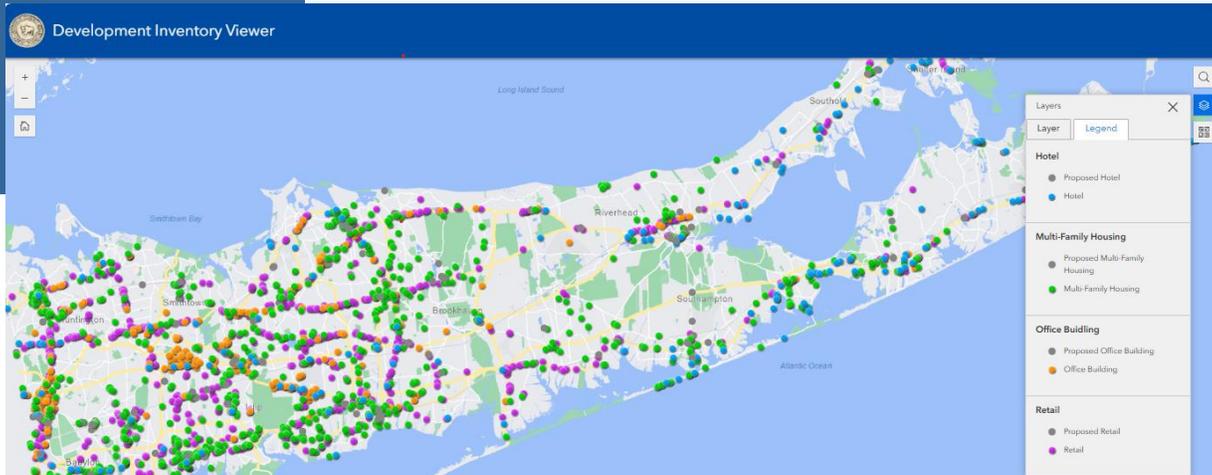


ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025



Department of Economic Development & Planning

SUFFOLK COUNTY

Email: Planning@SuffolkCountyNY.gov

Website: [Suffolk County Planning Commission](http://SuffolkCountyPlanningCommission)



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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE AND THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Forward by Jennifer Casey, Chairwoman

In accordance with Suffolk County Administrative code sec A14-6, the Suffolk County Planning Commission has prepared the following Annual Report which chronicles the activities of the Commission and includes “a survey of conditions in the County.”

The Suffolk County Planning Commission, in collaboration with the Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, aims to promote the development of livable, inclusive, sustainable, and economically vibrant communities by providing guidance to local municipalities at the county level. This is achieved through active engagement and dialogue with local governments and public agencies to address inter-community and countywide issues related to land use, housing, public space, transportation, environment, water quality, and economic development.

In the context of project reviews, the Commission has processed 1,108 referrals from municipalities in accordance with the Suffolk County Administrative Code A14. These referrals encompassed a variety of projects, including 55 Change of Zone requests, 388 Variances, 64 Subdivisions, 228 Code Amendments, and 172 Site plans.

Suffolk County is a highly sought-after location for living, working, visiting, and shopping in the United States. However, it faces significant decisions that will shape its future, such as addressing wastewater impacts on water quality and coastal resiliency, managing increased congestion, adapting to the shift from traditional retail to online shopping, diversifying housing options for low- and middle-income families, remaking shopping malls and office parks with adaptive reuse tactics, and enhancing civic participation. The county's leaders and residents need to continue to use creativity and bold leadership by collaborating to address the complex issues that face the County including wastewater, land development and housing.

The Commission acknowledges and appreciates the expertise, thoroughness, and collaboration of the County's Department of Economic Development & Planning staff. In 2024, the Commission engaged in various comprehensive planning activities. Furthermore, the Commission continued its partnership with Touro Law Center's Land Use Institute providing programming and education for local planners, planning boards as well as students. Panels were presented on Wind Energy, Long Island Land Banks, Inclusive Housing, Suffolk County Sewers and with the County Executive's participation and leadership on Long Island Transportation Challenges and Solutions. Looking ahead to 2025, the Suffolk County Planning Commission is committed to continuing its collaborative efforts with local organizations to foster innovation and seize opportunities that will contribute to Suffolk County's promising future.

SUFFOLK COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

Suffolk County Planning Commission Staff

**Sarah
Lansdale** **Elisa Picca**
Commissioner *Chief Deputy
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Director of Planning

William O'Brien Research Analyst

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Suffolk County Planning Commission Overview

The core role of the Commission under state and county law is to identify and promote countywide land use values and planning priorities.

The Commission is comprised of 15 members who are nominated to four-year terms by the County Executive and are confirmed by the County Legislature.

Of the 15 Commission members:

- One represents each of the ten Towns in Suffolk,
- One represents Villages with population under 5,000,
- One represents Villages with populations over 5,000, and
- There are three at-large representatives

