



SOUTHERN TIER CENTRAL
Regional Planning & Development Board

2025

Annual Report

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Director's Report

The year 2025 proved to be a challenging and transitional period for the Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board (STC).

Much of the year was spent working diligently to align ongoing activities and existing contracts with the priorities and requirements of a new federal administration. This transition required increased communication and education with new federal partners to ensure a clear understanding of who we are, the role we play, and the value STC brings to the Southern Tier region.



Uncertainty in federal funding, along with delays in contracting and reimbursement, created significant operational challenges throughout the year. These delays affected cash flow and required careful financial management and transparency. Recognizing the importance of open communication, STC made it a priority to share these challenges with our county partners. Over the summer, I presented to the three county legislatures, providing updates on federal changes while also using this time of transition to better understand each county's evolving goals and priorities as we move forward into 2026.

Despite these difficulties, the year also brought meaningful accomplishments and notable successes. One of the most significant achievements was the official award of the Tanglewood Nature Canopy Project, a joint investment involving Tanglewood Nature Center, Chemung County, New York State, and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

This collaborative effort represents a major win for the region and highlights the strength of multi-level partnerships in advancing community-focused infrastructure and tourism projects.

STC also made strong progress through the Twin Tiers ARISE Program (TTAP) initiative and expanded collaboration with workforce development partners across the region. Communication and coordination among TTAP agencies continued to improve, and the incorporation of the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania into the standard workforce practices became the norm. Additionally, the arrival of new leadership at several partner agencies presented an opportunity for STC to engage early, helping to shape best practices and reinforce the importance of interagency collaboration from the outset.

Staffing at STC remained strong throughout the year, even with the departure of two employees who moved on to new professional opportunities. The organization continued to build and strengthen relationships across the region while delivering high-quality support to counties and communities. Through ongoing collaboration, STC ensured that infrastructure, planning, economic development, and flood mitigation needs were addressed in a coordinated and strategic manner.

While 2025 tested STC's resilience, it also reinforced the importance of adaptability, partnership, and clear communication. The organization remains committed to serving the Southern Tier with integrity and purpose as we move forward into the coming year.



Executive Director

*Southern Tier Central Regional
Planning & Development Board*



2025 Financial Report

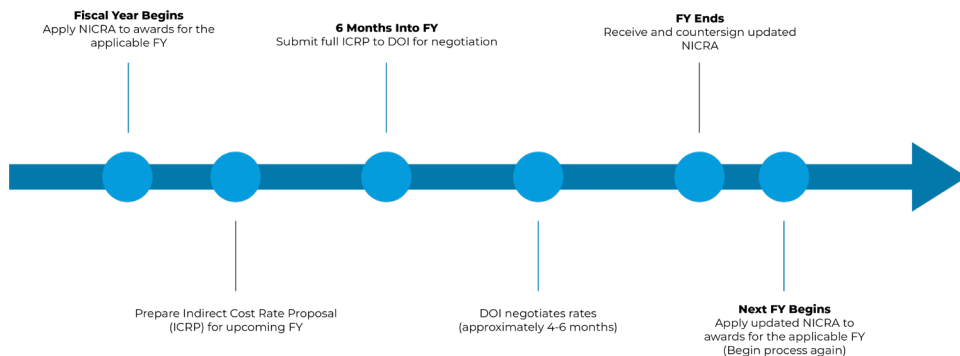
Budget Overview

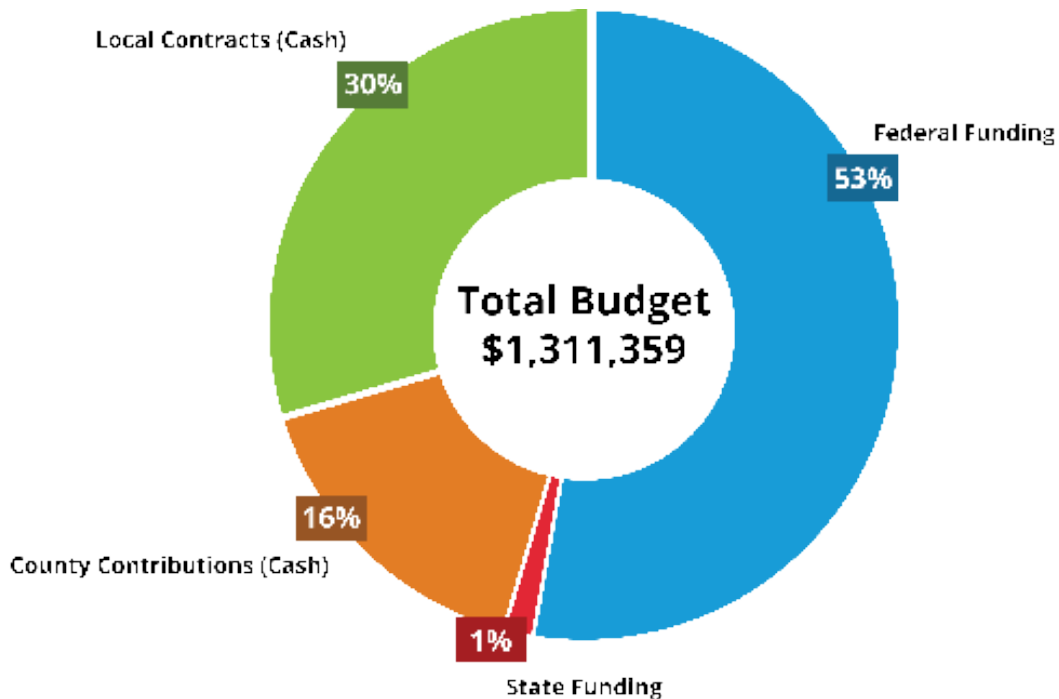
STC operated with a total budget of **\$1,311,359**, reflecting a diverse mix of funding sources that support regional planning and development activities. Federal funding remained the primary revenue source, accounting for 53% of the total budget and underscoring STC's continued reliance on federal programs and partnerships. Local contracts (cash) represented 30%, demonstrating strong demand for STC's services from municipalities and regional partners. County cash contributions made up 16%, reflecting continued local investment in STC's mission. State funding accounted for the remaining 1%.

