Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS REPORT

PREPARED BY

WALLACE ROBERTS & TODD, LLC
URS CORPORATION
ECONOMICS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

DECEMBER 5, 2001

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1.0 Introduction

This report presents the results of the Inventory and Analysis conducted by the consultant team for the Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this work was to gain an understanding of the existing conditions and trends that are shaping the Town's future as a basis for developing plan concepts, strategies, and recommendations for action in subsequent stages of the planning process. In this report, information on existing conditions and trends is presented both at the scale of the Town as a whole and for six smaller "Focal Planning Areas" that have been identified within the Town. The following eight subject areas are addressed for Amherst as a whole in Chapters 2.0 to 10.0:

Regional Context: This chapter describes Amherst's location and role in the Buffalo-Niagara region, its relationship to adjoining municipalities, and relevant regional and adjacent municipal planning efforts.

Land Use and Development: This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part provides an overview of existing land use and zoning for Amherst as a whole and for six geographic subareas of the Town. Amherst has been divided into these subareas, referred to as "Planning Analysis Areas," for the purpose of analyzing land use and development trends in the major sections of the Town. The second part of the chapter provides an estimate of the development capacity of vacant land remaining in the Town and compares the estimated capacity to projected demand for residential and commercial uses identified in later chapters of the report.

Natural and Cultural Resources: This chapter describes significant environmental resources within Amherst. These include natural resources such as geology, water resources, and vegetation; agricultural resources; major visual resources; and historic and archaeological resources.

Demographics: This chapter addresses demographic trends affecting the Town of Amherst and the Buffalo-Niagara region as a whole. Included are projections of growth in population and housing (both single-family and multi-family units) through the year 2020, broken down by Planning Analysis Area.

Economic Conditions: This chapter discusses a range of topics related to economic conditions and trends in Amherst and the Buffalo-Niagara region. These topics include prospects for the technology sector in Western New York, Amherst's role in the regional economy, the role of the University at Buffalo in the Town's economy, findings of economic stakeholder interviews conducted for the Inventory and Analysis, strengths and weaknesses of the local and regional economy, and economic development strategies that have been used in other university communities. Also included is a projection of employment growth in Amherst through 2020, broken down by Planning Analysis Area.

Transportation: This chapter addresses the Town's major transportation systems. These systems include the Town's roadway network, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, and public transportation.

Infrastructure: This chapter discusses the basic utilities and services (other than transportation) required to support existing and new development in the Town of Amherst. These infrastructure systems include sanitary sewer, water supply, stormwater drainage, solid waste, and private utilities.

Housing and Neighborhoods: This chapter summarizes housing conditions and neighborhoods within the Town. Included are a housing profile based upon U.S. Census data, major housing issues (affordable housing, senior housing, public and assisted housing, homelessness, housing for special needs populations) and a general overview of the Town's neighborhoods.

Community Facilities: This chapter describes community facilities and services that are available to town residents. These include both facilities and services provided or owned by the Town of Amherst (parks and recreation, police protection, libraries, senior services, youth services, and other municipal facilities) and key facilities and services provide by entities other than the Town (public schools, fire protection, and health facilities).

In addition to the above town-wide analyses, the report characterizes existing conditions, trends, and key issues in six smaller geographic areas within Amherst determined to have special planning challenges that deserve a closer level of scrutiny in the Comprehensive Plan. Described in Chapter 11.0, these Focal Planning Areas are:

1. Northwest Amherst
2. North Amherst
3. University
4. Eggertsville
5. Snyder
6. Williamsville

2.0 Regional Context

The Town of Amherst is located in Erie County in western New York, in what is referred to as the Buffalo-Niagara Region (see Figure 1).[1] It is situated in the northwestern part of the County abutting the City of Buffalo to the southwest. Other adjacent municipalities in Erie County include Tonawanda to the west, Cheektowaga to the south, Lancaster to the southeast, and Clarence to the east. In addition, the Village of Williamsville is located within the southeast portion of Amherst. Adjacent municipalities in Niagara County include North Tonawanda and Wheatfield to the northwest and Pendleton to the north.

The role that Amherst plays in the Buffalo-Niagara region has changed over the years. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Town could be characterized as predominantly a "bedroom community" or a "first-ring suburb" oriented towards the City of Buffalo. During this period of rapid population growth, the number of residents in the Town rose from 33,744 in 1950 to 62,837 in 1960 and 93,929 in 1970, an increase of 178 percent over two decades. Most of these residents lived in the area south of Maple Road, while the central and northern parts of Amherst remained largely undeveloped.

In the late 1960s the State University of New York announced its intention to develop a new campus on 1,200 acres near the center of Amherst. In addition, the Audubon New Community was created under the sponsorship of the New York State Urban Development Corporation on approximately 2,400 acres adjacent to the new campus to accommodate housing and other support services. These developments helped to change the character of the Town from a "bedroom community" to a major regional center. Population growth continued a slower rate during the subsequent decades, increasing to 108,706 in 1980, 111,711 in 1990, and 116,510 in 2000. Amherst has also witnessed significant non-residential (office, retail, industrial) development during this period. Much residential and non-residential growth occurred north of Maple Road and south of North French Road, much of the northern part of the Town remains rural in character. While Amherst has retained its reputation as a desirable suburban community in the Buffalo-Niagara region, today it also functions as an employment, retail, and institutional destination not only for its residents, but also for residents of surrounding municipalities.

From a comprehensive planning perspective, the relationships of Amherst to Clarence and Tonawanda are of particular concern because of the extensive, shared boundaries formed by two major arterials: Transit Road to the east and Niagara Falls Boulevard to the west. Coordinated land use and transportation planning is especially important for Transit Road because of the length of this corridor and the amount of adjacent land that is vacant or

[1] The Buffalo-Niagara region consists of the eight counties of Western New York (Allegheny, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming) and two regional municipalities in Southern Ontario (Niagara and Hamilton-Wentworth). (Source: *State of the Region: Performance Indicators for the Buffalo-Niagara Region in the 21st Century*, Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth, University at Buffalo, November 1999)

underutilized and thus susceptible to change. Amherst and Clarence are currently undertaking a joint access management study for this corridor. Amherst also shares a lengthy boundary with Pendleton along Tonawanda Creek. As a portion of the historic Erie Canal, Tonawanda Creek offers special opportunities for resource preservation/enhancement and recreation-related waterfront development that will be explored through the Town of Amherst and Town of Pendleton Joint Waterfront Revitalization Program.

Amherst has a less direct relationship to North Tonawanda, Wheatfield, and Lancaster, which abut small portions of the Town. (North Tonawanda and Wheatfield are located along Tonawanda Creek west of Pendleton while Lancaster touches the southeast corner of Amherst.) Although Cheektowaga shares a more extensive boundary along the south side of Amherst, the two towns are largely isolated by the physical barrier formed by the Governor Thomas E. Dewey Thruway. Nevertheless, issues of common concern exist relative to the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport (located in the northeast corner of Cheektowaga abutting the Thruway) and the Harlem-Kensington-Wehrle area, which spans both municipalities to the west of the Thruway. Amherst and Cheektowaga are currently engaged in a joint study of the Harlem-Kensington-Wehrle area to address issues such as the economic viability of the business district, physical improvements, and regulatory changes.

Like North Tonawanda and Lancaster, the City of Buffalo shares a limited geographic boundary with the Town of Amherst. Moreover, the South Campus of the University at Buffalo (UB) and the Grover Cleveland Golf Course form a partial physical buffer between the Town and the City. Nevertheless, the importance of the relationship between Buffalo, the traditional urban core of the region, and Amherst, its long-standing suburb and an emerging regional center in its own right, transcends mere physical adjacency. Issues of concern include, among others, the relative positions of the two municipalities in the regional economy, transportation linkages, and the viability of Amherst's older neighborhoods located next to Buffalo and the UB South Campus.

Four of the towns adjacent to Amherst have prepared Comprehensive Master Plans since 1989.[2] The most recent of these plans was a joint Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew. The Future Land Use Plan contained in this Plan specifies Regional Commercial uses along the east side of Transit Road abutting Amherst. The Town of Clarence Master Plan 2000, adopted in March 1989, similarly calls for Major Arterial (i.e., commercial) uses along the entire length of Transit Road adjacent to Amherst. Uses specified east of the Transit Road corridor include predominantly low-density residential south of Staley (Smith) Road and agricultural north of Staley Road.

The Town of Cheektowaga Comprehensive Master Plan, adopted in November 1991, identifies the Genesee Street and Harlem Road areas adjacent to Amherst as "key target sectors." Objectives for the Genesee Street Sector, which encompasses the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport, are to improve visual character, provide an "identity" theme for community, and create a high profile airport development district. Objectives for the Harlem Road Sector are to improve traffic circulation, improve visual appearance, and protect residential uses from commercial intrusion.

[2] The Village of Williamsville has also prepared a Master Plan, the Village of Williamsville Master Plan, adopted in January 1998. (See Section 11.6 for a discussion of this plan.)

The Town of Pendleton Master Plan was adopted in October 1990. The Plan calls for low-density residential development along Tonawanda Creek with the exception of Campbell Boulevard, which is designated for commercial use.

At the regional level, plans prepared to address transportation issues include the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council's 2025 Transportation System Plan, Regional Pedestrian Master Plan, Bicycle Master Plan, and Regional Bikeway Implementation Plan (see Chapter 7.0).

In addition, the Guiding Principles for Countywide Land Use Planning, published by the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning in 1999, identifies physical resources that should be preserved and enhanced and planning principles that should be incorporated into local planning documents and action plans. This plan addresses the following eleven physical areas or planning concepts of countywide significance:

Physical/Infrastructure Resources
- Economic Development
- Farmland Protection
- Rural Service Centers
- Transportation
- Utility Service Areas

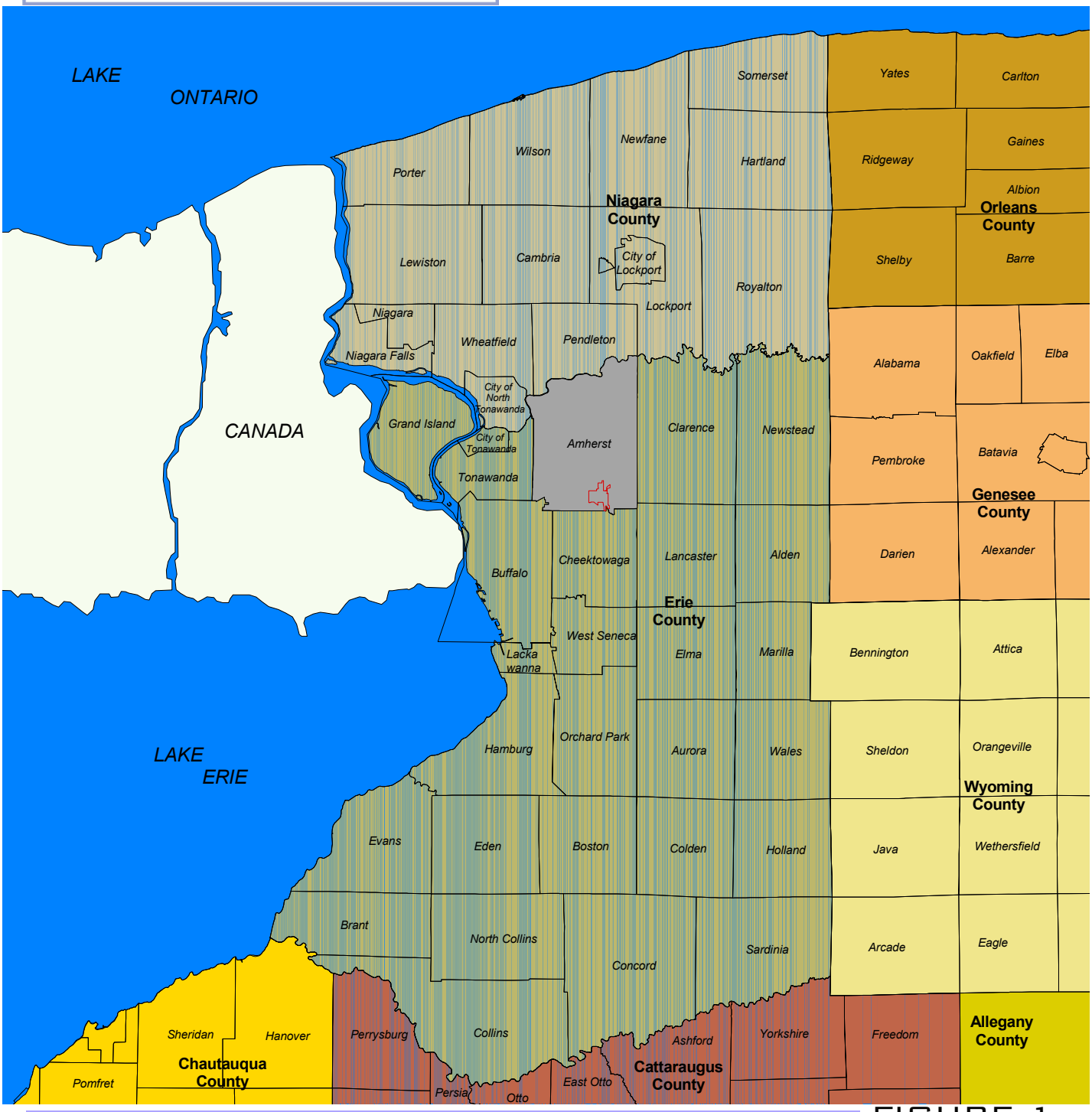
Social/Cultural/Institutional Resources
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Affordable Housing

Environmental Resources
- Environmental Preservation
- Parks and Open Space
- Stream Corridor Preservation
- Waterfront

For each area/concept, planning principles are identified, along with actions that Erie County and local governments can take to incorporate the principles into decision-making processes. A number of resources of countywide significance identified in the Guiding Principles for Countywide Land Use Planning are located in the Town of Amherst, including:

Farmland Protection: Agricultural district in North Amherst
Rural Service Centers: Swormville, located in Clarence and Amherst
Utility Service Areas: Sanitary Sewer Districts located in Amherst
Historic and Cultural Resources: Amherst Museum, Musicfare Theatre at Daeman College
Environmental Preservation: Wetlands, floodplains, and watersheds located in Amherst

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



Regional Context

FIGURE 1

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Town of Amherst
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Map Compiled by URS Corporationation

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Parks and Open Space: Erie Canal Trail, Ellicott Creek Bike Path, Great Baehre Conservation Area
Stream Corridor Preservation: Ransom Creek, Tonawanda Creek/Barge Canal, Ellicott Creek
Waterfront: Resources along Tonawanda Creek/Barge Canal, including Erie Canal Trail, Crystal Cove, Amherst Veterans Park, and Amherst Museum

The policies of the Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan need to address these resources. In addition, because these resources are shared among several communities in the region, the Plan must consider the implications of future planning actions beyond the borders of the Town of Amherst.

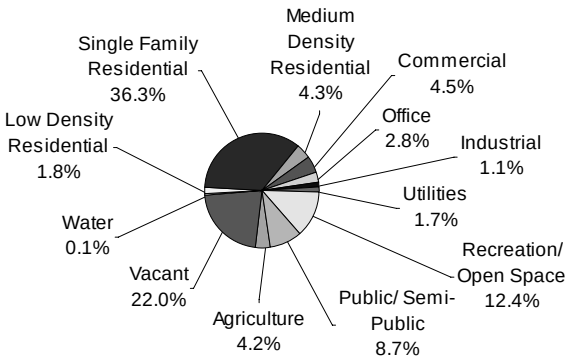
3.0 Land Use and Development

This chapter provides an overview of land use and development patterns both for Amherst as a whole and for each of six geographic subareas within the Town. Compiling data for the Town at both these scales allows for a more thorough consideration and analysis of trends. The boundaries of the subareas, referred to as Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs), are based on Census Tracts utilized in the U.S. Census. The boundaries of the six PAAs are shown on Figure 2.

3.1 EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING

Figure 3 illustrates existing land uses within and immediately adjacent to the Town of Amherst. Figure 4 shows existing zoning in the Town. While the following discussion focuses on land use and zoning patterns inside the Town's political boundaries, land use and zoning patterns occurring in the areas surrounding Amherst affect the Town. Generally, Amherst's relationship with the City of Buffalo has long influenced the growth of the Town, as has the Town's relationship to the regional transportation network. Examples of more specific land uses that influence the Town are the Buffalo Niagara International Airport, located in the Town of Cheektowaga; the University at Buffalo (UB) South Campus, located in Buffalo; and commercial development along Niagara Falls Boulevard in Tonawanda and Transit Road in Clarence. Additional discussion of the relationship of Amherst to surrounding municipalities is provided in Chapter 2.0 (Regional Context).

Town of Amherst
Generalized Land Use Estimate
(2000)



When the last comprehensive plan was completed in 1975 one of the stated goals was: "Diversity both in terms of the functions of the community and the people living in the community shall be encouraged." The Plan proposed that the Town "will no longer be only a residential community…" and that "the Town will be the home of a major educational institution…(and) recommended expansion of the industrial base." In the early 1970s the predominant land use was residential, and over one-half of the total town area was vacant or in agricultural use. The 1975 Community Development Plan proposed a more diversified mix of land uses, including: significant amounts of low density mixed residential; offices; and industrial parks. The 1975 Plan was a "build-out plan" that proposed uses for all of the land in the Town. As the new plan is formed it is useful to consider the existing and proposed land use composition from the 1975 Plan. Such a comparison helps

explain the estimated land use composition observed today, and the formation of goals and visions of land use in future. The table below compares these land use estimates with the 1975 Plan projections.

Comparison of Existing and Proposed Land Use (Acres) – 1975 and 2000

Land Use	1975 Existing Land Use	2000 Existing Land Use	1975 Plan Proposed Land Use	Difference 2000 Existing and 1975 Proposed Land Use
Agricultural [1]	0	1,226	0	1,226
Residential	7,229	12,520	15,189	2,669
Single Family	6,782	10,715	8,242	2,473
Low Density Mixed	0	544	6,030	5,486
Medium Density	447	1,261	917	344
Commercial	950	1,341	1,450	109
Office	0	818	188	630
Industrial	127	335	1,667	1,332
Public, Semi- Public	2,390	2,578	2,750	172
Recreation and Open Space	2,146	3,647	5,321	1674
Transportation and Utilities	4,148	5,169	7,535	2,366
Vacant	17,107	6,501	0	6,501

[1] Agricultural uses were categorized as Vacant and Agricultural in the 1975 Plan

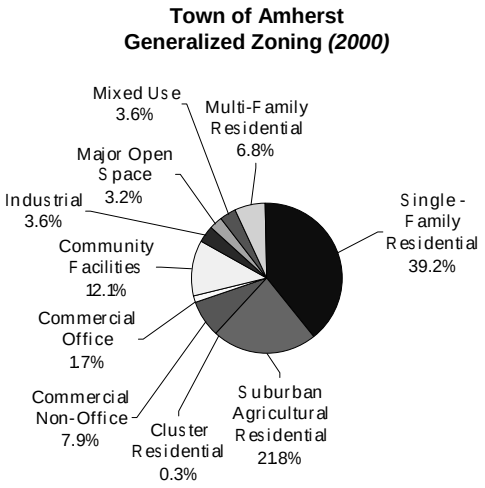
In 2000 the Town of Amherst remains a predominantly residential community, but with the mix of land uses proposed in the 1975 Plan, one that is typical of medium-size suburbanizing communities. Approximately 45% of the land area is developed in residential uses – primarily single-family residences. Commercial development in the Town exists at an average of 13.2 acres per 1,000 residents (exclusive of office development). Office development, meanwhile, is a growing land use in Amherst as a result of the Town's successful economic development program. Office development now occupies approximately 765 acres or 3% of the Town's land area. However, there is little industrial development (1%) in the Town, and agriculture (1%) has almost disappeared as a major land use. Finally, the Town of Amherst has a significant amount of land in public and semi-public use (9%), largely because of the 1,200-acre University at Buffalo campus.

The following table compares approximate land use percentages in the Town of Amherst with the average of 32 communities over 100,000 in population surveyed for the American Planning Association in 1992:

Comparison of Land Use Percentages in Amherst to Other Communities with Over 100,000 Residents

	Amherst	32 Communities
Residential	59%	52%
Commercial/Office	10%	10%
Industrial	2%	7%
Public/Semi-Public/Parks	29%	31%

Source: Christopher Harris, Bringing Land-Use Ratios into the '90s, PAS Memo, August 1992



The present zoning in Amherst reveals that the patterns seen in the Town's existing land use can be expected to continue. While 45% of the land area in the town is residentially developed, 67% is zoned for residential uses. The primary existing residential land can be expected to remain single-family as 90% of the residentially zoned land area in Amherst is zoned for single-family. Whereas commercial development (including office) now occupies approximately 8% of the land area, 11% is zoned for commercial uses. Just as existing industrial and agricultural uses occur on a small percentage of land in Amherst, the amount of land zoned for these uses is low. In fact, agriculture's only appearance is as Suburban Agriculture, a zoning district with a one-acre minimum house lot size.

3.1.1 Planning Analysis Area 1

A. Existing Land Use

Planning Analysis Area 1 (PAA1) is located in the northwest corner of Amherst. Its boundaries coincide with the boundaries of Census Tracts 91.06 and 91.07. The existing land uses in this area are a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial, as well as a large amount of parkland. The primary residential areas are Creekwood and Bucyrus Heights. Creekwood is located west of Sweet Home Road and north of North French Road and contains a mix of single-family, duplexes, and multi-family development. The Bucyrus Heights neighborhood is located east of Sweet Home Road and south of North French Road, and is predominantly single-family and duplex housing.

Retail commercial is found primarily along Niagara Falls Boulevard and includes the Wegmans and Tops Plazas near the junction of Niagara Falls Boulevard and E. Robinson Road. Office commercial and industrial land uses are concentrated in the Audubon Industrial Park, located west of Sweet Home Road and south of North French Road, though they also exist around Northpointe Parkway in the northwest quadrant of the Sweet Home Road and North French Road intersection.

Open space found in PAA1 includes the newly created Nature View Park, the Amherst Veterans Canal Park, Creekwood Park, the White Chapel Memorial Park, and the Evergreen Golf Course. Nature View Park is the largest of the parks in PAA1, occupying approximately 1,265 acres between Sweet Home Road and Campbell Boulevard.

Public and semi-public facilities in PAA1 include the Heritage Heights Elementary School east of Sweet Home Road and the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plant south of Tonawanda Creek Road.

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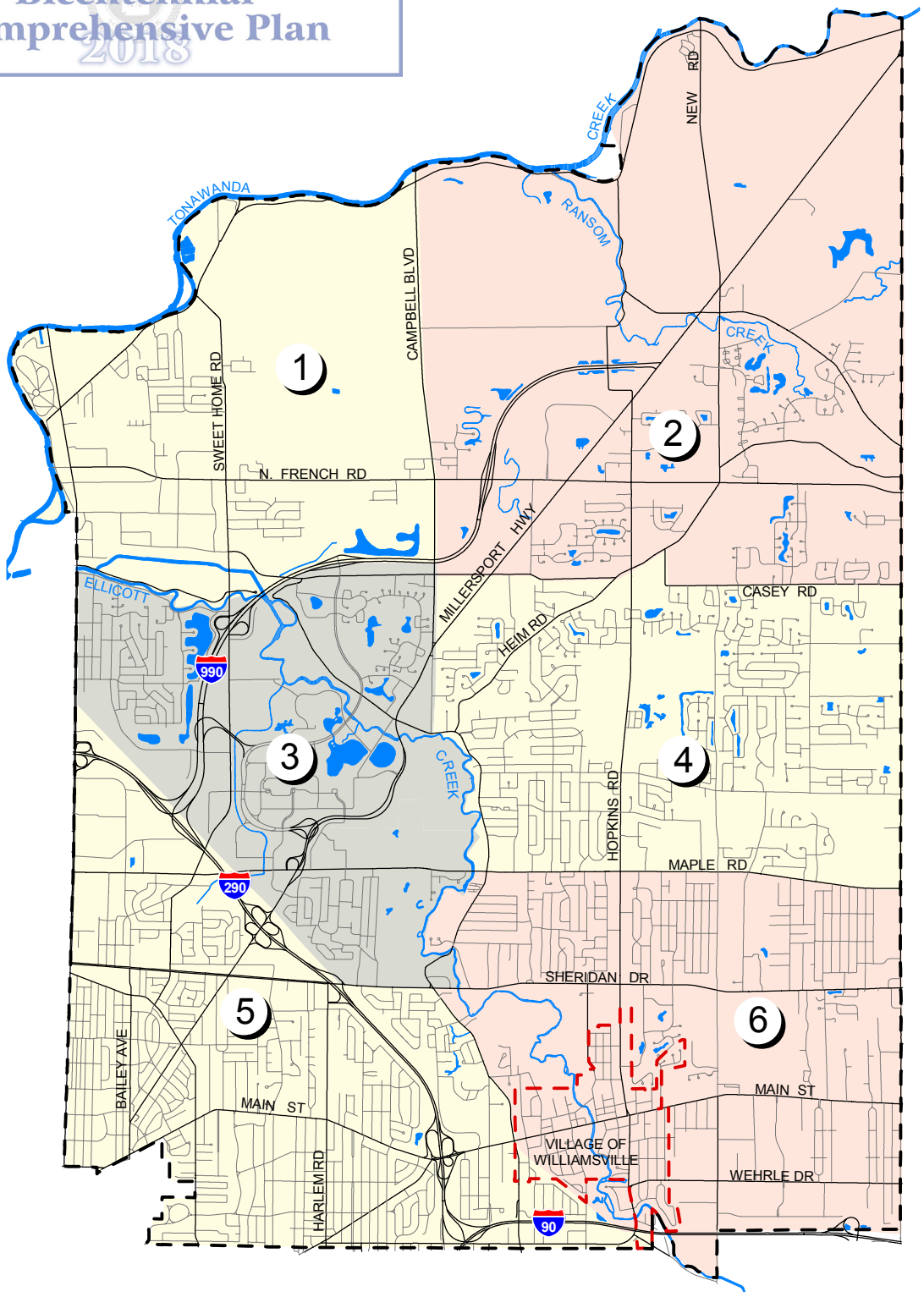

Planning Analysis Areas

FIGURE 2

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

1 Planning Analysis Area

Surface Water Body

Village of Williamsville Boundary

Municipal Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Planning Analysis Area Data provided by Economic Research Associates (based on 2000 Census Tract boundaries)

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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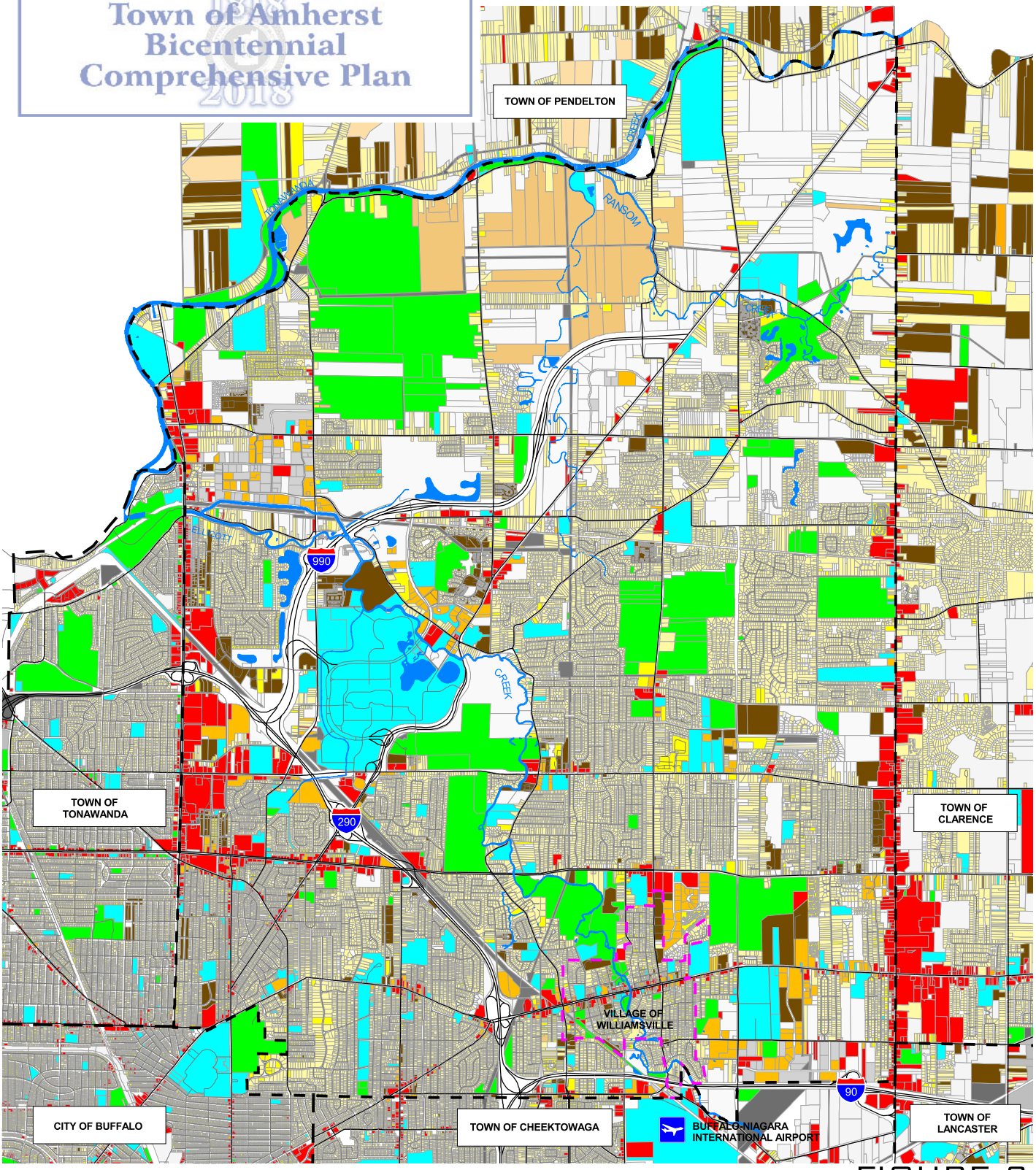
Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



Generalized Existing Land Use

FIGURE 3

REVISED - SEPTEMBER 2001

LEGEND

- Agricultural Land
- Single Family Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Recreation and Open Space
- Public/Semi-Public
- Utilities
- Vacant Land
- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Land use data as of September 2000

Map Compiled by URS Corporation

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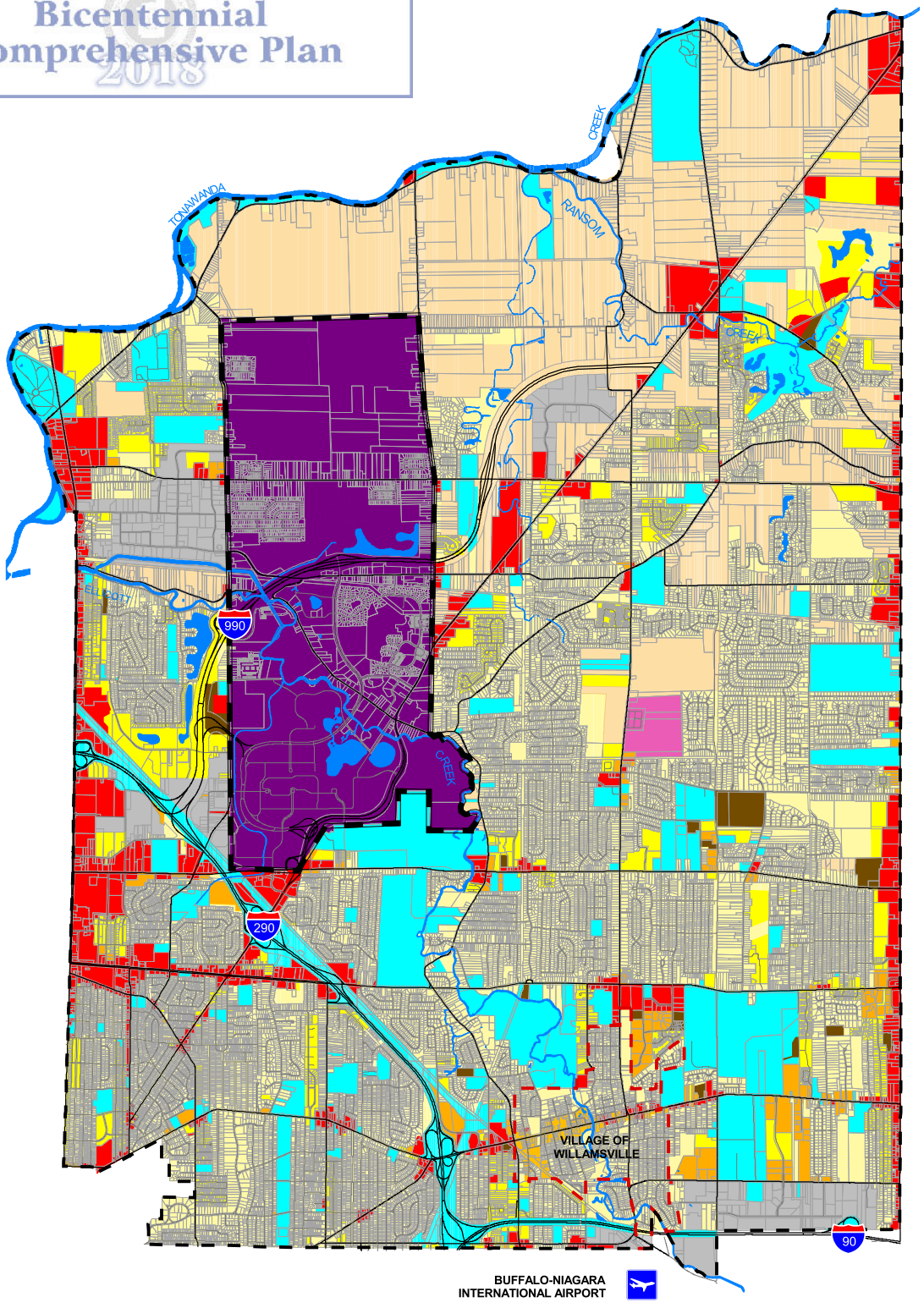
Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



GENERALIZED EXISTING ZONING

FIGURE 4

REVISED - SEPTEMBER 2001

LEGEND

- Suburban Agricultural Residential
- Single Family Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- New Community District
- Planned Residential District
- Commercial - Non-Office
- Commercial - Office
- Community Facilities
- Industrial
- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- New Community District Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Zoning Data, September 2000

This Zoning Map not officially adopted by the Amherst Town Board, Deed and other restriction may apply to some parcels.

For official zoning inforamtion please contact the Town of Amherst Building Department

Map Compiled by URS Corporation

N

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B. Existing Zoning

One-third of Planning Analysis Area 1 is zoned as Suburban Agricultural (SA). The majority of this land occurs in the areas immediately surrounding Nature View Park, east of Sweet Home Road and north of North French Road. Primarily as a result of Nature View, slightly less than one-fifth of PAA1 is zoned as Major Open Space (MOS). The zoning composition of the remainder of PAA1 is fairly evenly distributed between residential (R-3, R-4, MFR-5), commercial (ND, GB, GC), industrial (GI, RD), and Community Facilities (CF).

3.1.2 Planning Analysis Area 2

A. Existing Land Use

Planning Analysis Area 2 (PAA2) is located in the northeast corner of Amherst. Its boundaries coincide with the boundaries of Census Tracts 90.03 and 90.04. PAA2 is the largest of six planning areas, encompassing what can be characterized as the most rural portion of the Town. Existing land uses are influenced by the waterways that run through the area, including Tonawanda, Ransom, Gott, and Black Creeks. Residential development is concentrated in three areas, all in the southern portion of PAA2. Ransom Oaks is the most northern of these located north of North French Road. The other two areas of concentrated residential development exist between North French Road and Dodge Road and North French Road and Casey Road, respectively. Ransom Oaks contains a mix of single-family, duplexes and multi-family housing surrounding the Glen Oak Golf Course. The residential areas south of North French Road are predominantly single-family, the exception being several multi-family properties on North French Road and Transit Road. The remaining residential in PAA2 consists of frontage lots on the areas local roads.

Currently, there is limited commercial or industrial land use existing in PAA2. The commercial is concentrated along Transit Road, especially near the intersection with Casey Road and the Hamlet of Swormville, in the Crosspoint Business Park at the intersection of the Lockport Expressway (I-990) and Millersport Highway, and the Hopkins Square Plaza at the intersection of Hopkins Road and Dodge Road. Similarly, the industrial uses are also found along Transit Road and in the Crosspoint Business Park.

PAA2 contains the remaining active agriculture in the Town, as well as the majority of the land protected by the Town of Amherst Farmland Protection Program. Lands included in this Program are concentrated between Tonawanda Creek Road, Hopkins Road, Scholles Road, and Campbell Boulevard.

Open space found in PAA2 includes the Oakwood Golf Course, the aforementioned Glen Oak Golf Course, Lou Gehrig Baseball Park, the land surrounding the North Amherst Recreation Center, and the North French Recreation Area. PAA2 also contains the Amherst Museum and Amherst Museum Colony Park, located at the intersection of New Road and Tonawanda Creek Road.

Public and semi-public facilities in PAA2 include the Williamsville North High School, the Casey Middle School, the North Amherst Recreation Center, the Town Compost Facility, and the Erie County Fire Training Academy.

B. Existing Zoning

The zoning composition of Planning Analysis Area 2 is dominated by residentially zoned land, with over 83% of the area zoned for residential uses. Two-thirds of this residentially zoned land is Suburban Agricultural (SA), approximately 7% is multi-family (MFR-4A, MFR-5, MFR-6) and the remainder is single-family (R-3, R-2). In terms of sheer acreage the second largest zoned use is Community Facilities (CF). This category includes the Amherst Museum and Colony Park, North French Soccer Fields, Williamsville North High School, and Ransom Oaks Golf Course. Commercially zoned land in PAA2 is found along Transit Road and Millersport Highway, with industrially zoned land concentrated in the Crosspoint Business Park.

3.1.3 Planning Analysis Area 3

A. Existing Land Use

Planning Analysis Area 3 (PAA3) occupies the central portion of Amherst west of Stahl Road and Ellicott Creek. Its boundaries coincide with the boundaries of Census Tracts 91.08, 91.12, 91.10 and 91.09. This section of Amherst contains the North Campus of the University at Buffalo (UB) and the immediately adjacent neighborhoods: Willowridge, Audubon, and Maplemere.

The Willowridge neighborhood is bounded by Ellicott Creek, I-990, I-290, and Niagara Falls Boulevard. The residential composition is a mix of single-family, duplexes, and multi-family development. The duplex and multi-family housing is found primarily along Chestnut Ridge Road and in the vicinity of Niagara Falls Boulevard, while the area between Parkhaven Drive and I-990 is predominantly single-family housing. Commercial land uses in the Willowridge neighborhood are predominantly retail and are concentrated along Niagara Falls Boulevard. This includes the Wal-Mart and Home Depot plaza south of Willow Ridge Drive.

The Audubon neighborhood is bounded by I-990, Campbell Boulevard, Stahl Road, and North Forest Road. Residential land use in this neighborhood encircles Walton Woods Park and is a mix of single-family and multi-family development. Commercial development includes both retail and office land uses. Retail commercial is found along Dodge Road, Campbell Boulevard, and Millersport Highway. Office commercial is concentrated along the Audubon and Sylvan Parkways and includes the Audubon and Bryant Woods Office Parks.

The Maplemere neighborhood is bounded by Maple Road, the Westwood Country Club, Sheridan Drive, I-290, and Millersport Highway. Residential development is predominantly single-family. Commercial development in this area includes scattered office uses along Millersport Highway and hotel development west of the Millersport Highway between the UB North Campus and I-290 and at the I-290/ Sheridan Drive interchange.

At the center of PAA3 is the North Campus of UB. The UB campus has had a major influence on the existing land uses of PAA3. At over 1000 acres the campus itself occupies a large percentage of the land in PAA3. While the campus currently has housing for approximately 4,600 students, much of the multi-family housing in the surrounding neighborhoods serves the UB student population. The same is true for the retail land uses in the area, including the numerous hotel establishments.

PAA3 contains a number of park and recreation facilities, including Willowridge Park, Walton Woods Park, the Audubon Recreation Complex, Audubon Golf Course, Westwood Country Club, and the Ellicott Creek Bikeway.

Public and semi-public facilities in PAA3 include the Amherst Pepsi Center, Amherst Town Center (Police, Town Court, Senior Center, and Audubon Library), Sweet Home High School, and the Willowridge, Heritage Heights, and Maplemere Elementary Schools.

B. Existing Zoning

As with existing land use, the largest zoning category in Planning Analysis Area 3 is that of the University of Buffalo (NCD/SUNY).

The core of the Willowridge neighborhood is zoned as single-family residential (R-3). This area is surrounded by multi-family residential (MFR-5) in the vicinity of I-990 and Chestnut Ridge Road. This multi-family zoned land is interspersed with commercial and industrially zoned lands (GB, SC, RD) along Niagara Fall Boulevard and Sweet Home Road.

The existing land uses of the Audubon neighborhood are a product of the mixed-use zoning established in the 1970s. The Audubon New Community was planned to permit a variety of land uses that would complement each other and accommodate the population and economic growth resulting from the location of the new University at Buffalo North Campus in Amherst. The primary zoning classifications (GC, LC, ND) provide flexible land use and design regulations that permit a variety of residential types and non-residential uses and services.

Zoning in the Maplemere neighborhood is primarily single-family residential (R-3) and Community Facilities (CF). The land zoned as Community Facilities includes the Audubon 18 hole and Par 3 Golf Courses and the Westwood Country Club. Commercially zoned land (GB, SC) occurs on the edges of the Maplemere neighborhood, along Millersport Highway and Sheridan Drive.

3.1.4 Planning Analysis Area 4

A. Existing Land Use

Planning Analysis Area 4 (PAA4) occupies the central portion of Amherst east of Stahl Road and Ellicott Creek. Its boundaries coincide with the boundaries of Census Tracts 91.13, 90.07, 90.08 and 91.14. This section of Amherst can be generally characterized as containing a mix of residential, commercial, and open space/recreation land uses. Residential uses are

predominantly single-family and include the East Amherst neighborhood. Duplex and multi-family housing in PAA4 occurs primarily to the south of Klein Road.

Commercial land uses include a mix of retail and office found along Transit Road, Maple Road, Millersport Highway, and the area known as Clearfield. The commercial development along Transit Road includes a Target and a Wegmans and the Eastview Plaza. Included along Maple Road are the Meadowlands Professional Park and the Maple-Ayer Plaza. Clearfield's commercial development includes the Quality Markets Plaza and the Hopkins-Klein Office Park.

PAA4 contains a number of park and recreation facilities, highlighted by the 400 plus acre Great Baehre Conservation Area along Hopkins Road. Other park and recreation facilities include the Margaret Louise Park, also on Hopkins Road, Bassett Park at the intersection of Klein and Youngs Roads, and the Transit Valley Country Club off of Transit Road.

PAA4 contains numerous public and semi-public facilities, including the Williamsville East High School, the Heim and Transit Middle Schools, Clearfield Community Center, Clearfield Recreation Center, and the Millard-Fillmore Suburban Hospital.

B. Existing Zoning

As with the lands in PAA2 to the north, zoning in Planning Analysis Area 4 is dominated by residential districts, with over 84% of the area zoned as residential. However, whereas the residentially zoned land in PAA2 is primarily Suburban Agricultural, in PAA4 three-quarters is zoned R-2 and R-3. The remainder is a mix of Planned Residential District (PRD), Suburban Agricultural (SA), and Multi-Family Residential (MFR-4A, MFR-5, MFR-6, MFR-7). However, it is worth noting that much of the area zoned as Planned Residential District (PRD) and Suburban Agricultural (SA) occurs in the Great Baehre Conservation Area and therefore will not develop as zoned. The remainder of PAA4 is zoned for either community facilities or commercial use. Properties zoned Community Facilities (CF) include the Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital, Heim Elementary and Middle Schools, Transit Valley Country Club, Bassett Park, and the Clearfield Recreation Center. Commercially zoned land is concentrated along Transit Road, Maple Road, and Millersport Highway.

3.1.5 Planning Analysis Area 5

A. Existing Land Use

Planning Analysis Area 5 (PAA5) is located in the southwest corner of Amherst. Its boundaries coincide with the boundaries of Census Tracts 92.00, 93.02, 94.01, 94.02, 95.02, 95.01 and 93.01. Because PAA5 is found in the more intensively developed southern portion of Amherst, its existing land uses are diverse and generally occur on smaller parcels than most of Amherst. The majority of PAA5 falls within the Snyder and Eggertsville neighborhoods, which have residential components consisting of single-family, duplexes, and multi-family development.

Commercial land uses in PAA5 are approximately 80% retail and 20% office. They are well distributed throughout the area, occurring both as strip-commercial and in nodes, often in

the vicinity of PAA5's major intersections. Retail land uses are found along Niagara Falls Boulevard (Burlington Plaza, Boulevard Mall, Boulevard Consumer Square, TJ Maxx Plaza), Maple Road (Maple Ridge Center, Tops Plaza), Sheridan Drive (Northtown Plaza, Piccadilly Square, Sheridan Centre), Millersport Highway, Bailey Avenue, Main Street (University Center, Snyder Square, the Walker Center), Harlem Road, Kensington Avenue and Wehrle Drive. Office uses are similarly well distributed along Main Street, Harlem Road, Sheridan Drive, Maple Road and Bailey Avenue. Industrial uses are limited in PAA5, found mainly in the vicinity of Wehrle and Aero Drives.

Park and recreation facilities located in Planning Analysis Area 5 include the Eggertsville Community Park, Saratoga Park, Dellwood Park, Garnet Park, Kingsgate Park, Central Amherst Little League, the Mel Ott Park on Meyer Road, the Lehigh Valley Bikeway, and the West Royal Parkway Recreation Area.

Public and semi-public facilities in PAA5 are numerous, including Amherst Central High School; the Amherst and Sweet Home Middle Schools; the Windermere Boulevard, Smallwood Drive, and Forest Elementary Schools; and the Harlem Road Community Center. PAA5 also contains several private schools and Daeman College.

B. Existing Zoning

As with the pattern of existing land uses, the pattern of zoning in Planning Analysis Area 5 is more diverse on smaller parcels than portions of Amherst to the north. While the most common zoned use remains single-family residential (60%), multi-family residential (MFR-5), commercial (GB, SC, OB, MS), and community facility (CF) zoned land are distributed throughout PAA5.

3.1.6 Planning Analysis Area 6

A. Existing Land Use

Planning Analysis Area 6 (PAA6) is located in the southeast corner of Amherst. Its boundaries coincide with the boundaries of Census Tracts 91.04, 90.06, 96.00 and 89.00. A general overview of existing land uses in PAA6 reveals different patterns as one moves from north to south. The northernmost section between Sheridan Drive and Maple Road is predominantly single-family residential, with the exception of the areas near or along Transit Road, which are primary commercial and multi-family residential. The area to the south of this, between Sheridan Drive and Main Street, includes the northern half of the Village of Williamsville and contains a greater mix of land uses, including single-family, duplex and multi-family residential, commercial, office, and recreation facilities. Finally, the area south of Main Street contains a greater concentration of office and industrial uses and also includes the southern half of the Village of Williamsville and the North Campus of the Erie Community College.

As a whole, PAA6 has a solid mix of single-family, duplexes, and multi-family development. Single-family development includes the Dana Heights neighborhood in the northeast corner of PAA6 and much of the Village of Williamsville. Multi-family development is found

throughout PAA6, including near or along Transit Road, Sheridan Drive, Main Street, and Evans Street.

There are several retail commercial corridors in PAA6, including Transit Road (Tops Plaza, Premier Place), Sheridan Drive (Evanstown Plaza, Georgetown Plaza, Wegmans Plaza, Williamsville Place), and Main Street (Quality Markets Plaza, Plaza at Transit). Office uses are well-distributed, with concentrations occurring along Essjay Road, International Drive, Main Street, Wehrle Drive, Spindrift Drive, College Park, and Lawrence Bell Drive. Industrial uses are concentrated in the southeast corner of PAA6, south of Wehrle Drive and east of Youngs Road in the Wehrle Industrial Park.

Park and recreation facilities found in Planning Analysis Area 6 include Island Park, Glen Park, the Wehrle FAA Recreation Area, the Main-Transit Recreation Area and the newly acquired Amherst State Park along Ellicott Creek north of the Village of Williamsville. Between Sheridan Drive and Main Street PAA6 also contains two private golf courses, the Country Club of Buffalo and the Park Country Club.

Public and semi-public facilities in PAA6 include the North Campus of the Erie Community College, the Williamsville South High School, Mill Middle School, and Country Parkway Elementary School. The Williamsville Village Hall and Amherst Town Hall are located on Main Street in Williamsville.

B. Existing Zoning

As with PAA4 to the north, the two most common zoning categories in Planning Analysis Area 6 are single-family residential (R-3, R-4) and Community Facilities (CF). Single-family makes up over 56% of PAA6, while land zoned CF consists primarily of the Park Country Club of Buffalo, Country Club of Buffalo, and the Erie Community College North Campus. With the exception of PAA1, PAA6 has the most balance in the amount of commercially and industrially zoned land, possibly as a result of its location just to the north of the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport. The industrial and commercial land is not as well balanced geographically, with the industrially zoned land concentrated between Wehrle Road and I-90, while the commercially zoned land occurs primarily to the north along Transit Road and Main Street.

3.2 DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Over one-fifth of Amherst's land area remains vacant. In order to further understand the future growth of Amherst, the development capacity of the Town's residential and nonresidential vacant and underdeveloped lands was calculated. This was done using information on vacant and underdeveloped land, environmental resource constraints, and regulatory constraints. Vacant lands were properties with the potential to be subdivided, and were selected from Amherst's existing land use information. Underdeveloped lands were partially developed properties containing vacant land with the potential to be subdivided. Underdeveloped lands were identified by comparing existing land use information to ortho-photographs of the Town. Environmental resource constraints included areas within a FEMA floodway and areas within a NYSDEC-designated wetland. Regulatory constraints

included areas within the Town's Farmland Protection Program and limits on minimum lot sizes in areas outside of a sewer district. The development capacity process had three phases. The first was to identify the vacant and underdeveloped lands within the Town. The second was to evaluate the identified lands against the constraints listed above. The third phase varied depending on the zoning of the identified vacant or underdeveloped lands. For residentially zoned lands a unit yield was calculated, using minimum lot sizes specified by the Town Zoning Ordinance. For commercial and industrial zoned lands the number of unconstrained acres was calculated.

3.2.1 Residential Development Capacity

Residential Development Capacity by PAA

PAA	Single Family Units	Multi-Family Units	Total Units
1	1593	141	1734
2	3080	1382	4462
3	100	611	711
4	896	222	1118
5	298	90	388
6	1171	661	1832
TOTAL	7138	3107	10245

The analysis of the Town's identified vacant and underdeveloped residentially-zoned lands revealed a residential development capacity of 10,245 units, of which 7,138 (70%) occur in areas zoned for single family housing and 3,107 (30%) occur in areas zoned for duplex or multi-family housing. The accompanying table displays these units by Planning Analysis Area (PAA).

It should be noted that the residential development capacity figures presented above do not take into account increases in the number of student housing units located on the University of Buffalo North Campus.

A. Planning Analysis Area 1

Planning Analysis Area 1 contains over 1,100 acres of vacant land. An analysis of the development capacity of the residentially zoned portion of this vacant land determined that under current zoning, approximately 1,734 additional units could be built. These units would be 92% single family and 8% multi-family.

B. Planning Analysis Area 2

With over 3,500 acres of undeveloped land, Planning Analysis Area 2 is the only PAA where undeveloped land remains the predominant existing land use. Not surprisingly, it is the area with the greatest amount of potential future growth, and lies in the path of the northeasterly pattern of growth that has evolved since the 1970s. Analysis of the development capacity of the residentially zoned vacant land in PAA2 determined that under current zoning, approximately 4,462 additional units could be built. These units would be 69% single family and 31% multi-family, and make up approximately 44% of the projected residential development capacity for the whole Town (as determined by the analysis of vacant lands under current zoning).

C. Planning Analysis Area 3

A major variable in the development capacity of Planning Analysis Area 3 is the development of student living facilities on the UB North Campus. The University expects to increase the number of students living on campus from 4,600 to 8,500 by the year 2005. Analysis of the residential development capacity of the vacant land in PAA3, which did not include the expected increase in the student population on the UB campus, determined that under current zoning approximately 711 additional units could be built. These units would be 14% single-family and 86% multi-family.

D. Planning Analysis Area 4

Planning Analysis Area 4 contains over 360 acres of vacant land. Analysis of the residential development capacity of this vacant land determined that under current zoning approximately 1,118 additional units could be built. These units would be 80% single-family and 20% multi-family. A majority of the vacant land, and therefore of these units, occurs in the southeast corner of PAA4, south of Klein Road and east of Ayer Road, an area that is presently under development.

E. Planning Analysis Area 5

With less than 200 acres, Planning Analysis Area 5 has the smallest amount of vacant land of any of the PAAs. This is not unexpected given the area's well-developed nature. Analysis of the residential development capacity of this land determined that under current zoning approximately 388 additional units could be built. These units would be 77% single-family and 23% multi-family.

F. Planning Analysis Area 6

Planning Analysis Area 6 contains approximately 550 acres of vacant land. Analysis of the residential development capacity of this vacant land determined that under current zoning approximately 1,832 additional units could be built. These units would be 64% single-family and 36% multi-family.

3.2.2 Nonresidential Development Capacity

Commercial/Industrial Vacant Land by PAA

PAA	Acres of Commercial	Acres of Industrial	Total Acres
1	56	41	97
2	277	148	425
3	90	25	115
4	28	0	28
5	50	18	68
6	76	95	171
TOTAL	577	327	904

An analysis of the Town's identified vacant and underdeveloped retail and office commercial lands determined there to be 577 acres of remaining vacant commercial land. An identical analysis of industrial zoned lands determined there to be 327 acres of vacant industrial land in the Town of Amherst. The accompanying table displays this acreage by PAA.

A. Planning Analysis Area 1

Planning Analysis Area 1 contains approximately 97 acres of vacant land zoned for commercial or industrial uses, with 58% of this land zoned for a commercial use and 42% zoned industrial.

B. Planning Analysis Area 2

As Planning Analysis Area 2 retains the most vacant land of any of the PAAs, it is not surprising that it has the largest amount of vacant commercial and industrial land. PAA2 has 277 acres of vacant land zoned for commercial uses, 48% of the Town's total, and 148 acres of vacant land zoned for industrial uses, 45% of the Town's total.

C. Planning Analysis Area 3

Planning Analysis Area 3 contains approximately 115 acres of vacant land zoned for commercial or industrial uses, with 78% of this land zoned for a commercial use and 22% zoned industrial. The amount of vacant land for commercial use ranks second to PAA 2.

D. Planning Analysis Area 4

Planning Analysis Area 4 contains approximately 28 acres of vacant land zoned for commercial uses and no vacant land zoned for industrial use.

E. Planning Analysis Area 5

Planning Analysis Area 5 contains approximately 68 acres of vacant land zoned for commercial or industrial uses, with 74% of this land zoned for a commercial use and 26% zoned industrial.

F. Planning Analysis Area 6

Planning Analysis Area 6 contains approximately 171 acres of vacant land zoned for commercial or industrial uses, with 44% of this land zoned for a commercial use and 56% zoned industrial. This PAA ranks second to PAA 2 in the amount of vacant land zoned for commercial and industrial use combined and also has the second greatest amount of vacant, industrially zoned acreage.

3.2.3 Comparison of Capacity to Growth Projections

Growth projections for residential and nonresidential development in the Town of Amherst through the year 2020 were prepared for this report and are presented in Chapter 5.0, Section 5.5 (Population and Housing Projections) and Chapter 6.0, Section 6.9 (Commercial Land Use Projections), respectively. Like the calculation of capacity presented in Section 3.2.2 above, these projections are broken down by PAA. The projections for residential development are presented as a range in the number of single-family and multi-family units developed through 2020 based upon two different scenarios. The first scenario is derived from projections of population growth from various sources while the second assumes a continuation of historic (10-year) growth rates. The projections for nonresidential (commercial and industrial) development are based upon a conversion of employment growth projections to acreage figures. The full methodology used for each set of projections is presented in Sections 5.5 and 6.9.

This section compares development capacity with projected growth at the town-wide level. This comparison has not been broken down by PAA because the projections provide approximations for planning purposes of probable future growth based upon a series of

assumptions. They should not be interpreted as exact predictions, particularly at the relatively fine-grained scale of the PAAs. The calculations of land capacity are similar approximations based upon a series of assumptions that focus on vacant land.

As a general observation, the capacity and projected growth figures for both residential and nonresidential uses indicate the potential for the most development in the northern and particularly the northeastern part of Amherst.

A. Residential Capacity Versus Growth Projections

According to the two scenarios presented in Chapter 5.0, projected residential growth through the year 2020 will range from 4,494 units (2,762 single-family and 1,732 multi-family) under the first scenario and 10,292 units (4,410 single-family and 5,882 multi-family) under the second. These figures compare to a vacant land capacity calculated at 10,245 units (7,138 single-family and 3,107 multi-family).

Thus under the first (population projections) scenario, the projected growth will consume 44% of identified capacity by the year 2020. In terms of housing types, the 2,762 units of single family housing projected to be built in this scenario is 39% of the remaining 7,138 unit capacity, and the 1,732 units of multi-family is 56% of the remaining 3,107 unit capacity.

In the second scenario, which assumes that housing unit growth will continue at the same pace as during the period from 1990 to 2000, the projected residential development will slightly exceed supply by the year 2020. This situation is due to a projected excess in growth over capacity for multi-family units of 2,475 units. The growth in single-family units, on the other hand, is projected at 62% of the remaining 7,138-unit capacity in this scenario. According to the housing projections presented in Chapter 5, multi-family housing growth is projected to be particularly strong in the central part of Amherst, which contains the UB North Campus.

To help understand their spatial implications, the residential capacity and growth projections have been converted from units to acres based upon densities permitted by current zoning. The land consumed for single-family residential development would range from 1,841 acres under the first (population projections) scenario to 2,940 acres under the second (historic trends) scenario. Multi-family development would consume 279 acres under the first scenario to 900 acres under the second. This compares to a capacity under existing zoning of 4,762 acres for single-family development and 501 acres for multi-family development.

It should be noted that because the capacity analysis focuses primarily on vacant land, significant amounts of housing redevelopment in predominantly built-out areas could affect the above relationships.

B. Nonresidential Capacity Versus Growth Projections

The analysis of the Town's identified vacant and underdeveloped commercial (retail and office) or industrial zoned lands determined there to be 577 acres of remaining vacant commercial land and 327 acres of vacant industrial land in the Town of Amherst. Based upon the projections presented in Chapter 6.0, the projected nonresidential development through the year 2020 will require 357 acres of retail and office commercial land (62% of

total) and 139 acres of industrial land (43% of total). Therefore, according to this analysis Amherst as a whole has ample commercial and industrial zoned land to accommodate projected growth through the year 2020, but very little thereafter.

4.0 Natural and Cultural Resources

4.1 NATURAL RESOURCES

4.1.1 Geology

The Town of Amherst is located in the Erie-Ontario lake plain physiographic province. (*Soil Survey of Erie County, New York; USDA Soil Conservation Service, 1986*) The sedimentary bedrock in the area was deposited nearly 400 million years ago when Western New York was part of a shallow inland sea, and the Erie-Ontario province typifies the topography of a former lakebed. Bedrock consists chiefly of stratified limestone, dolomite and shale of marine origin. The bedrock surface is generally flat with a slight upward tilt to the southwest. Elevations within the community vary from 575 feet to 710 feet above sea level, with little significant topography.

