

Glossary

Active transportation

Active transportation is any form of human-powered transportation. It is any trip made for the purposes of getting yourself, or others, to a particular destination- to work, to school, to the store or to visit friends.

Active transportation infrastructure

Active transportation infrastructure are those elements that support active transportation such as dedicated bike lanes and bike networks, sidewalks, and greenways for walking and riding.

Affordable housing

Cost of housing, including the cost of rent, mortgage and utilities, is less than or equal to 30% of household income

Agricultural Land Commission

Administrative body of the agricultural land reserve (ALR)

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

The ALR was established by the Province of BC in 1973 to protect farmland from urbanization or development; includes both private and public lands that may be farmed, forested or vacant, but where agriculture is recognized as the priority use; it is administered by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC)

Aquaculture

Aquaculture is the farming of freshwater and saltwater organisms including mollusks, crustaceans and aquatic plants.

Balanced community

Balanced community is the balance of jobs/housing/services/ recreation/amenity at the community scale.

Baseline level of emissions

Indicates the total GHG emissions for a given year and provides municipalities with a point in time in which to compare all future GHG emission levels.

Biogeoclimatic zone

Provincial (BC) ecological classification that considers the diverse landscapes, strong regional climatic gradients, and complex local site variations found in the Province; the four biogeoclimatic zones in Comox Valley are: Alpine Tundra (AT), Coastal Douglas Fir (CDF), Mountain Hemlock (MH), Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH)

Body mass index

Method of classifying body weight according to health risk

Buffer

Perimeter of land located between two different land uses that is set aside to mitigate negative impacts between incompatible land uses; e.g. buffer between agricultural land uses and residential use or between park land use and industrial or resource land use

Built environment

Built environment refers to the human-made surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, ranging from the large-scale civic surroundings to the personal places.

Carbon neutral

Refers to achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered or offset.

Carbon sink

Removes carbon dioxide and other GHGs from the atmosphere (e.g., forests, soils, ocean); carbon sinks are expected to slow the rate and extent of climate change

Cohort

Age group.

Community Energy and Emissions Inventory

Tracks GHG emissions for local governments in BC by sector: buildings, on-road transportation, solid waste and land use change.

Community Parks Service

Allows the CVRD to acquire and operate parkland within electoral areas A,B and C and to require 5% parkland dedication or cash in lieu at time of subdivision; cash in lieu of land must be used to purchase other land for community park purpose

Community supported agriculture (CSA)

Partnership of mutual commitment between a farmer and a community of supporters to provide a direct link between the production and consumption of food; supporters cover a farm's yearly operating budget by purchasing a share of the season's harvest and in return the farm provides seasonal produce to supporters

Compact urban form

A compact urban form is characterized by relative high density, mixed land-use and pedestrian-oriented habitation. This urban form has been proposed as one solution for sustainable urban planning.

Connectivity

Connectivity is the measure of the efficiency of the transportation network; refers to the directness of links and the number of connections in the path or road network

Conservation biology

Conservation biology is the scientific study of the nature and status of earth's biodiversity with the aim of protecting species, their habitats, and ecosystems from excessive rates of extinction.

Conservation covenant

Under the Land Title Act, a landowner and a covenant holder (e.g. the Regional District or a land trust) can agree to register a legally binding written agreement with the Land Title Office in which the landowner agrees that certain features of the property will be permanently protected; once registered, the covenant "runs with the land" so that the covenant holder can also require future land owners to protect the property, as required in the covenant agreement

Demographics

Demographics refers to selected population characteristics such as age, income, disabilities, mobility, educational attainment, home ownership, employment status and location. Distribution of values within a demographic variable, across households, is both of interest, as well as trends over time. A significant shift in demographics in an area can impact variables such as service delivery, housing preferences, and employment.

Density

Density is a measure of urban and rural form; can be measured in a number of different ways including the number of people, jobs or buildings in a given area

Density bonus

This is a system of exchange, allowing zoning requirements to vary in exchange for provision of certain amenities or housing that benefit the community.

Dependency ratio

A calculation of the number of people aged 15 and under plus those aged 65+ for every 100 persons aged 15-64. The child dependency ratio is the number of people aged 15 and under only as a percentage of the 15-64 population and the elderly dependency ratio is the number of people aged 65+ as a percentage of the 15-64 population

Development cost charge (DCC)

A DCC is a fee that the municipality levies on new developments to help cover the cost of expanding or improving transportation (such as roads, pedestrian and bicycle access), water, sewer, storm drainage and parkland to accommodate growth.

Development Permit Areas (DPA)

A DPA is a designated area where development permits are granted that allow property owners to construct, renovate or make addition to a structure on a property located within this area. DPAs are one of the strongest tools for shaping new development. They allow local governments to create site-specific requirements for development over and above basic zoning.

