

CHAPTER 4 Utilities and Community Facilities Element

Section 4.1 Introduction

Adequate infrastructure, utilities, community facilities and services are important underpinnings of community life. They are the framework of a community's life and without them, present day standard of living could not exist. The decisions made by the Town of Buena Vista regarding the utilities and community facilities will impact 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/On-site Wastewater Treatment Technologies

There is no municipal sanitary sewer service within the Town of Buena Vista. 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.

B. Water Supply

The Town of Buena Vista does not have a municipal water system. Residents rely on individual private wells for their 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 in the Town of Stockton, have been closed. According to Department of Natural Resources Administrative Code, there must be 1,200 foot separation between a private well or reservoir and the nearest edge of an existing, proposed, or abandoned landfill. However, 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 the Town are shown on Map 4.2.

Other activities on the land surface can potentially result in contaminants leaching to groundwater and contaminating drinking water supplies. Poorly installed wells or wells without vermin proof caps may result in bacterial contamination of the water supply. In addition, wells that have not been properly abandoned can quickly deliver contaminants to the groundwater. Some of the more common contaminants in wells in this region that have drinking water standards include bacteria, nitrate, pesticides, and lead.

C. Storm Water Management

Responsibility for storm water management within the Town of Buena Vista is split between Portage County and the Town. Management mainly consists of ditches along the road network. Portage County maintains the ditches along the portions of county highways within Buena Vista, while the Town maintains any ditches along Town roads. Ditches along Town roads vary in size, ranging up to 4 feet in width. Other ditches in the Town were created primarily to

accommodate agricultural practices. Most of the west half of the Town is within the Portage County Drainage District. Many of the approximately 93 miles of ditches within the District were built in the early 1900's for the purpose of lowering the water table of an extensive marshland to accommodate agricultural production. Although the Portage County Drainage District was not chiefly created for storm water management, the ditches within the district help facilitate the flow and drainage of runoff during and after storm events, as well as melt water from the spring thaw.

The Portage County Drainage District oversees the maintenance of these ditches through statutory authority. Taxes are levied against land in the district receiving confirmed benefits for the ditches. The taxes are used for maintenance of the ditches. The presence of and continued maintenance of the ditches will be necessary to sustain agricultural production at current levels.

D. Solid Waste & Recycling Facilities

Buena Vista currently contracts with Wittenberg Disposal, LLC, (through the Portage County Solid Waste Department) out of Wittenberg, WI for solid waste disposal and recycling pickup. Solid waste is taken to the Portage County landfill in the Town of Stockton and recycling is taken to the Portage County Material Recovery Facility in the Village of Plover. The Portage County landfill is scheduled to close in 2006, after which the waste will be trucked to a landfill in Marathon County.

E. Corporate Utilities (Map 4.1)

1. Telephone and Internet - Services in the Town are currently offered by Ameritech; Amherst Phone Company, out of Amherst; and Union Phone Company out of Almond/Plainfield. There is a phone substation in the Town, owned by Amherst Phone Company, on the corner of Cty Rd K and Old Amish Rd. that serves fiber optic lines.
2. Telecommunications - There are no cellular towers within Buena Vista.
3. Gas and Electric Power - Major utility transmission lines within Buena Vista include: the ANR gas pipeline, which crosses the Town of Buena Vista from northwest to southeast, and two high-voltage electric transmission lines owned by American Transmission Company (Map 4.1). Also, there is an electric substation owned by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, located on the corner of Sherman and Eckles Roads.

The Town currently receives its gas and electric from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, with district offices located in Plover, WI.

Section 4.3 Community Facilities Inventory and Analysis

A. Municipal Buildings

A new Town Hall, located at 6684 Cty Rd BB, was constructed in 2004. This facility is used primarily for public meetings and voting. Also located on the premises is the Town Garage, which houses snow plowing and other road maintenance equipment.

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. Buena Vista is located in two of the districts: one district is bounded by STH 66 to the north, the Portage County line on

Map 4.1 Community Utilities

Map 4.2: Community Facilities

the east, and STH 54 on the south and west, the other district is bounded by STH 54 on the north and east, Portage County line in the south and east, with the Wisconsin River on the north.

