

Town of Amherst 2009 Comprehensive Plan



Approved on November 10, 2009

Prepared by the Town of Amherst Planning Commission with assistance from Virginia's Region 2000 Local Government Council and WW Associates.

PURPOSE

Section I of the **Town of Amherst 2009 Comprehensive Plan** is presented in a status report format and the information it contains served as an overview of existing conditions, with demographic profiles and a summary report on existing community services, facilities and programs. As such, it was used as background information and aided discussions that contributed to the Comprehensive Plan completion effort. The information within this section was drawn upon as the Planning Commission, Town Council and the rest of the Amherst community developed the specific goals, objectives, and strategies that comprise the forward-looking plan for the Town of Amherst.

Although other information was considered as the forward-looking portion of this Comprehensive Plan was developed, individuals making Town planning decisions in the coming years will find the information in this section useful.

Section II of the **Town of Amherst 2009 Comprehensive Plan** is the forward looking portion of the document and contains the policies, goals and “plan” for the continued good development of the Town of Amherst.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I – OVERVIEW OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Regional Setting and History.....	7
2. Population and Demographics	8
3. Housing	17
4. Historic and Cultural Amenities	29
5. Economy.....	31
6. Natural Resources.....	43
7. Land Use	47
8. Transportation	52
9. Community Services and Facilities	62

SECTION II - FUTURE PLAN

10. Economic Development Plan	77
11. Water Utility Plan.....	84
12. Sewer Infrastructure Plan.....	86
13. Transportation Infrastructure Plan.....	88
14. Environmental Management Plan	93
15. Historic Preservation Plan	95
16. Housing Plan	99
17. Public Safety Plan	100
18. Public Services Plan.....	101
19. Parks and Recreation Plan.....	103
20. Undeveloped/Redevelopment Areas and Areas for Special Focus	105
21. Future Land Use.....	119

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 2 - Population and Demographics

Table 2.1	Central Virginia Area: Population Growth and Percentage Change, 1980 - 2000
Table 2.2	Population Projections to 2010
Table 2.3	Urban Area Population Forecasts
Table 2.4	Age Distribution and Change from 1990 — 2000
Table 2.5	Town Of Amherst Age Distribution and Percent Change 1990-2000
Table 2.6	Age Distribution and Median Age of Central Virginia Town and Cities
Table 2.7	Town of Amherst Educational Attainment Residents 25 Years and Over: Percent Change 1990-2000
Table 2.8	Educational Attainment for Residents Over 25 in Region 2000 Localities in 2000
Table 2.9	Place of Work for Workers 16 Years and Over for Region 2000 Towns
Table 2.10	Central Virginia Towns: Racial Diversity - 2000
Table 2.11	Town of Amherst Racial Distribution and Percent Change 1990-2000
Table 2.12	Town of Amherst – Gender Comparisons for 1990 — 2000

Chapter 3 - Housing

Table 3.1	Housing Units in Amherst 1990 – 2000
Table 3.2	Owner Occupied and Renter Occupied Housing in Central Virginia Towns and Cities: Percent Change 1990-2000
Table 3.3	Town of Amherst – Rooms per Housing Unit
Table 3.4	Town of Amherst – Year Housing Structures were Built
Table 3.5	Median Housing Values in Central Virginia Towns: Percent Change 1990-2000
Table 3.6	Average Household Size of Occupied Housing in Region 2000 Towns and Amherst County
Table 3.7	Household and Per Capita Income in Central Virginia Towns and Percent Change 1990-2000
Table 3.8	Town Of Amherst Household Annual Income Distribution - 2000
Table 3.9	Median Annual Family Income
Table 3.10	Town Of Amherst Family Annual Income Distribution - 2000
Table 3.11	Town of Amherst – Household Types 1990 to 2000
Table 3.12	Percent Change of Female Headed Households in Central Virginia Cities and Towns 1990-2000
Table 3.13	Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units
Table 3.14	Median Contract Rent in Central Virginia Towns: Percent Change 1990-2000
Table 3.15	Poverty Rates in Central Virginia Towns - Percent Change 1990-2000
Table 3.16	Households on Public Assistance in Region 2000 Towns - 1990 & 2000

Chapter 5 - Economy

Table 5.1	Town of Amherst Labor Force Status 1990 – 2000
Table 5.2	Gender Composition of Town of Amherst Labor Force 1990 – 2000
Table 5.3	Unemployment Rates in the Region 2000 area
Table 5.4	Mean Travel Time to Work (in minutes) for Workers Living in Region 2000 Localities
Table 5.5	Occupations of Amherst Town Work Force – 1990 & 2000
Table 5.6	Gender By Occupation For The Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over in 2000
Table 5.7	Amherst Town Industrial Classifications 1990 & 2000
Table 5.8	Industrial Classifications by Gender in Amherst Town - 2000
Table 5.9	Industrial Classification Employment for Some Region 2000 Localities
Table 5.10	Region 2000 Employers
Table 5.11	Average Weekly Wage Statistics

Chapter 6 - Natural Resources

Table 6.1	Lynchburg, Virginia: Average Precipitation; Normals Period 1971 – 2000
Table 6.2	Lynchburg, Virginia: Average Fahrenheit Temperatures, Normals Period 1971-2000
Table 6.3	Lynchburg, Virginia: Heating Degree Day Normals, Normals Period 1971-2000
Table 6.4	Amherst County: Emissions in Pounds per Year (1993)

Chapter 8 - Transportation

Table 8.1	Roadways within the Town of Amherst (Federal Aid System, “Collectors” and Above)
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Chapter 13 - Transportation Infrastructure Plan

