



# Town of Big Flats

## Comprehensive Plan Update



**BIG FLATS**  
NEW YORK  
1822

JANUARY 2021



**BERGMANN**  
ARCHITECTS ENGINEERS PLANNERS

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# INTRODUCTION



## WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan is an expression of your community's vision for its future. The Town's vision, as expressed in The Comprehensive Plan, is an important tool that guides the future development of land to provide a safe, pleasant, and economical environment.

The Comprehensive Planning process allows Town residents the opportunity to bring all stakeholders to the table and constitutes the legal basis for the Town's zoning laws, their revision, and their application—it is a clear guide for entities, whether private or public, seeking to undertake a project in the community. The plan also acts as a strategic map that equips the Town with greater leverage to influence planning activities and programs instituted by other governmental authorities who are required to take local plans into consideration. Once adopted, a Comprehensive Plan will create opportunities for the Town and allow funding agencies to support initiatives that have been agreed upon by the community.

The New York State Town Law, at Section 272-a defines a comprehensive plan as:

"the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the municipality. The comprehensive plan shall...serve as a basis for land use regulation, infrastructure development and public and private investment, and any plans which may detail one or more topics of a comprehensive plan."

This plan is intended to provide guidance for 10 years, or to 2030. It is essential that the contents of this plan are reviewed regularly to measure progress and to identify any need to update it as conditions change.



*Big Flats Town Hall*

## THE UPDATE PROCESS

The 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update is an update of the Town's 2006 Comprehensive Plan, and is intended to account for changing conditions as well as projected trends such as economic factors, demographic characteristics, development activity, infrastructure conditions, and land uses characteristics.

Recognizing that land use involves the inter-relationship of many considerations, this document also discusses topics such as the preservation of scenic vistas and open space, access to parks and trails, as well as the potential impacts of future growth (local and regional) on the Town's infrastructure system and character.

The planning process, in its most basic form, encompasses three major activities: (1) understanding the present state of the Town (i.e. existing conditions), (2) identifying the Town's goals and vision for the future, and (3) determining the best way to achieve that vision.

As every good comprehensive plan should, this Plan Update seeks to leverage the Town's strengths, address its weaknesses, identify threats, and capitalize on opportunities to achieve the community's vision. The plan accomplishes this by establishing goals, policies, and action items that address numerous issues related to improving the quality of life for residents.



View from Sperr Park

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement, support and ownership are important ways to ensure successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Providing opportunities for residents to contribute feedback and ideas encourages investment in the future direction of the community and long-term support for the Plan itself. To that end, the planning process for the 2020 Update included a variety of opportunities for engagement, summarized below:

### Steering Committee Meetings

The Town of Big Flats convened a Steering Committee to help guide the planning process and provide expertise on a variety of issues and topics identified during the process. The Committee was comprised of representatives from businesses, local and regional government, as well as individuals from the community at large. Committee members represented diverse perspectives from within the Town and served as means of building a supportive group for the planning process by promoting the project, assisting in identifying key stakeholders, and inviting colleagues, neighbors and friends to the public meetings.

The Committee was involved in all aspects of the development of the Comprehensive Plan, including: identifying key issues to be addressed, facilitating public input, and providing continuous review of all components included in the Plan. The Committee met five times over the course of the planning process.

### Stakeholder Meetings

Small group interviews were conducted with key stakeholders early in the planning process to help provide feedback about specific needs and opportunities. A wide variety of backgrounds, expertise, and interests were represented by the stakeholders, including:

- car dealerships;
- commercial /economic development;

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

### Public Meetings

Two public workshops were provided for community participation in the comprehensive planning process. The first Public Workshop was held on March 11, 2020. This interactive workshop focused on community visioning and allowed community members the opportunity to share their thoughts on a series of questions to assist in the formulation of a Vision Statement. The Vision Statement acts as a guiding framework for the Comprehensive Plan. The Second Public Workshop occurred on September 17, 2020 and focused on the 2030 Future Land Use Plan. Highlights from this community event include increased focus on light industrial development, expansion of the pedestrian network, targeted residential growth, and defined mixed-use nodes and corridors.



*Community members participate during Public Meeting 1.*

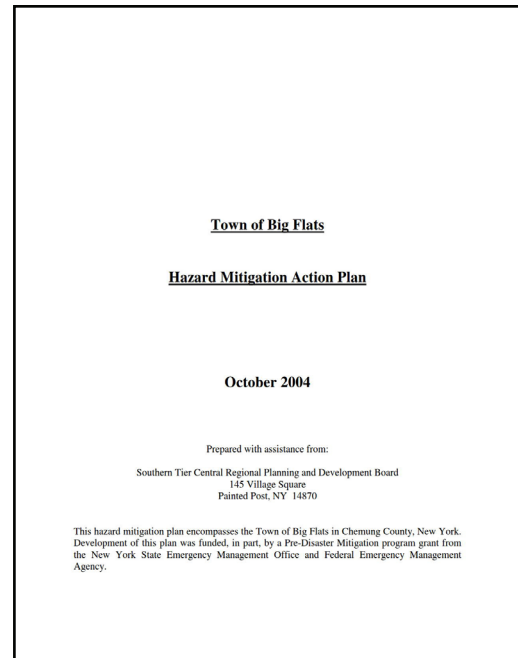


*Community members participate in a mapping activity as part of Public Meeting 2.*

# SUMMARY OF PAST PLANS

## Hazard Mitigation Action Plan - 2004

The Chemung River runs through the Town of Big Flats and is an important and valuable asset to the Big Flats community. Although the river provides both aesthetic and recreational value, it can also pose safety concerns due to the potential for flood events. Due to the flood-prone nature of many areas in the Town, this plan was created to identify actions that can be enacted in order to lessen the damage to property and potential loss within in the Town if a flooding disaster were to occur. This plan assesses the Town's risks and vulnerabilities and provides residents with a strategy that will minimize those risks through its goals, objectives, and action items. This plan was also intended to serve as a tool that assists the Town in the fulfillment of planning requirements for state and federal assistance programs, as well enable it with the opportunity to apply for hazard mitigation grants.

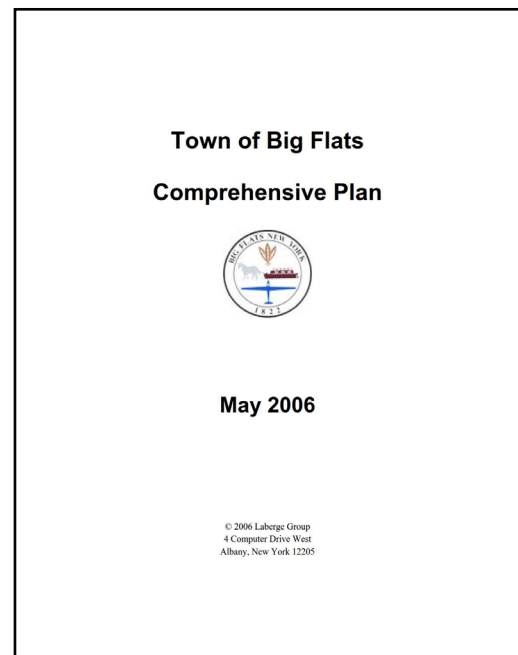


## Comprehensive Plan - 2006

This comprehensive plan was intended to serve as a guide for future public and private decisions to help sustain a vibrant and thriving community within Big Flats. This plan incorporates feedback solicited from the Town's elected and appointed leaders, business owners and residents in order to address concerns and build a consensus for the Town's vision. Implementation strategies surrounding the following focus topics are outlined in this plan:

- Land use/zoning;
- Transportation/infrastructure;
- Environment/recreation/natural resources;
- Housing/community; economic development/airport; and
- Town Center.

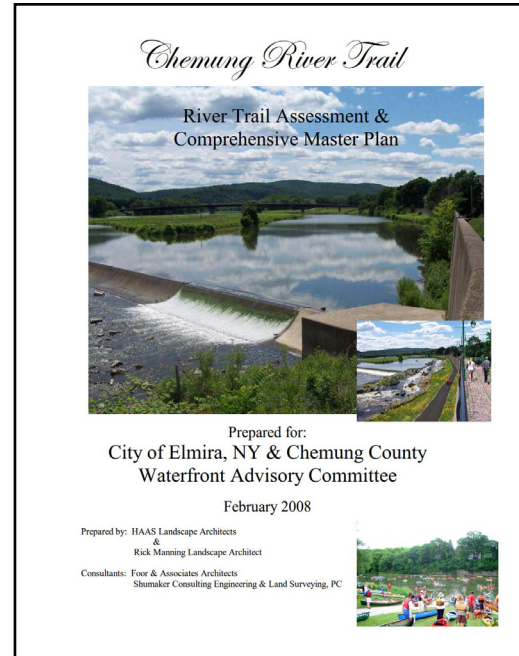
This plan creates a vision for the future and is a guide intended to serve the needs and interests of Big Flats residents.



# SUMMARY OF PAST PLANS

## Chemung River Trail Assessment - 2008

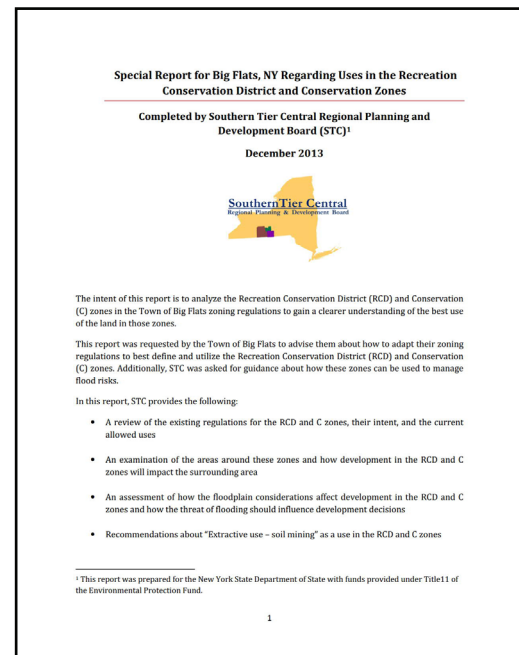
The greenway that runs along the Chemung River is a treasured asset that is ideal for trail use with its gently rolling hills, broad, flat valleys, a major city, and many smaller towns and villages. To refine a common vision and encourage a regional effort toward river development, this plan was developed as a feasibility and resource document for the City of Elmira, the five river Towns (one of which is the Town of Big Flats) and Chemung County. The Chemung River Trail Assessment & Comprehensive Master Plan was created to ensure that the regional trail system supports connectivity between municipalities, develops joint projects where needed and creates consistent trail design and management standards. At its core, this plan strives to increase economic prosperity, tourism, and quality of life for communities that surround the waterfront.



## Special Report For Big Flats Regarding Uses in the Recreation Conservation District and Conservation Zones - 2013

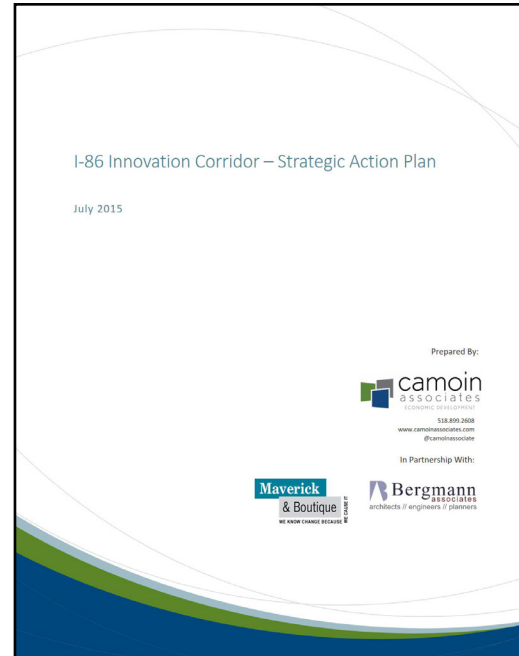
This plan reviews zoning regulations for the Recreation Conservation District and Conservation zones in the Town of Big Flats and is a guide that focuses on providing a stronger understanding of the best use of the land that both exists within and surrounds those zones. As stated in the report, The Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board (STC) provides the following assessments and recommendations:

- A review of the existing regulations for the RCD and C zones, their intent, and the current allowed uses;
- An examination of the areas around these zones and how development in the RCD and C zones will impact the surrounding area;
- An assessment of how the floodplain considerations affect development in the RCD and C zones and how the threat of flooding should influence development decisions; and
- Recommendations about "Extractive use – soil mining" as a use in the RCD and C zones.



## 1-86 Innovation Corridor – Strategic Action Plan - 2015

Interstate 86 runs through the Town of Big Flats and extends for 222 miles through northwestern Pennsylvania and Southern New York. Also known as the Southern Tier Expressway, it is highly trafficked by both locals and tourists, but due to economic decline, shifts in demographics, and natural disasters, the municipalities that surround I-86 have seen a multitude of negative economic impacts. This plan outlines a strategic plan for the seven municipalities that surround the I-86 corridor and the counties of Chemung and Steuben to “transform the area back into an economic powerhouse” by focusing on innovation through technology, governance, cooperation and communications.

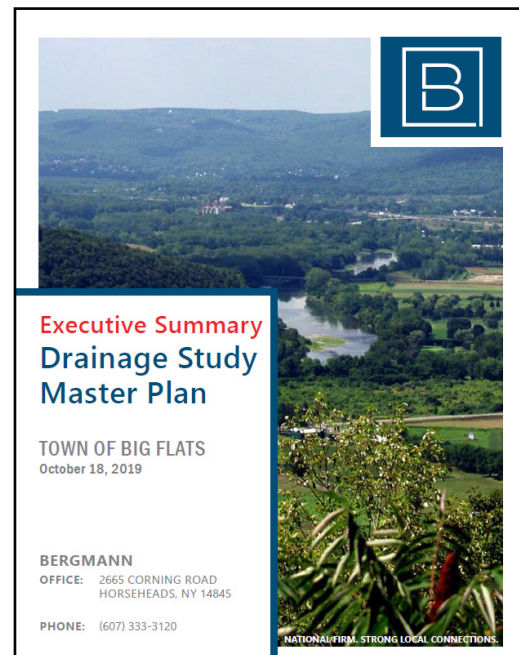


## Drainage Study Master Plan - 2019

In response to the frequent, high-intensity rainfall events that occurred in the Summer 2018, the Town of Big Flats developed a Drainage Study Master Plan. This five-year plan targets specific strategies that can be implemented to help the Town improve the overall stormwater management and improve its resiliency to flooding.

The Master Plan highlights the following high-priority recommendations:

- Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Updates to allow for improved land use strategies;
- Develop Culvert Replacement Program;
- Implement regular inspection and maintenance program for town managed infrastructure;
- Evaluate drainage districts, increase site application and impact fees to provide funding source for projects; and
- Improve education and communication through better utilization of website and social media.



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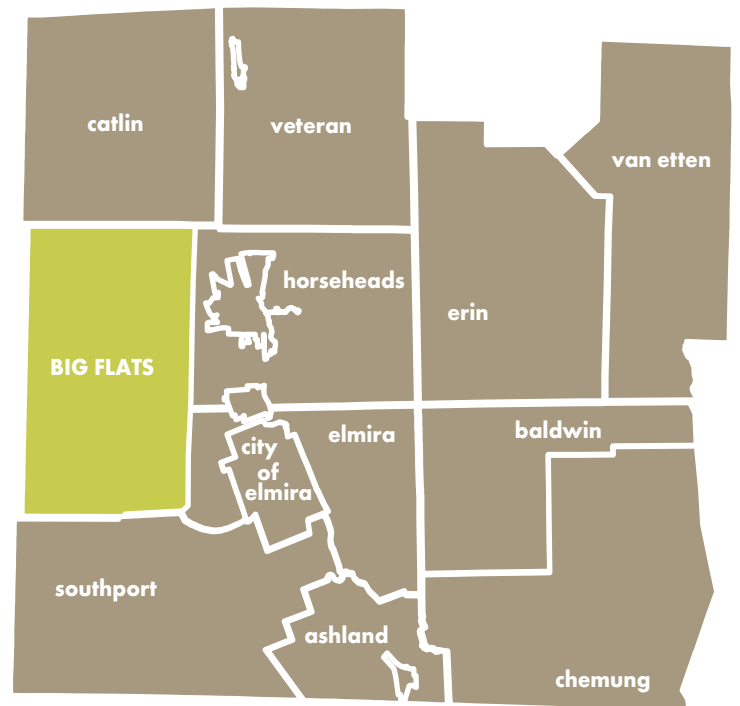
An aerial photograph showing a river meandering through a verdant landscape. The foreground features a well-maintained golf course with distinct green fairways and sand traps. The middle ground is dominated by a dense forest of green trees, through which the river flows. Beyond the forest, there are rolling hills and fields, some of which appear to be agricultural. The background shows a vast expanse of rolling hills under a bright, slightly hazy sky. A dark, semi-transparent rectangular box is overlaid on the upper portion of the image, containing the text 'EXISTING CONDITIONS' in white, bold, uppercase letters.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## GEOGRAPHIC SETTING

Big Flats is a 45.1-square mile town located on the western side of Chemung County, New York. It is bordered by the Town of Horseheads and Town of Elmira to the east, the Town of Catlin to the north, and the Town of Southport to the south. It is centrally located between the intersection of Interstate 99 at the Pennsylvania border in Steuben County and Interstate 86 at the Elmira interchange in Chemung County. This central location has contributed to the Town's growth and development as a suburb community to the cities of Corning and Elmira.

The Chemung River, a western tributary of the Susquehanna River, runs through the southern portion of the Town from east to west.



Chemung County is one of nineteen counties that fall within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which is the largest estuary in the United States. The Chesapeake Bay watershed is comprised of the Susquehanna River watershed and Chemung River watershed. Combined, these two watersheds make up the northern headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay and cover a large portion of New York's Southern Tier. The watershed spans 6,250 square miles throughout New York State, and has a population of about 640,000 people.

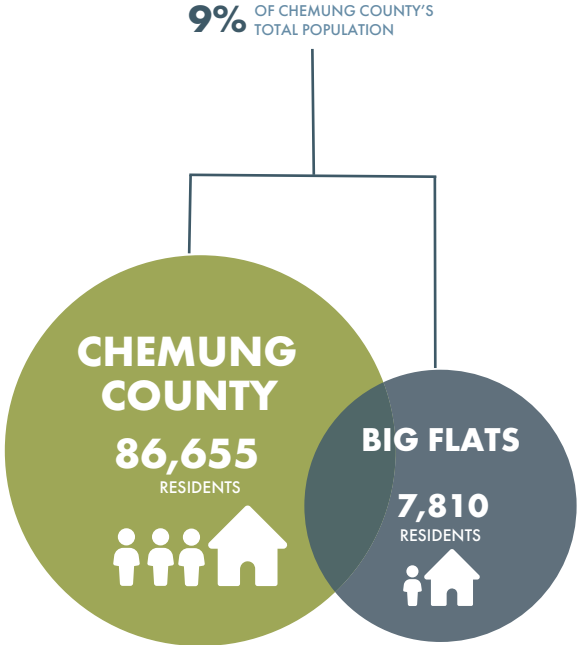
To improve water quality, New York State has developed and implemented Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP) that describe how it will meet nutrient and sediment loads outlined in the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Currently, three phases of the New York WIP have been completed. Phase III WIP was submitted in August 2019.

# DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

\*Data for this section was acquired from ESRI Business Analyst. The source file is U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. ESRI forecasts for 2019 and 2024.

