



Town of Southport

Comprehensive Plan

Adopted XXXXXX 2026

DRAFT

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Acknowledgments

A special thank you to all members of the public who attended the public meetings, participated in visioning activities, and completed the survey. Your involvement and input are the foundation of this plan.

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Notable Mentions

In addition, the fire departments were critical in the formulation of this plan and its process by hosting the visioning sessions. A special thank you to them:

Southport Volunteer Fire Department

Webbs Mills Fire Department

Pine City Fire Department

Golden Glow Fire Department

Key Terms and Acronyms

AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) – A nonprofit organization that advocates for older adults through education, research, public policy, and community programs.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) – A smaller, independent residential dwelling located on the same lot as a primary residence.

Affordable Housing – Housing that costs no more than approximately 30% of a household's gross income.

American Community Survey (ACS) – An annual U.S. Census Bureau survey providing demographic, housing, economic, and social data used for planning and decision-making.

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) – A federal-state partnership that provides funding and technical assistance for economic and community development throughout the Appalachian region.

Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) – A facility that stores electricity for later use, often paired with renewable energy systems to improve grid reliability.

Brownfield – Property where redevelopment may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of environmental contamination.

Capital Improvement – A major public investment such as roads, utilities, parks, or public facilities that provides long-term community benefits.

CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) – A federal program that provides funding for housing, infrastructure, community facilities, and economic development projects.

CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) – A regional economic development strategy required by the U.S. Economic Development Administration to guide investments and funding priorities.

Character Area – A geographic area sharing similar land use patterns, development characteristics, and community identity that helps guide future planning decisions.

CCIDA (Chemung County Industrial Development Agency) – A public benefit corporation that promotes economic development through financial incentives, financing assistance, and business support.

CEC (Clean Energy Communities) – A NYSERDA program recognizing municipalities that implement clean energy actions and providing grants and technical assistance.

Climate Resilience – The ability of a community to prepare for, adapt to, and recover from climate-related hazards and changing environmental conditions.

Cluster Development – A development pattern that groups buildings together while permanently preserving open space, farmland, or natural resources.

Complete Streets – Roadways designed to safely accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit users, and people of all ages and abilities.

Comprehensive Plan – A long-range policy document that establishes a community's vision, goals, policies, and actions for future growth and development.

Community Rating System - Voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management practices that exceed the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

Conservation – The protection and responsible management of natural resources, agricultural land, and environmentally sensitive areas.

CSC (Climate Smart Communities) – A New York State program that assists municipalities in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving climate resilience, and implementing sustainability initiatives.

DEC / NYSDEC (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation) – The state agency responsible for natural resource management, environmental permitting, conservation, and environmental protection.

DOS / NYSDOS (New York State Department of State) – The state agency responsible for planning, zoning, community development, and Local Waterfront Revitalization Program grants.

EDA (U.S. Economic Development Administration) – A federal agency providing grants and technical assistance for economic development, infrastructure, and job creation.

EPA (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) – The federal agency responsible for protecting human health and the environment through regulations, funding, and technical assistance.

ESD (Empire State Development) – New York State's economic development agency supporting business growth, downtown revitalization, and community investment.

ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) – A company that develops Geographic Information System (GIS) software used for mapping and spatial analysis.

Farmland Protection – Policies and programs intended to preserve productive agricultural land from incompatible development.

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) – The federal agency responsible for disaster preparedness, hazard mitigation, emergency response, and disaster recovery assistance.

FEMA Accredited Levee: - An accredited levee system is a system that FEMA has determined to meet the design, data, and documentation requirements of 44 CFR 65.10; it therefore can be shown on a FIRM as reducing the base flood hazard. This determination is based on a submittal, by or on behalf of a community, which includes 44 CFR 65.10—compliant data and documentation, certified by a registered professional engineer.

Form-Based Code – A zoning approach emphasizing the physical design and form of development rather than focusing primarily on land use.

Future Land Use Map – A planning map illustrating the community's desired long-term pattern of development, redevelopment, and conservation.

Geographic Information System (GIS) – Computer software and spatial data used to create, analyze, and manage maps and geographic information.

Goal – A broad statement describing a desired long-term outcome for the community.

Green Infrastructure – Natural or engineered systems that use vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage stormwater and improve environmental quality.

Hazard Mitigation – Actions taken before disasters occur to reduce future risks to people, property, and infrastructure.

HUC (Hydrologic Unit Code) – A watershed identification system developed by the U.S. Geological Survey to classify drainage areas.

Implementation Matrix – A table identifying the actions, responsible parties, partners, funding sources, priorities, and implementation timeframes needed to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Infill Development – Development of vacant or underutilized land within existing developed areas where infrastructure already exists.

Land Use – The way land is developed or utilized, including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, and conservation uses.

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) – A New York State program supporting waterfront planning, redevelopment, and environmental protection.

Mineral Soil Groups (MSG) – Agricultural soil classifications used to evaluate farmland productivity and suitability for agriculture.

Mixed-Use Development – Development that combines residential, commercial, office, civic, or recreational uses within the same building or neighborhood.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) - Managed by FEMA and is delivered to the public by a network of more than 47 insurance companies and the NFIP Direct. Provides flood insurance to property owners, renters and businesses, and having this coverage helps them recover faster when floodwaters recede

NYSDAM (New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets) – The state agency responsible for supporting agriculture, farmland protection, and local food systems.

NYSHCR (New York State Homes and Community Renewal) – The state agency responsible for affordable housing, community development, and housing assistance programs.

NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) – The state authority that administers clean energy, energy efficiency, and renewable energy programs.

Open Space – Undeveloped land preserved for agriculture, recreation, scenic views, natural resources, or environmental protection.

Policy – A strategy or guiding principle used to achieve one or more Comprehensive Plan goals.

REDC (Regional Economic Development Council) – A regional partnership that develops economic development strategies and recommends state funding priorities.

Resilience – The ability of a community to adapt to changing conditions and recover from environmental, economic, or social disruptions.

Rural Character – The combination of agricultural landscapes, open space, low-density development, scenic views, and community identity that distinguishes rural areas.

Rural Preservation – Protecting agricultural land, open space, scenic views, and low-density development patterns that define Southport's rural identity.

Smart Growth – A planning approach that balances economic development with the protection of rural character, agricultural lands, natural resources, and open space. It encourages directing growth to appropriate locations, making efficient use of existing infrastructure, providing diverse housing opportunities, supporting local businesses, and preserving the environmental and scenic qualities that make the community unique.

Stakeholder – Any individual, organization, business, or government agency with an interest in or affected by planning decisions.

STC (Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board) – The regional planning organization providing planning, GIS, grant administration, and community development services.

STEG (Southern Tier Economic Growth) – The economic development organization serving Chemung County by supporting business attraction, retention, entrepreneurship, and workforce development.

STN (Southern Tier Network) – A regional organization that develops broadband infrastructure and expands high-speed internet access throughout the Southern Tier.

Stormwater Management – Practices used to control runoff, reduce flooding, improve water quality, and protect infrastructure.

Sustainability – Meeting present community needs while protecting environmental, economic, and social resources for future generations.

SWOT Analysis – A planning exercise evaluating a community's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) – The federal agency providing funding and technical assistance for agriculture, rural development, conservation, forestry, and community facilities.

Vision Statement – A concise description of the community's desired future.

Watershed – An area of land where precipitation and runoff drain to a common stream, river, lake, or other waterbody.

Zoning – Local regulations governing how land may be used and developed within designated zoning districts.

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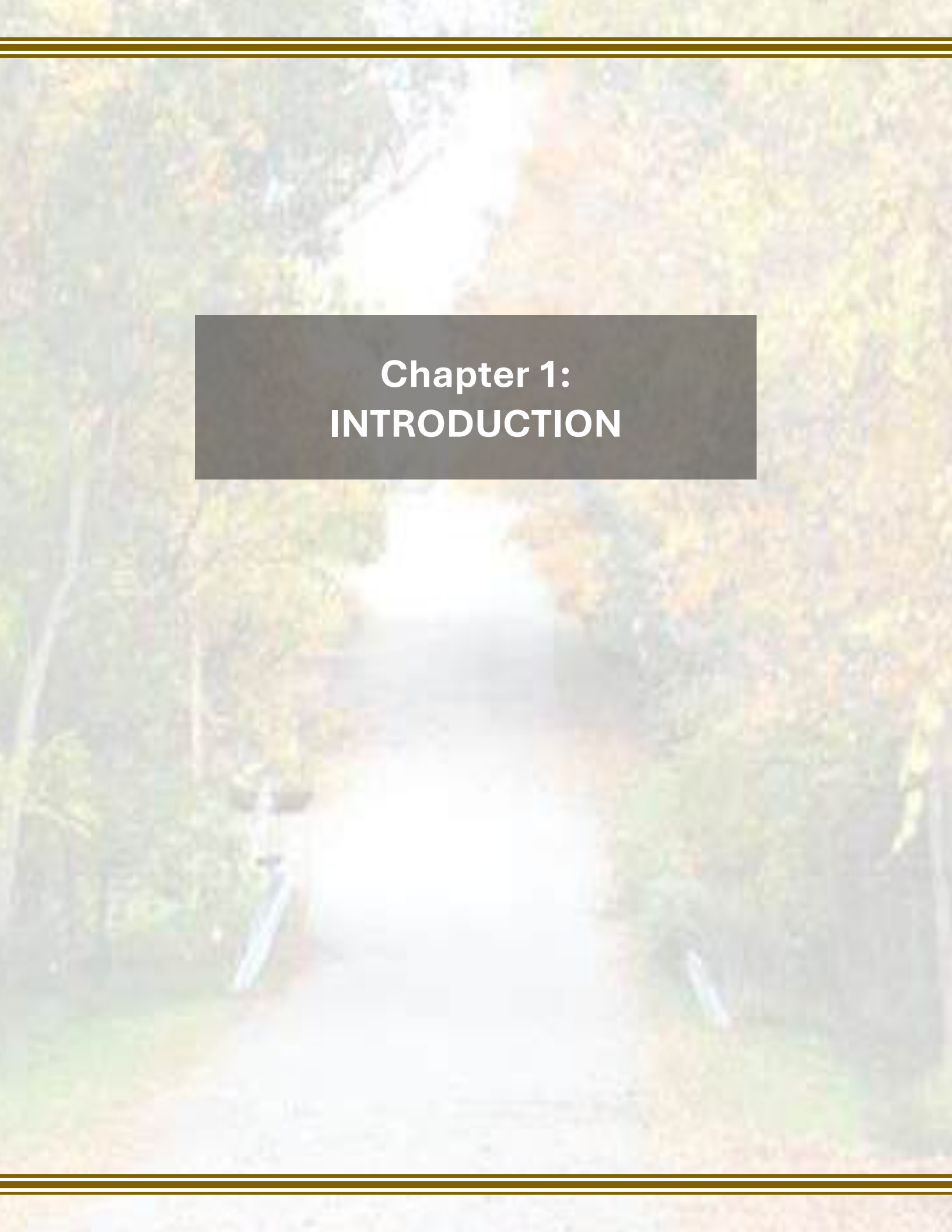
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An aerial photograph of a forest with a dirt road winding through it. The trees have autumn-colored foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and green. A dark rectangular box is centered over the road, containing white text.

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Background

Established in 1822, the Town of Southport is 46.84 square mile municipality located in the southwestern corner of Chemung County within the Southern Tier of New York State. Containing forty-seven square miles of scenic foothills, river valleys, and farmland. It sits on the NY-PA state line along its southern border and Steuben County along its western border. The Town sits adjacent to other Chemung municipalities, Town of Big Flats, Town of Elmira, and the City of Elmira on its northern border and the Town of Ashland and Elmira along the eastern border. Southport takes its name from its historical use of being the port on the south side of the Chemung River. The Town of Southport includes pockets of dense suburban neighborhoods adjacent to the south side of the City of Elmira. Route 328 (Pennsylvania Ave) is the major transportation and economic artery of Southport with Seeley Creek running adjacent. It connects the denser suburban neighborhoods to the rest of Southport as it runs in a northeast to southwest direction. Along this route there are major and small businesses, community centers, homes, offices, and schools. Off this route most of the Town is a quaint rural character that residents wish to preserve with hamlets such as Webbs Mills and Pine City. With this diverse mix of both built and natural geography it is essential for leaders and residents to plan for varying populations and neighborhoods in mind.

FIGURE 1: CHEMUNG COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITIES



Why Southport?

Throughout this process, residents made one thing clear; the community of Southport is strong, resilient, tight knit, and most importantly, neighborly. The small-town feeling built off good neighbors, friendly attitudes, and the community goal for a better future defines what they love about Southport and why they live here. This sense of place and sense of community in Southport was consistently stated as the best part of the town. This is not to say there are no issues at hand whether they be economic, demographic, or aesthetic but rather showing that the resilient community of Southport is the driving factor for a better future. Community events, annual parades, recreational opportunities, youth programs, art activities, fire department barbeques and so on are the foundational pillars of this community. Residents note the strength of their community is their top priority. They wish to see it continue to grow and endure. They desire such growth to be built from small businesses, local produce, community events, recreational assets, beautiful rural views and vistas, good neighbors, and a family-oriented focus. Future and potential residents, business owners, and investors, should take confidence in the strength and spirit of the Southport community.



PHOTO 1: TOWN OF SOUTHPORT SIGN

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Town Law Article 16 Section 272-a gives Towns the authority to prepare a comprehensive plan. A Comprehensive Plan is the expression of a community's vision for its future. This plan is a crucial tool that guides the development of land to provide a safe, pleasant, and robust community and advises Town decision makers to achieve such expressed vision. This plan is intended to provide guidance for the next 10 years, or to 2035. It is essential that the contents of this plan are regularly reviewed to measure progress, identify shortcomings, and determine updates as conditions change.

The foundation of this planning process is stakeholder input from all those that live, work, and visit within community, the better the input the better the plan. This process constitutes the *legal basis* for the Town's zoning, its updating and implementation, and is a *framework* for entities seeking to undertake a project within the community. This plan acts as a *strategic resource* that equips the Town with a greater understanding of its built, natural, and communal environment for its own decision makers and to leverage and influence planning activities of other governmental authorities who are required to take local plans into consideration. A Comprehensive Plan will create opportunities for the Town and provide community support to funding agencies for initiatives that have been identified and agreed upon by the community. This plan layouts the implementation matrix framework in goals, policies, and actions.

1. **Goal:** Overarching generalized objectives of this plan
2. **Policy:** Determined strategies of individual issues to achieve the goals
3. **Action:** Steps to implement the policies

Because a Comprehensive Plan is legal support to local laws, the goals, recommendations, and actions should be consulted by municipal officials prior to voting in any new laws, agreements, or partnerships. The plan should also be consulted prior to making land use decisions. Potential developers are strongly encouraged to reference the plan to align their intentions. Finally, the public may use this plan to remind their public officials of documented public engagement and the results thereof.

The Update Process

This 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update of the Town's 2014 Comprehensive Plan to account for changing conditions and projected trends such as economic factors, demographic characteristics, environmental health, development activity, infrastructure conditions, and land use changes. This planning process asks three core guiding questions: (1) **Where/What is the Town now?** (i.e., existing conditions, SWOT analysis), (2) **What should the Town be?** (i.e., vision and goals), and (3) **How does the Town get there?** (i.e., recommendations and actions). This plan conducts a SWOT analysis with stakeholders to leverage *strengths*, identify *weaknesses*, capitalize *opportunities*, and address *threats* to layout the guiding framework to improve the quality of life in Southport.

Community Engagement

Community engagement and stakeholder input are the foundation of this planning process. Providing opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback, contribute ideas, and identify issues is essential for the successful implementation of this plan.

Steering Committee Meetings

The Town of Southport convened a Steering Committee to help guide the planning process and provide expertise and insights into the issues and topics discussed throughout. Members of this committee are comprised of local and regional government personnel, business representatives, residents, and community organizations. The committee met monthly and was involved in all aspects of the planning process. These members also acted as a support group to get the community involved in this process.

Visioning Sessions

Four public workshops were provided for community participation and input in the development of this comprehensive plan. Participants were encouraged to only attend one as the format for each was identical. These sessions include a presentation about the background of a comprehensive plan and this process, interactive tabletop activities, open discussions, and a SWOT analysis. This engagement forms the vision for Southport and thus the visioning statement. The sessions were held at fire halls throughout the Town to gather as much input across its geography, they were held at the following locations and times:

- Wednesday August 6th, 2025, at Pine City Fire Hall at 5PM
- Wednesday August 13th, 2025, at Webbs Mills Fire Hall at 5PM
- Wednesday August 20th, 2025, at Southport Fire Hall at 6PM
- Wednesday August 27th, 2025, at Golden Glow Fire Hall at 6PM

Survey

The steering committee formed a comprehensive community survey which addresses a wide range of community issues from housing to renewable energy. This survey was provided in digital and paper formats, posted on social media, the Town's website, and on flyers in the community to provide accessibility. The survey opened on July 16th, 2025, was provided at the visioning sessions, and closed on October 1st, 2025. It received sixty-nine responses. The survey is in Appendix C, and the survey results are in Appendix D.

Public Hearing

The plan was required to undergo a public hearing to hear all comments for or against the adoption of the plan by the Town Board; this was held on September 8th, 2026.

Summary of Relevant and Past Plans

No community or municipality can act alone; it is critical to identify, analyze, and understand other relevant current and past plans of partnering entities that can impact, guide, or assist Southport. This includes the Town’s previous plan and other plans from county and region wide entities.

Town of Southport Comprehensive Plan – 2014

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan was the first of its type in Southport since the Master Plan of 1962. The plan identified four goals:

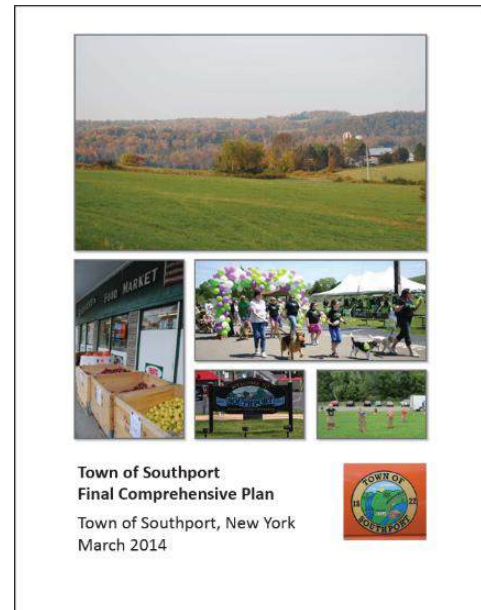
Goal 1: Generate Economic Development Opportunities

Goal 2: Accommodate the Changing Population

Goal 3: Enhance the Community Character

Goal 4: Protect Natural and Historic Resources

Developed through public focus groups and a survey, the plan emphasizes improving walkability, expanding sewer infrastructure to currently unserved areas, and protecting natural resources such as flood-prone lands and agricultural soils. While the plan did not specifically mention smart growth or form-based code it contained some smart growth principles and elements of form-based code in the implementation section. Ideas of these principles and elements were then adopted through the zoning code such as the Planned Development District. The 2014 plan aimed to balance growth with infrastructure capacity, environmental conservation, and quality of life for current and future residents. While this 2026 plan aims to achieve the same goals and objectives, it must take the next steps and account for the current land use issues, the changed community character, population trends, economic profile, and other existing conditions.

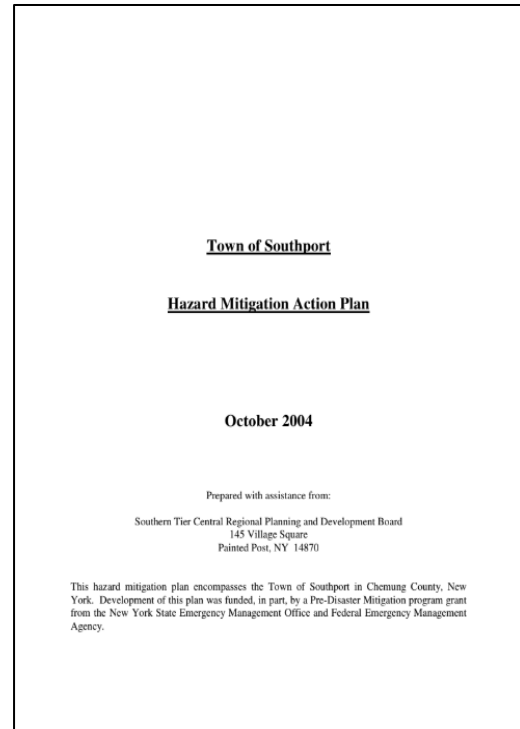


2014 Visioning Statement

“In 2025, the Town of Southport is a diverse community with attractive neighborhoods, successful businesses, productive agricultural areas, and protected rural lands. Residents regard the feeling of community, abundant historic and recreational resources, traditional character, and good governance as important reasons to settle here. The Town continues to build partnerships to grow its economy, provide desirable housing choices, and retain and attract new residents and businesses. In doing so, Southport is a leader in the Southern Tier, working with neighboring municipalities on transportation and land use while making thoughtful decisions about its own growth and conservation.”

Town of Southport Hazard Mitigation Action Plan - 2004

The Town of Southport Hazard Mitigation Action Plan includes resources and information to assist public and private sectors in the Town of Southport to reduce the losses from future hazard events. This plan is not a manual of what to do if a disaster occurs. Instead, it concentrates on actions that can be implemented prior to disaster events to reduce the damage to property and potential loss of life. The plan includes an assessment of the Town's risks and vulnerabilities, a strategy for minimizing those risks (goals and objectives), and an action plan that will be implemented to achieve the objectives. This plan is over 20 years old; the town should seek out funding and consultants with experience and expertise in hazard mitigation planning and climate adaptation planning.



Chemung County Comprehensive Plan –Ongoing

At the time of this plan's formulation, Chemung County is working on their first Comprehensive Plan and updating their 2019 Hazard Mitigation Plan. Similarly, to this plan, the ongoing Chemung County Comprehensive Plan outlines a strategic vision for the county's growth, land use, and development but across the municipal boundaries to act as one county wide strategy. It is a living document to evolve with the growth and conditions of the County. The plan will highlight the current needs and desires of residents while addressing emerging issues and opportunities. Proactive planning across municipal boundaries allows the County to manage expected population changes, development pressure, infrastructure demands, and more. This will be a valuable resource and guidance for Southport.



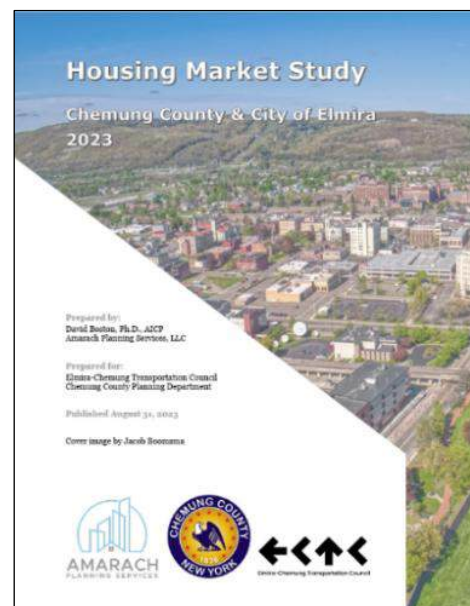
Chemung County: Hazard Mitigation Plan – Ongoing

The County's Hazard Mitigation Plan is critical for Southport for several reasons. First, it identifies potential hazards, this plan identifies 10 (Climate change, flooding, high hazard dams, landslides, thunderstorms, tornados, wildfires, winter storms, invasive species, and pandemic/epidemic) to lay out framework and actions to mitigate and minimize damage from these potential future disasters. Secondly, it is often required for many state and federal disaster recovery funds, granting Southport access and eligibility to these funds for infrastructure improvements, resilience programs, sustainable development, and mitigation projects. Lastly, like a comprehensive plan, stakeholder input is essential. This process acts as a public awareness and educational opportunity across the county about emergency plans, evacuation routes, and mitigation efforts, bolstering collaboration beyond municipal boundaries. This plan is crucial because it will help Southport prepare for, reduce the impact of, and recover from disasters in a more organized and efficient manner.

Chemung County: Housing Market Study – 2023

Housing is central to community wellbeing, economic vitality, and population stability. This Housing Market Study analyzes the existing conditions of the local housing market, addresses affordability and other challenges, and identifies the underlying potential for new housing development. This study can provide municipal leaders with a data driven foundation for policy such as grant applications and rezoning. Key findings:

1. Rising home prices
2. Decrease in home sales and purchases
3. Aging housing stock
4. Lack of diverse housing options
5. Population instability from an aging population
6. Potential rehabilitation and revitalization opportunities and strategies



Chemung County: Coordinated Transportation Plan – 2022

The Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council (ECTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Chemung County, developed this plan. The Chemung County Transit System (C TRAN) provides public transportation services in Chemung County. First Transit, Inc., a private company, operates the service under contract to Chemung County. C TRAN has a service area covering 408 square miles with routes and stops. The fixed-route bus system provides service along seven local and three regional routes throughout this area. Several other organizations provide transportation to a more limited number of clients that is nonetheless important to the people they serve. This plan identifies the transportation needs, goals, and strategies to improve transportation in Chemung County. This includes “Complete Streets” which are roadways that incorporate facilities and infrastructure with the goal of creating a cohesive transportation network in which travelers of all modes and abilities are provided safe, comfortable, and convenient mobility. This plan identified eight strategies:



1. Maintain or reduce the cost of public transportation
2. Enhance public transportation services for seniors, those with limited mobility, and people needing physical assistance
3. Expand public transportation service in rural areas, to other counties, and weekend service
4. Improve public communication and information
5. Cultivate a small business ecosystem, focus on Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs)
6. Promote transit-oriented development
7. Support multiple modes of transportation, including buses, personal vehicles, bikes, scooters, and other alternative transportation methods
8. Improve CTRAN facilities

STEG: Strategic Economic Development Plan - 2022

Southern Tier Economic Growth (STEG) fosters prosperity and vitality in Chemung County through the planning, promotion, and implementation of economic development programs. This plan was intended to help STEG, CCIDA, and the community for current and future funding opportunities. It outlines four major goal areas to guide economic development in Chemung County:



1. Business Development: Build an economic ecosystem that supports and resources all entrepreneurs, businesses, and prospects to improve community prosperity and sustainable, common-sense growth.
2. Built Environment and Infrastructure: Create a built environment supported by resilient, future-ready infrastructure that effectively and efficiently meets the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.
3. Human Capital: Ensure that residents and workers are able to achieve their highest potential and attain a thriving quality of life.
4. Creating Vibrant Communities: Develop downtowns, neighborhoods, and communities with diverse and distinct characters, and that offer a balance of necessities and amenities appropriate for each

Southern Tier REDC: Strategic Plan – 2023

The Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) supports the State’s innovative approach that empowers regional stakeholders to establish pathways to prosperity, mapped out in regional strategic plans. This Strategic Plan encompasses a holistic approach to regional economic development. In an era marked by unprecedented change, guiding economic development demands strategic foresight, adaptability, and collective action. This Plan identifies key trends impacting the Southern Tier economy and collective quality of life. It examines the region’s major strengths and challenges, providing a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape of living, working, visiting, and enjoying the Southern Tier. This strategic plan identifies five Pillars of Regional Investment:



1. Position the Southern Tier as a dynamic, ever-evolving hub for cleantech
2. Propel growth in backbone industries and nurture the regional innovation ecosystem
3. Demonstrate the Southern Tier’s unmatched livability and incentivize residential and commercial development that complements the region’s communities
4. Grow a diverse, adaptable, future-ready workforce
5. Amplify the Southern Tier story

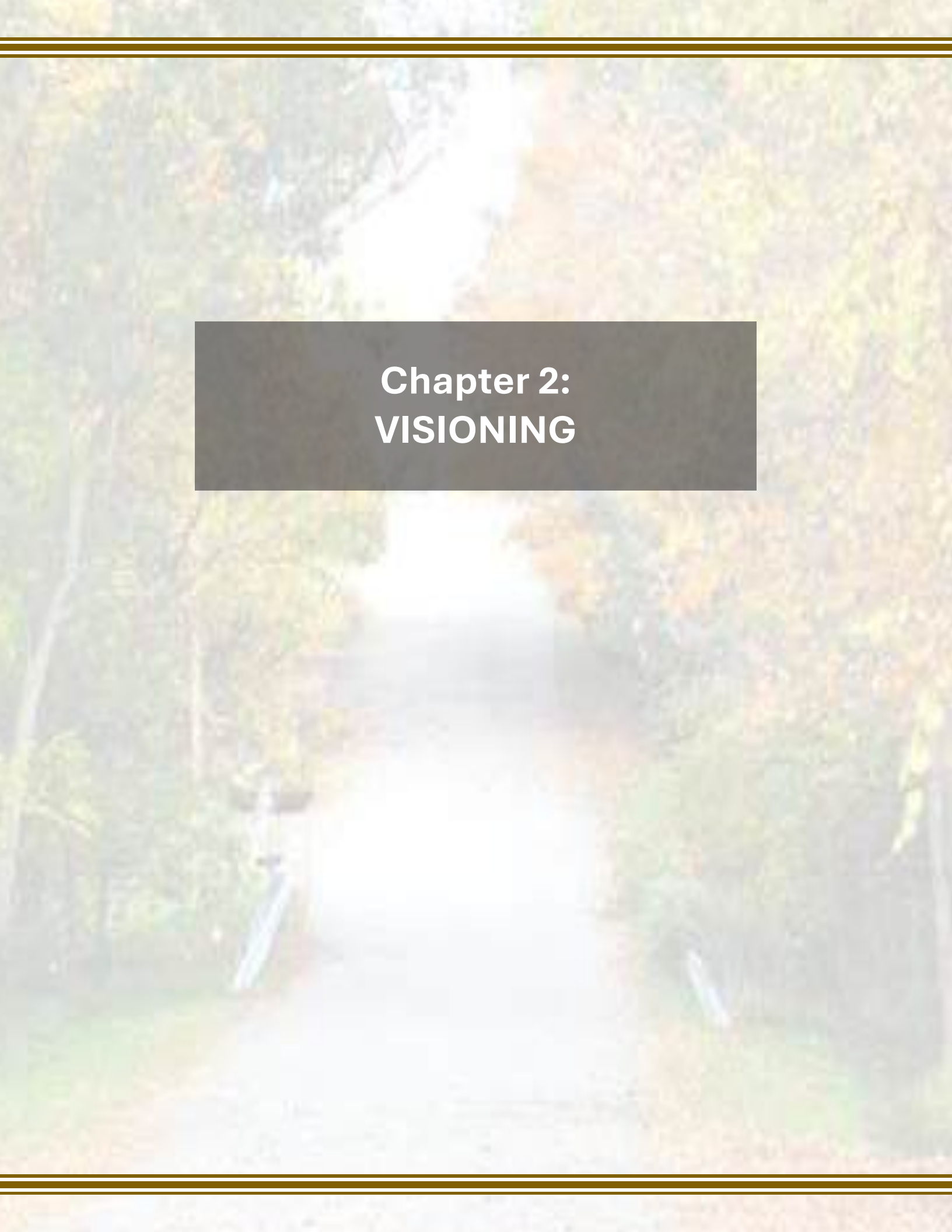
Southern Tier Central RPDB: CEDS 5 Year Plan - 2025

Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Agency (STC), serves Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben counties. STC is the Local Development District (LDD) for both the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to work with local governments, economic and community development organizations, and human services agencies to identify issues and provide solutions that will improve the economy, the environment, and quality of life across political borders. Their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is designed as a framework for integrating efforts of the organizations that serve the region and facilitating collaboration for resilient development. The public, local governments, non-profits, and employers should occasionally review the CEDS to gain a better understanding of how STC can interact with you, and how you can interact with the region’s other development partners. The CEDS outlines five major areas of interest for the region:



1. Job Retention, Wage Growth, and Alleviating Poverty
2. Improve: Health, Community, and Transportation
3. Technology, Innovation, and Environmental Resilience
4. Community Emergency Preparedness
5. Rural Development and Supporting Agriculture

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An aerial photograph of a forest with a light-colored path or clearing running through the center. The surrounding trees have green and yellow foliage. A dark rectangular box is centered over the path, containing white text.

