

**APPENDIX A**

**COMMUNITY PROFILE AND  
EXISTING CONDITIONS MAPPING**

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# APPENDIX A

## COMMUNITY PROFILE AND EXISTING CONDITIONS MAPPING

### Town of Chesterfield Comprehensive Plan

COMMUNITY PROFILE  
DRAFT DATE JANUARY 2025



*Photo provided by Ashlee Kleinhammer*

## Contents

Regional Context .....	3
Historic and Cultural Resources .....	7
Demographic and Socio-Economic Trends.....	10
Land Use and Zoning.....	20
Transportation and Mobility Resources .....	31
Community Facilities and Services.....	33
Infrastructure and Public Utilities .....	37
Natural Resources and Water Quality Protection.....	38
Parks, Recreation and Open Space Protection.....	42
Economy and Economic Development .....	46

## Maps

- Map 1 Town of Chesterfield Boundary
- Map 2 APA State and Private Land Classification
- Map 3 Land Use
- Map 4 Zoning
- Map 5 Agricultural Resources
- Map 6 Environmental Constraints
- Map 7 Parks, Recreation & Conserved Lands

## Regional Context

The Town of Chesterfield is the northernmost municipality within Essex County, New York, and is located entirely within the Adirondack Park. The Town is bounded by the Ausable River, Town of Ausable, and Clinton County to the north, Lake Champlain and Vermont to the east, the Town of Jay to the west, and the Towns of Lewis and Willsboro to the south. The majority of Chesterfield is undeveloped forest with mountains, ponds, and valleys. The pockets of development outside of the hamlets include year-round and seasonal single-family homes, active farmland, seasonal campgrounds, and summer camps.

The former Village of Keeseville was split between the Towns of Chesterfield and Ausable and continues to be the primary commercial and residential hamlet within Chesterfield. On Lake Champlain, Port Kent serves as the community's second hamlet. Other seasonal-based localities within the municipality include Port Douglass on Lake Champlain which has a high rate of seasonal variation in population and activity and the Augur Lake community within the center of Town. The Hamlet of Clintonville in the Town of Ausable also serves as a proximate locality for the northwestern section of Town and houses the regional high school.

While Chesterfield is within Essex County and is served by the social resources of Elizabethtown (county seat), it (and much of the county) is heavily reliant on the commercial, healthcare, and transportation (rail & air) services available within the Clinton County community of Plattsburgh, located just 16 miles to the north of Keeseville. Approximately 80 miles to the north is the nearest major metropolitan center of Montreal, Quebec, with a major international airport and world-class entertainment and services. Glens Falls, NY is located 95 miles to the south and is considered to be an alternative regional commerce center from Plattsburgh. Albany, NY provides an international airport 120 miles to the south. Other regional communities within an hour of Chesterfield (as depicted in Figure 1) include Lake Placid, Ticonderoga, Rouses Point, Keene Valley, Westport, Schroon Lake, Ausable Forks, Essex, and Peru.

Burlington, Vermont is five (5) miles due east across Lake Champlain and is the closest metropolitan statistical area to Chesterfield (as the crow flies). Burlington is the major regional center for medical care at UVM's Fletcher Allen Hospital. Burlington is also the primary provider for local television, possesses an international airport, and provides direct Amtrak access to Boston and other points throughout New England. Both Chesterfield and Burlington are located in the center of the lake, the locations furthest from the bridges and ferry ports, and, therefore, the shortest travel distance and time is through personal watercraft. Until recent years, Amtrak's Adirondack Line offered a seasonal stop in Port Kent with direct access to the Port Kent Ferry to Burlington. When the Port Kent Ferry service was discontinued in 2020, so too ended the seasonal train stop. Today, access exists through two (2) year-round ferries connect Vermont to New York between Essex, NY and Charlotte, VT (Essex Ferry) and between Plattsburgh and South Hero (Cumberland Head Ferry). To drive between the communities via the ferries it takes

approximately 1.25 hours. The two (2) bridges over Lake Champlain are 40 miles to the north and south, therefore, to drive to Burlington without taking the ferry takes approximately 1.75 hours.

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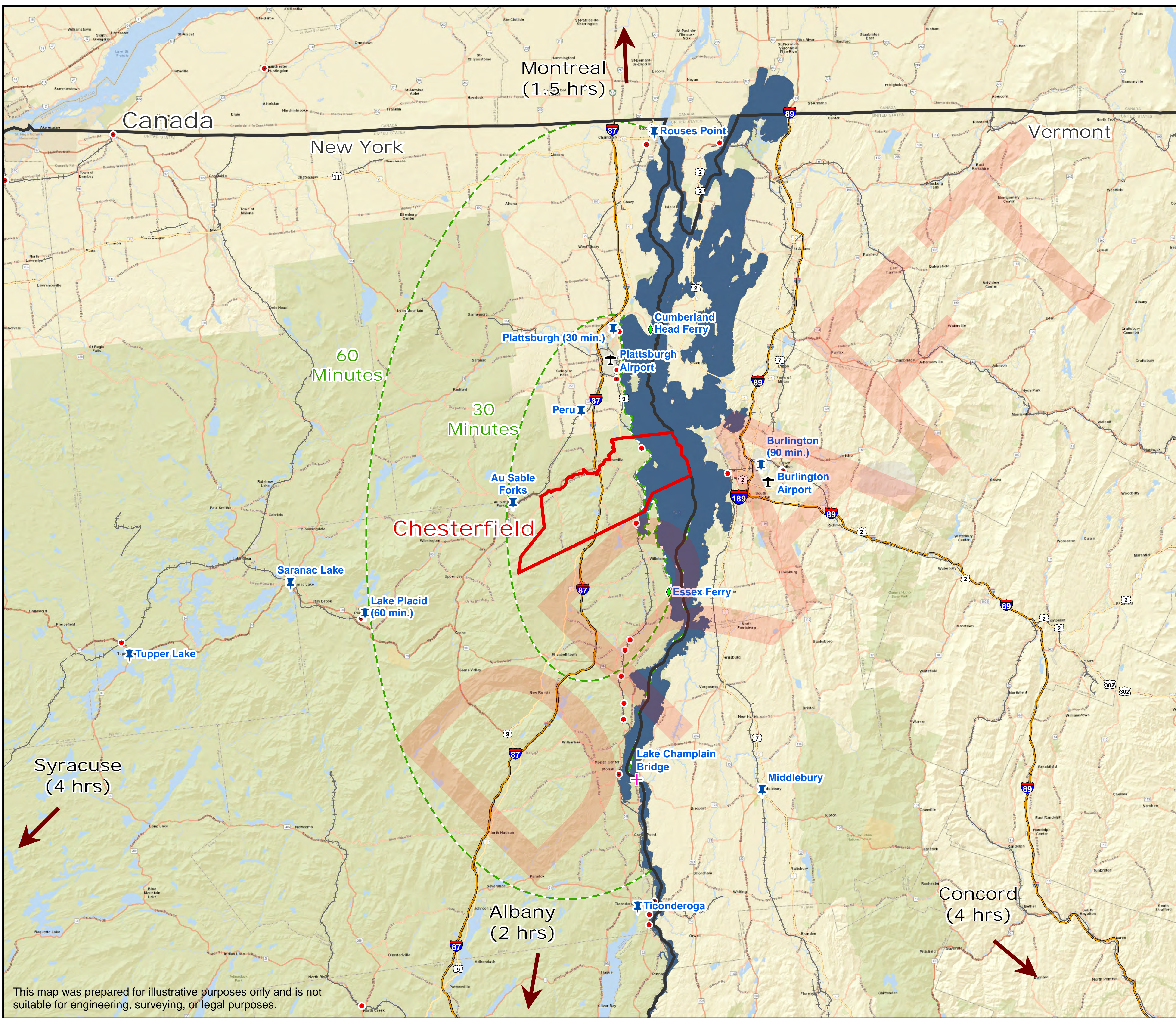


# Town of CHESTERFIELD Comprehensive Plan

Regional Context  
February 2025

### LEGEND

- Study Area
- Travel Time (approx.)
- Interstates
- US Routes
- Railroad
- Lake Champlain
- Airport
- Bridge
- Community
- Ferry
- Railroad Station



Sources:  
Esri, NYS ITS, DEC,  
Essex County, Town of Chesterfield

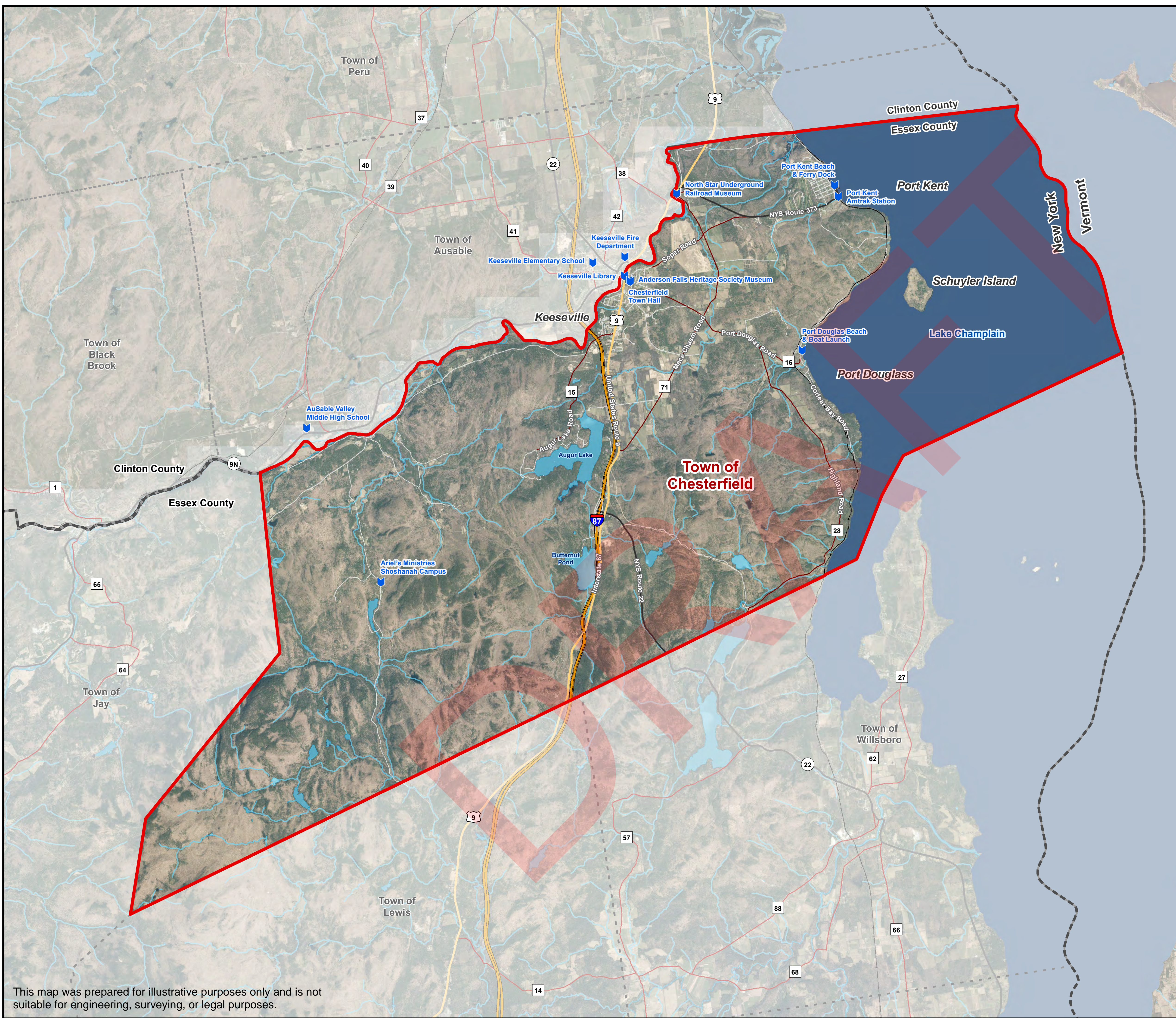


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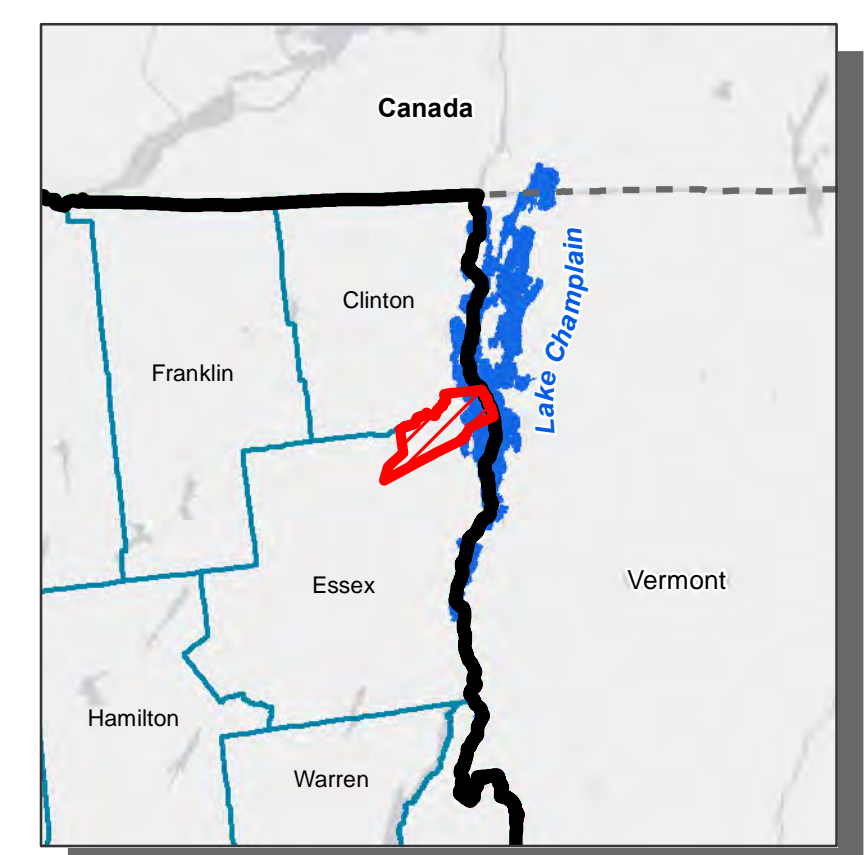
# Town of CHESTERFIELD Comprehensive Plan

## Community Services February 2025



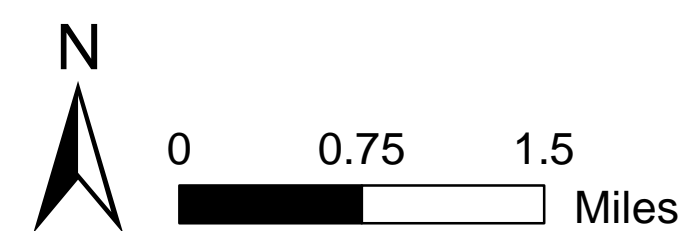
### LEGEND

- Study Area
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- Interstates
- US Routes
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Lake Champlain
- Waterbody
- River / Stream
- Town Points of Interest



This map was prepared for illustrative purposes only and is not suitable for engineering, surveying, or legal purposes.

Sources:  
Esri, NYS ITS, DEC,  
Essex County, Town of Chesterfield





## Historic and Cultural Resources

### Native History

Mohawk Indians established villages on Augur Lake and just upriver from Ausable Chasm at Alice Falls as basecamps for hunting throughout the Adirondacks. The highly active Native American presence slowed European settlement of the area until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. (*Adirondack History Museum*)

### European Settlement

The Town of Chesterfield was formed in 1802 by partition from Willsborough. With Lake Champlain as its eastern boundary and the Ausable River along the north, the town was well situated geographically to be a major transportation center during the county's first century. It is believed that Chesterfield was named by early settlers in honor of their former New England homes, as the bulk of early Essex County settlers came from New England. (*Adirondack History Museum*)

The hamlet of Keeseville was originally called Anderson Falls after John Anderson, an early merchant. John W. Anderson kept a tavern at Keeseville, where Mould's block now stands, during the War of 1812. After the war, Anderson left the area, and the settlement became known as Keeseville in honor of Anderson's partner William Keese. (*Anderson Falls Heritage Society*<sup>1</sup>)

### Industrial Revolution

With the Ausable River's most prominent drops located at Anderson Falls and above the Ausable Chasm, Chesterfield was primed for the creation of hydropower dams. Manufacturing began in 1808 with a carding and fulling plant and by 1816, the manufacture of nails had begun which grew into Keeseville's principal industry. It was in Keeseville that the first machine in the United States for making cut nails with heads on them was developed and patented. Production of secondary products of the iron ore industry grew in the 1800's. The Keeseville historic district contains many of the buildings that were built during this early industrial heyday. (*Adirondack History Museum*)

The Ausable Chasm was bridged in 1793 as a part of the government's construction of the Great Northern Turnpike, giving Chesterfield an early transportation advantage. Three ports developed along Lake Champlain: Port Kent and Port Douglass. Access to the lake meant Chesterfield was a stop on the busy waterway linking Canada with Albany. Roads were built linking the three lake ports and farms developed along those roads. It was believed that the Town would become the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.andersonfalls.org/about/>

principal city on Lake Champlain. However, as rail transport gradually replaced water travel, the importance of the lake towns faded to the point where Port Kendall is no longer a hamlet. The old state road passed centrally through Chesterfield and settlements sprang up along the route at Augur Lake and Butternut Pond. Bosworth's Tavern, built around 1800, was one of the first hostelries to serve the growing traffic on this highway. (*Adirondack History Museum*)

### **Modern Era**

Due to its close proximity to Lake Champlain and its location in the Adirondack Mountains Chesterfield became a center for the tourist industries with a railroad running from New York City to Montreal, Canada, and ferry boats running from Burlington, Vermont, to Port Kent, New York, via Lake Champlain. A spur was added to the railroad to bring tourists and goods to and from Keeseville. (*Anderson Falls Heritage Society*) The ferry from Port Kent to Burlington was a busy tourist thoroughway from late spring to early fall until its closure in 2022. The Ausable River is famous for the many unique and historic bridges which span its waters from Keene Valley through Jay and Ausable Forks to Keeseville and on to Lake Champlain. (*Adirondack History Museum*)

### **1977 Comprehensive Plan**

The Town's current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1977. The primary goal of drafting the original Plan was to fully understand the present status and capabilities of all the various components of the Town: its setting, economy, community facilities, existing land use, natural resources, and the needs, goals, and objectives of its residents. The information was presented as the basis for the development of a land use plan to be used as a guideline for harmonious, propitious growth in the future.