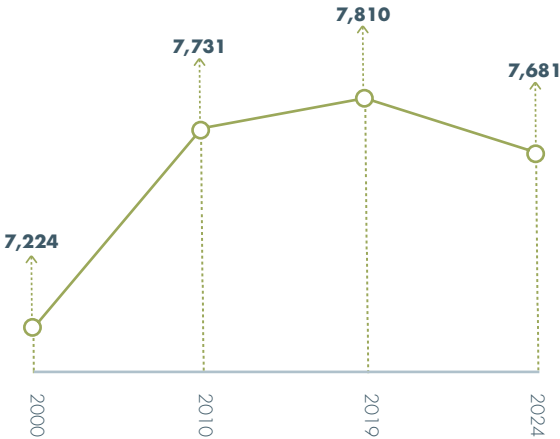
## Current Population

As of 2019, the Town of Big Flats is the third largest municipality found in Chemung County with approximately 7,810 residents. Big Flats represents nine percent of Chemung County's 86,655 residents, and the population density of the Town is approximately 172 residents per square mile.



## Population Trend

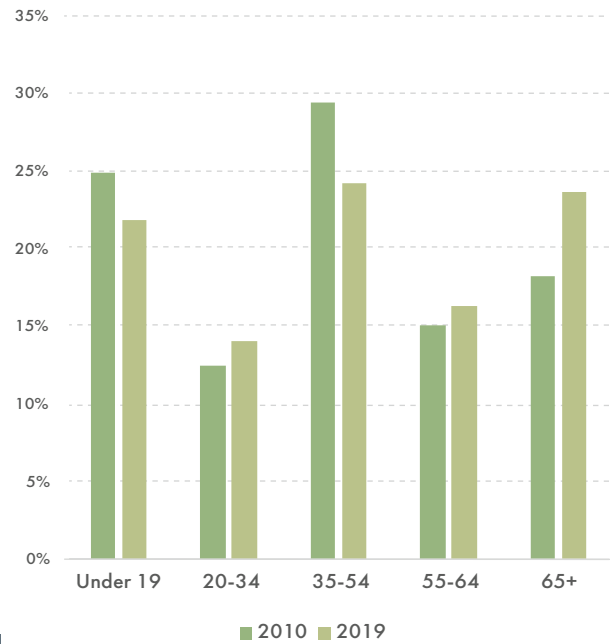
Chemung County's population has been decreasing since 2000, yet the Town of Big Flats has seen a steady increase. However, by the year 2024, the population of the Town is anticipated to decline by 2%, leaving 7,681 residents in the Town, which would correspond with a 3% drop in population for the entire county.



# DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)

## Age

In 2019, the median age in Big Flats in was 47.6, up from 44.9 in 2010. The largest age group in the Town is between 35-54 years old representing approximately 25% of the population. Between 2010 and 2019, the number of school aged children has seen a decrease of 3%, whereas the number of individuals over 55 years of age has increased by nearly 7%. This trend is projected to continue through 2024 and suggest that Big Flats is home to an aging population that may require specific types of services, different kinds of housing, and additional transportation/mobility options.

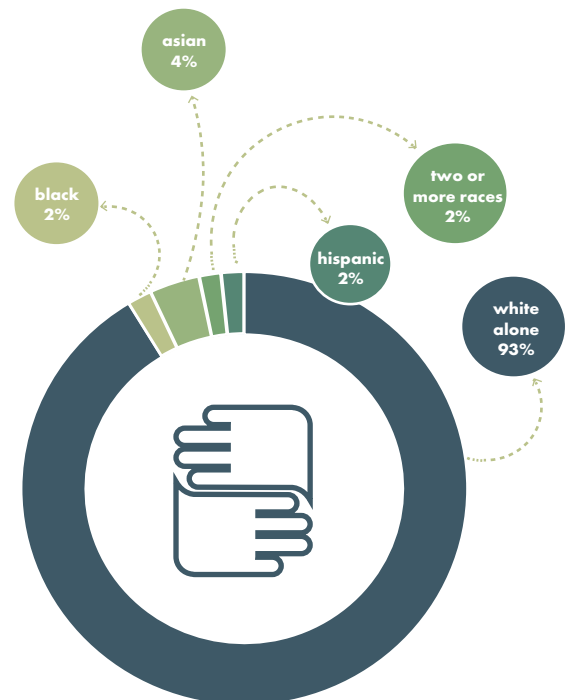


The Environmental Protection Agency created **Growing Smarter, Living Healthier: A Guide to Smart Growth and Active Aging (2009)** as part of its Aging Initiative to emphasize the importance of establishing age-friendly communities.

## Racial Composition

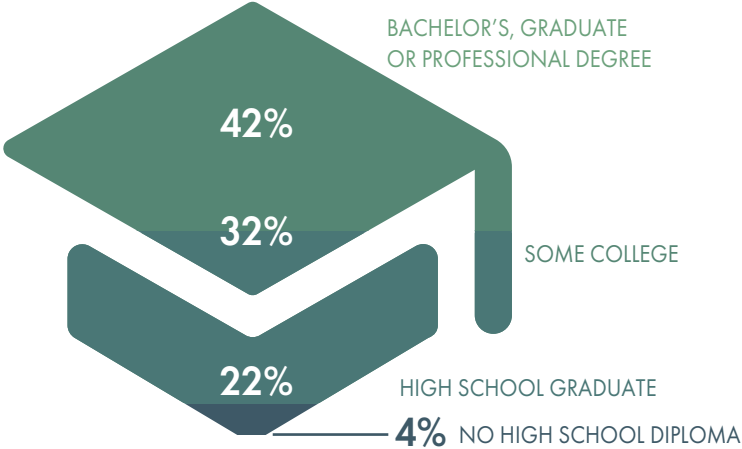
A large majority (93%) of the Town of Big Flats population is “white alone.” However, the Town of Big Flats has diversified over the years where the number of non-white residents has grown by 1.5% and is projected to grow an additional 1.2% by 2024.

Research suggests that the predominant racial background of rural communities corresponds to the capacity of a community to adapt to social and economic change.



## Educational Attainment

The Town of Big Flats is an educated community, with 42% of the population having a Bachelor's, Graduate, or professional degree (16% higher than Chemung County); 32% having completed some college coursework (2% higher than Chemung County); and 22% with at least a high school diploma (14% lower than Chemung County). Education plays a key role in the growth and advancement of a community and is essential to establishing a well-rounded society.

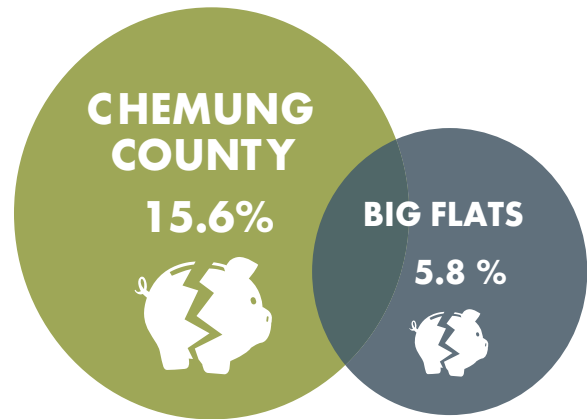


# ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

## Poverty

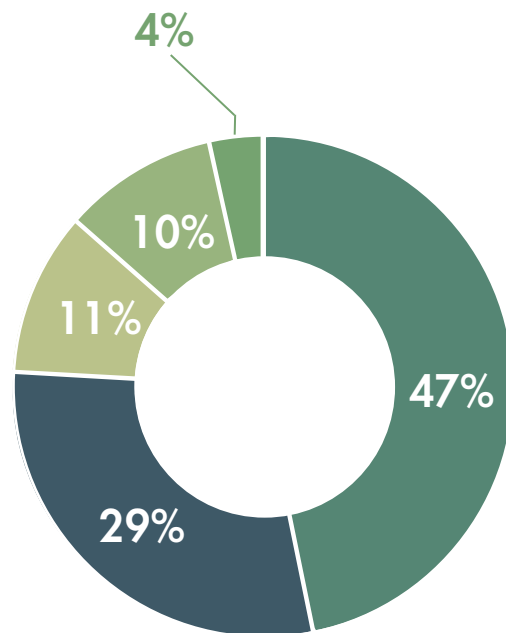
Poverty is defined as a state or condition in which a person or community lack the financial resources and necessities for a minimum standard of living. To measure poverty, the Census Bureau uses a set of income thresholds that differ by family size and structure.

The Town of Big Flats has a poverty rate of 5.8%, which is significantly lower than poverty rate for the whole of Chemung County. The Town’s poverty rate is also notably lower than New York’s statewide poverty rate of 13.6%. This confirms that Big Flats is relatively affluent and an economically-comfortable community.



## Employment

Individual and community well-being depends on employment and job creation. Jobs build prosperity in a community and support the health of its residents. A majority of Big Flats residents that are eligible to work are employed, totaling 7,792 workers, with the top three sectors in the retail trade industry (47%); the service industry (29%); and the manufacturing industry (11%).

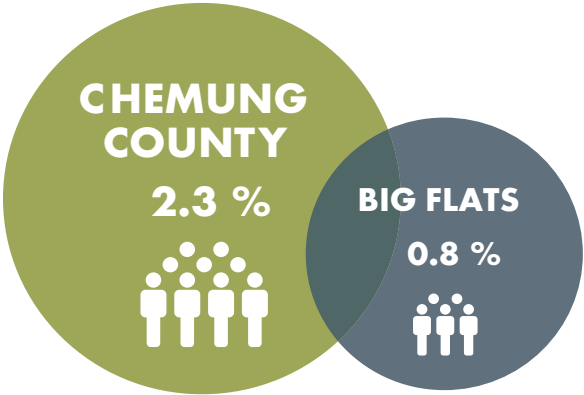


- RETAIL TRADE
- SERVICE
- MANUFACTURING
- FINANCE, INSURANCE OR REAL ESTATE
- OTHER

## Unemployment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) measures unemployment using labor force statistics collected from monthly household surveys called the Current Population Survey.

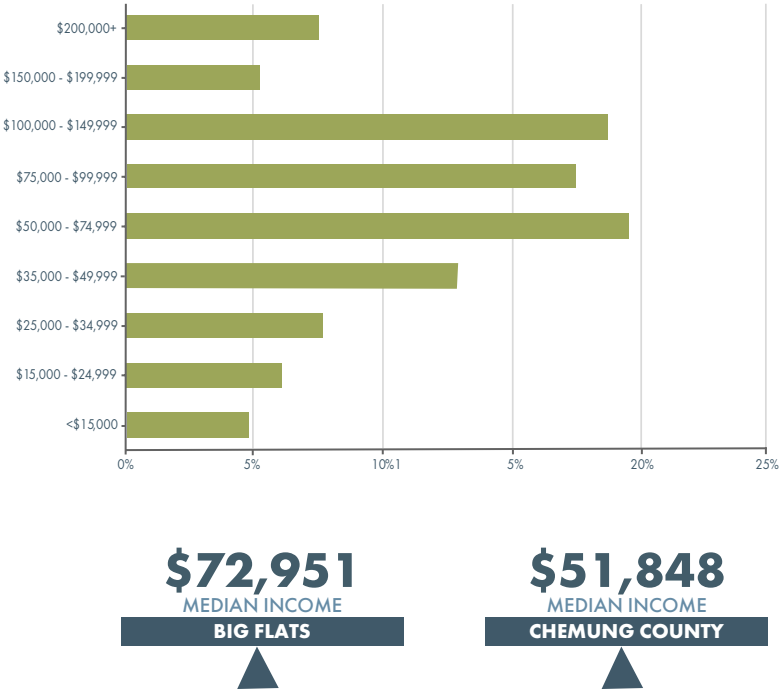
The rate of unemployment in Big Flats is 0.8%, which is less than half the unemployment rate for the entirety of Chemung County (2.3%) and considerably less than New York State's average of 4.4%. The Town's low unemployment rate indicates a stable economy, which is further strengthened through a diversification across several sectors.



## Median Household Income

Median household income is a measure that describes a household's economic status and is determined by collective incomes of all people sharing a specific place of residence.

The median household income in Big Flats is markedly higher than the whole of Chemung County, at approximately \$73,000 per year. The highest percentage of households (19.6%) have a combined income that totals between \$50,000 - \$74,999 annually. The highest percentage of households within Chemung County as a whole fall into the same income range.

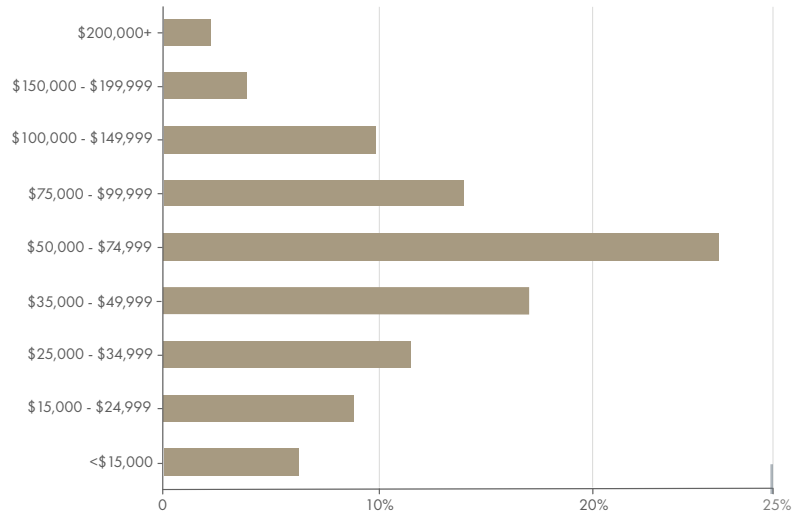


# ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)

## Disposable Income

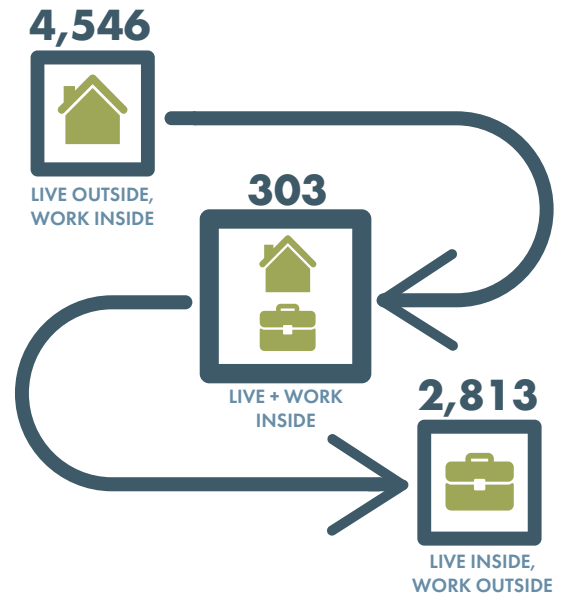
Disposable income is calculated as the total personal income minus personal current expenses, and is often monitored as an economic indicator used to gauge the overall wellbeing of an economy. Disposable income is also an important way to measure household financial resources.

The median disposable income for the Town of Big Flats is \$53,883, with 24% of households having disposable income that falls within the \$50,000 - \$74,999 range.



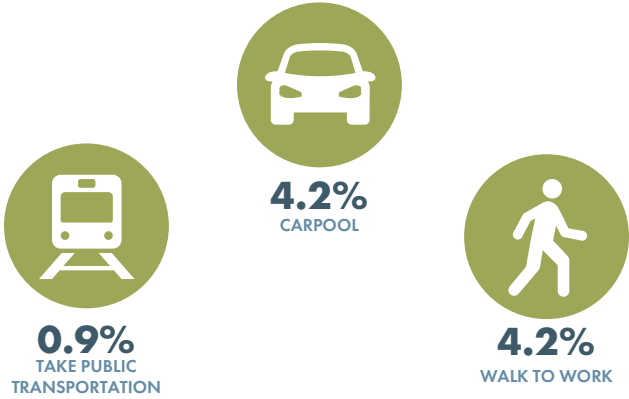
## Commuting Patterns

To inform our understanding of interconnectedness between communities, it's important to understand commuting patterns of workers, goods and services. Over 2,800 residents commute outside of Big Flats to get to their workplace, while only 303 workers both live and work within the Town. A majority of those employed inside the Town of Big Flats live in neighboring communities (4,546 people). These workers spend a considerable amount of time in the Town and can contribute to the Town's economic development.



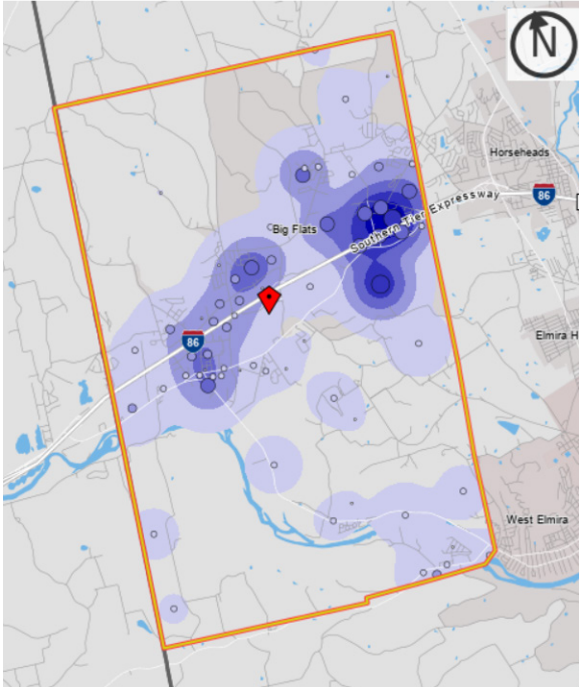
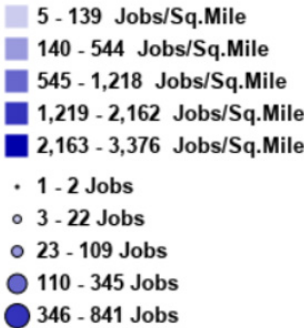
# Mode of Transportation to Work

About 91% of Big Flats residents drive alone to work, and approximately 4.2% carpool. This demonstrates a heavy dependence on automobiles within the Town and correlates with commuting pattern data which shows that residents living in Big Flats are commuting outside of the Town for employment.



# Job Density

Jobs provided within the Town of Big Flats are concentrated in areas adjacent to Interstate 86, particularly in the northeast portion of the Town which are the locations of Elmira Corning Regional Airport, Arnot Mall and Consumer Square. Other major employers are situated west of the airport or along State Route 352.

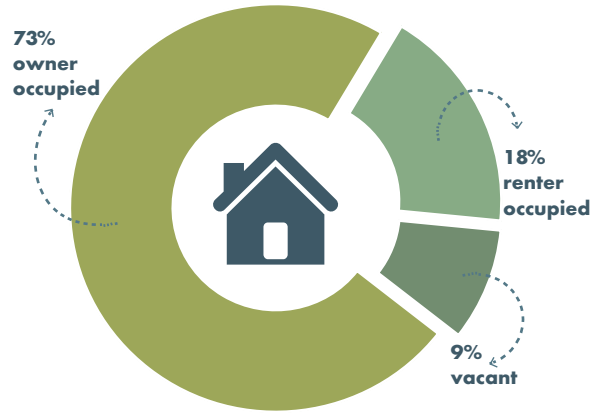


Map Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies

# HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

## Housing Units

There are 3,113 housing units in Big Flats. A majority of households are owner-occupied, which accounts for 73% of the total. Approximately 18% of housing units are renter-occupied, and 9% are vacant.



## Housing Cost

The cost of housing is considerably higher in Big Flats than Chemung County as a whole. The average amount spent on mortgage and basics is \$12,102 and the cost of rent is \$916.

