

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. The Town is divided into two different sanitary sewer districts (See Figure 11). Approximately 75% of the Town falls within Sanitary Sewer District 16, including projected growth areas in central and North Amherst. Sanitary Sewer District 1 provides service to an older section of the Town and contains infrastructure generally in need of upgrading (e.g., to replace failing clay pipe sewers and deteriorating brick manholes).

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 wastewater treatment plant 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.

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.

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 the Town's composting facility in northeast Amherst.

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:

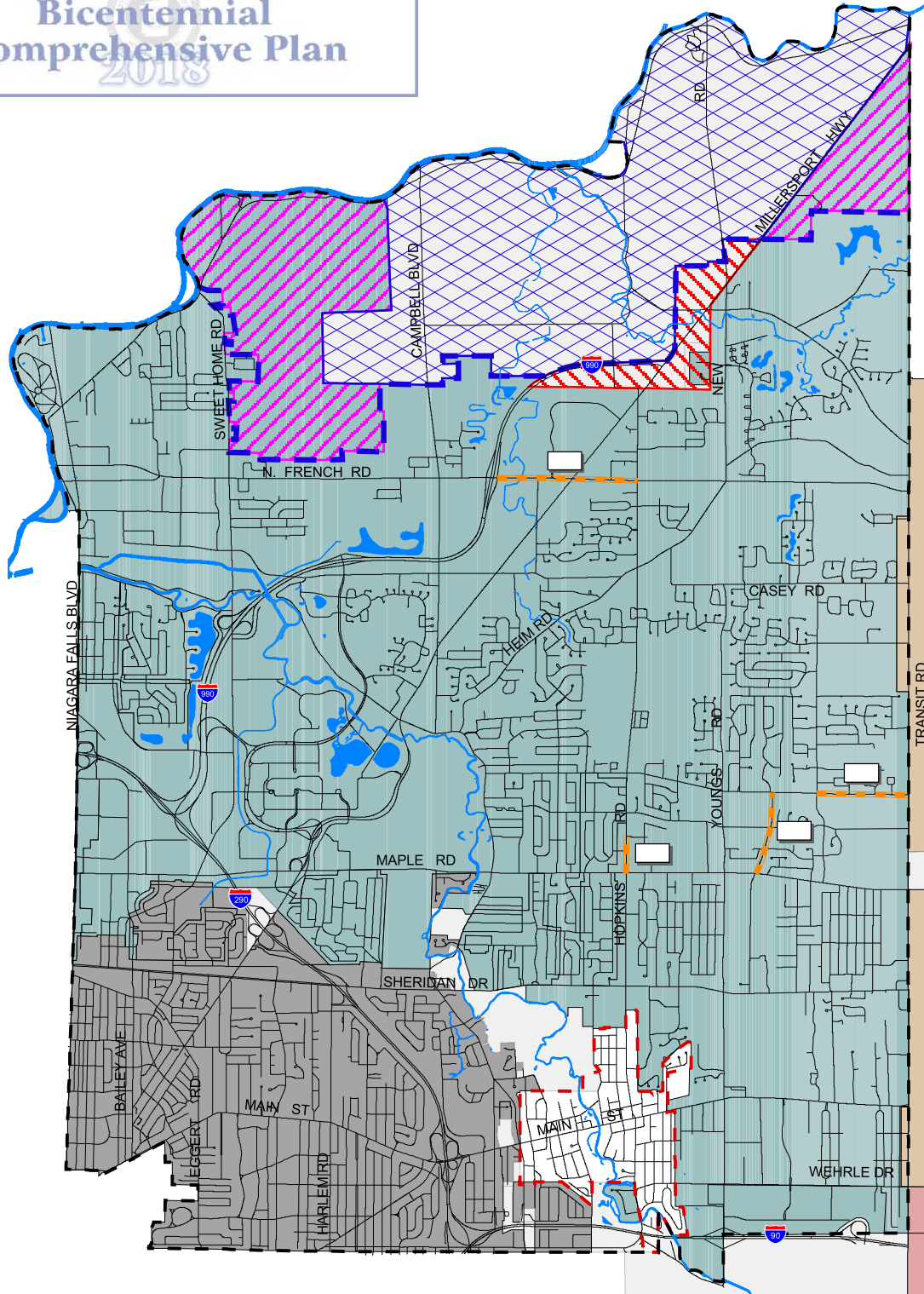
- Upgrading and efficiently maintaining existing infrastructure
- Developing a comprehensive stormwater management plan
- Working with surrounding municipalities to evaluate, upgrade, and/or rebuild shared infrastructure
- Addressing the role of infrastructure in economic development (i.e., high technology 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.***

