

ARTICLE 3

DEFINITIONS, ABBREVIATIONS & SYMBOLS

Words and terms defined for the purpose of use in this Ordinance appear in italics from time to time to assist with identifying such words and terms with special definitions. Italic fonts are for convenience and do not limit the application of the definition. Words and/or terms specifically defined herein and not appearing in italic font shall also have the meaning ascribed herein. The following words and terms shall have the meaning ascribed to them below.

Additional terms related to flood hazard and other environmental regulations are defined in Article 18.

ABANDONED. Not occupied or in use for 60 or more consecutive days, without regard to reason or intent, except where occupancy is split between two (2) or more primary locations for seasonal residential occupancy.

ACCESSORY BUILDING. A detached subordinate building, the use of which is incidental to that of the principal building and located on the same lot.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT. See *DWELLING, ACCESSORY UNIT.*

ACCESSORY USE. A use incidental to and customarily associated with a specific principal use, located on the same lot or parcel.

ACTIVE RECREATIONAL ELEMENTS. Recreational facilities which provide opportunities for more than passive enjoyment of open space and natural areas, including but not limited to parks, playgrounds, *athletic fields*, basketball or tennis courts, swimming pools, clubhouses, covered decks or pavilions, and sheltered picnic facilities.

ADAPTIVE REUSE. The conversion of an existing building built for one use to another use, typically to address some aspect of physical or functional obsolescence.

ADDITION (TO AN EXISTING BUILDING). An extension or increase in the floor area or height of a building or structure.

ADULT ESTABLISHMENT/USES. The definition of "*adult establishment*" for purposes of this ordinance shall be consistent with Chapter 14, Article 26A of the N.C. General Statutes as currently written or hereafter amended. *Adult establishments* include adult bookstores, adult motion picture and mini motion picture theaters, adult video sales and rentals, adult live entertainment business and massage businesses as those terms are defined by G.S.14-202.10, and adult motels and adult cabarets. The following separate definitions individually and collectively define this term.

“Adult Bookstore” is defined as a bookstore which:

- (A.) receives a majority of its gross income during any calendar year from the sale of publications (including books, magazines and other periodicals) which are distinguished or characterized by their emphasis on matter depicting, describing or relating to sexual activities or anatomical area; or
- (B.) has a preponderance of its publications, books, magazines and other periodicals distinguished or characterized by their emphasis on matter depicting or relating to sexual activities or anatomical areas.

"Adult Cabaret" is defined as a nightclub, bar, restaurant or other commercial establishment that regularly features, exhibits or displays as one of its principal business purposes:

- (A.) persons who appear nude or semi-nude, or
- (B.) live performances which are characterized by the exposure of "specified anatomical areas" or by "specified sexual activities," or
- (C.) films, motion pictures, video cassettes, slides or other photographic reproductions which depict or describe "specified anatomical areas.”

"Adult Motel" is defined as a hotel, motel or similar commercial establishment that:

- (A.) offers accommodations to the public for any form of consideration; provides patrons with closed circuit television transmissions, films, motion pictures, video cassettes, slides or other photographic reproductions that depict or describe "specified sexual activities," or "specified anatomical areas" as one of its principal business purposes; or
- (B.) offers a sleeping room for rent for a period of time that is less than ten hours; or
- (C.) allows a tenant or occupant of a sleeping room to subagent the room for a period of time that is less than ten hours.

“Adult Motion Picture Theater”, as defined in this ordinance and in G.S. 14-202.10, is any building used for presenting motion pictures, a preponderance of which are distinguished or characterized by an emphasis on matter depicting, describing, or relating to sexual activities or anatomical areas.

AGRICULTURAL USE. The use of open field land for agricultural production purposes, including farming, dairying, stock watering, pasturage agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, viticulture, and animal and poultry husbandry, and the necessary *accessory uses* for storing the supplies and products. The term shall include incidental retail sales by the producer of products raised on the farm. Agriculture does include forest management and timber harvesting activities,

provided a management plan for that activity has been prepared by a Professional Forester registered in the State of North Carolina. See definition of Forest Land. Also, as defined in G.S. 106-581.1. See definition of Bona Fide Farm in this Article.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION (CROPS ONLY). See *AGRICULTURAL USE*.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION (CROPS AND LIVESTOCK). See *AGRICULTURAL USE*.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION (WITHIN BUILDINGS). *The practice of horticulture, floriculture, and any form of non-animal or livestock agricultural production within buildings, such as greenhouse or hydroponic operation; along with the necessary accessory uses for storing supplies and products.*

ALLEY. A roadway which affords only a secondary means of access to abutting property.

ALONG DRAINAGE. The area parallel to and within fifty (50) feet of the drainage channel.

ALTERATION. See *SIGN ALTERATION*.

ANIMAL UNIT. A unit of measurement developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that is used to compare different types of animal operations.

APPEAL, FLOODPLAIN. A request for a review of the floodplain administrator's interpretation of any provision of this ordinance. (This definition applies to flood hazard regulations. See Article 18)

APPEAL, ZONING. A request for a review of the *Planning, Zoning and Subdivision Administrator's* interpretation of any provision of this land development ordinance.

APPRAISED VALUE. The value assigned to a structure by the Gaston County Tax Assessor or by an MAI-certified real estate appraiser whichever is greater for purposes of interpreting this ordinance.

AREA OF SHALLOW FLOODING. A designated Zone AO on a community's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) with base flood depths determined to be from one (1) to three (3) feet. These areas are located where a clearly defined channel does not exist, where the path of flooding is unpredictable and indeterminate, and where velocity flow may be evident.

AREA OF SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD. See "Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)". (This definition applies to flood hazard regulations. See Article 18)

ASSEMBLY. A joining together of completely fabricated parts to create a finished product.

ATHLETIC FIELD. Outdoor sites, often requiring equipment, designed for formal athletic competition in field sports (e.g. softball, soccer, football).

AUTO WRECKING. An activity that provides open storage, disassembling, or salvaging for more than two junked motor vehicles.

AUTOMOBILE REPAIR SERVICES, MAJOR. An establishment primarily engaged in one or more of the following activities: 1) general repair or service, 2) engine repair, 3) installation or repair of transmissions, 4) installation or repair of automotive glass, 5) installation or repair of exhaust systems, 6) repair of tops, bodies and interiors, and 7) automotive painting and refinishing.

AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR SERVICES, MINOR. An establishment primarily engaged in one or more of the following activities: 1) diagnostic service and tune-ups, 2) installation or repair of air conditioners, brakes, carburetors, electrical systems, fuel systems, generators and starters, and radiators, 3) lubricating service, and 4) front end and wheel alignment.

AVERAGE SLOPE. Shall mean the maximum inclination of the land surface from the horizontal as measured in percentage slope. The average slope shall be determined for the entire lot, tract, or subdivision before development.

AWNING. A cloth, plastic, or other nonstructural covering permanently attached to a building that may be raised or retracted to a position against the building when not in use.

BALLOON, ACCENT. A small balloon (or group of small balloons) displayed at heights of less than eight feet.

BALLOON, TETHERED. A large balloon (or group of balloons of any size) intended for commercial promotion and tethered at a business location.

BAR. An establishment primarily engaged in the retail sale of alcoholic spirits, beer or wine for consumption on the premises. Such establishment must obtain an ABC license for on-premises consumption of alcoholic spirits, beer or wine only. The establishment may also be engaged in the retail sale of prepared food for on-premises consumption.

BASE FLOOD. The flood having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year (a.k.a. “100-year flood”).

BASE FLOOD ELEVATION (BFE). The elevation to which structures and uses regulated by this Ordinance are required to be elevated or flood proofed. The determination of the water surface elevations of the base flood is published in the Flood Insurance Study. When the BFE has not been provided in a “Special Flood Hazard Area”, it may be obtained from engineering studies available from a Federal, State, or other source using FEMA approved engineering methodologies. This elevation, when combined with the “Freeboard”, establishes the “Regulatory Flood Protection Elevation.”

BASEMENT. Any area of the building having its floor subgrade (below ground level) on all sides. (This definition applies only with respect to flood hazard regulations.)

BED-AND-BREAKFAST INN. A private residence that offers sleeping accommodations to lodgers in 14 or fewer rooms for rent, is the innkeeper's (owner or operator) principal residence while renting rooms to lodgers, and may or may not serve breakfast to its lodgers. For the purpose of this definition, a lodger means a person who rents a room in a bed-and-breakfast inn for fewer than 30 consecutive days. See *TOURIST HOME*.

BERM, EROSION CONTROL. A mound of material and/or ditch the purpose of which is to divert the flow of run-off water.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMP). Conservation practices or systems of practices and management measures that: (a) control soil loss and reduce water quality degradation caused by nutrients, animal waste, toxins, and sediment; (b) minimize adverse impacts to surface water and groundwater flow, circulation patterns, and to the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of surface water bodies and wetlands; and (c) properly manage use and storage of fertilizers/pesticides. May use a structural or nonstructural management-based practice used singularly or in combination to reduce nonpoint source inputs to receiving waters in order to achieve water quality protection goals.

BLOCK. The land lying within an area bounded on all sides by streets.

BLOCKFACE. That portion of a block or tract of land facing the same side of a single street and lying between the closest intersecting streets.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT. A quasi-judicial body, appointed by the City Council, which is given certain powers under this Ordinance.

BOARDING HOUSE. A dwelling or part thereof, in which lodging is provided by the owner or operator to more than three boarders.

BONA FIDE FARM. As defined in context by G.S.160D-903 bona fide farm purposes include the production and activities relating or incidental to the production of crops, grains, fruits, vegetables, ornamental and flowering plants, dairy, livestock, poultry, and all other forms of agriculture, as defined in G.S. 106-581.1.

BOOKSTORE, ADULT. See *ADULT ESTABLISHMENT*.

BORROW. Fill material which is required for on-site construction and is obtained from other locations.

BREAKAWAY WALL. A wall that is not part of the structural support of the building and is intended through its design and construction to collapse under specific lateral loading forces without causing damage to the elevated portion of the building or the supporting foundation

system.

BREW PUB. A facility that prepares handcrafted natural beer with consumption on the premises.

BUFFER. An area of land planted or constructed to separate uses. Also, an area of natural or planted vegetation through which stormwater runoff flows in a diffuse manner so that the runoff does not become channelized and which provides for infiltration of the runoff and filtering of pollutants. The buffer is measured from the normal pool elevation of impounded structures and from the top of bank of each side of streams or river.

BUFFER. An area of land planted or constructed to separate uses.

BUFFER EASEMENT. An easement intended to permanently maintain an area of land, including landscaping, berms, walls, fences, and building setbacks, that is located between land uses of different character and is intended to mitigate negative impacts of the more intense use on a residential or vacant parcel.

BUFFER ZONE. The strip of land adjacent to a lake or natural watercourse, the width of which is measured from the edge of the water to the nearest edge of the disturbed area, with the 25% percent of the strip nearer the land-disturbing activity containing natural or artificial means of confining visible siltation.

BUILDABLE OR ZONING LOT. One or more lots of record in one undivided ownership with sufficient total area, exclusive of easement, flood hazards, well and septic tank fields, total dimensions, and street access to permit construction thereon of a principal building together with its required parking and planting yards. See *TRACT*.

BUILDING. Any structure having a roof supported by walls or columns constructed or used for residence, business, industry or other public or private purposes. See also *STRUCTURE*.

BUILDING ENVELOPE. The interior area of a lot established by the minimum front, side and rear yard area requirements of this Ordinance.

BUILDING LINE. A line perpendicular to the lot depth which establishes the horizontal distance between the structure and the front property line excluding the outermost steps, uncovered porches, gutters, and similar fixtures.

