

CHAPTER 4 Utilities and Community Facilities Element

Section 4.1 Introduction

Adequate infrastructure, utilities, community facilities and services are important in meeting existing and future community needs. They are the framework of a community's life and without them present day standard of living could not exist. The decisions made for the Town of Almond regarding the utilities and community facilities will have an impact on all present and future residents.

This chapter will describe the existing utilities and community facilities serving the community, and outline future desires and needs for Town residents.

Section 4.2 Public Utilities Inventory

A. Sanitary Sewer Service

There is no sanitary sewer service in the Town of Almond. Residents in the Town utilize private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS), otherwise known as private septic systems, as allowed by the Portage County Private Sewage System Ordinance. The Village of Almond has sewer service but there are currently no plans for expansion into the Town.

The Portage County Planning and Zoning Department administers the permitting and management of POWTS county-wide. The Town is comfortable with the County handling all private onsite wastewater issues.

B. Water Supply

The Town relies entirely on private wells for water supply. Please see the groundwater section of the Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resources chapter for further information.

Since potable water is obtained primarily from groundwater, consideration should be given to possible sources of contamination. One possible source is landfills. Landfills (also formerly known as dumps) have been around as long as people have lived in Portage County, however, the locations of many of the smaller, private dumps are unknown. The amount of materials deposited in these was small, and the toxicities of the materials were likely fairly low as compared to current solid waste. All known landfills, except the current County Landfill located on Cty Rd QQ, have been closed. According to Department of Natural Resources Administrative Code, there must be a 1,200 foot separation between a private well or reservoir and the nearest edge of an existing, proposed, or abandoned landfill. Modifications to this requirement may be granted by the DNR, particularly where a proposed development is upgradient (in terms of direction of groundwater flow) from the landfill site. Landfills in Almond are shown on Map 4.1.

C. Storm Water Management

The Town does not have a formal storm water management plan. However, responsibility for storm water management within the Town of Almond is split between Portage County and the Town. Storm water facilities consist mainly of ditches along the road network. Portage County maintains the ditches along the portions of County Highways within Almond, while the Town maintains any ditches along Town roads. In the spring, warning signs for "water crossing roads" are regularly seen in certain areas of the Town. Ditches along Town roads vary in size, ranging up to 4 feet in width.

D. Solid Waste & Recycling Facilities

Solid waste and recycling facilities are handled as a joint venture between the Town and Village of Almond. A drop-off point is located just south of the Village at the site of the former Village/Town landfill (Map 4.1). Residents of the Town and Village of Almond bring their garbage and recycling to the site. Recycling is housed in a storage shed and then hauled to the Portage County Recycling Facility by the Village. Deluxe Disposal handles the hauling of garbage with the disposal to the Portage County Landfill. Once a year, large appliances can be dropped off at the facility. A “tire roundup” is periodically conducted, as a joint venture between the Town and Village, to dispose of unwanted used tires. The costs for these services are split evenly with the Town and Village of Almond.

E. Corporate Utilities

1. Telecommunication Facilities - The Town does not own or manage telecommunication facilities. There are currently no private telecommunications towers within the Town.
2. Power Generating Plants and Transmission Line - There are no electric generation plants or high voltage transmission lines in the Town. One gas pipeline passes through Section One in the northeast corner of the Town (Map 4.1). This pipeline does not interfere with present agricultural operations. Electrical power is supplied through Alliant Energy in the western portion of the Town and Wisconsin Public Service Corporation in the eastern portion. Gas energy for farm and residential uses is supplied through individual onsite propane tanks.
3. Telephone and Internet Services in the Town are currently offered by Union Telephone Company, located in the Village of Almond.

Section 4.3 Community Facilities Inventory and Analysis

A. Municipal Buildings

Currently, there are no municipal buildings in the Town. The Town Board does not see a need to construct any in the foreseeable future. If a larger space is needed for meetings or special events, the Town has an agreement with the Village of Almond to use its Municipal Center.