The formations of bedrock underlying the Town occur in bands with an east-west orientation. These formations include the Salina Group, which occurs under the portion of Amherst north of the Onondaga Escarpment. This Group is approximately 5 to 6 miles wide and is composed of Camillus Shale, Syracuse Formation and Vernon Shale. South of this is the much narrower Akron Dolomite Group, composed of Akron Dolomite and Bertie Limestone. Finally, the southernmost portion of Amherst rests on bedrock of the Onondaga Limestone Group.

Rocks that form the bedrock surface are successively younger toward the south. The Salina and Akron Dolomite Groups were formed in the Upper Silurian periods, while the Onondaga Limestone Group is the lowest formation of the Devonian period bedrock in the area.

4.1.2 Groundwater

The Town of Amherst is located in the northern portion of the Lake Erie-Niagara River drainage basin. Aquifers in this basin are an example of carbonate-rock aquifers. These aquifers typically yield only small to moderate quantities of hard water to wells. Carbonate rocks and shale are virtually impenetrable as homogenous rock. However, when subjected to regional tectonic stresses these rocks are vertically and horizontally fractured and these fractures provide openings for the storage and transmission of water. (*Ground Water Atlas of the United States, Chapter HA 730-M, United States Geological Survey (USGS), 1995*)

The principal bedrock aquifers in the northern portion of the Lake Erie-Niagara River drainage basin are (1) a limestone aquifer that consists of the Onondaga Limestone, the Akron Dolomite, and the Bertie Limestone; (2) the Camillus aquifer, which consists of the Camillus Shale, the Syracuse Formation, and the Vernon Shale; and (3) the Lockport aquifer,

which consists of Lockport Dolomite. Portions of the limestone aquifer and the Camillus aquifer exist beneath Amherst. The three aquifers are not actually separated by confining units, therefore on a regional scale the area can be considered as having a single ground-water system with a continuous water table. The aquifers are distinguished by their contrasting water-yielding characteristics. Most wells completed in the limestone aquifer yield about 30 gallons per minute. The area where the limestone aquifer forms the bedrock surface is drained by Tonawanda Creek and its tributaries. The Camillus aquifer is the most productive aquifer in the basin, with well yields of 300 to 1,200 gallons a minute in the vicinity of Buffalo and Tonawanda. The Camillus aquifer forms a low topographic trough on its outcrop area, which is traversed by Tonawanda Creek, hence water that enters the aquifer discharges mainly to Tonawanda Creek. (*USGS, 1995*)

The quality of the groundwater taken from shallow wells in the northern part of the Lake Erie-Niagara River Basin limits its usefulness. This limitation is caused by several factors stemming from the amounts of dissolved constituents in the ground water derived primarily from the dissolution of rocks through which the water moves. Water-yielding rocks in the basin contain four soluble minerals: calcite, dolomite, gypsum and halite. The result of their dissolution includes the frequent occurrence of sulfate and chloride in excess of 250 milligrams per liter and excessive hardness requiring the water be treated for most uses. Furthermore, the quality generally deteriorates with depth as a result of limited groundwater circulation and the widespread presence of salt and gypsum beds. (*USGS, 1995*)

Therefore, while the Town of Amherst has access to groundwater resources, the majority of the Town relies on water imported from Lake Erie for its potable water supply. Amherst contains no Public Wellhead Delineation Areas of Countywide Significance. For these reasons, land use decisions in Amherst are not overly impacted by considerations of groundwater protection.

The protection and management of groundwater resources in New York State is a responsibility shared by local, state and federal agencies. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has the lead responsibility for groundwater resource management and protection. The NYSDEC Division of Water establishes the basic groundwater protection goals and priorities. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has the lead responsibility for public water supply management and protection.

In 1998, the Division of Water began the process of creating a Priority Aquifer List (PAL) to enhance its groundwater program management. The PAL has the dual purpose of identifying productive aquifers as well as groundwater problems throughout the state. This work is ongoing. (*NYSDEC Division of Water, Bureau of Watershed Assessment and Research, 1998*) It is not expected that this list of Priority Aquifers will include any aquifers in the vicinity of the Town of Amherst.

4.1.3 Soils

In the last ice age, occurring between 300,000 and 10,000 years ago, Amherst was covered and uncovered by several advances and retreats of glacial ice. As this ice moved in a

southward direction it picked up soil material and redeposited it as a mixture of unconsolidated material of various sizes, shapes and mineral content. Glacial processes, including the deposit of glacial till, sediments deposited in glacial lake waters and water-sorted deposits associated with glacial ice melt water, dominate the process of soil formation in Amherst.

The predominant soils in the southern portion of Amherst are composed of unsorted rock forming a thin layer over bedrock. In the remainder of the town soils are predominantly composed of thicker layers of interbedded clay, silt and fine sand. (*Flood Insurance Study, Town of Amherst, New York; Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 1992*)

More specifically, the dominant characteristics of the general soil groups found in Amherst are as follows (*Soil Survey of Erie County, 1986*):

- ***Niagara-Canadaigua-Cosad:*** Dominantly nearly level, deep, somewhat poorly drained to very poorly drained, medium textured soils; on lowland plains.
- ***Odessa-Schoharie-Rhineback:*** Dominantly nearly level and gently sloping, deep, somewhat poorly drained to well drained, medium textured and moderately fine textured soils; on lowland plains.
- ***Churchville-Ovid-Lima:*** Dominantly nearly level, deep, somewhat poorly drained and moderately well drained, medium textured soils; on lowland plains.
- ***Wasaic-Benson-Farmington:*** Dominantly nearly level, moderately deep and shallow, moderately well drained to excessively drained, medium textured soils; on upland underlain by limestone bedrock.
- ***Urban Land:*** Dominantly nearly level urbanized areas and areas of well drained to poorly drained soils and disturbed soils; on lowland plains.

The southeast portion of Amherst is categorized as Urban Land. The southwest portion consists of both Churchville-Ovid-Lima and Wasaic-Benson-Farmington. The central portion of Amherst is primarily Odessa-Schoharie-Rhineback, while the northern portion of town is Niagara-Canadaigua-Cosad.

The soils of Amherst can be described as generally poorly drained, as evidenced by the common occurrence of hydric soils or soils with the potential for hydric inclusions. Hydric soils occur with greatest frequency in the Niagara-Canadaigua-Cosad soil group in the north.

4.1.4 Surface Water Resources

A. Watersheds and Waterways

The Town of Amherst is located within the Tonawanda Creek sub-basin of the Lake Erie-Niagara River drainage basin. The three watersheds in Amherst are the Lower Tonawanda Creek Tributaries, Ellicott Creek and Ransom Creek. The eastern portion of Town falls within the Ransom Creek watershed, the northern edge within the Lower Tonawanda Creek, and the rest of the Town - the majority - in the Ellicott Creek watershed. The Town of Amherst averages 33 inches of precipitation annually. The average annual snowfall is 85 inches. (*FEMA, 1992*)

There are five named waterways in Amherst, as well as a local 'ditch' drainage system. The northern boundary of the Town of Amherst is formed by Tonawanda Creek. Ellicott Creek, a tributary to the Tonawanda, bisects the Town as it flows northwest from south of the Village of Williamsville to the Town's western boundary between Ellicott Creek Road and South Ellicott Creek Road. It is the primary drainage basin for the Town. The Gott, Black and Ransom Creeks occur in the northeastern quadrant of the Town. The Gott and Black Creeks flow into the Ransom, which flows into Tonawanda Creek approximately one and a quarter miles east of Campbell Boulevard (Route 270).

Of these waterways, three are designated as having Countywide Significance by Erie County: Tonawanda Creek, Ellicott Creek and Ransom Creek. The minimum prerequisite for this designation is that the stream "serve as the primary water-course within one of the 13 major subdrainage basins located in Erie County." (*Guiding Principles for Countywide Land Use Planning, Erie County Department of Environment and Planning (ECDEP), 1999*) This designation indicates that the stream corridors for these three creeks are large enough to provide environmental benefits to surrounding areas, including functioning as a filter for surface runoff, as a floodplain protector, and as a site for wildlife and fish habitat.

Water quality has been an issue in the Lake Erie-Niagara River drainage basin since the early 1900s. For purposes of water quality monitoring, the NYSDEC Division of Water classifies the fresh surface waters in the state according to their best usages and then makes periodic assessments evaluating how well the waters of the state support their designated uses. Ellicott and Tonawanda Creeks are Class B waters, while Ransom Creek is designated as Class C. The best usages of Class B waters are primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing. According to the Division of Water, these waters shall be suitable for fish propagation and survival. The best usage of Class C waters is fishing. These waters shall be suitable for fish propagation and survival. The water quality shall be suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation, although other factors may limit the use for these purposes. If there is a water quality problem, the severity with which it diminishes the best usage of the waterbody is placed into one of four categories: Precluded, Impaired, Stressed or Threatened. Waters with water quality problems are monitored and listed in a Priority Waterbodies List. (*NYSDEC Division of Water, Bureau of Watershed Assessment and Research, 1998*) The water bodies in Amherst on the list are:

- Ransom Creek is classified as Impaired (waterbody uses are not precluded, but some aspects of the use are limited or restricted). The cause of Ransom's Creek's classification as Impaired is nutrient loading caused by malfunctioning on-site wastewater disposal systems.
- Ellicott Creek and Tonawanda Creek are classified as Stressed (waterbody uses are not significantly limited or restricted, but occasional water quality, or quantity, conditions and/or associated habitat degradation periodically discourage the use of the waterbody). Tonawanda Creek is designated Stressed as a result of siltation caused by streambank erosion. Ellicott Creek is designated Stressed primarily because of hydrologic modifications.
- The portion of Tonawanda Creek included in the New York State Barge Canal (Erie Canal) is a Class C waterway included on the Priority Waterbodies List for Segments

Affected by Toxic Pollutants. The segment is classified as Impaired primarily because of the release of priority organics from contaminated bottom sediments.

In response to increased concern over threats to water quality, in 1988 the Erie-Niagara Basin Regional Water Resources Planning Board (ENRPB), with assistance from the ECDEP, coordinated the Ellicott Creek Improvement Project (ECIP). Lasting three years (1988-1991) the ECIP is the most ecologically comprehensive study ever undertaken of the Ellicott Creek watershed. The ECIP emphasized watershed based approaches to restoration and maintenance of natural resources, as well as flooding, water quality, flood plain restrictions and recommendations for land use management. The increased public awareness in water quality resulting from studies like ECIP has produced results. A recent report by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) notes that the water quality in Ellicott Creek has generally improved in recent years. Conditions east of Niagara Falls Boulevard are better than other segments as there are fewer (reduced) point source discharges, relatively higher gradient flows, and public awareness. (*US Army Corps of Engineers, Ellicott Creek New York Flooding and Related Water Resources, September 2000*)

B. Floodplains

Major floods resulting in flood damage in the Town of Amherst are usually the result of a combination of snowmelt and moderate amounts of precipitation. Most major floods occur in the late winter and early spring. Annual localized flooding currently occurs in the Ransom Oaks area adjacent to Ransom Creek and in the Lehn Springs area adjacent to Ellicott Creek.

The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) defines a Special Flood Hazard Area, representing what is commonly known as the 100-year floodplain. A 100-year floodplain represents the area inundated during a flood of a severity that would theoretically have a one percent chance of occurring in any given year. The 100-year floodplain is the benchmark by which FEMA establishes its standards for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Contained within the floodplain is the floodway. The Town's Zoning Ordinance defines the Regulatory Floodway as the "channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height as determined by the FEMA." Flood hazard areas in the Town of Amherst are shown on Figure 5.

There are over 1,130 acres located within the floodway in Amherst. The Town presently restricts most developed land uses within the floodway in order to protect public safety.

There are over 8,150 acres of 100-year floodplain (Zone Designations A, AE, AH) in the Town of Amherst. All new development in the 100-year floodplain must be in accordance with Chapter 203 Part VII Flood Damage Prevention of the Town Code (2000). This requires all new development to be designed to withstand the effects of flooding. As Figure 5 shows the areas within the 100-year floodplain are primarily concentrated in three areas:

- Primarily as a result of flooding from the Ransom, Black and Gott Creeks, a significant portion of the northeast quadrant of the Town, roughly the area north of North French Road and east of Campbell Boulevard, is located in a FEMA designated floodplain.

- Ellicott Creek has a floodplain of varying widths, which is especially significant upstream of the North Diversion Channel.
- Areas on the northern edge of the Town are located in the Tonawanda Creek floodplain.

In 1989, the Buffalo District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) completed the Amherst Flood Protection Project on Ellicott Creek. This project included the construction of over three miles of diversion channels beginning at Maple Road and extending to the Town boundary. The most visible of these is the North Diversion Channel from the Weinberg Campus to Niagara Falls Boulevard. The project effectively reduced the extent of the 100-year floodplain by 90% in the project area. The reduction in flood hazard brought on by the Project has stimulated land use changes in the Ellicott Creek corridor in the form of recreational open spaces, golf courses, and residential, commercial, and industrial development. The channelization of Ellicott Creek resulted in a loss and diminishment of aquatic habitat for rearing of juvenile fish and other organisms. (*Corps, September 2000*)

C. Wetlands

Extensive wetlands occur within sections of the Town of Amherst (Figure 6). There are over 1,500 acres of wetlands in the Town, primarily located in its less-developed northern portion. The silver maple-ash swamp protected in the Great Baehre Swamp Conservation Area is a good example.

Wetlands play a critical role in the ecological health of an area as a result of the diverse natural benefits they provide. Natural benefits include enhanced water quality and wildlife productivity. Wetlands enhance water quality by intercepting upland runoff and filtering out nutrients, wastes and sediment. Wildlife benefits from the abundance of habitat and food that wetlands provide. Wetlands also provide socioeconomic benefits including flood and storm-damage protection and erosion control.

Wetlands can be vegetated or non-vegetated and are classified on the basis of their hydrology, vegetation and substrate. The many benefits of wetlands, combined with their historic losses to draining and filling, have afforded wetlands a measure of protection from further losses. Many governmental agencies and private organizations participate in wetland conservation. State laws governing the protection of wetlands include the 1975 Freshwater Wetlands Act and the Protection of Waters Act. Both of these are administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). Figure 6 shows wetlands identified by NYSDEC (1995). The NYSDEC regulates wetlands through a permitting process, with permits for proposed activities affecting wetlands issued when the activity has been shown to meet certain tests for compatibility with the preservation, protection and conservation of the wetland and its benefits. (*NYSDEC, Title 6 NYCRR, Chap X, Part 663*)

At the federal level, there are several statutory prohibitions and incentives intended to slow the loss of wetlands, including the Rivers and Harbors Act and the 1972 Clean Water Act and its amendments. Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, as well as section 404 of the Clean Water Act, give the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) the authority to regulate certain activities in navigable waters and their associated wetlands through the granting of

permits. The Corps relies on jurisdictional determinations made in the field on a case by case basis for its regulatory process.

4.1.5 Significant Vegetation and Habitat

The New York Natural Heritage Program (NHP) is an ongoing, systematic, scientific inventory whose goal is to compile and maintain computer assisted data on the rare plants and animals native to New York State, and on significant ecological communities. Begun in 1985, it is a joint venture of the NYSDEC and The Nature Conservancy. The NHP database has identified two significant natural communities in the Town of Amherst: Hopkins Road Swamp (located within the Great Baehre Swamp Conservation Area), and a section of the Tonawanda Creek, west of Transit Road in the northeast corner of Town.

The Hopkins Road Swamp is a silver maple-ash swamp with a state rank of S2/S3 in the Natural Heritage Program database. This rank signifies it is one of the 6 to 100 remaining communities of its kind in New York State (*Users Guide to Natural Heritage Data, NY Natural Heritage Areas Program, 2000*). According to the NHP database, the Hopkins Road Swamp contains no species listed as Endangered or Threatened by the Federal Government, or Endangered, Threatened or Rare by the State Government.

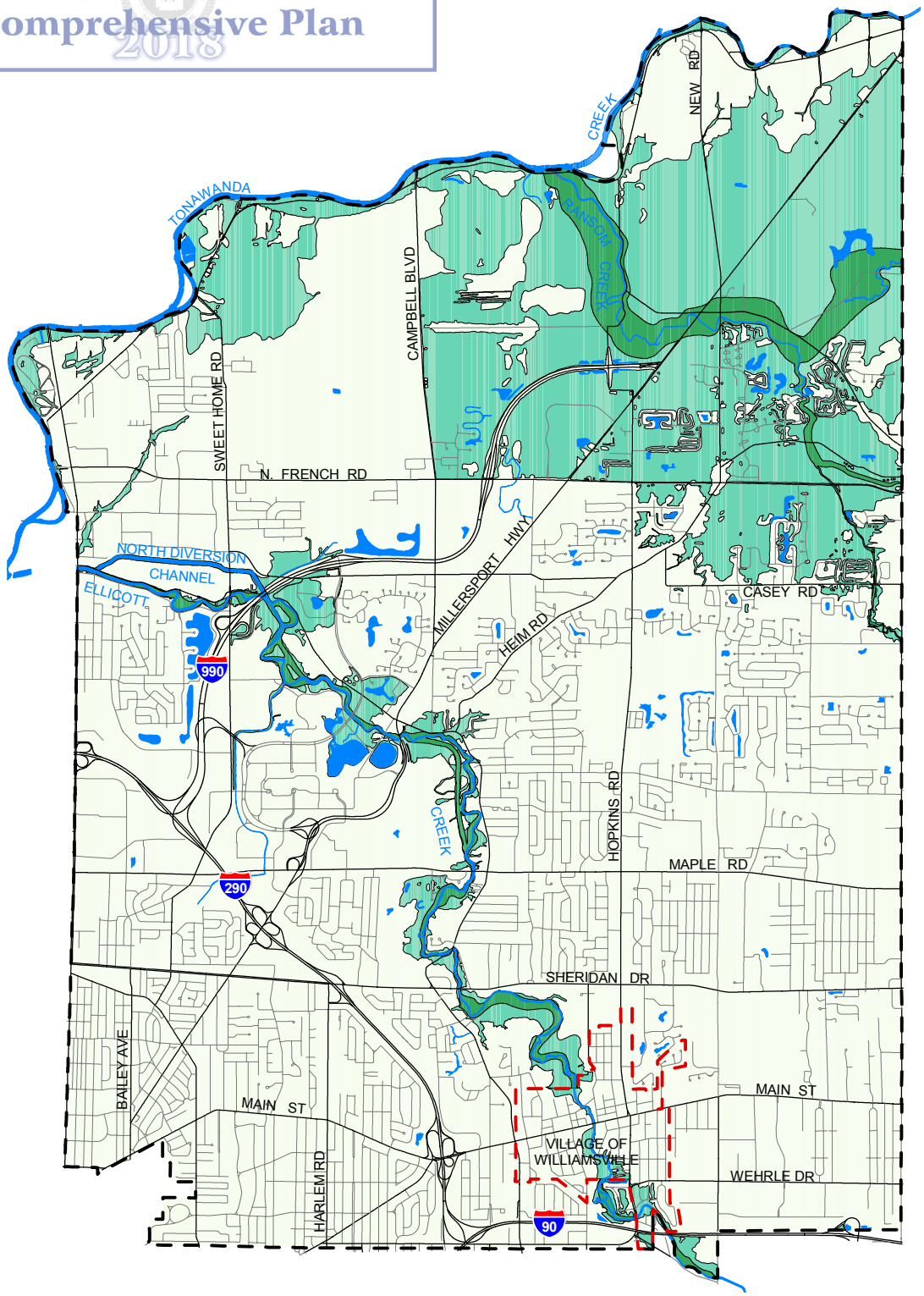
The section of Tonawanda Creek identified by the Natural Heritage Program is included in the NHP database as a result of the community of bivalve mollusks and fish found at that location. In the database, these species are assigned state rankings of S1, S2, S2/S3 or S3. According to the Users Guide to Natural Heritage Data these rankings signify the following:

- S1 is defined as "Typically 5 or fewer occurrences, very few remaining individuals, acres, or miles of stream, or some factor of its biology making it especially vulnerable in New York State."
- S2 is defined as "Typically 6 to 20 occurrences, few remaining individuals, acres, or miles of stream, or factors demonstrably making it very vulnerable in New York State."
- S3 is defined as "Typically 21 to 100 occurrences, limited acreage, or miles of stream in New York State."

This location contains no species listed by the Federal Government, but as of 1988, the Longear sunfish (*Lepomis megalotis*), a State listed Threatened species, was found to exist in this general location.

The Town of Amherst's numerous creek corridors support an abundance of fish and wildlife. For example, Ellicott Creek supports a warm water fishery, serves as a seasonal home for numerous bird species and supports a diverse group of mammal and reptile species. Historically, Ellicott Creek was home to the Blackchin Shiner (*Notropis heterodon*) a NYSDEC Species of Concern. (*Corps of Engineers, September 2000*)

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



Flood Hazard Areas

FIGURE 5

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

- FEMA Floodway
- FEMA 100-Year Floodplain
- Surface Water Body
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Municipal Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Floodplains and Floodways:
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 1992.
Flood Insurance Rate Maps for Erie County, New York.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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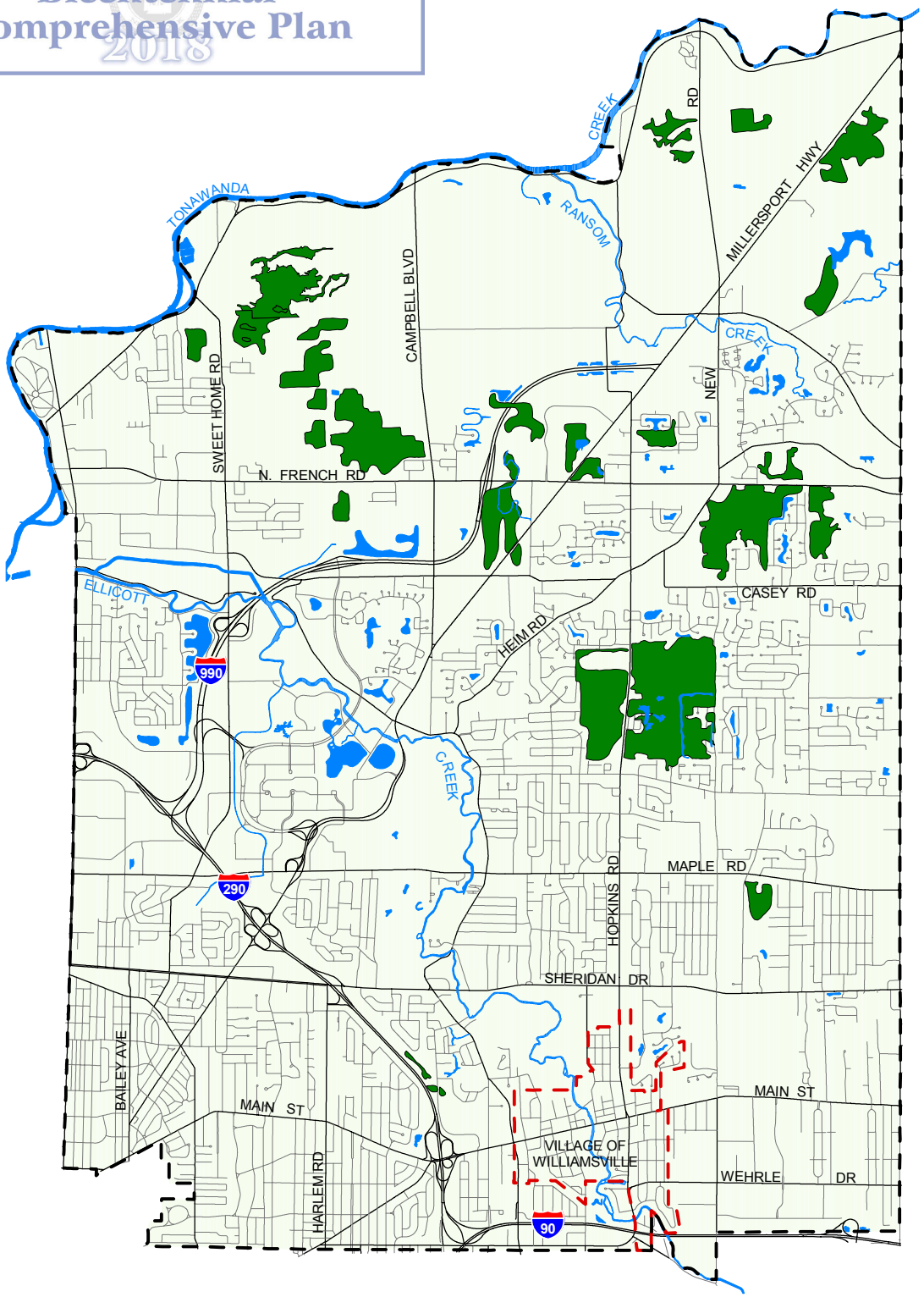

WETLANDS

FIGURE 6

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

- NYSDEC Regulated Wetland
- Surface Water Body
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Municipal Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

NYSDEC Regulated Wetlands:
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), 1995.
NYSDEC wetlands are currently under review for change. This map does not reflect those changes.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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4.1.6 Agricultural Resources

A. History of Agriculture in Amherst

Amherst has a significant agricultural heritage. Throughout the 19th century agriculture played a major role in its economy. In the latter half of the century subsistence farming gave away to commercial farming as area farmers took advantage of improved access to Buffalo and other nearby markets. The 19th century also saw a general transition from livestock farming to crop farming. This is reflected by a shift in products from wool, butter, and pork to oats, corn, wheat, rye and fruit.

However, in the 20th century the same factors that led to the earlier success of agriculture in Amherst led to its decline. The Town's continually improving access to Buffalo led to its growth as a residential suburb of the city. Amherst's superior transportation network and success as a desirable residential community led, in turn, to increased amounts of land in the Town being devoted to non-agricultural commercial and industrial uses. A side effect of all this success was a steady decrease in the amount of farms and active farmland in Amherst.

Currently, active agriculture in Amherst is limited to the northern portion of Town, including a few relatively large operations along Tonawanda Creek and between Campbell Boulevard and Hopkins Road. Predominant crops include corn, oats, buckwheat along with greenhouse operations growing flowers and vegetables. Crops are generally sold to produce brokers or at local roadside stands. (*Town of Amherst, Community Development Plan Update: Northeast Amherst, Background Studies, 1993*)

B. Agricultural Soils

With or without hydrologic improvements, the soils of Amherst are well-suited for agriculture. Figure 7 shows the location of agriculturally well-suited soils on existing farmland and vacant lands. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) maintains a record of those soils which qualify for consideration as prime farmland. Prime farmland is land of major importance in providing the Nation's short and long-term needs for food and fiber. Nearly thirty-five percent of Erie County meets the soil requirements of prime farmland. About three-quarters of this is used for crops. The Erie County Soil Survey notes that a recent trend in the County, particularly for the suburbs of Buffalo, has been the use of prime farmlands for industrial and urban purposes. This loss of prime farmland puts pressure on marginal lands, which are then farmed despite being more erodible, difficult to cultivate and less productive. (*Soil Survey of Erie County, 1986*) Prime farmland need not be in active agriculture, but, by definition, can not be in urban, built-up, or water areas. Of the over 6500 acres in Amherst categorized as vacant, 45% contain soils included on the USDA's prime farmland list. In terms of acreage, the most common soil types are Odessa Silt Loam (Od), Minoa very fine sandy loam (Mh) and Swormville clay loam (Sw). All three of these most common prime farmland soils are considered to be prime only 'where drained.' (*Soil Survey of Erie County, 1986*) The New York Field Office of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) also maintains a list of agriculturally important soils. Sixty-five percent of Amherst's remaining vacant lands contain soils classified as Erie County Soils of Statewide Importance. In terms of acreage, the most common soil types are Lakemont Silt Loam (La), Cheektowaga fine sandy loam (Ch), and Lamson very fine sandy loam (Lc).

Odessa Silt Loam (Od) is the soil with the most acreage found on both the prime farmland soils list and the list of Eric County soils of statewide importance.

C. Agricultural Protection Program

The Erie County Legislature has established the Amherst Agricultural District in accordance with the 1971 New York Agriculture Districts Law and the 1992 Agricultural Protection Act. The original law was enacted to protect and conserve the State's agricultural resource base. It relies on voluntary landowner initiative and municipal and state government cooperation to protect active farm operations from the threats of land conversion. (*New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Farmland Protection Program Overview, 1999*) Landowners who voluntarily agree to keep their land in a district for renewable eight-year periods receive incentives to continue farming. Generally, these include use-value assessment, exemptions from special district levies, right-to-farm provisions, and protections from eminent domain, adjacent non-agricultural development, and state agency regulations that interfere with farming. (*American Farmland Trust, Saratoga Springs, NY, 1997*)

While in the early 1990s the Town had a program in place that reduced tax assessments of property in active agriculture, in the past five years the Town has intensified its agricultural protection efforts with the development and implementation of the Town of Amherst Farmland Protection Program. The Program is focused upon the Erie County Agricultural District. This District is located south of Tonawanda Creek Road, in the vicinities of Campbell Boulevard and Hopkins Road. It encompasses approximately 1,250 acres, including most of the land between Campbell Boulevard and Hopkins Road north of Schoelles Road. The Town has preserved 259 acres of farmland within the District since 1996 and has agreements pending that will preserve an additional 162 acres.

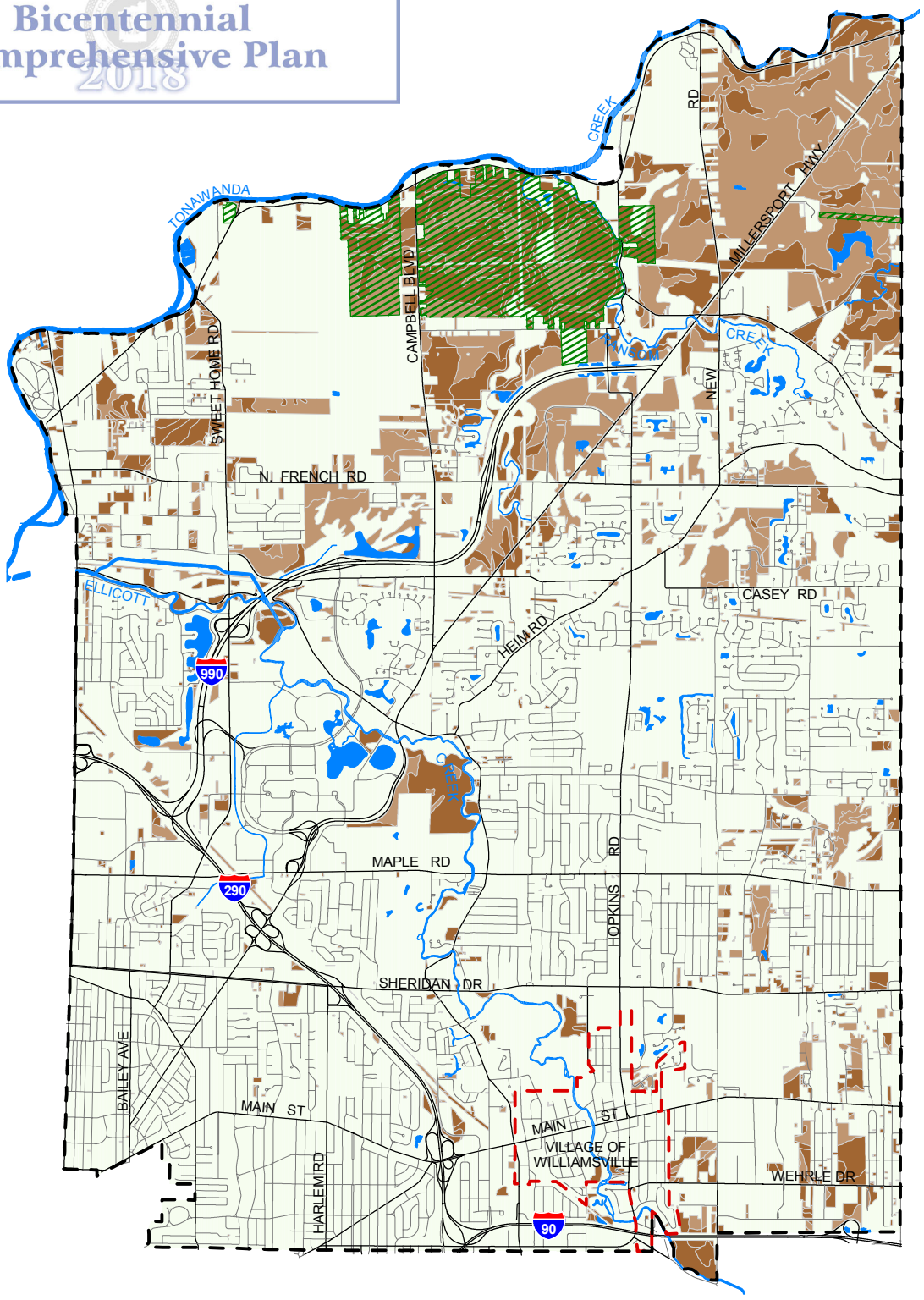
The Town has been very effective in securing funds from the State of New York for farmland protection through the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Program. In the four years since the program began, the Town has received slightly over one million dollars for farmland preservation. Funding for the permanent protection of at least another 300 acres of land in the Agricultural District is being sought. The success of these efforts is critical to the continued viability of farming in Amherst.

4.1.7 Major Visual Resources

The Town's major geological feature, the Onondaga Escarpment, is a major visual resource within the Town. The Escarpment is a 30 to 70 foot high limestone bluff running east to west north of Main Street and south of Sheridan Drive. The scenic quality of Ellicott Creek is another important resource. The intersection of these two features is of particular note, as the creek drops sixty feet in approximately a fifth of a mile. The Youngs Road corridor between Main Street and Sheridan Drive is also considered a valuable visual resource.

Views of Tonawanda Creek on Amherst's northern boundary are another of the Town's visual resources. Tonawanda Creek doubles as the historic Erie Canal for much of its length along the northern boundary of Town. Crystal Cove, Amherst Veteran's Park and the Old

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



Agricultural Soils

FIGURE 7

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

SOILS

- Prime Farmland Soils*
- Soils of Statewide Importance*

*Soils shown for identified vacant parcels only.

- Erie County Agricultural District #17
- Surface Water Body
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Municipal Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst.

Prime Farmland Soils & Soils of Statewide Importance:
US Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service,
Soil Survey of Erie County, 1986.
(Soils shown for identified vacant parcels only.)

Erie County Agricultural District #17:
Town of Amherst Farmland Protection Program, August, 2000.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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Amherst Colony Museum are all major waterfront areas having countywide significance. (*ECDEP, 1999*)

The rural character of northern Amherst as viewed from certain roadways constitute a third visual resource within the Town. Roads that retain a significant degree of rural character are identified in the discussion of the North Amherst Focal Planning Area (Section 11.2.1).

4.2 CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.2.1 Town of Amherst

The Amherst of today, a highly desirable residential community also serving as a business and educational hub in Western New York, has been in the making since prior to the founding of the Village of Williamsville over 200 years ago. As a result of this long period of growth, Amherst contains a diverse collection of historically and architecturally significant nineteenth and twentieth century residential, commercial, agricultural, and institutional buildings.

Despite this long history, it is only in the last decade that the Town has taken steps to comprehensively understand the cultural resources in the Town. As of 1997 the Town of Amherst (not including the Village of Williamsville) had never been the subject of a comprehensive cultural resources survey, and contained no historic resources listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places. (*Bero Associates Architects, Reconnaissance Level Survey of Historic Resources, Town of Amherst, p. 46, October 1997*)

However, in recent years the Town has taken aggressive steps to identify, preserve and protect its architecturally and/or historically significant resources. In 1994, in an effort to protect historic resources of local significance from the continuing threat of growth and development, the Town enacted a local law establishing regulations for historic preservation. The ordinance created a Town of Amherst Historic Preservation Commission, which was established on January 1, 1995. The Commission was granted power to recommend the designation of historical landmarks, historic sites, and historic districts, as well as the approval of all work affecting the appearance or cohesiveness of a locally designated historic site, landmark, or property within an historic district through the granting of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

On January 25, 1996 Amherst became a Certified Local Government (CLG). The Certified Local Government Program is a nation-wide program established by the National Historic Preservation Act that supports local preservation activities. The CLG program is coordinated by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). Services provided by OPRHP to CLG member communities include special grants, professional legal and technical assistance, and membership in the national preservation network.

Using funding provided by a CLG grant, in 1997 the Town of Amherst completed a Reconnaissance Level Survey of Historic Resources. At this point in time the Amherst Historic Preservation Commission had designated one landmark. The reconnaissance survey,

which did not include the Village of Williamsville, identified 254 potentially significant historic resources: 245 individual properties and nine historic districts. The nine historic districts contained 790 properties. Of the 254 potentially significant historic resources, 214 (84%) were residential or agricultural (farmsteads). The architectural and/or historical significance of each property was assigned either an extremely high, above average or moderate rating, with approximately a third of the resources identified falling into each category.

In 1998 the Town completed an Intensive Level Survey of Historic Resources. This intensive survey focused on 76 properties, most of which were rated as having an extremely high architectural and/or historical significance in the 1997 Reconnaissance Level Survey. No historic districts were included in the intensive survey. Of the 76 properties surveyed, approximately 75% were residential or agricultural (farmsteads). As with the reconnaissance survey, this intensive survey was funded by a CLG grant.

In the fall of 1999 Amherst adopted a local law providing tax exemptions for historic property alterations and rehabilitation. This law was intended to provide an incentive for alterations or rehabilitations to historic property by creating a real property tax exemption for any alterations or rehabilitations that preserve or increase the historic character of real property in the Town of Amherst. Properties qualifying for this incentive are those that have been designated as a landmark or are located in and contribute to the character of a designated historic district.

In 2000 the Town received a federal grant to investigate high priority sites in more detail for purposes of identifying additional properties eligible for the National Register. The efforts described above are producing results, as the Town of Amherst presently has six locally designated historic sites, as well as one structure potentially eligible for the National Register.

Other cultural resources in the Town of Amherst include the historic Erie Canal, located along the northern boundary of the Town. Enhancement of the Canal has been identified by New York State as a priority for historic tourism development.

The Amherst Museum is another extremely valuable resource in the community. The Museum offers opportunities for cultural enrichment through the preservation of artifacts and buildings typical of life in Amherst and the Niagara Frontier. The Museum supports the Town's historic preservation program, educates the public regarding the Town's history and historic resources, and helps build public support for local preservation by maintaining several restored 19th century building and exhibits located in a 35-acre park.

4.2.2 Village of Williamsville

The Village of Williamsville adopted its first historic preservation ordinance in 1983. As of 1997 the Williamsville Historic Preservation Commission had designated 10 landmarks, all individual buildings or sites. Included among these was the Williamsville Water Mill Complex on Spring Street, which is listed on the State and National Register of Historic Properties.

In 1997, a Reconnaissance Level Survey of Historic Resources was completed for the Village of Williamsville. The reconnaissance survey identified 83 additional individual buildings and structures apparently worthy of local landmark designation, as well as four potential historic districts. The four districts contained 79 buildings. (*Bero Associates Architects, Reconnaissance Level Survey of Historic Resources, Village of Williamsville, June 1997*)

4.2.3 Archaeological Resources

The history of human habitation in Amherst began over 12,000 years ago. This long history was spurred by the Town's numerous waterways and location along the Onondaga Escarpment. Although preliminary research suggests that there appear to be significant prehistoric and historic archaeological resources in the town, to date the Town has not been actively engaged in activities aimed at identifying and preserving these archaeological resources. (*Bero Associates Architects, October 1997*) The Town does require consideration of potential archaeological resources through the land development process. Development petitioners must consult with the OPRHP inventory of potential archaeologically sensitive sites before proceeding and must comply with any requirements set forth by the State. This may include various levels of investigation. If any resources are found, documentation of the findings, or in rare cases, protection of resources is required.

5.0 Demographics

This chapter discusses demographic trends affecting the Town of Amherst and the Buffalo-Niagara region as a whole. Section 5.1 presents key findings of the demographic analysis for Amherst and the region. Section 5.2 contains a demographic profile of the Town and its six Planning Analysis Areas based upon 1990 U.S. Census information.[1] Sections 5.3 and 5.4 describe demographic trends in the region and Amherst, respectively. Finally, Section 5.5 presents projections of future population and housing in the Town. Supporting tables are included in an appendix to the report.

5.1 KEY FINDINGS

- The population of the Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has declined since 1970, but the rate of decline was less in the 1990s than in the previous two decades.
- Despite estimates during the 1990s that showed population loss in Amherst, its 2000 Census figures show a healthy increase. The population of Amherst grew during the 1990s as both Erie County and the metropolitan area as a whole suffered losses.
- Amherst's northeastern area has posted strong population growth over the past decade, but older areas in the southern and western portions of the Town have either lost population or grown very slightly.
- Household growth has outstripped population growth, an indication of the national and regional trend towards smaller households.
- New housing construction has largely consisted of multi-family housing, an indication of Amherst's transformation from a bedroom suburb to a more densely settled and diverse live/work/play destination for Western New York residents.
- The population of the Town of Amherst can be expected to grow by about 11,000 to 22,000 people over the next 20 years.
- Population growth will create demand for approximately 5,000 to 10,000 new housing units in the Town of Amherst over the next 20 years.
- Approximately 4,000 of the new residents projected in the Town by 2020 will be students at the University at Buffalo. By 2005, the University at Buffalo expects to increase the number of students living on campus from 4,600 to 8,500, with no further planned increases beyond that time.

[1] Partial U.S. Census data for 2000 was released shortly prior to finalization of this report. Where possible, this information has been integrated into this chapter.

5.2 TOWN OF AMHERST CENSUS PROFILE

(Please refer to Table 5-1 in the Appendix.)

5.1.1 Overall Town Profile

According to the 1990 Census, the population of the Town of Amherst was 111,740. Of this population, 6,100 were in group quarters (the majority of whom lived in UB dormitories) and 105,640 were part of the town's household population. With 41,252 households in the Town, the average household size was 2.56 persons.

In 1990, Amherst contained 43,316 housing units, of which 41,333 (95.2 percent) were occupied. Among these occupied units, 30,946 were owner-occupied and 10,387 were renter-occupied, representing a 75/25 owner to renter split. Of the Town's total housing units, 71.9 percent were single-family units and 28.1 percent were multi-family units.

5.2.1 Profiles of Planning Analysis Areas

For the purposes of the Inventory and Analysis Report, the Town has been divided into six Planning Analysis Areas, or PAAs (see Figure 2). In 1990, the Town's population was most heavily concentrated in PAA 5 and PAA 6, the most southern portion of the Town. These two areas, which contain older neighborhoods such as Eggertsville, Snyder, and Williamsville, had 56,400 residents in 1990, or 50.5 percent of the total population of Amherst. Planning Analysis Areas 3 and 4, the central portion of the Town, contained 35,900 residents (32.1 percent of the total) and PAAs 1 and 2, (the northern portion) contained just 19,400 residents (17.4 percent of the total).

The Town's western sections have much higher concentrations of both renters and multi-family housing units than its eastern portion. In PAAs 1 and 3, the areas to the north and west of the University at Buffalo, only 56 percent of housing units were owner occupied in 1990. By comparison, over 90 percent of all housing units in PAAs 2 and 4, the northeastern area of Amherst, were owner occupied in 1990.

Average household size in 1990 varied greatly by PAA within the Town. PAA 5, which contains some of the oldest and most densely populated areas in Amherst, had an average size of 2.37 persons. PAA 3, which contains a high concentration of multi-family housing, had the Town's lowest average household size of 2.30 persons. At the other end of the spectrum, PAAs 2 and 4 are fairly sparsely populated areas with primarily single-family housing and had average household sizes of 2.83 and 2.92, respectively. A curious case is PAA 1, which had the largest average household size (2.96 persons per household) despite having a very high concentration of multi-family housing.

5.3 REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

(Please refer to Tables 5-2 and 5-3 in the Appendix.)

The population of the Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has been declining since 1970, but the rate of decline has slowed in the past decade.[2] In 1970, the region had 1.35 million people. By 1980 the population had declined to 1.24 million, and it declined further to 1.19 million in 1990. From 1990 to 1999 the estimated population declined slightly almost every year, with the 1999 population hitting 1.14 million. Preliminary 2000 Census estimates show signs of recovery, though, with the MSA population at 1.17 million.

Residents leaving the region are moving elsewhere in the United States, primarily to southern states. From 1990 to 1999, the net domestic migration of the region was -86,000 people. By comparison, the net natural increase (births minus deaths) was over 30,000, and the net foreign migration was over 9,000 on the positive side. This is an indication of growing immigrant populations in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

The bulk of the population loss occurred in Erie County, which declined from 1.14 million people in 1970 to 969,000 in 1990 and 950,000 in the 2000 Census. Niagara County's population has declined somewhat from its 1970 total of 235,000 to 221,000 in 1990 and to 220,000 in the 2000 Census. During the 1970 to 1999 period, the region's average household size declined dramatically, falling from 3.20 persons to 2.56 persons. This reflects a national trend revealed in 2000 Census data towards more single heads of households. For this reason the number of households in the MSA actually increased from 422,000 in 1970 to 451,000 in 1999, despite the overall loss in population.

Another positive trend in the Buffalo-Niagara MSA is income growth. In 1992 dollars, both per capita income and average household income increased substantially from 1970 to 1999. In 1970, the region's per capita and average household incomes (in 1992 dollars) were, respectively, $14,085 and $44,356. By 1999, these figures increased to $22,748 and $57,008, increases of 62 percent for per capita income and 29 percent for average household income. The shrinking margin between per capita and household income is likely a function of decreasing household sizes and more single heads of households.

5.4 TOWN OF AMHERST DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

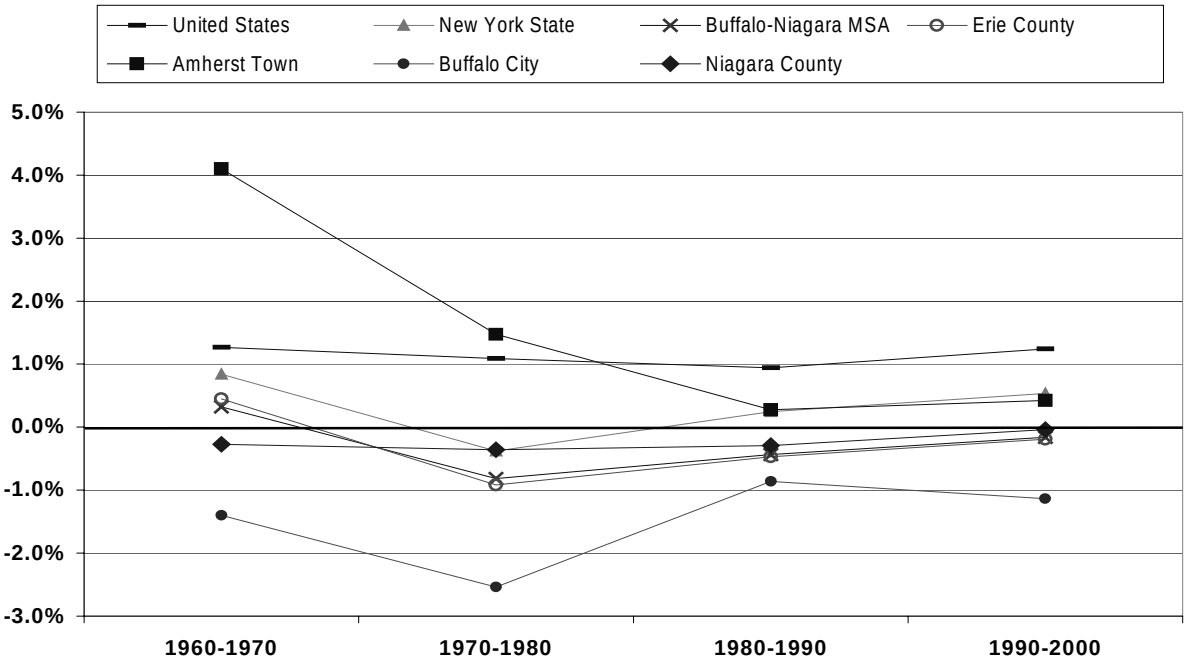
5.4.1 Overall Town Trends

Despite regional population losses, Amherst's population base has remained healthy, with its 2000 Census population of 116,510 representing a 4.3 percent gain from the 1990 Census total of 111,711. In fact, during the period from 1980 to 2000, Amherst's population grew by 7,804 while the City of Buffalo lost about 62,000 people. Amherst's share of Erie County's total population has increased from 10.7 percent in 1980 to 12.3 percent in 2000.

[2] The Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area is defined as Erie and Niagara Counties.

Chart 5-1 below illustrates population trends over the last four decades in Amherst in comparison to the United States, New York State, the Buffalo-Niagara region, Erie County, Niagara County, and the City of Buffalo. After increasing more rapidly than the country as a whole in the 1960s and 1970, Amherst has trailed national averages in population growth in the last two decades. Nevertheless, Amherst's growth has outperformed that of New York State in each of the decades. Amherst has performed strongly compared with the other regional entities, which have experienced negative population growth throughout the time period with the exception of slight gains for the Buffalo-Niagara MSA and Erie County in the 1960s.

Chart 5-1
Population Change by Decade, 1960-2000



5.4.2 Planning Analysis Area Trends

(Please refer to Tables 5-4 and 5-5 in the Appendix.)

Characteristics of the population of Amherst's six Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs) were adapted from two sources: data produced by CACI Information Systems, Inc., a private provider of demographic and economic data, and 2000 Census data. CACI data provide 1999 estimates and 2004 projections of population, households, age profiles, and owner versus renter-occupied housing units. CACI provides its information at the Census tract level, and this information was organized into the six PAAs. Census data show actual 1990 to 2000 population growth, as well as a breakdown by race for the six PAAs. The population estimate figures from CACI are not intended to be accurate depictions of growth; they are,

however, needed to provide baselines for age, household size, and other data shown in Table 5-4.

According to this analysis, four of Amherst's six PAAs gained population during the 1990s, with only PAAs 1 and 5, the northwestern and southwestern areas of the Town, losing any population (see Figure 8). PAA 1, Northwest Amherst, lost the most population, with an annual decline of 0.5 percent from 1990 to 2000. PAA 4, the east central area of Amherst, gained the most population both in number (2,800) and in percentage growth (1.3 percent per year). CACI data indicated that the number of households increased as average household size decreased throughout the Town.

Population Change by Planning Analysis Area, 1990-2000

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	TOTAL
Population							
1990 Census	8,478	10,944	15,932	19,949	34,859	21,578	111,740
2000 Census	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	116,510
Annual Percent Change	-0.5%	0.8%	1.2%	1.3%	-0.2%	0.1%	0.4%

Source: CACI Information Systems, Inc.; Economics Research Associates

The age profiles of the six districts changed substantially during the 1990s, with the most pronounced changes occurring in PAAs 1, 3, and 5. The school-age population of PAA 1 increased significantly, with the 6-17 age range's share of population growing from 18.7 percent in 1990 to over 21 percent in 1999. In PAA 3, the key issue was the loss of young adult population, with the 18-24 age cohort's share of population falling from 31.9 percent in 1990 to 21.9 percent by 1999. At the same time, PAA 3's school-age population share (6-17 years old) more than doubled from 9.2 percent to 18.8 percent. In PAA 5, the already significant senior population continued to grow, with the share of the population over the age of 75 increasing from 10.4 percent to 11.6 percent. Interestingly, the share of the 35-44 cohort grew in PAA 5 as well, rising from 7.3 percent to 15.5 percent.

Newly released data from the 2000 Census reveals that Amherst's population is becoming more racially diverse in all six PAAs. In 1990, Amherst's population was 93 percent white; in 2000 the population was 89 percent white. The biggest gainer among minorities was the Asian/Pacific Islander population, which grew from 3.8 percent to 5.2 percent of the Town's total population. Asians are most prevalent in PAA 3, where 8.9 percent of residents are in this group, including 12 percent in the Census tract occupied by the University at Buffalo. The most racially diverse planning analysis area by far is PAA 1, which is 83 percent white, 8 percent black, 6 percent Asian, and 3 percent American Indian or Other.

5.4.3 Housing Unit Trends

(Please refer to Tables 5-6 and 5-7 in the Appendix.)

Over the past decade the Town of Amherst's net change in housing unit inventory was 1,727 units, of which 415 were single-family units and 1,312 were multi-family units. The prevalence of multi-family construction illustrates how Amherst's residential character is evolving from that of a low-density bedroom community to a more mature, higher density portion of the Buffalo metropolitan area. In 1990, there were 43,316 housing units. According to the Town's construction and demolition permit data, the housing stock grew to 47,327 units by 2000, an average annual increase of 401 units. In percentage terms, this represents a 9.3 percent increase over the decade.

As should be expected, single-family unit growth was strongest in PAA 2, the far northeastern section of the town with the largest amount of undeveloped land and, to a lesser extent, in PAAs 4 and 6. Multi-family unit growth was strongest in PAAs 3 and 4, the central portion of Amherst. Although PAA 2 only added 170 multi-family units, its percentage growth was second fastest, due to the small size of the existing inventory. Overall, PAA 4 added the most units, but the smaller PAA 2 grew at a faster pace. PAAs 1 and 5 were the slowest growing planning analysis areas overall. PAA 1, the smallest in population, has only a small area of undeveloped land that is not designated as open space. PAA 5, the most populous, is largely built-out and has little room for new development.

5.5 POPULATION AND HOUSING PROJECTIONS

Using the above information regarding population and housing profiles and trends as a baseline, future projections of population and housing in the Town of Amherst were developed. This section summarizes the procedure used in the projections and then outlines the results.

5.5.1 Procedure Used to Develop Projections

A. Establishing the 2000 Baseline

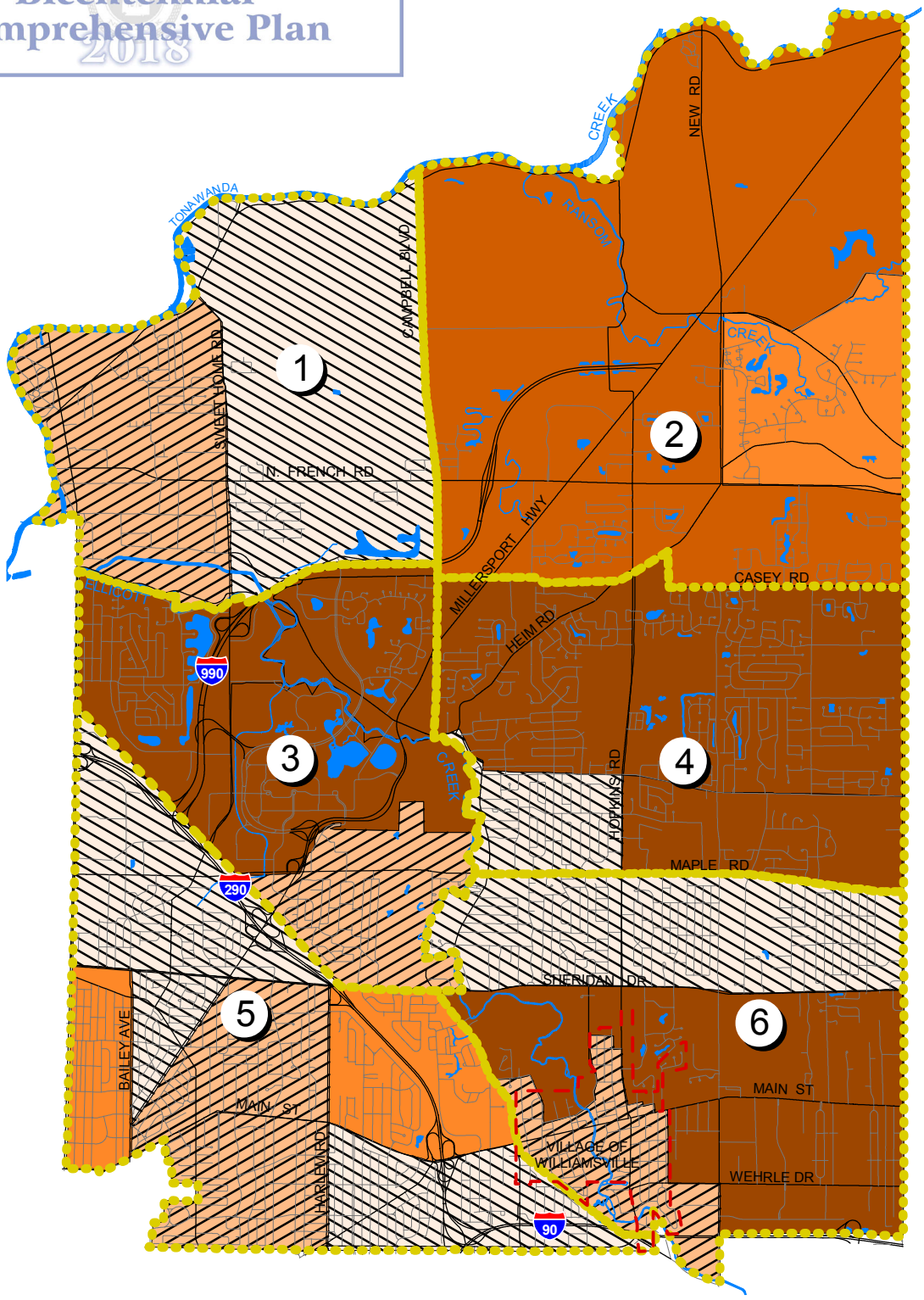
The starting point for the analysis was to establish a baseline for the number of existing housing units as of January 1, 2000. Although permit figures were available through part of the year 2000, it was decided to use figures from the last complete year in order to examine annual trends over the past decade.

B. Sources of Growth Projections

With the baseline and historic trend figures in place, the next step was to collect a number of different sources of population estimates and projections for Amherst's planning districts, the Town as a whole, Erie County, and the Buffalo-Niagara MSA. Collecting various sources allowed many different projections to be examined in order to come up with a consolidated estimate of future growth in the Town.

These sources are described in the bullet points below. Percentage changes in population and related factors projected by each source are shown in Tables 5-8 to 5-11 in the Appendix. These changes are shown in five-year increments from 1990 to 2020, as applicable.

