
III DEFINITIONS



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Active Landslide: An area presently undergoing downslope movement.

Active Recreation: Recreational activities generally found within formal and structured facilities.

Activity Area: Recreational activities generally found within formal and structured facilities.

Ambient Noise: The all-encompassing noise associated with a given environment, usually being a composite of sounds from many sources, near and far.

Amenities: An attractive or desirable feature of a place; anything that adds to ones comfort or convenience; pleasant qualities.

Arterial Street: Main channel for the movement of vehicles and is not intended to be a residential street.

Biotic Resources: All plant and animal organisms, both marine and terrestrial.

Buffer Zone: A zone or area which exhibits a dampening effect between two unlike areas; e.g., open space between commercial areas and residential areas.

Buildout: An area which has achieved its maximum development potential has achieved its buildout.

Coastal Setback Line/Bluff Setback: A boundary established in the discussion starting on Page CO-8. Due to possible risks to human life or property, no development will be allowed to proceed without a detailed engineering and geology study which demonstrates site stability and suitability for development.

Collector Street: Conducts traffic between arterials and sometimes links with other collectors.

Cluster Development: A technique of grouping structures in a given area for the purpose of conserving and creating open space, lowering construction and materials costs, conserving energy, and creating a more secure environment.

Community Noise: Combination of steady state noise (distant traffic flow, neighbor's air conditioner) and the intermittent noises (planes flying overhead, local traffic flow, children yelling, etc.).

Decibel: A unit for measuring the relative loudness of sounds detectable by the human ear.

Density: A term used to represent the measurement of how intensely the land is developed (residential) and refers to the number of dwelling units (d.u.) which occupy a given area of land – generally per acre – and may be expressed as d.u./acre.

Dormant Landslide: An area that have experienced downslope movement in the past, but are not currently active.

Dwelling Unit: A place of residence which contains bathing and cooking facilities for a single family.

Ecosystem: An environmental system in which the existence of that system is dependent on the interrelationship of the plant, animal, and bacterial communities within the system.

Environmental Impact Report (EIR): A detailed statement prepared under CEQA describing and analyzing the significant environmental effects of a project and discussing ways to mitigate or avoid the effects.

Extreme Slopes: Slopes of 35% or greater.

Fault: A plane or surface in earth materials along which failure has occurred and materials on opposite sides have moved relative to one another in response to the accumulation of stress in the rocks.

Gross Acreage: The total amount of land devoted to a development inclusive of public rights-of-way (streets, sidewalks, etc.), schools, and parks.

High Slope: Slopes between 25% and 35%.

Housing Mix: The relationship of the various types of dwelling units (single family to multi-family) within a given area.

Hydrology: The science that deals with water movements, surface and subsurface distribution, and the cycle involving evaporation, precipitation, and flow to the sea.

Infrastructure: The man-made support systems on which a community depends (e.g., water, sewerage, energy, communication, and transportation systems).

Kelp Bed: Forests that serve as sanctuaries, nurseries, habitats, and food sources for many species of marine organisms.

Load Induced: The associated effects on uses and support systems which would be generated through the development of a proposed activity (e.g., population, commercial activity, etc.).

Local Street: Minor networks that have principal function to provide access to adjoining property.

Mitigation: Includes avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation; rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the impacted environment; reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; or, compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

Multi-family Residence: Two or more dwelling units located in single structure.

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966: Calls for the preservation of sites, places and structures of national historic significance and sets criteria for entries into the National Register of Historic Places.

Natural Environment/Hazard Areas: Areas of extreme and hazardous physical characteristics (active landslide, sea cliff erosion, and/or slopes of 35% or greater) which are to be maintained as open space for the protection of public health, safety, and welfare. The undeveloped portions of these areas are to remain in their natural state, with only very low intensity uses permitted.

Net Acreage: The total amount of land devoted to a development exclusive of public rights-of-way (streets, sidewalks, etc.), schools and parkland.

Noise: Any loud sound.

Noise Contour: A line on passing through points where the same sound intensity level prevails. Contours form bands of varying width emanating from a noise source.

Non-Landslide: An area where no natural landslides have been identified.