B. Police, Fire, Rescue, Emergency Response

Police protection and ambulance service is provided by Portage County. The Portage County Sheriff’s Department provides protective services through random patrols and on a “call-out” basis. Portage County is divided into 3 districts for patrol purposes. The district in which Almond is located is bounded by STH 54 and the Wisconsin River to the north, and the Portage County line to the east, south, and west. During the day shift 1 officer is assigned to each district, plus an additional officer “floats” throughout the County. During the night shift, 2 officers are assigned to each district, plus 2 additional officers float throughout the County. Officers may drive through the Town any number of times during each shift to check on businesses and residences.

Fire, rescue, and first responder services are shared with the adjoining Village of Almond and parts of the Towns of Belmont and Buena Vista. The fire station, located within the Village of Almond on Main Street, was built in 1992. As of 2003, there were 8 vehicles within the 6,400 square foot fire station including:

Map 4.1 Community Facilities

1 engine/pumper which has a 1,000 gallon capacity and 1,000 gallon per minute pump rate

- 1 engine/pumper which has a 750 gallon capacity and 500 gallon per minute pump rate
- 3 tankers having a 1,500 gallon, 1,600 gallon, and 3,200 gallon capacity
- 1 pumper/tanker which has a 2,400 gallon capacity
- 1 brush rig which has a 250 gallon capacity
- 1 first responder truck
- 1 snowmobile rescue sled

These vehicles are replaced every 10 to 12 years. The 750 gallon capacity engine is due for replacement in the near future. Water for these vehicles can be pumped from numerous irrigation wells within the fire district. There are 30 volunteer firefighters and 13 first responders in the district. These services are currently considered adequate. The Town also has mutual aid agreements with the Plainfield and Wild Rose Fire Departments.

C. Schools

The Town of Almond is divided between two School Districts (Map 4.2).

1. Almond-Bancroft School District

The Almond-Bancroft School District has schools located within the Village of Almond and the unincorporated community of Bancroft. The Bancroft elementary school has approximately 30 students in early childhood through kindergarten. The Village of Almond elementary school (1st – 5th grades) has approximately 200 students and the high school (6th – 12th grades) has approximately 300 students. Both the elementary and the high school grades are located in one building in the Village of Almond.

2. Tri-County School District

The Tri-County Area School District facilities are located in the Village of Plainfield, in Waushara County, approximately 5 miles from the Town of Almond. There is one K-12 building (last remodeled in December, 1996) which serves a 2003-04 enrollment of approximately 850 students and 61 full time teachers. School lunch is made available for all children of the district. A staff of food-service personnel is available to serve children hot lunch on all days children are at school. A salad bar is provided twice weekly. The food service program is electronically managed through the purchase of a lunch card.

All students living outside the Village of Plainfield limits are offered bus transportation. The District has contracts with two local bus contractors. Approximately 650 students are transported daily.

D. Parks

Park facilities in the Town of Almond include Wolf Lake Park and Frost Park. Wolf Lake Park is an 89 acre facility located in the northeast corner of the Town adjacent to Wolf Lake. Major activities there include swimming, picnicking and fishing. There is one boat landing in the park to provide access to the 22-acre lake. Under Wisconsin law, motorboats may not operate in excess of slow-no-wake speed on lakes that are 50 acres or less and have public access. Frost Park is a 7-acre facility located on County Road BB and is used primarily for picnicking.