This balanced funding structure highlights both the opportunities and vulnerabilities associated with external funding environments, while reinforcing the importance of strong local and federal partnerships. STC continues to work with New York State to find new and interesting ways to partner and balance the budget with an increase in State funding.

Following changes in federal rules implemented in 2023, securing a **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)** became increasingly important for STC. While obtaining a NICRA is relatively uncommon for government entities, STC recognized the necessity of establishing a unified and federally approved indirect cost rate.

Ideal Timeline For Getting Your Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA)





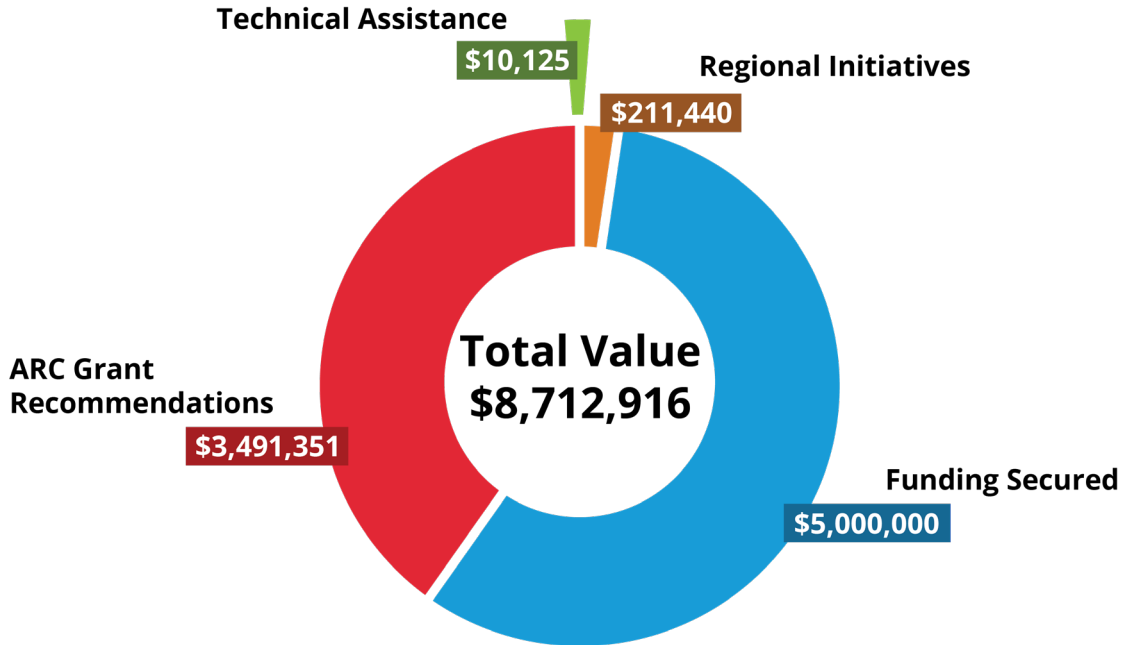
Over the course of the past year, STC’s Accountant worked closely with the *U.S. Department of the Interior* to complete this process, ensuring that a single, agreed-upon indirect rate could be applied consistently—without additional negotiation—to all federal funding sources.

Indirect costs are expenses that cannot be directly attributed to a specific project or program but are essential to overall operations and effective program delivery, such as administrative oversight, financial management, and organizational infrastructure. Once negotiated, a NICRA allows an organization’s approved indirect rate to be accepted by all federal agencies, unless prohibited by statute, for new grants and programs.

This was a lengthy and complex effort that spanned much of 2025, requiring detailed documentation, audited financial statements, and ongoing coordination with federal staff. STC officially secured its NICRA in January 2026, marking a significant administrative and financial milestone for the organization.

Moving forward, NICRA will be an annual process, completed following the close of each fiscal year. Establishing a NICRA strengthens STC’s financial sustainability, improves administrative efficiency, and ensures consistent cost recovery across federal programs.

Chemung County



Highlights: Funding Secured in 2025

\$4 million - Village of Horseheads for Thorne Street Park pool reconstruction and poolhouse renovation (through *NYSWIMS*)

\$1 million - Tanglewood Nature Center Canopy Walkway (through Appalachian Regional Commission)

Interview about the Southport Community Listening Sessions, *courtesy of WENY News*

Watch the video: <https://lnkd.in/emmDmfDE>



ARC Grants Transmitted

- Chemung Canal Connector, Phase 1B** - \$250,000
- Chemung County Industrial Development Agency** - \$150,000
- Elmira Civil War Prison Camp Visitor Center** - \$150,000
- Ernie Davis Community Center (Engineering)** - \$291,351

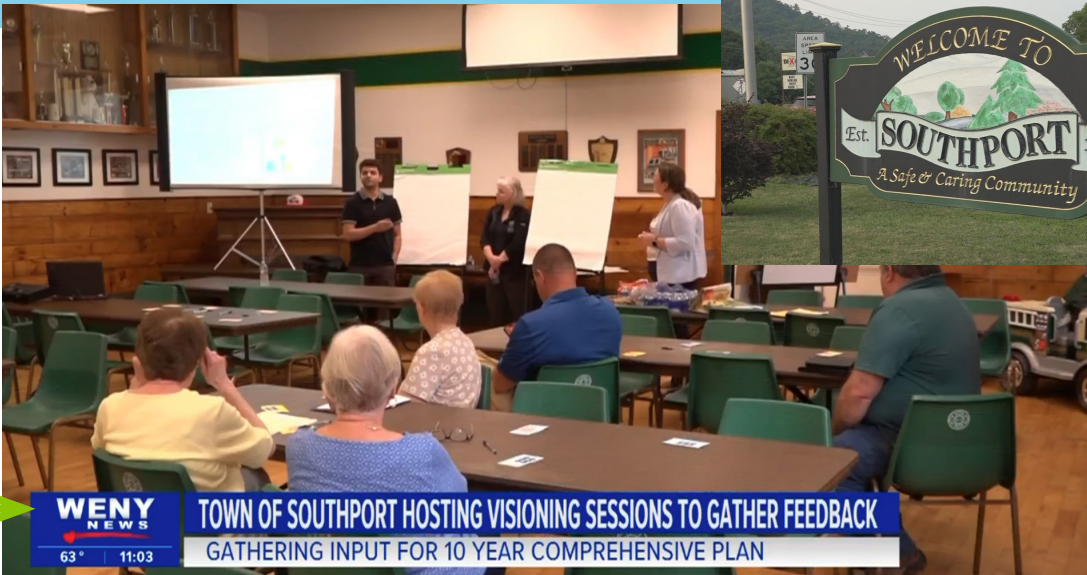
Technical Assistance Provided

- County Partnership Broadband** - Provide GIS mapping
- LECOM** - Economic Report
- Village of Horseheads** - NYSWIMS grant writing