Chapter 2: VISIONING

Visioning

VISIONING STATEMENT

IN 2036, THE TOWN OF SOUTHPORT IS A WELCOMING, SAFE, AND RESILIENT COMMUNITY WHERE ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBORHOODS, THRIVING BUSINESSES, PROTECTED NATURAL RESOURCES, AND A PRESERVED RURAL CHARACTER SUPPORT A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE. RESIDENTS VALUE SOUTHPORT'S STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY, PARKS AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, SCENIC LANDSCAPES, HISTORIC RESOURCES, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES. THROUGH THOUGHTFUL GROWTH AND STRATEGIC INVESTMENT, SOUTHPORT STRENGTHENS ITS ECONOMY, EXPANDS HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES, ENHANCES INFRASTRUCTURE, AND PRESERVES THE CHARACTER THAT MAKES IT A DESIRABLE AND SAFE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, AND RAISE A FAMILY.

Goal 1: Smart Growth

Goal Statement: Promote sustainable growth by directing development to areas served by existing infrastructure, encouraging mixed-use development in appropriate areas, preserving rural landscapes, and expanding housing opportunities that meet the needs of residents at all stages of life. The Town will improve transportation connectivity for all users while supporting redevelopment, efficient land use, and a diverse, affordable housing supply that strengthens existing neighborhoods for sustainable, fiscally responsible growth without compromising the community's identity.

Policy 1: Utilize Existing Infrastructure

Prioritize growth where public infrastructure and services already exist to encourage efficient development and reduce long-term municipal costs.

Policy 2: Promote Complete Streets

Develop a safe, connected transportation network that accommodates pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists of all ages and abilities.

Policy 3: Enhance Housing Supply

Promote housing that meets the changing community needs while reinforcing existing neighborhoods by uplifting current housing stock for existing residents.

Goal 2: Safeguard Natural Resources

Goal Statement: Protect Southport's natural resources by preserving farmland, reducing risks from flooding and other natural hazards, and conserving environmentally sensitive lands. Through responsible land use planning, updated regulations, and regional partnerships, the Town will improve resilience, protect water quality and wildlife habitat, improve stormwater management, and maintain the rural landscapes that define the community's character.

Policy 1: Protect Agriculture and Preserve Farmland

Support the continued viability of agriculture by protecting productive farmland, encouraging agricultural businesses, and promoting land use practices that maintain Southport's rural character and landscapes.

Policy 2: Mitigate Natural Hazards

Reduce risks associated with flooding, severe weather, and other natural hazards by improving stormwater management, supporting hazard mitigation efforts, and strengthening coordination with regional partners.

Policy 3: Protect Sensitive Areas

Protect natural resources, including forests, streams, wetlands, steep slopes, scenic landscapes, and other sensitive areas through thoughtful planning, conservation practices, and responsible development standards.

Goal 3: Economic Development

Goal Statement: Strengthen the local economy by supporting existing businesses, encouraging regional collaboration, and investing in infrastructure and community beautification. Strategic improvements to commercial areas, utilities, broadband, and transportation, combined with coordinated economic development efforts, will attract investment, create jobs, and enhance Southport's long-term competitiveness and quality of place.

Policy #1: Retain Existing Businesses

Support and strengthen Southport's existing businesses by fostering collaboration, reducing regulatory barriers, improving business districts, and addressing the needs of local business owners.

Policy #2: Regional Collaboration and Alignment

Work with neighboring municipalities, county and regional partners to coordinate planning, share resources, support housing, and economic development, and pursue regional funding opportunities.

Policy #3: Beautification and Infrastructure

Improve Southport's infrastructure, connectivity, streetscapes, and overall appearance through strategic investments in utilities, broadband, beautification, walkability, and green infrastructure.

Goal 4: Quality of Life

Goal Statement: Enhance the quality of life for residents by fostering a strong sense of community, supporting residents of all ages, and expanding recreational and cultural opportunities. Investments in parks, trails, public spaces, arts, housing accessibility, and community programming will create a healthier, more connected, and inclusive community where people can live, work, and thrive.

Policy #1: Promote Community

Strengthen Southport's sense of community and identity by promoting local events, expanding cultural and recreational programming, celebrating local history and the arts, and encouraging inclusive resident participation.

Policy #2: Age in Place

Support residents of all ages, particularly older adults, by promoting accessible housing, transportation, services, and safe connections to everyday needs that allow residents to remain in their homes and community as they age.

Policy #3: Reinforce and Expand Recreational Assets

Reinforce Southport's parks, trails, and recreational facilities to expand recreational opportunity by improving their quality and accessibility, expanding connections between community assets, renovating the community center, and supporting diverse recreational programs and activities.

Goal 5: Government Efficiency

Goal Statement: Promote effective, transparent, and responsive local government through improved communication, strategic investment, proactive code enforcement, and enhanced emergency preparedness. By strengthening public engagement, pursuing funding opportunities, coordinating with regional partners, and planning for future challenges, the Town will improve municipal services and ensure the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy #1: Active Communication

Improve transparency, accessibility, and resident engagement by maintaining consistent, timely, and accessible communication through multiple platforms, including meetings, newsletters, websites, and social media.

Policy #2: Investments and Engagement

Promote responsible investment and long-term community resilience by tracking Comprehensive Plan implementation, pursuing regional partnerships, and funding opportunities, leveraging state programs, and engaging residents in decisions about community priorities.

Policy #3: Emergency Preparedness

Strengthen Southport's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies through coordinated planning, public preparedness, emergency monitoring, and implementation of hazard mitigation strategies.

Results of Visioning Sessions

Four Visioning Sessions were held every Wednesday evening in August at every fire hall that covers the town. Originally these sessions were to be held from 5PM until 7PM, after feedback from residents voiced difficulties from making it on time after work and taking care of children, the last two sessions were moved to 6PM until 8PM to accommodate. In total these sessions had 45 participants gathering residents from across town. These sessions all followed the same structure which included a background presentation of the plan and its purpose, three questions of why residents live, stay, or need/want to leave Southport, a SWOT analysis, and draft visioning statements. These sessions were to have open discussions regarding all topics and issues facing Southport. After these discussions, participants were asked to rank the priorities pulled from the discussions and identify through hand drawing on maps the general areas within the town to preserve and conserve the existing level of natural or built environment and the general areas where desired development or development opportunities should be focused. Results of individual sessions can be found in Appendix E; this section is combining the overall results of all four.

TABLE 1: VISIONING SESSIONS RESULTS - DRIVING FACTORS

What makes you or would make you _____ Southport?		
Live in	Stay in	Need/Want to Leave
- Born here/Grew up here/Hometown - Family/Ability to raise a family - Proximity to jobs/Work in Southport - Cost of living - Friendly neighbors/strong sense of community - Character of rural neighborhoods (peace & tranquility) - Safety/Safe place to live - Away from Elmira - Pine City School	- Great neighborhood and neighbors - Strong and welcoming community ("Amazing") - Neighbors know each other - Proximity to jobs/good jobs - Local history - Feeling of safety - Recreational assets/Chapel Park - Access to stores/amenities - Active and engaged Fire departments - Pine City School - Natural views and vistas - Rural scenery - County/rural life	- Over development/Sprawl - Negative changes to the environment - More traffic - Kids growing up and leaving - High taxes (all levels) - Insurance hikes if 500-Year Floodplain enacted - Road maintenance declines - Community activities go away - Lack of variety, affordable, and available housing - Cost of rent - Lack of senior housing without subsidies - Lack of things to do/third places - Blight/Poor upkeep of some properties impacting property values - Costly and rising utilities prices 328 and roundabouts look unwelcoming, messy, not well kept - Stormwater control/run off is ever increasing, drainage is not well kept - Closure of prison - Vacant buildings and properties - No manufacturing

SWOT ANALYSIS	
Strengths	Weaknesses
• Sense of community, welcoming, caring, friendly neighbors; “tight knit” • Safe and quiet community • RURAL character • Community involvement and events • Proximity to amenities and stores • Pine City School • Small businesses support the community events • Sidewalks, pedestrian accessibility in some areas • Active community, a lot of people bike and walk around town • Town facilities are well maintained • Recreational opportunities and assets, Chapel Park, Community Garden, Sports, Youth leagues • Road maintenance is fairly good, especially plowing • Fire Departments are responsive, engaged, and upkeep their facilities • “Small town” feeling	• Areas starting to degrade, blight expanding, low property upkeep • Lack of police visibility, service, engagement • School lacks public water/sewer • Lack of small local business • No pharmacy • No wellness center • Vacant properties (Former Rite Aid) • Vacant Correctional Facility • Speed of State acting on issues • Aging population, losing young families and professionals • Poor communication and transparency from town officials • Outreach is harder these days, mail is costly • Sidewalks end abruptly, lack of pedestrian infrastructure, no bike racks • Lack of diverse, affordable, available housing • Cost of housing, rental costs • Lack of mixed-use development • No fresh local produce, farm stands • Practically no farms left • Culvert replacement, drainage issues, stormwater runoff issues are increasing
Opportunities	Threats
• Community safety: increase presence and engagement of law enforcement • Vacant and underutilized properties • Infill Development & Cluster development (Prevent sprawl) • Reuse of Correctional Facility is MAJOR but dependent on environmental studies • Expansion of local youth sports, recreational leagues, and community programs • Expansion of water/sewer to Pine City School and other neighborhoods • Collaboration with neighboring municipalities • Protect farmland and rural character • Business District, central location for small businesses • Central information hub about small/local businesses/business directory • Get all businesses on google maps • Use community board/ Buy Local campaign • Solar, can get the town some money • Outdoor recreation opportunities • Community Center development	• Lack of infrastructure (sewer and water) • Lack of State maintenance on 328 • Mindset – divisions between State/County/Local, collaboration and communication are essential • Closing of Pine City School is a big drawing factor to the community and a hub for engagement • School district is not well regarded • Lack of community involvement, engagement, participation. Particularly in decision making opportunities • Upkeep and maintenance of properties is falling; some people need assistance. Will help to attract new residents. • Code Enforcement needs more support and tools to crack down on properties • Town gets in its own way, need more forward thinking • Not enough mixed-use buildings, threat of sprawl • Rapidly aging population, losing young families and professionals • Farmland is not protected • Drainage issues, stormwater control, flooding, Levee infrastructure, and cost to repair • Not on major highways, limits industry interest and types of jobs • High taxes and regulations

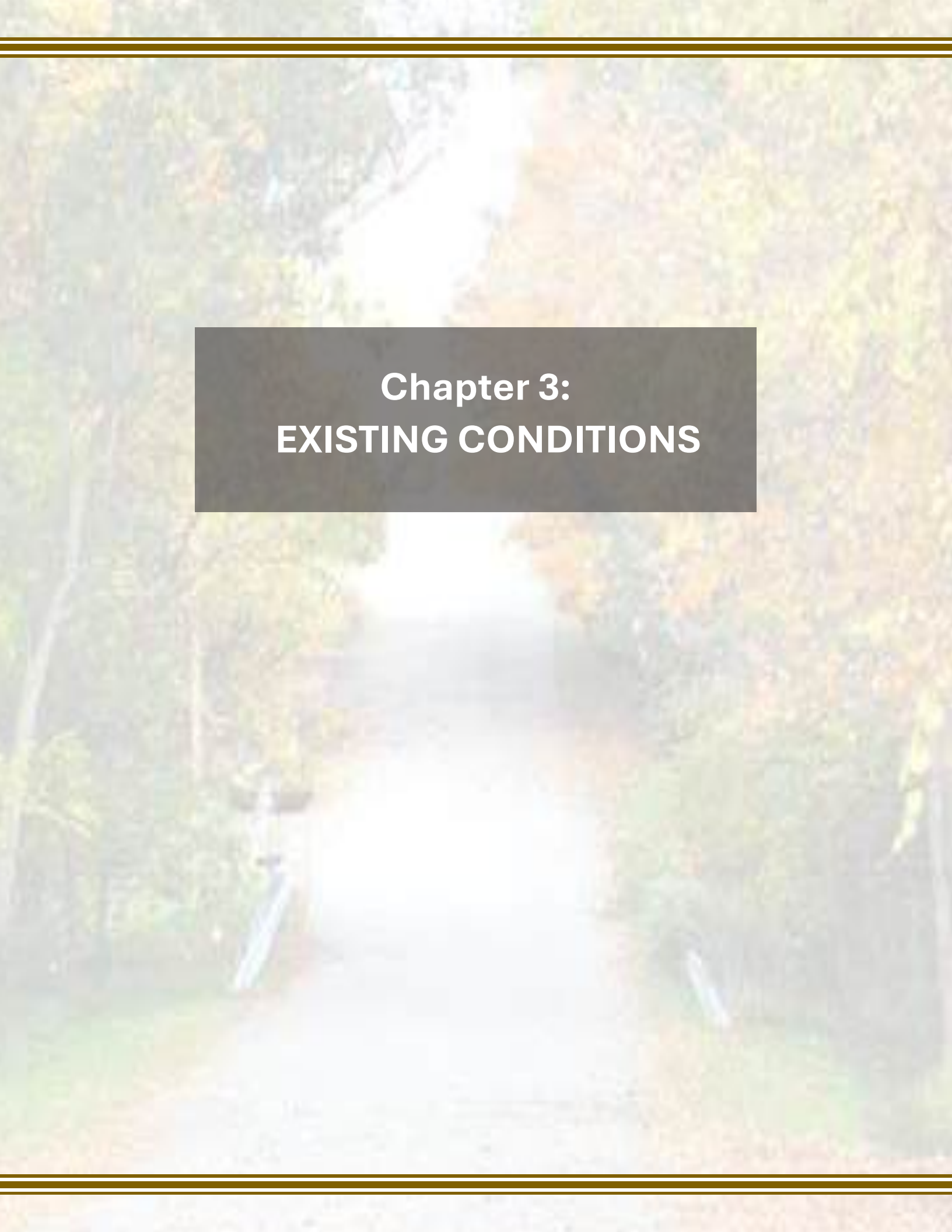
TABLE 2: VISIONING SESSIONS RESULTS - SWOT ANALYSIS

Through open discussions and the SWOT analysis, specific priorities were pulled and listed. Attendees were then asked to vote on these priorities with six stickers however they wish. As each session was unique each had a different slate of priorities that were drawn from their specific conversations. Some priorities such as Parks/Recreational asset upkeep/Recreational opportunities/programs, Thoughtful growth (Preserve community character, rural/farmland, use space better), Economic Development (Correctional Facility), and Quality of Schools/Pine City School were specifically discussed in all sessions.

TABLE 3: VISIONING SESSION RESULTS - PRIORITIES

Priorities	
These issues were pulled from the larger discussion and results from the previous tables. Participants were then asked to vote using six stickers; however, they wished	
1.	Parks/Recreational asset upkeep/Recreational opportunities/programs – 27
2.	“Thoughtful growth” (Preserve community character, rural/farmland, use space better) – 21
3.	Economic Development (Correctional Facility) – 15
	Quality of Schools/Pine City School – 15
4.	Town transparency and communication - 14
5.	More small local businesses (wide variety and produce) – 13
6.	Sewer Development - 12
7.	Property Maintenance/Code Enforcement – 10
	Flood Mitigation/Drainage Issues/Stormwater Control - 10
8.	Housing Affordability, Availability, and Variety - 8
9.	Public Engagement/Involvement – 7
	Business Directory – 7
10.	Development of Vacant Businesses/Plazas/Buildings/Facilities (Infill development) – 5
	Safety/Police Presence – 5
	Pedestrian/bike friendly roads (complete streets)- 5
	Sense of Community (Togetherness, friendly, neighbors know each other) - 5
11.	Town Road Maintenance – 4
12.	Attract/Retain Young Families - 3
13.	Municipal Collaboration – 2
	Environmental Protection – 2
	State Road (328) Maintenance – 2
	Low Taxes – 2
14.	Access to amenities/Proximity to Jobs – 1
15.	Solar Development Opportunities (PILOTs/HCBA) - 1

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An aerial photograph of a river with a large, light-colored central island. The riverbanks are lined with dense green and yellowish trees. The image is slightly blurred, giving it a soft, artistic feel. A dark grey rectangular box is centered over the middle of the image, containing white text.

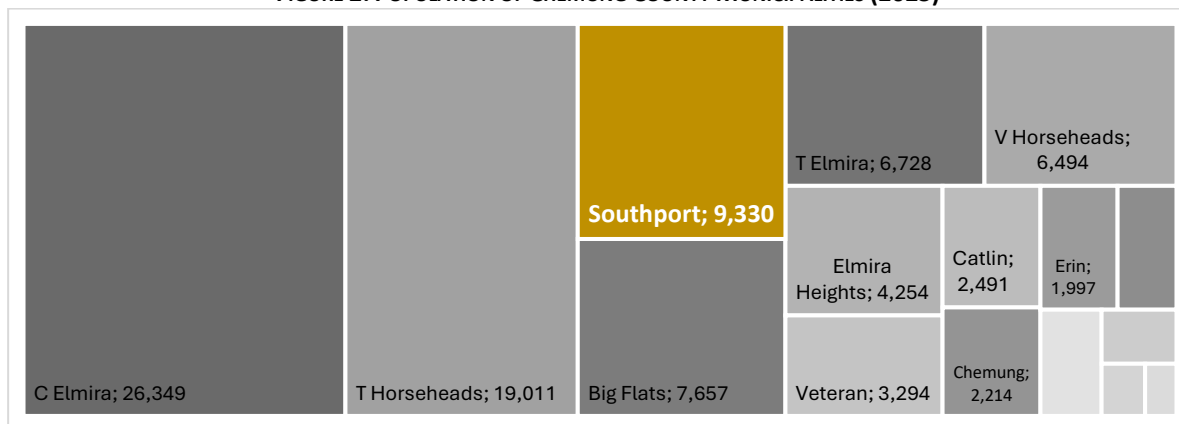
Chapter 3: EXISTING CONDITIONS

Demographic Characteristics

Current Population

As of 2023, the Town of Southport is home to 9,330 residents¹. Making it the third largest municipality by population in Chemung County, approximately 11.5% of the total 81,325 county population.

FIGURE 2: POPULATION OF CHEMUNG COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES (2023)

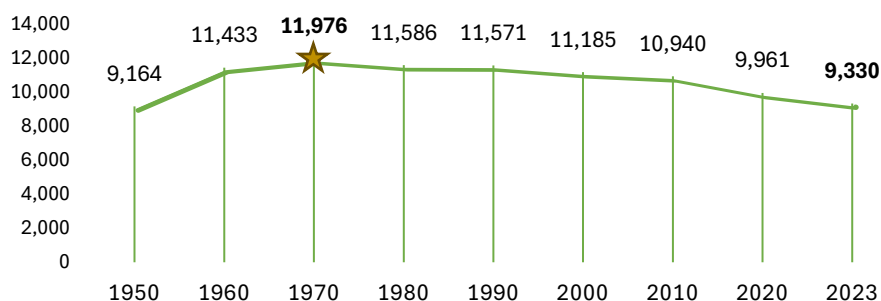


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Population Overtime

Southport's peak population was 11,976 in 1970 and has decreased in population ever since. Like much of New York State and particularly the Southern Tier, Southport is projected to continue to lose population. At its current rate since 2010, Southport is losing approximately 100 residents or 1% a year at a minimum for a total of 1,610 or 14.7%. Compared to the years 1990 and 2010 where Southport was losing approximately 30 or 0.3% of residents a year for a total of approximately 631 or 5.5%.³

FIGURE 3: POPULATION BY DECADE



¹ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP05*, 2023

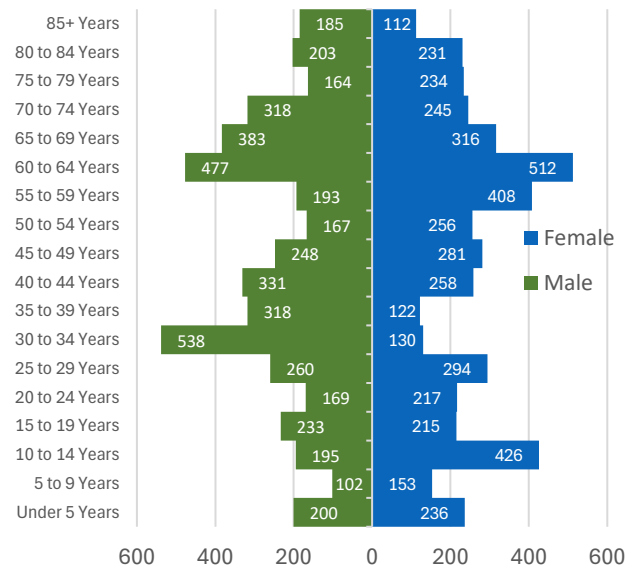
² U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Age and Sex." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101*, 2023 and "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP05*, 2023

³ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. *1950 – 2020 Censuses and American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP05*, 2023

Age of Population

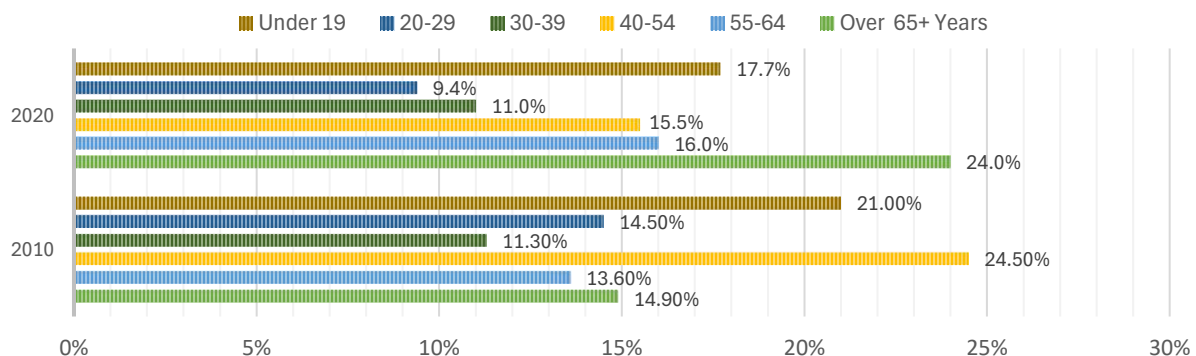
Like most Southern Tier communities, Southport is an aging community. The median age in Southport is 47.1 years old, older than Chemung County at 42.5 and neighboring towns of Big Flats at 43.7 and Elmira at 44.4. The population pyramid shows this trend in Southport. The pyramid is top heavy, indicating more residents over the age of 65 years and a lack of residents younger than 35 years. With nearly 25% being 65+ years of age.⁴ This raw count of population by age highlights the uneven distribution of residents' age and the concern of retaining younger residents. Since 2010, in 2020 the 65+ population and 55-64 have increased by 9.1% and 2.4% while every younger age group has decreased. The largest decreases are seen in the 40-54 age group, which declined by 9% and the 20-29 age group which declined by 6.1%. Some of the 40-54 residents contributed to the increase in the 55-64 age group. While the loss in the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups highlights the struggle to retain and attract younger residents and the 3.3% loss in Under 19 shows the struggle of young families with school-aged children.⁵

FIGURE 4: POPULATION PYRAMID (2023)



The Environmental Protection Agency created **Growing Smarter, Living Healthier: A Guide to Smart Growth and Active Aging (2009)** to address the basic principles of neighborhood and town design and how to make them more age friendly.

FIGURE 5: POPULATION BY AGE GROUP IN 2020 AND 2010

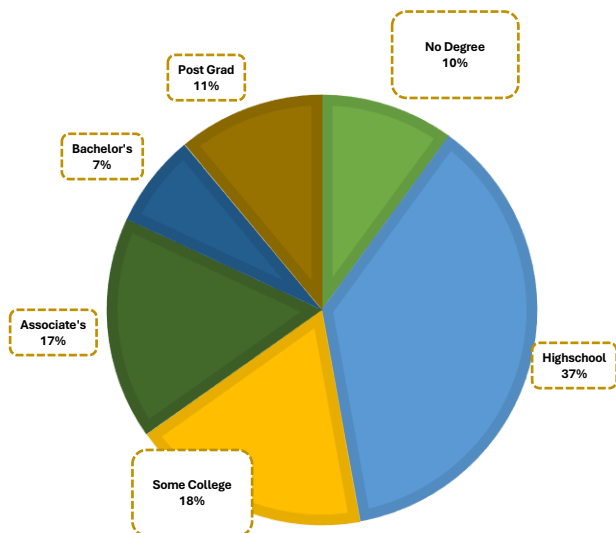


⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Age and Sex." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, 2023*

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. "SEX BY AGE." *Decennial Census, DEC Summary File 1, Table P12, 2010*, and "PROFILE OF GENERAL POPULATION AND HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS." *Decennial Census, DEC Demographic Profile, Table DP1, 2020*

Educational Attainment

FIGURE 6: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (2023)

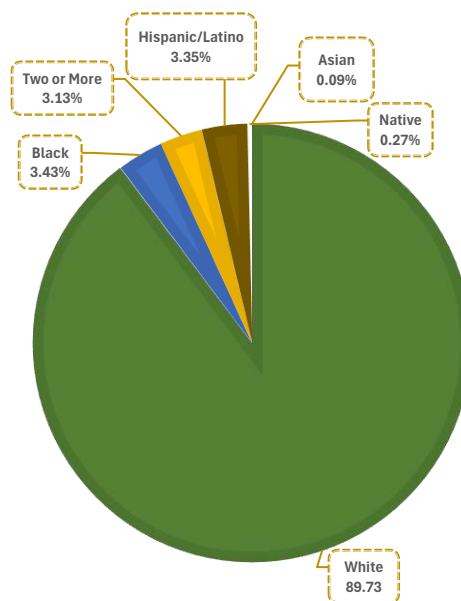


The Town of Southport is an educated community with 35% of residents over 25+ years having an Associate's, Bachelor's, or Post Grad degree, 18% having some college, 37% having a Highschool diploma or equivalent, and the remaining having no degree. Over 90% of residents are high school graduates. Overall, Southport has similar educational attainments to Chemung County. In the county 92.5% of residents 25+ years are high school graduates with 35.8% being their highest attainment and 40.2% attaining an Associate's, Bachelor's, or Post Grad degree.⁶ Educational attainment strongly influences the type of jobs and industries a community can attract.

