

CHAPTER 4 Utilities and Community Facilities Element

66.1001(2)(d) Wis. Stat.:

Utilities and Community Facilities element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local governmental unit such as sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other governmental facilities. The element shall describe the location, use and capacity of existing public utilities and community facilities that serve the local governmental unit, shall include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need in the local governmental unit to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities and facilities or to create new utilities and facilities and shall assess future needs for government services in the local governmental unit that are related to such utilities and facilities.

Section 4.1 Public Utilities Inventory

A. Sewer and Water Systems

The Village of Amherst Junction currently does not have a public water system or sewage system, all development utilizes private well and on-site sewage disposal. Soils are generally adequate for septic systems although significant construction of such systems in close proximity to any shallow wells in the Village could contaminate drinking water supplies. Also, increased septic system construction could pollute Lake Emily mainly through nutrient enrichment with resulting algae and aquatic plant growth.

The expansion of USH 10 to a four-lane divided highway through the Village has increased opportunities for residential and commercial development; however the lack of sewer and water utilities can present an obstacle to any significant future development in Amherst Junction. Certain government assisted housing programs require such facilities. Generally, any housing of greater density, such as concentrations of duplexes or apartments, should also have sewer and water facilities.

On the whole, the private disposal systems are performing adequately and a public sanitary sewer system is not needed. There are isolated instances where improvements to the private systems should be undertaken. The problem areas are few and widespread enough to eliminate community septic disposal systems from further consideration.

B. Storm Water Management

The Village has a very limited storm sewer system that serves only those portions of Main Street and Second Street in the built up area. This system does not discharge directly into any surface water, but rather into surface drainage ways to the east and west of the Village. In 2004 the Village constructed a new detention pond and storm water collection system as a part of the Lake Emily Road Rehabilitation Project associated with the construction of the re-located US Highway 10 (see Map 4.1).

C. Solid Waste & Recycling Facilities

In spring 2004, the Village entered into a contract with Wittenberg Disposal to provide garbage and recycling hauling service for Amherst Junction residents beginning in fall 2004. Wittenberg Disposal currently utilizes the Portage County landfill. The landfill is scheduled to close in 2006, after which the waste will be trucked to a landfill in Marathon County. The disposal of hazardous waste, yard waste, newsprint, aluminum cans, waste oil, and car and truck batteries is not permitted in the County landfill.

D. Telecommunication Facilities / Cable Television

Telephone services in the Village is served by the Amherst Telephone Company, which is also currently developing plans for providing high speed internet and cable internet service to Amherst Junction residents. Currently Airwave internet, a wireless dish service, is accessible for some through Nelsonville.

Cable Television is provided through the Tomorrow Valley Cable Television Company, located at 120 Mill Street in Amherst

E. Power Generating Plants and Transmission Lines; Other Utilities

An electrical substation is located just outside the northeast portion of the Village limits with high voltage lines running along Lake Emily Road, north on State Highway 161 and East on Lake Myers Road.

Natural Gas and electric are available through Alliant Energy. The gas line runs through the northern part of the Village.

Section 4.2 Community Facilities Inventory

A. Fire, Rescue, Emergency Response

The Village of Amherst Junction is part of the Amherst Fire District, located at 4585 Fairgrounds Road, Amherst. The Amherst Fire District protects approximately 6000 people living in a 90 square mile area including the Villages of Amherst, Amherst Junction, Nelsonville, and Towns of Amherst, and portions of the Towns of Lanark and Stockton contract for their fire protection service with the Amherst Fire District. The Town of New Hope utilizes First Responder service from the Amherst Fire Department. The department was reorganized in 1992, combining three smaller departments. A new fire station building was constructed in 1995. As of 2003, there are 7 vehicles within a single fire station including:

- 3 engine/pumpers
 - 1st out -1250 gallon per minute pump rate with 500 gallon capacity with foam application and aerial boom with ladder
 - 2nd out – 1000 gallon per minute pump rate with 1000 gallon capacity
 - 3rd out/reserve – 750 gallon per minute pump rate with 750 gallon capacity
- 2 tankers having a 2,000 and 3,000 gallon capacity
- 1 rescue vehicle
- 1 utility/grass fire vehicle

Map 4.1: Community Facilities

Water for these vehicles is usually pumped from the water hydrants located in the Village of Amherst. There is an irrigation well within the Town of Amherst to provide additional water, and there are a number of dry hydrants across the area. Three irrigation wells (two in the Town of Lanark and one in the Town of Amherst) are available within the Town of Lanark as an additional resource for fighting fires in that area. The fire district also has an agreement with other fire districts in Portage County to utilize their water sources if needed.

The Village is served by the Portage County ambulance service out of Stevens Point.

