8.2 DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS
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8.2.1 Definitions

Access. The ability to enter a site from a roadway and exit a site onto a roadway by motorized vehicle.

Acres, Gross. The entire acreage of a site, including easements, calculated to the centerline of any new proposed bounding streets and to the edge of the right-of-way of existing or dedicated streets.

Acres, Net. The portion of a site that can actually be built upon. The following generally are not included in the net acreage of a site: public or private road rights-of-way, public open space, easements and floodways.

Adaptive Reuse. The conversion of obsolescent or historic buildings from their original or most recent use to a new use. For example, the conversion of former hospital or school buildings to residential use, or the conversion of an historic single-family home to office use.

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

Affordable Housing. Housing capable of being purchased or rented by a household with very low-, low-, or moderate-income, based on a household’s ability to make monthly payments necessary to obtain housing. Housing is considered affordable when a household pays less than 30 percent of its gross monthly income (GMI) for housing, including utilities.

Agency. The governmental entity, department, office or administrative unit responsible for carrying out regulations.

Air Pollution. Concentrations of substances found in the atmosphere that exceed naturally occurring quantities and are undesirable or harmful in some way.

Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). A land use plan developed by the Airport Land Use Commission to provide guidance for land use planning around publicly owned airports. The two major issues addressed are: promoting compatibility between aircraft noise and various types of land uses; and ensuring safety of aircraft operations and people and property on the ground.

Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). The ALUC prepares and adopts a comprehensive land use plan for areas in the vicinity of each public use airport in Santa Clara County. The commission reviews general plans, specific plans, zoning and building regulation changes proposed by local agencies, as well as other proposed projects near publicly owned airports, for consistency with its plan.
Airport Safety Zones.

The **Runway Protection Zone** at the Airport as adopted by the airport and the FAA, begins 200 feet out from the runway’s displaced landing thresholds (not the pavement ends). It is a trapezoidal area centered on the extended runway centerline. The size is related to the expected aircraft use and the visibility minimums for that particular runway.

The **Inner Safety Zone** represents the approach and departure corridors that have the second highest level of exposure to potential aircraft accidents. The Inner Safety Zone is centered on the runway centerline and extends from the outer edge of the Runway Protection Zone to the outer edge of the Turning Safety Zone boundary. The length of the runway determines the dimensions.

The **Turning Safety Zone** represents the approach and departure areas that have the third highest level of exposure to potential aircraft accidents.

The **Outer Safety Zone** is a rectangular area centered on the extended runway centerline starting at the outer end of the Inner Safety Zone and extending away from the runway end. The length of the runway determines the dimensions.

The **Traffic Pattern Zone** is that portion of the airport area routinely overflown by aircraft operating in the airport traffic pattern. The potential for aircraft accidents is relatively low and the need for land use restrictions is minimal.

**Alley.** A narrow street or passageway between or behind buildings, that provides alternate site access, generally in addition to public streets.

**Altamont Commuter Express (ACE).** A heavy rail commuter train that runs between Stockton and San José, California. Service in Santa Clara includes stops at Great America Station and Santa Clara Transit Center, the latter which is suspended due to track construction.

**Ambient.** Surrounding on all sides; used to describe measurements of existing conditions with respect to traffic, noise, air and other environments.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).** A wide-ranging law that prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability.

**Analysis.** The examination of a subject, particularly its component parts and their interrelationships.

**Apartment.** (1) One or more rooms of a building used as a place to live, in a building containing at least one other unit used for the same purpose. (2) A separate suite, not owner occupied, which includes kitchen facilities and is designed for and rented as the home, residence or sleeping place of one or more persons living as a single housekeeping unit.
Aquifer. An underground, water-bearing layer of earth, porous rock, sand or gravel, through which water can seep or be held in natural storage. Aquifers generally hold sufficient water to be used as a water supply.

Archaeological Resources. Relating to the material remains of past human life, culture or activities.

Architectural Review. Regulations and procedures requiring the exterior design of structures to be suitable, harmonious and in keeping with the general appearance, historic character and/or style of surrounding areas. A process used to exercise control over the design of buildings and their settings. (See “Design Review.”)

Area Median Income. As used in State of California housing law with respect to income eligibility limits established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), “area” means metropolitan area or non-metropolitan county. In non-metropolitan areas, the “area median income” is the higher of the county median family income or the statewide non-metropolitan median family income.

Arterial (Major). Major arterials are generally designed with four travel lanes and a 100- to 120-foot right-of-way. Streets have travel speeds between 35 and 45 miles per hour and typically have dedicated left-turn lanes, traffic signals at major intersections, and parallel street parking. Through traffic and transit on these streets is given signal priority. Pedestrians are accommodated with sidewalks and crosswalks.

Arterial (Minor). Minor arterials are generally two to four travel lanes with up to a 95-foot right-of-way. Streets have travel speeds between 35 and 45 miles per hour and typically have dedicated left-turn lanes, traffic signals at major intersections, and parallel street parking. Through traffic and transit on these streets is given signal priority. Pedestrians are accommodated with sidewalks and crosswalks.

Artesian. An aquifer in which water is confined under pressure between layers of impermeable material. Wells tapping into an artesian stratum will flow naturally without the use of pumps. (See “Aquifer.”)

Articulation. Variation in the depth of the building plane, roof line or height of a structure that breaks up plain, monotonous areas and creates patterns of light and shadow.

Assisted Housing. Generally multi-family rental housing, but sometimes single-family ownership units, whose construction, financing, sales prices or rents have been subsidized by federal, State or local housing programs, including, but not limited to Federal Section 8 (new construction, substantial rehabilitation and loan management set-asides), Federal Sections 213, 236 and 202, Federal Section 221(d)(3) (below-market interest rate program), Federal Section 101 (rent supplement assistance), CDBG, FmHA Section 515, multi-family mortgage revenue bond programs, local redevelopment and in lieu fee programs, and units developed pursuant to local inclusionary housing and density bonus programs.
Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). The regional land use planning agency for the nine-county Bay Area. Among its other responsibilities, ABAG develops forecasts of population and employment growth, and provides each Bay Area city with estimates for its “fair share” of housing, or RHNA (see “Regional Housing Needs Allocation”).

Automated People Mover. A type of automated guideway operating on a loop or shuttle route proposed to connect the future Santa Clara BART station and the Airport.

Auto-Oriented Uses. Land uses such as vehicle service stations, car washes, or drive-thru restaurants, pharmacies, or convenience stores, that require the use of a vehicle and exist purely for the convenience of the driver.

Average Daily Traffic (ADT). ADT is based upon traffic counts that record the number of vehicles (cars and trucks) that travel on the roadway on a typical weekday (Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday).

Avigation Easement. An easement that grants one of the following rights: the right of flight; the right to cause noise, dust, etc. related to aircraft flight; the right to restrict or prohibit certain lights, electromagnetic signals and bird-attracting land uses; the right to unobstructed airspace over the property above a specified height; and/or the right of ingress/egress upon the land to exercise those rights.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The agency charged with implementation of the Clean Air Act, including the establishment of transportation control measures that each Congestion Management Agency (CMA) must help implement.

Bay Area Clean Air Plan, 2009. A comprehensive strategy to reduce air pollution in the Bay Area from both stationary sources, such as factories and refineries, and mobile sources, such as cars, trucks, and construction equipment. The goal of the plan is to reduce air pollution in order to attain air quality standards and protect public health.

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART). Operates the rapid rail transit system within Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties, with new service planned for Santa Clara County.

Baylands. Areas along a bay that are permanently wet or periodically covered with shallow water, such as saltwater and freshwater marshes, open or closed brackish marshes, swamps, mudflats and fans.

Below-Market-Rate (BMR) Housing Unit. (1) Any housing unit specifically priced to be sold or rented to low- or moderate-income households for an amount less than the fair-market value of the unit. Both the State of California and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development set standards for determining which households qualify as “low-income” or “moderate-income.” (2) The financing of housing at less than prevailing interest rates.
Best Management Practices (BMP). The combination of conservation measures and management practices that reduces or avoids adverse impacts of development on adjoining site’s land, water or waterways and waterbodies.

Bicycle Lane (Class II facility). A lane on the outside edge of roadways reserved for the exclusive use of bicycles, and designated with special signage and pavement markings.

Bicycle Path (Class I facility). A paved facility designated for bicycle use that is physically separated from roadways by space or a physical barrier. These paths often accommodate pedestrians and include creek trails within the City.

Bicycle Route (Class III facility). Roadways recommended for bicycle use and often connecting to bike lanes and bike paths are defined as bike routes. Routes are designated with signs only and may not include additional pavement width.

