

**City of Baldwin Park
2020 General Plan**

Glossary

November, 2002

General Plan Glossary

Air Basin - One of 14 self-contained regions of California minimally influenced by air quality in contiguous regions.

Air Pollutant Emissions - Discharges into the atmosphere, usually specified in terms of weight per unit of time for a given pollutant from a given source.

Air Pollution - The presence of contaminants in the air in concentrations that exceed naturally occurring quantities and are undesirable or harmful.

Air Quality Standards - The prescribed level of pollutants in the outside air that cannot be exceeded legally during a specified time in a specified geographical area.

Ambient Noise Level - The combination of noise from all sources near and far. In this context, the ambient noise level constitutes the normal or existing level of environmental noise at a given location.

Aquifer - An underground bed or layer of earth, gravel or porous stone that contains water.

Arterial - A major street carrying the traffic of local and collector streets to and from freeways and other major streets, with controlled intersections and generally providing direct access to nonresidential properties.

A-Weighted Decibel or dB(A) - A numerical method of rating human judgement of loudness. The A-weighted scale reduces the effects of low and high frequencies in order to simulate human hearing.

Base Flood Elevation - The highest elevation, expressed in feet above sea level, of the level of flood waters expected to occur during a 100-year flood (i.e., a flood that has 1 percent likelihood of occurring in any given year).

Buffer - A strip of land designated to protect one type of land use from another incompatible use. Where a commercial district abuts a residential district, for example, additional use, yard, or height restrictions may be imposed to protect residential properties. The term may also be used to describe any zone that separates two unlike zones, such as a multi-family housing zone between single-family housing and commercial uses.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) - A proposed timetable or schedule of all future capital improvements (government acquisition of real property, major construction project, or acquisition of long lasting, expensive equipment) to be carried out during a specific period and listed in order of priority, together with cost estimates and the anticipated means of financing each project. Capital improvement programs are usually projected five or six years in advance and should be updated annually.

Clean Air Act - Federal legislation establishing national air quality standards.

Collector - A street for traffic moving between arterial and local streets, generally providing direct access to properties.

Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) - The average equivalent sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of five decibels to sound levels in the evening from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. and after addition of 10 decibels to sound levels in the night after 10 p.m. and before 7 a.m. See also "A-Weighted Decibel."

Compatibility - The characteristics of different uses or activities that permit them to be located near each other in harmony and without conflict. The designation of permitted and conditionally permitted uses in zoning districts are intended to achieve compatibility within the district. Some elements affecting compatibility include: intensity of occupancy as measured by dwelling units per acre; pedestrian or vehicular traffic generated; volume of goods handled; and such environmental effects as noise, vibration, glare, air pollution, or the presence of hazardous materials. On the other hand, many aspects of compatibility are based on personal preference and are much harder to measure quantitatively, at least for regulatory purposes.

Condominium - A building, or group of buildings, in which units are owned individually, and the structure, common areas and facilities are owned by all the owners on a proportional, undivided basis.

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

Day-Night Average Level (Ldn) - The average equivalent sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of 10 decibels to sound levels in the night after 10 p.m. and before 7 a.m. See also "Community Noise Equivalent Level."

Decibel (dB) - A unit for describing the amplitude of sound, as it is heard by the human ear. See also "A-Weighted Decibel," "Community Noise Equivalent Level," and "Day-Night Average Level."

Density - The number of families, individuals, dwelling units, or housing structures per unit of land; usually density is expressed "per acre." Thus, the density of a development of 100 units occupying 20 acres is 5 units per acre.

Development - The division of a parcel of land into two or more parcels; the construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation or enlargement of any structure; any mining, excavation, landfill or land disturbance, and any use or extension of the use of land.

Development Plan - A plan, to scale, showing uses and structures proposed for a parcel or multiple parcels of land. It includes lot lines, streets, building sites, public open space, buildings, major landscape features and locations of proposed utility services.

Dwelling - A structure or portion of a structure used exclusively for human habitation.

Dwelling, Multi-family - A building containing two or more dwelling units for the use of individual families maintaining households; an apartment or condominium building is an example of this dwelling unit type.

Dwelling, Single-family Attached - A one-family dwelling attached to one or more other one-family dwellings by a common vertical wall; duplexes and townhomes are examples of this dwelling unit type.

Dwelling, Single-family Detached - A dwelling which is designed for and occupied by not more than one family and surrounded by open space or yards and which is not attached to any other dwelling by any means.

Dwelling Unit - One or more rooms, designed, occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, with cooking, sleeping and sanitary facilities provided within the unit for the exclusive use of a single family maintaining a household.

