

Infrastructure



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7.0 Infrastructure

7.1 OVERVIEW

**Priority Action Programs:
Infrastructure**

- Implement a comprehensive stormwater management strategy to address flooding and water quality protection
- Limit future sewer service extensions to support the Conceptual Land Use Plan
- Establish a septic system maintenance district for areas not designated for public sewer

This section of the Comprehensive Plan addresses the Town of Amherst’s non-transportation related infrastructure such as sanitary sewer, storm sewer, water, electric, natural gas, and fiber optic cable. The existing infrastructure generally has adequate capacity to serve existing and projected future development within the Town.

The current condition of the water system in the Town of Amherst is above average and is capable of providing for adequate fire protection for all property in the Town and adequate potable water supply for residents. The sanitary sewer system has recently undergone a substantial upgrade and is generally capable of operating at a higher level of capacity. In 2011 the Town created the Amherst Consolidated Sanitary Sewer District (CSSD) by combining former districts 1 and 16 into a single district that serves much of Amherst. The district is served through a single water pollution control facility (WPCF), the facility also serves areas in the Town of Clarence. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

The Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Division of Sewerage Management operates Sewer District 5, which serves small portions of Amherst next to the Town of Clarence. Sewer District 5 and Clarence Sewer District 2 serve extensive areas outside of the Town but discharge to the Amherst interceptor sewer network and Amherst WPCF on Tonawanda Creek. The Town should work closely with Erie County and the Town of Clarence in considering major improvements to the sewer trunks conveying flows from Clarence. Limits in the sanitary sewer network are established through an existing agreement between the two towns as part of a growth control measure for future development in Clarence. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

The Town of Amherst has an extensive system of open ditches, closed pipes, detention ponds, and creeks in place to manage stormwater runoff. While this system is in place, stormwater drainage is a concern to many residents as localized nuisance flooding from rain events affects certain areas of the Town. The water quality impacts of stormwater runoff are another important issue. In 2011 the Town consolidated its three stormwater drainage management districts (1, 16, and 26) into a single district. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

The Refuse Control Office and the Town Highway Department are responsible for the collection, recycling, and hauling of solid

waste, as well as spring brush pick-up and fall leaf pick-up. No significant concerns regarding the quality of service have been raised. Most of the solid waste collected by the Town is transported to American Refuel, a waste-to-energy company in Niagara Falls. Yard waste is transported to a privately owned and operated organic recycling center located in northeast Amherst. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

Private utility companies address other infrastructure needs of the residents of the Town of Amherst, for example:

- A lease management agreement with the Erie County Water Authority (ECWA) provides the Town with water.
- National Fuel Gas provides natural gas.
- Niagara Mohawk and New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG) provide electrical service.
- Adelphia Cable, Verizon, MCI, Telergy and TC Systems provide the Town with communications infrastructure to support high technology.

The main concern facing the Town of Amherst with regard to the current status of infrastructure is the cost of extending lines to unserved areas and associated impacts on community character. Other infrastructure-related needs include:

