allowed and conditionally allowed uses and applicable standards for development within the district. Also referred to as Zone or District. (Ord. M-4380 § 4, 2022; Ord. M-4179 § 66, 2016; Ord. M-4176 § 4, 2016; Ord. M-4034 § 2, 2012)

The Vancouver Municipal Code is current through Ordinance M-4431, passed December 18, 2023.

Disclaimer: The city clerk's office has the official version of the Vancouver Municipal Code. Users should contact the city clerk's office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

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