At the time, the top ranked desirable land uses included single family homes, agriculture, forestry and lumbering. Particular focus was paid to economic development, building infrastructure to support tourism while still maintaining the natural beauty of the region, and setting regulations with regards to land development so as to preserve the natural environment. There exists a strong emphasis on the environment throughout the Plan with discussion on the climate, soil types, steep slopes, and the protection of surface and ground water resources.

Many of the same values and goals continue to persist 47 years later, including protecting and conserving the natural environment, growing the local economy, concentrating development, supporting and encouraging agriculture, and protecting significant cultural and historic areas.

## National and State Historically Significant Resources

The following resources are included in the National and State Register of Historic Places:

- Keeseville Historic District (split with Town of Ausable) – 142 structures; 34.86 acres (82.33 total)
- Poke-o-Moonshine Fire Observation Tower (split with Town of Lewis) – 14.14 acres (21.2 total)
- Elkanah Watson House (Port Kent Hamlet) – 2.07 acres
- Rembrandt Hall (Keeseville Hamlet) – 2.63 acres
- Tomlinson House (Keeseville Hamlet) – 1.99 acres
- Swing Bridge (split with Town of Ausable) – 0.09 acres (0.16 total)
- Stone Arch Bridge (split with Town of Ausable) – 0.03 acres (0.07 total)
- Double-Span Metal Pratt Truss Bridge (split with Town of Ausable) – 0.05 acres (0.12 total)
- Old State Road Bridge (split with Town of Ausable) – 0.05 acres (0.08 total)
- Ausable Chasm Bridge (split with Town of Ausable) – 0.27 acres (0.42 total)

## Demographic and Socio-Economic Trends

### Population

After a decline of 5.5% in 1990 Decennial Census, the population of Chesterfield steadily grew by 12.22% to an estimated 2,544 according to the ACS 2022 five-year estimate. Table 1 below compares Chesterfield’s growth to its neighboring municipalities. Chesterfield’s growth is outperforming the rate of growth in Essex and Clinton Counties as well as the City of Plattsburgh and Towns of Lewis and Ausable. The Towns of Jay and Willsboro have grown slightly faster over the same time period at just over 14%. With the stability in growth over the past 20+ years, there is no reason to assume that this trend would reverse. If the current rate continues, the population will reach 3,000 by 2040.

Location	1990	2000	2010	2020	2022*	% Change
<b>Town of Chesterfield</b>	<b>2,267</b>	<b>2,409</b>	<b>2,445</b>	<b>2,476</b>	<b>2,544</b>	<b>12.22%</b>
Essex County	37,152	38,851	39,370	37,381	37,314	0.44%
Town of Jay	2,244	2,306	2,506	2,486	2,567	14.39%
Town of Lewis	1,057	1,186	1,382	1,293	1,112	5.20%
Town of Willsboro	1,736	1,903	2,025	1,905	1,983	14.23%
Town of Ausable	2,870	3,015	3,146	3,183	3,181	10.84%
City of Plattsburgh	21,255	18,750	19,989	19,841	19,907	-6.34%
Clinton County	85,969	79,894	82,128	78,843	78,753	-8.39%

Source: Decennial Census; \*American Community Survey, 2022 Five-Year Estimates

According to the 2020 Decennial Census, the racial tapestry of Chesterfield is relatively similar to that of Essex County. At the time, 90.7% of Town residents reported as Non-Hispanic White, 5.9% as Two or More Races, 1.4% as Hispanic/Latino, 1.3% as Black or African American, 0.3% as Some Other Race, 0.2% as Asian, 0.2% as American Indian, and 0% as Pacific Islander.

### Age

The generational distribution of a population influences the distinct set of needs within a given community. To illustrate the disparate generational needs in a community, housing provides a useful example. While a new family may be looking for safe housing near schools, seniors and people reaching retirement age may be looking for a quiet but active community, and new graduates may be looking for housing close to their places of employment, entertainment, and other amenities. A generation typically spans approximately 20 years, however there is no single definition as to how long a generation lasts. The age range of each generation can vary greatly depending on the source. The following are the common generation definitions.

**The Silent Generation:** This generation includes those born between 1926 and 1945. This generation follows the Greatest Generation and proceeds the Baby Boomers. Due to pressure from the Great Depression and World War II, this generation is marked by low birth rates.

**The Baby Boomers:** Between 1946 and 1964, these children were born during the Post-War boom. This generation is known for the surge of births occurring after the war.

**Generation X:** Also called Gen Xer's, this generation was born between 1965 and 1982. This generation is associated with the "Baby Bust" because of the sharp decline in the number of births compared to the previous generation.

**Millennials:** This generation was born between 1983 and 2001. This generation is sometimes thought of as an "echo" of the Baby Boomers.

**Generation Z:** Children born after 2002 fall into Gen Z. These children are sometimes compared to the Silent Generation due to the economic hardships and foreign wars that occurred around their arrival, as well as low birth rates.

	Essex County				Town of Chesterfield			
	2000	2010	2020	2022	2000	2010	2020	2022
Under 18	22.8%	19.7%	16.1%	15.9%	24.6%	20.9%	18.7%	21.7%
18 to 24	6.9%	8.0%	6.8%	6.6%	7.3%	5.8%	6.6%	8.3%
25 to 34	12.9%	11.2%	12.1%	11.4%	10.4%	9.1%	13.9%	12.4%
35 to 44	16.8%	13.5%	11.1%	11.4%	18.5%	15.3%	11.1%	8.5%
45 to 54	14.4%	16.0%	13.7%	12.8%	15.4%	17.6%	18.1%	14.3%
55 to 64	10.1%	14.0%	16.8%	17.1%	11.4%	14.2%	13.3%	11.2%
65 to 74	8.7%	9.1%	13.4%	14.5%	8.4%	13.5%	13.3%	14.0%
75 & Over	7.4%	8.5%	10.0%	10.3%	4.0%	3.6%	5.0%	9.6%

Source: Decennial Census; American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

The median age in Chesterfield, as of the 2022 ACS 5-year estimate, was 43.9 years; more than 5 years younger than the median age of the County (49.3). Chesterfield is the second youngest of Essex County's 18 towns, above only North Elba who has a median age of 40. In 2022, the largest age cohort within the Town was the under 18 population, accounting for 21.7% of the residents. This group was followed by persons 45 to 54 (14.3%) and those 65 to 74 (14.0%).

It is anticipated that by 2030, one in five Americans will be age 65 or over and that there will be more people over the age of 65 than under 18. Current trends in Essex County have already shown this to be true locally with the population 65 and over increasing from 16.1% to 24.8% and the population under 18 decreasing from 22.8% to 15.9% between the year 2000 and 2022.

Within the Town of Chesterfield, these trends also prevail. In the year 2000, people 65 and over made up 12.4% of residents. Fast-forward to the year 2022, that age group accounts for 23.6% of the population. While not as dramatic as the County, Chesterfield has seen fluctuation in persons under 18, from 24.6% in 2000 to 20.9% in 2010 to 18.7% in 2020 and up ticking once more to 21.7% in 2022. Chesterfield deviates from Essex County with a more stable under 18 population, a more rapidly declining percent of residents between 35 and 44, and through a falling percentage of residents between 55 and 64.

The Town’s rapid shift in its population 65 and over is expected to have an effect on economic growth with less persons in the workforce, on improvements to transportation systems and public infrastructure, and on the demand for greater variety in housing options. Additionally, this shift is likely to result in increased demand for health services, home-based care, assisted living, and nursing home care.

### Household Characteristics

A household is defined as any housing unit with people living inside, excluding those living in group quarters. Demand for services and housing are both affected by household characteristics. Tracking the trends of households, such as the total number of households and the average household size, can help determine the absolute demand for housing units, the type of housing unit needed, and other related characteristics.

Table 3 provides the household trends within Chesterfield and Essex County. The number of and average size of households has been relatively stable over the last 20+ years for both the Town and County. This signifies a steady balance in the residential makeup of Chesterfield and demonstrates the local market’s ability to provide for the population.

TABLE 3. HOUSEHOLD TRENDS								
	Essex County				Town of Chesterfield			
	Number of Households	% Change	Average Size	% Change	Number of Households	% Change	Average Size	% Change
2000*	15,015	-	2.39	-	934	-	2.96	-
2010*	16,098	7.2%	2.23	-6.7%	1,044	11.8%	2.31	-22.0%
2015**	15,268	-5.2%	2.37	6.3%	1,074	2.9%	2.52	9.1%
2022**	15,750	3.2%	2.23	-5.9%	1,025	-4.6%	2.44	-3.2%

Source: \*Decennial Census; \*\*American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

A worrying trend is the recent fall in the number of households within Chesterfield during the same period when the number of households in the County increased. This may be indicative of the increase in second homeowners and the rise of the short-term rental market.

## Housing

A diverse, high-quality housing stock is essential to meeting the needs of existing and new residents. Providing a range of housing types for households across all income levels results in a more well-rounded and sustainable community. It also supports economic development and helps businesses attract and retain employees.

The table below shows the total number of housing units in the Town of Chesterfield over a 20-year period. Between 2000 and 2020, the overall supply of housing in the town increased by 7% with a net gain of 97 units. Both owner-occupied and rental units were added to the inventory, but rental housing grew at a faster rate. The result was a slight shift in the distribution of housing by tenure: In 2000, 19% of the occupied housing units in Chesterfield were renter-occupied; by 2020, that proportion had increased to about 23%.

**TABLE 4. TOTAL HOUSING UNITS BY TENURE, TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD**

	2000		2010		2020	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	1,374	100.0%	1,443	100.0%	1,471	100.0%
Occupied Units	948	69.0%	1,024	71.0%	1,081	73.5%
Owner-Occupied Units	768	55.9%	822	57.0%	833	56.6%
Renter-Occupied Units	180	13.1%	202	14.0%	248	16.9%
Vacant Units	426	31.0%	419	29.0%	390	26.5%
For Seasonal/Occasional Use	317	23.1%	325	22.5%	296	20.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census.

Table 5 compares the Town of Chesterfield with neighboring towns and Essex County in terms of housing growth from 2000 to 2020. The highest rate of growth, 11.2%, occurred in the Clinton County town of Ausable. Among other communities, the rate of growth ranged from 3.3% in Willsboro to 7.1% in Chesterfield, while Essex County experienced an 8.7% increase in housing units.

**TABLE 5. HOUSING TRENDS AND CHANGE, 2000-20**

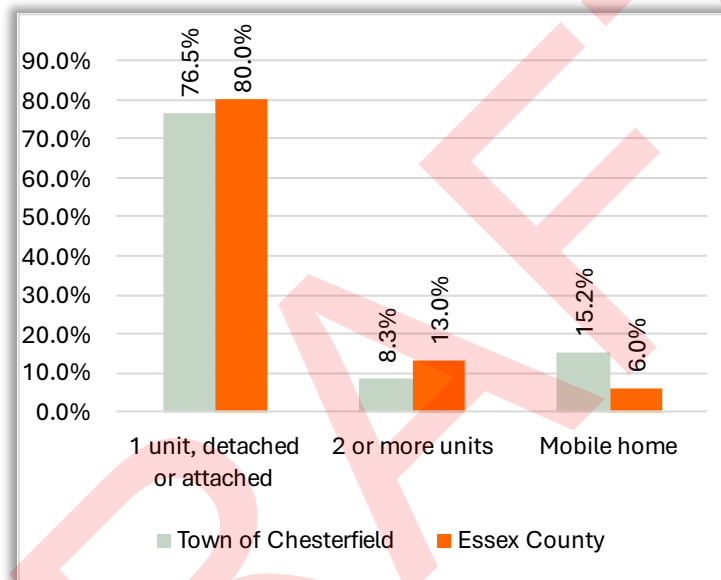
	2000	2010	2020	Change, 2000-2020	
				Net	Percent
<b>Town of Chesterfield</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>1,443</b>	<b>1,471</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>7.1%</b>
Town of Jay	1,443	1,547	1,516	73	5.1%
Town of Lewis	620	696	655	35	5.6%
Town of Willsboro	1,468	1,621	1,516	48	3.3%
Town of Ausable	1,347	1,473	1,498	151	11.2%
Essex County	23,115	25,603	25,123	2,008	8.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census.

## Housing Characteristics

Detailed information on the characteristics of housing in the Town of Chesterfield was obtained from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). According to 2022 data from the ACS, 77% of households that reside year-round in the Town of Chesterfield own their homes.

Single-family detached homes are the most prevalent housing type in Chesterfield, accounting for more than three-quarters of all housing units (Figure 3). About 15% of the town’s housing stock is made up of mobile homes, while the remaining 8% of the units are in multi-family structures. Compared to Essex County, the town has a lower proportion of its housing in multi-family structures and a higher proportion in mobile homes.

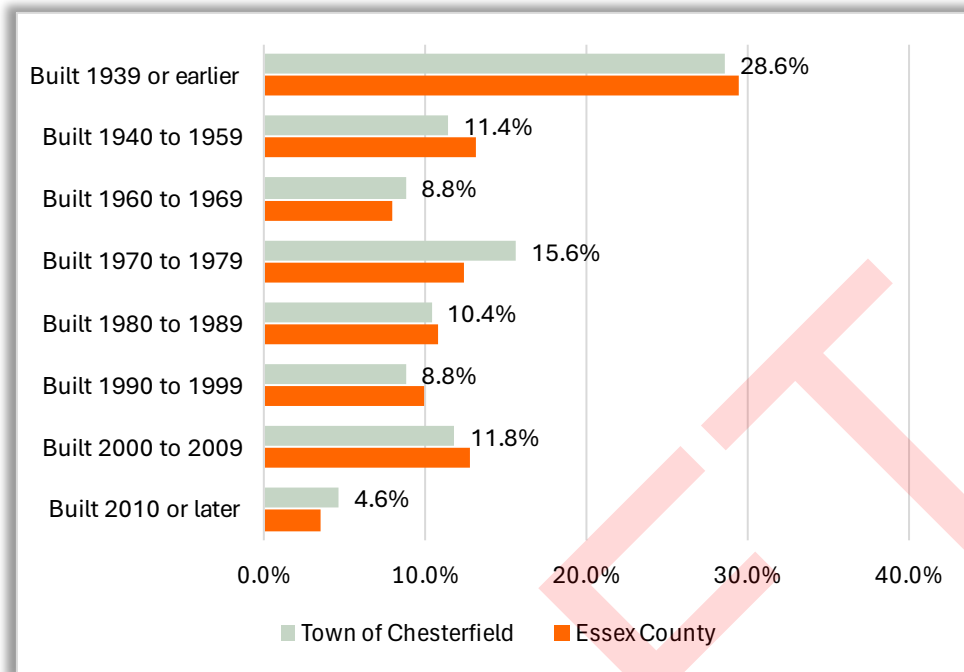


**Figure 3. Housing by Units in Structure**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-22  
Five-Year Estimates

About two-thirds of Chesterfield’s housing stock was built before 1980; the median year of construction is 1959. As shown in Figure 4, 29% of all housing units are in buildings constructed prior to 1940. Older properties tend to require ongoing maintenance and capital investments to update structural systems, improve energy efficiency, and renovate living spaces to modern standards.





**Figure 4. Housing Units by Year Structure Built**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-22 Five-Year Estimates

## Housing Values

Housing values tend to reflect both the age and condition of housing. The ACS estimated median value of owner-occupied housing in the Town of Chesterfield is \$171,200, below the Essex County median of \$189,500 (Table 6). About 30% of the owner-occupied homes in Chesterfield, compared to 17% of those in Essex County, are valued at less than \$100,000. At the opposite end of the spectrum, approximately 10% of the owner-occupied homes in the town, versus 12% of housing in the county, are valued at \$500,000 or more.