Race and Ethnicity

A large majority (89.73%) of residents are "White alone." Compared to neighboring towns of Big Flats (94.1%) and Elmira (90.6%), Southport is slightly more diverse.⁷ Due to its adjacent setting to the south side of the City of Elmira and higher population. Compared to Chemung County, it is less diverse. A large majority (85.8%) of Chemung County is "White alone," approximately 3% lower than Southport. While the county has higher percentages of Black (5.9%), Asian (1.5%), Two or More Races (5.5%), Native (0.3%) and Hispanic/Latino (3.6%).⁸ Compared to 2010, "White alone" has increased in Southport by 2%.

FIGURE 7: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNIC GROUPS (2023)



⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Educational Attainment." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1501*, 2023

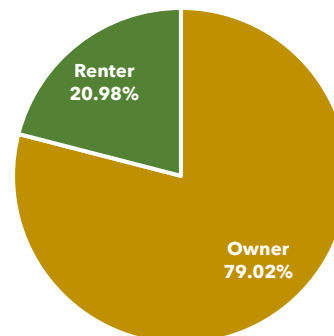
⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Race." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Tables, Table B02001*, 2023

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Race." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Tables, Table B02001*, 2023

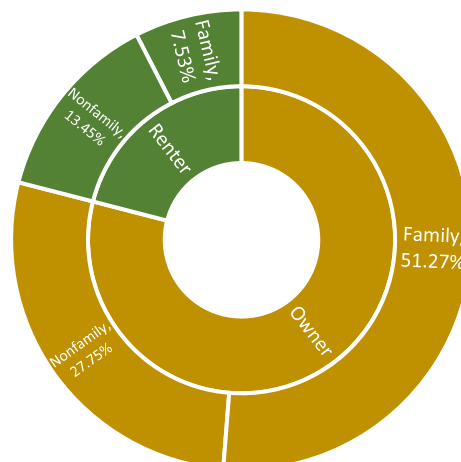
Households and Families

A household is an occupied housing unit whether it be a house or an apartment. Southport has a total of approximately 4,170 households. The majority of these are occupied by the owner (79.02%) while the remaining are occupied by renters (20.98%). Ownership is far higher in Southport compared to Chemung County (69.83%), New York State (54.31%), and the United States (65.02%). As ownership is more expensive than renting, the lack of rental properties and households drives out low-income and young residents. A family household is composed of persons related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. Non-family households are composed of either single-persons housing units or un-related occupants. The middle pie chart shows the percentages of family and non-family households by renting and owning. Family households are approximately 58.8% of households with family renters, 7.53% and family owners 51.27% of the households. The remaining 41.20% are non-family households with non-family renters as 13.45% and non-family owners as 27.75% of total households. The bottom pie chart explores households and families even further by depicting the percentage of family households with or without minors by renting and owning. The majority of households (73.35%) do not have minors with family renters as 7.79% and family owners as 65.56% of the total of family households. The remaining 27.65% of family households have minors with family renters as 5.02% and family owners as 22.63% of the total of family households. In total, family households with minors only represent 13.3% of all households in Southport.

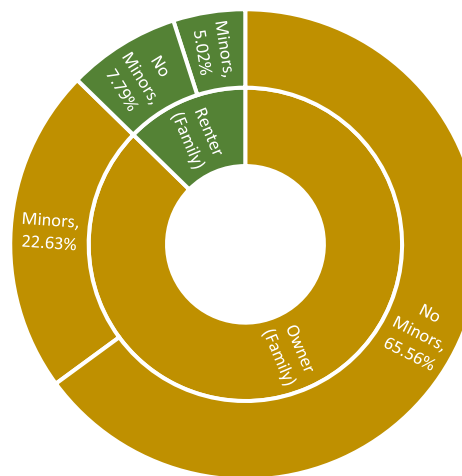
**FIGURE 8: HOUSEHOLD
OCCUPANCY BY TYPE (2023)**



**FIGURE 9: FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS
BY OCCUPANCY TYPE**



**FIGURE 10: FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS WITH
MINORS BY OCCUPANCY TYPE**



Economic Characteristics

Median Household Income

The median household income measures a geographic area's household economic status by determining what income level is the exact middle with 50% earning more and 50% earning less. The median household income in the Town of Southport is **\$63,371**, slightly higher than Chemung County at \$60,456⁹ and lower than New York State at \$81,600. The median household income has steadily increased over time. Between 2020 and 2023 the Town saw the sharpest increase in median household income since 2000 due to inflation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

FIGURE 11: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY INCOME LEVEL

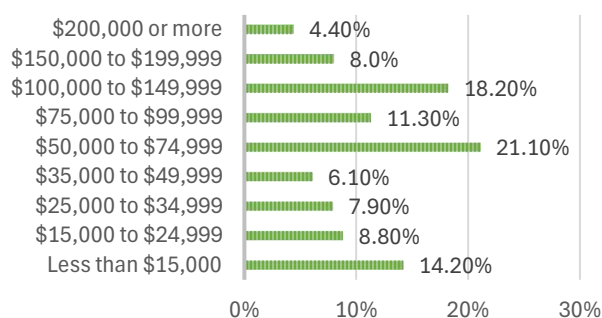
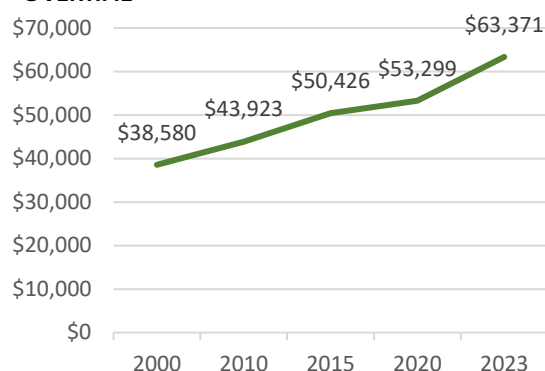


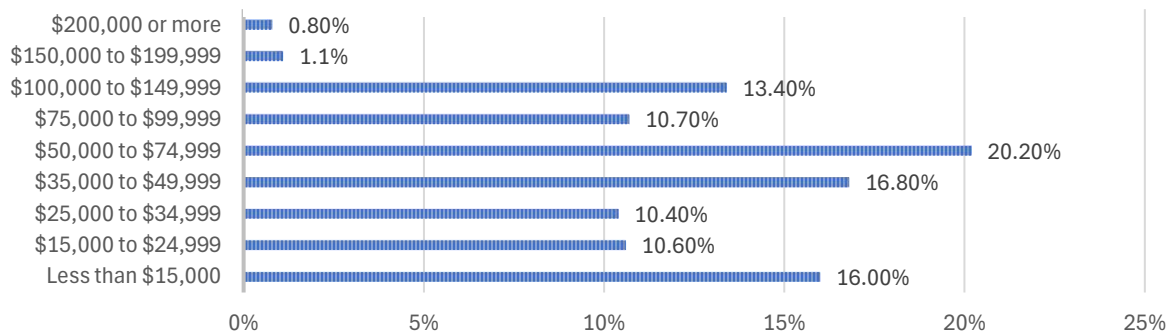
FIGURE 12: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME OVERTIME



Disposable Income

Disposable income is the measure of total household income after only taxes are removed. The median disposable income in the Town of Southport is **\$45,642**, lower than Chemung County at \$47,759 and lower than New York State at \$68,435.¹⁰ The residents of Southport have less disposable income on average compared to their county and state neighbors.

FIGURE 13: PERCENT OF POPULATION BY DISPOSABLE INCOME



⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2023 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1901, 2023*

¹⁰ Esri forecasts for 2024 and 2029. U.S. Census Bureau 2020 decennial Census data in 2020 geographies.

Poverty Rate

Poverty is defined as the lack of adequate financial resources to meet the basic necessities of living. The poverty rate is the percentage of the population whose income falls below the poverty line. In Southport, approximately 17.1% of residents fall below the poverty line. Lower than Chemung County at 18.7% but higher than New York State at 14.2% and the United States at 12.5%. ¹¹

FIGURE 14: POVERTY

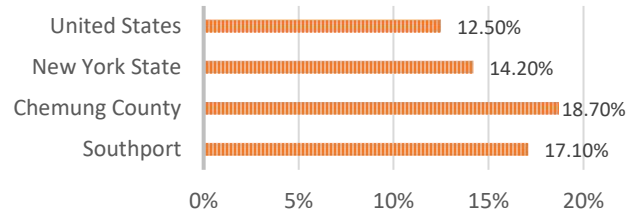
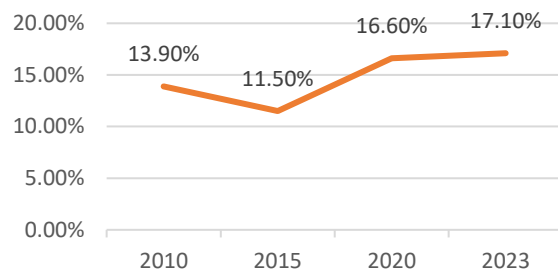


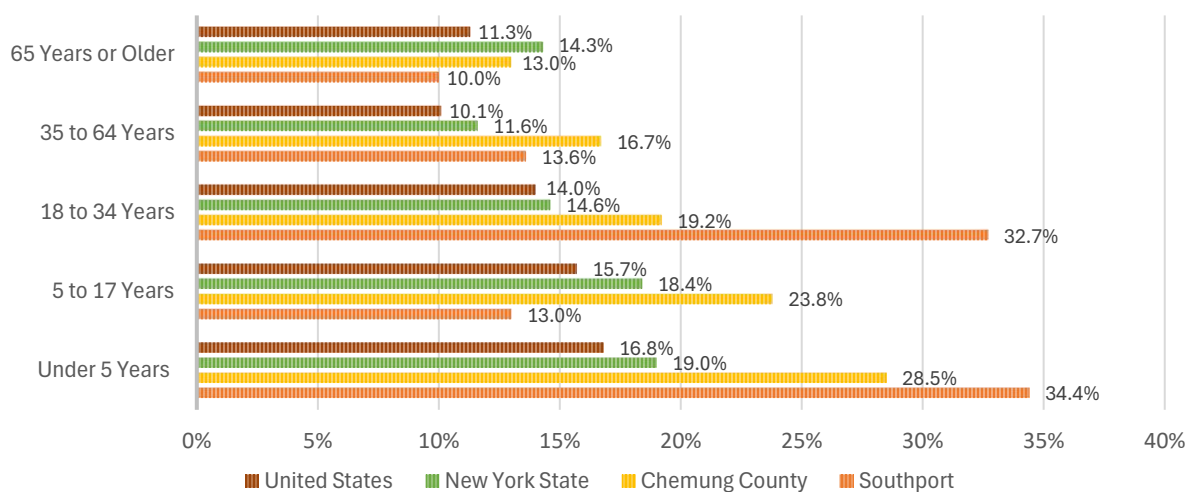
FIGURE 15: POVERTY RATE OVERTIME



Poverty by Age

In Southport, the most impoverished age groups are Under 5 Years at 34.4% and 18 to 34 Years at 32.7%. More than double the national percentage at 16.8% for Under 5 Years and 18 to 34 Years at 14.0%. However, Southport has the lowest rate among 65 Years and Older and 5 to 17 Years compared to Chemung County, New York State, and the United States. ¹²

FIGURE 16: PERCENT BELOW POVERTY BY AGE GROUP



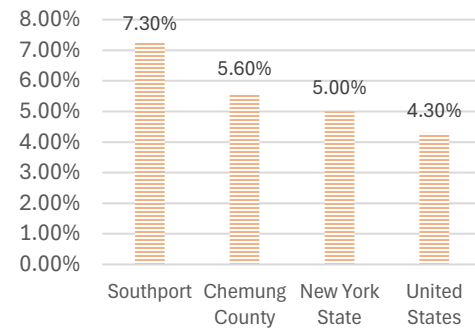
¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701, 2023*.

¹² U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months." *American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701, 2023*.

Unemployment

Unemployment is the measure of people in the labor force who are actively looking for work while unemployed. Among residents in the labor force, Southport's unemployment rate is 7.3%. Southport has a higher rate than Chemung County at 5.6%, New York State at 5.0%, and the United States at 4.3%.¹³

FIGURE 17: PERCENT UNEMPLOYED (2023)



Industry and Occupation

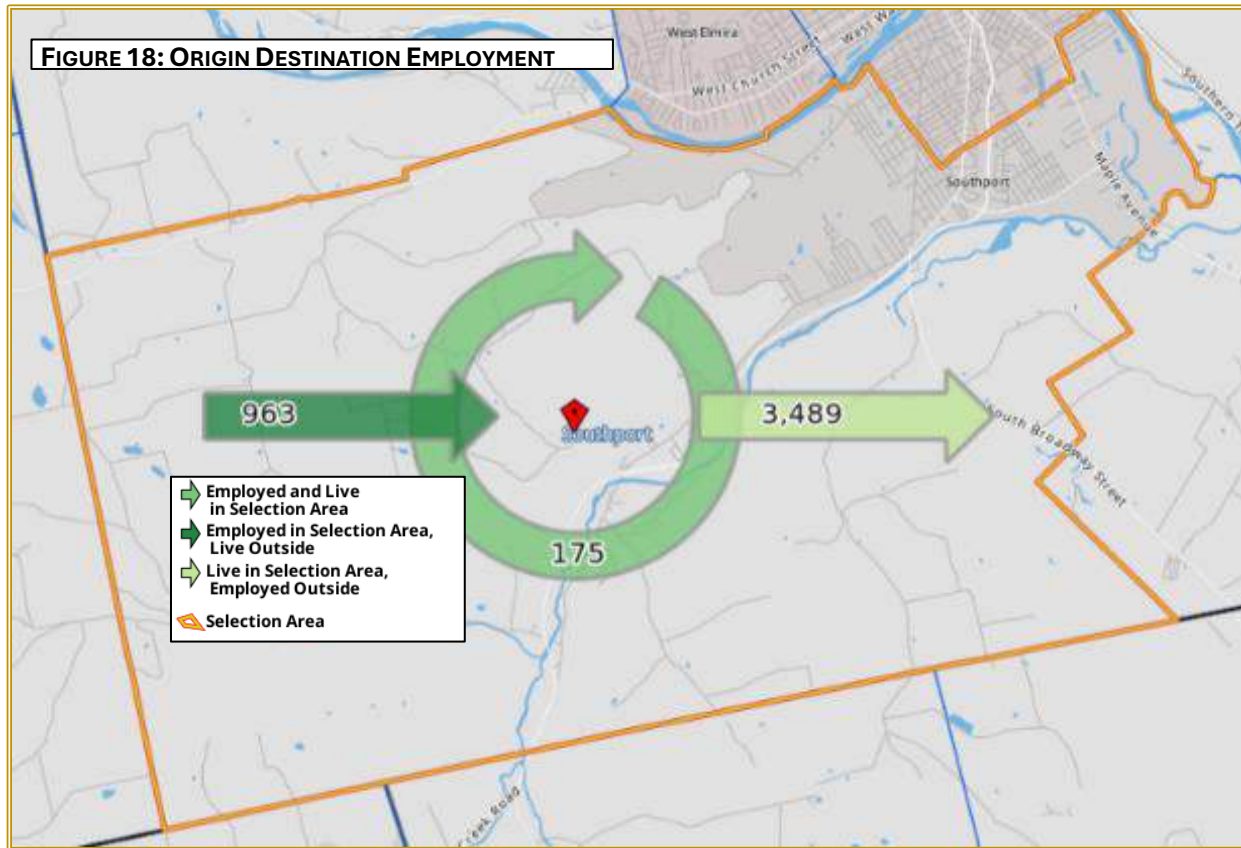


Figure 18 differentiates the origin destination of where workers and residents in Southport live and work.¹⁴ There is an approximate total of 1,138 jobs in Southport. Of these jobs 84.6% (963) are held by individuals who do not live in Southport while 15.4% (175) are held by individuals who do. The far majority of Southport working age employed residents do not work within the town, equaling 95.2% or 3,489. This highlights residents' concerns about the lack of jobs, opportunities, and businesses within the Town and their appreciation of the town's proximity to jobs outside of Southport.

¹³ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Selected Economic Characteristics." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03*, 2023

¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. "Origin Destination Employment Statistics" (for OnTheMap)," https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/data_downloads.html, accessed September 15, 2025

Legend	
Top Industries per year	Percent Change
Largest Industry	Growth: >+3.0%
Second Largest	Stability: -3.0% - +3.0%
Third Largest	Decline: < -3.0%

NAICS Industry	Total Percent Change (2007-2022)	2022		Percent Change	2017		Percent Change	2012		Percent Change	2007	
		Count	Percentage		Count	Percentage		Count	Percentage		Count	Percentage
Accommodation and Food Services	0.5%	205	18.0%	-8.9%	225	13.4%	-11.8%	255	14.1%	25.0%	204	11.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	-1.9%	202	17.8%	-30.3%	290	13.4%	29.5%	224	12.4%	8.7%	206	11.2%
Retail Trade	-19.5%	136	12.0%	-2.9%	140	8.4%	-41.7%	240	13.3%	42.0%	169	9.1%
Manufacturing	-38.1%	125	11.0%	5.0%	119	7.1%	-17.4%	144	8.0%	-28.7%	202	10.9%
Wholesale Trade	-26.9%	87	7.6%	-22.3%	112	6.7%	2.8%	109	6.0%	-8.4%	119	6.4%
Construction	-25.7%	75	6.6%	-21.9%	96	5.7%	-2.0%	98	5.4%	-3.0%	101	5.5%
Educational Services	37.3%	70	6.2%	-4.1%	73	4.4%	52.1%	48	2.7%	-5.9%	51	2.8%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	528.6%	44	3.9%	33.3%	33	2.0%	32.0%	25	1.4%	257.1%	7	0.4%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	2.5%	41	3.6%	-12.8%	47	2.8%	-21.7%	60	3.3%	50.0%	40	2.2%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0.0%	40	3.5%	-35.5%	62	3.7%	67.6%	37	2.1%	-7.5%	40	2.2%
Finance and Insurance	9.1%	36	3.2%	16.1%	31	1.8%	-6.1%	33	1.8%	0.0%	33	1.8%
Public Administration	-94.6%	33	2.9%	-91.8%	403	24.0%	-16.2%	481	26.7%	-20.6%	606	32.8%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	-60.0%	16	1.4%	-23.8%	21	1.3%	0.0%	21	1.2%	-47.5%	40	2.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	66.7%	10	0.9%	42.9%	7	0.4%	40.0%	5	0.3%	-16.7%	6	0.3%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	-43.8%	9	0.8%	-18.2%	11	0.7%	-21.4%	14	0.8%	-12.5%	16	0.9%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	-20.0%	4	0.4%		0	0.0%		0	0.0%	-100.0%	5	0.3%
Transportation and Warehousing		5	0.4%	-16.7%	6	0.4%	0.0%	6	0.3%		0	0.0%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	-100.0%	0	0.0%		0	0.0%	-100.0%	4	0.2%	300.0%	1	0.1%
Utilities		0	0.0%		0	0.0%		0	0.0%		0	0.0%
Information	-100.0%	0	0.0%		0	0.0%		0	0.0%	-100.0%	1	10.0%
TOTAL	-38.4%	1138	100%	-32.1%	1676	100%	-7.1%	1804	100%	-2.3%	1847	100%

TABLE 4: JOBS BY INDUSTRY OF ALL JOBS IN SOUTHPORT

Table 3 utilizes data from the U.S. Census Longitudal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD). It shows the total number of jobs by industry for the years 2007, 2012, 2017, and 2022 and their percent change for every industry between years. This data starts in 2007, a year prior to the 2008 financial crisis, and ends in 2022, the last year of the Covid-19 pandemic. Both of these events have had a severe impact on the local economy and fueled the shift towards a service industry based economy. The closure of the Southport Correctional Facility has had the biggest impact on jobs in Southport. In 2007, 2012, and 2017, Public Adminstration was the largest industry of employment in Southport. This industry includes the Southport Correctional Facility which employed over 400 individuals and was closed in 2022. This industry accounted for nearly a third of all jobs in Southport in 2007 (32.8%), to approxiamtely a quarter of all jobs in Southport in 2012 (26.7%) and 2017 (24.0%), to less than 3% in 2022. The closure of the correctional facility accounts for more than half of lost jobs since 2007. Now, the largest industry of employment is Accomodation and Food which includes hotels, RV sites, restaurants, cafes, bars, and caterers. This industry is approxmitely 18.0% of employment with Health Care and Social Assistance close behind at 17.8%. The third largest is Retail Trade at 12.0% and the fourth is Manufacturing at 11.0%. These four industries were consistently the largest behind Public Adminstation in 2007, 2012, and 2017 but now lead employment. However most industries in terms of employment have shrank since 2007, only five have experienced significant growth (Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation, Educational Services, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, and Finance and Insurance) while four have been fairly stable (Accommodation and Food Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Other Services (excluding Public Administration)). While these areas of growth may be significant they only total a fraction of employment. In total Southport has lost 38.7% (709) of jobs since 2007 with the closure of the correctional facility composing of approximtely half (56.4%) of the loss. Southport's economy has shifted to a service based economy. This table highlights significant and uneven growth and loss across industries indicating transition. This mix of contraction and expansion highlights the need for better strategic planning to address areas of concern, build upon existing strengths, and take advanatge of economic development opportunites and partners to ensure sustainbale growth and community well-being.

Demographic and Economic Implications

1. Losing Population

Since its peak in 1970, Southport has been losing population every decade. Population loss leads to an aging population, shrinking workforce, and declining tax revenue which strains the local economy and businesses and provides less money to be invested into upkeep and expansion of infrastructure and recreational assets. This is not unique to Southport as it draws across the Southern Tier region. The Town cannot address these impacts alone, strategies such as collaboration with neighboring municipalities, coordination with regional, county, and state partners, and building an attractive community to live, work, eat, and engage will address such issues.

2. Aging Population

With the population loss comes an aging population. Typically, older residents are on a fixed income and do not have the need, desire, and ability to move, leaving them in place. Aging in place refers to their desire to stay in their own home, maintain independence for long as possible, and have family and friends for help when needed with concerns about safety, getting around, and the ability to afford and access the necessities such as groceries, medication, and transit. The Town can help people age in place to retain the population while offering an age friendly quality of life. Strategies such as age friendly and accessible infrastructure (walkable streets, access to public transit, benches at bus stops), affordable, accessible, and diverse housing (“in-laws” dwellings, senior housing), hosting community programs (social clubs, town events), and providing access to support, health, and informational services will assist these aging populations to age on their own terms.

3. Struggling to Retain and Attract Young Families and Professionals

As seen in Figure 5, age groups under 40 all decreased since 2010. While Figure 9 shows family households constitute 58.8% of all households, Figure 10 shows that of family households 22.67% have minors. When grouped in with all households, family households with minors represent 13.3% of all households in Southport. While young families and professionals typically cannot afford to buy a home or struggle with rent this disparity is further inflamed by the housing affordability and availability crisis and rising inflation. Attracting, identifying, and siting industries and businesses that provide good paying jobs and permitting a diverse, available, and affordable housing types will attract and retain these critical populations. In the visioning sessions participants identified vacant properties such as the former correctional facility and a former rite aid as properties they would like to see developed, vacant properties and underutilized properties should be used for economic development and housing, Collaboration with neighboring municipalities and with county, regional, state, and federal entities is critical in attracting, identifying, and siting such industry. Supporting “third places” such as youth activities, recreational sport leagues, or certain small businesses where residents can socialize and engage with their community will incentivize such populations. The term “third places” refers to informal social environments outside of the two usual social environments home (first place) and work (second place). Examples of third places include theaters, parks, churches, restaurants/cafes, libraries/bookstores, and gyms, among others. These spaces often act as a community anchor, offering connection, community, and socialization. They define the sense of place of a community and an individual’s sense of belonging in that community. Participants voiced

their desire to see such spaces and mixed uses within the denser parts of town. Additionally, forging a welcoming and inclusive community

4. Strained Regional Economy

Like the majority of Southern Tier communities; Southport is facing economic challenges marked by high poverty, high unemployment, stagnant job growth, and low levels of disposable income. These conditions indicate a struggling local economy where many residents are unable to meet basic needs, local businesses face reduced consumer spending, and job opportunities are limited. This not only puts pressure on public services and infrastructure but also contributes to broader social issues such as declining health, education, and community stability. Addressing these challenges is critical for reversing economic decline and creating a more resilient and prosperous future for the town. Strategic investments in workforce development, small business support, and affordable housing will be essential to stimulate growth. Additionally, collaborative efforts between government, community organizations, and private stakeholders can help build long-term economic resilience.

Government, Services, and Infrastructure

Town Government

The town is governed by a Town Supervisor, Deputy Town Supervisor, and of a four-person town council elected to a 4-year term. The Town Clerk, two Town Justices, and the Highway Superintendent are also elected to 4-year terms. The Town Board meets monthly on the second Tuesday at the Town Hall. Other staff members include court clerks, a Deputy Town Clerk, a Deputy Highway Superintendent, a Code Enforcement Officer, a Seasonal Code Enforcement Officer, a Town Assessor, a Parks and Recreation Attendant, Traffic Officers, and multiple highway personnel. The planning board consists of 7 community members and 1 alternate member. Their intent is to promote business development and ensure that the operation complies with town land uses and to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the Town. The planning board meets monthly on the first Monday at the Town Hall. The Board of Appeals reviews local zoning decisions by Area or Use Variance; it meets monthly on the third Wednesday at the Town Hall. Throughout the visioning sessions, residents consistently discussed the lack of transparency and communication from the Town government. In an ever-changing digital landscape, reaching residents can present difficulties. Not all residents have social media or technology for the internet, not all residents have access to the same local news stations, and mailing is increasingly costly. Town officials should ensure transparency and communication by making all public materials available and accessible, including all relevant local news stations, and maintain the Town’s website to be up to date. During the writing of this plan, the Town recently restarted the town newsletter to act as a centralized location for recent and important news and events for residents. This should expand and find ways to be cost effective and communicative.



PHOTO 2: SOUTHPORT TOWN HALL

Roads and Transportation

According to the NYSDOT 2025 Local Roads Listing, there are approximately 79.51 centerline miles (158.89 lane-miles) of town road and 32.47 centerline miles (65.34 lane-miles) of county road in the Town of Southport. There are approximately 20.93 centerline miles of State road. When asked about the current state of road maintenance and snow removal, 67% responded stating that either it “should be improved and worth the cost” or it “could

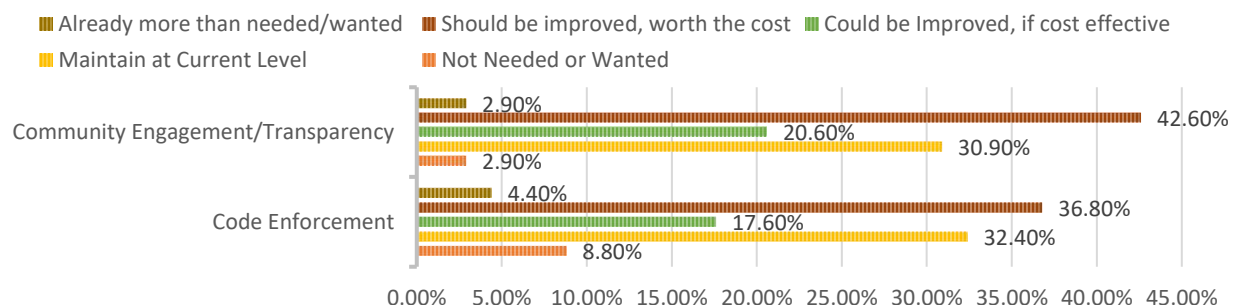


FIGURE 19: SURVEY RESULTS - LOCAL GOVERNMENT

be improved, if cost effective”. Survey respondents and session participants delineated this applies to all town, county, and state roads. Maintenance of State Route 328 was frequently discussed due to issues of overgrown vegetation, poor lighting, and the not well-kept traffic circles. Not only are these issues a detriment to visibility and traffic safety, but also the overlook of the community. Route 328 is an entrance into the community, maintaining it is essential to the community’s character and sense of place. It is owned and maintained by the State under the responsibility of NYSDOT Region 6 based in Hornell.