BUILDING SEPARATION. The minimum required horizontal distance between buildings.

BUILD-TO LINE. An alignment establishing a specific distance from the curb line to where the principal structure shall be built.

BUILT-UPON AREA. That portion of a development project that is covered by impervious or partially impervious cover including buildings, pavement, gravel (for pedestrian or vehicular use), recreation facilities (e.g., tennis courts), etc. Slatted decks and the water area of a

swimming pool are not considered Built-Upon Area.

BYPASS. See definition of Highway.

CALIPER INCHES. Quantity, in inches, of the diameter of trees measured at the height of six (6) inches above the ground for trees four (4) inches or less in trunk diameter, and if greater than four (4) inches, then measurement is taken twelve (12) inches above the ground.

CANOPY. A permanent, unattached roofed structure that shelters a use or activity from the weather.

CELLULAR COMMUNICATIONS. SEE *WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES.*

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE/OCCUPANCY. A statement, signed by the Enforcement Officer, setting forth either that a building or structure complies with the provisions of this Ordinance, or that building, structure, or parcel of land may lawfully be employed for specified uses, or both.

CHANNEL LETTERING. A sign design technique involving the installation of three-dimensional lettering against a background, typically a sign face or building façade.



Example of Channel Lettering

CHANNELIZATION. Any improvements or other construction activity which occurs within or in the vicinity of an existing natural drainage-way or perennial stream which directs or relocates said waterway along some desired course, by increasing its depth or by the use of piping or any other manmade storm drainage structures.

CHEMICAL STORAGE FACILITY. A building, portion of a building, or exterior area adjacent to a building used for the storage of any chemical or chemically reactive products (applicable in Flood Hazard regulations).

CHEMICAL BULK STORAGE STRUCTURE OR AREA. A building, portion of a building, or exterior area adjacent to a building used for the bulk storage of any chemical or chemically reactive products, hazardous or toxic materials.

CHICANE. An artificial feature creating extra turns in a roadway, used on City streets to slow the speed of traffic, by creating a horizontal deflection causing vehicles to slow as they would for a curve.

CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT. A development design technique that concentrates buildings on a portion of the site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, open space, or preservation of environmentally-sensitive land areas. Buildings are grouped together in order to conserve land resources and provide for innovation in the design of the project. This term includes non-residential development as well as single-family subdivisions and multi-family developments that may or may not involve the subdivision of land.

COLLECTOR STREET PLAN. A plan, adopted by the local governing body, for streets not shown on the Thoroughfare Plan and showing collector and, if appropriate, lower classification streets in the planning area.

COMMON AREA(S). All areas, including private streets, conveyed to an owners' association within a development or owned on a proportional undivided basis in a condominium development.

COMMON OPEN SPACE. Open space that is (1) owned in common and maintained by the owners of lots in a subdivision (i. e., a homeowner's association), or (2) owned by a private individual or entity but managed and maintained for common use by residents, occupants or customers of the development.

COMPLETED. Work has progressed to the point that, in the opinion of the *Planning, Zoning & Subdivision Administrator*, it is sufficiently completed in accordance with the approved plans and specifications that the work can be utilized for its intended purposes. For permanent runoff control structures this generally means that the following have been accomplished:

- (1.) The dam has been constructed to the approved lines and grades;
- (2.) all slopes have been fine graded, seeded, mulched, fertilized, and tacked to establish permanent ground cover;
- (3.) principal and emergency spillways have been installed at the approved elevations and dimensions; and
- (4.) permanent velocity controls on the inlet and outlet pipes and channels have been

COMPOSTING FACILITY. A facility in which only stumps, limbs, leaves, grass and untreated wood collected from land clearing or landscaping operations are deposited

CONDITIONED SPACE. Building space completely enclosed and protected from outside elements and typically provided with heating and ventilation as opposed to carports and open-air venues.

CONDOMINIUM. Real estate that is developed pursuant to the North Carolina Condominium Act, North Carolina General Statute Chapter 47C.

CONGREGATE CARE FACILITY. A facility providing shelter and services for ambulatory individuals at least fifty-five (55) years of age who by reason of their age, functional impairment, or infirmity may require meals housekeeping and personal care assistance. Congregate care facilities do not include nursing homes or similar institutions devoted primarily to the care of the chronically ill or the incurable.

CONSERVATION EASEMENT. A non-possessory interest of a holder in real property imposing limitations or affirmative obligations, the purposes of which include retaining or protecting natural, scenic, or open space values of real property, assuring its availability for agricultural, recreational, or open space use, protecting natural resources, maintaining or enhancing air or water quality, or preserving historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural aspects of real property.

CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION. A subdivision in which the lot sizes are reduced below those normally required in the zoning district in which the development is located, in return for the provision of permanent open space.

CONTRACTORS, GENERAL. The office of a business which contracts for and assumes responsibility for completing a construction project and hires, supervises, and pays all subcontractors and service contractors.

CONTRACTORS, SERVICE. The office of a business providing a specific trade or service, including but not exclusive of plumbing, electricity, carpentry, flooring, pest control, cleaning, restoration, painting and other trades predominately conducted at the customers premises.

COTTAGE DEVELOPMENT. A cluster of small detached single-family residences constructed to specific design standards and arranged around common open space, generally at higher density than the underlying zoning would allow for traditional detached single family residential development.

COTTAGE HOME. A small detached single-family residence constructed to specific design standards and arranged around common open space as part of a cottage development.

COUNTRY CLUB. A club with both social and sporting facilities, set in a suburban area.

COUNTY. Refers to governing authority of Gaston County, North Carolina.

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. The critical area is defined as extending either one-half mile from the normal pool elevation of the reservoir in which the intake is located or to the ridge line of the watershed (whichever comes first); or one-

half mile upstream from the intake located directly in the stream or river (run-of-the-river), or the ridge line of the watershed (whichever comes first). Major landmarks such as highways or property lines may be used to delineate the outer boundary of the critical area if these landmarks are immediately adjacent to the appropriate outer boundary of one-half mile.

CRITICAL ROOT ZONE. The rooting area of a tree established to limit root disturbance, generally defined as a circle with a radius extending from a tree's trunk to the furthest point of the crown drip-line.

CUL-DE-SAC. A short local street having one end open to traffic and the other end permanently terminated by a vehicular turnaround.

CURB BULB. An extension of the curb into the street, beyond the standard edge of the curb, which narrows the width of the roadway and is used to slow the speed of traffic on City streets. The curb bulb may be used for landscaping, pedestrian crosswalk, or for a combination of uses. Sometimes referred to as a “bulb out.”

DAY CARE CENTER. A facility licensed by the State of North Carolina for the care of children or adults for periods of less than 24 hours per day.

DENSITY CREDIT. Allocation of the density from within exacted land areas to other developable portions of a parcel. Gross density calculation includes this allocation.

DETENTION POND. A wet or dry stormwater holding area, either natural or manmade, which filters and releases stormwater to nearby or adjoining water bodies in a gradual fashion, also means a pond which collects stormwater runoff, filters the water, and releases it slowly over a period of hours or days. It does not have a permanent pool and is sometimes referred to as a dry pond. Also see definition of Best Management Practices.

DETENTION POND, WET. Means a pond that has a permanent pool and also collects stormwater runoff, filters the water, and releases it slowly over a period of days.

DEVELOPER. A person engaging in development.

DEVELOPMENT. (This definition applies to the Watershed Standards in Article 19). Any land disturbing activity which adds to or changes the amount of impervious or partially impervious cover on a land area or which otherwise decreases the infiltration of precipitation into the soil.

DEVELOPMENT. Any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate requiring a permit from the City of Lowell, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, or drilling operations, or storage of equipment or materials.

DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR. The Planning, Zoning & Subdivision Administrator or other staff appointed by the City Council having authority to interpret, administer, and enforce the Lowell Development Ordinance.

DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT. An agreement between the City of Lowell and a developer pursuant to Article 10 of G.S. 160D for a large-scale development with a lengthy build-out period and having a public-private partnership component involving mutual financial interests.

DEVELOPMENT, DENSITY OF. The density of development shall be determined using a gross acreage system. The total area of the tract, including areas to be used for new streets, rights-of-way, drives, parking, structures, recreation areas, dedicated areas, and required setbacks shall be used for density calculations.

DISCHARGING LANDFILL. A facility with liners, monitoring equipment and other measures to detect and/or prevent leachate from entering the environment and in which the leachate is treated on site and discharged to a receiving stream.

DISPERSED DRAINAGE. Means spread out, as opposed to collecting the runoff in channels, so as to affect increased sheet flow and overland flow.

DISPOSAL. As defined in G.S. 130A-290(a)(6), the discharge, deposit, injection, dumping, spilling, leaking, or placing of any solid waste into or on any land or water so that the solid waste or any constituent part of the solid waste may enter the environment or be emitted into the air or discharged into any waters, including ground-waters.

DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS OR TOXIC SUBSTANCE(S). The destruction, discharge, deposit, injection, dumping, spilling, leaking, or placing of any hazardous waste or toxic substance into or on any air, land, or water.

DISPOSAL FACILITY. A facility or part of a facility at which hazardous waste or toxic substance is intentionally placed into or on any land or water, and at which hazardous waste or toxic substance will remain after closure.

DIVERTER. A constructed feature designed to prevent left turns or through movements into a residential area, used as method to calm traffic on City streets.

DOMESTIC WASTEWATER DISCHARGE. The discharge of sewage, non-process industrial wastewater, other domestic wastewater, or any combination of these items. It includes liquid waste generated by domestic water-using fixtures and appliances from any residence, place of business, or place of public assembly even if it contains no sewage. Examples of domestic wastewater include once-through noncontact cooling water, seafood packing facility discharges, and wastewater from restaurants.

DOWN-ZONING. Means a zoning ordinance that affects an area of land in one of the following ways:

(1) by decreasing the development density of the land to be less dense than was allowed under its previous usage.

(2) by reducing the permitted uses of the land that are specified in a zoning ordinance or land development regulation to fewer uses than were allowed under its previous usage.

DRAINAGE, DISPERSED. Drainage spread out, as opposed to collected in channels, so as to effect increased sheet flow and overland flow.

DRAINAGE, ENHANCED. Drainage carried by existing natural drainage-ways which have been enhanced to resist soil erosion and stream bank degradation. An enhanced natural drainage-way is achieved with the installation of an engineered measure (i.e., netting, riprap) which will resist soil erosion and allow infiltration within the natural drainage-way.

DRAINAGEWAY. Any natural or man-made channel that carries surface runoff from precipitation.

DRAINAGEWAY AND OPEN SPACE AREA, DEDICATED. The area designated for floodplain and open space purposes on a recorded subdivision plat and thereby dedicated to the public for such purposes and, where approved by the City, for utilities.

DRAINAGEWAY, IMPROVED. Drainage channeled by impervious surfaces such as curb and gutter or concrete channels.

DRAINAGEWAY, PROTECTED. Drainage channeled by pervious devices such as sod waterways, berms, channels, or swales which have been stabilized with vegetation, rip-rap, or a combination of these, to resist soil erosion.

DRILLING OPERATION PETROLEUM, NATURAL GAS. The extraction of petroleum, natural gas, and related energy resources through mining, drilling and other related extraction techniques, including fracking. See *FRACKING*.

DRIPLINE. A vertical line extending from the outermost portion of a tree's canopy to the ground.

DRY DETENTION POND. A pond which collects stormwater runoff, holds the water, and releases it slowly over a period of hours or days. It does not have a permanent pool and is sometimes referred to as a dry pond or wet weather pond.

DUPLEX. A structure having two (2) dwelling units within a single structure.

