

City of Coquitlam Planning & Development

Key Planning Terms

AMENITIES – Community amenities improve the livability of an area and include parks, libraries, community or recreation centres, streetscape improvements, greenways, or space for community-serving groups.



AREA PLAN – These types of plans are part of the OCP and focus on land uses, high-level policies and issues relevant to a particular area of the city. Coquitlam currently has four Area Plans based on the city's geography: Southwest, City Centre, Northeast and Northwest.

BC BUILDING CODE – The BC Building Code is a provincially-regulated document that contains regulations regarding the health and safety aspects of construction. The Code outlines minimum standards of building, structural integrity, fire safety, plumbing, heating and ventilation, and many other aspects of buildings. It is a property owner's responsibility to ensure that their building/home is in full compliance with the Code.

COMMUNITY AMENITY CONTRIBUTION (CAC)

– CACs are a voluntary contribution made by a developer when City Council approves certain types of rezoning applications. The CAC amount is a flat rate per m² of all new residential floor area associated with a rezoning application. The CAC is used to help fund a specific amenity in an area. In Coquitlam CACs are only payable on new floorspace below 2.5 FAR.



DENSITY – is a measurement of development intensity on a lot. Density can be measured by dwelling units per hectare (single-family), or by floor area ratio (FAR) which relates to the amount of building floorspace to the area of the property

DENSITY BONUS – is an optional financial contribution made by a developer when City Council approves additional density at the time of rezoning. The amount of additional density and financial contribution is set out in the Zoning Bylaw. The financial contribution is a portion of the increase land value that occurs at the time of rezoning. Coquitlam's Density Bonus program applies to floorspace above 2.5 FAR. Density Bonus contributions can be spent on a wide range of amenities and infrastructure as determined by City Council and as identified in the City's Official Community Plan (OCP).



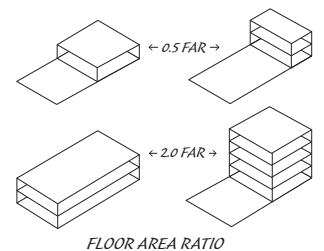
DEVELOPMENT COST CHARGES (DCC) – DCCs are fees on all new development paid either per housing unit or per square metre of new development. DCC rates are set citywide by Council, and Provincial legislation controls what DCCs can be spent on. Currently, DCCs can be mainly spent on arterial streets, water and sewer utilities, new parks, greenways and storm drainage infrastructure.



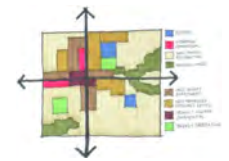
DEVELOPMENT PERMIT – A Development Permit is a type of application that most often controls the form and character of a proposed new building and ensures it meets the standards and requirements of the particular zone. The OCP has a number of Development Permit Guidelines (see part 4 of the OCP) that new buildings have to meet. Most buildings in Coquitlam (except single-family houses) require a Development Permit in order to be built.



FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR) – FAR is the maximum amount of floor area (building space) you are permitted to construct on your lot. This is expressed as a ratio. For example, if you have a lot area of 500 m² and your maximum FAR is 0.45, then the maximum floor area you can construct is 225 m².



LAND USE DESIGNATIONS – are a classification that determines the type of future use a property can have (i.e. commercial, single-family housing, multi-family housing, etc.). Each OCP Land Use Designation has a number of associated zones that can be applied through rezoning. There are currently 53 designations set out in the OCP.



MIXED USE – A development that allows more than one type of land use within one building, for example, a combination of residential, commercial, office or institutional use.



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – is the most detailed type of land use plan within the City's OCP and details specific housing types, density, environmentally-sensitive areas, cycling and pedestrian networks, and design guidelines for a particular neighbourhood. They establish a common vision through close consultation with the community.



Key Planning Terms *(continued)*

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN (OCP) – Coquitlam’s Citywide OCP contains policies that set a vision, and priorities to address issues that affect the entire city. The OCP provides Land Use Designations that describe the future use of all land in the city and has a general statement about the form and character for future development. An application to amend the OCP is decided by City Council.



PUBLIC REALM – generally refers to the spaces between buildings and includes all parts of the city that are publicly accessible; for example streets, walkways, squares, parks and open spaces as well as some semi-public spaces, such as a small courtyard in front of a private building.



REZONING – The process of changing the existing zone on a property to another zone. This is a regular part of the development process that occurs when an applicant applies to change the zone of a property. The zones that the applicant can choose to rezone to are determined by the land use designation (set out in the OCP). The rezoning process amends the City’s Zoning Bylaw and requires public notification to nearby property owners, a Public Hearing and approval by City Council.



RIPARIAN AREAS – These areas are vegetated spaces adjacent to a creek or any watercourse that help to maintain water quality and fish habitat.



STREETSCAPE – is the overall character and appearance of a street formed by elements and features that frame the public street such as building frontages and setbacks from the street, street trees and plants, street lighting, benches, width of the sidewalk, etc.



SUBDIVISION – is the process of changing the legal size or shape of a piece of land called a Lot. Subdivision includes both dividing a Lot into two or more smaller parcels or consolidating a number of smaller parcels into a new larger Lot.



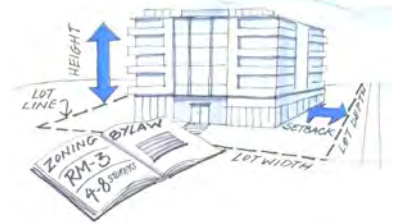
URBAN DESIGN – involves the design of buildings and the relationships between buildings as well as the spaces between them (the public realm), with the aim of creating livable, attractive and human-scaled streets and neighbourhoods.

WATERSHED – is a geographic area of land that drains water to a shared destination, typically a related creek or stream.



ZONE – The zone on a property specifies permitted uses, the dimensional requirements for lots, the height of buildings and how far they can be setback from a property boundary. The zone also determines the maximum density of buildings on a property and is typically measured in the City’s zones as a Floor Area Ratio (FAR). All land in the City is assigned a zone under the City’s Zoning Bylaw. The type of zone that can be applied to a property is set by the land use designation in the City’s OCP.

ZONING BYLAW – This bylaw regulates the present use of land. Zoning is a tool to implement the City’s policies and land use designations as set out in the OCP.



This information has been prepared to provide information only. It is not a legal document. If any contradiction exists between this document and the relevant City Bylaws, Codes or Policies, the text of the Bylaws, Codes or Policies shall be the legal authority.

Connect with us:

City of Coquitlam Planning & Development Department

✉ planninganddevelopment@coquitlam.ca ☎ 604-927-3430

🌐 coquitlam.ca/development

coquitlam.ca