Table 13.1	Planned Transportation Projects within the Town of Amherst
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LIST OF MAPS AND FIGURES

Chapter 7 - Land Use

Map 7.1 Town of Amherst Zoning Map

Chapter 8 - Transportation

Map 8.1 Town of Amherst Streets and Sidewalks Map

Chapter 9 - Community Services and Facilities

Map 9.1 Town of Amherst Community Resources Map

Map 9.2 Town of Amherst Water System Map

Map 9.3 Town of Amherst Wastewater System Map

Chapter 10 - Economic Development Plan

Map 10.1 Brockman Park Master Plan

Fig. 10.2 Amherst Brand

Map 10.3 Conceptual Layout for Town Square Project

Chapter 12 - Sewer Infrastructure Plan

Fig. 12.1 Sewer Plant Improvement Planning Timetable

Chapter 13 - Transportation Infrastructure Plan

Map 13.1 Town of Amherst Transportation Plan

Chapter 14 - Environmental Management Plan

Map 14.1 Town of Amherst Floodplain Map

Chapter 15 - Historic Preservation Plan

Fig. 15.1 Town of Amherst Historic Resources Inventory

Map 15.2 Town of Amherst Housing and Historic Preservation Plan Map

Map 15.3 Town of Amherst Housing and Historic Preservation Plan Map Inset

Chapter 19 - Parks and Recreation Plan

Map 19.1 Town of Amherst Parks and Recreation Map

Chapter 20 - Undeveloped/Redevelopment Areas and Areas for Special Focus

Map 20.1 Undeveloped/Redevelopment Areas and Areas for Special Focus

Map 20.2 Ambriar Development Area Plan

Map 20.3 Central Business District Development Area Plan

Map 20.4 Rt. 60/Bypass Interchange Development Area Plan

Map 20.5 N. Main/Bypass Interchange Development Area Plan

Map 20.6 60 East Area-Poplar Grove Utility Service Area Plan

Map 20.7 60 West Area-Lloyd Property Utility Service Area Plan

Chapter 21 - Future Land Use Plan

Map 21.1 – Future Land Use Map

INTRODUCTION

Legal Authority to the Plan

Every local government is required, as noted in section 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia, to adopt a comprehensive plan. As stated “The comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants.” In the Town of Amherst, the Planning Commission is charged with preparing the Comprehensive Plan document for the consideration and ultimate adoption by the Amherst Town Council. Virginia State law requires that the appointed local government Planning Commission review the Plan every five years to evaluate the need for update and/or amendment.

Town of Amherst – Vision Document

The Town of Amherst Comprehensive Plan presents a vision of what the Town envisions itself in the future and provides the steps necessary to ensure that this vision becomes a reality for the community. The Plan provides information on the Town’s current conditions, including its relationship to the surrounding region; provides short and long-term goals and objectives to maintain and enhance current resources; and lays a foundation to expand the ability of the Town to sustain a viable economic future that capitalizes on the unique cultural, historical, and natural resources of the Town.

CHAPTER 1

REGIONAL SETTING AND HISTORY

LOCATION

The Town of Amherst, the county seat of Amherst County (2000 census population of 2,251), is located in the east-central part of the County. The Town lies upon a ridge, considered by some as the upper elevations of the Piedmont Plateau and by others as the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, which runs generally in a north-south direction at an elevation of about 700 feet above mean sea level. U. S. Route 29 was built along this ridge, connecting Lynchburg, the region's largest city, and southern portions of Virginia with Charlottesville and, via Interstate 64, larger northern and eastern metropolitan areas of Virginia. The Town's respective distance to these areas is 15 miles north of Lynchburg; 50 miles south of Charlottesville; 100 miles west of Richmond, the state capital; 68 miles east of Roanoke; 165 miles southwest of Washington, D.C.; and 200 miles west of Norfolk and the ports of Hampton Roads.

HISTORY

Amherst, originally known as "The Oaks" and "Seven Oaks", started as a stage station on the Charlottesville-Lynchburg road. Upon the dividing of Nelson County from Amherst County in 1807, the village became the seat of Amherst County's government. At the same time, the community's name was changed to Amherst, both to correspond to the County's name and to honor Sir Jeffery Amherst, a Major-General who had been the hero of the Battle of Ticonderoga during the French and Indian War and who later served as the Governor-In-Chief of the Colony of Virginia from 1763 to 1768. The original Amherst County Courthouse, built in 1809 on two acres of land purchased "from a Mr. Coleman for ten shillings", was torn down in 1872 to make room for the present courthouse built "from homemade brick of Amherst County clay". All Amherst County records dating back to the County's formation from Albemarle County in 1761 are stored in the courthouse.

On April 15, 1910, the Town of Amherst was incorporated by order of the Circuit Court. A new charter was granted to the Town by the General Assembly in 1950.

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

The Town of Amherst charter establishes a governing structure of a Mayor and five other Town Councilors who compose the Town Council and make primary Town decisions. The Town Council holds the authority and responsibility to enact ordinances, adopt resolutions and budgets, determine policy, and appoint a Town Manager and Police Chief. The Mayor of Amherst presides over all meetings of the Town Council, is the recognized chief executive officer of the Town and has veto authority over the Town Council. The Town Manager assists the Town Council by assuming responsibility for the daily operation of the Town.

The Town of Amherst overlaps part of Amherst County and thus many of the County's laws and taxes apply to Town residents. Further, Town residents are fully represented in Amherst County policy decisions with the ability to vote for representation to the Amherst County Board of Supervisors, the County's governing body.