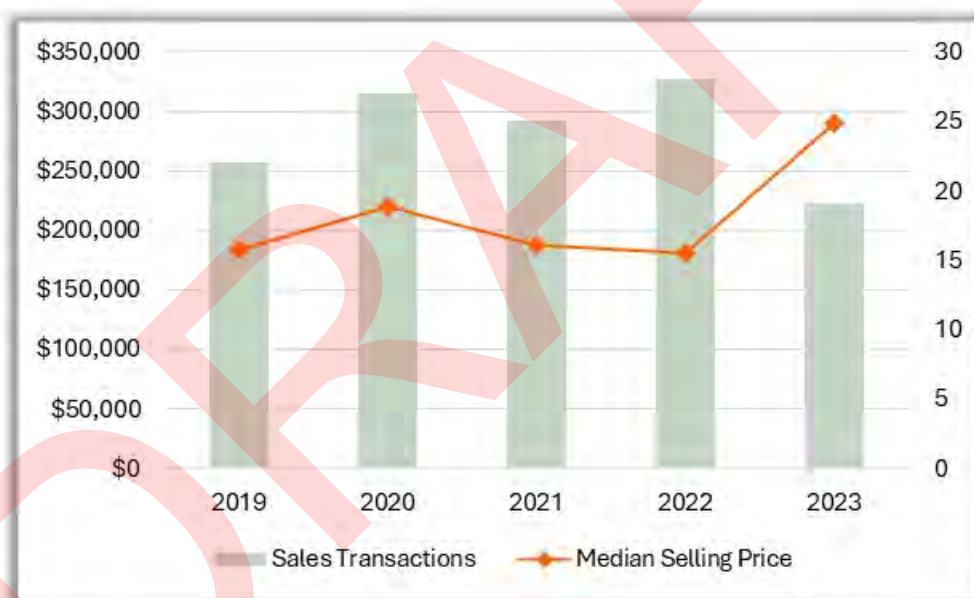
TABLE 6. ESTIMATED VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING						
	<\$100,000	\$100,000- \$199,999	\$200,000- \$299,999	\$300,000- \$499,999	\$500,000 or more	Median Value
<b>Town of Chesterfield</b>	<b>29.7%</b>	<b>33.1%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>15.3%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>\$171,200</b>
Town of Jay	7.4%	46.4%	25.6%	14.5%	6.1%	\$188,000
Town of Lewis	21.3%	52.0%	12.9%	9.7%	4.1%	\$157,000
Town of Willsboro	8.5%	31.4%	28.5%	20.6%	11.0%	\$247,900
Town of Ausable	44.6%	33.5%	13.0%	6.3%	2.6%	\$109,500
Essex County	16.9%	36.0%	18.3%	17.3%	11.5%	\$189,500

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-22 Five Year Estimates.

Chesterfield has a higher median home value than the towns of Ausable (\$109,500) and Lewis (\$157,000), but a lower median value than the towns of Jay (\$188,000) and Willsboro (\$247,900). As Table 7 suggests, housing values in the region tend to be higher in communities that have greater shares of seasonal housing, perhaps because they experience more housing demand.

TABLE 7. SEASONAL UNITS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	
Town of Chesterfield	14.9%
Town of Jay	25.9%
Town of Lewis	16.8%
Town of Willsboro	42.3%
Town of Ausable	7.4%
Essex County	29.0%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-22 Five-Year Estimates	

It is important to note that that the ACS housing value is an estimate of what the home would sell for if it were for sale. Residential sale prices are a more accurate measure of market values. Data on arm’s length single-family home sales<sup>2</sup> in the Town of Chesterfield from 2019 through 2023 is presented in Figure 5. (“Arm’s length” refers to real estate transactions in which buyers and sellers act independently and in their own interest, without undue pressure on either party.)



**Figure 5. Arm’s Length Sales of Single-Family Homes in the Town of Chesterfield**  
*Source: NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services*

According to the data, 121 single-family, year-round residences in Chesterfield changed hands over the period, with a total sales volume of \$31.8 million. The median selling price of a single-family residence over the five-year period was \$205,000, but on an annual basis, the median rose from \$184,000 in 2019 to \$289,900 in 2023.

<sup>2</sup> This analysis looks only at properties that are classified in Real Property records as 210 – One Family Year Round Residence and 240 – Rural Residence with Acreage.

## Housing Costs and Affordability

Shelter is a basic necessity of human existence and the rapidly changing real estate landscape has contributed to hardships in securing shelter for families and individuals at the local, state, and national level. The gross rent is defined as the contract rent for the unit plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, natural gas, water, sewer) and fuel if these are paid by the renter. As shown in Table 8, the median gross rent in the Town of Chesterfield is \$1,109, well above the Essex County median of \$875. In fact, rent levels are higher in Chesterfield than in any of the comparison communities except the Town of Jay, which has only 86 rental housing units. Moreover, the current median rent in Chesterfield reflects a 26% increase, in inflation-adjusted dollars, above what it was in 2000.

	Median Gross Rent	Median Monthly Housing Cost	
		Owners With a Mortgage	Owners Without a Mortgage
<b>Town of Chesterfield</b>	<b>\$1,109</b>	<b>\$1,536</b>	<b>\$469</b>
Town of Jay	\$1,145	\$1,463	\$694
Town of Lewis	\$1,000	\$1,163	\$618
Town of Willsboro	\$942	\$1,375	\$737
Town of Ausable	\$1,053	\$1,431	\$460
Essex County	\$875	\$1,530	\$610

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-22 Five-Year Estimates

Housing costs paid by homeowners include mortgage payments, if applicable, plus utilities, property taxes, and insurance. About 58% of homeowners in Chesterfield have a mortgage, and they have a median monthly housing cost of \$1,536 per month. Of households who own their homes free and clear, the median monthly cost is \$469 per month.

A standard measure of affordability looks at how much households spend on housing relative to their income. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a household that spends more than 30% of its gross income on monthly housing expenses as *cost burdened*. The greater the proportion of income spent on housing costs, the less households have available for other necessities like food, childcare, and transportation. Based on the ACS data, 58% of renter households in the Town of Chesterfield – compared to 48% of renters in Essex County – are characterized as cost burdened.

Homeowners typically experience affordability challenges less than renters; this is because lenders generally will not issue a mortgage that consumes more than 30% of the borrower's income. Nevertheless, 38% of homeowners in Chesterfield with a mortgage and about 10% of those who own their homes outright are cost burdened.

## Residential Building Permits

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Building Permits Survey, from 2012 through 2022, the Town of Chesterfield issued residential permits for the construction of 99 housing units, all of which were single-family structures (Table 9). The number of units for which permits were issued was much more than in Ausable or Lewis, but less than in Jay or Willsboro. Willsboro was the only one of the comparison communities that issued permits for multi-family housing, all in a single year (2012). It is important to note that while the number of approved building permits is an indicator of future construction, not all permits result in new development.

	Units in Single-Family Structures	Units in Multi-Family Structures	All Units
Town of Chesterfield	99	-	99
Town of Jay	121	-	121
Town of Lewis	28	-	28
Town of Willsboro	44	63	107
Town of Ausable	29	-	29
Essex County	1,195	248	1,443

Source: HUD User SOCDs Building Permits Database

## Perspectives on Housing

Residents, property and business owners, and other stakeholders who attended an April 2024 Open House and Planning Workshop identified several issues related to housing in Chesterfield. A common theme was a desire for *a range of housing options* in the town: affordable homeownership and rental housing; apartments on the second floors of commercial buildings downtown; housing suitable for young families; higher end senior housing; and duplexes and condominiums. Participants also commented on the need to clean up neighborhoods, demolish deteriorated properties, and allow tiny homes on small lots.

## Income

Household income levels impact the ability of residents to pay for housing, contribute to the tax base, and support the local economy as consumers of goods and services. According to the 2022 ACS five-year estimates, the median household income in the Town of Chesterfield is \$70,506, slightly higher than the median in the County (\$68,090) and 90% of the statewide median income (\$81,386). 27.4% of households in the Town have annual incomes of \$100,000 or more, while 34.6% of households have incomes below \$50,000 per year.

Income levels vary by tenure. Owner-occupied households in Chesterfield have a median household income of \$79,792. The majority of owner-occupied households (52.2%) have annual incomes of at least \$75,000, while 21.9% earn between \$50,000 and \$74,999 per year. The median household income among renter-occupied households is \$47,743, with over 29% having annual incomes below \$35,000.

The 2022 ACS data also reveals that 15.6% of all Chesterfield residents have annual incomes below the federal poverty level, up from 11.3% in the 2010 Census. The poverty rate amongst those under 18 was considerably higher at 36% and well lower amongst those 65 and over at 5%. When compared to Essex County, the Town has a poverty rate 1.5 times higher overall, 3 times higher for persons under 18, and 1.3 times lower for persons 65 and over. The overall poverty rate is nearly 20% higher than New York State's.

The United Way refers to households just above the poverty line who are unable to afford the basic cost of living as ALICE households: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. Members of these households are often in jobs that pay by the hour or have unpredictable work schedules, making it difficult for them to save for emergencies. According to UnitedForAlice.org, 21% of all households in Chesterfield are under the ALICE threshold, the minimum income level necessary for financial stability.

Most affordable housing programs target low-income households, those whose incomes are at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI), although housing developed with funding from the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program is restricted to households earning 60% or less of the AMI.

## Education

Educational attainment can be a valuable indicator of a sustainable economy, a thriving population, and a high quality-of-life. Table 10 compares the education levels of Essex County to that of Chesterfield through five commonly used metrics obtained by the U.S. Census Bureau. The Town is nearly identical to the County with their percentage of population with a high school degree (33%), an associate's degree (12%), and a graduate or professional degree (13%). Chesterfield has a lower percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree and a higher percentage of residents with some college but no degree than Essex County.

TABLE 10. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				
	Essex County	County Percent	Town of Chesterfield	Town Percent
High school or equivalent degree	9,477	32.8%	594	33.4%
Some college, no degree	4,500	15.6%	359	20.2%
Associate's degree	3,515	12.2%	213	12.0%
Bachelor's degree	5,079	17.6%	281	15.8%
Graduate or professional degree	3,941	13.6%	233	13.1%

Source: American Community Survey, 2022 Five-Year Estimates

## Land Use and Zoning

Through the evaluation of Chesterfield’s existing land uses and underlying zoning, the distribution, location, and characteristics of the developed and undeveloped landscape is revealed. The existing land uses differ from zoning through a variety of ways; primarily, though, zoning districts provide the types of structures that are allowed while the existing land uses show the current primary use each parcel of land. While the existing uses may or may not conform to the zoning district, the district provides a direction for future land uses to follow. Utilizing the information from this evaluation, combined with input from key stakeholders and the public, future land use changes and zoning updates will be identified to ensure that the community’s vision is realized.

### Land Use

Land use regulations are implemented to guide the type and intensity of development within the boundaries of a municipality. Chesterfield’s development pattern is a direct reflection of its topography, ecology, and geography. Suitability of development plays out stronger in Adirondack localities due to their mountainous terrain and regional land use restrictions.

TABLE 11. APA PRIVATE LAND CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS	
Land Use Type	Land Use Definition
Hamlet	Intentionally, the Agency has very limited permit requirements in hamlet areas. Activities there requiring an Agency permit are erecting buildings or structures over 40 feet in height, projects involving more than 100 lots, sites or units, projects involving wetlands, airports, watershed management projects, and certain expansions of buildings and uses.
Moderate Intensity	Most uses are permitted; relatively concentrated residential development is most appropriate.
Low Intensity	Most uses are permitted; residential development at a lower intensity than hamlet or moderate intensity is appropriate.
Rural Use	Most uses are permitted; residential uses and reduced intensity development that preserves rural character is most suitable.
Resource Management	Most development activities in resource management areas will require an Agency permit; compatible uses include residential uses, agriculture, and forestry. Special care is taken to protect the natural open space character of these lands.

Existing and future land uses cannot be discussed in Chesterfield independent of the Adirondack Park Agency (APA). The APA was created in 1971 by the NYS Legislature to develop long-range land use plans for public and private lands within the boundary of the Adirondack Park.<sup>3</sup> Since that time, Chesterfield’s development has been density and type restricted based on the APA’s Land Classification system. All private lands in the Park are classified into six categories as defined in Table 11.

<b>TABLE 12. APA LAND CLASSIFICATIONS</b>				
APA Land Classification	Average Lot Size (acres)	State/Private Lands	Acreage	Percentage
Hamlet	None	Private	807.4	1.60
Moderate Intensity	1.3	Private	2,017.7	4.00
Low Intensity	3.2	Private	3,609.6	7.16
Rural Use	8.5	Private	6,086.2	12.06
Resource Management	42.7	Private	34,511.6	60.41
Primitive Area	n/a	State	160.2	0.32
Wild Forest	n/a	State	3,001.8	5.95
Intensive Use	n/a	State	247.4	0.49
State Administrative	n/a	State	4.0	0.01
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>50,445.9</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 12 provides a breakout of the APA land classification districts within Chesterfield. Over 75% of land in Town falls within a state management district or resource management district with high development restrictions. The hamlet districts account for 1.6% of the total land area in Town and are the only areas not restricted by lot size or buildings per square mile under the APA regulations. Density restrictions are in place for Moderate Intensity, Low Intensity, and Rural Use districts, and provide limited development opportunities.

While the APA possesses oversight of local development and land use, it is important to note that Chesterfield is one of 18 Adirondack municipalities with an Agency-Approved Local Land Use Program (ALLUP). This designation allows the Town to integrate coordinated review procedures with the APA. The Town has increased control over project review and has its own zoning and sub-division codes.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://apa.ny.gov/About\\_Agency/index.html](https://apa.ny.gov/About_Agency/index.html)



# Town of CHESTERFIELD Comprehensive Plan

## APA Private and State Land Classification

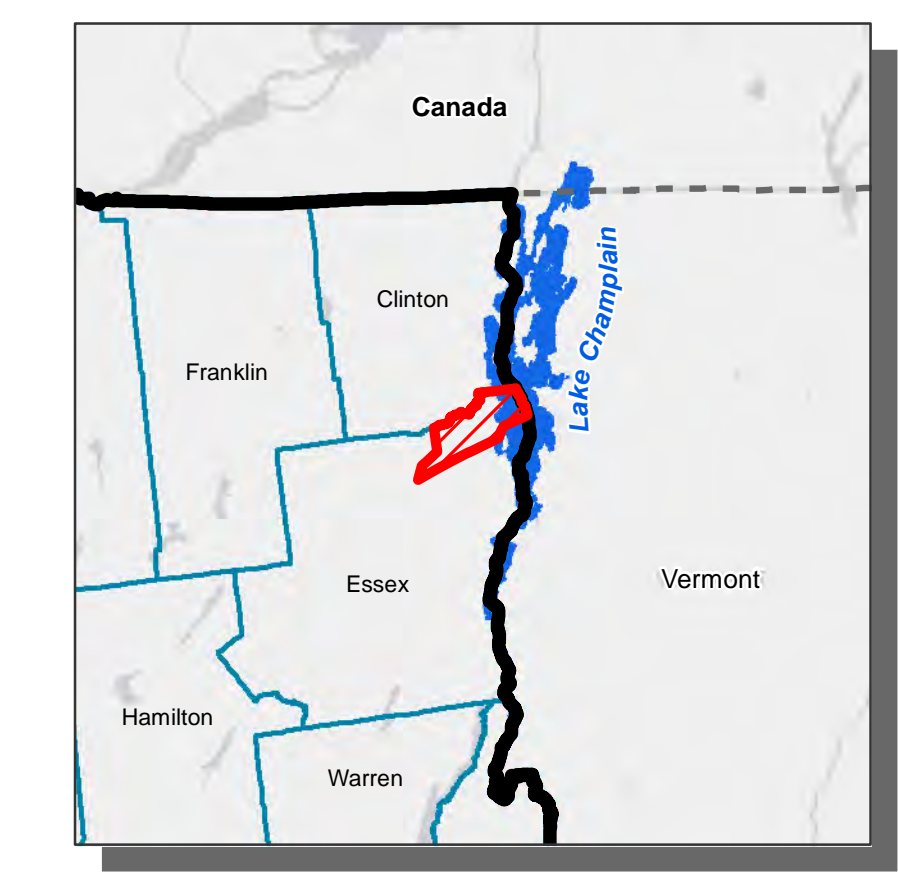
February 2025

### LEGEND

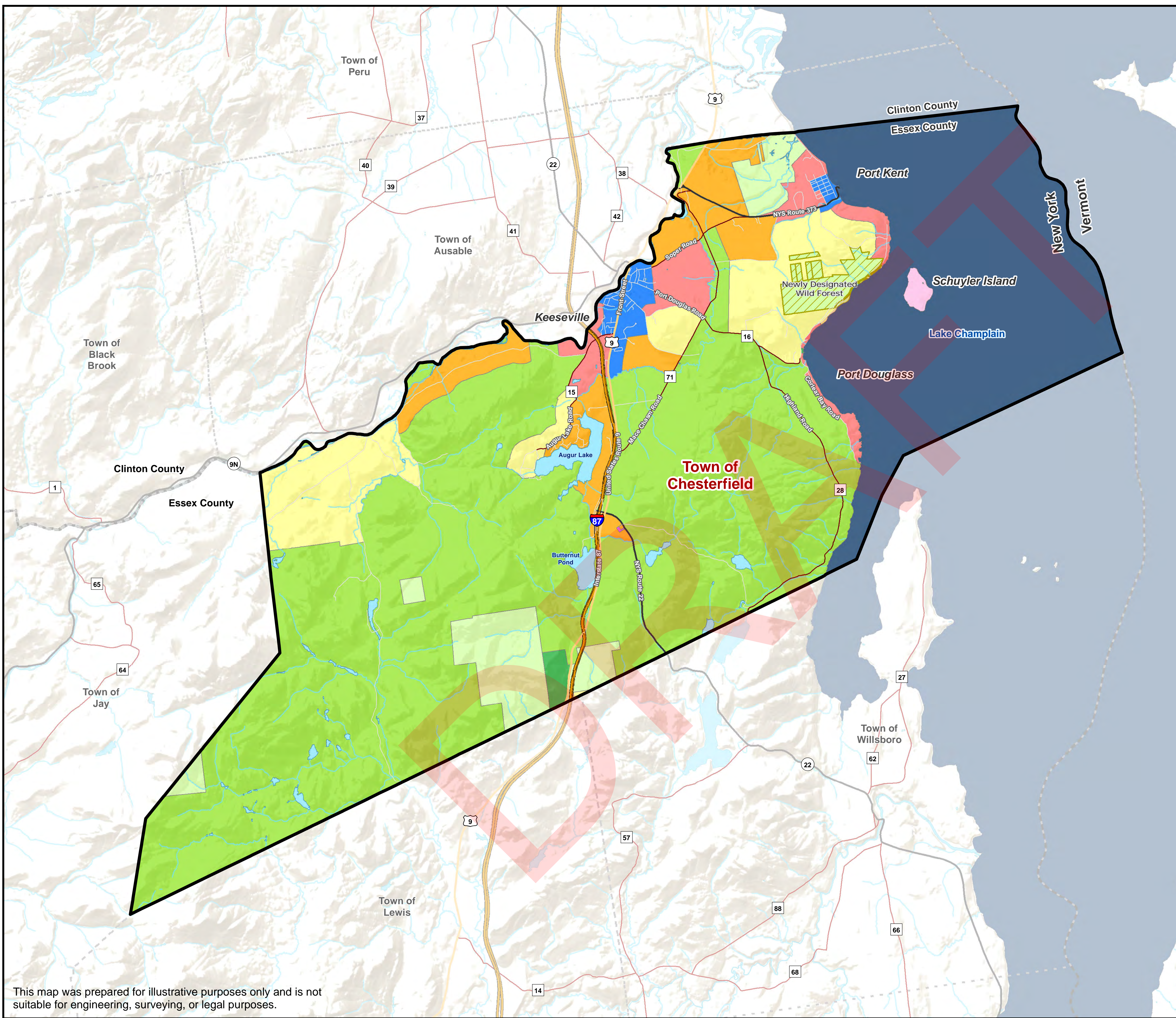
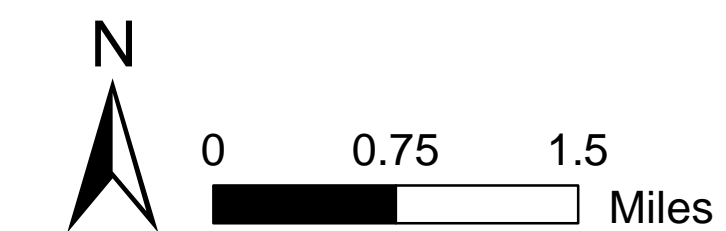
- Study Area
- Interstates
- US Routes
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- Lake Champlain
- Waterbody
- River / Stream
- Hamlet
- Moderate Intensity
- Low Intensity
- Rural Use
- Resource Management
- Primitive Area
- Wild Forest
- Intensive Use
- State Administrative
- Newly Designated Wild Forest \*