Old Landslide: An area determined to have had past movement and/or identified in the California Department of Conservation's landslide-inventory maps that portray the location of prior failure.

Open Space Land: Any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use for the purposes of (1) the preservation of natural resources, (2) outdoor recreation, or (3) public health and safety.

Overlay Control District: Areas within the City which possess special natural, social, cultural, or urban features which warrant control of development.

Passive Recreation: Recreational activities generally found within informal and unstructured areas that do not require specialized facilities.

Planned Unit Development (PUD): PUD refers to a development which has been completely planned by an architect, land planner, or developer which affords him arrangement flexibility not previously available. It implements planning for a diversification of dwelling types and aesthetic variety, while assuring that overall density standards will not be violated. Through various options or combinations of options (grid, cluster, etc.) open to the planner, more efficient use of the land can be made. Large common open areas, integrated land use designed to serve the needs of the residents, lower development costs per unit, and housing for a wider range of income levels are some of the amenities associated with Planned Unit Developments. These can all be achieved through a well designed PUD at a lower cost of construction per unit. Many PUD's are able to offer an amenity such as a lake or golf course as a focal point for the development.

Possible Landslide: An area suspected to be a landslide on the basis of topographic evidence.

Quimby Act: This act (also known as the Park and Land Dedication Act of 1965) allows the local government to impose a fee or require dedication of land or both, to be used for park or recreation purposes only, by an applicant requesting approval of a final subdivision map.

Seismic Safety: Safety measures taken to prevent loss of life and/or property due to natural or man made earthquakes and tremors.

Seismic Zone: Areas which have been divided and categorized according to the impacts which would occur as a result of an earthquake or earth tremor.

Sensitive Habitat: Vegetation communities that are considered rare in the region, support sensitive species of plants and animals, and/or are subject to regulatory protection through various federal, state, or local policies or regulations.

Single-family Residence: One dwelling unit which is located in a single structure.

Sound Attenuation: To lessen the negative impacts of sound by inhibiting the transmission of sound and/or absorbing the sound.

Sub-community Areas: Smaller divisions within the City based on common geographical features, location, or access by road system. Also referred to as neighborhood areas.

Subdivision Map Act: Gives local governments authority to regulate and control the design and improvement of subdivisions within their jurisdiction.

Topographic Conditions: Existing conditions on the land surface or a given region, including, but not limited to relief, water features (streams, rivers, lakes) and man made features (grading, etc.).

Transfer of Development Rights (Development Transfer): This process can be used when a municipality designates an area for open space and prohibits development therein. The residential development potential is then transferred to another area or areas where development is feasible.

Landowners in the preserved areas will continue to own their land and many sell their rights to further development to other landowners or builders who wish to develop those areas in which development is feasible.

Under the system, a zoning district is established for preservation of open space in which all development is essentially prohibited. The residential development potential of the zoning district before its open space designation is calculated as follows: For each residential dwelling eliminated in a preservation district, a substituted dwelling is added to a developable district of the community. A development right is created for each dwelling eliminated in the preserved district and is distributed to the landowners. To construct dwellings in developable areas, a development right is necessary along with appropriate zoning.

A builder who proposes to construct at a higher density, based on the new capacity or density resulting from the establishment of the preserved area, must also purchase development rights to equal the increased density and at a price arrived at through the bargaining process of the market place. The continued value or marketability of development rights are insured by adequate incentive zoning in the developable areas.

Urban Activity Area: Areas with Residential, Commercial, Institutional, Recreational, Agricultural, and Infrastructure Facility land use designations.

View: Scene or panorama observed from a given vantage point.

Viewing Corridors: Major circulation roads, and trail networks within the City that afford views of the visual resources.

Viewing Points: Locations at private residences and roadway turnouts along vehicular corridors that afford viewing of visual resources.

Viewing Sites: Larger areas which, due to their physical locations on the Peninsula, provide a significant viewing vantage.

Viewing Stations: Places where people can enjoy the visual resources of Rancho Palos Verdes.

Vistas: Confined view, usually directed toward a dominant element or landmark.

Watersheds: Geographical boundaries of an area that are drained by a common river, stream or network of rivers and streams.

Wildland Fire: Uncontrolled, non-structure fire other than prescribed fires that occur in the wildland area.