



## Town Planning Acronyms and Definitions

### Terms:

#### A:

**ADA** – Americans with Disabilities Act – The civil rights law by which standards for inclusivity and access for disabled persons was set forth. This applies to employment, access to restroom and establishments, municipal planning practices and the like. Common ADA compliant applications include parking, wheel chair access, etc.

**ADT** – Average Daily Traffic/Trips – The number of trips made per vehicle in a 24 hour period.

**AICP** – American Institute of Certified Planners – A professional organization and institute of the APA which provides training, education, professional development in the field and up to date information about planning standards and trends. Through this one becomes a certified planner.

**APA** – American Planning Association – A national, professional regional and city planning organization which promotes the exchange of planning expertise throughout the country.

#### B:

**BMP** – Best Management Practices – An important factor in land use planning, engineering and related fields as these practices reflect the best ways in which to protect conservation of soil and protection of water quality in development.

**BOA** – Board of Adjustments – A five member board, with 3 alternate members. It is a quasi-judicial (similar to a court of law) governing body that hears cases (variances, appeals and SUPs) and makes decisions in keeping with the NC General Statute and the Town of Indian Trail Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). They are appointed by the Town Council.

**BRT** – Bus-Rapid Transit – Public, high capacity, mass-transit system through the use of buses (or other specialized vehicles) with dedicated lanes or roadways.

#### C:

**CAD** – Computer Aided Design – A software suite that allows professionals in engineering, architecture and related occupations to create drawings and renderings of future layouts and land uses.

**CDBG** – Community Development Block Grant – Created under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, this program provides grant funds to local and state governments to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing with a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities to assist low- and moderate-income residents. These grants cover a broad spectrum of eligible projects such as affordable housing, poverty reduction, infrastructure, and development.

**CO** – Certificate of Occupancy – A legal document typically issued by a building or zoning professional, stating that the structure of a site/building adheres to safe and sound regulations and the plans of this area. Typically required prior to the business opening.

**COG** – Council of Government(s) – Regional, governmental bodies or multi-service entities with a clear set of geographic boundaries. Through this council a variety of programs and services are offered on the federal, state or local level. Each member of the Council is

responsible for its duties in the respective municipalities. North Carolina has 16 COG's. The COG Indian Trail belongs to is the Centralina COG, located in Uptown Charlotte.

**Comp Plan --** Comprehensive Plan – A policy document for a municipality that outlines the goals and vision as well as the current uses/conditions and the future land uses of an area. Here information is found regarding transportation, villages and corridor and demographics.

**CZ –** Conditional Zoning – An amendment of the zoning map/ordinance, concerning a specific parcel or parcels of property. Enacted only after the owner of the property has met specified conditions as recommended by Town planning staff and approved by the Town Council. This approval process is used to minimize impacts and to enhance the development process.

**E:**

**EIA –** Environmental Impact Assessment – A study of the potential or anticipated environmental effects associated with a project or action. This helps to inform stakeholders and decision makers of the environmental impacts and effects of moving forward and helps to predict and mitigate any potential hazards. Challenges may be address through design or other means. From this evaluation an EIS(Environmental Impact Statement) is created.

**F:**

**FAR –** Floor Area Ratio – A measure for the intensity of use. This is measured by the total square feet of a unit or building divided by the amount of total square feet of the lot/land on which the building is located upon.

**H:**

**HOV –** High-Occupancy Vehicle Lane –A HOV Lane is a mandate that more than one person be traveling in the vehicle while operating in the designated lane. For example, I-77 uses HOV lanes in Northern Mecklenburg County.

**F:**

**FIRM –** The FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map – A map of a given community or area that displays the floodplains, hazard areas and risk zones as noted by the FEMA(Federal Emergency Management Agency).

**L:**

**L.F. –** Linear foot – A horizontal length measurement. Different from a square foot which is an area measurement.

**LID –** Low Impact Development – A type of development/re-development focused on preservation and use of nature space and processes to manage stormwater runoff.

**LRTP –** Long Range Transportation Plan – A transportation plan typically regional or statewide, typically forecasting 20-30 years from the date of publication. This provides a vision for transportation modes, funding and transportation systems and facilities in the future.

**M:**

**MPO –** Metropolitan Planning Organization – A transportation planning, local decision making body, in a given urban area. MPO's are required in every Urbanized area grossing 50,000 or more people. These areas are determined by the Census. Indian Trail is a member of the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO).