FIGURE 20: SURVEY RESULTS - ROAD MAINTENANCE/SNOW REMOVAL

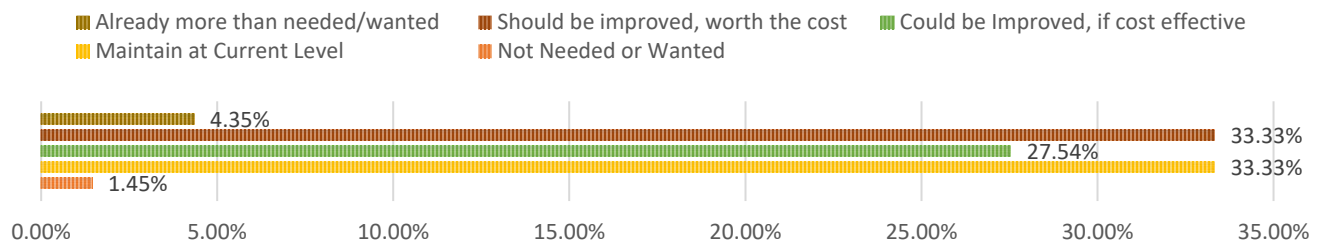
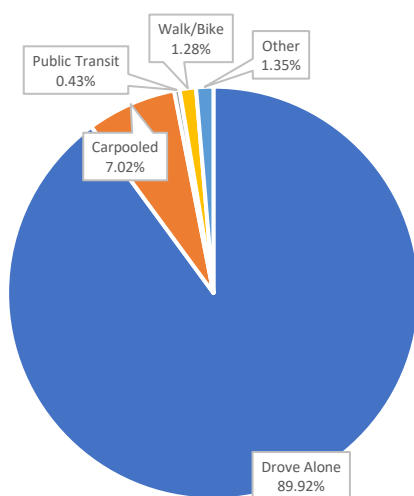
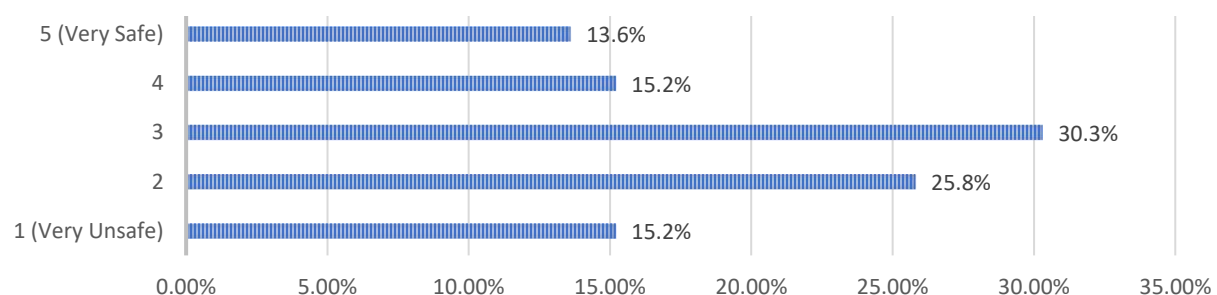


FIGURE 21: PRIMARY MODE OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



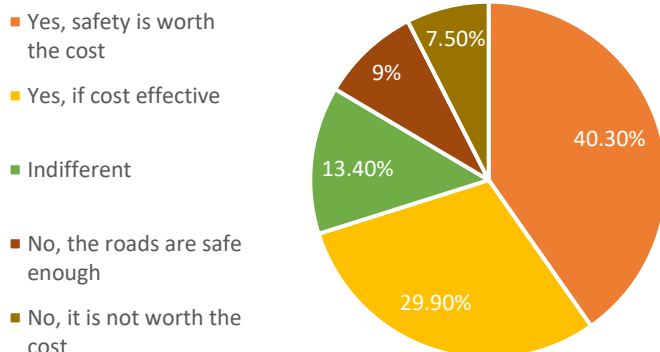
The 2023 5-Year ACS Estimates show that the majority of Southport residents use their personal vehicle for commuting and transportation.¹⁵ The survey results reflect this as well. Very few respondents stated they have ever used public transit, 3.3% said they do. The public transit system is under the authority of CTRAN and is a vital infrastructure for some Southport residents and businesses. The town should be an active collaborator with CTRAN to help improve the services to the areas and residents in need, particularly the elderly and low income. Approximately, 27.9% of respondents stated they frequently walk and bike on the streets. When asked to rate how safe the roads are for walking and bicycling the responses were evenly spread as seen in Figure 22. This demands more insight into the specific areas and streets that are not safe enough for walking and bicycling.

FIGURE 22: SURVEY RESULTS - ROAD SAFETY RATING FOR WALKING/BICYCLING



¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau (2019-2023). *Sex of Workers by Means of Transportation to Work American Community Survey 5-year estimates*.

FIGURE 23: SURVEY RESULTS - INVESTMENTS FOR WALKING/BICYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE



Survey respondents were largely in favor of investing in road and pedestrian infrastructure to improve walking and bicycling safety. More public collaboration should be completed on this topic to understand where the priority areas for walking and bicycling infrastructure, safety, and accessibility are needed the most.

Emergency Services

Emergency fire services are provided by four volunteer fire districts: Pine City Fire District #1, Big Flats Fire District #2 (Golden Glow), Webbs Mills Fire District #4, and Southport Protection District #1, each district has its own facilities. Throughout the public input, stakeholders expressed their appreciation and admiration for the fire personnel. Ambulances and EMS are provided by Erway Ambulance Service. Southport does not have its own police department. New York State Police and the Chemung County's Sheriff's Office provide police services to Southport, including a 40 hour per week resident deputy.

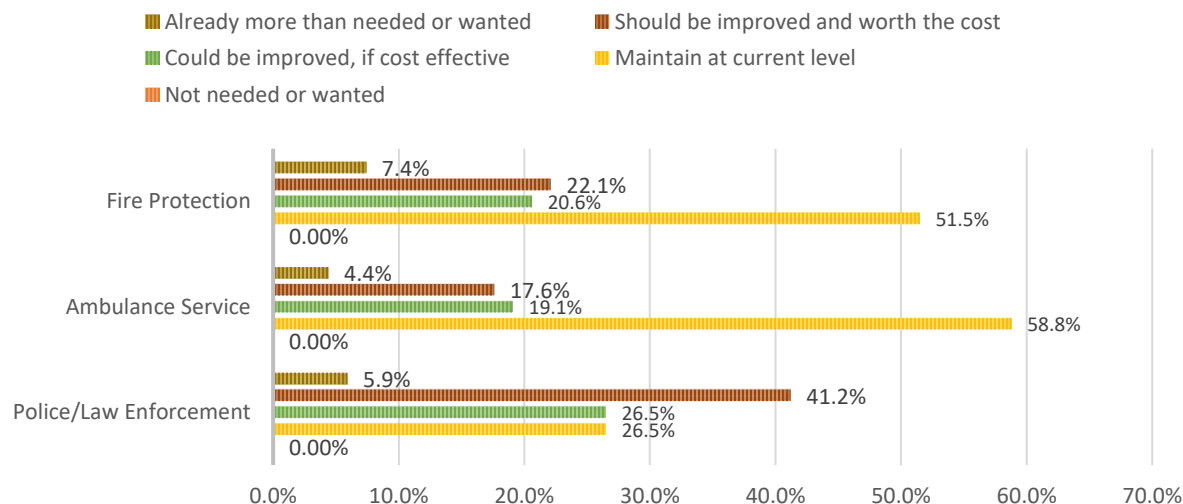


FIGURE 24: SURVEY RESULTS - EMERGENCY SERVICES

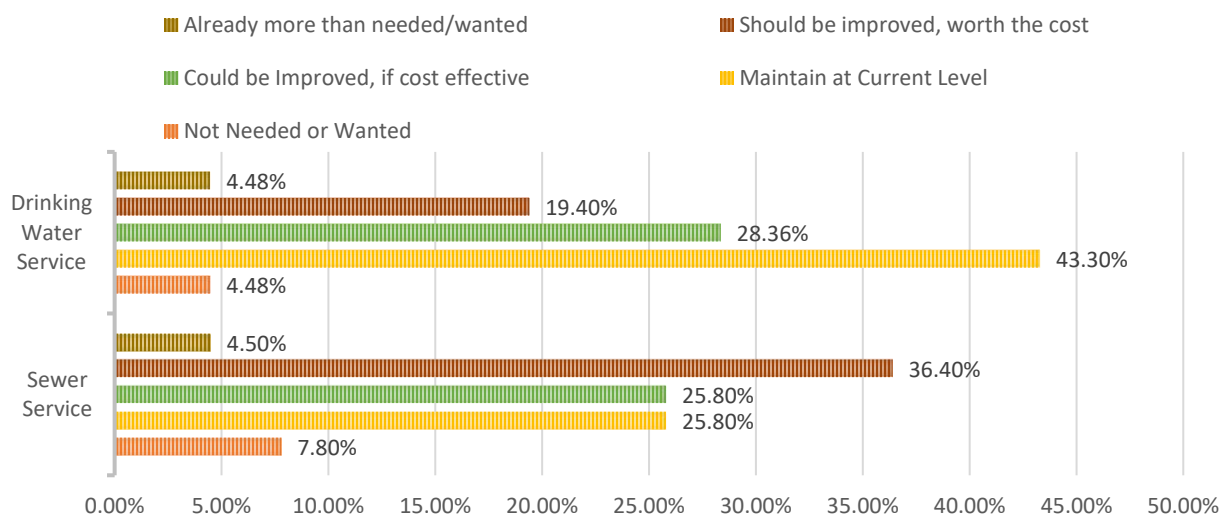
Power and Natural Gas

New York State Electricity and Gas (NYSEG) is the sole supplier of electricity in Southport. NYSEG and Corning Natural Gas are the suppliers of natural gas for the Town of Southport. The rising cost of utilities, particularly those on a fixed income such as retirees, was strongly voiced as a concern and threat to the cost of living and quality of life in Southport among residents.

Water and Sewer

Portions of Southport’s dense suburban neighborhoods adjacent to the south side of the City of Elmira get sewer service from the Chemung County Elmira Sewer District. Service is predicated by need and feasibility. The Town is in the process of extending the sewer system to 381 residential and commercial parcels that were unsewered through the NYS Water Quality Improvement Project Program. This project is replacing on-site sewage disposal systems, most of which did not meet New York State Department of Health minimum standards and is reducing the amount of nutrients entering the Chemung River. During the visioning sessions residents vocalized their support and desire to expand sewer service in neighborhoods such as Mount Zoar and to the Pine City Elementary School. Other neighborhoods have expressed interest in extending sewer service to their households as well. Expansion of sewer service should be determined off feasibility and cost. The rest of Southport is reliant on on-site septic. Similarly, most residents are reliant on private wells while a portion of Southport residents are served by the Elmira Water Board. Investments into water and sewer infrastructure are key components of economic development to attract desired industries and businesses.

FIGURE 25: SURVEY RESULTS - SEWER AND DRINKING WATER



High Speed Broadband

New York State aims to achieve 100% broadband coverage for all addresses by 2030. In 2025, New York State defines high speed internet at the “served” level as service with a minimum of 100 megabits per second (Mbps) download speeds and 20 Mbps upload speeds (100/20 Mbps). According to New York State’s Broadband Map, 98.8% (4,916) of addresses in Southport have high speed internet while 1.2% (60) do not. The remaining 1.2% are “unserved” which is defined as “no fixed wireless service or wired service with speeds of less than 25Mbps download available.” Charter Communications (Spectrum) is the predominant provider of broadband service in Southport providing cable technology throughout most of the town. Other notable providers are T-Mobile and Empire Long Distance Corporation, who provide some service at the served level through licensed fixed wireless and fiber to the premises technology, respectively. While satellite technology is available for the whole town, it is far more costly on the consumer than typical copper, coax, fiber to the premises, and licensed fixed wireless technologies. In recent years New York State has released numerous grant funding opportunities through the Office of ConnectALL to achieve their 2030 goal. Southern Tier Network (STN), a not-for-profit middle mile broadband infrastructure developer covers the southern tier including areas in Southport, primarily along State Route 328 and County Routes 28 and 85. STN is a vital part of ensuring affordable high-speed internet throughout the Southern Tier region. The Town should collaborate with agencies such as ConnectAll Office, STN, STC, CCIDA, and Chemung County to target the remaining addresses with no high-speed internet. The Office of ConnectALL has a variety of grant programs to fund such projects. If residents do not receive or cannot be offered speeds at the Served level both the FCC and NYS allow for residents to challenge such coverage.

Cellular Service

In addition to broadband, New York State aims to address gaps in cellular coverage throughout the State. The Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) National Broadband Map shows cellular gaps in Southport primarily in the western side of the Town. 4GLTE coverage has pockets of gaps in the area between Hendy Creek Rd and Sagetown Rd and no service on Miller Rd. These areas also have little to no 5G service available. Most of Southport has 5G coverage, particularly the areas around the major transportation arteries Route 328 (Pennsylvania Ave) and Route 14 (S Broadway). The 5G coverage gaps are even greater and includes areas around Christian Hollow Rd. The largest mobile providers in Southport are Verizon and T-Mobile. Similarly, New York State through the Office of ConnectALL offers grant funding opportunities to close the gaps. Essential agencies in this issue are Chemung County, CCIDA, and STC.

FIGURE 26: BROADBAND AND CELLULAR SERVICE SURVEY RESULTS



Waste and Recycling

Residents are responsible for the disposal of their own waste. There are several ways residents dispose of their waste. Some hire private waste management companies such as Greenleaf Recycling and Casella Waste Systems. They can also buy County trash bags from their local retailer and bring trash to the dump. Chemung County offers ways for residents to dispose of electronic waste and waste in excess amount. The County Trash Voucher Program allots each municipality with vouchers for residents who then can dispose of up to 1,000lbs of waste, free of charge to the County Milling Station. This voucher program has proved to be very popular and has expanded in recent years. Residents can dispose of electronic waste through Chemung County who has partnered with Cornell Cooperative Extension to properly handle such waste.

FIGURE 27: SURVEY RESULTS - WASTE AND RECYCLING



Schools

Most of the town falls within the Elmira City School District with a few homes in the northwestern corner being within the Corning-Painted Post Area School District. In addition, Southport is within the Greater Southern Tier BOCES region. There are six schools located within Southport, four of which are a part of the Elmira City School District, and a private high school.

Pine City Elementary School (Grades Pre-K – 2): A public school for grades Pre-K to 2nd, 1 of 4 elementary schools in the Elmira City School District.

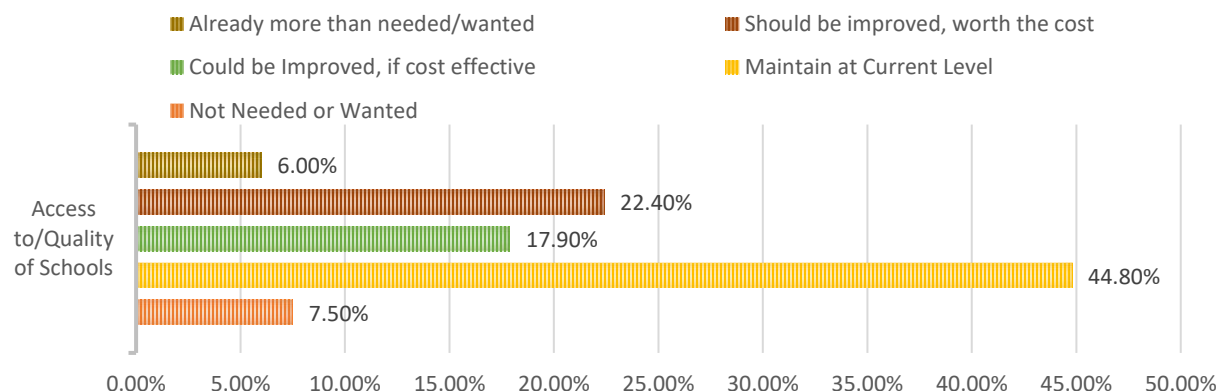
Broadway Elementary School (Grades 3-6): Partner school with Pine City Elementary School, for grades 3rd to 6th in the Elmira City School District.

Broadway Academy (Grade 9): A secondary school for 9th grade students in the Elmira City School District.

Elmira High School (10-12): The only high school in the Elmira City School District for grades 10th to 12th.

Notre Dame High School (Grades 7-12): A private, catholic school, serving students in grade 7th to 12th.

FIGURE 28: SURVEY RESULTS - SCHOOLS



Non-Profit Services

Glove House (Ages 12-18): A nonprofit, youth advocacy organization designed to support and facilitate the development and operation of community-based prevention, mental health and educational support services, foster care services, and residential services for youth and families in need. Glove House employees are regularly active community members, especially in the Summer Parks Program and other community events.

The Chatauqua Center (Able 2): A nonprofit organization that supports people with development and intellectual disabilities. Their main goal is to help individuals live independently, participate in the community, and improve their quality of life.

Cultural, Historic, and Recreational Resources

Parks

Parks are the center of a community; they act as a gathering location, a recreational facility, and a community center that defines a community's character. It is goal of the Parks and Recreation department to provide accessible, affordable, and quality programs, activities, services, and facilities to all residents of Southport. Residents consistently stated the parks are one of the greatest strengths of the town and identified them as a top priority. Each park provides ample green space for relaxation and scenic views. The Town of Southport owns and maintains four parks:

Chapel Park is located at 83 Personius Road, Pine City, NY 14871, and home to the Community Center. This park is approximately 22 acres, making it the largest park in Southport and the most visited. It has 3 little league baseball fields, 3 softball fields, a major league sized baseball field, tee-ball grass field, half mile paved and lighted recreational trail, a tennis court which was recently repaved, a repaved basketball court, and recently repaved 3 pickleball courts with lighting planned. This park also includes playground equipment, outdoor grills, storage sheds, pavilions, concession stands, and restrooms. Various organizations and leagues utilize these facilities such as Broadway Elementary School for recess and outdoor activities. The Community Center also acts as the Senior Center and Parks and Recreation Office. The Community Center is an outdated 40+ year old facility with inadequate heating and cooling systems and structural limitations failing to meet the needs for year-round activities. It is available to rent out for events. It hosts weekly community events and classes such as art club, chair caning, card players club, and bone builders' classes. The Town has made efforts to revitalize the community center through various grant opportunities but have not been successful. In the summer, the Bookmobile is here every other Tuesday from 3PM to 4PM. It is also home to a community garden with 14 plots that provides residents with a plot to grow their own vegetables and flowers and has proved to be extremely popular, demanding expansion and new plots.



PHOTO 3: COMMUNITY CENTER



PHOTO 5: CHAPEL PARK



PHOTO 4: COMMUNITY GARDEN

Draxler Park is located on Dry Run Road in Pine City and is 19.3 acres, making it the second largest park in Southport. Recently the Town installed a new pavilion, barbeque grills, and an aeration system in the pond to maintain a healthy ecosystem. It is also home to 1 baseball field, 2 other pavilions, a playground, and a storage building. The Town recently installed a half-mile trail, and residents have expressed interest in more expansion.



PHOTO 6: DRAXLER PARK ENTRANCE



PHOTO 7: ELMER GOODWIN PARK ENTRANCE

Elmer Goodwin Park (Universal Park) is located on Robert Street. The 4.5-acre park is home to 3 lacrosse fields, 2 baseball fields, and a soccer field that shares the same space as well as a basketball court. In addition, the park has a half mile trail, a playground, a splash pad, a small storage building and garage.

Roger Sterling Park is a 2.2-acre park located on Bird Creek Road in Pine City. Named after Roger Sterling the founder of Fair Shake Ice Creamery. The park has a baseball field, a pavilion, a playground, and a storage building.



PHOTO 8: PLAYGROUND AT ROGER STERLING PARK

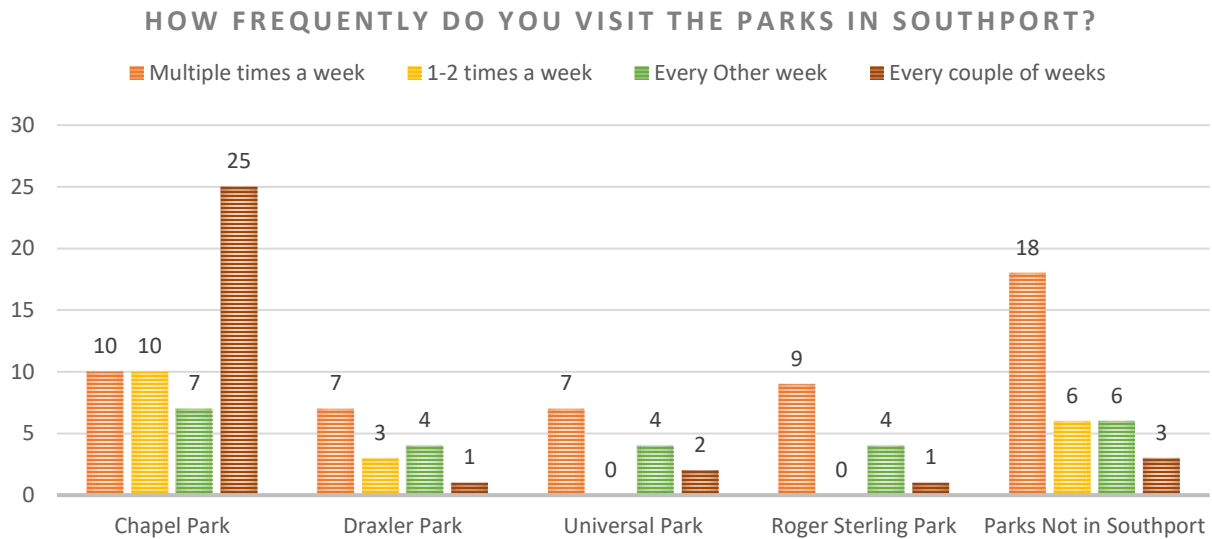


FIGURE 29: SURVEY RESULTS - PARK VISITATION FREQUENCY



FIGURE 30: SURVEY RESULTS - IMPORTANCE OF RECREATIONAL SPACES

How can these parks be improved?	
•	Improved Safety and Lighting x 8
•	New Community Center at Chapel Park x7
•	Improved Maintenance and Upkeep of Trails and Courts x5
•	More Pavilions and Grills, Drinking Fountains, More Comfortable Benches x3
•	More Community Events for All Ages x3
•	Indoor Walking Path x2
•	Dog Park x2
•	All Season Access Trails x1
•	Outdoor Exercise Stations x1
•	Pool x 1

TABLE 5: SURVEY RESULTS - PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Recreational Leagues and Programs

Recreational leagues and programs are a critical resource for social connection and community gathering. They strengthen an individual's mental, emotional, and physical well-being by providing outdoor physical activity for all ages. This plan has identified the leagues and programs that operate within Southport and utilize the town's recreational facilities.

- **Summer Parks Program:** This six-week annual program for 5- to 12-year-olds is operated by the Town. It runs Monday through Friday from 9AM to 2:45PM. It provides quality enrichment, educational, and recreational opportunities for children of all ages at Chapel Park and Goodwin Park. The program used to use Draxler Park but to decline in numbers they had to consolidate.
- **Southport Cinderella:** Southport Cinderella is a girls youth softball league. Starting in 2007, the league is in its 18th annual season and offers three levels of programs. Under the name Lady Sting, the team utilizes the softball field at Chapel Park and operates the concession stands.
- **Southport Recreation Association:** For kids K-6th, the SRA is committed to the advancement of youth sports in Southport. The lacrosse team utilizes the lacrosse fields at Elmer Goodwin Park and is exploring the addition of a girl's lacrosse league.
- **Southport Kiwanis Club:** An international not for profit aimed at supporting youth development through education, recreation, and health focused causes. The local Southport Kiwanis Club utilizes Chapel Park on Wednesdays.
- **Elmira Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken Baseball:** This youth softball and baseball league offers a "kids first" experience regardless of skill and ability. Partnered with the SRA, these leagues cover the majority of Chemung County and some parts of northern PA to recruit players. This partnership between recreational entities expands opportunities for every child regardless of location to get them outside and active.
- **Pickleball Association of the Twin Tiers:** This association offers educational, competition, and socialization opportunities for people and players of all ages, abilities, and skill level. PATT aims to grow the game of pickleball by cultivating an environment that promotes health, sportsmanship, fun, and socialization through recreational and competitive play. PATT utilizes the courts at Chapel Park during the warmer seasons.
- **Chemung County Senior Games:** The Office of the Aging and Long-Term Care hosts an annual sporting, fitness, and fun event for those aged 50 and over to highlight their active life and encourage exercise, nutrition, and positive lifestyle choices. Southport Parks and Recreation are proud supporters of this initiative by permitting use of their facilities for the competitions and games.

History and Art

The Southport community is filled with historical resources and creative opportunities that capture, display, and express the character of the community. These resources are essential to the social and civic life of residents; supporting them will maintain and uplift the quality of life of all stakeholders.

- Elmira Little Theater:** A not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting the theater arts in the twin tiers and offers opportunities for community involvement and education. It has been an all-volunteer vibrant community theater since 1944, showcasing local musical and theatrical talent.
- Recreational Art Classes:** Through the Parks and Recreation Department, the Town offers weekly art classes at the Community Center. These include chair caning, bone builders, art club, and sewing.
- Elmira Regional Art Society:** Since 1869, ERAS encourages development in the visual arts, provides venues to showcase work, and fosters appreciation of art. They meet monthly at Chapel Park for discussions and events regarding the visual arts. These meetings are open to the public.
- Southport Historical Society:** Formed in 1978, the Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the history of Southport and providing education to residents, schools, businesses, and all community members. They offer two annual educational and informational programs at Chapel Park. Located next to the Town Hall, it has information available about a multitude of topics from the community such as farming practices and history, past and present businesses, Town history, and many more.



PHOTO 9: SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY SIGN



PHOTO 10: WELLS STATION HISTORIC SIGN

Notable Community Events

- Fire Hall Events:** The fire departments host numerous events throughout the year such as barbeques. These events are extremely popular among residents and contribute to the small town feel residents enjoy.
- Easter Egg Hunt:** Annual easter egg hunt held at Chapel Park sponsored by Southport Parks and Recreation.

- **Halloween Festival:** The annual Halloween festival is held at Chapel Park and includes a trunk or treat, games, and music sponsored and supported by local businesses and organizations.
- **Christmas Land/Parade:** The Southport Business Association, Southport Volunteer Fire Company, the Southport Kiwanis club, and the Town of Southport partner up to host the annual Christmas Land and Parade at the fire hall. This 70-year-old tradition includes a tree lighting ceremony, dozens of Christmas displays, and the opportunity for children to meet Santa Claus. Followed by the annual Holiday Parade which marches down Pennsylvania Ave in Pine City to Christmas Land at the fire hall.
- **Pine City Street of Sales:** Typically held in early June, Pine City Street of Sales will hold its 37th year in 2026. Residents and community members gather to hold garage and rummage sales in Pine City.

These events provide all community members regardless of age, income, and ability, opportunities to learn, events to attend, resources to explore, and most importantly, a community to engage with. The more community involvement and engagement the stronger a community will be. It is critical for the Town and community to continue to support these events, opportunities, and organizations, however possible.



PHOTO 11: PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AT CHAPEL PARK

Agriculture

Agriculture remains an important part of the community's landscape and heritage, even as the town has grown more suburban over time. Southport's agricultural activity is characterized by small family-owned farms, hay and grain production, dairy operations, and limited livestock raising, reflecting the broader agricultural profile of the Southern Tier. Fertile soil and open fields in the town's rural western and southern areas support crop farming, while long-established farmsteads contribute to the town's scenic character and local identity. Although agriculture is no longer the dominant economic sector, it continues to shape land use patterns, preserve open space, and maintain a traditional rural backdrop that contrasts with the town's residential and commercial corridors. Residents consistently expressed their strong sentiments and desires to preserve an agricultural community, and the natural views and vistas farmland gives to the town.