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 provided by two fire districts: the Village of Plover Fire Department and the Almond Fire Department/District. The Village of Plover Fire Department consists of a 40 person paid, on-call fire department, including a full time Fire Chief and Captain. The Village has had a First Responder program in place since 1984 which became an Emergency Medical Technician – Basic (E.M.T.-B) Level Program in June of 2003. The Village's fire equipment consists of the following (2000 inventory):

- 2000 Rescue Unit – covers the southern part of Portage County
- 1991 Ford – a quick response mini-unit for grass and forest fires with 200 gallons of water
- 1996 Class A Pumper Unit - 1,000 gallons of water/1,500 gallons per minute pump
- 1984 Class A Pumper Unit – 750 gallons of water/1,000 gallons per minute pump
- 1976 Class A Pumper Unit – 750 gallons of water/1,000 gallons per minute pump
- 1984 – 100’ Aerial Platform with pre-piped waterway and a 2,000 GPM Midship Pump with a 6.5 KW diesel generator on board
- 29 self-contained breathing apparatus cylinders
- 23 extra cylinders
- Jaws of Life for industrial, farm and car accidents
- Upgraded Hazardous Material Unit – 1994 truck with a 28 foot trailer fully equipped for hazardous material spills and items for confined space rescue.

The Village of Plover's primary service area includes: the Village of Plover, the Towns of Plover and Stockton, and 12 sections in the Town of Buena Vista. The Village of Plover Fire Department has Mutual Aid Agreements with all 11 fire departments in Portage County, including the City of Stevens Point fire department, and four departments from Wood County.

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

- 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

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.

The Town of Buena Vista is serviced by the Portage County Ambulance service. The County has 4 ambulances that are staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can respond anywhere in the county in minutes. They cover approximately 810 square miles and are the only ambulance service in most of that area. The County Ambulance is operated by the Stevens Point Fire Department, with locations on Franklin Street (Station 1) and Industrial Park Road (Station 2), both in Stevens Point. Station 1 houses both an engine and ladder company, a rescue squad and three ambulances, has 6-8 firefighters/EMT's and the administrative staff. Station 2 houses an engine and ambulance, and has four personnel. Between the Stevens Point Fire Department and the Portage County ambulance service, there are a total of 17 firefighters/paramedics on staff. There are also 36 full-time trained ice/ cold water rescue personnel available, of which there are at least 10 on duty 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Rescue equipment includes:

- 6 medic trucks, including one equipped for confined space/water & ice rescue
- 1 Rescue air boat for water and ice rescue

C. Schools

The Town of Buena Vista lies within four different school districts (Stevens Point, Almond-Bancroft, Tomorrow River, and Tri-County) for primary and secondary education (see Map 4.2).

1. Stevens Point Area School District

The Stevens Point Area Public School District includes the City of Stevens Point, Villages of Whiting, Plover, Park Ridge, Amherst Junction, Junction City; Towns of Linwood, Hull, Eau Pleine, Dewey, Carson, Grant, Buena Vista, Plover, Sharon, and Stockton; as well as the Wood County Towns of Milladore and Sherry. The Stevens Point School District is the 14th largest district in the State of Wisconsin and serves a population of approximately 50,000 and employs staff of over 900. The approximate student enrollment for the 2003-2004 school year was 7,400.

The Stevens Point School District consists of ten K-6 grade elementary schools, two 7-9 grade junior high schools, and one 10-12 grade senior high school and an alternative school. Three charter schools lie within the secondary schools. Three of the elementary schools are charter schools and three additional elementary schools have applied for charter status. In addition the 45-acre Boston School Forest is an educational facility used by students for environmental education programs throughout the school year.

The Stevens Point Area Public School District covers nearly 400 square miles, so transporting students is a significant activity and expenditure. During the 2002-2003 school year, the transportation department bused nearly 7,000 students to public and private schools with a fleet of 79 districted-operated and 1 contracted buses traveling 1.2 million miles. Typically, the district's annual cost for busing is about two-thirds of the state average, with a district budget of \$2.6 million.

