



## GLOSSARY

This Glossary provides definitions of selected terms used in the Napa County General Plan. These definitions are provided for the reader's information and to assist in the interpretation of goals and policies in this General Plan. Where specific words are defined by policy in this Plan, the definition established by policy has precedence over the definitions below.

The definitions shown in this Glossary shall not be interpreted as establishing policies, standards, thresholds, or guidelines.



**affordable (housing)** – As defined by federal guidelines, housing is affordable if the household spends less than 30% of its total gross income on housing costs. Housing affordability is directly related to household income. *See also the related topic, **workforce housing**.*

**agriculture** – The following definition of agriculture has been established by policy in the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Element of this General Plan:

“Agriculture” is defined as the raising of crops, trees, and livestock; the production and processing of agricultural products; and related marketing, sales, and other accessory uses. Agriculture also includes farm management businesses and farm worker housing. *See Policy AG/LU-2 in the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Element.*

**appellation** – Officially known as “American Viticultural Areas,” appellations are areas designated by the federal Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). Areas within an appellation or AVA have the same climate, soil, and elevation and similar properties that give wine produced from grapes grown in the area a certain characteristic. The officially designated AVA “districts” in Napa County are: Atlas Peak, Chiles Valley, Diamond Mountain, Howell Mountain, Los Carneros\*, Mount Veeder, Oak Knoll, Oakville, Rutherford, Spring Mountain, St. Helena, Stags Leap, Wild Horse Valley\*, and Yountville. The entire county is in the “Napa Valley” appellation. (\* – Portions of these districts are outside of Napa County.)

**Baseline Data Report (BDR)** – A compilation of information about natural and manmade features in Napa County, first published by the County of Napa in 2005. The BDR is available as a printed volume, in digital format, and on the County's Web site ([www.co.napa.ca.us](http://www.co.napa.ca.us)).

**BMP or BMPs (Best Management Practices)** – The best available technologies, techniques, etc., to reduce the potential impacts of development or operation of a project on the environment. BMPs are typically referred to in relation to reducing erosion, drainage, and air and water pollution.

**California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS)** – Established by state law, these standards specify the standards for the purity of outdoor air, as measured by the concentration of ten pollutants: particulate matter (very fine dust), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfates, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, visibility reducing particles, lead, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride. *See also **National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)**.*

**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 has the potential for a significant adverse environmental impact, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared and



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certified as to its adequacy before action can be taken on the proposed project. General Plans require the preparation of a “program EIR.”

**CDPD** – The Napa County Department of Conservation, Development and Planning, the County department charged with administering the County’s planning and land use development program and building inspection activities in the unincorporated areas of Napa County. The department is composed of three divisions: Conservation, Planning, and Building Inspection.

**CNEL or  $L_{dn}$**  – Community Noise Equivalent Level is a weighted average of the noise level at a given location over a 24-hour period, in which more weight is given to noise during nighttime and early morning hours.  $L_{dn}$  is a similar 24-hour average, calculated slightly differently. Both are commonly used to characterize the noise environment at a given location, usually to determine whether “noise sensitive” uses such as homes will be subject to unacceptable levels of noise.

**conjunctive use** – In the context of surface water/groundwater, conjunctive use is a program where surface water supplies are used during times when sufficient surface water is available to meet all water demands (generally the wetter years) and groundwater supplies are used instead of surface water supplies to meet some or all water demands during times when surface water supplies are not sufficient to meet all demands (generally drier years).

**cultural landscape** – A significant, historical landscape meeting criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places pursuant to guidance provided by the National Park Service and the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

**dba** – The “A-weighted” scale for measuring sound in decibels; adjusts the effects of low and high frequencies in order to simulate human hearing.

**discretionary** – An action taken by a governmental agency that calls for the exercise of judgment in deciding whether to approve and/or how to carry out a project.

**Environmental Impact Report (EIR)** – A report required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) 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 or project. *See California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).*

**farm management** – Operation, maintenance, and storage of farm machinery and supplies used exclusively for agricultural cultivation, as defined by Section 18.08.040 of County Code.