E. Cemeteries

The Town of Almond has seven cemeteries that will adequately serve the residents through the time-frame of this plan. They are located as follows:

- EAST GERMAN METHODIST CEMETERY, Section 23, Township of Almond, Portage County, WI, on the corner of County Trunk D and 5th Street.
- GUARDIAN ANGEL CEMETERY, Section 31, Township of Almond, Portage Co, WI on Laura's Lane off County Trunk BB.
- LONE PINE CEMETERY, Section 18, Township of Almond, on old Highway 51, now County Trunk BB.
- MARTIN CEMETERY (also known as NORTH ALMOND CEMETERY), Section 16, Township of Almond, Portage County, WI; corner of County Trunk J and 4th Avenue; 2 miles North of Almond.
- ST JOHN'S LUTHERAN CEMETERY, section 26, Almond Township, Portage Co, WI. on 5th Street about one mile northeast of Almond.
- ST MARTINS CEMETERY, Section 6, located on County Trunk BB, 6 miles North-West of Almond.
- SPIRITLAND CEMETERY, Section 31, Almond Township, on the corner of County Trunk BB and County Trunk D, 2 ½ miles West of Almond.

F. Health Care Facilities

There are no health care facilities in the Town (or Village) of Almond. The closest medical clinic, dental and pharmacy facilities are in Wild Rose, Plover and Plainfield, all within 30 minutes of any point in the Town.

Major hospital facilities are found in Stevens Point, Wisconsin Rapids and Marshfield, each over 30 miles to the north and west of the Town.

G. Child Care Facilities

There are no licensed daycare facilities in the Town of Almond. The Town Plan Commission has stated that they would support the idea of working with the Town of Pine Grove on developing a licensed daycare facility at the Bancroft Elementary School. There are 2 different categories of state licensed child care; they depend upon the number of children in care:

- Licensed **Family** Child Care Centers provide care for up to 8 children. This care is usually in the provider's home, but it is not required to be located in a residence.

- Licensed **Group** Child Care Centers provide care for 9 or more children. These centers are usually located somewhere other than a residence and may be small or large in size.

For a complete list, contact the Regional Division of Children and Family Services at:

2811 8th St. - Ste. 70
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
Phone: (715) 422-5080 Fax: (715) 422-5091

Map 4.2 School Districts

H. Libraries

The Portage County Library System has a branch in the Village of Almond at 122 Main Street that provides library services to residents. Hours for the Almond Branch can be obtained by calling 715-366-2151. More detailed information about the Portage County Public Library system can be obtained via the internet at: <http://library.uwsp.edu/pcl/> or by calling the library system at: **1-800-264-0766**.

Section 4.4 Utilities and Community Facilities Issues.

- **Parks:** The Town will support and work with the County on the provision of park lands, however they do not want to manage or own park property.
- **Telecommunication Facilities:** The Portage County Telecommunication ordinance for the management and placement of these facilities is sufficient for the Town, provided that there is a continuation of co-location requirements and a consideration for aerial spraying operations during the placement of these facilities. How can aerial spray planes be protected from interference by communication or other towers?
- **Child Care Facilities:** The Town would support investigating the possibility of developing a licensed daycare facility at the Bancroft Elementary School. How can the Town work with Pine Grove and the County to support the creation of a local daycare facility?
- **Sheriff:** How can the Town support a continued presence of the Portage County Sheriff's Department within our borders?
- **Rescue and Ambulance:**

The Town would like to have EMTs living in the area that are hired by Portage County.

The County needs to re-evaluate the effectiveness of the county-wide ambulance service. The Town would like to see an ambulance stationed closer than Stevens Point. How can ambulance response time be improved?

Section 4.5 Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Adequate community services are provided to Town residents.

Objective 1.1: Seek continued involvement in the shared services of fire, first responders, solid waste, recycling, and road repair on boundary roads.

Policies:

1.1 (a). Continue to coordinate the following services with cooperating municipalities:

- Fire
- First responders
- Solid waste and recycling
- Road repair on boundary roads

1.1 (b). Share services across municipal borders whenever possible.

1.1 (c). Set guidelines with adjacent municipalities to share services and facilities for emergency events.

Goal 2: Protect public green space and water resources.

Objective 2.1: Identify significant open spaces and water resources.

Policy 2.1 (a): Use recommendations in this plan to protect identified open spaces and natural resources.