

EXISTING CONDITIONS

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

Currently there are 255 residents in Aurora, in addition to 352 Wells College students, for a total population of 607. Over the last two decades, the population in the Village has experienced an 15.7% decline, this is however deceiving due to the small size of the village. The student population at Wells College greatly skews the Villages population data, with nearly 60% of the population comprised of Wells College students.

Population 1980-2020

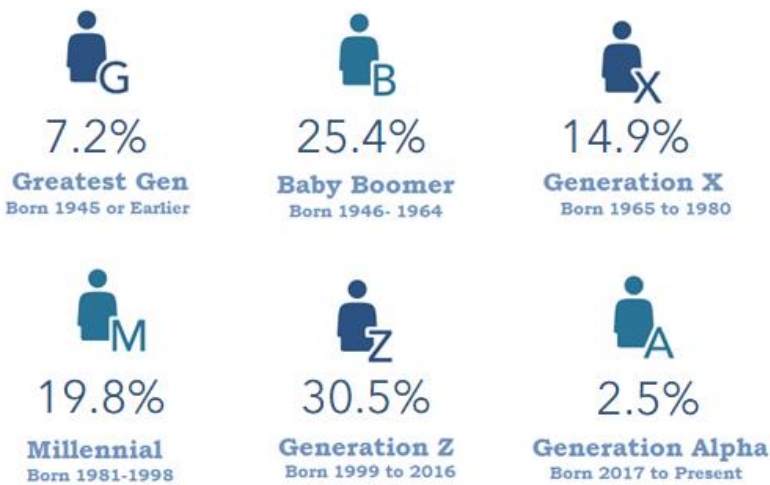
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Village of Aurora	926	687	720	724	607
Town of Ledyard	1,869	1,737	1,849	2,227	1,655
Cayuga County	79,894	82,313	81,963	79,978	76,248
New York State	17,558,072	17,990,455	18,976,457	19,378,102	20,201,249

Source: 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2020 Decennial Census

Age Cohorts

Within the Village of Aurora, there is a high representation from those 40 years of age or below, with Generation Z being the largest age cohort at 30.5% of the population, and the Millennial Generation comprising at 19.8%. In total, more than 50% of the population was born after 1980.

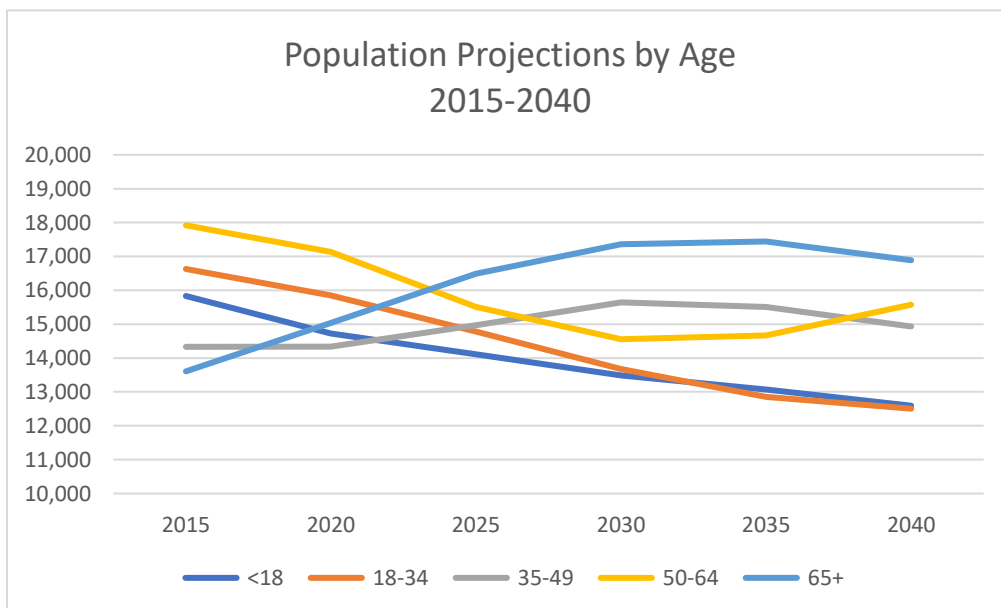
However, it is important to note that the Wells College student population skews the median age, with the most recent full count census data (2010) showing that college students comprise the bulk of the population (401) compared to the rest of the residents in the Village (323). When excluding the students at Wells College, the average age for residents is over 50. Note: the population counts differ between the full decennial census and the ACS five-year estimates.



Source: American Community Survey 2015-2019 Estimates, ESRI Community Analyst

Population Projections

According to Cornell University’s Program on Applied Demographics, the total population in Cayuga County is expected to decline by roughly 7 percent from 78,319 residents in 2015 to 72,494 residents by 2040. This general declining trend is expected for all age cohorts except the 35-49 age cohorts which is expected to increase by 4%, and the over 65 age cohort which is expected to increase by 24% from 2015-2040.



Source: US Census Bureau 2010 SF1 Decennial Census, Cornell University Program on Applied Demographics

Household and Family Type

In general, the total number of households within the Village of Aurora has decreased over time. According to the most recent census data, the Village had 128 households. The average household size in the Village has decreased from 2.2 persons per household in 2000 to 1.86 persons per household in 2019.

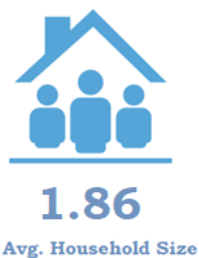
The Village performed an informal survey of its residents and households in 2021 and found within the Village of Aurora there were:

- 88 Owner occupied, single-family homes, of which
 - 9 young families
 - 8 empty nesters
 - 5 multi-generational households
 - 49 households where one or both individuals were retired.
 - 17 households considered other or unable to be determined

Additionally, as per this survey it was noted that there were at the time 20 children under the age of 18 within the village as well as 20 residents over the age of 80. There were 51 part-time residents (those gone at least 3 months of the year), 20 long-term rentals (houses and apartments), 12 short-term rentals, and 14 commercial properties.

Household Size

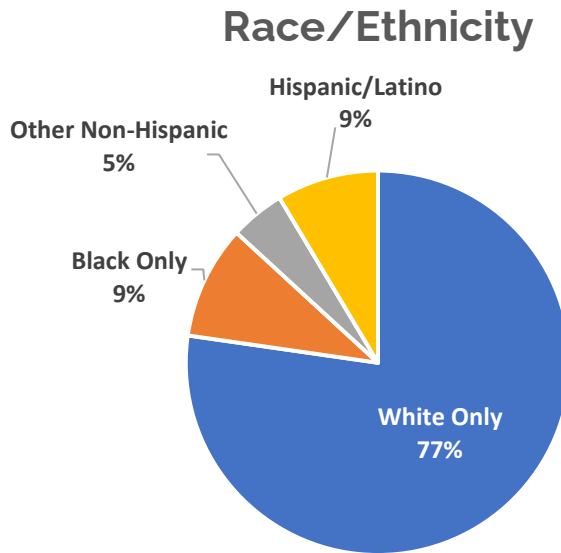
The average household size in Aurora is presently 1.86 persons per household, a decrease from 2.33 in 2000.