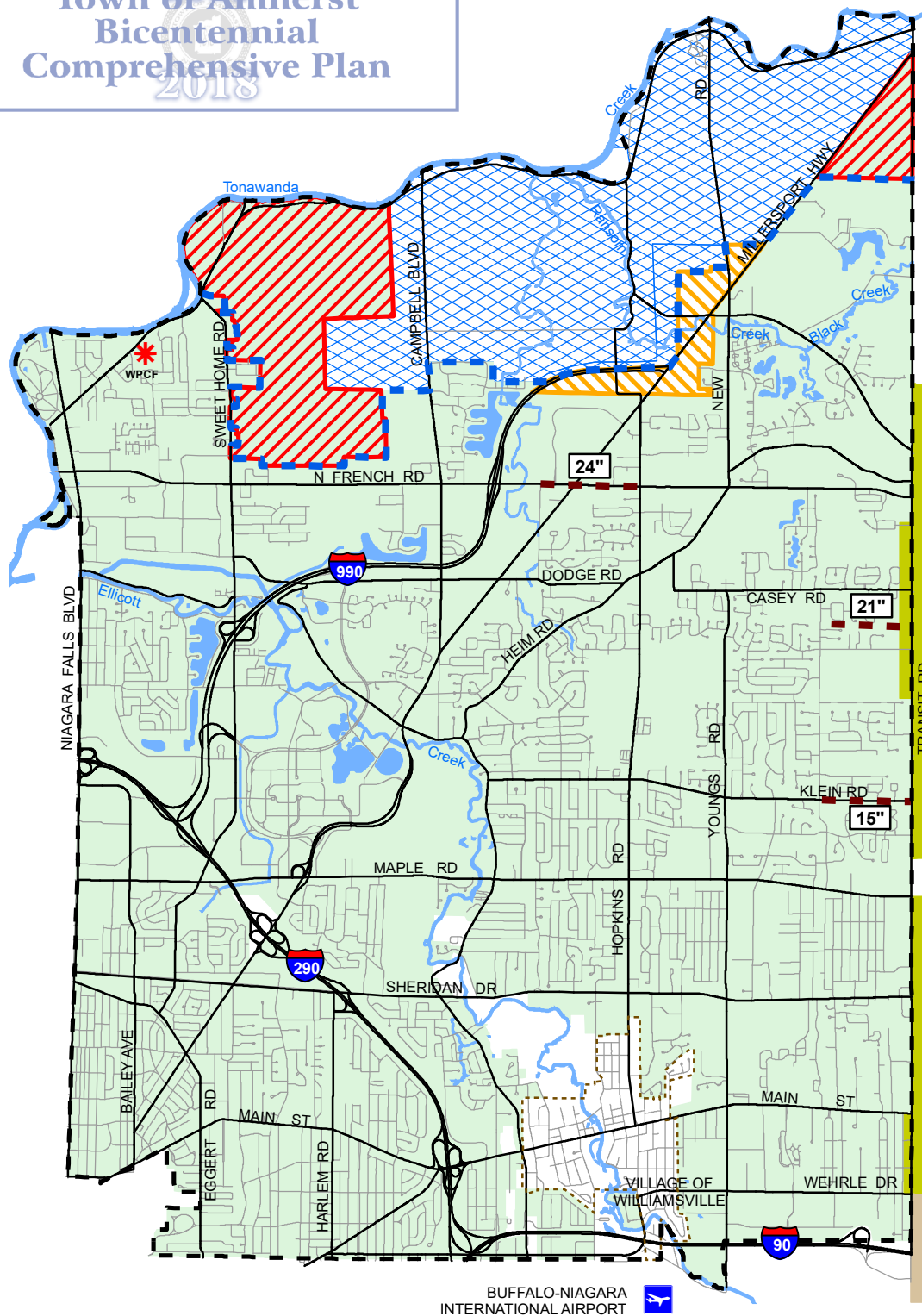
- Upgrading and efficiently maintaining existing infrastructure
- Developing a comprehensive stormwater management plan
- Working with surrounding municipalities to evaluate, upgrade, and/or rebuild shared infrastructure
- Addressing the role of infrastructure in economic development (i.e., high technology infrastructure and high utility costs. These issues are addressed in Chapter 5.0, Economic Development)

As previously indicated, the existing infrastructure generally has adequate capacity to support existing and future development. The two major issues of concern relate to stormwater management and sanitary sewers. For this reason, the goals, objectives, and policies presented below focus on Amherst's stormwater and sanitary sewer systems.



While Amherst's existing infrastructure generally has adequate capacity for existing and future development, the two major issues of concern relate to ***stormwater management and sanitary sewer.***

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



BUFFALO-NIAGARA
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

FUTURE SANITARY SEWER SERVICE

FIGURE 11

LEGEND

Existing Sanitary Sewer Districts

- Town of Amherst Consolidated Sanitary Sewer District (CSSD)
- Erie County Sewer District No. 4
- Erie County Sewer District No. 5
- No Sewer District

Future Sanitary Sewer District

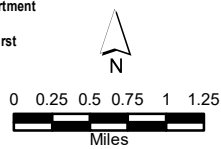
- Add to Amherst CSSD
- Delete from Amherst CSSD
- No Expansion of Amherst CSSD
- No Expansion of Amherst CSSD Limit of Future Sanitary Service

Planned Interceptor Improvements

- Interceptor / Diameter
- Water Pollution Control Facility
- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES:

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst Engineering Department
 Map Compiled by the Town of Amherst Planning Department
 Date: December 2020



7.2 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

GOAL

Well-maintained and cost-effective infrastructure systems that provide public water, sewer, stormwater, and other utility services within the Town of Amherst, consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies to promote sustainable land use and economic development and protect natural resources

OBJECTIVES

- Establish a town-wide program with plans and policies to effectively manage stormwater runoff, including flooding and stormwater quality
- Maintain and upgrade existing sanitary sewer infrastructure to support existing and projected needs. Limit future service extensions to those needed to serve development areas designated on the Conceptual Land Use Plan

POLICIES

A. Stormwater Management

The Town of Amherst has developed a stormwater management plan to comply with new regulatory programs at the federal and state levels. The Plan is comprehensive in scope in order to address multiple issues related to stormwater management and water resource protection in an integrated manner. In addition, the stormwater management plan addresses the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, including policies set forth in the Natural and Cultural Resources Element for the protection of water resources and quality. Through its collaboration with the Western New York Stormwater Coalition the Town hosts educational seminars for interested parties on an annual basis, informing them of the changing stormwater management program and regulations as well as ways to comply with the new regulations. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

7-1 Develop a program to address flooding and other stormwater management issues in coordination with other responsible agencies.

