Part 4: Additional Resources & References

Chapter 4.1 Definitions

Affordable Housing

'Affordable housing' means in the case of dwelling units for sale, housing in which mortgage, amortization, taxes, insurance, and condominium or association fees, if any, constitute no more than 28 percent of the annual household income for a household earning no more than 80 percent of the area median income, by household size, for the metropolitan statistical area as published from time to time by the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) and, in the case of dwelling units for rent, housing for which the rent and utilities constitute no more than 30 percent of the annual household income for a household earning no more than 80 percent of the area median income, by household size for the metropolitan statistical area as published from time to time by HUD. (SC Priority Investment Act Section 4.)

Agricultural Conservation Easement

A legal agreement restricting development on farmland. Land subjected to an agricultural conservation easement is generally restricted to farming, forestry, and/or open space use. (See also Conservation Easement.)

Agri-tourism

In general, agri-tourism is the practice of attracting travelers or visitors to an area or areas used primarily for agricultural purposes. Very often, the idea of tourism stimulates images of mass-produced travel that attracts a large number of travelers. These images may discourage small business owners from considering tourism as an option for enhancing their agriculture revenues. However, agri-tourism can be viewed much like eco-tourism in that it is small-scale, low-impact, and, in most cases, education-focused. (Va. Tech/VSU Cooperative).

Bulk and Area Regulations

The combination of land development regulations that establishes the maximum size of a building and its location on a parcel of land. Components of bulk regulations include: size and height of building; location of exterior walls at all levels with respect to lot lines, streets, or other buildings, building coverage, gross floor area of buildings in relation to lot area; open space requirements; and amount of lot area provided per dwelling unit.

Clustering

A form of development where houses are built close together in areas. By grouping houses on a small section of a large parcel of land, clustering is a technique that can be used to protect open space.

Complete Streets

Transportation policies that incorporate aesthetics as well as alternative modes of transportation such as bike lanes, sidewalks, and mass transit into the transportation system.

Conservation Easement

A legally recorded, voluntary agreement that limits land to specific uses. Easements may apply to entire parcels of land or to specific parts of a property. Most are permanent; term easements impose restrictions for a limited number of years. Land protected by conservation easements remains on the tax rolls and is privately-owned and managed.

Density

The number of housing units per unit of land. The density of a development of 100 units occupying 50 acres is 2 units per acre. The control of density is one of the basic purposes of zoning.

Development Rights

Development rights entitle property owners to develop land in accordance with local land use regulations.

Farmland Soils

Soils that are determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NCRS) to be prime farmland, as well as soils that are considered unique farmland, and farmland of statewide importance capable of producing crops. NCRS has established criteria that are used to assign soils to each category of farmland soils. Farmland soils are identified and mapped on a countywide basis by the NCRS.

Geographic Information System (GIS)

A method of storing geographic information on computers. Geographic information can be obtained from a variety of sources, including topographic maps, soil maps, aerial and satellite imagery, and many others. Using GIS software, the computer can create special maps for presentation, can analyze spatial data from different sources simultaneously, and can generate interpretive maps. Among the many benefits of GIS are easily updated digital databases that can be used to print maps easily and efficiently, that can be easily shared by many users, and that can be used to analyze spatial relationships among the physical, social and natural environments.

Green Infrastructure

An approach to water management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle. Green infrastructure incorporates both the natural environment and engineered systems to provide clean water, conserve ecosystem values and functions, and provide a wide array of benefits to people and wildlife. Green infrastructure solutions can be applied on different scales, from the house or building level, to the broader landscape level. On the local level, green infrastructure practices include rain gardens, permeable pavements, green roofs, infiltration planters, trees and tree boxes, and rainwater harvesting systems. At the largest scale, the preservation and restoration of natural landscapes (such as forests, floodplains, and wetlands) are critical components of green infrastructure. (American Rivers)

Greenbelt

The native Lowcountry landscapes, greenway and trail corridors, undeveloped landscapes and habitat for plants and animals that have been defined, both through public opinion and by the passage of the Transportation Sales Tax, as highly desirable landscapes for conservation and protection. The Greenbelt System for Charleston County is designed to protect and conserve these resources and further to connect residents and visitors to these cherished landscapes. There are two distinctly important types of greenspace types that add value and function for the Charleston County community. The first is non programmed natural open space, which consists of wetlands, marshes, streams, native forests, meadows, and other Lowcountry landscapes. These lands serve to protect the fragile ecology, native plants and animals that inhabit the Lowcountry. The second type is programmed open space that consists of productive lands (managed forest and farm), parks, trails and lands that the County, PRC, municipal, State and Federal governments, and private sector land conservation organizations own and manage.

Green (Space)

An open space available for unstructured recreation, its landscaping consisting of grassy areas and trees. May or may not be associated with the Greenbelt.

Infill (Development)

Development or redevelopment of land that has been bypassed, remained vacant, and/or is under used as a result of the continuing urban development process. Generally, the areas and/or sites are not particularly of prime quality; however, they are usually served by or are readily accessible to the infrastructure (services and facilities) provided by the applicable local governmental entity.

Land Development Regulations

Regulations regarding the development of land within the County including development review procedures, zoning, subdivision, and development standards.

Ombudsman

A government official working in an advocacy capacity.

Open Space

Any parcel of land or portion thereof, water feature, essentially unimproved (net of impervious surfaces) and set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for either public or private use or enjoyment or for the use and enjoyment of owners, occupants, and/or their guests of land adjoining or neighboring such open space.

Parks and Recreation

Parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, recreation facilities, and open spaces available to the general public, either without a fee or under the management or control of a public agency.

Public Infrastructure

Transportation systems or facilities, water systems or facilities, wastewater systems or facilities, storm drainage systems or facilities, fire, police and emergency systems or facilities, school systems or facilities, open space/park and recreation systems and facilities, government systems or facilities, electric utilities, gas utilities, cable facilities, or other capital facilities providing services to the public.

Sustainable Development

A development practice or type of development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being and protects and/or restores the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Also development or building practices and products that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Durable low maintenance materials, recycled or renewable raw materials used in construction are often referred to as sustainable

materials. Neighborhood configuration that reduces energy dependence and individual carbon-foot prints through incorporated pedestrian, bike, and mass transit transportation alternatives. Or Architectural design that reduces energy and resource consumption through innovative "green" systems.

Workforce Housing

Housing affordable to low and moderate income families (those earning up to 120% of the Charleston-North Charleston Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) median family income, as defined in the schedule published annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development).

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Chapter 4.2 Index of Resources

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Support and Related Documents

The following documents are integral parts of the creation and implementation of this Comprehensive Plan. They are available from the County Planning Department and are included here for reference purposes.

- Charleston County Comprehensive Plan Implementation Toolbox
- Charleston County Demand Analysis 2007
- Charleston County Capacity Analysis 2008
- Charleston County Greenbelt Plan 2006
- DuPont | Wappoo Community Plan
- Parkers Ferry Community Plan
- Sol Legare Community Plan
- Summary of Public Comments
    - October 2007
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