B. Police Protection

Currently, the Village does not have its own police department. The Portage County Sheriff's Department provides protective services through random patrols and a "call-out" basis. Portage County is divided into 3 districts for patrol purposes. The district in which Amherst Junction is located is bounded by STH 66 to the north, the Portage County line to the east, and STH 54 to the south. 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 Village any number of times during each shift to check on businesses and residences.

C. Schools

1. Tomorrow River School District

The Tomorrow River School District (Map 4.1), approximately 100 square miles, includes the Villages of Amherst, Amherst Junction and Nelsonville along with part of the Towns of Amherst, Bunea 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 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 on a rotating basis.

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 gym and 2,650 square foot band building in 1953; a 12,075 square foot elementary school in 1960; and a 13,440 square foot elementary school addition in 1970; a new 7,200 square foot shop building in 1976; a 24,000 square foot high 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. A total of 858 students were enrolled in 2004, including 404 elementary students (K-5), 191 junior high students (6-8) and 263 high school students (9-12).

2. Mid-State Technical College

Mid-State Technical College (MSTC) is one of 16 publicly supported colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College System. Approximately 16,000 full- and part-time students enroll annually. MSTC offers technical training in nearly 50 careers by granting one- and two-year technical diplomas and two-year associate degrees in four areas: business, health, service technologies, and technical & industrial. In addition, MSTC also awards certificates for the successful completion of a single course or a combination of courses. The Mid-State Technical College District includes full-service campuses in Marshfield, Stevens Point, and Wisconsin Rapids; a center in Adams; and several outreach sites.

3. University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (UWSP)

Since 1894 when Stevens Point Normal School opened its doors to 300 students, the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point has grown to become a major comprehensive University, with about 8,700 students enrolled. Its academic programs offer 100 choices within 51 majors and 78 minors plus 16 graduate programs. UWSP is home to four colleges (Fine Arts and Communication, Letters and Science, Natural Resources and Professional Studies), and is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In addition, UWSP has initiated a variety of innovative and nationally distinctive programs such as the National Wellness Institute, the Center for the Small City, the Central Wisconsin Economic Research Bureau, and the Global Environmental Management Center (GEM) Center for Watershed Science and Education.

The 400 acre main campus includes seven major buildings in addition to Old Main, UWSP's administrative building, the University Center and 13 residence halls housing approximately 3,000 students. North campus includes Schmeekle Reserve, a 225-acre nature area with a 24-acre lake, nature center and trails that are part of the Portage County 30-mile Green Circle Trail.

The Stevens Point campus is part of the University of Wisconsin System that includes 13 four-year campuses, 13 two-year centers and the University of Wisconsin-Extension. The University of Wisconsin system represents one of the finest educational institutions in the world. Access to information and research on virtually any topic is available.

In 2003, the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point placed among the top public universities in the Midwest. The publication U.S. News & World Report ranked UWSP number six in the top tier of Midwestern public master's degree-granting institutions. This was the fourth consecutive year that the university placed in the top six. U.S. News and World Report uses several criteria in rating the campuses including academic reputation, retention, faculty, students, financial resources and alumni giving. Other UW System campuses which placed in the top six among Midwestern comprehensives include UW-La Crosse and UW-Eau Claire. UW-Madison ranked seventh among public doctoral universities.

D. Libraries

There is no library in Amherst Junction. The closest is the Lettie Jensen Library in the Village of Amherst as well as the Amherst school system libraries.

E. Community Centers

While there are no community/senior centers in the Village of Amherst Junction, the Village voluntarily contributes to the Village of Amherst's Jensen Center and has a Village representative on the Jensen Center Board.

The Lettie W. Jensen Community center is located on Main Street, just north of the Tomorrow River Schools. Constructed in 1988 with funds donated as a memorial to Lettie W. Jensen, a former resident of Amherst, and is privately owned and operated by the Amherst Area Foundation. Major facilities include a large community/meeting room, heat and serve kitchen, recreation room that is home to the Boys and Girls Club, number of meeting rooms that are rented for multi-purpose activities and a recently completed 250 seat theater featuring state-of-the-art computer stage lighting and curtains available for theatrical/music performances, seminars and many other public gatherings. The Center is home to elderly meal site on Monday,

Wednesday and Fridays; Yoga, Tai Chi, Weight Watchers, and other events are also frequently offered. The Jensen Center is a popular location for wedding receptions, anniversary parties, fund raisers, and baby and bridal showers. In March of 2003 the Jensen Center began publishing “Our Community Spirit” a community newspaper for the Villages of Amherst, Amherst Junction, Nelsonville and Towns of Lanark, Stockton, and New Hope. The community newspaper has a circulation of over 2,500 residents. “*Where People Meet Along the Tomorrow River*”

F. Other Governmental Facilities

With the Village being so small, the Village government provides only essential administrative, safety, and street maintenance services. There are no full time public employees and there is no full time constable.