AVERAGE SPENT ON MORTGAGE AND BASICS



**\$12,102**

MEDIAN CONTRACT RENT



**\$916**

TOWN OF BIG FLATS



**\$8,041**

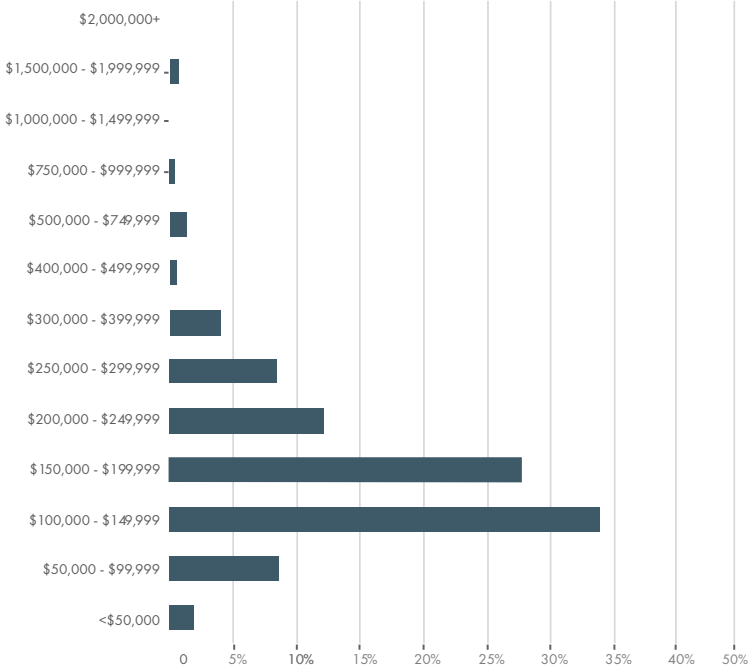


**\$661**

CHEMUNG COUNTY

## Housing Value

The median home value within the Town of Big Flats is \$160,000. This is a nearly \$50,000 higher median home value than that of Chemung County, which is \$110,869. This suggests that housing in the Town is seen as desirable and the housing market is strong. The figure to the right describes the percentage of homes in Big Flats that fall within a certain value range.



MEDIAN HOME VALUE



**\$160,000**

BIG FLATS

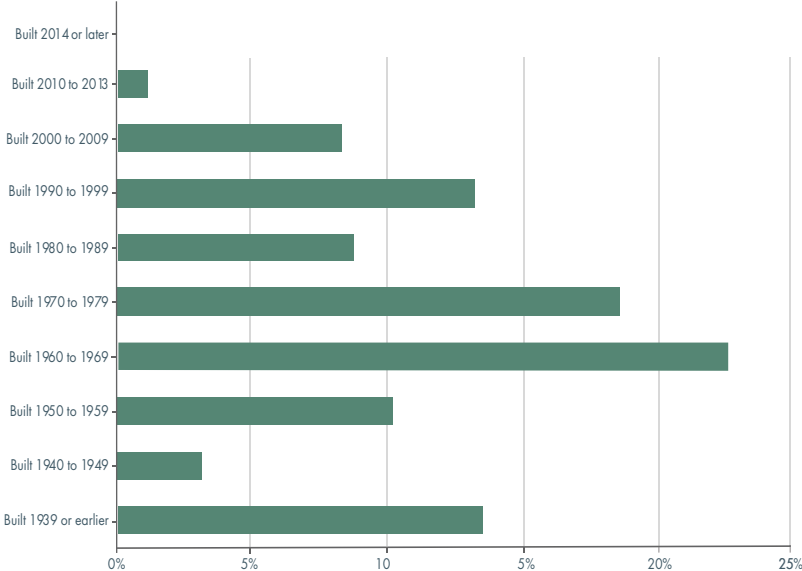


**\$110,869**

COUNTY

## Housing Stock

Approximately 50% of the housing stock in the Town of Big Flats was built between 1960 – 1989, with the largest concentration of those homes being built between 1960 and 1969 (23 percent). While these homes have contributed to the Town’s appealing and historic community identity, the large amount of older housing stock suggests that the Town may need to consider programs to support upkeep and mitigate public health hazards. Since 2010, the Town has seen a significant decrease in newly constructed houses and apartments, however Big Flats continues to be a desirable community for new housing development.



# PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

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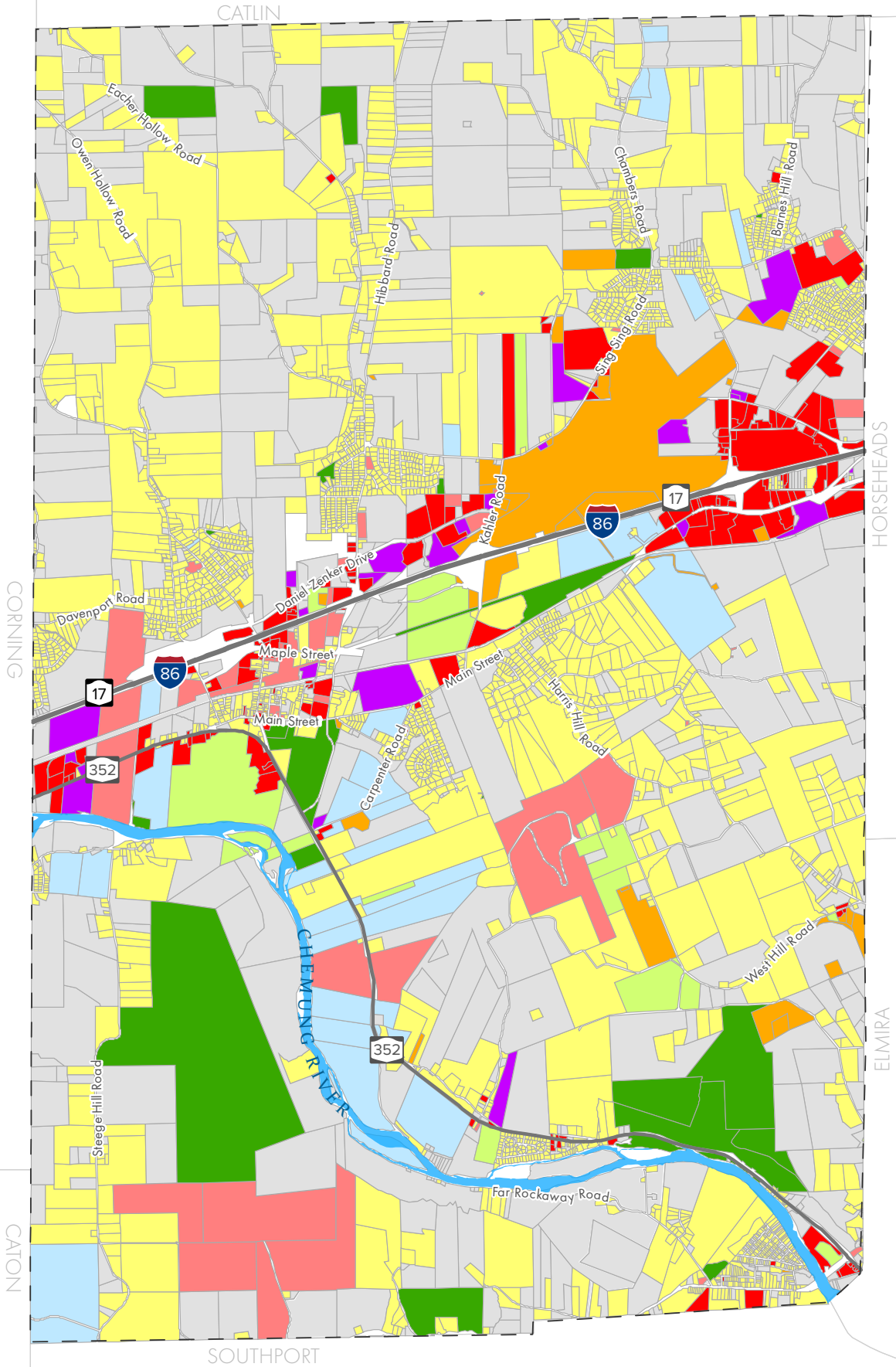
## Land Use

By percentage of parcels, land use within the Town of Big Flats is largely residential (70%), however total percentage of acreage that is vacant is about 9% higher than residential acreage, which suggests that there is plenty of room to transform underutilized parcels into valuable community assets for Big Flats residents.

The land use map on the right indicates that the majority of residential parcels are distributed along the perimeter of the Town, whereas Big Flats' core is mostly comprised of parcels with commercial, industrial, and service oriented uses. Forested, conservation and public parks are primarily concentrated south of I-86, with a large majority of those lands surrounding the Chemung River.

### LEGEND

	AGRICULTURAL
	RESIDENTIAL
	COMMERCIAL
	RECREATION
	COMMUNITY SERVICES
	INDUSTRIAL
	PUBLIC SERVICES
	FORESTED, CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC PARKS
	VACANT



## SPECIAL FOCUS: FLOOD VULNERABILITY

Flooding is the primary natural hazard in New York State, causing millions of dollars' worth of damage to homes and businesses each year. Flooding is also identified in the 2019 Chemung County Hazard Mitigation Plan as the highest-ranked hazard through self-assessment. The Town of Big Flats has experienced 3 flood-related events between January 1996 through June 2018, with a total of \$58,571 in property damage. With the increasing occurrence of intense storms and precipitation events, the probability of future flooding in the Town of Big Flats is extremely high. In order to achieve a greater level of community resilience and reduce overall flood losses, a variety of flood risk management tools is encouraged. Flood risk management is a concept that recognizes flooding will happen but manages the impacts by focusing on comprehensive planning, land use regulation, building codes, flood insurance, and nature-based flood protection and green infrastructure.

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) was created in 1968 by Congress to help people financially protect themselves from flooding. The NFIP offers flood insurance to homeowners, renters, and business owners if their community participates in the NFIP and enforces floodplain management regulations. These regulations include minimum construction requirements in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). The SFHA is a "high-risk flood zone."

Flood risk zones are determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on a community's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). Zones beginning with the letter "A" are high-risk flood areas, which are subject to inundation during a 100-year flood. This is the "base flood" or flood elevation that has a 1-percent-annual-chance of being equaled or

exceeded each year. The SFHA includes all "A" and "V" FIRM zones (V Zones apply in coastal situations with additional hazards associated with storm-induced waves). Low-to-moderate flood risk areas are subject to the 500-year flood, which means a flood of that size or greater has a 0.2-percent-annual-chance (or 1 in 500 chance) of occurring each year. They are shown on the FIRM as Zone B or Shaded Zone X. Zone C or Unshaded Zone X are outside the 1-percent and 0.2-percent-annual-chance floodplains with low flood risk. Structures in the SFHA with mortgages from federally regulated or insured lenders are required to have flood insurance. A resident will not be able to purchase a flood insurance policy if their community does not have floodplain regulations that meet or exceed NFIP criteria. The Town of Big Flats enforces local floodplain regulations through Chapter 15.12 – Flood Damage Prevention.

According to the 2019 Chemung County Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Town of Big Flats has 86 policies in-force. The chart on page 23 uses New York State Building Footprints with Flood Analysis data from the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) to identify parcels that fall in the 1-percent and 0.2-percent-annual-chance floodplains (this data is not the regulatory floodplain, as defined by FEMA).

Residential classification uses the RU, R1, and R2 zoning districts; mixed-use classification uses the TC and TCR zoning districts; industrial classification uses the CL and I zoning districts; conservation classification uses the C zoning district; and commercial classification uses the TC2, BN, BN2, BNR, BR, and ABD zoning districts.

( CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE )

**SPECIAL FOCUS: FLOOD VULNERABILITY (CONTINUED)**

	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Mixed-Use</b>	<b>Industrial</b>	<b>Conservation</b>	<b>Commercial</b>
1-percent-annual-chance floodplain	173	29	10	60	167
0.2-percent-annual-chance floodplain	83	142	39	6	27

The data shows that a total of 439 parcels are in the 1-percent-annual-chance floodplain, which is the high-risk flood zone where flood insurance on structures with mortgages from federally regulated or insured lenders is required. Compared with a total of 86 flood insurance policies, this analysis demonstrates the vulnerability to flooding that exists throughout the Town by way of the large amount of properties not insured against flooding. One way that the Town can assist with the cost of flood insurance is by improving its Community Ratings System (CRS) classification.

The CRS is a voluntary incentive program developed by FEMA that recognizes communities for enforcing floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. The CRS supports the NFIP by seeking to achieve the following three goals:

1. Reduce and avoid flood damage to insurable property,
2. Strengthen and support the insurance aspects of the NFIP, and
3. Foster comprehensive floodplain management.

There are many benefits to comprehensive floodplain management such as improved public safety, property loss reduction, open space and natural resource protection, and better post-disaster recovery. The CRS rewards communities

that implement activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements and work toward the three goals of the CRS by providing flood insurance premium rate reductions to policyholders.

Any community that is in full compliance with the NFIP may apply to join the CRS. CRS credit points are earned for a wide range of floodplain management activities, which are organized under four categories with 19 activities. The CRS uses a Class rating system to determine the premium discount for policyholders. All communities start out with a Class 10 rating (which provides no discount), then range from 5% (Class 9) to a maximum of 45% (Class 1). As a community engages in additional CRS-credited actions, increased NFIP policy premium discounts are available. Communities advance in CRS Classes by improving their floodplain management efforts and making changes to help eliminate or reduce exposure to floods. In this way, CRS performance metrics create a baseline by which municipalities can measure their progress towards reducing flood vulnerability and improved long-term resilience.

The Town of Big Flats is currently a Class 8 CRS community. This enables premium discounts of 5 to 10% on the higher-cost flood insurance policies. Additional discounts can be achieved by implementing additional activities that qualify for CRS credit, such as open space preservation within the floodplain and enactment of restrictive

## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)















### Zoning

There are currently 14 zoning classifications and two floating zone districts in the Town of Big Flats. Of these, five districts are variations of residential zoning, Town Center, various business districts, Commercial Light Industrial, Industrial, Conservation, and the Airport Business Development.

The majority of land in Big Flats is zoned Rural District. Zoning throughout the center of the Town reflects an assortment of development standards, where the majority regulates airport, business, town center and industrial uses. Conservation is the second largest zoning district, and the majority of lands surround the Chemung River.

#### LEGEND

##### ZONING DISTRICTS

	RESIDENTIAL 1 DISTRICT (R1)
	RESIDENTIAL 2 DISTRICT (R2)
	RURAL DISTRICT (RU)
	TOWN CENTER (TC)
	TOWN CENTER 2 (TC-2)
	TOWN CENTER RESIDENTIAL (TCR)
	BUSINESS NEIGHBORHOOD (BN)
	BUSINESS NEIGHBORHOOD 2 (BN2)
	BUSINESS NON-RETAIL (BNR)
	BUSINESS REGIONAL (BR)
	COMMERCIAL LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (CL)
	INDUSTRIAL (I)
	CONSERVATION (C)
	AIRPORT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (ABD)

##### FLOATING DISTRICTS

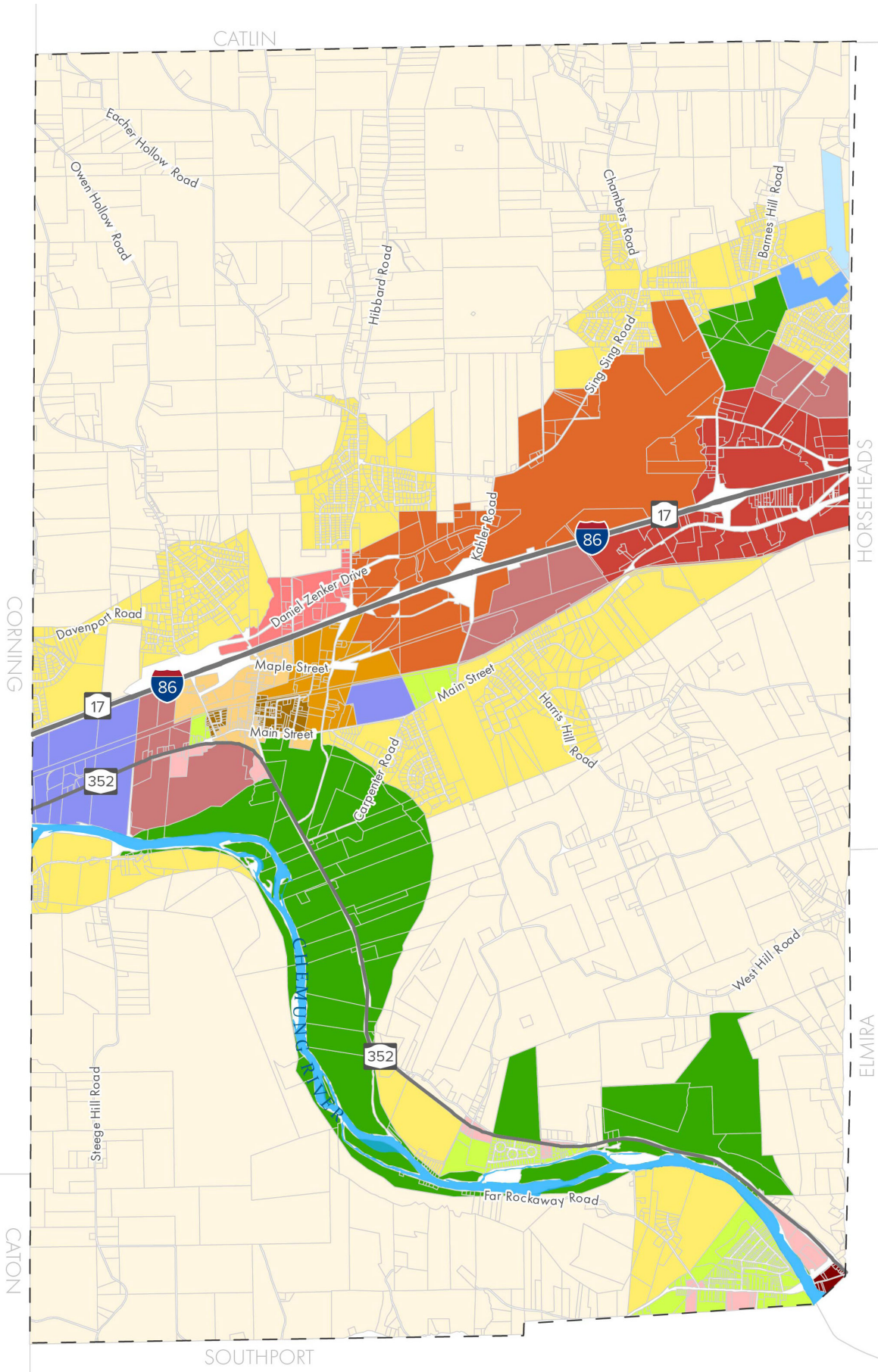
	PLANNED MULTI-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (PMRD)
	SENIOR HOUSING PLANNED MULTIPLE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (SHPMRD)

Conservation Advisory Councils (CACs) and Conservation Boards (CBs) are municipal organizations that advise local governing boards, zoning boards of appeals, and planning boards on matters related to natural resource planning. CACs and CBs benefit local governments in many ways, and can help to provide more thorough information about natural resources in an area than a planning board can. CACs and CBs:

- Develop town-wide inventories of natural resources and open space.
- Review development proposals.
- Conduct research.
- Implement stewardship projects.
- Deliver education programs.
- Gather and distribute information the other town agencies, land-use applicants, and the general public.

The Town of Big Flats' Conservation District contains 2,478 acres of land for which the Town can help raise environmental awareness, educate the public, and coordinate municipal environmental planning efforts through the establishment of a CAC or CB.

For more information on how to establish a Conservation Advisory Council, visit the [New York State Association of Conservation Commissions](#).



# PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)

## Trails

Big Flats has several trails that both residents and visitors enjoy year-round. The Big Flats Trail, which is a “Rail-to-Trail” multi-use path, runs parallel to Interstate 86 and County Route 64 and is a short community trail. Steege Hill Nature Preserve, Tanglewood Nature Center and the Plymouth Woods Nature Preserve are all scenic, forested areas that are ideal for exploring and physical exercise. NYS Route 352 through Big Flats is designated as NYS Bike Route 17 and continues along into neighboring West Elmira and into the City of Elmira.



Big Flats Trail

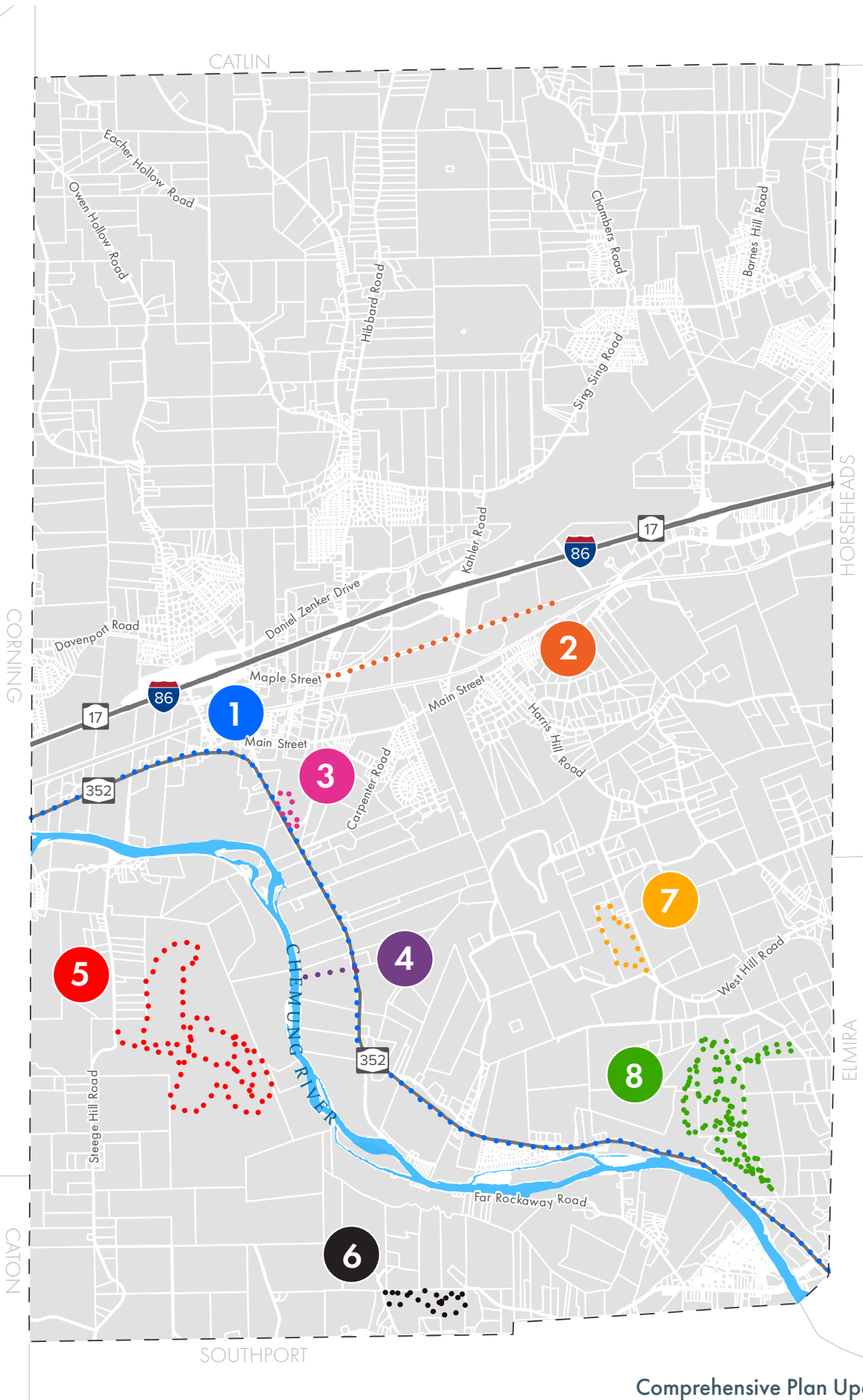


Plymouth Woods Trail System

The NYS Bike Routes Viewer is an online interactive map that provides information regarding NYS Department of Transportation Bicycle Touring Routes.

### LEGEND

- 1 BIKE ROUTE 17
- 2 BIG FLATS TRAIL
- 3 BIG FLATS COMMUNITY PARK TRAIL
- 4 MARCIEL LANE
- 5 STEEGE HILL NATURE PRESERVE TRAIL SYSTEM
- 6 PLYMOUTH WOODS NATURE PRESERVE TRAIL SYSTEM
- 7 PERSONIUS WOODS TRAIL
- 8 GLEASON MEADOWS TRAIL



# PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)

## Parks

A total of 17 parks are located throughout the Town, which range in size from a few hundred square feet at sites such as Fawn Acres Park, to the parks and preserves which hug the Chemung River and contain several hundred acres of public lands. In total, there are 1,685 acres of public park lands located in Big Flats, which offer a wide variety of outdoor activities and add greatly to the quality of life for the Town’s residents.



Sperr Memorial Park

LEGEND

- ① WHITNEY PARK
- ② BARNES HILL PARK
- ③ PINE CIRCLE PARK
- ④ FAWN ACRES PARK
- ⑤ REYNOLDS PARK
- ⑥ MAPLE SHADE PARK
- ⑦ HILLVIEW PARK
- ⑧ SPERR MEMORIAL PARK
- ⑨ BIG FLATS COMMUNITY PARK
- ⑩ HENRY MINIER ATHLETIC CENTER
- ⑪ HARRIS HILL PARK
- ⑫ STEEGE HILL NATURE PRESERVE
- ⑬ MANOR PARK
- ⑭ TANGLEWOOD NATURE CENTER
- ⑮ PLYMOUTH WOODS NATURE PRESERVE
- ⑯ GOLDEN GLOW HEIGHTS PARK
- ⑰ SOMERSET PARK

According to the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation in New York State generates:

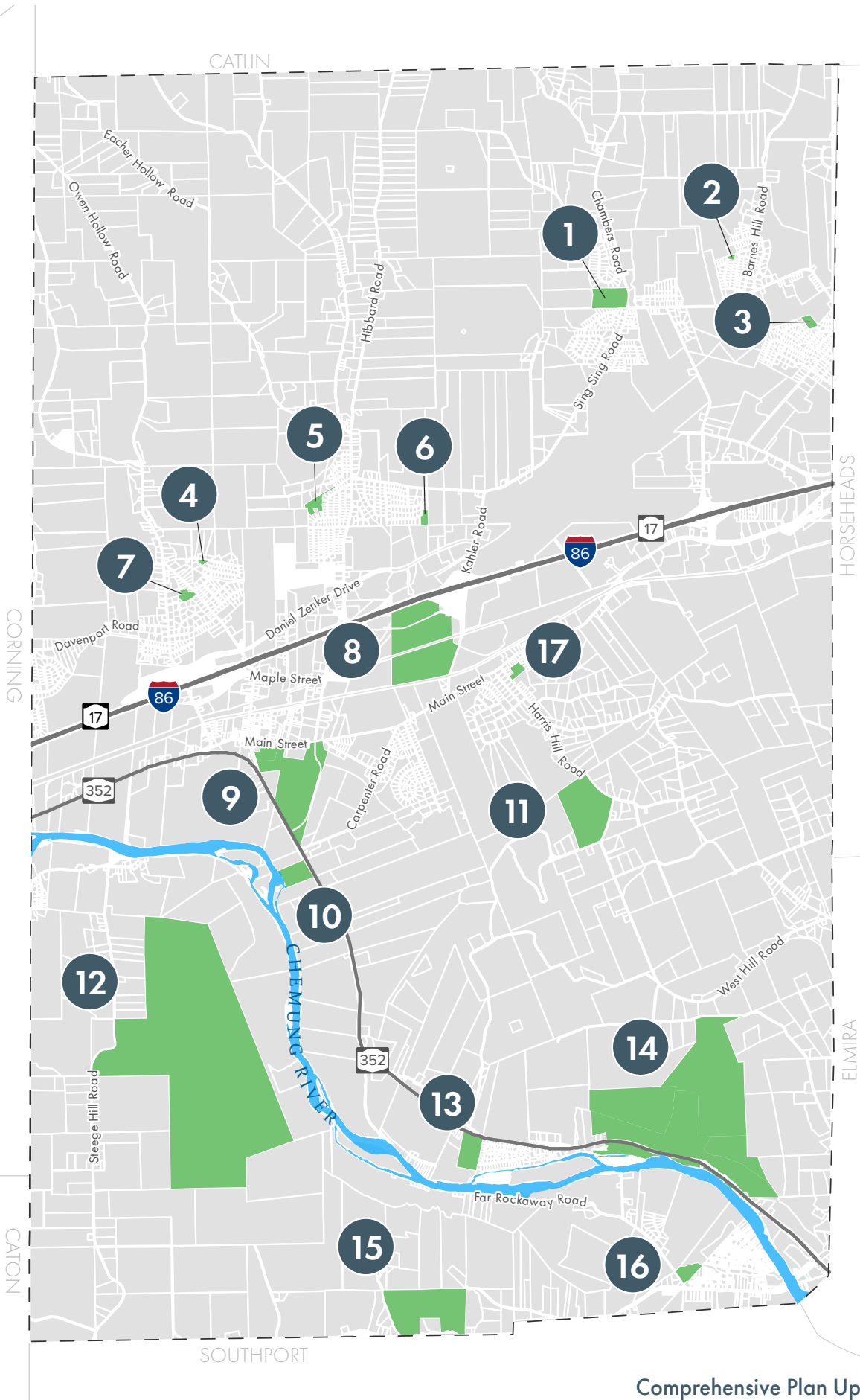
- \$41.8 billion in consumer spending annually
- 313,000 direct jobs
- \$14.0 billion in wages and salaries
- \$3.6 billion in state and local tax revenue



Plymouth Woods Nature Preserve



Whitney Park



## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)

### Historic Resources

The National Register of Historic Places provides an official list of historic places in the US that are worthy of preservation. These sites keep communities vibrant and livable, and connect people with one another through their economic, cultural, environmental and educational benefits.

The Town of Big Flats contains two listings on the National Register of Historic Places: the Mount Saviour Monastery National Historic District and the Warren E. Eaton Motorless Flight Facility. The Mount Saviour Monastery consists of 10 contributing buildings on three sites located on Monastery and Fisher Hill Roads. The Warren E. Eaton Motorless Flight Facility is on the grounds of the National Soaring Museum and was an important site in the development of motorless aircrafts. There are currently no locally designated resources or properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places nomination.

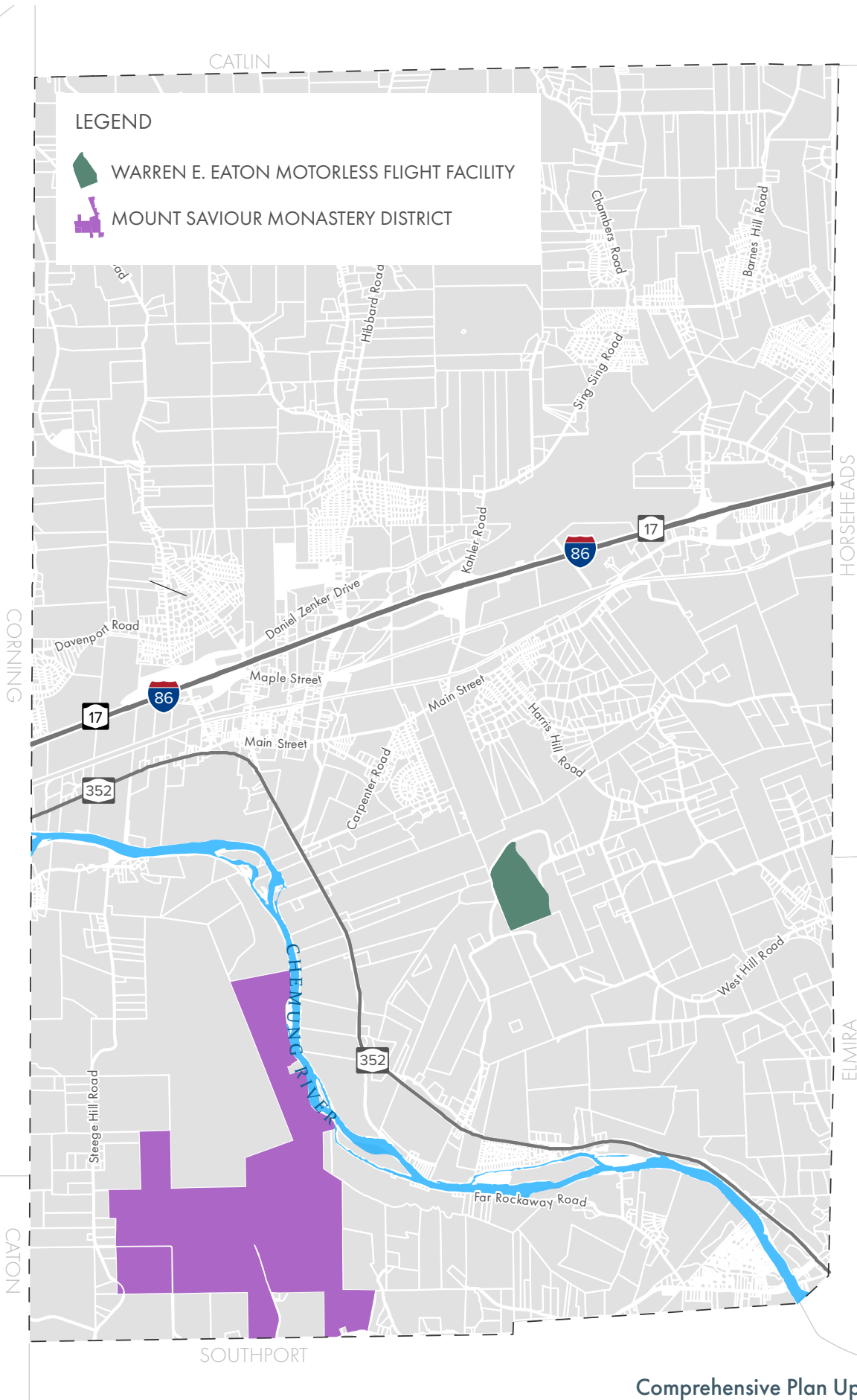


Mount Saviour Monastery



Warren E. Eaton Motorless Flight Facility

Owners of income producing real properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places may be eligible for a 20% federal income tax credit for the substantial rehabilitation of historic properties. Also, rehabilitation of historic residential buildings may qualify for a New York State tax incentive. For more information, see [Tax Credit Programs on the State Historic Preservation Office](#) website.



## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)

### Transportation System

The Southern Tier Expressway/Interstate 86 (I-86) bisects the Town of Big Flats and Chemung County. Exits 49, 50, 51A and 51B for I-86 exist in Big Flats and contribute considerably to traffic volumes on adjacent arterial surface streets. NYS Route 17/I-86 provides easy east-west access from New York City to Buffalo and is an alternative route to Interstate 90. Branching off NYS Route 17/I-86 is Interstate 390, which goes to Rochester. Located east of Big Flats is I-81 that provides access to Syracuse and Washington, D.C. Interstate 88, located northeast of Big Flats, connects the region to Albany and Montreal, and Interstate 84, located southeast of Big Flats, provides access to New England.

Commercial corridors along Big Flats Road and Chambers Road also serve as traffic generators. In addition, NYS Route 352 runs through the Town and connects the City of Elmira to the southeast with the Southern Tier Expressway to the northwest.

#### ELMIRA-CORNING REGIONAL AIRPORT

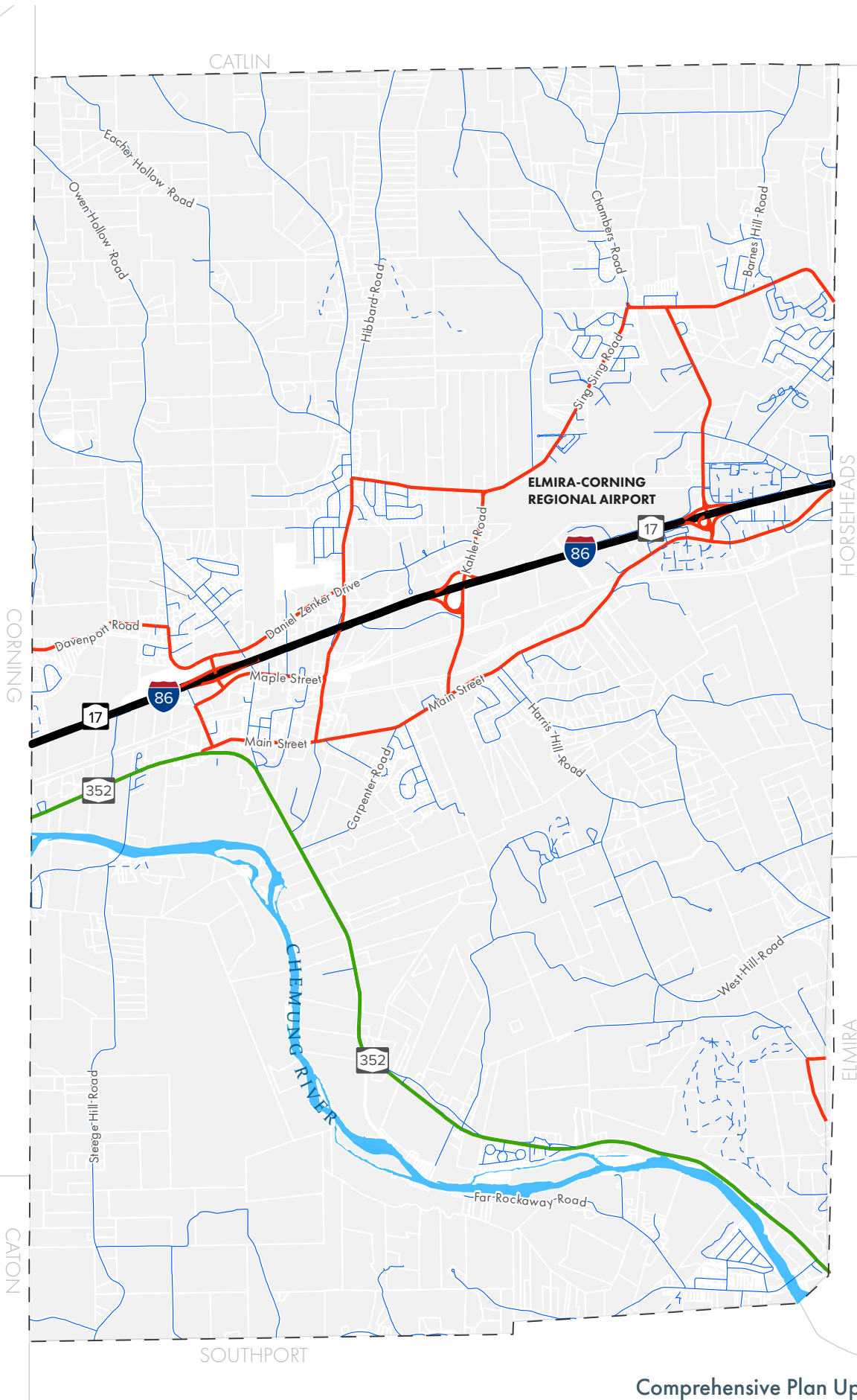
The Elmira-Corning Regional Airport has served the Southern Tier of New York and Pennsylvania since 1945 and is located just off of Interstate 86. The Elmira-Corning Regional Airport is owned and operated by Chemung County and is staffed by 16 County employees. General aviation accounts for about two-thirds of the Airport's operations activity. Current commercial service providers are Allegiant Air and Delta. The airport recently received a \$61 million terminal modernization and renovation project as part of the Upstate Revitalization Initiative in New York State.