1818
Town of Amherst
Bicentennial
Comprehensive Plan
2018



FUTURE SANITARY SEWER SERVICE

FIGURE 11

LEGEND

Existing Sanitary Sewer Districts

- Amherst Sewer District No. 1
- Erie County Sewer District No. 4
- Erie County Sewer District No. 5
- Amherst Sewer District No. 16
- No Sewer District

Future Sewer Sanitary Districts

- Add Area to Amherst Sewer District No. 16
- Delete Area from Amherst District No. 16
- No Expansion of District 16
- No Expansion of District 16 Limit of Future Sanitary Service

Planned Interceptor Improvements

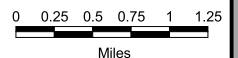
- Interceptor/Diameter Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES :

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst Engineering Department

Map Compiled by URS Corporation

Date: February, 2004



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 is currently developing a stormwater management plan to comply with new regulatory programs at the federal and state levels. This plan needs to be comprehensive in scope in order to address multiple issues related to stormwater management and water resource protection in an integrated manner. Existing stormwater studies should be reviewed and their findings incorporated into the new plan where appropriate. In addition, the stormwater management plan should address 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. The Town should host educational seminars for interested parties on an annual basis to inform them of the changing stormwater management program and regulations as well as ways to comply with the new regulations.

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 recently completed *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 should coordinate 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. 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.

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 wastewater treatment plant 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 rural uses.

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, particularly in Amherst Sanitary Sewer District No. 1 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 the extension of new lines to serve currently undeveloped areas. 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.

- Ensure necessary sewer improvements are made to maintain facilities located in Sanitary Sewer District 1, including elimination of SSO's
- Alleviate flows along the North Forest and Campbell/Stahl interceptors by diverting east/west flows north to the Peanut Line via rehabilitated sewers along Hopkins Road and Ayer Road
- Continue with the North French interceptor upgrade project by completing the replacement from I-990 to Hopkins Road
- Further relieve the North French interceptor sewer by expanding the Peanut Line interceptor from Transit Road to Paradise Road

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 Sanitary Sewer District No. 16 in the northern part of the Town to exclude rural areas designated for protection and include areas designated for more intensive development.

The Town should reevaluate and redefine the boundaries of the sewer districts 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 uses. Proposed new boundaries for Amherst Sanitary Sewer District No. 16 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 north of Sutton Lake between Millersport Highway and Transit Road. A new service area has been added near New Road and Ransom Creek and south to I-990 to serve future mixed-use and other development shown on the Conceptual Land Use Plan.

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.

7-5 Create a septic system maintenance district to ensure proper maintenance/operation of systems in areas where there are threats to public health.

Malfunctioning on-site septic systems have been identified as contributing to water quality problems in Ransom Creek in northeast Amherst. The Town should work with the Erie

County Department of Health to document the location and extent of failed septic systems that may pose a threat to public health and water quality. If warranted, a septic system maintenance district or districts should be established to provide a mechanism for the testing and repair of failed systems on a more frequent basis than currently occurs with property transfers. The affected areas would be generally outside the boundaries of the existing or proposed sewer districts, including non-sewered residential areas such as Tonawanda Creek Road and Schoelles Road.

A *septic system maintenance district* can be established to address failing on-site septic systems in areas outside of existing or proposed sanitary sewer districts.