The Town should implement flood mitigation measures as recommended in the *Town Flood Mitigation Plan Report* and the *Ransom Creek Improvement Study*. Recommendations include improving the hydraulic efficiency of the creek and ditch channels in the lower reaches to drain storm water from the local watersheds more quickly, as well as flood damage reduction through floodplain management planning and retrofitting. More specific flood mitigation recommendations include addition of rip rap at the tip of Seven Sister's Island (located just west of Lehn Springs Drive), replacement of the Castle bridge with a new bridge that can convey the 100-year flood stream flow, and utilization of vacant land for additional

flood storage capacity. The “Best Management Practices” discussed in Natural and Cultural Resources Policy 4-7 should be incorporated into future stormwater management projects and developments on an on-going basis.

As discussed under Natural and Cultural Resources Policy 4-6, the Town coordinates stormwater management efforts with other governmental agencies, including adjacent municipalities and other municipalities within the watersheds, Erie County, FEMA, EPA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the NYSDEC. Amherst participates in the WNY Stormwater Coalition, Tonawanda Creek Watershed Committee and the Erie County Water Quality Committee with a focus on watershed-based management planning to protect and improve water quality and stormwater management. Consistent with Chapter 4.0 policies, future stormwater management projects should be designed to provide the additional benefits of open space, improved water quality, and preservation of riparian vegetation, trees, and woodlands. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

7-2 Implement “low impact development” standards and techniques designed to reduce the quantity and improve the quality of stormwater runoff from development.

An alternative to conventional stormwater management that reduces development impacts on natural drainage systems, “low impact development” is addressed by Natural and Cultural Resources Policy 4-8. Conservation development that retains more area in natural cover to absorb runoff is an example of a low-impact development technique. Per Policy 4-8, the Town should consider revising its existing stormwater management standards to incorporate principles of low impact development.

B. Sanitary Sewer System

The Town of Amherst owns and operates a water pollution control facility and collection system. Policies for future sanitary sewer service should emphasize maintenance of existing infrastructure and include the elimination of sanitary sewer overflows (SSO’s) as mandated by the EPA. Coordination of future service extensions with the Conceptual Land Use Plan should be undertaken to limit development in areas designated to remain in farmland and rural uses. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

7-3 Give priority to repairs to existing infrastructure systems, rather than extensions to serve new greenfield development.

Sanitary sewer capital programming should place the highest priority on repairing existing infrastructure in older areas of Amherst in the southwestern part of town. This policy will contribute to encouraging reinvestment in these areas. Priority should also be given to updating existing components of the

system in order to meet existing and projected demands. The lowest priority should be given to extensions of new lines to serve currently undeveloped areas. Any extension into these areas should result from a comprehensive consideration of growth and definition of new policy direction. In accordance with this policy, the condition and capacities of the following existing sanitary sewer interceptor lines should be improved before public money is used to construct the proposed Smith Road/New Road lift station to accommodate anticipated growth in the Millersport/New Road/Smith Road area. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

- Ensure necessary sewer improvements are made to maintain facilities in southwest Amherst , including elimination of SSO's
- Continue with the North French interceptor upgrade project by completing the replacement from I-990 to Millersport Highway
- Further relieve the North French interceptor sewer by expanding the Peanut Line interceptor from Transit Road to Paradise Road

(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)

The entire sanitary sewer system should be modeled and evaluated every five years as needed to maintain a high level of service.

7-4 Redefine the boundaries of the Consolidated Sanitary Sewer District in the northern part of the Town to exclude rural and agricultural areas designated for protection and include areas designated for more intensive development. Promote the importance of proper maintenance of private disposal systems or septic systems to limit sewer extensions into protected areas. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

The Town should reevaluate and redefine the boundaries of the sewer district so that the best possible service can be provided to customers without unnecessary extensions and associated costs. Limiting sewer extensions should be utilized as a land use control measure to prevent higher density development in areas designated for rural and agricultural uses. Proposed new boundaries for the CSSD that are consistent with the Conceptual Land Use Plan are displayed in Figure 11. The major changes include the elimination of the area designated for agricultural, rural residential and open space uses north of North French Road and between Sweet Home Road and Campbell Boulevard, as well as the area generally north of Dann Lake between Millersport Highway and Transit Road where the development impacts on designated wetlands and/or prime agricultural soils can be avoided. A new service area has been added near New Road and Ransom Creek and

Limiting sewer extensions in North Amherst will protect rural and environmentally sensitive areas designated by the Conceptual Land Use Plan to remain in low-density uses.

south to I-990 to serve future mixed-use and other development shown on the Conceptual Land Use Plan. *(Amended 12-14-20; BCPA-2020-04)*

Private disposal systems or septic systems in the Town are mainly located in areas outside the Consolidated Sanitary Sewer District, such as along Tonawanda Creek Road and Schoelles Road. The responsibility for their maintenance is with the property owners. Sewer extensions are sometimes requested when these systems fail. The Town should promote the importance of maintaining private disposal systems to ensure that failing systems do not create a need for sewer extensions to those areas outside current districts. Utilizing available resources and educational practices from State and County Department of Health agencies can provide residents with the knowledge of best practices to maintain their systems, reducing the risk of failures or problems. New and advancing technologies such as mound and aerobic treatment systems can be used as alternatives for failing systems rather than pursuing sewer extensions. *(Amended 09-08-15; BCPA-2014-01)*