#### LEGEND

- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL - INTERSTATE
- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL - OTHER
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- MAJOR COLLECTOR
- - - MINOR COLLECTOR



Elmira-Corning Regional Airport



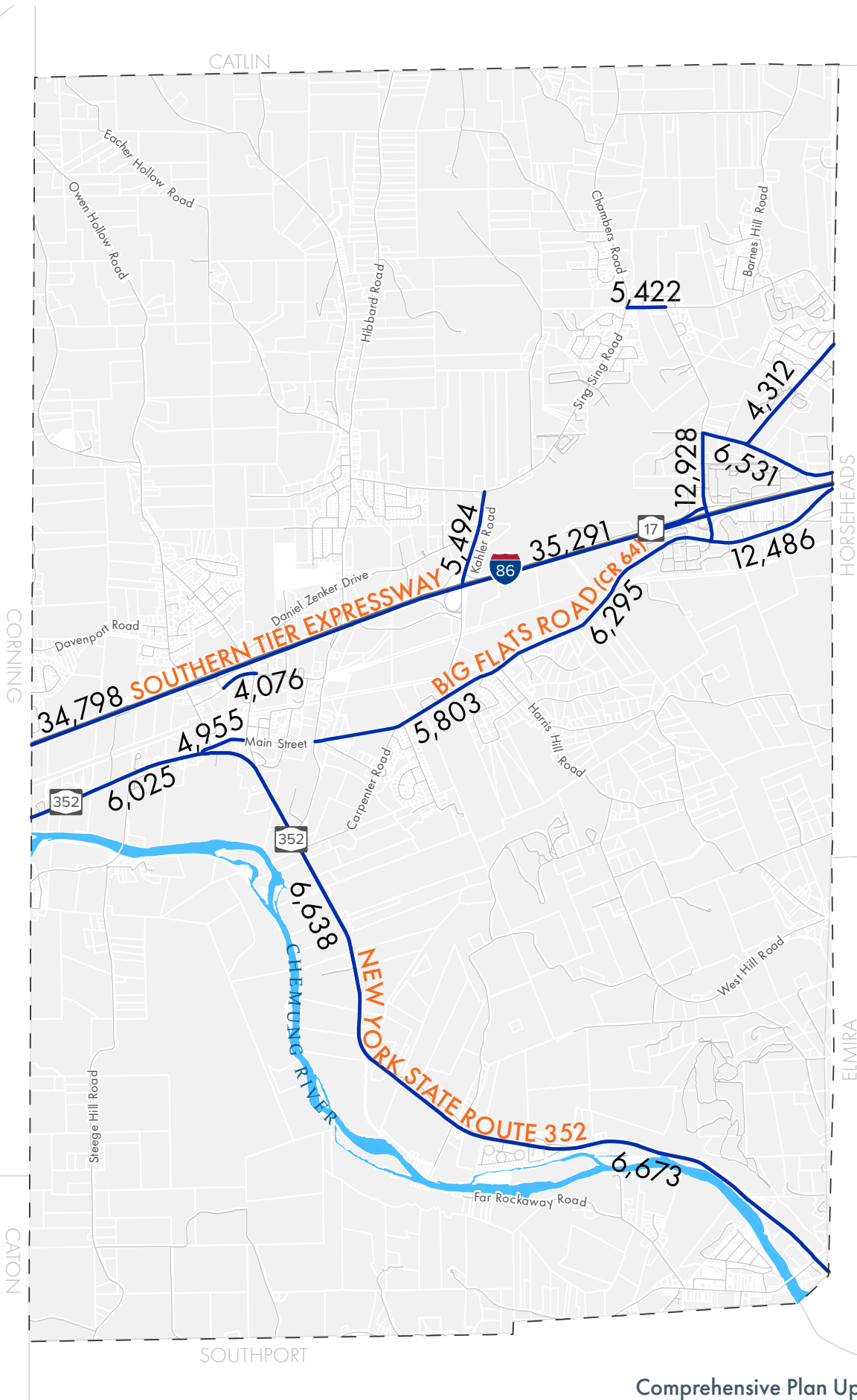
## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)

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### Traffic Volumes

According to Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, the most heavily trafficked thoroughfare in Big Flats is the Southern Tier Expressway (Interstate 86), which carries an average of approximately 35,000 automobiles through the Town daily. Portions of Chambers Road, north of the Southern Tier Expressway, as well as Big Flats Road (County Route 64) near Consumer Square carry considerable traffic daily.

AADT is a simple, but useful, measurement of how busy a road is—it is the total volume of traffic passing a roadside observation point over a period of one calendar year, divided by the number of days in that year. AADT is the standard measurement for vehicular traffic on a section of a roadway, and is the basis for most decision-making regarding the analysis of infrastructure projects and congestion. AADT is also used in estimating road safety and assessing the environmental hazards of pollution related to road transport.



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An aerial photograph of a river meandering through a dense forest. The trees are in various stages of autumn, with some showing bright yellow and orange, while others are still green. The river is a light blue-grey color, reflecting the sky. A dark, semi-transparent rectangular box is overlaid on the upper portion of the image, containing the text 'VISION, GOALS & POLICIES' in white, bold, sans-serif font.

# **VISION, GOALS & POLICIES**

## OVERVIEW

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A Comprehensive Plan ties together broad ideas and specific activities that will help achieve the Town of Big Flats' short- and long-term vision. This chapter includes a vision statement, goals, and policies, developed with feedback from the Steering Committee and members of the community. Goals, policies, and actions comprise the overall framework that guides implementation of the Comprehensive Plan Update as well as future land use and funding decisions.

The components of this policy framework are described below:

- The **Vision** is a general statement about the future condition or state of the community.
- **Goals** are overarching statements that describe the direction Big Flats wants to go and are used as a basis for Town-wide planning policy.
- **Policies** are statements of specific direction that expand on the goals and guide decisions that affect the built and natural environment of the Town as a whole, as well as specific parcels.

Actions are specific items that should be implemented in order to carry out the Plan's goals and policies (See Page 54: Implementation Plan).



*Airborne Gliders over Harris Hill*

# VISION

The Town of Big Flats will maintain its **high quality of life** and **small-town amenities** while encouraging **sustainable residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational growth**. It will prioritize **regional connectivity, economic development, tourism**, and a healthy range of **housing** and **employment** choices.

## VISIONING IN A WORD...

The first Public Workshop for the Comprehensive Plan update was held on March 11, 2020. During this Public Meeting, which was focused on community visioning, community members were asked to participate in interactive activities to share their thoughts on a series of questions to assist in the formulation of the Vision Statement, which acts as a guiding framework for the Comprehensive Plan.

① **How would you describe Big Flats to someone who has never been here?**



② **What aspects of Big Flats are most important to preserve?**



③ **What is the area where you see the greatest need for improvement?**



④ **How would you like to be able to describe Big Flats in 10 years?**



# COMPONENTS OF THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

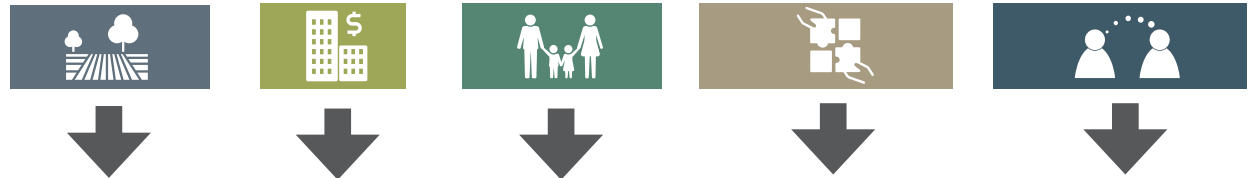
## Vision

The basis for the policy framework and lays the groundwork for the future of the Town of Big Flats.



## Goals

The Town's desired future direction that form the organizational framework and basis for policies.



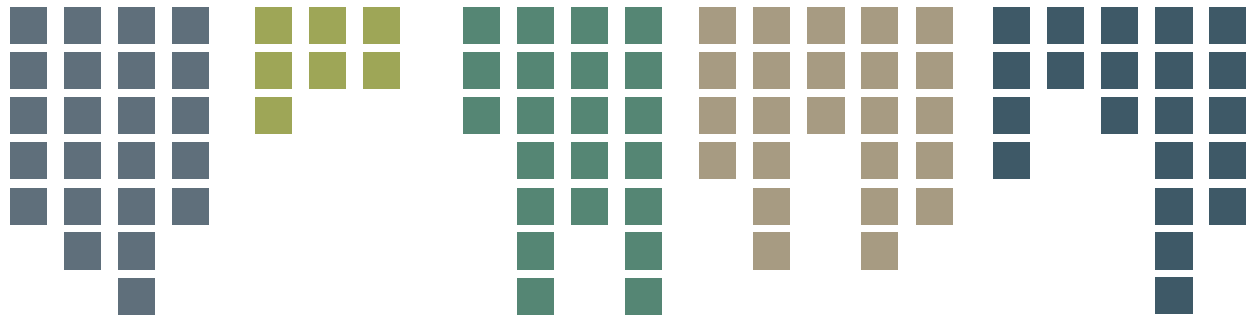
## Policies

Larger themes that guide decision-making to carry out the goals.



## Actions

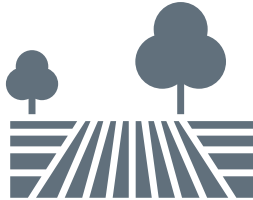
Specific recommendations to be undertaken by the Town and its partners to achieve the overarching goals of the Big Flats community.



## GOALS

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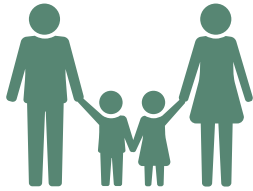
Five key goals form the organizational framework and basis for policies and actions. These were identified based on key themes which emerged through outreach with the Town, stakeholder focus groups, and the public.



- **Land Use -**  
Ensure a balanced mix of land uses that promotes well-managed growth, sustainable living, protects natural resources, and affords a high quality of life.



- **Business and Economic Development -**  
Ensure that the community is economically resilient and initiates sustainable development and redevelopment strategies that foster local business growth and builds confidence in local assets.



- **Quality of Life -**  
Ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and that public health needs are addressed through walkability, access to open space, and healthy neighborhoods.



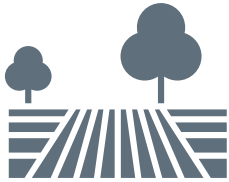
- **Regional Visioning -**  
Ensure that all local assets connect with and support the plans of adjacent jurisdictions and the surrounding region



- **Authentic Participation -**  
Ensure that the planning process actively involves all segments of the community in analyzing issues, generating visions, developing plans, and monitoring outcomes.

# POLICIES

The policies and actions that follow provide focused direction for carrying out the overarching goals of this Plan. Policies are larger themes that guide decision-making while actions are specific activities that should be implemented to effectuate these policies. Actions are found in the Implementation Strategy starting on page 52 of this document.



## Land Use and Zoning

### **Policy #1 – Smart Growth Principles:**

Remove barriers to smart growth development in the current Zoning Code.

### **Policy #2 – Designation of Growth Areas:**

Provide more allowable uses in designated growth areas (e.g., along Interstate 86, around the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport) to permit more flexible development and other sustainable development goals.

### **Policy #3 – Protect Natural Sensitive Lands:**

Develop tools and techniques to conserve open space.



## Business and Economic Development

### **Policy #1 – Retain Existing Businesses:**

Build on existing assets to create a strong foundation on which to attract new businesses, residents, and employment.

### **Policy #2 – Economic Growth:**

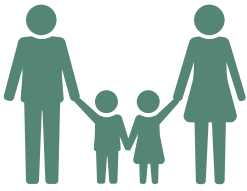
Provide the local capacity for economic growth.

### **Policy #3 – Community-Based Economic Development:**

Promote, support, and invest in businesses that serve local needs and are compatible with the vision, character, and cultural values of the community.

### **Policy #4 – Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations:**

Ensure that structures and networks are appropriately sized to adequately serve existing and future development to keep infrastructure capacity in line with demand.



## Quality of Life

### **Policy #1 – Improve Health and Promote Active Living through Recreational Amenities:**

Support and increase public access to recreational and open space opportunities.

### **Policy #2 – Establish a Distinctive Brand:**

Create a well-publicized initiative that clearly communicates consensus-building, shared values, and sustainable development goals of the Town of Big Flats.

### **Policy #3 – Provide Transportation Choices:**

Improve transit, biking, and pedestrian facilities, particularly in neighborhoods and other locations identified for infill development.



## Regional Visioning

### **Policy #1 – Promote Cooperation and Sharing of Resources:**

Explore opportunities for regional cooperation to allow for improved efficiency and cost savings in local government operations.

### **Policy #2 – Connect Local Activity Centers with Regional Destinations:**

Enhance connections so that residents can move throughout the region to access employment opportunities, services, and recreational amenities.



## Authentic Participation

### **Policy #1 – Provide Ongoing and Understandable Information for All:**

Inform and educate all citizens about development and decision-making processes.

### **Policy #2 – Use a Variety of Communications Channels to Inform and Involve:**

Disseminate planning and development information on a consistent basis.



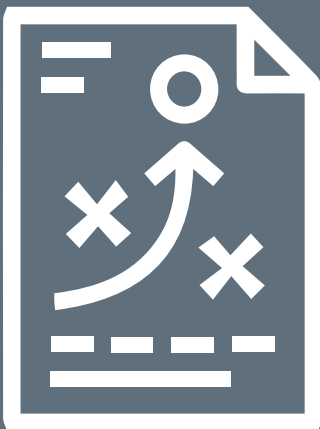
# FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan provides a



of the community's vision for future growth, protection, preservation and development.

The Future Land Use Plan provides the framework for future policy and zoning updates.



# FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

## Overview

Land use is a vital component of the Town of Big Flats Comprehensive Plan Update. The Future Land Use Plan defines the manner in which land is desired to be utilized over the course of the next 10 years.

The intent of the Future Land use Plan is to:

- Visually depict the principles of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Depict areas appropriate for development and conservation.
- Prioritize community-wide desires.
- Inform future zoning and land developments to ensure predictability.

### A Future Land Use Plan...



Is **NOT** regulatory - it is the basis for updating zoning, but it does not actually control land and property use in the Town;



Does **NOT** define specific properties, zoning classifications, permitted uses, and requirements. This is a function of a zoning ordinance.

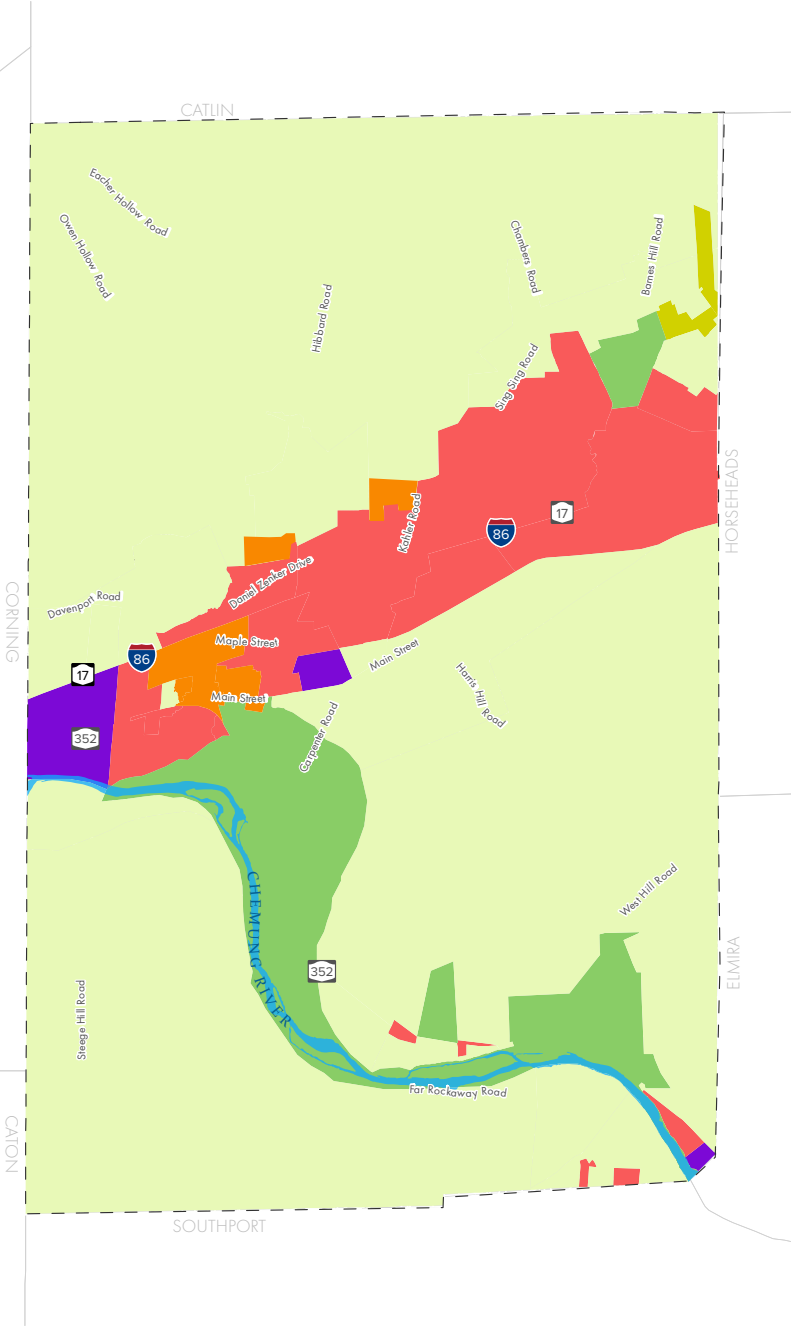
While zoning and land use regulations are tied to specific parcels of land, the Future Land Use Plan is intentionally kept undefined as it is a general expression of the land use vision. The Future Land Use Plan should serve as the basis for the Town of Big Flats to update its zoning ordinance, but the refinement of district boundaries, identification of specific permitted uses, and the accompanying regulations are a function of a zoning code update.

# 2030 LAND USE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF BIG FLATS

The 2030 Future Land Use Plan for the Town of Big Flats was created and modified with input from the Steering Committee as well as citizens at public meetings. The plan includes an increased focus on light industrial development, expansion of the pedestrian network, targeted residential growth, and defined mixed-use nodes and corridors.

## Character Areas

The Future Land Use Plan identifies where specific development patterns and types are most appropriate, these are called Character Areas. These character areas are used to convey an overall vision for the future of the Town over the next ten years. The Character Areas for the Town of Big Flats Future Land Use Plan include, Residential; Planned Residential; Commercial; Industrial; Mixed Use; and Conservation.



- LEGEND**
- RESIDENTIAL
  - MIXED USE
  - COMMERCIAL / MANUFACTURING / WAREHOUSE
  - INDUSTRIAL
  - CONSERVATION
  - PLANNED RESIDENTIAL

# RESIDENTIAL

Residential character areas indicate appropriate locations for existing or future residential development for low to medium density single family and multi-family homes. Variations in residential area development requirements are defined in the Town’s zoning code.