Bikeways. A term that encompasses bicycle lanes, bicycle paths and bicycle routes.

Bicycle Facilities. These include bike paths, bike lanes and bike routes, following a classification system established in the City’s Bicycle Plan.

Blight. A condition of a site, structure or area that may cause nearby buildings and/or areas to decline in attractiveness and/or utility. The Community Redevelopment Law (Health and Safety Code, Sections 33031 and 33032) contains a definition of blight used to determine eligibility of proposed redevelopment project areas.

Bond. An interest-bearing promise to pay a stipulated sum of money, with the principal amount due on a specific date. Funds raised through the sale of bonds can be used for various public purposes.

Buffer Zone. An area of land separating two distinct land uses that acts to soften or mitigate the effects of one land use on the other.

Building. Any structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy.

Building Height. The vertical distance from the average contact ground level of a building to the highest point of the structure, excluding features that are removable such as roof equipment, equipment screens, antennae and the like.

Build-out. Development characterized by full occupancy of all developable sites in accordance with the assumed General Plan at the probable level of development envisioned by the General Plan under specified assumptions about densities and intensities. Buildout does not assume parcels are developed at maximum allowable densities and intensities.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). A transit service that operates on designated bus lanes, HOV lanes, expressways, or ordinary streets. A BRT system combines a simple route layout, frequent service, limited stops, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technology, passenger information systems, traffic signal priority for transit, cleaner and quieter vehicles, rapid and convenient fare collection, high-quality passenger facilities, and integration with nearby land uses.
California Building Code (CBC). A State standard building code, based on the International Building Code (IBC), and enforced by the City, that sets forth minimum standards for construction.

California Clean Air Act. State law passed in 1988, requires nonattainment areas to achieve and maintain the State ambient air quality standards by the earliest practicable date. Air districts must develop plans for attaining the State ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide standards.

California Code of Regulations (CCR). Contains the text of the regulations that have been formally adopted by State agencies. The CCR consists of 28 titles and contains the regulations of approximately 200 regulatory agencies.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A State law requiring State and local agencies to regulate activities with consideration for environmental protection. If a proposed activity related to a pending City action has the potential for an adverse environmental effect, an environmental assessment must be prepared and adopted or certified as to its adequacy before taking action on the proposed project. Environmental assessments include Negative Declarations and Environmental Impact Reports.

California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHRA). The State agency planning the future high speed rail network in California.

California Housing Finance Agency (CHFA). A State agency, established by the Housing and Home Finance Act of 1975, which is authorized to sell revenue bonds and generate funds for the development, rehabilitation and conservation of low-and moderate-income housing.

California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA). A membership organization composed of a diverse range of stormwater quality management organizations and individuals, including cities, counties, special districts, industries, and consulting firms throughout the State. CASQA assists the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and municipalities throughout the State of California in implementing the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater mandates of the Federal Clean Water Act.

California Integrated Waste Management Act, AB 939. Passed in 1989, the AB 939 mandates a reduction of waste being disposed, requiring jurisdictions to meet diversion goals of 50% by the year 2000. AB 939 also established an integrated framework for program implementation, solid waste planning, and solid waste facility and landfill compliance.

Caltrain. Commuter rail service between San Francisco and San José, with weekday commute-hour service to Gilroy. Faster limited-stop train service is also provided by Caltrain Baby Bullet express trains. The Santa Clara Railroad Depot provides Caltrain service for Santa Clara.
Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA). A partnership of six local transit agencies in the eight county service area which shares the administration and management of the Capitol Corridor intercity passenger train system.

Capital Improvements Program (CIP). A program, administered by a city or county government, and reviewed by its planning commission, which schedules permanent improvements, usually for a minimum of five years in the future, to fit the projected fiscal capability of the local jurisdiction. The program generally is reviewed annually, for conformance and consistency with the general plan.

Carbon Dioxide (CO\textsubscript{2}). A colorless, odorless, non-poisonous gas that is a normal part of the atmosphere.

Carbon Monoxide (CO). A colorless, odorless gas formed by the incomplete combustion of fuels, which is toxic because of its tendency to reduce the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood.

Certified Local Government (CLG). A city or county that has been “certified” as eligible to apply for federal grants for historic preservation. A local government must pass an approved historic preservation ordinance and appoint a historic preservation commission to be “certified.”

Character. Special physical characteristics of a structure or area that set it apart from its surroundings and contribute to its individuality.

Circulation Element. One of the seven State-mandated elements of a local general plan, it contains adopted goals, policies and implementation programs for the planning and management of existing and proposed thoroughfares, transportation routes and terminals, as well as local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the general plan.

City. City with a capital “C” generally refers to the government or administration of the city that is the subject of discussion. City with a lower case “c” refers to any city or the geographical area of any city (e.g., a city bikeway system.)

Collector. Streets providing traffic circulation for residential and commercial uses at travel speeds of 25 to 35 miles per hour. Typically, with two to four lanes and rights-of-way of 55 to 75 feet, collector streets penetrate residential neighborhoods, distributing trips from Arterials into neighborhoods. They usually channel traffic from local streets to Arterials and provide pedestrian and bicycle links between destinations.

Commercial. A land use classification that permits facilities for the buying and selling of commodities and services and local serving office uses.

Community Center (Community Facility). A public facility in which educational, therapeutic and/or recreational programs are provided. Community centers in the City of Santa Clara include the Santa Clara Senior Center, Santa Clara Teen Center, the Walter E. Schmidt Youth Activity Center, and Santa Clara Community Recreation Center in Central Park.
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). A grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on a formula basis for entitlement communities, and by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for non-entitled jurisdictions. This program allots money to cities and counties for housing rehabilitation and community development, including public facilities and economic development.

Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL). A 24-hour energy equivalent level derived from a variety of single-noise events, with weighting factors of 5 and 10 dBA applied to the evening (7 PM to 10 PM) and nighttime (10 PM to 7 AM) periods, respectively, to adjust for the greater sensitivity to noise during these hours.

Community Park. Land with full public access intended to provide recreation opportunities beyond those supplied by neighborhood parks. Community parks are larger in scale than neighborhood parks but smaller than regional parks.

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

Composting. The treatment of solid organic refuse through aerobic, biologic decomposition.

Condominium. A structure of two or more units, the interior spaces of which are individually owned; the balance of the property (both land and building) is typically owned in common by all the owners of the individual units. (See “Townhouse.”)

Congestion Management Agency (CMA). An agency designated for a given area, usually a county, to develop and manage the Congestion Management Program. In Santa Clara County, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is the designated CMA.

Congestion Management Plan (CMP). A mechanism employing growth management techniques, including traffic level of service requirements, standards for public transit, trip reduction programs involving transportation systems management, jobs/housing balance strategies, and capital improvement programming, for the purpose of controlling and/or reducing the cumulative regional traffic impacts related to development.

Conservation. The management of resources to prevent waste, destruction or neglect.

Conservation Element. One of the seven State-mandated elements of a local general plan, it contains adopted goals, policies and implementation programs for the conservation, development and use of natural resources including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals and other natural resources.

Consistent. Free from variation or contradiction. Programs in the General Plan are to be consistent, not contradictory or preferential.

Convenience Commercial. Retail uses that sell items generally necessary or desirable for everyday living, such as consumables, books, magazines, toiletries and other, low-priced goods. Such uses are typically located near residential neighborhoods and along transit thoroughfares.
**Corridor.** A passage or guided way.

**County.** County with a capital “C” generally refers to the government or administration of the county that is the subject of discussion. County with a lower case “c” may mean any county or may refer to the geographical area of any county (e.g., a county road system).

**Creek.** Those areas where surface water flows sufficiently to produce a defined channel or bed. The channel or bed need not contain water year-round.

**Criteria Air Pollutants.** Six common air pollutants found all over the United States: particle pollution (often referred to as particulate matter), ground-level ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides and lead. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) calls these pollutants “criteria” air pollutants because it regulates them by developing human health-based and/or environmentally-based criteria (science-based guidelines) for setting permissible levels.

**Criteria.** Standards upon which a judgment or decision may be based. (See “Standards.”)

**Cultural Facilities.** Premises operated to accommodate cultural pursuits such as visual or performing arts, lectures or exhibitions.

**Cultural Resources.** (See “Archaeological Resources.”)

**Curb Cut.** The opening along the curb line at which point vehicles or other wheeled forms of transportation may enter or leave the roadway.

**Data Center.** Also known as a server farm, is a facility used to house computer systems and associated components, such as telecommunications and information storage systems. Data Centers typically include redundant or back up power supplies, redundant data communication connections, environmental controls (e.g., air conditioning fire suppression) and security devices.