Source: American Community Survey 2015-2019 Estimates

Race and Ethnicity

The Village (including Wells College students) is primarily composed of non-Hispanic Caucasians with non-white-only residents comprising 23% of the population.

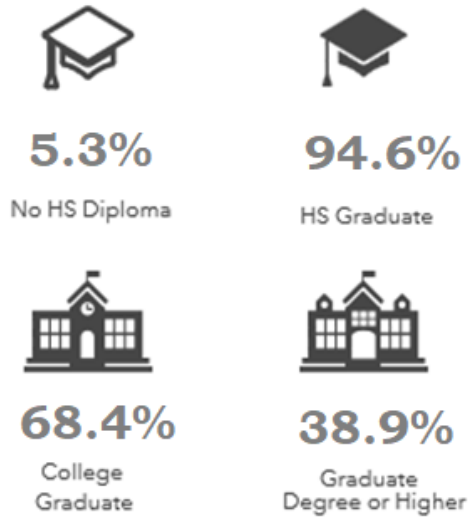


Source: 2020 Decennial Census

Educational Attainment

The Village of Aurora’s residents are well educated, with over 68% having a college education and 38.9% having an advanced degree. In comparison, 35.3% of Cayuga County residents have a college degree and 8.4% have advanced degrees.

Educational Attainment: Village of Aurora Population 25 or older



Source: American Community Survey 2015-2019 Estimates, ESRI Community Analyst

Educational Attainment: 2019

	HS Graduate	Bachelors	Graduate, Professional, Doctorate Degree
Village of Aurora	94.7%	59.4%	38.9%
Town of Ledyard	91.6%	44.6%	26.3%
Cayuga County	87.8%	22.6%	8.7%
New York State	87.6%	37.8%	16.6%

Source: American Community Survey 2015-2019 Estimates

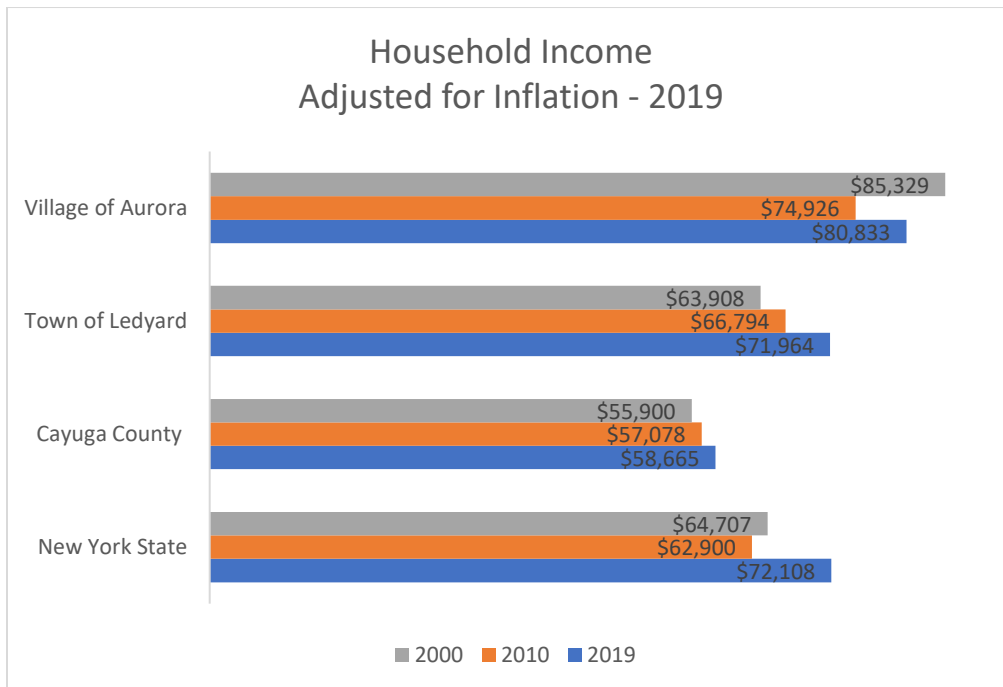
Economic Data

Household Income

Currently the median household income in Aurora is \$80,833. The median household income throughout Aurora is significantly higher than Cayuga County. While median income in Aurora and Cayuga County has stayed relatively stable over the last 20 years, the median income in Aurora has decreased by roughly \$5,000 since 2000, while the median income in Cayuga County has increased by roughly \$3,000 over the same period.



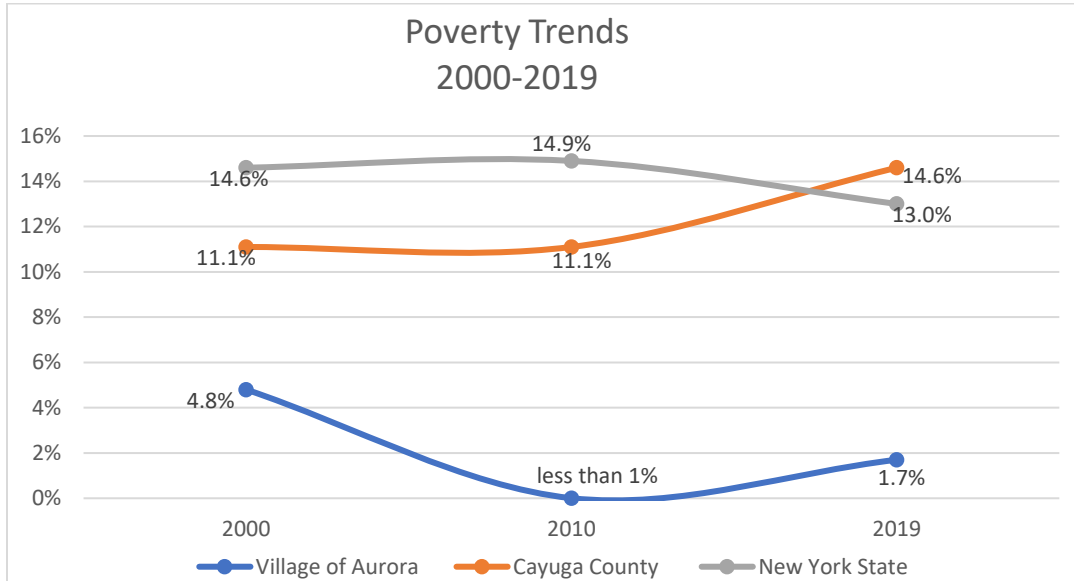
Source: American Community Survey 2015-2019



Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census, American Community Survey 2015-2019

Poverty

The poverty rate within the Village of Aurora has trended well below the New York State and Cayuga County over the last twenty years, with only one individual recorded as living below the poverty threshold in 2010.