Municipal Planning Contracts

Town of Southport

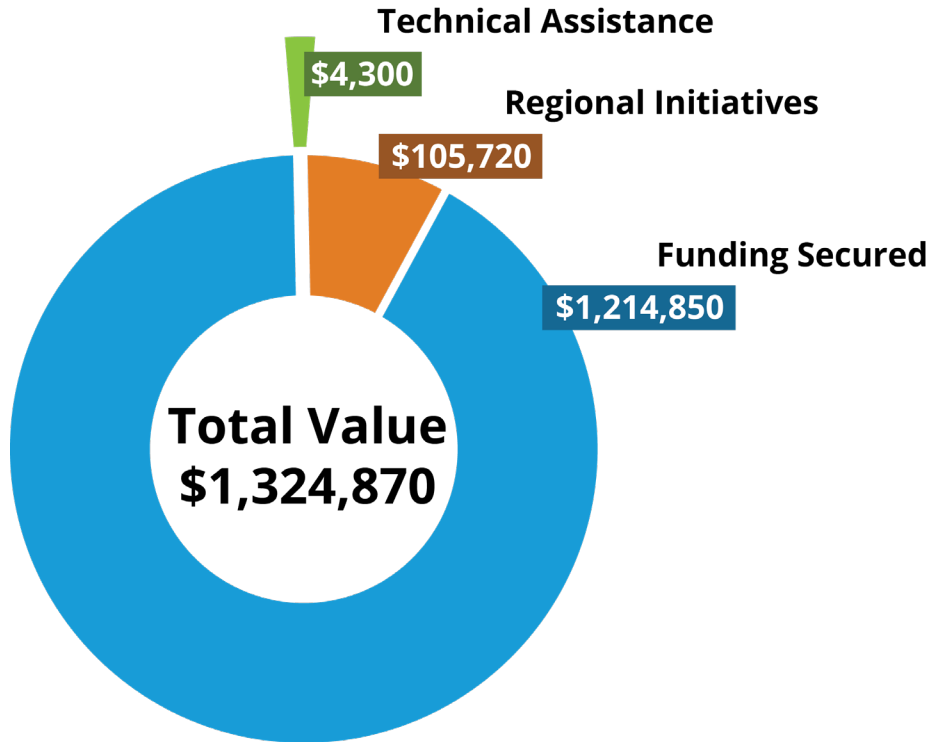
Village of Horseheads



WENY NEWS

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TOWN OF SOUTHPORT HOSTING VISIONING SESSIONS TO GATHER FEEDBACK
GATHERING INPUT FOR 10 YEAR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

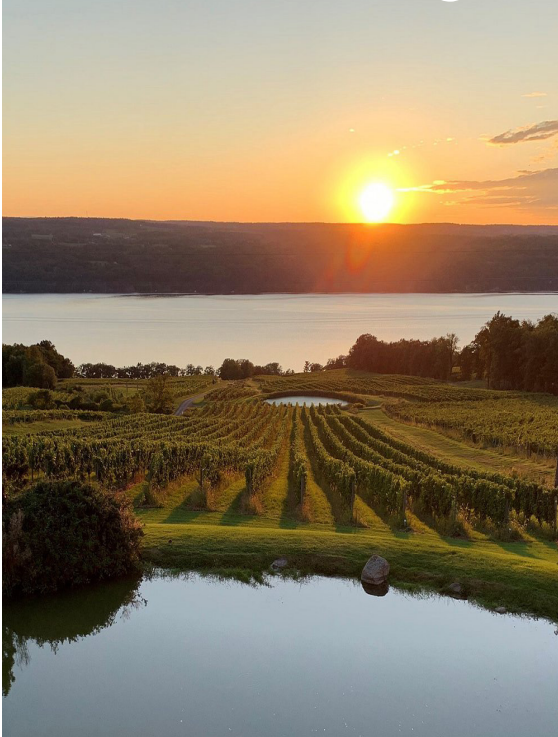


Highlights: Funding Secured in 2025

\$1,213,500 - Clute Park Pump Station (through Appalachian Regional Commission)

\$1,350 - *Sustainable Finger Lakes Neighborhood Mini-Grants* for Montour Falls Memorial Library, Dutton S. Peterson Memorial Library (Odessa), and the Hector Sustainability Committee