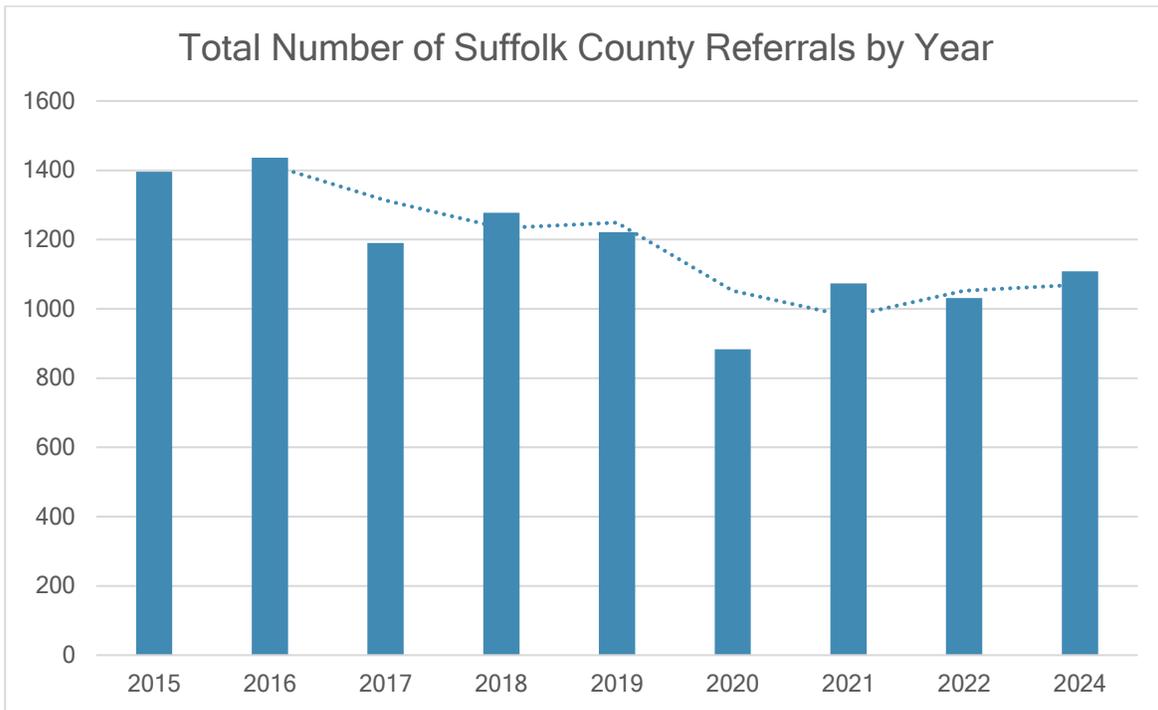
2024 Planning Commission Achievements

2023-2024 Suffolk County Planning Commission Referrals Processing

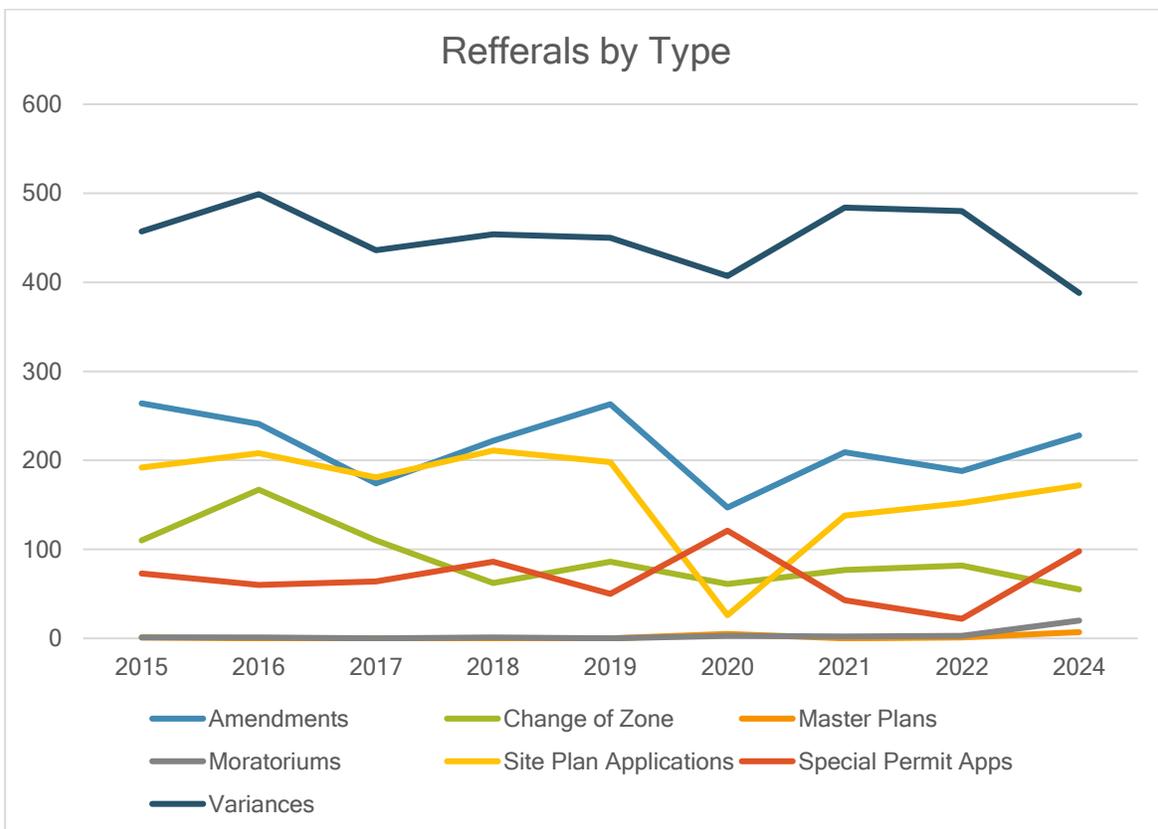
Zoning Referrals	2023	2024
Amendments	188	228
Change of Zone	82	55
Master Plans/Comp	1	7
Moratoriums	3	20
Site Plan Applications	152	172
Special Permit Apps	22	98
Variances	480	388
COU	3	2
IMA	0	1
SEQRA	40	73
ER	1	0
Total Subdivision Referrals	59	64
TOTAL REFERRALS	1,031	1,108
COMMISSION ACTIONS		
SCPC Local Determinations	468	649
SCPC No Actions	1	1
SCPC Approvals	23	38
SCPC Disapprovals	0	6
Incomplete	1	3
Adjourned	1	
TOTAL ACTIONS	26	697

Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, Division of Planning & Environment

Below are graphic representations of the Planning Commission referral types and volumes.