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

**Decibel (dB).** A unit of measurement used to express the relative intensity of sound as heard by the human ear describing the amplitude of sound, equal to 20 times the logarithm to the base 10 of the ratio of the pressure of the sound measured to the reference pressure, which is 20 micropascals (20 micronewtons per square meter).

**Density Bonus.** Development incentive that allow a parcel to accommodate additional square footage or additional residential units beyond the maximum for which the parcel is designated, usually in exchange for the provision or preservation of an amenity at the same site or at another location or for the provision of affordable housing beyond normal requirements.
Density, Residential. The number of residential dwelling units per gross acre of land. Densities specified in the General Plan are expressed in units per gross acre. (See “Acres, Gross,”)

Design Review. The evaluation of a development, and its impact on neighboring properties and the community as a whole, from the standpoint of site and landscape design, architecture, materials, colors, lighting and signs, in accordance with a set of adopted criteria and standards. “Design Review” usually refers to a system set up outside of the zoning ordinance, whereby projects are reviewed against certain standards and criteria by a specially established review board or committee. (See “Architectural Review.”)

Developable Land. Land that is suitable as a location for structures that can be constructed with minimal disruption on natural resource areas.

Developer. An individual or business that prepares raw land for the construction of physical building space for use primarily by others, and for which the preparation of the land or the creation of the building space is a business.

Development. The physical construction of land uses that include, but are not limited to, subdivision of land; construction or alteration of structures, roads, utilities and other facilities; grading; deposit of refuse, debris or fill materials; and clearing of natural vegetation cover. Routine repair and maintenance activities are not considered “development.”

Development Agreement. A legislatively-approved contract between a jurisdiction and a person or business having legal or equitable interest in real property within the jurisdiction (California Government Code Section 5865 et seq.) that “freezes” certain rules, regulations, and policies applicable to development of a property for a specified period of time, usually in exchange for certain concessions by the person or business with legal interest in the property.

Disability. Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual, or a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.

Discourage. To advise or persuade to refrain from.

District. (1) An area of a city or county that has a unique character identifiable as different from surrounding areas because of distinctive architecture, streets, geographic features, culture, landmarks, activities or land uses. (2) A portion of the territory of a city or county within which uniform zoning regulations and requirements apply.

Diversity. Differences among otherwise similar elements that give them unique forms and qualities. For example, housing diversity can be achieved by differences in unit size, tenure or cost.
Downtown Core. The eight block redevelopment area within the Downtown Focus Area bounded by Benton Street, Homestead Road, Lafayette Street and Monroe Street, planned for high density residential and retail use.

Duplex. A detached building under single ownership that is designed for occupation as the residence of two families living independently of each other.

Dwelling Unit. A room or group of rooms (including sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation facilities, but not more than one kitchen), which constitutes an independent housekeeping unit, occupied or intended for occupancy by one household on a long-term basis.

Easement. The right to use property owned by another for specific purposes or to gain access to another property. For example, utility companies often have easements on private property to install and maintain utility facilities.

Economic Base. Industry and businesses within a geographic market area that provide employment opportunities and retail sales that are essential to support the community.

Elderly. Persons age 62 and older. (see “Seniors.”)

Emergency Shelter. A facility that provides immediate and short-term housing and supplemental services for the homeless. Supplemental services may include food, counseling and access to other social programs. (See “Homeless”)

Encourage. To stimulate or foster a particular condition through direct or indirect action by the private sector or government agencies.

Endangered Species. A species of animal or plant is considered to be endangered when its prospects for survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes.

Enhance. To improve existing conditions by increasing the quantity or quality of beneficial uses or features.

Entertainment Uses. Uses of a recreational nature including sports and music venues, theaters, clubs and lodges, excluding Specified Regulated Businesses for purposes of this General Plan.

Environment. CEQA defines environment as “the physical conditions which exist within the area which will be affected by a proposed project, including land, air, water, mineral, flora, fauna, noise and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.”

Environmental Impact Report (EIR). A report required by the California Environmental Quality Act, which assesses all the environmental characteristics of an area and determines what effects or impacts will result if the area is altered or disturbed by a proposed action. (See “California Environmental Quality Act.”)
**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).** Under the National Environmental Policy Act, a statement on the effect of development proposals and other major actions that would significantly affect the environment.

**Erosion.** (1) The loosening and transportation of rock and soil debris by wind, rain or running water. (2) The gradual wearing away of the upper layers of earth.

**Expansive Soils.** Soils which swell when they absorb water and shrink as they dry.

**Expressway.** Facilities under the jurisdiction of Santa Clara County that include transit service and stops, typically designed to serve regional traffic with speeds of 45 miles per hour and limited access. Wide shoulders or parallel routes are generally provided.

**Family.** (1) Two or more persons related by birth, marriage or adoption [U.S. Bureau of the Census]. (2) An individual or a group of persons living together who constitute a bona fide single-family housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit, not including a fraternity, sorority, club or other group of persons occupying a hotel, lodging house or institution of any kind [California].

**Fault.** A fracture in the Earth’s crust forming a boundary between rock masses that have shifted. An active fault is a fault that has moved recently and which is likely to move again. An inactive fault is a fault showing no evidence of movement in recent geologic time and little potential for movement.

**Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).** An agency of the United States Department of Transportation with authority to regulate and oversee all aspects of civil aviation in the U.S. In particular, the FAA regulates air navigation geometry and air traffic control for publicly owned and operated airports.

**Federal Aviation Regulations Part 77 (FAR Part 77).** Federal regulations that allows the FAA to identify potential aeronautical hazards in advance and establishes standards and notification requirements for objects affecting navigable airspace in order to prevent or minimize potential adverse impacts to the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace.

**Federal Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA).** Legislation enacted in 2000 that reinforces pre-disaster infrastructure mitigation planning to reduce disaster losses nationwide. Major provisions include: funding for pre-disaster mitigation activities; developing multi-hazard maps to determine risk; establishing State and local government infrastructure mitigation planning requirements; and managing grants and funding for mitigation project costs.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).** An agency of the U.S. government tasked with disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery planning. The agency provides advice on building codes and flood plain management, helps equip local and state emergency preparedness, provides disaster assistance and training, and administers the national flood and crime insurance programs (including provision of FEMA 100 and 500-year flood maps).
Finding(s). The result(s) of an investigation and the basis upon which decisions are made. Findings are used by government agents and bodies to justify action taken by the entity.

Flood Zone. The relatively level land area on either side of the banks of a stream that is subject to flooding under a 100-year or 500-year flood.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR). The gross floor area permitted on a site divided by the total net area of the site, expressed in decimals to one or two places. For example, on a site with 10,000 net sq. ft. of land area, a Floor Area Ratio of 1.0 will allow a maximum of 10,000 gross sq. ft. of building floor area to be built. On the same site, an FAR of 1.5 would allow 15,000 sq. ft. of floor area; an FAR of 2.0 would allow 20,000 sq. ft.; and an FAR of 0.5 would allow only 5,000 sq. ft. FARs may be applied on a parcel-by-parcel basis or as an average for an entire site under a single development proposal.

FOCUS Program. A regional development and conservation strategy that promotes a more compact land use pattern for the Bay Area. It unites the efforts of four regional agencies into a single program that links land use and transportation by encouraging the development of complete, livable communities in areas served by transit, and promotes conservation of the region’s most significant resource lands.

Focus Area. A defined area with the potential for change in land use and urban design, often located near major corridors and destinations. Focus Areas in Santa Clara are defined in Section 5.4: Focus Areas.

Freeway. High-speed travel ways included in the State and federal highway systems and under the jurisdiction of Caltrans. Their purpose is to carry regional through traffic. Typical freeway speeds are 55 to 65 miles per hour, and rights-of-way are 200 to 250 feet, with additional width at interchanges. Access is provided by interchanges with typical spacing of one mile or greater. No direct access is provided to adjacent land uses. No pedestrian or bicycle facilities are provided, although some transit routes may travel on these roadways.

Full-Service Street. Often referred to as a Complete Street (per the California Planning Roundtable), a Full-Service Street is designed and operated to enable safe access and movement for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Gas Station. (See “Service Station.”)

Gateway. A point along a roadway entering a city or county at which a motorist gains a sense of having left the environs of one entity and of having entered the environs of another.

General Plan. A compendium of city or county policies for its long-term development, in the form of maps and accompanying text. A general plan is a legal document required of each local agency by the State of California Government Code Section 65301 and adopted by the City Council or Board of Supervisors. In California, the general plan has seven
mandatory elements (Circulation, Conservation, Housing, Land Use, Noise, Open Space, Safety and Seismic Safety) and may include any number of optional elements (such as Air Quality, Economic Development, Hazardous Waste and Parks and Recreation). The general plan may also be called a “City Plan,” “Comprehensive Plan” or “Master Plan.”

