

**PORTVILLE COMMUNITY**



**VISION 2020**

**SURVEY RESULTS**



## Introduction

In 2009 the Town of Portville Planning Board began the process of completing a new Comprehensive Plan and Economic Development Strategy (CPEDS) for the Town of Portville. The last plan was completed in 2003. Community needs and opportunities for development change over the years and the existing plan did not fully address concerns regarding potential and emerging development issues.

The CPEDS “*Vision 2020*” Committee began an issue identification and visioning process in January of 2009. The Committee discussed positive and negative aspects of our community, opportunities and threats facing our community and the planning process. The Community Survey was developed by the CPEDS Committee with input from the Town Board.

Two hundred surveys were printed and distributed. The surveys were distributed at the annual Heritage Day event in Pioneer Park and from Town and Village offices. In addition, the surveys were available from local businesses, the library and community bulletin boards. Lastly, the survey was available on our Town’s website [www.portville-ny.org/files/portville-community-survey-20090812.pdf](http://www.portville-ny.org/files/portville-community-survey-20090812.pdf).

The survey’s purpose was to gather and incorporate the opinions, concerns and insight of the community. Most importantly, it was designed to provide residents an opportunity to share likes and dislikes about our community and be a part of the finished plan.

Seventy eight or 39 percent of the surveys were returned, which was a reasonable response rate for this type of survey instrument.

Successful community planning depends upon participation by local residents. In order to assure the Committee’s visioning and issue identification process was representative of the community’s concerns, the Portville Community Survey was constructed as the first public input component of the planning process. Survey results on issues that are a priority to the community as well as quality of life issues such as development and community services will be included in the resulting conclusions of Portville’s “*Vision 2020*” Comprehensive Plan. Every effort is being taken to use the most current statistics available at the time of analysis.

This survey analysis and report is the Committee’s first step in reporting their progress to the community. The Committee will continue to encourage community participation throughout the planning process and report back.

The community is encouraged to continue being involved in the planning and enjoy the process.

For more information contact one of the following committee members:

Bernie Baldwin	933-6254	<a href="mailto:bernie.baldwin@portville-ny.com">bernie.baldwin@portville-ny.com</a>
Chuck Daley	373-8718	<a href="mailto:chuck.daley@portville-ny.com">chuck.daley@portville-ny.com</a>
Chairman Bob Fischer	933-7111	<a href="mailto:bob.fischer@portville-ny.com">bob.fischer@portville-ny.com</a>
Joann McAndrew	933-7452	<a href="mailto:joann.mcandrew@portville-ny.com">joann.mcandrew@portville-ny.com</a>
Dave McCoy	933-7091	<a href="mailto:dave.mccoy@portville-ny.com">dave.mccoy@portville-ny.com</a>

PAGE TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE TABLE OF CONTENTS

1-2. Introduction

3. Table Of Contents

4 Age & Gender Of Respondents

5 COMMUNITY CONCERNS

6. Lack Of Jobs, Population Decline

7. Increase In Poverty

8. Young Residents Are Leaving

9. Special Needs

10. Appearance Of The Town

11. Lack Of Recreational Facilities

12. Possible Wind Or Alternative Energy

13. Possible Adult Entertainment

14. Too Much Traffic

15. Too Many Vacant Buildings

16. Inadequate Infrastructure

17. Frequent Flooding

18. COMMUNITY ASSETS

19. Portville Central School

20. Village Of Portville

21. City Of Olean

22. The Allegheny River & Dodge Creek

23. Self Reliant & Hard Working Residents

24. Scenery is Beautiful

25. Clean Air & Clean Water

26. All Four Seasons To Enjoy

27, Secure In Our Homes

28. Low Crime Rate

29. Good Place To Raise A Family

30. Sprague’s Maple Farms

31, Historic Bedford Corners

32. Pfeiffer Nature Preserve

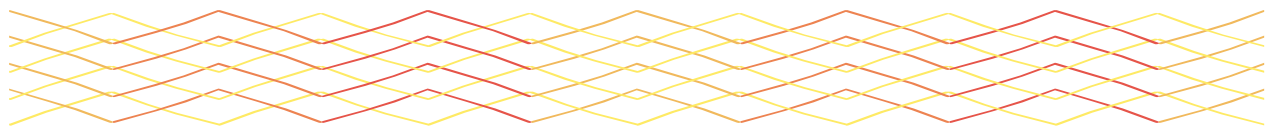
33. Nice Parks

34. Volunteer Fire Departments

35. Village Police Department

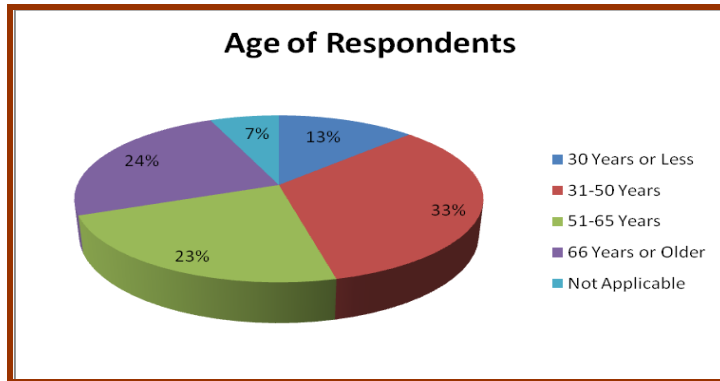
36. Portville Free Library

37. Community Responses On How To improve Portville Quality Of Life



## Age of the respondents

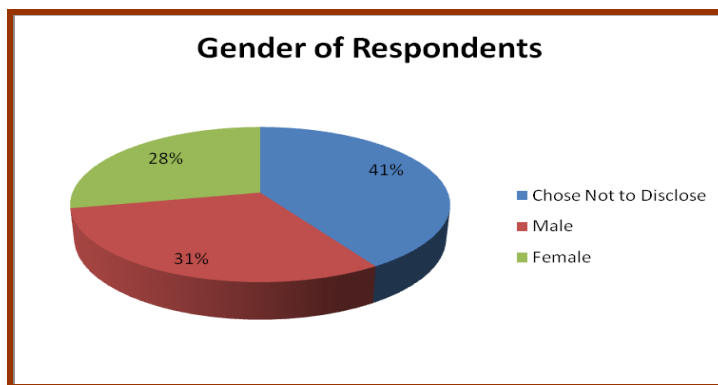
The age of those who returned the survey (the respondents) was included on the Community Survey in an effort to assure that all age groups within the community had been given an opportunity to provide input. Of the 78 surveys that were returned, only five respondents or seven percent of the survey group chose not to indicate their age.



The responses were relatively well distributed across the four age groups with the 31-50 age group having the highest response at 33 percent. The 66 or older and the 51-65 age groups responded at 24 and 23 percent, respectively. The response of the 30 years or less group was the lowest at 13 percent. The relatively low response of the 30 years or younger group might be attributed to orientation and lifestyle because younger people are less likely to be interested or participate in local government.

## Gender of the Respondents

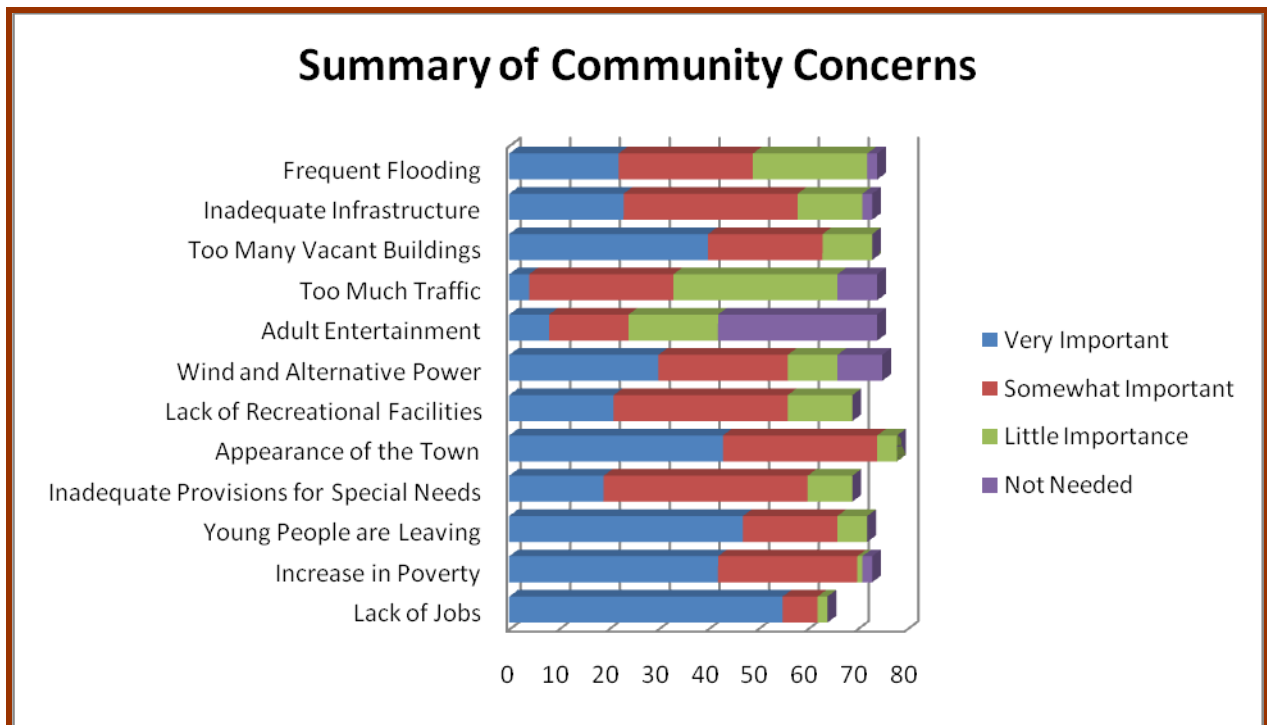
Gender was included in an effort to determine if the survey was equally available to both men and women. Thirty one percent of the respondents were male and 24 percent were female.



Forty one percent of the respondents chose not to indicate their gender, which was the highest “non-response” percentage of all the topics included in the Community Survey. With the exception of this topic, the non-response alternative to all other questions in the survey ranged from zero to eight percent.

## Community Concerns

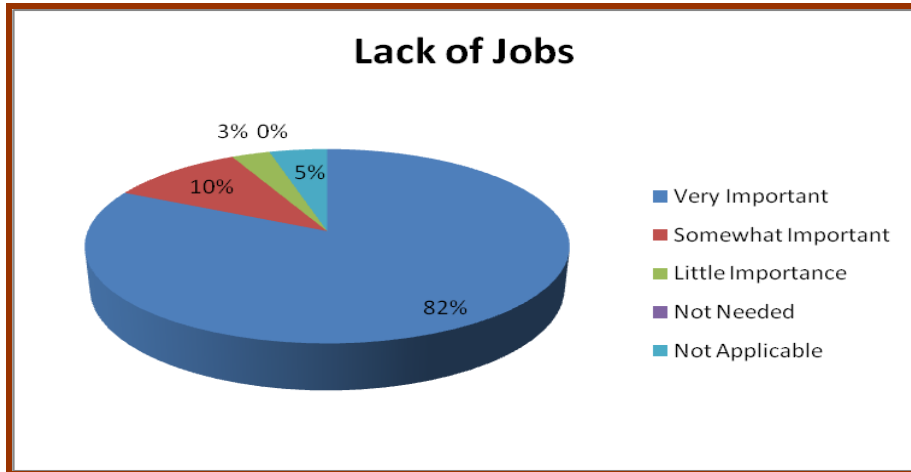
Community concerns are issues that have or have a potential to negatively impact our residents and the community as a whole. A list of twelve community concerns were identified by the CPEDS Committee and included in this survey. This portion of the survey was intended to see if the community shared our concerns and to determine which concerns were most troublesome to the community. Participants in the survey were asked to rank the concerns by their importance on a scale that ranged from not needed, somewhat important, little importance and very important. The results were graphed and are discussed in the following sections.