Town offices are located on South Main Street in the center of the Town and along the primary commercial district of the Town. These offices include the Town Hall and the Police Department. The Town's maintenance shop and fenced grounds for equipment and materials are located adjacent to the Zane Snead Industrial Park. Other major Town facilities include the water treatment plant on Grandview Drive and the wastewater treatment plant on Zane Snead Drive.

CHAPTER 2

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

INTRODUCTION

A key element in any comprehensive plan is the analysis of the size, structure and characteristics of the resident population and a projection of future population growth. Examining current trends and future developments in population change is necessary to determine community needs for land, housing, public services, schools and other services and facilities. In addition, population demographics are often the truest indicator of economic conditions within an area. Employment opportunities and economic investment are directly affected by a region's change, either positive or negative, in population. Thus, population analysis from within and surrounding a locality is a key component of any regional evaluation and planning decisions. For the purposes of this report, population trends of the Planning District 11 area, Amherst County, and three other Towns from within the region are provided for the purposes of reflecting population trends.

POPULATION TRENDS

POPULATION NUMBERS

The Town of Amherst is one of the ten member jurisdictions of the Region 2000 Local Government Council (Planning District 11 area). Region 2000 has a current population of 228,616 (2000 U.S. Census). The region saw a population increase of 34,438 persons between 1980 and 2000 which represents a 17.73% increase. The growth resulted from the establishment of new industries and the expansion of existing industries from the area within and just outside the Lynchburg area. The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) population projections for the year 2010 and 2020 place the Planning District 11 area population respectively at around 243,276 and 258,139 persons.

The population of the Town of Amherst has shown population increases as noted. However, there has been a significant increase in the last decade. In 1970, the Census reported that 1,108 people resided in the Town. A slight increase to 1,135 people was seen by 1980 and by 1990 the Town had a population of 1,914, a 68.6 % increase since 1980. It should be noted that this percentage of increase is somewhat elevated due to the annexation of 2,086 acres in 1994 which had a 1990 Census population of 854 persons. Thus, the 1,914 population denotes this increase; the 1990 population of Amherst prior to the adjusted annexed population at 1,060 shows an actual decrease in the area's population of 6.6 %.

Between 1990 and 2000 population within the Town increased from 1,914 (adjusted annexed population) to 2,251 representing a 17.6 % increase. This is a positive trend for the Town and reflects the increase in water infrastructure that has resulted in new housing developments within the Town.

The Town of Amherst is the second largest of the five Region 2000 Towns, according to the 2000 Census, with 2,251 residents. Table 2.1 provides a summation of population trends between 1980 and 2000. It should be noted that within the last decade Amherst has shown a significant increase in population as opposed to most of the area's towns which have experienced a decline in population. Again, some of this can be attributed to the annexation. The value of the local infrastructure and services are believed to have contributed greatly to this statistic.

**Table 2.1
Central Virginia Area: Population Growth and Percentage Change, 1980 - 2000**

Locality	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1990 - 2000
Altavista	3,254	3,686	3,425	- 7.08
AMHERST	1,135	1,914 *	2,251	17.61
Appomattox	1,345	1,707	1,761	3.16
Brookneal	1,454	1,344	1,259	- 6.32
Pamplin	237	208	199	- 4.32
Amherst County	29,122	28,578	31,894	11.60
Region 2000	194,178	206,226	228,616	10.86
Virginia	5,346,797	6,187,358	7,078,515	14.40

*denotes adjusted population to reflect annexation

Source: U.S. Census

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

It is important to analyze population projections in order to best predict how public services and policies may warrant modification or expansion in order to accommodate changing future needs.

Population projections for the region have been generated by the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) and are available through the Weldon Cooper Center at the University of Virginia. Data provided is shown in Table 2.2. The Lynchburg Metropolitan Statistical Area, MSA, which includes the City of Lynchburg, and the urbanized areas of Bedford, Campbell, and Amherst Counties, has an estimated growth rate of 7.2% from 2000 – 2010. This MSA for Amherst County includes all of the Town of Amherst. It is worth noting that while the City of Lynchburg is a large economic engine for the area, the city itself is not projected to grow much with the majority of growth taking place in the surrounding counties.

**Table 2.2
Population Projections to 2010**

Region	1990 *	2000 *	2010 **	% Change 2000 — 2010
AMHERST	1,914	2,251	2,322	3.15%
Lynchburg	66,049	65,269	65,300	0.04%
Amherst County	28,578	31,894	32,898	3.14%
Appomattox County	12,298	13,705	14,600	6.50%
Campbell County	47,572	51,078	53,703	5.14%
Bedford County	45,656	60,371	71,601	18.60%
Lynchburg MSA	200,153	223,317	238,102	7.20%
Virginia	6,189,317	7,078,515	7,737,597	9.31%

Source: * U. S. Census, ** Virginia Employment Commission/Weldon Cooper Center
VEC, Economic Information Services Division

The Virginia's Region 2000 Partnership generates population forecasts for the urbanized areas primarily for transportation and employment analysis. Table 2.3 provides a summary of the population forecast for the urbanized subsections within the Region 2000 area. This data supports the previous information which suggests that growth within the region will be primarily outside of the City of Lynchburg but located in the urbanized fringes. The Region 2000 forecast approach reflects that of the VEC in that most growth is shown to take place in Bedford and Campbell counties and moderate growth in Amherst County. However, the Region 2000 projects a slight decrease in population from within Lynchburg City.