\*Approximate boundary of newly designated Wild Forest provided by the Town (not yet included in APA mapping or table below)

APA Land Class	State or Private	Acreege	Percentage of Land Area
Hamlet	Private	807.4	1.60%
Moderate Intensity	Private	2017.7	4.00%
Low Intensity	Private	3609.6	7.16%
Rural Use	Private	6086.2	12.06%
Resource Management	Private	34511.6	68.41%
Primitive Area	State	160.2	0.32%
Wild Forest	State	3001.8	5.95%
Intensive Use	State	247.4	0.49%
State Administrative	State	4.0	0.01%
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>50,445.9</b>	<b>100%</b>



Sources: Esri, NYS ITS, DEC, APA, Essex County, Town of Chesterfield



This map was prepared for illustrative purposes only and is not suitable for engineering, surveying, or legal purposes.



<b>TABLE 13. EXISTING LAND USES</b>			
<b>Land Use Type</b>	<b>NYS Land Use Codes</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agricultural	105-151	1,202.2	2.4
Commercial	<i>416-486</i>	<i>441.2</i>	<i>0.9</i>
Community Services	611-695	47.0	0.1
Industrial	<i>710</i>	<i>21.2</i>	<i>0.0</i>
Mixed Use	481, 483	5.0	0.0
Parks & Conservation	<i>910-971</i>	<i>32,161.6</i>	<i>64.0</i>
Recreation & Entertainment	532-592	1,053.9	2.1
Residential – High Density	<i>230-281, 411</i>	<i>594.3</i>	<i>1.2</i>
Residential – Medium Density	215, 220	59.6	0.1
Residential – Low Density	<i>210, 240-283</i>	<i>8,160.6</i>	<i>16.2</i>
Transportation	842, 845	1,021.7	2.0
Utilities	<i>822-831, 874</i>	<i>56.8</i>	<i>0.1</i>
Vacant Lands	311-331	5,400.6	10.8
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b><i>50,225.6</i></b>	<b><i>100</i></b>

Map 2 and Table 13 present the breakout by area of land uses in Chesterfield based on the NYS Property Type Classification Codes. The state developed the property class codes to provide a statewide uniform classification system for tax assessment administration. Assessors assign a code to each property on an assessment roll based on the primary use of a parcel. Nearly two-thirds of Chesterfield is classified a Parks and Conservation (64%). The next largest land use categories are Low Density Residential (16.2%) and Vacant Lands (10.8%).



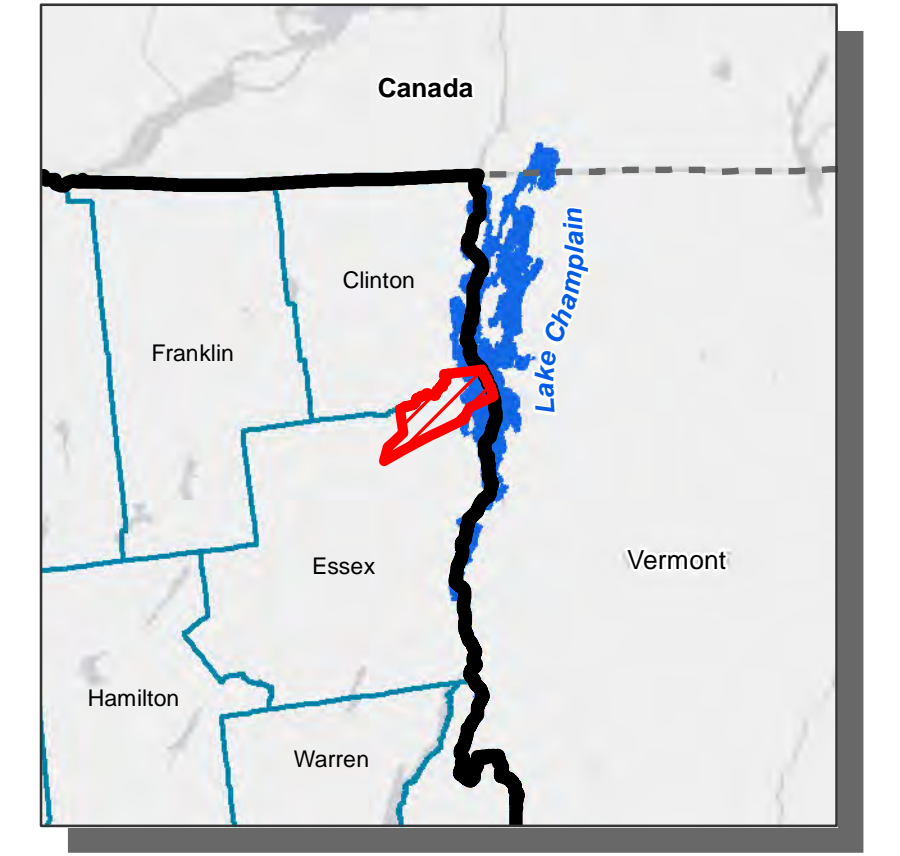
# Town of CHESTERFIELD Comprehensive Plan

## Existing Land Use February 2025

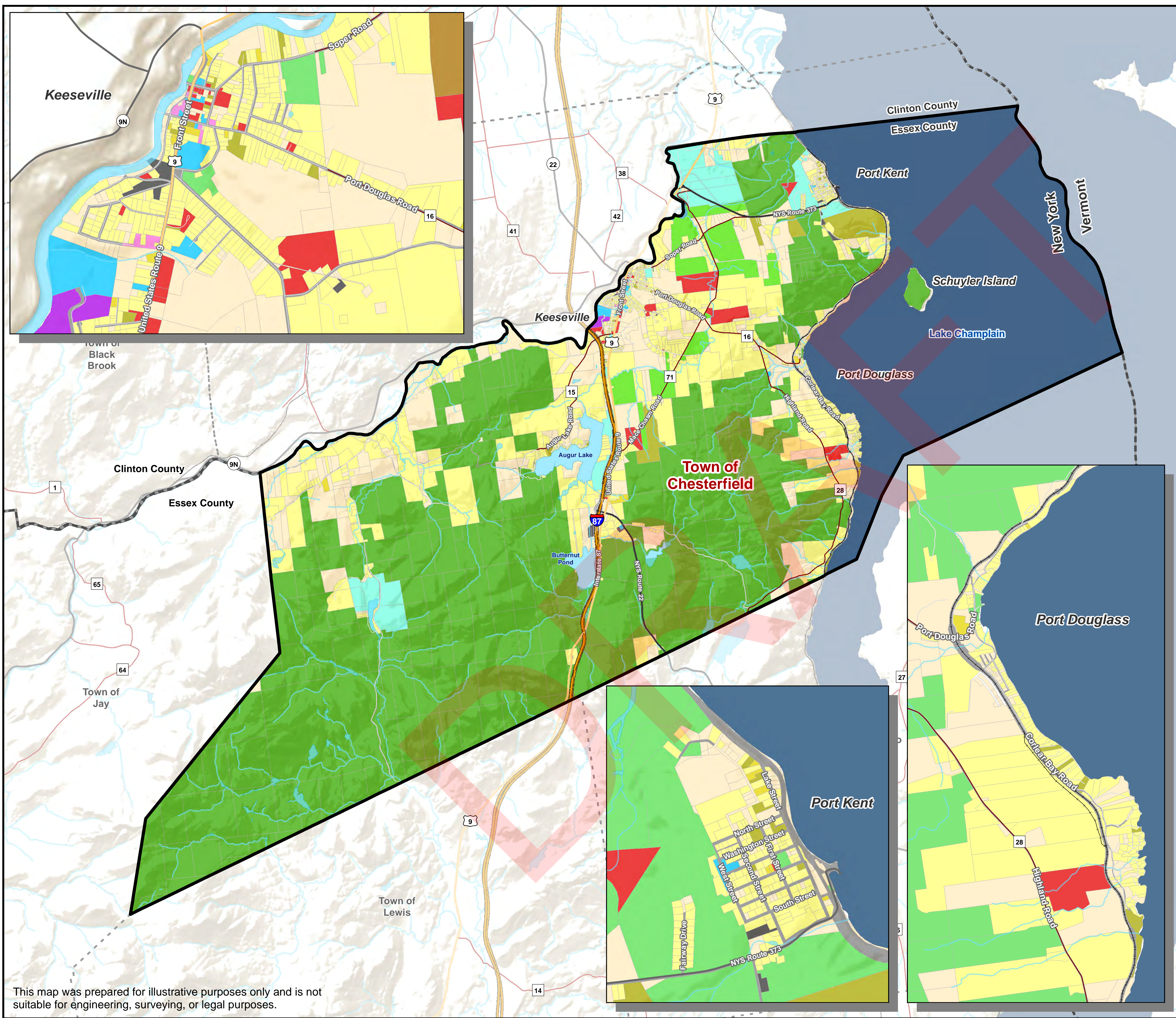
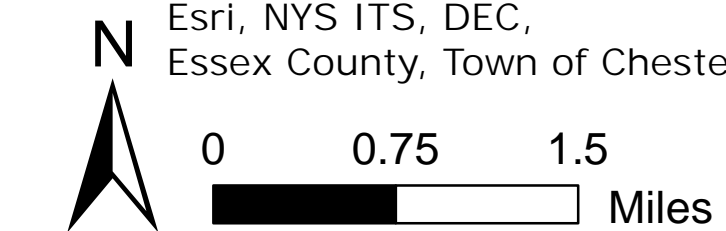
### LEGEND

- Study Area
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary
- Interstates
- US Routes
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Lake Champlain
- Waterbody
- River / Stream
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Community Services
- Industrial
- Mixed Use
- Recreation & Entertainment
- Parks and Conservation
- Residential - High Density
- Residential - Medium Density
- Residential - Low Density
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Vacant Land

Land Use	Land Use Codes	Acreage	Percentage of Land Use
Agricultural	105-151	1,202.2	2.4%
Commercial	416-486	441.2	0.9%
Community Services	611-695	47.0	0.1%
Industrial	710	21.2	0.0%
Mixed Use	481, 483	5.0	0.0%
Parks & Conservation Lands	910-971	32,161.6	64.0%
Recreation & Entertainment	532-592	1,053.9	2.1%
Residential - High Density	230-281, 411	594.3	1.2%
Residential - Medium Density	215, 220	59.6	0.1%
Residential - Low Density	210, 240-283	8,160.6	16.2%
Transportation	842, 845	1,021.7	2.0%
Utilities	822-831, 874	56.8	0.1%
Vacant Land	311-331	5,400.6	10.8%
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>50,225.6</b>	<b>100%</b>



Sources:  
Esri, NYS ITS, DEC,  
Essex County, Town of Chesterfield



This map was prepared for illustrative purposes only and is not suitable for engineering, surveying, or legal purposes.

## Zoning

The Town of Chesterfield’s Zoning Law was last amended on July 9, 2002 and guides development throughout the Town with the exception of the Hamlet of Keeseville. Upon the dissolution of the Village of Keeseville in 2017, the Town adopted the Zoning Law of the Hamlet of Keeseville as a separate code to continue the administration of the former Village’s Zoning Law.

The Town of Chesterfield Zoning Law consists of the following seven (7) districts:

- H-MU – Mixed-Use Hamlet
- H-PK – Port Kent Hamlet
- H-R – Hamlet Residential
- RR-1.3 – Rural Use
- RR-3.2 – Rural Use
- RR-8.5 – Rural Use
- FAL – Forest and Agricultural Lands

The Town of Chesterfield “Zoning Law of the Hamlet of Keeseville” consists of the following seven (7) districts:

- R1 – Existing Residential District
- R2 – Undeveloped Residential District
- C1 – Intense Commercial District
- C2 – Mixed-Use Light Commercial District
- M1 – Mobile Home District
- I1 – Industrial District
- L – Land Conservation District

Zoning Districts	Description	Acreage	Percentage
C1	Industrial Use	8.9	0.02
FAL	Forest and Agriculture	34,679.9	68.83
H-R, H-MU, H-PK, M1, R1, R2	Hamlet	671.9	1.33
RR1.3, RR3.2, RR8.5	Rural Use	11,172.3	22.18
SNY	State Administered	3,849.2	7.64
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>50,382.2</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 14 and Map 3 convey the extent to which the Wild Forest (FAL) District dominates the landscape of Chesterfield taking up 69% of the total land area. The second most predominant district type is Rural Use which is divided between the three (3) zoning districts of RR1.3, RR3.2, and RR8.5.



# Town of CHESTERFIELD Comprehensive Plan

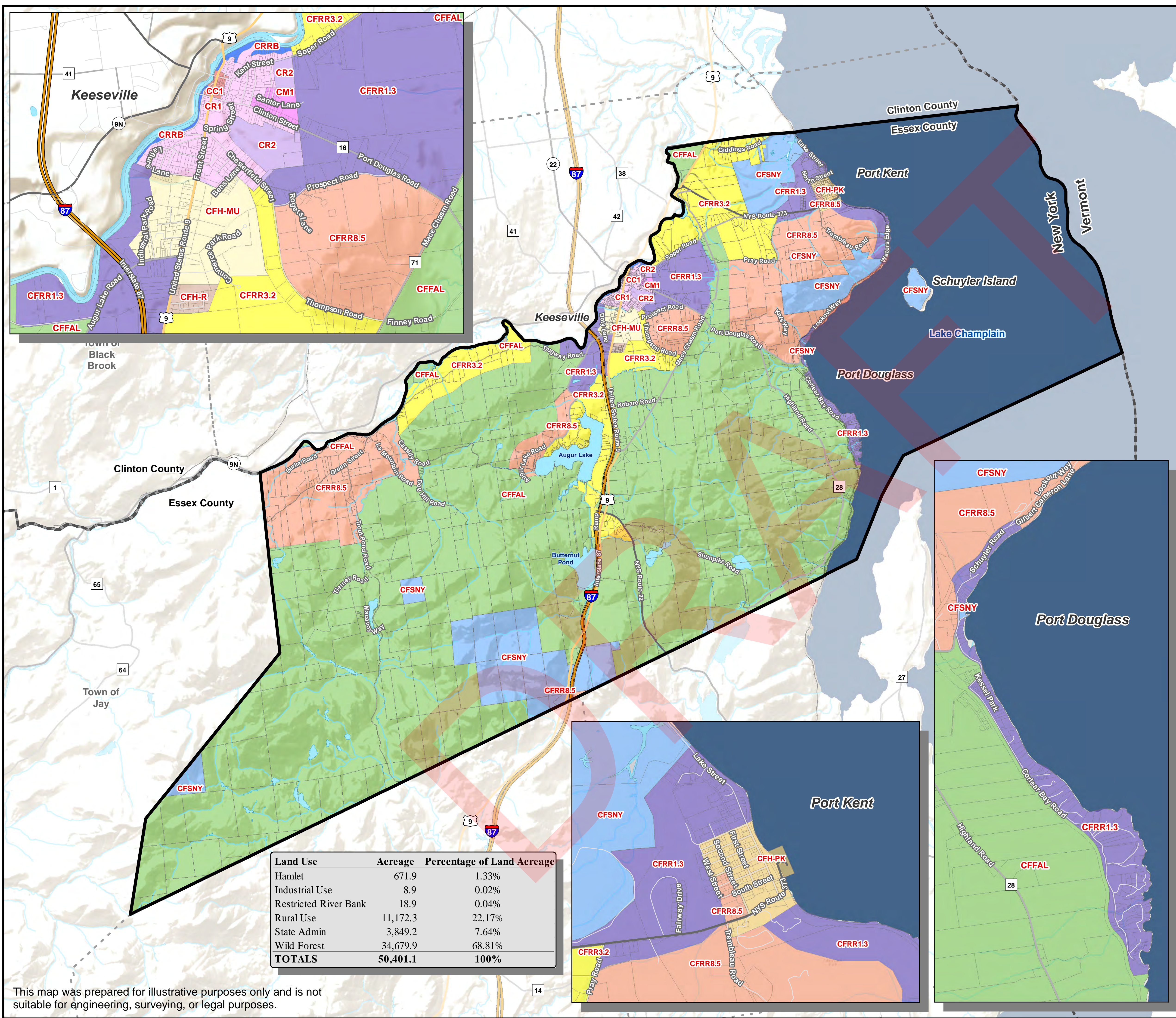
## Existing Zoning February 2025

### LEGEND

- Study Area
- County Boundary
- Town Boundary
- Lake Champlain
- Waterbody
- River / Stream
- Interstates
- US Routes
- State Routes
- County Routes
- Railroad