FIGURE 31: SURVEY RESULTS – IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE

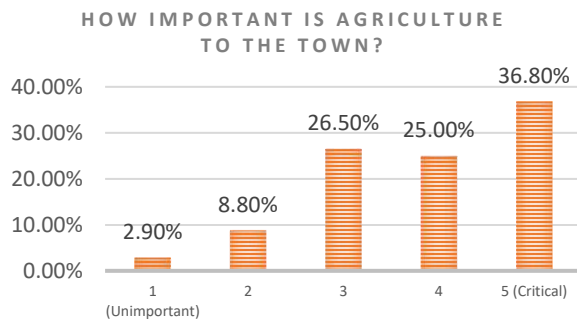


FIGURE 32: SURVEY RESULTS – CONCERNS OF THE LOSS OF

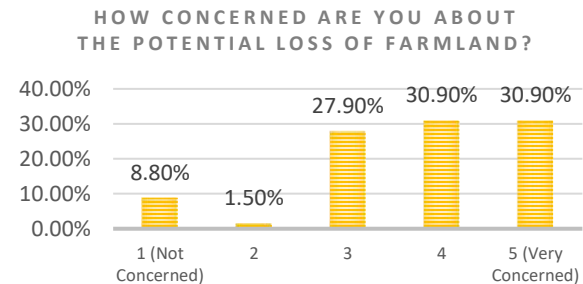
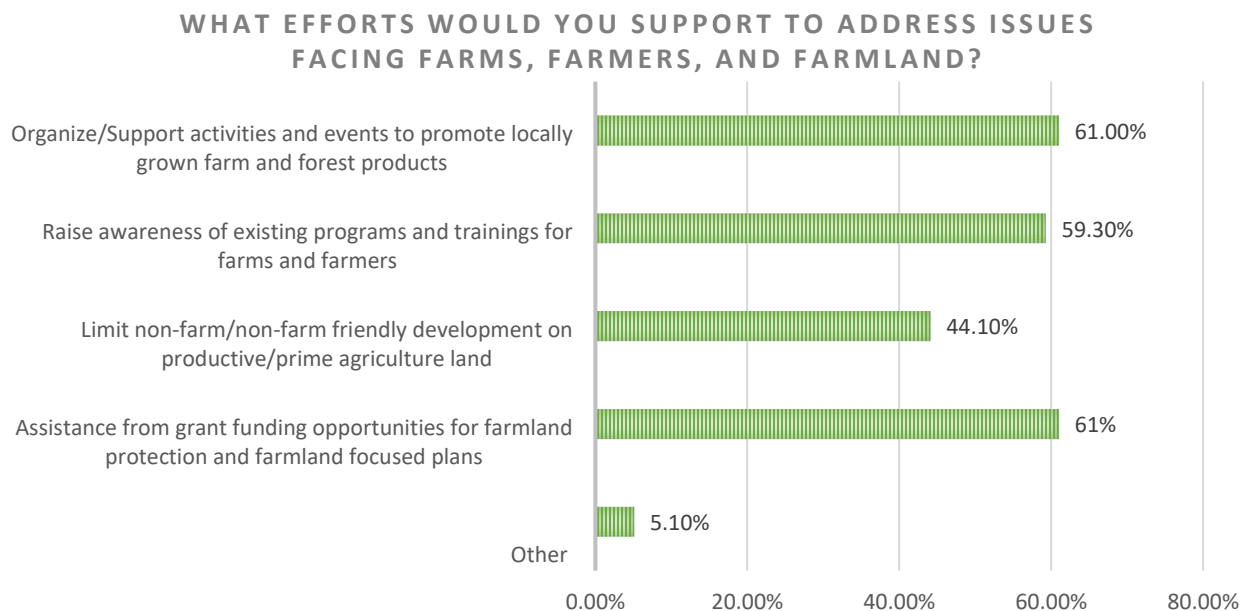


FIGURE 33: SURVEY RESULTS – COMMUNITY EFFORTS FOR FARMING

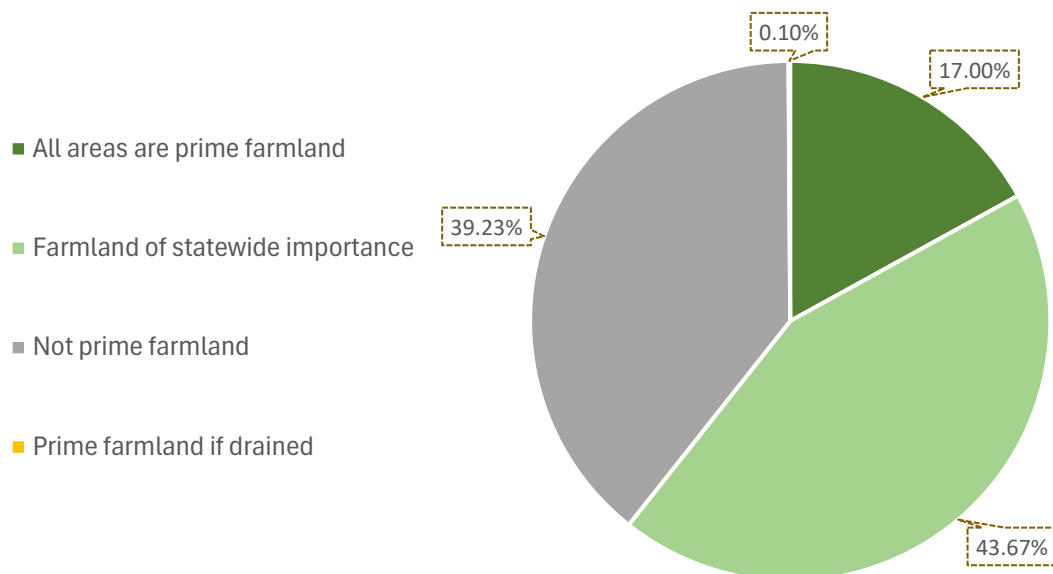


Farmland Classification

New York State recognizes three classes of farmland: Prime Farmland, Prime Farmland if Drained, and Farmland of Statewide Importance. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) sets the parameters of how these classifications are to be defined. The parameters for Prime Farmland are national, whereas the USDA allows individual States to further define the parameters for Prime Farmland if Drained and Farmland of Statewide Importance. New York State does this through the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM). These parameters are based off soil properties such as temperature, moisture regime, erodibility, pH, water table, permeability, rock fragment, and others. In New York, these classifications are defined as:

- **Prime Farmland:** Land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses. It has the combination of soil properties, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops in an economic manner if it is treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Other considerations include land use, frequency of flooding, irrigation, water table, and wind erodibility.
- **Prime Farmland if Drained:** Meet all the prime farmland criteria except for depth to seasonal high-water table and are suitable for drainage. In New York, somewhat poorly drained soils are designated as prime farmland if drained, if they meet all criteria for prime farmland other than depth to water table.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance:** In New York, Farmland of Statewide Importance soils are the soils that do not meet all the criteria for Prime Farmland or Prime Farmland if Drained, but are mineral soils in land capability classes 2e, 2s, 2w, 3e, 3s, 3w, or 4w.

FIGURE 34: FARMLAND CLASSIFICATION BY PERCENTAGE OF TOWN ACREAGE



Agricultural Districts

The New York state legislature enacted the Agricultural Districts Law (ADL) in 1971 to protect and promote the availability of land for farming purposes. An agricultural district is a geographic area which consists predominantly of viable agricultural land. Agricultural operations within the district are the priority land use and afforded benefits and protections to promote the continuation of farming and the preservation of agricultural land. In practice, districts may include land that is actively farmed, idle, forested, as well as residential and commercial. These districts do not inherently preserve farmland in the sense that the use of the land is restricted to agricultural production. The primary objective of these districts is to provide benefits that help make and keep farming as a viable economic activity. Land within a district is safeguarded against the enactment and administration of comprehensive plans, laws, ordinances, rules, or regulations by local governments which would unreasonably restrict or regulate farm operations within an agricultural district, unless it can be shown that the public health or safety is threatened. Interested landowners must meet the requirements set by Chemung County and submit an application to the appropriate County boards for consideration and approval. Qualifying residents can also apply for an agricultural land tax exemption through New York State. Like the districts, this does not protect or preserve the land from any non-agricultural development, it is to relieve farmers from financial stress. New York provides extra construction and decommissioning guidance and regulations for some non-agricultural development such as solar to protect and restore soil health. Similarly, right to farm laws are primarily focused on farm operations and do little to protect the land. If desired to protect and preserve farmland from non-agricultural development the town can seek to develop a farmland protection plan with funding from NYS DAM to limit and redirect non-agricultural uses to other sites in the town. There is always value in the planning process.



PHOTO 12: BEAUTIFUL RURAL VISTA ON COUNTY ROUTE 69

Housing

Housing is fundamental to the health, stability, and identity of a community. It shapes who can live, work, and remain in a place, influencing neighborhood character, economic vitality, and overall quality of life. During the formulation of this plan the country is experiencing a nationwide housing affordability and availability crisis. This plan must address how Southport can make housing more affordable to build and more affordable to live in. Housing choices, types, affordability, and location determine whether residents can age in place, young families can settle, and local employers can attract and retain workers of all ages and incomes. A comprehensive and thoughtful approach considers the physical form and character of each neighborhood, shaping streetscapes, services, and open spaces. A comprehensive approach to housing is essential to address these pressures while preserving and strengthening community character.

Ownership and Vacancy

According to the American Community Survey 2019–2023 5-Year Estimates, there are approximately 4,833 housing units in Southport. Among these units approximately 86.3% are occupied (4,170 units) whereas 13.7% are vacant (663 units). This vacancy rate is higher than Chemung County (11%) and New York State (10%). Among occupied units, 79% are owner-occupied (3,294 units) whereas 21% are renter-occupied (876 units). In contrast, the renter-occupied rate is about two-thirds the rate of Chemung County at 30% and about half the rate of New York State at 46%.¹⁶

FIGURE 35: OCCUPANCY BY TYPE

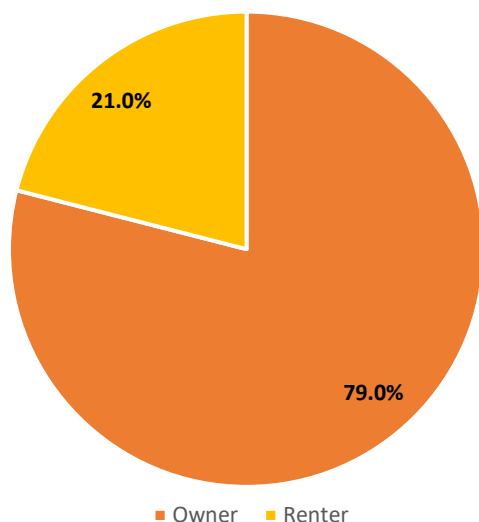
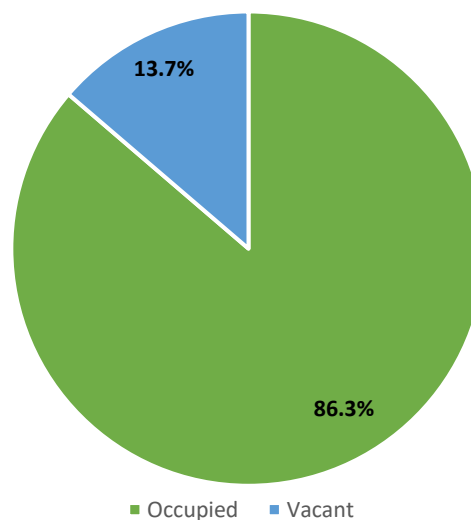


FIGURE 36: VACANCY RATE



¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Selected Housing Characteristics." *American Community Survey, 2023: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP04*

Housing Types

Single unit structures dominate the housing stock, making up 81% (3,915 units) of the total housing stock. Two units make up approximately 10.3% (498 units), three or four units 2.1% (102 units), five to nine units 0.8% (41 units), and structures with 10 or more units 3.7% (176 units). Finally, mobile homes make up approximately 1.6% (76 units).¹⁷ Single unit structures are typically single-family homes with the owner living there.

FIGURE 37: NUMBER OF UNITS BY STRUCTURE

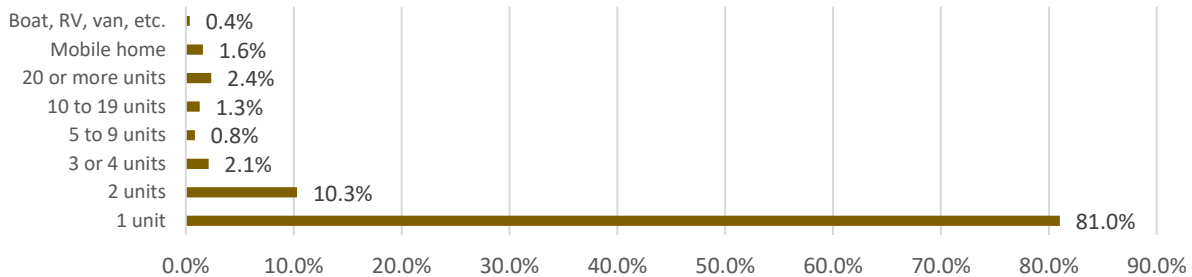
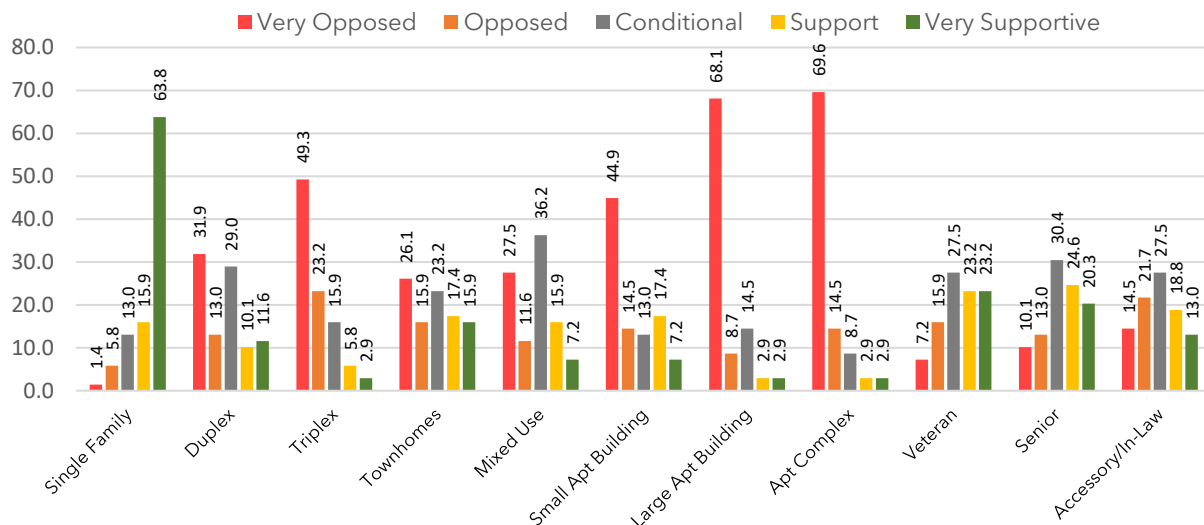


FIGURE 38: SURVEY RESULTS - HOUSING TYPES



Housing types greatly impact a neighborhood's character. The zoning update to follow this plan must take into consideration the differences between neighborhoods' character, streetscape, and density. Rural residents want to live in the rural countryside, residents that live in the more denser and urban neighborhoods want to walk down the street to stores and restaurants from their home. These neighborhoods do not contradict each other but rather work together. Smart and thoughtful zoning both preserves the countryside and promotes density in the appropriate areas. Preventing overdevelopment and sprawl through actions such as infill development will meet both neighborhood visions.

Cost of Housing

Both renting and owning housing costs have skyrocketed nationwide since the last comprehensive plan. Like any other industry, housing prices are based off supply. Currently, the United States has a housing shortage of 2 million homes. Housing must be more affordable to build and more affordable to live in. Approximately, 56.8% of owner occupied units have a mortgage with the median monthly mortgage totaling \$1,095. The median rent is \$1,100, up 47.8% since 2015.¹⁷

FIGURE 39: VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS

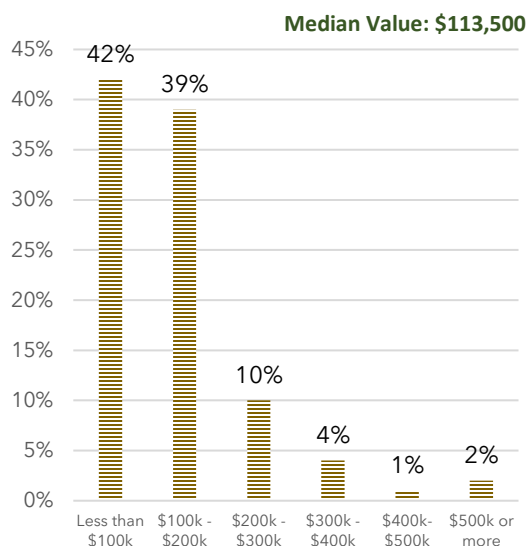


FIGURE 408: MEDIAN MORTGAGE PAYMENT (2023)

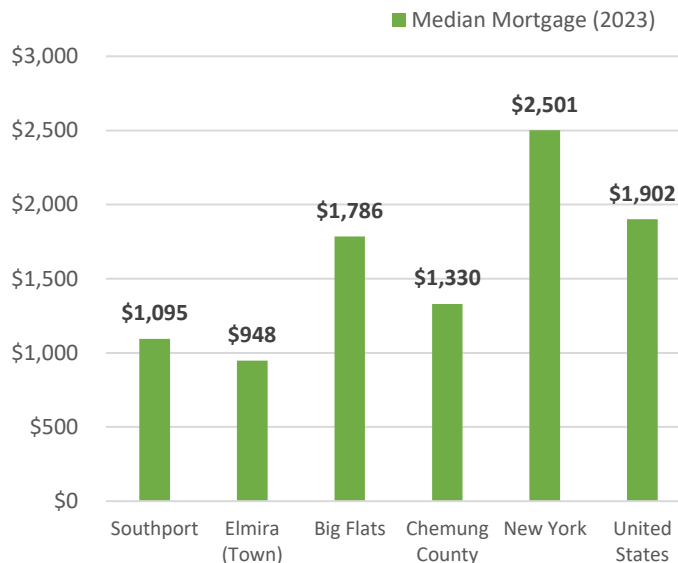
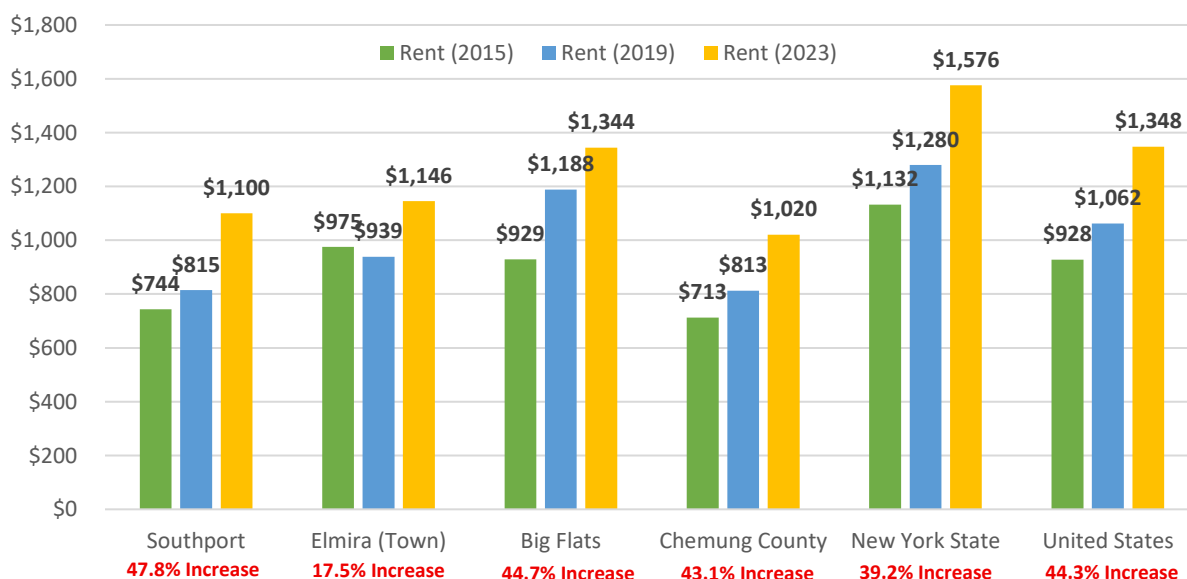


FIGURE 41: MEDIAN RENT OVERTIME

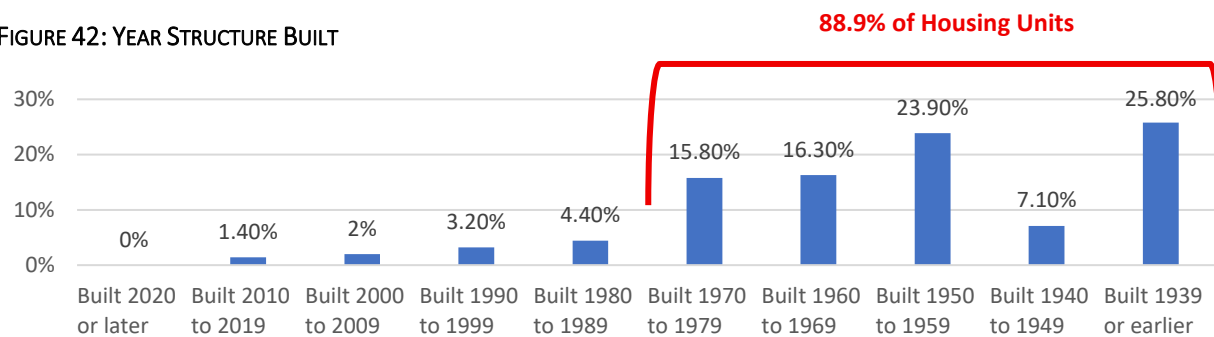


¹⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Selected Housing Characteristics." *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP04 for 2023, 2019, and 2015*

Age of Housing Stock

This data comes from the American Community Survey 2023 5-Year Estimates, it is prone to inaccuracy and may not reflect recent housing development. It is important to understand and analyze all housing development permitted by the town since the last plan. The majority of the housing stock was built between 1940 and 1980. This is typical for Southern Tier communities as the largest increase in population and expansion of industry happened in this time period.

FIGURE 42: YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT



Pro-Housing Community Program

Overseen by the New York State office of Homes and Community Renewal, the Pro-Housing Community Program is a statewide initiative to support and incentivize communities to address the housing affordability and availability crisis of recent years. Certification is a requirement in many state discretionary funding opportunities such as the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, NY Forward, and the New York Main Street Program. Southport is already a certified Pro-Housing community but maintaining certification is necessary. This must happen if Southport enacts any zoning changes and needs to be accompanied by recent permit data.

Recent Permits and Notable Developments

According to the NYS Pro Housing Community Housing Statistics, between the years of 2013 and 2023, there have been 15 housing permits granted in Southport. With 14 of these being permitted before 2020. However, there are notable housing developments and communities.

- **Southport Corners:** Located at 1205 Plymouth Ave this 60-unit Senior Housing Complex was awarded funding and recently approved by the planning board. The one-unit bedrooms are for people aged 55 and older who fall within 30% to 60% of the area's median income.
- **Cherrywood Manor:** Located at 1198 Maple Ave, Cherrywood Manor is a multi-building apartment complex offering 1- and 2-bedroom apartments with off-street parking.
- **Woodbrook:** Located at 1250 Maple Ave, Woodbrook has been an affordable assisted senior living residence since 1990.
- **Park Terrace:** Located at 1281 Pennsylvania Ave, Park Terrace is an income-based service supported housing complex for low-income seniors.

Natural Resources and the Environment

Topography

The Town of Southport lies in the southwestern corner of Chemung County. Southport is within the foothills of the Appalachian range, providing scenic sites of rolling hills, lush forests, and peaceful streams. The elevation in Southport ranges from approximately 830 feet of the land adjacent to the Chemung River and Seeley Creek to approximately 1,800 feet on hilltops such as Cleveland Hill, Kinner Hill, and Mount Zoar. Gentle slopes are frequent and allow ease of access for residents to scenic vistas and natural resources. Steep slopes can be found throughout the town primarily along roadways such as Christian Hollow Rd, Hendry Creek Rd, and Mount Zoar. Excessive development on steep slopes can lead to landslides, washouts, stormwater redirection, and pollution through excessive digging, removal of vegetation, or the addition of impervious surfaces. These consequences can cause significant and costly property damage to private landowners, residents, and public property putting a burden on budgets and reducing the quality of services.

Watersheds

Southport is completely within the Chemung River watershed with two HUC-10 sheds, Upper Chemung River and Middle Chemung River. There are six HUC-12 watersheds in Southport, Hendy Creek is a part of the Upper Chemung River Watershed while Mudlick Creek, Hammond Creek, Seeley Creek, South Creek, and Coldbrook Creek are all part of the Middle Chemung River watershed. The Chemung River flows east from the confluence of the Cohocton River and Tioga River in Painted Post, NY until it joins the Susquehanna River in Sayre, PA. The Chemung River watershed is a part of the larger Susquehanna River Basin which drains into the Chesapeake Bay.

TABLE 6: WATERSHEDS IN SOUTHPORT

Hydrological Unit Code	HUC-ID	Name
HUC-2	02	Mid-Atlantic Region
HUC-4	0205	Susquehanna River Basin
HUC-6	020501	Upper Susquehanna
HUC-8	02050105	Chemung River
HUC-10	0205010504	Upper Chemung River
	0205010505	Middle Chemung River
HUC-12	020501050405	Hendy Creek-Chemung River
	020501050504	Hammond Creek
	020501050505	Mudlick Creek
	020501050506	South Creek
	020501050507	Seeley Creek
	020501050508	Coldbrook Creek-Chemung River

Streams

There are many small ponds, wetlands, and streams that run throughout Southport. Seeley Creek is the largest creek in Southport, running parallel to State Route 328 until it cuts east to drain into the Chemung River. Mudlick Creek and its tributaries drain into Seeley Creek on the west side of 328 across from the Webbs Mills Fire Hall. While Hammond Creek and its tributaries drain into Seeley Creek south of the PA border and South Creek and its tributaries do so just south of Cedar St. Hendy Creek and Coldbrook Creek drain directly into the Chemung River.



PHOTO 13: SEELEY CREEK FROM COUNTY ROUTE 69

Waterbodies and Wetlands

Wetlands are a crucial ecosystem for public health, water quality, flooding, and biodiversity and wildlife habitat health. They are a natural sponge against severe flooding and for filtering pollutants from drinking water. They are also used for recreation such as fishing, hiking, and scenic views and vistas. Wetlands are vital for clean water, resilient communities, and thriving ecosystems. The National Wetland Inventory shows approximately 434 wetland bodies in Southport. These include wetland types of riverine (189), freshwater ponds (157), freshwater forested/shrub wetland (45), and freshwater emergent wetland (43). The DEC has one wetland mapped in Southport which lays in the southwestern corner of the town. Similarly, aquifers are just as important. Aquifers are massive underground freshwater reservoirs that provide filtered water for drinking, irrigation, and ecosystems. Three primary aquifers lie underneath Southport following Seeley Creek to the Chemung River. Wetland delineations as site plan review requirements are essential to understand and protect these vital sensitive features.

Forests and Tree Canopy Coverage

Trees, tree canopy, and wooded areas are vital natural resources that improve public health, define community character, and protect natural ecosystems. These natural resources provide numerous benefits including improving air quality, temperature moderation, stormwater management, reducing water, and noise pollution, providing shade and habitats, and providing economic and aesthetic value to property. Most of the town is well covered with the exception for areas for agriculture and denser residential and commercial uses which demand open space. Limiting tree clearing for certain uses and promoting natural vegetation to be used for screening assists and helps mitigate the loss of views and habitats. Chemung County has a Tree Mitigation Program with the goal to train municipal staff how to inventory and assess their publicly owned trees to determine if any trees are at a high risk for failure during future severe weather events so they do not become debris that can block roads, take down utility lines, and damage structures and property.

Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure uses filtration, infiltration, and evapotranspiration to treat and soak up rainwater. It can deliver multiple environmental, social, and economic benefits beyond stormwater management. Green infrastructure is thoughtfully designed to fit site-specific, local, or regional needs of the community and environment. They can provide cleaner water, cleaner air, protect against flooding and extreme heat, provide diverse habitats, and create beautiful green spaces. These tactics can be made as requirements for site plan review.

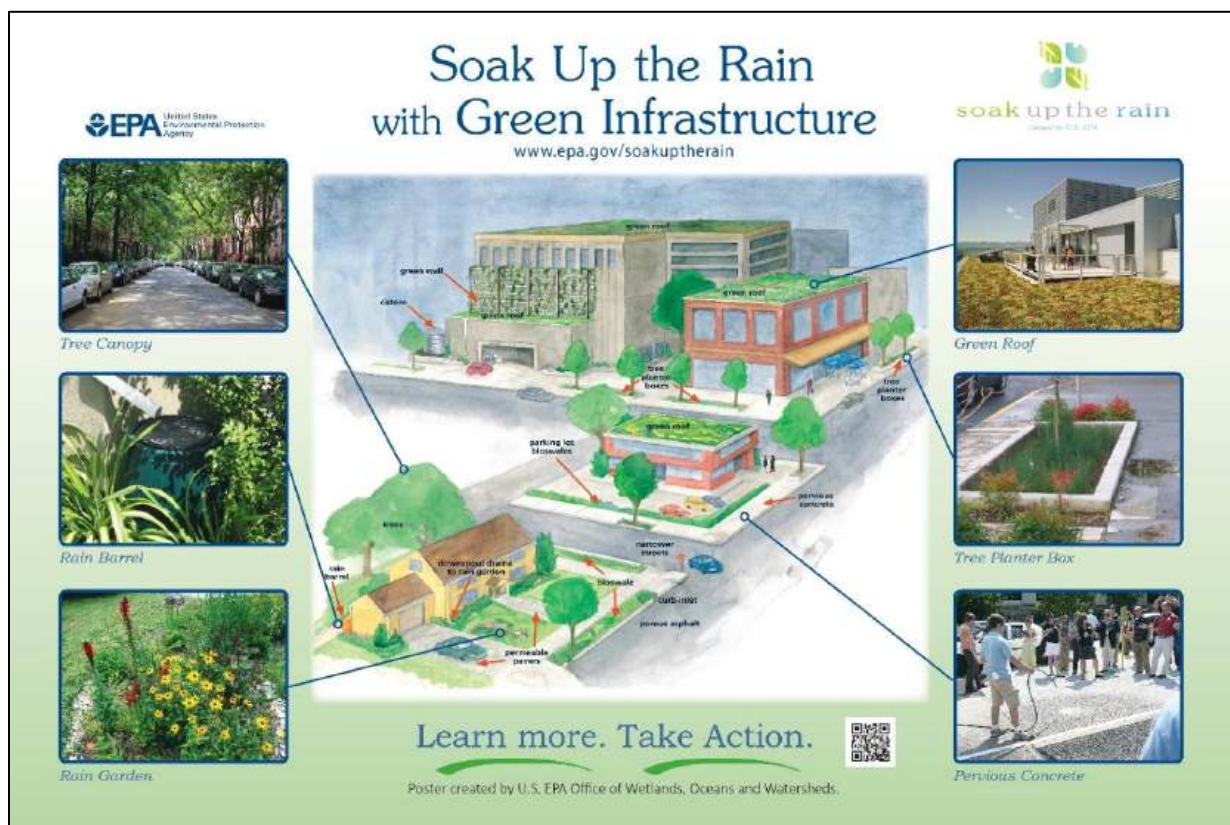


FIGURE 43: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE EXAMPLES FROM THE EPA

Green infrastructure is also used as beautification tactics as certain types such as rain gardens, tree canopy and planter boxes also improve the visual look of the community. Beautification aims to improve the visual appearance of a community. This includes greenery, public art, facade improvements, and many more ways to improve the visual appearance. Beautification uplifts the sense of place to attract commerce, instill community pride, and improve community engagement and socialization.