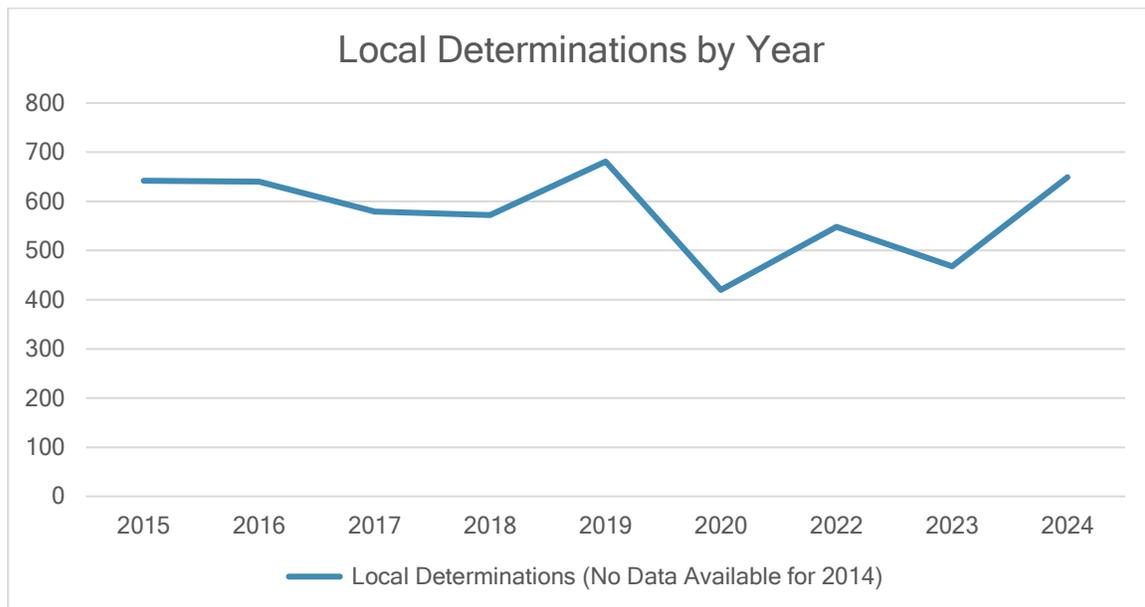


Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, Division of Planning & Environment

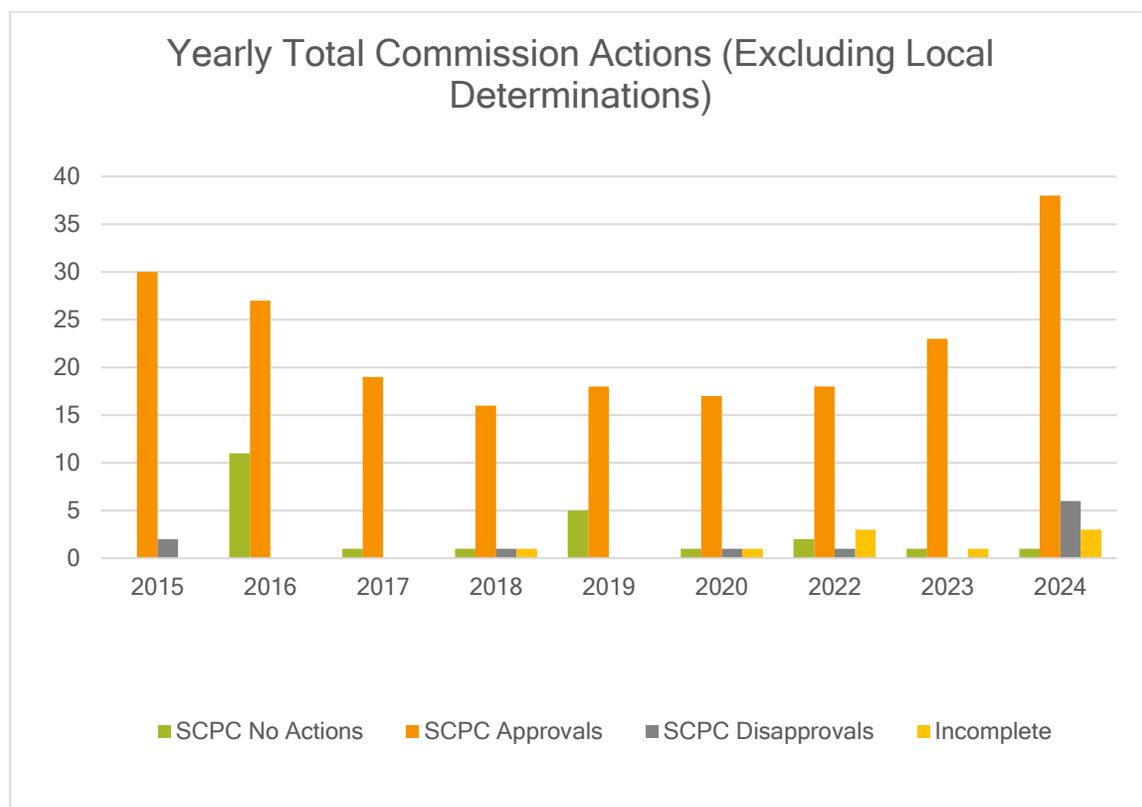


Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, Division of Planning & Environment

Planning Commission referral types and volumes (cont.)



Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, Division of Planning & Environment



Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, Division of Planning & Environment

In December 2023, the Planning Commission adopted updated guidelines which can be found at the following link:

https://suffolkcountyny.gov/portals/0/formsdocs/planning/Publications/2023_Suffolk_County_Planning_Commission_Guidebook.pdf

Please see Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning - Arthur Kunz Library, for all Publications, the Division of Planning and Environment webpage, and the Suffolk County Planning Commission webpage for additional recent reports.

2024 Economic Development and Planning Accomplishments



Farmland Preservation, April 2024

County Executive Romaine signed bills to increase Farmland Preservation funding by 50% to \$15M a year. Fifty years ago, with foresight and concern for preserving cultivatable soil, agricultural livelihoods and remaining rural landscapes, Suffolk County was, and still is, at the vanguard of farmland preservation. It is the oldest Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program in the country and continues to be a model for farmland protection. Suffolk County has successfully protected approximately 11,000 acres of farmland since the program's inception and over 20,000 acres have been preserved County-wide through a variety of County, Town, and Non-Profit farmland preservation efforts.

Wetland Restorations Grants, July 2024

The start of a multimillion-dollar state and federal grant project aims to restore "high priority wetland sites" in Suffolk's coastal resiliency plan at Scully Marsh, 25 acres; Islip Preserve, 35 acres; and Cupsogue Beach Marsh, 80 acres. The plan serves to harden our coast by restoring the area to its natural conditions, protecting neighboring communities and safeguarding the area from erosion. Suffolk received a grant totaling \$1.29 million for Phase One of the program through a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant. Phase Two funding, for \$2.75 million, will come from the federal government. The entire project will cost \$4.3 million.



