



Planning Terminology

Best Management Practices (BMP's): A structural or nonstructural management-based practice used singularly or in combination to reduce non-point source input to receiving waters in order to achieve water quality protection goals.

Brownfields: Real property, the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of has the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Reuse and redevelopment of these industrialized or commercial sites presents both a challenge and an opportunity to bring back into use. There are complex financial, legal and environmental risks which are some of the biggest barriers to owners and developers.

Buffer: A strip of land with natural or planted vegetation located between a use or structure and a side or rear property one intended to separate and partially obstruct the view of two abutting land uses or properties from another. A buffer area may include any required screening for the site.

Built-upon area (B.U.): Built-upon areas shall include that portion of a development project and/or lots that are covered by impervious or partially impervious cover including buildings, pavement, gravel roads, recreation facilities, etc.

Catawba River/Lake Wylie Overlay District: Provides for the protection of public water supplies; the overlay district supplements the uses or development requirements of the underlying zoning district within the Catawba River/Lake Wylie Watershed Protection Area.

Centers, Corridors and Wedges: *Centers, Corridors and Wedges* is the framework for organizing and managing growth in such a way to help ensure that future development enhances the community and contributes to its character and identify. This policy framework represents the adopted land use concept for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg region which encourages high density multi-use development along major transportation corridors and at key nodes or activity centers connected by these corridors. The wedge areas refer to the land in between the centers and corridors, largely the low density residential neighborhoods and supporting uses.

Contaminated sites: Sites which have experienced release of a regulated substance to the environment.

Critical Area: The area adjacent to a water supply intake or reservoir where risk associated with pollution is greater than from the remaining portions of the watershed.

EPA: Environmental Protection Agency

General Development Policies (GDPs): The GDP's are a planning document, not regulations. They are used to provide guidance for future land use and development decisions and provide guidance for the location, intensity and form of future development and redevelopment throughout the community. The GDP – Environment policies are used to help minimize the negative environmental impacts of land use and land development.

Impervious ground cover: Any structure or ground cover consisting of asphalt, concrete, stone, brick, ceramic tile or any other natural or man-made material that prevents the absorption of surface water into the soil.

LUESA - Land Use and Environmental Services Agency

Natural Heritage sites: (also known as a **Significant Natural Heritage Area (SNHA)**), an area of land or water identified as being important for conservation of the County's or State's biodiversity. SNHA contain one or more Natural Heritage elements: high-quality or rare natural communities, rare species, and/or special animal habitats.

Open Space: An area of land or water, which is open and unobstructed including areas maintained in a natural or undisturbed character or areas improved for active or passive recreation. Open space is vital in providing for recreational needs, and in creating a high quality of life.

Overlay Zoning Districts: Districts such as Watershed Districts, that are applied only in conjunction with other zoning districts and may require additional use or development requirements upon the underlying zone.

Post Construction Control Ordinances (PCCO): An ordinance, effective July 2008, enacted to protect, maintain and enhance the public health, safety, environment and general welfare by establishing minimum requirements and procedures to control the adverse effects of increased post-construction storm water runoff and non-point source pollution associated with Development and Redevelopment. It has been determined that proper management of construction-related and post-construction storm water runoff will minimize damage to public and private property and infrastructure, safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare, and protect water and aquatic resources.

Protected Area: The area adjoining and upstream of the Critical area of water supply watersheds where risk of water quality degradation from pollution, while still greater than non-watershed designated areas, is less than in the Critical Area.

Storm Water Improvement and Management (S.W.I.M.): An ordinance, effective July 1999, that protects bodies of water by way of vegetative buffers. The purpose of the stream buffer network in Charlotte is to ensure that the stream and adjacent lands will fulfill their natural functions. Stream

systems are comprised of the stream and their drainage basins. Streams have the primary natural functions of conveying storm and ground water, storing floodwater and supporting aquatic and other life. Vegetated lands adjacent to the stream channel in the drainage basin serve as a buffer to protect the stream system's ability to fulfill its natural functions. The primary natural functions of the buffer include the following: 1) Protect water quality by filtering pollutants; 2) Provide storage for floodwaters; 3) Allow channels to meander naturally; and 4) Provide suitable habitats for wildlife.

Sustainability: the ability to remain economically, socially and environmentally viable over the long-term.

Water pollution (point and nonpoint): Point sources of pollution come from a fixed location (as the name implies), such as a pipe. Non-point sources usually originate in storm water runoff.

Watershed: The entire land area contributing surface drainage into a stream, creek, lake or other body of water.