Solar Energy Generation

New York State has set aggressive clean energy goals. The state mandates by 2030, 70% of electricity must be generated from renewable energy sources and 100% by 2040. Solar energy systems are rapidly becoming more prevalent in communities across New York State. Whether for private on-site use or larger community and utility scale use, these systems impact a community's aesthetics, character, environment, and views. Rural areas are more likely to be targeted due to their available land to sustain community and utility scale solar farms, but this can and often does conflict with residents' desires. These solar systems can provide economic investments to communities through Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), Host Community Agreements (HCA), and cheaper electricity bills but these positive outcomes will only come after Southport has planned for solar installations and prepared regulations that address residents' concerns. With a dwindling agriculture industry, these fields are prime spots for solar developers. At the visioning sessions, residents expressed their concern of agricultural fields and views of becoming large scale solar installations erasing the rural character. Protecting agricultural land by limiting unfriendly development on productive and prime soils, ensuring adequate screening, and promoting agrivoltaics to combine these uses, rather than replace farming are ways to address residents' concerns. Reviewing and updating the solar law will be essential to ensure the town stays up to date on regulations and protections for town finances, residents' concerns, community character, public safety, and agriculture and environmental resources. This is also important as systems 25MW or greater are under the permitance of New York State, but developers must be in accordance with local laws.

Wind Energy Generation

Unlike solar which is often used for private on-site residences and businesses, wind energy generation largely comes from large scale wind farms. These large-scale wind farms typically exceed the 25MW permitting threshold therefore go under a state review process for approval. Local-level permitting are generally small, residential outfits and go through SEQR and applicable municipal land use regulations. For any wind project, there needs to be adequate wind to make any wind project feasible. Winds speeds vary hourly and seasonally due to the surrounding and regional geography of specific locations. According to NYSERDA, generally wind turbines begin to produce power at wind speed of about 6.7mph.¹⁸ The U.S. Energy Information Administration states that small wind turbines need an annual average wind speed of 9mph and utility scale turbines need an annual average wind speed of 13mph.¹⁹ Maps and data produced the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Southport has annual average windspeeds between 3mph to 6mph.²⁰ Larger wind generation systems are generally clusters of wind turbines generating electricity on land owned or leased by a developer in areas with reliable, favorable wind speeds. Wind farms are not only turbines; they also include a substation and

¹⁸ NYSERDA. "New York Wind Energy Guide for Local Decision Makers: Wind Energy Basics"

¹⁹ U.S. Energy Information Administration. "Where Wind Power is Harnessed – Eia.gov" 2024

²⁰ ESRI Landscape. "USA Average Wind Speed (Elevation 10-m to 200m)." 2022.

transmission lines. Developing wind farms in a community often improves the local infrastructure, through HCAs for roads and bridges. It can generate revenue for the municipality and jobs or income for landowners and residents. Some potential adverse effects from wind could include damage to roads, disruption of scenic views, the noise of the turbine, and disturbance to natural areas.

FIGURE 44: SUPPORT FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION - SURVEY RESULTS

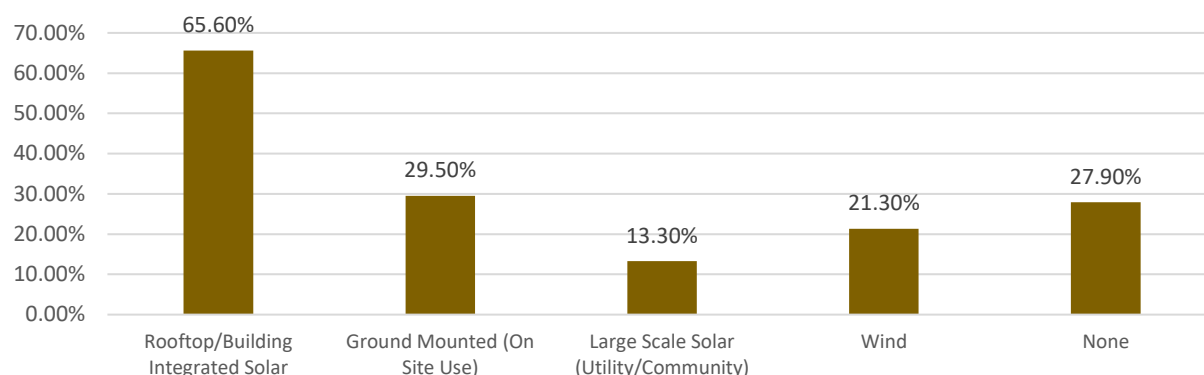
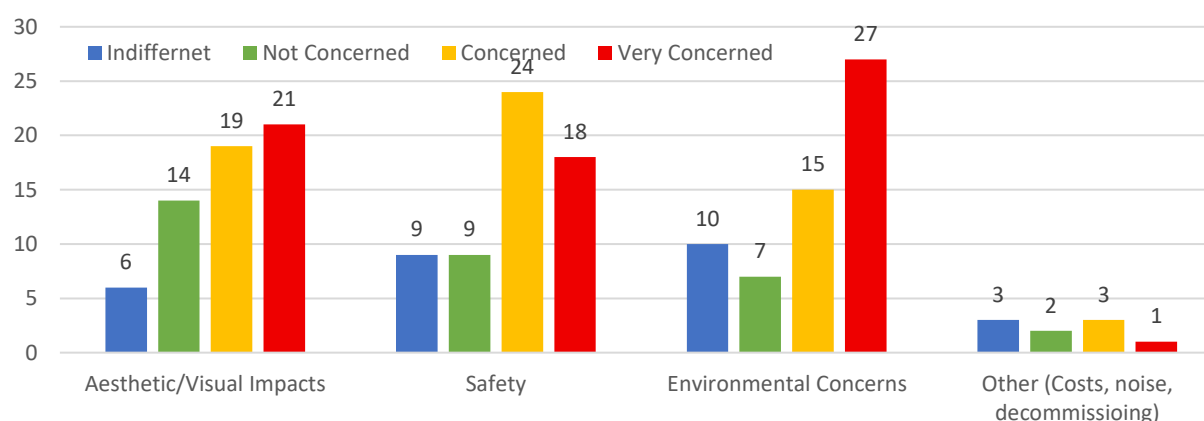


FIGURE 45: CONCERNS OF RENEWABLE ENERGY - SURVEY RESULTS



Battery Energy Storage Systems

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) are a rapidly emerging technology often paired with large scale solar and wind farms to store excess energy produced by the facilities to not overwhelm the grid. BESS is a key component of New York's clean energy goals. BESS help stabilize electrical grids and costs by providing consistent power flow despite fluctuations from inconsistent energy generation and other possible disruptions. These systems have raised legitimate safety, environmental, and health concerns. BESS incidents present unique challenges for host communities and local first responders such as:

- **Fire Suppression:** Lithium battery fires are extremely difficult to extinguish and may reignite hours or days later.
- **Emissions:** Battery fires can release harmful gases that pose health risks to nearby residents and first responders.

- **Environmental Impact:** Proper cleanup and disposal of damaged batteries require specialized procedures.
- **Costs:** Professional review, decommissioning, and potential issues listed above can be costly for the host community if they are left to pay for it.

It will be critical for the town to review and update renewable energy generation and battery energy storage systems regulations to ensure that they are up to date with the latest guidelines. NYSEERDA, the EPA, and other public laboratories and agencies have produced a wealth of knowledge on these systems. Coordination with local, county, and regional first responders will be vital to prevent and address hazards. Local first responders are not equipped to handle these kinds of fire hazards.

FIGURE 46: SUPPORT FOR BESS - SURVEY RESULTS

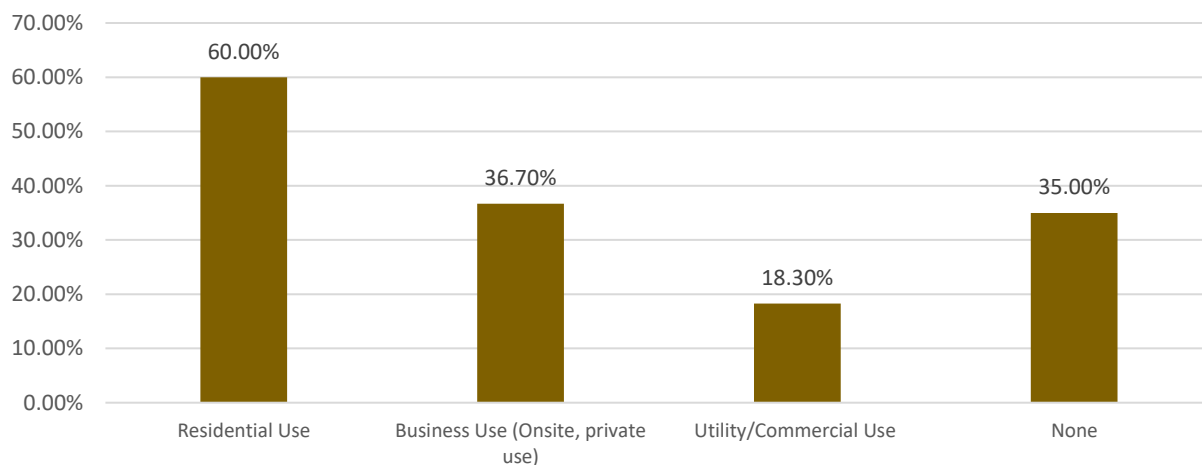
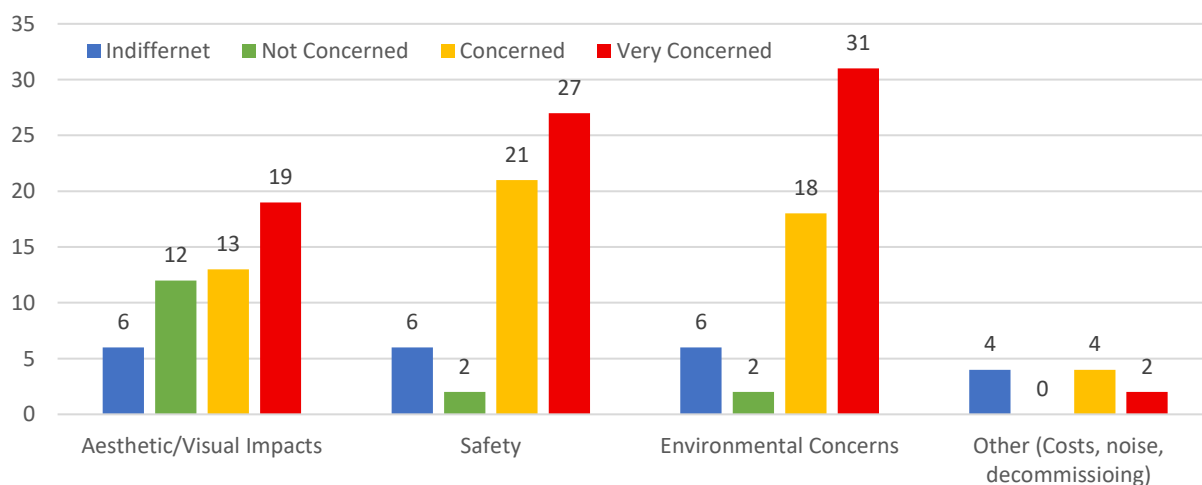


FIGURE 47: CONCERNS OF BESS - SURVEY RESULTS



FLOOD RISKS

History of Flooding

The Town of Southport has repeatedly endured flooding, streambank erosion, road washouts, and basement flooding from severe storm events. In 1972, the Hurricane Agnes flood devastated much of the Chemung River Valley. In Southport, the Chemung River overtopped the levee protection, Seeley Creek overran its banks, and smaller streams damaged low-lying properties. During this flood, water was 5 to 6 feet deep at Coldbrook School. Although Agnes caused the highest water levels in the Chemung River since recordkeeping began (called the flood of record), other floods have also caused severe damage in Southport. The most severe flood damages occurred in 1943, 1994 (Tropical Storm Beryl), January 1996, November 1996, 2003, and 2018.

Flood damage in Southport has not been confined to the FEMA-mapped floodplains. Low lying areas near any waterbody can be inundated when water overflows the banks. Flooding also occurs when the amount of runoff exceeds the capacity of roadside ditches, storm sewers, and other drainageways. In some areas of the Town, basements flood when groundwater levels rise. The tremendous energy of fast-moving floodwater erodes streambanks and road ditches, washing out bridges, culverts, roadways, and other developments and can threaten buried infrastructure, such as pipelines and septic systems.

If floodplains are undeveloped, flooding can occur with little impact on human activities. In addition, naturally functioning floodplains serve as temporary water storage areas during periods of high flow, reducing the severity of downstream flooding. When high water from a stream fan out across the floodplain, the flow velocity decreases and energy is lost, particularly in wooded floodplains. This is an important function for stream systems and reduces the potential for bank erosion. Additional erosion protection is provided by the root systems of riparian vegetation. The Town, together with residents and public and private sector partners, has been proactive in implementing measures that mitigate the impacts of flooding. This includes flood control levees along the Chemung River and Seeley Creek, regulation of floodplain development, zoning restrictions, flood attenuation wetlands, stream bank protection, drainage system maintenance/improvements, stormwater management, building elevation, and more.

FEMA-Mapped Flood Zones

Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the Town of Southport were published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 1980, and one of the three panels was updated in 1991. Floodplains were identified and mapped along the Chemung River, Coldbrook Creek, Seeley Creek, South Creek, and the South Creek Tributary near Christian Hollow Road. Although other streams are also subject to flooding, additional floodplains were not mapped. In 2024, FEMA conducted a Discovery process in anticipation of updating floodplain maps for Chemung County but has not yet secured funding to initiate this mapping project. The Town of Southport regulates new development in the flood zones mapped by FEMA and shown on the Town's Flood Insurance Rate Maps. These regulations exceed the minimum federal standards established by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and thus enable the availability of federal flood insurance within the Town.

Floodplain development standards are specified in Chapter 307 of the Southport Municipal Code, Flood Damage Prevention. Flood resistant construction standards for buildings are also included in the NYS Uniform Codes.

The FIRMs designate Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) where there is a 1% or greater probability of flooding in any given year (sometimes called the 100-year floodplain; labeled on the maps as Zone A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, A0, A11, or A12). Areas protected by flood control levees along the Chemung River and Seeley Creek are excluded from these high hazard flood zones. The anticipated heights of floodwater during a 1% annual probability flood event, called Base Flood Elevations (BFEs), were determined by FEMA and published in the Town's Flood Insurance Study. Although development in mapped floodplains is discouraged, it is not prohibited. The Town has required the use of flood resilient development practices in the SFHA since 1980. In order to reduce the potential for flood damage, new construction, and substantial improvements (repairs or renovations that exceed 50% of the value of the structure) must be elevated or protected to a level at least two feet above the base flood elevation. In addition, the Town's Residential Cluster Development requirements (Article VI of Zoning, §525-34 through §525-40) discourage floodplain development by classifying 100-year floodplains as constrained lands and incentivizing development in locations without environmental constraints. Areas with a 0.2% probability of flooding in any given year (500-year floodplains) and areas protected by flood control levees are shown as Zone B on the FIRM. Although floodplain development requirements were not previously enforced in Zone B, the 2025 NYS Uniform Code expands the regulated floodplain to include areas with a 0.2% or greater annual probability of flooding (the 500-year floodplain), except in areas protected by accredited levees. FEMA has published Flood Boundary and Floodway Maps designating parts of the floodplain adjacent to streams or rivers as Regulatory Floodway. The Floodway is the area that should be kept open for the passage of floodwater. In addition to other floodplain development requirements, any new development in the Floodway requires certification by a licensed engineer that the proposed activity will not cause any increase in the depth of the 1% annual probability flood. The Floodway is also the part of the floodplain most likely to be subject to dangerous floodwater depths, velocities, and erosive forces. To provide additional protection, Town of Southport established a Conservation Zoning District that coincides with the FEMA-mapped Floodway. The Conservation District supports low-intensity recreational and agricultural uses that are compatible with the flood hazard and do not require the construction of new buildings (§525-19, Conservation (C) intent, and §525-128, Filling storage and encroachment in the Conservation District, Town of Southport Code).

Additional Flood and Erosion Hazard Areas

Areas outside of the 1% and 0.2% annual probability floodplains were mapped by FEMA as Zone C, areas with minimal flood risk. However, because flood hazards were not evaluated for many streams or for other drainage channels, significant flooding and erosion risks exist in other parts of the Town. Development has occurred within narrow valleys and other areas with unmapped flood hazards. This existing development is subject to erosion and flooding risks. In order to manage future development in unmapped flood hazard areas and also protect the water quality and stability of stream systems, the Town of Southport has included stream protection requirements in the zoning law (§525-126, Stream protection, Town of Southport Code). This includes riparian buffer standards that protect the integrity of stream corridors through protection and enhancement of native vegetation within 50 feet of any perennial or intermittent stream. Vulnerable development uses are prohibited

within the riparian buffer. For perennial streams, an additional 50-foot setback area restricts buildings and other uses within 100 feet of the streambank.

Stormwater Runoff and Urban Flooding

Flooding and washouts can occur in upland and developed areas when the amount of runoff exceeds the capacity of drainage ditches or stormwater management systems. High flows in roadside ditches can wash out roads and damage culverts, particularly when flow is obstructed by debris or sediment buildup. Construction activities can contribute to increased runoff by altering drainage patterns or increasing the area covered by impervious surfaces that prevent water infiltration into the ground (such as pavement, roofs, or compacted soil). Southport controls water pollution, increased runoff, and erosion, in compliance with a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit from New York State. This program is coordinated with other Chemung County municipalities and implemented with assistance from the Chemung County Stormwater Coalition (in the Chemung County Department of Public Works). Chapter 452 of the Town of Southport Code (Stormwater Management; Erosion and Sediment Control) requires preparation



PHOTO 14: BIRD CREEK FROM PINE HILLS DR

and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for any construction activity disturbing 1 acre or more of soil. The project must comply with state standards for managing the quantity and quality of runoff as well as erosion from the construction site. The applicant must provide for long-term maintenance and repair of any stormwater facilities. In addition, projects subject to the stormwater management requirements in Chapter 452 are subject to special site plan review by the Planning Board (Zoning §525-101, Stormwater management and erosion control, Town of Southport Code).

Additional MS4 permit requirements implemented by the Town include public information and participation; inspection of stormwater facilities; identification and elimination of pollution sources (called illicit discharges); drainage system maintenance, and use of good stormwater management and pollution prevention practices for municipal operations. During storm events, the Town Highway Department sends out crews to inspect ditches,

ensure that pipes are unobstructed, close roads if needed, and conduct other emergency maintenance. Following flood events, the town, county, and state highway departments conduct any needed repairs to roads, roadside drainage, culverts, and bridges, including mitigation to improve future drainage when resources permit.

Forest cover naturally retains and slows stormwater runoff, providing erosion and flood protection for downhill areas. In order to promote good runoff and erosion management practices when timber is harvested, Southport requires a permit for commercial removal of more than two tractor trailer loads of timber per 100 acres of land or when more than 5 acres are clear cut (Chapter 483, Timber Harvesting, Town of Southport Code). The topography of the Town of Southport includes many steep slopes that benefit the community by providing scenic views, aquifer recharge areas, wooded areas, and substantial protection against flooding and erosion. If these areas are not carefully protected, uncontrolled runoff can result in extensive erosion and flooding. In order to protect the natural functions of the Town's hillsides, the Southport zoning law includes steep slope development requirements and prohibits erection of structures on slopes greater than 15% (1.5 feet of vertical rise in a ten-foot horizontal distance) (§525-100, Valley wall development, Town of Southport Code).

Flood Control Levees

Flood control levees and floodwalls along the Chemung River and Seeley Creek provide valuable flood protection for northern parts of the Town near the City of Elmira. This levee system was built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, modified by New York State during re-construction of State Route 14, and is maintained by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Although the levees are routinely inspected and appear to be in good condition, flood protection is not guaranteed. This levee system is now more than 75 years old and may have unknown deficiencies that could lead to failure during a major flood. If the volume of water in the river or creek exceeds the design capacity of the levee, overtopping can flood protected areas, as occurred during Tropical Storm Agnes in 1972. In addition, drainage water cannot flow through drainage structures in the levee during high flows and can accumulate on the developed side (called interior drainage). The current Flood Insurance Rate Maps do not include levee-protected areas of the town in the 1% annual probability (100-year) floodplain. However, this could change when the maps are updated. FEMA has asked the state and municipalities to provide certified documentation that the levee



PHOTO 15: LEVEE ADJACENT TO CHAPEL PARK

system meets specified design, operation, and maintenance standards. It is not known how the significant costs for geotechnical and engineering analyses needed to certify the levee system can be financed. If deficiencies are identified during this evaluation, additional funding would be needed to remediate the levees prior to certification. Without an engineering certification that the levee height and integrity are sufficient to contain a 1% annual probability flood, future mapping would show protected parts of the community as Special Flood Hazard Areas (100-year floodplain). Development in those areas would then be subject to floodplain development standards (requiring elevation of most new buildings) and flood insurance purchase requirements.

Dams

There are six small, state-permitted dams in the Town of Southport. All are classified as low hazard structures, meaning that a dam failure is unlikely to result in damage to anything more than isolated or unoccupied buildings, undeveloped land, or minor roads. (Dam hazard classification does not indicate the likelihood that the structure will fail.) Most of these dams were built by the Chemung County Soil & Water Conservation District to create flood attenuation wetlands. They form shallow impoundments for wildlife and recreation but can hold additional water during high flow conditions to provide local flood reduction benefits downstream. Construction of houses or other development downstream of these dams should be discouraged so that the dams can continue to be classified as low hazard structures.

Flood Insurance

Because the Town enforces minimum standards for all development in the FEMA-mapped floodplain (based on local law and the NYS Uniform Code), flood insurance from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is available for any building in the Town. Flood insurance is required for a federally backed mortgage on any building in the FEMA-mapped SFHA (1% annual probability/100-year floodplain). The NFIP website reports the following policy data for the Town of Southport as of 12/31/2025 (<https://agents.floodsmart.gov/flood-maps-and-data/flood-insurance-data>):

- Policies in force: 30
- Total Coverage (for buildings and contents): \$7,721,000
- Total Annual Payment (including premium, discounts, fees, assessments, and surcharges): \$31,558

In order to reduce the cost of flood insurance, the Town of Southport participates in the NFIP Community Rating System (CRS) program. CRS is a voluntary incentive program that encourages community floodplain management practices that exceed the minimum requirements of the NFIP. The Town has achieved a Class 7 CRS rating for undertaking and documenting flood risk reduction activities. This enables a 15% discount on the premium paid for flood insurance policies purchased through the NFIP (before fees and surcharges).

Flood Mitigation

Southport has worked with numerous partners to implement proactive measures that mitigate the impacts of future flooding in the Town. This includes flood control levees, floodplain management, land use regulations, flood attenuation wetlands, stormwater management, drainage improvements, stream remediation, elevation of homes, financial support for Environmental Emergency Services (which operates a three-county Flood Warning Service, including a climate station on Kinner Hill), public education, and more. Southport participated in the 2025 update to the Chemung County Hazard Mitigation Plan and included the following ongoing and proposed actions for the Town:

- Flood study and mapping
- Emergency generator for Town of Southport Town Hall
- Public Education and Outreach
- Floodplain management
- Stream mitigation
- Buyout damaged properties

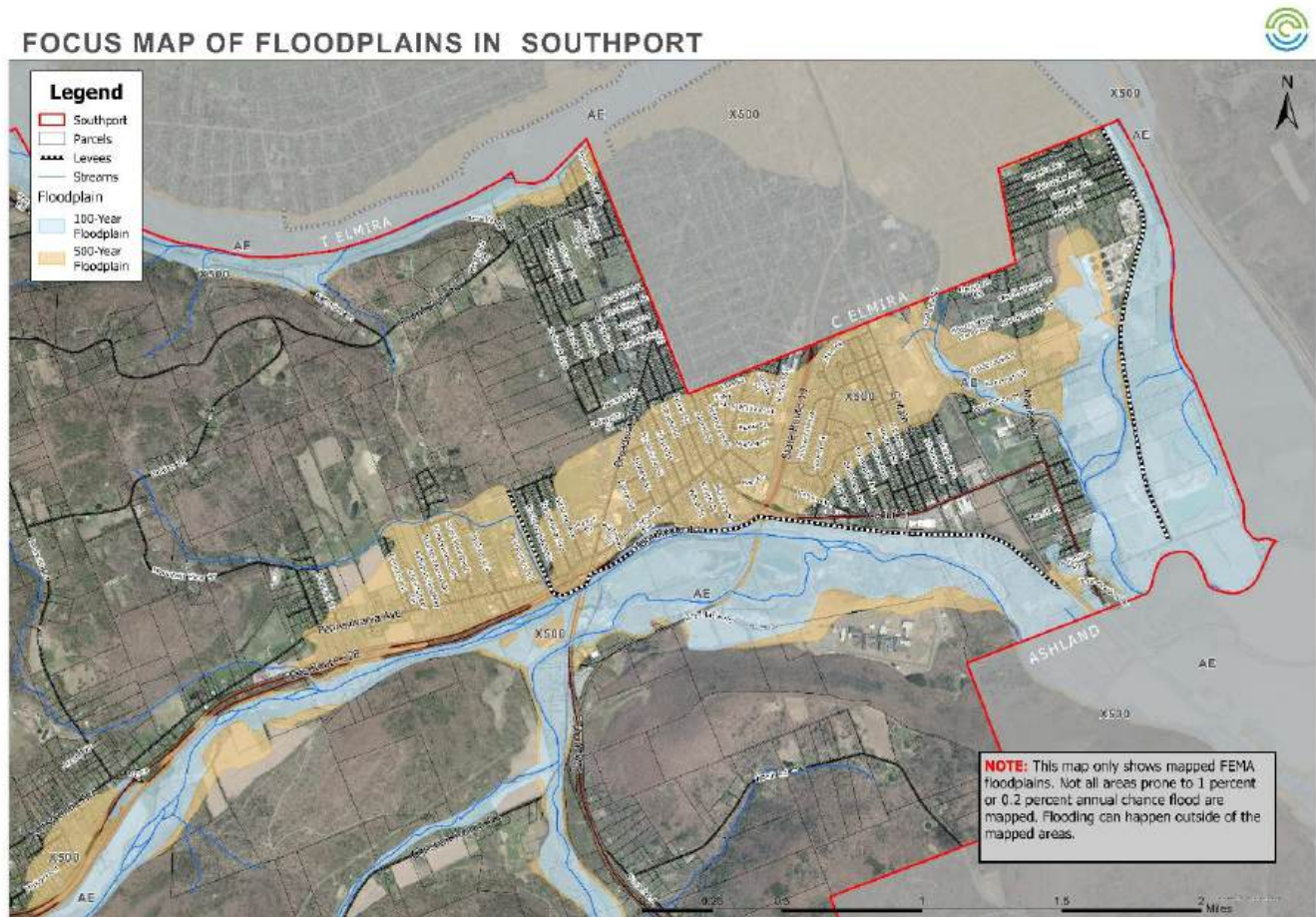


FIGURE 48: FLOODPLAINS IN DOWNTOWN SOUTHPORT

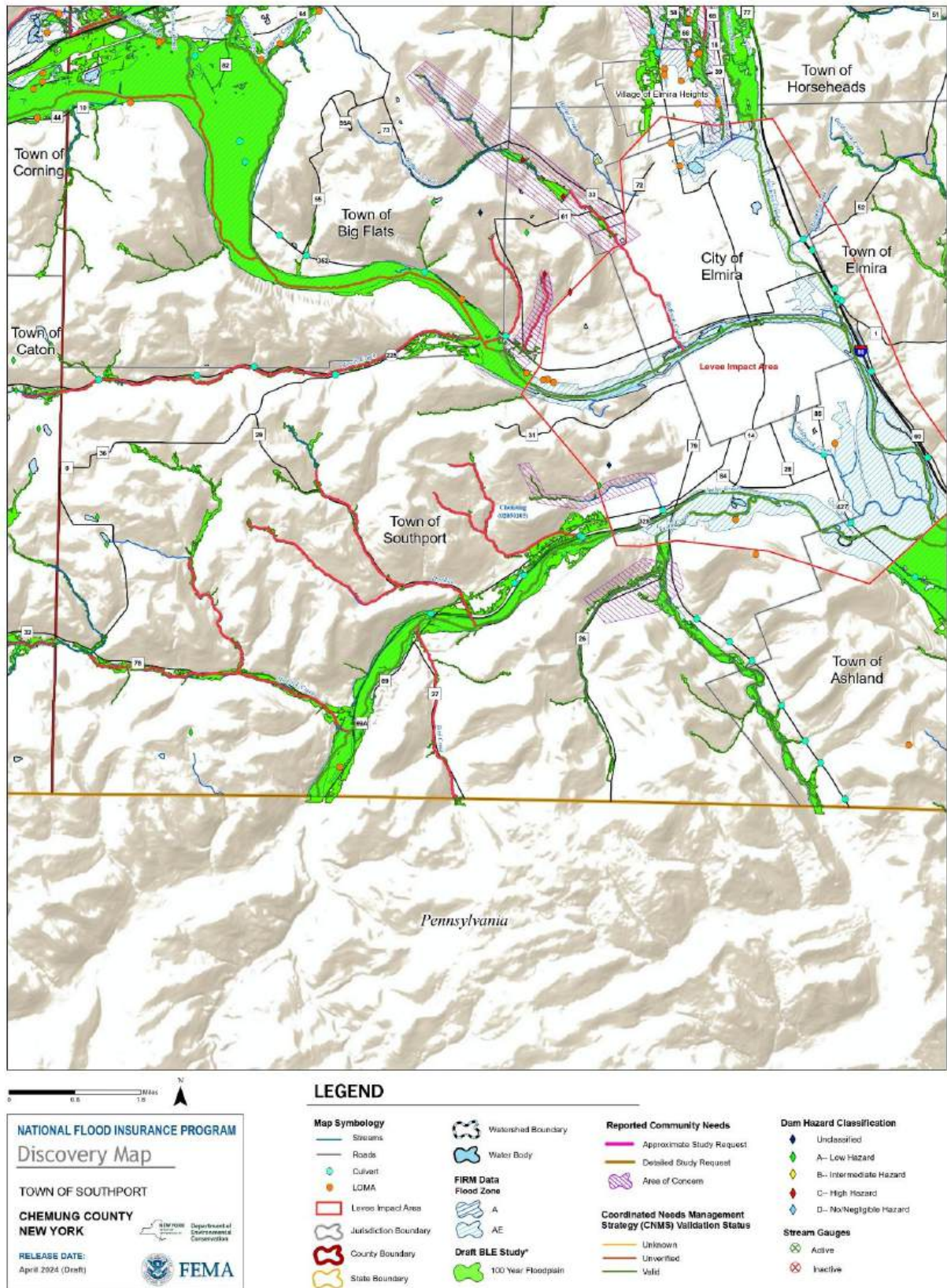


FIGURE 49: NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE DISCOVERY MAP OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHPORT

Land Use and Development

Land Use

Land Use codes delineate the general use of parcels. By acreage, land use within Southport is primarily residential uses totaling approximately 14,336.76 acres or 3,920 parcels. The second largest use is vacant meaning the property has no predominant use activity. This totals approximately 9,485.19 acres or 1,030 parcels. The third largest use is agriculture, totaling approximately 2,693.62 acres or 33 parcels. These three uses constitute approximately 93.4% of the total acreage of Southport or 94.05% of parcels. The land use map shows the other uses apart from Wild, Forested, Conservation lands, and Public Parks are largely located along the major transit routes of State Routes 328, 14, and 427.