**Table 2.3
Urban Area Population Forecasts**

Region	1990	2000	2010	2020	% Change 2000 — 2020
City of Lynchburg	66,049*	65,269*	65,050**	65,050**	-0.34
Amherst Urbanized Area	18,587	19,330	20,139	20,948	8.37
Bedford Urbanized Area	10,468	16,180	18,946	21,712	34.19
Campbell Urbanized Area	20,134	22,127	23,891	25,654	15.93
Total Urban Area	115,238	122,906	128,026	133,364	8.67

Source: * U.S. Census; ** Virginia's Region 2000 Partnership

POPULATION COMPOSITION

Numbers and growth alone do not significantly provide a comprehensive look at a population. There are various components of the population that need to be reviewed and considered in the process of making a complete community assessment.

The following section will consider demographic composition of the population, such as aging characteristics, school age children, commuting patterns, and racial composition. All of these factors contribute to our population and put special demands on our environment and services necessary to sustain a community.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age composition is an integral part of the population analysis. Different age groups have different needs and provide unique functions for the area in which they live. This demographic factor helps in determining the size of the labor force and is a good indicator of current and future service needs. Table 2.4 provides a summary of the age distribution for both the Town and County of Amherst in 1990 and 2000. It should be noted that the 1990 population numbers do not take into account the annexed section. However, the relative percentage of each age group as a factor of the population as a whole is still able to reflect general age trends.

**Table 2.4
Age Distribution and Change from 1990 — 2000**

Age	Town of Amherst				Amherst County			
	1990	2000	% of Total Population 1990	% of Total Population 2000	1990	2000	% of Total Population 1990	% of Total Population 2000
Under 15	170	415	16.0	18.4	5,457	6,130	19.1	19.2
15 — 24	124	209	11.7	9.3	4,376	4,455	15.3	14.0
25 — 44	284	549	26.8	24.4	9,270	8,837	32.4	27.7
45 — 54	112	281	10.6	12.5	3,453	4,613	12.1	14.5
55 — 64	84	249	7.9	11.1	2,667	3,462	9.3	10.8
65 — 74	137	216	12.9	9.6	1,977	2,520	7.0	8.0
75 — 84	111	190	10.5	8.4	1,098	1,415	3.8	4.4
85 years and older	38	142	3.6	6.3	280	462	1.0	1.4
Total Population	1,060	2,251	100	100	28,578	31,894	100	100

Source: 2000 U. S. Census

Since 1990 Amherst has seen a slight aging of its population; with an increase in those over 65 and a slight decrease of those under 18. The Town's population under the age of 18 decreased by 0.6% from 22.2% in 1990 to 21.60% in 2000. Meanwhile, its population 65 years of age and over changed from 21.53% in 1990 to 24.30% of the population in 2000, an increase of 2.77%. Altavista, Appomattox, and Brookneal each have comparable populations under the age of 18, with 22.5 %, 23.9 %, and 24.9 % respectively. Only Pamplin City has a sizeable difference in its under-18 population, with 31.2 %. Table 2.6 provides a summation of age distribution among Region 2000 Towns, Amherst County, and Virginia.

Also, in 2000, approximately 24.3% of the population of Amherst was 65 years and older. This statistic is higher than all of the other five localities; Brookneal, with 23.2% of its population 65 years and older, was the closest to Amherst. It should be noted that some of the elderly population within the Town may be attributable to the location of the Fairmont Nursing Home and Johnson's Senior Center.

**Table 2.5
Town Of Amherst Age Distribution and Percent Change 1990-2000**

	2000		1990		Percent Change 1990-2000
	Total Number	Percent of Total	Total Number	Percent of Total	
Under 18	487	21.60%	425	22.20%	-0.60%
65 years and older	548	24.30%	412	21.53%	2.77%

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

**Table 2.6
Age Distribution and Median Age of Central Virginia Town and Cities**

	Under 18	Percent	65 Years and older	Percent	Median Age
Altavista	769	22.50%	747	21.8	42.6
AMHERST	487	21.60%	548	24.3	43.4
Appomattox	421	23.90%	338	19.2	38.7
Brookneal	314	24.90%	292	23.2	41.8
Pamplin City	62	31.20%	38	19.1	34.5
Amherst County	7,486	23.47%	4,397	13.79	38.0
Virginia	1,735,824	24.52%	792,333	11.19	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The median age in the Town of Amherst is 43.4, meaning there are just as many individuals above the age of 43.4 as there are below it. This is the highest median age of all the Central Virginia towns and cities which were compared. Altavista, Brookneal, and Appomattox, however, each had median ages no more than 4 years below that of Amherst and in general reflect a national trend experienced in rural communities.

The 25 – 54 age segment represents people who are just beginning or have been in the labor force for several years. These persons have either lived here or moved to the area to take advantage of the employment opportunities in Amherst and Lynchburg primarily (see Chapter 5 - Economy). This age segment is also likely to have children utilizing the school system. Over the period between 1990 and 2000 this segment decreased from representing 37.3% of the total population to 36.9% of the population in 2000. This again represents a general aging of Amherst Town population. The trend of this age group having a general decrease is mirrored within Amherst County where in 1990 44.5% of the population was between 25 and 54 years of age as compared to 38.6% in 2000.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

There is a documented link between education and economic wellbeing. Higher educational attainment generally equates to higher incomes and standards of living. This higher standard of living often translates into quality of housing, development and living environment. As such the education attainment level of a community is often a signal of its current economic success and potential for the future.

