117.025 DEFINITIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Words, terms, and phrases.** For the purposes of this chapter and any other general or special law authorizing the exercise of the power of eminent domain, the words, terms, and phrases defined in this section have the meanings given them.

Subd. 2. **Taking.** "Taking" and all words and phrases of like import include every interference, under the power of eminent domain, with the possession, enjoyment, or value of private property.

Subd. 3. **Owner.** "Owner" includes all persons with any interest in the property subject to a taking, whether as proprietors, tenants, life estate holders, encumbrancers, beneficial interest holders, or otherwise.

Subd. 4. **Condemning authority.** "Condemning authority" means a person or entity with the power of eminent domain.

Subd. 5. **Abandoned property.** "Abandoned property" means property that: (1) has been substantially unoccupied or unused for any commercial or residential purpose for at least one year by a person with a legal or equitable right to occupy the property; (2) has not been maintained; and (3) for which taxes have not been paid for at least two previous years.

Subd. 6. **Blighted area.** "Blighted area" means an area:

(1) that is in urban use; and

(2) where more than 50 percent of the buildings are structurally substandard.

Subd. 7. **Structurally substandard.** "Structurally substandard" means a building:

(1) that was inspected by the appropriate local government and cited for one or more enforceable housing, maintenance, or building code violations;

(2) in which the cited building code violations involve one or more of the following:

(i) a roof and roof framing element;

(ii) support walls, beams, and headers;

(iii) foundation, footings, and subgrade conditions;

(iv) light and ventilation;

(v) fire protection, including egress;

(vi) internal utilities, including electricity, gas, and water;

(vii) flooring and flooring elements; or

(viii) walls, insulation, and exterior envelope;

(3) in which the cited housing, maintenance, or building code violations have not been remedied after two notices to cure the noncompliance; and

(4) has uncured housing, maintenance, and building code violations, satisfaction of which would cost more than 50 percent of the estimated market value for the building, excluding land value, as determined under section 273.11 for property taxes payable in the year in which the condemnation is commenced.

A local government is authorized to seek from a judge or magistrate an administrative warrant to gain access to inspect a specific building in a proposed development or redevelopment area upon showing of probable cause that a specific code violation has occurred and that the violation has not been cured, and that the owner has denied the local government access to the property. Items of evidence that may support a conclusion of probable cause may include recent fire or police inspections, housing inspection, exterior evidence of deterioration, or other similar reliable evidence of deterioration in the specific building.

Subd. 8. **Environmentally contaminated area.** "Environmentally contaminated area" means an area:

(1) in which more than 50 percent of the parcels contain any substance defined, regulated, or listed as a hazardous substance, hazardous material, hazardous waste, toxic waste, pollutant, contaminant, or toxic substance, or identified as hazardous to human health or the environment under state or federal law or regulation; and

(2) for which the estimated costs of investigation, monitoring and testing, and remedial action or removal, as defined in section 115B.02, subdivisions 16 and 17, respectively, including any state costs of remedial actions, exceed 100 percent of the assessor's estimated market value for the contaminated parcel, as determined under section 273.11, for property taxes payable in the year in which the condemnation commenced, or for which a court of competent jurisdiction has issued an order under law or regulations adopted by Minnesota or the United States, that clean up or remediation of a contaminated site occur and the property owner has failed to comply with the court's order within a reasonable time.

Subd. 9. **Public nuisance.** "Public nuisance" means a public nuisance under section 609.74.

Subd. 10. **Public service corporation.** "Public service corporation" means a utility, as defined by section 216I.02, subdivision 19; gas, electric, telephone, or cable communications company; cooperative association; natural gas pipeline company; crude oil or petroleum products pipeline company; municipal utility; municipality when operating its municipally owned utilities; joint venture created pursuant to section 452.25 or 452.26; or municipal power or gas agency. Public service corporation also means a municipality or public corporation when operating an airport under chapter 360 or 473, a common carrier, a watershed district, or a drainage authority.

Subd. 11. **Public use; public purpose.** (a) "Public use" or "public purpose" means, exclusively:

(1) the possession, occupation, ownership, and enjoyment of the land by the general public, or by public agencies;

(2) the creation or functioning of a public service corporation; or

(3) mitigation of a blighted area, remediation of an environmentally contaminated area, reduction of abandoned property, or removal of a public nuisance.

(b) The public benefits of economic development, including an increase in tax base, tax revenues, employment, or general economic health, do not by themselves constitute a public use or public purpose.

History: *1971 c 595 s 3; 2006 c 214 s 2,20; 2012 c 294 art 2 s 3; 2013 c 143 art 14 s 14; 2025 c 20 s 85*