- ***Census data:*** The U.S. Bureau of the Census, in addition to its 1990 and 2000 decennial population count, also produces intermediate population estimates for all years in between the two Census counts. These estimates had been indicating losses for Amherst from 1990 to 1999, with an average annual rate of decline of 0.16 percent. However, the recently-released 2000 Census counts show that Amherst has actually gained population since 1990, with an overall annual average growth rate of 0.4 percent. This compares favorably with trends in the Buffalo-Niagara MSA, which saw its population decline by 0.2 percent annually during the 1990s.
- ***Town of Amherst:*** In 1995, the Town of Amherst completed its own set of intermediate population estimates, with estimates completed for each census tract in the town. According to these estimates, Amherst grew substantially between 1990 and 1995, with an annual growth rate of 1.02 percent. The fastest growing area in the Town was PAA 2, which grew by 2.97 percent annually according to the Town. PAA 5, on the other hand, only posted a gain of 0.11 percent per year. The Town also provided the consultant team with the necessary figures on historic building permit and housing demolition trends used in the housing inventory analysis.
- ***CACI Information Systems, Inc.:*** CACI Information Systems, Inc. maintains a national database of demographic and consumer data and produces a set of current year estimates and five-year future projections down to the census tract level every year. CACI figures for Amherst show an annual loss of 0.07 percent from 1990 to 1999, and project a loss of 0.73 percent per year from 1999 to 2004. The 1990 to 1999 figures show gains in population in the Town's eastern half (PAAs 2, 4, and 6), and losses in the western half (PAAs 1, 3, and 5). All six districts are projected to lose population between 1999 and 2004.
- ***Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council:*** In 1997, the GBNRTC completed a set of population, household, and employment forecasts for Erie and Niagara Counties as part of its 2020 regional transportation plan. These forecasts looked at all cities and towns in the region and divided each jurisdiction into traffic analysis zones (TAZs). Over the 30-year period from 1990 to 2020 (no forecasts were done for intermediate years) the GBNRTC projected the Town of Amherst to grow by 0.63 percent annually, a significantly faster pace than the regional growth rate of 0.24 percent. Within the Town, PAA 2 was projected to exceed the average by nearly 100 percent, and PAA 5 was projected to lag substantially.
- ***Woods & Poole Economics:*** Each year Woods & Poole Economics publishes the Complete Economic and Demographic Data Source (CEDDS), an economic forecast for the entire United States. CEDDS projects population, employment, income, and retail spending data to 2025 for each county and MSA in the nation and, in ERA's experience, typically errs on the conservative side. CEDDS estimates show population losses in Erie County and the Buffalo MSA from 1990 to 1999, with the rate of loss increasing from 1995 to 1999. However, between 2000 and 2010, CEDDS forecasts both the county and region to grow very slightly (0.01 percent annually), and to pick up the pace between 2010 and 2020 to 0.08 per year. To compare with the GBNRTC



Change in Population by Census Tract, 1990-2000

FIGURE 8

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

Percentage Population Change by 2000 Census Tract

- < -5%
- -5% - 0%
- 0% - 5%
- 5% - 10%
- >10%

1 Planning Analysis Area

Planning Analysis Boundary

Village of Williamsville Boundary

Municipal Boundary

Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Population Data provided by Census Bureau

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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forecasts, the overall 1990 to 2020 regional change is forecasted to be a slight decline, with an annual average loss of 0.07 percent during the 30-year period.

From the above review two things became evident: each projection tells a different story, and the time frames of each do not match up neatly. Therefore a great deal of adjustment was needed in order to forecast a likely range of growth for the Town of Amherst and its six planning districts. The derivation of this range is described in the following section.

3. Defining Growth Projection Scenarios

The starting point for creating growth scenarios was to select two different methods, or scenarios, for projecting future growth. These scenarios were selected to identify a range within which future growth is likely to occur. The two scenarios are as follows:

Scenario 1: Extend Historic Trends

In this scenario, the starting point was the 1990 to 2000 change in the housing inventory for the Town of Amherst and its six planning analysis areas. During the 1990s, the townwide inventory of single-family units grew by 0.57 percent annually and the multi-family inventory grew by 1.67 percent each year. As of 2000, there were 33,400 single-family units in the Town, and 13,900 multi-family units, for a total of 47,300. Extending the 1990 to 2000 trends ahead to 2020, Amherst would add 4,400 new single-family units and 5,900 multi-family units in the next 20 years, for a total of 10,300 new units. Overall this would result in a 22 percent increase in the Town's housing inventory over a 20-year period.

Population change for this scenario was estimated through a two-step process. First, the projected rates of decrease of persons per housing unit calculated for Scenario 2 were applied to the future number of housing units to calculate total household population. By this methodology, the average household size in Amherst would decrease from an estimated 2.33 persons today to 2.23 persons in 2020. Next, group quarters (non-household) population was estimated by growing it at the same rate as household population. The exception to this was in PAA 3, where the group quarters population is almost exclusively comprised of University at Buffalo students in dormitories. Since UB estimates that 8,500 students will live on campus by 2005, this figure was used as the estimate for group quarters population in that PAA.

Overall, the Town's population would grow by about 22,000, with an estimated 2020 population of 138,800, an average annual change of 0.88 percent. Growth in household population would be strongest in PAAs 2 and 4, each of which would add over 5,000 residents. PAA 3 would add over 8,500 residents, but the majority would be UB students. The population of PAA 5 would decline slightly in this scenario. The projected percent change in population by PAA is shown in Figure 9.

Summary of Scenario 1: Extend Historic Trends

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	TOTAL
Population							
2000	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	116,510
2020	8,711	17,073	26,405	28,604	33,501	24,545	138,839
Total Change, 2000-2020	631	5,220	8,513	5,868	(584)	2,681	22,329
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.38%	1.84%	1.96%	1.15%	-0.09%	0.58%	0.88%
Housing Inventory							
2000	3,146	4,898	6,040	8,069	15,668	9,475	47,296
2020	3,567	7,421	8,536	10,677	16,198	11,188	57,588
Total Change, 2000-2020	421	2,523	2,496	2,608	530	1,713	10,292
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.63%	2.10%	1.74%	1.41%	0.17%	0.83%	0.99%

Source: Economics Research Associates

More detail on the projected change in population and number of housing units by PAA under Scenario 1 is provided in Tables 5-12 to 5-14 in the Appendix.

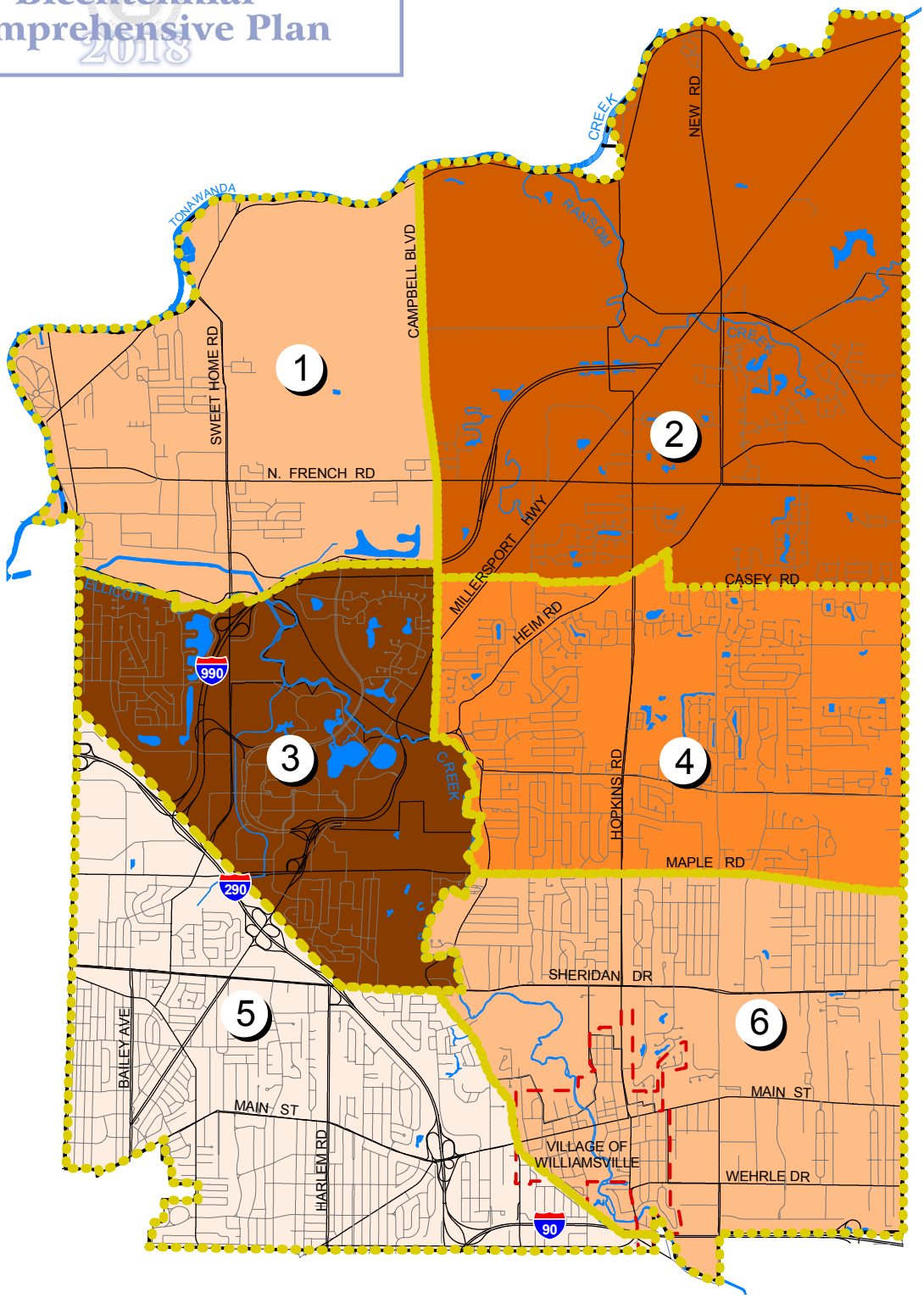
Scenario 2: Apply Projected Growth Rates

This scenario builds on the growth rate projections described in the previous section. In order to establish growth rates, three "baseline" rates were established, one for each of three periods of analysis: 2000-2005, 2005-2010, and 2010-2020. The baseline rate for each time period was chosen based upon the availability of data for each time period. As a result, for 2000-2005, the CACI rates were the starting point, and then for 2005-2010 and 2010-2020, the GBNRTC rates were the starting points.

To determine a reasonable projection of population change, each baseline rate was adjusted by comparing it with other growth rates. For example, the CACI baseline rate for 2000-2005 was adjusted by Census, Woods & Poole, and GBNRTC rates. After checking the CACI rate with these "adjustment factors" the difference was then applied to CACI's projections for each planning district. For household change, the projected rate of decrease in the number of persons per household was then applied in order to determine the projected change in housing units. Table 5-11 in the Appendix illustrates this process for each of the three time frames.

The projected growth rates include rates for both population and household change, based on the same projections for decreasing household size used in Scenario 1. Therefore, once these rates were established, the next step was simply to apply these growth rates to estimated 2000 baselines for population and housing, assuming that housing unit and household growth are equal (i.e., no more housing units become vacant).

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan 1818 2018



Historic Trends Scenario, 2000-2020

FIGURE 9

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

Percentage Population Change by Planning Analysis Area

- < 0%
- 0% - 15%
- 16% - 30%
- 31% - 45%
- > 45%

1 Planning Analysis Area

Planning Analysis Boundary

Village of Williamsville Boundary

Municipal Boundary

Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Planning Analysis Area Population Data provided by Economic Research Associates (based on 2000 Census Tract boundaries)

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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By this methodology, the Town would add nearly 2,800 new single-family units and more than 1,700 new multi-family units, for a total of about 4,500 new units. Again, growth would be led by PAAs 2 and 4, but growth will differ by type of unit in each district, as PAA 2 growth would be primarily in single-family units and PAA 4 growth would be balanced between single and multi-family. In this scenario, population would only grow by 0.44 percent annually, with the Town adding about 10,750 new residents between 2000 and 2020 for a total of 127,260. The projected percent change in population by PAA is shown in Figure 10.

Summary of Scenario 2: Apply Projected Growth Rates

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	TOTAL
Population							
2000	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	116,510
2020	8,597	14,169	22,475	25,332	34,258	22,434	127,264
Total Change, 2000-2020	517	2,316	4,583	2,596	173	570	10,754
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.31%	0.90%	1.15%	0.54%	0.03%	0.13%	0.44%
Housing Inventory							
2000	3,146	4,898	6,040	8,069	15,668	9,475	47,296
2020	3,520	6,125	6,505	9,141	16,373	10,125	51,790
Total Change, 2000-2020	374	1,227	465	1,072	705	650	4,494
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.56%	1.12%	0.37%	0.63%	0.22%	0.33%	0.45%

Source: Economics Research Associates

More detail on the projected change in population and number of housing units by PAA under Scenario 2 is provided in Tables 5-15 to 5-17 in the Appendix.

5.5.2 Results of the Two Scenarios

Summarized in Table 5-18 in the Appendix, the results of the two scenarios suggest that Amherst will experience a net gain of between 10,300 and 22,300 people over the next 20 years. This will result in demand for 4,500 to 10,300 new housing units. In Scenario 1, which extends historic housing unit trends, 43 percent of new units would be single-family and 57 percent would be multi-family. In Scenario 2, which combines several different types of growth rates, 62 percent would be single-family and 38 percent would be multi-family. A comparison of the projections to the current supply of vacant, unconstrained land zoned for residential use is presented in Chapter 3.0 of this report.

6.0 Economic Conditions

This chapter provides an overview of employment trends and economic considerations affecting Amherst and the Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). It begins with a summary of key findings followed by a review of regional employment trends. It then goes on to examine a number of key issues affecting the Town's economic competitiveness. These issues include the following:

- Prospects for the technology sector in Western New York
- Amherst's role in the regional economy
- The role of the University at Buffalo (UB) in the Town's economy
- Findings of economic stakeholder interviews
- Strengths and weaknesses of the local and regional economy
- Economic development strategies in other university communities

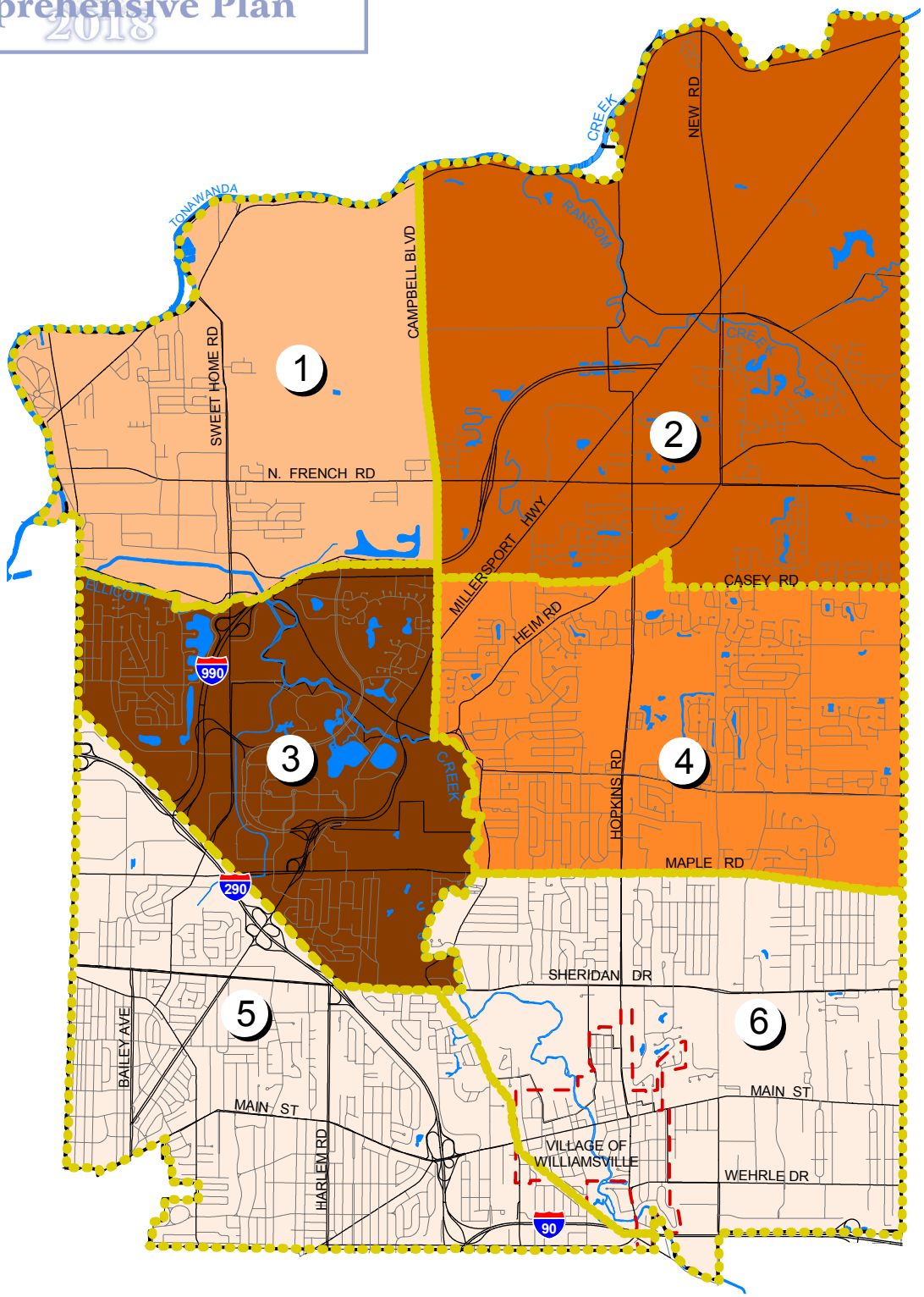
The chapter concludes with employment and commercial land use projections by industry sector for each of Amherst's six Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs). Supporting tables are included in the Appendix.

Throughout the chapter, employment is divided into four major categories. These categories were chosen to match those used in the sub-area employment forecasts conducted by the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), as these forecasts form the basis for the employment projections presented here. The four categories are Manufacturing, Retail, Wholesale, and All Other Employment. For the purposes of this chapter the All Other Employment category is assumed to represent all businesses using office space. While some areas in the All Other Employment category may represent non-office users, the vast majority of these businesses fall into categories like professional services, business services, engineering, and finance/insurance/real estate.

6.1 KEY FINDINGS

- Employment in the Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) grew substantially during the 1980s but growth tailed off in the 1990s, as net job growth in the MSA from 1990 to 1999 was only 1,800 jobs.
- Erie County's net employment change was more positive, as it added 7,200 jobs during the 1990s. However, employment losses in Niagara County dampened the region-wide effects of Erie's growth.
- Over the past 30 years, the Services sector has boomed and the Manufacturing sector has declined in Western New York, as has been the case nationwide. While some services industries do pay well, the majority pay considerably less than the manufacturing jobs that have been lost.

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan 1818 2018



PROJECTED GROWTH RATES SCENARIO, 2000-2020

FIGURE 10

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

Percentage Population Change by Planning Analysis Area

- 0% - 5%
- 6% - 10%
- 11% - 15%
- 16% - 20%
- > 20%

- 1 Planning Analysis Area
- Planning Analysis Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Planning Analysis Area Population Data provided by Economic Research Associates (based on 2000 Census Tract boundaries)

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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- New York State lags behind many other northeastern states in terms of competitiveness in the high-tech economy. Within New York, many of the state's stronger resources for the high-tech economy are concentrated in the New York City metro area. The major strength of the Western New York region in the high-tech economy is the concentration of scientists and engineers in its universities and other research institutions.
- While Western New York's occupational projections show strong percentage growth in many high-paying technology industries, many of these industries are presently very small and the number of jobs created will be modest. The region's largest job growth sectors are forecasted to be low-wage ones like Services and Retail.
- There exists a mismatch in the region between growing high-tech companies and skilled labor, as growing companies tend to recruit top talent from elsewhere, and technology-oriented graduating students from local universities tend to leave the area in pursuit of good jobs. A number of programs have been developed to address this problem.
- It is estimated that Amherst added about 5,300 new jobs during the 1990s, with 75,600 jobs in the Town in 2000. This employment base is expected to increase by another 28,000 over the next 20 years, an average of 1,400 new jobs per year.
- The State University of New York at Buffalo (UB) represents a major engine for the economy of Amherst and of Western New York as a whole. In recent years, UB has taken several steps to better leverage its resources for local and regional economic development purposes.
- The Town of Amherst has many strengths, including a good labor force, a very low crime rate, economic development initiatives that have succeeded in building new business, attractive commercial space, many cultural and recreational resources, high quality government services, and a major research university in UB.
- Amherst also has its weaknesses, which include steep costs of doing business, high taxes, a lack of high-paying jobs, and relatively flat housing values.
- Universities can provide their surrounding areas with substantial resources for community development, economic development, and real estate investment. While UB and other local colleges have succeeded to some degree in all of these areas, more ideas can be gleaned from examining how other academic institutions around the country have approached "town-gown" relations.
- Employment is projected to increase in all of Amherst's Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs) to some degree. PAAs 1 and 2 in the northern part of the Town are projected to be the areas with the biggest percentage increases. The "All Other Employment" classification, which is primarily comprised of office employment, is projected to grow the fastest townwide. Employment is projected to grow in the other categories as well, but not by as much.
- The projected employment growth over the next 20 years would create demand for about 6.9 million square feet of new commercial retail, office, and industrial space in Amherst, with office accounting for 71 percent of that total. Assuming standard development density ratios, this amount of space would require the development of 496 acres of land throughout the Town.

6.2 REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

(Refer to Tables 6-1 to 6-3 in the Appendix.)

As outlined in Chapter 5.0, the Buffalo-Niagara region has lost population over the past few decades. However, the region's employment base has actually grown over the same time period, according to New York State Department of Labor figures. In 1980, the region had 483,000 non-agricultural jobs. That number grew to 528,000 in 1990 and to 530,000 in 1999. Erie County experienced all of the expansion, as it gained nearly 50,000 jobs from 1980 to 1999, compared with Niagara County's concurrent net loss of over 2,000 jobs. Region-wide, employment growth was negligible during the 1990s, with a net change of just 1,800 jobs, representing an annual increase of less than 0.1 percent. This represents a slowdown from the 1980s, when the region's job base grew by 0.9 percent per year and 45,000 new jobs were created.

In the 1990s, just three of the eight major industry groups grew in the MSA: Wholesale Trade, Finance/Insurance/Real Estate (FIRE), and Services. In the 1980s, six of the eight groups posted gains. The bulk of the employment losses in the 1990s were in the Manufacturing (10,900 jobs), Retail Trade (7,800 jobs), and Construction (1,700 jobs) sectors. Manufacturing, which was the largest industry group in the region in 1970, has continued to decline over time, and is now only the third largest, behind Services and Retail Trade. Services industries were by far the leading growth area, with a net gain of 21,800 jobs from 1990 to 1999.

During the 1990s, Erie County's employment grew from 445,700 in 1990 to 452,922 in 1999, an annual rate of increase of 0.2 percent. However, Erie's gains were largely offset by losses in Niagara County, which saw its employment decrease by 0.7 percent annually during the 1990s. In Erie County, as with the MSA, the top growth industry sector was Services. Erie County's Services industries grew by 1.2 percent annually from 1990 to 1999 and by an even stronger 2.7 percent during the 1980s. In total, Erie County added over 57,000 Services jobs from 1980 to 1999. However, other industry groups in Erie County that grew during the 1980s, such as Construction, Retail, and FIRE, tapered off during the 1990s.

More detailed evaluation of the Services sector shows that many of the employment groupings included in this sector simply do not create high-paying jobs. Even Engineering and Accounting Services, the highest paying of the Services industries, only have an average salary of $35,000, a significantly lower figure than the average Manufacturing salary of $42,700. Most other Services categories are low wage, including Hotels ($13,500), Social Services ($16,000), Business Services ($20,500), and Health Services ($26,500). In fact, of the eight major industry groups, only Retail Trade at $13,600 has a lower average salary than the overall average for Services of $22,925.

For comparison with New York State data, other independent employment estimates were examined. Two key sources were the regional forecasts to 2020 conducted by the GBNRTC and estimates by Woods & Poole Economics, a private economic forecasting firm. Both the GBNRTC and Woods & Poole estimate that the Buffalo-Niagara MSA has a much higher employment base than New York State reports. This is because these sources measure

employment differently, counting part-time and seasonal employees as employees. Regardless, these sources were included to compare growth estimates during the 1990s. According to both independent sources, the MSA grew by more indicated by New York State Department of Labor figures, with GBNRTC reporting an annual increase of 0.3 percent from 1990 to 1999 and Woods & Poole reporting a 0.7 percent annual increase. Both sources did show losses in Manufacturing employment, with gains in the Retail, Wholesale, and All Other Employment areas.

6.3 TECHNOLOGY EMPLOYMENT IN WESTERN NEW YORK

One of the key questions facing many communities in recent years is "How do we remain vital and competitive in the technology age?" As Western New York has lagged behind both the United States and the rest of New York State in creating high-tech jobs, this question is particularly important for Amherst and other communities in Western New York to consider. Many public and private organizations like the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Progressive Policy Institute, and the Milken Institute have conducted research in recent years on the high-tech economy of the U.S. Topics covered have included state rankings, regional competitiveness, tracking of job creation and wages, and how technology fits into manufacturing, services, transportation, and other sectors of the economy.

6.3.1 New Economy Index

A key measure of high-tech competitiveness is the State New Economy Index, published by the Progressive Policy Institute. This index measures a number of key factors that define the level of competitiveness in the high-tech economy for all 50 states. The high-tech economy is defined in this study as including fields like electronics manufacturing, software and computer services, and telecommunications. The New Economy Index is based on 17 different economic indicators that cover five different categories, as defined below:

- ***Knowledge Jobs:*** includes Office Jobs, Managerial/Professional/Technical Jobs, and Workforce Education
- ***Globalization:*** includes Export Focus of Manufacturing and Foreign Direct Investment
- ***Economic Dynamism and Competition:*** includes "Gazelle" Jobs[1], Job Churning[2], and Initial Public Offerings
- ***Transformation to a Digital Economy:*** includes Online Population, Commercial Internet Domain Names, Technology in Schools, and Digital Government
- ***Technological Innovation Capacity:*** includes High-Tech Jobs, Scientists and Engineers, Patents, Industry Investment in R&D, and Venture Capital

[1] "Gazelle Jobs" are jobs in companies whose annual sales revenue has grown by more than 20 percent each year for four consecutive years.
[2] "Job Churning" is a measure of jobs in businesses that have either started up or failed compared with the total number of jobs in a given economy.

In this index, New York's New Economy ranks 16th nationally, trailing other northeastern states like Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Maryland, and New Hampshire. New York's strongest areas within the Index are Office Jobs, Job Churning, and Scientists and Engineers, where it ranks third, seventh, and 10th in the country, respectively. New York State's strength in the first two of these three categories has been largely driven by growth in the New York City Metro area, however.

Regarding Office Jobs, the metropolitan New York market (excluding New Jersey and Connecticut submarkets) contains about 500 million square feet of office space. By comparison, Buffalo's only contains about 10 million square feet, or 1/50 as much as the New York metro area.

The one category in which Buffalo's high-tech economy is at the national forefront is Scientists and Engineers, due to the presence of UB and several other research universities in the region, which have teamed up under the name The Upstate Alliance for Innovation. According to Business First of Buffalo, faculty members at Upstate Alliance institutions applied for patents on 129 discoveries and inventions in 1999. In disciplines ranging from composite materials to biomedical products to software development, UB has made tremendous strides in making research technology available to entrepreneurial businesspeople. Through the UB Business Alliance, the expertise of UB and its research partners is increasingly available to businesses in Western New York and its communities.

6.3.2 America's High-Tech Economy Report

The Milken Institute, a nonprofit research organization, published a study called "America's High-Tech Economy." This report includes a section that compares 315 metropolitan areas nationwide in terms of the concentration of technology employment, output, and recent growth in order to formulate what it terms a "Tech-Pole" index for each area. This index measures the extent to which a metropolitan area is able to act as a "pole" to which technology business and labor gravitate.

In this index, the Buffalo-Niagara MSA ranked at 108, with a score of 0.083. Buffalo's strong point in this category is its output relative to national real output, which ranks 83rd. However, its weak point is relative output growth, which ranks 251st, indicating that its position nationally may be slipping from an already tenuous base. Buffalo's score trails behind many of its competing areas in the northeast, including Rochester (0.205, 71st place), Pittsburgh (0.482, 47th place), Cleveland (0.225, 69th place), and Harrisburg (0.304, 65th place). In terms of competing with national leaders, the top ten regions all have scores of 3.46 or higher, with runaway first place San Jose coming in at 23.69. Other top ten metro areas include Dallas, Los Angeles, Boston, Seattle, Washington, DC, Albuquerque, Chicago, New York, and Atlanta.

6.3.3 Occupational Projections

The New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) generates ten-year projections (1997 through 2007) by occupation type for all regions of the state. Occupational projections for Western New York indicate that several high-technology industries will be among the growth sectors in the region in the coming years. These growing sectors include computer engineers, systems analysts, and database administrators. All of these occupation categories have median hourly wages over $18.00, which translates to median annual salaries of more than $37,000. These categories are set to grow rapidly, but they have small bases to begin with and will only add a one or two thousand jobs per category to the region in the coming years.

While these high-tech sectors are projected to grow rapidly, as noted they will not result in large numbers of job openings. The categories with the highest number of openings in the region are, by and large, low-wage occupations like cashiers, waiters/waitresses, janitors, office clerks, and health care aides. The highest paying of these four categories only carries a median hourly wage of about $10.00, which comes to an annual salary of less than $21,000. Western New York's projected percentage growth in high-tech employment may be significant, but the real growth industries in terms of numbers of jobs created will still occur in low-wage service industries.

Western New York's prospects do not match up with NYSDOL's occupational projections for the state as a whole. Statewide projections predict that there will be a need for 12,500 computer engineers, 29,100 systems analysts, 7,000 engineering managers, and 9,200 computer support specialists. Statewide median wages for these categories all exceed $20.00 per hour ($41,600 per year) and reach as high as $36.97 per hour ($77,000 per year).

6.3.4 Labor Force Issues

An ongoing challenge faced by Western New York has been the tendency of its best and brightest minds to emigrate to metro areas with better job opportunities, a phenomenon commonly known as "brain drain." The region's 23 colleges and universities graduate 15,000 students per year, and there is a perception that good jobs are only available to them in other cities. Conversely, many high-tech employers in the region find that they are unable to recruit engineers, computer technicians, and scientists from local universities and must recruit from outside Western New York.

The perception that the Buffalo area lacks quality job opportunities is largely the result of a lack of communication. Technology-oriented firms in Western New York are often small and do not have the corporate recruiting resources of firms like Microsoft, AOL Time Warner, or Intel, which annually scour the campuses of UB and other colleges to recruit young talent to their headquarters in Seattle, Northern Virginia, and San Jose, respectively. As a result, many students leave the Buffalo area without having any viable options to stay and work for a nearby firm. Also, large international corporations can pay new hires far more than can local start-ups. However, with Buffalo's low cost of living compared to bigger cities, the lower pay does not have to be a major issue.

Beyond the hiring of entry-level technology workers, firms in Western New York have even bigger problems finding higher level employees in the metropolitan area. One tech firm in Amherst interviewed during the stakeholder interview process (see Section 6.6 below) commented that it usually does not even look in Buffalo when hiring senior engineers and other highly-skilled staff. Interestingly, though, when it does recruit from out of town, it always tries to find employees with psychological ties to Buffalo, as those with such ties tend to remain at their jobs longer. Such ties include having grown up in the area, having family in the area, or even just having lived in a cold-weather city. If young workers never left Buffalo in the first place, technology-oriented firms in the area would not need to resort to such tactics to recruit viable employees.

With such considerations in mind, business and community leaders in the Buffalo area have initiated a number of efforts to better serve the needs of both businesses and the labor force. Organizations filling these needs range from nonprofits like InfoTech Niagara to University-sponsored efforts like UB's "Come Back to Buffalo" program and professional networks like the New Millennium Group to the JOBSapalooza job fair. The New York State Department of Labor also maintains a database for employers and job seekers alike. These resources are helping to eliminate the labor shortage problem as a hindrance to Buffalo's technology economy.

6.4 AMHERST'S ROLE IN THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

Over the past 20 years the character of Amherst evolved from that of a bedroom suburb to a regional center of employment and cultural activity. This change is most evident in the relationship between the number of residents and people who work in the town. In 1980, Amherst had 38,800 employees and 108,700 residents, a jobs to population ratio of 35.7%. Rapid employment growth added 31,500 jobs to Amherst in the 1980s, an 81% increase. During the same decade the Town's population only grew by 3,000, so that the resulting jobs to population ratio in 1990 was a markedly different 62.9 percent. The estimated 2000 ratio is 64.9%, and 2020 projections show that Amherst's future ratio will be in range of 75 to 82%.

Comparing Amherst with other cities and towns in Western New York, the nature of this transformation is clear. In 1990 the City of Buffalo had a jobs to population ratio of 69.9%, indicative of a central city. Other central cities have even higher concentrations of employment; Washington, DC has a jobs to population ratio of 108.5%. Other suburban areas outside of Buffalo resemble the Amherst of 1980 much more than the one of today or tomorrow. Amherst's western neighbor, the Town of Tonawanda, has a ratio of 43.9%; to the north, the semi-rural Town of Pendleton has a ratio of just 21.6%. Cheektowaga, to the south, has a ratio of 52.8%, but it too has added many jobs in recent years. Clarence has a ratio of 69.7%, but that largely a reflection of its small population base of 20,000, as it remains a predominantly rural town.

Although no employment estimates have been made for the Town of Amherst since 1990, all indications are that the Town's employment base continues to grow. Projections of

employment made by the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) indicate that Amherst will outpace the region in terms of employment growth through 2020. The GBNRTC's figures attribute 40% of regional employment growth from 1990 to 2020 to Amherst, despite the fact that it represented only 11 percent of the region's employment base in 1990. Estimates and projections of Amherst's employment by Planning Analysis Area (PAA) are discussed in Section 6.8.

More important than the actual magnitude of employment is the type of employment generated. Over the past two decades Amherst has emerged as the regional leader in high-technology employment, with dozens of firms in the fields of manufacturing, business services, and research & development firms either coming to or expanding in the Town. To track the Town's economic progress, the Amherst Industrial Development Agency (IDA) has conducted an annual Existing Business Survey for the past 10 years. This survey includes profiles of the companies that occupy Amherst's 21 business and industrial parks, have received assistance from the IDA, or both. Information includes employment types, the future needs of companies, and the level of satisfaction with the Town and the region. This survey provides valuable data that help characterize Amherst's role within the economy of the Buffalo-Niagara MSA.

The number of companies in the IDA survey has increased as Amherst's employment base has grown, from 438 firms in 1991 to 613 in 2000. More importantly, total employment of these firms has grown from 12,437 in 1991 to 29,762 in 2000, representing a 139 percent increase over this period. About 51 percent of the employment in the survey falls under the umbrella of "Professional Services," which includes all of the major industry category of Finance/Insurance/Real Estate (FIRE) and most of the Services category. Most of the remaining half of employment is split fairly evenly among Distribution Services (including Wholesale Trade and Transportation/Communications/Utilities), Industrial (Construction and Manufacturing), and Other (Retail, Health, Education, Government). Only a few jobs in the IDA survey are in the Consumer Services category (Hotels, Personal Services, Recreation), as IDA parks do not contain many of these types of uses. Among these sector groups, Professional Services has grown the most, adding over 5,000 jobs from 1996 to 2000 alone. All of the other major categories have grown as well (excluding Consumer Services), with Distribution Services, Industrial, and Other all growing by more than 30 percent during that four-year stretch.

In addition to asking about employment category, the IDA survey also classifies employees by job function. These statistics provide excellent insight into the nature of employment in Amherst, as job type correlates strongly with income level. Among IDA firms, 41 percent of employees are administrative/support workers, 18 percent are in sales, 13 percent are call center employees, 9 percent are in manufacturing, 8 percent are in information technology, 4 percent are in research & development, 2 percent are in warehousing, and the remaining 5 percent are other types of workers. It should be noted that the Other category contains high-paying job functions like legal, accounting, health care, and engineering. Clearly, the concentrations of employment in Amherst's business parks are in lower paying administrative, secretarial, sales, and back office jobs. These concentrations are indicative of the overall regional economy, as discussed in Section 6.2.

Another important consideration from the IDA survey relates to the commuting patterns of workers in Amherst. While the survey is not a proxy for the patterns of all employees in Amherst, it does provide insight into the patterns of the core office and industrial tenants in the Town. Among responding companies, only 21 percent of employees live in Amherst, a figure which undoubtedly contributes to traffic congestion on many of the Town's interstates and arterial roads. Of the inter-community commuters, 19 percent live in the City of Buffalo, 46 percent live elsewhere in Erie County, and 14 percent commute from outside Erie County.

From all of the above data, it is clear that, despite Amherst's strong (and growing) presence of office and manufacturing jobs, it still faces many of the hurdles faced by the Buffalo-Niagara MSA as a whole. The major issue with Amherst's economy is that the type of employment it creates is concentrated in lower wage jobs, frequently in back-office operations. Although there has been substantial demand for this type of labor from companies all over the country, too many back-office jobs create a "dead end" labor market, in which highly-skilled employees become even more difficult to recruit. Nevertheless, Amherst remains one of the few communities in Western New York with a growing employment base, and its ongoing status as a desirable residential community contributes to its cache as a preferred location for employers in the region.

6.5 THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO'S ROLE IN THE AMHERST ECONOMY

The State University of New York at Buffalo (UB) provides Amherst and the Buffalo-Niagara region with a major economic engine, as an institution of higher learning, employer, source of high-technology research, and a cultural amenity. In the 1999-2000 academic year, UB had 24,813 students on its two campuses, with about 6,500 of them living on campus. Of these students, 59 percent were full-time undergraduates, 9 percent part-time undergraduates, and the remaining 32 percent graduate students. The University's faculty of more than 5,600 includes 1,200 full-time members, 650 part-time members, and 3,800 volunteers. UB has a strong draw from Western New York, as 48 percent of its students are from the area. Of the remaining 52 percent, 22 percent come from the New York City area and the remaining 30 percent come from elsewhere.

The University at Buffalo employs over 5,000 people full-time and has an additional 1,350 part-time employees, 1,700 graduate/teaching assistants, and 3,300 students employed on campus, for a total of over 11,000 employees. Assuming that a non-full time employee represents the equivalent of one-half of a full-time job, the total number of full-time equivalent jobs on the South Campus and North Campus combined would be about 8,200. Since South Campus is in the City of Buffalo, all employees at this location are reported to the New York State Department of Labor as being employed in the City of Buffalo. Employees on North Campus are reported as being employed in the Town of Amherst. The estimate of the breakdown of employment between the two campuses is based on enrollment distribution. Because 20 percent of the total enrollment is at the South Campus, it is reasonable to assume that 20 percent of UB employees do not work in Amherst, thus reducing full-time equivalent employment on the North Campus to roughly 6,500.

Comparing this figure to Amherst's estimated total employment in 2000 of about 75,000 (and acknowledging that South Campus is actually in the City of Buffalo), it can be estimated that UB accounts for about 8.7 percent of the Town's jobs.

In addition to its actual on-site employment, UB generates considerable economic activity for the region as a whole. Its technological innovations have been transferred to entrepreneurial firms in the region, creating employment opportunities. Its students and faculty spend money at off-campus retail businesses, creating retail spending. Many of its employees also live in Amherst, thus generating property taxes and other spending in the Town. Cultural and athletic activities on and around the two campuses provide an amenity for Amherst and its residents. Clearly, the economic impacts generated by the University are enormous, and its presence in Amherst adds to the Town's economic viability.

In recent years, UB has created a number of regional economic outreach programs and partnerships, many of which fall under the umbrella of the UB Business Alliance. The stated purpose of the Alliance is to "facilitate the linkage of business needs to university resources, expertise, and technology in an expeditious and responsive manner." These activities include a technology incubator facility, a technology transfer program, workforce development programs, and a business referral service. Through this program, a number of start-up companies have tapped into the University's resources in order to get off the ground, and several of these companies have located in Amherst's business parks. Since the Amherst Industrial Development Agency (IDA) is an active partner with UB through the Business Alliance, participating businesses are aware of available buildings and land in business parks located near the campus of UB.

It is evident that UB is a major economic asset for the Town of Amherst. Section 6.10 describes initiatives designed to leverage the economic development potential of colleges and universities in other communities around the country.

6.6 ECONOMIC STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with key economic development and real estate leaders in Amherst. Each interview was conducted in a private, one-on-one session. The 12 people interviewed included town officials, economic development professionals, residential and commercial developers and brokers, users of industrial and office space, senior housing/social service providers, and the University at Buffalo. The thrust of these interviews was to gauge overall impressions about Amherst, to determine the level of satisfaction with Amherst as a business environment, and to examine what can be done through the Comprehensive Plan to foster continued economic prosperity in the Town.

Generally speaking, economic stakeholders feel that Amherst is still the prime location to do business in Western New York, offering attractive space, a strong labor market, affordable rents, and a safe environment. However, the region on the whole suffers from relative economic stagnation, as Amherst's real competition does not come from Buffalo or Clarence, but rather from Charlotte, Atlanta, and other booming Sunbelt markets.

Stakeholders also identify parochialism and governmental duplication in Western New York as issues for Amherst's business environment.

The paragraphs below summarize key points made by economic development and real estate stakeholders.

Amherst is the bright spot in a weak regional economy. Amherst's population and tax base have remained strong during the past 20 years when most other communities in Western New York have experienced losses. The unfortunate truth is that growth in a stagnant area is a zero-sum game, where one town's successes come at the expense of another, and Amherst has clearly been the winner in the region. One key to Amherst's success has been the coordinated efforts of the Amherst Industrial Development Authority's (IDA) business parks and tax abatements. Over 29,000 people work in Amherst's business parks today. Its residential and retail bases also remain among the strongest in the region, as Amherst continues to be the most desirable address for white-collar professionals.

Western New York finds it difficult to compete nationally. Western New York is at a disadvantage when competing with other parts of the country and largely missed out on the economic boom of the 1990s. One reason is its large tax burden, which is a function of the preponderance of independent town governments (which duplicate municipal services) and high infrastructure costs. In addition to the number of independent jurisdictions, two factors contribute to the region's high infrastructure maintenance costs. First, the region's infrastructure was built for a larger population than exists today. Second, older infrastructure costs more to maintain than newer infrastructure and often mandates capital investments to ensure its continued operation.

Another of Western New York's competitive disadvantages is that the development review processes in the area tend to be more rigorous and political than in growing areas, which discourages new investment. A sign of the region's inability to compete is that only in the last couple of years as unemployment has reached historic lows in other parts of the country have firms come to Western New York looking for labor.

Buffalo has many hidden strengths. Although the Buffalo area has been suffering for many years, it has many strengths upon which future economic development initiatives should capitalize. The region has a tremendous variety of cultural and recreational opportunities, its overall cost of living is very low (despite its high taxes), it has strong communities, labor costs to businesses are cheap, and people have a strong work ethic. The Buffalo region needs to do more to remind former residents that they left behind many things when they relocated to the Sunbelt, especially as the quality of life declines in newer, Southern cities.

The regional economy is overly dependent on low-wage jobs. The bulk of the recent economic growth in Western New York has been in back-office environments like call centers. While these jobs have created new opportunities for the middle-class, it becomes very difficult for people to move up without leaving the area. Graduates of local colleges have few opportunities for professional jobs and the vast majority leave the area after

graduating. Even when higher-level jobs become available, the local labor pool is very small, and companies must look outside the area.

Town-gown relations must be more clearly defined. While most everyone agrees that relations between the Town and the University are improving, the future direction of this relationship is unclear. Some stakeholders feel that Amherst should be more of a university town and others feel that it is simply a town with a university in it. The University sees itself as a resource for the whole region, so that its location in Amherst does not compel it to provide special treatment to a town that is already in better shape than much of the rest of the region. However, it does realize the importance of strengthening Eggertsville and other neighborhoods around its South Campus. The University also wishes to use its land assets in Amherst and Buffalo to create economic development opportunities. The Town must engage the University more and develop clear policies for town-gown relations in order to make more effective use of its valuable resources.

IDA tax abatements are a double-edged sword. The property tax abatements offered by the Amherst IDA have been successful at attracting and retaining new office and industrial users for the past two decades, but their effects have not been universally positive. The typical observed pattern is that a firm will move into a tax-abated facility, then will leave 10 years later when the abatements end and move into a new tax-abated facility. As old buildings lose their tax abatements, landlords request the Town to lower their assessments, as they can no longer achieve the rents they once could with the abatements. The long-term result is an oversupply of Class B space, which cuts into the Town's commercial tax base as rents decline. Many stakeholders would like to see the IDA shift its activities from new development to redevelopment programs, which it has already begun to do.

The local housing market could be stronger. Although Amherst remains a prime residential location within the Western New York region, its housing market is showing signs of weakening, particularly in its older areas. Home values all over the town have flattened, even in higher-end areas like Williamsville. One problem cited has been that the Williamsville School District spills into Clarence, and that many homebuyers have chosen to enjoy Clarence's lower tax environment while still sending their children to Williamsville schools. In fact, the portion of Clarence in the Williamsville district has seen healthy increases in home value while the Amherst portion's values have remained flat.

The multifamily and senior housing markets are particularly difficult. Amherst's status as a premier residential community in the region makes it more expensive than its neighboring towns, which has made the markets for multifamily and senior housing difficult despite the amount of new construction in recent years. While new housing construction is frequently perceived as a sign of a strong market, that is not always the case. In Amherst, the construction of new apartment units has been strong, but these new units have caused overall unit occupancy to fall in the market, an indication that the success of these new units is occurring at the expense of older multi-family properties. The multifamily market has been adversely affected by three factors: lower home values have led many former renters to buy in Amherst, extremely high tenant turnover has made it difficult to keep units filled, and higher commercial land values in Amherst necessitate higher rents than in neighboring towns like Cheektowaga. The end result has been a decline in occupancy and rents in

Amherst's apartment communities. The senior housing community is hindered by the fact that providing senior housing is expensive, and rents must be kept high. Since a high percentage of seniors in the Buffalo area simply cannot afford expensive assisted living or nursing home accommodations, such projects have not been as financially successful as in other metropolitan areas.

6.7 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE AMHERST AND WESTERN NEW YORK ECONOMIES

As a way to synthesize qualitative and quantitative information about Amherst and Western New York, a list was assembled of the strengths and weaknesses of the local and regional economies. The purpose of this list is to help gauge future prospects for economic health. Identification of the strengths and weaknesses began with a review of the regional and local demographic and economic trends discussed in Chapter 5.0 and earlier in this chapter. This exercise also drew upon comments shared with the consultant team during the "stakeholder interviews," as well as the consultant team's observations from field studies in Amherst.

6.7.1 Strengths of the Amherst and Western New York Economies

- Amherst has a strong white-collar labor market. Interviews with local white-collar employers indicate that many prospective employers in Western New York seek a location in Amherst to tap into this market.
- The Amherst IDA's incentive programs have been extremely successful at both attracting tenants to Amherst and retaining them for the long-term, with nearly 30,000 employees working in Amherst industrial and office parks in 2000, compared with just 12,400 in 1991.
- For small, growing firms, the high cost of doing business in Western New York can be a deterrent. Amherst is a regional leader in catering to growing businesses, as evidenced by the IDA's willingness to provide tax incentives to small businesses.
- The commercial building stock in Amherst is better suited to the needs of today's office users. Its business parks offer large floor plates, ample free parking, and easy road access. Older commercial buildings in Buffalo cannot provide the same amenities as business parks in Amherst.
- Amherst is no longer a bedroom suburb of Buffalo. Over the past 30 years, it has evolved into a key employment center and it is one of Western New York's premier business addresses. In 1970, Amherst had 93,929 residents and 33,300 jobs. From 1970 to 1990, Amherst's population only grew by 19% to 111,711, but its employment base expanded by 111% to 70,300 jobs.
- Amherst has been one of the few communities in Western New York with an increasing employment base over the past two decades. From 1980 to 1990, the region's net gain in employment was 45,000 jobs and Amherst's net gain was 31,500. As a result Amherst accounted for 70 percent of regional job growth during that decade.
- For a region of its size, Western New York offers tremendous cultural and recreational opportunities, and its housing is very affordable. For many people seeking a lower-cost

lifestyle without sacrificing the advantages of a larger urban center, the Buffalo area provides a good alternative.

- Taxes are perceived to be high in Amherst, but the Town's residents feel that they get their money's worth. Property taxes are higher per $1,000 of value in Amherst than in some neighboring communities, but the Town's residents and businesses interviewed by the consulting team expressed satisfaction with the services they receive from the Town in return for their taxes. Residents particularly appreciate the Town's recreational programs, public safety, and general infrastructure maintenance.
- The University at Buffalo is the flagship of the SUNY system and provides an outstanding resource for Amherst and the region. As the University continues to grow in both size and reputation, Amherst can benefit from its presence. The University's role in creating the State of the Region document provides evidence of its commitment to the region's future.[3]

6.7.2 Weaknesses of the Amherst and Western New York Economies

- For many residents and businesses, real competition for Amherst does not come from other towns in Western New York but rather from outside the State. In addition to climactic differences and rapid employment growth in Sunbelt states, other northern states such as Ohio and Pennsylvania offer a more favorable tax environment than does New York. According to Regional Financial Associates' 1997 Relative Cost of Doing Business Index, the cost of doing business in the Buffalo-Niagara region exceeds the national average. In particular, Buffalo is burdened by higher taxes, as it ranks fifth out of over 100 metropolitan areas in terms of tax burden.
- The overlap of governmental jurisdictions in Western New York makes taxes higher than in other parts of the country. Between 1982 and 1997, as reported by the New York State Comptroller's Special Report on Municipal Affairs (and quoted in the State of the Region report), town governments in Western New York have been increasing spending at a rate far above the inflation rate and also far above the rate of spending increases in towns across the State. According to the Special Report, inefficiencies have resulted largely from increasing costs in rising public school spending. Such inefficiencies have been more pronounced in towns than in counties, villages, and particularly cities; of the four types of governments, cities have been the most efficient.
- Much of the employment growth in the region has been in low-wage, back-office jobs at companies with headquarters in other cities. As a result, the level of opportunity for professionals in Western New York is limited and many people need to move away in order to move up. This stagnation is evident from weekly earnings data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, which show that real earnings (adjusted for inflation) decreased by nearly 10 percent in Western New York from 1977 to 1997. Over the same period, real earnings statewide increased by nearly 16%.
- Although the presence of the University at Buffalo provides Amherst with a reliable and growing economic engine, some working relationships between the Town and UB could

[3] "State of the Region: Performance Indicators for the Buffalo-Niagara Region in the 21st Century," Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth, University at Buffalo, 1999

improve. Stakeholder interviews revealed that both the Town and the University would like the other to become more proactive in fostering town-gown cooperation.

- Many older areas in Amherst have experienced erosion in housing values and commercial character. Although these areas have not really experienced the sort of deterioration seen in Buffalo, there is a popular perception that they are areas in decline.

6.8 EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

This section presents employment projections developed by Planning Analysis Area (PAA) for the Town of Amherst through 2020. This analysis drew upon various sources of data concerning historic employment estimates and future projections in order to determine expected employment figures for each five-year period from 2000 to 2020. Supporting statistical information is included in Tables 6-3 through 6-8 in the Appendix.

6.8.1 Existing Sources

Three existing sources of employment estimates or projections for the Buffalo-Niagara MSA were consulted:

- Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC)
- Woods & Poole Economics
- New York State Department of Labor

Employment estimates for 1999 from these three sources are shown in Table 6-3. Employment forecasts by GBNRTC through 2020 are shown in Table 6-4.

A. Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council

The most reliable local area employment projections for Amherst are the transportation analysis zone (TAZ) figures projected by GBNRTC for its 2020 regional transportation plan. The GBNRTC study subdivides employment into four major categories: manufacturing, retail, wholesale, and all other. These categories are useful for a comprehensive plan as each category largely represents a need for a different type of commercial space: manufacturing jobs require factories, retail jobs require retail space, wholesale jobs require warehouses, and all other jobs require office space. By projecting employment by these four category types, the results can be easily adapted to project future demand for different types of commercial space.

According to the GBNRTC projections, the Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) will add a net total of 54,000 new jobs during the 1990-2020 period, a net increase of 8.5 percent (Table 6-4). The Town of Amherst is projected to post a net job gain of 22,000 jobs, an increase of 30.9 percent. According to these projections, Amherst will account for 40 percent of regional growth despite only having 11 percent of the region's total jobs in 1990.

Within Amherst, employment is projected to increase in all six PAAs by 2020, with PAAs 6 and 1 expected to add the largest numbers of jobs (approximately 6,000 and 5,000, respectively). PAA 2, with only 746 jobs in 1990, is projected to grow the fastest in terms of percentage, with a 300% increase projected. Although PAA 5 is projected to add about 3,100 jobs (the third largest numeric increase), it is expected to experience the smallest percentage increase (13.6%) over the 20-year period because of its relatively large existing employment base.

B. Woods & Poole Economics

Each year, Woods & Poole Economics produces the Complete Economic and Demographic Data Source (CEDDS). CEDDS includes historical data, current estimates and projections to 2025 for every county, metropolitan area, and state in the nation. Data in CEDDS include population, employment by industry, income, age, race, retail spending, and other key economic indicators. As a thorough, national data source, CEDDS is very useful for establishing baselines to compare with information from local and state sources like GBNRTC and the New York State Department of Labor.

C. New York State Department of Labor

The New York State Department of Labor produces annual estimates for employment by industry for each county and MSA in the state. In order to characterize regional employment trends for 1990 to 1999, data was assembled from these estimates for Erie and Niagara Counties, the two counties that comprise the Buffalo-Niagara MSA. According to these figures, Erie County added over 7,000 jobs between 1990 and 1999, but this increase was offset by a loss of about 5,000 jobs from Niagara County (Table 6-3). As a result, the entire region's growth during the decade was just 1,800 jobs, or a net change of less than one-half of one percent.

Among the four employment classifications, both Erie County and the Buffalo-Niagara MSA posted losses in manufacturing and retail jobs, but made gains in the wholesale and all other categories. In total, the region lost 11,000 manufacturing jobs and nearly 8,000 retail jobs but gained over 20,000 jobs in all other categories, mainly in the services sector.

6.8.2 Procedure Used to Develop Projections

The general approach to estimating and projecting employment by type and Planning Analysis Area (PAA) for the Town of Amherst was to use the GBNRTC's projections as a means of allocating growth by PAA, followed by an adjustment based on other estimates and projections of regional growth. The first step in the process was to lay out the projected annual 1990-2020 growth rates by PAA according to GBNRTC. These projections serve as a starting point that was subsequently adjusted based on other data. GBNRTC's employment growth rate projections for Amherst by PAA and major employment type are shown in Table 6-5 under the heading "1990-2020 Annual Growth Rates by Employment Type, GBNRTC Figures."

Starting with these allocations, the next step was to adjust the overall employment figures for the Town based on the comparison of GBNRTC's region-wide projections with the New

York State Department of Labor's (NYSDOL) 1990-1999 regional estimates and Woods & Poole Economics' (W&P) 2000-2020 regional forecasts. This comparison is shown in Table 6-5 under the heading "Comparison of Regional Growth Rates."

The comparison shows that the region's actual job growth from 1990 to 1999 lagged well behind the forecasts made by GBNRTC for that period except in the all Other Employment category, which is largely driven by services employment. However, over the 2000 to 2020 period, Woods & Poole's forecasts predict that employment in the region will grow by 0.8 percent annually, more than twice the rate expressed by GBNRTC. In this longer view, the All Other Employment category will grow much faster than projected by GBNRTC.

The next step was to take these figures and adjust the GBNRTC projections for each PAA based upon them. For the 1990-2000 period, district and town growth allocations were adjusted by comparing GBNRTC's regional projections with actual figures from New York State. For the overall 1990-2020 period, GBNRTC's projections were adjusted by doing the same with Woods & Poole's regional totals. The resulting growth rates are shown in Table 6-5 under the headings "1990-2000 Annual Growth Rates, Adjusted for NY State Dept. of Labor Estimates" and "2000-2020 Annual Growth Rates, Adjusted for Woods & Poole/NY State Department of Labor Figures."

The next step was to apply these growth rates to the 1990 employment baselines for each PAA. For the 1990 to 2000 period, this provided a 2000 estimate of employment. For the 2000 to 2020 period, projections were segmented in five-year groupings in order to show the pace of growth during the 20-year period. The end results are shown in Table 6-6.

6.8.3 Results of Employment Projections

(Refer to Tables 6-6 to 6-8 in the Appendix.)

The 2000 employment estimates show that the Town of Amherst added about 5,300 new jobs from 1990 to 2000, a 7.6 percent increase. The result is a 2000 employment base of 75,600 jobs in the Town. During the 1990s, employment increased in all six PAAs, with the strongest growth coming in PAA 6 (1,700 new jobs), PAA 1 (1,200 new jobs), and PAA 3 (1,000 new jobs). PAA 5, which contains the most jobs (23,600), grew the least during the 1990s, increasing by just 1.9 percent. In percentage terms, PAA 2 grew the most at 44 percent, but its job base in 1990 was small (746). Thus its employment increase in the 1990s was just 329 jobs.

Employment projections show a net town-wide increase of 28,000 jobs over the next 20 years, an average of 1,400 new jobs per year. Employment is projected to increase in all of Amherst's PAAs to some degree. PAAs 1 and 2 in the northern part of the Town are projected to experience the biggest increases, a collective growth rate of 68 percent over the next 20 years. The "All Other Employment" classification, which is assumed to primarily include office employment, is projected to grow the fastest, with an increase of 47 percent. Each PAA's projected percentage of the total number of new jobs created in the Town over the next 20 years is shown in Figure 11.

Employment is projected to grow in the other categories as well, but not by as much. Manufacturing employment in Amherst is projected to post an increase of about 500 jobs from 2000 to 2020. However, employment in this category is expected to decline in five of the six PAAs. Only PAA 2 is projected to gain Manufacturing jobs, with about 700 new jobs (14.6 percent gain) expected due to the availability of industrially zoned land. Retail is expected to be the slowest growing sector in the Town, with just a 12 percent gain from 2000 to 2020. This relatively slow increase is largely due to PAAs 5 and 6, where virtually no retail jobs are projected to be added. The four other PAAs are all projected to post significant gains in the Retail sector, particularly PAA 2. Wholesale, the smallest sector in 2000, is projected to grow by 35 percent and surpass Manufacturing by 2010.

Total Forecasted Change in Employment by Planning Analysis Area, 2000-2020

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	TOTAL
Manufacturing	(56)	697	(15)	(5)	(50)	(56)	516
Retail	445	483	347	429	328	2	2,034
Wholesale	259	16	37	259	240	293	1,103
All Other Employment	4,861	786	3,765	2,355	4,533	8,266	24,566
Total Employment	5,508	1,982	4,133	3,038	5,052	8,506	28,220

Source: Economics Research Associates

6.9 COMMERCIAL LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Following the completion of employment projections by Planning Analysis Area (PAA) for the Town of Amherst, projections were completed to measure the amount of commercial acreage that could potentially be developed to meet the projected demand. This section describes the methodology used in this analysis and then summarizes the results. Supporting statistical information is included at the end of the chapter in Tables 6-9 to 6-11. A comparison of the projections to the current supply of vacant, unconstrained land zoned for commercial use is contained in Chapter 3.

6.9.1 Procedure Used to Develop Projections

The exercise of translating employment forecasts into land development forecasts involved two steps. First, jobs were translated into building square feet by establishing the expected ratio of square feet per employee for each of the four employment categories. Second, building square feet were translated into developed acreage by establishing a typical Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for each of the four categories.

FAR is a measure of development density representing the relationship between the built square footage of a building and the square footage of its site. A hypothetical four-story building with floor plates of 15,000 square feet built on a two-acre (87,120 SF) lot illustrates

the derivation of FAR. The building's total square footage is 60,000 SF, so its FAR is 0.689. Although this building's ground-level footprint only takes up 17 percent of the total lot area, its development density as measured by FAR is 69 percent of the lot area.