Schuyler County



Technical Assistance Provided

Town of Cayuta - SCOPED Mapping for Economic Development

Schuyler County - Comprehensive Plan Assistance

Municipal Planning Contracts

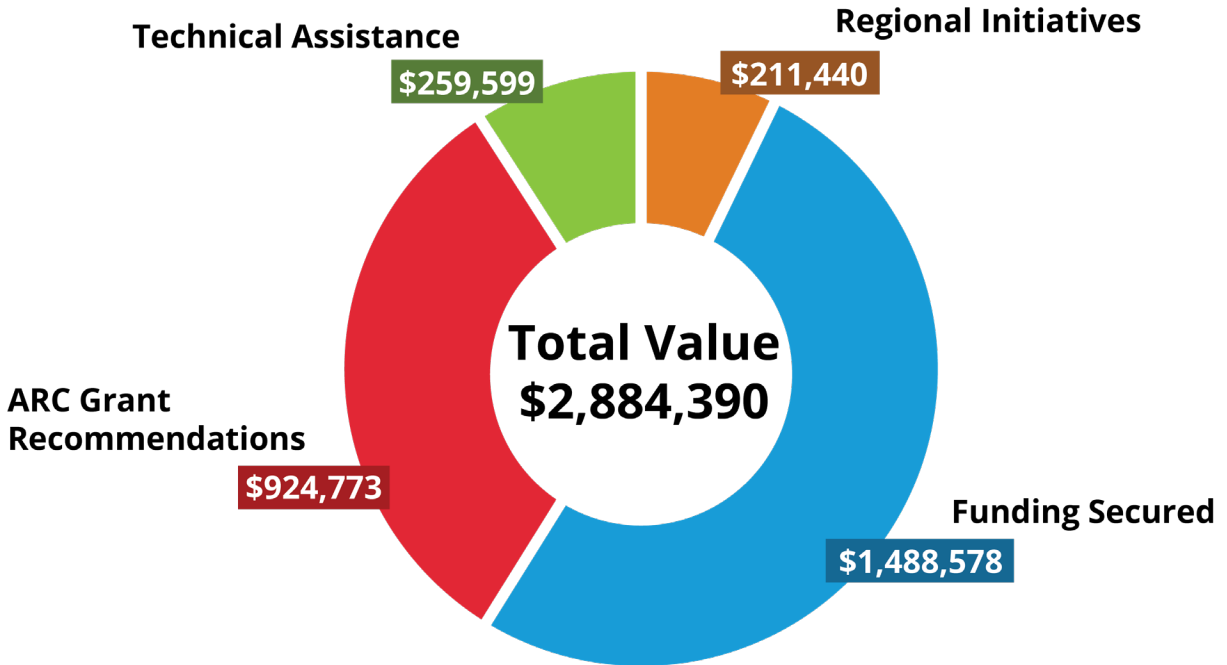
Town of Hector

Village of Orange

Village of Montour Falls

Village of Watkins Glen

Steuben County



Highlights: Funding Secured in 2025

\$400,000 - Town of Corning received the next series of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to support housing rehabilitation

\$1,088,578 - Steuben County IDA Railroad Improvements & Upgrades



ARC Grants Transmitted

Hornell Intermunicipal Wastewater Engineering - \$500,000

Shawmut Industrial Park Access Road Project - \$250,000

Village of Canisteo Downtown Markets Study - \$80,000

Y at Watson Woods Walking Path - \$94,773

Technical Assistance Provided

County Partnership Broadband - Provided grant and GIS assistance

Town of Cameron - Municipal Parts Grants Submission

Town of Campbell - Produced an online parcel viewer for Code Enforcement use

Town of Corning - CDBG Grant Writing & Secured; SEQR for Grant Proposal

Town of Woodhull - Municipal Gas Project Management

Village of Painted Post - Continued providing planning assistance with primary focus on the conclusion of the West Water Street Predevelopment project

Municipal Planning Contracts

Town of Caton

Town of Corning

Village of Addison

Town of Cameron

Town of Woodhull

Village of Painted Post



Appalachian Regional Commission

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) funding continues to be a catalytic source of investment in the STC region, supporting exciting, locally led economic development and quality-of-life projects in our communities. This year, STC

successfully partnered with local applicants, New York State, and our federal partners in ARC to bring project funding to our region.

The STC region continued its history of strong performance in the 2025 grant cycle, securing sizable funding from ARC. In March, the NYS Department of State transmitted all six of STC's ARC applications to the ARC Federal Office for review and all six projects—totaling **over \$850,000**—were approved by ARC, with implementation already underway for many of these projects.

2025 ARC Approved and Funded Projects

Applicant	Project Description	ARC Request
Bath & Hammondsport RR Depot Flood Mitigation Planning <i>Town of Urbana</i>	The Town of Urbana will use funds to evaluate the Bath and Hammondsport Railroad Depot to reduce the buildings flood risk from intensifying storm and flood events at Keuka Lake. Local engineers, historic preservation experts, and architects will determine the appropriate techniques to protect the building for years to come, ideally utilizing the space for water and recreation related activities.	\$45,357
CCC Workforce Education and Labor Market Alignment <i>SUNY Corning Community College (CCC)</i>	The CCC Workforce Education and Labor Market Alignment project aims to assess local labor market needs and evaluate the College's capacity to meet those demands through its current workforce development programs. The project will identify gaps between employer needs and existing program offerings and develop strategies to enhance program sustainability and alignment with local economic growth, strengthening the regional economy by ensuring a skilled workforce that meets the evolving demands of local industries.	\$150,000
Chemung Canal Connector Trail Project, Phase 1A <i>Chemung County</i>	The construction of the complete Chemung Canal Connector Trail will link the Catharine Valley Trail to the Lackawanna Rail Trail. The total length of the new trail will span much of the urban center of the County, including the City and Town of Elmira, Village and Town of Horseheads, and Elmira Heights. This will provide much of the County population with safe, accessible outdoor recreation where none currently exists. Doing so will also expand the State trail network, encourage tourism, and improve resident quality of life.	\$250,000



Applicant	Project Description	ARC Request
<p>Bath and Hammondsport Rail Corridor Stabilization Project</p> <p><i>Steuben County IDA</i></p>	<p>This project will use ARC and local funds to invest in the redevelopment and improvement of a 2.9 mile section of the Bath and Hammondsport Railroad. This capital investment will stabilize the railway bed with bridge safety, erosion control and track stabilization measures making this section viable for use by a rail bike guided tour operator in the near term. These improvements will preserve the rail corridor now, which also sustains its value for potential future re-use by freight transportation customers in the long term.</p>	<p>\$200,000</p>
<p>Community Connectivity and Digital Resource Training for Jobs</p> <p><i>Southern Tier Library System</i></p>	<p>Southern Tier Library System (STLS) will partner with 27 public Libraries in Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben counties, and agencies to offer digital literacy trainings to residents that assist with online resources geared towards strengthening basic digital skills, searching and applying for jobs, and aligning personal interests with regional career opportunities. STLS will also enhance public meeting technologies at libraries for residents, agencies, and businesses to share information, develop strategic partnerships, and advance regional opportunities.</p>	<p>\$187,320</p>
<p>Catharine Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Feasibility Study</p> <p><i>WGACC</i></p>	<p>A feasibility study will provide options for expanding and improving trails, wayfinding, accessibility, and educational opportunities for the Catharine Creek Wildlife Management Area (CWMA).</p>	<p>\$25,000</p>
<p>6 Total Applications (2 Construction, 4 Non-Construction) supporting <i>workforce development, capacity building, and asset-based tourism development</i></p>		<p>Total Request: \$857,677</p>