The Town of Amherst, as shown when viewing Table 2.7, has seen an increase in the attainment of higher levels of education since 1990. In 2000, 74.7 % of the residents of the Town of Amherst aged 25 or older was considered a high school graduate or held a higher degree. This compared to 67.14 % of residents in the Town with a high school degree or higher in 1990. Of the total population, 19.4 % had received a bachelor's degree or higher in 2000, while only 19.3 % had done so in 1990.

In 2000 approximately 11.4 % of the population aged 25 and older had an educational attainment equivalent to less than a 9th grade education, and 13.9 % had reached some level of high school but had not reached a degree. This is considerably less than when in 1990, 16.04 % had an educational attainment of less than 9th grade and an also larger 16.82 % had reached some level of high school but had not reached a degree. While the number of persons going beyond 9th grade was higher in 1990, it can be assumed that the 2000 Census captured those residents that continued their education as shown in the data.

**Table 2.7
Town of Amherst Educational Attainment Residents 25 Years and Over: Percent Change 1990-2000**

<i>Educational attainment</i>	2000		1990		Percent Change 1990-2000
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	
Less than 9th grade	187	11.40%	123	16.04%	-4.64%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	227	13.90%	129	16.82%	-2.92%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	480	29.40%	175	22.82%	6.58%
Some college, no degree	340	20.80%	141	18.38%	2.42%
Associate degree	83	5.10%	51	6.65%	-1.55%
Bachelor's degree	224	13.70%	103	13.43%	0.27%
Graduate or professional degree	93	5.70%	45	5.87%	-0.17%
Percent high school graduate or higher	N/A	74.70%	N/A	67.14%	7.56%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	N/A	19.40%	N/A	19.30%	0.10%
Total residents 25 years and over	1,634	100%	767	100%	N/A

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

Table 2.8 provides a comparison of the educational attainment between Amherst Town, Amherst County, and the entire Region 2000 population. It can be seen that the over 25 population within the Town has in general exceeded that of Amherst County, and reflects the general trend of educational attainment for the area. It is worth noting that the Town did have a higher percentage of over 25 residents with both graduate or Bachelor's degree and those residents with graduate or professional degrees. This is strong evidence of the value of the area's workforce and employment capabilities.

The educational attainment of the Town's 25 years of age and older population, when compared with other Region 2000 towns, confirms the value of this workforce. Other than Altavista, which 2000 data revealed had 14.4% with at least a Bachelors degree, 5.4% with a graduate or higher degree, and 68.2% with at least a high school diploma; the Town had the highest educational attainment. The 2000 Census noted that Brookneal had 7.1% with at least a Bachelor degree, 3.7% with graduate or higher, 61.3% with at least a high school diploma, and 10.9% with Bachelors degree or higher; Appomattox Town with 4.9% obtaining a Bachelor or higher, 3.8% graduate level or higher, 64.1% obtaining a high school diploma or higher, and 8.7% with a Bachelors degree or higher.

Table 2.8
Educational Attainment for Residents Over 25 in Region 2000 Localities in 2000

Educational Attainment	AMHERST		Amherst County		Region 2000	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Number	% Total
Less than 9 th grade	187	11.40%	3,275	15.4%	14,602	9.52%
9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	227	13.90%	2,990	14.0%	22,436	14.62%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	480	29.40%	7,108	33.4%	49,052	31.97%
Some college, no degree	340	20.80%	4,073	19.1%	30,098	19.61%
Associate degree	83	5.10%	1,065	5.0%	8,524	5.55%
Graduate or Bachelor's degree	224	13.70%	1,876	8.8%	18,793	12.25%
Graduate or professional degree	93	5.70%	906	4.3%	9,940	6.48%
Percent high school graduate or higher	74.70%	N/A	70.6%	N/A	75.86%	N/A
Percent Bachelor's degree or higher	19.40%	N/A	13.1%	N/A	18.72%	N/A
Total residents 25 years or older	1,634	100%	21,293	100%	153,445	100%

Source: 2000 US Census

DISABILITY STATUS

In the 2000 Census respondents were asked about five disability types, which include sensory, physical, mental, self-care and mobility. Nationally, two out of every five, or 40% of Americans over 65 reported at least one disability (Source: Social Science Data Analysis Network). The 2000 Census found the Town to be fairly consistent, but slightly above, this average with 258 of the 479, or 53.9%, persons over 65 reported having at least one disability. Appomattox Town was at 47.6%, Altavista at 43.1% and Brookneal at 45.2%. The higher number for Amherst Town may be connected to the availability of senior living within the Town.

The 2000 Census indicated that of the 501 residents between 5 and 20, 52 or 10.4% registered as having at least one disability. It should be noted that the American Disability Act, ADA, has a number of definitions for disability. Below is the general disability definition provided by the ADA.

ADA's Definition of "Disability" – a person is disabled if he/she

- "has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity;
- has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment".

MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

An important part of the population or Town statistic to be examined is the migration and mobility of the Town's workforce. In 2000, according to the U. S. Census there were 890 workers 16 years of age and older. Of the 890 workers listed for the Town, 252 or 28.3% worked in the Town, 244 or 27.4% worked in Amherst County, 373 or 41.9% worked outside of Amherst County but in Virginia, and 21 or 2.4% worked outside of Virginia. Therefore, in 2000 of the 890 workers over 16, 55.7% worked in Amherst County (including the Town) and 44.3% worked outside of the County.

Table 2.9 provides a comparison of the place of work for Region 2000 town residents. Compared to the other Region 2000 Towns, fewer of the over 16 workers who live in Amherst are employed within their Town of residency. This is most likely due to the fact that there is not a large regional employer within Amherst Town limits

The 2000 Census indicated that of the 890 workers over 16 from Amherst, the average travel time to work was 22.1 minutes. Of the Region 2000 towns, only Altavista at 21.7 minutes had a shorter travel time.