The Village Hall is located in the old F&M bank 3980 Second Street.

The Village does have its own post office, located at the corner of Main Street and Second Street in the business district, which serves a large rural delivery zone.

G. Cemeteries

There are no cemeteries located in the Village of Amherst Junction. The Town of Amherst has six (6): Bickel Cemetery, Amherst Cemetery, Greenwood (located at Cty Rd B southeast of Amherst Junction), Lower Amherst Cemetery, Oak Grove, St. James Cemetery, and one located in the Town of Stockton: St. Mary-Mount Carmel Cemetery.

H. Health Care Facilities

The Village of Amherst Junction currently does not have a medical facility with a medical doctor or dentist. The Village of Amherst does have chiropractor and dentist offices along with the Amherst Family Medical Center, located at 272 Christy Street. The Amherst Medical Center provides complete primary care services for acute and chronic conditions. Patients range from infants to older adults, including newborns, pediatric, adult and geriatric care, and women’s health.

I. Child Care Facilities

According to the Division of Children and Family Services Bureau of Regulation and Licensing there is one child care facility within the Village of Amherst Junction.

Section 4.3 Parks and Recreation Inventory

A. Parks and Opens Space

Nelson Park consists of 3.4 acres which includes: volleyball, softball, and a kid’s playground.

B. Other Recreational Facilities (i.e. trails)

The availability of indoor recreational and cultural facilities such as a library and senior center will likely remain limited to the communities of Amherst and Stevens Point.

1. Lake Emily Park

Lake Emily Park, located west of Amherst Junction, (with about 20 acres in the Village limits) is one of the 24 areas managed by Portage County Parks Department. It consists of 143 acres with diversified activities including large picnic area, two picnic lodges, 51 campsites, showers, boat ramp, trailer dump station, playground equipment, nature trail, swimming beach, and baseball field. The lake's 96 acres of water provides excellent water and winter sports activities for fishermen, boaters, water skiers and swimmers.

2. Glacier Hollow

Glacier Hollow, a youth camp, is located on Lake Elaine north of the community near the Village of Nelsonville.

3. Tomorrow River Trail

The Tomorrow River State Trail is a 14 mile trail developed along an abandoned railroad grade between the Village of Plover and the Waupaca County line.

The trail consists of a surface of crushed limestone which is packed smooth. It is open to bicyclists, hikers, and joggers in the spring, summer, and fall. A separate 9 mile trail for horseback riders is available for riding between Plover and Amherst Junction. During the winter months the trail is open to snowmobilers, skiers, and dog sledders. A 1.3 mile portion of the Tomorrow River Trail runs through the center of Amherst Junction, accounting for 13.6 acres of park land.

Waupaca County will be developing a 14 mile extension of the trail to the east in the next few years.

4. Ice Age Trail

The Ice Age Bicycle Trail runs north and south along the glaciated areas of eastern Portage County for a total of 48 miles. The trail was designed specifically for bicyclists as it runs along portions of major roadways. With the reconstruction of Highway 10, the Ice Age Bike Trail may connect with the Tomorrow River Trail to provide for a safer crossing of US Highway 10.

The proposed Ice Age Walking Trail winds in and out of the County along the eastern border between Portage County and Waupaca County. Portions of the Ice Age Trail are complete; however, easements across private land are still needed for much of the trail. When completed, the Ice Age trail will extend 1,000 miles among the glacial features throughout Wisconsin.

5. Standing Rocks Park and Trail

Standing Rocks Park is located approximately 5 miles southwest of Amherst Junction. The 524 acre park is open year round for a variety of outdoor activities, including: downhill and cross-country skiing, approximately 10 miles of trails for hiking and mountain biking, 18 hole disc golf course, 1 mile cross country/dog exercise trail, and a 26 acre field target archery course.

Section 4.4 Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives and Policies

A. Goal

Provide adequate infrastructure, and community facilities and services to meet existing and future community needs.

B. Objectives

1. Cooperation with the County and with the Town and Village of Amherst in Planning and supporting necessary community facilities on an area wide basis such as:
 - a. Community centers and programs – Jenson Center
 - b. Library facilities and services
 - c. Recreation
 - d. Ambulance, fire and police protection
2. Protect public green space and water resources in the Village.

C. Policies

1. Maintenance of fire district and forces adequate to protect existing and new development.
2. Maintenance of current park facilities and encourage the continuation of adequate recreational facilities through the use of a park dedication fee for new subdivisions.
3. Places and activities for the youth of the community are supported.
4. Share services across County or municipal boundaries whenever possible.