### Zoning Code, Description

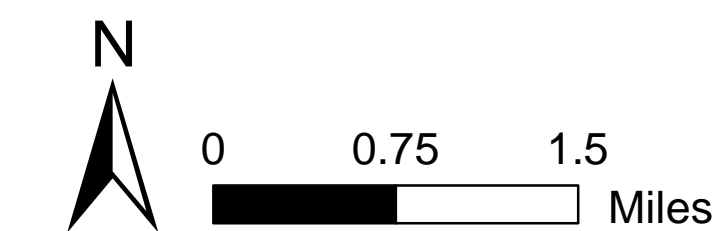
- CC1, Industrial Use
- CFRR8.5, Rural Use
- CFFAL, Wild Forest
- CFSNY, State Admin
- CFH-MU, Hamlet
- CM1, Hamlet
- CFH-PK, Hamlet
- CR1, Hamlet
- CFH-R, Rural Use
- CR2, Hamlet
- CFRR1.3, Rural Use
- CRRB, Restricted River Bank
- CFRR3.2, Rural Use



Land Use	Acres	Percentage of Land Acres
Hamlet	671.9	1.33%
Industrial Use	8.9	0.02%
Restricted River Bank	18.9	0.04%
Rural Use	11,172.3	22.17%
State Admin	3,849.2	7.64%
Wild Forest	34,679.9	68.81%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>50,401.1</b>	<b>100%</b>



Sources:  
Esri, NYS ITS, DEC,  
Essex County, Town of Chesterfield



This map was prepared for illustrative purposes only and is not suitable for engineering, surveying, or legal purposes.

The following provides a brief description of each district. It is important to note that the descriptions below are merely summaries. The precise regulations applicable to each district are provided within the Town Zoning Codes accessible on the Town of Chesterfield's website<sup>4</sup>.

### **Town of Chesterfield Zoning Law**

#### Hamlet Districts – Mixed-Use (H-MU), Port Kent (H-PK), Residential (H-R)

Located in the Hamlet of Port Kent and to the south of the former Village of Keeseville, the hamlet zoning districts provide growth areas for residential, commercial, and industrial activities. The intent of these regulations is to maintain the two (2) existing community centers as viable and attractive places to live and work through the allowance of mixed-use development that works in harmony with the existing pattern and scale of land use in the hamlets. While permitted uses are limited to single-family dwellings and home occupations, a wide variety of residential and commercial uses are provided for through the special use permitting process. Lot size and setback requirements trend smaller than the other districts within this code.

#### Rural Use Districts (H-R, RR1.3, RR3.2, & RR8.5)

Located on lands outside of the hamlet districts and which are not part of the Town's forest and agricultural land resource base, these zoning districts provide opportunities for low-density residential development, small-scale agriculture, small business, and recreational development. The intent of these regulations is to allow for uses that are compatible with the land's development capacity in order to maintain the existing land use pattern while providing opportunities for home-based economic activities as well as large-scale, low-density recreational and commercial uses.

#### Forest and Agricultural Lands District (FAL)

The portions of Chesterfield covered under this district are located on lands which are important to the agricultural sector of the local economy and are within agricultural districts or lands which are rugged, remote, and forested. The intent of these regulations is to maintain these lands as large, undeveloped landholdings for their economic and natural resource value. Maintaining the agricultural landscape of Chesterfield along Mace Chasm and Highlands roads is recognized as a primary asset for a stable and diverse economy. Throughout the districts development is maintained at low intensity, while providing for the possibility of economic diversification by rural landowners. Residential development should be sited to preserve the most important agricultural areas of the district.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://chesterfieldny.com/ordinances>

## **Town of Chesterfield Hamlet of Keeseville Zoning Law**

### Existing Residential District (R1)

This district encompasses the existing residential areas of the Hamlet in order to preserve their neighborhood character. Its intent is to serve as a location for one (1) and two (2) family dwellings, including modular dwelling, and home-based accommodations, gardens, nurseries, greenhouses, and seasonal produce stands.

### Undeveloped Residential District (R2)

This district consists of those areas of the Hamlet deemed appropriate for future residential development. This district allows for the same permitted and special uses as the R1 District and has the same setback requirements except no maximum lot coverage is included.

### Historic Residential District (R3)

The intent of this district is to preserve certain areas of historical and cultural significance within the Hamlet. All development should be consistent with the architectural, cultural, and historic character of the neighborhood. Permitted uses are the same as the other residential districts, however, special uses also include multi-family housing up to four (4) units.

### Intense Commercial District (C1)

This district is the commercial core of the Hamlet and strives to maintain downtown Keeseville as a diverse and densely developed area. The regulations provide locations for an array of permitted without special use permits including multi-family housing retail, health care, offices, restaurants, theaters, repair shops, and vehicle sales.

### Mixed-Use Light Commercial District (C2)

The intent of this district is to allow for the limited expansion of commercial activity outside of the C1 District. Permitted uses within this district include single family dwellings, two-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings of less than four (4), offices, salons, antique/craft shops, retail businesses under 3,000 sf, and non-vehicle repair shops. Many of the permitted uses of the C1 District are special uses within this district in order to give the Town more flexibility in the site, scale, and intensity of the uses.

### Industrial (I1)

The purpose of this district is to provide for the establishment of industrial uses essential to the development of a balanced economic base and to regulate its development so it will not be detrimental or hazardous to the surrounding community. Any use of a light industrial or agri-industrial nature is permitted which involves only the processing, assembly, or packaging of previously prepared or refined materials. Residential uses are prohibited in this district and all

permitted uses are required to set aside a minimum of ten (10) percent of the lot for seeding, planting retention of tree cover, or other landscaping.

#### Mobile Home District (M1)

This district is intended to provide a location for mobile homes alongside single family dwellings as a permitted use. Mobile home parks and multiple storage buildings have been included as special uses within this district. Additional requirements apply to the establishment of a mobile home park under the Hamlet's mobile home ordinance.

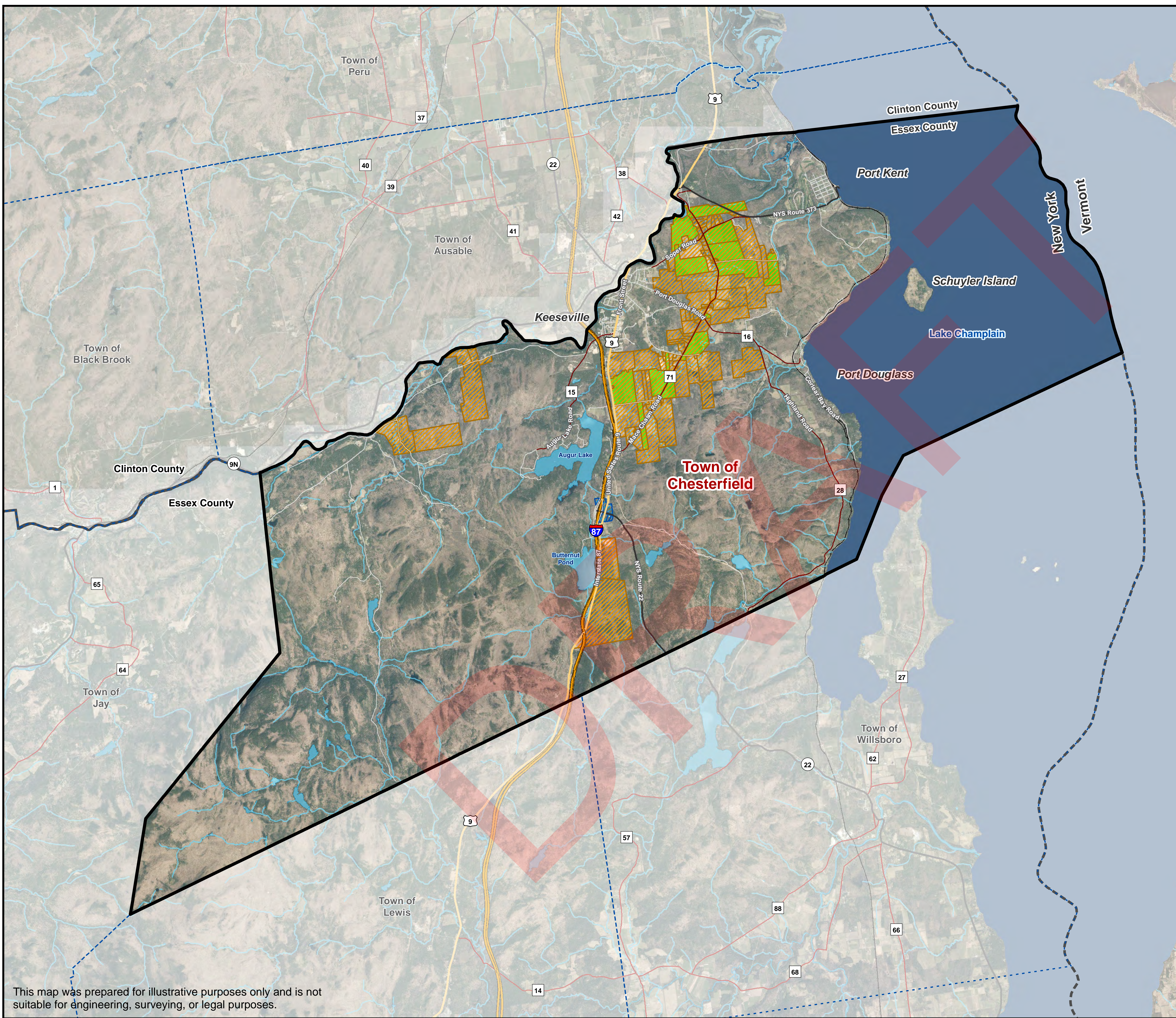
#### Restricted River Bank (CRRB)

This district falls within the Hamlet's Land Conservation District and is intended to identify land areas where development is prohibited because of special or unusual conditions of topography, drainage, flooding, or other natural conditions that create a substantial risk of harm or damage to persons or property. The only permitted uses within this district are those uses accessory to a permitted use as a matter of right in the adjacent zone, provided it does not involve the construction of a structure. The lands of this district may count towards open space of adjoining lots to meet coverage requirements.



# Town of CHESTERFIELD Comprehensive Plan

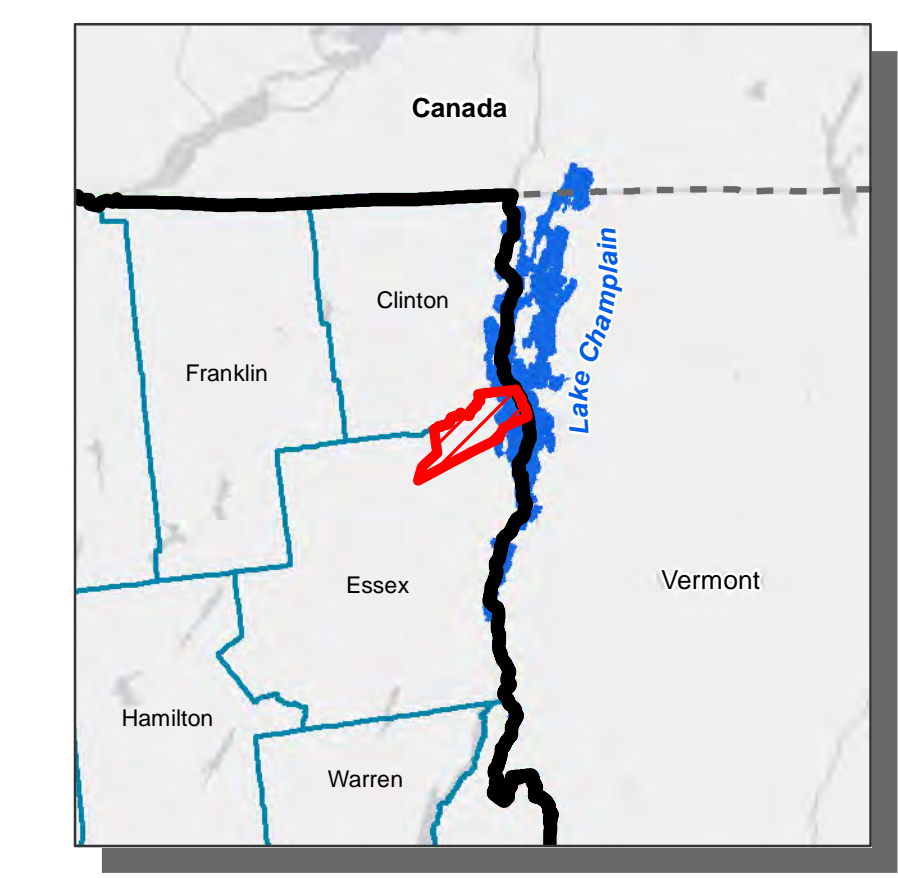
## Agricultural Resources February 2025



### LEGEND

- Study
  - Town
  - County
  - US Routes
  - State
  - County
  - Local Roads
  - Lake Champlain
  - River / Stream
  - Agricultural District #1
  - Agricultural Land Use
  - State Owned Conservation Easements (APA)\*
- \* Other conservation easements, not owned by the state, are present within the study area but are not mapped.

Agricultural Districts	Acreage	Percentage of Land Use
Agricultural District #1	5254.8	10.46%
Conservation Easements	36.4	0.07%
Agricultural Land Use	1202.2	2.39%



This map was prepared for illustrative purposes only and is not suitable for engineering, surveying, or legal purposes.

Sources:  
Esri, NYS ITS, DEC,  
Essex County, Town of Chesterfield





## Transportation and Mobility Resources

The development of and access to primary transportation corridors have been vital to the development of Chesterfield. Its adjacency to the Ausable River, Lake Champlain, Interstate 87, US Route 9, and the Amtrak rail line provide a wealth of opportunities to access this municipality.

### Vehicular Mobility

The Town of Chesterfield is primarily auto dependent. The use of a private vehicle is needed for most activities and there is limited mass transit. The Adirondack Northway (I-87) is classified as a principal arterial interstate and connects Albany to the Canadian border via Saratoga, Warren, Essex, and Clinton Counties. This highway provides a direct connection to Chesterfield via Exit 33 at the intersection of NY Route 22 and US Route 9. Exit 34 in the Town of Ausable provides the second access point into Town via Pleasant Street to Main Street. Alongside the Northway, US Route 9 bisects Chesterfield and provides local access throughout Town. NYS Route 373 connects the Hamlet of Port Kent with Ausable Chasm and US Route 9. NY Route 22 combines with US Route 9 through most of Town except at Exit 33 where it splits off to connect with the Town of Willsboro.

### Transit Routes

The principal transit provider for the community is Clinton County Transit with a stop at Adirondack Hardware within the Hamlet of Keeseville in Chesterfield. This route runs five (5) times per day during the week and connects Keeseville to both Plattsburgh and Ausable Forks. It travels along US Route 9 and NYS Route 9N with stops at the Clinton County Government Center in Plattsburgh, Clinton Community College in Plattsburgh, the Villa Motel in the Town of Ausable, and the Tops Market in Ausable Forks.

The Essex County Public Transportation (ECPT) also provides regularly scheduled bus service in towns and throughout the county. Connections can be made in Ausable Forks and Keeseville to Clinton County public transit buses. The Champlain North Route provides transportation to Elizabethtown, Keeseville, Chesterfield, Willsboro, and Essex.

### Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility

US Route 9 and NY Route 22 are designated as on-street portions of the Empire State Bike Trail; however, little bicycle infrastructure exists throughout Chesterfield. The network of sidewalks provides safe travel for pedestrians along Front Street, Main Street, Clinton Street, Vine Street, Kent Street, and Beach Street and connects across the Ausable River to the Town of Ausable.

### Air, Ferry, and Rail Service

While there was once seasonal access to passenger rail and Lake Champlain ferry service within the Town of Chesterfield, these amenities are now located to the south at the Essex Ferry and Westport Train Station and to the north in Plattsburgh. Plattsburgh also possesses the sole international airport north of Albany and east of Watertown in New York State. The Plattsburgh

International Airport provides service through Allegiant, Contour, and Breeze to Fort Lauderdale, Orlando, Sarasota, Tampa, Mort Myers, and Philadelphia. The Amtrak station in Plattsburgh connects the region north to Montreal and south to New York City and Buffalo and all points beyond.