Appomattox noted a mean travel time of 27.8 minutes, Brookneal 24.4 minutes, and Pamplin at 34.2 minutes.

**Table 2.9
Place of Work for Workers 16 Years and Over for Region 2000 Towns**

	AMHERST		Altavista		Appomattox		Brookneal	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Workers Living in Place	890	100	1,429	100	687	100	488	100
Worked in place of residence	252	28.3	601	42.0	261	38.0	177	36.3
Worked outside place of residence	638	71.7	828	58.0	426	62.0	311	63.7

MINORITY AND GENDER COMPOSITION

Analyzing a population’s racial and ethnic composition and diversity is a valuable assessment for a region and ensures that the needs of all groups are being met adequately. A diverse population provides for unique job and service opportunities but also can, depending on the specific needs of an ethnic group, require additional or unique service requirements. The U.S. Census reports that minority data is difficult to quantify and compare from census to census because of the ever changing classifications used to characterize a population and due to the ability of survey respondents to provide multiple minority classifications.

Based on the 2000 Census, Amherst had a minority population of approximately 31.9 % in 2000. When viewing Table 2.10, it can be seen that the highest minority populations were found in Brookneal and Appomattox, each reporting a minority percentage of 37.5 % and 32.8 %, respectively. The smallest minority population was found in Pamplin City, with a percentage of 10.5. Altavista reported a minority population of 26.7%. Currently, the region does not have an extremely high Latino or Hispanic population. However, the trend in the majority of the region is seeing an increase in this population and this is expected to be a general trend. While 2000 Census numbers do not indicate a need, in the future there may be needs for additional services such as “Second Language” services.

**Table 2.10
Central Virginia Towns: Racial Diversity - 2000**

	White	Percent	Black	Percent	Hispanic or Latino	Percent	Other	Percent	Total	Percent
Altavista	2,543	74.20%	841	24.60%	32	0.90%	38	1.20%	3,425	100%
AMHERST	1,552	68.90%	667	29.60%	23	1%	29	1.30%	2,251	100%
Appomattox	1,178	66.90%	566	32.10%	4	0.20%	10	0.50%	1,761	100%
Brookneal	803	63.80%	437	34.70%	20	1.60%	14	1.20%	1,259	100%
Pamplin City	181	91%	15	7.50%	3	1.50%	3	1.50%	199	100%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census of Population.

**Table 2.11
Town of Amherst Racial Distribution and Percent Change 1990-2000**

	1990		2000		Percent Change 1990-2000
	Population	Percent of Population	Population	Percent of Population	
White	1,448	75.65%	1,552	68.90%	-6.75%
Black	459	23.98%	667	29.60%	5.62%
Other	7	0.37%	29	1.30%	0.93%

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

The 2000 U.S. Census reports that of the total Town population, 1,032 or 45.8% of the population is male and 1,219 or 54.2% of female. The percentages for 1990 were 45.2% male and 54.8% female.

**Table 2.12
Town of Amherst – Gender Comparisons for 1990 — 2000**

Gender	1990	Percentage	2000	Percentage
Male	479 *	45.2%	1,032	45.8%
Female	581 *	54.8%	1,219	54.2%

Source: * 1990 U. S. Census (unadjusted); 2000 U.S Census

KEY FINDINGS

- The Town's population in 2000 was 2,251. Trends are difficult to evaluate due to the 1994 annexation of 2,086 acres into the Town which resulted in estimates and inconsistent data, but it is obvious that the Town has experienced healthy population growth since 1990.
- The Town is part of the Lynchburg Metropolitan Statistical Area and serves as a part of the residential base for the employment areas in and near the City of Lynchburg. 28% of the Town's workforce works inside the corporate limits while 44% works outside of Amherst County.
- The Town has an aging population with 24.3% of the Town's population was 65 years old and older and the median age was 43.4. However, these relatively high age statistics may be due to the location of Johnson Senior Center and Fairmont Crossing nursing home within the Town's corporate limits.
- The Town's minority population is 32%.

CHAPTER 3

HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

Statistics about household characteristics, housing stock, and other housing trends are useful as they provide a vital overview on the overall economic well-being of a community. There is a correlation between the value, makeup, and growth of the housing stock to the income of the residents within the community.

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight trends in housing and family household characteristics to support a plan that ensures there will be available safe, clean, and affordable housing to meet community needs.

HOUSING GROWTH

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Amherst Town's population consisted of 2,251 persons living in 941 housing units (total housing units for 2000 was 1,003 with 62 units noted as vacant). This represents an occupancy rate of 94%. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units increased from 405 to 941. It should be noted this extreme increase is to a large degree due to the annexation of 2,086 acres from Amherst County in 1994.

Table 3.1
Housing Units in Amherst 1990 – 2000

Housing Units	1990	2000
Total Housing Units	435	1003
Total Vacant Units	30	62
Total Occupied Units	405	941

Source: 1990, 2000 Census

The Town of Amherst had the second highest amount of housing units in 2000, with 1,003, when compared to the other Region 2000 towns. Altavista had the highest with 1,650, Appomattox with 767, Brookneal with 580, and Pamplin with 89. More telling is the fact that Amherst had the highest occupancy rate, 94%, of all the Region 2000 towns with Appomattox, Altavista, and Brookneal having occupancy rates of 93%, 91%, and 87% respectively. Summary provided in Table 3.1.