2. The Almond-Bancroft School District

The Almond-Bancroft School District encompasses approximately 109 square miles and has schools located within the Village of Almond and the unincorporated community of Bancroft. As of 2003, the Bancroft elementary school had approximately 30 students in early childhood through kindergarten, while the Village of Almond elementary school (1st – 5th grades) had approximately 200 students, and the high school (6th – 12th grades) had

approximately 300 students. Both the elementary and the high school grades are located in one building in the Village of Almond.

3. The Tomorrow River School District

The Tomorrow River School District is approximately 100 square miles in size, and includes the Villages of Amherst, Amherst Junction and Nelsonville, along with part of the Towns of Amherst, Buena Vista, Lanark, Stockton, and New Hope. The entire student population, Pre-kindergarten through 12, is educated on one site, within a 160,693 sq. ft. interconnected structure in the Village of Amherst. The Amherst School complex consists of 86 teachers, 43 support staff and 5 administrators servicing 900 students in grades Pre-Kindergarten to 12. The school is governed by a 5 member school board elected to three year terms.

The original high school building was constructed in 1922 and was 11,000 square feet. Additional building projects since 1922 include: a 7,500 square foot shop building added during the 1940's; a new 14,300 square foot band building in 1953; a 12,075 square foot elementary school addition in 1978; and a 16,000 square foot elementary school addition in 1988. The area between the high school and elementary buildings has gradually been utilized for expansion, so that both buildings are now under one roof.

4. Tri-County School District

The Tri-County Area School District, covering approximately 218 square miles, is headquartered in Plainfield, Wisconsin. There is one K-12 building -- the newest addition was occupied in December, 1996. There are approximately 850 students enrolled in K-12 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. 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.

Post-secondary education opportunities for Town residents are available at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and Mid-State Technical College, both in Stevens Point. Other area facilities include: the University of Wisconsin-Marathon County and North Central Technical College in the City of Wausau, located approximately 50 miles north of the Town, and the University of Wisconsin-Marshfield/Wood County in the City of Marshfield, 50 miles to the west of Buena Vista.

1. University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point

UW-Stevens Point has approximately 8,700 students within four academic colleges: College of Natural Resources, College of Letters and Sciences, College of Fine Arts, and the College of Professional Studies. The College of Natural Resources is the largest undergraduate college of natural resources in the nation. In total, there are 100 program choices within 49 majors, plus 78 minors and 16 graduate programs. There are 400 faculty and teaching academic staff, 200 non-teaching academic staff, and 350 support staff within the school, resulting in a 20 to one student/faculty ratio. UWSP is consistently named one of the top Public Midwestern Universities-Master's in *U.S. News and World Report's* college rankings.

2. Mid-State Technical College

Mid-State Technical College has nearly 16,000 full- and part-time students that enroll at the college each year. The college has over 40 career options available through one- and two-year technical diplomas and two-year associate degrees in business, service & health, and technical & industrial fields. Mid-State Technical College includes campuses in Stevens Point, Marshfield, and Wisconsin Rapids; a center in Adams; and several outreach sites.

3. University of Wisconsin- Marathon County

UW- Marathon County is a 2 year UW campus and is located near downtown Wausau, consisting of the main campus building, 1 residence hall (Marathon Hall), and the UWMC Fieldhouse. Average enrollment is just over 1,000 students per year. There are 14 departments which consist of 79 teaching staff, with an average of 20 students per class. The school offers both associate and bachelor degrees.

4. North Central Technical College

North Central Technical College's central campus in Wausau is supported by regional campuses in Antigo, Medford, Phillips, Wittenberg, and Spencer. The college has approximately 2,450 full-time equivalent students, and approximately 18,000 people taking at least one class annually. There are 40 one- and two-year programs available at the college, which students can obtain an associate degree, technical diploma, or a technical certificate.

