

**Chapter 18.20  
DEFINITIONS**S.J.C. DEPARTMENT OF  
MAY 18 2018  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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### **18.20.001 Scope.**

This chapter contains definitions of technical and procedural terms used throughout this code, and definitions of land uses listed in Tables 3.1 and 3.2, SJCC [18.30.030](#) and [18.30.040](#). Not all of the uses defined below are named in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. (Ord. 12-2001 § 3; Ord. 2-1998 Exh. B § 2.1)

### **18.20.005 Interpretations.**

A. For the purpose of this code, all words shall have their normal and customary meanings, unless specifically defined otherwise in this section. In general, words used in the present tense shall include the future; the singular shall include the plural; and the plural the singular. The

words "shall," "must," "will," "may not," and "no ... may" are always mandatory. The word "should" indicates that which is recommended but not required. The word "may" indicates a use of discretion in making a decision. The word "used" includes "designed, intended, or arranged" to be used. The masculine gender includes the feminine and vice versa. References to "distance" means distance as measured horizontally unless otherwise specified.

B. All definitions which reference the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Washington Administrative Code (WAC), and Uniform Building Code (UBC) are intended to mirror the definitions in these codes at the effective date of the Unified Development Code (this code) or as amended. If the definition in this code conflicts with a definition under state law or regulation, the state definition shall control over this definition.

C. These definitions are not intended to establish regulations. (Ord. 2-1998 Exh. B § 2.2)

**18.20.010 "A" definitions. (Some provisions effective until March 1, 2014. See Code Reviser's Note at end of this section.)**

"Abandon" means to terminate or remove a structure by an affirmative act, such as changing to a new use; or to cease, terminate, or vacate a use or structure through nonaction.

"Abutting" means adjoining as defined herein, but will often have the added component of joining end to end, or sharing an end border.

Accessory Apartment, Accessory Dwelling Unit. See "internal ADU."

"Accessory dwelling unit (ADU)" means a living area that is accessory to the principal residence, located on the same lot, and that provides for sleeping quarters, kitchen, and sanitation facilities. An ADU may be internal, attached or detached.

"Accessory structure" means a structure detached from a principal building located on the same lot and which is incidental and secondary to the principal building.

"Accessory use" means use of land or of a building or portion thereof incidental and subordinate to the principal use or building and located on the same lot with the principal use.

"Accretion shoreform" means shoreline with a backshore which has been produced by the long-term deposition of sand or gravel by littoral drift from a feeder bluff or other source. Such shoreforms include barrier beaches, points, spits, hooks, and tombolos.

"Acre" means a unit of measure of land area which consists of 43,560 square feet.

"Activity centers" in San Juan County include villages, hamlets, residential activity centers, island centers, and master planned resorts.

"Adaptive management" means a style of management which relies upon the best available information to make decisions, but implements decisions with a strategy to obtain additional information. The decisions, or their implementation, are then adapted, if necessary, based on the new information.

"Urban environment, shoreline" means the Shoreline Master Program designation that is designed to ensure optimum use of shorelines within urbanized areas. The urban environment is intended to permit intensive use by managing development so that it enhances and maintains shorelines for a multiplicity of urban uses.

"Urban governmental services" means those governmental services historically and typically delivered by towns, including municipal water systems and sewage treatment facilities, storm sewer systems, street cleaning services, fire and police protection services, public transit services, and other public utilities associated with urban growth and normally not associated with nonurban areas.

"Urban growth" means growth that makes intensive use of land for the location of buildings, structures, and impermeable surfaces to such a degree as to be incompatible with the primary use of such land for the production of food and other agricultural products, or forests, or the extraction of mineral resources.

"Urban growth area" means an area designated by the County within which urban growth is to be encouraged and outside of which growth is not intended to be urban in nature.

"Usable area" means that portion of any parcel or lot which is capable of supporting a "dwelling unit," a properly installed "on-site waste disposal system," and a safe "individual water system," as defined in this code.

"Usable construction area" means the area indicated on all proposed lots (per SJCC 18.70.060 (B)(4)) which can be used for the construction of a dwelling unit, approved sewage system, and an approved water supply.

"Use" means the purpose that land or building or structures now serve or for which they are occupied, maintained, arranged, designed, or intended.

"Utilities" means facilities serving the public through a network of wires or pipes, and ancillary structures thereto, including systems for the delivery of natural gas, electricity, cable TV, and telecommunications services.

"Utility distribution lines" operate at voltages of 15kV and lower, and distribute power from a substation to the end-user (connecting via a service line; see SJCC 18.60.150).

"Utility facilities" means facilities directly used for the distribution or transmission of electricity, cable TV, or landline telecommunications and public or community water service to an area, excluding utility service offices. A utility facility may support a joint use wireless facility.

"Utility pole" means poles with a primary purpose of supporting wires and equipment for the distribution or transmission of utility services to an area. A utility pole may be used as a joint use wireless facility.

"Utility substations" means the intermediate substations used for the transmission of utilities. (See "utility facilities.")

"Utility transmission lines" means electrical power wires that carry voltages of 24.9 kV and above, move bulk power between substations and do not directly serve the end consumer. (Ord. 10-2012 §§ 15, 32; Ord. 12-2001 § 3; Ord. 14-2000 § 7(YY); Ord. 2-1998 Exh. B § 2.3)

**18.20.220 "V" definitions. (Effective until March 1, 2014.)**

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"Vacation rental of a residence or an ADU" means a single-family residential unit or an accessory dwelling unit that is rented (for periods of less than 30 days).

"Vacation, roads and streets" means a statutory procedure by which the County may relinquish its interest in streets, alleys, or easements.

"Variance" means a means to grant relief from the specific bulk, dimensional, or performance standards set forth in this code, and not a means to vary allowable or prohibited uses.

"Vessel" includes ships, boats, barges, or any other floating craft which are designed and used for navigation and do not interfere with the normal public use of the water (WAC 173-27-030).

"Vicinity" means the area within one-half mile of the exterior boundary of a given parcel.

"Villages" are activity centers similar to towns in that they provide similar uses and services but usually have only rural governmental services and are not incorporated.

"Vulnerability assessment" means the evaluation of potential contamination for a specific area that could affect water in a well. (Ord. 21-2002 § 3; Ord. 2-1998 Exh. B § 2.3)

**18.20.220 "V" definitions. (Effective March 1, 2014.)**

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"Vacation rental of a residence or an ADU" means a single-family residential unit or an accessory dwelling unit that is rented (for periods of less than 30 days).

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"Variance" means a means to grant relief from the specific bulk, dimensional, or performance standards set forth in this code, and not a means to vary allowable or prohibited uses.

"Vessel" includes ships, boats, barges, or any other floating craft which are designed and used for navigation and do not interfere with the normal public use of the water (WAC 173-27-030).

"Vested" means a permit application that is valid and fully complete and for which the law provides that the application will be processed under the regulations in effect on the date of application. Laws regarding vesting include RCW 19.27.095 and 58.17.033.

"Vicinity" means the area within one-half mile of the exterior boundary of a given parcel.

"Villages" are activity centers similar to towns in that they provide similar uses and services but usually have only rural governmental services and are not incorporated.