**floodplain** – The area in which floodwaters spread out, but are not actively flowing. *See also floodway.*

**floodway** – The area or channel in which floodwaters are actively flowing. *See also floodplain.*

**global climate change** – The term for changes in the earth’s climate attributed to a buildup of greenhouse gases, primarily resulting from the burning of fossil fuels such as coal and oil.

**greenhouse gases** – Gases which cause heat to be trapped in the atmosphere, warming the earth. Greenhouse gases are necessary to keep the earth warm, but increasing concentrations of these gases are implicated in **global climate change**. Greenhouse gases include in the order of relative abundance water



vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone. The majority of greenhouse gases come from natural sources, although human activity is also a major contributor.

**habitats/communities of limited distribution** – Natural communities in the County that are considered sensitive due to the limited local distribution, encompass less than 500 acres of cover within the County, and are considered by local biological experts to be worthy of conservation. The following six communities are examples of the rarest biotic communities meeting the 500-acre threshold: native grassland (perennial grassland, bunch grass); tanbark oak alliance; Brewer willow alliance; ponderosa pine alliance; riverine, lacustrine, and tidal mudflats; and wet meadow grasses super alliance.

**headwater channels** – Drainage channels located in relatively steep terrain (i.e., >8% slope). These channels have generally been delineated in the Napa River “Limiting Factors Analysis” (Stillwater Sciences and Dietrich, 2002, and also by Dietrich, W.E. et al., 2004. The use of Airborne Laser Swath Mapping Data in Watershed Analysis to Guide Restoration Priorities: the Napa River Watershed Study. *Eos Transactions of the American Geophysical Union* 85(47), Fall Meeting Supplement, Abstract G11B-06).

**integrity** – In the context of historical structures, this generally refers to how closely a building, place, or property matches its original condition. As defined by the National Park Service, “integrity” is measured for seven aspects or qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. *For more information: [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)*

**intermittent stream** – A stream that carries water a considerable portion of the time, but that ceases to flow occasionally or seasonally because bed seepage and evapotranspiration exceed the available water supply.

**invasive species** – Non-native species (e.g., plants or animals) that adversely affect the habitats they invade economically, environmentally, or ecologically.

**LEED** – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a standard established by the U.S. Green Building Council.

**Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)** – The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is responsible for administering California Government Code Section 56000 et seq., which is also known as the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. The state charges LAFCO with encouraging orderly formation and development of local agencies in a manner that preserves agricultural and open space lands, promotes the efficient extension of municipal services, and prevents urban sprawl. LAFCO is responsible for municipal service reviews, annexations, and establishment of spheres of influence for each agency under its jurisdiction. In Napa County, the LAFCO consists of two members of the Board of Supervisors, two council members appointed from among the County’s five cities/town, and one member of the public. There are also alternate Board, city, and public members.

**Level of Service (LOS)** – Generally, a measure of how well (or poorly) traffic is flowing on a roadway or through an intersection. LOS can be measured in different ways, but in general Level of Service is defined as decreasing as congestion or delays increase. The Circulation Element of this General Plan defines the County’s desired LOS standards for traffic on county roads.

**Lower Milliken-Sarco-Tulucay Creeks (MST) Area** – The study area identified in the U.S. Geological Survey’s Water-Resources Investigations Report 03-4229 (Ground-Water Resources in Lower Milliken-Sarco-Tulucay Creeks Area, Southeastern Napa County, California, 200-2002, Farrar, C. & Metzger, L.).



**main basin** – A groundwater region that includes the unincorporated areas in the vicinity of Calistoga, St. Helena, Yountville, Napa, and American Canyon (2050 Water Resources Study, West Yost & Assoc. 2005).

**Measure A** – Voter-approved initiative (1980) which limited housing growth in the unincorporated area to 1 percent per year. Measure A expired in 2000, but was re-adopted by the Board of Supervisors as an ordinance the same year.