These areas include residential development in the Town, including both moderate and high density residential districts, and the rural district.

## POSSIBLE LAND USES

- Detached Single-Family Homes
- Carriage Homes
- Town Homes
- Condos
- Apartments



Representative Image

# PLANNED RESIDENTIAL

These residential areas are defined by greater flexibility in building siting, lot size, setbacks, and mixture of housing types, with an emphasis on medium to high density multi-family and single family homes.



These areas include lands where planned multi-residential density housing and building types may be developed along with common property to satisfy a need for more creative physical development, open space, and networks of utilities and roads.

## POSSIBLE LAND USES

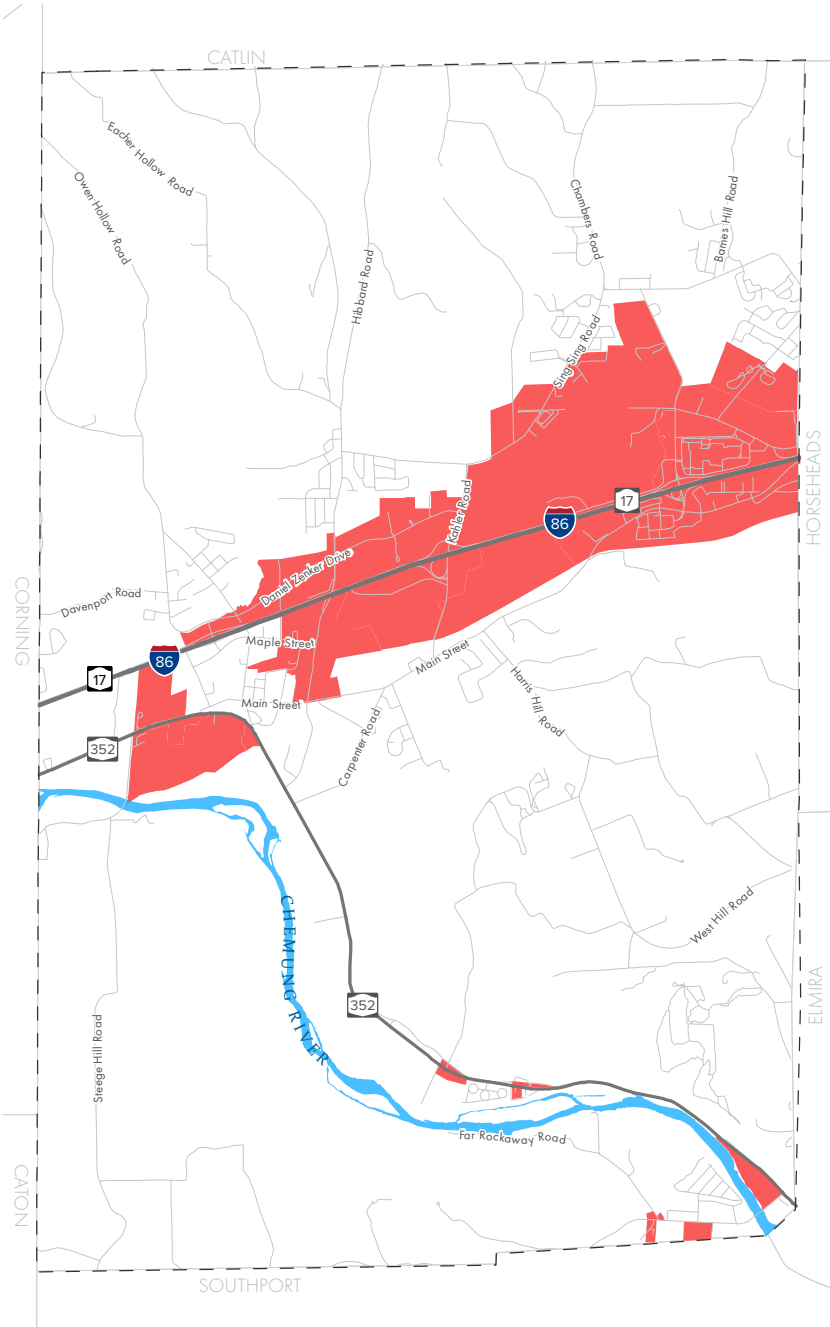
- Apartments
- Assisted Living Facilities
- Nursing Homes



Strawberry Flats Luxury Apartments

# COMMERCIAL

The Commercial character area reflects suitable locations throughout the Town for local and regional business and employment concentrations, with an emphasis on existing community assets.



These areas include other service oriented districts that may support a wide range of low to high intensity business uses that cater to both the general and traveling public. This character area encourages employment and the flow of capital throughout the Town.

## POSSIBLE LAND USES

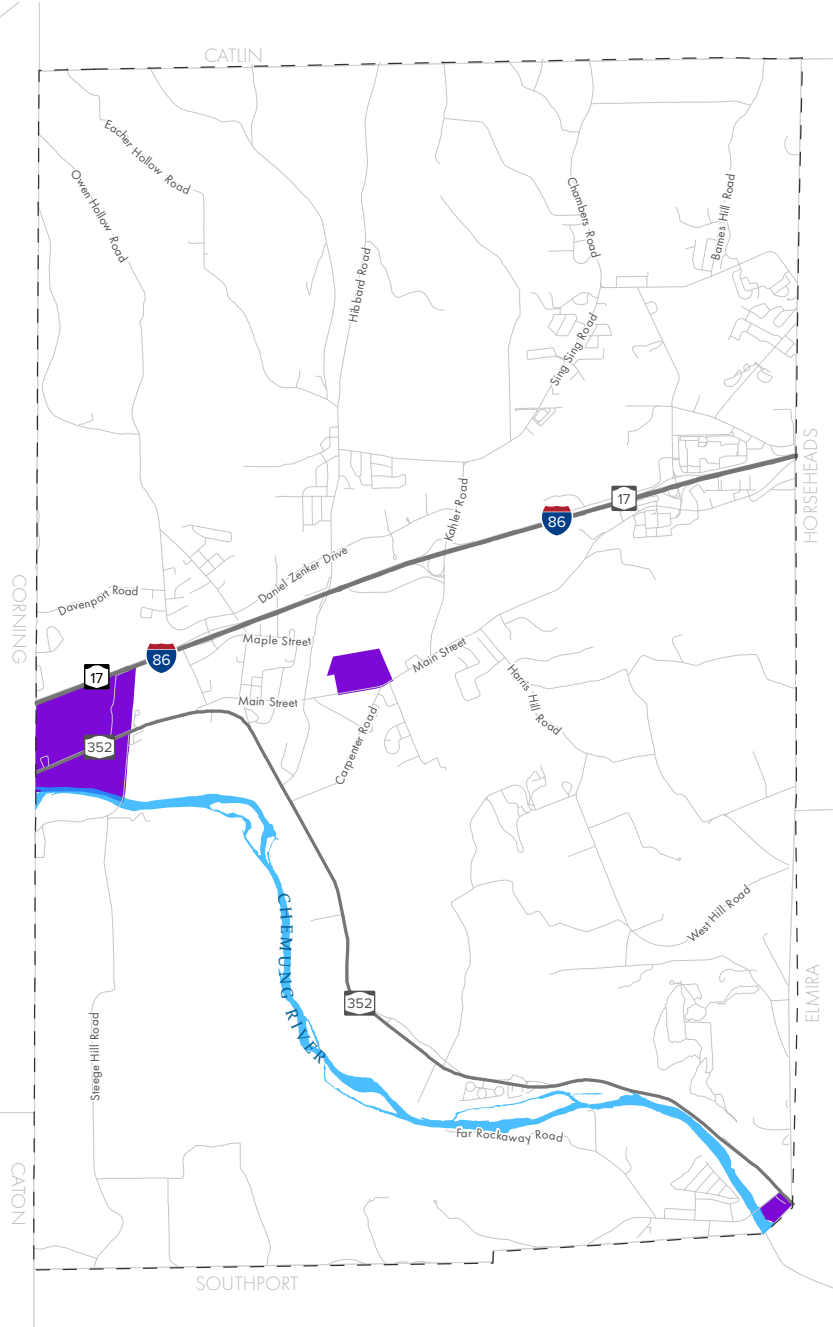
- Shopping Centers
- Restaurants
- Airport
- Hotels
- Light Manufacturing
- Warehouse



Representative Image

# INDUSTRIAL

Lands designated as Light Industrial encourage employment-related uses and light manufacturing that are compatible with adjacent land uses.



This district delineates those areas in the Town that are utilized for and appropriately suited for light industrial use. They are located along and adjoining to major primary roads that can support a range of high tech and innovation manufacturing and business models that by their nature require direct access to and support of the transportation network.

## POSSIBLE LAND USES

- Light Industrial Facilities
- Business Parks
- Offices



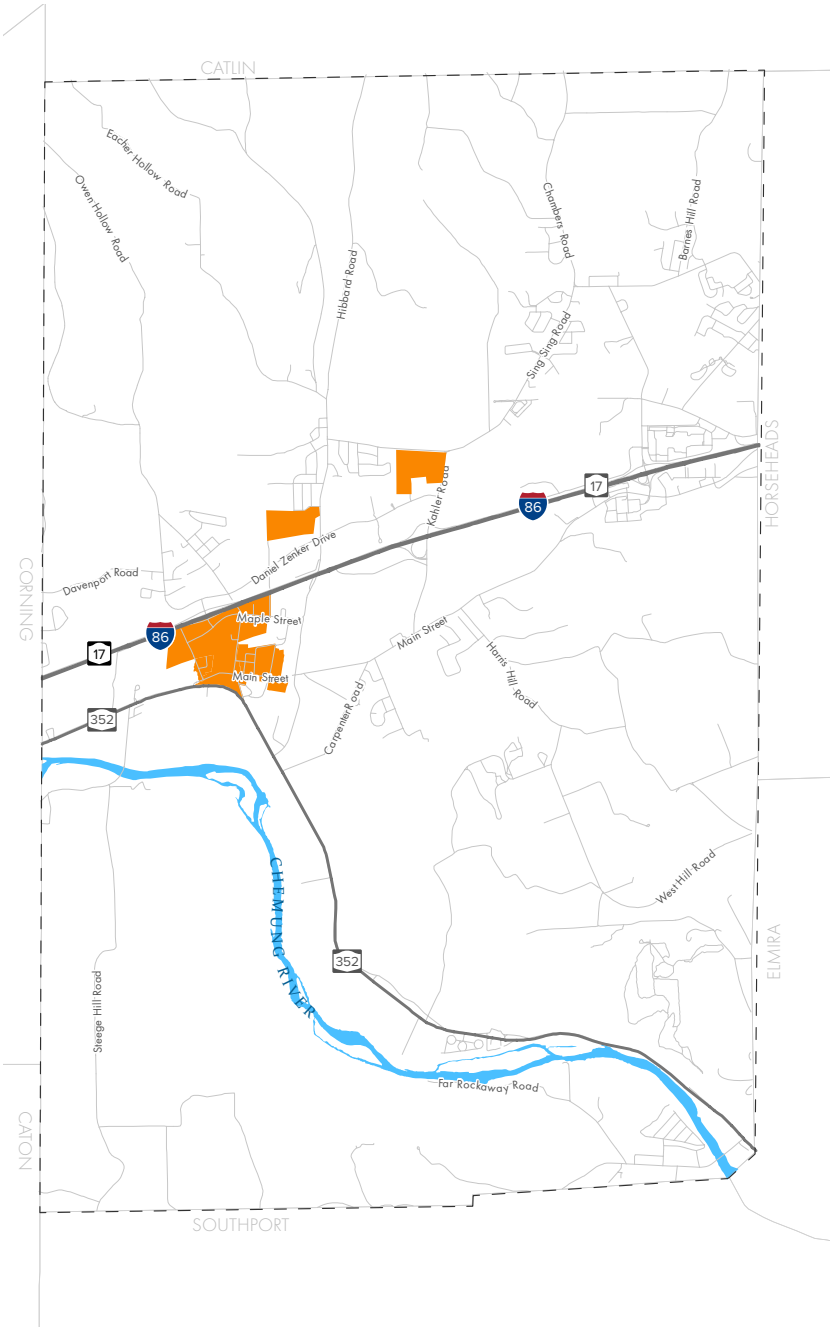
# MIXED-USE

Mixed Use character areas represent locations in the Town where a range of uses - mixed horizontally and vertically - are encouraged. Mixed Use areas provide the infrastructure for walking and biking, which includes compact buildings and public gathering spaces that allow people to live, work and play.

These areas are envisioned for small-scale mixed use development. These developments may convert residential structures to low impact non-residential use or mixed use, and may be subject to additional design guidelines.

## POSSIBLE LAND USES

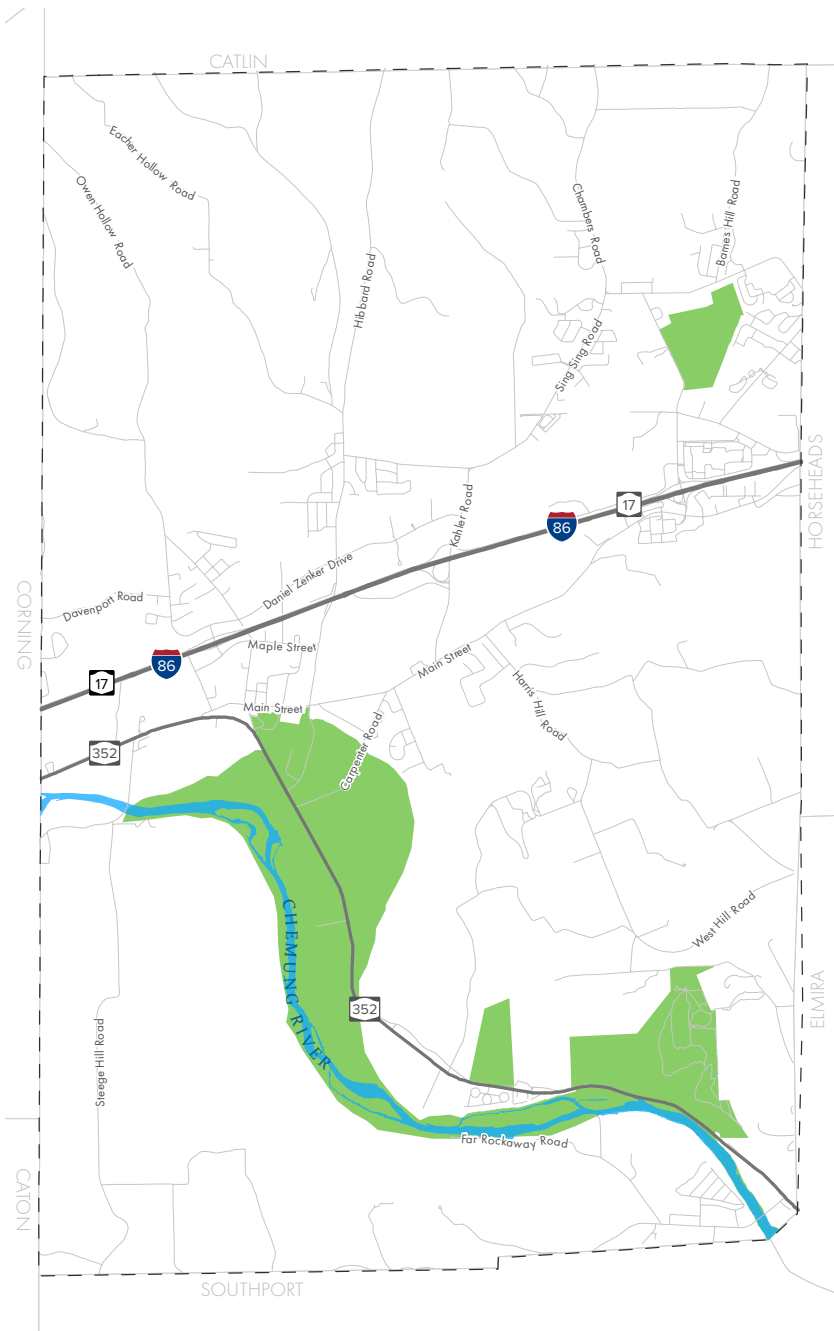
- Small-scale, mixed use development
- Human-scaled building design
- Emphasis on connectivity and mobility
- Residential neighborhood housing
- Community and service oriented facilities



Main Street Corridor

# CONSERVATION

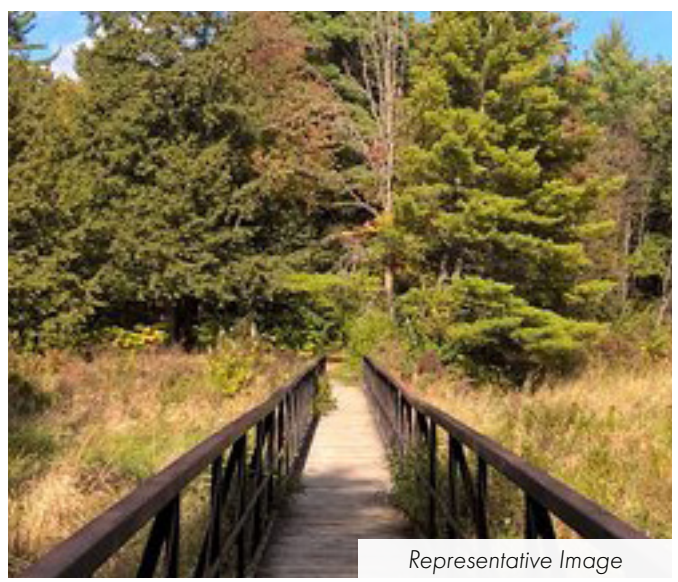
This character area is defined by existing open space and community parks that are protected from future development and devoted to public use for a range of passive and active recreational use.



These areas include all environmentally sensitive land and water areas, as well as open areas that are of recreational use to the public.

## POSSIBLE LAND USES

- Parks
- Conservation areas
- Undeveloped natural areas
- Agricultural lands



Representative Image

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An aerial photograph of a river winding through a dense, green forest. The river flows from the bottom left towards the center. The surrounding landscape is a mix of thick woods and open green fields. In the far distance, rolling hills are visible under a clear sky. A dark grey rectangular box is overlaid on the upper portion of the image, containing the text 'IMPLEMENTATION PLAN' in white, bold, uppercase letters.

# **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**



# Land Use and Zoning

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*Ensure a balanced mix of land uses that promotes well-managed growth, sustainable living, protects natural resources, and affords a high quality of life.*

**Policy #1 – Smart Growth Principles**

**Policy #2 – Designation of Growth Areas**

**Policy #3 – Protect Natural Sensitive Lands**

**Policy #1 – Smart Growth Principles:**

Remove barriers to smart growth development in the current Zoning Code.

**Actions:**

- Make zoning and other land development regulations simple to use and easy to read.
- Coordinate regional transportation investments such as Interstate 86 and the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport with core commercial and manufacturing clusters.
- Focus opportunities for air freight/warehouses to support economic growth and any new commercial and mixed-use development in the areas around the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport.
- Leverage being a Registered Climate Smart Community and implement climate-smart land use.
- Implement applicable action items from the Town of Big flats Drainage Study Master Plan (2019).

**SMART GROWTH**

Smart growth encourages the preservation of the natural and built environment by discouraging development on open space and farmland. By directing future growth toward those areas already supplied by existing infrastructure, environmental effects of development will be mitigated.

Smart growth also encourages:

 **A MIX OF USES**

 **COMPACT DESIGN**

 **STRONG SENSE OF PLACE**

 **COST EFFECTIVENESS**

**Policy #2 – Designation of Growth Areas:**

Provide more allowable uses in designated growth areas (e.g., along Interstate 86, around the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport) to permit more flexible development and other sustainable development goals.