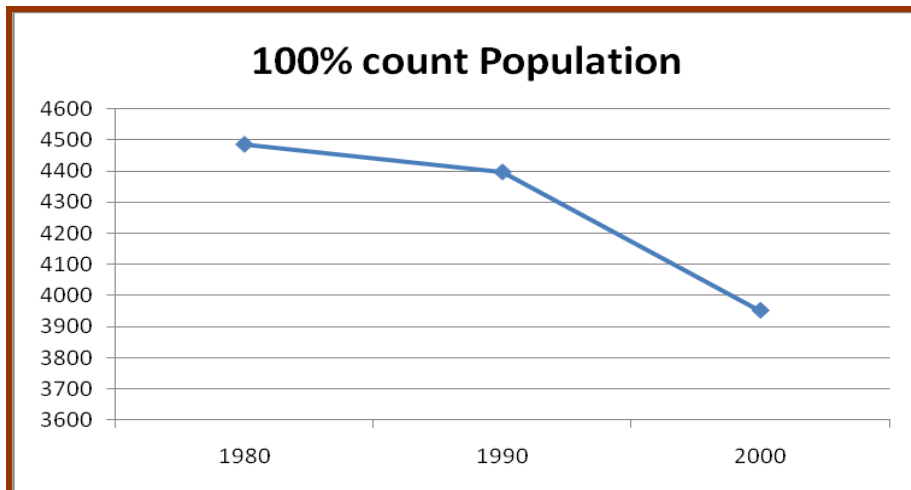
The Summary of Community Concerns graph shown above allows us to compare the level of consensus among respondents for each of the twelve community concerns that were discussed in the Community Survey. Concern over the lack of jobs had the greatest level of consensus (1st), where 55 of the respondents felt this was a very important concern. Second in consensus were concerns about our young people leaving the area and was rated very important by 47 of the respondents. Third, 43 of the respondents felt that by the appearance of the Town was a very important concern. These worries were closely followed by concerns regarding increases in poverty (4<sup>th</sup>), where 42 of the respondents felt that this was a very important concern and the presence of too many vacant buildings (5<sup>th</sup>), where 40% of the respondents rated this as very important. Conversely, concerns over too much traffic ranked last (12<sup>th</sup>), while concerns over adult entertainment were ranked next to last (11<sup>th</sup>) and inadequate provisions for persons with special needs was ranked third to last (10<sup>th</sup>).

## Lack of Jobs

There are job opportunities in Portville, but are somewhat limited when compared to Olean and other communities in Western New York. This is one reason why many who live in Portville also commute to other communities for employment. Issues with the Nation’s financial markets have tightened credit and made for uncertainty for many employers. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated that from 2000 to 2008 unemployment was approximately five percent in Cattaraugus County; however, by October 2009, unemployment increased to 8.7 percent.



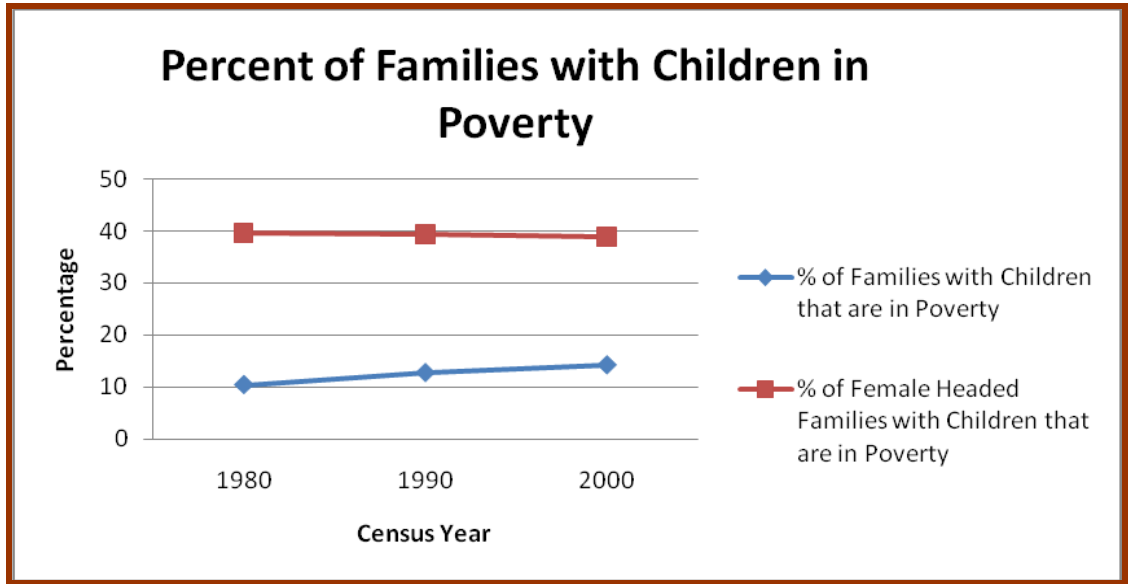
Based upon the survey response, our community is overwhelmingly concerned about the lack of jobs. Eighty two percent considered the lack of jobs a very important concern and an additional ten percent believed the lack of jobs was somewhat important. Only three percent believed the lack of jobs wasn’t important.



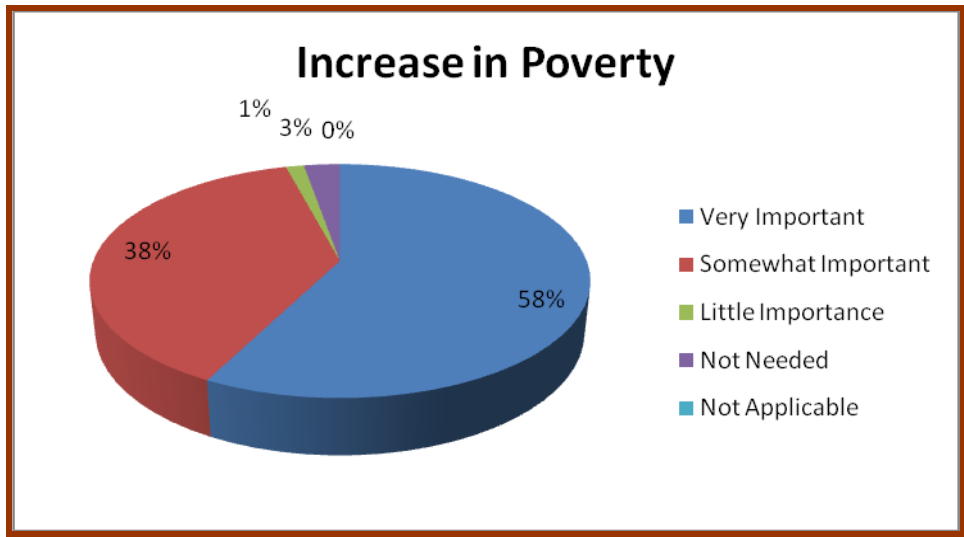
There may be an interesting correlation between the census data, which shows a decline in population and the survey response, which indicated an overwhelming concern regarding the lack of jobs.

### Increase in Poverty

United States Census data indicated that many of us in this area live below the poverty line. This is particularly true for single parent (female) families. Census data shows this trend has been increasing for the last two decades and is likely to continue into the future.



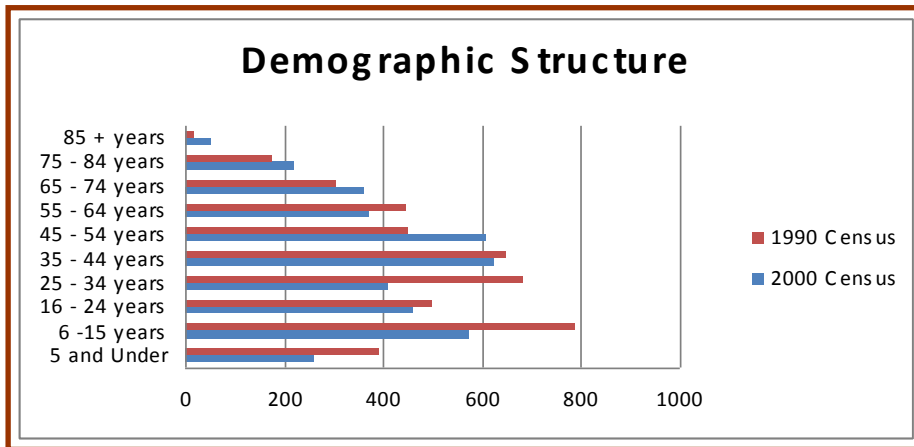
The CPEDS committee believes this a concern shared by many in the community and included this topic in the survey.



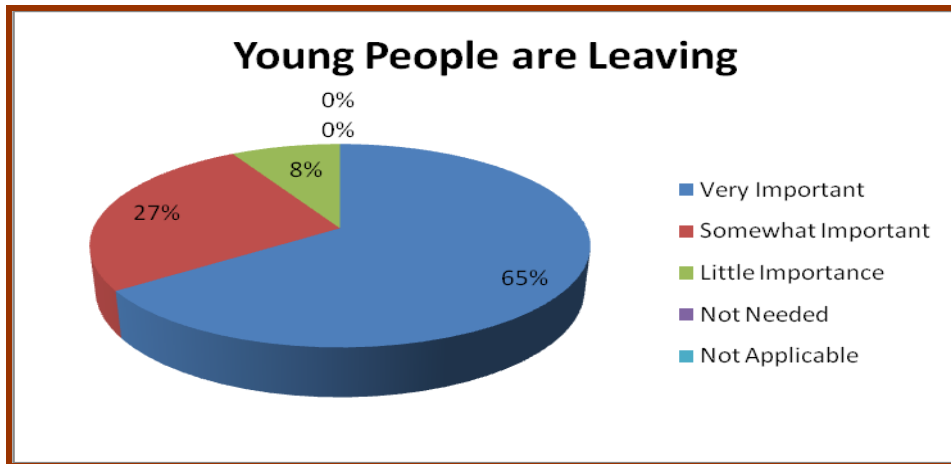
Fifty Eight percent considered the increase in poverty a very important concern and an additional thirty eight percent believed the increase in poverty was somewhat important. Only three percent believed the lack of jobs was of little importance and one percent thought the increase in poverty was of no concern.

## Young Residents Are Leaving

Many of us have seen our young people grow up and then leave the area for employment. This concerns us because we believe opportunities for employment are limited here in our community. Census data indicate that our community’s population is not only becoming smaller, it’s also growing older. The graph below shows how the changes within various age groups affect the demographics of our community.



This trend extends beyond our community to the Western New York region. Over the last two decades Cattaraugus County has seen a 5.1% decline in population, while Allegany and Chautauqua Counties have seen population declines of 1.5% and 4.5%, respectively. The CPEDS Committee included this concern in the Community Survey because we felt this topic would certainly become a topic in future discussions.

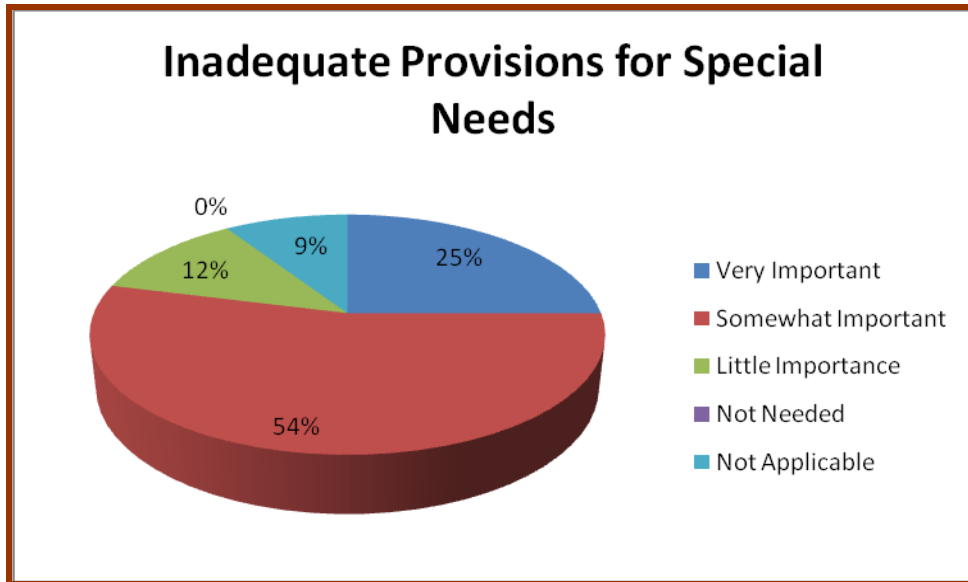


An analysis of the survey data revealed that 65 percent of those who responded to the survey considered our young people leaving very highly as a community concern. An additional 27 percent of the respondents ranked this concern highly. Just eight percent of the respondents believed our young people were leaving to be of little importance.



## Inadequate Provisions for Persons with Special Needs

This topic was intended to cover a broad spectrum of what may be considered special needs, including (but not limited to) physical handicaps, developmental disabilities and mental health. Our nation has made significant progress with integrating persons with special needs into our communities. Unfortunately, some of our community facilities are not fully accessible because they were constructed before the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. The CPEDS Committee wanted to gauge the community's level of concern with providing for persons with special needs.