While the Town of Amherst has seen an overall increase in housing and has a good occupancy rate, there has been a decrease in owner occupation of housing since 1990. In 2000, only 66.30 % of housing was owner-occupied, while in 1990 the rate was 68.50 %. This general decrease of owner-occupied housing was mirrored in all of the area towns. However, Amherst showed the second highest percentage, at 6.49 %, behind Pamplin, for the greatest decrease in owner-occupied units of the five Region 2000 towns.

**Table 3.2
Owner Occupied and Renter Occupied Housing In Central Virginia Towns and Cities
Percent Change 1990-2000**

	2000		1990		Percent Change Owner-Occupied 1990-2000
	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	
Altavista	66.3%	33.7%	68.5%	31.5%	-2.2%
AMHERST	65.0%	35.0%	71.5%	28.5%	-6.5%
Appomattox	65.5%	34.5%	69.2%	30.8%	-3.7%
Brookneal	64.0%	36.0%	66.8%	33.2%	-2.8%
Pamplin City	60.3%	39.7%	72.7%	27.3%	-12.4%

Source: 1990, 2000 Census

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

TYPES OF HOUSING

A site-built, single-family, detached dwelling, used as a primary family residence describes and constitutes the majority of housing units within the Town. According to the 2000 Census, 706 or 70.4% of the housing units within the Town are single-family detached units. This represents a slight decrease in the total percentage of single-family homes when compared to the 75% of single-family dwellings noted in October 1994. When compared with other Towns in the region, Amherst has the lowest percentage of single-dwelling units; Pamplin, at 77.%, had the highest percentage and Altavista, Appomattox, and Brookneal had single-dwelling rates of , 75.7%, 75.1%, and 72.6/% respectively.

Mobile homes represent a relatively small percentage of housing stock within the Town at 2.8%. This percentage has decreased since 1994 when there were 43 mobile units representing 5% of the housing stock. The Town has the lowest percentage of mobile units of any of the Region 2000 towns. Pamplin had the highest percentage of mobile homes (16.8%), followed by Brookneal (10.4%), Appomattox (8.9%), and Altavista (5.1%). A number of localities have put into place efforts to limit the replacement of homes with mobile units. However, mobile units often represent the most viable affordable housing for some families. As such they continue to be a viable option and are allowed in approved existing mobile home parks.

Single-family housing is the predominant form of housing within the Town. However, multi-family housing is becoming an increasing housing option. As the older population increases the desire for multi-family units may increase. The slight change in the type of housing is confirmed when viewing the increase in multi-family units. While there is a small percentage of multi-family housing units in the Town, there has been a slight increase from the 184 or 20% of multi-family units in 1994 to the 233 multi-family units or 23 % in 2000. When compared to the other towns in the area, Amherst has the second lowest percentage of multi-family units, behind Pamplin at 22.5%, of multi-family units. Brookneal had the highest percentage at 27.1%, and Appomattox at 24.5%, and Altavista at 23.3%.

The Town does not play a direct role in providing housing for its citizens. The Town through the utilization of the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, other regulations and capital investments is able to guide the type, location, and density of housing. Details on specific housing issues are discussed further in this chapter.

SIZE AND AGE OF HOUSING

In Amherst the size of the housing unit, based on the number of rooms, tells us a great deal about the primary family makeup and housing quality within the area. 54.9% of the housing units in Town have five to seven rooms (U.S. Census shows the median at 5.6% rooms). This statistic seems to support the fact that the majority of the Town's housing are single-family detached dwellings.

**Table 3.3
Town of Amherst – Rooms per Housing Unit**

Rooms	Number	Percent	Rooms	Number	Percent
1 room	3	0.3	6 rooms	184	18.3
2 rooms	12	1.2	7 rooms	170	16.9
3 rooms	119	11.9	8 rooms	87	8.7
4 rooms	142	14.2	9 or more rooms	89	8.9
5 rooms	197	19.6	Median	5.7	N/A

Age of housing is also a very important part of the housing assessment for a community. Of the 1,003 total housing units in Amherst in 2000, 659 or 65.7% were built prior to 1980. Further, when looking at the housing stock within the Town, the majority, at 21.7%, was built between 1940 and 1959.

**Table 3.4
Town of Amherst – Year Housing Structures were Built**

Year Built	Number	Percent of Total Housing
1999 – to March 2000	8	0.8
1995 – 1998	55	5.5
1990 – 1994	119	11.9
1980 – 1989	162	16.2
1970 – 1979	148	14.8
1960 – 1969	153	15.3
1940 – 1959	218	21.7
1939 or earlier	140	14.0

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

HOUSING VALUE

Housing value tells us much about the living conditions within the Town. Housing values are reflective of the overall economic conditions. As incomes rise and purchasing power improves, there is often an inclination to move and build larger homes or to add additions to existing dwellings. The following summarizes changes in housing value between 1990 and 2000.

In the year 2000, the median value of owner occupied housing units in the Commonwealth of Virginia was \$125,400. This compares to a median value of \$91,000 in 1990 or a 37.8% increase in value over the decade. The Town of Amherst had a median housing value of \$101,400, an increase of 38.68% over its value of \$62,174 in 1990. Amherst's median housing value had the highest percentage increase of the selected towns of Central Virginia and the only town with an increase greater than that of the State in the same time period. Summary of median housing values provided in Table 3.2. It should be noted that with the County wide housing reassessment taken in 2007, that these figures may be out of date and should be carefully reviewed in the future.