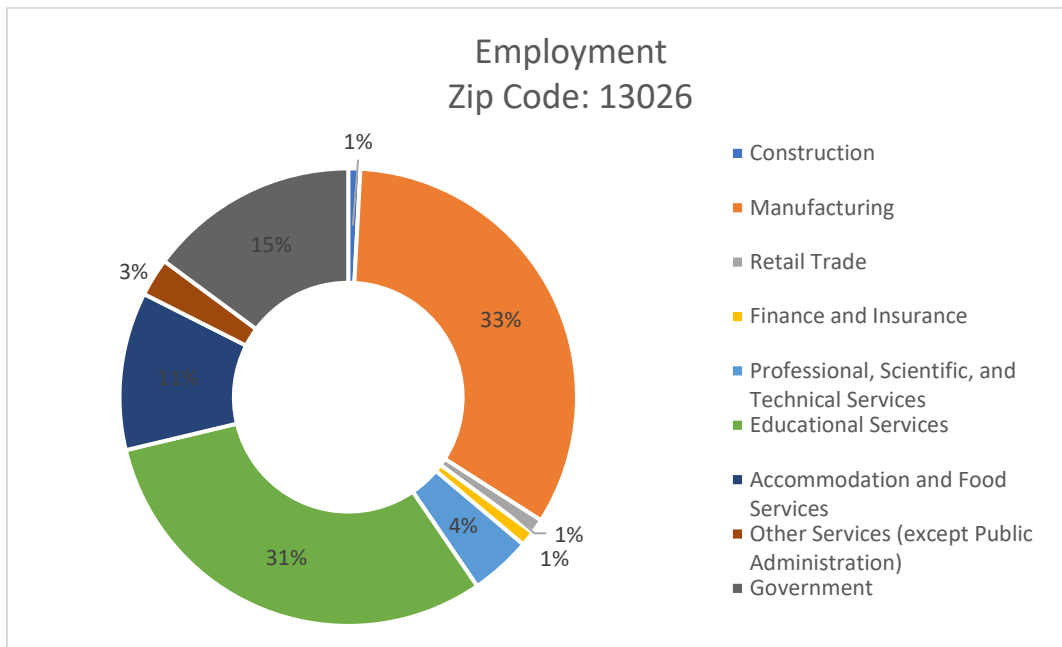
Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census, American Community Survey 2015-2019

Employment

This section considers the entirety of the 13026 zip code (the boundaries of which are shown at right) to adequately assess employment information in and around the Village of Aurora. By going beyond the village boundary, these numbers capture large employers in and just outside Aurora such as MacKenzie-Childs (manufacturing), Wells College (education) and the Southern Cayuga Central School District (classified by the US Department of labor as government.)



Including regional employers helps to convey the number of jobs not only in but also around Aurora, which at last count in the second quarter of 2021 was approximately 1,289. Manufacturing, Educational Services, Retail Trade, and Government are the largest employers by sector, with over 50% of jobs being classified as professional, educational, finance, etc. sectors.

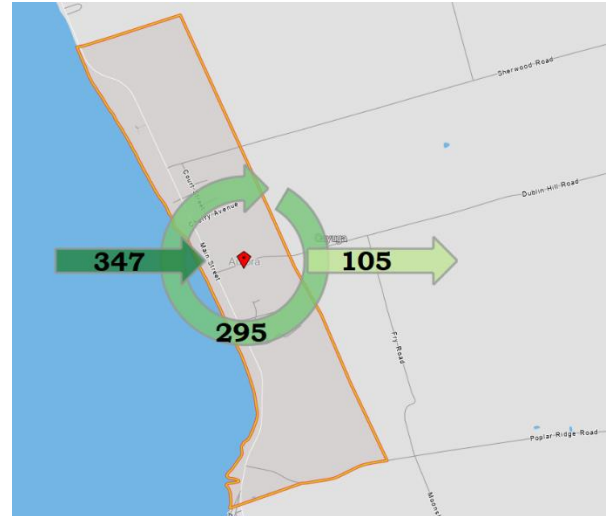


Source: U.S. Department of Labor: EMSI Q2 2021 Data Set

There are two distinct cluster of employment within the Village of Aurora, with one centered around the Inns of Aurora and the other centered around Wells College.

Commuting Patterns

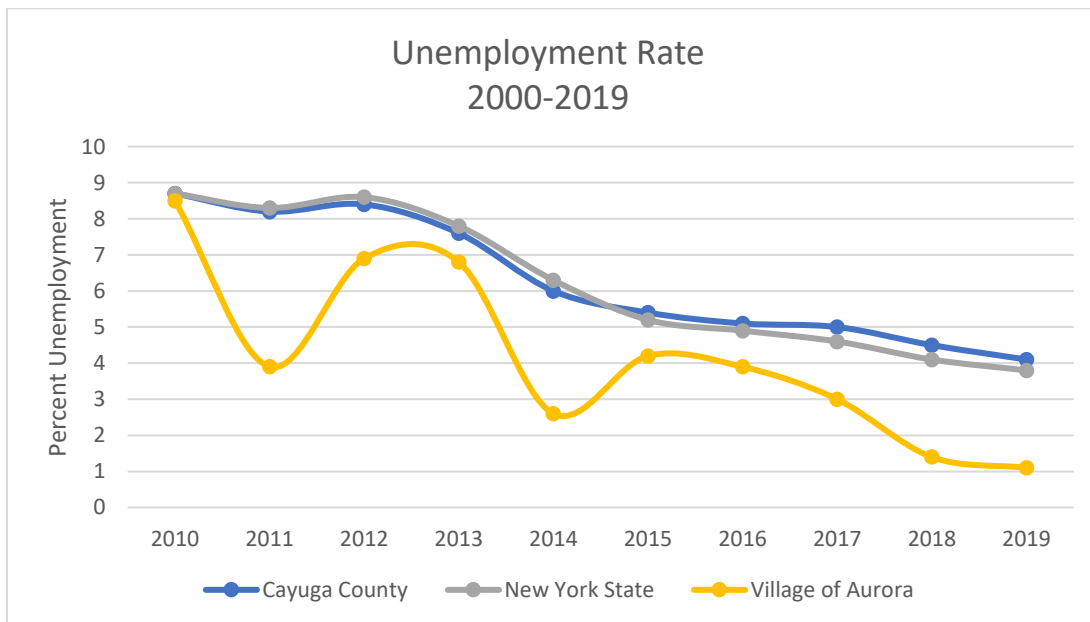
Commuting patterns provide insight into the links between the community and the greater region. Currently, more employees migrate into Aurora than out of Aurora to the surrounding area. 347 people live outside of the Village but work within the Village, roughly 295 people both live and work within the Village of Aurora, and 105 people live within but work outside of the Village. These numbers include Wells College students and on-campus and off-campus jobs.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap 2018 Inflow/Outflow Analysis of workers in the Village of Aurora.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate in the Village has fluctuated significantly over the last decade, with it being nearly 1% as of 2019. The Village’s unemployment rate was 2.8% in 2000, and while it has risen at periods, to a high of 8.5% in 2010, the average has maintained below both Cayuga County and New York State throughout this period.