DRAFT

## Community Facilities and Services

### Schools

Secondary, primary, and pre-k public education is provided through the Ausable Valley Central School District (AVSD). The AVSD covers over 300 square miles and represents a portion of three counties (Clinton, Essex and Franklin) in New York State. The district encompasses in whole and/or part of the Towns of Ausable, Black Brook, Chesterfield, Jay, Wilmington, Keene, Franklin, Peru and Willsboro<sup>5</sup>. Nearly the entire Town of Chesterfield is within the AVSC; parcels not included are non-taxable, NYS owned and administered conservation lands.

The AVCS's Pre-Kindergarten Early Childhood Program allows the district to offer a free and high-quality educational environment for children who are 4 years of age on or before December 1st. Primary education for Chesterfield students K-6 is provided at the Keeseville Elementary School located at 1825 Main Street in the Hamlet of Keeseville in the Town of Ausable. ACSD provides Secondary Education at the Ausable Valley Middle High School located at 1490 State Hwy 9N in the Hamlet of Clintonville within the Town of Ausable.

The Ariel's School of Messianic Studies at the Shoshanah Campus on Trout Pond is the only educational institution within the Town of Chesterfield's borders. This school offers people of all ages from all around the globe to learn and grow in Messianic discipleship. This beautiful facility provides the perfect setting for deep Bible study, fellowship, and fun extending from early July through Labor Day weekend.<sup>6</sup>

### Higher Education

Institutes of higher learning are proven to be invaluable partners for communities working towards social, economic, historic, and environmental initiatives. While no colleges or universities exist within the Town of Chesterfield, there are an array of options within a 90-mile drive in Plattsburgh (15 miles), Saranac Lake (43 miles), Burlington (48 miles), Middlebury (60 miles), and Montreal (80 miles) and include:

- Clinton Community College – Plattsburgh, NY
- State University of New York at Plattsburgh – Plattsburgh, NY
- North Country Community College – Saranac Lake, NY
- Paul Smith's College – Brighton, NY
- Saint Michael's College – Colchester, VT
- University of Vermont – Burlington, VT
- Champlain College – Burlington, VT

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<sup>5</sup> [AuSable Valley Central School District \(avcs.org\)](http://avcs.org)

<sup>6</sup> [Messianic Bible Study Family Conference Center NY \(ariel.org\)](http://ariel.org)

- Burlington Technical Center – Burlington, VT
- Community College of Vermont – Winooski, VT
- Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences – Colchester, VT
- Community College of Vermont – Saint Albans, VT
- Middlebury College – Middlebury, VT
- Community College of Vermont – Middlebury, VT
- Concordia University – Montreal, QC
- McGill University – Montreal, QC
- University of Quebec at Montreal – Montreal, QC
- University of Montreal – Montreal, QC
- University of Sherbrooke – Longueuil, QC

## Library

The Lee Memorial library was established October 3rd, 1901, and housed in a square framed building on Main Street. The library was supported by subscriptions, membership being \$1.00 annually. In 1926 the Lee Memorial library became the Keeseville Free Library under a state charter but remained in the same building. Interested residents served and continue to serve on the library board. The library's headquarters on Main Street was destroyed by fire on November 21, 1923, and the present brick library on Front Street was erected in 1935 and built under the W.P.A.<sup>7</sup>

The Towns of Chesterfield and Ausable are both served by the Keeseville Free Library located at 1721 Front Street in Chesterfield. It is an associated public library within the Clinton–Essex–Franklin Library System. The library offers a variety of activities and services beyond the printed word including art displays, arts and craft classes, musical performances, Mah Jongg instruction, technology lessons, virtual reality events, and volunteer drives.



*Keeseville Free Library; Photo received through the Community Survey*

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<sup>7</sup> [ABOUT - KEESEVILLE FREE LIBRARY](#)

## Police, Fire, & Emergency Services

### Fire Services

The Keeseville Fire Department is a volunteer-based fire service provider for the Ausable-Chesterfield-Keeseville Joint Fire District. It is physically located within the Town of Ausable at 8 Pleasant Street in the Hamlet of Keeseville. The fire departments surrounding the Keeseville Fire Department include Peru, Ausable Forks, and Willsboro. The fire station is an eight-bay, 18,000 square foot, single-story facility.

### Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Ambulance services are housed at the Keeseville Fire Station at 8 Pleasant Street in Keeseville. As with fire services, EMS services are also joined with the Town of Ausable. The nearest hospitals are located in Burlington, VT and Plattsburgh, NY through the University of Vermont Health Network.

### Law Enforcement Services

The Town of Chesterfield does not provide local law enforcement, rather police services are provided by New York State Police and the Essex County Sheriff's Department throughout the Town.

## Other Community Services

**Adirondack Community Action Program** – The Adirondack Community Action programs provide multiple quality products and services to the towns and communities in Essex County. Established in 1965, it to serve the needs of and advocates for low-income families in Essex County, NY. Part of a network of 1,000 Community Action Agencies nationwide, the agency mobilizes resources, plans, and integrates programs and services that best meet the needs of our community. Expanding beyond its original mission, the agency works to improve the quality of life of families and strengthen our communities by coordinating multiple programs and resources.<sup>8</sup>

**ADKAction** – The mission of ADKAction is to create projects that address unmet needs, promote vibrant communities, and preserve the natural beauty of the Adirondacks for all through projects that will significantly improve the social, economic, and cultural lives of local residents and enhance the long-term natural resources and character of the Park.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.acapinc.org/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.adkaction.org/get-to-know-us/>

**Keeseville Community Development Corporation (KCDC)** – The mission of the KCDC is to bring together the local residents of the Chesterfield and Ausable communities to identify, fund, and oversee community and economic development projects that will help both towns become stronger and more resilient into the future.

**Keeseville Business Association** – The Keeseville Business Association is a group of local businesses formed together to create a better community. Hosting events and creating opportunities to collaborate and strengthen the economic conditions of the community.

**North Star Underground Railroad Museum** – The North Star Underground Railroad Museum is located in the Town of Chesterfield Heritage Center at 1131 Mace Chasm Rd in Ausable Chasm. The Museum reveals the hidden history of the Champlain Line of the Underground Railroad. The Museum and the Heritage Center are managed by the North Country Underground Railroad Historical Association. Poignant exhibits portray compelling stories of fugitives from slavery who passed through Northeastern New York and the Champlain Valley on their way to Québec and Ontario, Canada.<sup>10</sup>

**Anderson Falls Heritage Society Museum** – Anderson Falls Heritage Society (AFHS) is a volunteer-powered organization dedicated to preserving our hometown heritage as a legacy for the future. Their mission is to preserve, display, and make available to the public, historical materials and artifacts for the purpose of educating students, visitors and the general public. The Society's home is in a late 1830s Greek Revival building in the Historic District of the hamlet of Keeseville.<sup>11</sup>

**Adirondack Architectural Heritage** – The Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH) is a non-profit historic preservation organization for New York State's Adirondack region. Their headquarters are located in Keeseville in the former office building of the Ausable Horse Nail Company. AARCH's mission is to promote better understanding and stewardship of the region's unique and diverse architectural heritage.<sup>12</sup>

**Ausable Valley Grange** – Part of the New York State and National Grange organizations, the Ausable Valley Grange is a fraternal organization that holds activities such as workshops, lectures, music, and tours for members.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://northcountryundergroundrailroad.com/museum.php>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.andersonfalls.org/about/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://aarch.org/about/>

## Infrastructure and Public Utilities

The ability of the Town's infrastructure to support the current needs and to accommodate future development is a crucial consideration when planning for the future. Improvements to Chesterfield's existing infrastructure occur on an ongoing basis and typically require significant financial resources. The expansion or replacement of existing infrastructure can have a dramatic impact on the character and function of the Town. Such expansion requires careful attention to the potential for growth-inducing impacts.

### Municipal Water

The Chesterfield Water District is the responsibility of the Town of Chesterfield includes all water uses within and surrounding the Hamlet of Keeseville and draws its water directly from Butternut Pond.

The Port Kent Water District includes all users within and surrounding the Hamlet of Port Kent and draws its water from local springs.

### Municipal Sewer

The hamlet of Keeseville is the only area of Town served by municipal sewer service. The Chesterfield Sewer District, along with the Ausable Sewer District, combine to account for the former Village of Keeseville Sewer District which is the responsibility of the Town of Ausable. The sewage treatment plant is located along the Ausable River within the Town of Ausable and services both municipal districts.

### Energy

The Town of Chesterfield tracks the energy consumption of Town Hall, the highway garage, and the two (2) water treatment plants in order to understand where there is room to reduce energy waste for taxpayers and the environment.

## Natural Resources and Water Quality Protection

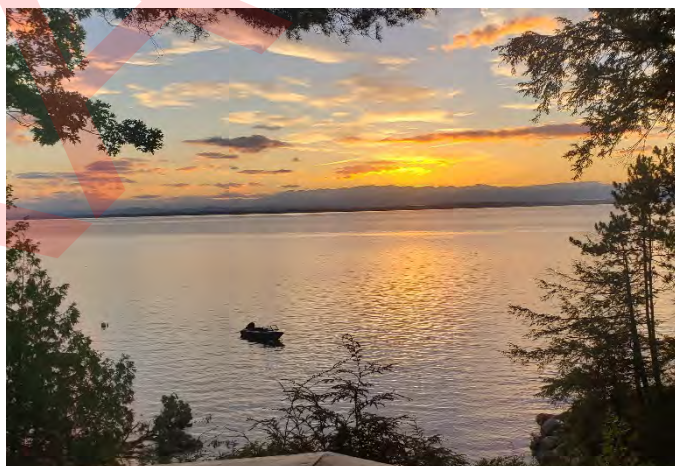
Within the Town of Chesterfield, the natural environment plays a significant role in shaping the character of the community. Environmental constraints to land use such as soil type, the presence of steep slopes and wetland areas are important factors in guiding prudent land management and development practices.

### Topography

Topography can be a defining feature of the development of the Town. The Town of Chesterfield experiences considerable changes in elevation and slope from the valley floor in central Chesterfield to the slopes of the western and Trembleau sections of the Town. Elevation within the Town can affect the layout of site improvements, stormwater drainage, and the suitability of land that can be developed. Areas with steep slopes are ecologically sensitive and often unsuitable for development. In the Town of Chesterfield, 23.78% of the land has a slope greater than 15%, and 2.03% has a slope greater than 30%. The southwestern part of the town, characterized by its mountainous terrain, has the highest concentration of steep slopes. Notable mountains in the Town include Poke-O-Moonshine Mountain, with an elevation of 2,162 feet, located in the southern part of the town, and Trembleau Mountain, with an elevation of 988 feet, situated near the hamlets of Port Douglass and Port Kent.

### Water Resources

The Town of Chesterfield is home to several significant waterbodies that contribute to its natural beauty and ecological health. These water resources play a crucial role in the local ecosystem, supporting diverse plant and animal life, and are integral to the community's water supply, agricultural needs, and recreational uses. Proper management and conservation of these waterbodies are essential to maintaining the environmental health and sustainability of the Town of Chesterfield.



*Lake Champlain; Photo received through the Community Survey*

Lake Champlain is the sixth largest freshwater lake in the United States and is located east of the Town along Port Kent and Port Douglass. Lake Champlain provides numerous assets to the Town of Chesterfield as it is a popular destination for recreational use and easily accessible boat launches and a small marina.



Ausable River stretches 94 miles through the heart of the Adirondack and empties into Lake Champlain. Ausable River passes directly through Keeseville and forms the northwestern border of the Town. This river is fed by more than 70 streams including two major tributaries, the Chubb River and Black Brook. The main branch of the river cuts through the gorges and falls at Ausable Chasm, where the walls are as high as 175 feet, while the east and west branches of the river join at Ausable Forks.

Augur Lake is situated south of Keeseville. The lake is 377 surface acres in size and has a maximum depth of 21 feet. Augur Lake includes a diverse range of fish species. One of the primary issues facing Augur Lake is the excessive growth of the invasive species Eurasian water milfoil<sup>13</sup>. Augur Lake and Butternut Pond are also included on the Priority Waterbodies List (PWL) as of 2009<sup>14</sup>.

### Wetlands

Wetlands are areas saturated by surface or groundwater for varying periods during the year. Wetlands provide numerous ecological benefits, including flood protection and habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species. In the Town of Chesterfield, a total of 5,098.2 acres or 9.90% of the land consists of National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Wetlands and 2,466.2 or 4.79% of the land consists of Adirondack Park Agency (APA) Regulated Wetlands. These known wetlands are highlighted in yellow and blue pattern on Map 6 and their type is characterized as freshwater forested/shrub wetlands and riverine<sup>15</sup>.

Wetlands in the Town cover portions of the land surrounding the Ausable River, Augur Lake, Butternut Pond, and other waterbodies within the Town. The Wickham Marsh is a large area of wetland located in the northern portion of the Town. Wickham Marsh Wildlife Management Area is comprised of over 800 acres of marshland and is managed by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for a variety of recreational and scientific uses including; natural resources education, wildlife observation and photography, fishing, trapping, hunting, hiking, and canoeing. The primary purposes of this area are wildlife and habitat management and wildlife-dependent recreation. Another large area of wetland is located just north of Keeseville along Mud Brook.

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<sup>13</sup> [https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/c2f09103-545f-45c1-b20b-2ff33060d744/downloads/2014\\_AugurLake.pdf?ver=1720021719352](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/c2f09103-545f-45c1-b20b-2ff33060d744/downloads/2014_AugurLake.pdf?ver=1720021719352)

<sup>14</sup> <https://data.ny.gov/Energy-Environment/Waterbody-Inventory-Priority-Waterbodies/uctu-y9hj>

<sup>15</sup> <https://gisservices.dec.ny.gov/gis/erm/>

## Significant Natural Communities

The New York Natural Heritage Program of the NYSDEC maintains a listing of Significant Natural Communities throughout the state, which comprise locations of rare or high-quality wetlands, forests, grasslands, ponds streams, and other types of habitats, ecosystems, and ecological areas.<sup>16</sup>

A number of Significant Natural Communities are located within or near the Town of Chesterfield. In the northern portion of Town, Significant Natural Communities are present in Wickham Marsh and Trembleau Mountain. Natural Communities in these areas include northern white cedar swamp and pitch pine-oak-heath rocky summit. The southern portion of the Town includes Significant Natural Communities in Poke-O-Moonshine Mountain, Bigelow Mountain, and Willsboro Bay Shore. These Natural Communities include calcareous talus slope woodland, cliff community, rocky summit grassland, and limestone woodland. To the west, Lake Champlain has a Natural Community of summer-stratified monomictic lake<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://gisservices.dec.ny.gov/gis/erm/naturalHeritageCommunities.html>

<sup>17</sup> <https://gisservices.dec.ny.gov/gis/erm/>



# Town of CHESTERFIELD

## Comprehensive Plan

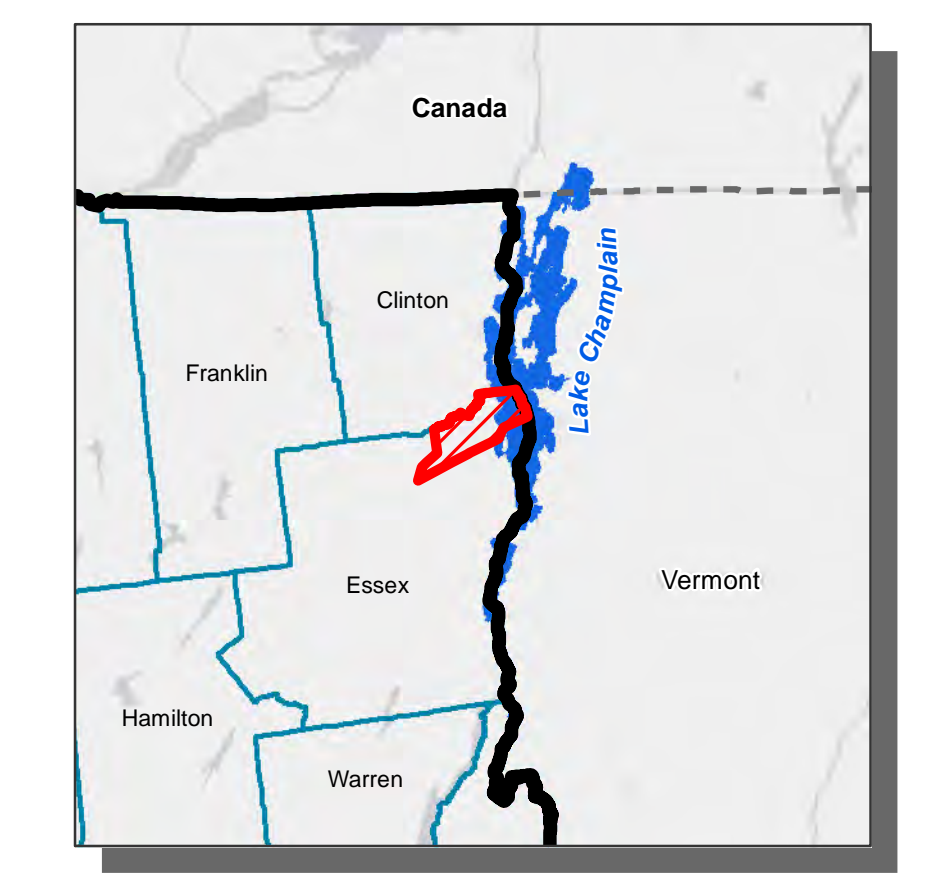
Environmental Constraints  
February 2025