**Actions:**

- Direct commercial and industrial development to appropriate locations with good connections to existing development. For example, continue to direct development along the I-86 Corridor to create a stronger district.
- Coordinate regional transportation investments such as Interstate 86 and the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport with core commercial and manufacturing clusters.
- Focus opportunities for air freight/warehouses to support economic growth and any new commercial and mixed-use development in the areas around the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport.
- Develop area planning in Town Center zoning districts and neighborhood business districts for infill locations to establish place-specific goals, identify existing challenges, create policies to guide future development, and develop implementation strategies.
- Allow commercial development in outlying areas by special use permit only after requiring the developer to demonstrate the need for that service in that area. Adopt site and building design standards to ensure that any commercial development is in keeping with rural character.

**WHAT ARE CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES?**

The Town of Big Flats is a Registered Climate Smart Community (CSC). There are twelve Pledge Elements (PE) that are part of the CSC Certification program—PE6 focuses on climate-smart land use. The Town is encouraged to explore the following activities that support PE6: Implement climate-smart land:

- Incorporate smart growth principles into land-use policies and regulations
- Adopt a renewable energy ordinance
- Adopt land-use policies that support or incentivize farmers' markets, community gardens and urban and rural agriculture. Adopt green parking lot standards
- Adopt a complete streets policy
- Implement strategies that support bicycling and walking
- Install electric-vehicle infrastructure
- Implement strategies that increase public transit ridership and alternative transport modes
- Implement a Safe Routes to School program



**Climate Smart  
Communities**

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure can help protect water quality and reduce storm water runoff by using vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage and treat storm water. A site outfitted with green infrastructure can mimic nature by soaking up and storing water. Green infrastructure elements can be easily incorporated into parking lot designs to help mitigate the effects of storm water runoff. These systems can replace the installation and maintenance of traditional storm drains and catch basins. Some elements of green infrastructure elements include the following:

- **Bioswales.** Vegetated open trenches designed to temporarily store and infiltrate stormwater.
- **Pervious pavements.** A porous pavement surface that lets stormwater percolate and infiltrate, rather than going directly into the public drainage system. In addition to reducing runoff, pervious pavements can trap solids and filter pollutants from the water. Installed in areas with solar access pervious asphalt accelerates snow melt and reduces the need for salt.
- **Wildflowers.** A diverse mix of low maintenance, deep rooting wildflowers and grass species can provide shade, stormwater infiltration, and a pleasant visual experience.
- **Tree box filters.** There are multiple types of tree box planters that collect and absorb runoff from sidewalks, parking lots, and streets. They are placed at the curb, typically where storm drain inlets are positioned and are ideal for locations where space is limited.

### Green Infrastructure Maintenance

The maintenance of green infrastructure is different than traditional hard infrastructure and may require additional education and allocation of resources. For example, natural plantings may need extra hands to weed in the first two years as the plants establish, or instead of maintaining traditional catch basins and storm drains crews will use a vacuum sweeper at least twice per year to remove sediment and debris.

A bioretention area in the parking lot at Arnot Mall can provide stormwater management as well as counteract urban heat island effect:



Image of Arnot Mall parking lot before bioretention area is implemented.



Representative rendering of Arnot Mall parking lot after bioretention area is implemented.

**Policy #3 – Protect Natural Sensitive Lands:**

Develop tools and techniques to conserve open space.

**Actions:**

- Require riparian and wetland buffer areas through zoning.
- Prohibit new development in all floodplains unless it is a use that can be flooded without threatening property or human life.
- Evaluate development proposals near rivers for upstream and downstream impacts.
- Prohibit development on previously undeveloped land where the elevation is lower than the elevation of the 100-year flood as defined by FEMA.
- Prohibit development on previously undeveloped land within a setback to any endangered or protected fish and wildlife habitat or wetland conservation area.
- Designate and protect critical natural lands to, identify areas that have a strong rural legacy.
- Explore the use of open space or recreation impact fees to preserve open space.
- Encourage green infrastructure strategies to collect and treat stormwater runoff, such as rain gardens, vegetated swales, and permeable pavements, through incentives in new developments or redevelopments.
- Designate growth areas and preservation areas.

**GROWING GREENER**

**Community Health Benefits**

*Designing spaces for people and preserving community open space can...*



Encourage people to participate in physical activities more frequently, keeping people healthy;

Foster the growth of community connections, partnerships and consensus for more community investment;



Improve people’s health and state of mind and reduce stress by providing a haven from technological stimuli;

Increase home values and boost economy;



Generate pride in the citizenry that live in the community through preserving historic and scenic resources;

Create educational opportunities through direct contact with natural environment and cultural and historical places; and



Clean the air we breath and the water we drink by acting as a filter for many forms of pollution.



## Business and Economic Development

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*Ensure that the community is economically resilient and initiates sustainable development and redevelopment strategies that foster local business growth and builds confidence in local assets.*

**Policy #1 – Retain Existing Businesses:**

**Policy #2 – Economic Growth**

**Policy #3 – Community-Based Economic Development**

**Policy #4 – Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations**

**Policy #1 – Retain Existing Businesses:**

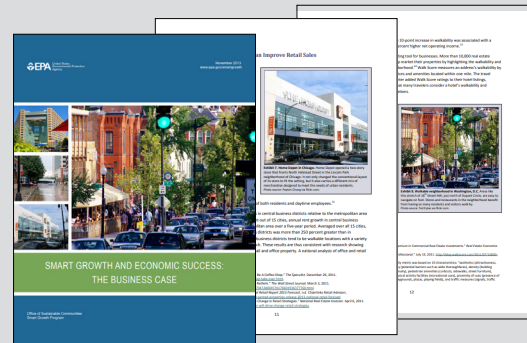
Build on existing assets to create a strong foundation on which to attract new businesses, residents, and employment.

**Actions:**

- Work with local property and business owners to build support for a special assessment district or improvements in the area.
- Create a unified community events calendar to inform local businesses and potential customers by collecting and assembling data into one area and providing easy access.
- Implement programs and build relationships in the community, including operating programs, pursuing funding, and tracking results so the Town can modify its activities and investments as business needs change.
- Utilize Southern Tier Economic Growth (STEG) and County Industrial Development Agency to identify economic development opportunities and resources. Determine if a dedicated economic development person is warranted to regularly coordinate with regional agencies.
- Partner with local businesses and community colleges or workforce training programs to create a tailored curriculum that prepares students for jobs in high-priority industries.

**CENTRALLY LOCATED BUSINESS**

Compact, walkable downtowns are good for business. Areas with housing and transportation options and a mix of uses that are close together support quality of life in a community. **Smart Growth and Economic Success: The Business Case (2013)** is a guide to stimulating economic growth by creating centrally located business districts that encourage innovation and attract workers.



**Policy #2 – Economic Growth:**

Provide the local capacity for economic growth.

**Actions:**

- Ensure public investment in existing infrastructure to support business owners and commercial property owners in places where there is existing private-sector activity.
- Focus commercial and retail development along Interstate 86 and encourage small business development in town center zoning districts.
- Create a special expedited or prioritized review procedure to process development proposals in designated town centers.
- Implement an informational marketing campaign to encourage and attract businesses to the Town of Big Flats.
- Support the redevelopment of Arnot Mall through the implementation of flexible zoning.

**INFILL DEVELOPMENT**

Infill projects are opportunities to participate in flourishing downtown markets. When infill development occurs near existing transit infrastructure, employment centers, and other destinations, it can lead to reductions in the amount of time that people drive, improvement in air quality, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. **Smart Growth and Economic Success: Investing in Infill Development (2014)** discusses smart growth approaches to infill development, which has had a history of discouraging developers due to a number of unique challenges, including:

- Smaller parcels with fragmented ownership
- Potential for existing environmental contamination.
- Higher capital costs.
- More limited financing options
- A longer regulatory approval process.



**Policy #3 – Community-Based Economic Development:**

Promote, support, and invest in businesses that serve local needs and are compatible with the vision, character, and cultural values of the community.

**Actions:**

- Develop a recreation economy. Encourage recreation business ventures, such as a local paddling outfitter.
- Use zoning, expedited review, and other incentives to encourage private recreational facilities to locate in the Town of Big Flats.
- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis for an indoor recreation facility that can host regional competitions.
- Increase tourism through enhanced marketing and promotion of existing assets, such as the Chemung River corridor.

**LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM**

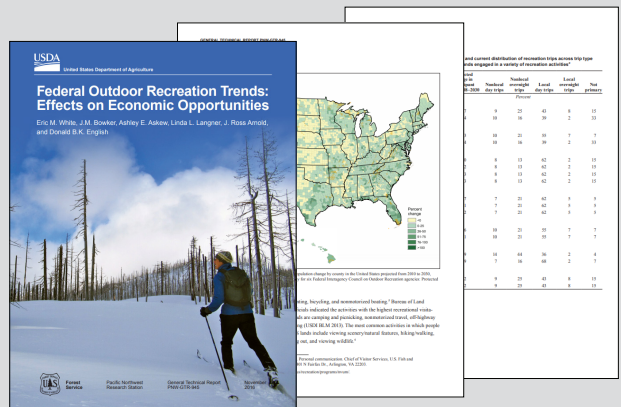
The Chemung River is a designated inland waterbody, and as such, The Town of Big Flats is eligible to apply to the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. A LWRP is a planning document that reflects community consensus, as well as a program established to implement the plan.

A LWRP represents a unified vision of what a waterfront should look like and improves a community’s chances in obtaining public and private funding for projects.

The Program may be comprehensive and address all issues that affect the Town’s entire waterfront or it may address the most critical issues facing a significant portion of the waterfront.

**DEVELOPING A RECREATION ECONOMY**

**Federal Outdoor Recreation Trends: Effects on Economic Opportunities** (2016) is a report prepared for the Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation (FICOR) that focuses on the potential future role of federal lands in supplying outdoor recreation opportunities and therefore supporting associated jobs and income.



### Policy #4 – Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations:

Ensure that structures and networks are appropriately sized to adequately serve existing and future development to keep infrastructure capacity in line with demand.

#### Actions:

- Develop a capital improvements program that aligns with the comprehensive plan that supports new development.
- Perform a study of public water and sewer services with an integrated regional approach to attract industry that supports residential and commercial development.

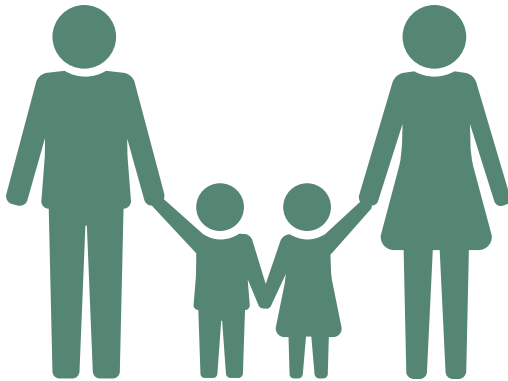
## STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Development projects can be the building blocks of a growing economy and economically sustainable communities.

**Smart Growth and Economic Success: Benefits for Real Estate Developers, Investors, Businesses, and Local Governments** (2012) is a report that discusses smart growth approaches local governments can use to increase revenue/lower costs. Some advantages associated with smart growth that developers, communities, and local governments can use are discussed in this report. They are:

- Compact development
- Walkability
- Range of choices (land use, building types, housing, workplace locations, etc.)





## Quality of Life

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*Ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and that public health needs are addressed through walkability, access to open space, and healthy neighborhoods.*

**Policy #1 – Improve Health and Promote Active Living through Recreational Amenities**

**Policy #2 – Establish a Distinctive Brand**

**Policy#3 – Provide Transportation Choices**

## Policy #1 – Improve Health and Promote Active Living through Recreational Amenities:

Support and increase public access to recreational and open space opportunities.

### Actions:

- Explore shared-use agreements to expand public access to recreational facilities at schools, churches, and other locations.
- Working with local businesses, make recreational equipment such as bikes, snowshoes, and cross-country skis available through a community center, school, library, or commercial partner for residents to rent or borrow.
- Encourage or incentivize landowners to provide recreational trails and access to or through private lands.
- Activate underutilized preserves and conservation areas, such as the Steege Hill Nature Preserve.
- Implement applicable strategies from the Chemung River Trail Assessment & Comprehensive Master Plan.
- Leverage participation in the Community Ratings System to refocus old emotions about the Chemung River and its history of flooding towards the river as a recreational asset.

## WHAT IS A LAND TRUST?

Land trusts are private, nonprofit organizations that work with key federal agencies, leading nonprofits and businesses to save and secure lands through conservation. Land trusts protect land through a range of voluntary methods, including acquiring or assisting with the acquisition of land or conservation easements.

Conserved, well-managed land can provide protection from natural disasters, such as floods and drought. All conservation easements must provide public benefits, such as:

- Scenic views
- Farm land preservation
- Water quality
- Outdoor recreation
- Wildlife habitat
- Historic preservation
- Education

## OPEN SPACE NETWORK BENEFITS

### Open space plays a vital role in our community's well-being!

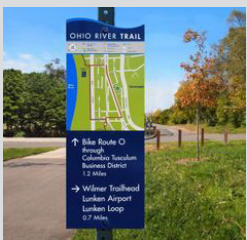
People want to be able to find trails that meet their individual interests. Those people will gravitate toward trails that have readily available information about trail location, activities permitted, type of terrain, level of difficulty, special facilities, parking, and potential fees. A trail wayfinding system can assist users with accessing information in a convenient manner.

#### 1 Maps, Maps, Maps



Maps orient users to their current and desired location. Utilize both kiosks and web-based maps.

#### 2 Cohesive Sign Design



Utilize consistent brand, shape, and text to create a branded identity. Users will know they are on a trail just by looking briefly at sign.

#### 3 Gateway Elements



Install gateway signage at onset of trail to welcome users and create a strong sense of place.

#### Better health



#### Strong people, strong economy



#### Connected community



**Policy #2 – Establish a Distinctive Brand:**

Prepare a well-publicized consensus-building initiative that clearly communicates the shared values and sustainable development goals of the Town of Big Flats.

**Actions:**

- Establish a Town of Big Flats brand and identity, with consistent fonts, colors and logo, and leverage other regional and state resources.
- Develop and distribute pamphlets and brochures/guides that share information about the Town to residents and visitors.
- Design and install educational and interpretive signage at Town sites and facilities.

**WAYFINDING SYSTEM:  
Creating Positive Experiences**

An effective wayfinding system, focused on all modes of transportation, will entice residents and visitors to explore beyond their traditional comfort zone. An appropriately designed system will function as the connective tissue of the Town of Big Flats, linking the myriad of major destinations, historic sites, trail systems, and other resources together in a cohesive wayfinding network.

The ability to easily and efficiently navigate an unfamiliar place is directly related to the enjoyment of that place. A healthy wayfinding system allows visitors to easily orient themselves and navigate between destinations. These systems are not limited to signage, but also include visual cues from the streetscape, landscape, and landmarks.



Vehicular Directional Sign on State Routes

Vehicular Directional Sign on City Streets

Gateway Monument

Pedestrian Kiosk

Parking Sign

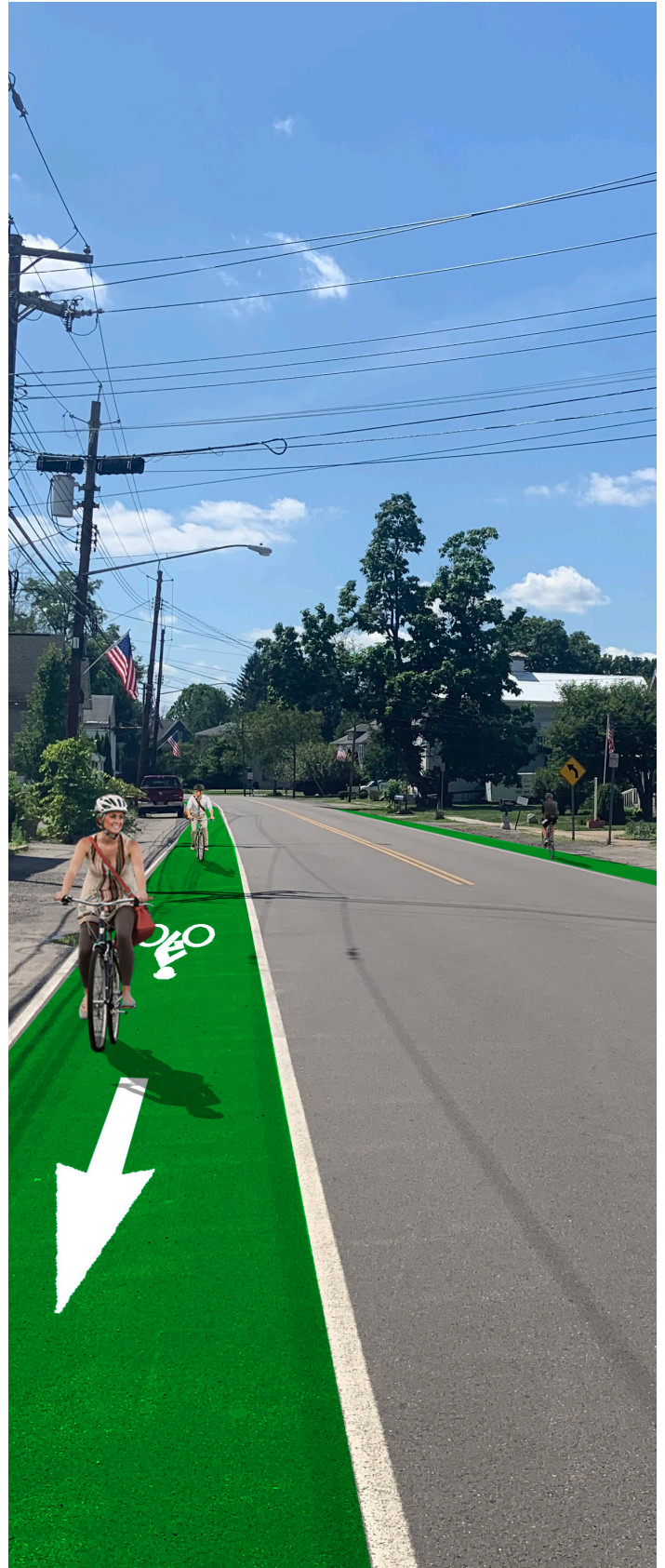
Above are examples of wayfinding systems established for Rome, NY from the Downtown Rome Wayfinding Design Plan. These signs represent an example system that could be designed and implemented in the Town of Big Flats.

**Policy #3 – Provide Transportation Choices:**

Improve biking and pedestrian facilities, particularly in neighborhoods and other locations identified for infill development.

**Actions:**

- Provide flexibility in the zoning code to encourage new developments to include pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly features.
- Emphasize increased connectivity when expanding the street network by limiting cul-de-sacs and dead ends, which are disconnected.
- Adopt traffic calming and context-sensitive street design guidelines around schools, in residential neighborhoods, and in other key activity centers.
- Encourage connections between new developments and adjacent neighborhoods.
- Use zoning, expedited review, and other incentives to encourage health care providers, housing for older adults, assisted living facilities, and rehab centers to locate in key activity centers with transit and pedestrian facilities.



*Example of a safe pedestrian and bike passage on Main Street.*

## COMPLETE STREETS, COMPLETE COMMUNITY

### What is a Complete Street?

A complete street, as defined by the National Complete Streets Coalition, is “a transportation facility that is planned, designed, operated, and maintained to provide safe mobility for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.”