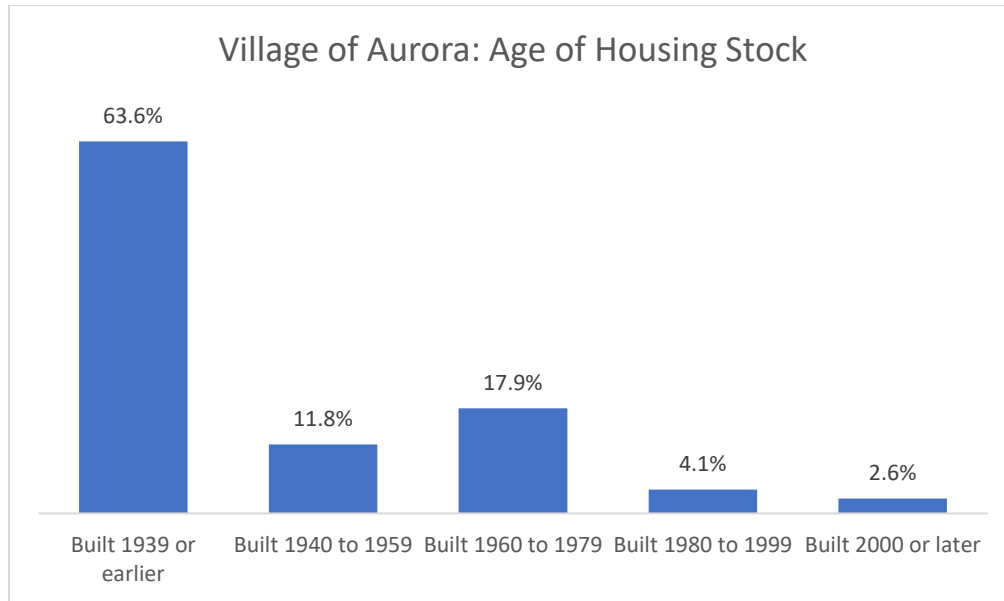


Source: New York State Department of Labor – Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census (SF1), 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

HOUSING

Housing Stock

Over three quarters of housing in the Village of Aurora was built prior to 1960 and less than 3% of housing has been constructed in the last two decades.



Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

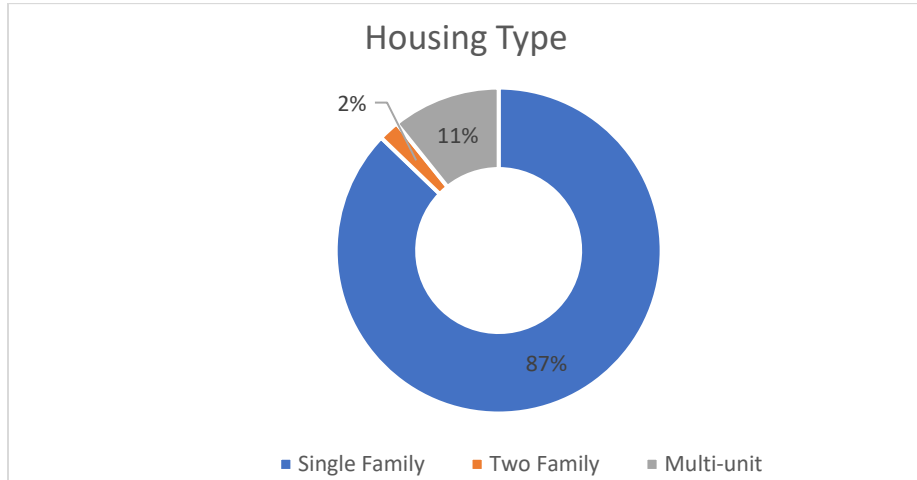
Age of Housing Stock: 2019

	Village of Aurora	Town of Ledyard	Cayuga County	New York State
Built 1939 or earlier	64%	38%	36%	31%
Built 1940 to 1959	12%	10%	13%	23%
Built 1960 to 1979	18%	19%	21%	23%
Built 1980 to 1999	4%	20%	20%	14%
Built 2000 or later	3%	13%	10%	10%

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing Type

The predominant housing type within the Village of Aurora is single family homes. Several multi-unit apartments are found throughout the Village as well.

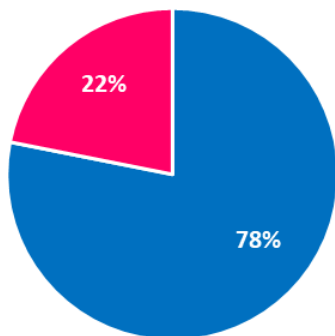


Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing Tenure

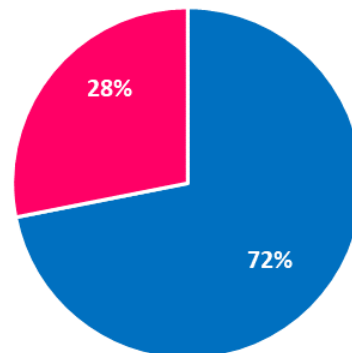
Housing tenure refers to the arrangement under which a household occupied a housing unit, commonly as either an owner or a renter. The total number of housing units in the Village of Aurora decreased by 42 units from 234 to 192 units between 2000 and 2020. The number of owner-occupied units has increased since 2000 with roughly 78% of structures now being owner occupied compared to 65% in 2000. This figure includes second homes occupied by the owner but not year-round.

