



VILLAGE OF
PORT CHESTER
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1
June 17, 2026, 6:30-8:30 PM
Port Chester Senior Community Center

The Village of Port Chester hosted the first of three public workshops for the Comprehensive Plan Update on June 17, 2026 at the Senior Community Center. Approximately 60 people were in attendance, in addition to Village Staff and Trustees. Greg Cutler, Planning and Economic Development Department Director introduced the meeting. Mayor Luis A. Marino provided opening remarks.

Sarah Yackel, Principal of BFJ Planning, and Emily Tolbert of BFJ Planning provided a presentation about the Comprehensive Plan process, public engagement opportunities, and anticipated plan contents. Nick Cerdera of BFJ Planning provided Spanish language translation of the presentation. The presentation slides are available in English and Spanish on the project website: compplan.portchesterny.gov





Participants then spent approximately an hour and 15 minutes completing a roundtable discussion activity. For each planning theme listed below, participants were instructed to identify the top issues and opportunities, develop recommendations addressing each issue or opportunity, and outline overarching goals. A member of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee was seated at each table to help facilitate the discussion. In addition, comment cards were available for participants to submit independent comments. Feedback from the comment cards is incorporated into the table of feedback.



Economic Development – major employers, small businesses, active downtown, workforce development



Housing – market dynamics, neighborhoods, affordable housing, housing options



Transportation – roads, public transit, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety, complete streets



Community Resources – public facilities and services, parks and recreation, historic resources, community and cultural resources



Environment – natural resources, infrastructure, sustainability, resilience

Following the roundtable discussions, a speaker from each table reported back to meeting participants some of the key takeaways from their discussion. Below is a summary of comments received in writing or spoken.



 Economic Development	
Issue or Opportunity	Goal / Recommendations
Vision for downtown – who is new development for?	
Lack of retail options, small necessity retail, mom and pop shops, and prevalence of empty retail spaces downtown.	Encourage more retail stores and diversity of businesses downtown. Brand and become a hub for small and individual businesses, not just chain stores. Incentivize developers to offer smaller retail spaces to encourage smaller businesses.
Build on the small and individual restaurant industry and Port Chester’s reputation for dining.	Diversify and attract dining options.
Small businesses are closing or displaced due to redevelopment.	Retain existing businesses. Set definitive policy addressing displacement, including compensation. Provide tax breaks, rebates, and incentives. Encourage developers to lease to local businesses. “First pick” in new developments for current restaurants. Business relations and support.
Lack of focus on inviting small and medium-sized businesses to set up businesses in Port Chester. Acclimate and assimilate new business.	Work with the Chamber of Commerce. “Newcomer council.” Have the Village brand themselves through more social media. Cater to attract young people. Collaborate with business development groups.



	Keep the same rules for new businesses (zoning codes).
Encourage entrepreneurship.	Provide a “Business Launch Pad” in a brick and mortar space to help new businesses start up. Make resources for access in both English and Spanish. Maker space. Business incubation.
Activate downtown.	Beer garden / outdoor spaces / patio seating / rooftops. Farmers markets / popups / food festival. Paint and sip, coffee shops, brunch places. Tax incentives for filming (Stamford CT as example). Anchor for Main Street.
Make the waterfront not just a recreation space, but an economic opportunity. Rejuvenate the waterfront.	Make it both a recreation and economic space. Have kayaks and encourage artists to come (from Clay Art Center, SUNY Purchase art students). Clean up the “gut” area. Add an open band pit. Activate and manage waterfront => invest + hire harbor master.
Lack of civic space/central green for public gathering.	Desire for large, central green downtown where festivals, farmers’ markets, concerts, theater can take place.
15-minute city / Walkable local ecosystem.	Plan businesses to have a good mix in walking distance.
Physical character of new development is lacking.	Aesthetic standards. Implement sidewalk set back requirement to increase pedestrian friendly sidewalks.