**Measure J** – Measure J, the Agricultural Lands Preservation Initiative, enacted by a vote of the people on November 6, 1990, is intended to preserve the County’s agricultural lands, which have a General Plan land use designation of Agricultural Resource (AR) or Agricultural, Watershed and Open Space (AWOS). Measure J provides that until December 31, 2020, the General Plan’s provisions governing maximum building intensity and minimum parcel size may not be changed within agricultural areas to reduce the minimum parcel size, the intent, or maximum building intensity except by vote of the people. In addition, lands designated as “Agricultural Resource” or “Agriculture, Watershed and Open Space” on the Napa County General Plan Land Use Map adopted by the Board of Supervisors on September 8, 1975, as amended through February 1, 1990, may not be re-designated to another land use category except by a majority vote of the people, if the land is annexed to a city, or if it is re-designated by the Board of Supervisors pursuant to procedures set forth in the initiative, and only if certain findings can be made. The General Plan at the time of adoption of Measure J provided for a minimum parcel size of 40 to 160 acres for lands designated “Agriculture, Watershed and Open Space” and a minimum parcel size of 40 acres for lands designated “Agricultural Resource.” Since then, all areas designated as “Agriculture, Watershed and Open Space” have become subject to a minimum parcel size of 160 acres. The language of Measure J was inserted into the General Plan, and therefore will remain intact and in effect as part of the updated General Plan unless it is changed by the voters or by the Board of Supervisors following Measure J’s expiration on December 31, 2020.

**Milliken-Sarco-Tulocay** – *See MST.*

**ministerial (administrative) decision** – An action taken by a governmental agency that follows established procedures and rules and does not call for the exercise of judgment in deciding whether to approve a project.

**MST** – Abbreviation for Milliken-Sarco-Tulocay, a groundwater basin in Napa County. The MST has been designated as “groundwater deficient,” meaning that a shortage of groundwater has been created by excessive withdrawals.

**National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)** – Established by the US Environmental Protection Agency, these standards specify the standards for the purity of outdoor air, as measured by the concentration of six pollutants: ozone, particulate matter (very fine dust), carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and lead. *See also California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS).*

**National Register of Historic Places** – The official list, established by the National Historic Preservation Act, of sites, districts, buildings, structures, and objects significant in the nation’s history or whose artistic or architectural value is unique.

**Napa County League of Governments (NCLOG)** – NCLOG was established in early 2002, with participation from the five cities and town and the County of Napa. NCLOG’s purpose is to address issues



of common concern across all jurisdictions, including transportation, housing, economic growth, agricultural preservation, environmental protection, and social equity.<sup>1</sup>

**Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency (NCTPA)** – NCTPA was formed in 1998 as a joint effort by the cities of American Canyon, Calistoga, Napa, and St. Helena, the town of Yountville, and the County of Napa. NCTPA serves as the countywide transportation planning agency. NCTPA operates the VINE, the Napa area’s bus system. NCTPA also oversees the planning and funding of paratransit (transportation for special needs and disabled riders), improvement of highways, streets and roads, and bicycle facilities. As the program manager for the Transportation Fund for Air Quality, the NCTPA helps promote air quality in the Napa region. The NCTPA also works with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to coordinate funds from the Transportation Development Act (TDA) for transit, paratransit, streets and roads, and bicycle projects. Additionally, NCTPA serves as the Abandoned Vehicle Abatement Authority for the allocation of funds derived from vehicle registration fees.<sup>2</sup>

**perennial stream** – A stream that contains water at all times except during extreme drought (e.g., multiple dry years).

**property rights** – With no intent either to limit existing rights or to create new rights, “property rights” as used in this General Plan means all the rights customarily and traditionally residing in ownership of real property, including the exclusive right to possess, occupy, use, and enjoy the property and the water, mineral, and other resources on, under, and over the surface thereof, to control the use of the property and to exclude others from it, to protect the property from damage and from pollution, to farm the property and otherwise improve it, to benefit economically from the property and its improvements, and to temporarily or permanently transfer, encumber, assign, or alienate or otherwise dispose of certain of those rights through bequest, sale, mortgage, lease, deed, easement, or otherwise.

**Right to Farm** – As used in this General Plan, refers to the concept that conduct of agricultural operations takes precedence over the need to prevent agricultural operations from negatively affecting nearby non-agricultural users.