Village of Aurora Occupancy
2019



■ Owner-Occupied ■ Renter-Occupied

Village of Aurora Vacancy
2020



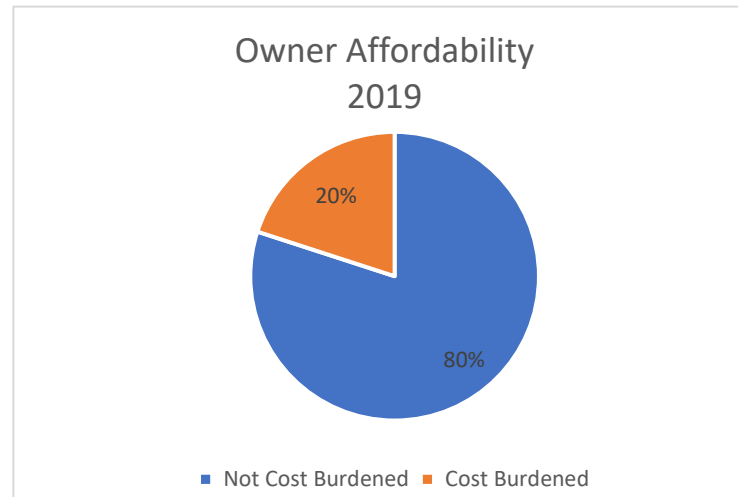
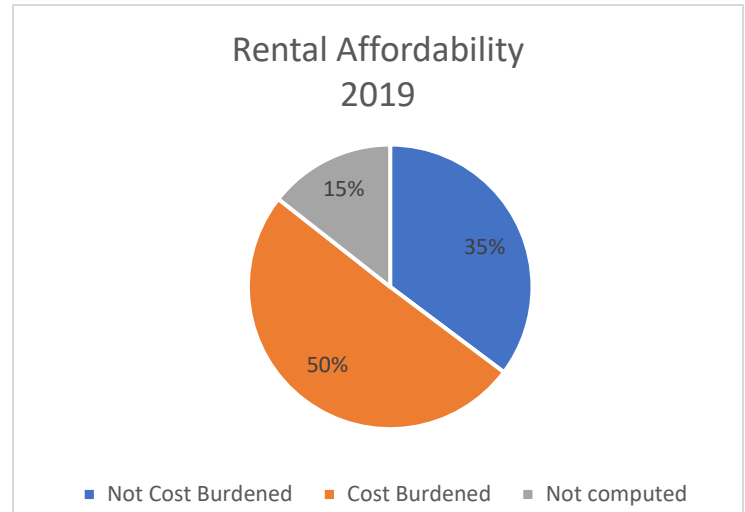
■ occupied ■ vacant

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing Affordability

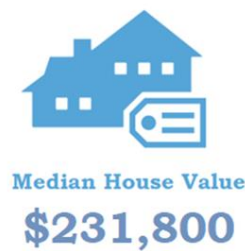
Half of those renting live in housing that is not “affordable”, meaning that they spend more than 30% of their monthly income on housing. Gross rents have increased by 14% since 2010 to \$1,083. In comparison, the median gross rent throughout the rest of Cayuga County is \$745.

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Only 20% of homeowners are cost burdened (defined as paying more than 30% of a household’s income toward housing expenses). The median housing value of owner-occupied housing in Aurora has increased by 128% since 2000, with the median house value now \$231,800. In comparison, the median house value throughout the rest of Cayuga County is \$128,000.

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



LAND USE AND ZONING

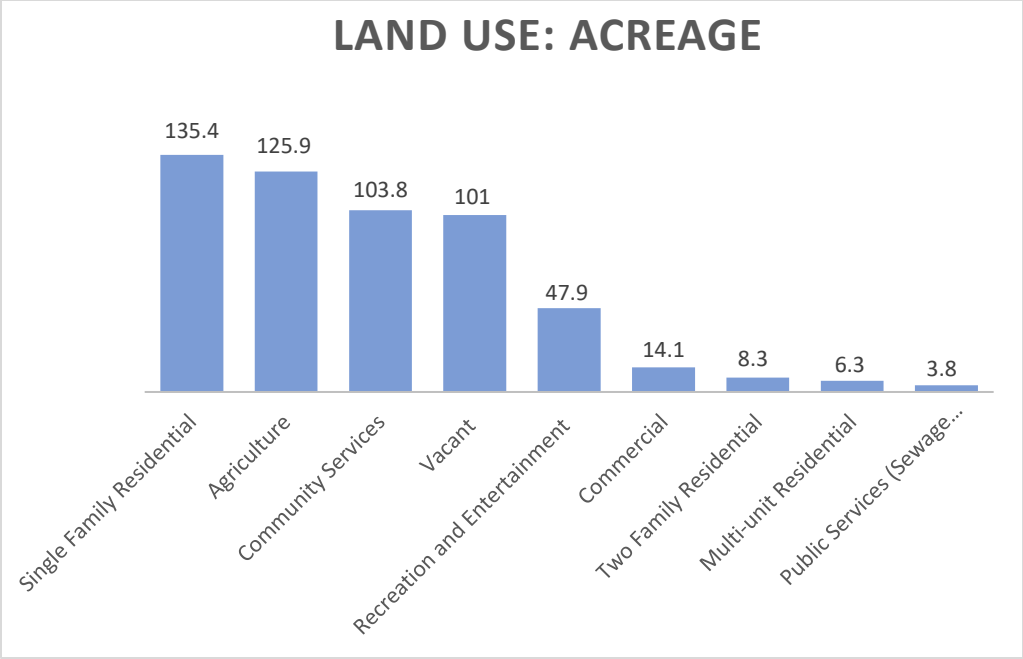
Land Use

The Cayuga County Planning Department provides real property data according to property tax records and property type classification codes. These codes provide a statewide uniform classification system and we have chosen to use that system rather than the land use classification of the Aurora Zoning Code. The terms in Aurora’s zoning code may change with amendments to the law but the statewide codes will remain constant. While this data does not always reflect the current use of land, it is helpful to know how the county classifies land within the village for consideration when revisiting land use regulations. For example, much of Aurora is classified as “agricultural” land while it may more likely be used for both agricultural operations and residential use.

Currently, the largest percentage of land in the Village is classified as residential use (27.5%), followed by Agriculture (23%) and Community Services. Community Services is defined as “property used for the well-being of the community” and the designation includes colleges and universities. Approximately 18.5% of the land within the village is classified as vacant. Less than 3% of land use is commercial operations, with those few establishments clustered on Main Street between Sherwood Road and Cherry Avenue.