### LEGEND

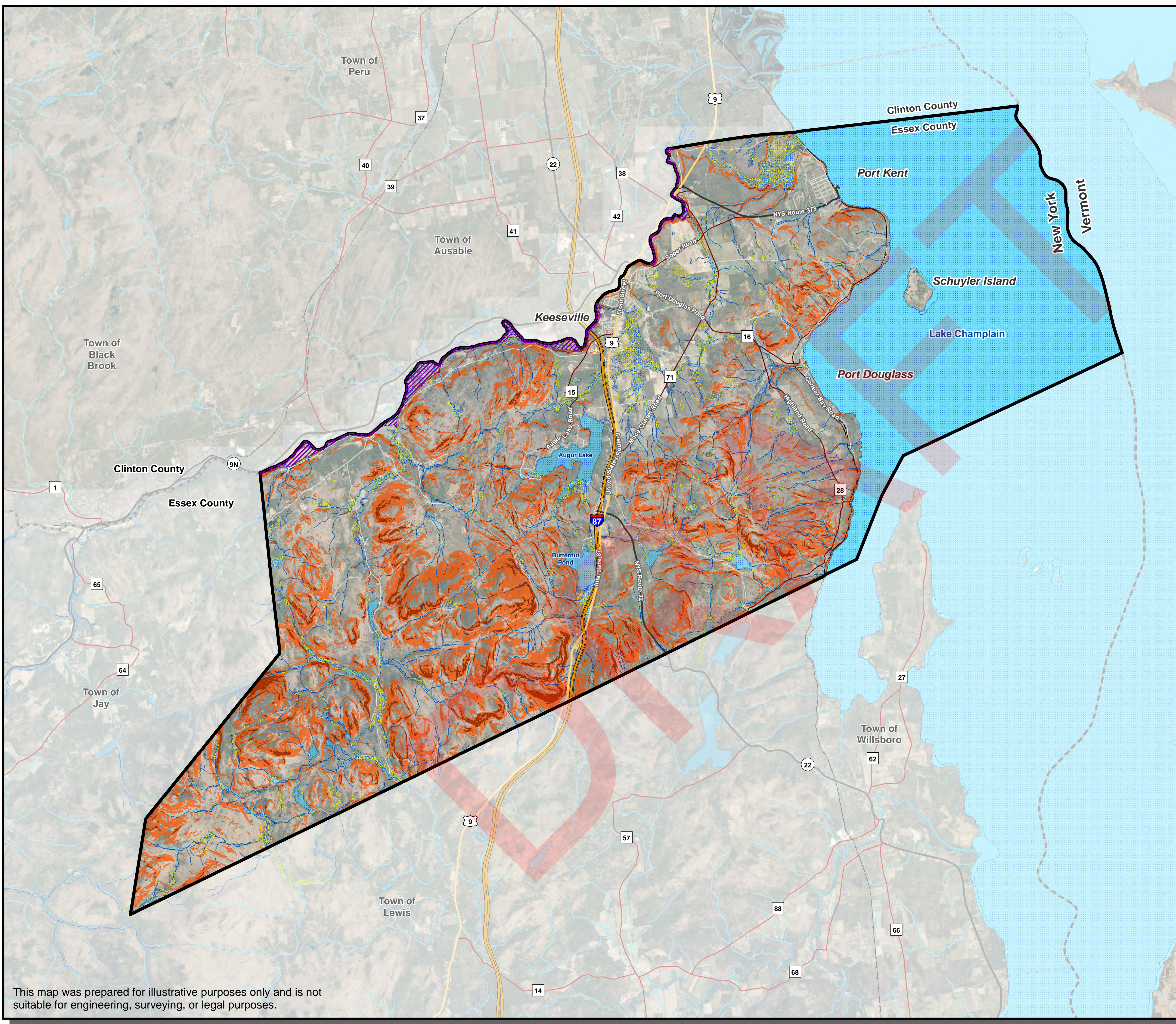
- Study Area
  - Town Boundary
  - County Boundary
  - Interstates
  - US Routes
  - State Routes
  - County Routes
  - Local Roads
  - Railroad
  - Waterbody
  - River / Stream
  - APA Regulated Wetlands
  - NWI Wetlands
  - \*100-year Floodzone
  - Slopes > 30%
  - Slopes > 15%
- \* 100-year Flood Boundary derived from 1987 FEMA FIRMs

Land Feature	Acreage	**Percentage of Land
APA Regulated Wetlands	2,466.2	4.79%
NWI Wetlands	5,098.2	9.90%
100-Year Floodzone	469.2	0.91%
Slopes > 30%	1,046.8	2.03%
Slopes > 15%	12,241.0	23.78%

\*\* Percentage of Land includes all streams and water bodies except Lake Champlain



Sources:  
Esri, NYS ITS, DEC, APA, NWI, FEMA  
Essex County, Town of Chesterfield



This map was prepared for illustrative purposes only and is not suitable for engineering, surveying, or legal purposes.

## Parks, Recreation and Open Space Protection

Parks, recreation, and open spaces hold immense significance in enhancing the well-being of individuals and communities. They serve as communal hubs, fostering social interactions and building a sense of community. Accessible parks, sports facilities, and cultural spaces provide opportunities for physical activity, promoting a healthy lifestyle and reducing the risk of lifestyle-related illnesses. Beyond the physical benefits, parks play a crucial role in supporting mental health, offering a serene environment that reduces stress and promotes relaxation. Furthermore, their positive economic impact, attracting visitors and supporting local businesses, underscores their multifaceted role in creating healthier, happier, and more vibrant communities.

Chesterfield’s parks, outdoor recreation facilities, and conserved open spaces contribute substantially to the character of the Town and the lives of its residents. Parks and open spaces provide a host of ecosystem services – stormwater runoff management, air and water filtration, plant, and animal habitat – in addition to promoting public health with opportunities for active and passive recreation. Chesterfield’s parks and outdoor recreation resources include:

### Municipal Parks

**Jacee Park** is located in Keeseville and is home to various community events. This park features numerous fields and a skate park.

**Anderson Falls Park** offers views of the 10-foot-high waterfall from the bridges crossing the Ausable River at the foot of Front Street and on Main Street or State Highway 22.

**Veteran’s Park** located in downtown Keeseville features historical plaques, benches, and a large statue in honor of Veterans. In the past, the Town held a tribute for local veterans with custom-made military dog tags. The tags are sold for fundraising and put on display at the Veterans Park.

**Watson Square Park** is located in Port Kent and features a playground, gazebo, basketball court, and tennis court.

**Port Douglass Beach** is located on County Route 16 and features picnic tables, parking, restroom facilities, and a swimming area. Immediately adjacent is a New York State DEC boat launch that is handicap accessible.



*Statue at Veterans Park, Photo provided by Andrew Prescott*

## State Park Lands

**Wickham Marsh Wildlife Management Area** serves three key purposes: wildlife management, wildlife habitat management, and wildlife-dependent recreation. The area covers 862 acres and is located in the northern portion of the Town. Land purchases for this management area began in 1950 and have grown over time with the final acquisition being in 1970. Featured activities include hiking, cross country skiing, freshwater fishing, hunting, and trapping. The area is open year-round and has free admission.

**Schuyler Island** is the eastern most component of the Town in Lake Champlain. This island spans 123 acres and was acquired by New York State in 1967. Schuyler Island is part of the Adirondack Preserve and has a view of the Green Mountains and the City of Burlington, Vermont. Visitors can camp on the island without permits or reservations. It is a popular spot for boaters offering safe, protected anchorage.

**Poke-O-Moonshine State Land** is located in the Towns of Chesterfield and Lewis and only a few miles from Interstate 87. The Poke-O-Moonshine Mountain has a peak of 2,180 feet with a fire tower and provides panoramic views of Lake Champlain, the High Peaks Wilderness, and the Jay Range. Activities offered here include hiking, birding, rock climbing, camping, and snowshoeing in the winter.

**Trembleau Mountain State Land** is located on the eastern shore of the Town and offers clear views in each direction. The mountain is easily identifiable from western Vermont. Over 750 acres of State Forest that includes frontage on Lake Champlain with old logging roads and trails for hiking and mountain biking. There are great fifty-mile views from the mountain's three (3) peaks. The State has recently acquired large tracts of land on Trembleau Mountain providing panoramic views of Lake Champlain and Schuyler Island.



*Poke-O-Moonshine Fire tower, Photo received through the Community Survey*

### Private/Other Recreation

**Port Kent Beach** is three miles east of the Ausable Chasm and located at the end of Route 373. This beach is privately owned but frequently used by the public and offers views of Vermont's Green Mountains.

**Harmony Golf Club** is located in Port Kent and features a 14-hole course, clubhouse, and restaurant.

**Chesterfield Fish and Game Club** is located in Clintonville and is dedicated to the purpose of the propagation of fish and game as well as the conservation, protection, and perpetuation of forests, waters, and minerals. The Club has various indoor and outdoor facilities and offers various programs and education classes.

**Ausable Chasm Recreation Area** was established in 1870. It is privately owned but visitors can explore the chasm on nature trails with scenic vistas and waterfalls with the price of admission. Other activities include lantern tours, rock climbing, camping, raft float tours, tubing, and rappelling. There are various landmarks located within the Chasm such as Rainbow Falls, Column Rock, Elephant's Head, Hyde's Cave, and Mystic Gorge.

### Natural Recreation Features

**Lake Champlain** located to the east of the Town offers various recreational opportunities to visitors and residents of the Town. Lake Champlain is a popular paddling destination for canoes, flat water, and sea kayaks. Bass fishing is another major recreational activity on the lake and was ranked among the Top 5 in Bassmaster's best bass lakes in the northeast.

**Augur Lake** located south of Keeseville offers scenic views for nearby lake house rentals.

**Ausable River** flows through the Town and offers a variety of recreational activities near and on the river.



*Ausable River, Photo provided by Comprehensive Plan Update Committee*



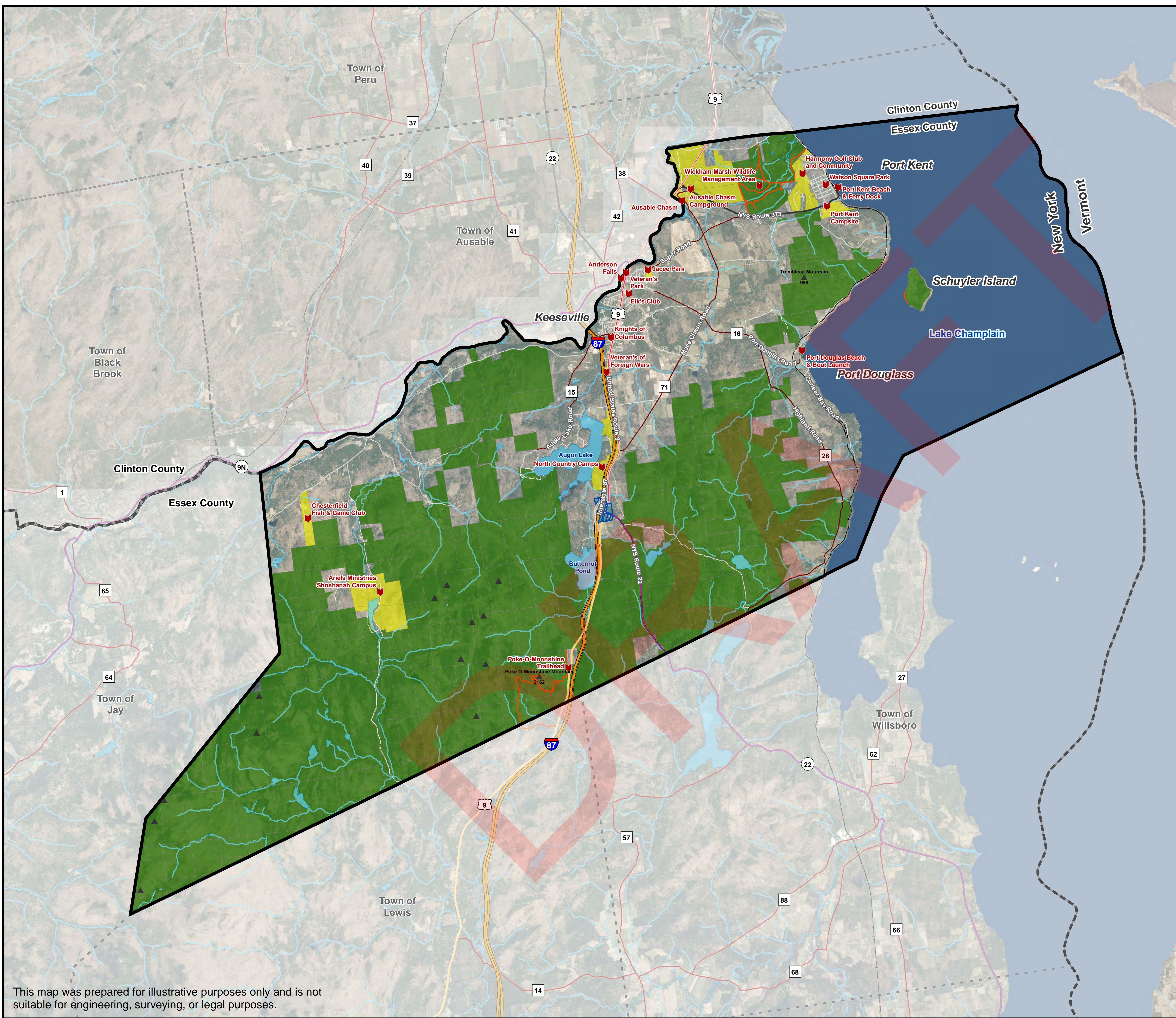
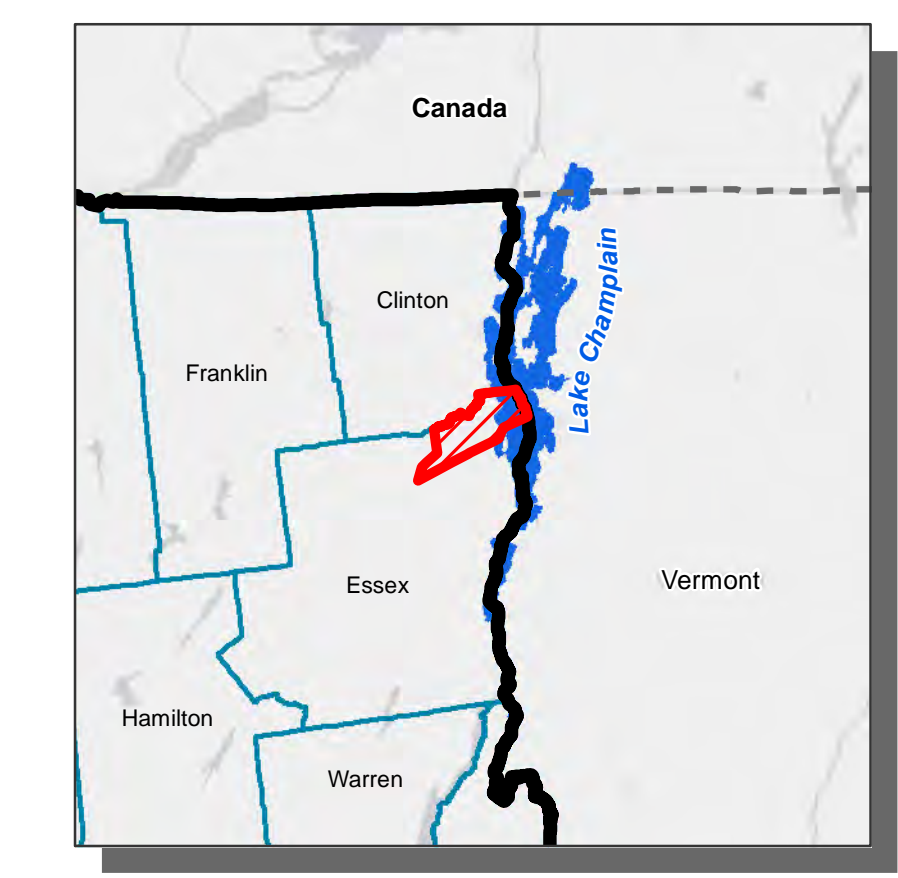
# Town of CHESTERFIELD Comprehensive Plan

## Parks and Recreation February 2025

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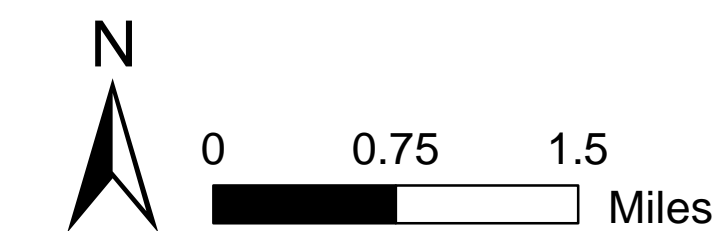
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- Waterbody
- River / Stream
- Summits
- Parks & Campsites
- Trails
- State Bike Route
- Conservation Easements
- Parks & Conservation
- Private Recreation

Land Use	Acreage	Percentage of Land Use
Parks & Conserved Lands	32163.70	48.64%
Private Recreation	354.25	0.54%



This map was prepared for illustrative purposes only and is not suitable for engineering, surveying, or legal purposes.

Sources:  
Esri, NYS ITS, DEC,  
Essex County, Town of Chesterfield



## Economy and Economic Development

The Town of Chesterfield economy is integrally connected with the economy of the broader North Country region. In addition to hospitality and tourism, regional industry strengths include aerospace, agriculture, biotech, defense, energy, and transit equipment.<sup>18</sup> Health care is also a key economic sector.

Chesterfield is less than thirty minutes from Plattsburgh, one of the largest communities in the region, which serves as an employment hub. Located in Clinton County, Plattsburgh is home to a regional medical center, a State University campus, a cluster of transportation equipment and aerospace manufacturers, and other large employers.

Most residents of the Town of Chesterfield who are in the labor force work in Clinton County (49.4%) or in Essex County outside Chesterfield (14.1%). Over the years, Chesterfield has become a bedroom community for Plattsburgh.