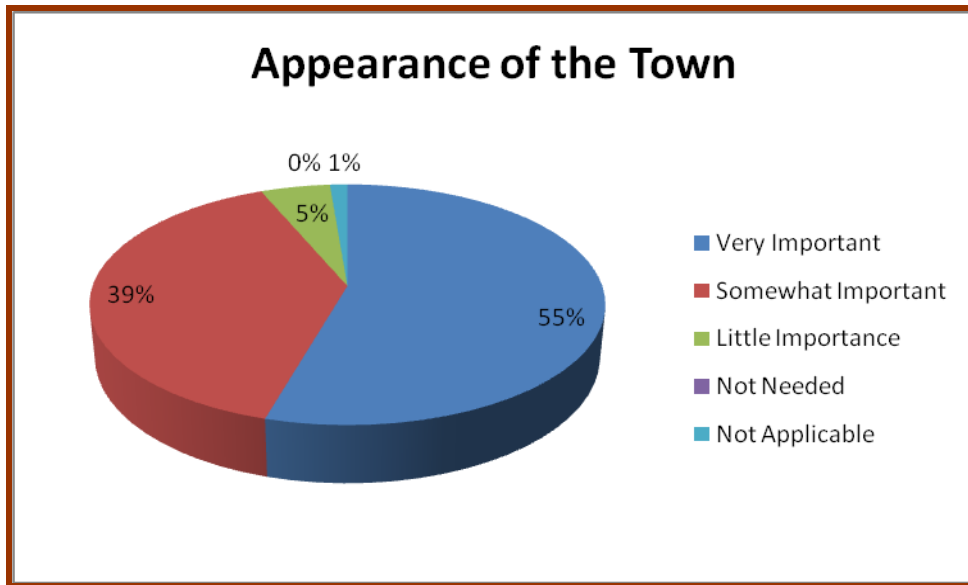


An analysis of the survey data revealed the 25 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked inadequate provisions for persons with special needs very highly as a community concern and an additional 54 percent of the respondents ranked this concern highly. Only twelve percent of the respondents ranked this concern of little importance, while nine percent didn't answer the question. Collectively, 79 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked inadequate provisions for persons with special needs highly or very highly as a community concern.



## Appearance of the Town

Given a choice, most of us would choose to live in an attractive community. We like to see well kept homes and a community that is free from blight and clutter. Inoperable cars and trucks, old appliances and other junk have a negative effect on the appearance of a community and on the outlook of the people who live there. The CPEDS Committee chose this topic because we wanted to understand the community's opinion regarding this concern.

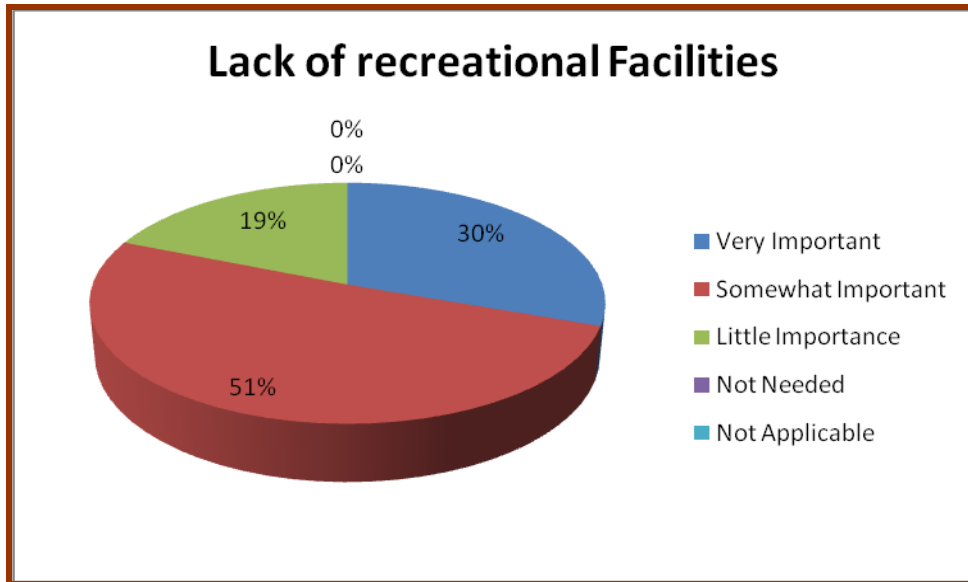


An analysis of the survey data revealed that 55 percent of those who took the survey ranked the appearance of the Town very highly as a community concern. An additional 39 percent of the respondents ranked appearance highly. Five percent of the respondents thought the appearance of the Town was of little importance and only one percent failed to answer the question. The results indicate that 94 percent of those who responded ranked the appearance of the Town highly or very highly as a community concern.



## Lack of Recreational Facilities

We are fortunate enough to have parks, restaurants and a few other recreational facilities in our community, but sometimes we feel our options for recreation in Portville are limited. There are movie theaters, shopping centers, fitness centers and other recreational opportunities within a short drive of Portville; however, we sometimes forget that not everyone has an automobile or shares our preference in recreational activities, and for these reasons, the CPEDS Committee chose to include this topic in the community survey.

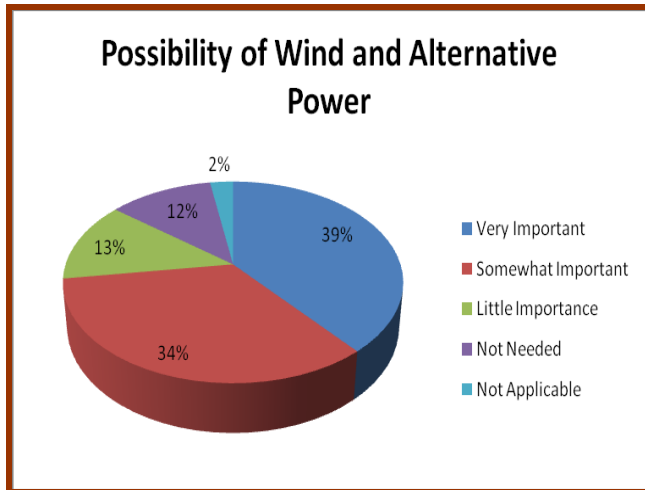


Analysis of the survey data showed that thirty percent of those who participated in the survey ranked the lack of recreational facilities very high as a community concern and an additional fifty one percent ranked this concern high. Nineteen percent ranked the lack of recreational facilities as being of little importance.



## Possibility of Wind or Alternative Energy

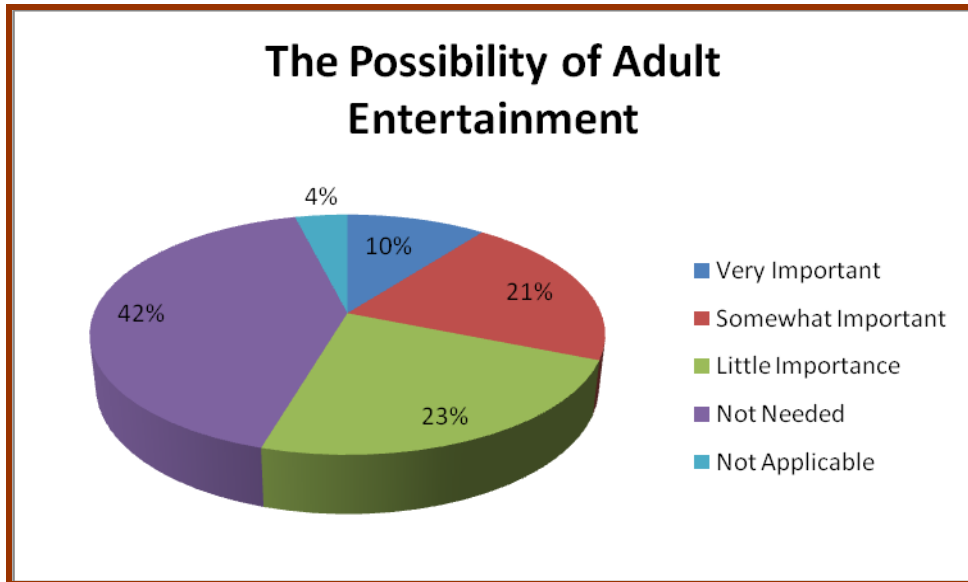
The 2003 version of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan did not discuss the need to regulate wind power facilities or other alternative energy facilities in the Town. Since then, several nearby communities have been approached by wind power developers. These communities have enacted local land use regulations in an effort to regulate the development of wind parks and small scale windmills for private use. The regulation of wind and other alternative power facilities has been a topic of discussion by the Planning Board and the CPEDS committee wanted to gauge the level of concern in the community.



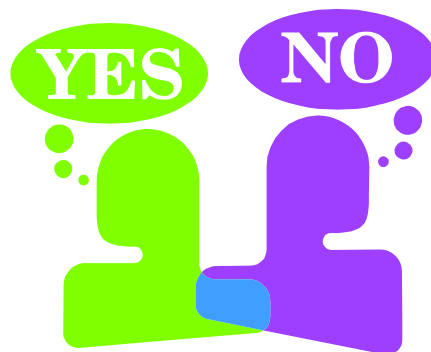
The community survey revealed that 39 percent of those who responded considered the possibility of wind and alternative power very important concern and 44 percent of the respondents were somewhat concerned. Only thirteen percent of those who responded to the survey thought the possibility of wind and alternative power was of little importance, while an additional 12 percent thought wind and alternative energy was not needed. Only two percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question. Together, 73 percent of those who responded to the survey considered the possibility of wind and alternative energy important of very important.

## Possibility of Adult Entertainment

Many of us would not want to live next to an adult entertainment establishment, yet we understand there are certain provisions in the United States Constitution that allow for adult entertainment. Like many other communities, Portville has made decisions concerning adult use facilities; however, the 2003 Comprehensive Plan did not discuss the need to regulate this type of development. The CPEDS Committee included the topic of adult entertainment in the community survey in an effort to understand the level of importance the community places on this concern.

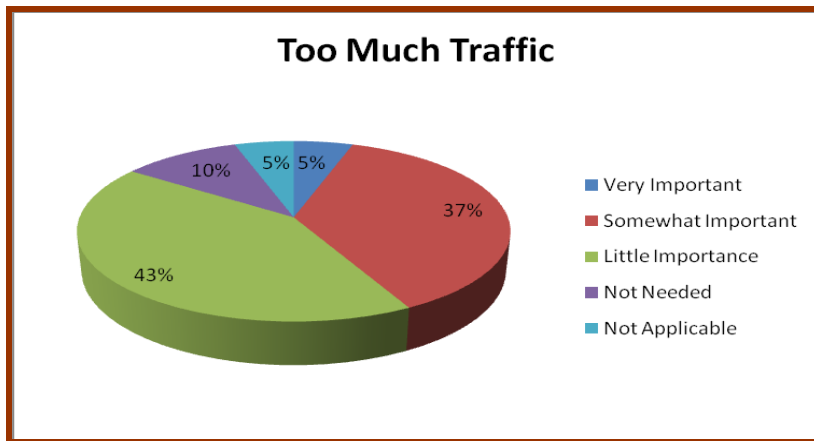


Analysis of the survey data showed that 42 percent of those who participated in the survey thought adult entertainment facilities were not needed. Twenty three percent of the respondents were neutral on this topic. Twenty one percent thought adult entertainment was somewhat important and ten percent thought adult entertainment was very important. Just four percent did not answer the question.

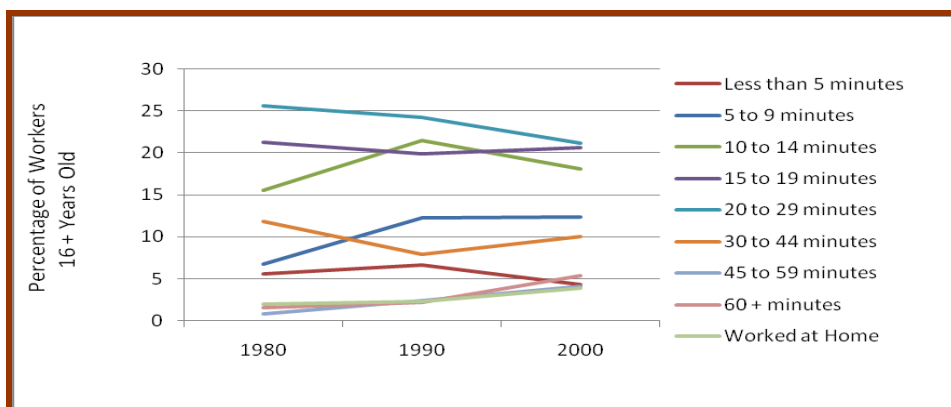


## Too Much Traffic

Traffic can be a vexing concern to a community. Sitting through several traffic signal cycles without getting through the intersection, waiting behind someone who is trying to turn left against traffic or witnessing road rage incidents are all issues with too much traffic. Route 417 is our primary transportation corridor for those of us traveling east or west Route 305 for those traveling north and south. Although most of the time we don't have a problem with traffic on Route 417 or 305, there are certain times of the day when traffic gets heavy and there are longer waits at signals and turns across traffic are difficult. The CPEDS Committee wanted to know what our community's opinion of traffic was to see if there was a problem.