5. University of Wisconsin-Marshfield/Wood County

The University of Wisconsin-Marathon/Wood County is a two-year college campus located in the City of Marshfield. The campus offers Associate of Arts and Science (AAS) Degrees, and the ability to transfer credits to 4 year campuses. The enrollment for the current year is 625 students, with an average of 24 students per class. The student/faculty ratio is 19:1. UW-Marathon/Wood County has 25 academic departments, with more than 50 fields of study, including health sciences, teaching, engineering, social sciences, business, humanities and the arts.

D. Parks

The Town of Buena Vista currently has no park facilities. The closest County Parks available to Buena Vista residents are: Standing Rocks Park, in the Town of Stockton, and Wolf Lake Park, in the Town of Almond.

E. Cemeteries

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

- BUENA VISTA CEMETERY, Section 35, ¼ mile north of Cty Rd. GG at the end of Pine Ln.
- LIBERTY CORNERS CEMETERY, Section 18, on County Highway J, just north of State Highway 54.
- ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH CEMETERY, Section 26, on the corner of County Highway N and Pleasant Drive.

- CARRY’S CEMETERY, Section 1, on the corner of County Highways K and D.
- AMISH CEMETERY, Section 13, on Maves Road, just south of Spring Creek.

F. Health Care Facilities

There are no health care facilities in Buena Vista. The closest facilities are the Plover Family Practice located on Plover Road in the Village of Plover, and the Amherst Family Medical Center, located on Christy Street in the Village of Amherst. St. Michael’s Hospital and Rice Medical Center, located in Stevens Point, are the largest facilities in the county. Other health care services located in the Stevens Point/Plover urban area available to Town residents include dental, chiropractic, sports medicine, and podiatry. Regional facilities are also available in Marshfield, Wisconsin Rapids and Waupaca.

G. Child Care Facilities

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.

While there may be some in-home child daycare available in Buena Vista, there aren’t any licensed child care facilities located in the Town. The closest facilities exist in the Villages of Amherst, Amherst Junction and Plover. 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

H. Libraries

The Town of Buena Vista does not have a public library. Library facilities available to Town residents include: the Charles M. White library, located on Main Street in downtown Stevens Point, approximately 15 miles from the center of Buena Vista; the Plover Library, located at 2151 Roosevelt Drive, approximately 6 miles from the center of Buena Vista; and the Almond Library, located in the Village of Almond. All of these facilities are affiliated with the Portage County Library system. More detailed information about the Portage County Public Library can be obtained via the internet at: <http://library.uwsp.edu/pcl/> or by calling the library system at: 1-800-264-0766.

Other area libraries include the Lettie W. Jensen Public Library, located at 278 North Main Street in Amherst. This facility was constructed in 1988 with funds donated to the Village and is a member of the South Central Library System. The Library is run by an appointed Village library board. The Library offers internet access, various computers programs, interlibrary loan, large-print books, audio books, videos, magazines, a local history room, a copy machine, Story time kits, a book discussion group, and a weekly preschool story hour.

Section 4.4 Utilities and Community Facility Issues Identified by the Plan Commission

The following issues concerning utilities and facilities were identified:

- How can the Town promote the creation of a local First Responders unit?
- Some residents have indicated a desire to establish a park/playground in the Town. To what extent should the Town provide recreation facilities for its residents?

Section 4.5 Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives and Policies

A. Goals:

1. Places and activities for the youth of the community are provided.
2. Create and protect public green space and water resources.
3. Share services across County or municipal borders whenever possible.
4. Plan for the provision of infrastructure, utilities, and community facilities and services to efficiently meet community needs.

B. Objectives:

1. Provide recreational facilities for youth.
2. Work with other communities for fire and rescue, First Responders, road maintenance, etc.
3. Create a plan for providing infrastructure and services in the future.

C. Policies:

1. Work with Portage County to help create a Town park.
2. Continue agreements with surrounding municipalities.
3. Work with surrounding communities to help provide services for Town residents.
4. Work with the County to help establish a First Responders unit in the Town.