Easement - A grant of one or more of the property rights by the property owner to and/or for use by the public, a corporation, or another person or entity.

Economic Base - The production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services within a planning area.

Element - A division of the General Plan referring to a topic area for which goals, policies, and programs are defined (e.g., land use, housing, circulation).

Eminent Domain - The authority of a government to take, or to authorize the taking of, with compensation, private property for public use.

Environment - The sum of all external conditions and influences affecting the life, development, and survival of an organism.

Essential Facilities - Those facilities whose continued functioning is necessary to maintain public health and safety following a disaster. These facilities include fire and police stations, communications facilities, emergency operation centers, hospitals, administrative buildings, and schools designated as mass care shelters. Also included are key transportation facilities and utility facilities such as water supply, sewage disposal, gas storage facilities and transmission lines, and electric generation stations and transmission lines.

Fault - A fracture in the earth's crust forming a boundary between rock masses that have shifted.

Fault, Active - A fault that has moved within the last 11,000 years and which is likely to move again within the next 100 years.

Fault, Inactive - A fault which shows no evidence of movement in the last 11,000 years and no potential for movement in the relatively near future.

Fault, Potentially Active - A fault that last moved within the Quaternary Period (the last 2,000,000 to 11,000 years) before the Holocene Epoch (11,000 years to the present); or a fault which, because it is judged to be capable of ground rupture or shaking, poses an unacceptable risk for a proposed structure.

Fire Flow - A rate of water flow that should be maintained to halt and reverse the spread of a fire.

Floodplain - A lowland or relatively flat area adjoining the banks of a river or stream which is subject to a one percent or greater chance or flooding in any given year (i.e., 100-year flood).

Floodway - The channel of a watercourse or river, and portions of the flood plain adjoining the channel, which are reasonably required to carry and discharge the base flood of the channel.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) -The gross floor area of all buildings on a lot divided by the lot area; usually expressed as a numerical value (e.g., a building having 5,000 square feet of gross floor area located on a lot of 10,000 square feet in area has a floor area ratio of 0.5:1).

General Plan - A legal document which takes the form of a map and accompanying text adopted by the local legislative body. The plan is a compendium of policies regarding the long-term development of a jurisdiction. The state requires the preparation of seven elements or divisions as part of the plan: land use, housing, circulation, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Additional elements pertaining to the unique needs of an agency are permitted.

Goal - The ultimate purpose of an effort stated in a way that is general in nature and immeasurable; a broad statement of intended direction and purpose (e.g., "Achieve a balance of land use types within the city").

Grade - The degree of rise or descent of a sloping surface.

Ground Failure - Mudslide, landslide, liquefaction (see this Glossary), or the compaction of soils due to ground shaking from an earthquake.

Groundwater - The supply of fresh water under the ground surface in an aquifer or soil that forms a natural reservoir.

Group Quarters - A dwelling that houses unrelated individuals, such as convalescent facilities.

Growth Management - Techniques used by government to control the rate, amount and type of development.

Hazardous Materials - An injurious substance, including pesticides, herbicides, toxic metals and chemicals, liquified natural gas, explosives, volatile chemicals and nuclear fuels.

Household - According to the U.S. Census, a household is all persons living in a dwelling unit whether or not they are related. Both a single person living in an apartment and a family living in a house are considered households.

Household Income - The total income of all the people living in a household. Households are usually described as very low income, low income, moderate income, and upper income for that household size, based on their position relative to the regional median income.

Housing Affordability - Based on State and Federal standards, housing is affordable when the housing costs are no more than 30 percent of household income.

Housing Unit - A room or group of rooms used by one or more individuals living separately from others in the structure, with direct access to the outside or to a public hall and containing separate toilet and kitchen facilities.

Implementation Measure - An action, procedure, program, or technique that carries out general plan policy.

Income Categories - Four categories for classifying households according to income based on the median income for each County. The categories are as follows: Very Low (0-50% of County median); Low (50-80% of County median); Moderate (80-120% of County median); and Upper (over 120% of County median).

Infrastructure - The physical systems and services which support development and population, such as roadways, railroads, water, sewer, natural gas, electrical generation and transmission, telephone, cable television, storm drainage, and others.

Intensity - A measure of the amount or level of development often expressed as the ratio of building floor area to lot area (floor area ratio) for commercial, business, and industrial development, or units per acre of land for residential development (also called "density").

Issue - A problem, constraint, or opportunity requiring community action.

Intersection - Where two or more roads cross at grade.

Land Use - A description of how land is occupied or used.

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

Liquefaction - A process by which water-saturated granular soils transform from a solid to a liquid state due to groundshaking. This phenomenon usually results from shaking from energy waves released in an earthquake.