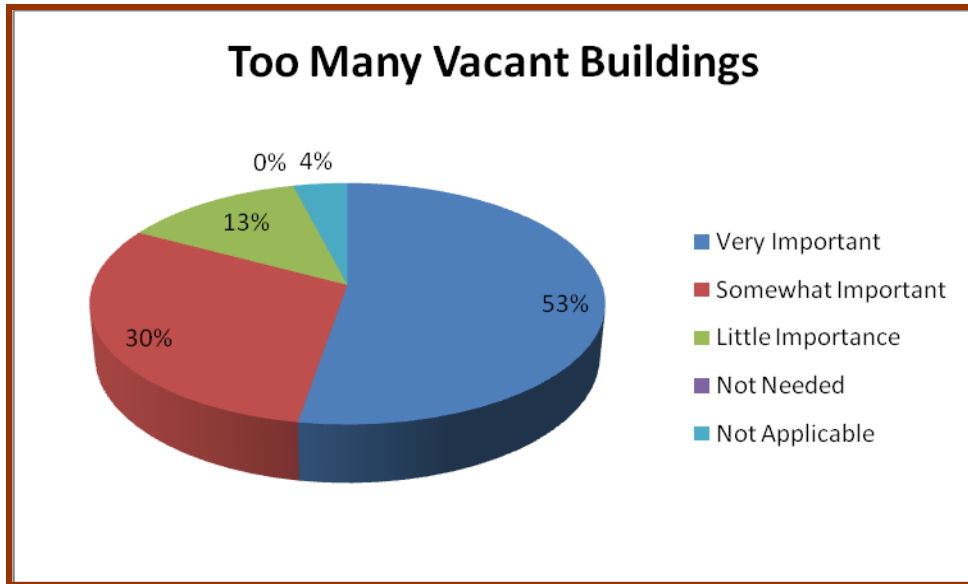
Analysis of the survey data showed that 43 percent of those who participated in the survey thought too much traffic was of little importance and an additional ten percent were not concerned at all. Thirty seven percent considered too much traffic was somewhat important and an additional five percent considered traffic a very serious concern. Together 53 percent of the respondents thought too much traffic was of little or no concern, while 42 percent believed traffic was a somewhat or very important community concern. Five percent did not answer the question.



The census data indicated that the commute time for workers has generally increased and that more people are working from home.

## Too Many Vacant Buildings

Vacant commercial buildings can be problematic for a community. When a commercial building becomes vacant, it frequently leaves a hole in the fabric of a community, especially if the building formerly contained an important community asset, like a factory, drug store or Laundromat. The building might be for sale by its owner or caught up in legal proceedings such as a bankruptcy or estate settlement. Vacant residential structures can also be problematic and suggest that a community is distressed in some way. The CPEDS Committee included this topic on the Community Survey because we wanted to see if the community shared our concerns regarding vacant buildings.

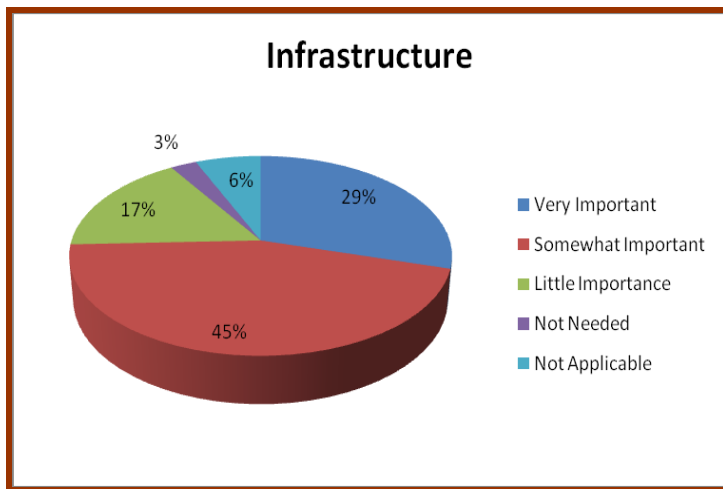


An analysis of the survey data revealed the 53 percent of those who responded ranked vacant buildings as a very important community concern and an additional 30 percent of the respondents ranked vacant buildings as a somewhat important community concern. Only thirteen percent of the respondents believed vacant buildings were of little importance. Collectively, 83 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked vacant buildings as an important or very important community concern. Only four percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question.



## Inadequate Infrastructure

Infrastructure is a broad term used to describe the utilities, roads, bridges and other things we depend upon to make our lives easier. Aside from Town maintained roads, the Town of Portville has very limited infrastructure. There is a small sewer district in the Happy Hollow area and there is a short waterline that serves Ashley Furniture. Both of these utilities are extensions of districts in the Town of Olean, which in turn, are extensions from the City of Olean. The Village has water and wastewater infrastructure, which extends into the Town to serve the Dollar General Store along Route 417. But generally, there is no municipal water or wastewater in the Town. There is electric and telephone service available to almost all of our residents. Natural gas, cable television and high-speed internet service is available to some of our residents.

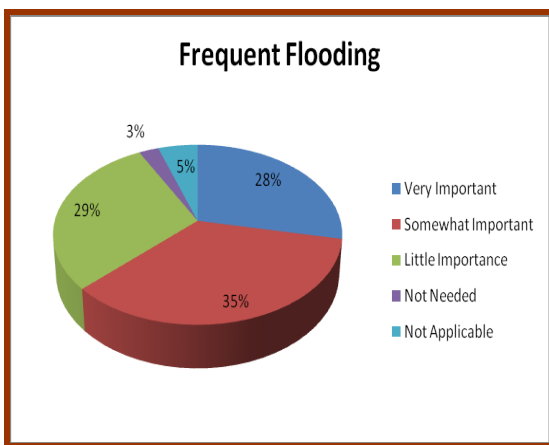


Of those who took the survey, 17 percent ranked infrastructure low as a community concern and another three percent thought infrastructure was not needed. Forty five percent considered inadequate infrastructure an important community concern and an additional 29 considered inadequate infrastructure a very important concern. Collectively, 20 percent of those who took the survey ranked inadequate infrastructure low or very low as a community concern, while 64 percent thought that inadequate infrastructure was a high or very high community concern and six percent didn't answer the question.

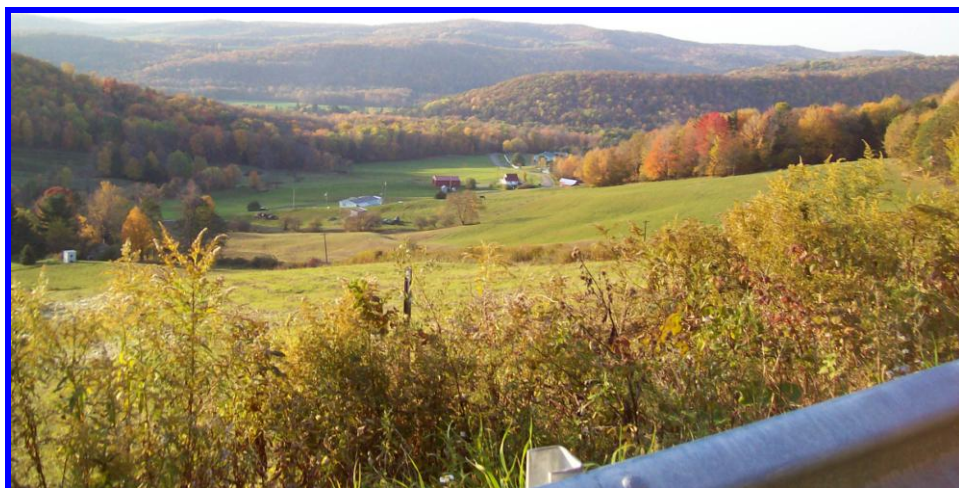


## Frequent Flooding

Much of Portville lies within the flood plain of the Allegheny River. There are also flood plains associated with the Oswayo River, Dodge Creek and even some of the smaller tributaries such as the Haskell Creek. Many of us can remember the catastrophic flooding that occurred in 1972 in association with Hurricane Agnes, which inundated large portions of the Town and Village. There have also been lesser events that have caused property damage, such as the February 1996 flood that was the result of melting snow and heavy rain. One of the most noticeable impacts associated with flooding is closure of local roads such as the Barbertown Road and especially the railroad underpass on Route 417. When this low area floods, it results in the closure of Route 417 and Route 305 and causes long detours to the traveling public over Butternut Brook.

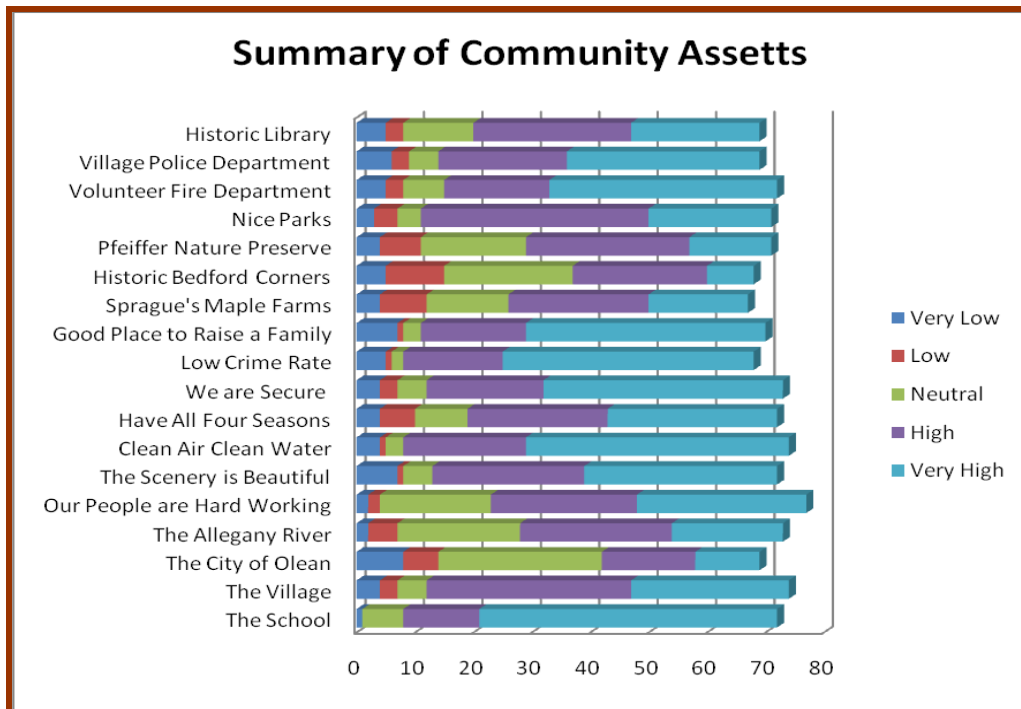


Twenty nine percent believed frequent flooding was of little concern and another three percent thought flooding was not a concern at all. Thirty five percent considered frequent flooding an important community concern and an additional 28 considered flooding a very important concern. Collectively, 31 percent of those who took the survey considered frequent flooding low or very low as a community concern, while 63 percent thought that flooding was a high or very high community concern. Five percent failed to answer the question.



## Community Assets

Community assets are tangible assets such as our educational facilities, parks and libraries; community assets are also intangible things such as the character of our residents and feeling safe in our homes. A list of eighteen community assets were identified by the CPEDS Committee and included in this survey. This portion of the survey was intended to see if the community shared our opinion and determine which assets were most highly valued by the community. Participants in the survey were asked to rank these assets by importance on a scale that ranged from very low, low, neutral, high and very high. The results were graphed and are discussed in the following sections.



The Summary of Community Assets graph shown above allows us to compare the level of consensus among respondents concerning the importance of the community assets that were identified in the Community Survey. It is interesting to note that there was a very high level of consensus among the respondents, who generally ranked the assets as high or very highly in importance.