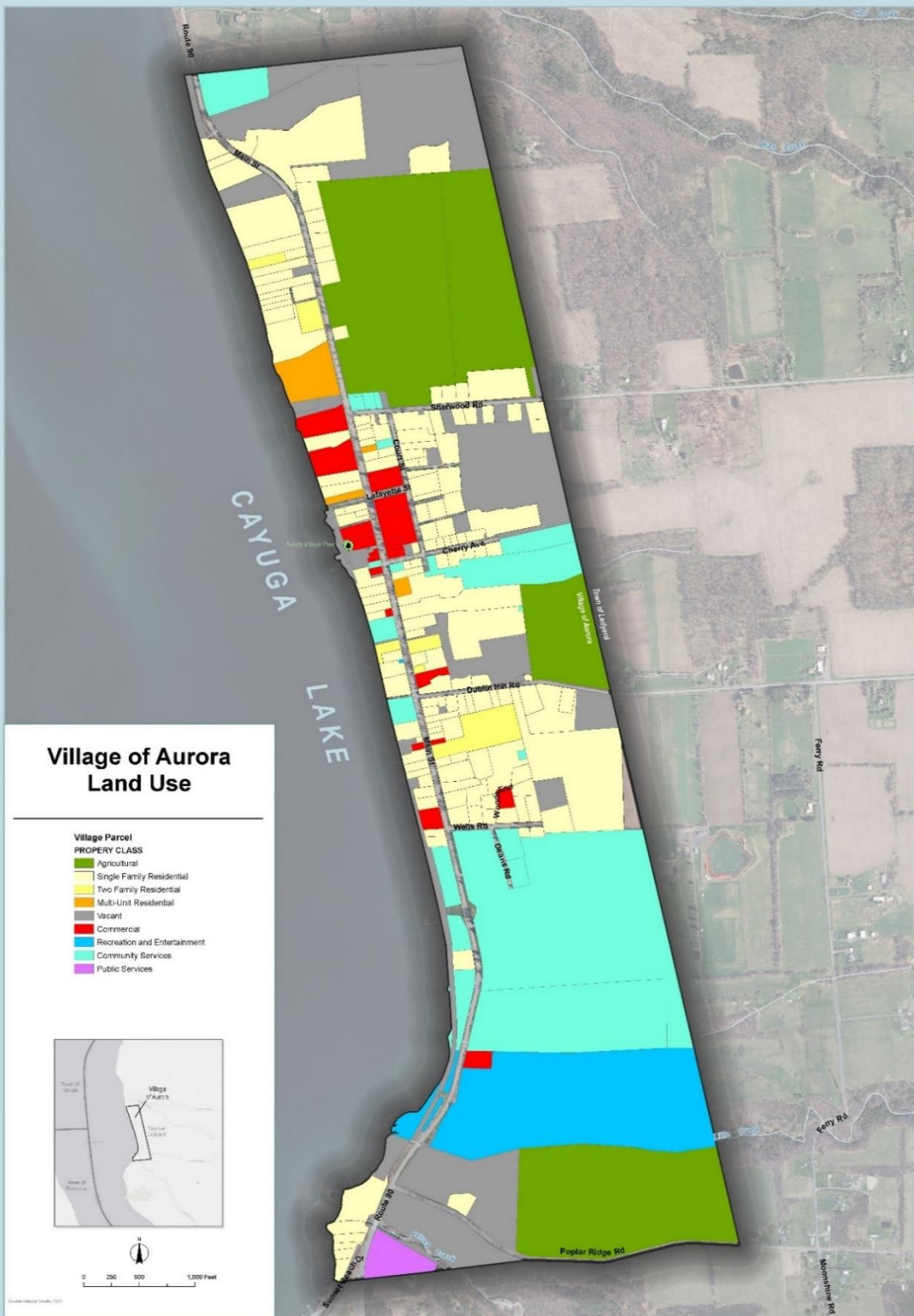
The County classifies roughly 37% of the land in Aurora as “public land” due to the presence of Wells College in the southern third of Aurora. The total acreage of the Village is 588.8 acres of which Wells College owns 30% and the Inns of Aurora, LLC owns roughly 20%. The Village and other entities, such as the library and churches, own several parcels including the park and playground.

A full list of the Property Type Classification Codes and their descriptions can be accessed at <https://www.tax.ny.gov>.



Source: Real Property data provided by Cayuga County Planning Department.

VILLAGE OF AURORA Land Use



Zoning

The Village of Aurora has four distinct zoning districts. These districts range in intensity from low-density agricultural residential to institutional use.

The zoning law defines the district intents for each zoning district in the Village of Aurora. The intents are modified for clarity below:

Agricultural/Residential (AR) Land for agricultural and/or residential purposes. Note that large agricultural operations near Aurora occur in the Town of Ledyard, while Aurora has smaller/hobby farms. Residential uses in this district include one- and two-family and multi-family residential uses on lots with a minimum size of 15,000 square feet.

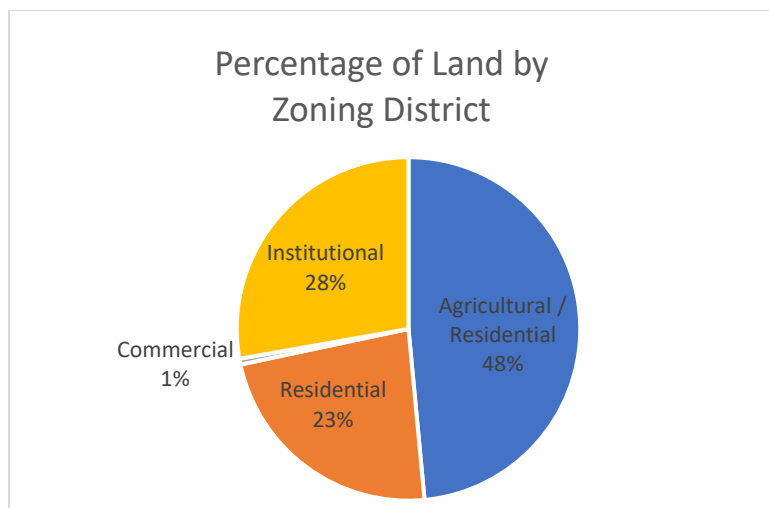
Residential (R) Land for dwellings. Home occupations may be granted through Special Use Permits.

Commercial (C) Land for enterprises carried on for profit by the owner, lessee, or licensee.

