

Appendix G
Glossary of Planning Terms

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APA: Adirondack Park Agency, New York State government agency responsible for guiding land use and development within the Adirondack Park.

Cluster 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.

Comprehensive plan: a county development plan or city, village, town, or regional planning commission master plan. Comprehensive plans provide a vision and general idea of how land should be used to assure public health, safety, and welfare.

Conservation easements: a recorded legal agreement between a landowner and a qualified conservation agency that transfers development rights from the owner to the agency to protect natural or historic features.

Conservation subdivision: a housing development in a rural setting that is characterized by compact lots and common open space, and where the natural features of land are maintained to the greatest extent possible.

Economic base: the economic base of an area consists of those activities that provide the core employment and income on which the rest of the local economy depends.

Environmentally sensitive areas: areas such as wetlands, steep slopes, waterways, underground water recharge areas, shores, and natural plant and animal habitats that are easily disturbed by development.

GIS: Geographic Information Systems - computer technology, tools, databases, and applications that provide spatial(geographic) data management, analysis, and mapping capabilities to support policy evaluation, decision-making, and program operations.

Historic preservation: the research, protection, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic properties.

Implementation tools: programs, incentives, activities, regulations, etc. that communities use to implement their plan.

Land use classification: a system for classifying and designating the appropriate use of properties.

Mixed-use development: a development that allows multiple compatible uses to be in close proximity to one another in order to minimize transportation infrastructure impacts and to create a compact, efficient neighborhood; for example, single family, multifamily, commercial, and industrial uses are located within a reasonable proximity to each other.

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Natural resources inventory: a statistical survey of land use and natural resource conditions and trends

Nonconforming use: a use (or structure) that lawfully existed prior to the adoption or amendment of an ordinance but that fails to conform to the standards of the current zoning ordinance.

Planning commission: an appointed local government commission authorized to make and adopt planning documents.

Planning process: the process of developing a plan. Usually includes the following stages – visioning, data collection and analysis, issue identification, goal and objective development, strategy formulation, plan review and approval, implementation, and monitoring and assessment.

Public participation: the involvement of the public in the planning process, with the following purposes: educate the public, reach those that rarely get involved, thwart misinformation efforts, understand what people value, seek feedback from people, and build support for a plan.

Smart growth: an approach to land-use planning and growth management that recognizes connections between development and quality of life. The features that distinguish smart growth approaches vary. In general, smart growth invests time, attention, and resources in restoring community and vitality to center cities and older suburbs. In developing areas, the approach is more urban-centered, is transit and pedestrian oriented, and has a greater mix of housing, commercial, and retail uses. Smart-growth approaches preserve open space and other environmental amenities.

Stakeholders: those who have an interest in a particular decision, either as individuals or representatives of a group. This includes people who influence a decision, or can influence it, as well as those affected by it.

Subdivision: the description and recording of separate land parcels or lots.

Sustainable development: development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Town center revitalization: improve the economic or social environment of downtowns or town centers by involving all facets of the community.

Traditional neighborhood development: a development that exhibits several of the following characteristics; alleys, streets laid out in a grid system, buildings oriented to the street, front porches on houses, pedestrian-orientation, compatible, mixed land uses, villages squares and greens.

Transfer of development rights (TDR): a technique, involving the designation of development (receiving) zones and protected (sending) zones, for guiding growth away from sensitive

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resources and toward controlled development centers by transferring development rights from one area to another via local law authorization such as a deed or easement.

Trends: the general movement in the course of time of a statistically detectable change.

Visioning: a process by which a community defines the future it wants. Through public involvement, communities identify their purpose, core values, and vision of the future.

Zoning: a measure in which the community is divided into districts or zones within which permitted and special uses are established as are regulations governing lot size, building bulk, placement, and other development standards.

Adapted from:

Center for Land Use Education. *General Information on Comprehensive Planning, Planning Terminology Glossary 1*. Retrieved May 19, 2009 from http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/pdffiles/CompPlanBinder/General%20Information%20on%20Comprehensive%20Planning/Glossary_general%20info.pdf.