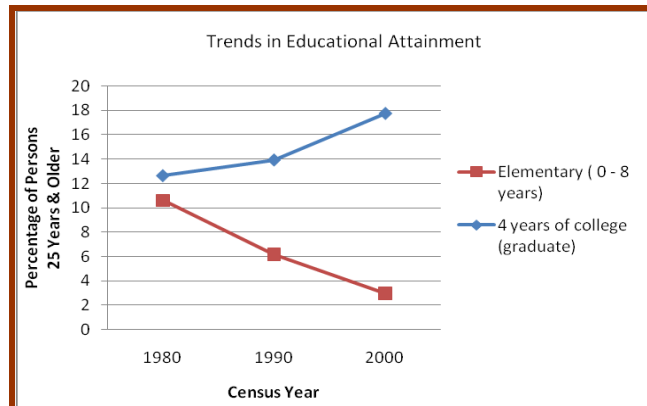
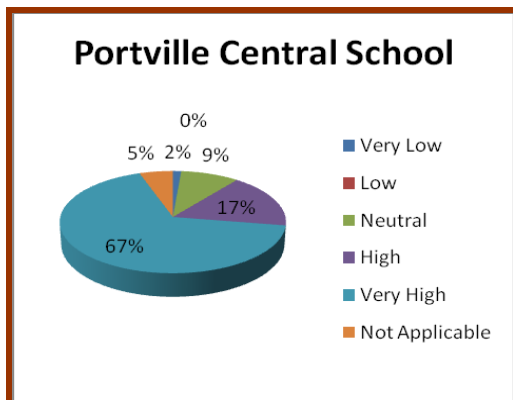
The highest ranked community asset was clean air and clean water with 66 of the respondents ranking this asset highly or very highly in importance. Clean air and clean water was closely followed in importance by Portville Central School by 64 of the respondents. The Village of Portville was third with 62 respondents ranking the village high or very highly in importance. The belief that we are secure in our homes followed with 61 and nice parks and low crime rate tied for fourth at 60 respondents each.

The least important community asset was the City of Olean, which was considered to be important or highly important by just 29 of the respondents. The Historic Bedford Corners area was ranked as the second least important asset by 31 of the respondents.

## Portville Central School



Educational facilities are often one of the most important factors in choosing a place to live. All things being equal, a family with school aged children is more likely to choose a community with a highly respected school system over a community where the school system is struggling or under performing. Aside from being an important part of our community’s identity, Portville Central School is the largest employer and is a strong influence on the character and values of our children. The school also serves a center for recreational and social activities in our community. For these reasons, Portville Central School was included on our Committee’s list of community assets.



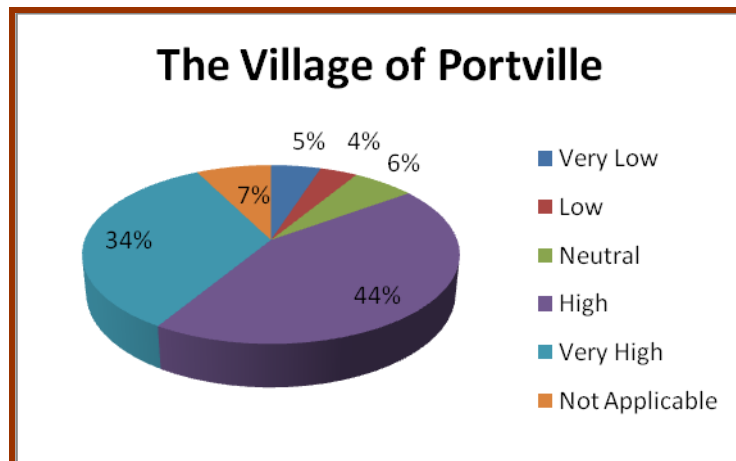
An analysis of the survey data revealed that 67 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked Portville Central School very highly as a community asset. An additional 17 percent of the respondents ranked the school highly. Nine percent of the respondents were neutral and only two percent ranked the school as low or very low. Five percent of the respondents had no opinion or failed to answer the question. The results indicate that 84 percent of those who responded ranked Portville Central School highly or very highly as a community asset. This speaks highly of our school and its ability to draw new residents into our community.

The census data shows that the number of persons graduating four-year college programs has increased, conversely, that census data shows that persons who only complete elementary school has declined significantly.

## The Village of Portville



For most of the people in Western New York, Portville is a place where there is little distinction between the Town and the Village. This is especially true from the perspective of a non-resident. A motorist traveling on State Route 417 or 305 for the first time probably wouldn't consider the Town and the Village as two distinctly different places. Although most of us who live in the Town and Village understand there are separate units of government, we share a strong connection to each other and it's for this reason the CPEDS committee chose to include the Village on our list of community assets.

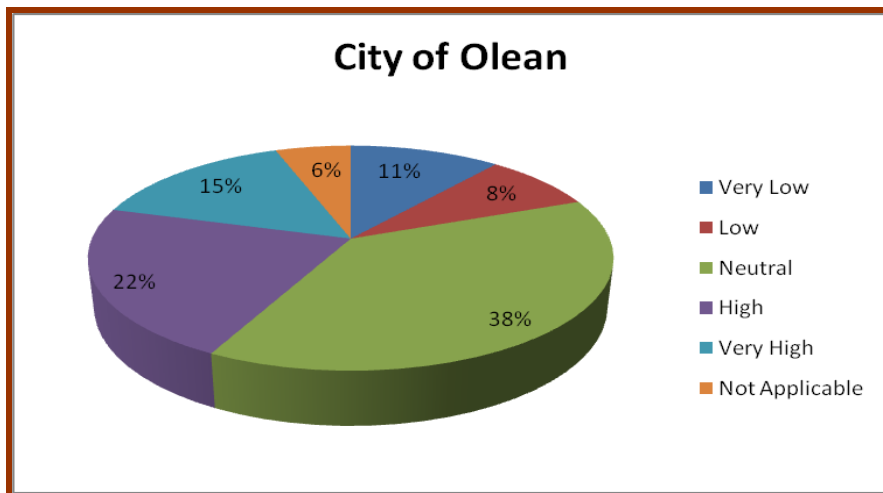


The community survey revealed that 34 percent of those who responded ranked the Village of Portville very high and 44 percent of the respondents ranked the Village high as a community asset. Only four percent of those who responded to the survey ranked the Village low, while an additional 5 percent ranked the Village very low. Six percent of the respondents were neutral and seven percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question. Together, 78 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked the Village of Portville highly or very highly as a community asset. Conversely, eleven percent of the respondents ranked the Village poorly or very poorly as a community asset.

## The City of Olean



The Town of Olean adjoins the west side of the Town of Portville and within the Town of Olean is the City of Olean. With a population of approximately 12,000 people, the City of Olean is the largest city in Cattaraugus County and is the largest city within a 65 mile radius of Portville. And for most of us, Olean is a place with little distinction between the City and the Town. Olean offers regionally significant opportunities for employment, education, commerce and recreation. The CPEDS Committee included the City of Olean in the Community Survey because many of Portville’s residents work, shop, attend college, or enjoy social and cultural activities in Olean.

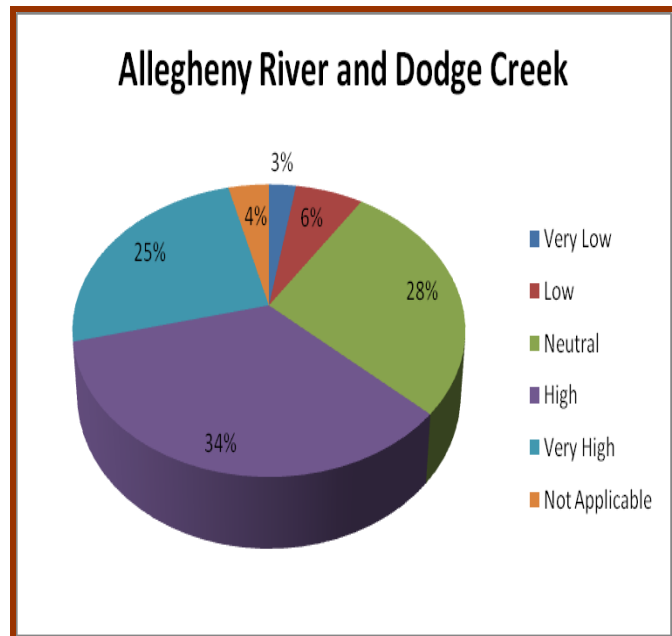


Twenty two percent of those who took the survey ranked the City of Olean highly as a community asset, while 15 percent ranked the Olean very highly as a community asset. Together, 37 percent of the respondents ranked Olean highly or very highly. Thirty Eight percent were neutral. Eight percent of the respondents ranked Olean low and an addition 11 percent ranked Olean very low as a community asset. Six percent chose not to answer the question.



## The Allegheny River and Dodge Creek

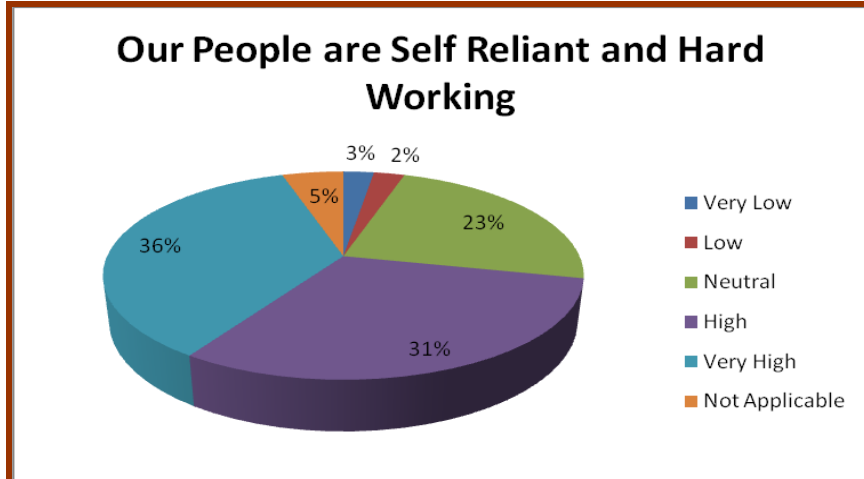
As evidenced by our name, “Portville” has always been linked to the Allegheny River system. In the early days, the Allegheny served as a mode of transportation for people and supported commerce associated with the lumber industry. The Allegheny River flows into the Town from the south, near the hamlet of Mill Grove and leaves the west side of the Town, in the hamlet of Weston Mills. Dodge Creek and the Oswayo River also flow to the Allegheny River along the way. These water bodies, lowland flood plains and wetland areas are important habitat and offer significant recreational opportunities. Conversely flood plain development and wetland protection regulations are important factors to those who may consider building here. Our rivers and streams are also the reason for our Town’s land use regulations, which were mandated in the early 1970s by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide eligibility for federal flood insurance for our residents. Our community shares a strong linkage to these natural features, and for these reasons, they were included in the survey.



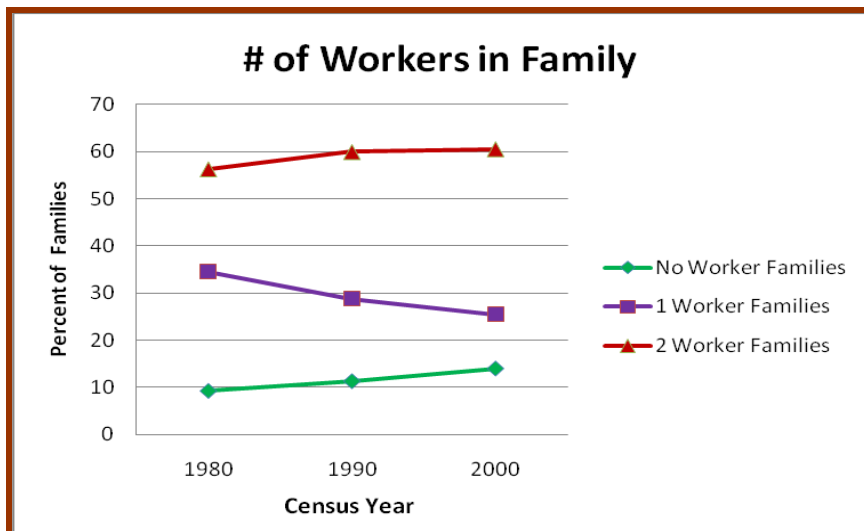
An analysis of the survey data revealed the 34 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked our rivers and streams very high as a community asset and 25 percent of the respondents ranked our rivers and streams high. Only six percent of the respondents ranked the rivers and streams low, while three percent ranked them very low. Collectively, 59 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked our rivers and streams highly or very highly as a community asset. Nine percent of the respondents ranked them poorly or very poorly as a community asset. Twenty eight percent of the respondents were neutral and four percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question.

## Our People are Self Reliant and Hard Working

Self reliance and a solid work ethic are important qualities in a person and in a community. The CPEDS Committee believes Portville exemplifies these qualities and they are an important community asset.