	Reinstate architectural review board or hire architectural professionals to ensure that character of historical elements of the village is sustained. Trees and plant beds on sidewalks.
Construction results in safety issues on sidewalks	
Aesthetic issues in downtown – empty retail, dirty sidewalks and street features.	Deep cleaning of sidewalks, post office boxes, street signs. Clean/repaint exteriors of vacant buildings.
Better job opportunities are needed in Port Chester.	Encourage workforce training to offer more jobs with a livable wage to allow Port Chester residents to live and work here. Hire Port Chester residents on new development projects in the Village.
Vision for North Main Street.	
Create community and encourage people to stay in the Village.	Mixer, events, “new to PC” meetups PC Day, Cultural Day, more!
 Housing	
Issue or Opportunity	Goal / Recommendations
“Affordable housing” in new development is not affordable enough for Port Chester residents.	Determine ranges and criteria for affordability. Set aside 10% of units as affordable. Make affordable housing more welcoming for new tenants. Explore zoning changes and policies that encourage more affordable housing development and conversion.
Lack of government rental assistance (Section 8 application is closed)	



Aging residents that want to stay in the Village lack affordable housing options.	Support seniors to stay in the community. Encourage affordable and accessible housing for seniors (55+). Outreach program to seniors to help them understand programs, existing tax exemptions, and benefits (e.g., STAR). Work with Port Chester Housing Authority to improve existing senior housing stock.
New housing development should welcome existing Port Chester residents, workforce, and young people.	Communicate to residents about upcoming new construction. Explore zoning and policy changes that encourage local preference and preference for vulnerable populations. Create a housing resource hub on the Village website to showcase housing opportunities for locals.
Concern about displacement of residents	Explore policy changes that can help displaced residents find new housing. Provide compensation for displaced residents. Balance stricter code enforcement with programs to help displaced from overcrowded housing.
Port Chester Housing Authority properties need improvement.	Redevelop Port Chester Housing Authority properties.
Lack of ownership opportunities	Encourage development of condos for sale and affordable homeownership opportunities.
Scale of housing developments in downtown	Explore zoning changes and/or policies that scale down development downtown. Two and three-bedroom apartments are needed, not just studios.
Redevelop the area from the Costco parking lot towards Columbus Park to the sewage plant.	Rezone for tall buildings (12-15 stories) for more tax base and develop waterfront space there.



Lack of diversity in housing typologies, especially options outside of downtown.	Explore zoning changes and/or policies that encourage diverse housing options outside of downtown. Microhomes. Garden apartments. CD4 District – Townhouses, middle housing.
Lack of outdoor space for residents	Focus on open space and air access for new and existing residential buildings (e.g., courtyards, balconies).
Lack of neighborhood amenities in walking distance in neighborhoods outside of downtown	Amenities and neighborhood shops need to be walkable. Rezoning to allow small local commercial (corner store) in residential areas.
Concerns about Overcrowding More apartments, more residents = more cars, more traffic, more parking problems Overload on police and fire	
Transportation	
Issue or Opportunity	Goal / Recommendations
Lack of parking availability and cost of parking.	Create free parking areas. Explore a downtown parking garage. Better enforcement on illegal parking and delivery drivers. Require developers to provide public parking spaces in exchange for bonus (e.g., the Embassy project).



Street parking concerns – too much street parking, narrow streets, commercial vehicles parking on neighborhood streets.	Provide a Centralized parking lots for commercial vehicles. Reduce on-street parking and require more in-building parking.
Traffic congestion and too many cars.	Provide better traffic organization, such as traffic circles. Road improvements at dangerous intersections. Better messaging on road closures. Provide alternative transportation options to reduce car dependence (e.g., local shuttle, school buses, bike lanes).
Lack of local public transit and lack of school buses to get around the Village.	Explore local public transportation to circulate around Port Chester and connect users to key destinations (e.g., schools, neighborhoods, train station, downtown).
Lack of amenities as bus stops and train station.	Provide more benches at bus stops and the train station, provide shelters and shade.
Bee Line Bus doesn't have tap to pay.	Encourage Westchester County to adopt a tap to pay system.
Food delivery bike drivers.	Require licenses, registration, and insurance. Provide education and clear rules for bicycles and e-bikes.
Lack of bike infrastructure and safety.	Make Port Chester more bikeable to reduce car dependence, to provide transportation alternatives, recreation, and safety for youth and others. Install bike lanes (suggested locations include King Street, Ridge Street, North Main Street to Rt. 1) and bike racks downtown and at other destinations. Shut down a road to car traffic for biking once a month. Bike education.



Concerns about walkability, pedestrian safety, and sidewalks.	Enhance walkability and pedestrian friendliness of streets. Improve the train underpasses with lighting and keep them clean. Consider sidewalk 50/50 program where the village matches funds with property owners to improve sidewalks. Explore raised intersections, wider sidewalks, and accessibility to improve safety.
Street signage in the village needs replacement.	Provide funding and support for DPW to replace local street signs.
Community Resources	
Issue or Opportunity	Goal / Recommendations
Limited parks, recreation, and open space and increasing density.	Increase recreation fees from new developments. Develop basketball courts and pickle ball courts. Create more green spaces and open spaces scattered throughout the village (e.g. pocket parks). Village should acquire old lots and turn them into parks or open space.
Existing parks can use improvements.	Maintain and improve existing parks. Lyon Park – lights. Summerfield Park - take down the fence. Waterfront promenade – have a small open pit for performances. Improve aesthetics. Activate smaller parks (e.g. rotate pop-up store). Provide wider public seating.



	Provide access to amenities like wifi and trash cans in parks and waterfront.
Additional recreation, activities, and places for youth are needed.	Provide an additional recreation center with free gym, computer classes, and language classes.
Leverage community assets: Library, Carver Center, Library, Clay Arts Center, Abendroth Park, Dog Park, Port Chester Yacht Club.	
Build community through events.	Communication about events. Provide year-round events. Community cookouts. Music festival. Food festival featuring local business. Beech Street parking lot would be a perfect site for farmer's market and community events. Closing particular streets for community events.
Volunteerism declining.	Encourage volunteerism. Rotary Club, Lion's Club, and VFW.
Cramped police station.	Expand or open new police station.
Lack of historic preservation of buildings and sites.	Preserve old charm of Port Chester. Enhance and protect historical sites. Establish a Historic Preservation Commission Appoint an Architectural Review Board. Save St. Peter's Church.
Welcome new residents to the community.	Consider a welcoming resource with information.
Engagement with Spanish-speaking community.	Resources for Spanish speaking families.



 Environment	
Issue or Opportunity	Goal / Recommendations
Loss of trees and lack of trees in Port Chester.	Restore and enhance canopy cover. Plant more trees - Tree planting program. Plant trees on every sidewalk and design sidewalks to accommodate tree growth. Maintain existing trees. Focus on large tree growth and retention (arborist).
Lack of greenery in downtown.	Require street trees. Plant beds.
Urban heat island.	Standards need to be applied to sidewalks with added trees and bioswales.
Green building and higher level of stormwater requirements.	Insist on green roofs in all new developments. Require and incentivize green energy development and conversion and require higher levels for developers with storm water retention.
Flood zone in downtown – flooding at Westchester Avenue and Main Street and outside of Don Bosco.	
Flooding: In addition to Byram River and the Sound, underground water and geological conditions under the Village and surface water contributing to flooding, overtaking catch basins, hydro static pressure causing asphalt cracking.	
Impervious coverage.	Require permeable paving for driveways etc.



Electrical lines above ground.	Bury electrical lines.
Defunct, inactive, overgrown cable lines.	Identify and remove defunct, inactive, overgrown cable lines.
	Establish an environmental department/commission/committee.
	Establish community gardens (e.g., at schools) Provide more composting bins stations in specific checkpoints around the village (e.g., at the high school, Lyons Park).

In addition to the roundtable activity, participants were invited to comment on three boards. First, they were asked to comment on the draft vision statement. On the second, they could mark where they live or work on a map of the Village using blue stickers (where they live) and red stickers (where they work). And on the third board, they marked their favorite locations in Port Chester using stickers, categorized by community facilities (blue), retail/restaurants (red), parks (green), and other (yellow). The marked-up boards are shown below.



Draft Vision Statement



Port Chester envisions a future that builds on its rich **diversity, vibrant downtown, unique waterfront**, and strong regional **transportation connections** to create a more **connected, inclusive**, and resilient **community**.
that humans + organizations are eager to invest their time + resources in for continuous improvement

The Village will foster thoughtful growth, celebrate its **neighborhoods**, expand economic opportunity, and encourage a **diverse** range of housing choices that support **affordability** and allow people of different incomes, ages, and household types to **thrive** in Port Chester.

By investing in **public spaces**, infrastructure, and development patterns that promote **affordability**, long-term **sustainability** and quality of life, Port Chester will continue to evolve as a dynamic, **welcoming**, and forward-looking **community** with a strong **sense of place** and a lasting commitment to prosperity, resilience, and environmental stewardship.

flexibility

One comment card provided feedback on the draft vision statement: “Would love to see creativity and culture represented in the vision statement.”



Where do you live or work in the Village?

Stamford





What's your favorite place in the Village?