**MXU –** Mixed Use Development – Properties on which various uses like office, commercial, institutional, and residential are combined in a single building or on a single site in an integrated development project with significant functional interrelationships and a coherent physical design.

**N:**

**NEPA** – National Environmental Policy Act – The act by which the EPA was created. Set the precedent for requiring an EIS (environmental impact statement) for projects requiring large amounts of federal funding.

**NIMBY** – Not In My Backyard – A typically pejorative phrase regarding the objection of something seen as unsafe, unpleasant or unwanted in a neighborhood or development.

**P:**

**PE** – Professional Engineer – An engineer who is certified in their respective state as being registered/licensed to practice engineering. Professional designation.

**PUD** – Planned Unit Development – Land use zoning which allows the adoption of a set of development standards that are specific to the particular project being proposed. PUD zones usually do not contain detailed development standards; these are established during the process of considering the proposals and adopted by ordinance if the project is approved.

**R:**

**RFP** – Request for Proposal – This is a formal, written document in which an entity requests or bids for a service, good, commodity or project from another business or entity.

**ROW** – Right of Way – The legal right of making a way to travel over or on a piece of land, owned by another, is granted. Public roads, utilities and infrastructure often create a need for a ROW, for access.

**S:**

**SP** – Site Plan – A plan that depicts a property, its major features, proposed improvements, as well as building, parking and related information.

**SUP** – Special Use Permit – SUP's are permits approved by the BOA that have additional conditions that must be followed for said use type to be permitted. These permits are required to help minimize impacts and ensure compatibility between developments.

**S.Q. ft** – Square Feet/Footage – A measure of area (length x width). For example, 1 acre of land is equivalent to 43, 560 square feet.

**T:**

**TAZ** – Traffic Analysis Zone – These zones house at least one major road or thoroughfare and are established to better examine traffic patterns and population characteristics in the area. The TAZ is defined by the number of square feet or miles in the study area. An average measure of the population in that area is taken into account as well as general employment and housing information to create a traffic-demand model. These zones are typically a group of Census blocks.

**TIA** – Traffic Impact Analysis/Study – This is a comprehensive study of the impact that a proposed development may have in a given area and on the greater transportation network in that municipal area. Other factors examined include road improvements and any impacts that might need to be mitigated.

**TIF** – Tax Increment Financing – A public financing method that utilizes upcoming redevelopment projects for future public funds a funding source. The 'increment' used to fund the project is the net difference in taxes before and after the TIF designation is given.

**TIP** – Transportation Improvement Program - These regional or statewide plans forecast upcoming transportation projects and their priority level. On the regional level these are typically created by MPO's. These also outline the source(s) of funds. These plans should remain consistent with regional transportation plans and projects.

**TND** – Traditional Neighborhood Development – Development of an area in accordance with the traditional, comprehensive planning principles (i.e. a neo-traditional style). TND's provide access for multiple transportation modes through the creation of higher density, compact areas with many uses. One such example is several of the Ballantyne communities observed on the planning tour. These communities are walk able, accessible and distinct from their surroundings.

**TRC** – Technical Review Committee – A weekly meeting of the Town of Indian Trail Planning staff and a representative from the Engineering and Code Enforcement departments to discuss proposed development projects.

**U:**

**UDO** -- Unified Development Ordinance – A consolidated ordinance in which all Town regulations are compiled. All general development, administrative and permit information is found in this document.

**V:**

**VAR** – Variance – Relief from certain provisions of a zoning ordinance granted to a property owner. Variance requests are subject to state mandated criteria. They must be approved or disapproved by the BOA.

**VCO**- Village Center Overlay – The village center overlay is to provide for the designation of areas within the Town where mixed-use centers may be established. The location of Village Center Overlays will be consistent with the location identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

**VMT** – Vehicle Miles Traveled – A measure of the gross number of miles traveled in a given area or region for a pre-determined amount of time.

**Z:**

**ZM** – Zoning (Map) Amendment – A legislative act changing the official Zoning Map of the Town. This must be recommended by the Planning Board reviews the document and makes recommendations and the Town Council makes the final decision.

**Outside Agencies:**

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency  
NCDENR – NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
NCDOT – North Carolina Department of Transportation  
UCBCE – Union County Building Code Enforcement  
UCFM – Union County Fire Marshall  
UCSO – Union County Sheriff's Office  
UCPW – Union County Public Works

**Sources:**

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