Ecological greenway

Greenway where the priority is to conserve ecosystems and/or wildlife corridors and may not normally have no public access.

Ecoregion

An ecologically and geographically defined area of land water based on the biodiversity of flora, fauna and ecosystems within it; an ecoregion often crosses municipal, provincial and even national borders.

Edge planning

The 'edge' refers to the urban/agriculture interface created by the ALR boundary and recognition of this as a distinct 'edge planning area'. As such, it is along this edge where specific policies and management techniques can be fairly applied to urban and agricultural land users.

Environmental Farm Plan (EFP)

Joint federal and provincial funding program that works with farmers to do an environmental audit of their agricultural operation and identify goals to reduce the environmental impact of their operation; funds up to 50% of costs to mitigate environmental impacts of farming and to improve wildlife habitat on agricultural lands (e.g. by planting hedgerows).

Environmentally Sensitive Area**Developments Permits (ESA DP)**

Land developers in Electoral Areas A, B and C are required to obtain an environmentally sensitive area development permit (ESA DP) when applying to build within 30 metres of a stream, the foreshore, or a wetland with fish presence, or within 200 metres of an eagles nest, or within 300 metres of a heron nest; permits may be place parameters on development, such as where a building can be sited or restriction of activities during breeding seasons.

Estuary

An estuary is a semi-enclosed coastal body of water with one or more rivers or streams flowing into it, and with a free connection to the open sea.

Green buildings

This is a building design that focuses on increasing the efficiency of resource use- energy, water, and materials- while reducing building impacts on human health and the environment during the building's lifecycle, through better siting, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and removal.

Green house gas (GHG)

Carbon dioxide, methane (CO₂), nitrous oxide (N₂O) and methane (CH₄), expressed as a CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e); typically generated from the use of fossil fuels to light, heat, cool and ventilate buildings (including homes and offices) and to power motorized vehicles, municipal operations, and industrial processes; and the decomposition of organic waste in landfills

Greenfield

This is a term used to describe a piece of previously undeveloped land, in a city or rural area, either currently used for agriculture, landscape design, or just left to nature.

Ground truthing

Refers to information that is collected "on location." This is especially important in order to relate image data to real features and materials on the ground.

Habitat fragmentation

Habitat fragmentation describes the emergence of discontinuities (fragmentation) in an organism's habitat.

Improvement Districts

Autonomous local authorities governed by elected trustees, focused on providing services to local landowners e.g. water provision; granted through powers by the Province to enact and enforce regulations and charges, to assess and collect taxes, to acquire, hold and dispose of lands, to borrow money and to expropriate lands required to carry out its functions; RGS study area includes five Improvement Districts: Ship's Point Improvement District, Fanny Bay Waterworks District, Union Bay Improvement District, Royston Improvement District and Sandwick Improvement District.

Infill

In urban planning and development of land industries, infill is the use of land within a built-up area for further construction, especially as part of a community redevelopment or growth management program or as part of smart growth. It focuses on the reuse and repositioning of obsolete or underutilized buildings and sites.

Intelligent transportation systems (ITS)

Use of advanced computer technology such as geographic information system software (GIS) and global positioning systems (GPS) to deliver efficient and on-time transit to the user.

Land use

This is the human modification of natural environment or wilderness into built environment such as fields, pastures, and settlements.

Land use category or designation

A description of permitted land uses for specified areas within a planning jurisdiction. There can be a number of different types of land uses (residential, recreational, commercial, institutional, etc.) within a given area.

Large-format retail

This is a term applied to large floor plate, one-storey retail outlets, usually operated as part of a chain, that locate on individual sites or that cluster on a large site, sometimes adjacent to each other. Large-format stores, commonly referred to as “big-box” stores, serve a region-wide market and typically locate at highly visible locations at major intersections or adjacent to highways.

Local area plan

Local Area Plans is a legal document and is a public statement of planning policies. It is valid for six years from the date of adoption by the Council. The Plan should be compatible with the OCP and RGS.

Mariculture

Mariculture, also known as shellfish aquaculture, is the cultivation and harvesting (farming) of aquatic invertebrates and marine

plants; cultivation implies some form of human intervention in the rearing process to enhance production, such as regular stocking and protection from predators; it also implies individual or corporate ownership of the stock being cultivated.

Official community plan (OCP)

An OCP can be developed by both municipalities and regional districts. The OCP provides the longer term vision for the community. Under the Local Government Act section 875, an OCP is a statement of objectives and policies to guide decision on planning and land use management, within the area covered by the plan, respecting the purposes of local government.

Recharge areas

A recharge area is where rainfall, irrigation, garden water or water from waterways seeps into the ground and add water to the ground water system.

Recreation greenway

Greenway where the priority use is for non-motorized transportation, such as walking, cycling and/or horseback riding.