**riparian woodland** – A linear association of trees and associated understory vegetation commonly occurring adjacent to or within streams and watercourses.

**Rural Urban Limit (RUL)** – RUL is a term used locally in Napa County to denote a city’s growth boundary. The City of Napa has had a voter-approved RUL for many years. The City of Napa has had an RUL since 1975. The City’s RUL was adopted by the voters in 1999 such that it cannot be changed without voter approval. Nonetheless, LAFCO considers each jurisdiction’s general plans and therefore any locally adopted RUL when it reviews each agency’s SOI.

**Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)** – A state agency. Napa County is under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco RWQCB.

**Secretary of the Interior’s Standards** – Standards created by the National Park Service for work involving historic structures. The standards are “are intended to promote responsible preservation practices that help

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<sup>1</sup> Source: NCLOG Web site

<sup>2</sup> Source: NCTPA Web site



protect our Nation's irreplaceable cultural resources" (*source: National Park Service*). Standards are provided for four types of treatment for historic buildings: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. *For more info, see [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)*

**sensitive biotic communities** – Natural plant communities that are designated sensitive by the California Department of Fish and Game and identified in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and are significant because of their rarity, high biological diversity, and/or susceptibility to disturbance or destruction. (Also see habitats/communities of limited distribution.)

**sensitive domestic water supply drainage** – Any of the drainages depicted on the Sensitive Domestic Water Supply Drainages Map(s) maintained by the County and hereafter modified from time to time as necessary by the Planning Director, as noted under 18.108.030 of the County Code. *See also **municipal water supply reservoirs**.*

**sensitive natural communities** – Biotic communities in Napa County considered sensitive by the California Department of Fish and Game and designated in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) because of their rarity, high biological diversity, and/or susceptibility to disturbance or destruction. Twenty-three sensitive natural communities are currently known to exist in Napa County and are listed on page 4.5-8 of the DEIR.

**special-status species** – Plants and animals that are legally protected under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), or other federal, state, or local regulations, or are considered sufficiently rare by the scientific community to qualify for such protection pursuant to the definition provided in Section 15380 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

**sphere of influence (SOI)** – California Government Code Section 56076 defines a sphere of influence (SOI) as “a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local agency, as determined by [LAFCO].” LAFCO establishes, amends, and reviews spheres to indicate to local agencies and property owners that, at some future date, a particular area will likely be induced within a jurisdiction or service area. LAFCO is required to review each agency's SOI every five years.

**Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)** – A measure of the amount of contaminants in water. TMDL is used to measure and set targets for water quality. The San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board has established TMDL targets for the Napa River.

**urban bubble** – Informal term used to describe areas in Napa County that are designated Rural Residential or Urban Residential on the County's official Land Use Map.

**urbanized areas** – All areas shown on the Land Use Map in the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Element which are designated residential, commercial, industrial, or public-institutional, as well as the incorporated cities and town.

**viewshed** – The area which can be seen (or “viewed”) from a designated roadway or vantage point. (Viewshed is also defined in Section 18.106 of the Napa County Code.)

**viticulture** – The cultivation or culture of grapes, especially for wine-making.

**Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)** – The total number of miles traveled by vehicles in a given time period (usually one day). For instance, 100 vehicles driving 20 miles each in one day would generate 2,000 VMT



(100 x 20 = 2,000). VMT does not measure traffic congestion (see **Level of Service**), but is an indicator of how much vehicle use is occurring and how far people travel to home, work, shopping, and other destinations. Because VMT measures total vehicle use, it is also commonly used to estimate the amount of air pollution created by cars and trucks.

**Williamson Act, Williamson Act Program** – The California Land Conservation Act of 1965—commonly referred to as the Williamson Act—which enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return for maintaining agricultural uses, landowners receive property tax assessments which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. Local governments receive an annual subvention of forgone property tax revenues from the state via the Open Space Subvention Act of 1971. (Source: State of California Division of Land Resource Protection)

**workforce housing** – Housing targeted for local workers. *See also* ***affordable (housing)***.



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