DWELLING UNIT. One or more rooms, designed, occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters *for one family*, with *a separate entrance and* cooking, sleeping and sanitary facilities provided therein. Units in dormitories, hotels, motels, shelters for the homeless or other structures designed for transient residents are not dwelling units. (See G.S. 160D-706(b))

DWELLING, ACCESSORY UNIT. A dwelling that exists either as part of a principal dwelling or as an *accessory building* that is secondary and incidental to the use of the property as single family residential.

DWELLING, ATTACHED HOUSE (TOWNHOUSE). A dwelling unit located within a building and attached to other similar dwelling units in which each unit is located on an individually owned parcel, generally within a development containing facilities and areas owned in common.

DWELLING, MANUFACTURED/MOBILE HOME. For manufactured/mobile homes built before June 15, 1976, "manufactured/mobile home" means a portable manufactured housing unit designed for transportation on its own chassis and placement on a temporary or semi-permanent foundation having a measurement of over 32 feet in length and over seven feet in width.

DWELLING, MANUFACTURED HOME – TYPE 1. A structure, transportable in one or more sections, which in the traveling mode is eight body feet or more in width, or 40 body feet or more in length, or, when erected on site, is 320 or more square feet; and which is built on a permanent chassis and designed to be used as a dwelling, with or without permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities, including the plumbing, heating, air conditioning and electrical systems contained therein.

DWELLING, MANUFACTURED HOME – TYPE 2. A double-wide manufactured home, which is two or more portable manufactured housing units designed for transportation on their own chassis that connect on site for placement on a temporary or semi-permanent foundation having a measurement of over 32 feet in length and over eight feet in width. The term “manufactured home” does not include a recreational vehicle.

DWELLING, MULTIFAMILY. A building or portion thereof used or designed for three or more dwelling units; the term includes apartments, and condominiums.

DWELLING PARK, MANUFACTURED HOME. Any place, area, lot, parcel, or space of land maintained, offered or used for the placement of two (2) or more manufactured homes; said space may be used or intended for use as a residential dwelling whether or not compensation is paid for any or all accommodation; and said space may be occupied under various ownership or lease arrangements. The term manufactured home park/court shall include the term mobile home park/court.

DWELLING, MODULAR. A dwelling constructed in accordance with the standards set forth in the N.C. State Residential Building Code and composed of components substantially assembled in a manufacturing plant and transported to the building site for final *assembly* on a permanent foundation.

EASEMENT. A grant of one or more of the property rights, such as right of access, by the property owner to, or for use by the public, a corporation, or other entity.

ELECTRICAL ENERGY PRODUCTION (FOSSIL FUEL-BASED). Electricity-generating facility operated by Duke Power, Gaston Power, or other utilities company authorized and licensed by the State of North Carolina utilizing coal, oil, or other fossil fuel as the source of power generation.

ELECTRICAL ENERGY PRODUCTION (ALTERNATIVE SOURCES). Electricity-generating activities operated a power generation facility by a licensed utilities company. The term does not include appurtenant panels as an accessory activity to a principal use of a property utilizing solar, wind, or other non-fossil fuel source of power.

ELECTRONIC GAMING OPERATION. Any business enterprise, whether as a principal or accessory use, where persons utilize electronic machines, including, but not limited to computers and gaming terminals to conduct games including but not limited to sweepstakes, lotteries, games, and/or games of chance, and where cash or merchandise, or other items of value are redeemed or otherwise distributed, whether or not the value of such distribution is determined by electronic games played or by predetermined odds, which have a finite pool of winners. The term includes, but is not limited to internet sweepstakes, video sweepstakes, or cybercafés. This definition does not include any lottery endorsed, approved, or sponsored by the State of North Carolina, or arcade games of skill.

ELEVATED BUILDING. A non-basement building which had its lowest elevated floor raised above ground level by foundation walls, shear walls, posts, piers, pilings, or columns.

ENCROACHMENT. The advance or infringement of uses, fills, excavation, buildings, permanent structures or development into a floodplain, which may impede or alter the flow capacity of a floodplain. (This definition applies only with respect to flood hazard regulations.)

ENFORCEMENT, COMPLAINT-BASED. Enforcement action initiated on the basis of information provided by a third-party complainant.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICER. The City *Planning, Zoning & Subdivision Administrator* or their designee.

ENFORCEMENT, PROACTIVE. Enforcement action initiated at the discretion of the *Planning, Zoning & Subdivision Administrator* independent of any third-party complaint.

ENHANCED DRAINAGE-WAY. Means carried by existing natural drainageways which have been enhanced to resist soil erosion, including stream bank degradation.

EQUESTRIAN USE. Paddocks, fields, stables, barns, riding ring, and other facilities provided for *the care and use of horses*.

EROSION. The wearing of land surface by the action of wind, water, gravity or any combination thereof.

EROSION, ACCELERATED. Any increase over the rate of natural (i.e. undisturbed by human intervention) erosion as a result of land-disturbing activities.

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT. Those projects that are built or those projects that at a minimum have established a vested right under North Carolina zoning based on at least one (1) of the following criteria:

- (A.) Substantial expenditure of resources (time, labor, money) based on a good faith reliance upon having received a valid local government approval to proceed with the project; or
- (B.) Having a valid outstanding building permit; or
- (C.) Having an approved site specific or phased development plan in compliance with North Carolina General Statute 160D-108.

EXISTING LOT OF RECORD. A lot which is part of a subdivision, a plat of which has been recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds prior to the adoption of this Ordinance or a lot described by metes and bounds, the description of which has been so recorded prior to December 31, 1999.

EXISTING MANUFACTURED HOME PARK OR MANUFACTURED HOME SUBDIVISION. A manufactured home park or subdivision for which the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including, at a minimum, the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads) was completed before the original effective date of the floodplain management regulations adopted by the community. (This definition applies to Article 18)

EXISTING MANUFACTURED HOME PARK OR MANUFACTURED HOME SUBDIVISION. A manufactured home park or subdivision for which the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including, at a minimum, the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads) was completed before the original effective date of this Ordinance.

FAMILY. One or more persons related by blood or marriage, or up to three unrelated adults, occupying a dwelling unit and living as a single household.

FAMILY CARE HOME. A home meeting the North Carolina Residential Building Code with support and supervisory personnel that provides room and board, personal care and habilitation services in a family environment for six or fewer resident handicapped persons, pursuant to G.S. 160D-906.

FARM. See Agricultural Use.

FARMER'S MARKET. An open-air market at a regularly scheduled venue, includes seasonal and year-round markets.

FEDERAL LAW REFERENCE. National pollutant discharge elimination system (NPDES) permits (applies to watershed standards only).

FENCE. A physical barrier or enclosure consisting of wood, stone, brick, block, wire, metal or similar material used as a boundary or means of protection or confinement, but not including a hedge or other vegetation.

FIXTURE, FULL CUT-OFF. An outdoor light fixture shielded in such a manner that all light emitted by the fixture, either directly from the lamp or indirectly from the fixture, is projected below the horizontal plane as determined by photometric test or certified by the manufacturer.

FIXTURE, PARTIAL CUT-OFF. An outdoor light fixture shielded in such a manner that more than zero (0) but less than ten (10) percent of the light emitted directly from the lamp or indirectly from the fixture is projected at angles above the horizontal plane, as determined by photometric test or certified by the manufacturer.

FLOOD AND FLOODING. A general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas from the overflow of inland waters or the unusual and rapid accumulation of runoff of surface waters from any source.

FLOOD INSURANCE. The insurance coverage provided under the National Flood Insurance Program.

FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP (FIRM). An official map of the City of Lowell on which the Federal Emergency Management Agency has delineated both the areas of special flood hazard and the risk premium zones applicable to the City of Lowell and its ETJ.

FLOOD INSURANCE STUDY. The official report provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The report contains flood profiles, as well as the Flood Boundary/Floodway Map and the water surface elevation of the base flood.

FLOOD PLAIN. The relatively flat area or low land adjacent to the channel of a river, stream, or watercourse, lake, or other body of standing water, which has been or may be covered by flood water and which is susceptible to being inundated by water from any source.

FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR. The individual appointed to administer and enforce the floodplain management regulations.

FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT PERMIT. Any type of permit that is required in conformance with the provisions of this ordinance, prior to the commencement of any development activity.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT. The operation of an overall program of corrective and preventive measures for reducing flood damage and preserving and enhancing, where possible, natural resources in the floodplain, including, but not limited to, emergency preparedness plans, flood control works, floodplain management regulations, and open space plans.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS. This ordinance and other zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, building codes, health regulations, special purposed ordinances, and other application of police power which control development in flood-prone areas. This term describes federal, state or local regulations, in any combination thereof, which provide standards for preventing and reducing flood loss and damage.

FLOOD PRONE AREA. See *FLOOD PLAIN*.

FLOODPROOFING. Any combination of structural and nonstructural additions, changes, or adjustments to structures which reduces or eliminates flood damage to real estate or improved real property, water and sanitation facilities, structures, and their contents.

FLOODWAY FRINGE. The land area located between the floodway and maximum elevation subject to inundation by the base flood as defined in these Definitions.

FLOODWAY. The channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot.

FLOOD ZONE. A geographical area shown on a Flood Hazard Boundary Map or Flood Insurance Rate Map that reflects the severity or type of flooding in the area.

FLOOR AREA, GROSS. The sum of the gross horizontal areas of the several floors of a building measured from the exterior face of exterior walls, or from the centerline of a wall separating two buildings, but not including interior parking spaces, loading space for motor vehicles or any space where the floor-to-ceiling height is less than six feet. Additionally, gross floor area includes areas covered by canopies and like structures under which an active use is occurring such as drive-through service, gasoline pumping, loading and/or storage of materials, and similar activities.

FLOOR. The top surface of an enclosed area in a building (including basement), i.e., top of slab in concrete slab construction or top of wood flooring in wood frame construction. The term does not include the floor of a garage used solely for parking vehicles.

FOOD TRUCK. See *MARKET, TAILGATE*.

FOREST LAND. Land that is a part of a forest unit that is actively engaged in the commercial growing of trees under a sound management program. Forestland includes wasteland that is a part of the forest unit, but the wasteland included in the unit must be appraised under the use-

value schedules as wasteland. A forest unit may consist of more than one tract of forestland, but at least one of the tracts must meet the requirements in G.S. 105-277.3(a)(3), and each tract must be under a sound management program.

FRACKING. The production of natural gas from prehistoric shale rock formations by means of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing.

FREEBOARD. The height added to the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) to account for the many unknown factors that could contribute to flood heights greater than the height calculated for a selected size flood and floodway conditions, such as wave action, bridge openings, and the hydrological effect of urbanization on the watershed. The Base Flood Elevation plus the freeboard establishes the “Regulatory Flood Protection Elevation.”

FULLY SHIELDED LIGHTING FIXTURE. A light fixture that is shielded in such a manner that light rays emitted by the fixture, either directly from the lamp or indirectly from the fixture, are projected below a horizontal plane running through the lowest point on the fixture where light is emitted.

FUNCTIONALLY DEPENDENT FACILITY. A facility which cannot be used for its intended purpose unless it is located in close proximity to water, limited to a docking or port facility necessary for the loading and unloading of cargo or passengers, shipbuilding, or ship repair. The term does not include long-term storage, manufacture, sales, or service facilities. This definition applies only to the Flood Damage Prevention standards.

FURNITURE AND FIXTURES. An industrial process that involves the assembling of furniture utilizing parts that are pre-made and fabricated elsewhere.

GATED COMMUNITY. A subdivision, neighborhood, or residential development to which entry is restricted to residents and their guests. Often includes barriers such as gates, security personnel, fences and/or walls.

GIFT SHOP. A retail space in which miscellaneous articles that are appropriate as gifts are sold.