Learning with GTC

28th Annual Regional Leadership Conference: Building Capacity for Stronger Communities

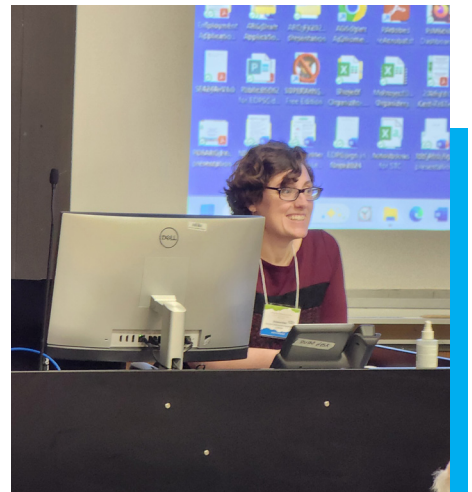
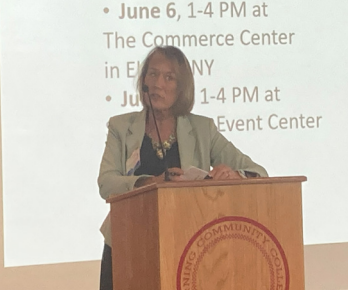
On June 5, 2025, STC successfully hosted its **28th Annual Regional Leadership Conference** at Corning Community College, bringing together municipal leaders, planners, professionals, and partners from across the region for a full day of learning, collaboration, and engagement. The conference welcomed a total of **300 participants**, including 215 registered attendees, 47 vendor representatives, 28 speakers, and 10 STC staff members. Set against the backdrop of a beautiful, sunny day, the event fostered both meaningful professional development and valuable networking opportunities.

The conference featured 23 educational sessions addressing a wide range of issues facing local governments and communities today. Evaluation feedback identified Citizen Emergency Preparedness, presented by the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), as the most popular session. Attendees praised the class for its relevance and practical guidance, reflecting growing interest in emergency planning and resilience.

Similarly, Emergency Planning for Municipalities received strong positive feedback for its timely and engaging content. Other highly rated sessions included SEQRA Basics and Reclaiming Idle Spaces, highlighting attendees' desire for both regulatory clarity and innovative community development strategies.



- June 6, 1-4 PM at The Commerce Center in Elmira, NY
- June 7, 1-4 PM at the Event Center



A robust vendor area featuring 25 organizations complemented the educational programming, providing attendees with direct access to services and resources aligned with municipal needs. Vendors also supported the conference through breakfast and dessert service, further enhancing the attendee experience.

The success of the 28th Annual Regional Leadership Conference reflects STC's continued commitment to supporting effective leadership and strengthening communities across the region.

Evening Trainings

Increasing the capacity of our region's local governments and nonprofits continues to be a core priority for STC. The STC team delivered a robust lineup of evening trainings for 2025—from SEQR and floodplain mapping to civil service hiring, site plan review, and six focused Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant information sessions.




These programs engaged **85 participants** from more than **38 organizations** across the Southern Tier. Participating organizations enhanced their effectiveness by joining these sessions and Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals members earned up to two hours of required NYS training each session. Offered trainings also helped strengthen all participants' practical skills.

As we plan our 2026 offerings, we welcome your input on future training topics.





The **Twin Tiers ARISE Program (TTAP)** continued to build on the progress made over the past two years. As the program reached its halfway point, STC worked closely with TTAP partners to review and adapt funding to better align with industry standards and evolving program needs. This careful review helped all partners better understand what was working well and what needed to change.

The results have been significant. Partners completed a review of the program's successes and challenges, then updated their budgets to support what they learned. Several TTAP partners made meaningful changes to their programs. These changes included addressing inconsistencies in service delivery, updating outdated practices, and closing gaps in services. Through these updates, TTAP partners are now using program funding in more effective ways that support long term results for workers and employers in New York and Pennsylvania. 



Every five years, as required by the **Economic Development Administration**, STC creates a **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)**. This strategy answers the fundamental question: "given the current conditions in our area, goals of the region's residents, and given

the strategic limits set by federal agencies, then, what potential actions are possible, and which actions should be promoted to improve economic conditions in the region for the betterment of all?" [AS1.1]. In short, the CEDs serves as a guiding framework to align STC's work with the current federal priorities.

March 2025 marked the latest update of STC's five-year CEDs. STC staff completed work on the 2025-2030 CEDs, with significant input from STC's Board, Committees, community partners, and the public.



With continued support from STC, partners are *learning, adapting, and improving*. These steps ensure that TTAP remains strong and ready to create lasting progress across the region. Together, these efforts position TTAP and its partners to drive an even greater impact as the program moves into its next phase.

“TTAP’s flexibility and adaptability have allowed us to course correct.”

“Budget amendments gave us back some of the decision-making. Rather than simply going through prescribed motions that may not have been fully effective, we were able to adjust our budgets and adapt our programs to allow for greater engagement. Our budget now supports what’s working.”

Throughout the year, STC discussed proposed CEDS updates and garnered feedback through STC Board and Committee meetings, as well as an open public comment period. With this CEDS, STC can assist with regional development projects by leveraging connections and sharing information between existing entities. Over the five-year strategic period, STC will assist with project development for projects with significant expected impacts in the realms of private industry, place-based investment, and human development.

STC’s CEDS webpage contains the final CEDS documents, and all links to relevant strategies from regional, state, and national entities. This CEDS update will help STC accomplish the good work prioritized by the strong partners that support our region (government, nonprofit, and for-profit).

Find out more about STC’s CEDS at: www.stcplanning.org/ceds/

Village of PAINTED POST West Water Street Predevelopment

STC wrapped up the predevelopment project for the former Ingersoll-Rand foundry site in the Village of Painted Post, which built off of a series of studies and development interest on the site. The project evaluated the impacts of theoretical potential uses of the site to create a generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS).

STC staff joined Fagan Engineers to conduct traffic counts at critical intersections in the village for a Traffic Impact Study (TIS). The TIS evaluates current and future anticipated traffic impacts under different conditions. This project also led to a deeper understanding of the site's history of environmental remediation and existing conditions, setting the stage to reevaluate its deed restrictions to expand the possibilities for new and desired uses at this critical location.