TABLE 7: LAND USE

Land Use	Description	Approximate Acreage
Agriculture	Property used for the production of crops or livestock.	2,693.62
Residential	Property used for human habitation not including hotels, motels, apartment complexes, or mixed uses (categorized as commercial)	14,336.76
Vacant	Property that is not in use, is in temporary use, or lacks permanent improvement.	9,485.19
Commercial	Property used for the sale of goods and/or services.	569.63
Recreation and Entertainment	Property used by groups for recreation, amusement, or entertainment. (Town parks, athletic grounds, camps)	47.96
Community Service	Property used for the well-being of the community. (Schools, Places of worship, health facilities, jails, cemeteries)	536.61
Public Services	Property used to provide services to the general public. (Utilities, water treatment facilities, waste disposal)	120.51
Industrial	Property used for the production and fabrication of durable and nondurable man-made goods.	352.98
Wild, Forested, Conservation lands, and Public Parks	Reforested lands, preserves, and private hunting and fishing clubs. Lands with an intended conservation or preservation use.	102.20
Not Provided	Land use code not provided in County parcel dataset. From analysis of imagery and location these are most likely residential, agricultural, or vacant uses. Except for the railroad.	240.30

Zoning Districts

The Southport zoning code outlines 9 zoning districts in the town. These are determined based on neighborhood character, housing density, commercial activity, natural features, and historic land use. Zoning regulates land use to protect public health and safety, promote orderly development, and preserve environmental features.

TABLE 8: ZONING

Zone	Description	Approximate Acreage
Conservation Zone	This district delineates open, publicly owned and/or environmentally sensitive areas. Its purpose is to protect the integrity and benefit of these areas, maintain open space, and allow for the free flow of streams at flood events by prohibiting uses that are incompatible in development type and intensity of use. Typically, only the least-intensive and carefully considered types of development are compatible with the goals of this district.	925.80
Agricultural/Residential	This district delineates predominately agricultural and low-density single-family residential areas and areas where such development should occur in the future. These areas are typically not suitable for more intensive development due to a lack of infrastructure or other environmental limitations. The purpose of this district is to maintain a rural, low-density character and conserve agricultural land by prohibiting uses that are incompatible in development type and intensity of use.	25,145.19
Commercial Neighborhood	This district delineates areas with a mixture of residential and commercial urban fabric, with a range of building types that accommodate a variety of uses, including retail, offices, some single-family and multiunit dwellings, including apartments above shops. Commercial buildings complement the character of residential buildings, and existing houses may accommodate commercial uses.	176.62
Commercial Regional	This district delineates areas that consists of moderate-density buildings that accommodate the greatest variety of uses of regional importance. Buildings accommodate primarily commercial uses, including retail, offices, and semi-industrial uses in designated areas. Mixed-use buildings may include dwellings.	124.43
Industrial	This district delineates predominately industrial areas and areas where such development should occur in the future. Its purpose is to allow industrial activity in areas where it will create no detrimental or significant adverse impact on the environment or the community as a whole.	846.32
Planned Development District	This district allows for a variety of land uses and flexible arrangements of lots, structures, and land uses in a well-planned and coordinated design. This is achieved by the Town continuously participating in and approving stages of project planning and development.	46.86
Residential 1	This district delineates predominately low-density single-family residential areas and areas where such development should occur in the future.	233.43
Residential 2	This district delineates predominately moderate-density single-family residential areas and areas where such development should occur in the future.	581.19
Residential 3	This district delineates residential areas with a mixture of moderate- and high-density housing types and areas where such development should occur in the future.	150.61

Most of the town is zoned as Agricultural/Residential to preserve and promote a rural, farm friendly character, way of life, and scenic views and vistas. The second largest zone is the Conservation Zone which follows the flood way of Seeley Creek and the Chemung River to protect environmentally sensitive areas and limit intensive development in case of flooding events. Commercial and industrial areas are largely zoned along or near major transit routes. The last major zoning update happened after the adoption of the 2015 plan. This update aimed to incorporate elements of form-based code and some principals of smart growth. While it had some success in implementing these elements, some regulations have made it difficult to build in certain commercial areas of the town. The zoning update to follow the adoption of this plan should aim to balance the smart growth anti-sprawl regulations with the ability for businesses and residents to build and invest in Southport.

Smart Growth

Smart Growth is a planning approach that promotes density and preservation over sprawl. By directing future development into existing denser hamlets and neighborhoods, so existing infrastructure such as roads, sewers, electrical lines, are utilized instead of constantly constructing new expensive infrastructure which must be then maintained. In an aging and shrinking town like Southport, continuous sprawl and development is not environmentally or financially sustainable. In doing so, this approach preserves and protects scenic rural lands and vibrant small-town neighborhoods. Smart growth encourages mixed uses and compact design to cultivate a strong sense of place and cost effectiveness. Without proper planning new development may occur in a way that requires more public funds, degrades natural resources, destroys scenic views and vistas, endanger farmlands, and alters the small town feel that Southport residents enjoy. By limiting low-moderate density, single use, peripheral development which consumes large amounts of land and demands additional ever increasing expensive public services and infrastructure, Southport can protect and promote all neighborhoods and their character.

Development vs Preservation

At the visioning sessions, participants were presented with maps. They were tasked to identify areas that have economic development potential and where incoming development should be directed and identify areas that should be preserved from incoming and future development. Over the sessions the results were similar. Residents identified areas such as the general Southport neighborhood adjacent to Elmira, the former correctional facility, and existing commercial areas along major transit routes as the areas where development such as moderate-high density living, and mixed uses should be directed. All maps showed that the rural, agricultural, and low-density neighborhoods are areas that are desired for preservation from development or land use types that do not align with their character. These results reflect one of the biggest concerns of residents, overdevelopment, and sprawl. These maps *do not officially designate these specific areas as growth areas but show where residents prefer commercial and economic development to be focused to inform local decision makers*. Figure 50 shows that residents want most of the town to be protected from overdevelopment. They identified existing commercial and industrial corridors as the potential areas for economic development. Throughout the survey and the sessions, residents identified the former Southport Correctional Facility as the most important potential economic development site in Southport. Residents have demonstrated a belief in smart growth principles, preservation, and concentration over sprawl.

PRESERVATION AREAS VS PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT AREAS

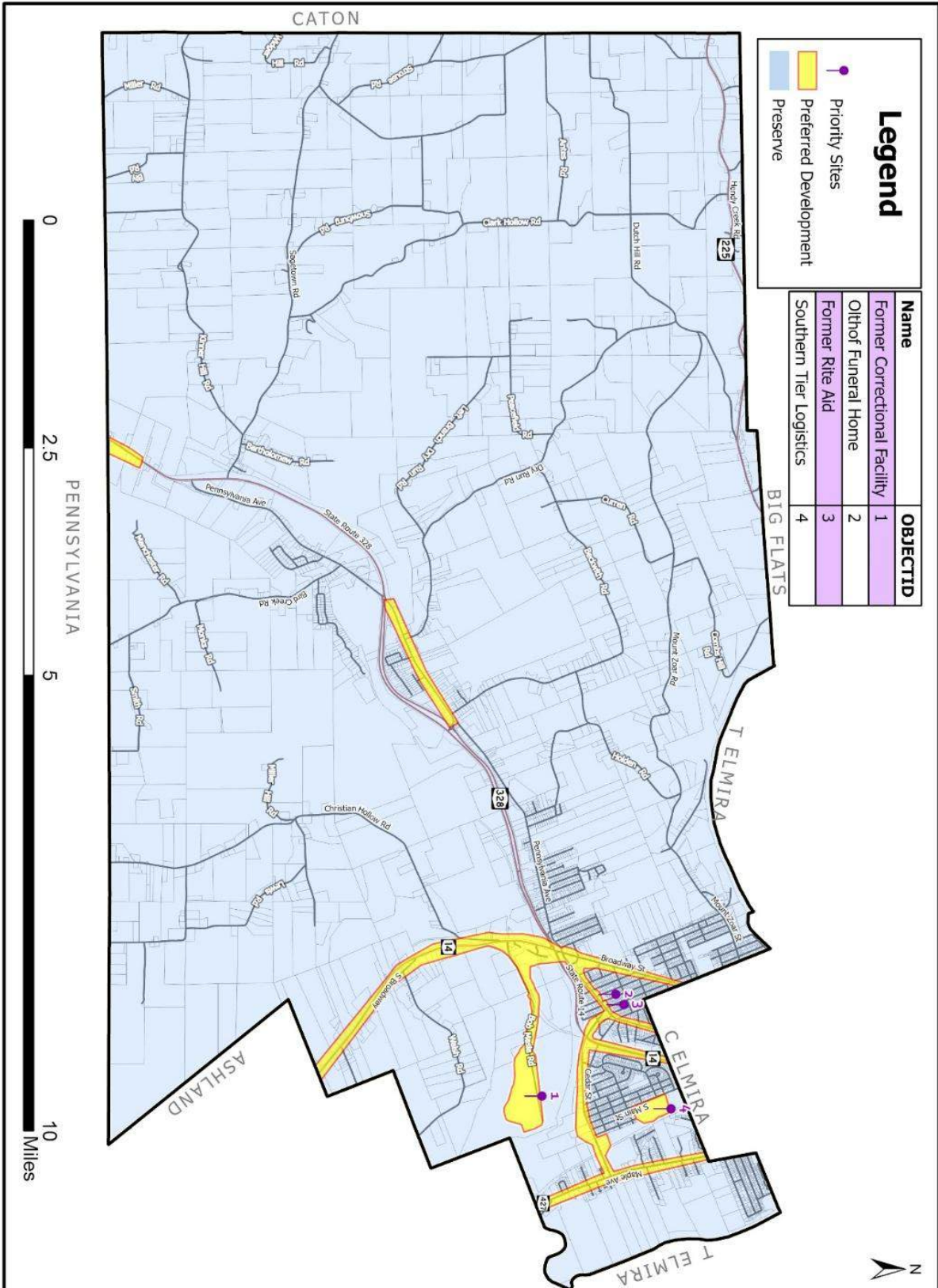


FIGURE 50: VISIONING SESSION RESULTS - PRESERVATION VS DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development

Southport is home to a diverse small business economy. Along with a shrinking population the number of jobs has decreased, however, Southport's commercial areas largely remain occupied and active. While the region has relatively low developmental pressure, proper planning is still essential for successful economic development. Successful economic development builds a strong tax base, creates jobs, and enhances quality of life. Residents expressed their desire for the local economy to be built on small businesses, local companies, and a sense of community.

Strategies

Infill Development and Underutilized Spaces: By targeting and identifying vacant parcels, aging commercial properties, vacant buildings, and underperforming sites, the Town can increase tax base, support small business growth, and improve neighborhood vitality without significant new infrastructure costs or sprawl into rural and low-density areas.

Smart Growth Zoning: Structuring a zoning code that promotes infill development and preservation of rural lands strengthens community character. While amending regulations to make it more affordable to build will attract investments in Southport. For example, flipping parking minimums to parking maximums will conserve space, lower building costs, and reduce excess impervious surfaces. It is also important to consider how development can become more pedestrian and age friendly as Southport continues to age in place.

Quality of Life: In any community, quality of life is vital for a community to thrive and sustain. Investments in public parks, community events, and infrastructure boosts community pride and bolsters quality of life. Walkable streets and accessible amenities build community pride and engagement. Additionally, transparency and a centralized location for community events, programs, news, and potentially small businesses to connect people to their community. Accessibility and aging in place strategies and infrastructure will boost quality of life as well.

Regional Coordination and Alignment: As part of the Southern Tier region, Southport works within the framework of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council, which sets strategic priorities for the region and Consolidated Funding Applications. Southern Tier Central is a regional planning and economic development board and is the designated local development agency for both the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA). Lastly, countywide agencies such as the Industrial Development Agency and Southern Tier Economic Growth are critical organizations with influence and expertise in economic development.

Priority Sites

Former Correctional Facility: Closed in 2022, this 300-acre facility located at 236 Bob Masia Drive once employed over 400 staff. Its closure accounts for approximately 56.4% of jobs lost in Southport since 2007. Currently owned by the State and subject to environmental testing, this zoned Industrial site is prime for potential development. This site already has existing infrastructure to be invested into and repurposed. Identifying desired and potential uses and possibly offering a streamlined process for such determined uses could incentivize development.

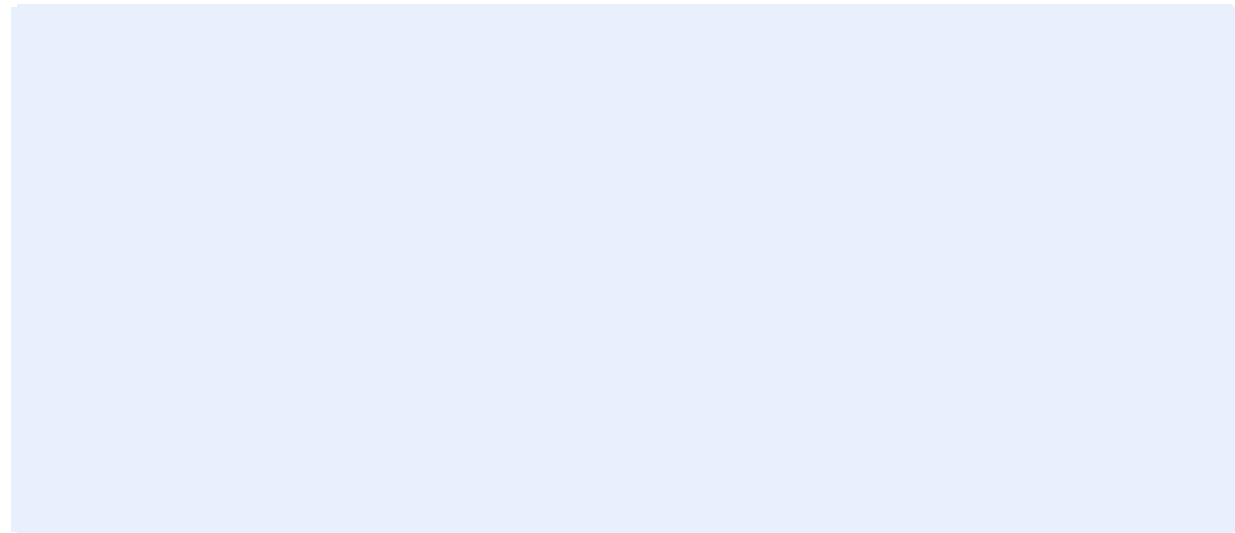


FIGURE 51: REDEVELOPMENT USE OF CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - SURVEY RESULTS

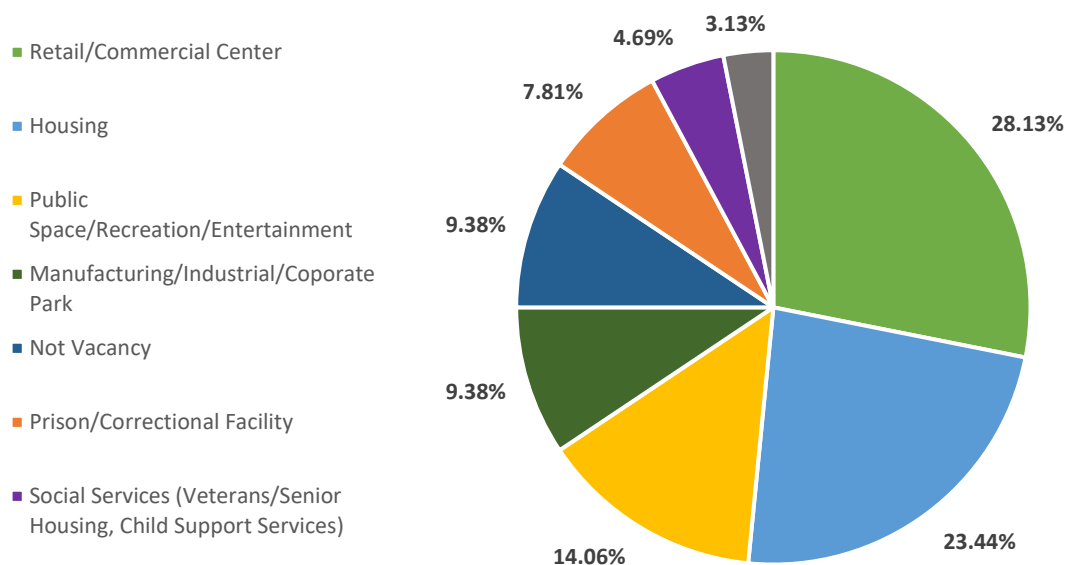


Figure 51 shows the survey results when asked what type of development respondents would like to see at the former correctional facility. Some form of retail/commercial center and housing were the most common responses.

Former Rite Aid: After the closure of Rite Aid at 1000 Penna Ave, Southport has been left without a pharmacy. Currently zoned as Commercial Neighborhood, this site is in the center of Southport’s commercial strip along Penna Ave. As seen in Figure 52, Residents identified a pharmacy as one of their most desired businesses. This site has high investment potential whether for a pharmacy or other adaptive reuse of the site.



PHOTO 16: CLOSED RITE AID

Southern Tier Commerce Center/Southern Tier Logistics: Formerly known as the “N-Plant” and constructed by the federal government during World War 2, this complex had favorable economic development opportunity. Zoned as industrial, this 48-acre site hosts 373,000 square feet of buildings with strong transportation access from County Route 28 (S Main St) to State Routes 427 and 14 to access Interstate 81. Additionally, it sits adjacent to the Norfolk Southern Rail line. This is a prime site for industrial and manufacturing purposes.



PHOTO 17: STCC FACILITY

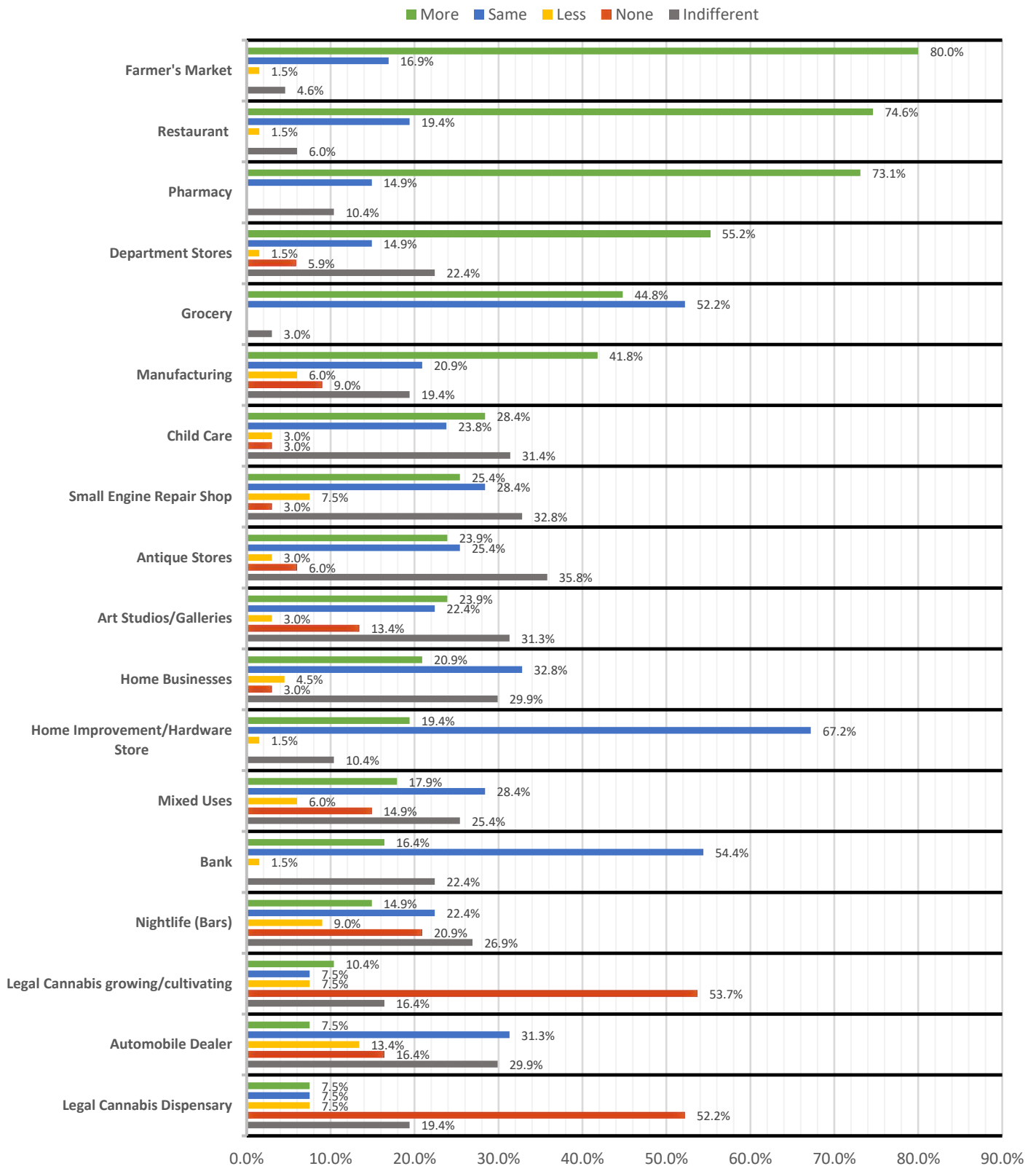
Former Olthof Funeral Home: Located at 1050 Pennsylvania Ave, the Olthof Funeral Home was a well-known community business for 80 years. Zoned as Commercial Neighborhood, this site has high potential for an adaptive reuse of the site, building, and infrastructure located along a main transportation and commercial corridor. Currently, this site has an application for a 55+ community which will contain 20 units.



PHOTO 18: OLTHOF FUNERAL HOME

Figure 52 shows survey results when asked what types of businesses are most desired or needed in Southport. Most businesses received a mixed response between “more,” “same,” and “indifferent.” The most desired are farmer’s market, restaurants, and pharmacies, respectively. As seen previously, survey respondents and session attendees continually brought up support for local agriculture and farmers. Restaurants were another business that was frequently identified through public engagement. Currently there is no pharmacy in town due to the closure of Rite Aid. The only businesses that received a majority of “none” were legal cannabis growing/cultivating and legal cannabis dispensary. Overall, the public input reflects the desire for more economic investment and job creation, support for small businesses, third spaces, and to fill gaps in everyday needs.

FIGURE 52: DESIRED BUSINESSES - SURVEY RESULTS



An aerial photograph of a forest with a dirt road and a small stream. The road is light brown and runs vertically through the center. The stream is a thin, light blue line on the left side. The trees are mostly green, with some yellow and orange leaves scattered throughout, suggesting an autumn setting. The overall image is slightly blurred and has a soft, ethereal quality.

Chapter 4: **FUTURE LAND USE**

Future Land Use

Overview

Land use is a key component of this comprehensive plan update. This Future Land Use Plan identifies how land is desired to be utilized and the character of neighborhoods over the course of the next 10 years. The intent of the Future Land Use Plan is to provide a framework for future policy and zoning updates by illustrating the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, identify appropriate areas for development and conservation, inform local decision-making, and ensure development predictability. The Future Land Use Plan is **NOT** a regulatory document to control land and property use and does **NOT** define specific permitted uses and zoning classifications; such intentions are functions of a zoning code ordinance. ***This Future Land Use Plan is an undefined general expression of the land use vision of the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Southport to update its zoning ordinance.***

Character Areas

The Future Land Use Plan identifies seven (7) character areas to delineate where general development types and neighborhood characters are the most appropriate and desired. These character areas are based on existing built and natural environments, the Southport zoning code, and public input from the visioning sessions. They distinguish the desires of certain development types and patterns in the town.

- **Commercial/Mixed-Use:** These areas include the primary commercial development areas in the town along Pennsylvania Ave, Broadway St, Cedar St, and parts of Maple Ave. Which includes mixed use development and are appropriate areas to expand mixed uses as they are adjacent to the densest residential areas in the town and in proximity to existing infrastructure capacity. This will support pedestrian access for adjacent residents to engage with these services and businesses.
- **Residential:** These areas identify the densest residential areas in the town, primarily in the Southport area. This area largely includes municipal sewer and water from the Elmira Water Board. Housing types in these areas include single family, duplexes, mixed uses, and apartment buildings promoting a higher level of development density. Further expansion of water and sewer should be done strategically.
- **Low Residential:** These areas include low density residential development found adjacent to State Route 328. This includes the hamlets of Pine City and Webbs Mills. Light commercial development that retains the quaint character of these areas exists and can be permitted in specific areas found within. These areas have limited infrastructure capacity.
- **PUD:** The Planned Urban Development area is specific to the PUD zone where planned multi-residential density housing and development types are existing and permitted.

- **Industrial:** This area delineates suitable and appropriate areas for light industrial use. This composes areas along major transportation routes, railways, and the Southport Correction Facility. Such areas could support a range of manufacturing, warehousing, or other uses that demand proximity to high-capacity infrastructure.
- **Protected Areas:** These areas include environmentally sensitive land and water resources such as the Conservation Zone and including open spaces and parks that are open to the public for recreational use.
- **Rural/Agriculture:** These areas include most of the town. This includes agricultural operations and a rural residential character. The town's most significant scenic viewsheds and vistas are located within these areas. Typical rural commercial and community service developments can be found in these areas.