GRADE. A reference plane representing the average of finished ground level adjacent to any structure.

GRADING. Any operation or occurrence by which the existing site elevations are changed, or where any ground cover, natural or man-made, is removed, or any buildings or other structures are removed, or any water course or body of water, either natural or man-made, is relocated on any site, thereby creating an unprotected area. The term "grading" is interchangeable with "land-disturbing activity.”

GRADING PLAN. The graphic plan, including narrative where appropriate, required by this Ordinance as a prerequisite for a grading permit, the purpose of which is to explain existing

conditions and proposed grading of land including any development and to describe the activities and measures to be undertaken to control accelerated soil erosion and sedimentation.

GRANDFATHERED. Not affected by a change in this Ordinance absent physical modification or abandonment. Buildings, land uses, and lots or parcels of property that do not meet the standards of this Ordinance but legally existed prior to the effective date of this Ordinance, and complied with prior ordinances, regulations, and or standards, shall not be affected by this ordinance absent physical modification or abandonment.

GRAND OPENING. A promotional activity not exceeding 30 calendar days used by newly established businesses, within 60 calendar days after initial occupancy, to inform the public of their location and services available to the community.

GRAVEL. A clean or washed, loose aggregation of small, rounded, water-worn or pounded stones ranging in size from .08” to 3.0” in size. Gravel is not crushed stone or rock.

GREENWAY. A linear open space along either a natural corridor such as a riverfront, stream valley or ridge line, or along a railroad right-of-way converted to recreational use, a canal, scenic road, or other route managed for public use that has been designated on an officially adopted greenway plan. Greenways typically link parks, nature preserves, cultural features or historic sites with each other and/or with neighborhoods, schools, and commercial districts.

GROUP CARE FACILITY. A facility licensed by the State of North Carolina, (by whatever name it is called, other than "Family Care Home" as defined by this Ordinance), with support and supervisory personnel that provides room and board, personal care or habilitation services in a family environment.

HAZARDOUS AND/OR RADIOACTIVE WASTE (TRANSPORTATION, STORAGE AND/OR INCINERATION). An industrial operation that transports, stores, and /or incinerates or otherwise disposes of hazardous materials and/or hazardous or toxic materials as defined in this ordinance. The term includes a hazardous waste management facility and hazardous waste treatment facility as defined in this ordinance.

HAZARDOUS INDUSTRY. An industrial operation that receives, stores, incorporates into its industrial processes, and/or generates through its industrial processes either as part of its intended product or as part of its waste stream by-product, hazardous materials and/or hazardous or toxic materials as defined in this ordinance. The term includes a hazardous waste generator as defined in this ordinance.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL. Any material listed as such in: Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) section 302 Extremely Hazardous Substances (42 USC 1100 et seq.); Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) Hazardous Substances (42 USC 9601 et seq.); or section 311 of the Clean Water Act, as

amended (CWA) (33 USC 1251 et seq.; oil and hazardous substances) hereby incorporated by reference including any subsequent amendments and editions.

HAZARDOUS OR TOXIC SUBSTANCE. Any solid waste as defined in G.S. 130A-290, or any substance regulated under the Federal Toxic Substance Control Act of 1976, (PL 94.476), as amended from time to time, which because of its quantity, concentration, or physical chemical or infectious characteristic(s) may: 1) cause or significantly contribute to an increase in serious irreversible or incapacitating illness, or; 2) pose a substantial present or potential threat to the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or otherwise managed.

HAZARDOUS WASTE GENERATOR. Any person whose act or process produces hazardous waste or toxic substance identified or listed in Part 261 of the North Carolina Hazardous Waste Management Rules or whose act first causes a hazardous waste or toxic substance to become subject to regulation provided that, "generator" does not include a facility which accepts hazardous waste or toxic substances for the purpose of treatment, storage, or disposal, and in that process, creates a different hazardous waste or toxic substance.

HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY. As defined in G.S.130A-290, a facility for the collection, storage, processing, treatment, recycling, recovery, or disposal of hazardous waste.

HAZARDOUS WASTE TREATMENT FACILITY. A facility established and operated for the recovery, recycling, treatment, storage during collection and prior to treatment, short-term storage after treatment, collection, processing, volume reduction, source separation, or transportation used exclusively in connection with the facility, of hazardous waste; and which includes several of the following equipment or processes: incinerators, rotary kilns, drum handling, washing and crushing facilities, raw waste tank storage, reduction, neutralization, detoxification, wastewater treatment facilities including settling systems, aerobic digester, anaerobic digester, clarifiers, neutralization facilities, solidifying facilities, evaporators, reactions to facilitate recycling, analytical capabilities, and other similar technologies, and processes as may now exist or be developed in the future.

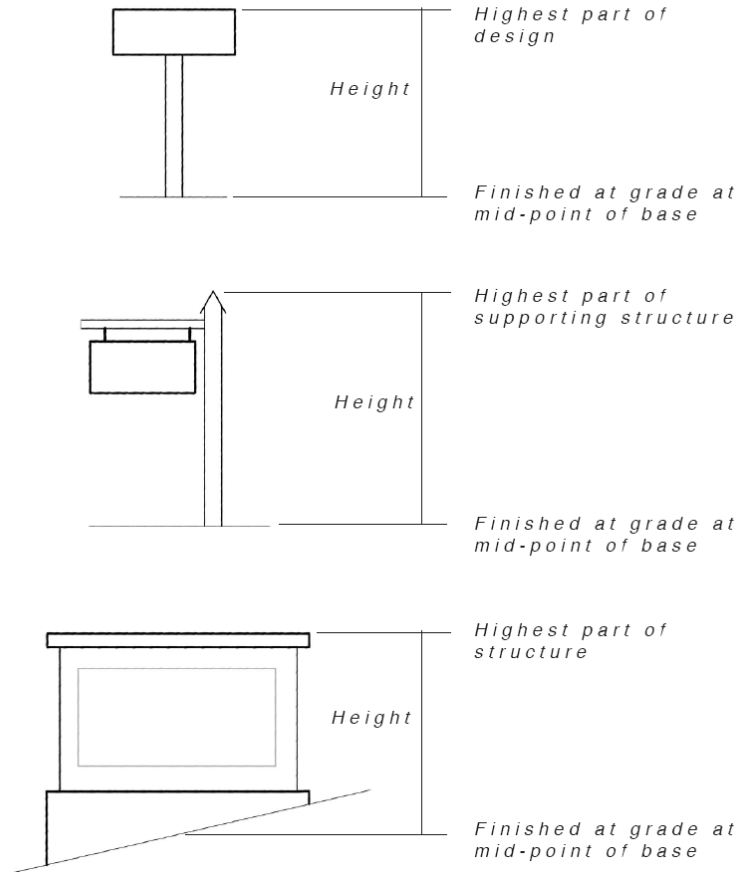
HIGHEST ADJACENT GRADE (HAG). The highest natural elevation of the ground surface, prior to construction, immediately next to the proposed walls of the structure.

HIGHWAY. U.S. and/or N.C designated highway. Also see Streets.

HEIGHT, BUILDING. For buildings with flat roofs, the vertical distance from the mean elevation of the finished grade to the highest finished roof surface. For buildings with pitched roofs, the vertical distance from the mean elevation of the finished grade to a point representing the midpoint of the peak and eave heights. (See definition below for freestanding sign height.)

HEIGHT, FREESTANDING SIGN. The vertical distance between the highest part of the sign or its supporting structure, whichever is higher, and finished grade at the midpoint of the base of the sign.

HEIGHT / SIGN



HEIGHT, OTHER STRUCTURE. The vertical distance from the existing grade to the highest point of the structure above such existing grade.

HOME OCCUPATION. Any *business* use conducted entirely within a dwelling and carried on by the occupants thereof, which use is incidental and secondary to the use of the dwelling for residential purposes and does not change the character of the dwelling or the neighborhood.

ILLCIT CONNECTION. Any unlawful connection which allows the discharge of non-stormwater to the stormwater conveyance system or waters of the state in violation of this ordinance.

ILLICIT DISCHARGE. Any unlawful disposal, placement, emptying, dumping, spillage, leakage, pumping, pouring, emission, or other discharge of any substance other than stormwater into a stormwater conveyance, the water of the state, or upon the land in such proximity to the same, such that the substance is likely to reach a stormwater conveyance or the waters of the state.

IMPACT. The effect of one land use upon another as measured by traffic or noise generation, site activity, hours of operation, site lighting, vibration, smoke or odor emissions, or similar factors.

IMPERVIOUS SURFACE. Improvements including street pavement, driveways, gravel areas, buildings, and other structures which cover the soil surface and prevent infiltration of water into the soil.

IMPERVIOUS SURFACE COVERAGE. That portion of a lot covered by buildings, structures, paving or other impervious surface materials.

IMPROVED DRAINAGE-WAY. Means channeled by impervious surfaces such as curb and gutter or concrete (gunnite, bituminous, etc.) channels.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. Any non-residential development that requires an NPDES permit for an industrial discharge and/or requires the use or storage of any hazardous material for the purpose of manufacturing, assembling, finishing, cleaning or developing any product or commodity.

INDUSTRIAL DISCHARGE. The discharge of industrial process treated wastewater or wastewater other than sewage and including:

- (A.) Wastewater resulting from any process of industry or manufacture, or from the development of any natural resource;
- (B.) Wastewater resulting from processes of trade or business, including wastewater from laundry-mats and car washes, but not wastewater from restaurants;
- (C.) Stormwater contaminated with industrial wastewater; and
- (D.) Wastewater discharged from a municipal wastewater treatment plant requiring a pretreatment program.

INDUSTRY, LIGHT. Research and development activities, the manufacturing, compounding, processing, packaging, storage, *assembly*, and /or treatment of finished or semi-finished products from previously prepared materials, which activities are conducted wholly within an enclosed building. Light industry typically involves land uses operated in such a manner as to control external effects of the manufacturing process, such as smoke, noise, soot, dirt, vibration, odor, etc.

INDUSTRY, HEAVY. A use engaged in the basic processing and manufacturing of materials or products predominately from extracted or raw materials, or a use engaged in storage of or manufacturing processes using flammable or explosive materials, or storage or manufacturing processes that potentially involve hazardous or commonly recognized offensive conditions.

INTEGRATED MULTIPLE USE DEVELOPMENT (IMUD). A development containing three or more stores, service establishments, offices, or other permitted uses planned, organized, and managed to function as a unified whole and featuring all of the following: 1) common driveways, 2) common parking, 3) common signage plan, and 4) common landscaping plan. Examples are shopping centers and office parks having the characteristics listed above. Such integrated developments may include outparcels for lease or for sale. Any such integrated development may be organized as a condominium or in a manner analogous to that of a City-house development (with ownership parcels beneath the building units and with parking and driveways being in common elements owned and maintained by an Owners' Association).

JUNK/SALVAGE YARD. Any land or area used, in whole or in part, for the storage, keeping, or accumulation of material, including scrap metals, waste paper, rags, or other scrap materials, or used building materials, for the dismantling, demolition or abandonment of automobiles or other vehicles or machinery or parts thereof.

JUNKED AUTOMOBILE. See MOTOR VEHICLE, JUNKED

LAND-DISTURBING ACTIVITY. Any use of land in residential, industrial, educational, institutional, or commercial development, highway or road construction or maintenance, that results in a change in natural cover or topography that causes or contributes to sedimentation.

LANDFILL. A facility for the disposal of solid waste on land in a sanitary manner in accordance with Chapter 130A Article 9 of the N.C. General Statutes. For the purpose of these watershed provisions, this term does not include composting facilities.