Violet Cove - Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, December 2024

Suffolk County was awarded \$2 million from the state's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) for construction improvements at Violet Cove, converting vacant land overlooking Moriches Bay into a recreational eco-destination. The money is part of \$14.2 million of LWRP funds awarded to 21 communities statewide. The program provides grants to communities to develop plans that cultivate a vision for their waterfront, expand public access, protect the environment, while also boosting tourism and economic development opportunities.

Aquaculture Lease Program

The County's shellfish industry has been enhanced through the establishment and implementation of the Aquaculture Lease Program in Peconic Bay and Gardiners Bay. Based on landings reported to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in 2023, 15.8% of the oysters landed in the State were farmed by leaseholders in the Suffolk County Shellfish Aquaculture Lease Program. Currently there are 36 shellfish aquaculture leases in place on approximately 595 acres of underwater lands.



Kelp Harvest, Violet Cove, May 2024

Suffolk County is expanding its aquacultural footprint while taking proactive measures to clean the Great South Bay and mitigate climate change. Along with Violet Cove Oysters and Lazy Point Farms, we celebrated the harvest of the first commercially-grown sugar kelp crop in the state at Violet Cove in the Mastic Beach communities. Violet Cove Oysters, LLC is the first company to receive a commercial license from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to grow kelp.

Grove Apartments, East Patchogue, May 2024

Suffolk County is providing land acquisition and infrastructure funding for the Grove Apartments in East Patchogue's Grove Apartments development, with the 2.78-acre project consisting of garden-style apartments comprised of 55 1BR, 2BR, and 3BR units. The project also includes an Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI) award from NYS for 17 units, which will be set aside for vulnerable populations, with referrals and support services provided by New Ground, Inc.





East Hampton Affordable Housing, December 2024

The Green at Gardiner's Point, 50 affordable rental apartments on Three Mile Harbor Road, which was jointly developed by Georgica Green Ventures and the East Hampton Housing Authority. Two income levels will be represented within the complex, with 41 apartments for people earning up to 60 percent of the area median income and eight reserved for Section 8 subsidies, and one for the resident manager. The Town of East Hampton pitched in \$25,000 of seed money to get the project started and Suffolk County and New York State contributed about \$1.7 million each with the remainder coming from a construction loan.

Suffolk County Down Payment Assistance Program, April 2024

Suffolk County's Department of Economic Development & Planning Community Development unit attended the closing for Veronique Daniel, who became a first-time homeowner thanks to the Suffolk County Down Payment Assistance Program. Veronique was able to qualify for \$30,000 in assistance to purchase a condo in the Town of Huntington. All told, in 2024 six DPAP grants were awarded totaling \$162,000.



Control Tower Grant, Gabreski Airport, February 2024

As part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law - Airport Terminals Program, Suffolk County was awarded \$4.9 million to replace the original control tower from the early 1940's at Francis S. Gabreski Airport in Westhampton Beach. Another \$3.35 million has already been secured in state and federal grants. The remaining \$7.76 million needed to complete the project is expected to come from the FAA or Gabreski's fund balance. The airport anticipates construction to begin in March 2025 and take 2 years for completion.

Gabreski Airport / Signature Aviation, October 2024

Signature Aviation broke ground on a \$48 million dollar investment that stands to supercharge the economic impact of Francis S. Gabreski Airport in Westhampton Beach with additional hanger space, a new terminal office building and an aircraft fuel facility. County Executive Romaine was joined by colleagues in government and from the business community to welcome this new addition and the jobs it will bring.



Lawrence Aviation

In Port Jefferson, the Suffolk County Landbank (SCLB) is making strides in redeveloping the 125-acre former Lawrence Aviation Industries (LAI) property, a federally designated Superfund site. LAI represents SCLB's largest brownfield site to date. The property was declared a Superfund site in 2000 with the EPA clean-up ultimately costing over \$50 million.

In 2023, the SCLB took ownership of the LAI property, saving the County over \$700,000 annually in ongoing tax liability. With a winning bid of \$5 million, a solar developer is purchasing approximately 36 acres zoned light industrial on which it will install 5 MW of ground-mount solar panels. An additional 31 acres are projected for MTA use. As of November 2024, the SCLB closed with the Town of Brookhaven on 40 acres which will be designated as TOB open space. The partial delisting of the site from the National Priorities List is proceeding and is anticipated to be complete in early 2025. The SCLB is continuing to advance the sale of the remaining acreage.

2024 Suffolk County Real Property Auction, November 2024

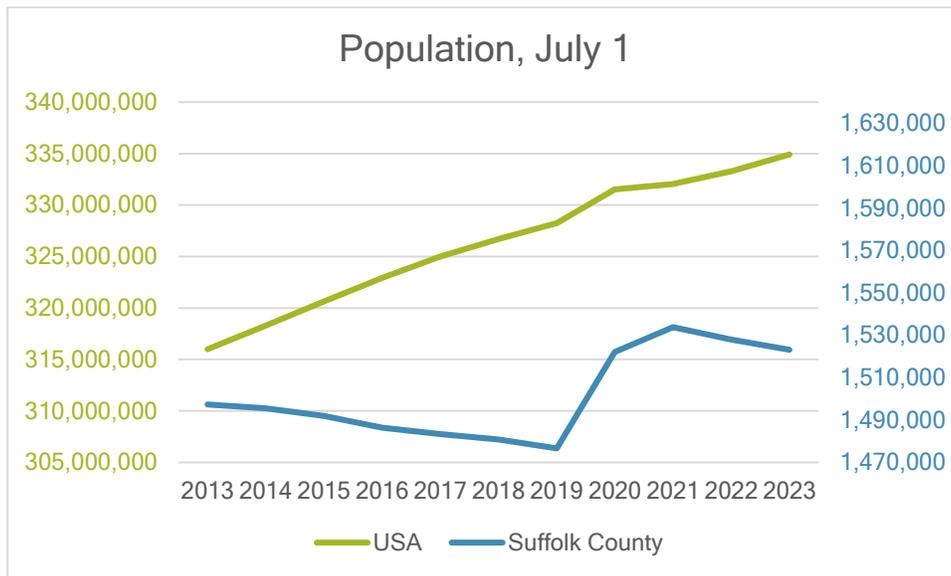
For 2024, the total winning bids were nearly 60% higher than last year's auction with nearly the same number of parcels.