PHOTO 19: PENNA AVE, PINE CITY (LOW RESIDENTIAL)

CHARACTER AREAS

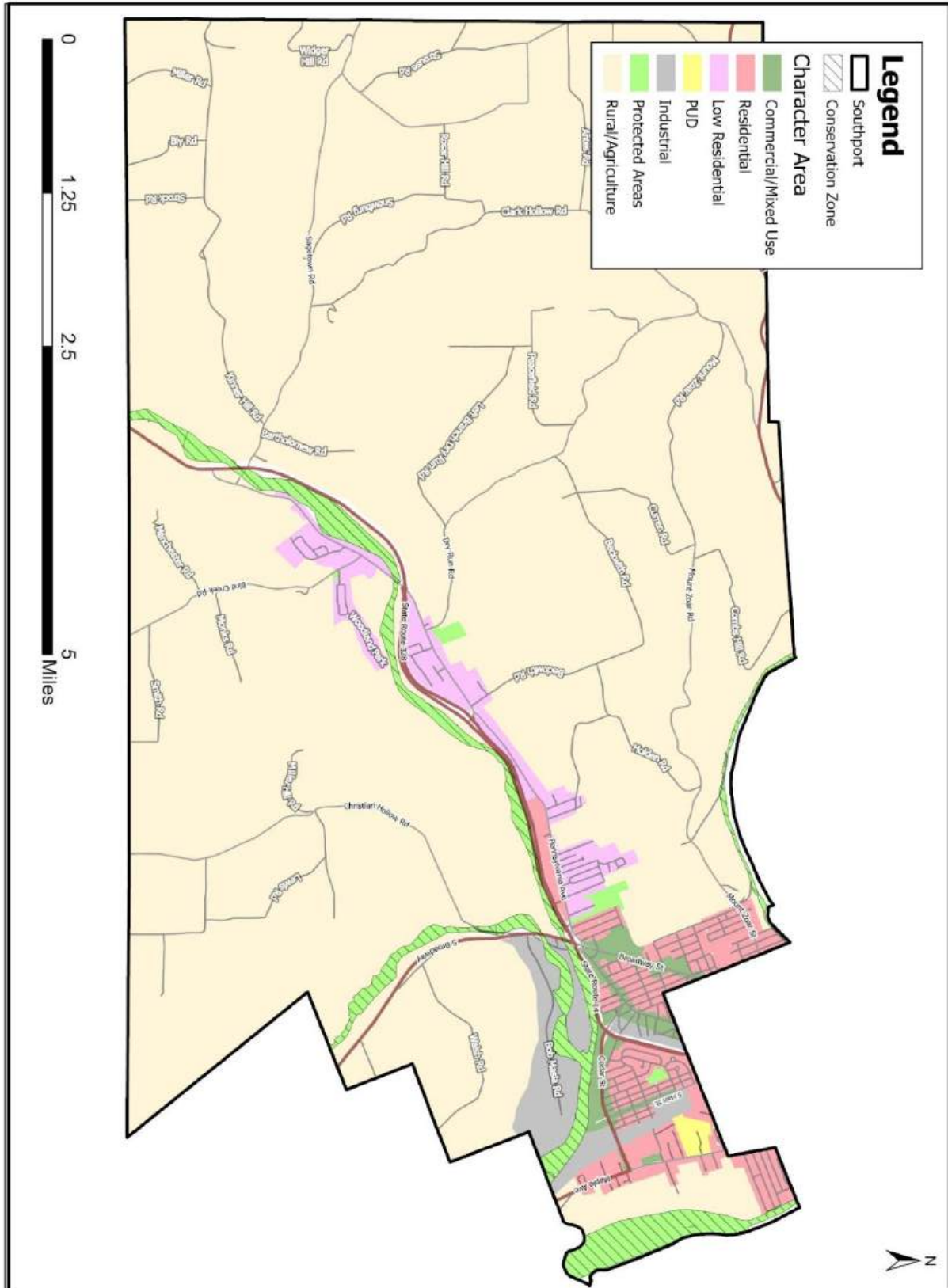


FIGURE 53: CHARACTER AREAS

An aerial photograph of a dirt path winding through a forest. The path is light brown and leads towards a bright, overexposed area in the distance. The surrounding trees have green and yellow foliage. A dark gray rectangular box is centered over the path, containing white text.

Chapter 5: **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Implementation Plan

While previous sections of this plan outline the community's existing conditions, natural landscape, and present and future issues, the implementation plan organizes the goals into achievable actions. It outlines actionable steps, timelines, potential agencies, and potential funding sources to bridge the gaps between the visioning and execution of this plan. This plan has identified five goals, fifteen policies, and eighty-seven actions to implement over the course of the next 10 years. The implementation matrix can be found in Appendix B.

Goal: Overarching generalized objectives of this plan

Policy: Determined strategies of individual issues to achieve the goals

Action: Steps to implement the policies

Goal 1: Smart Growth

- › Policy 1: Utilize Existing Infrastructure
- › Policy 2: Promote Complete Streets
- › Policy 3: Enhance Housing Supply

Goal 2: Safeguard Natural Resources

- › Policy 1: Promote Agriculture and Protect Farmland
- › Policy 2: Mitigate Natural Hazards
- › Policy 3: Protect Sensitive Areas

Goal 3: Economic Development

- › Policy 1: Retain Existing Businesses
- › Policy 2: Regional Collaboration and Alignment
- › Policy 3: Beautification and Infrastructure

Goal 4: Quality of Life

- › Policy 1: Utilize Existing Infrastructure
- › Policy 2: Promote Complete Streets
- › Policy 3: Enhance Housing Supply

Goal 5: Government Efficiency

- › Policy 1: Utilize Existing Infrastructure
- › Policy 2: Promote Complete Streets
- › Policy 3: Enhance Housing Supply



PHOTO 20: STATE ROUTE 328



Smart Growth

Policy #1: Utilize Existing Infrastructure

Policy #2: Promote Complete Streets

Policy #3: Enhance Housing Supply

WHAT IS SMART GROWTH?

Smart Growth is an approach to achieving communities that are socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable. Smart Growth promotes efficient and sustainable land development, incorporates redevelopment patterns that leverage prior infrastructure investments, and consumes less land that is typically available for agriculture, open space, natural systems, and rural lifestyles.

This approach in Southport looks to preserve local character, leverage existing infrastructure and services, and improve access to housing, jobs, and essential services. Encouraging context-appropriate zoning reform, expanding transportation options, and promoting efficient land use can help Southport grow sustainably without losing what makes Southport unique.

Priorities being addressed:

- Thoughtful growth
- Access to amenities/Proximity to Jobs
- Pedestrian/bike friendly roads
- Sense of Community
- Housing Affordability, Availability, and Variety
- More small local businesses
- Sewer Development
- Attract/Retain Young Families
- Low Taxes

POLICY #1: UTILIZE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Action #1: Review and update zoning regulations to remove barriers and support smart growth principles, encouraging efficient land use and compact development patterns.
- Action #2: Prioritize and align development in areas with existing infrastructure capacity (water, sewer, roads)
- Action #3: Identify and designate priority infill and redevelopment areas to focus growth in underutilized or strategically located sites.
- Action #4: Encourage mixed-use development in appropriate commercial corridors to promote walkability, housing diversity, and efficient land use.
- Action #5: Review parking requirements and consider reductions in infill areas to lower development costs, reduce impervious surfaces, and support redevelopment.
- Action #6: Update regulations to support middle housing types and remove barriers to diverse housing options, increasing housing choice and density where appropriate to preserve more rural areas.
- Action #7: Promote redevelopment and adaptive reuse of vacant and historic buildings, and consider incentives such as density bonuses, expedited review, or other tools for priority sites and development types.

POLICY #2: PROMOTE COMPLETE STREETS

- Action #1: Adopt a Complete Streets policy to ensure all future transportation projects consider safe and convenient access for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists of all ages and abilities.
- Action #2: Conduct a walkability and bikeability analysis to identify safety concerns, accessibility gaps, and priority corridors for improvement.
- Action #3: Prioritize and secure funding for traffic calming improvements at identified high-risk locations to enhance roadway safety and reduce vehicle speeds.
- Action #4: Secure funding to implement pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements at priority sites, including sidewalks, crosswalks, bike facilities, and accessibility upgrades.
- Action #5: Incorporate Complete Streets principles into local zoning and design standards by updating design guidelines and development regulations.
- Action #6: Coordinate with the County and NYSDOT to support and implement Complete Streets improvements along State and County roadways.
- Action #7: Work with regional transit providers to improve bus service access and connectivity to employment centers, housing areas, and key community destinations.

What are Complete Streets?

A Complete Street is a roadway planned and designed to consider the safety, accessibility, and mobility of all roadway users, modes, ages, and abilities to enhance community connectivity between residents, businesses, and services.

Benefits of Complete Streets:

- Safer travel and decreased severity of crashes
- Increased access and mobility
- Equitable transportation options
- Stronger communities and economies
- Healthier living and environment

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYSDOT Climate Smart Communities Program
- NYSDOT Transportation Alternatives Program
- FHWA Bicycling and Pedestrian Program
- FHWA Highway Safety Improvement Program
- USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)

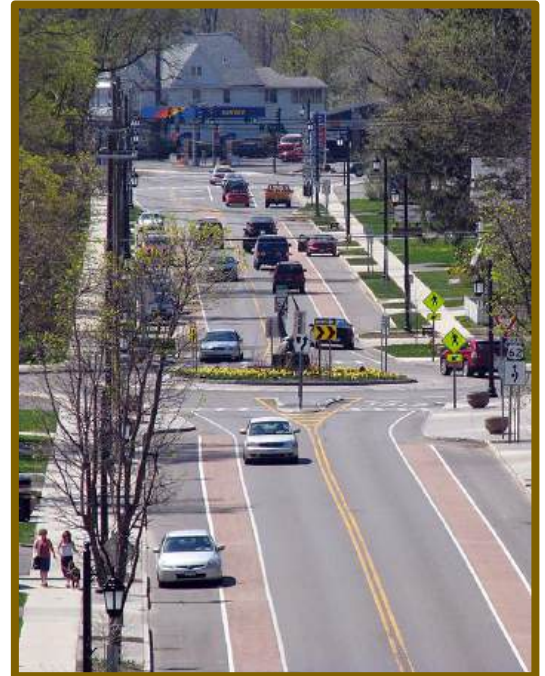


PHOTO 21: ROUTE 62, HAMBURG, NY (SOURCE: NYSDOT)

POLICY #3: ENHANCE HOUSING SUPPLY

- Action #1: Uplift the housing stock by prioritizing reinvestment into existing homes and neighborhoods to improve property condition and community quality.
- Action #2: Promote housing affordability by supporting a diversity of housing options
- Action #3: Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of underutilized or vacant residential properties to reduce vacancy and return housing to productive use and deter sprawl
- Action #4: Support a diverse range of housing options to serve changing demographics, including seniors, smaller households, and workforce needs
- Action #5: Track housing conditions, vacancy levels, and neighborhood trends to inform targeted reinvestment efforts and guide long-term strategies

Community Development Block Grant Funding

The New York State Office of Homes and Community Renewal oversees federal Community Development Block Grant programs for numerous issues like senior facilities and emergency services. STCPRDB has implemented Housing Needs Assessments (Community Planning) and Housing Rehabilitation projects in the towns of Corning, Cameron, and Thurston to assist low- to moderate- income homeowners with necessary home rehabilitation that they could not afford otherwise.



Safeguard Natural Resources

Policy #1: Promote Agriculture and Protect Farmland

Policy #2: Mitigate Natural Hazards

Policy #3: Protect Sensitive Areas

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Safeguarding natural resources is essential to maintain water quality, mitigate natural hazards, and support long-term ecosystem health. Natural resources provide clean air and safe drinking water, recreational opportunities, scenic landscapes, local food production, and critical habitats that sustain biodiversity and community quality of life. By balancing growth with environmental protection, these resources benefit both current and future generations. Thoughtful planning and conservation efforts also help communities become more resilient to environmental changes and natural hazards.

New York State Clean Energy Communities (NYSERDA) program and Climate Smart Communities (NYSDEC) program assist and guide communities in mitigating hazards and becoming more resilient.

Priorities being addressed:

- Thoughtful growth
- Flood Mitigation/Drainage Issues/Stormwater Control
- Municipal Collaboration
- More small local businesses (produce)
- Environmental Protection

POLICY #1: PROMOTE AGRICULTURE AND PROTECT FARMLAND

- Action #1: Explore and develop a Farmland Protection Plan to identify issues facing farming, priority conservation areas, establish long-term preservation strategies.
- Action #2: Promote agricultural economic development by supporting agritourism, local food systems, and farm businesses.
- Action #3: Map and inventory prime soils and contiguous farmland blocks to guide land use decisions and conservation efforts.
- Action #4: Increase awareness and participation in agricultural programs such as Agricultural Districts and New York’s Right-to-Farm Law.
- Action #5: Review and update zoning and land use regulations to eliminate barriers to farming, support farm-related uses and protect prime soils in agriculture zoned areas
- Action #6: As more guidance is released, update solar regulations to encourage agrivoltaics

NYSDAM Farmland Protection Plan

The Farmland Protection Planning Grants Program helps local governments plan for the future of agriculture, identify issues facing farms, and develop protection plans. The planning process identifies recommendations, policies, and projects, to maintain and boost the economic vitality and viability of the local agricultural industry. The FPPG funds 90% of the planning process and requires a 10% match. NYSDAM also offers the Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Program to assist and fund municipalities with implementing their farmland protection plans.

Right to Farm

Southport has adopted a Right to Farm Law which allows local farmers to engage in necessary agricultural practices that traditionally cause noise, dust, and odors, as long as they are operated safely and follow generally accepted farming guidelines to prevent disputes over the everyday realities of farming.

Agricultural Districts

The purpose of agricultural districting is to encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural production. It is a geographic area which consists of viable agricultural land. Agricultural operations within the district are the priority land uses and afforded benefits to promote the continuation of farming and the preservation of agricultural land.

Educational Resources

There are agencies and not for profits that provide educational materials and webinars for local decision makers and farmers regarding a wide range of issues facing the agricultural community.

- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- American Farmland Trust
- NYSDAM
- USDA

POLICY #2: MITIGATE NATURAL HAZARDS

- Action #1: Update Flood Damage Prevention chapter of Town Code based on NYS Code Coordinated Model Law
- Action #2: Review and update municipal codes to support green infrastructure practices for stormwater management and climate resilience
- Action #3: Implement green infrastructure projects (e.g., stormwater retention, infiltration, and natural drainage systems) to reduce flooding and improve water quality.
- Action #4: Continue to participate in CRS Program to reduce flood risk and lower flood insurance costs for residents.
- Action #5: If necessary, collaborate and conduct an interior drainage study for the South Elmira levee system (area protected by levees southwest of the Chemung River and northeast of Seeley Creek), with appropriate adjacent municipalities
- Action #6: Continue to partner with adjacent municipalities and relevant agencies to identify and pursue funding for levee certification, if necessary
- Action #7: Collaborate with the Chemung County Soil and Water Conservation District and other organizations to implement stream stabilization and rehabilitation projects
- Action #8: Continue outreach, education, and technical assistance related to floodplain stewardship, stream processes, flood safety, and mitigation of flood damaged buildings

Climate Smart Communities

Administered by NYSDEC, the CSC program offers free guidance and tools to assist local communities in implementing actions to mitigate hazards and adapt to changing environmental conditions. The CSC grant provides funding to implement these actions such as green infrastructure, feasibility studies, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Clean Energy Communities

Administered by NYSDERDA, the CEC program empowers local governments to focus on reducing energy use and investing into clean energy. Offering free guidance, CEC coordinators can help implement high priority actions to receive direct funding.



PHOTO 22: HAZARD MITIGATION ECO-WHEEL (SOURCE: EPA)

POLICY #3: PROTECT SENSITIVE AREAS

- Action #1: Refine the intent and allowed uses for the Conservation (C) District to better protect environmentally sensitive lands while allowing appropriate low impact uses.
- Action #2: Incorporate flood-prone areas and stream setbacks into constrained land calculations for residential density and cluster development to reduce risk and protect natural functions
- Action #3: Review stream buffer regulations to preserve water quality, habitat, and natural drainage systems.
- Action #4: Review erosion and sediment control standards to minimize impacts from construction and land disturbance.
- Action #5: Review timber harvesting regulations to maintain healthy forests and protect soils
- Action #6: Review steep slope regulations to prevent erosion, protect scenic resources, and limit hazardous development.
- Action #7: Explore development of significant viewshed protection to identify and protect significant viewsheds and scenic resources
- Action #8: Partner with local, regional, non-profits, and state organizations to conserve open space and environmentally sensitive lands.
- Action #9: Partner with appropriate agencies to manage invasive species for forest and crop protection

Overlay Zoning Districts

Overlay districts are a specialized zoning district applied on top of existing base districts that set additional regulations or incentives on top of the primary zoning districts. This tool is primarily used to protect sensitive areas and mitigate damages from natural disasters. It can also be implemented along ridgelines to preserve scenic views and vistas (Example: Town of Big Flats, Town of Gardiner).

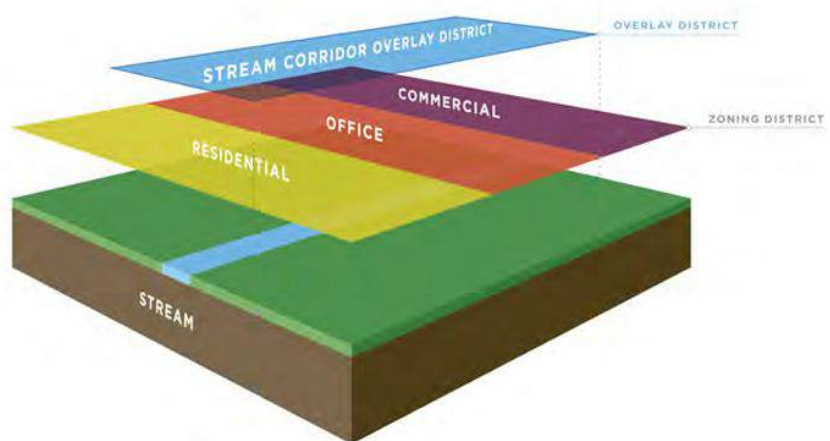


PHOTO 23: STREAM CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT (SOURCE: NYSDOS)



Economic Development

Policy #1: Retain Existing Businesses

Policy #2: Regional Collaboration and Alignment

Policy #3: Beautification and Infrastructure

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Economic development creates jobs, increases income, and improve overall quality of life. A strong economy supports local businesses and provides stable employment opportunities for residents. It encourages investment, which can lead to new businesses, services, and community growth. Collaborating with regional organizations helps share resources, identify solutions, and create greater regional opportunities. Improvements to infrastructure and public spaces makes an area more attractive to businesses, residents, and visitors. Better roads, utilities, and community facilities support long-term economic success. Economic development can increase local tax revenue, which helps fund schools, public safety, and other essential services to build a stronger community.

Priorities being addressed:

- Thoughtful growth
- Infill development
- Economic Development (Correctional Facility)
- Quality of Schools/Pine City School
- Municipal Collaboration
- Town Road Maintenance
- Property Maintenance/Code Enforcement
- Proximity to Jobs
- Sense of Community
- Business Directory
- Sewer Development
- Property Maintenance/Code Enforcement

POLICY #1: RETAIN EXISTING BUSINESSES

- Action #1: Regularly collaborate with the Southport Business Association
- Action #2: Explore the creation of a distinctive brand for local and small businesses in Southport
- Action #3: Review and update zoning regulations to reduce barriers, allow flexible uses, and streamline approvals for small businesses
- Action #4: Host workshops with small business owners to identify challenges and solutions
- Action #5: Invest and enhance business districts through streetscape enhancements, facade upgrades, and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure

POLICY #2: REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND ALIGNMENT

- Action #1: Explore collaboration with neighboring municipalities about shared municipal services and regional consistency
- Action #2: Coordinate with regional agencies to identify economic development priorities and potential funding
- Action #3: Align housing efforts with regional partners to attract investment and meet regional housing need
- Action #4: Partake in intermunicipal communication and data sharing
- Action #5: Coordinate transportation and infrastructure planning across municipal boundaries
- Action #6: Develop a Town-specific economic development strategy to attract investment, support local businesses, and align with regional priorities



Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council



CCIDA
THE CHEMUNG COUNTY
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

POLICY #3: BEAUTIFICATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Action #1: Assess and map broadband and cellular service gaps, and pursue funding and partnerships to expand reliable high-speed connectivity across the Town
- Action #2: Conduct water and sewer infrastructure studies to evaluate system capacity, future demand, and opportunities for expansion or upgrades.
- Action #3: Strategically expand water and sewer service to support existing homes, businesses, and targeted growth areas
- Action #4: Enhance key corridors and downtown areas through streetscape and mixed-use improvements that promote walkability, economic vitality, and community identity.
- Action #5: Pursue grants and funding opportunities for community beautification projects, including facade improvements, corridor enhancements, and placemaking initiatives. Explore forming a beautification committee to manage and execute beautification initiatives including volunteer events.
- Action #6: Implement green infrastructure and urban forestry initiatives, including tree planting programs and pursuing designation as a Tree City USA community.

What is Beautification?

Beautification addresses the visual look of communities. This often includes greenery, public art, and decorative infrastructure.

Types:

- Streetscape upgrades
- Public art/murals
- Tree lined streets/Hanging flower baskets
- Community gardens/Public gardens
- Clean up litter/Reduce waste
- Address light and sign pollution

Benefits:

- Enhances community character
- Attracts commerce to businesses
- Instills community pride
- Encourages community engagement
- Uplifts health and well being
- Increases property values



PHOTO 24: MARKET ST IN CORNING



Quality of Life

Policy #1: Promote Community

Policy #2: Age in Place

Policy #3: Reinforce and Expand Recreational Assets

WHAT IS AGE IN PLACE?

The Southern Tier is projected to continue to age. Age in Place refers to the ability of people to safely, independently, and comfortably live in their own home and community as they grow older, rather than moving to assisted living or nursing facilities. Southport can assist by encouraging walkable neighborhoods, senior-friendly housing, accessible public services, opportunities for social connection, and diverse transportation options so older residents can maintain independence and a good quality of life for as long as possible. Agencies such as the New York State Office for the Aging, Department of State, and AARP offer guidance, funding opportunities, and age-friendly planning tools that help communities support older residents while improving overall quality of life.

Priorities being addressed:

- Parks/Recreational asset upkeep/Recreational opportunities/programs
- Sense of Community
- Public Engagement and Involvement
- Safety

POLICY #1: PROMOTE COMMUNITY

- Action #1: Enhance coordination to promote local events, assets, and identity across platforms (website, social media, signage)
- Action #2: Capitalize on recreational assets, leagues, and cultural events to expand programming, increase participation, and strengthen eligibility for future funding
- Action #3: Strengthen partnerships with local organizations, schools, and neighboring municipalities to expand programming and outreach
- Action #4: Develop a Public Arts strategy to support murals, installations, performances, and rotating exhibits throughout the Town.
- Action #5: Invest in historical interpretation and signage to highlight local heritage and create educational and cultural experiences.
- Action #6: Promote inclusive community engagement and volunteerism by encouraging resident participation, supporting diverse programming, and gathering public input to guide future initiatives

POLICY #2: AGE IN PLACE

- Action #1: Coordinate with local and regional organizations to enhance, promote, and expand services and programs that support older adults
- Action #2: Pursue funding opportunities to rehabilitate aging housing stock and improve living conditions of low- and moderate-income residents
- Action #3: Coordinate with transit providers and senior housing operators to improve access to transportation and increase awareness of available services.
- Action #4: Encourage development and zoning that supports proximity to daily needs (e.g., pharmacies, grocery stores, and healthcare services) near senior housing.
- Action #5: Improve safe and accessible connections to nearby amenities through pedestrian infrastructure, lighting, traffic calming, and transit access
- Action #6: Explore and support alternative transportation options (such as ridesharing or on-demand services) for residents with limited mobility
- Action #7: Update zoning regulations to support aging in place, including allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and flexible housing arrangements for caregivers and multigenerational living on property.



PHOTO 25: AARP - 8 DOMAINS OF LIVABILITY

Age in Place Guidance Resources

- [EPA: Growing Smarter, Living Healthier](#)
- [APA: Aging in Place Toolkit](#)
- [NYSDOS: Senior Housing Regulations Two Model Laws and courses](#)
- [RHlhub: Community Supports for Rural Aging in Place](#)

AARP Age-Friendly Network

Southport joined the AARP Age-Friendly Network in 2015. The network aims to advance efforts to help people live easily and comfortably in their homes and communities as they age. The network serves as an educational catalyst for local leaders and implementation guidance through the forms of grants, model policies, and examples from other communities to become more age friendly. The grant program covers a wide range of projects such as disaster preparedness/resilience, pedestrian safety, home modifications, and public space improvement,

POLICY #3: REINFORCE AND EXPAND RECREATIONAL ASSETS

- Action #1: Expand and connect open space and trail systems to improve access between neighborhoods, parks, and community facilities.
- Action #2: Conduct engineering study of recreational assets to identify deficiencies, maintenance needs, and capital improvement priorities.
- Action #3: Pursue funding opportunities to improve the safety, accessibility, and quality of recreational facilities and for expansion of recreational facilities such as the Community Center.
- Action #4: Continue to support youth recreational leagues and programs to promote community engagement and active lifestyles
- Action #5: Improve pedestrian and bicycle access to parks through sidewalks, crosswalks, and trail connections, meet ADA standards
- Action #6: Coordinate with neighboring municipalities, county agencies, and community organizations to strengthen and expand recreational programming and leagues.



Government Efficiency

Policy #1: Active Communication

Policy #2: Investments and Engagement

Policy #3: Emergency Preparedness

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Efficient government boosts the town's ability to provide reliable services, respond to community needs, and use resources effectively. Clear and active communication keeps residents informed and helps build trust between the community and local government. This supports growth and strengthens local involvement in decision-making. In addition, the town getting and staying engaged in state and federal programs opens doors for future opportunities. Proactive emergency preparedness ensures the town can effectively respond to natural disasters, severe weather, or public safety emergencies. Planning ahead can reduce risks, protect residents, and create opportunities. Effective communication, community investment, and preparedness all contribute to a safer, more connected, and better-functioning community.

Priorities being addressed:

- Town transparency and communication
- Municipal Collaboration
- Low taxes
- Public Engagement and Involvement

POLICY #1: ACTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Action #1: Maintain and regularly update a centralized Town calendar that includes public meetings, events, and community activities.
- Action #2: Enhance the Town newsletter and digital communications to consistently highlight community events, Town news, and local businesses.
- Action #3: Improve public access to government meetings by posting recordings, agendas, and minutes online
- Action #4: Continue to work towards live streaming of public meetings to increase transparency and accessibility.
- Action #5: Expand communication platforms and outreach efforts (e.g., website improvements, social media, and email alerts) to better inform and engage residents.

POLICY #2: INVESTMENTS AND ENGAGEMENT

- Action #1: Monitor and track implementation of the Comprehensive Plan through regular reporting, evaluation, and updates to ensure progress toward community goals.
- Action #2: Pursue shared services and regional collaboration opportunities with neighboring municipalities and county agencies to improve efficiency and reduce costs.
- Action #3: Explore in municipal energy efficiency and sustainability initiatives (such as LED streetlighting and renewable energy for Town facilities) to reduce long-term costs and environmental impacts
- Action #4: Proactively prepare for funding opportunities by aligning projects with regional priorities, completing necessary environmental and engineering studies in advance, and identifying potential match or in-kind contributions.
- Action #5: Maintain and consider participation in state and regional certification programs (including Pro-Housing Community, Climate Smart Communities, and Clean Energy Communities) to access funding and technical resources.
- Action #6: Strengthen ongoing community engagement in decision-making through public outreach, partnerships, and transparent communication to guide investments and priorities.

POLICY #3: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- Action #1: Strengthen and support emergency response planning, coordination, and training
- Action #2: Enhance public preparedness and engagement in emergency safety and response
- Action #3: Continue to support Environmental Emergency Services (a three-county non-profit organization that operates a Flood Warning Service and Chemical Hazard Information Team)
- Action #4: Consider supporting new Environmental Emergency Services gauges to provide real-time water level and precipitation data for the Seeley Creek Watershed
- Action #5: Build off the existing Hazard Mitigation Plan by reviewing and fulfill town-specific actions from the Chemung County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Southport Actions from Chemung County HMP

1. Floodplain Management
2. Flood Study and Mapping
3. Emergency Generator at Town Hall
4. Public Education and outreach
5. Stream Mitigation
6. Buyout Damaged Properties

Website can be accessed at <https://chemung2025.devmy.org/>

Levee Certification

Levee certification is the multi-step process of documenting that a levee meets federal design, construction, operation, and maintenance standards to provide protection from the 1% annual chance (100-year) flood to obtain FEMA accreditation. If levees are not accredited, then protected areas would be included in the Special Flood Hazard Area. This would affect requirements for flood insurance coverage, construction standards for new development, and construction standards for substantial improvements to existing development. FEMA does not conduct this certification, which they consider to be the responsibility of the local project sponsor. Although most of the levees in the region are operated, maintained, and inspected by NYSDEC or USACE, they do not certify the levees. There are approximately 4.8 miles of levee in Southport, 3 miles along Seeley Creek and 1.8 miles along the Chemung River. The estimated cost for levee certification is likely to exceed \$250,000 per mile. There is limited funding opportunities to complete the necessary interior drainage studies and other steps. STC can assist in this process.

Potential Funding Sources:

- **NYSDEC Climate Smart Communities Grant**
- **Community Development Block Grant – Community Planning**