Regional conservation

Approach to protecting the diversity and richness of species and ecosystems throughout Comox Valley based on the principles of conservation biology; requires the collaboration of stakeholders in the Valley, including provincial, regional and municipal governments, K’omoks First Nation, private landowners, and non-governmental organizations like the local Comox Valley Land Trust and Project Watershed.

Regional Parks Service

Currently an inactive service for the CVRD; allows CVRD to raise money to fund acquisition, management and operation of regionally significant parkland that is used by residents region-wide.

Renewable energy

Renewable energy is energy generated from natural resources- such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides and geothermal heat- which are naturally replenished.

Right to Use Agreements

a landowner may enter into a right to use agreement with a government agency or a land trust or other property owner for use of a portion or all of their land; the agreement can be terminated by either party e.g. an agreement could permit the public to use a trail over private property.

Riparian area

This is the interface between land and a stream. Plant communities along the river margins are called riparian vegetation. Riparian zones are significant in ecology because of their role in soil conservation, their biodiversity, and the influence they have on aquatic ecosystems.

Ripple effect

The influence of land use planning policies on human behaviour, such as those policies expressed in a RGS and OCP, and the impacts of these land use policies on human health.

Rural Comox Valley Official Community Plan (OCP)

OCP for Electoral Areas A, B and C administered by the Comox Valley Regional District.

Secondary suites

This is an urban planning term for an additional separate dwelling unit on a property that would normally accommodate only one dwelling unit. A secondary suite is considered “secondary” or “accessory” to the primary residence on the parcel.

Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI)

Federal and provincial government mapping project to systematically identify and map rare and fragile ecosystems in a given area; SEI is intended for use in a variety of land-use planning processes, such as the RGS; its purpose is to identify remnants of rare and fragile ecosystems (on land) and to encourage land-use decisions that will ensure the continued integrity of these ecosystems;

Settlement boundary

This is the extent of physical development around a town or village, usually defined on community and regional plans. The purpose of the settlement boundary is to direct growth to appropriate places with existing infrastructure and to protect working landscapes and natural areas.

Shellfish aquaculture

Shellfish aquaculture, or mariculture as it is sometimes called, is the cultivation and harvesting (farming) of aquatic invertebrates and marine plants; cultivation implies some form of human intervention in the rearing process to enhance production, such as regular stocking and protection from predators; it also implies individual or corporate ownership of the stock being cultivated.

Statutory Right of Way

Land use designation to permit a right of way for a public trail, sidewalk, water or sewer pipes, drainage, hydro lines or other utility.

Stormwater

Describes the water that originates during precipitation events. It may also be used to apply to water that originates with snowmelt or runoff water from overwatering that enters the stormwater system. Stormwater is a concern for two main issues: the volume and timing of runoff water and potential contaminants that the water is carrying.

Integrated Water Management (IWM)

Refers to the integrated management of stormwater with the goal to improve runoff quality, reduce the risk and impact of flooding and deliver additional water resources. This strategy includes stormwater harvest, biofiltration and retention.

Transit supportive land use

These are development patterns which make transit less expensive, less circuitous, more efficient and more convenient, as well as those which make access to the system more attractive to the potential transit user.

Transit-first development

Provision of convenient and effective transit service in new developments from the time that the first person(s) move in or business(es) opens.

Transportation demand management (TDM)

general term for strategies that result in more efficient use of transportation resources; emphasizes the movement of people and goods rather than private motor vehicles; gives priority to walking, cycling, ridesharing, and public transit.

Travel allowances

Financial payment provided to employees instead of parking subsidies; commuters can use this money to pay for parking or for another travel mode.

Urban containment boundary

An urban containment boundary sets aside land to be protected from most forms of development. Usually the boundary will delineate the edge of town and the beginning of rural areas.

Value added agriculture

This is a process of increasing the economic value and consumer appeal of an agricultural commodity such as farm tourism, B&Bs and farmgate sales.

Variable messaging system

Part of an intelligent transportation system (ITS) used to display messages at remote locations from a centralized computer system; uses include displaying route information, delays and cancellations updates in real time at transit stops.

Water balance model

The Water Balance Model (WBM) for BC is an on-line tool that helps users gauge the potential for developing or redeveloping communities while maintaining the original hydrologic condition. The model evaluates the effectiveness of applying different stormwater source controls under different development conditions.

Watershed planning

Watershed management that involves the community in addressing water use, water quality, and protection of critical recharge areas as well as in managing competing demands for water among agriculture, wetlands and wildlife habitat, fishery and other water users.

Zoning by-law

A zoning bylaw contains provisions that regulate the use, size, height, density and location of buildings on properties within a jurisdiction.

Zoning Incentives

Zoning tools used to encourage a developer to provide an amenity or cash-in-lieu of an amenity in return for favourable zoning permissions e.g. increased density (see density bonus).