LANDFILL, DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION DEBRIS (MAJOR). A disposal site other than minor demolition and construction debris landfill as defined in this ordinance for stumps, limbs, leaves, concrete, brick, wood and uncontaminated earth. Disposal of any other types of wastes must be approved by the State Division of Health Services.

LANDFILL, DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION DEBRIS (MINOR). A disposal site for stumps, limbs, leaves, concrete, brick, wood and uncontaminated earth which is less than three acres in size and is in operation for less than one year.

LANDFILL, SANITARY/SOLID WASTE. A site for solid waste disposal from residential, industrial or commercial activities.

LIGHTING, ACCENT. Lighting intended to accentuate an architectural feature such as a window, roofline, or other vertical or horizontal element and consisting of small, non-flashing

white lights.

LIVESTOCK. Animals, poultry or aquatic life bred and/or raised for the purpose of human and/or animal consumption.

LOT. A portion of a subdivision or any other parcel of land intended as a unit for transfer of ownership or for development or both. The word "lot" includes "plot", "parcel," or "tract."

LOT, CORNER. A lot abutting two or more streets at their intersection.

LOT, DEPTH. The distance measured along the perpendicular bisector of the smallest possible rectangle enclosing the lot.

LOT, EASEMENT-ACCESS. An *Existing Lot of Record* recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds with an established residential use not abutting a public street where an access easement of at least fifteen (15) feet in width for the entire length of said easement has also been recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds.

LOT OF RECORD. A lot, plot, parcel or tract recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds in conformance with the ordinance(s) in effect at the time of recordation. (*see "Existing Lot of Record"*)

LOT, REVERSE FRONTAGE. A through lot which is not accessible from one of the parallel or nonintersecting streets upon which it fronts.

LOT, THROUGH. A lot abutting two streets that do not intersect at the corner of the lot.

LOT WIDTH. The mean width measured at right angles to its depth at the building front setback line.

LOWEST ADJACENT GRADE (LAG). The elevation of the ground, sidewalk or patio slab immediately next to the building, or deck support, after completion of the building.

LOWEST FLOOR. Lowest floor of the lowest enclosed area (including basement). An unfinished or flood resistant enclosure, usable solely for parking of vehicles, building access, or limited storage in an area other than a basement area is not considered a building's lowest floor, provided that such an enclosure is not built so as to render the structure in violation of the applicable non-elevation design requirements of this ordinance.

MAINTENANCE (OF A SIGN). Cleaning, painting, repairing, or replacing defective parts in such a manner that does not alter the basic structure of a sign. This definition includes the changing of the copy or listings on a changeable copy, civic event, sandwich board, or directory sign and the replacement of sign copy with other sign copy of the same or smaller size on other permitted signs.

MAJOR WATERSHED VARIANCE. A variance from the minimum statewide watershed protection rules that results in the relaxation by a factor greater than five (5) percent of any buffer, density or built-upon area requirement under the high density option; any variation in the design, maintenance or operation requirements of a wet detention pond or other approved stormwater management system; or relaxation by a factor greater than ten (10) percent of any management requirement under the low density option.

MANUFACTURED HOME. See *DWELLING, MANUFACTURED HOME.*

MANUFACTURED HOME. A structure, transportable in one or more sections, which is built on a permanent chassis and designed to be used with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities. The term “manufactured home” does not include “recreational vehicle.” (This definition applies to flood hazard regulations. See Article 18)

MANUFACTURED HOME PARK OR SUBDIVISION. A parcel (or contiguous parcels) of land divided into two or more manufactured one lots for rent or sale.

MANUFACTURED HOME PARK/COURT. See *DWELLING PARK, MANUFACTURED HOME.*

MANUFACTURED HOME SUBDIVISION. See *SUBDIVISION, MANUFACTURED HOME.*

MANUFACTURED HOUSING AND WOOD BUILDINGS. An industrial process that involves the production and assembling manufactured housing and other wooden buildings utilizing parts that are pre-made and fabricated elsewhere.

MARKET, TAILGATE. The periodic offering for sale of fresh agricultural and/or prepared food products directly to the consumer at an open-air venue, including the term “Food Truck”.

MARKET VALUE. The building value, not including the land value, and that of any accessory structures or other improvements on the lot. Market value may be established by independent certified appraisal; replacement cost depreciated for age of building and quality of construction (Actual Cash Value); or adjusted tax assessed values.

MAXIMUM RUNOFF CONTROL. Means approximately one hundred (100%) percent of Built-Upon Area runoff must pass through permanent wet detention pond(s).

MEAN SEA LEVEL. For purposes of this ordinance, the National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) as correct in 1929, the North American Vertical Datum (NAVD) as correct in 1988, or other vertical control datum used as a reference for establishing varying elevations within the floodplain, to which Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) shown on a FIRM are referenced. Refer to each FIRM panel to determine datum used.

MILLWORK, PLYWOOD, VENEER. An industrial process involving millwork and creation of wooden parts for furniture, housing, and other uses that are assembled elsewhere.

MINING AND/OR EXTRACTION (INCLUDING QUARRY). The long-term removal of soil, gravel, minerals, and/or other resources of a site for offsite manufacturing or industrial purposes. This term does not include grading, site clearance, or temporary stockpiling of soil associated with development of a site.

MINOR WATERSHED VARIANCE. A variance from the minimum statewide watershed protection rules that results in the relaxation by a factor of up to five percent of any buffer, density or built-upon area requirements under the high-density option; or relaxation by a factor of ten (10) percent of any management requirement under the low-density option.

MIXED DEVELOPMENT. A mixture of residential, office, commercial, and/or institutional uses.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT. The combination of complementary land uses in an integrated fashion through the development of a tract of land, building or structure.

MOBILE HOME. See *DWELLING, MANUFACTURED HOME.*

MODERATE RUNOFF CONTROL. Means at least seventy-five (75%) percent of Built-Upon Area runoff must pass through permanent wet detention pond(s).

MODULAR HOUSING. See, *DWELLING, MODULAR.*

MOTOR VEHICLE, JUNKED OR ABANDONED. A motor vehicle that is not currently registered and does not display a current license plate and one or more of the following applies: 1) the vehicle is partially dismantled or wrecked; or 2) the vehicle cannot be self-propelled or moved in the manner in which it originally was intended to move; or 3) the vehicle is more than five years old and appears to be worth less than five hundred dollars (\$500.00).

MULTIFAMILY DWELLING. See *DWELLING, MULTIFAMILY.*

MUNICIPAL SEPARATE STORM SEWER SYSTEM (MS4). A stormwater conveyance or unified stormwater conveyance system (including without limitation: roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, stormwater detention facilities, curbs, gutters, ditches, natural or man-made channels, or storm drains), that:

- (1.) is located within the corporate limits of the City of Lowell, North Carolina.
- (2.) is owned or operated by the State, county, the City, or other public body; and
- (3.) discharges to waters of the state, excluding publicly owned treatment works, and lawful connections thereto, which in turn discharge into the waters of the State.

MURAL. A hand-painted visual image on the exterior wall of a building that is a one-of-a-kind piece of original artwork, and that does not convey a commercial message. For purposes of this definition, a commercial message shall include any depiction of a trademark, service-mark or

other distinctive mark or image associated with a specific business, product, or service, as well as any form of advertisement or any image or lettering that otherwise specifically identifies or promotes a business or commercial enterprise of any kind by name, product, or service provided, or that in any way relates to the operation of such business or commercial enterprise.

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM. A permitting system established pursuant to 402 of the Clean Water Act.

NECKDOWN. Constructed features designed and placed to narrow the width of traffic lanes in order to slow the speed of traffic on City streets. Curb bulbs and chicanes may be used for this purpose.

NEIGHBORHOOD. An area of the City with characteristics which distinguish it from others including distinct economic bases, housing types, schools, development styles or patterns, or boundaries defined by distinct physical barriers such as railroads, arterial streets, rivers, or major water bodies.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN. The plan officially adopted by the Lowell City Council for a particular neighborhood or district that provides specific design standards and guidelines regulating the development and use of the property.

NEW CONSTRUCTION. Structures for which the “start of construction” commenced on or after the effective date of the original version of the community’s Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance and includes any subsequent improvements to such structures. (This definition applies only with respect to flood hazard regulations.)

NEW DEVELOPMENT. Any land-disturbing activity which adds to or changes the amount of built-upon area. (This definition applies only with respect to watershed protection regulations.)

NONCONFORMING USE. Any current legal use of property not otherwise permitted under current zoning regulations. This may include, without limitation 1) a use legally established under requirements at the time of installation or construction but not now permitted in the zoning district in which it is located or 2) a use conditionally allowed in the zoning districts in which it is located but for which no special use permit has been obtained. See *GRANDFATHERED*.

NONCONFORMITY, DIMENSIONAL. Any current legally constructed improvement on property not otherwise permitted under current zoning regulations, involving a dimensional or numerical development requirement. This definition does not include Signs, Nonconforming, which are defined herein and addressed in Article 17. Dimensional nonconformities may include, without limitation, nonconformities associated with density, landscaping, buffering, lot size, lot width, lot depth, setbacks, height, structure size standards, impervious surface standards, open space, number of parking spaces, or separation requirements between particular uses or zoning districts. See *GRANDFATHERED*.

NONCONFORMITY, LAWFUL. Any current legal lot, structure, or use of property not otherwise permitted under current zoning regulations constructed or established in conformity with the then-applicable development requirements of the City, but subsequently not permitted by action of the City through a zoning map or unified development code text amendment. See *GRANDFATHERED*.

NONENCROACHMENT AREA. The channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one (1) foot as designated in the Flood Insurance Study report.

NONPROCESS DISCHARGE. Industrial effluent not directly resulting from the manufacturing process. An example is noncontact cooling water from a compressor.

NURSING HOME. An establishment which provides full-time convalescent and/or chronic care, including food, shelter, and caregiver or nursing care, for persons who are not related by blood or marriage to the operator or who, by reason of advanced age, chronic illness or infirmity, are unable to care for themselves. This term includes assisted care facility, convalescent home, home for the aging, sanitarium, rest home, or any similar facility.

OCCUPANCY. A separately leased or owned area within a building having ground level frontage on a right-of-way or parking facility.

OFF-PREMISES. Not located on the property to which it pertains.

OFFICE, PROFESSIONAL. The office of a member of a recognized profession maintained for the conduct of that profession, including, but not limited to, the offices of doctors, lawyers, dentists, landscape architects, architects, stockbrokers and financial analysts, chiropractors, engineers, surveyors, or City planners.

OFFICE-WAREHOUSE. A land use that includes offices that support showroom or warehouse uses.

ON-PREMISES. Located on the property to which it pertains.

OPEN SPACE. Any publicly dedicated or privately-owned area of land or water that is permanently preserved and maintained. Such an area may be predominately in a natural condition or modified for uses such as recreation, education, aesthetics, cultural or natural resource management or public health and safety.

PASSIVE RECREATION ELEMENT. Trails, open space, uncovered picnic areas, and similar facilities provided for recreational use.

PERENNIAL AND INTERMITTANT STREAMS. Those streams (and rivers), with associated lakes and ponds as indicated on the following:

- (A.) On the most recent version of the United States Geological Survey 1:24,000 scale (7.5-minute quadrangle) topographical map;
- (B.) On the most recent version of the Soil Survey of Gaston County developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (formerly the USDA Soil Conservation Service);
- (C.) By other site-specific evidence that indicates to the North Carolina Division of Water Quality (DWQ) the presence of such waters not shown on either of these two (2) maps or evidence that no actual stream or water-body exists; or
- (D.) Upon determination following field inspection by a qualified professional.

PLAN, SKETCH. A rough sketch map of a proposed subdivision or site showing streets, lots, and any other information required by the City of sufficient accuracy used for discussion of the street system and the proposed development pattern.