### DESIGNED FOR ALL, NO MATTER HOW THEY TRAVEL



### BENEFITS OF COMPLETE STREETS:

- ① SAFETY  
Dedicated lanes, lighting and crosswalks create a easily accessible environment for users
- ② ECONOMIC VITALITY  
Walkability promotes shopping and business support
- ③ INCLUSIVE MOBILITY  
Elderly, children, those with disabilities are better served with design that allows safe mobility
- ④ ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
Improved air quality due to alternative modes of transportation
- ⑤ PHYSICAL HEALTH  
Those in communities with sidewalks are 47% more likely to be active at least 30 minutes per day



## Regional Visioning

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*Ensure that all local assets connect with and support the plans of adjacent jurisdictions and the surrounding region.*

**Policy #1 – Promote Cooperation and Sharing of Resources**

**Policy #2 – Connect Local Assets with Regional Destinations**

### Policy #1 – Promote Cooperation and Sharing of Resources:

Explore opportunities for regional cooperation to allow for improved efficiency and cost savings in local government operations.

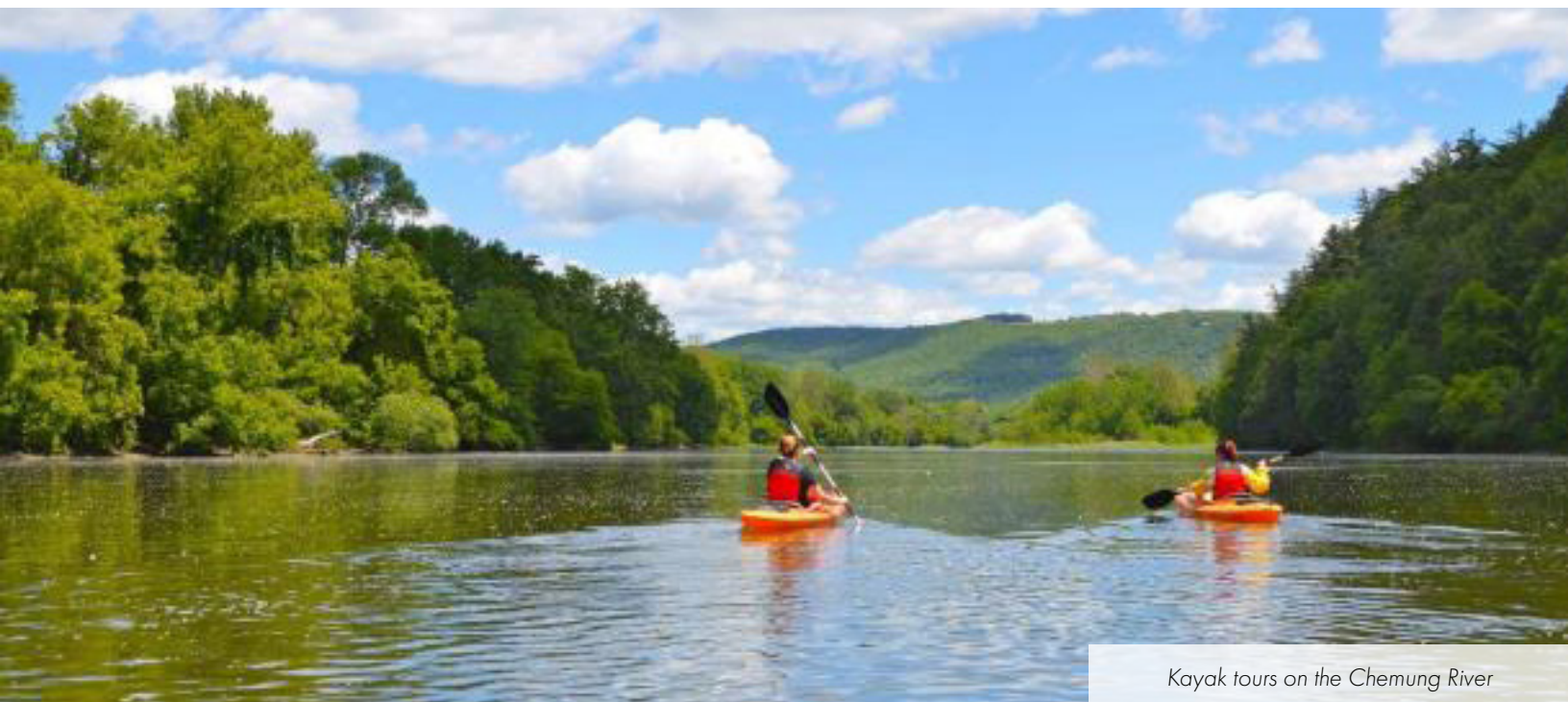
#### Actions:

- Coordinate with the County, and nearby towns, and villages to share resources, exchange ideas, and forge partnerships to build and access planning capacity.
- Participate in regional coordinated planning and policy guidance documents.
- Support the Southern Tier Regional Consortium.
- Enhance partnership between the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce and Finger Lakes Wine Country.
- Implement applicable action items from the I-86 Innovation Corridor – Strategic Action Plan (2015).

## CONNECTING TO FINGER LAKES WINE COUNTRY

Big Flats is strategically located at the southern end of the Finger Lakes Region, and is known as the “Gateway to the Finger Lakes”.

The Chemung River Run Kayak Tour is one of the activities in Big Flats listed online at [Finger Lakes Wine Country](#), and is a two hour non guided tour down part of the scenic Chemung River to Fitch’s Bridge in Elmira. Kayaks are delivered in Town at Bottcher’s Landing on South Corning Road.



*Kayak tours on the Chemung River*





# Authentic Participation

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*Ensure that the planning process actively involves all segments of the community in analyzing issues, generating visions, developing plans, and monitoring outcomes.*

**Policy #1 – Provide Ongoing and Understandable Information for All**

**Policy #2 – Use a Variety of Communications Channels to Inform and Involve**

### Policy #1 – Provide Ongoing and Understandable Information for All:

Inform and educate citizens about development and decision-making processes.

#### Actions:

- Utilize a pre-application meeting to assist parties interested in developing and improving residential and commercial properties in the Town of Big Flats.
- Enact clear design guidelines so that streets, buildings, and public spaces work together to create a sense of place in Town Center zoning districts and neighborhood business districts.
- Create easy-to-understand zoning handouts available online and at Town Hall. Providing a simple explanation of what is allowed and contact information for further questions can ease the burden of seeking permit approvals.

## ENGAGING AND CONNECTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS

New communication tools, such as websites and other online engagement resources, can help citizens participate in local government and create a sense of ownership and pride in the community.



Example of an online engagement resource

**Policy #2 – Use a Variety of Communications Channels to Inform and Involve:**

Disseminate planning and development information on a consistent basis.

**Actions:**

- Continue to hold regular community meetings to encourage public participation in the development of plans and other land use regulations.
- Distribute a monthly bulletin of community meetings via email, local paper, direct-mailers, or others forms of communication accessible to everyone.
- Develop websites and social media tools to provide broadcasts or recordings of community meetings for those unable to attend in person.
- Use social media platforms to connect audiences of all demographics, and to inform and engage the public on events as they are happening.
- Maintain a website to increase the availability of information, such as changes to a specific site design or posting common questions and information about the Uniform Code. In this way, the public can remain informed and engaged in site design and development review and other planning processes.

# Action Plan

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The following matrices provide a summary of implementation guidance to inform decision-making around priorities for action in the Town over the next ten years. Each of the recommended actions addressed in the Comprehensive Plan Update is identified in the following tables, with corresponding information about timeframe, responsible agencies, timeframe, and potential funding. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all policies and activities to be undertaken by the Town of Big Flats over the next decade, but includes targeted recommendations focused around the topics of land use and zoning; business and economic development; quality of life; regional visioning; and authentic participation. For easy reference, each section is numbered based on the goal, policy, and action. For example, under Land Use (Goal 1), Policy 1, first listed action would be 1.1.1; second action would be 1.1.2, etc.

## RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible agencies typically include the Town, recognizing that elected officials, municipal staff, board members, and/or consultants may take on various roles in most actions identified within the Comprehensive Plan Update. Potential partners are also noted as having a lead or contributing role in advancing specific recommendations.

## TIMELINE \_\_\_\_\_

Timeframes are identified in the following manner:

**1-2 years:** These are on-going and near-term activities that should commence immediately and continue to be pursued within 2 years.

**3-5 years:** These recommendations should be targeted for completion within a 3-5 year timeframe. Continued maintenance is necessary to achieve long-term goals.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING \_\_\_\_\_

Where applicable, potential sources of funding have been provided to inform budgeting and other financial decisions.



**POLICY  
1**

**Smart Growth Principles**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
1.1.1 Make zoning and other land development regulations simple to use and easy to read to support the development of innovative, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use projects.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
1.1.2 Coordinate regional transportation investments such as Interstate 86 and the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport with core commercial and manufacturing clusters.	Town, County, Southern Tier Economic Growth (STEG), Chemung County IDA	1-2 years	County, STEG, Chemung County IDA
1.1.3 Focus opportunities for freight facility development to support economic growth and any new commercial and mixed-use development in the areas around the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, Elmira-Corning Regional Airport	1-2 years	County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, FHWA
1.1.4 Leverage being a Registered Climate Smart Community and implement climate-smart land use.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Grant program
1.1.5 Implement applicable action items from the Town of Big Flats Drainage Study Master Plan (2019).	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local



**POLICY  
2**

**Designation of Growth Areas**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
1.2.1 Direct commercial and industrial development to appropriate locations with good connections to existing development. For example, continue to direct development along the I-86 Corridor.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local, Private
1.2.2 Coordinate regional transportation investments such as I-86 and the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport with core commercial and manufacturing clusters	Town, County IDA	1-2 years	NA
1.2.3 Cluster freight facilities to support economic growth and any new commercial and mixed-use development in the areas around the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport.	Town, Planning Board, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA	1-2 years	County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, Private
1.2.4 Develop area planning for infill locations to establish place-specific goals, identify existing challenges, create policies to guide future development, and develop implementation strategies.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
1.2.5 Allow commercial development in outlying areas by special use permit only after requiring the developer to demonstrate the need for that service in that area. Adopt site and building design standards to ensure that any commercial development is in keeping with rural character.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local



**POLICY  
3**

**Protect Natural Sensitive Lands**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
1.3.1 Require riparian and wetland buffer areas through zoning.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
1.3.2 Prohibit development in all floodplains unless it is a use that can be flooded without threatening property or human life.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
1.3.3 Evaluate development proposals near rivers for upstream and downstream impacts.	Town, Planning Board, County	1-2 years	Local
1.3.4 Prohibit development on previously undeveloped land where the elevation is lower than the elevation of the 100-year flood as defined by FEMA	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
1.3.5 Prohibit development on previously undeveloped land within a setback to any endangered or protected fish and wildlife habitat or wetland conservation area.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE			



**POLICY  
3**

**Continued Protect Natural Sensitive Lands**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
1.3.6 Designate and protect critical natural lands to identify areas that have a strong rural legacy.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
1.3.7 Explore the use of open space or recreation impact fees to preserve open space.	Town, Parks Committee	1-2 years	Local
1.3.8 Encourage green infrastructure strategies to collect and treat stormwater runoff, such as rain gardens, vegetated swales, and permeable pavements, through incentives in new developments or redevelopments.	Town, County, Chemung County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD)/Chemung County Stormwater Coalition	1-2 years	Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP), Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) Program
1.3.9 Designate growth areas and preservation areas.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local



# GOAL

# BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## POLICY 1

### Retain Existing Businesses

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
2.1.1 Work with local property and business owners to build support for a special assessment district or improvements in the area.	Town, Big Flats Business Association, Chamber of Commerce	1-2 years	Local
2.1.2 Create a unified community events calendar to inform local businesses and potential customers by collecting and assembling data into one area and providing easy access.	Town, Big Flats Business Association	1-2 years	Local
2.1.3 Implement programs and build relationships in the community, including operating programs, pursuing funding, and tracking results so the Town can modify its activities and investments as business needs change.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA	3-5 years	Local, Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA
2.1.4 Utilize Southern Tier Economic Growth (STEG) and County IDA to identify economic development opportunities and resources.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA	1-2 years	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA
2.1.5 Partner with local businesses and community colleges or workforce training programs to create a tailored curriculum that prepares students for jobs in high-priority industries.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, Greater Southern Tier BOCES, REDC	3-5 years	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA

# GOAL

## BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### POLICY 2

### Economic Growth

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
2.2.1 Ensure public investment in existing infrastructure to support business owners and commercial property owners in places where there is existing private-sector activity.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, Big Flats Business Association, Chamber of Commerce, Chemung County	3-5 years	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, Private
2.2.2 Focus commercial and retail development along Interstate 86 and encourage small business development in Town Center zoning districts and neighborhood business districts.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
2.2.3 Create a special expedited or prioritized review procedure to process development proposals in designated town centers.	Town, Planning Board	3-5 years	Local
2.2.4 Implement a marketing campaign to encourage and draw businesses into the Town of Big Flats.	Town, Big Flats Business Association, Chamber of Commerce	1-2 years	Local
2.2.5 Support the redevelopment of Arnot Mall through the implementation of flexible zoning.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local



# GOAL

# BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## POLICY 3

### Community-Based Economic Development

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
2.3.1 Develop a recreation economy. Encourage recreation business ventures, such as a local paddling outfitter.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA	3-5 years	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, Private
2.3.2 Use zoning, expedited review, and other incentives to encourage private recreational facilities to locate in the Town of Big Flats.	Town, Planning Board	3-5 years	Local
2.3.3 Conduct a cost-benefit analysis for an indoor recreation facility that can host regional competitions.	Town, County IDA, STEG	3-5 years	Local, County, STEG
2.3.4 Increase tourism through enhanced marketing and promotion of existing assets, such as the Chemung River corridor.	Town, County, Chemung County Chamber of Commerce	3-5 years	Local, County

# GOAL

## BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### POLICY 4

### Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
2.4.1 Develop a capital improvements program that aligns with the comprehensive plan that supports new development.	Town	3-5 years	Local
2.4.2 Perform a study of public water and sewer services with an integrated regional approach to attract industry for residential and commercial development.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA	3-5 years	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA



# GOAL

# QUALITY OF LIFE

## POLICY 1

### Improve Health and Promote Active Living Through Recreational Amenities

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
3.1.1 Explore shared-use agreements to expand public access to recreational facilities at schools, churches, and other locations.	Town, Parks Committee	3-5 years	Local
3.1.2 Make recreational equipment such as bikes, snowshoes, and cross-country skis available through a community center, school, library, or commercial partner for residents to rent or borrow.	Town, Parks Committee	1-2 years	Local
3.1.3 Encourage or incentivize landowners to provide recreational trails and access to or through private lands.	Town, Finger Lakes Land Trust	3-5 years	Local
3.1.4 Activate underutilized preserves and conservation areas, such as the Steege Hill Nature Preserve.	Town, Finger Lakes Land Trust	3-5 years	Local
CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE			



**POLICY  
1**

**Continued Improve Health and Promote Active Living Through Recreational Amenities**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
3.1.5 Implement applicable strategies from the Chemung River Trail Assessment & Comprehensive Master Plan.	Town, County, Friends of the Chemung River	3-5 years	Local
3.1.6 Leverage participation in the Community Ratings System to refocus old emotions about the Chemung River and its history of flooding towards the river as a recreational asset.	Town, County, Friends of the Chemung River	3-5 years	Local, CSC Grant program



**POLICY  
2**

**Establish a Distinctive Brand**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
3.2.1 Establish a Town of Big Flats brand and identity, with consistent fonts, colors and logo, and leverage other state and regional resources.	Town	1-2 years	Local
3.2.2 Develop and distribute pamphlets and brochures/guides that share information about the Town to residents and visitors.	Town	1-2 years	Local
3.2.3 Design and install educational and interpretive signage at Town sites and facilities.	Town	3-5 years	Local



**POLICY  
4**

**Provide Transportation Choices**

ACTION ITEM _____	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES _____	TIMEFRAME _____	POTENTIAL FUNDING _____
3.3.1 Provide flexibility in the zoning code to encourage new developments to include pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly features.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
3.3.2 Emphasize increased connectivity when expanding the street network by limiting cul-de-sacs and dead ends, which are disconnected.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
3.3.3 Adopt traffic calming and context-sensitive street design guidelines around schools, in residential neighborhoods, and in other key activity centers.	Town, Planning Board	3-5 years	Local
3.3.4 Encourage connections between new developments and adjacent neighborhoods.	Town, Planning Board	3-5 years	Local
3.3.5 Use zoning, expedited review, and other incentives to encourage health care providers, housing for older adults, assisted living facilities, and rehab centers to locate in key activity centers with transit and pedestrian facilities.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local



**POLICY  
1**

**Promote Cooperation and Sharing Resources**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
4.2.1 Coordinate with the County, nearby towns, and villages to share resources, exchange ideas, and forge partnerships to build and access planning capacity.	Town, County	1-2 years	Local, County
4.2.2 Participate in regional coordinated planning and policy guidance documents.	Town, County, STC	1-2 years	Local, County
4.2.3 Enhance partnership between the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce and Finger Lakes Wine Country.	Town, Chamber of Commerce	1-2 years	Local, Chamber of Commerce
4.2.4 Implement applicable action items from the I-86 Innovation Corridor – Strategic Action Plan (2015).	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, REDC, I-86 Action Committee	3-5	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, REDC



POLICY  
**2**

**Connect Local Assets with Regional Destinations**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
4.3.1 Connect local leaders with Southern Tier higher education institutions to increase collaboration.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, REDC, BOCES	3-5 years	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA
4.3.2 Leverage the Consortium, regional planning boards, and the Regional Economic Development Council to identify opportunities for collaboration on community development projects, such as road and infrastructure projects.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, REDC	1-2 years	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA
4.3.3 Coordinate local efforts to invest in people and skills by incorporating skills development of workers as a priority at all levels of regional economic development planning.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, Greater Southern Tier BOCES, REDC	1-2 years	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA
4.3.4 Participate with regional ad hoc working groups to enhance availability of entrepreneurial advisory, educational, collaboration and business planning opportunities.	Town, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA, Greater Southern Tier BOCES, REDC	1-2 years	Local, County, STEG, Chemung County IDA



# GOAL

# AUTHENTIC PARTICIPATION

## POLICY 1

# Provide Ongoing and Understandable Information for All

ACTION ITEM _____	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES _____	TIMEFRAME _____	POTENTIAL FUNDING _____
5.1.1 Utilize a pre-application meeting to assist parties interested in developing and improving residential and commercial properties in the Town of Big Flats.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
5.1.2 Enact clear design guidelines so that streets, buildings, and public spaces work together to create a sense of place.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local
5.1.3 Create easy-to-understand zoning handouts available online and at Town hall. Providing a simple explanation of what is allowed and contact information for further questions can ease the burden of seeking permit approvals.	Town, Planning Board	1-2 years	Local



**POLICY  
2**

**Use a Variety of Communications Channels to Inform and Involve**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
5.2.1 Continue to hold community meetings to encourage public participation in developing plans and other land use regulations.	Town	1-2 years	Local
5.2.2 Distribute a monthly bulletin of community meetings via email, local paper, direct-mailers, or others forms of communication accessible to everyone.	Town	1-2 years	Local
5.2.3 Develop websites and social media tools to provide broadcasts or recordings of community meetings for those unable to attend in person.	Town	1-2 years	Local
5.2.4 Use social media platforms to connect audiences of all demographics, and to inform and engage the public on events as they are happening.	Town	1-2 years	Local
5.2.5 Maintain a website to increase the availability of information, such as changes to a specific site design or posting common questions and information about the Uniform Code.	Town	1-2 years	Local