**General Plan Steering Committee (GPSC).** The 19-member City Council-appointed committee that included representatives from a variety of community interests. This committee was responsible for providing input and guidance for the preparation of the draft General Plan. Members included residents as well as representatives from businesses, schools, public agencies, City commissions and the City Council.

**Geological.** Pertaining to rock or solid matter.

**Goal.** A general, overall and ultimate purpose, aim or end toward which a city or county will direct its efforts.

**Grasslands.** Land reserved for pasturing or mowing, in which grasses are the predominant vegetation.

**Greenhouse Effect.** The term used to describe the warming of the earth’s atmosphere due to accumulated carbon dioxide and other gases in the upper atmosphere. These gases absorb energy radiated from the earth’s surface, “trapping” it in the same manner as glass in a greenhouse traps heat.

**Greenhouse Gas (GHG).** Gases that trap heat in the earth’s atmosphere, including Carbon Dioxide, Methane, Nitrous oxide, Hydrofluorocarbons, Perfluorocarbons, and Sulfur hexafluoride, all of which are of primary concern and identified explicitly in California legislation and litigation for measures to counteract global warming and climate change.

**Groundwater.** Water under the Earth’s surface, often confined to aquifers capable of supplying wells and springs.

**Group Home (Group Quarters).** A residential living arrangement, other than the usual single-family house, apartment or mobile home, in which two or more unrelated persons share living quarters and cooking facilities. Institutional group quarters include nursing homes, orphanages and prisons. Non-institutional group quarters include dormitories, sororities, fraternities, shelters and boarding houses.

**Growth Management.** A wide range of techniques used by a community to direct the amount, type, rate and location of development desired. Growth management policies can be implemented through growth rates, zoning, capital improvement programs, public facilities ordinances, urban limit lines, standards for levels of service and other programs.

**Guidelines.** General statements of direction for specific details.

**Habitat.** The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.
**Handicapped.** A person determined to have a physical impairment or mental disorder expected to be of long or indefinite duration.

**Hazardous Material.** Any substance that, because of its quantity, concentration or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. The term includes, but is not limited to, hazardous substances and hazardous wastes.

**Hazardous Waste.** Waste which requires special handling to avoid illness or injury to persons or damage to property. Includes, but is not limited to, inorganic mineral acids of sulfur, fluorine, chlorine, nitrogen, chromium, phosphorous, selenium and arsenic and their common salts; lead, nickel and mercury and their inorganic salts or metallo-organic derivatives; coal, tar acids such as phenol and cresols and their salts; and all radioactive materials.

**Hetch-Hetchy Aqueduct.** A conveyance system for the Tuolumne River water runoff from Yosemite National Park to the greater San Francisco Bay Area. The Hetch-Hetchy system consists of 11 reservoirs, numerous pipelines and water treatment facilities. The system delivers approximately 265,000 acre-feet of water per year and generates over two billion kilowatt hours of hydropower per year.

**High Speed Rail.** A rail transportation system with exclusive right-of-way which serves densely traveled corridors at speeds of 124 miles per hour and greater. High Speed Rail service is planned along the existing Caltrain right-of-way through the City of Santa Clara.

**High Speed Train (HST).** (See “High Speed Rail.”)

**Highway.** High-speed, high-capacity, limited-access transportation facility serving regional and county-wide travel. Highways may cross at a different grade levels.

**Historic; Historical.** An historic building, feature or site is one that is noteworthy for its significance in local, State or national history, its architecture or design, or its works of art, memorabilia or artifacts.

**Historical and Landmarks Commission, City of Santa Clara.** A commission appointed by the City Council that provides advice on the marking and preservation of historical landmarks and places, as well as the names and renaming of streets and museums.

**Historic Preservation.** The preservation, restoration and/or rehabilitation of historically significant structures, resources and neighborhoods.

**Historic Structure.** A structure deemed to be historically significant based on its visual quality, design, history, association, context and/or integrity.

**Homeless.** Persons and families who lack a fixed, regular or adequate nighttime residence. Includes those staying in temporary or emergency shelters and who are accommodated with friends or others with the understanding that shelter is being provided as a last resort. California Housing Element law, Section 65583(c)(1) requires all cities and counties to address the housing needs of the homeless. (See “Emergency Shelter.”)
Hotel. A facility where guest rooms or suites are offered to the general public for lodging, with or without meals, for compensation. (See “Motel.”)

Household. All those persons – related or unrelated – who occupy a single housing unit. (See “Family.”)

Households, Number of. The count of all year-round housing units occupied by one or more persons. The formation of new households generates the demand for housing and creates the need for additional housing units or for sharing existing units. New household formation can continue with or without an increase in population.

Housing and Community Development Department of the State of California (HCD). The State agency that has principal responsibility for assessing, planning and assisting in meeting the needs of low- and moderate-income households.

Housing Element. One of the seven State-mandated elements of a local general plan, it assesses the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community, identifies potential sites adequate to provide the amount and kind of housing needed, and contains adopted goals, policies and implementation programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing.

Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of (HUD). A cabinet-level department of the federal government that administers housing and community development programs.

Housing Unit. The place of permanent or customary residence of a person or family. A housing unit may be a single-family dwelling, a multi-family dwelling, a condominium, a modular home, a mobile home, a cooperative or any other residential unit considered real property under State law. A housing unit minimally has cooking facilities, a bathroom and a place to sleep. It also cannot be moved without substantial damage or unreasonable cost. (See “Dwelling Unit,” “Family,” and “Household.”)

Identity. A consistent quality that makes a city, place, area or building unique and gives it a distinguishing character.

Impact. The effect of any direct man-made actions or indirect repercussions of man-made actions on existing physical, social or economic conditions.

Impervious Surface. Surface through which water cannot penetrate, such as a roof, road, sidewalk and paved parking lot. The amount of impervious surface increases with development and increases the need for drainage facilities or alternate measures to deal with the increased runoff.

Implementation. Actions, procedures, programs or techniques that carry out policies.

Improvement. One or more structures or utilities on a parcel of land.

Industrial. Industrial is often divided into “heavy industrial” uses, such as manufacturing, construction yards, quarrying and factories, “light industrial” uses, such as less intensive warehousing and manufacturing, and office and research and development uses.
**Infill Development.** The development of new housing or other buildings on properties with low-intensity development in a built-up area or existing vacant properties.

**Incentive.** A factor, not related to economic or financial considerations, that incites or tends to incite to action or greater effort, as a reward offered for increased productivity or output.

**Infrastructure.** Permanent improvements, including facilities such as roads, water supply lines, utilities, sewage conveyance pipes and power and communications lines.

**Institutional Use.** (1) Publicly or privately owned and operated activities that are institutional in nature, such as hospitals, museums and schools; (2) churches, other religious organizations and places of assembly; and (3) other nonprofit activities of a welfare, educational or philanthropic nature that can not be considered a residential, commercial or industrial use.

**Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).** An advanced approach to traffic management that utilizes a range of technologies, including processing, control, communication and electronics, that are applied to a transportation system.

**Intensity.** For residential uses, the actual number or the allowable range of dwelling units per gross acre. For non-residential uses, the floor area ratios (FARs) of development calculated for the gross acres of that site.

**ISO Rating.** ISO is a private company that creates a widely used Fire Suppression Rating Schedule that evaluates the fire-fighting capabilities of individual communities. The schedule produces a numerical grading system which rates fire departments on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being the best and 10 being the worst.

**Issues.** Important matters or problems that are identified in a community’s general plan and dealt with through implementing the plan’s goals, objectives, policies, proposals and implementation programs.

**Joint Powers Board (JPB).** The Peninsula Corridor JPB is a government entity formed in 1987 to oversee Caltrain service between the San Francisco Peninsula and Santa Clara Valley. The JPB has three members: The City and County of San Francisco, San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA).

**L\text{dn} (Day-Night Average Sound Level).** The A-weighted average sound level for a given area (measured in decibels) during a 24-hour period with a 10 dB weighting applied to nighttime sound levels (after 10 p.m. and before 7 a.m.). The L\text{dn} is numerically equal to approximately the CNEL for most environmental settings.

**Landmark.** (1) A building, site, object, structure or significant feature, having historical, architectural, social or cultural significance and marked for preservation by the local, State or federal government. (2) A visually prominent or outstanding structure or natural feature that functions as a point of orientation or identification.
Landscaping. Planting (including trees, shrubs and ground covers) suitably designed, selected, installed and maintained so as to permanently enhance a site or roadway.