About 21% of the jobs held by residents, regardless of location, are in the public sector. This includes jobs in local, state, and federal government as well as at public schools, colleges and universities. Other industries in which large percentages of Chesterfield residents work include health care and social assistance (18.5%), retail trade (13.2%), and manufacturing (9.7%).

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Manufacturing	27.8%
Administrative and Waste Management Services	10.9%
Construction	8.6%
Personal and Repair Services	8.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	8.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	7.1%
Government (Total)	7.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	5.9%
Retail Trade	4.3%
All Other Industries	11.6%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics. Data is as of 2021, the latest available.	

<sup>18</sup> North Country Regional Economic Development Council, *State of the Region: North Country 2023 Strategic Plan*, pp. 18-19. Downloaded from <https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/north-country>.



Although the Town of Chesterfield lacks large employers, jobs are distributed across a wide range of industries. As of 2021, the most recent year for which data are available, Chesterfield had approximately 420 jobs within its boundaries, the same number it had in 2011. The manufacturing sector accounted for nearly 30% of the employment (Table 15), while administrative and waste management services made up 11%.<sup>19</sup> Other leading employers in the town included construction, personal and repair services, transportation and warehousing, health care and social assistance, and accommodation and food services.

Chesterfield draws workers from a long distance; 37% of individuals employed in the town travel more than 50 miles to work. Approximately 19% of the jobs in Chesterfield are held by town residents, while 10.5% live elsewhere in Essex County; 31% are held by individuals who live in Clinton County.

According to 2023 Annual Assessment Rolls, the Town of Chesterfield has 49 commercial properties, excluding apartment buildings and mobile home parks. The largest number (28) are multi-use buildings such as downtown row buildings, converted residences, and small, single-story structures, followed by storage, warehouse, and distribution facilities (14). Chesterfield also has 2 industrial properties that are occupied by private companies: one is a supplier of abrasive products, and the other is a wood pallet manufacturer. Overall, less than 1% of the Town's acreage is classified as commercial, mixed use, and industrial.

Developed as a joint initiative between the Town of Chesterfield and the Essex County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA), Chesterfield Commerce Park is a 100-acre park that features pre-permitted, shovel-ready lots for structures of up to 40,000 square feet. The site is located 3 miles from the Adirondack Northway (I-87), and it offers municipal water and sewer, high speed internet access, fiber optics and 3-phase power. The ECIDA has been marketing Chesterfield Commerce Park and several lots have been sold.

An incorporated village until 2014, the hamlet of Keeseville has a long history as a commercial center. Although Keeseville has retained its historic character, there are fewer shopping and dining opportunities and more empty storefronts than in past years. Town residents, property and business owners, and other stakeholders have expressed support for revitalizing the downtown, restoring vacant buildings, and attracting new investment to the hamlet. They cite a need for a grocery store, more places to eat, and spaces for gathering (e.g., a coffee shop). Most residents travel to Plattsburgh to shop. Community members are also interested in having more services and activities that are easily accessible from home and that can help make Keeseville more vibrant.

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<sup>19</sup> Establishments in the administrative and waste management services sector perform routine support activities for the day-to-day operations of other organizations in a variety of industries. Activities performed include office administration, janitorial services, hiring and placement of personnel, document preparation, arranging travel, investigative and security services, waste collection, etc.

## Employment

In order to understand the employment realities of a community, it is necessary to analyze the employment rate of residents, the employment locations of residents, the number and types of jobs within the community, and where workers are traveling from. As of 2021, the total number of jobs within the Town of Chesterfield was 448. The vast majority of the 1,000 Chesterfield resident-held jobs (71.8%) are located in either Clinton (49%) or Essex County (22.8%). The top five municipalities for employment of Town residents include the City of Plattsburgh (209), Town of Plattsburgh (134), Town of Chesterfield (87), Town of Ausable (73), and Town of North Elba (40). Figure 6 provides a breakdown of the number of workers commuting into Chesterfield, the number residents who leave Chesterfield to work, and the number of residents who work in the Town.

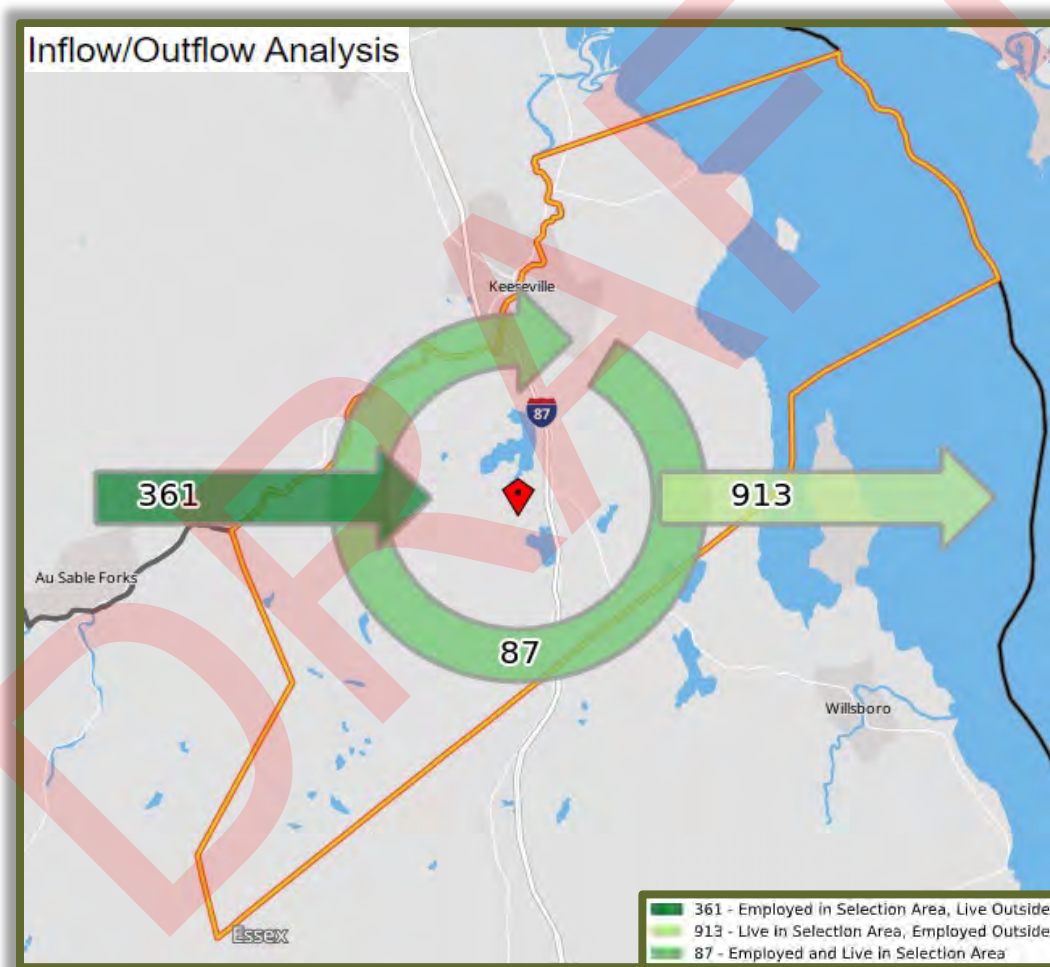


Figure 6 Job Inflow/Outflow

Figure 7 shows the location of all 448 jobs in Chesterfield, with darker colors representing areas with the highest employment density. As could be expected, most of the jobs and businesses are based within the Hamlet of Keeseville. Additional job nodes are found at Augur Lake, Trout Pond, in the north end of town at Ausable Chasm, Port Kent, and on the northernmost border.

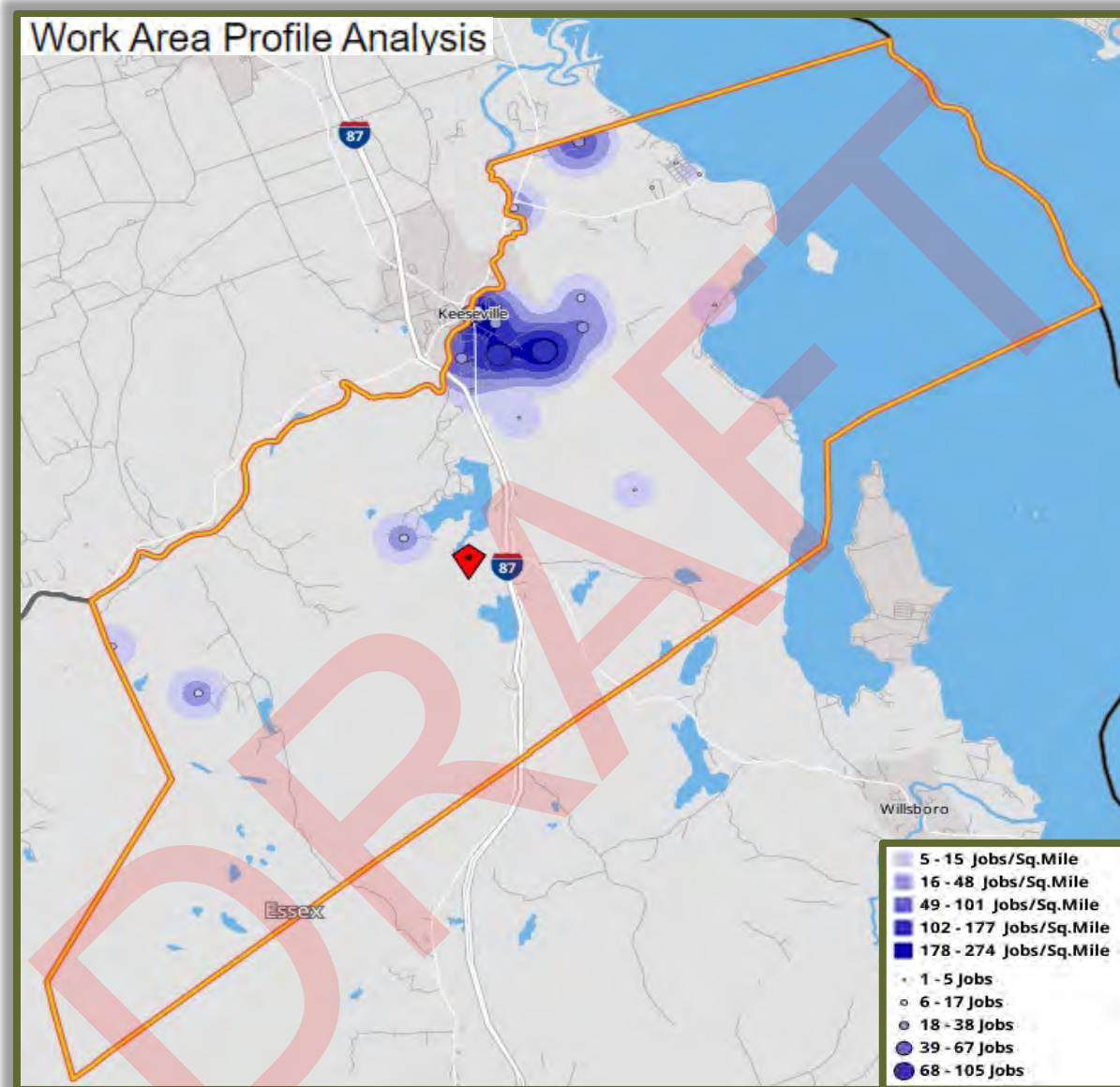


Figure 7 Jobs in Chesterfield

The unemployment rate in Chesterfield for persons 16 years and over was 7.2% as of the 2022 ACS 5-year estimate; approximately 3% above nationwide and statewide figures. An additional 41.3% of the workforce is not considered to be within the labor force. Taken together, these figures compute to 51.7% of the Chesterfield labor force actively employed as of 2022.

## Tourism

Tourism is a major economic driver in Essex County. According to the report *Economic Impact of Visitors in New York 2022: Adirondacks Focus*, visitors spent \$818.2 million in Essex County in 2022, exceeding 2019 (pre-pandemic) levels by 61%. Tourism generated \$192.0 million in direct labor income and \$300.3 million including indirect and induced impacts. It also produced 5,092 jobs; more than 37% of the employment in Essex County was sustained by visitors.<sup>20</sup>

A Leisure Travel Study of Lake Placid, Essex and Hamilton Counties, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake was commissioned by the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST) in 2022. The study was based on a survey distributed to a sample of leisure travelers to the region. The biggest draw among visitors was outdoor activities (73%), followed by relaxing, dining and shopping (60%) and sightseeing and touring (48%). The average daily expenditure per traveler party in Essex County was \$512, well above the five-year average of \$418; the average length of stay was 3.7 nights.<sup>21</sup>

Within Essex County, Keeseville and Chesterfield are considered part of the Lake Champlain region that extends south to Fort Ticonderoga, incorporating the towns of Crown Point, Elizabethtown, Essex, Lewis, Moriah, Ticonderoga, Westport, and Willsboro. One of the most significant tourism generators in this area is Ausable Chasm, located just north of Keeseville. Known as “the Grand Canyon of the Adirondacks,” Ausable Chasm is a privately-owned natural attraction that has been welcoming visitors for more than 150 years. It offers five miles of walking trails that are open year-round, a riverwalk, rafting tours, opportunities for rock climbing and rappelling, and a fully-guided Adventure Trail that combines hiking and climbing; it also has on-site campground. Ausable Chasm attracts more than 100,000 people annually.

Additional recreational attractions in Chesterfield include the Wickham Marsh Wildlife Management Area in Port Kent, an excellent location for birding, hiking, and snowshoeing, and trails to the summit of Poke-O-Moonshine Mountain, where hikers are rewarded with views of Lake Champlain and the High Peaks. There is a state boat launch on Lake Champlain at Port Douglass. The town also has state-owned lands, part of the Taylor Pond State Forest, that offer public access for a wide range of outdoor recreational activities. Several campgrounds are located within the Town of Chesterfield, including Bolton Acres and Ausable River Campground offering spaces to stay while enjoying a variety of recreational activities.

For visitors interested in history and culture, Chesterfield is home to the North Star Underground Railroad Museum, the Anderson Falls Heritage Society Museum, and the Clayton Family Gallery at Adirondack Architectural Heritage, an organization that also offers tours of historic buildings in the Adirondacks.

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<sup>20</sup> Tourism Economics, *Economic Impact of Visitors in New York 2022: Adirondacks Focus*, downloaded from [https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/Adirondacks-2022-NYS-Tourism-Economic-Impact\\_0.pdf](https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/Adirondacks-2022-NYS-Tourism-Economic-Impact_0.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism, *Leisure Travel Study: 2022 Essex County Visitor Focus*, downloaded from <https://www.roostadk.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/2022-Essex-County-leisure-travel-study.pdf>.

“Agritourism” refers to on-farm experiences and the sales of agricultural products at farm stands, on-farm stores, and farmers markets. The Essex County Farmland Protection and Food System Plan (2022) asserts that visits to farms and farmers markets are “rarely final destinations for tourists. Rather, agricultural and food system amenities are stops along the way that add to the overall quality of visitor experiences: good food, beautiful scenery, brewery and winery tours, corn mazes, events, and more, all adding to memorable experiences... Visitors come to enjoy outdoor activities, relax, and eat, so Essex County’s food system – including restaurants, bars, and stores – figures prominently in visitor experiences.”<sup>22</sup> The plan identifies supporting and coordinating agritourism (and culinary tourism) as a strategy to increase the viability of local farm and food businesses. It also calls for improving connections between the food economy and Essex County’s overall tourism program.

**Strategies to Support and Coordinate Agritourism in Essex County**

- > Create an Agritourism Strategy Team to Develop Cohesive Marketing and Support Services for Agritourism
- > Develop Agritourism Resources for Farmers, Food Businesses, and Tourism Professionals
- > Create a Comprehensive Inventory of Agritourism Opportunities in Essex County
- > Develop More Comprehensive Agritourism Marketing and Promotion

Chesterfield has several active farms and agriculture-related businesses, most of them within a few miles of each other, that are part of a burgeoning agritourism industry:

- Ausable Brewing Company, a farm-based “nanobrewery” featuring a variety of high-quality ales, lagers, and sodas.
- Highlands Estate Vineyards, a family-owned and operated winery.
- Mace Chasm Farm, a livestock and poultry farm that sells its products year-round through its farm store and at farmers markets.
- Mossbrook Roots Flower Farm, which grows an array of fresh flowers and herbs and operates a farm gift shop.
- North Country Creamery, a dairy with an on-farm store that produces and sells farmstead cheeses, creamline yogurts, and raw milk from cows that are 100% grassfed.
- Adirondack View Lavender Farm, a 13-acre farm with over 2,000 lavender plants of seven (7) varieties, sunflowers, and grapes.

Efforts by Essex County to enhance agritourism would likely benefit the Town of Chesterfield. For example, it could encourage additional spending by visitors at local farms, restaurants, stores, and

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<sup>22</sup> *Essex County Farmland Protection and Food System Plan, 2022, p.71.* Downloaded from <https://essex.cce.cornell.edu/agriculture/essex-county-farmland-protection-and-food-system-plan-2022>.

other businesses. It also has the potential to inspire the creation of new enterprises that would fill vacant storefronts and stimulate the revitalization of the Keeseville hamlet.

Another potential opportunity, especially given Chesterfield's access to I-87, is the development of overnight accommodations. Spending on lodging accounted for nearly 52% of visitor spending in Essex County in 2022. The Tri-Lakes Region (Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake) has experienced significant private investment in lodging facilities over the past ten to fifteen years, but that trend has yet to extend to the northeastern part of the County.

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