Livable Community - A shared community vision of pedestrian friendly, mixed use and transit oriented places scaled to people, not automobiles, and connected to vibrant civic and public spaces.

Local Street - A street providing direct access to properties and designed to discourage through-traffic.

Lot - The basic unit of land development. A designated parcel or area of land established by plat, subdivision, or as otherwise permitted by law, to be used, developed or built upon as a unit.

Median Income - The annual income for each household size which is defined annually by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Half of the households in the region have incomes above the median and half are below.

Mobile Home - A structure, transportable in one or more sections, which is at least 8 feet in width and 32 feet in length, which is built on a permanent chassis and designed to be used as a dwelling unit, with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities.

National Flood Insurance Program - A federal program which authorizes the sale of federally subsidized flood insurance in communities where such flood insurance is not available privately.

Noise - Any undesired audible sound.

Noise Exposure Contours - Lines drawn about a noise source indicating constant energy levels of noise exposure. CNEL and Ldn are the metrics utilized to describe community noise exposure.

Open Space - Any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, designated, dedicated or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment.

Overcrowding - As defined by the U.S. Census, a household with greater than 1.01 persons per room, excluding bathrooms, kitchens, hallways, and porches.

Parcel - A lot or tract of land.

Policy - Statements guiding action and implying clear commitment found within each element of the general plan (e.g., "Provide incentives to assist in the development of affordable housing").

Program - A coordinated set of specific measures and actions (e.g., zoning, subdivision procedures, and capital expenditures) the local government intends to use in carrying out the policies of the general plan.

Redevelopment - Redevelopment, under the California Community Redevelopment Law, is a process with the authority, scope, and financing mechanisms necessary to provide stimulus to reverse current negative business trends, remedy blight, provide job development incentives, and create a new image for a community. It provides for the planning, development, redesign, clearance, reconstruction, or rehabilitation, or any combination of these, and the provision of public and private improvements as may be appropriate or necessary in the interest of the general welfare. In a more general sense, redevelopment is a process in which existing development and use of land is replaced with newer development and/or use.

Rehabilitation - The upgrading of a building previously in a dilapidated or substandard condition, for human habitation or use.

Restoration - The replication or reconstruction of a building's original architectural features, usually describing the technique of preserving historic buildings.

Right-of-Way - A strip of land acquired by reservation, dedication, prescription or condemnation and intended to be occupied or occupied by a road, crosswalk, railroad, electric transmission lines, oil or gas pipeline, water line, sanitary or storm sewer, or other similar uses.

Sewer - Any pipe or conduit used to collect and carry away sewage from the generating source to a treatment plant.

Site Plan - The development plan for one or more lots on which is shown the existing and proposed conditions of the lot including: topography, vegetation, drainage, floodplains, marshes and waterways; open spaces, walkways, means of ingress and egress, utility services, landscaping, structures and signs, lighting, and screening devices; any other information that reasonably may be required in order that an informed decision can be made by the approving authority.

Solid Waste - Unwanted or discarded material, including garbage with insufficient liquid content to be free flowing, generally disposed of in land fills or incinerated.

Special District - A district created by act, petition or vote of the residents for a specific purpose with the power to levy taxes.

Special Needs Groups - Those segments of the population which have a more difficult time finding decent affordable housing due to special circumstances. Under State planning law, these special needs groups consist of the elderly, handicapped, large families, female-headed households, farmworkers and the homeless.

Stationary Source - A non-mobile emitter of pollution.

Subdivision - The division of a lot, tract or parcel of land that is the subject of an application for subdivision.

Transportation Systems Management - Individual actions or comprehensive plans to reduce the number of vehicular trips generated by or attracted to new or existing development. TSM measures attempt to reduce the number of vehicle trips by increasing bicycle or pedestrian trips or by expanding the use of bus, transit, carpool, vanpool, or other high occupancy vehicles.

Water Course - Any natural or artificial stream, river, creek, ditch, channel, canal, conduit, culvert, drain, waterway, gully, ravine or wash in which water flows in a definite channel, bed and banks, and includes any area adjacent thereto subject to inundation by reason of overflow or flood water.

Zoning - A police power measure, enacted primarily by units of local government, in which the community is divided into districts or zones within which permitted and special uses are established as are regulations governing lot size, building bulk, placement, and other development standards. Requirements vary from district to district, but they must be uniform within the same district. The zoning ordinance consists of a map and text.

Zoning District - A geographical area of a city zoned with uniform regulations and requirements.

Zoning Map - The officially adopted zoning map of the city specifying the uses permitted within certain geographic areas of the city.