PLANNED COMMUNITY. Real estate with respect to which any person, by virtue of that person's ownership of a lot, is expressly obligated by a declaration to pay real property taxes, insurance premiums, or other expenses to maintain, improve, or benefit other lots or other real estate described in the declaration. For purposes of this act, neither a cooperative nor a condominium is a planned community, but real estate comprising a condominium or cooperative may be part of a planned community. "Ownership of a lot" does not include holding a leasehold interest of less than 20 years in a lot, including renewal options.

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT. An area of land under unified ownership or control to be developed and improved as a single entity under a Unified Development Plan in accordance with and subject to the requirements of this Ordinance.

PLANNING, ZONING AND SUBDIVISION ADMINISTRATOR. The Planning, Zoning & Subdivision Administrator or other staff appointed by the City Council having authority to interpret, administer, and enforce the Lowell Development Ordinance..

PLAT. A surveyed map or plan of a parcel of land which is to be, or has been subdivided.

PLAT, FINAL. The final map of all or a portion of a subdivision or site plan, showing the boundaries and location of lots, streets, easements and other improvements required by the City, which is presented for approval by the City and subsequent recorded in the Gaston County Register of Deeds Office.

PLAT, PRELIMINARY. A map indicating the proposed layout of the subdivision or site showing lots, streets, water, sewer, storm drainage and any other improvements required by of the City, which is presented for preliminary approval.

POLLUTION. Man-made or man induced *alteration* of the chemical, physical, biological, thermal, and/or radiological integrity of water.

PORTABLE STORAGE UNIT (POD). A transportable unit designed and used for the temporary storage of household goods, personal items and other materials which is placed on a site for the use of occupants of a dwelling or building on a limited basis. Such containers are uniquely designed for their ease of loading to and from a transport vehicle.

POST-FIRM. Construction or other development for which the “start of construction” occurred on or after the effective date of the initial Flood Insurance Rate Map for the area.

POWELL BILL MAP. A map showing the length, width and surface improvement type (pavement, dirt, gravel, etc.) of municipal streets submitted annually by North Carolina municipalities to NCDOT for purposes of determining each municipality’s share of N.C. gasoline taxes for street maintenance purposes.

PRE-FIRM. Construction or other development for which the “start of construction” occurred before the effective date of the initial Flood Insurance Rate map for the area.

PRINCIPALLY ABOVE GROUND. That at least 51% of the actual cash value of the structure is above ground.

PRINCIPAL STRUCTURE. A structure (or structures) in which the principal use of the lot or property is conducted.

PRINCIPAL USE. The primary use of any lot or property.

PROFESSIONAL OFFICE. See *OFFICE, PROFESSIONAL.*

PROTECTED DRAINAGEWAY (CHANNEL). Where drainage is channeled by pervious devices such as sod waterways, berms, channels or swales which have been constructed to resist soil erosion by either vegetating, netting, rip-rapping, or a combination of those, and which allows infiltration of water into the soil.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE. Open space that is accessible to the general public and maintained by the City.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND/OR NUISANCE. Anything which is injurious to the safety or health of an entire community or neighborhood, or any considerable number of persons, or unlawfully obstructs the free passage or use, in the customary manner, of any navigable lake, or river, bay, stream, canal, or basin. (This definition applies only to flood hazard regulations.)

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE. A vehicle which is built on a single chassis, 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection, designed to be self-propelled or permanently towable by a light duty vehicle, and designed primarily for use not as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel or seasonal use.

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARK. Any site or tract of land, of contiguous ownership, upon which 15 or more recreational vehicles or tent spaces are provided for occupancy according to the requirements set forth in this ordinance.

REFERENCE LEVEL. The top of the lowest floor for structures within Special Flood Hazard Areas designated as Zone AO, AE, or A.

REGULATORY FLOOD PROTECTION ELEVATION. The “Base Flood Elevation” plus the “Freeboard”. In “Special Flood Hazard Areas” where Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) have been determined, this elevation shall be the BFE plus two (2) feet of freeboard. In “Special Flood Hazard Areas” where no BFE has been established, this elevation shall be at least two (2) feet above the highest adjacent grade.

REGULATING PLAN. A master development plan for a site, parcel, or property, meeting the standards of the City of Lowell and identifying building, parking, and landscape locations, open spaces, trails, other amenities, and other features as required by the City. Upon its approval by the Lowell City Council, the plan becomes the guide for the development of the property and all development activity on the property must comply with the plan.

REMEDY A VIOLATION. To bring the structure or other development into compliance with State and community floodplains management regulations, or, if this is not possible, to reduce the impacts of its noncompliance. Ways that impacts may be reduced include protecting the structure of other affected development from flood damages, implementing the enforcement provisions of the ordinance or otherwise deterring future similar violations, or reducing Federal financial exposure with regard to the structure or other development. (This definition applies only with respect to flood hazard regulations.)

RENOVATION. The repairing or remodeling of a structure in which the exterior walls, foundation and roof are maintained structurally intact.

REQUIRED DRAINAGE CHANNEL. The theoretical stream bed section which is required to carry and discharge the runoff from a 100-year storm.

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTION USES. Uses such as medical, optical and scientific research facilities, software production and development, clinics and laboratories, pharmaceutical compounding and photographic processing facilities, and facilities for the *assembly* of electronic components, optical equipment, and precision instruments.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT. Buildings for use as residences such as attached and detached single-family dwellings, apartment complexes, condominiums, City-houses, cottages, etc. and their associated outbuildings such as garages, storage buildings, gazebos, etc. and customary home occupations.

RETENTION POND. A stormwater holding area, either natural or manmade, which has a permanent pool and does not release stormwater to nearby or adjoining water bodies. Also means a pond that has a permanent pool and also collects stormwater runoff, filters the water, and releases it slowly over a period of days. Also see Best Management Practices definition.

RIVERINE. Relating to, formed by, or resembling a river (including tributaries), stream, brook, etc.

ROOF LINE. Either the top edge of the roof or the top of the parapet, whichever forms the top line of the building silhouette.

RUNOFF CONTROL IN EXCESS OF MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF EROSION CONTROL ORDINANCE. Means at least fifty (50%) percent of Built-Up Area runoff must pass through permanent wet detention pond(s).

RUNOFF DETENTION EQUAL TO MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS. Velocity control of runoff.

RURAL MARKET. Place of business serving primarily rural areas and trading in primarily rural products, produce, crafts, and commodities. Does not include convenience stores, gasoline and/or fuel sales.

SALVAGE YARD. Any non-residential property used for the storage, collection, and/or recycling of any type of equipment, and including but not limited to vehicles, appliances and related machinery.

SALVAGE YARD, AUTO PARTS. Any establishment listed in the Standard Industrial Classification manual under Industry Number 5015. Also, any land or area used, in whole or part, for the storage, keeping, accumulation, dismantling, demolition, or abandonment of inoperable vehicles or parts thereof.

SALVAGE YARD, SCRAP PROCESSING. Any establishment listed in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual under Industry Number 5093. Also, any land or area used, in whole or part, for the storage, keeping, accumulation of scrap or waste materials, including scrap metals, waste paper, rags, building materials, machinery, or other scrap materials.

SCENIC CORRIDOR. An area providing scenic vistas visible from a highway or roadway that is designated by the City of Lowell as having special importance to the character of the City and meriting special protection and preservation measures.

SEARCHLIGHT. A device that emits an upwardly-directed beam of light to attract commercial

attention.

SEDIMENT. Solid particulate matter, both mineral and organic, that has been or is being transported by water, air, gravity, or ice from its site of origin.

SEDIMENTATION. The process by which sediment resulting from accelerated erosion has been or is being transported off the site of the land-disturbing activity or into a lake or natural watercourse.

SETBACK. The minimum required horizontal distance between a structure and the lesser of either the lot line or the line that marks the beginning of street right-of-way maintenance by the City of Lowell or the North Carolina Department of Transportation, as determined by the City of Lowell.

SETBACK, REAR. A setback from an interior property line lying on opposite side of the lot from the front street setback.

SETBACK, SIDE. Any interior property line setback other than a rear setback.

SETBACK, STREET. Any setback from a street, road or lane right-of-way line.

SETBACK, ZERO SIDE. An alternate form of dimensional requirements that allows a dwelling unit to have one side setback of zero feet from a side property line. This definition does not include City-houses.

SHOPPING CENTER. A group of retail and other commercial establishments that are planned, developed, owned and managed as a single property. On-site parking is provided. The center's size and orientation are generally determined by the market characteristics of the trade area served by the center.

SHEAR WALL. Walls used for structural support but not structurally joined or enclosed at the end (except by breakaway walls). Shear walls are parallel or nearly parallel to the flow of the water.

SIGN. A communications medium, method, device, structure, or fixture that incorporates motion, lighting, graphics, symbols, or written copy intended to promote the sale of a product, commodity, or service, or to provide direction to or identification of a neighborhood, premises, event or facility.

SIGN ALTERATION. Any change to the size, shape, illumination, position, location, or construction of a sign or the supporting structure of a sign. Maintenance or change of copy which does not entail replacement of the sign face is not included in this definition.

SIGN AREA. The size of a sign in square feet as computed by the area of not more than two standard geometric shapes (specifically circles, squares, rectangles, or triangles) that encompass the shape of the sign exclusive of the supporting structure.



Example Illustrating Measurement of the Area of an Irregularly Shaped Sign

SIGN COPY. Any graphic design, letter, numeral, symbol, figure, device or other media used separately or in combination that is intended to advertise, identify or notify, including the panel or background on which such media is placed.

SIGN FACE. The side or sides of a sign on which a message is placed.

SIGN ILLUMINATION, TYPES OF.

- (A.) **AMBIENT.** Illumination of a sign by light from the sign's general surroundings, such as daylight or nearby street lights.
- (B.) **EXTERNAL.** Illumination of a sign by a source of light located exterior to the sign, such as a floodlight.
- (C.) **INTERNAL.** Illumination of a sign by a source of light contained within the sign itself

SIGN, NONCONFORMING. A sign legally consistent with the standards in place at the time of installation but which now does not meet one or more current standards.

SIGN TYPES.

- (A.) **SIGN, AWNING.** A sign incorporated into or attached to an *awning*.
- (B.) **SIGN, BLADE (OR PROJECTING).** A sign attached to and projecting from the building façade, typically at right angles to the building.
- (C.) **SIGN, CANOPY.** A sign incorporated into or attached to a canopy.
- (D.) **SIGN, CHANGEABLE COPY.** A sign or portion thereof designed to accommodate frequent copy changes through manual, mechanical or digital means.

- (E.) *SIGN, DIRECTIONAL*. An on-premises sign whose message is exclusively limited to guiding the circulation of motorists or pedestrians entering, exiting, or on a site, including signs marking entrances and exits, parking areas, loading zones, or circulation patterns.
- (F.) *SIGN, DIRECTORY*. A sign listing the names, uses, or locations of the discrete uses or activities conducted within a building or group of buildings that is intended to provide on-site directions.
- (G.) *SIGN, EXEMPT*. A sign identified in Article 17, section 6 that is exempt from the requirements of this ordinance, either conditionally or unconditionally.
- (H.) *SIGN, FLAT (OR WALL)*. A sign attached directly to and generally parallel with the façade of a building.
- (I.) *SIGN, GOVERNMENT*. A sign installed by an active domestic unit of government, or by a contracted installer on behalf of the unit of government.
- (J.) *SIGN, INCIDENTAL*. A sign, generally informational, whose purpose is secondary to the use of the premises on which it is located, such as the date of building erection, the building address, the hours of operation, the open or closed status of the operation, the credit cards honored, and similar incidental information, and containing no commercial message.
- (K.) *SIGN, MACHINE*. A sign attached to a machine such as a gasoline pump, a drive-through menu kiosk, a soft drink dispensing machine, or an ATM.
- (L.) *SIGN, MONUMENT (OR GROUND)*. A freestanding sign supported by a structure that is at least as wide as the sign to which it is attached.
- (M.) *SIGN, OUTDOOR ADVERTISING (OR BILLBOARD)*. A type of off-premises sign that contains a commercial message.
- (N.) *SIGN, PERMANENT*. A sign intended, designed and/or constructed for permanent display and permitted as such.
- (E.) *SIGN, POLE*. A freestanding sign supported by a structure consisting of not more than two poles.
- (O.) *SIGN, SANDWICH BOARD (OR A-FRAME)*. A temporary freestanding sign designed and displayed to provide information to pedestrians.
- (P.) *SIGN, SNIPE*. A temporary sign not otherwise defined in this Article that is tacked, nailed posted, glazed, or otherwise affixed to a light fixture, utility pole, public building, fence, railing, public telephone pole, traffic control device, or tree.