In order to establish baseline measurements for both square feet per employee and development density in FAR, national best practices as documented by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) were reviewed. As a national research organization supported by the real estate development community, ULI provides current and accurate information with regard to these and other figures related to new commercial development. The following assumptions were used regarding these two sets of key inputs for each of the four employment categories used in the projections:

Square Feet per Employee and FAR Assumptions

Category	Square Feet/Employee	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
Manufacturing	500	0.18
Retail	400	0.25
Wholesale	750	0.20
All Other Employment	200	0.40

Source: Urban Land Institute, Economics Research Associates

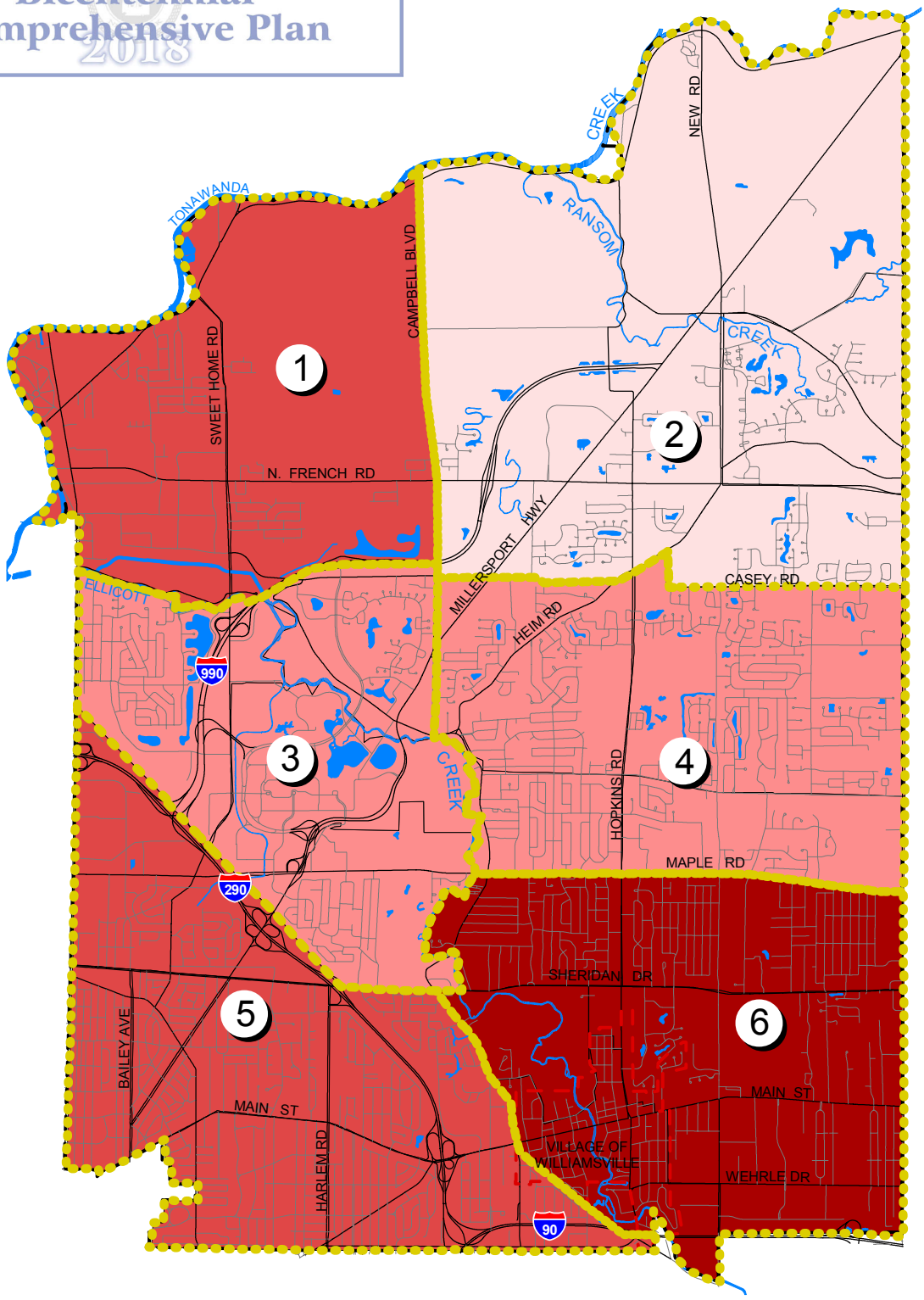
For the "All Other Employment" category, it was assumed that the vast majority of jobs would fall under the umbrella of office employment and therefore typical measurements for office development were used for this category.

Once these key inputs were established, the remainder of the exercise of projecting land development involved applying these inputs to the previously completed employment projections by type for Amherst's six PAAs. The starting point for this analysis was to document the change in employment for each five-year interval between 2000 and 2020. From the employment projections in Section 6.8, it was established that the total level of employment in Amherst is expected to grow by about 37 percent over the next two decades, from 75,600 to 103,800.

The next step was to multiply the figures from the previous table by the square foot per employee factors in order to calculate the total projected built square footage by five-year increment. The results of this step are shown in Table 6-10.

Finally, the square footage figures were multiplied by the assumed FAR figures in order to calculate total projected developed land, as show in Table 6-11. It should be noted that these calculations do not account for the fact that some new commercial construction may represent the redevelopment of existing commercial space, and may therefore overestimate the amount of land needed for future development.

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan 1818 2018



Projected New Jobs, 2000-2020

FIGURE 11

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

Percentage of New Jobs by Planning Analysis Area

- 0% - 10%
- 11% - 15%
- 16% - 20%
- > 20%

- 1 Planning Analysis Area
- Planning Analysis Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Planning Analysis Area Employment Data provided by Economic Research Associates (based on 2000 Census Tract boundaries)

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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6.9.2 Results of Commercial Land Use Projections

(Refer to Tables 6-9 and 6-10 in the Appendix.)

Projections suggest that slightly less than seven million new square feet of commercial space will be built in the Town of Amherst over the next 20 years, an average of 345,000 square feet per year. Of this total, 5.1 percent is projected to be manufacturing space, 11.8 percent retail space, 12.0 percent wholesale space, and the remaining 71.2 percent all other employment, primarily office space.

The only PAA projected to have any new manufacturing space constructed is PAA 2, the northeastern corner of the Town. Retail development is projected to be distributed fairly evenly among PAAs 1 to 5, with PAA 6, the Town's southeast corner, receiving almost no new retail space. New wholesale space is projected largely for PAAs 1, 4, 5, and 6. For All Other Employment, PAA 6 is projected for the most space, with PAAs 1, 3, and 5 all gaining substantially as well. Overall, PAA 6 is expected to see the largest amount of commercial construction over the next 20 years.

Translating building square footages to acreage, the projected amount of commercial development will require the development of about 496 acres throughout the Town of Amherst over the next 20 years. Since All Other Employment is the densest type of development from the perspective of "jobs/square feet," it will only account for 57 percent of the land needed despite representing over 70 percent of the square footage. Wholesale development will take up 19.1 percent of the land, with Retail at 15.1 percent, and Manufacturing at 8.9 percent.

As a note, the projected amount of commercial land developed does not account for the prospect that some level of new development could occur on land that is already developed. For example, PAA 5 contains a number of aging retail developments that could be ripe for redevelopment into office or mixed-use projects. Therefore the 85 acres of land projected for development in this PAA may include some land that is already developed, and would not require developing any vacant land in a largely built-out area.

6.10 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN OTHER UNIVERSITY COMMUNITIES

Colleges and universities represent stable institutions with long-term financial and psychological commitments to their particular locales. In recent years, institutions of higher learning all over the country have come to realize that the attractiveness and economic health of their surrounding communities play a large role in their ability to remain competitive. As such, many academic institutions have attempted to leverage their resources to help with economic development in their communities.

Such "town-gown" outreach programs have been established by colleges and universities of all sizes and in all types of locations. Activities carried out by these programs include community development, incubator and research and development (R&D) services, and real

estate development. The type and scale of community intervention undertaken by a university depends heavily on its size, resources, and location. Amherst contains or borders on several different college campuses of differing size and orientation, including the moderately sized urban South Campus of the University at Buffalo (UB), the small urban campus of Daemen College, the larger suburban North Campus of UB, and Erie Community College.

Since each campus in Amherst has a disparate level of resources, and the character of the areas around each campus is slightly different, the types and levels of economic development programs that can be undertaken will be unique in each situation. As a result, this section provides a brief summary of several different types of economic development programs involving colleges and universities. In all cases, the initiatives required the backing of the local governmental jurisdiction involved, as well as local neighborhood or business organizations. These case studies can therefore provide useful insight for the formulation of economic development policy recommendations to be made in the Town of Amherst's Comprehensive Plan.

6.10.1 Community Development Examples

Community Development initiatives undertaken by universities include those aimed at stabilizing housing, creating retail opportunities, providing policing and other outreach, offering job training opportunities, and providing access to capital for reinvestment. UB already is involved with these sorts of activities in neighborhoods near the South Campus, through the University Community Initiative (UCI). However, the UCI is mainly concentrated on neighborhoods in the City of Buffalo at this time, with less priority on surrounding areas of Amherst like Eggertsville and Harlem/ Kensington/Wehrle.

As further background, the following text describes community development programs undertaken by other universities in a variety of contexts.

A. Trinity College, Hartford, CT

Trinity College initiated a $175 million neighborhood revitalization program for the surrounding community, with programs including housing rehabilitation, homeownership assistance, streetscape improvements, job training, recreation, and family services. The project will ultimately include three schools, one of which will contain a pediatric health clinic. The project is a joint venture between the College and the Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (which includes Hartford Hospital, Connecticut Children's Medical Center, the Institute of Living, and Connecticut Public Television and Radio), with financial support from the State of Connecticut, the City of Hartford, the federal government, corporations and foundations, and local residents and community organizations. A total of over $100 million has been committed, including $79 million in state funding, $6.75 million from the City of Hartford, $1.8 million from the federal government, $10 million from the Alliance members, and just over $5 million from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

B. Lafayette College, Easton, PA

Lafayette College is currently in the process of planning a redevelopment strategy for a portion of the Third Street corridor in downtown Easton. The project was initiated by the College's decision to purchase and renovate a building located along 3rd Street in downtown Easton (in effect, the gateway to the College). The building will serve as an arts center for the College and the community, with small-scale ancillary uses including residential, office and retail. A strategy has been outlined whereby the first phase of the project is envisioned as an "expenditure" by the College to improve the environment for the short-term and enhance prospects for long-term development. The first phase would include acquisition of key parcels and demolition of two buildings located over the Bushkill Creek so as to provide an enhanced waterfront amenity. The second phase could include recruitment of a developer partner for targeted adaptive-reuse projects along both the east and west sides of Third Street.

C. Duke University, Durham, NC

In an effort to help stabilize the general residential environment around its campus, Duke University undertook the development of a 36-unit faculty housing complex, containing 21 houses and 15 townhouses. The project will provide attractive housing options for staff and faculty wanting to live near the campus. The houses are being developed on University-owned land by a designated developer. Through a special agreement, the developer has also been allowed to use the Duke's property as collateral for construction loans. To ensure staff and faculty occupancy, a covenant has been attached to the development that it must be occupied by and resold to faculty or staff of Duke University. A local bank will provide a preferred loan program for the buyers of these houses.

D. Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI

Acknowledging a relationship between its declining enrollment and increased crime and blight in its peripheral neighborhoods, Marquette University decided to become involved in the revitalization of the area. The University created two non-profit corporations, one for residential and the other for commercial development. A study of the neighborhoods, where many students live, found that 75% of property owners in the area were absentee landlords, and many of the housing units had fallen into disrepair. The study also found that many basic services were lacking. The revitalization strategy therefore concentrated on stabilizing ownership, as the nonprofit corporation purchased over 400 housing units, renovated them, and sold them to new buyers. Many renovated units are set aside for low-to-moderate families, as a way to avoid gentrification and dislocation of working-class residents. In addition, the program has improved over 1,100 apartment units and spearheaded the development of an 88,000 square-foot retail center.

6.10.2 Incubator and R&D Examples

Many large research universities have established a strong off-campus presence in order to encourage the growth of fledgling companies and to provide valuable research for transfer to entrepreneurs. UB has certainly made strides in this area, with its incubator facility and increasing commitment to the business community in Western New York. From Amherst's perspective, though, the Town would like to see these efforts result in greater benefits to the

area around the North Campus, where R&D activities were planned to be concentrated. The following text provides examples of other such efforts.

A. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Cornell University has developed a 20-building office park near the Ithaca airport, where it built and manages five properties and ground-leases land for 15 others that were built by private developers or individual corporations. The goal of this investment was not to provide the school with the best return on investment, but to instigate economic development in Ithaca and Tompkins County and to provide development space for spin-off technologies from the University. While the sale of the land would have provided more revenue to the University, it considers the project to be a long-term investment in the community, not a short-term real estate deal. However, the development is monetarily self-sufficient, and the University feels that the office park development is at least financially solvent, if not lucrative. The development was originally funded by borrowing funds from the Cornell short-term investment pool, and was later refinanced through a $7 million loan from Sallie Mae.

B. Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA

Indiana University of Pennsylvania purchased an old warehouse building on a site adjacent to the campus. After considering adapting the building for its own office needs, the University decided instead to convert the building into an incubator facility, aimed at creating employment opportunities in an economically depressed county. The rehabilitation work was completed by a builder/contractor (selected through a competitive bidding process) at a relatively low cost. Project funding came from a private donor and University funds. Although the project has proven to be successful, Indiana University decided that any future projects of this nature would be new construction, which it feels would be more economical than rehabilitating an existing building. Going into this project, the University had a back-up plan: if the incubator space had not been successful, the building would have been used for University offices.

C. University of Illinois, Champaign, IL

The University of Illinois is developing a 37-acre research park, planned to contain 1,150,000 square feet of office/research space for high tech firms. These firms will be able to use the University research facilities on a cost share basis. As with New York State, land in Illinois belonging to a public university is considered to be outside the City's jurisdiction and therefore is not subject to property taxes or zoning restrictions. For this reason, the University has agreed to let the City of Champaign annex the land. Although the land will remain in the ownership of the University, by annexing the land the City of Champaign will be able to collect property tax on it and offer its financial incentives. Several research units of technology firms expressed interest in occupying this space prior to construction, creating pre-leasing potential and considerable developer interest.

D. Fraunhofer USA Research Parks, Six Locations

Fraunhofer USA is a subsidiary of the Fraunhofer-Geselschaft, Germany's leading organization for applied research in advanced technologies, which receives substantial financial support from the German government. Fraunhofer USA operates specialized research centers affiliated with (and located near) universities, including Boston University,

the University of Maryland, the University of Delaware, and the University of Michigan. Each center has a unique research focus; for example, the Boston facility is aimed at manufacturing innovation and the Maryland facility concentrates on experimental software engineering. Fraunhofer's mission is to help universities develop new technologies and market them to industries that will bring these technologies to the marketplace. The Boston Center employs its own professional engineering staff in addition to student researchers. Funding is derived largely from contracts with private industry, with only about 10 to 15 percent of the budget coming from the Foundation's coffers. Each center has strong involvement from university faculty, and the proximity to faculty has been a key to Fraunhofer's success.

6.10.3 Real Estate Development Examples

While many of the colleges and universities involved with community development and incubator/R&D facilities have partnered with real estate developers, several academic institutions have taken the next step and acted as their own developers, owning and/or managing off-campus properties. This strategy has proven effective in many cases where resources did not exist in communities, or where no developer was willing to take on the financial risk of an innovative project. The text below describes how several colleges and universities have effectively involved themselves with off-campus real estate development.

A. University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

Looking to add a high-profile mixed-use development to its neighborhood while helping to shed its image as the proverbial "ivory tower" in low-to-middle class West Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania decided to develop Sansom Common in 1997. Sansom Common is a mixed-use development that includes a major retail component anchored by a 55,000 square-foot bookstore, a hotel to serve the university community, and dormitories for students. The project was managed directly by the university, with assistance from a for-profit realty corporation created by the University many years earlier. The University then hired a private developer to oversee the construction of the building, but Penn will retain ownership after completion. Penn turned down City of Philadelphia economic incentives that would have required housing set-asides, as it felt that the project's costs were market-supportable. Despite the absence of incentives, Sansom Common is having positive effects on West Philadelphia, as the University has voluntarily earmarked 140 of the estimated 435 on-site jobs for minority and/or female residents of nearby neighborhoods. Furthermore, the presence of the first large, modern retail development in West Philadelphia provides local residents with access to goods and services that were previously lacking.

B. Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

Over the years, Dartmouth College has undertaken a number of real estate projects under a variety of arrangements. Its earliest projects were conducted through a for-profit development corporation created by the College that legally separated the school from the income source. Subsequently, the college partnered with a private developer to build an off-campus office park, but found that the developer's focus on short-term financial returns made it an unsuitable partner, and the college bought out the partner. Today, Dartmouth's real estate investment philosophy is that achieving a strategic objective for the College is the

first priority, and takes precedence over economic/financial returns. As a result investment returns on Dartmouth-developed office properties have averaged about 10 percent (acceptable for a non-profit, but well below the 14-18 percent usually sought by private developers). Its retail properties in downtown Hanover have fared better, with returns as high as 35 percent. As a long-term strategy, the college has decided to invest 2 percent of its endowment on real estate projects in Hanover, with the intent being for Dartmouth to develop future projects without outside partners.

C. Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA

Franklin & Marshall College created an independent, for-profit company called John Marshall Investment Corporation to invest in retail development with an outside developer. The College was the sole shareholder and the company's goal was to build and manage a retail center across from the campus. The original development scheme, involving the outside developer, fell through, but the college decided to pursue the center independently because of the amount of capital already invested in the project. According to Franklin and Marshall, the developer could not provide the necessary share of funding for the investment and was subsequently excluded from the deal. The retail center houses a first floor of student-focused retail and restaurants while the second floor contains college offices, the night school, and the campus bookstore. Project financing was provided by the college through its endowment. The college is currently in the process of disbanding the for-profit company. The college has managed the property through the school offices and the company's Board has not met in five years.

D. Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA

As a preemptive move aimed at stabilizing downtown South Hadley, Mount Holyoke College made the decision to purchase and develop a site adjacent to the college. The development was not viewed as a financial investment by the College, but as an investment in its future. A nonprofit corporation (owned solely by the college) was set up to manage the new development, and a construction management firm was retained to oversee the development process. The project includes roughly 100,000 square feet of space, including retail, office, and housing. Two surprises have occurred over time: stronger office demand than expected led to the conversion of a portion of the retail space into office use, and the residential component, thought to be too expensive for students, has been very successful in attracting them. The project is generating a positive cash flow, but the return is minimal, and the college will not likely develop another project in the future. At one point, Mount Holyoke considered selling the property, but it was ultimately decided that a new owner might not maintain the property up to the standards desired by the College.

6.10.4 Conclusions

The above case studies generally involve colleges and universities in central cities or smaller rural towns. UB's North Campus is fundamentally different from many of these examples, as it is a larger campus located in the suburbs of a major metropolitan area. While the other examples cited here are not exactly similar to UB, the lessons they offer are certainly relevant.

In terms of community development, the initiatives undertaken by educational institutions are applicable to other campuses, regardless of location. Although the multi-family housing near UB's campus is in the form of automobile-oriented apartment complexes, it poses issues similar to those experienced by town-gown communities in more urban areas, such as the condition of off-campus student housing and its effects on adjacent neighborhoods. Housing investment programs need not be limited to older urban areas, and the potential for decline of 1960s and 1970s-era neighborhoods is a growing concern all over the country.

Access to commercial services is another community development issue. While North Campus is located fairly close to the major retail uses in the vicinity of Boulevard Mall along Niagara Falls Boulevard, many students do not own cars and cannot easily get to these services. This problem could be addressed by adding retail goods and services on or closer to campus or by providing transit options like shuttle bus access or bicycle paths to these services.

Since UB still controls a substantial amount of undeveloped land near North Campus, the examples of Incubator and R&D developments provide perhaps the greatest opportunity for community and economic development. Such developments typically require two resources that are unique to public universities: land and capital. UB has already begun to leverage its resources for business incubation and technology transfer, and can continue to do so in the future, using the examples of Cornell, Indiana of PA, Illinois, and other universities.

The examples of real estate development cited in this section are as different as the four campuses in question are different. The examples range from urban (Penn) to suburban (F&M) to small town (Dartmouth and Mount Holyoke). In all cases, the point is that an academic institution took the initiative and acted as a real estate developer in order to provide building space that turns a profit and benefits both town and gown. While a public institution like UB may be limited in its ability to act in such a manner, these examples could be used as a model for establishing a nonprofit development corporation with UB as a supporting partner. Similarly, UB could orchestrate joint development arrangements with private developers on appropriate real estate projects around the edges of North Campus.

7.0 Transportation

Transportation affects the way communities function, determines the means by which people interact and move about, and enables economic development. The choices that Amherst and its citizens make about transportation affect both the viability and livability of the community as a whole. This chapter addresses the following components of the Town's transportation system: vehicular circulation, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, and public transportation. Much of the baseline data utilized in this section was derived from the Town of Amherst Traffic Study Final Summary Report prepared by Bergman Associates in 1997. This information was combined with current data provided by the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC).

7.1 VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

The Town of Amherst has a wide variety of highway classifications within the existing roadway network (Figure 12). Classification categories are assigned to highway segments based on transportation parameters such as number of lanes, pavement width, speed limit, function, and daily traffic characteristics. The Town utilizes GBNRTC determined highway classifications for most higher volume roadway segments, including interstate, principal, and minor arterial highways. However, some lower volume general and collector highway segments within the Town have been classified using the Town's standards.

In spite of ongoing transportation system improvements throughout the Town of Amherst at the state, county, and local levels, many traffic intersections are currently operating over capacity and are exhibiting low Levels Of Service (LOS) during weekday peak PM periods. The LOS is the best indicator of the operation of a roadway since it is a qualitative measure of a driver's comfort and safety perception as related to factors such as speed, travel time and delay, traffic interruptions, freedom to maneuver, driver frustration, comfort, convenience and safety. In this way, a measure of performance is determined for the periods when the roadways operate at their highest volume. LOS designations for uninterrupted flow facilities are defined as follows:

- LOS "A" represents free flow, where drivers are unaffected by others in the traffic stream.
- LOS "B" represents stable flow, however the presence of others in the traffic stream is noticeable.
- LOS "C" is in the limit of stable flow and maneuvering within the traffic flow requires significant vigilance.
- LOS "D" represents high density but stable flow. Freedom and speed to maneuver are highly restricted. This condition usually warrants improvement.
- LOS "E" represents operating levels at or near capacity. Comfort and convenience levels are very low, driver frustration is high and very long delays ensue.

- LOS "F" is used to define a breakdown of flow. The amount of traffic arriving at a point exceeds the amount departing and queues begin to form. Extreme delays are encountered.

For purposes of this study, 60 signalized intersections were selected as representative of the Town's traffic characteristics. Analysis of these intersections was performed for the peak PM period only, as the available transportation reports identify this period as exhibiting slightly lower LOS than the peak AM period. This situation is typical of an urban traffic system where peak AM traffic generally consists of commuters heading directly to their places of work. Alternatively, PM peak traffic encounters higher conflicts of flow, as commuters sometimes divert from their regular routes for purposes such as running errands, shopping, going to dinner, etc. In addition, the major development corridors within Amherst attract additional motorists for PM peak period entertainment activities including malls, movie theatres, bars/restaurants, etc., resulting in traffic not present in the AM period.

The existing intersection analysis has been simplified by categorizing the 60 intersections into the following three categories (Figure 13):

- GREEN represents LOS "C" or better conditions where stable flow exists.
- YELLOW represents LOS "D" high-density conditions that usually warrant improvement.
- RED represents LOS "E" or worse, conditions where traffic flows break down, delays are evident, and improvements are warranted.

Of the 60 intersections analyzed, 20 were found to function at LOS "E" or worse (RED) and a general pattern of sequential RED intersections revealed the following six "over capacity" traffic corridors where peak PM traffic flows break down regularly:

- Niagara Falls Boulevard from Willow Ridge to Tonawanda Creek Road
- Sweet Home Road from I-990 to North French Road
- Bailey Avenue/Ridge Lea Road from Niagara Falls Boulevard to Sheridan Drive
- Maple Road from Bailey Avenue to North Forest Road
- Main Street from Eggert Road to South Cayuga Road
- Transit Road from I-90 to Maple Road

The population and employment projections presented in Chapters 5.0 and 6.0 indicate a continued and fairly stable increase in housing units, which will generate additional traffic volumes in Planning Analysis Areas 3, 4 and 5. Of more significance for future traffic conditions is the projected increase in total employment town-wide, which will result in even lower operating levels of service, especially during peak periods.

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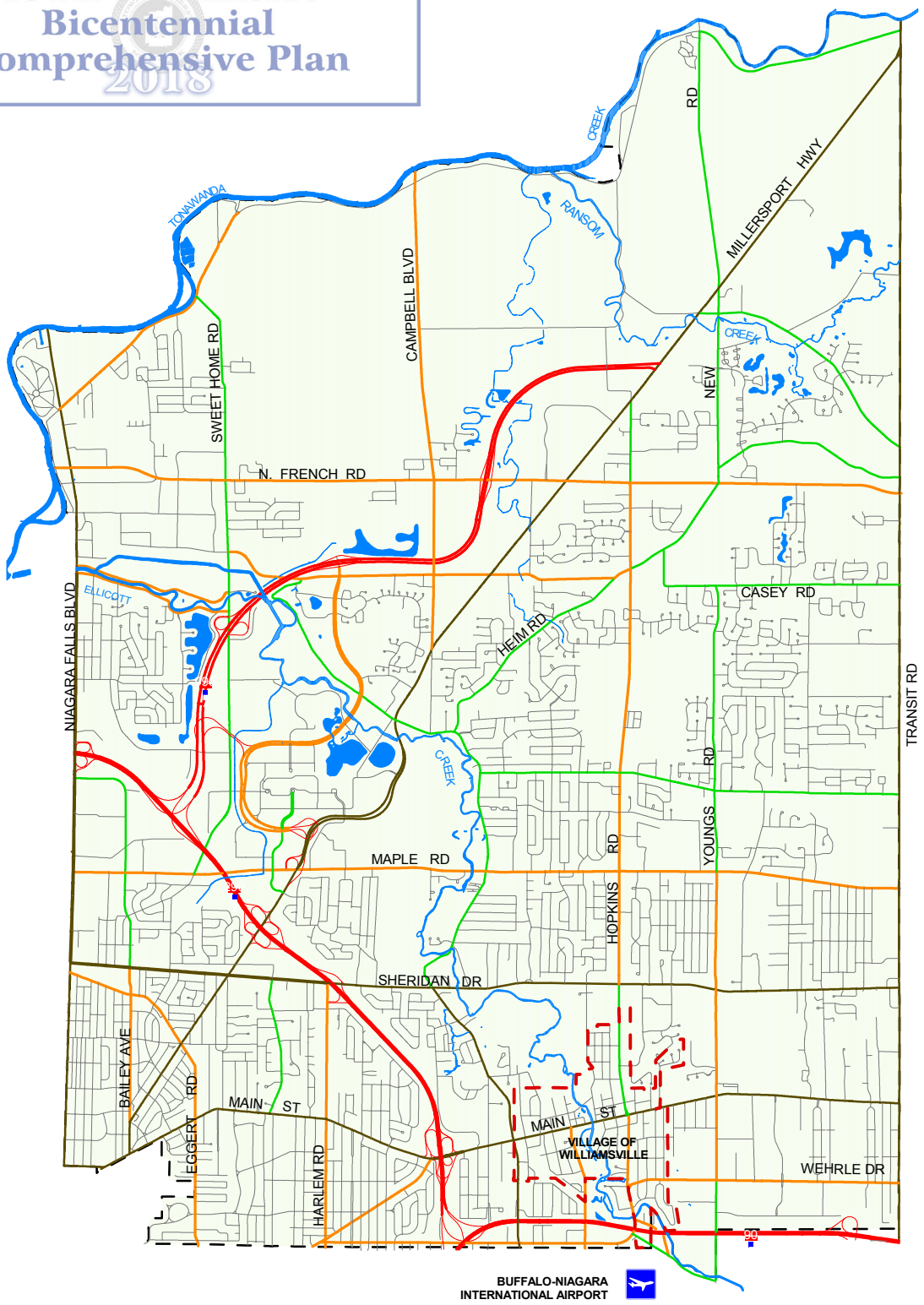

HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATION

FIGURE 12

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

CLASSIFICATION CODE

- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Local
- Ramp
- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council

New York State Department of Transportation

Map Compiled by URS Corporation

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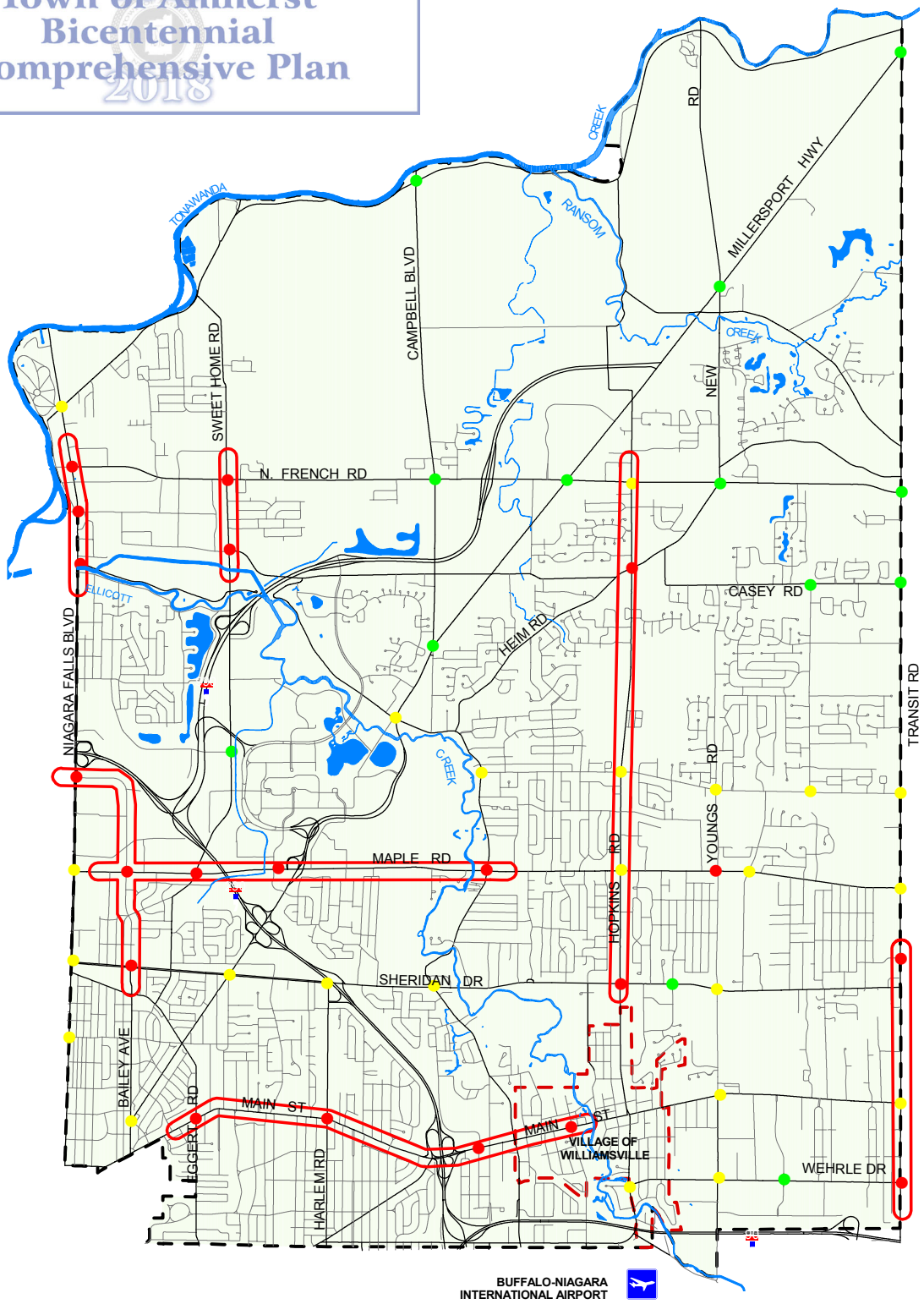
Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



EXISTING WEEKDAY P.M. PEAK PERIOD LEVEL OF SERVICE

FIGURE 13

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE

- Level of Service C or Better
- Level of Service D
- Level of Service E or Worse
- Poor Traffic Flow Corridor

ROADS

- County Road
- Interstate Route
- Local Road
- New York State Route
- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst, Engineering Department and Highway Department

Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council

Erie County Department of Public Works

New York State Department of Transportation

Map Compiled by URS Corporation

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In addition, the GBNRTC's 2025 Traffic Congestion Null Network[1] identifies numerous roadway segments within the Town that are projected to operate at LOS "E" or "F," including the following:

- North French Road from Campbell Boulevard to Transit Road
- East Robinson Road from Niagara Falls Boulevard to North French Road
- Transit Road from North French Road to Town Line
- Transit Road from Casey Road to Main Street
- Hopkins Road from North French Road to Dodge Road
- Hopkins Road from Klein Road to Maple Road
- Klein Road from Hopkins Road to Youngs Road
- Youngs Road from Klein Road to Main Street
- Main Street from I-290 to Transit Road

A number of highway reconstruction projects have been programmed for the next five years within the Town of Amherst, which will improve traffic flows. Proposed state, county, and local highway improvements projects include the following areas identified previously as "over capacity" traffic corridors:

- Sweet Home Road from Rensch Road to North French Road
- Niagara Falls Boulevard from I-290 to Ridge Lea
- Maple Road from Niagara Falls Boulevard to Millersport Highway
- Main Street from Youngs Road to Transit Road
- Transit Road from I-90 to Main Street

Other proposed state, county, and local highway improvement projects within the Town of Amherst include the following:

- Millersport Highway from North Forest Road to Campbell Boulevard
- North Forest Road from Millersport Highway to Dodge Road
- East Robinson Road Bridge over Tonawanda Creek
- Wehrle Drive from Youngs Road to Transit Road

In addition, the following transportation improvements have been investigated recently, including the findings of the 1997 the Town of Amherst Traffic Study:

- Youngs Road Extension from Casey Road to North French Road
- Youngs Road widening from Aero Drive to North French Road
- Northwest Connector Road from North French Road to Tonawanda Creek Road
- Romney Drive connector from Niagara Falls Boulevard to North Bailey Avenue
- Audubon Parkway Extension from Dodge Road to North French Road

[1] The Year 2025 "Null" highway network refers to the base (or existing) system network plus any committed improvements to that network. Highway capacity improvements listed in the region's 5-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are considered committed projects and were included in the null network.

- Klein Road widening from Hopkins Road to Transit Road
- Transit Road Access-way along both sides of Transit Road from Main Street to Sheridan Drive
- NYS Thruway Toll Barrier Relocation from Amherst to east of Exit 49 (Transit Road)

It appears that the proposed transportation improvements will address capacity issues for the majority of poorly operating (LOS E) traffic corridors, but some areas will operate under current conditions for the next several years. In particular, the following traffic segments should be investigated for future transportation improvements:

- Niagara Falls Boulevard – from Willow Ridge to Tonawanda Creek Road
- Bailey Avenue from Maple Road to Sheridan Drive
- Transit Road from North French Road to Town Line
- Transit Road from Casey Road to Main Street
- Klein Road from Hopkins Road to Young Road
- Main Street from I-290 to Transit Road

7.2 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

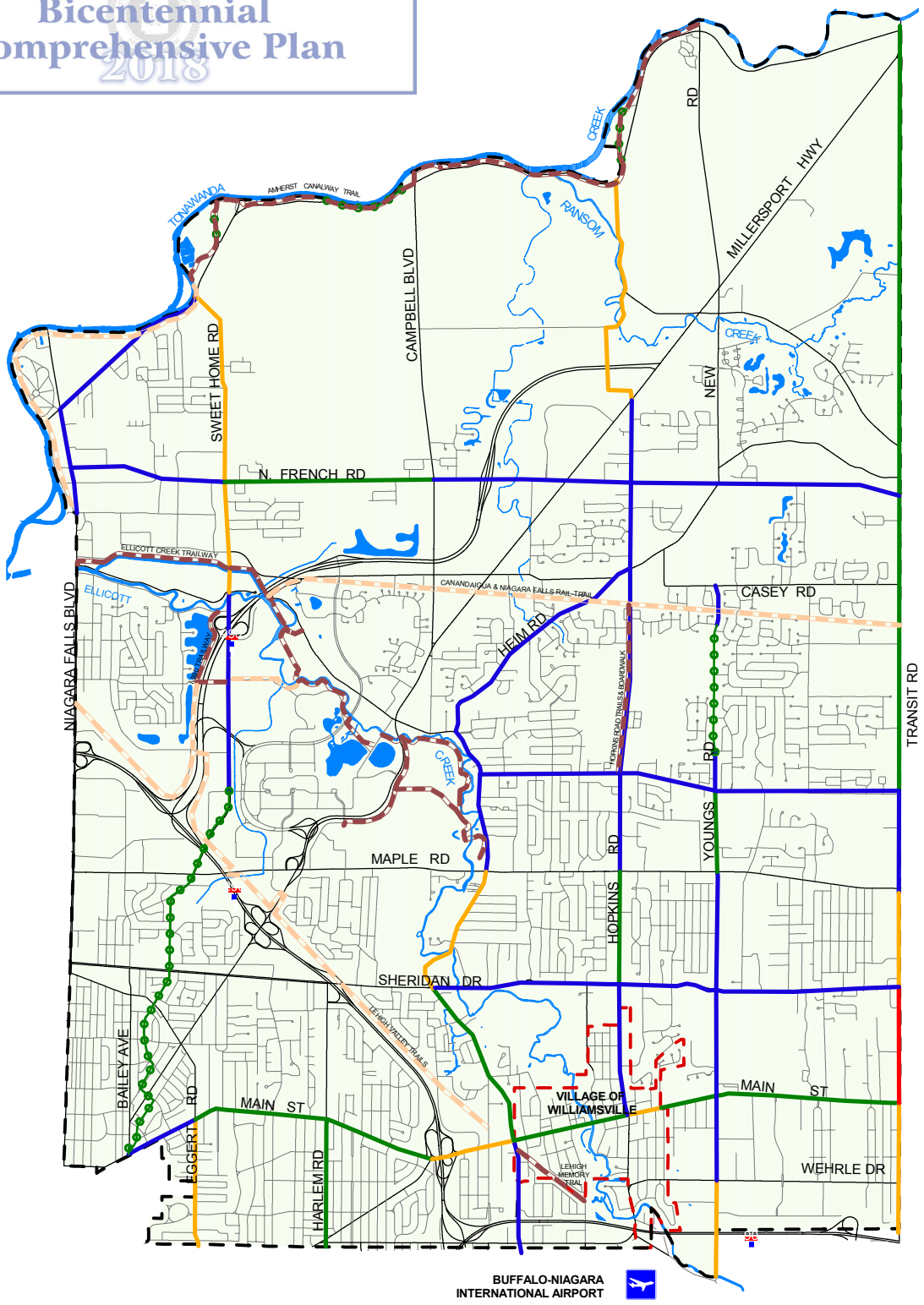
Utilizing bicycles rather than vehicles for transportation reduces wear and tear on roadways and alleviates traffic congestion. In addition, bicycle riding is non-polluting and quiet. To aid bicyclists, the Town and private employers and retailers can provide facilities to accommodate bicyclists. Bike racks or storage areas, bike paths, and even shower facilities all help encourage the choice of bicycling as a transportation alternative.

Safety for bicyclists is a concern because of their vulnerability to serious injury in accidents with vehicles. For this reason, and for aesthetic reasons, off-road bike trails have become popular.

Bikeways are classified according to how much separation exists between bicycle traffic and motorized vehicle traffic. Class I facilities separate bicyclists from vehicles by using paths or trails designated for bicyclists. These allow for two-way bicycle traffic. Class II facilities are on-street bicycle lanes that are not to be used by motorized vehicles. Bicyclists ride in the direction of traffic. Class III facilities are street routes that have been designated for bicycle use. They are indicated by signage only.

The Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) has released a Regional Bikeway Implementation Plan (RBIP) for the Buffalo-Niagara region. Generalized bicycle ratings (poor, fair, good, very good) assigned by GBNRTC to roadway corridors within the Town of Amherst are shown on Figure 14. These ratings were developed utilizing a formula for determining Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) that incorporates parameters for Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), number of travel lanes, average outside lane width, posted speed limit, pavement surface ratings and land use. The following roadway segments received bicycle ratings of fair or poor, indicating a need for physical improvements to the bicycle environment:

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



Recreational Trailways

FIGURE 14

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

ON-STREET BICYCLE NETWORK

- Poor Rating
- Fair Rating
- Good Rating
- Very Good Rating
- Designated Bicycle Route or Lane
- Recreational Trailway
- Planned Recreational Trailway
- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

New York State Department of Transportation

Erie County Department of Public Works

Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council

Map Compiled by URS Corporationation

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Street	Section
Hopkins	Tonawanda Creek to Millersport
Main (Rt 5)	I-290 to Union
Main (Rt 5)	Evans to Williamsville Line
N Forest	Maple to Sheridan
Transit	Maple to Sheridan
Transit	Sheridan to Main
Transit	Main to I-90
Youngs	Wehrle to Aero

Many of these areas will have improved bicycle and pedestrian circulation due to previously listed anticipated highway and transportation improvements.

The Town of Amherst is actively developing a system of off-road trails to support both bicycle and pedestrian use. Off-street recreational trailways and designated on-street bicycle routes and lanes are shown on Figure 14. The Town has once again received funding for the extension of its trailways system, and plans on moving forward with the Lehigh Valley Multi-Use Trail Development project in 2001. This project follows the Ellicott Creek Trailway Extension project completed in 2000. Additional trailway projects include the Willow Ridge and Peanut Line Trailway extensions.

In addition to off-road trails, the Town continues to construct or support construction of sidewalks within Amherst. Major pedestrian activity areas such as industrial parks and shopping malls/centers are generally located along the numerous busy highways under the jurisdiction of New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), which will construct sidewalks along its roads if desired by the community.

The Town of Amherst maintains a general policy of providing for safe walking by requiring sidewalk construction on roads classified as collector or arterial under Town guidelines, which vary slightly from GBNRTC. However, the Town generally supports the GBNRTC Pedestrian Policy Statement, which outlines the following objectives:

- Increase pedestrian mobility
- Improve safety and comfort of pedestrians
- Encourage pedestrian activity
- Provide pedestrian accessibility to all destinations
- Educate bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists

Regardless of the policy, discontinuities exist within Amherst's network of sidewalks. In an effort to enhance sidewalk connectivity and increase walkability, the Town has established a Town Sidewalk Improvement Fund to allow residents to borrow money to install/repair sidewalks in front of their homes. In 1999 the Town submitted an unsuccessful application to the State for TEA-21 Enhancement Grant funding to construct sidewalks along various collector roads throughout the Town.

7.3 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority's (NFTA) Metro Bus system provides public transit service in the Town of Amherst. In addition, the Metro Rail (LRRT) system operates between downtown Buffalo and the University at Buffalo's South Campus, providing park and ride service to Amherst residents.

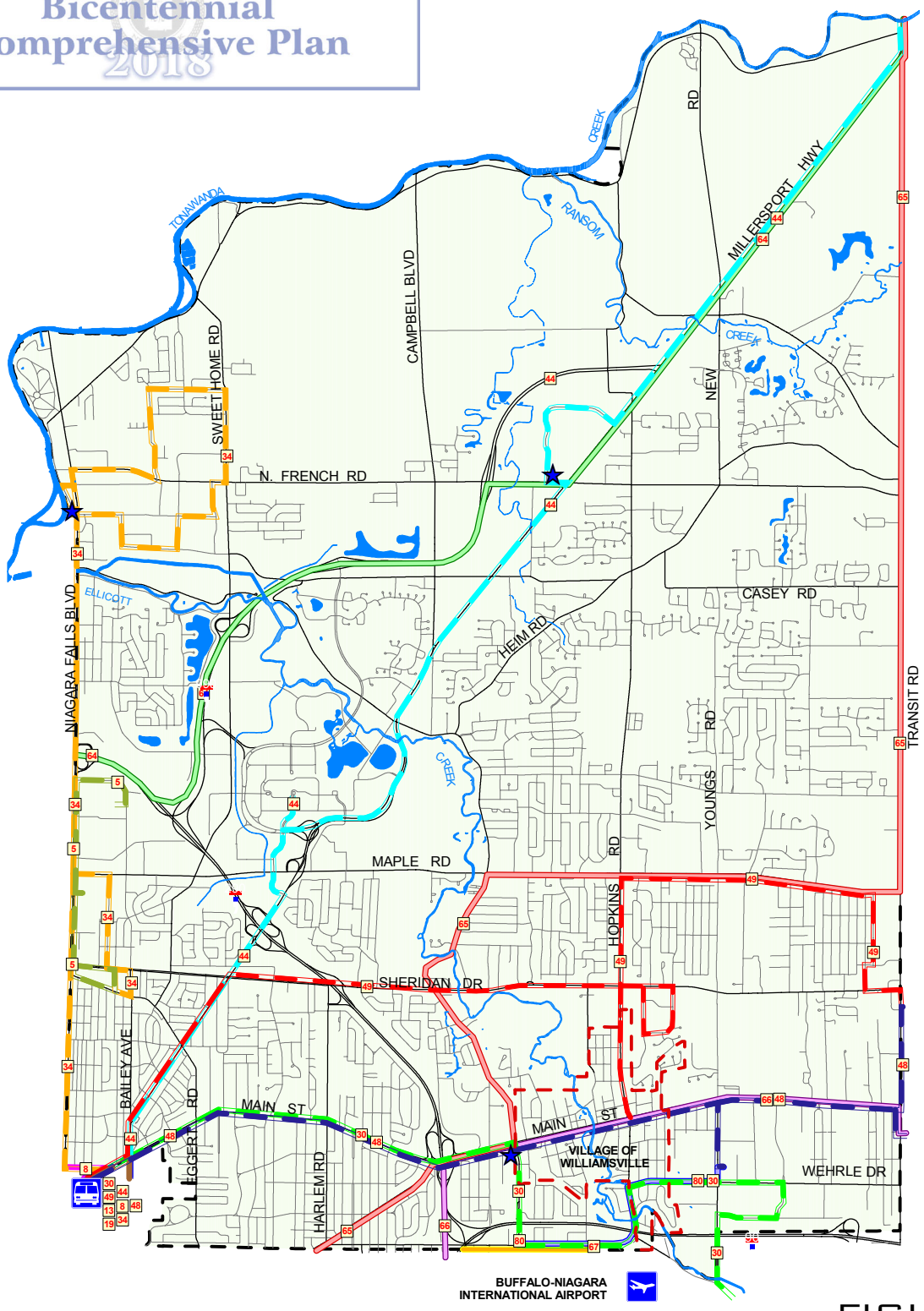
Seven metro routes and five express routes traverse the Town (Figure 15). The local routes are as follows. (The average number of passengers boarding or departing at a stop within the Town of Amherst per weekday is shown in parentheses.)

- ***5-Niagara (140 Amherst passengers/weekday):*** "D" extension connects the Town of Tonawanda and points west via Sheridan Drive with Northtown Plaza, Boulevard Mall and Niagara Falls Boulevard to Ridge Lea and Amherst Development Park on North Bailey
- ***30-Kenmore (160 Amherst passengers/weekday):*** Provides service between South Campus Metro Rail Station and Buffalo Niagara International airport via Main Street, Union Road, Wehrle Drive, ECC North, and Wehrle International Business Park
- ***34-Niagara Falls Boulevard (849 Amherst passengers/weekday):*** Operates between Metro Rail South Campus Station and Audubon Industrial Park via Boulevard Mall and retail areas along Niagara Falls Boulevard
- ***44-Lockport (315 Amherst passengers/weekday):*** Operates between Metro Rail South Campus Station and City of Lockport via Millersport Highway, UB North Campus and CrossPoint Development Park
- ***48-Williamsville (867 Amherst passengers/weekday):*** Provides service along Main Street between Metro Rail South Campus Station and Transitown Plaza and Eastern Hills Mall, and also serves the ECC North Campus
- ***49-Hopkins (172 Amherst passengers/weekday):*** Operates between Eastern Hills Mall and South Campus Metro Rail Station via Maple, Millard Suburban Hospital, Hopkins Road, Centerpointe office park and Main Street

The express routes are:

- ***64-Lockport (47 Amherst passengers/weekday):*** Provides peak hour service between Lockport and downtown Buffalo via Millersport, CrossPointe Development Park (new park and ride) and the I-990
- ***65-Amherst Express (68 Amherst passengers per weekday):*** Operates between East Amherst and Downtown Buffalo via Transit Rd., Maple, North Forest, Union Road (park and ride lot) Main Street, Kensington Avenue and Route 33
- ***66-Willliamsville Express (184 Amherst passengers/weekday):*** Operates between Transitown Plaza and Downtown Buffalo via Main Street (park and ride lot), I-90 and Route 33
- ***67-Clevand Hill:*** Connects with Routes 30 and 80 at Cayuga Road and Wehrle Drive
- ***80-ECC Shuttle:*** Provides connectivity between the three Erie Community College campuses

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



Existing Public Transportation Routes

FIGURE 15

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

METRO BUS ROUTES

- 5 Niagara
- 8 Main
- 13 Kensington
- 19 Bailey
- 30 Kenmore
- 34 Niagara Falls Blvd
- 44 Lockport
- 48 Williamsville
- 49 Hopkins

EXPRESS METRO BUS ROUTES

- 64 Lockport
- 65 Amherst
- 66 Williamsville
- 67 Cleveland Hill
- 80 ECC Shuttle

- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Surface Water Body
- Metro Bus/Rail Station
- 80 Metro Route Number
- Park and Ride Lots

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

New York State Department of Transportation

Public Transit Routes: Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) - April ,2001

Map Compiled by URS

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Total ridership on these routes is approximately 3,000 riders per average weekday, which is about the same as in 1995. However, in the last two years there has been a significant increase in ridership from Buffalo to retail and employment sites in Amherst, reflecting a shift in the predominant ridership pattern previous to 1995 of Amherst residents commuting to downtown Buffalo.

After a period of decline, daily Amherst ridership volumes have increased over the past three years to return to 1995 levels. This increase is in large part a result of the Metro Bus commitment to improving suburban service by limiting changeover trips to Buffalo and providing increased access to industrial parks and entertainment/shopping districts. The Town's emergence as an employment center has also contributed to this increase by generating a realized transit demand in reverse commute trips from the City of Buffalo. The City's labor pool continues to be important to many businesses. In addition to serving employees working in Amherst, the economic viability of the transit system continues to improve as utilization increases in the reverse commute direction.

The most significant ridership increases over the last three years have been in the Niagara Falls Boulevard corridor (+10%) and the Main Street corridor (+5%). Steady ridership has occurred in the cross-town corridor (Route 5D), and slight increases on routes 44 and 64. Service to ECC North and Earhart-Wehrle industrial developments have shown continued steady ridership.

Over the past four years, NFTA-Metro has made significant improvements in service to Amherst by adjusting and realigning routes to better serve employers. The improvements have included initiation of new services designed to directly serve the Earhart Drive development, CrossPoint development, Audubon Industrial Park, Dodge Road businesses, Farber Lakes, Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital and other health care providers, and human services agencies along North Bailey.

A new set of service adjustments was scheduled for implementation in June 2001. Among the proposed changes was the elimination of Route 41. Although the portion of this route connecting South Campus Station with the Sheridan/Niagara Falls Boulevard area had been strong, the portion of the route that connected this area via Sheridan and Harlem to Cheektowaga had not performed well. The areas of Route 41 that had shown strong ridership were to be accommodated by improving and increasing service on other routes that serve these areas.

Three park and ride lots exist in the Town of Amherst. These include a newly established park and ride opportunity at CrossPoint Development Park near Millersport and North French and lots at Main & Union and Creekside. Currently, about 25-30 cars use the Main & Union lot, about 5 use the CrossPoint lot, and 1 or 2 take advantage of the Creekside lot.

The Hublink Mobility Plan developed by NFTA in 1997 is being used as a guideline for repositioning public transportation in the Buffalo-Niagara region over the next several years. The plan called for frequent service on major trunk bus routes serving several suburban hubs where customers could transfer to other secondary routes and new non-traditional services such as employment shuttles, community circulators, or vanpools using smaller

buses or vans. Service modifications have included additional peak hour, late night and weekend service, route deviations, and minor reroutes. Several service changes have been implemented on the routes serving Amherst in the past two years. Specifically, added service on Routes 30, 34, 44 and 48 and routing changes on Routes 44, and 49 are designed to improve access to jobs.

Several existing and proposed hubs are located in Amherst, including the Boulevard Mall, UB North Campus, UB South Campus Metro Rail Station, and ECC North Campus. These locations currently function as hubs; however, improvements to these sites with added passenger amenities are planned by the NFTA as part of Hublink.

The NFTA expects the implementation of non-traditional services to be underway by the end of 2001 with discussions with Town officials determining what services are appropriate and needed. Strategies for implementation and establishing partnerships are being explored by NFTA.

The Amherst Industrial Development Agency and NFTA subsidized a pilot program, starting in 1998, to use vans to transport commuters within the Amherst Audubon Industrial Park. Called the New York West Express, a private van service was commissioned to provide the drivers and maintenance for NFTA shuttle vans. Transfers and fares were shared between the NFTA and the shuttle service. The UB North Campus hub, served by the #44 bus, was the boarding point for the commuters. Although employers within the industrial park thought it was a good idea, the pilot program did not become financially self-sufficient. Fares collected did not meet costs. This was partly due to the NFTA and driver's union failing to agree on the use of reduced hours and rates for drivers. This service was discontinued in January 2001.

8.0 Infrastructure

For the purposes of the Inventory and Analysis Report, infrastructure includes basic utilities and services (other than transportation facilities, which are addressed in Chapter 7.0) required to support existing and new development in Amherst. This chapter describes the following infrastructure systems: water, sanitary sewer, stormwater management, solid waste, and other utilities.

8.1 WATER SYSTEM

Almost the entire Town of Amherst is provided with adequate water supply under Lease-Management Agreement (LMA) with the Erie County Water Authority (ECWA). The water system exhibits above average pressures and acceptable fire flow protection. There are virtually no limitations regarding the potential for expansion of the water system to accommodate future growth.

8.2 SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

The Town of Amherst operates its own sewage treatment facility, which has recently been re-rated by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to increase capacity by 50% to 36 million gallons per day (MGD). The plant is currently operating below capacity at about 22 MGD. Current sanitary sewer service within the Town is shown in Figure 16.

Amherst Sewer District No. 1 is located in the southwest portion of Amherst, an area characterized by long established neighborhoods and early twentieth century homes. Consequently, the sanitary sewer system exhibits high levels of inflow/infiltration due to failed vitrified clay pipe sewers and collapsing brick manholes. Many streets encounter surcharge conditions after regular rainfall events. Occupying almost 75% of the Town, Amherst Sewer District No. 16 relies on a series of interceptor sewers that gradually convey flows north and west to the treatment plant on Tonawanda Creek Road near Niagara Falls Boulevard.

Erie County Sewer District 5 and Town of Clarence Sewer District 2 utilize the Town of Amherst Interceptor Sewer Network and Treatment Plant for three discharge points located along the Town of Clarence border. The majority of these flows pass through the Peanut Line interceptor sewer, which is currently near capacity during peak flow periods. Recent development in Clarence has necessitated requests for additional capacity in the Peanut Line and Klein Road interceptor sewers.

The Town of Amherst downstream capacity model was developed to assist in sewer trunk capacity analysis for active development areas of the Town. A sanitary sewer typically

achieves peak flows four times the daily average flow. The model identifies the following interceptor sewers as near or beyond capacity during peak flow periods:

Sewer	Segment	Size	Capacity	Avg. Flow	Peak Flow
Peanut Line 1	Plant 16 to Ellicott Creek	84"	101 MGD	24 MGD	96 MGD
Peanut Line 2	Ellicott Creek to Campbell	66"-60"	45 MGD	10 MGD	40 MGD
Peanut Line 5	Paradise to Transit	18"	3.0 MGD	0.6 MGD	2.4 MGD
CampbellStahl	Peanut Line to Klein	30"	7.0 MGD	3.9 MGD	surcharge
North Forest 1	Klein to Maple	24"	5.5 MGD	2.0 MGD	surcharge
Maple Road 1	North Forest to Hopkins	24"	4.5 MGD	1.5 MGD	surcharge
Maple Road 2	Hopkins to Youngs	18"	2.4 MGD	0.9 MGD	surcharge
N French 3	I-990 to New	24"	4.2 MGD	1.2 MGD	surcharge
N French 4	New to Transit	24"	4.2 MGD	1.0 MGD	4.0 MGD

In addition, other sanitary trunks conveying flows north from the Eggertsville/Snyder area are not modeled, but do experience surcharge conditions during peak flow periods. The growth projections presented in Chapters 5.0 and 6.0 indicate that population increases in Planning Analysis Areas 2, 3 and 4 will create additional capacity demand on the following modeled sewers in year 2020:

Sewer	Segment	Projected Demand
N French 3	I-990 to New	Additional 0.5 MGD average flow
North Forest 1	Klein to Maple	Additional 1.0 MGD average flow
CampbellStahl	Peanut Line to Klein	Additional 1.5 MGD average flow
Peanut Line 2	Ellicott Creek to Campbell	Additional 3.8 MGD average flow
Peanut Line 1	Plant 16 to Ellicott Creek	Additional 9.1 MGD average flow

The largest portion of the Town of Amherst that remains unsewered is the area in the northern part of the Town bounded by Tonawanda Creek, Millersport Highway, I-990, and Campbell Boulevard. The main reason that this area lacks sanitary sewer service is that there are too few residences to warrant new mains and topographic conditions would make sewer extensions very costly. All development in this area must rely upon on-site wastewater disposal systems (OSDS). The predominant soils in the area are severely constrained for on-site wastewater disposal and the majority of the area is also within the 100-year floodplain or regulatory floodway.

Almost all of the soils (97.5%) in the Town of Amherst are severely constrained for the use of OSDS as a result of soil wetness, slow permeability, and susceptibility to flooding. (*USDA, Soil Conservation Service, 1978*) Installation of an OSDS in these conditions typically requires construction in fill material, subject to the County's minimum lot requirements of ¾ acre per unit.