- Winning Bids, 61 Properties: \$13,658,500.
- Average Price Per Property: \$223,910.
- Total Deposits Collected: \$3,141,435.
- County Auction Fees Collected: \$409,735.
- SLAP Fees (Sheriff's Labor Assistance Program) collected: \$83,859.
- Total Fee Paid to Vendor (\$325.00 per winning bid): \$19,825.



County Overview

According to the Census Bureau’s Population Estimates Program (PEP), the County population on July 1, 2023 (1,523,170) was 3.1% higher than in 2019 (1,476,601). This is largely due to an influx of migration to the suburbs due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The population decreased by 0.6% since its peak in 2021 (1,533,815). Prior to 2020, the population decreased every year from 2014-2019. The County’s population is the largest of any county in New York State outside of New York City. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the County ranks 26th in population out of all 3,142 counties in the United States and has a larger population than 12 states.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, total personal income of all County residents amounted to \$135.3 billion in 2023, an increase of 6% over the 2022 figure. The County’s 2023 per capita personal income was \$88,816, ranking 4th highest out of the 62 counties in New York State and in the top 4.5% out of all counties in the nation.

As the table below shows, the median household income in the County was \$124,045 in 2023, placing it 60% higher than the median household income in the nation (\$77,719) and ranking it 51% higher than New York State (\$82,095). In addition, the percentage of persons living in poverty in the County was 6.8% in 2023, significantly lower than the overall percentage in New York and the United States.

Median Household Income and Poverty Rate in the County, with Comparisons

Area	2018		2023	
	Median Household Income	Persons Below Poverty (%)	Median Household Income	Persons Below Poverty (%)
Suffolk County	\$100,468	7.2%	\$124,045	6.8%
Nassau County	116,304	5.6	141,568	5.4
New York State	67,844	13.6	82,095	14.2
United States	61,937	13.1	77,719	12.5

Source: U. S. Census Bureau (American Community Survey)

According to the New York State Department of Labor, the average annual pay in the County in 2023 amounted to \$74,753, an increase of 23.7% in the five years since 2018 (\$60,423). This increase was greater than the rate of inflation in the NY-NJ-PA metro area over the same period, which was 17.7% according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The County has a relatively well-educated population. Among residents aged 25 and over in 2023, 91.4% were high school graduates and 40.4% held a bachelor's degree or higher. These figures compare to 89.8% and 36.2%, respectively, for the nation, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The following table lists colleges and universities in Suffolk County with enrollment:

Higher Education Institutions in Suffolk County, New York:

Institution	Suffolk County Campus Locations	Enrollment (2023-2024)
<i>Public</i>		
Stony Brook University	Stony Brook, Southampton	25,825
Farmingdale State College	East Farmingdale	9,541
Suffolk County Community College	Selden, Riverhead, Brentwood, Sayville	20,143
<i>Private</i>		
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory School of Biological Sciences	Cold Spring Harbor	49
Five Towns College	Dix Hills	595
Long Island University- Regional Campuses	Riverhead, Brentwood, Southampton*	61
Molloy University Suffolk Center	East Farmingdale*	NA
St. Joseph's University	Patchogue	3,036
Touro College and University System	Bay Shore, Central Islip	1,132

*Data for this location is unavailable or incomplete.
Source: New York State Education Department



Source: Discover Long Island

Economic Indicators

Demographics

- According to the U. S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the County had a gross domestic product of \$131.8 billion in 2023, a 30% increase since 2018.
- According to the New York State Department of Labor, as of November 2024, there were 1,378,300 jobs in the region, an increase of 18,900 or 1.39% since November 2023.

The following table shows employment for the region by industry sector:

Non-Farm Employment in the Nassau-Suffolk Region, by Industry, in Thousands

Industry	November 2023	November 2024	% Change
<i>Goods Producing</i>	<i>150.8</i>	<i>154.6</i>	<i>2.52%</i>
Mining, Logging & Construction	81.3	85.4	5.04%
Manufacturing	69.5	69.2	-0.43%
<i>Service Providing</i>	<i>1,208.6</i>	<i>1,223.7</i>	<i>1.25%</i>
Wholesale Trade	62.4	62.9	0.80%
Retail Trade	147.5	144.7	-1.90%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	47.2	47	-0.42%
Information	14.8	14.3	-3.38%
Financial Activities	71.8	71.1	-0.97%
Professional & Business Services	186.3	182.6	-1.99%
Private Education & Health Services	289	301.3	4.26%
Leisure & Hospitality	129.4	136	5.10%
Other Services	57.8	58.5	1.21%
Government	202.4	205.3	1.43%
TOTAL NON-FARM	1,378.3	1,359.4	+1.39%

Source: New York State Department of Labor

- As of November 2024, the County's unemployment rate was 3.1%, lower than the 3.6% recorded in August 2023.
- The County unemployment rate in November 2024 was lower than the rate in the Nation (4%), the State (4.2%) and in New York City (5.5%). As of November 2024, there were 770,200 employed residents in the County. This figure was 1.4% lower than the November 2023 figure (781,400).

The following table lists noteworthy larger-scale firms in the County and employment. Many of have made multiple “Best of” Employers lists.