AERIAL VIEW LOOKING NORTH



WEST WATER STREET GEIS SITE VIEWS

CHIUTEN TROWBRIDGE landscape architects FAGAN ENGINEERS



WEST WATER STREET GEIS SITE VIEWS

CHIUTEN TROWBRIDGE landscape architects FAGAN ENGINEERS

With this important environmental review aspect completed, a developer whose project does not exceed any of the defined thresholds in the GEIS can be expedited through the permitting process. Reducing the need for this lengthy piece of the review process can make the site more attractive to developers and help return this significant developable site to a functional space for the Village.

In collaboration with the Village of Painted Post and the Steuben County Industrial Development Agency (IDA), this predevelopment project has created a foundation for future economic growth on this historic site.



Town of Woodhull Municipal Gas Project

In mid-2025, the Town of Woodhull's Municipal Gas Service received a **\$4.9 million** grant from the *Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)* through the U.S. Department of Transportation. The application—developed by STC—supports upgrades to approximately five miles of gas main and service lines. It will also fund the replacement of the District Regulator Station.

The existing infrastructure is aging. Most of the pipes were installed between 1979 and 1982. As a result, the system has several issues. Some pipe segments cannot be located, there are two active leaks, and at least one major system valve that is currently inoperable. The system has also not seen significant capital investment since the early 1980s.

Following the grant award, STC staff assisted the Town of Woodhull to contract with LaBella Engineering to design needed upgrades and the new regulator station. With the project design work complete, LaBella is preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to secure contractors for construction.

Throughout 2025, STC staff provided ongoing grant administration, including reporting, invoicing, and communication with project stakeholders regarding project status and challenges. STC also helped the Town secure Buy America, Build America (BABA) certifications for project materials.



NYS Climate Smart Communities

STC continued to play a pivotal role in supporting local municipalities in the NYS Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Program through direct technical assistance, outreach, and education. STC staff worked closely with four municipalities to pursue CSC actions, conducted outreach to additional communities, and promoted the program through presentations across three conferences and events.

- Staff served as active collaborators at community taskforce meetings, provided guidance on program actions and actionable next steps, and supported certification efforts for Montour Falls, Hector, Chemung County, and Painted Post.
- Region welcomed the Village of Canisteo as a registered community.
- Montour Falls and Hector partnered for their 2nd annual repair cafés, sparking incredible interest across other Southern Tier communities.
- Staff attended 3-day Land Use Leadership Alliance (LULA) in November organized by Pace University and the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to learn about solar energy and battery storage developments, how to prepare our communities to handle incoming developments, and what questions to ask.
- Joined Village of Montour Falls Mayor, James Ryan, to recognize the Village's major accomplishment as the first and only Silver-certified community in the STC region to kick off Climate Week. ***With this achievement, Montour Falls joins only 24 other Silver-certified communities in New York State.***



Community members at the Hector Repair Cafe, May 3, 2025



STC Planner and CSC Coordinator, Liv Lovejoy, with Mayor James Ryan commemorating the Village's Silver certification status.

Collectively, these milestones highlight the importance of collaboration between STC and local municipalities to strengthen climate resilience and build municipal capacity throughout the region.

Partnership & Broadband Expansion

Throughout 2025, **Southern Tier Network (STN)** continued receiving steady support from STC through both leadership involvement and technical assistance. STC Executive Director, Chelsea Robertson serves as Vice Chair of the STN Board of Directors, ensuring continued alignment between the two organizations and providing expert guidance rooted in public-sector planning and governance. In addition, STC continued to provide mapping services that assist STN in updating service areas as new fiber infrastructure is built across the region.

STN's most significant initiative in 2025 was the launch of its **\$19.4 million** Empire State Development–funded Municipal Infrastructure Program (MIP), a major investment in broadband equity across the Southern Tier.

Once completed, the project will *serve more than 2,000 unserved and underserved locations* and *expand the STN fiber network by over 660 miles* throughout Steuben, Schuyler, Chemung, Tioga, and Broome Counties. This expansion marks a substantial step forward in improving digital access, economic competitiveness, and quality of life for rural and underserved communities.

STC played a key role in supporting STN's successful implementation of the MIP, including assistance with the initial grant development, ongoing technical guidance related to billing and porting systems, and support for audit controls and compliance. STC's position on the STN board—combined with its familiarity with the unique requirements of public entities—has helped ensure strong financial oversight and program accountability. Together, STC and STN continue to advance regional broadband infrastructure in a coordinated and strategic manner, strengthening connectivity and opportunity across the Southern Tier.



Community Development Block Grant

This year was full of exciting progress in advancing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Rehabilitation projects in the towns of Corning and Thurston.



Town of Corning

Throughout the year, STC worked with the Town of Corning to conduct a CDBG Housing Needs Assessment. The Town's housing stock showed both areas of opportunity and concern.

Census Data:

- Approximately 92% of housing units appear occupied (59% of occupied units were owner-occupied)
- More than 20% of housing units built before 1940
- Over 17% of households spend at least 30% of their income on housing costs

Working with the Town of Corning's Housing Steering Committee, STC developed and conducted community and windshield surveys to better understand local housing needs.

The windshield survey evaluated **2,314 homes** from the outside and gave them a condition ranking from (1) to (5). The rankings were as follows:

- 1. Deteriorated** (no rehabilitation feasible) = 1.5% (35 houses)
- 2. Poor** (major deficiencies) = 8.7% (201 houses)
- 3. Average** (minor deficiencies) = 26.1% (604 houses)
- 4. Good** (no significant deficiencies apparent) = 43.1% (998 houses)
- 5. Excellent** (no deficiencies apparent) = 20.6% (476 houses)

Twenty percent (20%) of community survey recipients—2,270 addresses—submitted responses. From those responses, *more than 140* (owner-occupied, single family) *households* appeared to meet income guidelines to receive help with repairs on their homes. This shows a clear community need for a housing rehabilitation program.

Based on the findings of the Needs Assessment, completed in December, STC helped the town secure a **\$400,000** grant through the CDBG Single Family Housing Rehabilitation Program. The town plans to launch the rehabilitation program in 2026 to support long-term housing stability for residents.