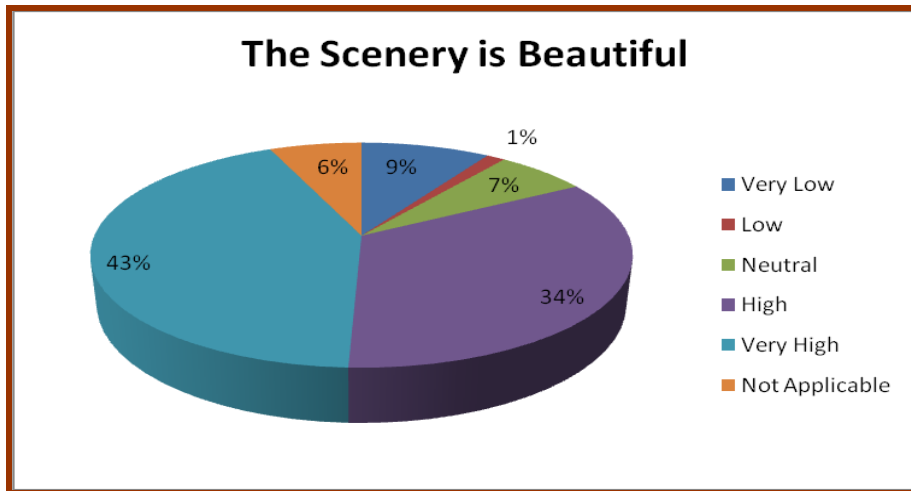
Thirty one percent of the respondents ranked self reliance and strong work ethics of our residents highly as a community asset, while 15 percent very highly ranked these community assets. Twenty three percent were neutral. Only two percent of those who responded ranked self reliance and strong work ethics low and just three percent ranked these qualities very low as a community asset. Five percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question. Collectively, 67 percent of the respondents ranked self reliance and strong work ethics highly or very highly, while only five percent ranked these qualities of our residents as low or very low.



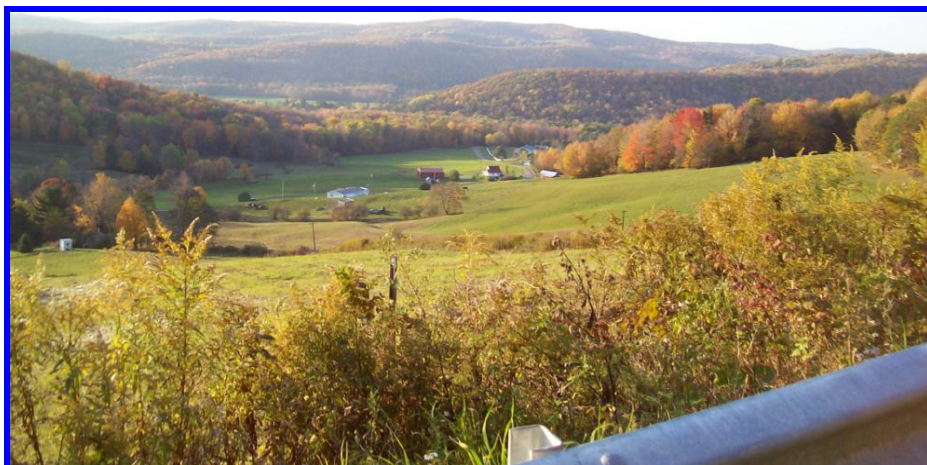
Census data shows that the number of two-worker families has increased, while the number of single worker families has decreased; however, the number on no worker families has also increased.

## The Scenery is Beautiful

The hills, streams and forests are all important components of our natural environment. The unique visual qualities of the Town and Village contribute equally to the overall image of our community. The rolling hills, forests, open land, rivers and streams are components that offer rural character to the Town, while the village has an appealing “small town” charm. Cattaraugus County has greatly emphasized the value of the county’s geography and uses the phrase “Welcome to the Heart of the Enchanted Mountains” in their promotional campaigns. Scenery was included by the CPEDS committee in our list of community assets because we believe it plays an important roll in our quality of life.



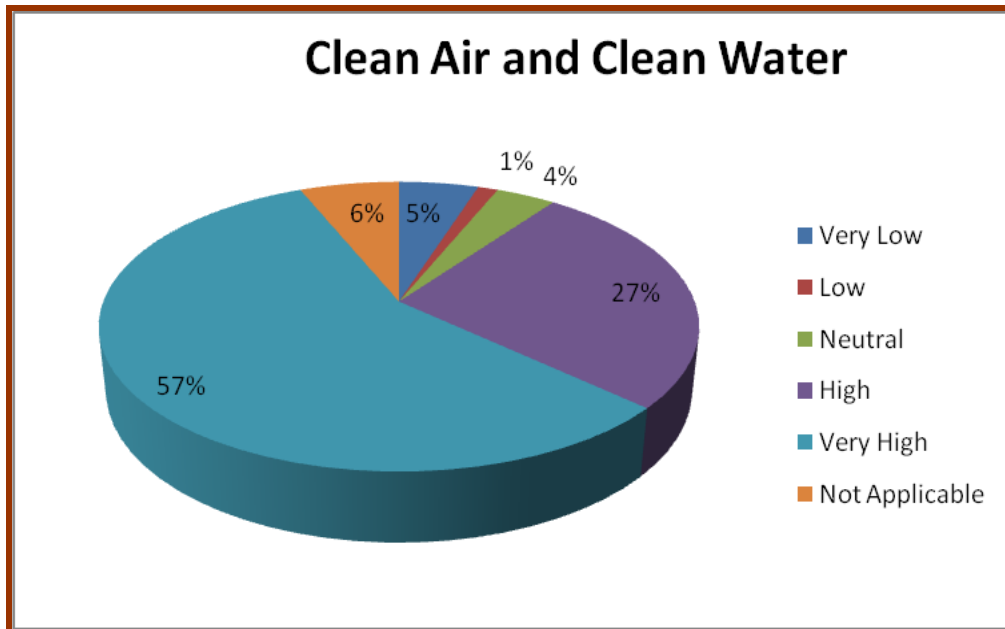
Survey data revealed that 43 percent of those who responded ranked our scenery very high and 34 percent of the respondents ranked scenery high as a community asset. Only one percent of the respondents ranked the scenery very low, and an additional one percent ranked the village low. Together, 77 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked our community’s scenery highly or very highly as a community asset as opposed to ten percent of the respondents who ranked scenery poorly or very poorly as a community asset. Seven percent of the respondents were neutral and six percent of those who took the survey chose not to answer the question.





## Clean Air and Clean Water

Beginning in the 1970s, the importance of clean air and clean water has been underscored by federal legislation intended to protect these resources. New York State has followed suit by enacting legislation and developing regulatory programs that in many cases are more stringent than the federal regulations and programs. The CPEDS Committee believes clean air and clean water greatly impact the quality of life in our community, and is therefore, a significant community asset.



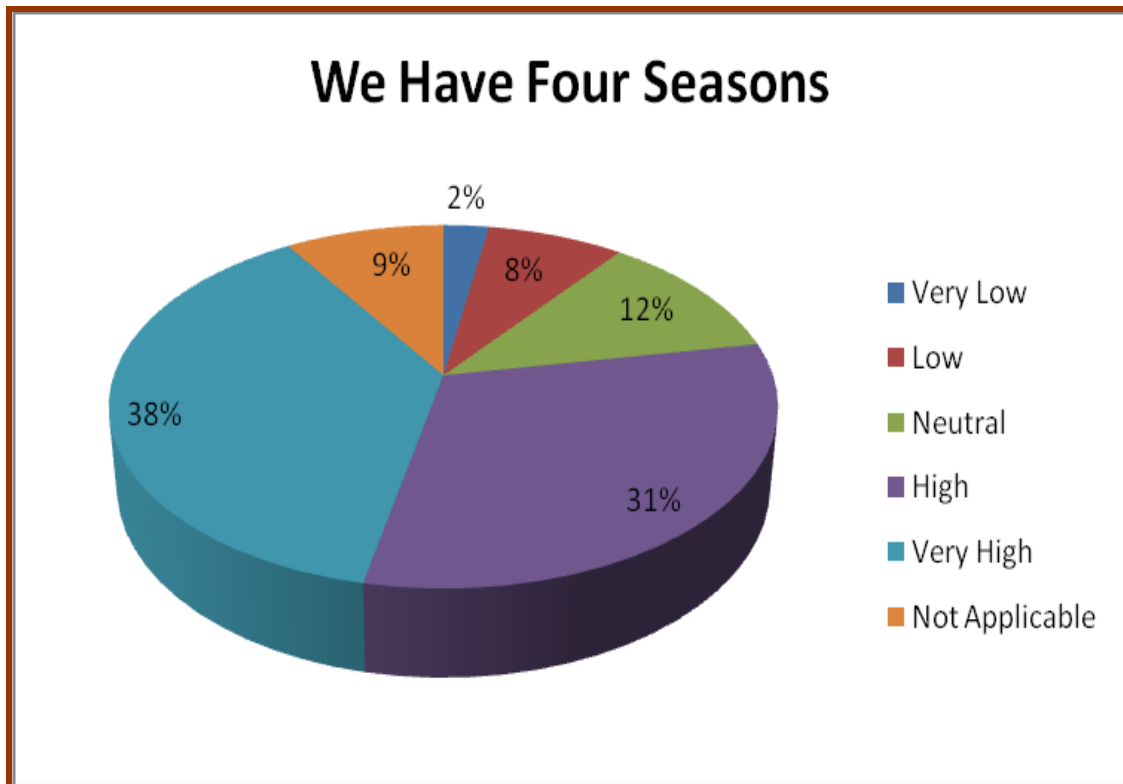
An analysis of the survey data revealed the 57 percent of those who participated in the survey ranked clean air and clean water very highly as a community asset and an additional 27 percent of the respondents ranked clean air and clean water highly. Only five percent of the respondents ranked clean air and clean water very low, while an additional one percent ranked the asset low. Collectively, 84 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked clean air and clean water highly or very highly as a community asset. Only six percent of the respondents ranked clean air and clean water poorly or very poorly as a community asset. Only four percent of the respondents were neutral while six percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question.



## We Have All Four Seasons to Enjoy

Climate statistics indicate there are 157 sunny days per year in Portville. The warmest month is July with high temperatures around 79 degrees, while January is the coldest month with low temperatures near 11 degrees. Our town receives an average of 34 inches of rain per year, which is slightly less than the US average of 37. Our annual snowfall is 63 inches and the number of days with measurable precipitation is 167.

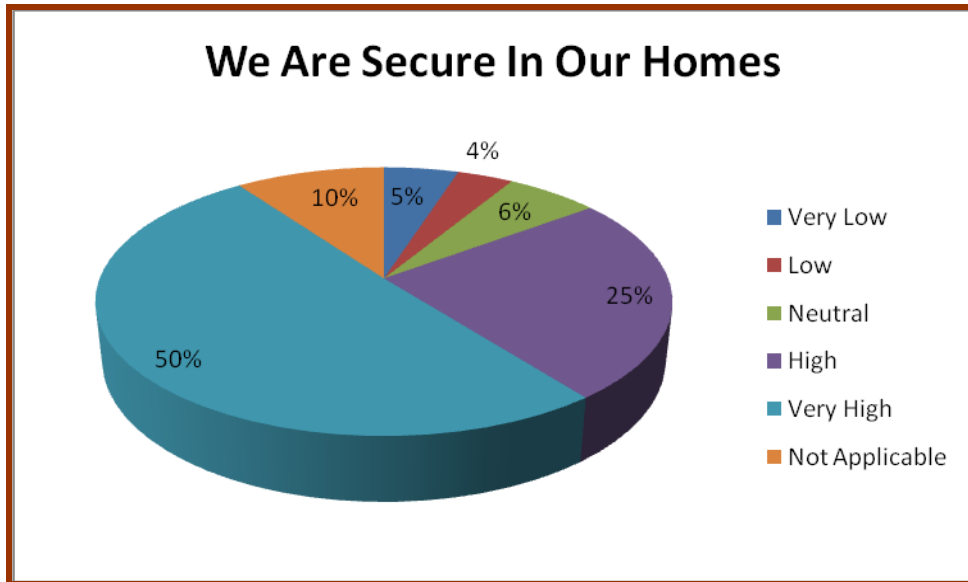
Communities in the Mid-Atlantic Region of United States experience all four seasons. Portville’s cold winter, fickle spring, warm summer, and colorful fall give us a variety of seasons to enjoy each year. We have snowmobiling in the winter, maple syrup making in the spring, gardens, garage sales and little league baseball in the summer and leaf peeping and cider mill visits in the fall. The Committee included the four seasons as a topic because they add diversity to our lifestyles and provide economic opportunities for local entrepreneurs.



Of those who took the survey, eight percent ranked our climate low as a community asset and another two percent ranked our climate very low. Thirty one percent ranked our climate high and an additional thirty eight percent ranked our climate very high as a community asset. Collectively, ten percent of those who took the survey ranked our climate low or very low, while 69 percent ranked our climate high or very high. Twelve percent had a neutral opinion and nine percent didn’t answer the question.