Mid-size to Large Employers in Suffolk County

Firm Name	Industry	Location	Regional Significance	Total Number of Employees
Northwell Health	Health Care System	Melville	Dedicated Ambulatory Surgery Center, 500+ employees	70,000
Henry Schein	Telecommunications, Medical Products and Services	Melville	Global Headquarter Campus, 1,200+ local employees	20,000
Zebra Technologies	Marking, Tracking & Printing Technologies	Holtsville	Top Workplaces 2020 honor by Newsday for the third consecutive year	7,400
Leviton	Electrical Products & Services	Melville	Global Headquarters	6,000
MSC Industrial Direct	Metalworking Products and Services	Melville	Customer Support Center and Headquarters	6,000
The Bountiful Company (Nature's Bounty)	Vitamins and Nutritional Products	Ronkonkoma	Corporate Headquarters	4,500
Verint	Customer Analytics Software & Hardware products	Melville	Global Headquarters	4,300 +
Geico	Insurance	Woodbury	Location of 2,800 local employees	40,000 +
American Portfolio Group	Financial Services	Holbrook	Five years ranked Best Companies to Work for in New York	1,000+
Canon	Optical, Imaging and Industrial Products Medical Products and Services	Melville	Corporate Headquarters	1,000+
Bohler Engineering	Civil Engineering Consulting	Hauppauge	Six years ranked Best Companies to Work for in New York	1,000+
Kurt Weiss Greenhouses	Growing & Affiliate Delivery	Center Moriches	US headquarters, fourth-largest grower in the U.S.	1,000
Dime Community Bank	Business Banking & Commercial Lending	Hauppauge	Merger expanded BNB bank from East End origins	800+
SupplyHouse	Plumbing/HVAC Products Supplier	Melville	US Headquarters, ranked Best Companies to Work for in New York	500+

Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, Division of Planning & Environment

- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there were 55,862 private business establishments located in the County in the second quarter of 2024, an increase of 6.4% since the second quarter of 2020 (52,499).

- The County has a mix of large and small employers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2022, there were 24 businesses in the County that employed 1,000 or more persons, yet a majority are small businesses, as 89% of County business have fewer than 20 employees. Furthermore, 63% have 5 or fewer employees and 79% employed 9 or fewer. There were also 153,902 “non-employer” firms in the County, mostly self-employed individuals. The number of these businesses increased by 16.6% in the five years between 2017 and 2022.



Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development and Planning

Economic Base

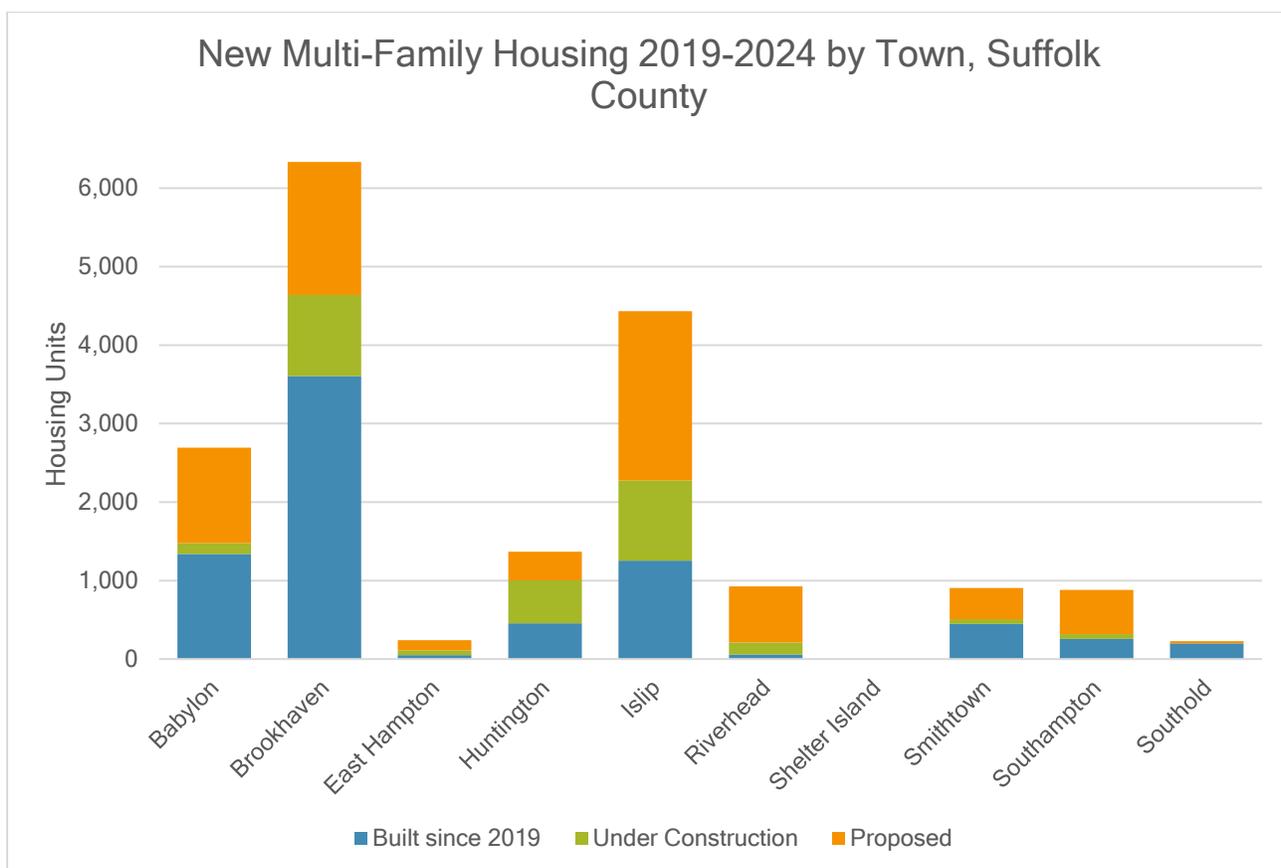
The County has a substantial commercial office building market. According to CBRE, a multinational real estate firm, the office availability rate on Long Island was 15% in the 4th quarter of 2024, equal to the availability rate in the 4th quarter of 2023. The average office space rental rate was \$30.94 per square foot in the 4th quarter of 2024, an increase of 2% over the 4th quarter of 2023 figure. According to the County’s Department of Economic Development & Planning, there are 27.3 million square feet of commercial office buildings located in the County. This figure includes nearly 700,000 square feet of new office space constructed since 2019. An additional 2 million square feet of office space has been proposed for future construction.