Water quality monitoring data indicate that many OSDSs in North Amherst are failing, as evidenced by fecal coliform contamination and nutrient enrichment in Ransom Creek. (*NYS DEC, Bureau of Watershed Assessment and Research, 1998*)

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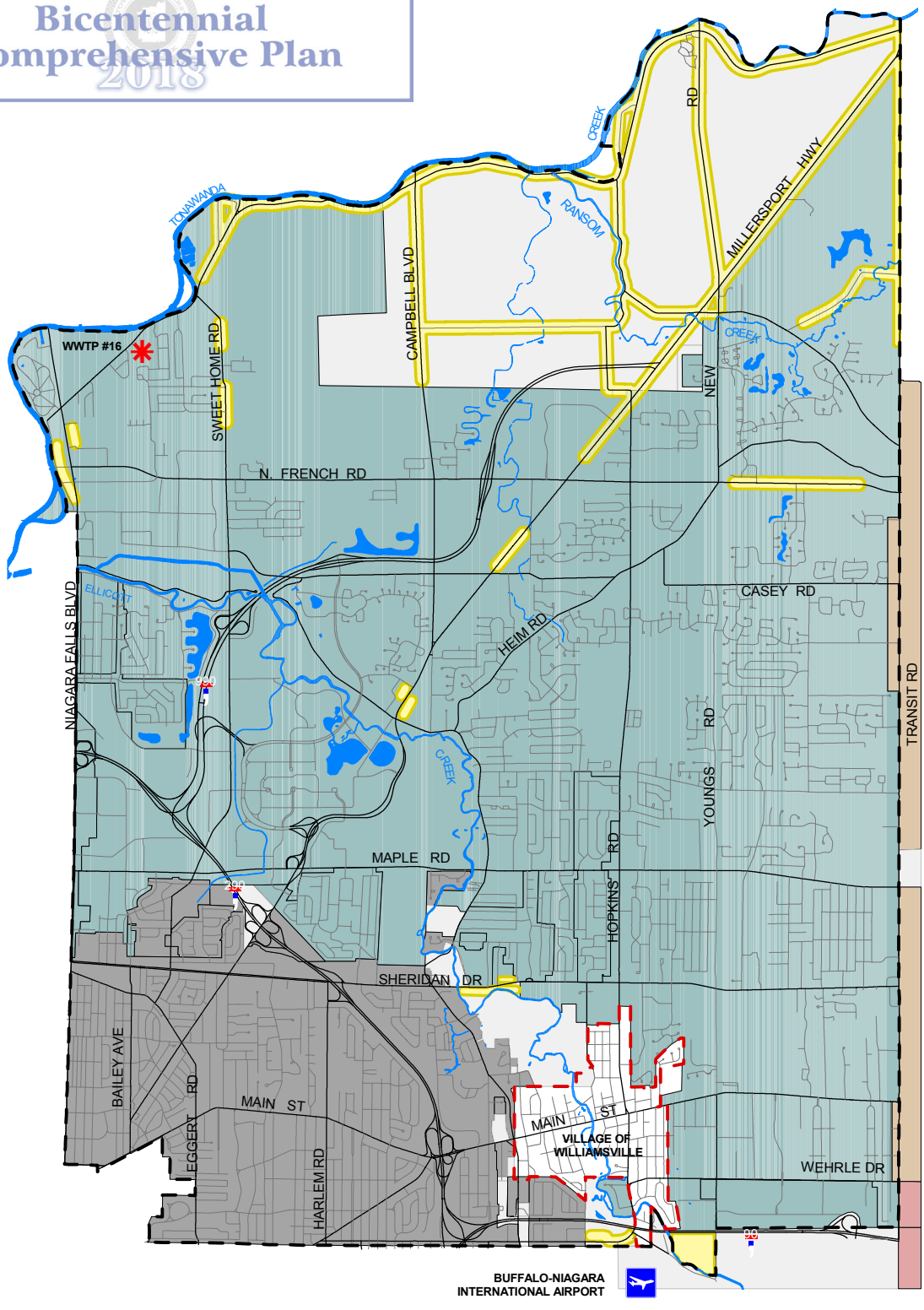

SANITARY SEWER SERVICE

FIGURE 16

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

SANITARY SEWER DISTRICTS

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

- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Road Areas without Sanitary Sewer Lines
- Sewer Treatment Plant
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst and Engineering Department

Map Compiled by URS Corporation

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8.3 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Stormwater drainage is a concern to many Amherst residents. Localized flooding due to rain events affects certain areas of the Town repeatedly. The Town is mainly on lowland plains, and the soils in the northern half of the Town are hydric soils that are generally poorly drained. Several major creeks flow through the Town, including Ellicott Creek and Ransom Creek. Tonawanda Creek forms the northern border of Amherst and the Town of Tonawanda. Gott Creek and Black Creek are tributaries to Ransom Creek. Both Ellicott Creek and Ransom Creek have histories of flooding. Stormwater management features of note, including hydric soils, drainage ditches, and surface water bodies, are shown on Figure 17.

The Town has an extensive system in place to manage stormwater runoff. Amherst's stormwater system is comprised of underground storm sewer pipes, ditches, retention ponds, and dry wells with approximately 23 outfalls that are greater than 36 inches. These outfalls discharge to Ellicott Creek, Tonawanda Creek, and tributary streams.

Land development can contribute to flooding problems by changing drainage patterns. Paving over soil reduces the amount of rain that infiltrates the ground, increasing runoff. The Town addresses these potential problems by requiring a grading plan and storm drainage calculations in the site plan application process. The Code of the Town of Amherst addresses drainage on parking lots and yards. Flood hazards are addressed in a separate section of the Town Code that specifies requirements for new construction. The Town of Amherst requires that all facilities drainage elements conform to the Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board Storm Drainage Design Manual, which utilizes the rational method and a minimum recurrence storm of ten years for conveyance to an approved public outfall. The stormwater plan review process involves both the Engineering and Highway Departments and includes review of storm water calculations and effects on neighboring properties.

Several studies over the past few decades have concentrated on solving flooding in problem areas of the Town. Current studies include a reconnaissance study of the Ellicott Creek watershed by the Army Corps of Engineers, a Flood Mitigation Plan, and an Engineering improvement study for Ransom Creek. The Town does not plan any significant drainage work in the next five years, but Erie County will reconstruct Wehrle Drive in 2003. The road will be rebuilt from the bridge over Ellicott Creek to Transit Road. Some stormwater will drain to Town ditches and some will go north to Ellicott Creek. This area south of the Onondaga escarpment is characterized by hard dolomite rock one foot below grade, and therefore is difficult to drain. As documented in Section 6.8, a significant increase in employment is projected in Planning Analysis Area 6, indicating a potential increase in business parks/commercial use. The poor drainage history of this area may necessitate detention facility requirements for new construction.

In the near future, the Town of Amherst will be expected to develop a stringent storm water management program which complies with anticipated revised New York State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) driven by the USEPA Phase II storm water regulations. The Town is undertaking a stormwater management plan to comply with EPA

regulations. Under the Clean Water Act, the Storm Water Phase II Final Rule requires towns such as Amherst to develop stormwater management programs. These programs must include plans to implement six specified minimum control measures. The Town has started with the "Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping" measure by assessing the municipal-owned facilities and how they are affected by the regulations.

8.4 SOLID WASTE

The Refuse Control Office of the Town is responsible for the collection and hauling of solid waste for residents and small apartment complexes. Large apartment complexes and commercial establishments use private collection services. Commercial, industrial, and institutional establishments are also required to separate recyclables by source and arrange for their collection. Solid waste includes recyclables, yard waste, garbage, and trash.

The Town Highway Department is responsible for spring brush pick-up and fall leaf pick-up, as well as collection of concrete, stone, appliances, tires, and miscellaneous metal items. Construction debris from residents' contracted projects, large do-it-yourself construction projects, as well as brick, stone, and concrete, is removed by private haulers. The Town requires private garbage collectors to be licensed. Yard waste is collected weekly and deposited at the Town's Compost facility on Millersport Highway. Wood waste is separated and converted into mulch, which is then sold to residents and local vendors. Leaves and grass are stored until the fall, when they are combined and cured through the winter, then sold as compost in the spring. The facility is permitted to accommodate 85,000 cubic yards of raw waste, and is currently operating at about 90% capacity. The diversion of yard waste to this facility reduces the annual tipping fee costs associated with conventional waste disposal. The Town is already planning an expansion of the facility to increase capacity 30% to 40%.

There is one garbage district for the Town, which covers the entire Town with the exception of the University at Buffalo, the Village of Williamsville, and the large apartment complexes and commercial establishments previously mentioned. As of June 2001 the Village of Williamsville is included in the Town's pick-up area.

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. Commercial establishments use landfills or the waste-to-energy facility for disposal.

8.5 PRIVATE UTILITIES

In addition to the public infrastructure systems described above, a number of privately-owned utilities are located within the Town of Amherst. In general, these utilities are widely available to serve existing and future development. The only consideration for new development would be the cost to extend certain utility lines to areas not served. However, the availability of land in serviced areas makes this a minor limitation.

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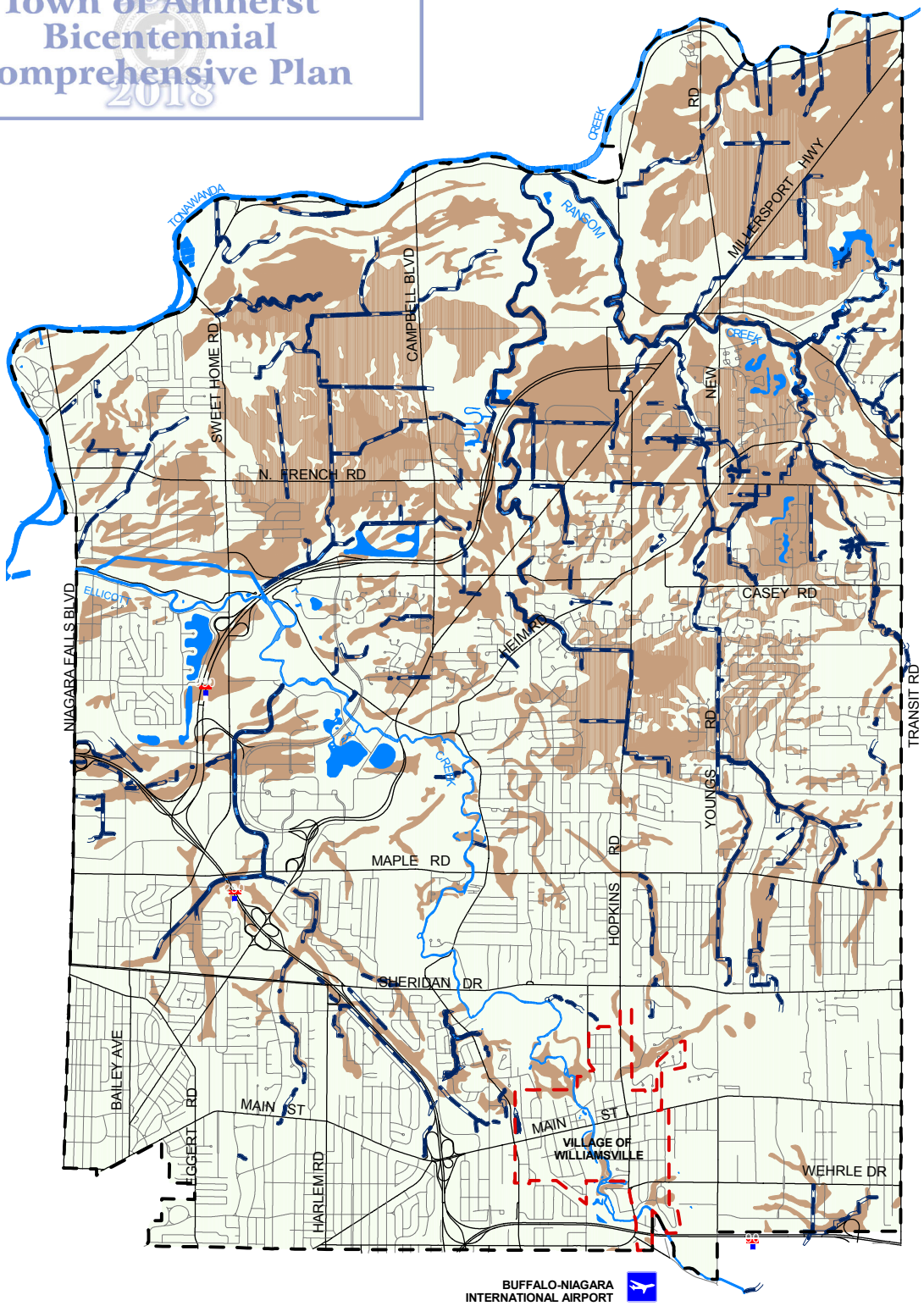

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FEATURES

FIGURE 17

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

- Hydric Soil
- Surface Water Body
- Ditch
- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Soil Data:
US Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service,
Erie County, 1986

Map Compiled by URS Corporation

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A. Natural Gas

Natural gas transport for the entire Town is provided by National Fuel, whether or not the gas is purchased from them. National Fuel has adequate capacity to accommodate the needs of existing and projected future development in the Town. The cost of running lines to currently unserviced areas would be the only consideration in serving new development.

B. Electrical Service

Two companies, Niagara Mohawk and New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG), provide electrical service for the Town of Amherst.

Niagara Mohawk: Niagara Mohawk and its distribution system provide electrical service for almost the entire Town. No significant problems are reported for the conveyance and distribution network. However, power rates for Town residents are not necessarily favorable.

Through its Economic Development Zone Rider (EDZR), Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation offers businesses that locate or expand in an Economic Development Zone (now known as Empire Zones) up to ten years of deep discounts on the delivery of incremental (new) electricity and natural gas supply. Discounts are on the delivery portion only. The electric supply, or generation cost, is the market price of electric generation, which is not controlled by Niagara Mohawk. The EDZR electricity discounts depend on the customer's service classification, delivery voltage, and energy use profile. This program provides discounts of 50% to 70% from standard electric delivery rates.

NYSEG: This company provides electric service to some properties on the west side of Transit Road. NYSEG aerial poles provide electricity from the front lots along Transit Road. Niagara Mohawk provides any back lot service to Transit Road properties.

C. High Technology

Amherst is well served by infrastructure necessary to support use of high technology by businesses and homeowners. Companies serving the Town include Adelphia Cable, Verizon, MCI, Telergy, and TC Systems.

Adelphia Cable: Adelphia maintains coaxial cable and fiber in Amherst. The company provides all of the residential cable television service to the Town, as well as Power-Link Internet access via the cable network. Adelphia also provides Hyperion, which is a telephone service network for business.

Verizon: Verizon maintains fiber in the Town of Amherst for DS1 bandwidth and above. DS1 can transport data or 24-telephone lines (DS0 is for single telephone lines). The company can serve customers directly, or its competitors purchase DS1 and break it into 24 telephone lines. Verizon has done considerable work in Amherst in the last three years and has capacity to support future development in the Town. However, additional hubs and fiber will need to be added. Presently Verizon is looking into adding a hut next to an existing one at Sweet Home Road and Commerce Drive, which is the company's busiest service area.

MCI: MCI maintains fiber optic lines in a dedicated easement running north-south between Campbell Boulevard and Hopkins Road to Sheridan Drive, where the line turns southwest

across Ellicott Creek and beyond I-290. The conduit carries two sets of fiber: a MCI long distance 277-count fiber cable and a Worldcom long distance 200-count fiber cable. The conduit has additional carrying capacity.

Telergy: Transport of data is provided by Telergy through the company's own underground duct system, existing ductwork owned by Verizon or Niagara Mohawk, or through cables on aerial poles. Although Telergy does not generally have individual accounts, the company directly services some large accounts. Telergy supplied the fiber network for communication for the Amherst Schools.

TC Systems: This company provides the backbone fiber optics for local service in the Town. Presently TC Systems has only one line going through the Town: east along Main Street from the City of Buffalo into the Village of Williamsville, north on Grove Street, east on Grove Avenue, and south on Cayuga to the Town of Cheektowaga. TC Systems plans on expanding throughout the Town of Amherst in the next five years.

D. Miscellaneous Underground Transmission Lines

Sun Pipeline: A transmission line passes through the Town just south of Klein Road and south of the University at Buffalo to the I-290 right-of-way. This line carries petroleum products such as gasoline, fuel oils, and kerosene to a terminal in Tonawanda.

Lakehead Pipe Company: A 12" crude oil pipeline runs through the Niagara Mohawk transmission line right-of–way along I-290. This pipe brings crude oil from Canada to a company in West Seneca.

Texas Brine: A transmission brine line from Wyoming County to Occidental Chemical Corporation and Olin Corporation in Niagara Falls passes through the northeast corner of the Town of Amherst.

None of the above transmission lines are useful for or a hindrance to future development in Amherst.

9.0 Housing and Neighborhoods

This chapter provides an overview of Amherst's housing stock and major housing issues facing the Town. Section 9.1 contains a housing profile of the Town based upon 1990 U.S. Census data.[1] A more detailed discussion of housing development trends and projections is provided in Chapter 5.0 (Demographics). Section 9.2 describes the major housing issues facing Amherst. Section 9.3 provides a brief discussion of Amherst's neighborhoods. More detailed descriptions of land use and neighborhoods is provided in Chapter 3.0 for the Town's six Planning Analysis Areas and in Chapter 11.0 (Focal Planning Areas) for the six smaller Focal Planning Areas.

9.1 HOUSING PROFILE

9.1.1 Housing Inventory

According to 1990 Census data, the population of the Town of Amherst was 111,740. Of this population, 6,100 were in group quarters (the majority of whom lived in UB dormitories) and 105,640 were part of the town's household population. With 41,252 households in the Town, the average household size was 2.56 persons.

In 1990, Amherst contained 43,316 housing units. According to the Town's construction and demolition permit data, the housing stock grew to 47,327 units by 2000, an average annual increase of 401 units. In percentage terms, this represents a 9.3 percent increase over the decade. The Town of Amherst's net change in housing unit inventory in this same period was 1,727 units, of which 415 were single-family units and 1,312 were multi-family units.

Housing Permit Activity and Housing Unit Trends are presented by Planning Analysis Area by year in Tables 5-6 and 5-7 in the Appendix.

9.1.2 Housing Occupancy and Tenure

Of the 43,303 housing units in Amherst in 1990 less than 5% were vacant (1,983 units). This indicates a tighter housing market in Amherst than in Erie County as a whole, which had a vacancy rate of 6.25% in 1990. The vacancy rate of those vacant units for rent or sale in Amherst in 1990 was 1.4% for homeowners and 7.2% for renters. This is slightly above the norm (1% owner and 5% rental) used as indicators of a healthy housing market.

Of the occupied units, 30,921 were owner-occupied and 10,399 were renter-occupied, representing a 75/25 owner to renter split. Erie County, with an owner to renter ratio of

[1] Partial U.S. Census data for 2000 was released shortly prior to finalization of this report. Where possible, this information has been integrated into this chapter.

approximately 60/40, has a significantly lower percentage of owner-occupied units than Amherst.

Table 5-1 in the Appendix provides additional information on housing occupancy in Amherst, including the number of housing units, vacancy rates, and the owner to renter ratio by Planning Analysis Area.

Housing Units in Structure

# Units in Structure	Housing Units	%
1 Unit, Detached	28914	66.8%
1 Unit, Attached	2177	5.0%
2 Units	2971	6.9%
3 to 9 Units	6132	14.2%
10 or more Units and Other	3109	7.2%
TOTAL	43303	100%

Most of Amherst's housing stock consists of single-family units. The table at left breaks down the Town's housing stock in terms of the number of units per structure. Combining 1 Unit-Detached with 1 Unit-Attached (these are generally townhouses or row houses) results in 31,091 single-family housing units or 71.8% of Amherst's total. By comparison, of the over 400,000 housing units in Erie County in 1990, only 56% are single family. The difference is attributable the County having a significantly higher percentage (23.5%) of 2 unit structures than Amherst.

Type of Rental Housing Stock

Type	# Units	%
1 Detached	950	9.1
1 Attached	720	6.9
Two Family	2131	20.5
3 and 4 Unit	2596	25
5 or more	3829	36.9
Mobile Home	161	1.6
TOTAL	10387	100

The high percentage of owner-occupancy in Amherst's single-family housing stock is represented by the fact that only 16% of rental units are single-family. As shown in the table to the left, the majority (82.4%) of rental housing in Amherst occurs in structures with 2 or more units.

The Town's western sections have much higher concentrations of both renters and multi-family housing units than its eastern portion. In Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs) 1 and 3, located to the north and west of the University at Buffalo, only 56% of housing units were owner occupied in 1990. By comparison, over 90% of all housing units in PAAs 2 and 4, the northeastern area of Amherst, were owner occupied in 1990.

Average household size in 1990 varied greatly by Planning Analysis Area. Planning Analysis Area 5, which contains some of the oldest and most densely populated areas in Amherst, had an average size of 2.37 persons. PAA 3, which contains a high concentration of multi-family housing, had the Town's lowest average household size of 2.30 persons. At the other end of the spectrum, PAAs 2 and 4 are fairly sparsely populated areas with primarily single-family housing and had average household sizes of 2.83 and 2.92, respectively. An exception is PAA 1, which had the largest average household size (2.96 persons per household) despite having a very high concentration of multi-family housing.

9.1.3 Housing Age and Condition

Year Housing Structure Built

Years Constructed	# of Structures	%
1990-2000	4027	8.5%
1980-1989	6734	14.2%
1970-1979	9702	20.5%
1960-1969	9836	20.8%
1950-1959	7990	16.9%
1940-1949	4665	9.9%
1939 or earlier	4373	9.2%
TOTAL	47327	100%

The table to the left shows the relative age of the residential structures in the Town of Amherst. This table shows a pattern of steady and consistent production of new housing units. Less than 20% of the housing structures in Amherst are over 50 years old. Given the steady production of housing units in recent decades, this percentage of older housing stock is not expected to significantly affect general housing conditions in Amherst, which are considered good.

The FY2000 Consolidated Plan for the Towns of Amherst, Cheektowaga, and Tonawanda utilized the following definition of substandard housing:

Housing units which have a 1) major deficiency/code violation of one or more of the housing components such as heating, plumbing, electric or structure affecting the health, safety and well being of the occupant; or 2) an accumulation of minor deficiencies/code violations which together constitute a threat to the integrity of the structure as a safe, decent and sanitary dwelling unit. (Consolidated Plan, Amherst Cheektowaga Tonawanda Consortium, 2000)

Housing Stock Conditions - 2000

Category	# of Structures	%
Total Year Round Units	44518	
Needing Rehab	3897	8.8%
Not Rehab-able	35	<1%

Based on this definition and a windshield survey of several neighborhoods, the number of housing units estimated to need rehab is shown in the table to the left. Rehabilitation could include one or more of the deficiencies listed in the definition above. As shown in the Table, approximately 9% of Amherst's occupied housing units were in substandard condition and nearly all were considered suitable for rehabilitation. Of the units needing rehabilitation, 58% were owner occupied units, 39% were renter occupied units and 3% were vacant (for rent or sale). (Consolidated Plan, Section IB, 2000)

9.2 MAJOR HOUSING ISSUES

9.2.1 Affordable Housing

A. The Need for Affordable Housing

The need for affordable housing throughout Erie County is apparent and well documented. The median family income for Amherst in 1990 was $41,466. Although rents and housing prices increased significantly in the 1980s, housing costs have stabilized in the region in the 1990s. (Consolidated Plan, 2000) Therefore, the reliance on 1990 Census data captures the market at a time when costs were at a relative high. Housing costs for the metropolitan area are projected to increase at a rate lower than inflation during the next ten years.

Based on the 1990 Erie County MSA median family income of $35,061, approximately 20% of the families residing in Amherst are lower income (i.e., families with annual incomes of 80% or less of the MSA median income). Approximately 8% are very low income (i.e., families with annual incomes 50% or less of the MSA median income). Lower income households comprise about 24% of Amherst's population. (Consolidated Plan, 2000)

The 1989 per capita income for the Town of Amherst is $19,789. Approximately 5% (5,698 persons) of Amherst's population has an income below the poverty level.

The median value for owner occupied housing in Amherst in 1990 was $103,300. This is significantly higher than the $74,000 median value for Erie County as a whole. Higher housing values are driven in part by the higher cost of land and the amenities offered in a community.

According to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines, spending 30% or more of household income on housing expenses is burdensome. By this definition, in 1990 17.7% (4,733 households) of the owner-occupied households in Amherst were cost burdened by housing expenses. The median monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income were 20% for owners with a mortgage and 13.9% for those owners without a mortgage.

In regard to rental housing, the median rent in Erie County in 1990 was $292 a month. In Amherst, the median gross rent of $504 was significantly higher. Thirty-nine percent of renter-occupied housing units spent over 30 percent of their household income on housing expenses. Fifty-four percent of elderly (65 years of age and over) tenants spent over 30 percent of their household income on housing expenses. Median gross rent as a percentage of household income was 26.4%. Therefore, housing costs as a percentage of income are higher for renters than for owners.

In the Amherst Cheektowaga Tonawanda Consortium's 2000 Consolidated Plan, the top two priorities in the Five-Year Strategy deal with the affordability of elderly and rental housing. The top priority is given to programs and services designed to assist the elderly in maintaining their existing homes, including rental assistance for those elderly in rental housing. The second priority is the provision of additional rental assistance to lower income households residing in the Consortium towns. The Five-Year Strategy notes that the majority of substandard housing occurs in the Consortium's pre-1950 housing stock, largely found in residential areas adjacent to the City of Buffalo, which house a significant portion of the Consortium's low income families. The two factors are related as high housing costs often force low and very low income homeowners to defer maintenance on their residence, leading to it becoming substandard. According to 1990 Census data, 83% of poor renters in the Amherst Tonawanda Cheektowaga Consortium lived in housing that HUD classified as having housing problems.

B. Barriers to Affordable Housing

The Amherst Cheektowaga Tonawanda Consortium's 2000 Consolidated Plan's Five Year Strategy states that the Consortium towns have not identified any negative effects of public policies impacting the availability of affordable housing. Consequently, no plan is set forth

by the Towns to address any negative effects of any public policies during the five-year period.

Community Development staff in Amherst reviewed the Joint Venture for Affordable Housing "Implementation Checklist" for the categories of Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, Administration and Processing, and Land Planning and Development. In conducting this review, staff did not uncover any rules or regulations that would constitute a barrier to housing affordability. Amherst's Zoning Ordinance provides for a variety of residential housing types at a wide range of densities. Amherst also has substantial undeveloped acreage zoned for multi-family use.

However, proponents of affordable housing are increasingly faced with opposition stemming primarily from a false perception of a specific population to be housed and a lack of knowledge of the implication of not providing such housing. (Consolidated Plan, p. 88) The general course of action taken to mitigate this barrier to affordable housing requires that all concerned parties – the project proponent, local review boards, and affected residents – have accurate information on the project and are sufficiently educated about the importance and necessity of housing for special needs populations. The public needs to be made aware that without the establishment of affordable housing options, an increasing number of people will struggle with burdensome rent and mortgage payments and may be left homeless. (Consolidated Plan, 2000)

9.2.2 Senior Housing

The 1990 Census data for Amherst places 20% of the Town's population, 22,643 of 111,711 total residents, in the age bracket of 60 years old and above. Approximately two thirds of this population is between the ages of 60 and 74, with another quarter between 75-84 and slightly less than ten percent 85 years or older. The population in all of these age groups is growing as human longevity increases. Senior citizens in all three of these age brackets prefer to maintain an independent housing environment, living in their community (aging-in-place) rather than moving into institutionalized environments. However, the 75-84 age group is described as being in transition, with the need for assistance and rising housing costs leading them to consider relocating to alternative affordable and supportive housing. Seniors in the 85+ age group, while still preferring to maintain a self-managing and independent lifestyle, are in need of access to in-home services and supportive assistance if they are to do so. Therefore, appropriate housing for older persons means an environment which provides alternative housing options, designed to accommodate the physical, social and mental changes which occur during aging. Such housing needs to be in decent condition, affordable, and to provide the necessary services to allow residents to maintain an independent lifestyle. (Consolidated Plan, 2000)

A housing unit is considered affordable if the amount of income expended on housing is 30% or less of a person's gross income. The affordability of senior housing is a growing concern of Amherst residents. Census data from 1990 reveals that out of the 2,892 renter-occupied housing units occupied by the elderly (65 years of age and older), fifty-four percent spent 30% or more of their income on housing expenses. Of the 6,432 owner-occupied

housing units occupied by the elderly, twenty percent spent 30% or more of their income on housing expenses. These statistics show a strong need for affordable senior housing, especially rental housing.

Since 1990 400 apartments for seniors have been built, and 500 more were in the development pipeline at the end of 1999. (Consolidated Plan, 2000)

9.2.3 Public and Assisted Housing

The most severely cost-burdened population group in Amherst is very low income renter households. As noted earlier, the top two priorities in the Consolidated Plan's Five-Year Strategy involve rental assistance to the elderly and lower income households.

The Town of Amherst does not have a public housing authority. However, the Assisted Housing Inventory in the Consolidated Plan lists 3,567 units as well as 234 beds in Amherst which receive some form of financial assistance from the federal and state governments. Funds are provided for a variety of purposes, including rent subsidies, sponsorship of affordable housing projects, and moderate rehabilitation and repairs. All of the developments represented in the figures above are reported to have extensive waiting lists and no vacancies. (Consolidated Plan, 2000)

9.2.4 Homelessness

There is little documentation of homelessness within the Town of Amherst. People in need of shelter tend to gravitate toward the City of Buffalo where services are more centralized and accessible. Therefore, the Consortium Towns of Amherst, Cheektowaga, and Tonawanda approach the homeless issue with the intent to understand the dimensions of the problem within their towns and in the surrounding communities of Erie County, and to determine how the Consortium can best participate in effecting positive solutions to address the identified need.

The result of this approach is an understanding that the nature of homelessness in the Consortium towns rests with the inability of low income households to compete in the open market for an ever shrinking number of affordable units. This, in turn, has led to a focus on the increasing population at risk of becoming homeless.

Based on the personal and professional observations of administrators of public and private service agencies in the area, the homeless within the Consortium towns can be characterized as runaway youth, victims of domestic violence, substance abusers, and the temporarily unemployed. Due to an increase in the number of reported instances of domestic violence, the number of suburban women and children seeking assistance to escape abuse has risen steadily. This situation is exacerbated by landlord evictions of families unable to pay rising rents. While there are sufficient emergency shelter beds in the region to accommodate the needs of the single homeless population, there are not enough to meet family needs. According to a survey of emergency shelters during the summer of 1994 conducted by the

Erie County Commission of Homelessness, an average of 35% of the persons staying in shelters were members of families. (Consolidated Plan, 2000)

There is also an apparent need for transitional housing programs. Homeless in need of a transitional housing setting in order to prepare for a fully independent living include runaway youth, victims of domestic violence, and the temporarily unemployed. This transitional housing would be affordable, permanent housing within which appropriate support services are provided. When services are no longer needed, the person can continue to reside in that unit independently. (Consolidated Plan, 2000)

9.2.5 Special Needs Population - Non-Homeless

The 1990 Census does not provide the specific housing and population data required to establish housing assistance needs for persons with mental, physical and developmental disabilities or persons with AIDS. To address this issue, local service providers were asked to estimate the special needs population in the Consortium towns. The responses indicate that the housing needs of these special populations throughout Erie County are significant, but that with the assistance of the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, an increasing array of housing options are being provided. In the Town of Amherst these include 46 community residences operating or under development, an apartment building, and an Individual Residential Alternative with a total of 252 beds. Operators of these facilities include the United Cerebral Palsy Association, West Seneca Developmental Disabilities Services, People, Inc., and HUD. (Consolidated Plan, 2000)

The other non-homeless special needs population well-represented in Amherst is the elderly (see Section 9.2.2).

9.3 NEIGHBORHOODS

Based on public input received in the planning process to date, one attribute of Amherst that residents value is the diversity of the Town's neighborhoods. These neighborhoods range from areas with a "traditional" neighborhood design near the City of Buffalo (e.g., Eggertsville and Snyder) to newer suburban areas such as East Amherst to the still largely rural North Amherst. The current pattern of neighborhoods reflects the twentieth century development of Amherst, first as an "inner ring" suburb and then in a northerly direction away from Buffalo, a trend that accelerated with the establishment of the North Campus of the University at Buffalo and the Audubon New Community in the 1970s. This development replaced the nineteenth century pattern of a largely agricultural community with villages and hamlets. Vestiges of the historic pattern remain in the Village of Williamsville, which was incorporated in 1850 and served as Amherst's traditional center, and in smaller historic settlements such as Getzville and Swormville.

Chapter 3.0 (Land Use and Development) includes a description of existing land use, zoning, and neighborhoods throughout Amherst by Planning Analysis Area. Chapter 11.0 (Focal Planning Areas) also addresses those neighborhoods that fall within the six delineated focal

planning areas. The following provides a summary overview of Amherst's neighborhoods from the older to the newer areas, indicating the general sequence of the Town's growth.[2]

Housing Stock Age – PAA5

Year Built	# Units	% of Total
1980-March 1990	222	1.47%
1970-1979	971	6.41%
1960-1969	2619	17.29%
1950-1959	5008	33.07%
1940-1949	3629	23.96%
1939 or earlier	2696	17.80%
TOTAL	15145	100.00%

Planning Analysis Area 5: Located in the southwest corner of Amherst, PAA5 contains the Eggertsville and Snyder neighborhoods, the Town's oldest neighborhoods outside of the Village of Williamsville. Based on the 1990 U.S. Census, approximately 41.8% of the housing stock in this PAA was developed prior to 1950 and an additional 33.1% was developed in the 1950s. By contrast, only 25.2% of the area's housing was developed after 1960, with the majority of that development (17.3%) occurring in the 1960s. Building permit information indicates that 179 dwelling units (92.7% multi-family) were added in the 1990s.

Housing Stock Age – PAA6

Year Built	# Units	% of Total
1980-March 1990	837	9.71%
1970-1979	1919	22.27%
1960-1969	2367	27.47%
1950-1959	1635	18.97%
1940-1949	677	7.86%
1939 or earlier	1183	13.73%
TOTAL	8618	100.00%

Planning Analysis Area 6: Covering the southeast portion of the Town, PAA6 contains the Village of Williamsville, one of the oldest settlements within Amherst. However, the majority of this area was developed later than the Eggertsville and Snyder neighborhoods; as late as 1970 the portion south of Sheridan Drive outside of the Village was mostly open space, institutional, and vacant lands. The area between Sheridan Drive and Maple Road was a mix of older residential development (including the Dana Heights neighborhood west of Transit Road) and vacant land at that time. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, approximately 49.5% of PAA's housing stock was developed in the 1960s and 1970s, as opposed to 19.0% in the 1950s and 21.6% prior to 1950. Building permit information indicates that 117 dwelling units (66.6% single-family) were added in the 1990s.

Housing Stock Age – PAA3

Year Built	# Units	% of Total
1980-March 1990	1276	24.00%
1970-1979	1839	34.59%
1960-1969	1505	28.31%
1950-1959	498	9.37%
1940-1949	53	1.00%
1939 or earlier	145	2.73%
TOTAL	5316	100.00%

Planning Analysis Area 3: Located in the west central portion of Amherst centered on the North Campus of the University at Buffalo, the neighborhoods in PAA3 were mostly developed in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. These neighborhoods include Maplemere, bounded by Maple Road, Millersport Highway, I-290, and the Westwood Country Club; Willowridge, located between Niagara Falls Boulevard and I-990; and the Audubon New Community, which abuts the campus to the northeast. In addition, considerable multi-family housing has been and continues to be developed along Chestnut Ridge and Sweet Home roads to the south and east of Willowridge. Another isolated neighborhood is Rensch Road, a single, long cul-de-sac to the west of Sweet Home Road south of Chestnut Ridge.

[2] Information for the age of housing stock are based on 1990 U.S. Census data (the latest available) and building permit data for the 1990s provided by the Town of Amherst.

The growth of PAA 3 was largely related to the development of the University at Buffalo and the Audubon New Community; only Maplemere, portions of Willowridge, and Rensch Road were developed prior to 1970. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, 13.1% of the area's housing stock was developed prior to 1960. Approximately 28.3% was developed in the 1960s, 34.6% in the 1970s, and 24% in the 1980s. Based upon building permit data, the area's housing stock grew by an additional 11% (610 units) in the 1990s, with the increase almost entirely due to multi-family development. This was the largest rate of increase of all six PAAs.

Housing Stock Age – PAA4

Year Built	# Units	% of Total
1980-March 1990	2455	34.20%
1970-1979	2285	31.83%
1960-1969	1943	27.07%
1950-1959	318	4.43%
1940-1949	100	1.39%
1939 or earlier	77	1.07%
TOTAL	7178	100.00%

Planning Analysis Area 4: Located in the east central portion of Amherst between Maple Road to the south and the Peanut Line R.O.W. to the north, PAA4 was largely developed in the 1960s (27.1% of the area's housing stock), 1970s (31.8%), and 1980s (34.2%). According to the 1990 U.S. Census, only 6.9% of the housing stock in PAA4 was developed prior to 1960. Building permit information indicates that an additional 485 units, or 6.7% of the number of dwellings in 1990, were developed during the 1990s. Approximately 81% of the units built in the 1990s were multi-family.

PAA4 contains two distinct neighborhood groupings that consist of predominantly single-family dwellings. The first grouping is located generally west of Youngs Road and north of Maple Road. Containing some of the first residential development to occur in PAA4, this area is an extension of a similar pattern located south of Maple Road in PAA2. The second grouping is generally located north of Klein Road on both sides of the Great Baehre Conservation Area. Often referred to as East Amherst, this area contains some of the most expensive housing stock in the Town.

Housing Stock Age – PAA1

Year Built	# Units	% of Total
1980-March 1990	225	7.67%
1970-1979	1282	43.68%
1960-1969	1069	36.42%
1950-1959	200	6.81%
1940-1949	40	1.36%
1939 or earlier	119	4.05%
TOTAL	2935	100.00%

Planning Analysis Area 1: Located in the northwest corner of Amherst, PAA1 is an exception to Amherst's prevalent south to north development trend in that the area's two principal neighborhoods were largely built in the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, much of the area remains undeveloped or has been preserved as public open space. PAA1's neighborhoods are Creekwoods, located west of Sweet Home, north of North French Road, and East of Niagara Falls Boulevard; and Bucyrus Heights, located in the southeast quadrant of the Sweet Home/North French intersection. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, 36.4% of the area's housing stock was built in the 1960s and 43.7% in the 1970s, as opposed to only 12.2% prior to 1960 and 7.7% in the 1980s. Building permit information indicates that only 57 net dwelling units (all single-family) were added in the 1990s.

Housing Stock Age – PAA2

Year Built	# Units	% of Total
1980-March 1990	1719	41.68%
1970-1979	1406	34.09%
1960-1969	333	8.07%
1950-1959	340	8.24%
1940-1949	173	4.19%
1939 or earlier	153	3.71%
TOTAL	4124	100.00%

Planning Analysis Area 2: Covering the northeast portion of Amherst, PAA2 is still largely undeveloped and contains some of the most recent development in Amherst. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, 41.7% of the area's housing stock was constructed in the 1980s and 34.1% in the 1970s, as opposed to 24.2% prior to 1970. Building permit information indicates that an additional 279 units, or 6.8% of the number of dwellings in 1990, were developed during the 1990s. Approximately 61% of the units built in the 1990s were single-family and 39% were multi-family.

The predominant residential neighborhood in PAA2 is Ransom Oaks area, located generally north of North French Road, east of Millersport Highway, and south of Smith Road. Ransom Oaks was the first significant subdivision development to occur in northeast Amherst. Areas south of North French Road and east of Hopkins Road have experienced the most recent development in PAA4 (East Amherst).

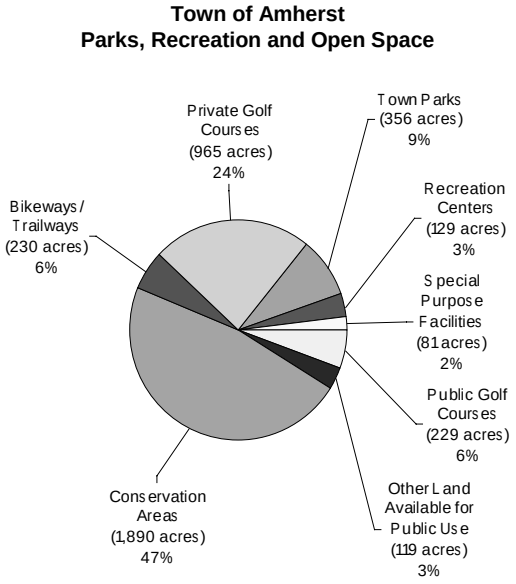
10.0 Community Facilities and Services

The Town of Amherst has excellent community facilities and services. In public input forums held for the Comprehensive Plan, residents have consistently rated public schools, police protection, parks and recreation, and other facilities and services as a major contributor to Amherst's high quality of life. Community facilities and services addressed in this chapter include:

1. Facilities and services provided or owned by the Town of Amherst (parks and recreation, police protection, libraries, senior services, youth services, and other municipal facilities)
2. Key facilities and services provided to the public by entities other than the Town (public schools, fire protection, and health facilities)

Parks and recreational areas in the Town of Amherst are shown in Figure 18. Other community facilities are shown in Figure 19.

While the current provision of community facilities and services in the Town is generally good, some significant issues will need to be addressed in the future. Many of these issues involve future facility development needed to maintain levels of service for residents as Amherst grows and matures. Although projections indicate that population will increase at a moderate rate (9 to 19% in a 20-year period), the cumulative effects of growth spread over a larger geographic area will create the need for expanded or new facilities such as park/recreation facilities, a library, school(s), and fire station(s). The capital and operating costs associated with expansion of existing facilities and development of new ones will affect the Town's fiscal situation. Issues related to specific types of facilities and services are noted in the following text.



10.1 MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES

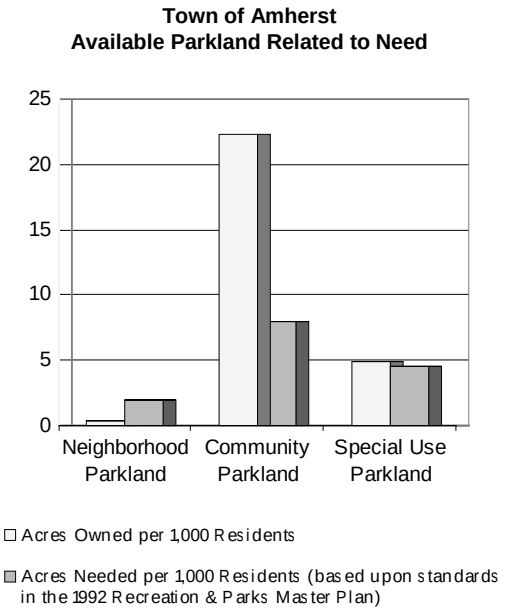
10.1.1 Parks and Recreation

The Town of Amherst offers a variety of park and recreational facilities for residents. Approximately 12% of the Town's land area or 4,000 acres is currently designated for recreation and open space uses such as parks, recreation areas, conservation areas, bikeways and trailways, and golf courses.

The Town adopted a Recreation & Parks Master Plan in 1992. The Plan laid out the policy initiatives and projects that should be pursued to meet the park

and recreation needs of residents to the year 2010. Many of the plan's proposals, for example development of the Amherst Pepsi Center with four indoor rinks, have been implemented. The Town is currently embarking on an update to the 1992 Plan, which will evaluate and update needs for park and recreational facilities over the next 10 years and beyond.

The 1992 Recreation & Parks Master Plan established standards for the provision of recreational facilities (ballfields, courts, pools, playgrounds, etc.). The plan also set an overall standard of 15 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. While the standards will be revisited in the Master Plan update, they provide a good measure as to how well the Town has been performing in meeting its park, recreational, and open space objectives. Based upon the 2000 population of 116,510, publicly accessible parks and open spaces (excluding private golf courses) in the Town total approximately 3,034 acres, or 26.0 acres/1,000 persons, well in excess of the parkland acreage standard.



In addition to the overall parkland standard, the 1992 Plan also set standards for neighborhood, community, and "special use" parkland of 2 acres, 8 acres, and 4.5 acres, respectively, per 1,000 residents. Based on these standards, the Town has a relatively small amount of neighborhood-level parkland, 0.4 acres per 1,000 residents. The current amount of community parkland – 22.3 acres per 1,000 residents – is well in excess of the standard. This reflects the Town's success in preserving open space and acquiring parkland, following policy direction initially established by the 1988 Open Space Acquisition Plan. The amount of special or single-use parkland is close to the standard set in the 1992 Plan.

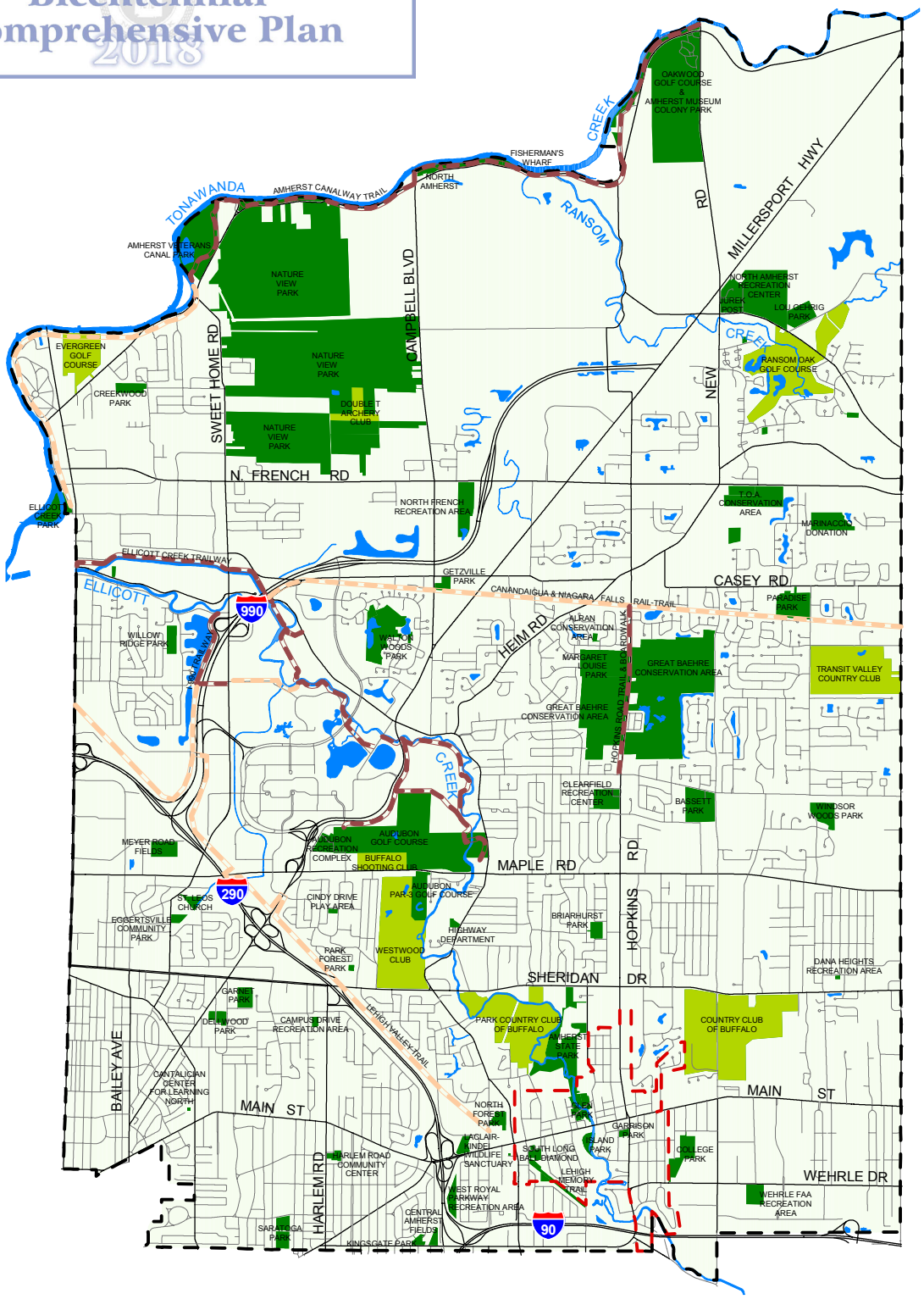
As shown in Figure 18, parks and open spaces are generally distributed throughout the Town, but fewer are located in the southern Planning Analysis Areas (PAA 5 and PAA 6).

The Town has begun to address this shortage with the acquisition and development of land within these areas. Major recent accomplishments include acquisition with the State of New York of the Amherst State Park in Williamsville, and recent designations and pending development of Eggertsville Community Park and Saratoga Park. Another significant acquisition was the 1,265-acre Nature View Park in Northwest Amherst.

The Town's 2001-2006 Capital Improvements Program includes a number of Recreation Department projects. From a cost standpoint, the two largest projects are construction of a golf driving range at the Audubon Golf Course ($1.4 million) and improvements to Bassett Park ($780,000). Another significant project is $145,000 in funding to begin planning for a community center in the Eggertsville area. In addition to the Recreation & Parks Master Plan

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan

1818 2018



Park and Recreation Areas

FIGURE 18

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

- Park and Recreation Area
- Private Recreation Areas
- Recreational Trail
- Planned Recreational Trail
- Surface Water Body
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Municipal Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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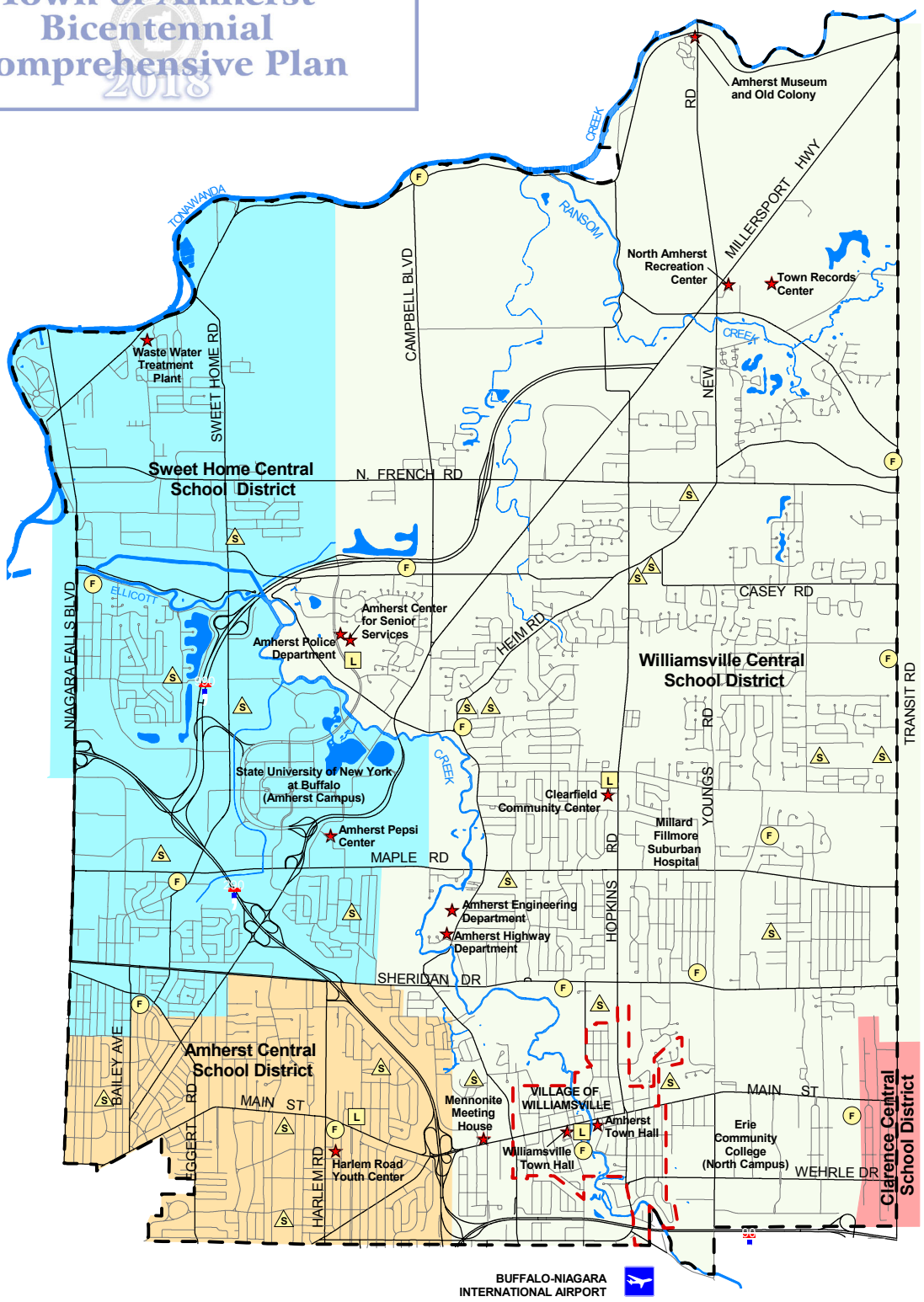
0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 1.25

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

FIGURE 19

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

- Town Facilities
- Library
- Fire Station
- Public School

School District Boundary

- Amherst Central
- Clarence Central
- Sweet Home Central
- Williamsville Central

- Municipal Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Surface Water Body

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Map Compiled by URS Corporation

N

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 1.25

Update, two important planning projects are master plans to determine the future uses of Nature View and Amherst State Parks.

10.1.2 Police Protection

The Town of Amherst is known for its low crime rate. Based upon an analysis of 1999 FBI crime data for 207 metropolitan areas, researcher Scott Morgan of *America's Safest Cities* ranks Amherst as the "Safest City in America." Amherst has claimed the number one ranking in three of the last four years. On an overall basis, crimes against persons have decreased in the Town but property crimes have increased. Police protection is provided by a force of 151 sworn officers, substantially lower than the number in many communities of the same size.

Members of the community have expressed concern regarding the potential for increased crime in the Eggertsville area. However, this area has not experienced appreciably higher crime rates in recent years compared to the rest of Amherst. Nevertheless, the Police Department identifies the potential for increasing crime as an issue that should be monitored in the future.

The Town's police station was constructed in 1979. Located at the municipal complex on the John James Audubon Parkway, it is still generally adequate to serve the department's space needs, although the police chief notes that additional space is likely to be required in the future. A more immediate need has been identified for a 3,100 square foot addition to the nearby Court Building to accommodate processing space, cells, and additional parking.

10.1.3 Libraries

The Amherst Public Libraries are part of the Erie County library system. Although the County is responsible for funding salaries of library personnel and other operating expenses, for the purposes of this chapter they are considered municipal facilities because the Town of Amherst owns and maintains the buildings. Hennen's American Public Library Ratings (HAPLR) rates the Amherst Public Libraries as among the top 12 systems in the U.S. that serve communities with populations between 100,000 and 250,000. The HAPLR system is based on 15 factors focused on circulation, staffing, materials, reference services, and funding levels.

The Amherst Main Library is located at the municipal complex on the John James Audubon Parkway. Three branch libraries are located in East Amherst (Clearfield), Snyder, and Williamsville. A recent library facilities plan found the existing buildings to be in generally good condition; minor improvements identified in the plan, such as upgraded lighting, are currently being implemented.

The Town's Capital Improvements Program includes construction of a new branch library in the Ransom Oaks area as a long-range project to serve residents of Northeast Amherst who currently have to drive to the Clearfield branch.

10.1.4 Senior Services

The Town recently constructed a new Senior Center at the municipal complex on the John James Audubon Parkway. Opened in August 2000, the new center replaced and consolidated the functions of several facilities, including a main building at Union Road and Main Street, adult daycare at Clearfield, a satellite facility on Harlem Road, and offices at Town Hall. At 53,000 square feet, the new center is expected to accommodate the facility needs of the Senior Services Department for the foreseeable future.

Some residents have expressed concerns regarding the effects of relocating the center to a more remote location on senior citizens in the southern part of Town. The site of the new center was selected because it is more centrally located in the Town, is better situated to serve the growing senior population in Central and North Amherst, and allows all of the senior service functions to be housed in one building, which is more cost-effective than operating satellite facilities. Van service is provided for seniors who are unable to drive to the center.

10.1.5 Youth Services

The Amherst Youth Board offers varied services in support of the Town's children, youth, and families. These services include after-school child care and after-school, evening, and weekend programs. As of January 2001, these services were accommodated in three town-owned buildings (Harlem Road Community Center, Amherst Pepsi Center, and Clearfield Community Center) and one privately-owned building (Christian Central Academy).

The after-school programs are administered as partnerships with the three school districts to address the needs of working families with children who return home from school to empty houses. The Harlem Road Community Center program serves approximately 40 children a day in the Amherst Central School District. The Pepsi Center serves approximately 55 children a day in the Sweet Home School District. The Williamsville School District is served by the Christian Central Academy site (about 55-60 children) and the Clearfield Community Center (about 30-35 children).

The most immediate space need identified by the Youth Board is a facility to replace the Christian Central Academy that will become unavailable in September 2001. From a longer term perspective, the five-year Strategic Plan recently completed by the Youth Board identifies the establishment of satellite youth centers in designated high-need areas, particularly Eggertsville, as an objective. Other Strategic Plan objectives include increasing the number of families served by 10% and maintaining a level of external funding at 45-50% of the operating budget. Over the long term, the Youth Board Director identifies a potential need for new facilities in Northwest and Northeast Amherst to serve the increasing number of families in that area.

10.1.6 Other Municipal Facilities

In addition to utility and infrastructure components (see Chapter 8.0), other Town of Amherst facilities include the Town Hall in Williamsville and the Engineering/Highway Department administrative and operational facilities on North Forest Road. According to the Amherst Town Hall Expansion Study completed in 2000, expansion of Town Hall is needed because of overcrowding of the administrative functions that occupy the building. The study notes that although the consolidation of the Tax Department and Town Clerk's office and the creation of a Public Reassessment Office at an off-site location have provided some relief, "additional office and storage space is still desperately needed." The study identifies a need for an additional 20,000 square feet to properly accommodate the departments that are currently located within the existing Town Hall.

10.2 OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

10.2.1 Public Schools

The Town of Amherst is served by four separate public school districts: Amherst Central School District, Sweet Home Central School District, Williamsville Central School District, and Clarence Central School (see Figure 19). The Town's three major school districts, Amherst Central, Sweet Home Central, and Williamsville Central, rank consistently above average in student performance as measured by the New York State School Report Card and are a source of pride for residents. Public schools located in Amherst include:

Amherst Central
Amherst Central High School
Amherst Central Middle School
Smallwood Drive Elementary
Windermere Boulevard Elementary

Sweet Home Central
Sweet Home High School
Sweet Home Middle School
Heritage Heights Elementary
Maplemere Elementary
Willow Ridge Elementary

Williamsville Central
East High School
North High School
South High School
Casey Middle School
Heim Middle School
Mill Middle School
Transit Middle School
Country Parkway Elementary

Dodge Elementary
Forest Elementary
Heim Elementary
Maple East Elementary
Maple West Elementary

All three of Amherst's major school districts have prepared Long-Range Facilities Plans which reflect their varying needs. Amherst Central serves a largely built-out area and has been experiencing stable to slightly increasing enrollment levels. Facility issues have largely centered on the adequacy of buildings originally constructed in the 1930s (Amherst Central High School) or the 1950s (the remaining three schools) for modern space needs; major renovations/ additions to the high school and elementary schools have been completed. The District's administrative offices are currently located in the Middle School in space that may be needed in the future for additional classrooms.

The Sweet Home Central School District, which serves both Amherst and Tonawanda, has experienced stable to slightly increasing enrollment levels, a trend which is projected to continue over the next five years. In March 2000, the School District passed a $29.4 million renovation project that is expected to address building needs for the foreseeable future.

Williamsville Central is the Town's largest school district, encompassing the eastern portion of Amherst as well as parts of Clarence and Cheektowaga. In 2000, the total enrollment in the District was 10,360 (compared to 3,221 in Amherst Central and 3,973 in Sweet Home). According to Williamsville Central's Long-Range Facilities Plan dated December 1999, enrollment levels are projected to remain stable or slightly decline over the next five or more years. The plan identifies renovations needed to each of the existing schools but no major new facility needs. In addition to the existing schools, the School District owns four undeveloped sites, three of which are identified by the plan as readily adaptable for construction if a school or schools are needed in the future.

Despite generally stable projections for the next five years, school district enrollments over the long term will be affected by residential development, particularly in Williamsville and Sweet Home, which are projected to experience population increases during the next 20 years. Although Amherst Central is not expected to see an increase, some additional enrollment could occur in neighborhoods where subsidized housing is available, as has been the case with the Princeton and Allenhurst Court developments in the Eggertsville area. Increased enrollments affect the need for expanded or new facilities and services.

School district taxes represent a significant portion of the local tax burden and are a concern to many residents. The average cost of educating a student in 1997-1998 (the latest figures available through the New York State School Report Card) was $9,373, $9,965, and $10,030, respectively in the Williamsville, Amherst Central, and Sweet Home School Districts, compared to the state average of $9,810. The proportion of school costs funded by residential taxpayers is tied to the amount of state aid (which has been declining) and the size of the non-residential tax base within the school districts. In recent years tax increases in the three school districts have generally been at or below the rate of inflation.