## We are Secure in Our Homes

The need for security is a big part of human nature. At the national level we are concerned about secure borders and on the local level we are concerned about secure homes, schools and places to work. We listen to the news and hear about economic security, national security, global security, social security. The CPEDS Committee chose security as a community asset because we believe that our community is safe and we want to gauge the opinion of the community to see if everybody felt this way, and if not, find ways to improve our community.

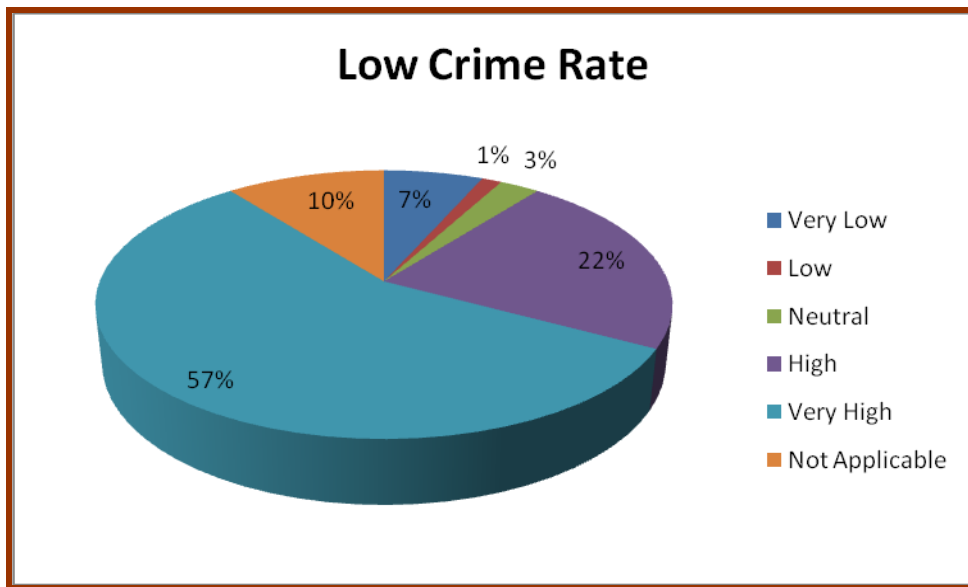


Analysis of the survey data showed that fifty percent of those who participated in the survey ranked security very high as a community asset and an additional twenty five percent ranked security high. Five percent ranked security very low and four percent ranked security low. Security in the home was ranked high or very high by 75 percent of the respondents and only nine percent ranked security low or very low. Six percent of the respondents were neutral and ten percent didn't answer the question.



## Low Crime Rate

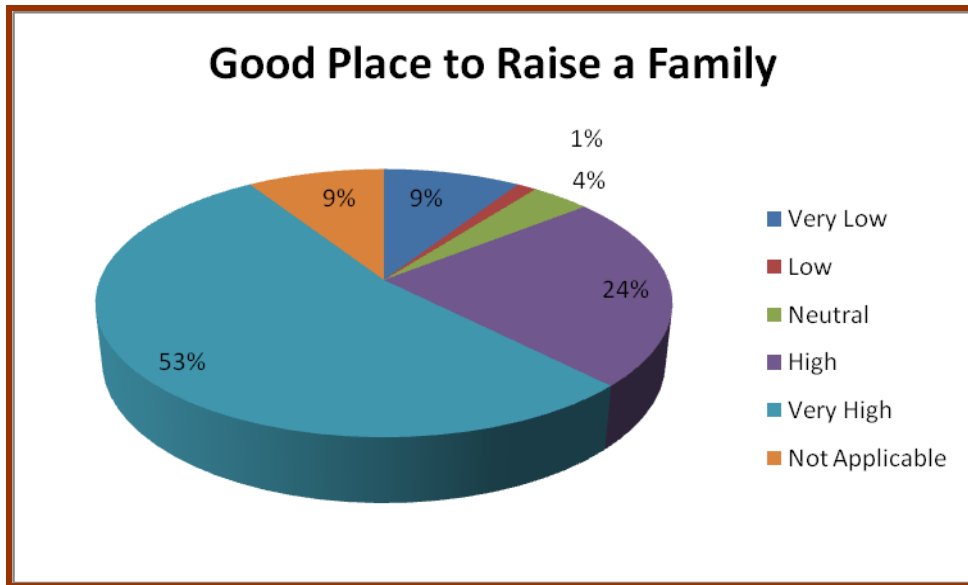
Not being overly concerned regarding the safety of our family and property is an important community asset. We are aware of high instances crime in larger cities, but rarely does crime have a serious impact on our community. *SperlingsBestPlaces.net* has established an index to allow a comparison of the violent crime rate between different areas of the United States. According to Sperlings, violent crime is composed of four offenses: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The index ranges from one (low crime) to ten (high crime). According to this index for violent crime within the 14770 (Portville) zip code is one, which compares favorably to the United States average of three. Property crime includes the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. The object of the theft-type offenses is the taking of money or property, but there is no force or threat of force against the victims. Sperlings reported that property crime in the 14770 zip code is one. Again, the average for the United States is three. The violent crime and property crime indexes for the 14760 zip code (Olean) are both two. Violent and property crime in Cattaraugus County also has indexes of two. Therefore overall crime rate in Portville is less than the average for the Nation, is comparable to Olean and Cattaraugus County, and is lower than the national, county and the 14760 zip code with respect to violent crime.



An analysis of the survey data revealed the 57 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked a low crime rate very highly as a community asset and an additional 22 percent of the respondents ranked a low crime rate highly. Only seven percent of the respondents ranked this asset very low, while an additional one percent ranked the asset low. Collectively, 79 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked a low crime rate highly or very highly as a community asset. Only eight percent of the respondents ranked the low crime rate poorly or very poorly as a community asset. Only three percent of the respondents were neutral while ten percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question.

## Good Place to Raise a Family

Given a choice, people who have children would live in a community that is a good place to raise a family. Most of us who were born here and those who have moved here and stayed here believe Portville is a good place to raise a family. The CPEDS Committee chose this topic because it is a good indicator of the overall quality of life and we want to understand the community’s opinion regarding this asset.



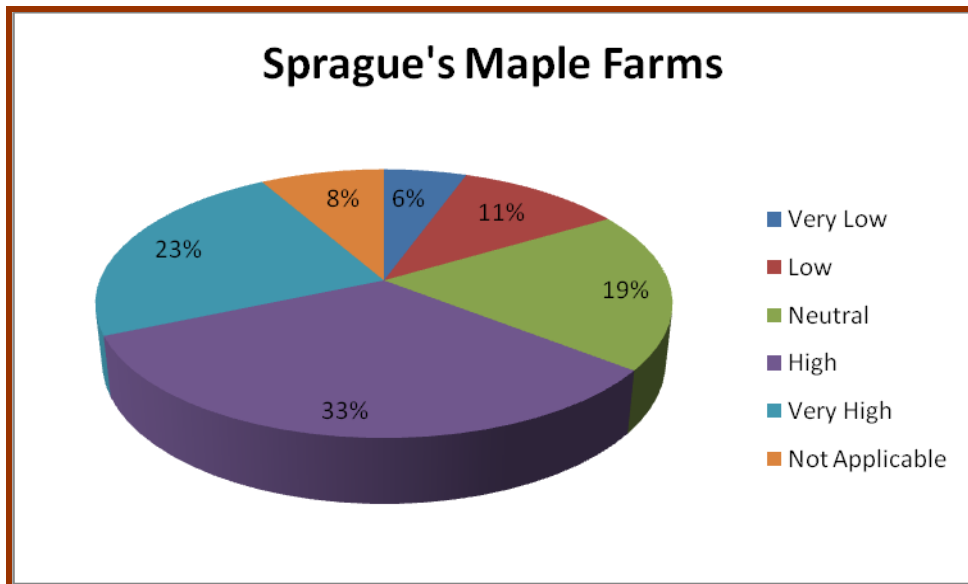
An analysis of the survey data revealed the 57 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked a good place to raise a family very highly as a community asset and an additional 24 percent of the respondents ranked this asset highly. Only nine percent of the respondents ranked the asset very low, while an additional one percent ranked the asset low. Collectively, 77 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked a good place to raise a family highly or very highly as a community asset. Only ten percent of the respondents ranked a good place to raise a family poorly or very poorly as a community asset. Just four percent of the respondents were neutral while nine percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question.



## Sprague's Maple Farms



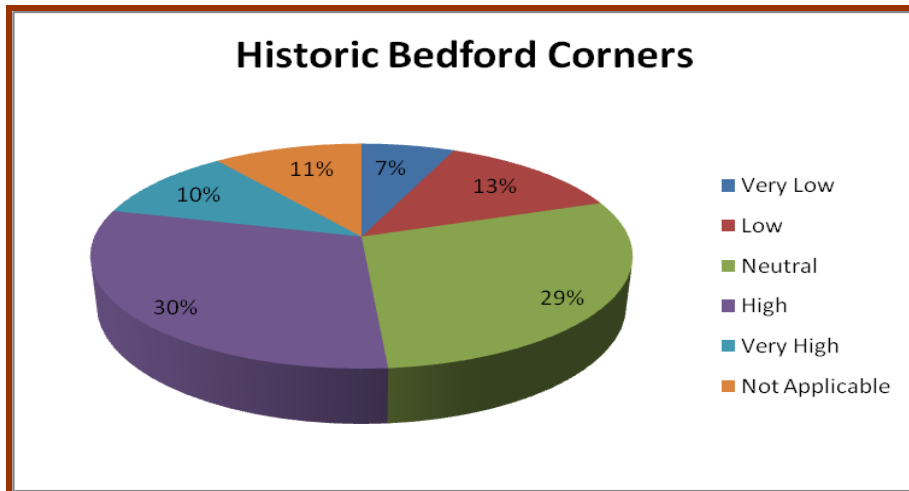
There are occasions when a local community asset is also a regional asset. This is the case for Sprague's Maple Farms. Sprague's scenic location and appeal have made this business an important attraction and a part of our community's identity. The CPEDS Committee selected Sprague's Maple Farms as a community asset because it's often the first thing about Portville that makes a connection with someone from another community and we want to see if the community shares our opinion.



Analysis of the survey data showed that 33 percent of those who participated in the survey ranked Sprague's Maple Farms very high as a community asset and an additional 23 percent ranked Sprague's high. Six percent ranked Sprague's very low and eleven percent ranked Sprague's low. Sprague's was ranked high or very high by 56 percent of the respondents and seventeen percent ranked Sprague's low or very low. Nineteen percent of the respondents were neutral and eight percent didn't answer the question.

## Historic Bedford Corners

Bedford Corners Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003. The district is located on Route 305 and includes the Jacob Bedford residence and a one room school house that were built in 1864, as well as the Bedford Corners Cheese Factory/Grange Hall that was built in 1886. The Committee included the Bedford Corners Historic District on our list of community assets because it preserves our history and fits well with our rural character.



Analysis of the survey data showed that ten percent of those who participated in the survey ranked the Bedford Corners Historic District very high as a community asset and an additional 30 percent ranked the District high. Seven percent ranked the Bedford Corners Historic District very low and thirteen percent ranked the district low. The Bedford Corners Historic District was ranked high or very high by 40 percent of the respondents and twenty percent ranked the district low or very low. Twenty nine percent of the respondents were neutral and eleven percent didn't answer the question.

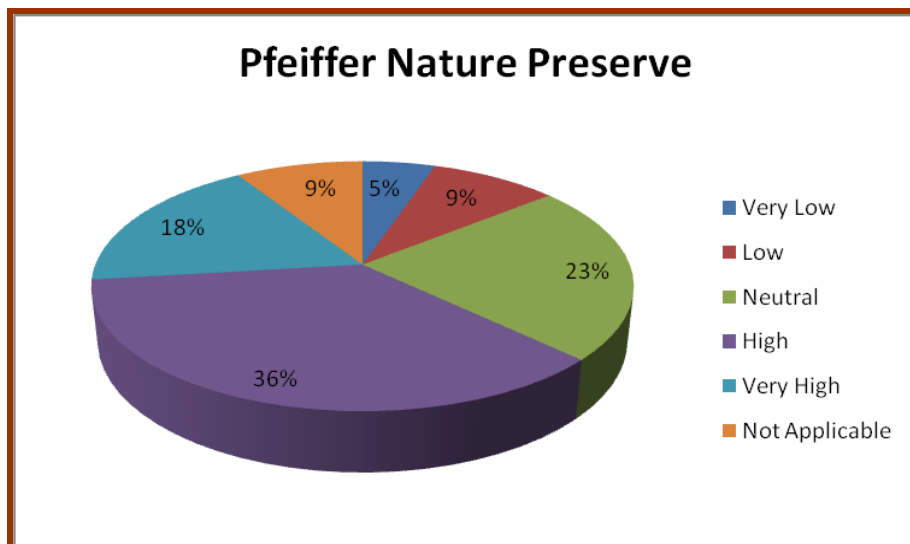




## Pfeiffer Nature Preserve



The Pfeiffer Nature Preserve is a non-profit organization that maintains 518-acre nature preserve on the Lillibridge Road. The Center’s scenic location and appeal have made it a regional attraction that fits well with our rural character. The Center includes interpretive trails, a structure for activities and a historic cabin constructed from chestnut wood. For these reasons, the Pfeiffer Nature Center was included on our Committee’s list of community assets.