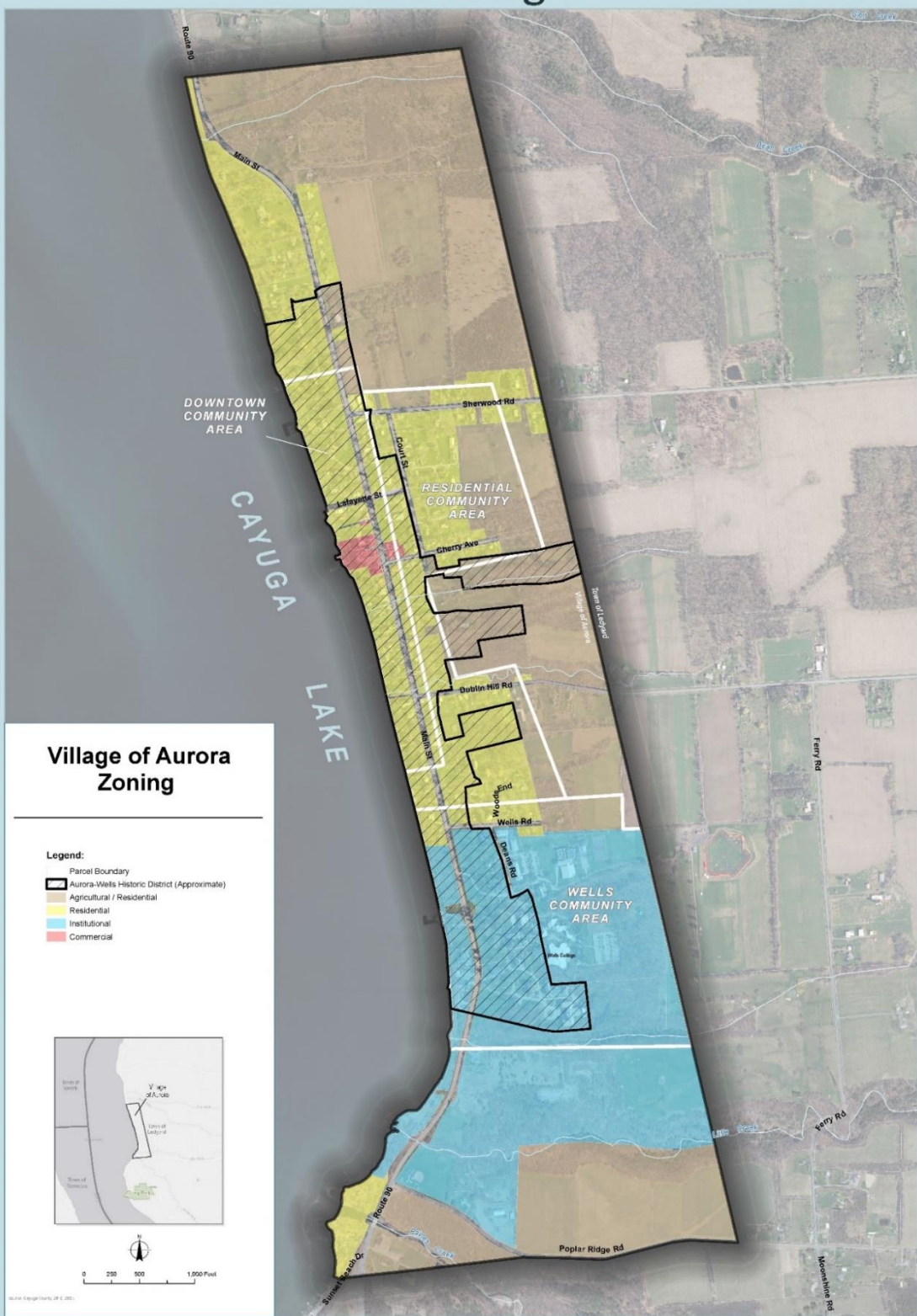
Institutional (I) Land for institutions such as non-profit schools, research centers, libraries, and conference centers, dedicated to educational, charitable, fraternal, or similar purposes. Institutions such as reform schools, prisons, and hospitals are excluded.

The Village also has a Flood Hazard zone that runs the length of Cayuga Lake.

There are two parcels in the residential district designated as Agricultural in the Cayuga County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan 2014.



VILLAGE OF AURORA Zoning



Hydrology

The topography and hydrology in Aurora is a major factor to consider when discussing existing and future development. As shown in the following map, the topography declines from east to west, with several tributaries running into Cayuga Lake.

During major storm events, some of the tributaries are prone to flooding. When the Village updates its development standards, it should consider the impact of land development around these water sources and set regulations in place to protect the water quality as well as the land around the tributaries and Cayuga Lake.



Document Path
 I:\Aurora_Village of 2211771 - Comprehensive Plan Update\GIS\Map\Map\Del\Report\Figure#2021_08_13\Tributaries.mxd

UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Village of Aurora is served by a comprehensive network of public infrastructure, with sufficient capacity to support additional development. Infrastructure systems include the following.

Water

Public water is available through a village-owned distribution system consisting of 8” to 10” diameter water lines from the Wells Campus, north and south along Main Street, and along Sherwood Road to the Village water tank; most other streets are served by 4 to 6” diameter distribution lines. The water treatment plant is owned and operated by Wells College and treated water is purchased in bulk by the Village. Water is drawn from Cayuga Lake through an intake pipe that, due to its shallow placement, has proven vulnerable to recent threats of algal toxins as well as other pollutants, the wind and turbulence of stronger storms, and the increased turbidity of heavy and prolonged rainfall. Although the plant delivers water of excellent quality, the Village and Wells College recognize that the system is very old, needs replacement or significant upgrade and have been working toward a solution for several years.

Sanitary and Storm Sewer

Public sewer lines are also available throughout the village. Within the last few years, the storm sewers have been overwhelmed by the significant increase in rain amounts and storm intensity associated with climate change. Frequency of severe storms over the past few years, and especially in 2021, has caused damage to property including houses, basements and well-maintained lawns and landscaping. The Village has made some capital improvements on local streets, and increased seasonal maintenance, but it is imperative that the DOT upsize and replace connectors under Route 90 if these problems are to be solved. Portions of Route 90 throughout the village have no curbing adding to the effects of flooding. NYS DOT has made improvements to the route both north and south of the village and intends to address drainage along with a proposed repaving of the village; no definite date has been set and the Village needs to follow up on the DOT’s intention.

Telecommunications

Spectrum provides phone, internet, and cable TV services throughout the area. Verizon Fios is available for phone service; and satellite TV service is available from Dish TV and DirecTV.

Electricity

New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) provides electricity to the Village.

Streets and Sidewalks

Main Street in Aurora is New York State Route 90, a heavily traveled road. The speed limit is 30 miles per hour. Parallel parking spaces are designated on both the east and west side through the center portion of the village where road width allows for parking. In other areas vehicles are often parked on the side of Main Street causing safety issues and damaging grassy areas maintained by homeowners. Connecting to Route 81 as well as to Route 20, Route 90 serves to bring tourists and travelers to Cayuga Lake and to the Finger Lakes in general. Traffic is comprised of passenger vehicles, buses, farm vehicles and large tractor trailers, including those hauling waste from downstate to Seneca Meadows Landfill. For the past fifteen years local village officials have unsuccessfully sought a way to limit heavy traffic on the road. Concerns are growing that the proposed changes to Route 81 through the city of Syracuse will divert more westbound truck traffic onto Route 90 and other area state highways. Pedestrian safety is a concern, as are noise, vehicular collisions, and toxic spills near Cayuga Lake.

The Village has installed a sidewalk network that includes one side of each publicly owned street and on Route 90 south to the southern-most Wells College driveway; there are sidewalks on both sides of Main Street in the center of the village from Sherwood Road to Cherry Avenue. The system is in good condition.