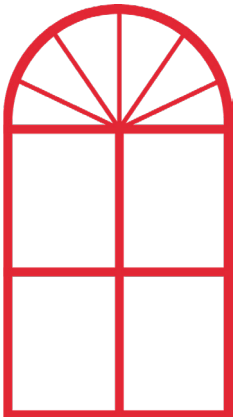
Town of Thurston

Following their Housing Needs Assessment, Thurston moved from planning into active construction and rehabilitation through CDBG.

STC provided ongoing support throughout the rehabilitation process, including assistance with consultant selection, regular file reviews, and consistent communication with New York State Homes and Community Renewal (NYSHCR) staff to ensure program compliance and smooth administration. This support helped Thurston navigate the regulatory and administrative requirements associated with state-funded housing programs.

The Town hired LaBella Associates to manage the Housing Rehabilitation process. LaBella received and vetted 14 resident rehabilitation applications over the course of the year, with 9 of the applications deemed eligible, based on required program criteria. Five homes advanced to the bidding stage, marking a significant milestone toward construction.

Through Thurston's Housing Rehabilitation grant, eligible applicants can receive roof repairs, foundation rehabilitation, water control measures, and the construction of safe and accessible entrances. These improvements are designed to preserve existing housing stock, enhance safety, and support residents to remain in their homes.



These projects address critical housing needs and support improvements to the safety and livability of owner-occupied homes within their communities. Through collaboration with STC, the towns are well positioned to continue **strengthening housing quality** and **supporting the wellbeing of residents**.

The progress made by the Town of Corning and the Town of Thurston in 2025 reflects a strong commitment to addressing local housing needs and demonstrates the value of coordinated planning, technical assistance, and state partnership. STC remains committed to supporting municipalities across the region as they move from assessment to implementation in strengthening housing stability and community resilience.

Water Quality

STC staff completed a broad range of water quality activities, ranging from community education and outreach to water data monitoring, collection, and review, as well as serving as subject matter experts to guide policy and ensure the Southern Tier's water quality issues are considered in guidance and regulations.

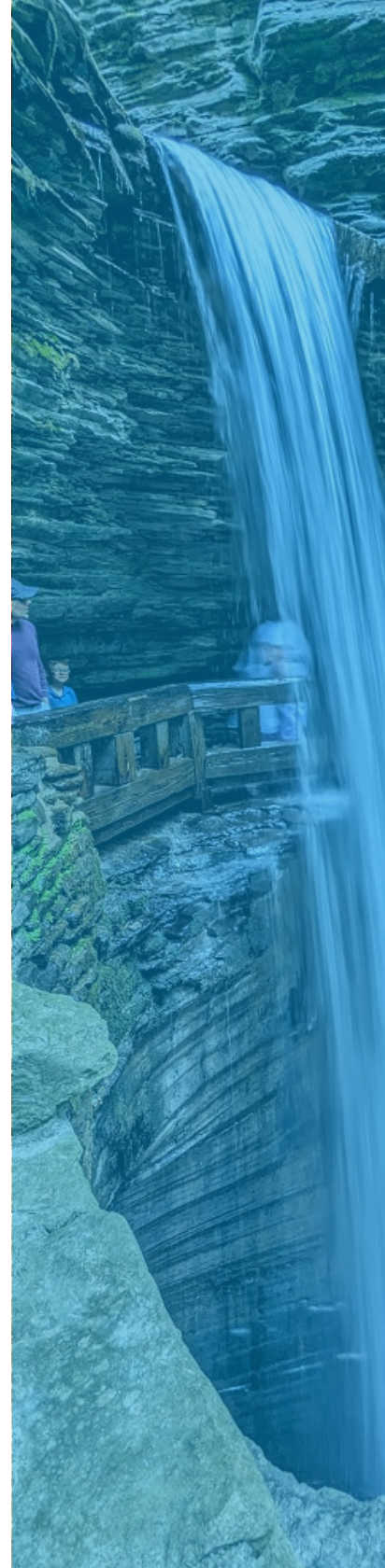
Staff continued to attend each of our three counties' Water Quality Coordinating Committees (WQCC), as well as the Stormwater Coalition in Chemung County, relaying pertinent information for each county and identifying areas for collaboration and opportunity across the region.

STC supported the Schuyler County WQCC to amplify their *first* DEC summer camp sponsorship contest, which sought out essays from students in Schuyler County school districts about *What Water Quality in the Finger Lakes Means to You* for a chance to attend one week of a DEC summer camp of their choosing.

In partnership with the **Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC)**, representatives from STC, along with **ST8**—our eastern counterpart—and the **Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring (ALLARM)** through Dickinson College, supported the Susquehanna Monitoring Collaborative. Staff engaged partners in each county to identify priority rivers and tributaries for monitoring that will be combined with State and other priority areas, and gathered interest for volunteer monitoring training. An interactive dashboard of monitoring site is available on the SRBC website.

STC staff provided outreach and material development assistance to the Town of Hector for a Watershed Forum series. The first of the series was centered around septic system maintenance and other floodplain information and had approximately 50 residents in attendance.

To increase community understanding about stormwater and risks associated with flooding in our region, STC staff continued outreach





and education with the Environmental Emergency Services (EES) **Stormwater-Floodplain Model** at events like, Chemung County's Environmental Field Days, Wisner Market, and as demonstrations for Planning Board members. Planning Board demonstrations supported a better understanding of flood risk considerations during application review and measures to mitigate flooding and stormwater runoff. The hands-on model is a critical tool for educating community members, local officials, and students alike.

To prepare our communities for the new state wetlands regulations that went into effect in January 2025, STC coordinated an evening training to relay pertinent information about the changes. STC also provides water quality and quantity-related trainings at our annual Regional Leadership Conference.

Staff reviewed and provided extensive comment on the nontidal network and nutrient monitoring information sheet to emphasize outreach and communication with the public, as well as tie-ins to local issues in our region.

STC supports annual NYSDEC and EPA efforts to collect voluntary best management practices (BMPs) from municipalities for the Chesapeake Bay Program. This voluntary reporting effort supplements mandatory reports to those agencies to create a more accurate representation of New York State's contributions, both to the level of nutrients making their way to the Bay from our communities and the BMPs in our communities that aid in reducing downstream impacts to the Bay.