Landslide. A general term for a falling mass of soil or rocks.

Land Use. The occupation or utilization of land or water area for any human activity or any purpose defined in the General Plan.

Land Use Classification. A system for classifying and designating the appropriate use of properties.

Land Use Element. A required element of the General Plan that uses text and maps to designate the future use or reuse of land within a given jurisdiction’s planning area. The Land Use Element serves as a guide for structuring zoning and subdivision controls, capital improvement programs, and decisions on development proposals, public facilities, and open space. (See “Mandatory Element.”)

Leadership in Energy and Design (LEED). An internationally recognized green building certification system, providing third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance in energy savings, water efficiency, CO₂ emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

Lease. A contractual agreement by which an owner of real property (the lessor) gives the right of possession to another (a lessee) for a specified period of time (term) and for a specified consideration (rent).

Level of Service (LOS). (1) A qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a transportation system and the perception of motorists, transit passengers, pedestrians and/or bicyclists regarding these conditions. A level of service definition generally describes these conditions in terms of such factors as volumes, speed and travel time, delays, freedom to maneuver, interruptions, comfort, convenience and safety.

(2) Historically, a qualitative description of the traffic operations experienced by the driver at the intersection. It ranges from LOS “A” with no congestion and delay to LOS “F” with excessive congestion and delays. Vehicular LOS uses quantifiable traffic measures, such as average speed and intersection delay to determine driver satisfaction. LOS ratings are derived from the peak hour during the commute hours of the day as well as for daily operations. Similar levels of service may be used for corresponding transit, bicycle, and pedestrian speed and delay to define user satisfaction.

(3) Some communities in California also have standards for levels of service relating to municipal functions such as police, fire and library service.

Light Rail Transit (LRT). “Street cars” or “trolley cars” that typically operate entirely or substantially in mixed traffic and in non-exclusive, at-grade rights-of-way. Passengers may board vehicles from the street level (or from a platform that is level with the train). Vehicles are each electrically self-propelled and usually operate in one, two or three-car trains.
**Liquefaction.** (1) The transformation of loose water-saturated granular materials (such as sand or silt) from a solid into a liquid state. A type of ground failure that can occur during an earthquake. (2) A sudden large decrease in the shearing resistance of a cohesion-less soil, caused by a collapse of the structure by shock or strain.

**Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP).** The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires jurisdictions to develop and submit mitigation plans for FEMA approval as a condition of receiving Hazard Mitigation Grant Program project grants. The LHMP for the Bay Area was adopted by ABAG in March 2005. Each participating local government in the Bay Area must prepare an Annex to the LHMP to explain how the plan specifically applies to that agency and to identify local disaster mitigation strategies. The City of Santa Clara Annex was approved by FEMA in April 2005.

**Low-income Household.** A household with an annual income usually no greater than 80 percent of the area median family income adjusted by household size, as determined by a survey of incomes conducted by a city or a county, or in the absence of such a survey, based on the latest available eligibility limits established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Section 8 housing program.

**Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.** Tax reductions provided by the federal and State governments for investors in housing for low-income households.

**Maintain.** To keep in an existing state. (See “Preserve.”)

**Mandatory Element.** A component of the General Plan mandated by State Law. California State law requires that a General Plan include elements dealing with seven subjects – circulation, conservation, housing, land use, noise, open space and safety – and specifies to various degrees the information to be incorporated in each element.

**Manufacturing.** Process to convert raw materials, components, or parts into finished goods for wholesale or retail consumption.

**Marsh (Saltmarsh).** Any area designated as marsh or swamp on the largest scale United States Geologic Survey topographic map most recently published. A marsh usually is an area periodically or permanently covered with shallow water, either fresh or saline.

**May.** That which is permissible.

**Median Strip.** The dividing area, either paved or landscaped, between opposing lanes of traffic on a roadway.

**Medical Facilities.** Doctor offices, clinics, pharmacies, medical laboratories, and other similar out patient facilities.

**Metropolitan.** Of, relating to, or characteristic of a large city.

**Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).** An agency established through, or empowered to carry out, the regional transportation planning functions established in federal legislation. In the Bay Area, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the designated MPO.
**Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC).** The regional transportation planning agency established by the State of California for the nine-county Bay Area region; MTC also serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization or MPO under federal legislation.

**Minimize.** To reduce or lessen, but not necessarily to eliminate.

**Mini Park.** Small neighborhood park of approximately one acre or less.

**Mitigation Measures.** Action taken to avoid, minimize or eliminate environmental impacts. Mitigation includes avoiding the impact, minimizing impacts, rectifying the impact, reducing or eliminating the impact and compensating for the impact.

**Mitigation.** A specific action taken to reduce environmental impacts. Mitigation measures are required as a component of an environmental impact report (EIR) if significant environmental effects are identified.

**Mixed-Use.** The combination of various uses, such as office, commercial, institutional and residential, in a single building or on a single site in an integrated development with significant, functional interrelationships and a coherent physical design. A “single site” may include contiguous properties.

**Mobile Home.** A structure, transportable in one or more sections, built on a permanent chassis and designed for use as a single-family dwelling unit and that (1) has a minimum of 400 square feet of living space; (2) has a minimum width in excess of 102 inches; (3) is connected to all available permanent utilities; and (4) is tied down to a permanent foundation on a lot either owned or leased by the homeowner or is set on piers, with wheels removed and skirted, in a mobile home park.

**Moderate-Income Household.** A household with an annual income between 80 and 120 percent of the area median family income adjusted by household size, usually as established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Section 8 housing program.

**Motel.** (1) A hotel for motorists. (2) A facility in which guest rooms or suites are offered to the general public for lodging, with or without meals, for compensation with guest parking in proximity to guest rooms. Cooking in individual guest rooms or suites may be provided. (See “Hotel.”)

**Multi – Family Dwelling.** Attached or detached dwelling units on the same parcel, designed to be occupied by three or more households in separate units.

**Municipal Services.** Services traditionally provided by local government, including water and sewer, roads, parks, schools, and police and fire protection.

**Must.** That which is mandatory.

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).** An act passed in 1974 establishing federal legislation for national environmental policy, a council on environmental quality and the requirements for environmental impact statements.
National Flood Insurance Program. A federal program that authorizes the sale of federally subsidized flood insurance in communities where such flood insurance is not available privately.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). A program that controls water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. Point sources are discrete conveyances, such as pipes or man-made ditches. Individual homes that are connected to a municipal system, use a septic system, or do not have a surface discharge do not need an NPDES permit; however, industrial, municipal, and other facilities must obtain permits if their discharges go directly to surface waters, such as creek of the bay.

Necessary. Essential or required.

Need. A condition requiring supply or relief.

Neighborhood Park. Publicly-owned land intended to serve the recreation needs of people living or working within one-half mile radius of the park.

Nitrates. Chemical units of nitrogen and oxygen that combine with various organic and inorganic compounds. Once taken into the body, nitrates are converted into nitrites, which can interfere with the oxygen-carrying capacity of blood, particularly in infants and children. EPA has set the maximum contaminant level for drinking water at 10 parts per million (ppm) for nitrates and 1 ppm for nitrites.

Noise. Any sound that is undesirable because it interferes with speech and hearing, is intense enough to damage hearing or is otherwise annoying. Noise, simply, is “unwanted sound.”

Noise Attenuation. Reduction of the level of a noise source using a substance, material or surface, such as double pained windows, insulation, earth berms and/or solid concrete walls.

Noise Contours. Lines drawn about a noise source indicating equal levels of noise exposure. CNEL and $L_{dn}$ are used to describe the annoyance due to noise and to establish the criteria for noise.

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

Noise Element. One of the seven State-mandated elements of a general plan. It assesses noise levels of highways and freeways, local arterials, railroads, airports, local industrial plants and other ground stationary sources, and adopts goals, policies and implementation programs to reduce the community’s exposure.

Notice. A legal document announcing the opportunity for the public to present their views to an official representative or board of a public agency concerning an official action pending before the agency.
**Objective.** A specific statement of desired future condition toward which the city or county will expend effort to achieve a broader goal. An objective should be achievable and, where possible, should be measurable and time-specific. The State Government Code (Section 65302) requires that general plans spell out the “objectives” for the general plan, which may also be identified as goals in the general plan.

**Office of Historic Preservation, State of California (OHP).** A State agency that administers federally and State mandated historic preservation programs to further the identification, evaluation, registration and protection of California’s archaeological and historical resources. OHP administers the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program and provides architectural review and technical assistance to government agencies; manages the California Historical Resources Information System; and provides project review for compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and California Environmental Quality Act.

