

**“Visualizing a New Town Center  
in Southport, New York”**

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## ATP PROJECT OUTLINE

**PROJECT FOCUS:** Alfred State will complete a community visualization study of the Chemung County Town of Southport, New York in order to help the residents and municipal officials envision potential strategies for revitalizing their existing business district into a walkable new town center.

### PROJECT DETAILS:

**Course Number, Name, and Instructor:**

ARCH 7306 – Design Studio 5 – 6 credit hours  
Professor William Dean, RA, AIA, Instructor

**Community Partner:**

Town of Southport, New York  
David Sheen, Supervisor

**Need:**

Alfred State – SUNY College of Technology is located in New York’s Southern Tier which is home to some of the poorest areas in New York’s Appalachian Region. Communities tend to be very small with limited resources and part-time governments. Local community organizations and municipalities in these Southern Tier counties are especially in need of assistance with respect to long-range planning to create strategies for sustainable development of projects ranging from façade improvements to large-scale infrastructure repair and replacement.

**Number and description of planned meetings with the community partner:**

In addition to municipal officials and town residents, the students will also have the opportunity to work with architects, planners and landscape architects from a local firm involved in authoring a recently-completed comprehensive plan for the town. The expertise of these design professionals will supplement the faculty instruction in this integrated studio that seeks to align architectural design with the realities of contemporary practice. Initial meetings, both in Southport and via teleconference, will occur every two weeks or as necessary leading up to the start of the project. Once the project begins, meetings for data gathering will occur in Southport. Both interim and final design presentations will take place on the Alfred State campus and the students will publicly present their work in Southport at the end of the project to municipal officials and town residents.

### **Overview of the project, including its central focus (10-12 sentences):**

In Fall 2015, Professor William Dean will lead the Architecture and Design Department's senior Appalachian Teaching Project studio in working with the Town of Southport, which is located in New York's Southern Tier, as the subject for the semester's community visualization study. Working individually and in small groups, students will be expected to research and document the subject area and complete a site analysis which includes a visual survey of the defined physical characteristics representing Urban Design Excellence and Design Linkages within the community.

The information generated during these initial efforts will be used as a point of departure to illustrate and explain a positive vision for sustainability and growth of the Town of Southport through community engagement. The overall goal through student engagement of the community is to develop an inclusive community visualization study that includes a series of design interventions based on the village's recently-completed comprehensive plan. The study will include a series of before and thematic after images intended to help local officials and residents envision possibilities for future development. Implementation will be possible through grant funding that will require the community to have a clearly defined vision to supplement the new comprehensive plan.

### **Goals and Objectives:**

- Students will attend an initial public meeting at the Southport Town Hall organized by the faculty and municipal officials and intended to identify sites within the community which are underutilized, have future development potential, or are being promoted for future development by local officials.
- Working in small groups, students will investigate the Town of Southport to collect economic, social, and environmental information, as well as to document the physical characteristics of the project area. Following the site visit, the studio group will work together to refine and coordinate the collected information into a seamless Site Analysis of Southport.
- The studio will complete a community visualization study focused on suggesting appropriate development of a new town center in the municipality three, five, and ten years into the future.
- The community visualization study will include action items for implementation and will be presented by the students to community residents both on the Alfred State campus and at a public meeting in the Town of Southport in late October or early November 2015.
- The community visualization study will be available for use for future planning and for working toward implementation via possible grant funding.

## **PROJECT OUTCOMES:**

- This project will continue the partnership between local communities and Alfred State in serving the Appalachian area of New York State.
- This project will serve as a model for creating sustainable communities in the region by capitalizing on their assets through community visualization studies.
- This project is consistent with ARC Strategic Plan Goal (3) to develop and improve the region's infrastructure to make the Region economically competitive. The specific focus of the project will be to build and enhance basic infrastructure (3.2) and preserve and enhance environmental assets (3.4).
- This project is consistent with the goal of the Southern Tier Central Planning and Development Board to "identify issues and provide solutions that will improve the economy, the environment, and the quality of life in the STC region".
- This project will develop a network of students and faculty across the region who may continue research and service partnerships beyond the current project – expanding this project to include grant-based funding for future classes using the community visualization studies developed.
- This project will develop leadership and civic engagement opportunities among students involved in the project by working with the local rural communities.
- This project will enhance student and community awareness of the work of the ARC at all levels.
- Deliverables will include a public presentation of the research to community members both on the Alfred State campus and at a public meeting in the Town of Southport in late October or early November 2015; an exhibit of the student work at the Community Design Center of Rochester (CDCR) in Rochester, New York in early December 2015; presentation of the research in Washington, DC, at the December 2015 ATP Conference, and the creation of a poster for the event.