NYS Route 90 has been designated as a Scenic Byway by the state. The village is committed to preserving the historic built environment as well as maintaining open space whereby those vistas can be enjoyed by all who live and pass through.

VILLAGE OF AURORA Utilities



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Due to Aurora’s proximity to the Erie Canal and Wells College and having previously served as County Seat for Onondaga then Cayuga County, there are many civic, cultural, recreational, and historic sites found within the village as listed below. These spaces not only provide services for residents but also contribute to the quality of place found throughout the community.

Community Organizations & Services	Aurora Farmers Market Aurora Free Library Aurora Historical Society Aurora Mobile Farmers Market at Patrick Tavern Aurora Post Office Aurora Village Clerk Aurora Volunteer Fire Department Community Medical Center Oak Glen Cemetery Scipio Memorial Lodge & History Center St. Patrick’s Cemetery
Historical Sites and Landmarks	Aurora Village / Wells College Historic District <i>See pages 25-26 for historical landmarks and maps.</i>
Houses of Worship	St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Church United Ministry
Schools and Educational Facilities	Aurora Preschool Peachtown Elementary Wells College <i>(The Southern Cayuga Central School District, with facilities located outside the village, also serves Aurora residents).</i>
Recreational Facilities	Aurora Fitness Trail Aurora Village Park Memorial Playground Morgan Opera House Wells College Docks Wells College Golf Course

Village Hall

The Village of Aurora government does not have an appropriate office/meeting space from which it can best provide services to the village. The village office and meeting room, located in the south portion of the Aurora Volunteer Fire Department, is an 11 ft. x 15 ft. space originally designed as a storage room. It has cinder block walls with no windows to allow light or ventilation. It has one door for egress and regress. It contains one large desk, two computer workstations, one each for the clerk and treasurer, 3 large and 2 small file cabinets, two shelving units, boxes to hold supplies and maps, and a large copier. Workers Compensation and safety inspectors are regularly concerned about safety issues with one egress and regress. The current setting does not provide private space for the Code Enforcement Officer, Mayor, or various board members, who work in the public meeting room. The Village stores records in a Pod located at the sewer facility at the south end of the village, where the clerk continually makes trips by car to retrieve boxes of records for review.

Lack of a Village Hall also impacts the Village's ability to protect and store our historical archive, which is being overseen by the Aurora Historical Society. Space was provided for the Aurora Historical Society through a lease with the Inns of Aurora at the Old School House until June 2021 when the Inns of Aurora withdrew the lease. This space, which was climate controlled, included the village historian's office, a room where meetings were held and exhibits displayed, an office area with a desk, several file cabinets and wall shelves. The village archives were stored in large securely locked closet a short distance down a hallway. Some space for the Historical Society has been provided at the Aurora Masonic Lodge and irreplaceable archives are stored in at least three different spaces throughout the village. These arrangements are on a temporary basis. Reliable, dependable, and secure space is critical to sound village government oversight.

Occupancy of the public meeting space is 65. While village boards encourage wide resident attendance to meetings, the small meeting space is challenging especially during the COVID Pandemic. Large public gatherings can be held in the Fire Department truck bay (weather permitting) or another large private gathering space within the village, such as venues at Wells College or the Inns of Aurora (availability dependent).

The Village should explore all options for the creation of an office and community meeting space with consideration for size, location, budget, accessibility, permanence, and functionality according to need.

Parks, Open Space and Recreational Facilities

The Village owns a small lakeshore park that allows for gatherings, as well as quiet contemplation of the lake, and is accessible along a walkway on the north side of the Aurora Post Office. It has several benches facing the lake as well as two tables with attached seating. This is a popular destination for picnics at lunch in good weather and serves as a

venue for children’s theater, music, and similar events. Since 2008 it has been upgraded with better seating, signage, and landscaping, as recommended by the last master plan. However, the park is still in need of better access and additional land as also recommended in 2008. This Comprehensive Plan carries forth these recommendations.

The Village also owns Children’s Memorial Playground on Court Street. The playground has grown and acquired more equipment since its creation in 1995, with a significant upgrade in 2014 through the fundraising efforts of a citizens committee. Aurora also has several “green streets” that provide access to Cayuga Lake and are equipped with a bench and, in some cases, a kayak rack to accommodate residents who do not live on the lake.



Document Path: I:\Aurora_Village\02211771 - Comprehensive Plan Update\GIS\MapMX\DelRepor\Figures\2021_02_19\Parks and Recreation.mxd

Historic District and Local Landmarks

Much of the historic fabric is still intact throughout Aurora, with the majority of the main street and Wells College designated on the National Register as a historic district. In addition to the historic district, the Village has designated its own set of Local Landmarks. Both the district and the Local Landmarks are shown on the following map.

Aurora Free Library, 370 Main Street
Aurora Inn, 391 Main Street
Aurora Office Building (The Fargo), 384 Main Street
Cayuga Lake National Bank, 397 Main Street
Christopher Morgan House, 311 Main Street
The Presbyterian Manse (Parsonage), 359 Main Street
Masonic Temple, 325 Main Street
Oak Glen Cemetery, Cherry Avenue
Patrick Tavern, 302 Main Street
St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, 303 Main Street
Taylor House, 396 Main Street
United Ministry (Presbyterian) Church, 337 Main Street
E.B. Morgan House (Wells College Guest House), 431 Main Street
Wells College properties: Glen Park, Louis Jefferson Long Library, Macmillan Hall, Main Building, Pettibone House
Avery-Arms House, 358 Main Street
Barn at Phelps-Swan House, 21 Cherry Avenue
Benjamin Ledyard House, 334 Main Street
Chonodote Site, northeast of 456 Main Street; original site of Peachtown
Chimney Corner, 348 Main Street
Cooper-Cromwell House, 237 Main Street
Franklin-Richmond Tavern, 488 Main Street
Marriott-Gifford House, 78 Court Street
Site of Roswell Franklin's cabin (next to green barn at 461 Main Street) Stack House, "Paul Jones," 326 Main Street
Leddra Wood House, 425 Main Street
Jedediah Morgan House, 280 Main Street
Peter Fort House, 268 Main Street (include fence)
Richmond House, 19 Wells Road

Selected Trees

Oak on Franklin Hill (curve on north end of Aurora)

Council Tree (Chonodote Site)

Harris-Thompson Ginkoes (418 Main St, 425 Main St, 453 Main St)

Sycamore at 358 Main St.

Black Walnut at 311 Main St.



Discussed Path:
 C:\Users\j... \Public\Aurora_Village\GIS\MapServer\styles\Aurora_Village_Historic_District_and_Contributing_Buildings.sld