**Office of Planning and Research, State of California (OPR).** OPR is the State planning agency and includes five main units: State Clearinghouse, Legislative Unit, Policy and Research Unit, Office of Small Business Advocate, and Advisory for Military Affairs.

**Office Use.** The use of land for general business offices, medical and professional offices, administrative or headquarters offices for large wholesaling or manufacturing operations, and research and development.

**Old Quad.** The City’s oldest historic neighborhood, generally bounded by Newhall Street, Scott Boulevard, Southern Pacific Railroad and the City limit line. The area is comprised of the original City street grid pattern surveyed in 1866.

**Open Space.** Any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use for the purposes of (1) the preservation of natural resources, (2) the managed production of resources, (3) outdoor recreation or (4) public health and safety.

**Orchard.** A group of fruit or nut trees, either small and diverse and grown for home use, or large and uniform (i.e., of one variety) and cultivated for revenue.

**Overlay.** A designation on the Land Use Diagram, or zoning map, that modifies the basic, underlying designation criteria or requirements in some specific manner.

**Parcel.** A lot, or contiguous group of lots, in single ownership or under single control, usually considered a unit for purposes of development.

**Park.** Open space with the primary purpose of recreation. (See “Park Land.”)

**Park Land (Parkland).** Land that is publicly owned or controlled for the purpose of providing parks, recreation, or open space for public use.

**Parkland, Local Serving.** Mini, Neighborhood and Community parks and open space that serves the recreational needs of Santa Clara residents.
**Park Needs Assessment.** A long term plan identifying a community’s anticipated future park and recreation facility needs. This plan typically includes a study of existing facilities, assessment and projection of service standards, maintenance plans, and procedures for joint use operations for facilities such as school ball fields, regional open space, or other shared facilities. (See Park Master Plan)

**Parking, Shared.** Public or private parking used jointly by two or more uses.

**Parking Ratio.** The number of parking spaces provided per 1,000 square of floor area, e.g., 2:1 or “two per thousand.”

**Parkway.** An expressway or freeway designed for non-commercial traffic only; usually located within a strip of landscaped park or natural vegetation.

**Peak Hour.** The busiest one-hour period for traffic during a 24-hour period. The PM peak hour is the busiest one hour period of traffic during the typical Monday through Friday evening commute period. The AM peak hour is the busiest one hour period during the morning commute.

**Peak Hour/Peak Period.** For any given roadway, a daily period during which traffic volume is highest, usually occurring in the morning and evening commute periods.

**Pedestrian-Oriented Development.** Development designed with an emphasis on the street-level designs, sidewalks and pedestrian access, rather than on accommodating auto access and parking.

**Personal Services.** Services of a personal convenience nature, as opposed to products that are sold to individual consumers. Personal services include services such as barber and beauty shops, shoe and luggage repair, photographers, laundry and cleaning services, copying, clothing alterations.

**Picnic Area.** Two or more picnic tables, often with barbecue stands.

**Places of Assembly.** Land or buildings for the primary purpose of the congregation of people for public or private meetings, including uses such as places of worship, meeting halls for clubs and other membership organizations, union halls, community centers and facilities, convention and exhibition halls, auditoriums, and funeral homes. May also include functionally related internal facilities, such as kitchens, multi-purpose rooms, and storage. Does not include conference and meeting rooms for industrial, office, or research and development uses, or such facilities that are accessory and incidental to another permitted primary use, typically used only by on-site employees or clients and that occupy less floor area than the primary use.

**Planned Community.** A large-scale development with a definable boundary; a consistent, but not necessarily uniform, character; overall control during the development process by a single development entity; private ownership of recreation amenities; and enforcement of covenants, conditions and restrictions by a master community association.
Planning Area. The land area addressed by a general plan. For a fully developed city, the planning area boundary typically coincides with the City limits.

Planning Commission. A body, usually having five or seven members, in compliance with California law (Section 65100) that is assigned some planning functions of the city or county, as deemed appropriate by the legislative body.

Policy. A specific statement of principle or guiding actions that implies clear commitment, but not mandatory action, the direction set by a governmental agency, in order to meet specified goals and objectives.

Pollutant. Any introduced gas, liquid or solid that is beyond defined ecological tolerance levels.

Pollution. The presence of pollutants whose nature, location or quantity produces undesired environmental effects.

Preservation. As used in historic preservation, the process of sustaining the form and extent of a structure essentially as it exists. Preservation aims at halting further deterioration and providing structural stability but does not contemplate significant rebuilding.

Preserve. To keep safe from destruction or decay; to maintain or keep intact. (See “Maintain.”)

Principle. An assumption, fundamental rule or doctrine that guides general plan policies, proposals, standards and implementation measures. The State Government Code (Section 65302) requires that general plans spell out the objectives, “principles,” standards and proposals of the general plan.

Priority Development Area (PDA). PDAs are locally-identified, infill development opportunity areas within existing communities. They are generally areas of at least 100 acres where there is a commitment for more housing, with amenities and services in a location served by transit.

Professional Offices. A use providing professional or consulting services in the fields of law, medicine, architecture, design, engineering, accounting, real estate, insurance and similar professions.

Program. An action, activity or strategy in response to adopted policy to implement a goal or objective. Policies and programs establish the “who,” “how” and “when” for carrying out the “what” and “where” of goals and objectives.

Protect. To maintain and preserve beneficial uses in their present condition as nearly as possible.

Public and Quasi-Public. Uses such as government offices, fire and police facilities, public utilities, transit stations, commercial adult care and child care centers, places of worship, public and private schools, cemeteries, hospitals, places of assembly and other facilities that have a unique public character as their primary use.
**Quimby Act.** Authorizes local agencies to establish an ordinance requiring new development to pay a fee or dedicate land for park and recreation facilities, not to exceed three acres of land per 1,000 persons. A jurisdiction may require up to five acres of land per 1,000 persons if the existing neighborhood and community park area exceeds three acres per 1,000 residents.

**Rare or Endangered Species.** A species of animal or plant listed in Sections 670.2 or 670.5, Title 14, California Administrative Code; or Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 17.11 or Section 17.2, pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act designating species as rare, threatened or endangered.

**Recognize.** To officially (or by official action) identify or perceive a given situation.

**Recreation, Active.** Recreational activity that requires the use of organized play areas, including, but not limited to, softball, baseball, football and soccer fields, tennis and basketball courts and various forms of children’s play equipment.

**Recreation, Passive.** Recreational uses that do not require the use of organized play areas.

**Recycle.** The process of extraction and reuse of materials from waste products.

**Redevelop.** To demolish and to expand existing buildings irrespective of whether there is a change in the land use.

**Redevelopment.** Any proposed replacement of existing development.

**Regional.** Pertaining to activities or economies at a scale greater than that of a single jurisdiction, and affecting a broad geographic area.

**Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).** State law requirement for jurisdictions to make available a specified number of housing sites for a range of income levels. In the Bay Area, each city and county’s “fair share” of housing units is determined by ABAG through the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. This process takes in to account factors such as existing and expected employment, population growth, and transit accessibility in order to allocate housing units. The Housing Element is the implementing tool for the RHNA allocation.

**Regional Park.** A park typically 150-500 acres in size focusing on activities and natural features not included in most other types of parks and often based on a specific scenic or recreational opportunity.

**Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).** A department of the California Environmental Protection Agency whose main goal is to protect and enhance the State’s waters.

**Regulation.** A rule or order prescribed for managing government.
Rehabilitation (Remodeling). The repair, preservation and/or improvement of structures.

Request for Proposals (RFP). A document describing a project or services and soliciting bids for consultant's or contractor's performance.

Research and Development Use (R&D). A use engaged in study, testing, design, analysis and experimental development of products, processes or services, similar to corporate offices in design and employment patterns.

Residential. Land designated in the City General Plan and Zoning Ordinance for buildings consisting only of dwelling units. May be improved, vacant or unimproved. (See “Dwelling Unit.”)

Restore. To renew, rebuild or reconstruct to a former state.

Restrict. To check, bound or decrease the range, scope or incidence of a particular condition.

Retention Area. A pond, pool, lagoon or basin used for the storage of water runoff.

Retrofit. To add materials and/or devices to an existing building or system to improve its operation, safety or efficiency. For example, buildings can be retrofitted to use solar energy and to strengthen their ability to withstand earthquakes.

Rezoning. An amendment to the map and/or text of a zoning ordinance to effect a change in the nature, density or intensity of uses allowed in a zoning district and/or on a designated parcel or land area.