- (Q.) *SIGN, TEMPORARY.* A sign not intended, designed and/or constructed for permanent display and permitted as such.
- (R.) *SIGN, TIME AND TEMPERATURE.* A sign that displays time and temperature information as its only message.
- (S.) *SIGN, V-TYPE.* An attached sign consisting of two separate faces arranged in a “V” pattern and having an angle of 120 degrees or less as measured from the side attached to the building.
- (T.) *SIGN, WINDOW.* A sign attached to a display window or door window that is intended to be viewed from the exterior. This definition shall include signs attached to the interior of a display window or door window.

SILTATION. Sediment resulting from accelerated erosion which is separable or removable by properly designed, constructed, and maintained control measures; and which has been transported from its point of origin within the site of a land-disturbing activity, and which has been deposited, or is in suspension in water.

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL. Any development where: 1) no building contains more than one dwelling unit, 2) every dwelling unit is on a separate lot, and 3) where no lot contains more than one dwelling unit, except for the permitted accessory dwelling unit.

SITE PLAN. A plan, drawn to scale, showing uses and structures proposed for *a tract or buildable or zoning lot* as required by the regulations, such as lot lines, streets, building sites, reserved open space, buildings, major landscape features both natural and manmade and the locations of proposed utility lines.

SITE SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN. A plan that has been submitted to the City by a landowner describing with reasonable certainty the type and intensity of use for a specific parcel or parcels of property and which establishes vested rights for a specific period of time, per North Carolina General Statutes. Such plan may be in the form of, but not limited to, any of the following plans or approvals: A subdivision plat, a preliminary or general development plan, a special use permit, a conditional district zoning plan, or any other land-use approval designation as may be utilized by the City. Such a plan shall include the approximate boundaries of the site; significant topographical and other natural features affecting development of the site; the approximate location on the site of the proposed buildings, structures and other improvements; the approximate dimensions, including height, of the proposed building and other structures; the approximate location of all existing and proposed infrastructure on the site, including water, sewer, roads, and pedestrian walkways; and any other information required by the City for the type of plan or approval requested by the landowner. A variance shall not constitute a site-specific development plan. Neither a sketch plan nor any other document which fails to describe with reasonable certainty the type and intensity of use for a specific parcel or parcels of property

may constitute a site-specific development plan.

SLUDGE. Any solid or semisolid waste generated from a wastewater treatment plant, water treatment plant, or air pollution control facility permitted under authority of the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITY. Any facility involved in the disposal of solid waste as defined in G.S. 130A-290(a)(35).

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL SITE. As defined in G.S. 130A-290(a)(36), any place at which solid wastes are disposed of by incineration, sanitary landfill, or any other method.

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA (SFHA). The land in the floodplain subject to a one (1%) or greater chance of being flooded in any given year, as determined in Section 18.3(B) of this ordinance.

STABILIZING VEGETATION. Any vegetation that prevents accelerated soil erosion. Also means any vegetation that protects the soil against erosion.

STABILIZING VEGETATION. Any vegetation that prevents accelerated soil erosion. Also means any vegetation that protects the soil against erosion.

START OF CONSTRUCTION. Includes substantial improvement, and means the date of the building permit was issued, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition placement, or other improvement was within 180 days of the permit date. The actual start means either the first placement of permanent construction of a structure on a site, such as the pouring of slab or footings, the installation of piles, the construction of columns, or any work beyond the stage of excavation; or the placement of a manufactured home on a foundation. Permanent construction does not include land preparation, such as clearing, grading, and filling; nor does it include the installation of streets and/or walkways; nor does it include excavation for a basement, footings, piers, or foundations or the erection of temporary forms; nor does it include the installation on the property *accessory buildings*, such as garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or not part of the main structure. For a substantial improvement, the actual start of construction means the first *alteration* of any wall, ceiling, floor, or other structural part of the building, whether or not that *alteration* affects the external dimensions of the building. (This definition applies only with respect to flood hazard regulations.)

STORM, 100-YEAR. The surface runoff resulting from a rainfall of an intensity expected to be equaled or exceeded, on the average, once in 100 years and of a duration which will produce the maximum peak rate of runoff for the watershed of interest under average antecedent wetness conditions.

STORM, 10-YEAR. The surface runoff resulting from a rainfall of an intensity expected to be equaled or exceeded, on the average, once in 10 years and of a duration which will produce the

maximum peak rate of runoff for the watershed of interest under average antecedent wetness conditions.

STORM DRAINAGE FACILITIES. The system of inlets, conduits, channels, ditches, and appurtenances which serve to collect and convey stormwater through and from a given drainage area.

STORMWATER RUNOFF. The direct runoff of water resulting from precipitation in any form.

STREAM. A watercourse that collects surface runoff.

STREAM BUFFER. A natural, or vegetated, area through which stormwater runoff flows in a diffuse manner so that the runoff does not become channelized and which provides for infiltration of the runoff and filtering of pollutants. The buffer width is measured landward from the normal pool elevation of impoundments and from the bank of each side of streams or rivers.

STREET, LOCAL. A street whose primary function is to provide access to abutting properties.

STREET, MAJOR THOROUGHFARE. Major thoroughfares consist of interstate, other freeway, expressway, or parkway links, and major streets that provide for the expeditious movement of high volumes of traffic within and through urban areas. Such roadways are designated on transportation plans adopted by the City of Lowell.

STREET, MINOR THOROUGHFARE. Minor thoroughfares collect traffic from collector, sub-collector, and local streets and carry it to the major thoroughfare system. Minor thoroughfares may be used to supplement the major thoroughfare system by facilitating movement of moderate volumes of traffic within and through urban areas and may also serve abutting property. Such roadways are designated on transportation plans adopted by the City of Lowell.

STREET, PRIVATE. A vehicular travel-way not dedicated or offered for dedication as a public street but resembling a cul-de-sac or a local street by carrying traffic from a series of driveways to the public street system.

STREET, PUBLIC. A dedicated public right-of-way for vehicular traffic which: (1) has been accepted by NCDOT for maintenance, or (2) is not yet accepted, but in which the roadway design and construction have been approved under public standards for vehicular traffic. *Alleys* are specifically excluded from this definition.

STREET, RIGHT-OF-WAY. A strip of land occupied or intended to be occupied by a travel-way for vehicles and also available, with the consent of the appropriate governmental agency, for installation and maintenance of sidewalks, traffic control devices, traffic signs, street name signs, historical marker signs, water lines, sanitary sewer lines, storm sewer lines, gas lines, power lines, communication lines, and other infrastructure as approved by the City.

STREET, SUBCOLLECTOR. A street whose principal function is to provide access to abutting properties, but which is also designed to be used or is used to connect local streets with collector or higher classification streets.

STORMWATER. Any flow resulting from, and occurring during or following, any form of natural precipitation.

STORMWATER CONVEYANCE OR STORMWATER CONVEYANCE SYSTEM. Any feature, natural or man-made, that collects and transports stormwater, including but not limited to roads with drainage systems, streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made or natural channels, pipes, culverts, and storm drains and any other natural or man-made feature or structure designed or used for collecting or conveying stormwater.

STRUCTURE. A walled and roofed building, a manufactured home, or a gas, liquid, or liquefied gas storage tank that is principally above ground. (This definition applies only with respect to flood hazard regulations.)

SUBDIVISION. All divisions of a tract or parcel of land into two or more lots, building sites, or other divisions when any one or more of those divisions is created for the purpose of sale or building development, whether immediate or future, and shall include all divisions of land involving the dedication of a new street or change in existing streets; except as exempted by G.S. 160D-802(a) listed in Article 16 of this Ordinance.

SUBDIVISION, ADMINISTRATIVE. A category of subdivision established under North Carolina State Statutes requiring expedited administrative approval.

SUBDIVISION ADMINISTRATOR. See *DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR.*

SUBDIVISION, MAJOR. Any non-residential subdivision; or a residential subdivision establishing more than three new lots, or requiring new public street(s) for access to interior property, or requiring extension of public sewerage and/or water line, or requiring a waiver or variance from any requirement of this Ordinance.

SUBDIVISION, MANUFACTURED HOME. A residential subdivision with manufactured homes on individual lots.

SUBDIVISION, MINOR. A residential subdivision involving three or fewer lots fronting on an existing approved public street(s), not requiring any new public or private street(s) for access to interior property, not requiring extension of public sewage or water line and not requiring a waiver, modification, or variance from any requirement of this Ordinance provided all of the following criteria are met:

(1) The tract or parcel to be divided is not exempted under sub-section 16.1-2(A)(2) of Article 16 of this Ordinance.

- (2) No part of the tract or parcel to be divided has been divided under this definition in the 10 years prior to division.
- (3) The entire area of the tract or parcel to be divided is greater than 5 acres.
- (4) After division, no more than three lots result from the division.
- (5) After division, all resultant lots comply with all of the following:
 - a. All lot dimension size requirements of the applicable land-use regulations, if any.
 - b. The use of the lots is in conformity with the applicable zoning requirements, if any.
 - c. A permanent means of ingress and egress is recorded for each lot.

SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE. Damage of any origin sustained by a structure during any one-year period whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before damaged condition would equal or exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred. See definition of “substantial improvement”. Substantial damage also means flood-related damage sustained by a structure on two separate occasions during a 10-year period for which the cost of repairs at the time of each such flood event, on the average, equals or exceeds 25 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred. (This definition applies only with respect to flood hazard regulations.)

SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT. Any combination of repairs, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvement of a structure, taking place during any one-year period for which the cost equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the “start of construction” of the improvement. This term includes structures which have incurred “substantial damage”, regardless of the actual repair work performed. The term does not, however, include either:

(A.) Any correction of existing violations of State or community health, sanitary, or safety code specifications which have been identified by the community code enforcement officials and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions; or,

(B.) Any *alteration* of a historic structure, provided that the *alteration* will not preclude the structure’s continued designation as a historic structure.

SUBSTANTIALLY SIMILAR. The same or significantly the same as a prior plan or application as determined by the associated land area, the intensity of development proposed, the range of proposed uses, the type, variety and scale of signage, and other relevant factors.

SUBURBAN OPEN SPACE AMENITIES. Land available for and containing active and passive recreational elements, including parks, trails, clubhouses, playgrounds, *athletic fields* and courts, picnic facilities, benches, community gardens, and pools. It can include natural areas including floodplains, water bodies, wetlands, woodlands, land used for stormwater retention, and slopes over 15%.

SURFACE WATER BUFFER. A natural, vegetated, or re-vegetated area through which stormwater runoff flows in a diffuse manner so that the runoff does not become channelized and which provides for infiltration of the runoff and filtering of pollutants. The buffer width is measured landward from the normal pool elevation of impoundments and from the bank of each side of streams or rivers. (This definition applies only with respect to Watershed Protection regulations.)

TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWER. A tower, pole, or similar structure that supports a telecommunications antenna operated for commercial purposes above ground in a fixed location, freestanding, guyed, or on a building or other structure.

THOROUGHFARE PLAN. A plan adopted the City of Lowell and other governments in the regions for the planning and development of major transportation improvements in the region in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

TOURIST HOME. A private residence in which accommodations are provided for lodging and may include meals for overnight guests for a fee. This term includes “Bed & Breakfast” and “Air Bed & Breakfast” a.k.a. “Air B&B”.

TOWNHOUSE. See *DWELLING, ATTACHED HOUSE (TOWNHOUSE).*

TOWNHOUSE LOT. A parcel of land intended as a unit for transfer of ownership and lying underneath, or underneath and around, a City-house, patio home, or unit in nonresidential group development.

TOXIC SUBSTANCE. Any substance or combination of substances (including disease causing agents), which after discharge and upon exposure, ingestion, inhalation, or assimilation into any organism, either directly from the environment or indirectly by ingestion through food chains, has the potential to cause death, disease, behavioral abnormalities, cancer, genetic mutations, physiological malfunctions (including malfunctions or suppression in reproduction or growth) or physical deformities in such organisms or their off spring or other adverse health effects.

TRACT. All contiguous land and bodies of water in one ownership, or contiguous land and bodies of water in diverse ownership being developed as a unit, although not necessarily all at one time. See *BUILDABLE OR ZONING LOT.*

TREE, CANOPY. A tree which normally grows to a mature height of 40 feet or more with a minimum mature crown of 30 feet.

TREE, RARE. A rare tree is:

- a. Any healthy living pine tree that has a trunk diameter of thirty-six (36) inches or more, or any other species that:
- b. Has a trunk diameter at breast height (DBH) of twenty-four (24) inches or more; or

- c. Has a trunk DBH of twelve (12) inches or more in the case of North Carolina native species from the list of genera in this section; or
- d. Is listed as a State or National Champion by the North Carolina Forest Service or the American Forestry Association; or
- e. Provides unique habitat for any endangered or threatened wildlife species protected by federal law; or
- f. Has been cited by the City council as being historically significant; or
- g. Represents an uncommon species, such as Long Leaf Pine, Live Oak, or Sequoia Redwood, that the City Planning, Zoning & Subdivision Administrator considers to be desirable and not to pose a threat to the local ecological balance.

TREE, SPECIMEN. A specimen tree is:

- a. Any healthy living pine tree that has a trunk diameter of eighteen (18) inches or more, or any other species that:
- b. Has a trunk diameter at breast height (DBH) of twelve (12) inches or more; or
- c. A trunk DBH of six (6) inches or more in the case of the North Carolina native species from a following list of genera:

North Carolina Native Genera: Aesculus (Buckeye), Amelanchier (Serviceberry), Asimina (Pawpaw), Carpinus (Hornbeam), Cercis (Redbud), Chionanthus (Fringetree), Cornus (Dogwood), Crataegus (Hawthorn), Diospyros (Persimmon), Fagus (Beech), Halesia (Silverbell), Hamamelis (Witch-hazel), Ilex (Holly), Juniperus (Cedar), Ostrya (Hophornbeam), Oxydendrum (Sourwood), Sassafras (Sassafras), Tsuga (Hemlock)

TREE, UNDERSTORY. A tree which normally grows to a mature height of 15 to 35 feet in height.

TYPICAL REQUIRED DRAINAGE CHANNEL SECTION. A cross-sectional view of a required drainage channel.

UNDISTURBED AREA. That portion of a lot, tract, or subdivision which has not and will not be occupied and which has not and will not be graded to change land contours or to destroy existing vegetation. Only areas that are wooded or reforested are considered undisturbed for the purposes of watershed protection score sheet evaluation. (This definition applies only with respect to watershed protection regulations.)

URBAN OPEN SPACE AMENITIES. Facilities for active and passive recreational use located in urban areas that include sidewalks widened beyond what is required by code, plazas, street furniture, outdoor eating or gathering areas, fountains, rooftop gardens, areas featuring public art, or other urban-related amenities.

USE, LISTED. A use identified in the Table of Uses in this ordinance and shown as allowed within one or more of the zoning districts provided the basic standards and requirements of the zoning district and the required provisions of this Ordinance are met.

USE, LISTED WITH ADDITIONAL STANDARDS. A listed use requiring additional standards be met to ensure that the use fits the intent of the zoning districts within which it is permitted and that the use is compatible with other development permitted within the zoning district.

USE, SPECIAL. A use which is generally compatible with other land uses allowed in a zoning district but which, because of its unique characteristics or potential impacts on the surrounding neighborhood and the City of Lowell, requires individual consideration of its location, design, configuration, and/or operation at the particular location proposed.

VARIANCE. Official permission from the *Board of Adjustment* to depart from the dimensional requirements of this ordinance.

VEGETATIVE BUFFER. An area meeting regulatory buffer requirements consisting entirely of plant materials that form a screen.

VELOCITY. The average velocity of flow through the cross section of the main channel at the peak flow of the storm of interest. The cross section of the main channel shall be that area defined by the geometry of the channel plus the area of flow below the flood height defined by vertical lines at the main channel banks. Overland flows are not to be included for the purpose of computing velocity of flow.

VESTED RIGHT. A right pursuant to G.S. 160D-108 to undertake and complete the development and use of property under the terms and conditions of an approved site development plan.

VIOLATION. The failure of a structure or other development to be fully compliant with the community's floodplain management regulations. A structure or other development without the elevation certificate, other certificates, or other evidence of compliance required in Article 18 is presumed to be in violation until such time as that documentation is provided. (This definition applies only with respect to flood hazard regulations.)

WATER DEPENDENT STRUCTURES. Structures for which the use requires access or proximity to or citing within surface waters to fulfill its basic purpose, such as boat ramps, boat houses, docks, and bulkheads. Ancillary facilities such as restaurants, outlets for boat supplies, parking lots, and commercial boat storage areas are not water dependent structures.

WATER QUALITY CONSERVATION EASEMENT. See Easements.

WATER SURFACE ELEVATION (WSE). The height, in relation to mean sea level, of floods of various magnitudes and frequencies in the floodplains of coastal or riverine areas.

WATERCOURSE. A lake, river, creek, stream, wash, channel or other topographic feature on or over which waters flow at least periodically. Watercourse includes specifically designated areas in which substantial flood damage may occur.

WATERS OF THE STATE. Surface waters within or flowing through the boundaries of the state including the following: any intermittent or perennial stream, river, creek, brook, swamp, lake, sound, tidal estuary, bay, reservoir, wetland, or any other surface water or any portion thereof that is mapped as solid or dashed blue lines on United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey 7.5-minute series topographic maps. Treatment systems, consisting of man-made bodies of water, which were not originally created in waters of the state, which are not the result of impoundment of waters of the state, are not waters of the state.

WATERSHED AREA. That portion of the watershed within the basin of the water supply as delineated in Article 19 (Watershed Standards).

WET DETENTION POND. A natural or man-made water body that provides for the storage and gradual release of stormwater runoff by means of a permanent pool of water having an outfall to another water body, and which has a permanent pool that utilizes both settling and biological process to remove both particulate and soluble particulates. See Best Management Practices definition.

WET RETENTION POND. A natural or man-made water body that provides for the storage of stormwater runoff by means of a permanent pool of water. See Best Management Practices definition.

WETLANDS. Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support under normal circumstances a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

WHOLESALE TRADE. An establishment primarily engaged in selling durable and nondurable goods to retailers; to industrial, commercial, institutional, farm, construction contractors, or professional business uses; or to other wholesalers. Merchandise may be stored inside enclosed buildings or outside. On-site activities include physically assembling, sorting, and grading goods in large lots and breaking bulk for redistribution in smaller lots.

WIRELESS FACILITY. See G.S. 160D-931(22)

YARD SALE (OR GARAGE SALE). The sale of items outdoors, or from a vehicle, or from a garage or other *accessory building*, belonging to one or more sponsors of the sale.

ZONING DISTRICT. An area defined by this Ordinance and delineated on the Official Zoning Maps in which the requirements for the use of land and building and development standards are prescribed.

ZONING PERMIT (OR ZONING COMPLIANCE PERMIT). A written document approved by the administrator of this Ordinance, or their authorized designee, indicating compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance and entitling the applicant to proceed with subsequent activities authorized by said permit provided all requisite approvals have also be secured in accordance with this Ordinance and/or all other applicable requirements.

ZONING VESTED RIGHT. See *VESTED RIGHT*.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABC - Alcoholic Beverage Commission

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

AG – Agriculture District.

ANSI – American National Standards Institute.

ATM – Automatic Teller Machine.

BFE – Base Flood Elevation.

BMP – Best Management Practices.

BOCA – Building Officials and Code Administrators.

C-74 – US Highway 74 Commercial District.

C-85 – Interstate Highway 85 Commercial District.

CERCLA- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

CIV – Civic District.

CLG – Certified Local Government.

CO – Certificate of Occupancy.

CRZ – Critical Root Zone.

CWA – Clean Water Act.

DBH - Diameter at Breast Height.

DFIRM – Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map.

DWQ – Division of Water Quality.

EA – Environmental Assessment.

EIS – Environmental Impact Statement.

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency.

EPCRA – Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-know Act.

ETJ – Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

FAA – Federal Aviation Authority.

FBFM – Flood Boundary and Floodway Map.

FCC – Federal Communication Commission.

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency.

FHBM – Flood Hazard Boundary Map.

FIRM – Flood Insurance Rate Map.

G.S. – General Statutes.

HIO – Heavy Industry Overlay District.

HUD – Housing and Urban Development.

HVAC – Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning.

IND – Industrial District.

ISA – International Society of Arboriculture.

LCID – Land Clearing Inert Debris.

LDO – Lowell Development Ordinance.

LEPC – Local Emergency Planning Committee.

LOMA – Letter of Map Amendment.

LOMC – Letter of Map Change.

MAX – Maximum.

MHP – Manufactured Home Park District.

MIN – Minimum.

MLS – Multiple Listing Service.

MPH – Miles Per Hour.

MS – Main Street District.

MSDS – Material Safety Data Sheets.

MU – Mixed Use District.

NAVD – North American Vertical Datum.

NCAC – North Carolina Administrative Code.

NCDEQ – North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality.

NCDOT – North Carolina Department of Transportation

NCGS – North Carolina General Statutes.

OPA - An Otherwise Protected Area.

OSHA – Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

PEV – Plug-in Electric Vehicles.

PIN – Property Identification Number.

PZ&SA – Planning, Zoning & Subdivision Administrator.

POD – Portable Storage Unit.

RMST – Residential Main Street Transition District.

ROW – Right of Way.

RV – Recreational Vehicle.

SARA – Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act.

SCO – Scenic Corridor Overlay District.

SERC – Smithsonian Environmental Research Center.

SFHA – Special Flood Hazard Area.

SFR – Single Family Residential District.

TCA – Tree Conservation Area.

TNDO – Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay District.

TRI – Toxic Release Inventory.

USDA – US Department of Agriculture.

VSR – Vehicle Service and Repair District.

VUA – Vehicular Use Area.

WSE – Water Surface Elevation.

SYMBOLS

(Symbols Used in the Text)

Ac. - Acre

a.k.a. - Also Known As

@ - At

= - Equals

‘ - Foot

Ft. - Foot

“- Inch

If or LF – Linear feet

% - Percent

r/w – Right-of-Way

Sq. - Square

w/ - with