



Santa Maria
General Plan

imagine



Appendix G: Glossary

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A

Age-adjusted death rate. A measure that shows how often people die in a population, standardized to remove the effects of different age structures, allowing for fair comparisons between areas or time periods with varying numbers of young and old people.

A-weighted sound level (dBA). The sound level obtained by using an A-weighted filter for a sound level meter. All sound levels referred to in the policies are A-weighted decibels (abbreviated "dBA"). A-weighting de-emphasizes the very low and very high frequencies (pitch) of sound in a manner similar to the human ear. Most community noise standards utilize A-weighting, as it provides a high degree of correlation with human annoyance and health effects.

Ambient noise level. The normal or existing level of environmental noise at a given location.

Annexation. The legal process of expanding a local governmental boundary by incorporating adjacent unincorporated land into the local government's jurisdiction.

B

Bioswale. A vegetated, shallow, landscaped depression designed to capture, treat, and infiltrate stormwater runoff as it moves downstream.

C

Community noise equivalent level (CNEL). The equivalent energy (or energy average) sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained by adding approximately five decibels to sound levels occurring between 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. and ten decibels to sound levels occurring during the night from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. CNEL is generally computed for annual average conditions.

Class 1 Shared-Use Path. Dedicated paths for walking and bicycling completely separate from the roadway.

Complete community. A place where residents can meet most daily needs, such as housing, employment, education, services, recreation, and transportation, within a convenient distance, supported by a mix of land uses, mobility options, and public amenities.

D

Day-night average level (Ldn). The equivalent energy (or energy average) sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained by adding 10 decibels to sound levels between 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. The Ldn is generally computed for annual average conditions.

Decibel (Db). A measure of sound which people perceive as loudness.

Density. The population and development capacity of residential land, often expressed as dwelling units per acre (du/ac).

Detention basin. A low-lying area designed to temporarily store stormwater runoff and reduce flooding.

Developed core. The central, most intensively developed area of a city, typically characterized by higher densities, a mix of land uses, concentrated employment and services, and established infrastructure.

Disadvantaged communities (DACs). A low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. (California Health and Safety Code Section 39711)

Dwelling units per acre. A measure of population density based on the number of housing units per net acre of land (du/ac), exclusive of existing and proposed streets and rights-of-way.

E

Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP). A guiding document that outlines a community's vision, goals, and targeted strategies to support economic growth.

Enplanements. The number of passengers boarding an aircraft.

Environmental justice. The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. (California Government Code Section 65040.12(e))

Equivalent energy level (Leq). The sound level corresponding to a steady state sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given sample period.

G

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

H

Habitable room. Any room meeting the requirements of the Uniform Building Code or other applicable regulations which is intended to be used for sleeping, living, cooking or dining purposes, excluding such enclosed spaces as closets, pantries, bath or toilet rooms, service rooms, connecting corridors, laundries, unfinished attics, foyers, storage spaces, cellars, utility rooms, and similar spaces.

I

Intensity. The extent of development, often measured by the height, setbacks, and floor-area ratios of buildings on sites.

Intrusive noise. Noise that intrudes over and above the existing ambient noise at a given location. The relative intrusiveness of a sound depends upon its amplitude, duration, frequency, time of occurrence, and tonal or informational content as well as prevailing ambient noise level.

J

Joint use agreement. A formal agreement between two or more entities, often a school district and a City or County, outlining the terms and conditions for the shared use of public property or facilities.

L

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). LAFCO has authority to review and approve all boundary changes in the County.

M

Multimodal. A transportation system or environment that supports and integrates multiple forms of travel, such as walking, bicycling, transit, and automobiles.

N

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

Noise exposure contours. Lines drawn around a noise source indicating constant or equal level of noise exposure from that source. CNEL is the noise index used to relate community exposure to noise.

P

Park facilities. Parks and their associated facilities, such as playgrounds, picnic areas, gardens, and restrooms.

Permeable surface. Any surface that allows water to pass through it into the soil or a storage system.

Public-private partnership. A cooperative arrangement between government agencies and private sector entities for funding, developing, or operating projects and services.

Public-realm connections. Physical and visual linkages within publicly accessible spaces, such as streets, sidewalks, paths, parks, and plazas, that improve access, connectivity, and the continuity of the public environment.

Prime Agricultural Land. Class I and Class II soils in the Natural Resource Conservation Service capability classifications. Generally, these are the best lands for irrigated row crop agriculture.

R

Raised cycle track. A grade-separated cycling path that is separate from both the roadway and sidewalk. These paths additionally use curbs/barriers to protect cyclists from vehicle traffic.

Recreational facilities. Spaces or buildings designed for recreational activities like sports, fitness, and other community programs. Examples include gyms, pools, community centers, and sports courts.

Retention basin. An area designed to collect and store stormwater runoff, often for long periods, and reduce flood risk.

Retardation basin. A low-lying area designed to slow stormwater runoff and reduce flooding.

S

Specific plan. A detailed plan for the development of a specific area. It creates a bridge between the General Plan and individual development proposals and directs all facets of future development.

Sphere of influence. The probable physical boundaries and service area of a city, as determined by the LAFCO.

T

Trail. A path for walking and bicycling that may be unpaved or does not meet standards for Class I paths.

Transit-oriented development. An approach to urban development that calls for denser, mixed-use business/neighborhood centers to be clustered around transit facilities and corridors to increase the use of public transportation.

U

Unincorporated. Territory where land use decisions are made by the County Board of Supervisors.

Urban heat island. An urbanized area that experiences higher temperatures relative to its surrounding rural areas.

W

Workforce development. Programs and initiatives designed to improve the skills, employability, and productivity of the local labor force.