The County has significant industrial space totaling 91 million sq. ft., according to the commercial real estate advisory firm Cushman and Wakefield. The industrial market fundamentals remained very strong through the 4th quarter of 2024. According to Cushman and Wakefield, the County’s industrial vacancy rate in the 4th quarter of 2024 was 5.6% and the weighted average of industrial asking rent was \$17.30 per sq. ft., a decrease of 2.4% since the 4th quarter of 2023. The largest concentration of industrial space in the County is located in Hauppauge, with more than 13 million square feet of space. Additionally, significant light industrial space is located in the area around Long Island MacArthur Airport in Ronkonkoma and Bohemia and further east in the Yaphank area. Best Pet Supplies Inc

The Route 110 Corridor in western Suffolk County is a hub of the Long Island business community. According to the County’s Department of Economic Development & Planning, the hamlet of Melville, located on Route 110, has 9.7 million square feet of office space and 1,485 acres in Melville and East Farmingdale are developed with light industrial uses. Melville is also home to large corporate headquarters, such as Henry Schein Inc., a Fortune 500 distributor of healthcare products and services. Melville is the U.S. headquarters for Canon and Nikon and a regional headquarters for Fortune 500 cosmetics producer Estee Lauder and large banks including Capital One and TD Bank. After Melville,

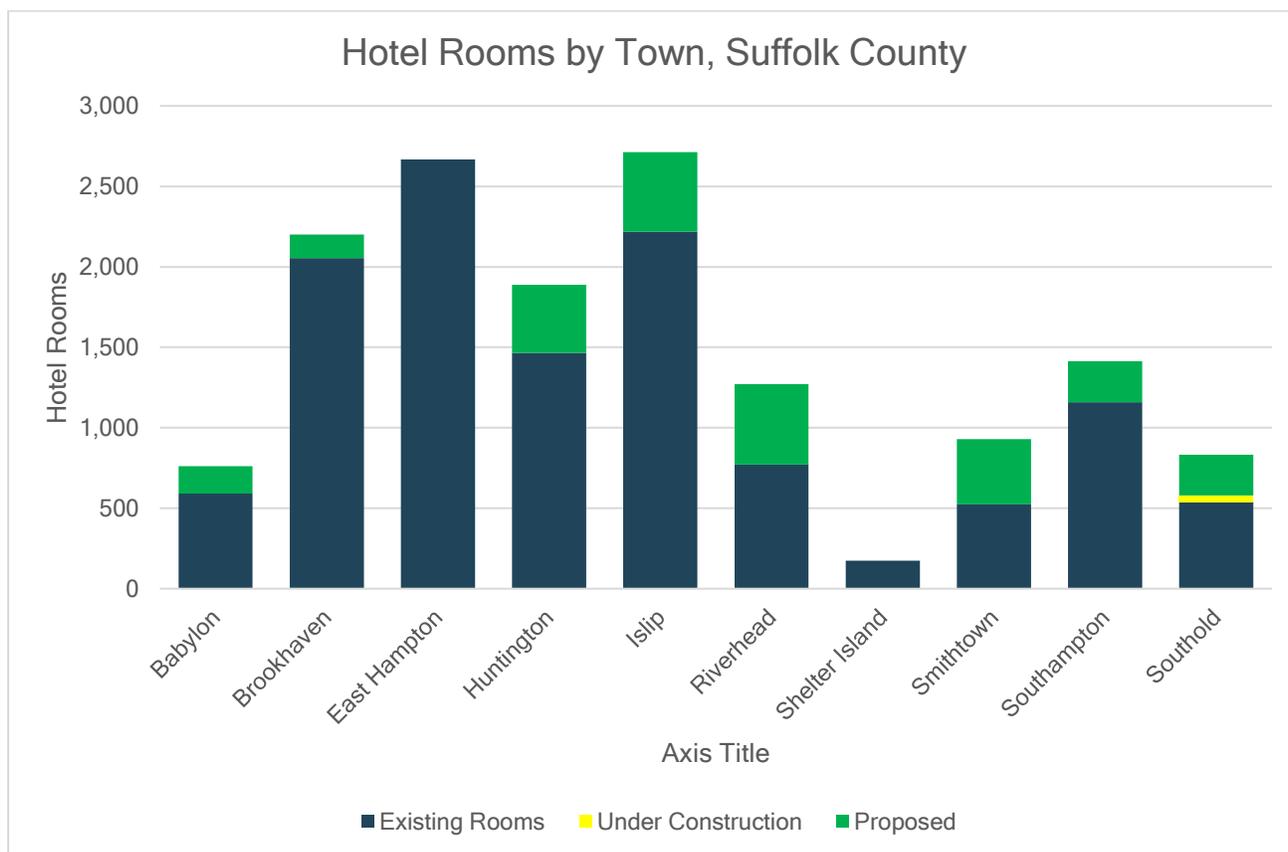
the next largest concentrations of private office space in the County are in Hauppauge (3.8 million square feet), Islandia (1.8 million square feet), Bohemia (726,000 square feet), and Ronkonkoma (1 million square feet), according to the Department of Economic Development and Planning.

Multi-family housing construction is robust in the County. According to the Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, since 2019, a total of 80 multi-family housing complexes containing a total of 7,661 units have been built in the County and more than 3,000 units are currently under construction. About 73% of the new units are in rental apartment complexes, and 27% are in ownership complexes. In addition, 82 multi-family housing complexes are currently proposed for construction in the County, which could add more than 7,200 housing units.



Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, Division of Planning & Environment

According to the County's Department of Economic Development & Planning, there are 284 hotels, motels and inns located in the County. Together these lodging properties have over 12,000 rooms. Approximately 20% of these rooms are seasonal (open for half the year in the warmer months) and these seasonal rooms are located primarily in the eastern end of the County. Since 2019, more than 430 lodging rooms have been added in the County. This includes a 128-room Homewood Suites that opened in Lake Ronkonkoma in 2019, a 146-room Home2Suites by Hilton that opened in Yaphank in 2019, a 25 room Canoe Place Inn & Cottages in Hampton Bays that opened in 2022, and an 80-room Hampton Inn that opened at the historic site of Huntington's old Town Hall in 2022. In 2024, construction began on The Enclaves, a new hotel in Southold with 40 year-round rooms. Proposals have been made for several additional new hotels in the County, which could result in an increase of more than 2,600 hotel rooms. Proposed hotels in the County include the 299-unit Ferncliffe Hotel in Melville and a 96-unit Tempo by Hilton, located in the Village of Patchogue.



Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, Division of Planning & Environment

There are 11 full-service hospitals located in the County. Several of these hospitals have spent or are spending hundreds of millions of dollars on major construction projects to expand and modernize their facilities. For example, Good Samaritan Hospital in West Islip has announced plans to invest \$525 million for a major expansion. Stony Brook University Hospital ("SBUH") is undergoing a \$450 million expansion of its hospital campus, including a new cancer center, the expansion of its emergency, surgical, and obstetrics departments, and a major expansion to its Children's Hospital that opened in 2019. In 2020, Peconic Bay Medical Center in Riverhead completed a \$67 million expansion. A \$60 million cardiac care center at Long Island Community Hospital in Patchogue opened in 2016 and a \$53 million expansion of Huntington Hospital's emergency room opened in 2017. A completely new \$305 million Stony Brook Southampton Hospital is proposed for completion in 2025, replacing the existing Southampton facility. Northwell's South Shore Hospital in Bay Shore is currently undergoing a planned

\$500 million, five-year campus transformation that includes a \$71 million, 34,450 square-foot Women and Infants Center.

The County is a major retail market. According to Esri Business Analyst Suffolk County had annual retail demand of \$21.5 billion in sales. average retail sales per household in the County amounted to \$41,397, 29% higher than New York State (\$32,096) and 38% higher than the nation (\$30,029). Three regional malls and two regional outlet centers serve the County. According to the County Department of Economic Development & Planning, shopping center space in the County totals 52.6 million square feet and an additional 400,000 square feet of new retail space is proposed for construction. Many of the County's downtown business districts have emerged as attractive and vibrant centers for dining and entertainment. Ground floor retail space in the County's downtown centers totals approximately 9 million square feet.



Source: Discover Long Island

Tourism is a multi-billion dollar industry in the County. The County represents 57% of the region's tourism sales, with \$4.3 billion in direct tourism spending as of 2023, according to the consulting firm Tourism Economics. Tourism supports 40,658 local jobs in the County and generated an estimated \$519 million in local and state tax revenues in 2023. The largest share of visitor spending in the County in 2023 was for food and beverages (\$1.2 billion), followed by lodging (\$1 billion), and retail/service stations (\$640 million).

According to Discover Long Island, the occupancy rate of the County's hotels was 75.5% in September 2024, higher than the 74.4% figure in September 2023. The average daily room rate ("ADR") in September 2024 was \$227.80, higher than the \$224.13 ADR from September 2023. ADR was higher than Nassau County (\$196.70), but lower than New York State (\$307.67). Revenue Per Available Room ("RevPAR") in September 2024 was \$172.04, 3.2% higher than September 2023 (\$166.70). RevPar in Suffolk was higher than RevPAR in Nassau County (\$166.25), but lower than in New York State (\$237.74).



Source: Suffolk County Department of Economic Development and Planning

Suffolk County is home to two out of three of Long Island's wine growing American Viticultural Areas (AVAs), with a significant number of wineries located on the North Fork. 49 wine grape varieties have been evaluated in the research vineyard at the Long Island Horticultural Research and Extension Center in Riverhead. Long Island Sustainable Winegrowing is the first certified sustainable viticulture program on the east coast, using international standards of sustainable practices in quality wine-grape production that have been refined for the northeast. According to the New York State Liquor Authority, the County has 71 vineyards, 35 craft breweries (the most of any county in the State), 4 cideries, and 26 distilleries.



Source: Discover Long Island

The County has a significant agricultural sector. According to the most recent U.S. Census of Agriculture, the County has nearly 34,000 acres of active farmland and agricultural production. County agriculture is by far the most diverse in the State with field crops like corn, tomatoes, melons, potatoes, pumpkins, cauliflower and cabbage, grapes/wine, fruit trees and berries, greenhouse, sod and nursery, poultry including ducks, livestock such as bison and steer, hops and grains, and shellfish aquaculture. This \$364 million industry ranks fourth of all Counties in the State (2022 USDA Census of Agriculture). Agriculture in the County directly employees 2,400 people and supports an additional 417 jobs across the County's economy, resulting in \$109 million in income from all jobs and a total economic output of \$353.2 million (IMPLAN economic analysis). In 2022, farms in the County averaged \$10,767 in agricultural sales per acre of farmland, nearly nine times the State average. Direct food sales at farmstands and farmers markets increased 81% from \$27.6 million in 2017 to \$50 million in 2022. This represents just under 14% of the total value of the County's agricultural products. Since 2012 (\$8.9 million), direct food sales have increased by 459%. Though agri-tourism is a large component of County agriculture (\$3 million in 2022), sales in this category decreased by 70.9% from \$10.3 million figure recorded in 2017. The County also participates in the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' Agricultural District Program. This program is based on a combination of landowner incentives

and protections designed to encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural production and forestall the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

The fishing industry and the shellfish industry are important sources of employment and income in the east end of the County. Commercial fishing is a heritage industry in the County that provides quality of life benefits, economic benefits and tourism revenue. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2023, there were 29 commercial fishing establishments in the County, landing more than 20 million pounds of fish, valued at nearly \$23 million. The County's shellfish industry (mostly oysters) has been enhanced through the establishment and implementation of the Aquaculture Lease Program ("ALP") in Peconic Bay and Gardiners Bay. Based on landings reported to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in 2023, 15.8% of the oysters landed in the State were farmed by Leaseholders in the Suffolk County Shellfish Aquaculture Lease Program. As of January 2025, there are 36 shellfish aquaculture leases in place on approximately 595 acres of underwater lands in Peconic Bay and Gardiners Bays. Suffolk County is currently working to expand the current Aquaculture Lease Program to include seaweed cultivation. In Mastic Beach, the County has launched a pilot program that involves the lease of a portion of a former restaurant site in Violet Cove for the purpose of drying kelp. Violet Cove Oysters, LLC is the first company to receive a commercial license to grow kelp from the Department of Environmental Conservation ("DEC"). The kelp is grown in Moriches Bay and once harvested, the leased Violet Cove site, which is currently undergoing a redevelopment plan to promote education and recreation at the site, is utilized to dry the kelp.