10.2.2 Fire Protection

Fire protection in the Town of Amherst is provided by 10 volunteer fire departments: two independent commission districts and eight fire protection districts (including Williamsville). These departments operate a total of 13 fire stations in the Town. Current fire protection and emergency services are good as measured by facility and equipment conditions, response times, and insurance ratings. The effectiveness of the individual departments is enhanced by an automatic mutual aid system. Issues of potential concern for the future as identified by the fire chiefs include:

- Emergency response times could be affected by increasing traffic congestion.
- It may become more difficult to attract adequate numbers of volunteers to meet fire protection staffing needs.

10.2.3 Health Care Facilities

A health care facility of regional significance, the Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital, is located on Maple Road in the Town of Amherst. Part of the Kaleida regional health care system, Millard Fillmore is a 197-bed facility that is highly rated in terms of the quality of health care provided. The hospital was expanded in 1995 and is currently operating at 100% capacity due to growing demand for health care services from a surrounding suburban population that is both increasing in numbers and growing older. Kaleida is currently considering options to meet an anticipated continuing increase in demand for services at Millard Fillmore.

11.0 Focal Planning Areas

Focal Planning Areas are smaller geographic areas within the Town of Amherst with special planning challenges that deserve a closer level of scrutiny in the Comprehensive Plan. In addition to town-wide policies for elements such as land use, transportation, and natural resources, the Comprehensive Plan will include planning strategies to address issues specific to these areas. Potential Focal Planning Areas were identified and evaluated based upon the following criteria:

- Areas that are experiencing or are likely to experience change that suggests the need for more specific analysis and definition of strategies for the future
- Areas that have significant planning opportunities or issues that could be positively influenced through targeted actions by the Town
- Areas that are or could be a focus of community activity and identity

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee identified the following six Focal Planning Areas to be addressed in the Plan (Figure 20):

1. Northwest Amherst
2. North Amherst
3. University
4. Eggertsville
5. Snyder
6. Williamsville

This chapter provides an overview of existing conditions and key issues for each of these six areas, including land use and zoning, socioeconomic characteristics, transportation[1], and infrastructure. In addition, Tables 11-1 and 11-2 in the Appendix provide a summary of demographics by focal planning area using census tract approximations.[2]

[1] The information on transportation presented for each focal planning area includes average annual daily traffic counts available from the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC). These counts are for the latest available year and many not reflect traffic improvements or other changes subsequent to the year of observation.

[2] For the purpose of analyzing socioeconomic characteristics, the best available data are at the census tract level. Since the boundaries of the focal planning areas are not identical with those of census tracts, the closest approximation of census tracts has been used. Each section and table in this chapter therefore references the census tracts that each area most closely matches.

11.1 NORTHWEST AMHERST

11.1.1 Existing Conditions Overview

Most of the Northwest Amherst Focal Planning Area is bounded by Sweet Home Road to the east, Tonawanda Creek Road to the north/northwest, Niagara Falls Boulevard to the west, and the Northern Diversion Channel of Ellicott Creek to the south. In addition, it includes two residential areas located east of Sweet Home Road (Figure 21).

A. Land Use and Zoning Characteristics

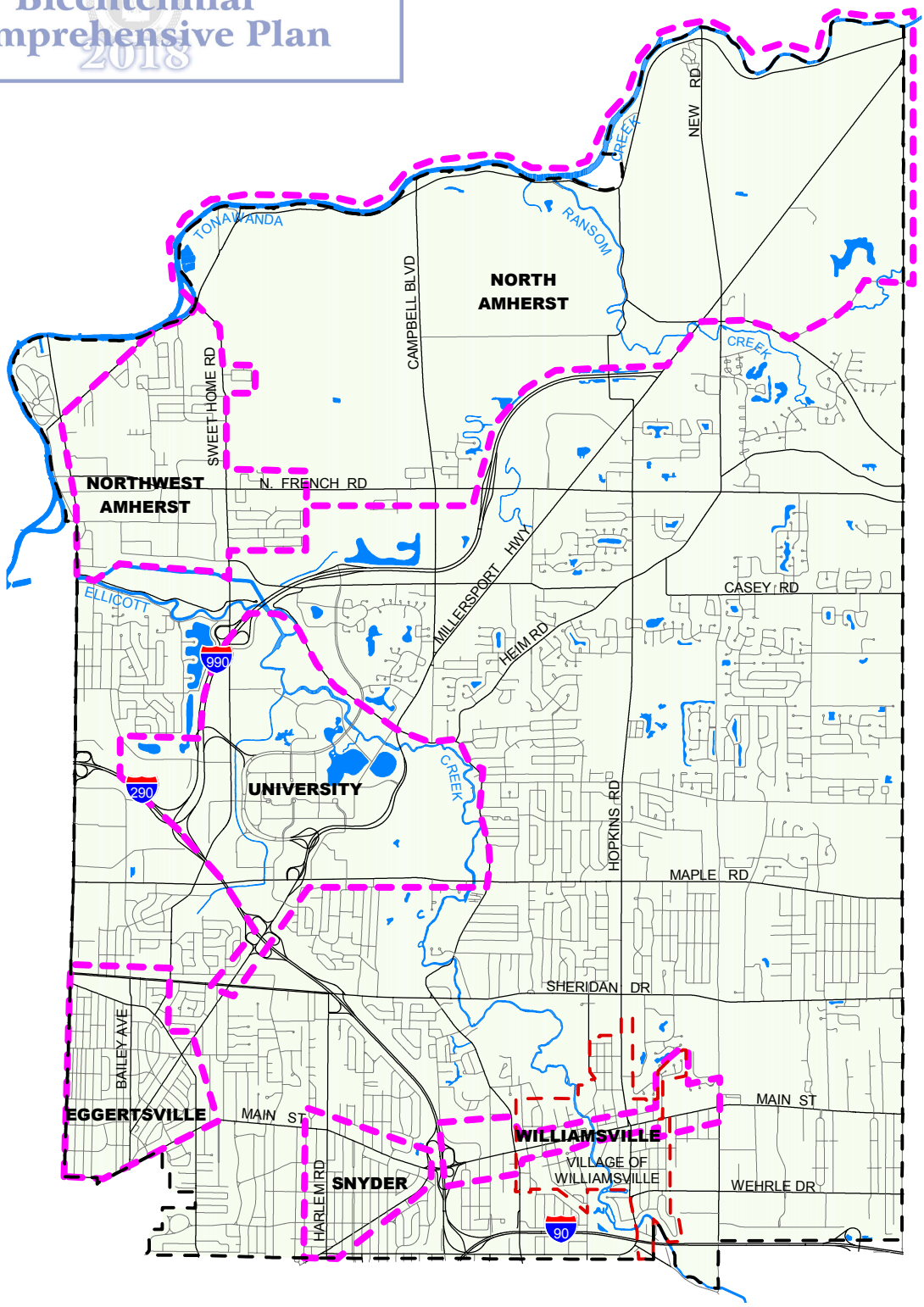
The Northwest Amherst Focal Planning Area contains several distinct land use zones. Automobile-oriented retail commercial uses are concentrated along Niagara Falls Boulevard. Mixed office and light industrial uses are found south of North French Road and in the Northpointe flex office development on the north side of North French and west of Sweet Home Road. The remainder of the planning area is largely a mixture of single-family, two-family, and multi-family residential development. (The latter use is concentrated in newer apartment/condominium development along the southern portion of Sundridge Drive). The two portions of the planning area located east of Sweet Home Road are largely single-family residential, mixed with two-family dwellings in the Bucyrus Heights neighborhood south of North French Road.

There is a significant amount of vacant land remaining in the Northwest Amherst Focal Planning Area, some of which is under development for residential use. The Town of Amherst Wastewater Treatment Plant is located between Tonawanda Creek Road and Glenhaven Drive directly abutting single-family and two-family residential lots. Community facilities include a small neighborhood park, Creekwood Park, located off Sundridge Drive next to the Water Pollution Control Facility, and the Heritage Heights Elementary School, located on the east side of Sweet Home Road next to Bucyrus Heights.

Similar to the prevalent land use pattern, a mix of zoning districts apply to the Northwest Amherst Focal Planning Area. The office/industrial area south of North French Road and the Northpointe development north of North French Road are largely zoned Research-Development (RD). The predominant commercial zoning along Niagara Falls Boulevard is General Business (GB). Residential portions of the planning area are zoned R-3 or Agricultural Residential (SA) for single-family use, R-4 for two-family use, or MFR-5 for multi-family use. The Wastewater Treatment Plant and Creekwood Park are zoned Community Facilities (CF). The two largest remaining undeveloped parcels in the planning area are zoned Suburban Agricultural Residential (SA) and CF, respectively. (The CF-zoned parcel is owned by the Sweet Home School District.)

B. Socioeconomic Characteristics

The Northwest Amherst Focal Planning Area is roughly equivalent to Census Tract 91.07 and Block Group 2 in Tract 91.06. This area's population was about 7,300 in 1990 and declined by 3.1 percent from 1990 to 2000. Its 1990 average household size of 2.92 was considerably higher than the town-wide average of 2.56, indicating a high concentration of families with children. In fact, 30 percent of this area's population is under the age of 18, and just 12 percent of its residents are older than 55. The 1999 average household income of



Focal Planning Areas

FIGURE 20

REVISED - MAY 2001

LEGEND

- Focal Planning Area Boundary
- Surface Water Body
- Village of Williamsville Boundary
- Municipal Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst

Focal Planning Area Data provided by Wallace Roberts & Todd LLC.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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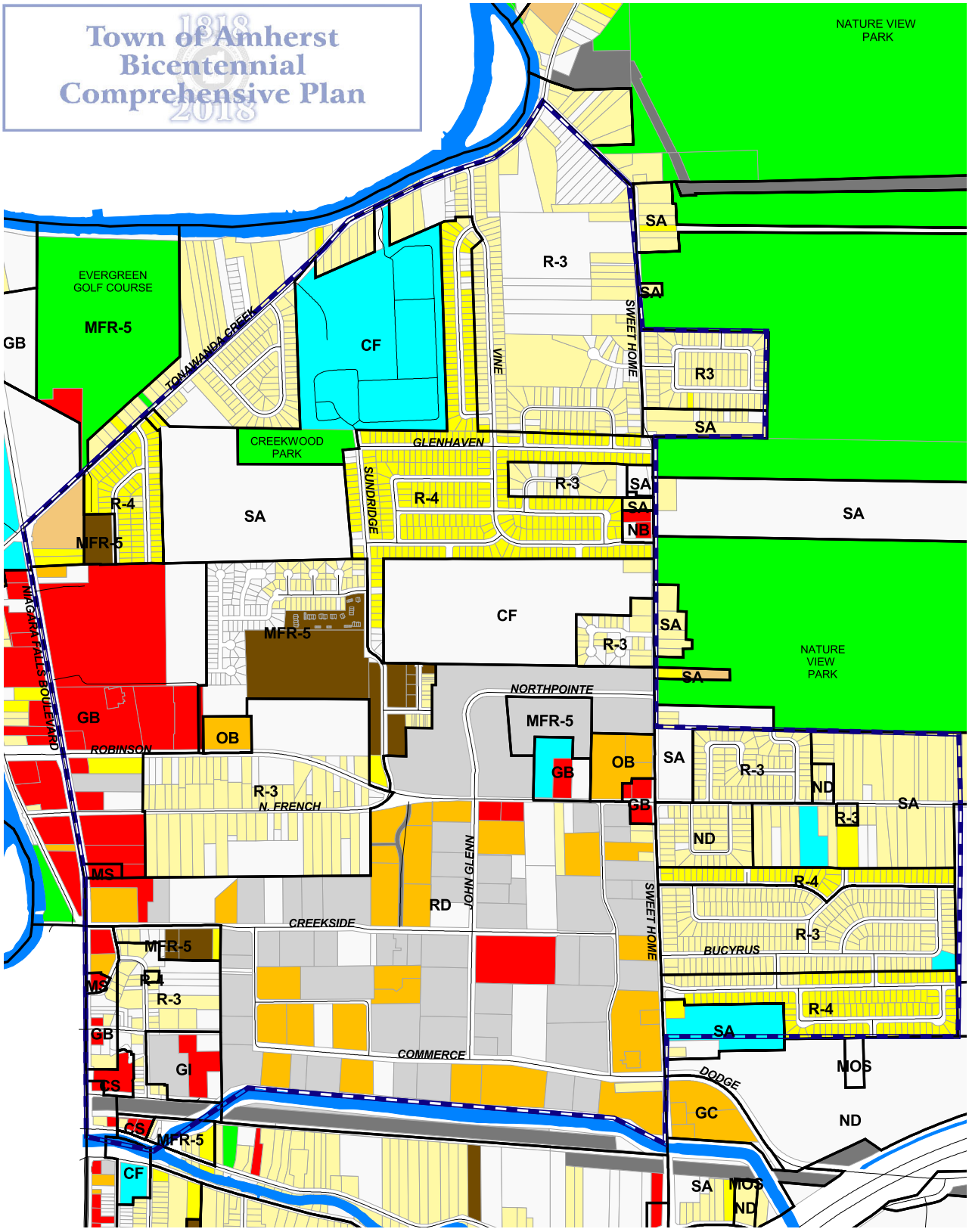

FIGURE 21

NORTHWEST AMHERST FOCAL PLANNING AREA

REVISED - SEPTEMBER 2001

LEGEND

- Agricultural Land
- Single-Family Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Recreation and Open Space
- Public/Semi-Public
- Utilities
- Vacant Land
- R-3 Zoning
- Surface Water Body
- Focus Area Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst.

Zoning data last revised Spetember 2000.
Land Use data last revised December 2000.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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Tract 91.07 is a very low $43,600 and its per capita income of just $15,600 is the lowest of any census tract in the Town of Amherst except for the tract containing the University at Buffalo, where all residents are full-time college students.

Another concern for Northwest Amherst is its housing mix. One would expect that an outlying suburban area like Northwest Amherst would be primarily composed of owner-occupied, single-family housing units. However, this area has a very high concentration of two or multi-family rental housing, particularly east of Sweet Home Road. In 1990, only 43 percent of the housing units in Northwest Amherst were single-family units and just 45 percent were owner-occupied. These figures very clearly illustrate the low housing values and transience that affect this focal planning area.

C. Transportation

General patterns of traffic in the Northwest Amherst Focal Planning Area were determined using recent GBNRTC adjusted Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) figures for specific roadway segments. Significant volumes occur on major streets and roads, including principal arterial Niagara Falls Boulevard (NY 62); minor arterials Tonawanda Creek Road (CR 2), North French Road (CR 299) and East Robinson Road (CR 299); and collector Sweet Home Road (CR 301). All available data are summarized in the following table:

NORTHWEST AMHERST TRAFFIC PATTERNS

ROUTE NO.	ROUTE NAME	ROUTE SEGMENT	LANES	PAVT WIDTH	SPEED LIMIT	CLASSIFICATION CODE	DAILY TRAFFIC	OBSERVED YEAR
NY 62	Nia Falls Blvd	N Creek - E Robinson	5	40	45	Principal Arterial	34,500	98
NY 62	Nia Falls Blvd	E Robinson - Town Line	4	64	55	Principal Arterial	25,150	98
CR 2	Tonawanda Creek	N Falls Blvd - Sweet Home	2	32	45	Minor Arterial	15,900	96
CR 299	E Robinson	Town Line - N Falls Blvd	2	31	35	Minor Arterial	10,300	96
CR 299	E Robinson	N Falls Blvd - N French	2	41	40	Minor Arterial	16,900	98
CR 232	N Ellicott Creek	N Falls Blvd - Sweet Home	2	22	35	Minor Arterial	1,000	00
CR 299	N French	E Robinson - Sweet Home	2	41	45	Minor Arterial	22,600	00
CR 299	N French	Sweet Home - Campbell	2	38	45	Minor Arterial	8,900	00
CR 301	Sweet Home	N Ellicott - Commerce	4	59	35	Collector	21,600	98
CR 301	Sweet Home	Commerce - N French	4	49	45	Collector	22,000	00
CR 301	Sweet Home	N French - Tona Creek	2	22	40	Collector	8,500	96

Additional traffic count data are available from GBNRTC and NYSDOT at major intersections that reflect important travel patterns within the focal planning area. Peak turning hour movements and volume percentages for autos, busses, and trucks are available for intersections along Niagara Falls Boulevard, Sweet Home Road, Tonawanda Creek Road, and East Robinson Road. These data, combined with highway geometric conditions and traffic control information can be utilized to determine existing traffic operation conditions, as expressed in terms of Level of Service (LOS).

Evaluation of recent traffic reports has determined that some highway segments operate within the limits of stable flow. However, recent highway reconstruction projects at Niagara Falls Boulevard and Sweet Home Road have not entirely alleviated the high-density traffic conditions and beyond capacity operating levels that eventually lead to flow breakdown during peak periods along these corridors. The section of Niagara Falls Boulevard from

North Ellicott Creek Road to East Robinson Road has one of the highest non-interstate AADT volumes in the entire Town, and traffic flows are interrupted by numerous signalized intersections. Business commuters from the Audubon Industrial Park and Northpointe Development areas converge on North French and Sweet Home Roads to access the nearby I-990 interchanges. The intersections of Sweet Home with North French and Dodge/Commerce exhibit a high level of accident occurrence during peak periods.

Public transportation to Northwest Amherst's industrial parks is available through Metro Bus Route 34 (Niagara Falls Boulevard), which provides direct access from the Main Street Metro Rail Station. Bicyclists and pedestrians in this area have access to major rights-of-way that generally receive "good" ratings, and to the recreational trailway along Tonawanda Creek.

D. Infrastructure

The Northwest Amherst Focal Planning Area is located completely within Amherst Town Sewer District No. 16. As previously noted, the Amherst Wastewater Treatment Plant No. 16 is located along Tonawanda Creek Road. All existing streets have complete utility service, including water, sanitary and storm sewer, power, gas and cable. The only exception is limited sanitary sewer service along Old Niagara Falls Boulevard, a small section along the east side of Niagara Falls Boulevard (under construction), and two segments along Sweet Home Road.

11.1.2 Key Issues

Key issues for the Northwest Amherst Focal Planning Area include the following:

- As noted above, the condition, ownership, and value of housing stock constitute an important issue for Northwest Amherst. Of particular concern is the portion of the planning area closest to the Sewage Treatment Plant.
- The land use pattern in the planning area is fragmented, with residential uses in some cases abutting higher intensity, non-residential development. The single-family lots along North French and Robinson Roads are particularly susceptible to traffic and related impacts from the commercial development to the west and the office/industrial development to the south and east.
- The area lacks community identity and focus on a clearly defined activity center, such as a neighborhood school/park or neighborhood shopping center. This issue is made more important by the relative isolation of the planning area from the rest of Amherst.
- Although much of the residential development in the area is older, the area has experienced significant development in recent years, a trend that will continue given the availability of additional vacant land parcels.
- The section of Niagara Falls Boulevard from North Ellicott Creek Road to East Robinson Road has one of the highest non-interstate AADT volumes in the entire Town and routinely experiences traffic flow breakdown during peak periods.
- A few residential areas are located within Amherst Town Sewer District No. 16 but are not provided a sanitary sewer line to tie into.

11.2 NORTH AMHERST

11.2.1 Existing Conditions Overview

The North Amherst Focal Planning Area is the largest of the six planning areas. It is bounded to the north and east by the Towns of Pendleton and Clarence, respectively. Its western boundary runs along Sweet Home Road, with the exception of two residential developments on the eastern side of the road that are part of the Northwest Amherst Focal Planning Area. From west to east, its southern boundary runs along the south edge of the Bucyrus Heights neighborhood, the North French Road corridor, the Lockport Expressway, Millersport Highway, Smith Road, and Dann Road (Figure 22).

A. Land Use and Zoning Characteristics

The land use pattern in North Amherst is distinctly different from the rest of the Town. In contrast to the development that has occurred throughout the remainder of Amherst, most of the area is distinctly rural in character. The area contains most of the Town's undeveloped land in relatively large lots, including several parcels that remain in active agricultural use. The Town is actively pursuing protection of key undeveloped properties in the area through its Farmland Protection Program (see Section 4.1.6). In addition, the Town has acquired a major open space holding in Nature View Park in the western part of the study area, which at 1,264 acres represents approximately 40% of Amherst's dedicated park and open space lands. The Amherst Museum Colony Park and Oakwood Golf Course, located at Tonawanda Creek and New Roads, together constitute another significant open space resource.

Residential uses in the North Amherst Focal Planning Area largely consist of single-family lots along roadways such as North French, Schoelles, and Smith. Conventional subdivisions with internal streets are confined to a few locations in the southern part of the study area off of North French Road and Campbell Boulevard. Two- and multi-family developments are similarly limited to a few isolated locations. The overall pattern of residential development is one of low density with large, undeveloped parcels often located behind the individual lots. Nevertheless, the homes that line some roadway segments significantly affect visual character as viewed from the road. Roads that retain a significant degree of rural character include:

- Campbell Boulevard between Clearwater Drive and Tonawanda Creek Road
- Dann Road between Smith Road and Transit road
- Hopkins Road between Millersport Highway and Tonawanda Creek Road
- New Road between Smith Road and Tonawanda Creek Road
- Orbit Drive (entire loop off of Tonawanda Creek Road)
- Sweet Home Road between Christine Drive and Tonawanda Creek Road
- Tonawanda Creek Road between Sweet Home Road and Transit Road

Existing commercial uses in the North Amherst Focal Planning Area are small in scale and limited to the Millersport Highway/Transit Road, Millersport Highway/New Road, North French Road/Campbell Boulevard, and Campbell Boulevard/Tonawanda Creek Road intersections. In addition to those previously mentioned, several parks and community facilities are located in the planning area. The largest concentration is situated on the east side of Millersport Highway at Smith Road. This partially developed, 110-acre site includes the North Amherst Recreation Center, Lou Gehrig baseball complex, Town composting facility, Erie County Fire Training Center, the Town Records Center, and Highway Department storage buildings. The Buffalo Destroyers Arena Football team leases the North Amherst Recreation Center as a training center.

North Amherst contains many of the Town's significant natural resources. Nature View Park, for example, contains significant wetland areas (see Figure 6). Much of the area east of Campbell Boulevard is located within the floodplain or floodway associated with Ransom Creek (see Figure 5). Many of the existing homes in this area are located within the 100-year floodplain. In general, a large proportion of North Amherst is characterized by hydric (wet) soils (see Figure 17).

The prevalent zoning throughout much of the North Amherst Focal Planning Area is Suburban Agricultural (S-A), which permits single-family detached dwellings on one-acre lots. Smaller areas (mostly in the southern and eastern portions of the study area) are zoned for higher density residential development, including R-2 (single-family detached at approximately three units/acre), R-3 (single-family detached at approximately 3.5 units/acre), and MFR-5 (multi-family). The primary commercially zoned areas are located at the intersections of Millersport Highway with New/Smith Roads and Transit Road, respectively. Each of these intersections is bordered by a significant amount of vacant, commercially zoned property.

A portion of the North Amherst Focal Planning Area is located in the area covered by the Northeast Amherst Community Development Plan. Adopted by the Town of Amherst Planning Board in 1993, the Northeast Amherst Plan provides a guide for land development in the area bounded by North French Road to the south, Campbell Boulevard to the west, Tonawanda Creek to the north, and Transit Road to the east. This plan designates much of the land located within the North Amherst Focal Planning Area for Agricultural, Rural Residential, or Recreation/Open Space/Wetland uses. An "Integrated Use Area," or mixed-use center, is proposed north of Smith Road at the Millersport Highway/New Road intersection. Uses envisioned for this center include mixed commercial/office development, multi-family, and single-family development west of Millersport Highway and a municipal complex with park and recreational uses east of Millersport Highway. Other uses proposed by the Northeast Amherst Plan for areas located within the North Amherst Focal Planning Area include:

- A commercial node at the Millersport Highway/Transit Road intersection
- Single-family residential south of Schoelles Road along the east side of Campbell Boulevard, extending east to the Lockport Expressway
- Single-family residential to the north of the Integrated Use Area and extending east to Transit Road

Town of Amherst
Bicentennial
Comprehensive Plan
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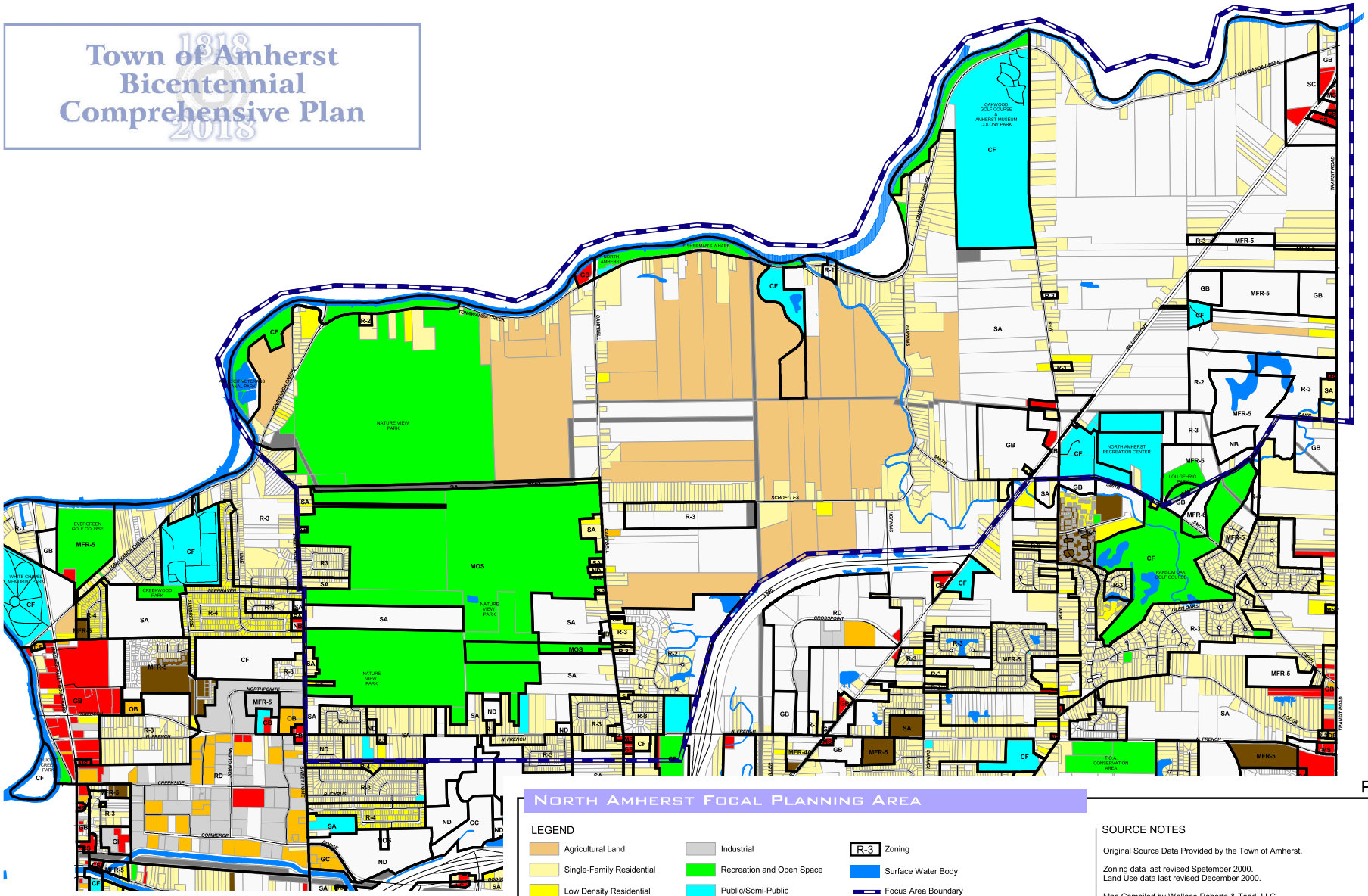

North Amherst Focal Planning Area

FIGURE 22

REVISED - SEPTEMBER 2001

LEGEND

- Agricultural Land
- Single-Family Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Recreation and Open Space
- Public/Semi-Public
- Utilities
- Vacant Land
- R-3 Zoning
- Surface Water Body
- Focus Area Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst.

Zoning data last revised Spetember 2000.
Land Use data last revised December 2000.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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2500 0 2500 Feet

Two current initiatives of significance for North Amherst's future are the Town of Amherst Farmland Protection Program and the joint Town of Amherst and Town of Pendleton Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP). Through the Farmland Protection Program the Town has purchased the development rights to 319 acres of land. Approximately 1,250 acres of land have been identified for ultimate acquisition. Acquisition of development rights will preserve this land and help assure the long-term economic viability of farming in the Town. The LWRP will explore opportunities for resource preservation/enhancement and recreation-related waterfront development along Tonawanda Creek, which forms the border with the Town of Pendleton and of the planning area.

B. Socioeconomic Characteristics

The North Amherst Focal Planning Area includes portions of two Census Tracts: 91.06, Block Group 9 and 90.03, Block Group 4. A sparsely populated area with just 2,653 residents in 1990, the area grew by a modest 2.4 percent from 1990 to 2000. This growth was concentrated in the Tract 90.03 portion of the planning area, located east of Campbell Road, which grew by 16 percent during the 1990s. Tract 91.06, roughly equivalent to the western part of the area between Campbell Road and Sweet Home Road, lost population during the same time, with its population declining by 15 percent during the 1990s.

North Amherst has the largest average household size of the six focal planning areas, with a 1990 average size of 3.11 persons. As with Northwest Amherst, this reflects a sizable population of children, with 31 percent of North Amherst's population being under the age of 18. However, a larger share of North Amherst's population is over the age of 55, with this group accounting for 18 percent of the Town's total.

The overwhelming majority of housing units in North Amherst consists of single-family, owner-occupied homes. In the 1990 Census, 96 percent of this area's housing units were single-family and more than 90 percent of all units were owner-occupied.

C. Transportation

General patterns of traffic in the North Amherst Focal Planning Area were determined using recent GBNRTC adjusted Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) figures for specific roadway segments. Interstate I-990 runs along the southern border of this focal planning area with interchanges at North French Road and the I-990 terminus at Millersport Highway. Significant volumes occur on major streets and roads, including principal arterials Transit Road (NY 78) and Millersport Highway (NY 263) and minor arterials North French Road (CR 299) and Campbell Boulevard (NY 270). All available data are summarized in the following table:

NORTH AMHERST TRAFFIC PATTERNS

ROUTE NO.	ROUTE NAME	ROUTE SEGMENT	LANES	PAVT WIDTH	SPEED LIMIT	CLASSIFICATION CODE	DAILY TRAFFIC	OBSERVED YEAR
I-990	Lockport Exp.	N French – Millersport	4	28	55	Interstate	15,900	99
NY 78	Transit	Millersport – Town Line	5	50	55	Principal Arterial	29,200	98
NY 78	Transit	Wolcott - Millersport	2	24	55	Principal Arterial	12,400	00
NY 263	Millersport	I-990 - Transit	5	60	55	Principal Arterial	19,500	99
NY 270	Campbell	Dodge - N French	2	40	40	Minor Arterial	9,600	00
NY 270	Campbell	N French – Town Line	2	30	40	Minor Arterial	6,900	97
CR 299	N French	Sweet Home - Campbell	2	38	45	Minor Arterial	8,900	0
CR 299	N French	Campbell – I-990	2	38	45	Minor Arterial	11,800	00
CR 186	New	Dodge – Millersport	2	27	40	Collector	1,500	98
CR 186	New	Millersport – Town Line	2	30	40	Collector	3,300	00
CR 297	Smith	Millersport – Transit	2	33	35	Collector	3,000	98
CR 301	Sweet Home	N French – Tona Creek	2	22	40	Collector	4,600	99
CR 2	Tonawanda Creek	Sweet Home - Campbell	2	33	45	Minor Arterial	3,500	00
CR 2	Tonawanda Creek	Campbell - New	2	32	45	Collector	1,000	98
CR 2	Tonawanda Creek	New - Transit	2	28	50	Collector	630	98
CR 87	Hopkins	N French - Millersport	2	28	40	Collector	3,700	96

Additional traffic count data are available from GBNRTC and NYSDOT at major intersections that reflect important travel patterns within the focal planning area. Peak turning hour movements and volume percentages for autos, busses, and trucks are available for intersections along Millersport Highway, Campbell Boulevard, Transit Road, Sweet Home Road, Tonawanda Creek Road, and Hopkins Road. This data, combined with highway geometric conditions and traffic control information, can be utilized to determine existing traffic operation conditions, as expressed in terms of Level of Service (LOS). Evaluation of recent traffic reports has determined that most highway segments operate within the limits of stable flow.

Public transportation to the North Amherst Focal Planning Area is available through Metro Bus Route 44 (Lockport), which provides direct access from the Main Street Metro Rail Station. Bicyclists and pedestrians in this area have access to major rights-of-way receiving "fair" ratings, as well as to the recreational trailway along Tonawanda Creek.

D. Infrastructure

The North Amherst Focal Planning Area has virtually no sanitary sewer service due to subsurface and grade limitations and low population density. Consequently, a large portion of the area is not within an Amherst Town Sewer District. A major utility corridor runs north/south through the focal planning area between Campbell Boulevard and Hopkins Road. The dedicated easement contains power transmission lines, gas distribution lines, and fiber optic lines. All other general service utilities, including power, gas, water, and cable, can be made readily available.

11.2.2 Key Issues

Key issues for the North Amherst Focal Planning Area include the following:

- North Amherst contains much of Amherst's remaining undeveloped land and is highly valued by residents for its open space and "green" character. The Town has preserved significant amounts of open space through easements or outright acquisition and much of the remaining undeveloped land has significant development constraints (presence of wetland, floodplain, and/or hydric soils, lack of public sewer service). Nevertheless, development pressures will likely increase in the future as the remainder of the Town approaches build-out. Continuation of current development patterns will result in erosion of the rural character valued by residents.
- Population projections prepared for this Inventory and Analysis Report indicate that most of the population growth in North Amherst will take place in the area east of Campbell Boulevard. The Northeast Amherst Community Development Plan designated a "Growth Corridor" in the southern portion of this area, including the "Integrated Use Area" at the Millersport Highway/Smith Road/New Road intersection. According to the Plan, the majority of development should be directed to the Growth Corridor, allowing the area to the north to be preserved in rural/agricultural uses.
- The availability of public sewer is a primary determinant of new development. Although a significant portion of North Amherst is not served by public sewer and limitations in grade and subsurface conditions will make extension of sanitary sewer service costly, continued low-density residential development served by on-site sewage disposal systems will be possible where soil conditions permit.

11.3 UNIVERSITY

11.3.1 Existing Conditions Overview

The University Focal Planning Area is located in west-central Amherst in the area generally bounded by the Maple Road corridor to the south, North Forest Road to the east and northeast, the Lockport Expressway (I-990) to the northwest, and I-290 to the southwest (Figure 23). Portions of the Planning Area extend west of 990 along Chestnut Ridge Road and south of 290 along Millersport Highway to the Sheridan Drive intersection.

A. Land Use and Zoning Characteristics

The major land use in the University Focal Planning Area is the north campus of the University at Buffalo (UB), which occupies the central part of the planning area from Sweet Home Road on the west to Millersport Highway on the east. As originally designed in the 1970s, the campus buildings were focused towards the interior of the property and surrounded by a "moat" of open space. Recently the University has been constructing student housing near the perimeter of the campus (e.g., the Hadley Village apartments, opened in August 1999, and additional one, two, and four-bedroom units under construction next to the Audubon Parkway/Millersport Highway intersection). This housing is being developed in accordance with a Master Plan by the Facilities Planning & Design Department to accommodate the greater student population projected to result from the relocation of

undergraduate functions from the south campus in Buffalo. (The number of students living on campus is projected to increase from 4,600 currently to 8,500 by 2005.) The Master Plan identifies the potential for additional housing sites and a commercial center on the north campus.

The remainder of the University Focal Planning Area consists of mixed uses around the periphery of the campus. These land uses include:

- Highway-oriented commercial uses along Maple Road and Millersport Highway south of Maple Road to Sheridan Drive, with a major concentration in the vicinity of the Millersport Highway/I-290 interchange. Uses near the interchange include strip commercial retail, hotels, and office. A vacant parcel next to the interchange is proposed as the site of a new hotel.
- Recreational and open space facilities east of Millersport Highway and north of Maple Road, including the Town's Pepsi Center and Audubon Golf Course and a private shooting club on Maple Road.
- A large, vacant parcel owned by UB east of Millersport Highway and north of the Audubon Golf Course.
- A mix of residential, institutional, and office uses on North Forest Road along the northwestern edge of the campus. These uses are generally compatible with the University setting (e.g., the University Inn and Conference Center, Jewish Community Center, and Weinberg Campus for assisted living).
- Residential, institutional, commercial, and vacant land along Sweet Home Road next to the west edge of the campus. The major institutional uses are Sweet Home High School and the Baird Research Center, a University-sponsored "incubator" facility. Residential uses include a condominium complex, graduate student housing, and single-family housing along Rensch Road. A new apartment complex catering towards University students is proposed on a vacant parcel across from Sweet Home High School. The commercial uses, including a self-storage warehouse, professional office building, and a medical complex, are located near I-290 in the Rensch Road area.
- Condominium apartment complexes and vacant parcels west of the Lockport Expressway along Chestnut Ridge Road.

Existing zoning in the University Focal Planning Area largely reflects existing land uses. The University campus and the vacant property owned by the University east of Millersport Highway are currently zoned New Community District (NCD), intended for development of multi-use neighborhoods. The recreational and open space facilities east of Millersport Road and north of Maple Road are zoned Community Facilities (CF). The land in the vicinity of the Millersport Highway/I-290 interchange has a variety of commercial zoning designations, including Motor Service (MS), Commercial Service (CS), General Business (GB), and Office building (OB). The area west of the University along Sweet Home Road and Chestnut Ridge Road is largely zoned Multi-Family Residential (MFR-5), the largest single concentration of such zoning in the Town of Amherst.

Differences between existing zoning and existing land use are found along Rensch Road and in the North French Road area. Land along Rensch Road is zoned Research-Development (RD), but the predominant use in this area is residential. The current zoning is consistent

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan

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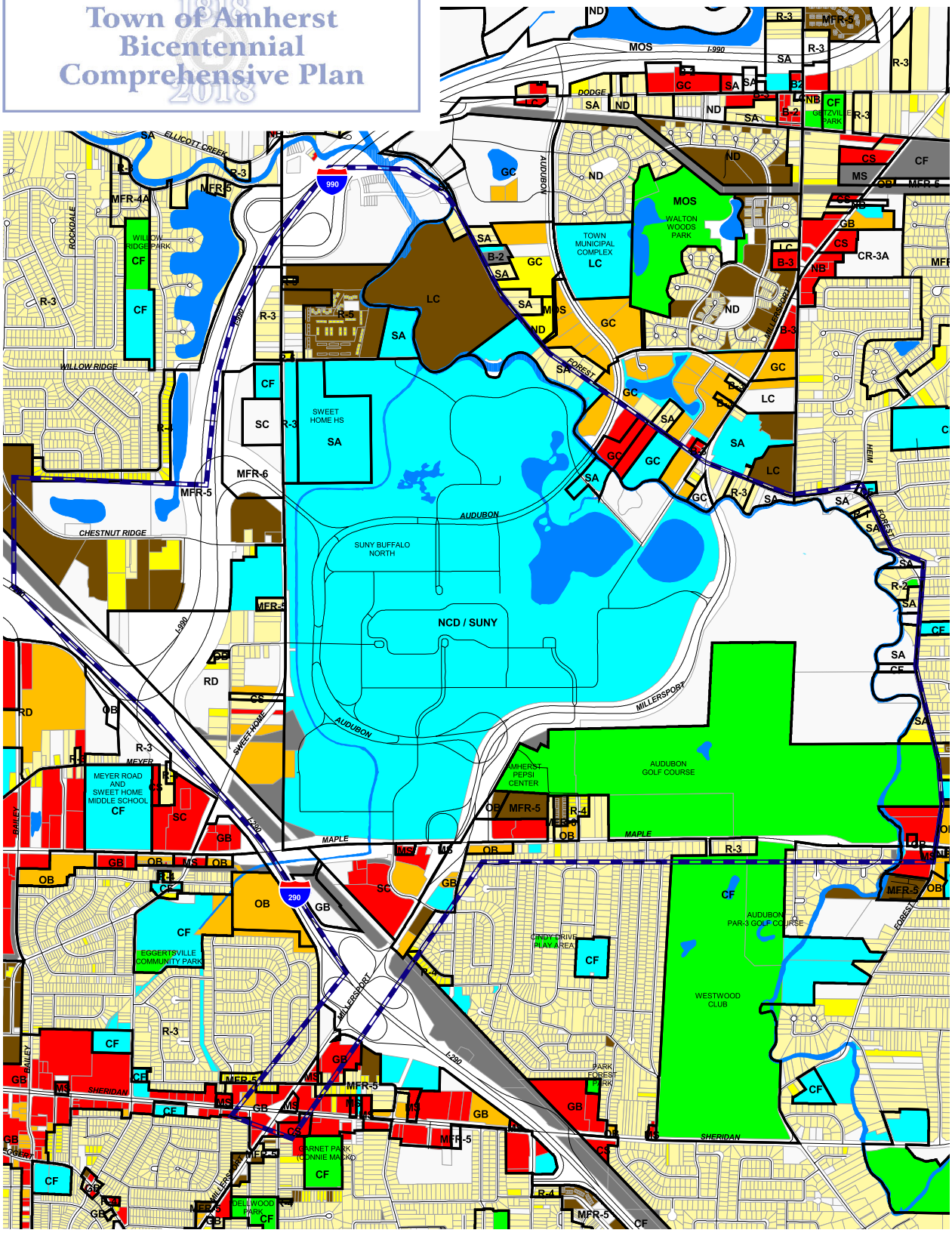

University Focal Planning Area

FIGURE 23

REVISED - SEPTEMBER 2001

LEGEND

- Agricultural Land
- Single-Family Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Recreation and Open Space
- Public/Semi-Public
- Utilities
- Vacant Land
- R-3 Zoning
- Surface Water Body
- Focus Area Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst.

Zoning data last revised September 2000.
Land Use data last revised December 2000.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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1500 0 1500 Feet

with the Future Land Use Plan contained in the 1975 Community Development Plan, which designated the entire area between Sweet Home Road and the Lockport Expressway right-of-way as industrial. The current residential uses are considered transitional as development in the area shifts to industrial. Lands along North French Road are zoned a mixture of Suburban Agricultural Residential (SA) and two commercial zoning categories within the New Community District: Local Center (LC) and General Commercial (GC).

B. Socioeconomic Characteristics

The University Focal Planning Area includes all of Census Tract 91.10, which is comprised entirely of the University at Buffalo campus. This area also includes a significant portion of Census Tract 91.08, which extends from the western edge of the campus to the town line. The entire population of tract 91.10 is comprised of University at Buffalo students living on campus, which accounts for the fact that 41 percent of the area's residents fall in the 18 to 34 age range. Combining this with the high percentage of children in tract 91.08 (35 percent of its population), over 67 percent of the planning area's population is under the age of 35.

Income levels in the planning area are affected greatly by the University. The area's average per capita income in 1999 was about $16,400, but this figure is considerably reduced by the large number of resident full-time students, as evidenced by tract 91.10's average per capita income figure of $4,000. Tract 91.08 has a much healthier average per capita income level of $23,900. Since all residents of the campus live in dormitories, tract 91.10 does not have any households, and therefore its household income levels cannot be estimated. The average household income for tract 91.08 is $52,300.

The overall breakdown of housing in tracts 91.08 and 91.10 is 55 percent multi-family and 45 percent single-family. In reality, the multi-family percentage in the University focal planning area is probably much higher, as the area largely excludes the single-family neighborhoods in tract 91.08. As a function of this high concentration of multi-family housing, the average household size in the focal planning area is very small, with an average of 2.18 persons per household. Owner occupancy is also low in the University area, as just 52 percent of units were owner-occupied in 1990.

C. Transportation

General patterns of traffic in the University Focal Planning Area were determined using recent GBNRTC adjusted Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) figures for specific roadway segments. Interstate I-290 runs along the southwestern border of this focal planning area, with interchanges at I-990 and Millersport Highway. Interstate I-990 runs along the northwestern border of the area and has interchanges at Audubon Parkway and Sweet Home Road. Significant volumes occur on major streets and roads, including principal arterials Sheridan Drive (NY 324) and Millersport Highway (NY 263), minor arterials Maple Road (CR 192) and Audubon Parkway, and collectors Sweet Home Road (952T) and North Forest Road (CR 294). All available data are summarized in the following table:

UNIVERSITY TRAFFIC PATTERNS

ROUTE NO.	ROUTE NAME	ROUTE SEGMENT	LANES	PAVT WIDTH	SPEED LIMIT	CLASSIFICATION CODE	DAILY TRAFFIC	OBSERVED YEAR
I-290	Youngmann Exp	Nia Falls Blvd - I-990	6	120	55	Interstate	97,700	99
I-290	Youngmann Exp	I-990 - Millersport	6	72	55	Interstate	105,700	99
I-990	Lockport Exp	I-290 - UB Access	8	84	55	Interstate	44,900	97
I-990	Lockport Exp	UB Access - Sweet Home	6	72	55	Interstate	39,300	98
I-990	Lockport Exp	Sweet Home - Audubon	6	72	55	Interstate	29,800	99
NY 263	Millersport	Sheridan - I-290	5	60	35	Principal Arterial	24,400	97
NY 263	Millersport	I-290 - Maple	5	23	45	Principal Arterial	33,900	98
NY 263	Millersport	Maple - ACC SUNYAB	4	23	45	Principal Arterial	19,900	99
NY 263	Millersport	ACC SUNYAB - Coventry	4	23	45	Principal Arterial	18,900	97
NY 263	Millersport	Coventry - N Forest	4	23	45	Principal Arterial	18,000	99
NY 324	Sheridan	Sweet Home - Millersport	7		40	Principal Arterial	26,700	96
NY 324	Sheridan	Millersport - Harlem	7	88	40	Principal Arterial	33,000	00
952T	Sweet Home	Maple - Rensch	4	60	45	Collector	15,300	97
952T	Sweet Home	Rensch - Chestnut Ridge	2	43	45	Collector	16,800	98
952T	Sweet Home	Chestnut Ridge - I-990	2	39	45	Collector	13,700	98
	Audubon Pkwy	Millersport - Flint	4	63	40	Minor Arterial		
	Audubon Pkwy	Flint - Rensch	6	111	40	Minor Arterial	4,400	98
	Audubon Pkwy	Rensch - I-990 Ramp	6	101	40	Minor Arterial	14,500	98
	Audubon Pkwy	I-990 Ramp - Frontier	6	79.6	40	Minor Arterial	5,400	00
	Audubon Pkwy	Frontier - N. Forest	4	83	45	Minor Arterial	7,500	98
CR 173	Heim	N Forest - Dodge	2	36	35	Collector	4,500	97
	Klein	N Forest - Hopkins	2	38	35	Collector	9,300	00
CR 192	Maple	Sweet Home - Millersport	4	64	45	Minor Arterial	23,500	97
CR 192	Maple	Millersport - N Forest	5	64	45	Minor Arterial	24,700	98
CR 294	N Forest	Sheridan - Maple	2	30	35	Collector	15,900	99
CR 294	N Forest	Maple - Heim	2	37	35	Collector	13,300	97
CR 294	N Forest	Heim - Millersport	2	36	35	Collector	14,800	97
CR 294	N Forest	Millersport - Audubon	2	28	45	Collector	11,600	98
CR 294	N Forest	Audubon - Weinberg	2	29	45	Collector	4,000	00
CR 294	N Forest	Weinberg - Dodge	2	19	45	Collector	4,000	00

Additional traffic count data are available from GBNRTC and NYSDOT at major intersections that reflect important travel patterns within the focal planning area. Peak turning hour movements and volume percentages for autos, busses, and trucks are available for intersections along Millersport Highway, Maple Road, Sweet Home Road, Flint Road, Audubon Parkway, and North Forest Road. This data, combined with highway geometric conditions and traffic control information, can be utilized to determine existing traffic operation conditions, as expressed in terms of Level of Service (LOS). Evaluation of recent traffic reports has determined that most highway segments operate within the limits of stable flow. However, high-density traffic conditions exist along portions of Maple Road, resulting in operating levels beyond capacity and the eventual breakdown of flow during peak periods.

Public transportation to this area is available through Metro Bus Route 44 (Lockport), which provides direct access from the Main Street Metro Rail Station. Bicyclists and pedestrians in

this area have access to major rights-of-way receiving "good" ratings, as well as to the recreational trailway along Ellicott Creek.

D. Infrastructure

The University Focal Planning Area is located completely within Amherst Town Sewer District No. 16 with the exception of Sheridan Drive south of I-290, which is located in Amherst Town Sewer District No. 1. A major utility corridor runs northwest/southeast through the focal planning area along the I-290 corridor. The dedicated easement contains power transmission lines, gas distribution lines and fiber optic lines. All other general service utilities including power, gas, water, and cable can be made readily available.

11.3.2 Key Issues

Key issues for the University Focal Planning Area include the following:

- The expansion of the student population at the University's north campus will affect traffic, demand for services, etc., in the surrounding area. There will also be increasing demand for off-campus rental housing geared towards students, focused on the multi-family zoned areas along Sweet Home and Chestnut Ridge Roads where a number of vacant parcels remain. These trends will reinforce the transient character of the area's housing stock.
- In the past the University has functioned as a largely self-contained entity having little interaction with the surrounding community. As the University expands, its relationship to adjacent areas will become more and more important with respect to such issues as traffic patterns and the location and physical design of new uses. Thus there will be an increasing need to coordinate Town and University growth policies on issues that affect both entities. An example is the extent to which student housing and supporting commercial services are provided on versus off-campus.
- There is potential for additional economic development spin-off from University research functions similar to the Baird Research Center. The Rensch Road area is zoned Research-Development and the area is designated to transition from current residential uses.
- The land owned by the University east of Millersport Highway is one of the largest vacant properties in the Town south of North French Road. Not needed by the University for its current expansion plans, the future use of this property could have a significant impact on this planning area.
- Segments of Maple Road exhibit high-density traffic conditions leading to breakdown of flow during peak periods.

11.4 EGGERTSVILLE

11.4.1 Existing Conditions Overview

The Eggertsville Focal Planning Area is bounded by Main Street to the south, the Tonawanda town line/Niagara Falls Boulevard to the west, and the Sheridan Drive corridor

to the north. The eastern boundary of the planning area runs generally to the east of Eggert Road from Sheridan Drive to Main Street (Figure 24).

A. Land Use and Zoning Characteristics

The Eggertsville Focal Planning Area contains a diverse mix of land uses. The Eggertsvile community forms the core of the area. One of the Town's older neighborhoods, Eggertsville is completely built and has the character of a traditional, close-in suburb with an interconnected, walkable street network; predominantly single-family residences on relatively small lots, mixed with some two- and multi-family development; and neighborhood-oriented commercial centers. This pattern is overlain by strip commercial development along several of the area's roadway corridors. In addition, the widening of some roadway corridors to accommodate automobile traffic has impacted the pedestrian environment.

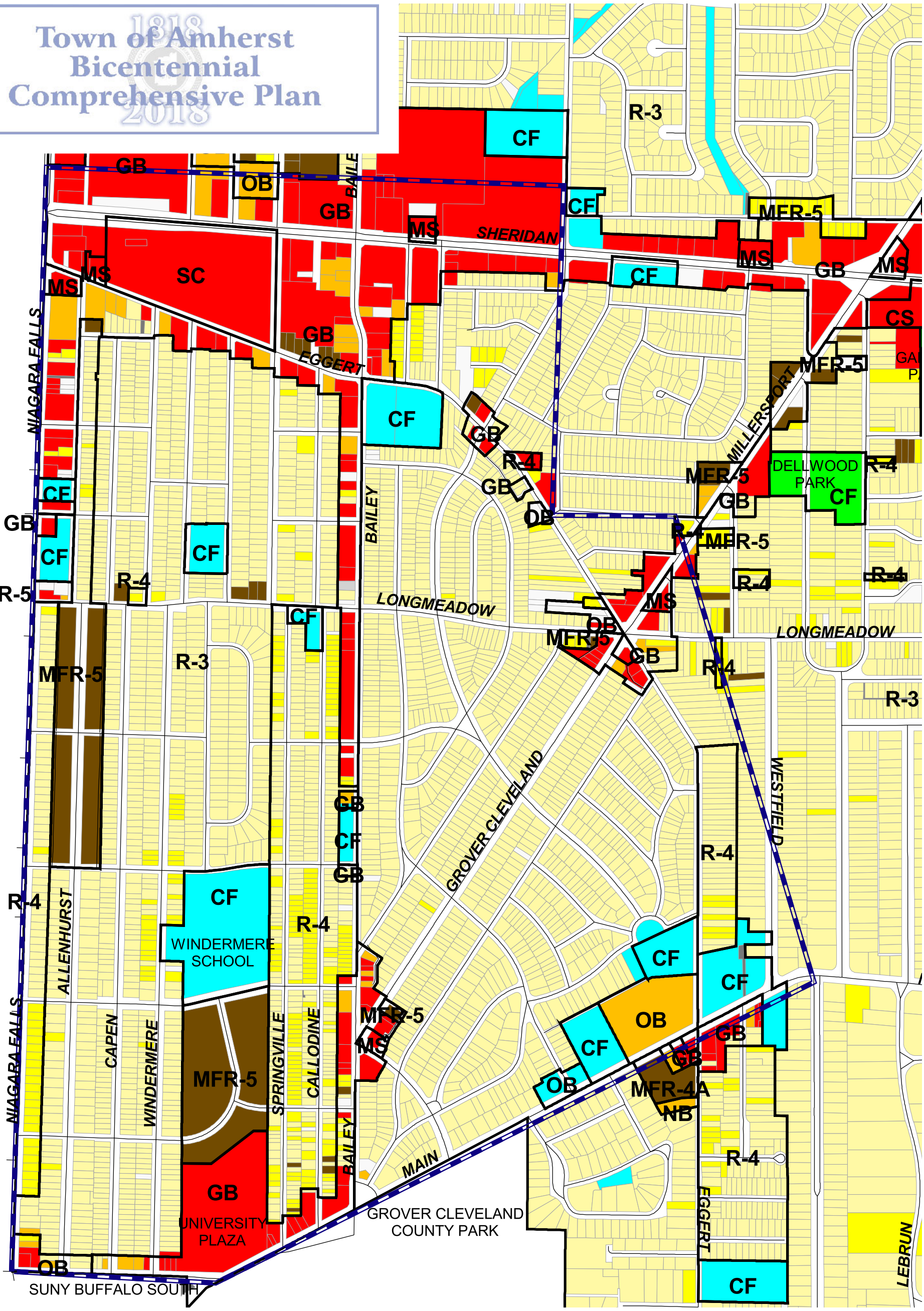
The Eggertsville Focal Planning Area is bisected by Bailey Avenue. East of Bailey Avenue, residential uses are almost entirely single-family, with a few scattered exceptions. The housing stock west of Bailey Avenue is more diverse, consisting of mostly single-family and some two-family dwellings, along with two large apartment complexes, Allenhurst and Princeton Court. Two-family dwellings are concentrated along Springville and Callodine Avenues to the east of Princeton Court. Both Allenhurst and Princeton Court have HUD-insured mortgages and contain a large proportion of Section 8-subsidized housing. The major community facility located in Eggertsville is the Windermere Elementary School, located adjacent to Princeton Court.

The Eggertsville Focal Planning Area contains eight different commercial areas with distinctly different characters. These areas are:

- The west side of Bailey Avenue from Freemont Street to Eggert Road
- The Bailey Avenue/Grover Cleveland Highway Intersection
- The Main Street/Eggert Road intersection
- The "Six Corners" commercial area located at the intersection of Eggert Road, Grover Cleveland Highway/Millersport Highway, and Longmeadow Road
- Niagara Falls Boulevard from Longmeadow Road to Eggert Road
- Main Street/Kenmore Avenue from Bailey Avenue to Niagara Falls Boulevard
- Eggert Road from Bailey Avenue to Niagara Falls Boulevard
- Sheridan Drive from the east boundary of the planning area to Niagara Falls Boulevard

Bailey Avenue: The west side of Bailey Avenue contains older commercial buildings on shallow lots surrounded by residential development. The shallow depth of these lots makes it difficult for potential new development or redevelopment to meet current Town zoning requirements such as setbacks and parking and increases the potential for adverse effects on adjoining residences. The largest lot is occupied by a Harley Davidson sales and service center.

Bailey Avenue/Grover Cleveland Highway: Surrounded by single-family residential development, this area functions as a small commercial center providing neighborhood-



Eggertsville Focal Planning Area

Figure 24

REVISED - SEPTEMBER 2001

LEGEND

- Agricultural Land
- Single-Family Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Recreation and Open Space
- Public/Semi-Public
- Utilities
- Vacant Land
- R-3 Zoning
- Surface Water Body
- Focus Area Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst.

Zoning data last revised Spetember 2000.
Land Use data last revised December 2000.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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oriented retail and service uses at the intersection of several streets. Examples of these uses include a gas station/auto repair shop and a video store.

Main Street/Eggert Road: Located at the first major intersection in Amherst east of the City of Buffalo line, this area possesses the unique character of a neighborhood center that several stakeholders cited as a desirable development pattern in community meetings and visioning sessions. This "node" functions as a community activity center, with uses including neighborhood-oriented businesses, religious institutions (churches, parochial school), and a relatively large office building.

Six Corners: Located at the intersection of three roadways, the Six Corners commercial area contains small, neighborhood- and automobile-oriented retail uses such as gas stations, medical offices, and small restaurants. The fragmented lot pattern created by the unusual intersection configuration has affected the character and viability of this commercial area. Several older structures on or near the intersection are vacant. There are also concerns about the construction and structural condition of single-family residences on narrow lots along Eggert Road and Longmeadow Road near the intersection.

Niagara Falls Boulevard: The east side of Niagara Falls Boulevard in Amherst is fronted by single-family residences from Longmeadow Drive to Kenmore Avenue. The segment north of Longmeadow to Eggert Road contains a linear mix of institutional, professional services, and retail uses. These include older retail buildings with uncontrolled automobile access onto Niagara Falls Boulevard. Commercial uses are also found along the west side of the boulevard in Tonawanda. Niagara Boulevard has been reconstructed and widened, increasing vehicular capacity but impacting the formerly more pedestrian-friendly character of the street.

Main Street/Kenmore Avenue: The Main Street/Kenmore Avenue commercial area is located in the southwest corner of the planning area across from the UB South Campus and Grover Cleveland Park. Traditionally this area served both UB's student population and residents of surrounding neighborhoods. Its market position is changing, however, due to the transfer of undergraduate programs and student housing to the North Campus, shifting demographics in adjacent residential areas, and competition from newer, larger retail centers in other locations. Commercial uses in this area include the University Plaza shopping center, which was recently renovated, and smaller businesses along Main Street and Kenmore Avenue.

Eggert Road: Eggert Road from Bailey Road to Six Corners is predominantly residential, with the exception of a fire station and senior care facility at the Bailey Road intersection and several small commercial establishments further to the east. Uses west of Bailey Road include Northtown Plaza, a large shopping center which also fronts on Sheridan Drive, and smaller scale commercial retail and services on the south side of Eggert Road. Several of these properties are partially or fully vacant.

Sheridan Drive: A heavily traveled east-west arterial roadway, Sheridan Drive is part of a major commercial and office corridor that serves a regional market. Land uses in the corridor include a mix of large shopping centers like Northtown Plaza, strip centers, free-

standing retail establishments, auto sales and services, offices, banks, and churches. Sheridan Drive has a markedly different character than other commercial areas in the Eggertsville Focal Planning Area due to the scale of the roadway (six lanes of traffic with turning lanes) and the adjoining large, automobile-oriented commercial developments with expansive parking lots fronting the roadway.