Right-of-Way. (1) A strip of land occupied or intended to be occupied by certain transportation and public use facilities, such as roadways, railroads and utility lines. (2) A continuous strip of land reserved for or actually occupied by a road, crosswalk, railroad, electric transmission lines, oil or gas pipeline, water line, sanitary storm sewer or other similar use.

Riparian Corridor. Areas that are transitional between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. They are areas where surface and subsurface water bodies connect adjacent uplands, usually adjacent to perennial, intermittent and ephemeral streams, lakes and estuarine-marine shorelines.

Riparian Habitat. The land and plants bordering a watercourse or lake.

Risk. The danger or degree of hazard or potential loss.

Ruderal. Non-native grassland composed almost entirely of annual grasses and other herbaceous species. Ruderal grasslands can be found in freeway cloverleaf areas, along roadways, and in vacant, undeveloped lots.
Runoff. That portion of rain or snow that does not percolate into the ground and is discharged into streams.

Safety Element. One of the seven State-mandated elements of a local general plan, it contains adopted goals, policies and implementation programs for the protection of the community from any risks associated with seismic and geologic hazards, flooding and wildland and urban fires.

Saltmarsh. (See “Marsh.”)

Sanitary Landfill. The controlled placement of refuse within a limited area, followed by compaction and covering with a suitable thickness of earth or other containment material.

Sanitary Sewer. A system of subterranean conduits that carries refuse liquids or waste matter to a plant where the sewage is treated, as contrasted with storm drainage systems (that carry surface water) and septic tanks or leech fields (that hold refuse liquids and waste matter on-site).

San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP). Wastewater treatment facility that treats and cleans the wastewater for over 1,500,000 residents and employees in the 300-square mile area encompassing San Jose, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Saratoga, and Monte Sereno.

Santa Clara. Throughout this document, “Santa Clara” refers to the City of Santa Clara, its programs, policies, infrastructure, etc., unless otherwise noted, i.e., County of Santa Clara or Santa Clara University.

Santa Clara Green Power Program. An option offered by Silicon Valley Power to both residents and businesses to pay slightly higher rates to buy power from 100 percent renewable energy sources.

Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP). A regional partnership between six Local Partners (the County of Santa Clara, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, Santa Clara Valley Water District, and the Cities of San Jose, Gilroy and Morgan Hill) and three Wildlife Agencies (the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS-NOAA Fisheries) to protect and enhance ecological diversity and function within a large section of Santa Clara County, while allowing for currently planned development and growth.

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). The regional Congestion Management Agency for Santa Clara County. Responsibilities include the development, operation and maintenance of the bus and light rail system within the County and managing the County’s blueprint to reduce congestion and improve air quality.

Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP). An association of thirteen cities and towns in Santa Clara Valley, the County of Santa
Clara, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District that share a common NPDES permit to discharge stormwater to South San Francisco Bay. Member Agencies (Co-permittees) include Campbell, Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Monte Sereno, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga, Sunnyvale, the County of Santa Clara, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

**Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCWD).** The primary water resources agency for Santa Clara County, California. It acts not only as the county’s water wholesaler, but also as its flood protection agency and is the steward for its streams and creeks, underground aquifers and district-built reservoirs.

**Second Unit.** A self-contained living unit, either attached to or detached from, and in addition to, the primary residential unit on a single lot. Sometimes called “Granny Flat.”

**Section 8, Rental Assistance Program.** A federal (HUD) rent-subsidy program that is one of the main sources of federal housing assistance for low-income households. The program operates by providing “housing assistance payments” to owners, developers and public housing agencies to make up the difference between the “Fair Market Rent” of a unit (set by HUD) and the household’s ability to contribute toward the rent, which is calculated at 30 percent of the household’s adjusted gross monthly income (GMI). “Section 8” includes programs for new construction, existing housing and substantial or moderate housing rehabilitation.

**Sedimentation.** Process by which material suspended in water is deposited in a body of water.

**Seismic.** Caused by or subject to earthquakes or earth vibrations.

**Senior Housing.** Typically one- or two-bedroom apartments or condominiums designed to meet the needs of, and restricted to, persons 62 years of age or older or, if more than 150 units, persons 55 years of age or older.

**Seniors.** Persons age 62 and older. (see “Elderly.”)

**Sensitive Receptors.** Persons who are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, the acutely ill and chronically ill, adults with mental or physical disabilities, and persons with mobility limitations or difficulty understanding and executing directions due to age, physical or mental conditions. The term “sensitive receptors” can also refer to the land use categories where these people live or spend a significant amount of time. Such land uses include residences, schools, playgrounds, child-care or senior daycare centers, hospitals, retirement homes and convalescent homes.

**Service Station (Gas Station).** A building or use intended to provide fuel, repair, testing, or other service for automobiles and trucks.

**Service Population.** The residential population, plus the population of those persons who work in the City.
Server Farm. (See Data Center)

Setback. The horizontal distance between the property line and any structure.

Settlement. (1) The drop in elevation of a ground surface caused by settling or compacting. (2) The gradual downward movement of an engineered structure due to compaction. Differential settlement is uneven settlement, where one part of a structure settles at a different rate than another part.

Shall. That which is obligatory or necessary.

Shopping Center. A group of commercial establishments, planned, developed, owned or managed as a unit, with common off-street parking provided on the site.

Should. Signifies a directive to be honored.

Sign. Any representation (written or pictorial) used to convey information, or to identify, announce or otherwise direct attention to a business, profession, commodity, service or entertainment, and placed on, suspended from, or in any way attached to, any structure, vehicle or feature of the natural or man-made landscape.

Significant Effect. A beneficial or detrimental impact on the environment. May include, but is not limited to, significant changes in an area’s air, water and land resources.

Silicon Valley Power (SVP). The municipal electric utility for the City of Santa Clara, since 1896.

Site. A parcel of land or assembly of parcels used or intended for one use or a group of uses as part of a single development proposal and having frontage on a public or private street.

Soil. The unconsolidated material on the immediate surface of the earth created by natural forces that serves as natural medium for growing land plants.

Solar Access. The provision of direct sunlight to an area specified for solar energy collection when the sun’s azimuth is within 45 degrees of true south.

Solid Waste. Any unwanted or discarded material that is not a liquid or gas. Includes organic wastes, paper products, metals, glass, plastics, cloth, brick, rock, soil, leather, rubber, yard wastes and wood, but does not include sewage and hazardous materials.

Solid Waste Diversion. A combination of waste reduction, recycling, reuse and composting activities that reduces solid waste disposal at the landfill.

Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). The land area covered by the floodwaters of the base flood on National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) maps. The SFHA is the area where the NFIP’s floodplain management regulations must be enforced and the area where the mandatory purchase of flood insurance applies.
Specific Plan. Under Article 8 of the Government Code (Section 65450 et seq), a legal tool for detailed design and implementation of a defined portion of the area covered by a General Plan. A specific plan may include all detailed regulations, conditions, programs and/or proposed legislation that may be necessary or convenient for the systematic implementation of any General Plan element(s).

Specified Regulated Business. Businesses that have additional regulations by local, State or Federal regulatory agencies, such as adult-oriented bars or lounges, adult businesses, massage establishments, tattoo or branding parlors, body-piercing establishments, check-cashing shops, pawn shops or medical marijuana dispensaries. Such uses are considered commercial for purposes of this General Plan.

Speed, Average. The sum of the speeds of the cars observed divided by the number of cars observed.

Standards. (1) A rule or measure establishing a level of quality or quantity that must be satisfied. The State Government Code (Section 65302) requires that general plans spell out the objectives, principles, “standards” and proposals of the general plan. An example of a standard includes the number of acres of park land per 1,000 population. (2) Requirements in a zoning ordinance that govern building and development as distinguished from use restrictions – for example, site-design regulations such as lot area, height limit, frontage, landscaping and floor area ratio.

Stationary Source. A source of air pollution that is not mobile, such as a heating plant or an exhaust stack from a laboratory.

Street Furniture. Those features associated with a street that are intended for use by pedestrians, such as benches, trash receptacles, kiosks, lights and newspaper racks.

Streets, Local. Streets that are designed for lower traffic volumes and provide primary access for abutting residential and neighborhood commercial properties. Typically, these streets are two lanes and have a 40- to 60-foot right-of-way, with travel speeds of 25 miles per hour.

Structure. Anything constructed or erected, as defined in the California Building Code.

Subdivision. The division of a tract of land into defined lots, either improved or unimproved, which can be separately conveyed by sale or lease, and which can be altered or developed. “Subdivision” includes a condominium project as defined in Section 1350 of the California Civil Code and a community apartment project as defined in Section 11004 of the Business and Professions Code.

Subregional. Pertaining to a portion of a region.

Subsidence. The gradual settling or sinking of an area with little or no horizontal motion. (See “Settlement.”)