Staff continued our support across the region as direct technical assistance providers and on plan development teams and implementation committees for the Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP2), which empowers communities to be proactive in mitigating impacts of potential contaminant sources that can impact their drinking water source.

Flood Resilience

“Is it likely to flood here?” This is an important and reasonable question to ask in the flood-prone Southern Tier. But there is no simple answer. The flood zones mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are used for floodplain development regulations and for mandatory flood insurance requirements. But those maps are old—mostly from the 1980s—and likely to be updated in the next few years.

STC coordinates with FEMA on their floodplain mapping efforts and can provide information about the effective maps, draft maps, and issues related to mapping of areas protected by levees.

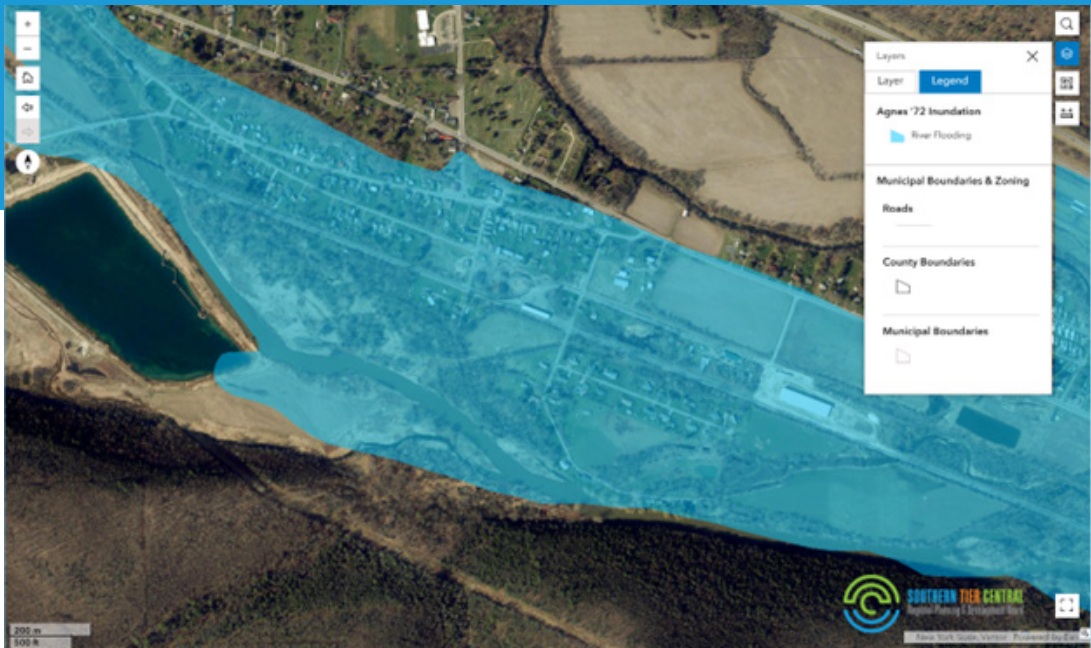
FEMA floodplain maps, called **Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs)**, don’t tell the whole story. Flooding and erosion often occur *outside* of the mapped flood zones. In response, STC developed an online Regional Flood Information Map to provide access to additional information related to flood risks, including the areas inundated from Tropical Storm Agnes in 1972, waterbodies without mapped flood zones, locations of dams, areas protected by flood control levees, and steep slopes where water rushing downhill can cause washouts.

You can access this online map at: stc-hub-stcgis.hub.arcgis.com

Local Flood Warnings

Flooding or flash flooding occurs somewhere in the STC region almost every year, and multiple times in some years. Localized warnings of these events allow time to alert residents, close roads, protect property, and evacuate. Support for flood warnings is provided by **Environmental Emergency Services (EES)**, a non-profit group that maintains a network of real-time precipitation and water level sensors in Steuben, Chemung, and Schuyler Counties.

This local gauge information is used by the National Weather Service (NWS) and improves the situational awareness needed to manage flood response activities. When the National Weather Service issues a flood alert, STC staff monitors the data from these and other gauges and relays information to the county Emergency Managers.

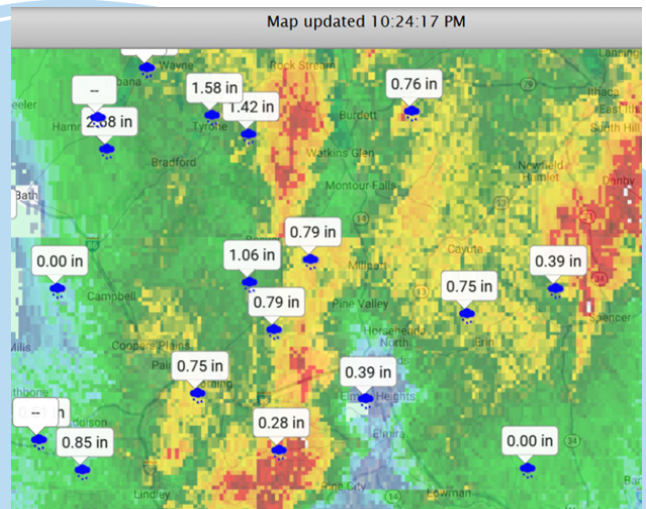


Inundation by the Cohocton River in Coopers Plains during the 1972 Tropical Storm Agnes flood shown on the STC Flood Information Mapper, as mapped by the U.S. Geological Survey

Knowing where it might flood is only the first step toward increased flood resilience. STC assisted with hazard mitigation planning in Chemung and Steuben Counties, resilience planning in Chemung County, and local waterfront planning in Elmira. STC also provides public outreach, local government training, and technical assistance about development requirements and other strategies for improving flood resilience, in and outside of the FEMA-mapped flood zones.

Alerts occurred **ten times in 2025**, though fortunately most of the heavy rain events did not result in flood damage. Real-time rainfall and radar maps helped emergency managers focus their attention on areas most likely to experience flooding problems.

To improve the monitoring of localized storms, EES is installing additional precipitation and stream gauges with grant funding from FEMA. STC staff wrote the grant applications and are managing these projects to enhance local flood warnings.



Real-time rainfall amounts during the flash flood event on June 9, 2025



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TIER CENTRAL
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