The predominant residential zoning category in the Eggertsville Focal Planning Area is single-family residential (R-3). Springville and Callodine Avenues from Longmeadow Road to the Main Street commercial corridor and Niagara Falls Boulevard from Longmeadow to the Kenmore Avenue commercial corridor are zoned for attached (two to four) dwelling units (R-4). Allenhurst, Princeton Court, and several other smaller areas are zoned multi-family (MFR-5).

The predominant zoning in Eggertsville's commercial corridors is General Business (GB). Other commercial zoning categories include Planned Shopping Center (SC), which applies to Northtown Plaza; Motor Services (MS), which applies to several properties along Sheridan Drive and Eggert Road; and Office Building (OB), which applies to the office development in the northwest quadrant of the Main Street/Eggert Road intersection.

The Windermere Elementary School, churches, and other institutional uses in the planning area are zoned Community Facilities (CF).

The Town addressed the Eggertsville Focal Planning Area in the Eggertsville Action Plan (July 2000), which focused on the area's commercial corridors. The study goals identified in the plan are to:

- *Identify uses the Eggertsville commercial corridors can support given the context of the surrounding neighborhoods and market realities.*
- *Reinforce or in some cases create a sense of place.*

The Plan identifies the following strategies for achieving these goals:

- *Eliminating barriers to redevelopment presented in the Zoning Code.*
- *Identifying capital projects the Town can undertake to encourage/support development.*
- *Identifying Actions the Town or other public entities can undertake as partners in the redevelopment process.*
- *Establishing guidelines enhancing the quality of development.*
- *Establish design guidelines making public spaces, i.e., street right-of-ways, public parks and squares, etc., more attractive, safe, and green.*

B. Socioeconomic Characteristics

The Eggertsville Focal Planning Area includes all of Census Tracts 93.01 and 93.02 and a portion of tract 94.01. For the purposes of this review, however, tract 94.01 was excluded, as most of it lies outside of the planning area. The population of tracts 93.01 and 93.02 declined slightly from 1990 to 2000, falling by 0.2 percent. Eggertsville's 1990 average household size of 2.36 persons was well below the Town average of 2.56.

Eggertsville's average household income of $43,400 is the lowest of the focal planning areas, but its per capita income of $19,000 exceeds those of the Northwest Amherst and University areas. These figures indicate that fewer households in Eggertsville have multiple income earners than in other areas such as North Amherst. The single-family to multi-family housing split in Eggertsville is a two-to-one ratio (67 percent single-family and 33 percent multi-family). The owner occupancy in this focal planning area is 71 percent, indicating that many multi-family units are owned and not rented.

The age breakdown in Eggertsville is very diverse, with 20 percent of the population under the age of 18, 28 percent between 18 and 34, 22 percent between 35 and 54, 23 percent in the 55-74 range, and 8 percent 75 or older. This age profile results from the area's diverse housing stock in terms of age, type, quality, cost, and size.

C. Transportation

General patterns of traffic in the Eggertsville Focal Planning Area were determined using recent GBNRTC adjusted Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) figures for specific roadway segments. Significant volumes occur on major streets and roads including principal arterials Main Street (NY 5), Bailey Avenue (NY 62), Niagara Falls Boulevard (NY 62), Grover Cleveland Highway (NY 263), Kenmore Avenue (CR 307), Sheridan Drive (NY 324) and Millersport Highway (NY 263), minor arterial Eggert Road (CR 130), and collector North Bailey Avenue. All available data are summarized in the following table:

EGGERTSVILLE TRAFFIC PATTERNS

ROUTE NO.	ROUTE NAME	ROUTE SEGMENT	LANES	PAVT WIDTH	SPEED LIMIT	CLASSIFICATION CODE	DAILY TRAFFIC	OBSERVED YEAR
NY 5	Main	Nia Falls Blvd - Kenmore	4	60	30	Principal Arterial	16,900	98
NY 5	Main	Kenmore - Bailey	6		35	Principal Arterial	27,400	99
NY 5	Main	Bailey - Eggert	5	52	40	Principal Arterial	18,700	00
NY 5	Main	Eggert - Harlem	4	62	40	Principal Arterial	23,600	99
NY 62	Bailey	Main - Millersport	4	46	35	Principal Arterial	19,000	98
NY 62	Bailey	Millersport - Eggert	2	24	35	Minor Arterial	9,000	99
NY 62	Bailey	Eggert - Sheridan	3	48	35	Minor Arterial	12,000	97
NY 62	Nia Falls Blvd	Sheridan - Maple	6	94	40	Principal Arterial	24,000	91
NY 263	Grover Cleveland	Bailey - Eggert	4	48	35	Principal Arterial	14,100	97
NY 263	Millersport	Eggert - Sheridan	4	23	35	Principal Arterial	20,000	97
NY 324	Sheridan	Nia Falls Blvd - Bailey	7	72	40	Principal Arterial	25,600	00
NY 324	Sheridan	Bailey - Sweet Home	7	88	40	Principal Arterial	31,600	00
NY 324	Sheridan	Sweet Home - Millersport	7		40	Principal Arterial	26,700	00
950K	Nia Falls Blvd	Kenmore - Sheridan	4	68	40	Principal Arterial	21,400	00
CR 307	Kenmore	Nia Falls Blvd - Main	2	43	30	Principal Arterial	14,300	99
CR 130	Eggert	Main - Millersport	4	43	35	Minor Arterial	12,300	96
CR 130	Eggert	Millersport - Bailey	4	49	35	Minor Arterial	8,500	00
CR 130	Eggert	Bailey - N Falls Blvd	4	49	35	Minor Arterial	7,700	00
	N Bailey	Sheridan - Emerson	2	33	35	Collector	10,600	98

Additional traffic count data are available from GBNRTC and NYSDOT at major intersections that reflect important travel patterns within the focal planning area. Peak turning hour movements and volume percentages for autos, busses, and trucks are available

for intersections along Millersport Highway, Sheridan Drive, Main Street, and Bailey Avenue. This data, combined with highway geometric conditions and traffic control information, can be utilized to determine existing traffic operation conditions, as expressed in terms of Level of Service (LOS). Evaluation of recent traffic reports has determined that most highway segments operate within the limits of stable flow. However, high-density traffic conditions exist along portions of Main Street and North Bailey Avenue, resulting in operating levels beyond capacity and the eventual breakdown of flow during peak periods.

Public transportation to the Eggertsville Focal Planning Area is available through Metro Bus Routes 5 (Niagara) and 34 (Niagara Falls Boulevard), which provide direct access from the Main Street Metro Rail Station. Bicyclists and pedestrians in this area have access to major rights-of-way receiving "good" ratings, including a designated bicycle route or lane along Sweet Home Road.

D. Infrastructure

The Eggertsville Focal Planning Area is located completely within Amherst Town Sewer District No. 1. The aging infrastructure has seen numerous reconstruction projects recently, in particular the replacement of failed sanitary sewers. All other general service utilities, including power, gas, water, and cable, can be made readily available.

11.4.2 Key Issues

- Eggertsville's commercial areas have been adversely affected by their age and configuration, changing demographics and consumer patterns, and competition from newer "power centers." The Eggertsville Action Plan lays out detailed strategies for revitalizing these areas through actions such as regulatory changes and public investments.
- General Business (GB) zoning has been applied to commercial areas in Eggertsville which vary greatly in character. This "one-size-fits-all" zoning does not acknowledge the established character of older commercial areas such as Main Street/Eggert Road. The Eggertsville Action Plan calls for the commercial zoning in this area to be revised.
- The residential demographics of Eggertsville are changing as a result of the transfer of undergraduate programs and student housing from UB's South to North Campus and the conversion of Allenhurst and Princeton Court to subsidized housing. While most of Eggertsville consists of solid, owner-occupied housing, there are concerns regarding declining housing values, the loss of the student rental market in areas near the South Campus, and property deterioration in some locations.
- There is an opportunity for positive collaboration between the Town and UB to address some of the above issues. Through the University Community Initiative, UB is currently working with the Towns of Amherst, Cheektowaga, and Tonawanda on projects to stabilize and improve neighborhoods around the South Campus.
- Also on the positive side, many of the Eggertsville commercial areas have a pedestrian-oriented character that is lacking from newer, larger shopping centers. It is possible that a combination of public and private investment could reposition these areas as smaller scale activity centers that offer a different, more pleasant shopping experience than is

available along Sheridan Drive or other similar automobile-oriented commercial environments.

- Eggertsville is an essentially built out area and lacks any public parks or recreational facilities. A particular need has been identified for a community center.
- Segments of Main Street and North Bailey Avenue exhibit high-density traffic conditions leading to breakdown of flow during peak periods. Widening of some other roadway corridors in the area to accommodate traffic flows has affected the pedestrian environment and neighborhood character.
- Additional replacements of aging sanitary sewer lines are needed.

11.5 SNYDER

11.5.1 Existing Conditions Overview

A. Land Use and Zoning Characteristics

The Snyder Focal Planning Area is located in the area defined by the Main Street Corridor, the I-290/Main Street interchange, the Kensington Avenue Corridor, and Mt. Vernon Street (Figure 25). The southwest corning of the planning area abuts the Town of Cheektowaga.

Like Eggertsville, the Snyder Focal Planning Area is an older, almost completely built out part of Amherst. Snyder's traditional neighborhood quality is reflected in an interconnected network of tree-lined streets, stable residential development with a largely consistent character, and neighborhood-serving commercial development focused in several nodes. The most prevalent land use consists of single-family dwellings along the grid of residential streets between Main Street and Kensington Avenue. Scattered two-family and multi-family dwellings occur in the area west of Roycroft Boulevard, with a particular concentration along Harlem Road and Hamilton Drive south of Kings Highway and north of Saratoga Road. In addition, multi-family apartments are found in the northwest corner of the planning area along Campus Drive next to the Daeman College campus. Daeman College owns some of these apartment buildings and is currently renovating them for continued use as student housing.

Commercial uses in the Snyder Focal Planning Area are concentrated in four areas:

- Along Main Street at the Harlem Road intersection and extending east to Roycroft Boulevard
- At the I-290/Main Street interchange
- Along Harlem Road south of Saratoga Road and Kensington Avenue east of Roycroft Boulevard
- At the Kensington Avenue/Darwin Drive intersection

Main Street/Harlem Road: Commercial uses in the vicinity of the Main Street/Harlem Road interchange include a bank, gas station, medical office buildings, and the Snyder Square and Snyder Square II developments. Snyder Square is noteworthy as a newer, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development.

I-290/Main Street: Uses at the I-290/Main Street interchange include the Lord Amherst Motel, the Snyder Place Shopping Center, and (extending south along Kensington Avenue) office buildings, a gas station, and a funeral home.

Harlem/Kensington: The Harlem/Kensington commercial area contains a mix of automobile-oriented development (mostly along Kensingston) and older, pedestrian-oriented buildings pulled up to the street right-of-way (mostly along Harlem). Some of the buildings, particularly along Harlem, are vacant or underutilized and in deteriorated condition. Uses along Harlem include a nursery/florist, a sports therapy business, and small-scale offices and shops. Uses along Kensington include a Walgreen's Pharmacy, bank, restaurant, and small-scale strip commercial development.

Kensington Avenue/Darwin Drive: Uses at the Kensington Avenue/Darwin Drive intersection are small-scale, neighborhood-oriented retail and services, such as a florist, cleaner, barber shop, veterinarian, and vehicle service station.

Public and semi-public uses in the Snyder Focal Planning Area include the Harlem Community Center, a fire station, and several churches. The Daeman College campus is located on the north side of Main Street next to the northwest corner of the planning area.

The predominant zoning within the Snyder Focal Planning Area is single-family (R-3). The east side of Harlem Road and both sides of Hamilton Road between the Harlem Road Community Center and Saratoga Road (for Harlem) and Yorktown Road (for Hamilton) are zoned R-4. This zoning category allows attached dwellings with two to four units and encompasses the area of two-family and multi-family dwellings previously noted along these two roads.

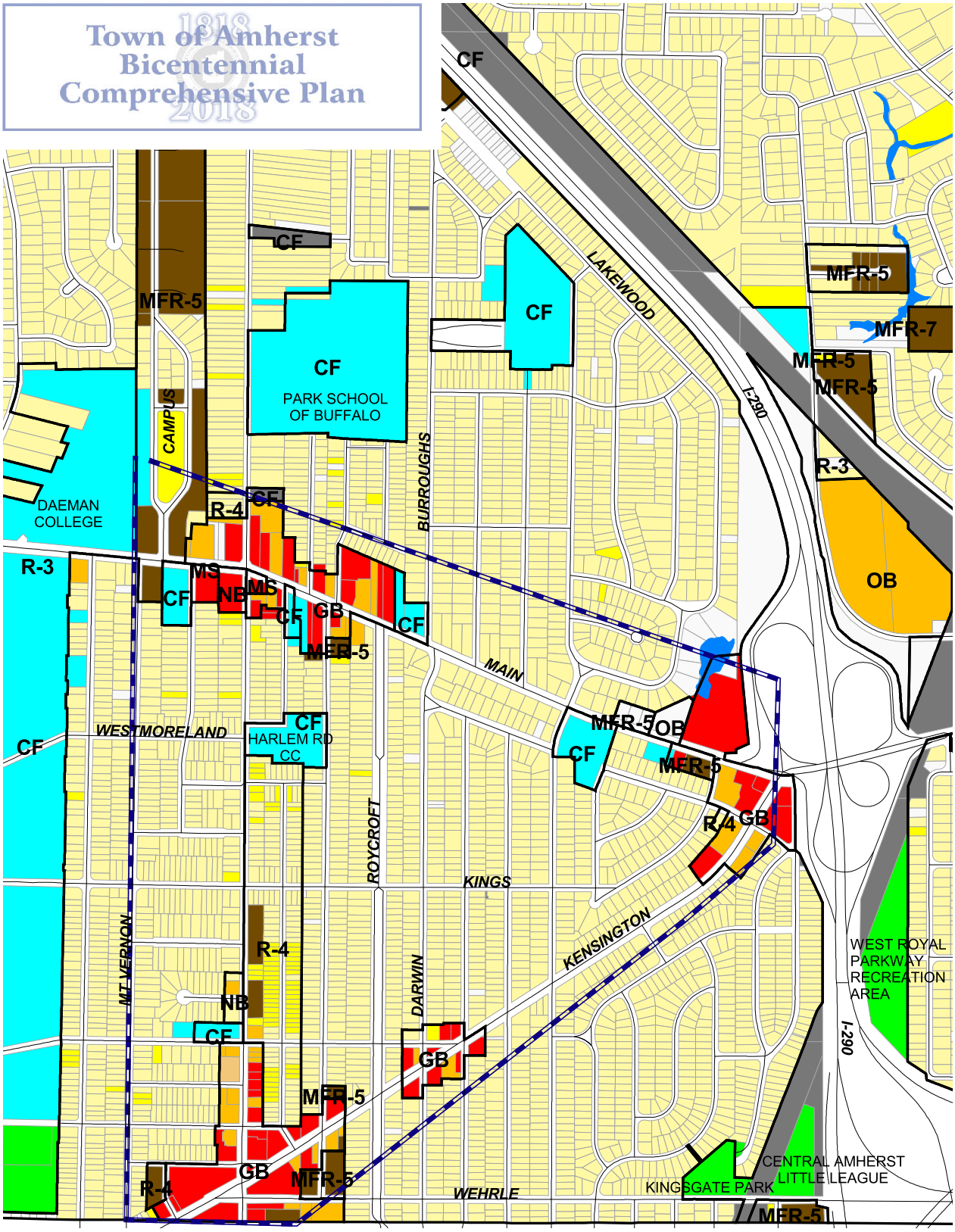
The predominant zoning in all four of the commercial areas is General Business (GB). Other zoning categories in the planning area include Community Facilities (CF), which applies to the area's public facilities, churches, and the Daeman College campus; and multi-family (MFR-5), which applies to small areas located next to the Main Street/Harlem Road, I-290/Main Street, and Harlem/Kensington commercial areas. Campus Drive is the most extensive area of MFR-5 zoning.

B. Socioeconomic Characteristics

The Snyder Focal Planning Area is located entirely within Census Tract 95.02, the area west of the Village of Williamsville, east of Harlem Road, and south of Main Street. The tract does, however, extend to the east beyond the boundaries of the planning area. The population of this tract fell during the 1990-2000 period by 4.6 percent. As with Eggertsville, the average household size is small, with an average of 2.43 persons per unit.

Income levels in Snyder are relatively low, with the average household income of $52,900 below the town-wide average. As with Eggertsville, though, per capita income is fairly solid at an average of $22,500, again indicating a lower average number of workers per household. The Snyder area has a high percentage of single-family housing units (76 percent) and a high rate of home ownership (also 76 percent).

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan



Snyder Focal Planning Area

FIGURE 25

REVISED - SEPTEMBER 2001

LEGEND

- Agricultural Land
- Single-Family Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Recreation and Open Space
- Public/Semi-Public
- Utilities
- Vacant Land
- R-3 Zoning
- Surface Water Body
- Focus Area Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst.

Zoning data last revised Spetember 2000.
Land Use data last revised December 2000.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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Snyder's age profile is not as evenly distributed as Eggertsville's but is still diverse. The area has a high concentration of older residents, with 10 percent of its population being over the age of 75 and 33 percent over the age of 55. Snyder's younger population is among the smallest of the six focal planning areas; just 20 percent of its residents are under the age of 18 and 22 percent are between 18 and 34. Snyder is clearly an area with a stable base of older residents.

C. Transportation

General patterns of traffic in the Snyder Focal Planning Area were determined using recent GBNRTC adjusted Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) figures for specific roadway segments. Interstate I-290 runs along the eastern border of this focal planning area, with an interchange at Main Street. Significant volumes occur on major streets and roads, including principal arterial Main Street (NY 5) and minor arterial Harlem Road (NY 240). All available data are summarized in the following table:

SNYDER TRAFFIC PATTERNS

ROUTE NO.	ROUTE NAME	ROUTE SEGMENT	LANES	PAVT WIDTH	SPEED LIMIT	CLASSIFICATION CODE	DAILY TRAFFIC	OBSERVED YEAR
NY 5	Main	Eggert - Harlem	4	62	40	Principal Arterial	23,600	99
NY 5	Main	Harlem - I-290	4	62	40	Principal Arterial	32,900	96
NY 240	Harlem	Cleveland - Kensington	4	52	35	Minor Arterial	15,400	99
NY 240	Harlem	Kensington - Main	2	40	35	Minor Arterial	11,000	99
NY 240	Harlem	Main - Sheridan	2	35	35	Minor Arterial	10,300	99
CR 208	Kensington	Main - Harlem	4	40	35	Minor Arterial	9,300	96

Additional traffic count data is available from GBNRTC and NYSDOT at major intersections that reflect important travel patterns within the focal planning area. Peak turning hour movements and volume percentages for autos, busses, and trucks are available for intersections along Main Street and Harlem Road. This data, combined with highway geometric conditions and traffic control information, can be utilized to determine existing traffic operation conditions, as expressed in terms of Level of Service (LOS). Evaluation of recent traffic reports has determined that most highway segments operate within the limits of stable flow. However, high-density traffic conditions exist along portions of Main Street, resulting in operating levels beyond capacity and the eventual breakdown of flow during peak periods.

Public transportation to this area is available through Metro Bus Routes 30 (Kenmore) and 49 (Hopkins), which provide direct access from the Main Street Metro Rail Station. Bicyclists and pedestrians in this area have access to major rights-of-way receiving "very good" ratings.

D. Infrastructure

The Snyder Focal Planning Area is located completely within Amherst Town Sewer District No. 1. The aging infrastructure has seen numerous reconstruction projects recently, in particular the replacement of failed sanitary sewers. All other general service utilities including power, gas, water, and cable can be made readily available.

11.5.2 Key Issues

- Most of the housing stock in the Snyder Focal Planning Area is owner-occupied and well maintained. However, the two-family and multi-family dwellings along Harlem Road between Kings Highway and Saratoga Road exhibit evidence of deterioration and lack of investment.
- Decline is also evident in the Harlem/Kensington commercial area in the form of vacancies and deteriorating buildings. Amherst and Cheektowaga are planning to sponsor a joint study of the area to address issues such as the economic viability of businesses and physical improvements and regulatory changes to promote revitalization.
- Preservation of the established development pattern and character along Main Street is a concern. This pattern is one of a neighborhood-oriented commercial activity center at Main and Harlem and an automobile-oriented commercial area at the I-290 interchange, separated by single-family residences. Nonresidential development extends west as far as Roycroft Boulevard. Although the existing uses west of the intersection are largely office buildings, the underlying General Business zoning category allows a wide variety of uses, some of which would not be compatible with Snyder's character. This situation is symptomatic of the Town's "one-size-fits-all" zoning (previously noted for the Eggertsville Focal Planning Area), and also applies to the Harlem/Kensington and Kensington Avenue/Darwin Drive commercial areas.
- Like Eggertsville, Snyder is an essentially built out area and lacks any parks or recreational facilities other than the Harlem Road Community Center and Saratoga Park, which is located a block and a half east of the southwest corner of the planning area.
- Segments of Main Street exhibit high-density traffic conditions leading to breakdown of flow during peak periods.
- Additional replacements of aging sanitary sewer lines are needed.

11.6 WILLIAMSVILLE

11.6.1 Existing Conditions Overview

The Williamsville Focal Planning Area is located along Main Street between I-290 to the west and Youngs Road to the east (Figure 26). While the core of the planning area is located within the Village of Williamsville, it also includes areas in the Town of Amherst east of I-290 and west of Youngs Road.

A. Land Use and Zoning Characteristics

The predominant land use pattern along Main Street is a mix of retail commercial and office uses. The Main Street corridor also contains some significant institutional uses, including Williamsville South High School towards the east end of the planning area; the Amherst and Williamsville municipal buildings and adjacent parkland along Ellicott Creek in the core of the planning area; churches; and a cemetery. In addition, Erie Community College is located next to the southeast end of the planning area. The predominant residential uses are single-family homes located behind the non-residential uses along Main Street. Residential uses on

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Bicentennial
Comprehensive Plan
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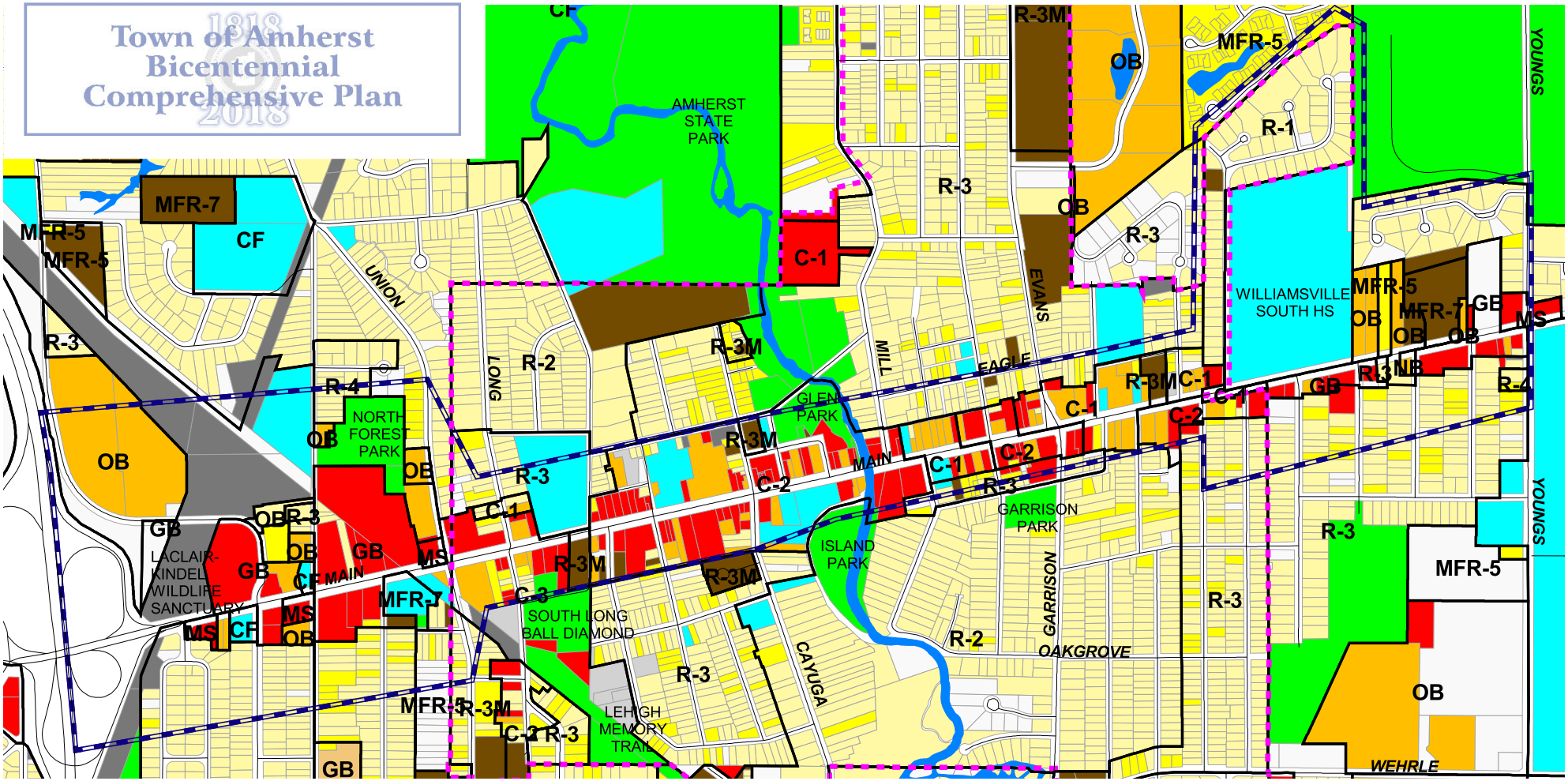

FIGURE 26

WILLIAMSVILLE FOCAL PLANNING AREA

REVISED - SEPTEMBER 2001

LEGEND

- Agricultural Land
- Single-Family Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Recreation and Open Space
- Public/Semi-Public
- Utilities
- Vacant Land
- R-3 Zoning
- Surface Water Body
- Focus Area Boundary
- Village of Williamsville Boundary

SOURCE NOTES

Original Source Data Provided by the Town of Amherst.

Zoning data last revised Spetember 2000.
Land Use data last revised December 2000.

Map Compiled by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

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Main Street are widely separated and include two taller apartment buildings and an assisted living facility.

While the Main Street corridor exhibits a fairly consistent pattern of mixed land uses, the form and character of these uses change as one moves along the corridor. The village core from Cayuga Road to Ellicott Creek/Mill Street is a pedestrian-oriented streetscape consisting largely of closely spaced, smaller scale buildings fronting the sidewalk. To the west of Cayuga Road, this traditional pattern is punctuated by newer commercial and office developments with parking in front and larger buildings set back from the street. Auto-oriented development predominates at the west end of the planning area in the vicinity of Union Road and the I-290 interchange, where uses include fast-food establishments, a strip shopping center with parking spaces that back directly onto Main Street, and a newer, relatively upscale retail center. Development to the east of Cayuga Road includes professional offices and other small businesses in former single-family homes, other neighborhood/convenience-oriented retail development at the Garrison Road intersection, and small-scale, automobile-oriented commercial establishments, including gas stations at three corners of the Youngs Road intersection. An eight-story condominium building and a six-story office building located east of Evans Road interrupt the predominant pattern of smaller scale structures.

Most of the Main Street corridor within the Village of Williamsville is zoned for commercial use in one of the following three categories (listed from most restrictive to least restrictive):

- C-1 Professional and Administrative District
- C-2 Restricted Commercial District
- C-3 General Commercial District

C-1 zoning is concentrated in the area between the eastern Village boundary and Mill Street. Permitted principal uses include, among others, offices, medical centers, banks without drive-in facilities, and multi-family dwellings. C-2 is the most prevalent zoning category, covering the entire portion of the corridor between Reist Street and Mill Street (including the village core). This zoning designation is also found interspersed among C-1 zoning east of Mill Street. Principal uses permitted in the C-2 zone include all uses permitted in the C-1 zone, drive-in service facilities, restaurants, commercial residences, and retail businesses. C-3 zoning is concentrated in the portion of the corridor next to the western village boundary. Permitted principal uses include, among others, all uses permitted in the C-1 and C-2 zones, wholesale businesses, gasoline service stations, and motor vehicle service.

The portion of the Williamsville Focal Planning Area located within Amherst west of the Village contains a mix of zoning districts. The predominant district along Main Street is General Business (GB). The Main Street corridor in Amherst to the east of the Village also contains a mix of zoning districts, including General Business (GB), Office Building (OB), and several categories of residential zoning (MFR-5 and MFR-7 multi-family and R-3 single-family). Williamsville South High School is zoned Community Facilities (CF).

The Village of Williamsville Master Plan 2000 was completed in January 1998. It lays out goals, objectives, and strategies for various types of future land uses within the Village. The plan states the following regarding the Main Street corridor:

> *The commercial development in Williamsville is concentrated along Main Street and is composed of retail and office facilities that draw upon both the local populace and broader areas utilizing Main Street. The recent development of smaller commercial enterprises, rather than large "one stop" shops has been a great force in reinvigorating a Main Street commercial zone that was declining in the 1970's and quite stagnant in the 1980's. The 1990's have seen a resurgence of commercial activity along Main Street. But it is very tenuous at best. Informal discussions with the local merchants and business leaders lead us to believe that large retail shops threaten the economic viability of Village commerce. It is important for the Village to encourage small retail/commercial enterprises that can support the limited parking available in the Village and keep the "small Village" sense of community. We must also encourage the continual use of smaller buildings for office use.*

The plan designates three areas for consolidation of future commercial development:

- the ***Village Center*** (pedestrian-oriented retail between Cayuga Road and Mill Street)
- ***West Main*** (auto-oriented retail at the west end of Main Street in the vicinity of Union Road, extending into Amherst)
- ***East Main*** (neighborhood-oriented retail at the Main Street/Garrison Road intersection)

The plan recommends improvements for each of these areas. These include improvements to off-street parking and circulation to address the issue of retail parking, identified by Main Street merchants as a priority need.

B. Socioeconomic Characteristics

The Williamsville Focal Planning Area is a mixed-use corridor and thus is difficult to characterize from a socioeconomic perspective. The western and eastern "bulges" of the area fall into Census Tracts 94.02, 95.02, and 96.00 and the Main Street corridor is in tract 89.00. However, in order to provide a general approximation of the area's residential population, the tract 89.00 core area was used as a proxy. The population of tract 89.00 dropped by 3.7 percent from 1990 to 2000. The average household size in 1990 of 2.23 was just slightly higher than the University area's average of 2.22, the lowest of the six focal planning areas.

Williamsville has a very high average per capita income level of $26,300, but its average household income is not as strong, at $58,600. As with Eggertsville and Snyder, this indicates a lower than average number of working people per household. The housing stock and home ownership characteristics of the Williamsville Focal Planning Area are similar to Eggertsville, as 67 percent of the units are single-family and 71 percent of residents are homeowners. Its age profile is similar to the other older areas of Eggertsville and Snyder, as it has a smaller under 18 base (19 percent) and a larger senior citizen base (30 percent over the age of 55).

C. Transportation

General patterns of traffic in the Williamsville Focal Planning Area were determined using recent GBNRTC adjusted Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) figures for specific roadway segments. Interstate I-290 runs along the western border of this focal planning area, with an interchange at Main Street. Significant volumes occur on major streets and roads, including principal arterials Main Street (NY 5) and Union Road (NY 277) and minor arterials Garrison Road (CR 289) and Youngs Road (CR 554). All available data are summarized in the following table:

WILLIAMSVILLE TRAFFIC PATTERNS

ROUTE NO.	ROUTE NAME	ROUTE SEGMENT	LANES	PAVT WIDTH	SPEED LIMIT	CLASSIFICATION CODE	DAILY TRAFFIC	OBSERVED YEAR
I-290	Youngmann Exp	Sheridan - Main	6	72	55	Interstate	115,900	99
I-290	Youngmann Exp	Main - I-190	6	72	55	Interstate	114,700	99
NY 5	Main	I-290 - Union	5	73	35	Principal Arterial	42,000	99
NY 5	Main	Union - Evans	5	73	35	Principal Arterial	34,100	98
NY 5	Main	Evans - Youngs	2	36	40	Principal Arterial	21,800	99
NY 277	Union	Wehrle - Main	4	49	40	Principal Arterial	12,300	97
NY 277	Union	Main - Sheridan	2	24	40	Principal Arterial	14,950	98
CR 195	Evans	Main - Sheridan	2	31	30	Collector	11,700	96
	Flint	Millersport - Maple	3	52	35	Collector	11,800	97
	Flint	Maple - Audubon	4	50	30	Collector	8,100	97
CR 289	Garrison	Wehrle - Main	2	37	30	Minor Arterial	20,300	96
CR 554	Youngs	Wehrle - Main	2	42	35	Minor Arterial	11,600	97
CR 554	Youngs	Main - Sheridan	2	32	35	Minor Arterial	13,300	96

Additional traffic count data is available from GBNRTC and NYSDOT at major intersections that reflect important travel patterns within the focal planning area. Peak turning hour movements and volume percentages for autos, busses, and trucks are available for intersections along Main Street, Union Road and Garrison Road. This data, combined with highway geometric conditions and traffic control information, can be utilized to determine existing traffic operation conditions, as expressed in terms of Level of Service (LOS). Evaluation of recent traffic reports has determined that most highway segments operate within the limits of stable flow. However, high-density traffic conditions exist along portions of Main Street resulting in operating levels beyond capacity and the eventual breakdown of flow during peak periods.

Public transportation to this area is available through Metro Bus Route 48 (Williamsville), which provides direct access from the Main Street Metro Rail Station. Bicyclists and pedestrians in this area have access to major rights-of-way receiving "very good" ratings as well as to the recreational Lehigh Memory Trail.

D. Infrastructure

The Williamsville Focal Planning Area is located partially within Amherst Town Sewer District No. 1 and mostly within the Village of Williamsville. All general service utilities including power, gas, water, and cable can be made readily available.

11.6.2 Key Issues

Key issues for the Williamsville Focal Planning Area include the following:

- Much of the planning area is located within the Village of Williamsville and thus is under the Village's jurisdiction with regard to zoning and land use policies. Nevertheless, Main Street is important to Amherst's character, functioning somewhat like a traditional downtown. In addition, commercial development within the Town next to the village borders at both ends of the planning area has a significant impact on the character and economic vitality of the traditional village core. Coordinated Town/Village planning is needed on several key issues. These issues include the economic positioning of the Main Street corridor with respect to regional shopping opportunities (e.g., along Transit Road); the form and scale of new development inside and outside Williamsville in relation to the traditional village fabric; the design treatment of gateway entrances to the Village, etc.
- The impact of automobile-oriented development on traditional village character is a particular concern. This concern relates to issues such as building scale and character and the placement of parking in relation to the buildings and Main Street. The Village has in place a Planning/Architectural Review Board for proposed developments, although the Williamsville Code lacks clear compatibility standards. The CVS Pharmacy is an example of a development that responded to the existing village fabric by pulling the building up to the street and placing the parking to the side.
- Although the Village of Williamsville Master Plan 2000 advocates consolidation of future commercial uses into three nodes, the current zoning pattern is one of strip commercial development.
- The geometry and function of Main Street as a major arterial creates a "pedestrian-unfriendly" environment that affects small businesses, particularly those located within the traditional village core. In addition, segments of Main Street exhibit high-density traffic conditions leading to breakdown of flow during peak periods. Relocation of the Thruway toll booths to the east has been recommended as a way to significantly reduce "pass-through" traffic.
- A master plan for the Amherst State Park is under development. Planning for the State Park and its relationships with other parks and land uses in the Village presents an excellent opportunity to augment the existing recreational assets within this Focal Planning Area.

Appendix One

Demographic and Economic Analysis Tables

Table 5-1

1990 Census Profile - Town of Amherst

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	**PAA 2**	**PAA 3**	**PAA 4**	**PAA 5**	**PAA 6**	**TOTAL**
Population	8,478	10,944	15,932	19,949	34,859	21,578	**111,740**
Household Pop.	8,478	10,944	11,708	19,470	34,103	20,937	**105,640**
Households	2,868	3,867	5,097	6,659	14,399	8,362	**41,252**
Average Household Size	2.96	2.83	2.30	2.92	2.37	2.50	**2.56**
Housing Units	2,935	4,124	5,316	7,178	15,145	8,618	**43,316**
Occupied Units	2,857	3,885	5,080	6,644	14,540	8,327	**41,333**
Vacant Units	78	239	236	534	605	291	**1,983**
% Occupied	97.3%	94.2%	95.6%	92.6%	96.0%	96.6%	**95.4%**
% Vacant	2.7%	5.8%	4.4%	7.4%	4.0%	3.4%	**4.6%**
Owner Occupied	1,452	3,379	2,960	6,110	10,715	6,330	**30,946**
Renter Occupied	1,405	506	2,120	534	3,825	1,997	**10,387**
% Owner Occupied	50.8%	87.0%	58.3%	92.0%	73.7%	76.0%	**74.9%**
% Renter Occupied	49.2%	13.0%	41.7%	8.0%	26.3%	24.0%	**25.1%**
Single-Family	1,455	3,512	2,975	5,873	10,906	6,425	**31,146**
Multi-Family	1,480	612	2,341	1,305	4,239	2,193	**12,170**
% Single-Family	49.6%	85.2%	56.0%	81.8%	72.0%	74.6%	**71.9%**
% Multi-Family	50.4%	14.8%	44.0%	18.2%	28.0%	25.4%	**28.1%**

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; Economics Research Associates

Table 5-2

Population Trends, 1990-2000

Amherst, Neighboring Towns and Cities, Buffalo Metro Area, New York State, and United States

Population Trends

	1990 Census	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000 Census 1/
United States	248,790,925	252,153,092	255,029,699	257,782,608	260,327,021	262,803,276	265,228,572	267,783,607	270,248,003	272,690,813	281,421,906
New York State	17,990,778	18,029,532	18,082,032	18,140,894	18,156,652	18,150,928	18,143,805	18,143,184	18,159,175	18,196,601	18,976,457
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	1,189,340	1,190,958	1,191,320	1,190,508	1,186,227	1,180,518	1,173,217	1,163,149	1,151,490	1,142,121	1,170,111
Erie County	968,584	969,871	970,459	969,107	964,956	959,193	952,513	943,514	933,702	925,957	950,265
Amherst town	111,711	112,367	112,826	113,281	113,027	112,780	112,268	111,482	110,652	110,110	116,510
Buffalo city	328,175	325,197	323,678	321,231	317,795	313,582	310,016	305,454	299,743	295,619	292,648
Niagara County	220,756	221,087	220,861	221,401	221,271	221,325	220,704	219,635	217,788	216,164	219,846

Annual % Change

	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
United States	1.4%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	3.2%
New York State	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	4.3%
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	-0.4%	-0.5%	-0.6%	-0.9%	-1.0%	-0.8%	2.5%
Erie County	0.1%	0.1%	-0.1%	-0.4%	-0.6%	-0.7%	-0.9%	-1.0%	-0.8%	2.6%
Amherst town	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.5%	-0.7%	-0.7%	-0.5%	5.8%
Buffalo city	-0.9%	-0.5%	-0.8%	-1.1%	-1.3%	-1.1%	-1.5%	-1.9%	-1.4%	-1.0%
Niagara County	0.1%	-0.1%	0.2%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.3%	-0.5%	-0.8%	-0.7%	1.7%

Annual % Change by Period

	1990-1995	1995-2000	Cumulative 1990-2000
United States	1.1%	1.4%	1.2%
New York State	0.2%	0.9%	0.5%
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.2%
Erie County	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.2%
Amherst town	0.2%	0.7%	0.4%
Buffalo city	-0.9%	-1.4%	-1.1%
Niagara County	0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%

1/ Figures for 1991 through 1999 are estimates, not Census counts. As a result, the different between 1999 and 2000 is not an accurate reflection of real population change for that year.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; Economics Research Associates

Table 5-3

Summary of Trends in Buffalo-Niagara MSA

From Woods & Poole Economics Data

	Estimated					Projected			
	1970	**1980**	**1990**	**1995**	**1999**	**2000**	**2005**	**2010**	**2020**
Population by Age									
Under 5	111.95	77.61	83.93	84.59	73.57	72.19	69.44	69.65	69.36
5-14	272.91	184.75	152.80	162.03	162.38	162.62	154.59	143.65	143.14
15-24	223.67	230.59	169.34	146.17	141.12	142.06	150.58	158.07	141.65
25-34	150.39	186.23	195.24	177.54	153.83	148.57	130.91	128.90	142.30
35-44	155.74	131.64	171.11	178.94	180.72	180.65	169.37	145.66	128.43
45-54	169.74	136.67	119.75	137.83	148.04	151.70	162.40	169.09	138.73
55-64	131.13	140.14	117.70	107.20	110.88	112.73	133.16	149.02	167.82
65-74	83.92	93.91	107.11	107.11	98.95	97.53	91.80	100.19	134.25
75 and Over	50.76	60.10	73.19	79.11	84.25	85.72	91.30	90.98	98.93
Total Population	**1,350.21**	**1,241.65**	**1,190.17**	**1,180.52**	**1,153.72**	**1,153.76**	**1,153.54**	**1,155.20**	**1,164.61**
Erie County	1,114.70	1,014.49	969.14	959.19	935.42	935.47	935.35	936.73	944.45
Niagara County	235.51	227.17	221.03	221.33	218.29	218.29	218.20	218.46	220.15

Annual Pop. Change	**1970-80**	**1980-90**	**1990-95**	**1995-99**	**1999-00**	**2000-05**	**2005-10**	**2010-20**
Under 5	-3.6%	0.8%	0.2%	-3.4%	-1.9%	-0.8%	0.1%	0.0%
5-14	-3.8%	-1.9%	1.2%	0.1%	0.1%	-1.0%	-1.5%	0.0%
15-24	0.3%	-3.0%	-2.9%	-0.9%	0.7%	1.2%	1.0%	-1.1%
25-34	2.2%	0.5%	-1.9%	-3.5%	-3.4%	-2.5%	-0.3%	1.0%
35-44	-1.7%	2.7%	0.9%	0.2%	0.0%	-1.3%	-3.0%	-1.3%
45-54	-2.1%	-1.3%	2.9%	1.8%	2.5%	1.4%	0.8%	-2.0%
55-64	0.7%	-1.7%	-1.9%	0.8%	1.7%	3.4%	2.3%	1.2%
65-74	1.1%	1.3%	0.0%	-2.0%	-1.4%	-1.2%	1.8%	3.0%
75 and Over	1.7%	2.0%	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	1.3%	-0.1%	0.8%
Total Population	**-0.8%**	**-0.4%**	**-0.2%**	**-0.6%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.1%**
Erie County	-0.9%	-0.5%	-0.2%	-0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Niagara County	-0.4%	-0.3%	0.0%	-0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%

	Estimated					Projected			
Population by Race	**1970**	**1980**	**1990**	**1995**	**1999**	**2000**	**2005**	**2010**	**2020**
White	1,231.93	1,113.35	1,047.18	1,024.83	992.83	990.19	976.75	964.93	946.88
Black	109.13	114.68	123.95	132.99	136.00	137.95	147.40	156.93	176.69
Other	9.15	13.62	19.05	22.70	24.89	25.62	29.39	33.33	41.04
Hispanic (any race)	5.96	14.75	24.59	29.14	33.41	34.27	47.94	55.51	79.20
Total Population	**1,350.21**	**1,241.65**	**1,190.17**	**1,180.52**	**1,153.72**	**1,153.76**	**1,153.54**	**1,155.20**	**1,164.61**

Annual Pop. Change	**1970-80**	**1980-90**	**1990-95**	**1995-99**	**1999-00**	**2000-05**	**2005-10**	**2010-20**
White	-1.0%	-0.6%	-0.4%	-0.8%	-0.3%	-0.3%	-0.2%	-0.2%
Black	0.5%	0.8%	1.4%	0.6%	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%
Other	4.1%	3.4%	3.6%	2.3%	2.9%	2.8%	2.6%	2.1%
Hispanic (any race)	9.5%	5.2%	3.5%	3.5%	2.6%	6.9%	3.0%	3.6%
Total Population	**-0.8%**	**-0.4%**	**-0.2%**	**-0.6%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.1%**

Source: Woods & Poole Economics; Economics Research Associates.

Table 5-3

Summary of Trends in Buffalo-Niagara MSA

From Woods & Poole Economics Data

	Estimated					Projected			
	1970	1980	1990	1995	1999	2000	2005	2010	2020
Per Capita Income									
Erie County	$ 4,193	$ 10,017	$ 18,823	$ 22,759	$ 26,749	$ 27,746	$ 33,560	$ 41,573	$ 65,173
Niagara County	$ 3,966	$ 9,568	$ 17,350	$ 20,748	$ 23,725	$ 24,570	$ 29,538	$ 36,354	$ 56,479
MSA Average	**$ 4,153**	**$ 9,935**	**$ 18,549**	**$ 22,382**	**$ 26,177**	**$ 27,145**	**$ 32,799**	**$ 40,586**	**$ 63,530**
PCI--1992 Dollars									
Erie County	$ 14,219	$ 17,126	$ 20,260	$ 21,160	$ 23,245	$ 23,591	$ 25,203	$ 26,900	$ 30,486
Niagara County	$ 13,449	$ 16,359	$ 18,674	$ 19,289	$ 20,617	$ 20,890	$ 22,182	$ 23,523	$ 26,419
MSA Average	**$ 14,085**	**$ 16,986**	**$ 19,965**	**$ 20,809**	**$ 22,748**	**$ 23,080**	**$ 24,632**	**$ 26,261**	**$ 29,717**
Annual PCI Growth		1970-80	1980-90	1990-95	1995-99	1999-00	2000-05	2005-10	2010-20
Erie County		1.9%	1.7%	0.9%	2.4%	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
Niagara County		2.0%	1.3%	0.7%	1.7%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
MSA Average		**1.9%**	**1.6%**	**0.8%**	**2.3%**	**1.5%**	**1.3%**	**1.3%**	**1.2%**
Households									
Erie County	349.22	365.88	377.31	374.10	366.97	367.81	371.74	375.06	376.43
Niagara County	72.33	80.40	84.88	85.12	84.47	84.67	85.60	86.37	86.69
MSA Total	**421.55**	**446.28**	**462.19**	**459.22**	**451.45**	**452.49**	**457.34**	**461.43**	**463.11**
Annual HH Growth		1970-80	1980-90	1990-95	1995-99	1999-00	2000-05	2005-10	2010-20
Erie County		0.5%	0.3%	-0.2%	-0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%
Niagara County		1.1%	0.5%	0.1%	-0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%
MSA Average		**0.6%**	**0.4%**	**-0.1%**	**-0.4%**	**0.2%**	**0.2%**	**0.2%**	**0.0%**
Avg. HH Size	3.20	2.78	2.58	2.57	2.56	2.55	2.52	2.50	2.51
Average HH Income									
Erie County	$ 13,147	$ 27,283	$ 47,379	$ 57,200	$ 66,791	$ 69,104	$ 82,559	$ 101,383	$ 159,280
Niagara County	$ 12,758	$ 26,657	$ 44,551	$ 53,200	$ 60,429	$ 62,422	$ 74,106	$ 90,402	$ 140,715
MSA Average	**$ 13,080**	**$ 27,170**	**$ 46,860**	**$ 56,459**	**$ 65,601**	**$ 67,854**	**$ 80,977**	**$ 99,328**	**$ 155,805**
AHHI--1992 Dollars									
Erie County	$ 44,583	$ 46,645	$ 50,995	$ 53,180	$ 58,042	$ 58,754	$ 61,999	$ 65,600	$ 74,507
Niagara County	$ 43,261	$ 45,575	$ 47,950	$ 49,460	$ 52,514	$ 53,074	$ 55,652	$ 58,494	$ 65,823
MSA Average	**$ 44,356**	**$ 46,452**	**$ 50,436**	**$ 52,490**	**$ 57,008**	**$ 57,691**	**$ 60,811**	**$ 64,270**	**$ 72,882**
Real Annual HH Income Growth		1970-80	1980-90	1990-95	1995-99	1999-00	2000-05	2005-10	2010-20
Erie County		0.5%	0.9%	0.8%	2.2%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%
Niagara County		0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	1.5%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%
MSA Average		**0.5%**	**0.8%**	**0.8%**	**2.1%**	**1.2%**	**1.1%**	**1.1%**	**1.3%**

Source: Woods & Poole Economics; Economics Research Associates.

Table 5-4

CACI Population Trends and Projections, 1990-2004

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	Amherst Total
Population							
1990 Census	8,478	10,944	15,932	19,949	34,859	21,578	**111,740**
1999 Estimate	7,742	11,611	15,368	20,082	34,303	21,957	**111,063**
2004 Projection	7,369	11,264	14,897	19,362	32,984	21,196	**107,072**
Annual % Change, 1990-99	-1.0%	0.7%	-0.4%	0.1%	-0.2%	0.2%	**-0.1%**
Annual % Change, 1999-04	-1.0%	-0.6%	-0.6%	-0.7%	-0.8%	-0.7%	**-0.7%**
Households							
1990 Census	2,868	3,867	5,097	6,659	14,399	8,362	**41,252**
1999 Estimate	2,693	4,203	5,000	6,903	14,750	8,668	**42,217**
2004 Projection	2,601	4,130	4,859	6,745	14,376	8,475	**41,186**
Annual % Change, 1990-99	-0.7%	0.9%	-0.2%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	**0.3%**
Annual % Change, 1999-04	-0.7%	-0.3%	-0.6%	-0.5%	-0.5%	-0.4%	**-0.5%**
Average Household Size							
1990 Census	2.96	2.83	2.30	2.92	2.37	2.50	**2.56**
1999 Estimate	2.87	2.76	2.27	2.84	2.28	2.46	**2.49**
2004 Projection	2.83	2.73	2.24	2.80	2.24	2.43	**2.46**
Age Profile, 1990							
0-5	10.2%	10.7%	5.6%	8.4%	8.6%	7.4%	**8.2%**
6-17	18.7%	18.9%	9.2%	20.5%	13.2%	15.2%	**15.3%**
18-24	10.3%	6.7%	31.9%	8.7%	10.3%	8.8%	**12.7%**
25-34	18.6%	18.7%	13.8%	11.0%	16.2%	13.8%	**15.0%**
35-44	25.2%	21.3%	14.2%	12.7%	7.3%	11.6%	**13.1%**
45-54	7.6%	11.0%	8.6%	17.6%	11.5%	13.9%	**12.2%**
55-64	4.0%	5.6%	5.6%	9.1%	8.7%	8.3%	**7.5%**
65-74	3.8%	5.3%	5.8%	6.5%	13.8%	11.1%	**9.1%**
75+	1.7%	1.7%	5.3%	5.5%	10.4%	9.9%	**7.0%**
Age Profile, 1999							
0-5	11.4%	9.9%	5.3%	7.2%	7.1%	6.6%	**7.4%**
6-17	21.1%	19.5%	18.8%	19.1%	13.1%	15.4%	**16.6%**
18-24	8.6%	5.5%	21.9%	6.3%	7.1%	5.8%	**8.7%**
25-34	16.5%	14.0%	11.6%	8.1%	11.8%	10.1%	**11.3%**
35-44	18.8%	22.9%	13.0%	19.9%	15.5%	16.4%	**17.1%**
45-54	11.8%	14.2%	10.0%	18.6%	12.2%	14.9%	**13.7%**
55-64	6.0%	7.1%	7.6%	9.9%	10.0%	11.0%	**9.3%**
65-74	3.7%	4.7%	5.5%	5.5%	11.7%	9.4%	**8.0%**
75+	2.1%	2.2%	6.3%	5.6%	11.6%	10.4%	**7.9%**
Housing Units, 1990							
Occupied	97.3%	94.2%	95.6%	92.6%	96.0%	96.6%	**95.4%**
Vacant	2.7%	5.8%	4.4%	7.4%	4.0%	3.4%	**4.6%**
Home Ownership Rate							
1990	50.8%	87.0%	58.3%	92.0%	73.7%	76.0%	**74.9%**
1999	50.8%	87.9%	57.9%	92.1%	73.3%	76.6%	**75.3%**
2004	50.8%	88.0%	57.9%	92.2%	73.3%	76.7%	**75.3%**

Source: CACI Information Systems, Inc.; Economics Research Associates

Table 5-5

Census Profile by Planning Analysis Area, 1990-2000

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	**PAA 2**	**PAA 3**	**PAA 4**	**PAA 5**	**PAA 6**	**Amherst Total**
Population							
1990 Census	8,478	10,944	15,932	19,949	34,859	21,578	**111,740**
2000 Census	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	**116,510**
Annual % Change	-0.5%	0.8%	1.2%	1.3%	-0.2%	0.1%	**0.4%**
Race (number), 1990							
White	7,595	10,380	14,301	18,373	32,699	20,575	**103,923**
Black	339	181	596	488	1,010	353	**2,967**
American Indian	76	61	13	21	102	17	**290**
Asian/Pacific Islander	415	309	950	1,039	967	589	**4,269**
Other Race	53	13	72	28	81	44	**291**
Total	8,478	10,944	15,932	19,949	34,859	21,578	**111,740**
Race (percent), 1990							
White	89.6%	94.8%	89.8%	92.1%	93.8%	95.4%	**93.0%**
Black	4.0%	1.7%	3.7%	2.4%	2.9%	1.6%	**2.7%**
American Indian	0.9%	0.6%	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	**0.3%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.9%	2.8%	6.0%	5.2%	2.8%	2.7%	**3.8%**
Other Race	0.6%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	**0.3%**
Race (number), 2000							
White	6,714	10,941	15,152	20,606	30,314	20,291	**104,018**
Black	647	229	866	532	1,813	457	**4,544**
American Indian	22	12	10	29	56	17	**146**
Asian/Pacific Islander	508	537	1,593	1,332	1,288	850	**6,108**
Other Race/Multi-Racial	189	134	271	237	614	249	**1,694**
Total	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	**116,510**
Race (percent), 2000							
White	83.1%	92.3%	84.7%	90.6%	88.9%	92.8%	**89.3%**
Black	8.0%	1.9%	4.8%	2.3%	5.3%	2.1%	**3.9%**
American Indian	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	**0.1%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.3%	4.5%	8.9%	5.9%	3.8%	3.9%	**5.2%**
Other Race/Multi-Racial	2.3%	1.1%	1.5%	1.0%	1.8%	1.1%	**1.5%**

Source: CACI Information Systems, Inc.; Economics Research Associates

Table 5-6

Housing Permit Activity, 1990-1999

Year	Total Single-Family	Demos	Net Single-Family	Multi-Family	New Units
District 1					
1990	4	2	2	0	2
1991	10	1	9	12	21
1992	7	2	5	12	17
1993	26	1	25	14	39
1994	14	1	13	8	21
1995	21	1	20	12	32
1996	11	0	11	0	11
1997	11	0	11	0	11
1998	13	2	11	0	11
1999	24	0	24	0	24
Total	**59**	**2**	**57**	**0**	**57**
District 2					
1990	180	0	180	24	204
1991	91	1	90	5	95
1992	113	2	111	14	125
1993	102	3	99	11	110
1994	67	4	63	8	71
1995	70	0	70	0	70
1996	48	3	45	0	45
1997	29	3	26	0	26
1998	51	1	50	36	86
1999	51	1	50	72	122
Total	**179**	**8**	**171**	**108**	**279**
District 3					
1990	24	0	24	32	56
1991	17	0	17	88	105
1992	28	0	28	32	60
1993	18	0	18	21	39
1994	15	0	15	33	48
1995	6	2	4	36	40
1996	3	3	0	51	51
1997	1	1	0	325	325
1998	3	0	3	182	185
1999	1	0	1	48	49
Total	**8**	**4**	**4**	**606**	**610**

Table 5-6

Housing Permit Activity, 1990-1999

Year	Total Single-Family	Demos	Net Single-Family	Multi-Family	New Units
District 4					
1990	107	1	106	8	114
1991	67	0	67	85	152
1992	48	2	46	12	58
1993	52	1	51	12	63
1994	29	0	29	24	53
1995	39	0	39	0	39
1996	17	0	17	2	19
1997	22	3	19	383	402
1998	27	3	24	6	30
1999	33	1	32	2	34
Total	**99**	**7**	**92**	**393**	**485**
District 5					
1990	5	2	3	0	3
1991	9	1	8	5	13
1992	11	3	8	5	13
1993	12	2	10	12	22
1994	11	10	1	0	1
1995	7	6	1	6	7
1996	8	4	4	8	12
1997	5	4	1	0	1
1998	4	3	1	99	100
1999	9	2	7	59	66
Total	**26**	**13**	**13**	**166**	**179**
District 6					
1990	57	7	50	7	57
1991	39	2	37	4	41
1992	52	1	51	171	222
1993	46	2	44	8	52
1994	38	0	38	152	190
1995	25	3	22	7	29
1996	29	1	28	14	42
1997	15	2	13	6	19
1998	16	0	16	13	29
1999	21	0	21	6	27
Total	**81**	**3**	**78**	**39**	**117**
TOTAL	**452**	**37**	**415**	**1312**	**1727**

Source: Town of Amherst; Economics Research Associates

Table 5-7

Housing Unit Trends - Town of Amherst

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	TOTAL
Total Single-Family Units							
1990	1,455	3,512	2,975	5,873	10,906	6,425	**31,146**
1991	1,457	3,692	2,999	5,979	10,909	6,475	**31,511**
1992	1,466	3,782	3,016	6,046	10,917	6,512	**31,739**
1993	1,471	3,893	3,044	6,092	10,925	6,563	**31,988**
1994	1,496	3,992	3,062	6,143	10,935	6,607	**32,235**
1995	1,509	4,055	3,077	6,172	10,936	6,645	**32,394**
1996	1,529	4,125	3,081	6,211	10,937	6,667	**32,550**
1997	1,540	4,170	3,081	6,228	10,941	6,695	**32,655**
1998	1,551	4,196	3,081	6,247	10,942	6,708	**32,725**
1999	1,562	4,246	3,084	6,271	10,943	6,724	**32,830**
2000	1,586	4,296	3,085	6,303	10,950	6,745	**32,965**
Net Change	**131**	**784**	**110**	**430**	**44**	**320**	**1,819**
Avg Change/Year	**13.1**	**78.4**	**11.0**	**43.0**	**4.4**	**32.0**	**181.9**
1990-1995	10.8	108.6	20.4	59.8	6.0	44.0	**249.6**
1995-2000	15.4	48.2	1.6	26.2	2.8	20.0	**114.2**
Total Multi-Family Units							
1990	1,480	612	2,341	1,305	4,239	2,193	**12,170**
1991	1,480	636	2,373	1,313	4,239	2,200	**12,241**
1992	1,492	641	2,461	1,398	4,244	2,204	**12,440**
1993	1,504	655	2,493	1,410	4,249	2,375	**12,686**
1994	1,518	666	2,514	1,422	4,261	2,383	**12,764**
1995	1,526	674	2,547	1,446	4,261	2,535	**12,989**
1996	1,538	674	2,583	1,446	4,267	2,542	**13,050**
1997	1,538	674	2,634	1,448	4,275	2,556	**13,125**
1998	1,538	674	2,959	1,831	4,275	2,562	**13,839**
1999	1,538	710	3,141	1,837	4,374	2,575	**14,175**
2000	1,538	782	3,189	1,839	4,433	2,581	**14,362**
Net Change	**58**	**170**	**848**	**534**	**194**	**388**	**2,192**
Avg Change/Year	**5.8**	**17.0**	**84.8**	**53.4**	**19.4**	**38.8**	**219.2**
1990-1995	9.2	12.4	41.2	28.2	4.4	68.4	**163.8**
1995-2000	2.4	21.6	128.4	78.6	34.4	9.2	**274.6**
Total Housing Units							
1990	2,935	4,124	5,316	7,178	15,145	8,618	**43,316**
1991	2,937	4,328	5,372	7,292	15,148	8,675	**43,752**
1992	2,958	4,423	5,477	7,444	15,161	8,716	**44,179**
1993	2,975	4,548	5,537	7,502	15,174	8,938	**44,674**
1994	3,014	4,658	5,576	7,565	15,196	8,990	**44,999**
1995	3,035	4,729	5,624	7,618	15,197	9,180	**45,383**
1996	3,067	4,799	5,664	7,657	15,204	9,209	**45,600**
1997	3,078	4,844	5,715	7,676	15,216	9,251	**45,780**
1998	3,089	4,870	6,040	8,078	15,217	9,270	**46,564**
1999	3,100	4,956	6,225	8,108	15,317	9,299	**47,005**
2000	3,124	5,078	6,274	8,142	15,383	9,326	**47,327**
Net Change	**189**	**954**	**958**	**964**	**238**	**708**	**4,011**
Avg Change/Year	**18.9**	**95.4**	**95.8**	**96.4**	**23.8**	**70.8**	**401.1**
1990-1995	20.0	121.0	61.6	88.0	10.4	112.4	**413.4**
1995-2000	17.8	69.8	130.0	104.8	37.2	29.2	**388.8**

Source: Town of Amherst Planning Department; Economics Research Associates

Table 5-8

Summary of Projected Percentage Changes by Source

	Period of Analysis						
	1990-95	1995-99	1990-99	1999-2004	1990-2020	2000-2010	2010-2020
Population Change							
U.S. Census							
United States	**1.10%**	**0.93%**	**1.02%**				
New York State	**0.18%**	**0.06%**	**0.13%**				
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	**-0.15%**	**-0.82%**	**-0.45%**				
Erie County	**-0.19%**	**-0.88%**	**-0.50%**				
Town of Amherst	**0.19%**	**-0.60%**	**-0.16%**				
Town of Amherst Planning Dept.							
Town of Amherst	**1.02%**						
District 1	0.76%						
District 2	2.97%						
District 3	1.35%						
District 4	1.26%						
District 5	0.11%						
District 6	1.05%						
CACI Information Systems, Inc.							
Town of Amherst			**-0.07%**	**-0.73%**			
District 1			-1.00%	-0.98%			
District 2			0.66%	-0.60%			
District 3			-0.40%	-0.62%			
District 4			0.07%	-0.73%			
District 5			-0.18%	-0.78%			
District 6			0.19%	-0.70%			
Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council							
Buffalo-Niagara MSA					**0.24%**		
Erie County					**0.23%**		
Town of Amherst					**0.63%**		
District 1					0.77%		
District 2					1.43%		
District 3					0.42%		
District 4					0.99%		
District 5					0.32%		
District 6					0.43%		
Woods & Poole Economics							
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	-0.16%	-0.57%	-0.35%		-0.07%	0.01%	0.08%
Erie County	-0.21%	-0.63%	-0.39%		-0.09%	0.01%	0.08%

Table 5-8

Summary of Projected Percentage Changes by Source

	Period of Analysis						
	1990-95	1995-99	1990-99	1999-2004	1990-2020	2000-2010	2010-2020
Household Change							
Town of Amherst Planning Dept.							
Town of Amherst	**1.03%**						
District 1	0.86%						
District 2	3.13%						
District 3	1.27%						
District 4	1.33%						
District 5	0.08%						
District 6	1.31%						
CACI Information Systems, Inc.							
Town of Amherst			**0.26%**	**-0.49%**			
District 1			-0.70%	-0.69%			
District 2			0.93%	-0.35%			
District 3			-0.21%	-0.57%			
District 4			0.40%	-0.46%			
District 5			0.27%	-0.51%			
District 6			0.40%	-0.45%			
Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council							
Buffalo-Niagara MSA					**0.21%**		
Erie County					**0.21%**		
Town of Amherst					**0.66%**		
District 1					0.81%		
District 2					1.33%		
District 3					0.54%		
District 4					1.02%		
District 5					0.38%		
District 6					0.53%		
Woods & Poole Economics							
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	**-0.13%**	**-0.43%**	**-0.26%**		**0.01%**	**0.20%**	**0.04%**
Erie County	**-0.17%**	**-0.48%**	**-0.31%**		**-0.01%**	**0.20%**	**0.04%**

Table 5-8

Summary of Projected Percentage Changes by Source

	Year							
	1980	1990	1995	1999	2000	2004	2010	2020
Average Household Size								
U.S. Census Bureau								
Town of Amherst		**2.56**						
District 1		2.96						
District 2		2.83						
District 3		2.30						
District 4		2.92						
District 5		2.37						
District 6		2.50						
Town of Amherst Planning Dept.								
Town of Amherst		**2.56**	**2.56**					
District 1		2.96	2.93					
District 2		2.83	2.81					
District 3		2.30	2.30					
District 4		2.92	2.91					
District 5		2.37	2.36					
District 6		2.50	2.49					
CACI Information Systems, Inc.								
Town of Amherst				**2.49**		**2.46**		
District 1				2.87		2.83		
District 2				2.76		2.73		
District 3				2.27		2.24		
District 4				2.84		2.80		
District 5				2.28		2.24		
District 6				2.46		2.43		
Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council								
Town of Amherst		**2.56**						**2.56**
District 1		2.96						2.92
District 2		2.86						2.94
District 3		2.30						2.31
District 4		2.90						2.89
District 5		2.36						2.33
District 6		2.51						2.45
Woods & Poole Economics								
United States	**2.74**	**2.63**			**2.60**		**2.57**	**2.55**
New York State	**2.69**	**2.63**			**2.60**		**2.57**	**2.54**
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	**2.72**	**2.51**			**2.49**		**2.43**	**2.44**
Erie County	**2.71**	**2.50**			**2.48**		**2.42**	**2.43**

Source: All listed sources; Economics Research Associates

Table 5-9

Comparison of Demographic Projections by Source

Population and Household Change

U.S. Census	1990-95 Pop	1990-95 HH	1995-99 Pop	1995-99 HH	1990-99 Pop	1990-99 HH
United States	**1.10%**		**0.93%**		**1.02%**	
New York State	**0.18%**		**0.06%**		**0.13%**	
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	**-0.15%**		**-0.82%**		**-0.45%**	
Erie County	**-0.19%**		**-0.88%**		**-0.50%**	
Town of Amherst	**0.19%**		**-0.60%**		**-0.16%**	

Town of Amherst Planning Dept.	1990-95 Pop	1990-95 HH
Town of Amherst	**1.02%**	**1.03%**
District 1	0.76%	0.86%
District 2	2.97%	3.13%
District 3	1.35%	1.27%
District 4	1.26%	1.33%
District 5	0.11%	0.08%
District 6	1.05%	1.31%

CACI Information Systems, Inc.	1990-1999 Pop	1990-1999 HH	1999-2004 Pop	1999-2004 HH
Town of Amherst	**-0.07%**	**0.26%**	**-0.73%**	**-0.49%**
District 1	-1.00%	-0.70%	-0.98%	-0.69%
District 2	0.66%	0.93%	-0.60%	-0.35%
District 3	-0.40%	-0.21%	-0.62%	-0.57%
District 4	0.07%	0.40%	-0.73%	-0.46%
District 5	-0.18%	0.27%	-0.78%	-0.51%
District 6	0.19%	0.40%	-0.70%	-0.45%

Population and Household Change (cont.)

Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council	1990-2020 Pop	1990-2020 HH
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	**0.24%**	**0.21%**
Erie County	**0.23%**	**0.21%**
Town of Amherst	**0.63%**	**0.66%**
District 1	0.77%	0.81%
District 2	1.43%	1.33%
District 3	0.42%	0.54%
District 4	0.99%	1.02%
District 5	0.32%	0.38%
District 6	0.43%	0.53%

Table 5-9

Comparison of Demographic Projections by Source

	1990-95		1995-99		2000-2010		2010-2020		1990-2020	
Woods & Poole Economics	**Pop**	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	-0.16%	-0.13%	-0.57%	-0.43%	0.01%	0.20%	0.08%	0.04%	-0.07%	0.01%
Erie County	-0.21%	-0.17%	-0.63%	-0.48%	0.01%	0.20%	0.08%	0.04%	-0.09%	-0.01%

Average Household Size

U.S. Census Bureau	**1980**	**1990**	**1995**	**1999**	**2000**	**2004**	**2010**	**2020**
Town of Amherst		**2.56**						
District 1		2.96						
District 2		2.83						
District 3		2.30						
District 4		2.92						
District 5		2.37						
District 6		2.50						

Town of Amherst Planning Dept.			
Town of Amherst	**2.56**	**2.56**	
District 1	2.96	2.93	
District 2	2.83	2.81	
District 3	2.30	2.30	
District 4	2.92	2.91	
District 5	2.37	2.36	
District 6	2.50	2.49	

Average Household Size (cont.)

CACI Information Systems, Inc.				
Town of Amherst	**2.49**		**2.46**	
District 1	2.87		2.83	
District 2	2.76		2.73	
District 3	2.27		2.24	
District 4	2.84		2.80	
District 5	2.28		2.24	
District 6	2.46		2.43	

Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council			
Town of Amherst	**2.56**		**2.56**
District 1	2.96		2.92
District 2	2.86		2.94
District 3	2.30		2.31
District 4	2.90		2.89
District 5	2.36		2.33
District 6	2.51		2.45

Woods & Poole Economics						
United States	2.74	2.63	2.60	2.57	2.55
New York State	2.69	2.63	2.60	2.57	2.54
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	2.72	2.51	2.49	2.43	2.44
Erie County	2.71	2.50	2.48	2.42	2.43

Source: All above sources and Economics Research Associates

Table 5-10

Comparison of Demographic Projections by Time Period

1990-1995 Figures

	Census		Town Estimates		Woods & Poole	
	Pop	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**
United States	**1.10%**					
New York State	**0.18%**					
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	**-0.15%**				-0.16%	-0.13%
Erie County	**-0.19%**				-0.21%	-0.17%
Town of Amherst	**0.19%**		**1.02%**	**1.03%**		
District 1			0.76%	0.86%		
District 2			2.97%	3.13%		
District 3			1.35%	1.27%		
District 4			1.26%	1.33%		
District 5			0.11%	0.08%		
District 6			1.05%	1.31%		

1995-1999 Figures

	Census		Woods & Poole	
	Pop	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**
United States	**0.93%**			
New York State	**0.06%**			
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	**-0.82%**		-0.57%	-0.43%
Erie County	**-0.88%**		-0.63%	-0.48%
Town of Amherst	**-0.60%**			

1990-1999 Figures

	Census		Woods & Poole		CACI	
	Pop	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**
United States	**1.02%**					
New York State	**0.13%**					
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	**-0.45%**		-0.35%	-0.26%		
Erie County	**-0.50%**		-0.39%	-0.31%		
Town of Amherst	**-0.16%**				**-0.07%**	**0.26%**
District 1					-1.00%	-0.70%
District 2					0.66%	0.93%
District 3					-0.40%	-0.21%
District 4					0.07%	0.40%
District 5					-0.18%	0.27%
District 6					0.19%	0.40%

1999-2004 Figures

	CACI	
	Pop	**HH**
Town of Amherst	**-0.73%**	**-0.49%**
District 1	-0.98%	-0.69%
District 2	-0.60%	-0.35%
District 3	-0.62%	-0.57%
District 4	-0.73%	-0.46%
District 5	-0.78%	-0.51%
District 6	-0.70%	-0.45%

2000-2020 Figures

	W&P 2000-10		W&P 2010-20		W&P 1990-2020		GBNRTC 1990-2020	
	Pop	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**	**Pop**	**HH**
Buffalo-Niagara MSA	0.01%	0.20%	0.08%	0.04%	-0.07%	0.01%	**0.24%**	**0.21%**
Erie County	0.01%	0.20%	0.08%	0.04%	-0.09%	-0.01%	**0.23%**	**0.21%**
Town of Amherst							**0.63%**	**0.66%**
District 1							0.77%	0.81%
District 2							1.43%	1.33%
District 3							0.42%	0.54%
District 4							0.99%	1.02%
District 5							0.32%	0.38%
District 6							0.43%	0.53%

Sources: All above sources; Economics Research Associates

Table 5-11

Adjustments to Projected Growth Rates

2000-2005: CACI Information Systems		
Estimated CACI 1990-99 Town Population Growth Rate:	-0.07%	
Estimated Census 1990-99 Town Population Growth Rate:	-0.16%	
Census Adjustment Factor:	**-0.09%**	
Estimated Census 1995-99 MSA Population Growth Rate:	-0.82%	
Estimated W&P 1995-99 MSA Population Growth Rate:	-0.57%	
Woods & Poole Adjustment Factor:	**0.25%**	
Projected W&P 1990-2020 MSA Population Growth Rate:	-0.07%	
Projected GBNRTC 1990-2020 MSA Population Growth Rate:	0.24%	
GBNRTC Adjustment Factor:	**0.31%**	
Overall Adjustment Factor:	**0.47%**	

Projected CACI Population Growth Rates, 2000-2005:	**CACI Projection**	**Adjusted Projection**
Town of Amherst	**-0.73%**	**-0.26%**
District 1	-0.98%	-0.51%
District 2	-0.60%	-0.14%
District 3	-0.62%	-0.15%
District 4	-0.73%	-0.26%
District 5	-0.78%	-0.31%
District 6	-0.70%	-0.23%
Projected Decrease in Persons per Household, 2000-2005:	**-0.28%**	
Projected Household Change, 2000-2005:		
Town of Amherst	**0.02%**	
District 1	-0.23%	
District 2	0.14%	
District 3	0.13%	
District 4	0.02%	
District 5	-0.03%	
District 6	0.04%	

2005-2010: Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council		
Projected GBNRTC 1990-2020 MSA Population Growth Rate:	0.24%	
Projected W&P 1990-2020 MSA Population Growth Rate:	-0.07%	
Woods & Poole Adjustment Factor	**-0.31%**	
Projected W&P 1990-2020 MSA Population Growth Rate:	-0.07%	
Projected W&P 2000-2010 MSA Population Growth Rate:	0.01%	
Time Period Adjustment Factor	**0.08%**	
Overall Adjustment Factor	**-0.23%**	

Projected GBNRTC Population Growth Rates, 2005-2010:	**GBNRTC Projection**	**Adjusted Projection**
Town of Amherst	**0.63%**	**0.41%**
District 1	0.77%	0.54%
District 2	1.43%	1.20%
District 3	0.42%	0.19%
District 4	0.99%	0.77%
District 5	0.32%	0.09%
District 6	0.43%	0.20%
Projected Decrease in Persons per Household, 2005-2010:	**-0.24%**	
Projected Household Change, 2005-2010:		
Town of Amherst	**0.65%**	
District 1	0.79%	
District 2	1.44%	
District 3	0.44%	
District 4	1.01%	
District 5	0.34%	
District 6	0.45%	

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 5-12

Population Projections - Town of Amherst
Based on 1990-2000 Trends in Housing Inventory

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	**PAA 2**	**PAA 3**	**PAA 4**	**PAA 5**	**PAA 6**	**TOTAL**
2000 Baseline							
2000 Population Estimate	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	**116,510**
Housing Unit Forecasts							
2000	3,146	4,898	6,040	8,069	15,668	9,475	**47,296**
2005	3,246	5,434	6,540	8,610	15,797	9,867	**49,493**
2010	3,349	6,028	7,114	9,217	15,928	10,282	**51,918**
2015	3,456	6,688	7,775	9,902	16,062	10,722	**54,605**
2020	3,567	7,421	8,536	10,677	16,198	11,188	**57,588**
Total Change, 2000-2020	421	2,523	2,496	2,608	530	1,713	**10,292**
Average Household Size							
Projected Annual Rate of Decrease in Number of Persons per Household							
2000-2005	-0.28%	-0.28%	-0.28%	-0.28%	-0.28%	-0.28%	**-0.28%**
2005-2010	-0.24%	-0.24%	-0.24%	-0.24%	-0.24%	-0.24%	**-0.24%**
2010-2020	-0.24%	-0.24%	-0.24%	-0.24%	-0.24%	-0.24%	**-0.24%**
Projected Average Household Size							
2000	2.56	2.42	2.21	2.75	2.12	2.25	**2.33**
2005	2.53	2.39	2.18	2.71	2.09	2.22	**2.29**
2010	2.49	2.36	2.15	2.68	2.06	2.20	**2.27**
2015	2.46	2.33	2.12	2.65	2.04	2.17	**2.24**
2020	2.43	2.30	2.10	2.62	2.01	2.14	**2.21**
Household Population by Year							
2000	8,056	11,853	13,325	22,199	33,205	21,360	**109,998**
2005	8,196	12,967	14,228	23,359	33,015	21,936	**113,702**
2010	8,355	14,212	15,290	24,704	32,885	22,581	**118,027**
2015	8,518	15,577	16,508	26,217	32,759	23,262	**122,840**
2020	8,685	17,073	17,905	27,928	32,637	23,980	**128,207**
Total Change, 2000-2020	629	5,220	4,580	5,729	(568)	2,620	**18,209**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.38%	1.84%	1.49%	1.15%	-0.09%	0.58%	**0.77%**
Group Quarters Population by Year *(1)*							
2000 Estimate	24	-	4,567	537	880	504	**6,512**
2005	24	-	8,500	569	876	519	**10,488**
2010	25	-	8,500	602	872	534	**10,534**
2015	25	-	8,500	638	869	550	**10,582**
2020	26	-	8,500	676	865	566	**10,632**
Population Projections by Year							
2000	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	**116,510**
2005	8,221	12,967	22,728	23,928	33,891	22,454	**124,190**
2010	8,380	14,212	23,790	25,306	33,758	23,115	**128,561**
2015	8,543	15,577	25,008	26,855	33,628	23,811	**133,422**
2020	8,711	17,073	26,405	28,604	33,501	24,545	**138,839**
Total Change, 2000-2020	631	5,220	8,513	5,868	(584)	2,681	**22,329**

(1) Group quarters population is expected to grow at same rate as all population, except in District 3, where the University at Buffalo plans to house 8,500 students on campus by 2005 and from that point forward. Population projections for District 3 have therefore been adjusted to accommodate this growth.

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 5-13

Housing Unit Projections - Town of Amherst
Based on 1990-2000 Trends

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	**PAA 2**	**PAA 3**	**PAA 4**	**PAA 5**	**PAA 6**	**TOTAL**
2000 Baseline							
Single-Family	1,570	4,224	3,424	6,410	10,956	6,840	**33,424**
Multi-Family	1,576	674	2,616	1,659	4,712	2,635	**13,872**
Total Units	3,146	4,898	6,040	8,069	15,668	9,475	**47,296**
Annual Percent Change in Housing Inventory, 1990-2000							
Single-Family	0.87%	2.04%	0.36%	0.71%	0.04%	0.49%	**0.57%**
Multi-Family	0.39%	2.48%	3.14%	3.49%	0.45%	1.64%	**1.67%**
Total Units	0.63%	2.10%	1.67%	1.27%	0.16%	0.79%	**0.89%**
Housing Unit Projections, 2000-2020							
Single-Family Units							
2005	1,639	4,672	3,487	6,641	10,978	7,008	**34,424**
2010	1,711	5,167	3,551	6,879	11,000	7,181	**35,489**
2015	1,787	5,715	3,616	7,127	11,022	7,357	**36,623**
2020	1,865	6,320	3,682	7,383	11,045	7,538	**37,834**
Change, 2000-2020	295	2,096	258	973	89	698	**4,410**
Multi-Family Units							
2005	1,607	762	3,053	1,969	4,819	2,859	**15,068**
2010	1,638	861	3,564	2,338	4,928	3,101	**16,429**
2015	1,670	974	4,159	2,775	5,039	3,364	**17,981**
2020	1,702	1,100	4,854	3,294	5,153	3,650	**19,754**
Change, 2000-2020	126	426	2,238	1,635	441	1,015	**5,882**
Total Units							
2005	3,246	5,434	6,540	8,610	15,797	9,867	**49,493**
2010	3,349	6,028	7,114	9,217	15,928	10,282	**51,918**
2015	3,456	6,688	7,775	9,902	16,062	10,722	**54,605**
2020	3,567	7,421	8,536	10,677	16,198	11,188	**57,588**
Change, 2000-2020	421	2,523	2,496	2,608	530	1,713	**10,292**

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 5-14

Population and Household Projections - Town of Amherst
Based on 1990-2000 Trends

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	**PAA 2**	**PAA 3**	**PAA 4**	**PAA 5**	**PAA 6**	**TOTAL**
Population Projections by Year							
1990 Census Population	8,478	10,944	15,932	19,949	34,859	21,578	**111,740**
2000	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	**116,510**
2005	8,221	12,967	22,728	23,928	33,891	22,454	**124,190**
2010	8,380	14,212	23,790	25,306	33,758	23,115	**128,561**
2015	8,543	15,577	25,008	26,855	33,628	23,811	**133,422**
2020	8,711	17,073	26,405	28,604	33,501	24,545	**138,839**
Total Change, 2000-2020	631	5,220	8,513	5,868	(584)	2,681	**22,329**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.38%	1.84%	1.96%	1.15%	-0.09%	0.58%	**0.88%**
Household Population by Year							
2000	8,056	11,853	13,325	22,199	33,205	21,360	**109,998**
2005	8,196	12,967	14,228	23,359	33,015	21,936	**113,702**
2010	8,355	14,212	15,290	24,704	32,885	22,581	**118,027**
2015	8,518	15,577	16,508	26,217	32,759	23,262	**122,840**
2020	8,685	17,073	17,905	27,928	32,637	23,980	**128,207**
Total Change, 2000-2020	629	5,220	4,580	5,729	(568)	2,620	**18,209**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.38%	1.84%	1.49%	1.15%	-0.09%	0.58%	**0.77%**
Housing Unit Projections by Year--projected by trend							
2000	3,146	4,898	6,040	8,069	15,668	9,475	**47,296**
2005	3,246	5,434	6,540	8,610	15,797	9,867	**49,493**
2010	3,349	6,028	7,114	9,217	15,928	10,282	**51,918**
2015	3,456	6,688	7,775	9,902	16,062	10,722	**54,605**
2020	3,567	7,421	8,536	10,677	16,198	11,188	**57,588**
Total Change, 2000-2020	421	2,523	2,496	2,608	530	1,713	**10,292**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.63%	2.10%	1.74%	1.41%	0.17%	0.83%	**0.99%**
Average Household Size by Year							
2000	2.56	2.42	2.21	2.75	2.12	2.25	**2.33**
2005	2.53	2.39	2.18	2.71	2.09	2.22	**2.30**
2010	2.49	2.36	2.15	2.68	2.06	2.20	**2.27**
2015	2.46	2.33	2.12	2.65	2.04	2.17	**2.25**
2020	2.43	2.30	2.10	2.62	2.01	2.14	**2.23**

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 5-15

Population Projections - Town of Amherst
Based on Projected Growth Rates

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	**PAA 2**	**PAA 3**	**PAA 4**	**PAA 5**	**PAA 6**	**TOTAL**
2000 Baseline							
1990 Census Population	8,478	10,944	15,932	19,949	34,859	21,578	**111,740**
2000 Population Estimate	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	**116,510**
Annual Change	-0.48%	0.80%	1.17%	1.32%	-0.22%	0.13%	**0.42%**
Projected Annual Percent Change in Population							
2000-2005 (CACI)	-0.51%	-0.14%	-0.15%	-0.26%	-0.31%	-0.23%	**-0.26%**
2005-2010 (GBNRTC)	0.54%	1.20%	0.19%	0.77%	0.09%	0.20%	**0.41%**
2010-2020 (GBNRTC)	0.61%	1.26%	0.26%	0.83%	0.16%	0.27%	**0.47%**
Total, 2000-2020	0.31%	0.90%	1.15%	0.54%	0.03%	0.13%	**0.44%**
Population Projections by Year *(1)*							
2005	7,875	11,773	21,690	22,444	33,557	21,610	**118,950**
2010	8,090	12,495	21,899	23,316	33,713	21,832	**121,347**
2015	8,340	13,305	22,185	24,303	33,985	22,131	**124,249**
2020	8,597	14,169	22,475	25,332	34,258	22,434	**127,264**
Total Change, 2000-2020	517	2,316	4,583	2,596	173	570	**10,754**
Group Quarters Population by Year *(1)*							
2000 Estimate	24	-	4,567	537	880	504	**6,512**
2005	23	-	8,500	530	866	498	**10,418**
2010	24	-	8,500	551	870	503	**10,448**
2015	25	-	8,500	574	877	510	**10,486**
2020	26	-	8,500	598	884	517	**10,525**
Household Population by Year							
2000	8,056	11,853	13,325	22,199	33,205	21,360	**109,998**
2005	7,851	11,773	13,190	21,914	32,691	21,112	**108,532**
2010	8,066	12,495	13,399	22,765	32,843	21,329	**110,898**
2015	8,315	13,305	13,685	23,729	33,107	21,621	**113,763**
2020	8,571	14,169	13,975	24,734	33,373	21,917	**116,738**
Total Change, 2000-2020	515	2,316	650	2,535	168	557	**6,740**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.31%	0.90%	0.24%	0.54%	0.03%	0.13%	**0.30%**

(1) Group quarters population is expected to grow at same rate as all population, except in District 3, where the University at Buffalo plans to house 8,500 students on campus by 2005 and from that point forward. Population projections for District 3 have therefore been adjusted to accommodate this growth. The percentage growth rates at the top of this table do not include this increase in student population.

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 5-16

Housing Unit Projections - Town of Amherst

Based on Projected Growth Rates

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	**PAA 2**	**PAA 3**	**PAA 4**	**PAA 5**	**PAA 6**	**TOTAL**
2000 Baseline							
Single-Family	1,570	4,224	3,424	6,410	10,956	6,840	**33,424**
Multi-Family	1,576	674	2,616	1,659	4,712	2,635	**13,872**
Total Units	3,146	4,898	6,040	8,069	15,668	9,475	**47,296**
Percent of Total Inventory, 1990							
Single-Family	49.6%	85.2%	56.0%	81.8%	72.0%	74.6%	**70.7%**
Multi-Family	50.4%	14.8%	44.0%	18.2%	28.0%	25.4%	**29.3%**
Percent of Total Change in Inventory, 1990-2000							
Single-Family	69.3%	82.2%	11.5%	44.6%	18.5%	45.2%	**45.4%**
Multi-Family	30.7%	17.8%	88.5%	55.4%	81.5%	54.8%	**54.6%**
Adjustment Factors: Contribution to Change vs. Percent of Existing 1990 Inventory							
Single-Family	19.7%	-3.0%	-44.5%	-37.2%	-53.5%	-29.4%	**-25.3%**
Multi-Family	-19.7%	3.0%	44.5%	37.2%	53.5%	29.4%	**25.3%**
Annual Percent Change in Housing Inventory							
All Units							
2000-2005	-0.23%	0.14%	0.13%	0.02%	-0.03%	0.04%	**0.02%**
2005-2010	0.79%	1.44%	0.44%	1.01%	0.34%	0.45%	**0.65%**
2010-2020	0.85%	1.51%	0.50%	1.08%	0.40%	0.52%	**0.72%**
Total, 2000-2020	0.56%	1.12%	0.37%	0.63%	0.22%	0.33%	**0.45%**
Single-Family Units							
2000-2005	-0.28%	0.14%	0.07%	0.01%	-0.02%	0.03%	**0.01%**
2005-2010	0.94%	1.40%	0.24%	0.63%	0.16%	0.32%	**0.49%**
2010-2020	1.02%	1.46%	0.28%	0.68%	0.19%	0.36%	**0.54%**
Total, 2000-2020	0.67%	1.09%	0.21%	0.39%	0.10%	0.23%	**0.34%**
Multi-Family Units							
2000-2005	-0.19%	0.15%	0.18%	0.03%	-0.05%	0.06%	**0.02%**
2005-2010	0.63%	1.48%	0.63%	1.38%	0.52%	0.58%	**0.81%**
2010-2020	0.68%	1.55%	0.73%	1.48%	0.62%	0.67%	**0.90%**
Total, 2000-2020	0.45%	1.16%	0.54%	0.86%	0.34%	0.43%	**0.57%**
Housing Unit Projections, 2000-2020							
Single-Family Units							
2005	1,548	4,253	3,436	6,414	10,948	6,851	**33,450**
2010	1,622	4,559	3,478	6,620	11,033	6,960	**34,273**
2015	1,707	4,903	3,527	6,846	11,137	7,088	**35,208**
2020	1,796	5,272	3,576	7,081	11,242	7,218	**36,186**
Change, 2000-2020	226	1,048	152	671	286	378	**2,762**
Multi-Family Units							
2005	1,561	679	2,640	1,661	4,700	2,643	**13,884**
2010	1,611	731	2,724	1,780	4,823	2,720	**14,388**
2015	1,667	789	2,825	1,915	4,974	2,812	**14,982**
2020	1,725	853	2,929	2,061	5,130	2,907	**15,604**
Change, 2000-2020	149	179	313	402	418	272	**1,732**
Total Units							
2005	3,109	4,932	6,076	8,075	15,648	9,494	**47,334**
2010	3,233	5,290	6,202	8,399	15,856	9,680	**48,661**
2015	3,374	5,692	6,352	8,761	16,111	9,900	**50,190**
2020	3,520	6,125	6,505	9,141	16,373	10,125	**51,790**
Change, 2000-2020	374	1,227	465	1,072	705	650	**4,494**

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 5-17

Population and Household Projections - Town of Amherst
Based on Projected Growth Rates

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	**PAA 2**	**PAA 3**	**PAA 4**	**PAA 5**	**PAA 6**	**TOTAL**
Population Projections by Year							
1990 Census Population	8,478	10,944	15,932	19,949	34,859	21,578	**111,740**
2000	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	**116,510**
2005	7,875	11,773	21,690	22,444	33,557	21,610	**118,950**
2010	8,090	12,495	21,899	23,316	33,713	21,832	**121,347**
2015	8,340	13,305	22,185	24,303	33,985	22,131	**124,249**
2020	8,597	14,169	22,475	25,332	34,258	22,434	**127,264**
Total Change, 2000-2020	517	2,316	4,583	2,596	173	570	**10,754**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.31%	0.90%	1.15%	0.54%	0.03%	0.13%	**0.44%**
Household Population by Year							
2000	8,056	11,853	13,325	22,199	33,205	21,360	**109,998**
2005	7,851	11,773	13,190	21,914	32,691	21,112	**108,532**
2010	8,066	12,495	13,399	22,765	32,843	21,329	**110,898**
2015	8,315	13,305	13,685	23,729	33,107	21,621	**113,763**
2020	8,571	14,169	13,975	24,734	33,373	21,917	**116,738**
Total Change, 2000-2020	515	2,316	650	2,535	168	557	**6,740**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.31%	0.90%	0.24%	0.54%	0.03%	0.13%	**0.30%**
Housing Unit Projections by Year--projected by rate							
2000	3,146	4,898	6,040	8,069	15,668	9,475	**47,296**
2005	3,109	4,932	6,076	8,075	15,648	9,494	**47,334**
2010	3,233	5,290	6,202	8,399	15,856	9,680	**48,661**
2015	3,374	5,692	6,352	8,761	16,111	9,900	**50,190**
2020	3,520	6,125	6,505	9,141	16,373	10,125	**51,790**
Total Change, 2000-2020	374	1,227	465	1,072	705	650	**4,494**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.56%	1.12%	0.37%	0.63%	0.22%	0.33%	**0.45%**
Average Household Size by Year							
2000	2.56	2.42	2.21	2.75	2.12	2.25	**2.33**
2005	2.53	2.39	2.17	2.71	2.09	2.22	**2.29**
2010	2.49	2.36	2.16	2.71	2.07	2.20	**2.28**
2015	2.46	2.34	2.15	2.71	2.05	2.18	**2.27**
2020	2.43	2.31	2.15	2.71	2.04	2.16	**2.25**

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 5-18

Summary of Residential Growth Scenarios - Town of Amherst

	Planning Analysis Areas (PAAs)						
	PAA 1	**PAA 2**	**PAA 3**	**PAA 4**	**PAA 5**	**PAA 6**	**TOTAL**
Scenario 1: Extend Historic Trends							
Population							
2000	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	**116,510**
2020	8,711	17,073	26,405	28,604	33,501	24,545	**138,839**
Total Change, 2000-2020	631	5,220	8,513	5,868	(584)	2,681	**22,329**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.38%	1.84%	1.96%	1.15%	-0.09%	0.58%	**0.88%**
Housing Inventory							
2000	3,146	4,898	6,040	8,069	15,668	9,475	**47,296**
2020	3,567	7,421	8,536	10,677	16,198	11,188	**57,588**
Total Change, 2000-2020	421	2,523	2,496	2,608	530	1,713	**10,292**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.63%	2.10%	1.74%	1.41%	0.17%	0.83%	**0.99%**
Scenario 2: Apply Projected Growth Rates							
Population							
2000	8,080	11,853	17,892	22,736	34,085	21,864	**116,510**
2020	8,597	14,169	22,475	25,332	34,258	22,434	**127,264**
Total Change, 2000-2020	517	2,316	4,583	2,596	173	570	**10,754**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.31%	0.90%	1.15%	0.54%	0.03%	0.13%	**0.44%**
Housing Inventory							
2000	3,146	4,898	6,040	8,069	15,668	9,475	**47,296**
2020	3,520	6,125	6,505	9,141	16,373	10,125	**51,790**
Total Change, 2000-2020	374	1,227	465	1,072	705	650	**4,494**
Annual Percent Change, 2000-2020	0.56%	1.12%	0.37%	0.63%	0.22%	0.33%	**0.45%**

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 6-1

Employment and Earnings Trends in the Buffalo-Niagara MSA, 1980-1999

				Annual Percent Change	
	1980	1990	1999	1980-1990	1990-1999
Erie County					
Total Non-Agricultural	403,298	445,702	452,922	1.0%	0.2%
Construction	13,662	17,931	16,868	2.8%	-0.7%
Manufacturing	100,591	74,595	68,212	-2.9%	-1.0%
Transportation & Public Utilities	25,672	27,123	25,928	0.6%	-0.5%
Wholesale Trade	22,254	24,036	24,892	0.8%	0.4%
Retail Trade	73,326	89,175	83,406	2.0%	-0.7%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	20,517	27,390	28,657	2.9%	0.5%
Services	125,096	163,698	182,869	2.7%	1.2%
Government	22,180	21,754	22,090	-0.2%	0.2%
Niagara County					
Total Non-Agricultural	79,823	82,470	77,454	0.3%	-0.7%
Construction	2,585	3,673	3,068	3.6%	-2.0%
Manufacturing	32,285	22,931	18,380	-3.4%	-2.4%
Transportation & Public Utilities	3,473	4,549	5,083	2.7%	1.2%
Wholesale Trade	2,082	2,663	2,103	2.5%	-2.6%
Retail Trade	13,424	17,924	15,936	2.9%	-1.3%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,932	2,053	1,982	0.6%	-0.4%
Services	18,885	23,354	25,955	2.1%	1.2%
Government	5,157	5,323	4,947	0.3%	-0.8%
MSA Total					
Total Non-Agricultural	483,121	528,172	530,376	0.9%	0.0%
Construction	16,247	21,604	19,936	2.9%	-0.9%
Manufacturing	132,876	97,526	86,592	-3.0%	-1.3%
Transportation & Public Utilities	29,145	31,672	31,011	0.8%	-0.2%
Wholesale Trade	24,336	26,699	26,995	0.9%	0.1%
Retail Trade	86,750	107,099	99,342	2.1%	-0.8%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	22,449	29,443	30,639	2.7%	0.4%
Services	143,981	187,052	208,824	2.7%	1.2%
Government	27,337	27,077	27,037	-0.1%	0.0%

Source: New York State Department of Labor; Economics Research Associates.

Table 6-2

Buffalo-Niagara MSA Employment Profile, 1997

	Average Units	Total Employment	% of Total	Wages in $000s	Avg. Salary Per Job
Total Employment	**28,083**	**527,688**	**100.0%**	**14,975,912**	
Total Private Employment	**27,531**	**445,159**	**84.4%**	**12,086,866**	**$ 27,152**
Manufacturing	**1,697**	**88,942**	**16.9%**	**3,797,716**	**$ 42,699**
Durable Goods	1,019	54,254	10.3%	2,498,253	$ 46,047
Nondurable Goods	678	34,688	6.6%	1,299,463	$ 37,461
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	**537**	**3,706**	**0.7%**	**65,821**	**$ 17,761**
Mining	**27**	**255**	**0.0%**	**10,284**	**$ 40,329**
Construction	**2,858**	**19,247**	**3.6%**	**632,009**	**$ 32,837**
Transportation & Public Utilities	**1,040**	**24,365**	**4.6%**	**854,225**	**$ 35,060**
Wholesale Trade	**2,261**	**26,847**	**5.1%**	**878,397**	**$ 32,719**
Retail Trade	**6,817**	**100,728**	**19.1%**	**1,371,164**	**$ 13,613**
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	**2,163**	**28,790**	**5.5%**	**988,565**	**$ 34,337**
Services	**9,966**	**151,905**	**28.8%**	**3,482,387**	**$ 22,925**
Hotels	146	4,467	0.8%	60,129	$ 13,461
Personal	860	5,169	1.0%	71,665	$ 13,864
Business	1,382	28,073	5.3%	575,316	$ 20,494
Auto Repair	876	4,487	0.9%	94,337	$ 21,025
Miscellaneous Repair	246	1,633	0.3%	42,184	$ 25,832
Motion Pictures	121	1,181	0.2%	11,714	$ 9,919
Amusement & Recreation	394	5,398	1.0%	144,221	$ 26,717
Health	2,137	52,559	10.0%	1,394,112	$ 26,525
Legal	712	4,518	0.9%	153,474	$ 33,969
Educational	243	9,371	1.8%	178,056	$ 19,001
Social	805	15,871	3.0%	253,802	$ 15,992
Museums/Galleries/Gardens	14	397	0.1%	7,725	$ 19,458
Membership Organizatins	779	6,736	1.3%	87,766	$ 13,029
Engineering & Accounting	901	11,437	2.2%	400,622	$ 35,029
Private Households	336	591	0.1%	6,655	$ 11,261
Miscellaneous	14	18	0.0%	609	$ 33,833
Government	**552**	**82,529**	**15.6%**	**2,889,046**	**$ 35,006**
Unclassified	**165**	**374**	**0.1%**	**6,300**	**$ 16,845**

Source: New York State Department of Labor; Economics Research Associates

Table 6-3

Comparison of Employment Estimates for 1999

	Buffalo MSA			Erie County			Niagara County		
	1990	1999	Annual % Change	1990	1999	Annual % Change	1990	1999	Annual % Change
Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council									
Manufacturing	100,459	97,948	-0.3%	78,025	76,296	-0.2%	22,434	21,648	-0.4%
Retail	121,895	128,102	0.6%	101,647	106,008	0.5%	20,248	22,053	1.0%
Wholesale	31,173	32,337	0.4%	27,757	28,756	0.4%	3,416	3,580	0.5%
All Other Employment	384,541	395,022	0.3%	330,526	338,747	0.3%	54,015	56,260	0.5%
Total Employment	**638,068**	**653,791**	**0.3%**	**537,955**	**550,039**	**0.2%**	**100,113**	**103,734**	**0.4%**
Woods & Poole Economics									
Manufacturing	99,830	92,727	-0.8%	76,810	72,893	-0.6%	23,030	19,827	-1.7%
Retail	120,200	121,621	0.1%	99,960	100,896	0.1%	20,240	20,725	0.3%
Wholesale	29,590	31,590	0.7%	26,540	28,869	0.9%	3,050	2,724	-1.2%
All Other Employment	376,660	419,659	1.2%	325,080	363,171	1.2%	51,570	56,468	1.0%
Total Employment	**626,280**	**665,762**	**0.7%**	**528,390**	**565,937**	**0.8%**	**97,890**	**99,796**	**0.2%**
New York State Department of Labor									
Manufacturing	97,526	86,592	-1.3%	74,595	68,212	-1.0%	22,931	18,380	-2.4%
Retail	107,099	99,342	-0.8%	89,175	83,406	-0.7%	17,924	15,936	-1.3%
Wholesale	26,699	26,995	0.1%	24,036	24,892	0.4%	2,663	2,103	-2.6%
All Other Employment	296,848	317,447	0.7%	257,896	276,412	0.8%	38,952	41,035	0.6%
Total Employment	**528,172**	**530,376**	**0.0%**	**445,702**	**452,922**	**0.2%**	**82,470**	**77,454**	**-0.7%**

Source: Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council; Woods & Poole Economics; New York State Department of Labor; Economics Research Associates.

Table 6-4

Employment Forecasts to 2020

Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council Data

Planning Analysis Areas	Total Employment			Manufacturing Employment			Retail Employment			Wholesale Employment			All Other Employment		
	1990	2020	Percent Change	1990	2020	Percent Change	1990	2020	Percent Change	1990	2020	Percent Change	1990	2020	Percent Change
Erie County															
Town of Amherst															
PAA 1	8,650	13,652	57.8%	1,324	1,286	-2.9%	1,907	2,907	52.4%	814	1,006	23.6%	4,605	8,453	83.6%
PAA 2	746	2,987	300.4%	18	850	4622.2%	162	898	454.3%	19	35	84.2%	547	1,204	120.1%
PAA 3	8,842	11,726	32.6%	308	296	-3.9%	1,013	1,727	70.5%	117	144	23.1%	7,404	9,559	29.1%
PAA 4	7,694	10,092	31.2%	269	273	1.5%	1,760	2,713	54.1%	321	581	81.0%	5,344	6,525	22.1%
PAA 5	23,178	26,322	13.6%	820	770	-6.1%	8,065	9,593	18.9%	759	936	23.3%	13,534	15,023	11.0%
PAA 6	21,179	27,221	28.5%	1,170	1,125	-3.8%	5,186	5,787	11.6%	902	1,123	24.5%	13,921	19,186	37.8%
Amherst Total	**70,289**	**92,000**	**30.9%**	**3,909**	**4,600**	**17.7%**	**18,093**	**23,625**	**30.6%**	**2,932**	**3,825**	**30.5%**	**45,355**	**59,950**	**32.2%**
Neighboring Cities/Towns															
City of Buffalo	229,455	217,300	-5.3%	29,494	23,100	-21.7%	29,246	28,250	-3.4%	2,087	2,000	-4.2%	168,628	163,950	-2.8%
Town of Cheektowaga	52,446	56,400	7.5%	9,822	9,700	-1.2%	13,908	15,000	7.9%	4,673	6,000	28.4%	24,043	25,700	6.9%
Town of Clarence	13,964	18,000	28.9%	1,051	1,000	-4.9%	5,451	7,700	41.3%	517	550	6.4%	6,945	8,750	26.0%
Town of Lancaster	13,085	15,900	21.5%	2,419	2,900	19.9%	2,487	2,750	10.6%	665	1,700	155.6%	7,514	8,550	13.8%
City of Tonawanda	11,274	12,000	6.4%	2,729	2,600	-4.7%	2,386	3,000	25.7%	1,158	1,000	-13.6%	5,001	5,400	8.0%
Town of Tonawanda	36,193	34,400	-5.0%	9,483	8,900	-6.1%	5,549	6,000	8.1%	2,693	2,500	-7.2%	18,468	17,000	-7.9%
Neighboring Total	**356,417**	**354,000**	**-0.7%**	**54,998**	**48,200**	**-12.4%**	**59,027**	**62,700**	**6.2%**	**11,793**	**13,750**	**16.6%**	**230,599**	**229,350**	**-0.5%**
Other Erie County	**111,249**	**133,300**	**19.8%**	**19,118**	**19,610**	**2.6%**	**24,527**	**30,600**	**24.8%**	**13,032**	**13,655**	**4.8%**	**54,572**	**69,435**	**27.2%**
Erie County Total	**537,955**	**579,300**	**7.7%**	**78,025**	**72,410**	**-7.2%**	**101,647**	**116,925**	**15.0%**	**27,757**	**31,230**	**12.5%**	**330,526**	**358,735**	**8.5%**
Niagara County Total	**100,113**	**112,700**	**12.6%**	**22,434**	**19,920**	**-11.2%**	**20,248**	**26,917**	**32.9%**	**3,416**	**3,995**	**16.9%**	**54,015**	**61,868**	**14.5%**
Buffalo MSA Total	**638,068**	**692,000**	**8.5%**	**100,459**	**92,330**	**-8.1%**	**121,895**	**143,842**	**18.0%**	**31,173**	**35,225**	**13.0%**	**384,541**	**420,603**	**9.4%**

Source: Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council; Economics Research Associates

Table 6-5

Employment Growth Rates by Planning Analysis Area, 1990-2020

	Planning Analysis Area						Amherst	Region
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	Total	Total
1990-2020 Annual Growth Rates by Employment Type, GBNRTC Figures								
Manufacturing	-0.1%	13.7%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.2%	-0.1%	**0.5%**	**-0.3%**
Retail	1.4%	5.9%	1.8%	1.5%	0.6%	0.4%	**0.9%**	**0.6%**
Wholesale	0.7%	2.1%	0.7%	2.0%	0.7%	0.7%	**0.9%**	**0.4%**
All Other Employment	2.0%	2.7%	0.9%	0.7%	0.3%	1.1%	**0.9%**	**0.3%**
Total Employment	1.5%	4.7%	0.9%	0.9%	0.4%	0.8%	**0.9%**	**0.3%**

Comparison of Regional Growth Rates	GBNRTC, 1990-2020	NYSDOL 1990-1999	W&P 2000-2020	Difference:	1990-1999	1990-2020
Manufacturing	-0.3%	-1.3%	-0.4%		1.0%	0.1%
Retail	0.6%	-0.8%	0.2%		1.4%	0.4%
Wholesale	0.4%	0.1%	1.0%		0.3%	-0.6%
All Other Employment	0.3%	0.7%	1.3%		-0.4%	-1.0%
Total Employment	**0.3%**	**0.0%**	**0.8%**		**0.2%**	**-0.6%**

1990-2000 Annual Growth Rates, Adjusted for NY State Dept. of Labor Estimates							
Manufacturing	-1.1%	12.7%	-1.2%	-1.0%	-1.2%	-1.2%	**-0.5%**
Retail	0.0%	4.5%	0.4%	0.1%	-0.8%	-1.0%	**-0.5%**
Wholesale	0.4%	1.8%	0.4%	1.7%	0.4%	0.4%	**0.6%**
All Other Employment	2.5%	3.1%	1.3%	1.1%	0.8%	1.5%	**1.4%**
Total Employment	1.3%	4.5%	0.7%	0.7%	0.2%	0.6%	**0.7%**

2000-2020 Annual Growth Rates, Adjusted for Woods & Poole/NY State Dept. of Labor Figures							
Manufacturing	-0.2%	13.6%	-0.3%	-0.1%	-0.4%	-0.3%	**0.4%**
Retail	1.1%	5.5%	1.4%	1.1%	0.2%	0.0%	**0.5%**
Wholesale	1.3%	2.7%	1.3%	2.6%	1.3%	1.4%	**1.5%**
All Other Employment	3.1%	3.7%	1.9%	1.7%	1.4%	2.1%	**1.9%**
Total Employment	2.1%	5.3%	1.5%	1.5%	1.0%	1.4%	**1.5%**

Note: The 1990-2000 growth rate is based on actual estimates from the New York State Department of Labor for 1990-1999 change.

Source: Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council; Woods & Poole Economics; New York State Department of Labor; Economics Research Associates.

Table 6-6

Employment Forecasts by Planning Analysis Area

	Planning Analysis Area						Amherst
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	Total
1990 Baseline							
Manufacturing	1,324	18	308	269	820	1,170	3,909
Retail	1,907	162	1,013	1,760	8,065	5,186	18,093
Wholesale	814	19	117	321	759	902	2,932
All Other Employment	4,605	547	7,404	5,344	13,534	13,921	45,355
Total Employment	**8,650**	**746**	**8,842**	**7,694**	**23,178**	**21,179**	**70,289**
2000 Estimate							
Manufacturing	1,182	59	274	244	724	1,041	3,524
Retail	1,913	251	1,055	1,772	7,439	4,681	17,111
Wholesale	849	23	122	380	791	943	3,108
All Other Employment	5,891	743	8,428	5,972	14,653	16,194	51,882
Total Employment	**9,835**	**1,077**	**9,879**	**8,368**	**23,606**	**22,859**	**75,625**
Total Change, 1990-2000							
Manufacturing	(142)	41	(34)	(25)	(96)	(129)	(385)
Retail	6	89	42	12	(626)	(505)	(982)
Wholesale	35	4	5	59	32	41	176
All Other Employment	1,286	196	1,024	628	1,119	2,273	6,527
Total Employment	**1,185**	**331**	**1,037**	**674**	**428**	**1,680**	**5,336**
2020 Forecast							
Manufacturing	1,126	756	259	239	674	985	4,040
Retail	2,358	735	1,402	2,201	7,767	4,683	19,145
Wholesale	1,108	38	159	639	1,031	1,237	4,211
All Other Employment	10,752	1,529	12,193	8,327	19,186	24,460	76,448
Total Employment	**15,344**	**3,059**	**14,013**	**11,406**	**28,658**	**31,365**	**103,844**
Total Change, 2000-2020							
Manufacturing	(56)	697	(15)	(5)	(50)	(56)	516
Retail	445	483	347	429	328	2	2,034
Wholesale	259	16	37	259	240	293	1,103
All Other Employment	4,861	786	3,765	2,355	4,533	8,266	24,566
Total Employment	**5,508**	**1,982**	**4,133**	**3,038**	**5,052**	**8,506**	**28,220**

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 6-7

Employment Forecasts by Planning Analysis Area
by Intermediate Periods, 2000-2020

	Planning Analysis Area						Amherst
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	Total
1990 Baseline							
Manufacturing	1,324	18	308	269	820	1,170	3,909
Retail	1,907	162	1,013	1,760	8,065	5,186	18,093
Wholesale	814	19	117	321	759	902	2,932
All Other Employment	4,605	547	7,404	5,344	13,534	13,921	45,355
Total Employment	**8,650**	**746**	**8,842**	**7,694**	**23,178**	**21,179**	**70,289**
2000 Estimate							
Manufacturing	1,182	59	274	244	724	1,041	3,524
Retail	1,913	251	1,055	1,772	7,439	4,681	17,111
Wholesale	849	23	122	380	791	943	3,108
All Other Employment	5,891	743	8,428	5,972	14,653	16,194	51,882
Total Employment	**9,835**	**1,077**	**9,879**	**8,368**	**23,606**	**22,859**	**75,625**
2005 Forecast							
Manufacturing	1,168	112	270	243	711	1,027	3,595
Retail	2,015	329	1,133	1,871	7,519	4,682	17,569
Wholesale	907	26	130	433	845	1,009	3,352
All Other Employment	6,848	890	9,243	6,489	15,674	17,953	57,121
Total Employment	**10,938**	**1,357**	**10,777**	**9,035**	**24,750**	**24,670**	**81,636**
2010 Forecast							
Manufacturing	1,154	212	266	241	699	1,013	3,667
Retail	2,124	430	1,216	1,975	7,601	4,682	18,039
Wholesale	970	30	139	493	903	1,080	3,615
All Other Employment	7,959	1,066	10,137	7,052	16,767	19,903	62,889
Total Employment	**12,206**	**1,737**	**11,759**	**9,761**	**25,970**	**26,677**	**88,209**
2015 Forecast							
Manufacturing	1,140	400	263	240	686	999	3,741
Retail	2,238	562	1,306	2,085	7,683	4,683	18,521
Wholesale	1,036	34	148	561	965	1,156	3,898
All Other Employment	9,251	1,277	11,118	7,663	17,936	22,064	69,240
Total Employment	**13,665**	**2,273**	**12,835**	**10,549**	**27,270**	**28,901**	**95,400**
2020 Forecast							
Manufacturing	1,126	756	259	239	674	985	4,040
Retail	2,358	735	1,402	2,201	7,767	4,683	19,145
Wholesale	1,108	38	159	639	1,031	1,237	4,211
All Other Employment	10,752	1,529	12,193	8,327	19,186	24,460	76,448
Total Employment	**15,344**	**3,059**	**14,013**	**11,406**	**28,658**	**31,365**	**103,844**

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 6-8

Projected Employment Change by Planning Analysis Area
by Intermediate Periods, 2000-2020

	Planning Analysis Area						Amherst
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	Total
Employment Change, 2000-2005							
Manufacturing	(14)	53	(4)	(1)	(13)	(14)	7
Retail	103	77	78	99	81	1	438
Wholesale	58	3	8	53	54	66	243
All Other Employment	956	147	815	518	1,021	1,759	5,216
Total Employment	**1,103**	**280**	**897**	**668**	**1,144**	**1,811**	**5,903**
Employment Change, 2005-2010							
Manufacturing	(14)	100	(4)	(1)	(12)	(14)	54
Retail	108	101	83	104	82	1	479
Wholesale	62	4	9	60	58	71	263
All Other Employment	1,111	176	894	562	1,093	1,950	5,786
Total Employment	**1,268**	**380**	**982**	**725**	**1,220**	**2,007**	**6,583**
Employment Change, 2010-2015							
Manufacturing	(14)	188	(4)	(1)	(12)	(14)	144
Retail	114	132	90	110	83	1	529
Wholesale	67	4	9	68	62	76	286
All Other Employment	1,292	211	980	611	1,169	2,161	6,424
Total Employment	**1,459**	**536**	**1,076**	**788**	**1,301**	**2,224**	**7,383**
Employment Change, 2015-2020							
Manufacturing	(14)	356	(4)	(1)	(12)	(14)	312
Retail	120	173	96	116	83	1	589
Wholesale	71	5	10	78	66	81	311
All Other Employment	1,501	252	1,075	664	1,250	2,396	7,140
Total Employment	**1,679**	**786**	**1,178**	**857**	**1,388**	**2,464**	**8,351**
Total Employment Change, 2000-2020							
Manufacturing	(56)	697	(15)	(5)	(50)	(56)	516
Retail	445	483	347	429	328	2	2,034
Wholesale	259	16	37	259	240	293	1,103
All Other Employment	4,861	786	3,765	2,355	4,533	8,266	24,566
Total Employment	**5,508**	**1,982**	**4,133**	**3,038**	**5,052**	**8,506**	**28,220**

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 6-9

Projected Commercial Development by Planning Analysis Area
by Intermediate Periods, 2000-2020

	Planning Analysis Area						Amherst
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	Total
Square Feet Developed, 2000-2005							
Manufacturing	-	26,400	-	-	-	-	26,400
Retail	41,100	30,900	31,100	39,400	32,300	200	175,000
Wholesale	43,800	2,400	6,200	39,500	40,600	49,600	182,100
All Other Employment	191,200	29,400	163,000	103,500	204,300	351,700	1,043,100
Total Square Feet	**276,100**	**89,100**	**200,300**	**182,400**	**277,200**	**401,500**	**1,426,600**
Square Feet Developed, 2005-2010							
Manufacturing	-	49,900	-	-	-	-	49,900
Retail	43,300	40,400	33,300	41,600	32,700	200	191,500
Wholesale	46,800	2,700	6,600	45,000	43,300	53,000	197,400
All Other Employment	222,300	35,200	178,800	112,500	218,500	389,900	1,157,200
Total Square Feet	**312,400**	**128,200**	**218,700**	**199,100**	**294,500**	**443,100**	**1,596,000**
Square Feet Developed, 2010-2015							
Manufacturing	-	94,200	-	-	-	-	94,200
Retail	45,600	52,900	35,800	44,000	33,000	200	211,500
Wholesale	50,000	3,100	7,100	51,200	46,300	56,700	214,400
All Other Employment	258,300	42,100	196,100	122,200	233,800	432,300	1,284,800
Total Square Feet	**353,900**	**192,300**	**239,000**	**217,400**	**313,100**	**489,200**	**1,804,900**
Square Feet Developed, 2015-2020							
Manufacturing	-	178,000	-	-	-	-	178,000
Retail	48,100	69,100	38,400	46,400	33,400	200	235,600
Wholesale	53,400	3,600	7,600	58,300	49,500	60,700	233,100
All Other Employment	300,300	50,500	215,100	132,800	250,100	479,200	1,428,000
Total Square Feet	**401,800**	**301,200**	**261,100**	**237,500**	**333,000**	**540,100**	**2,074,700**
Total Square Feet Developed, 2000-2020							
Manufacturing	-	348,500	-	-	-	-	348,500
Retail	178,100	193,300	138,600	171,400	131,400	800	813,600
Wholesale	194,000	11,800	27,500	194,000	179,700	220,000	827,000
All Other Employment	972,100	157,200	753,000	471,000	906,700	1,653,100	4,913,100
Total Square Feet	**1,344,200**	**710,800**	**919,100**	**836,400**	**1,217,800**	**1,873,900**	**6,902,200**

Source: Economics Research Associates

Table 6-10

Projected Land Consumption by Planning Analysis Area
by Intermediate Periods, 2000-2020

	Planning Analysis Area						Amherst
	PAA 1	PAA 2	PAA 3	PAA 4	PAA 5	PAA 6	Total
Acres Developed, 2000-2005							
Manufacturing	-	3.4	-	-	-	-	3.4
Retail	3.8	2.8	2.9	3.6	3.0	0.0	16.1
Wholesale	5.0	0.3	0.7	4.5	4.7	5.7	20.9
All Other Employment	11.0	1.7	9.4	5.9	11.7	20.2	59.9
Total Square Feet	**19.8**	**8.2**	**12.9**	**14.1**	**19.4**	**25.9**	**100.2**
Acres Developed, 2005-2010							
Manufacturing	-	6.4	-	-	-	-	6.4
Retail	4.0	3.7	3.1	3.8	3.0	0.0	17.6
Wholesale	5.4	0.3	0.8	5.2	5.0	6.1	22.7
All Other Employment	12.8	2.0	10.3	6.5	12.5	22.4	66.4
Total Square Feet	**22.1**	**12.4**	**14.1**	**15.4**	**20.5**	**28.5**	**113.0**
Acres Developed, 2010-2015							
Manufacturing	-	12.0	-	-	-	-	12.0
Retail	4.2	4.9	3.3	4.0	3.0	0.0	19.4
Wholesale	5.7	0.4	0.8	5.9	5.3	6.5	24.6
All Other Employment	14.8	2.4	11.3	7.0	13.4	24.8	73.7
Total Square Feet	**24.8**	**19.6**	**15.4**	**16.9**	**21.8**	**31.3**	**129.8**
Acres Developed, 2015-2020							
Manufacturing	-	22.7	-	-	-	-	22.7
Retail	4.4	6.3	3.5	4.3	3.1	0.0	21.6
Wholesale	6.1	0.4	0.9	6.7	5.7	7.0	26.8
All Other Employment	17.2	2.9	12.3	7.6	14.4	27.5	82.0
Total Square Feet	**27.8**	**32.4**	**16.7**	**18.6**	**23.1**	**34.5**	**153.0**
Total Acres Developed, 2000-2020							
Manufacturing	-	44.4	-	-	-	-	44.4
Retail	16.4	17.8	12.7	15.7	12.1	0.1	74.7
Wholesale	22.3	1.4	3.2	22.3	20.6	25.3	94.9
All Other Employment	55.8	9.0	43.2	27.0	52.0	94.9	282.0
Total Square Feet	**94.4**	**72.6**	**59.1**	**65.0**	**84.7**	**120.2**	**496.1**

Note: Acreage projections assume that all commercial development occurs on presently vacant land, and do not account for potential redevelopment of land already developed.

Source: Economics Research Associates