Substandard Housing. Residential dwellings that, because of their physical condition, do not provide safe and sanitary housing.
Substantial. Considerable in importance, value, degree or amount.

Surplus. An amount or a quantity in excess of what is needed.

Sustainability. Use of natural resources in a way that increases the potential for future generations to live and prosper.

Sustainable Development. Development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the environment for future generations.

Tax Credit. A dollar amount that may be subtracted from the amount of taxes owed.

Tax Increment. Additional tax revenues that result from increases in property values within a Redevelopment Project Area. State law permits the tax increment to be earmarked for redevelopment purposes but requires at least 20 percent to be used to increase and improve the community’s supply of affordable housing.

Telecommuting. An arrangement where the employee is at a location other than the primary work place, and communicates or conducts business via wireless or telephone lines, using modems, fax machines, or other electronic devices in conjunction with computers.

Total Dissolved Solids (TDS). Total dissolved solids comprise inorganic salts and small amounts of organic matter that are dissolved in water. The principal constituents are usually calcium, magnesium, sodium and potassium and the anions carbonate, bicarbonate, chloride, sulphate and, particularly in groundwater, nitrate (from agricultural use).

Townhouse; Townhome. A one-family dwelling in a row of at least three such units in which each unit has its own front and rear access to the outside, with no unit located over another. Each unit is separated from other units by one or more common, fire-resistant walls. Townhouses usually have separate utilities. Common areas typically have utilities purchased by a homeowners association on behalf of all townhouse owners. (See “Condominium.”)

Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ). A special area delineated by State and/or local transportation officials for tabulating traffic-related data, especially commuting statistics.

Traffic Calming. A technique aimed at significantly reducing vehicle speeds in residential areas, without restricting access in order to protect road users and residents.

Transit. The conveyance of persons or goods from one place to another by means of a local, public transportation system.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD). A mixed-use community within an average of 2,000 feet of a transit stop. TODs mix residential, retail, office and public uses in a walkable environment, to promote travel by transit, bicycle or foot as an alternative to single occupancy vehicles.
Transit, Public. A system of regularly-scheduled buses and/or trains available to the public on a fee-per-ride basis. Also called “Mass Transit.”

Transportation Demand Management (TDM). A strategy for reducing vehicles on the roadway network system through incentives for carpools, vanpools, buses and trains, walking biking and the like.

Trees, Heritage. Trees designated as significant by the City due to their age, commemoration of an event, or memory of a person or event in history.

Trees, Street. Trees strategically planted, usually in parkways, medians, or along street frontages, to enhance the visual quality of a neighborhood.

Trip. A one-way journey that proceeds from an origin to a destination via a single mode of transportation; the smallest unit of movement considered in transportation studies. Each trip has one “production end,” (or origin), and one “attraction end” (destination).

Trip Generation. The trips by automobiles or other means of public transportation associated with specific uses or development type. Trip generation is the basis for estimating the level of use for a transportation system and the potential impacts of additional development or transportation facilities on an existing, transportation system. Trip generation from households are correlated with destinations that attract members for specific purposes.

Truck Route. A path of circulation required for all vehicles exceeding a specified weight or axle limit. Typically, a truck route follows Major Arterials through commercial or industrial areas and avoids residential areas.

Underutilized Parcel. A parcel that is not developed to its full potential, as allowed by a general plan or zoning.

Urban. Urban areas are generally characterized by moderate and higher-density residential development (i.e., three or more dwelling units per acre), commercial development, industrial development and the availability of public services required for that development, specifically central water and sewer, an extensive road network, public transit, and other such services (e.g., safety and emergency response). Development not providing such services may be “non-urban” or “rural.”

Urbanized. Area that is characterized by higher population density in comparison to surrounding areas.

Urban Design. The location, mass and design of various development components that combines elements of urban planning, architecture and landscape architecture to define the form, in terms of both beauty and function, to selected areas within a city.

Urban Runoff Management Plan (URMP). A plan that details the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP) to reduce urban runoff pollution in the Santa Clara Valley Watershed. (see “Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program.”)
**Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP).** A plan that ensures the appropriate level of reliability in water service to meet the needs of various categories of customers during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.

**Use.** The purpose for which a property or structure may be leased, occupied, maintained, arranged, designed, intended, constructed, erected, moved, altered and/or enlarged as per the City’s Zoning Ordinance and General Plan land use designation.

**Vacant.** Lands or buildings that are not actively used for any purpose.

**Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).** A measure of both the volume and extent of motor vehicle operation; the total number of vehicle miles traveled within a specified geographical area (whether the entire country or a smaller area) over a given period of time.

**VTA.** (See “Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority.”)

**Walkability.** The extent to which the built environment supports and encourages walking by providing pedestrian access and safety.

**Walking distance.** Typically a quarter mile or less.

**Water-Efficient Landscaping.** Landscaping designed to minimize water use and maximize energy efficiency.

**Wildlife.** Animals or plants existing in their natural habitat.

**Wildlife Refuge.** An area maintained in a natural state for the preservation of both animal and plant life.

**Zoning.** The division of a city or county by legislative regulations into areas, or zones, which specify allowable uses for real property and development standards for buildings within these areas; a program that implements policies of the General Plan.

**Zoning District.** A designated classification of a zoning ordinance that prescribes use requirements along with building and development standards.

**Zoning Map.** Government Code Section 65851 permits a legislative body to divide a county, a city or portions thereof, into zones of the number, shape and area it deems best suited to carry out the purposes of the zoning ordinance. These zones are delineated on a map or maps, called the Zoning Map.

**Zoning Ordinance.** A city ordinance that divides incorporated city land into districts and establishes regulations governing the use, placement, spacing and size of buildings, open spaces and other facilities.
8.2.2 Acronyms

**AB 32**: Assembly Bill 32

**ABAG**: Association of Bay Area Governments

**ACE**: Altamont Commuter Express

**ADA**: Americans with Disabilities Act

**ADT**: Average Daily Traffic

**ALUC**: Airport Land Use Commission

**BAAQMD**: Bay Area Air Quality Management District

**BART**: Bay Area Rapid Transit

**BMP**: Best Management Practices

**BMR**: Below-market-rate dwelling unit

**BRT**: Bus Rapid Transit

**Caltrans**: California Department of Transportation.

**CASQA**: California Stormwater Quality Association

**CBC**: California Building Code

**CCJPA**: Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority

**CCR**: California Code of Regulations

**CDBG**: Community Development Block Grant

**CEQA**: California Environmental Quality Act

**CHFA**: California Housing Finance Agency

**CHRA**: California High-Speed Rail Authority

**CIP**: Capital Improvements Program

**CLG**: Certified Local Government

**CLUP**: Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan
Appendix Two: DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

CMA: Congestion Management Agency
CMP: Congestion Management Plan
CNEL: Community Noise Equivalent Level
dB: Decibel
dBA: “A-weighted” decibel
DMA: Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000
DOF: California State Department of Finance
EIR: Environmental Impact Report (State)
EIS: Environmental Impact Statement
FAA: Federal Aviation Administration
FAR: Floor Area Ratio
FAR Part 77: Federal Aviations Regulations Part 77
FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency
GHG: Greenhouse Gases
GPSC: General Plan Steering Committee
HCD: State of California Housing and Community Development Department
HCP/NCCP: Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan
HST: High Speed Train
HUD: U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
IBC: International Building Code
ITS: Intelligent Transportation Systems
JPB: Peninsula Joint Powers Board
L_{dn}: Day and Night Average Sound Level
LHMP: Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
LEED: Leadership in Energy and Design
LOS: Level of Service
LRT: Light Rail Transit
MTC: Metropolitan Transportation Commission
MTWS: Mission Trail Waste Systems
NEPA: National Environmental Policy Act
NPDES: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
OHR: State of California Office of Historic Preservation
OPR: State of California Office of Planning and Research
PDA: Priority Development Area
R&D: Research and Development
RFP: Request for Proposals
RHNA: Regional Housing Needs Allocation
RWQCB: California Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB 375: Senate Bill 375
SCFD: Santa Clara Fire Department
SCPD: Santa Clara Police Department
SCUSD: Santa Clara Unified School District
SCVURPPP: Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program
SCVWD: Santa Clara Valley Water District
SFHA: Special Flood Hazard Area
SVP: Silicon Valley Power
TAZ: Traffic Analysis Zone
TDM: Transportation Demand Management
TDS: Total Dissolved Solids
TOD: Transit Oriented Development
URMP: Urban Runoff Management Plan

UWMP: Urban Water Management Plan

VMT: Vehicle Miles Traveled

VTA: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

WPCP: San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant