This glossary includes primarily technical terms used in the General Plan. However, the glossary also includes some commonly used and understood words in cases where a specific meaning is intended. The Glossary is intended to provide definitions for words that are used throughout the plan; in some cases, the General Plan may use technical terms only once, or only in a single, discrete discussion (a few paragraphs at most) in the plan. Where that is the case, the term will be defined in the text where it is used. These glossary definitions apply only to the Amador County General Plan.

In general, the language used in the goals and policies of the General Plan communicates the broad outlines of the County’s desired direction. The language of the goals and policies is intended to preserve the discretion of current and future decision makers to weigh competing objectives and interests in their decisions. Unless specific, directive language (such as “The County will” or “The County shall”) is used, goals and policies indicate a preferred direction, and do not require (or prohibit) specific actions or activities.

Accessible: 1) Capable of being reached. 2) Capable of being used or seen.

Activity Centers: Cities and areas of the County (such as Town Centers and Regional Service Centers) where residents go to do their shopping and obtain services, such as health care, post offices, legal services, etc.

Affordable: 1) Having a cost which may be borne without serious detriment; to be able to bear the cost of.

Agricultural Land: Agricultural land includes not only Farmland (as defined below), but also other land used for agricultural purposes.

Agriculture: Use of land for the primary purpose of producing food, fiber, or fuel, including the growing of crops, value-added activities, and/or the grazing of animals.

Agriculture-related Businesses: Businesses, such as agricultural product sales, on-farm sales, roadside stands, produce stands, farmer’s markets, self-pick operations, agri-tourism, and agricultural home stays, which may provide an additional source of income on agricultural lands.
**Agri-tourism**: Recreational travel to agricultural areas, or to participate in agricultural activities or education. As used in the General Plan, agri-tourism includes activities directed at agricultural tourists, including agri-entertainment and agri-education activities.

**Alternative**: 1) Offering or expressing a choice. 2) Different from the usual or conventional.

**Appropriate**: Suitable or fitting.

**Available**: 1) Present or ready for immediate use. 2) Qualified or willing to assume a responsibility. 3) Accessible or obtainable.

**Best Management Practices**: Methods which are determined to be the most effective, practical means of achieving desirable outcomes.

**Buffer**: An area of land or physical feature separating two distinct activities that acts to soften or mitigate the effects of one land use on the other. Buffer areas may include but are not limited to undeveloped open space, developed or built lands, landscaped areas, fences, walls, berms, or any combination of these things.

**Building Envelope**: The area formed by the front, side, and rear building restriction or setback lines within which all buildings must be located.

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**: See California Public Resources Code Sections 1000 to 21177.

**Cluster Development**: A project design technique that concentrates buildings in specific areas on a site to allow remaining land to be used for open space, recreation, agriculture, or the preservation of historically or environmentally sensitive features.

**Community Water Systems**: Defined by the U.S. EPA.

**Coordinate, Collaborate, Coordination, Collaboration** – Use of these terms indicates the County’s intent to seek input or cooperative action with another agency or organization, but does not indicate an obligation by the County to accept or implement any suggestions, requests, instructions, or activities proposed by other agencies.

**Conservation easement**: A voluntary method of restricting development on private property to maintain the long term conservation or natural
resource value of the property in exchange for compensation to the property owner.

**Cortese List**: The Cortese List (formally known as the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List) is a planning document required by California Government Code Section 65962.5. The California Environmental Protection Agency is required to compile the list, which is used by state agencies, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements in providing information about the location of potential hazardous materials release sites.

**Culture**: The body of customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits constituting a distinct complex of tradition of a racial, religious or social group – that complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, morals, law, customs, opinions, religion, superstition, and art.

**Cultural Resources**: As defined in the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, Section 15064.5.

**D**

**Defensible space**: Area surrounding a building or buildings in which basic fire protection and prevention measures are implemented. These measures typically include control of vegetation, fuel modification, and the provision of adequate emergency access.

**Density**: The amount of residential development permitted in a given area, typically expressed as the number of allowed dwelling units per acre of land (du/ac).

**Develop**: To expand or construct physical structures, roads, utilities, and other facilities; to install water and sewer systems, conduct grading activities, deposit refuse, debris or fill, or clear vegetative cover. The definition of develop does not include agricultural activities.

**Discretionary Decision**: A decision requiring the exercise of judgment, or deliberation on the part of the decision-making authority in the process of approving or disapproving an activity.

**Diverse**: Differing from one another; composed of distinct or unlike elements or qualities.

**E**

**Economically Viable Agriculture**: Agricultural and related activities which provide sufficient net income to the landowner or operator to sustain agricultural operations.
**Facilitate**: To make easier; to assist the progress of.

**Farmland**: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland, as determined by the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). *Note: FMMP applies these designations based on technical soil ratings and current land use. Note: “Important Farmland” was identified as a glossary word. This definition is for “Farmland” to differentiate the definition for the purposes of CEQA (which includes the categories described here) from “Important Farmland,” which is defined by FMMP and includes other lands which are not included in the CEQA Appendix G Thresholds.*

**Fire Hazard Severity Zone**: Areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. Moderate, high, and very fire hazard severity zones are mapped by CalFIRE, and State WUI building standards apply in these zones.

**Forestland**: Land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. (Public Resources Code Section 12220[g])

**Form-Based Code**: Land use standards that apply to the physical form of structures on a site, and allow greater flexibility in the range of uses that are permitted. Form-based codes differ from traditional zones that define which uses are permitted in a given location.

**Fuel Modification**: Manipulation or removal of combustible matter (such as vegetation) to reduce the likelihood of ignition, to lessen potential damage, and/or to facilitate control by firefighters.

**General Plan Policy**: A statement in the General Plan intended to provide guidance for future decision-making.

**Geotechnical Evaluation**: an evaluation of the physical characteristics of the soils and bedrock at a site, conducted to determine the requirements for buildings or earthworks.
Goal: In the General Plan, a goal is an abstract description of an ideal future condition that provides a broader context or guide for policies and implementation measures.

Graywater: Domestic wastewater from sources such as bathtubs, showers, washing machines, and dishwashers, but excluding water from kitchen sinks and toilets.

Green Building: Construction and site development techniques that reduce environmental effects or resource consumption.

Groundwater Recharge Zones: Areas where stormwater infiltrates through permeable soils or exposed rock fractures to recharge aquifers.

Guide: To steer, lead, or advise.

Hierarchical Transportation System: A transportation system in which roads meet different standards depending on whether they serve local or “through” traffic, and the volume of traffic.

Historic Preservation: The preservation of historically significant structures in order to facilitate restoration and rehabilitation of the building(s).

Historic Structures: Structures which are listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources or the National Register of Historic Places.

Impact Fee: A fee charged by a public agency as compensation for additional services or costs which will be incurred as a result of a particular development project. California law specifies that impact fees must not exceed the estimated reasonable cost of providing the service for which the fee is charged.

Incentives: Financial or technical assistance that facilitates a particular course of action on the part of an individual or organization.

Infill Development (Areas of Urban Development): Development of vacant, skipped-over parcels of land in otherwise built-up areas.

Integrated (Integrate): To form, coordinate or blend into a functioning or unified whole; to unite with something else; to incorporate into a larger unit.
Intensity: The amount of commercial or industrial development permitted on a particular parcel. Typically expressed as a lot coverage standard (the maximum percentage of a parcel that can be covered by a developed use) or by a Floor Area Ratio (the ratio of interior space to the area of the parcel as a whole).

Ione Chaparral: Ione chaparral is a plant community which occurs on soils of the Ione formation. Ione chaparral is characterized by the presence of Ione manzanita, although Ione buckwheat and Irish Hill buckwheat may also be present.

Jobs-Housing Balance: The relationship between available jobs and housing units, which balance is determined by the free market.

Labor force: Residents of a community who are either working or actively looking for work, regardless of the work location.

Amador Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO): LAFCO is an independent regulatory commission created by the legislature and is responsible for the planning, oversight and control of the boundaries and spheres of influence of cities and most special districts in Amador County. Amador LAFCO implements the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, other statutes and its locally adopted policies in the exercise of its jurisdiction. LAFCO is not part of a County government.

Large Retailer: Large commercial retail or warehouse stores with footprints greater than 50,000 square feet of gross floor area (including outdoor storage and sales area).

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design): An independent certification for energy-efficient and environmentally-sensitive buildings, provided by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Level of Service (LOS): A general measurement of traffic operating conditions for a specific road segment or intersection. LOS assigns letter grades A through F to particular levels of congestion and delay at a specific location.

Local: 1) Of, relating to or characteristic of a particular place. 2) Primarily serving the needs of a particular limited district.

Local Businesses: Businesses which have their primary place of business in Amador County.
Local Services: Services (such as shops, medical offices, post offices) which are directed to the residents of the immediately surrounding area or neighborhood.

Low Impact Development: Development techniques intended to address stormwater management through surface detention and infiltration that mimic natural systems rather than constructed piped systems.

Manage: 1) To make or keep compliant; to treat with care; to exercise executive, administrative and supervisory direction of. 2) to work upon or try to alter for a purpose.

Mills Act: California legislation which encourages conservation of historic structures through property tax reductions.

Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ): A land classification created by the California Geological Survey used to designate sites with known deposits of commercially viable mineral or aggregate material. (Note: In addition to state-designated MRZs, Amador County designates local MRZs through application of the MRZ land use designation).

Mining: The act or process of extracting resources, including but not limited to; oil, coal, mineral deposits, sand, gravel, rock, or metals from the earth.

Mitigation Measure: An action that is required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to avoid or reduce a significant or potentially significant environmental impact of a project.

Mixed-Use: Sites combining more than one use as an integrated project and sometimes in the same building, such as office, residential, commercial, or services.

National Register of Historic Places: The official list, established by the National Historic Preservation Act, of sites, districts, buildings, structures, and objects significant in the nation's history or whose artistic or architectural value is unique.

NEV—(Neighborhood Electric Vehicle): A low-speed vehicle which operates under battery electric power.

Noise Control Techniques: Noise control techniques interrupt the path of noise or directly shield the receiver. Noise control techniques may
include (but are not limited to) building orientations, spatial buffers, landscaping, acoustical design features, and noise barriers.

**Non-point Sources:** Sources of water pollution which result in water running off hard or paved surfaces and picking up contaminants.

**O**

**Oak Woodland:** As defined by Public Resources Code Section 21083.4.

**Opportunity:** 1) A favorable juncture of circumstances. 2) A good chance for advancement or progress.

**P**

**Performance criteria:** Standards which define specific objectives or targets which must be attained. Once the standards have been established, performance criteria do not prescribe the specific methods that may be used to attain the objectives or targets, allowing individuals to select the method or methods which best suit their particular situations.

**Permeable Pavement:** Paving materials that allow water to infiltrate through the material into the ground beneath.

**Preserve** (verb): To keep safe from destruction or decay;

**Program:** An action or strategy carried out to implement an adopted goal and/or policy.

**Promote:** 1) To contribute to the progress or growth of; further. 2) To urge the adoption of; advocate.

**Protect:** To maintain the status or integrity of, especially through financial or legal guarantees; to foster or shield from infringement or restriction.

**Provide:** 1) To make preparation to meet a need. 2) To supply or make available.

**Q**

**Quality:** Degree of excellence (grade).
Reasonable: Not extreme or excessive; moderate; fair.

Reclaimed: Obtained from a waste product or by-product.

Reclaimed water: See Recycled Water.

Recycled water: As defined in the California Water Code, “water which, as a result of treatment of waste, is suitable for a direct beneficial use or a controlled use that would not otherwise occur.”

Redevelopment: The revitalization or reuse of areas which already have (or have had in the past) a developed use, typically as an alternative to extension of developed uses into new growth areas.

Renewable: Capable of being replaced by natural ecological cycles or sound management practices.

Renewable Energy Generation: Methods of generating electrical power which do not require the combustion of fossil fuels such as oil and natural gas. Renewable energy generation might include (but is not limited to) solar, wind, and geothermal power, or the generation of energy from biomass or other sources.

Riparian Habitat: Areas adjacent to rivers and streams with a differing density, diversity, and productivity of plant and animal species relative to nearby uplands.

Runoff: Water from precipitation (such as rain or snowmelt) that flows across a land surface into surface water bodies rather than being absorbed into the ground.

Sensitive receptors: Those people or things which are most susceptible to adverse effects. For instance, sensitive receptors to noise and air pollutants might include schools, day care centers, and health care facilities.

Setbacks: Areas of a parcel, expressed as a distance in feet from a property line, that may not be occupied by structures or buildings. These areas are kept clear in order to achieve a desired separation from roadways, neighboring structures, or other parcels.

Shall: That which is obligatory; an unequivocal direction.
Should: A less rigid directive than “shall;” a directive to be followed if at all possible in the absence of compelling or contravening considerations.

Special Status Species: Plants and animals that are legally protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), California Endangered Species Act (CESA), or other regulations, and species that are considered sufficiently rare by the scientific community to qualify for such listing.

Sphere of influence: A plan for the probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of a local government agency, as determined by the Amador Local Agency Formation Commission (Amador LAFCO).

Subdivision and Subdivision Map Act: As defined in Section 66410, et seq. of the California Government Code.

Support: 1) To promote the interests of; 2) To provide a basis for the existence or subsistence of.

Timberland: Land which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of any commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees.

Timberland Production Zone (TPZ): Under California law (the Z’berg-Warren-Keene-Collier Forest Taxation Reform Act of 1976), an area which has been zoned pursuant to Government Code Section 51112 or 51113 and is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber, or for growing and harvesting timber and other compatible uses, which can include watershed management, fish and wildlife habitat management, and outdoor education and recreation activities as defined in State law.

Value-added Agricultural Activities: See Agriculture-related Businesses, Agri-tourism.

Viable: 1) Capable of living or surviving; 2) Capable of growing or developing.

VMT (vehicle miles traveled): The number of travel miles in a single automobile that are generated by a particular activity or land use.
Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI): The line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels (CAL FIRE 2010 California Fire Plan).

Williamson Act: A California law (Government Code Section 51200-51297.4) which allows land used for agricultural purposes to enter a 10-year contract to be taxed on the basis of its agricultural use rather than market value. This contract includes certain restrictions, and specific conditions must be met prior to entering into a contract. The 10-year contract is renewed automatically each year unless a notice of non-renewal is filed.

Zoning: The division of a city or county by legislative regulations into areas, or zones, that specify allowable uses for real property and size restrictions for buildings within these areas; a program that implements policies of the general plan.
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