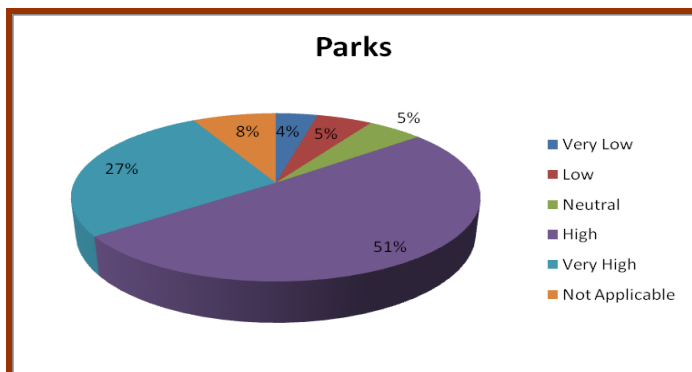
Analysis of the survey data showed that 18 percent of those who participated in the survey ranked the Pfeiffer Nature Preserve very high as a community asset and an additional 36 percent ranked the preserve high. Five percent ranked the preserve very low and nine percent ranked the preserve low. The preserve was ranked high or very high by 54 percent of the respondents and low or very low by fourteen percent of the respondents. Twenty three percent of the respondents were neutral and nine percent didn’t answer the question.



## Nice Parks



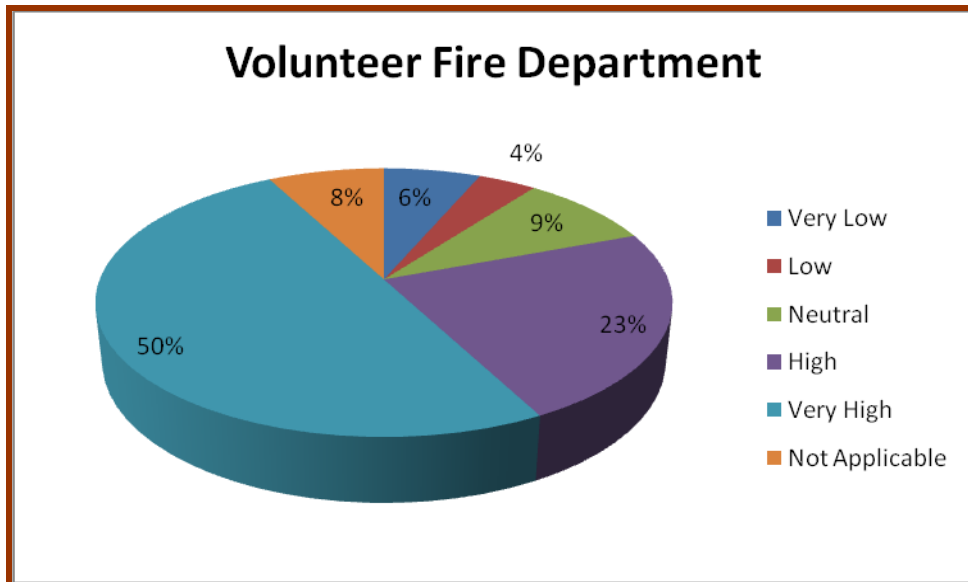
When we talk about community assets, parks are one of the first assets that come to mind. The Village maintains several parks. The best known Portville park is Pioneer Park, which is located in the center of the Village on Route 417. The park, with its historic monuments and pavilion, is attractively illuminated during the holiday season and is often the location for community activities such as weddings, barbecues and the annual Heritage Days celebration in the summer. Across Route 417 is a basketball court, sports fields and a concession stand, which are operated by the recreational leagues that use these facilities. The Lyman Baker Memorial Park is located on Route 305 on the north side of the Village. The playground and comfort facilities at this park make it a favorite of families with young children. The Town has one park, which is located behind the New Beginnings Church of God in Weston Mills. The park features a basketball court, playground facilities and a softball field. There is also the privately owned Riverhurst Park in Weston Mills. The property adjoins the Allegheny River and is currently operated as a campground. In the early 1900s, the park was linked to a trolley system that served nearby communities and was a center for social and recreational activities.



Of those who took the survey, five percent ranked our parks low as community assets, while another four percent ranked our parks very low. Fifty one percent ranked our parks high and an additional 27 percent ranked our parks very high as community assets. Collectively, nine percent of those who took the survey ranked our parks low or very low, while 78 percent ranked our parks high or very high. Five percent had a neutral opinion and eight percent didn't answer the question.

## Volunteer Fire Departments

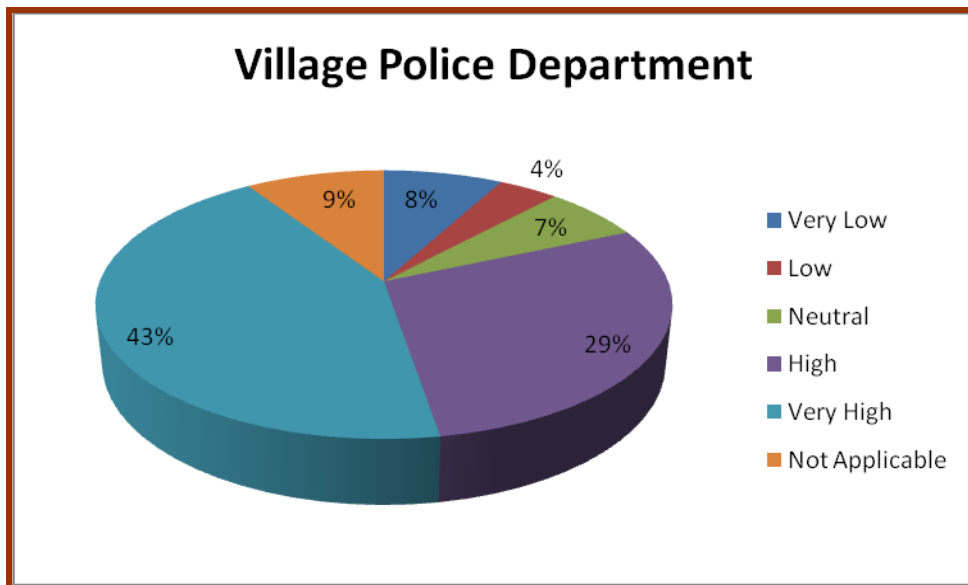
In many rural places, the volunteer fire department is tightly woven into the fabric of the community. Their fire halls are used for wedding receptions, barbeques, bingo and other community activities. Portville is lucky to have two volunteer fire departments. Both organizations are active and have a long and proud history of providing fire protection and emergency response to our community. Statistics for each fire department were available from [Firehouse.com](http://Firehouse.com). The Portville Fire Department has 36 active members who protect 6,000 people living in a fire district that is 68 square miles in size. In 2007, the Portville Fire Department responded to 30 fire calls, 50 rescue calls and 200 emergency calls. The Weston Mills or Kinney Hose Company has 53 active members that protect 1,200 people living in a fire district that is 19.2 square miles in size. In 2007, the Kinney Hose Company responded to eight fire calls, 25 rescue calls and 170 emergency calls. The CPEDS Committee chose our volunteer fire departments as a community asset because we strongly support these organizations and heavily rely upon them as first responders in our community. Furthermore, we wanted to gauge the community's opinion regarding these two worthwhile organizations.



Survey data revealed that 50 percent of those who responded ranked our volunteer fire departments very high and 23 percent of the respondents ranked our volunteer fire departments high as a community asset. Only four percent of the respondents ranked our volunteer fire departments low, while an additional six percent ranked these organizations very low. Nine percent of the respondents were neutral and eight percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question. Together, 73 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked our volunteer fire departments highly or very highly as a community asset. Conversely, only ten percent of the respondents ranked our fire departments poorly or very poorly as a community asset.

## Village Police Department

As we noted earlier in the discussion of the Village of Portville, most people consider Portville as a place, with little or no distinction between the Village and the Town. Although the Town of Portville relies upon the Cattaraugus County Sheriff’s Department and the New York State Police, The Village has its own Police Department with a full time Chief and part-time Deputies. The Village Police Department has an important and beneficial presence in the community and is responsible, in part, for the relatively low crime rate in our area. Although most of us who live in the Town understand the Village police protection does not extend into the Town, we share a strong connection to the Village and it’s for this reason the CPEDS committee chose to include the Village Police Department on our list of community assets.

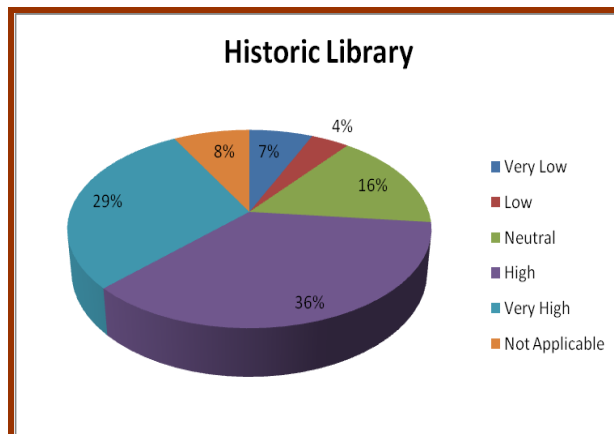


An analysis of the survey data revealed the 43 percent of those who responded to the ranked the Village Police Department very highly as a community asset and an additional 29 percent of the respondents ranked he department highly. Only eight percent of the respondents ranked this asset very low, while an additional four percent ranked the asset low. Collectively, 72 percent of those who responded to the survey ranked the Village Police Department highly or very highly as a community asset. Only twelve percent of the respondents ranked the Village Police Department poorly or very poorly as a community asset. Only seven percent of the respondents were neutral while nine percent of the respondents chose not to answer the question.

## Portville Free Library



The presence of a library in Portville dates back to 1857 when the Portville Library Association was formed. The Library is an example of colonial Georgian architecture and was originally constructed in 1847 by Smith Parish as his residence. The property was purchased in 1909 by E. G. Dusenbury, who converted the structure into a library. Dusenbury supported the library with an endowment and frequent contributions. On March 31, 1910 the Library was granted its Charter by the Board of Regents and during 2010, the Portville Free Library will celebrate its one hundredth anniversary. The Portville Free Library was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991. Many of us have enjoyed the Library while growing up in Portville and continue to use the Library today. It is for these reasons the CPEDS Committee selected the Portville Free Library as an important community asset.



Of those who took the survey, four percent ranked our library low as community assets, while another seven percent ranked our library very low. Thirty six percent ranked our library high and an additional 29 percent ranked our library very high as community assets. Collectively, eleven percent of those who took the survey ranked our library low or very low, while 65 percent ranked our library high or very high. Sixteen percent had a neutral opinion and eight percent didn't answer the question.

## PORTVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BOARD COMMUNITY VISION 2020 SURVEY RESULTS

The Comprehensive Plan Survey also had an open ended question that provided an opportunity for respondents to identify other areas or ways to improve the quality of life in Portville. The suggestions were grouped into twenty nine categories, which are identified below:

1. Enforce Codes/clean-up
2. New Housing Development
3. More flowers box/ barrels
4. Programs for the Youth
5. Small business development
6. Bring property taxes down
7. More Activities
8. Engage people in improving their community
9. Paint the building on the corner of Maple St. and Lillibridge
10. Training seminars
11. Attractions in vacant lots
12. Would like to see something beside trucks and semis on Main St.
13. Speed Limit increased to 45 mph on Portville-Olean Rd.
14. Invite Industry with incentives
15. All local roads policed
16. Improve academics
17. Old time "gas" lights for the village streets
18. Monitor the school's budget and spending
19. Shared facilities
20. Merge the Town and Village
21. Purchase Methodists church for a community center and museum
22. Job opportunities
23. River trail extended
24. Improve infrastructure
25. Arts and crafts/ antique fair
26. More marketing
27. More events
28. Fitness center in the village
29. Laundry facility in the village

It is the CPEDS Committee's intent to further discuss these and other suggestions during future public participation meetings.



**Portville  
Vision 2020  
Comprehensive  
Plan and  
Economic  
Development  
Strategy**