**Table 3.5
Median Housing Values in Central Virginia Towns: Percent Change 1990-2000**

	2000	1990	Percent Change 1990-2000
Altavista	\$78,000	\$49,400	36.67%
AMHERST	\$101,400	\$62,174	38.68%
Appomattox	\$76,900	\$48,000	37.58%
Brookneal	\$53,900	\$40,500	24.86%
Pamplin City	\$55,500	\$37,800	31.89%

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

In addition to median housing value increases, median contract rent has also seen increases in the Town of Amherst. Between 1990 and 2000, median contract rent in the Town of Amherst increased by 48.6 %, from \$184 to \$358. The Town of Amherst had the highest increase in median contract rent of all the Region 2000 towns and cities. Appomattox had the second highest increase, with 31.18%.

Because rental units are concentrated in urban areas, the percentage of persons owning their own homes is significantly lower in the cities and towns of Region 2000 than in the surrounding rural areas. According to the 2000 Census, 68.1 % of housing units in the Commonwealth of Virginia were owner occupied. In 2000, 65 % of housing in Amherst was owner-occupied, compared to 71 % of the housing in 1990. Altavista had the highest rate of owner occupied housing with 66.3 %, and Appomattox had a rate only a half a percentage point higher than Amherst's with 65.5 %. Both Brookneal and Pamplin reported lower owner occupied housing rates, with 64 % and 60.3 % respectively.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

There has been very little change in the median size of households over the past decade. Table 3.6 shows that the median size for households is consistent throughout the region.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

A large majority of housing and family characteristics are shaped by household income. Ultimately the size, condition, quality and price of a home and other family spending decisions are dictated by the income available to a family.

According to the 2000 Census, when compared to the five other Central Virginia towns, Amherst has the highest median household income with \$33,000. Altavista has the second highest median annual income level of \$31,818 while Appomattox has the lowest level of only \$24,167; the other Towns fell within that range. Amherst also experienced the highest annual per capita income of \$18,457. Altavista followed closely with the second highest rate of \$17,997, and Brookneal, with \$14,164, had the lowest per capita income.

Table 3.6
Average Household Size of Occupied Housing in Region 2000 Towns and Amherst County

Average Household Size	Altavista	AMHERST	Appomattox	Brookneal	Amherst County
Total	2.23	2.20	2.31	2.37	2.51
Owner Occupied	2.30	2.27	2.24	2.25	2.58
Renter Occupied	2.10	2.07	2.41	2.53	2.24

Source: 2000 Census

While Amherst did have the highest median household income for Towns in the region, it was considerably lower than the Virginia Median Household Income of \$46,677 and 13.3% lower than the Median Household Income of \$37,393 for Amherst County.

Although the Town of Amherst had the highest median household income in 2000, it did not experience the highest growth rates of these statistics. Median household income grew by 26.14 % in the Town of Amherst between 1990 and 2000. Pamplin City and Altavista both saw higher growth rates, with 31.05 % and 28.5 % respectively. Appomattox and Brookneal, each saw lower median household income growth rates than did the Town of Amherst. A summation of household and per capita incomes for area Towns, Amherst County, and the State from the last two Census reporting periods is found in Table 3.4.

Despite having the highest annual per capita income in 2000, the Town of Amherst experienced the second highest annual per capita income growth since 1990. Per capita income in Amherst grew by 35.28% between 1990 and 2000. When viewing Table 3.4 it is important to note that the Town experienced a higher percent increase in per capita income than the state and Amherst County and is only second to Pamplin in this increase. This statistic highlights the increase in value of employment options in the area.

Table 3.7
Household and Per Capita Income in Central Virginia Towns and Percent Change 1990-2000

	2000		1990		Percent Change Median Household Income 1990-2000	Percent Change Per Capita Income 1990-2000
	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income		
Altavista	\$31,818	\$17,997	\$22,750	\$12,553	28.50%	30.25%
AMHERST	\$33,000	\$18,457	\$24,375	\$11,946	26.14%	35.28%
Appomattox	\$24,167	\$14,355	\$22,361	\$10,637	7.47%	25.90%
Brookneal	\$25,938	\$14,164	\$20,658	\$10,569	20.36%	25.38%
Pamplin City	\$28,000	\$15,246	\$19,306	\$9,061	31.05%	40.57%
Amherst County	\$37,393	\$16,952	\$27,771	\$11,185	25.73%	34.0%
Virginia	\$46,677	\$23,975	\$33,328	\$15,713	28.6%	34.46%

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

In the Town of Amherst, the largest proportion of households, 16.6 %, earns between \$50,000 and \$74,999 annually. The second largest proportion of households, only a slightly lower 16.4 %, earns between \$35,000 and \$49,000 annually. 15% of households earn less than \$10,000 and 11 % earn

between \$10,000 and \$14,999 annually. Also, 15% of households earn between \$15,000 and \$24,999 annually. Just under 3% of households earn more than \$200,000 annually. Amherst has a median household income of \$33,000. This means just as many households earn below \$33,000 as earn above it.

**Table 3.8
Town Of Amherst Household Annual Income Distribution - 2000**

Income Level	Number of Households	Percent of Total
Less than \$10,000	137	15%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	100	11%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	137	15%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	102	11.20%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	150	16.40%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	151	16.60%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	77	8.40%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	32	3.50%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	12	1.30%
\$200,000 or more	14	1.50%
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	912	100%
Median household income	\$33,000	(X)
Per capita income	\$18,457	(X)

Source: US Census Bureau

The Town of Amherst has median annual family income of \$44,181. As with the Median Household Income, the Town had the highest Median Annual Family Income of any of the other towns in the region. Additionally, the Town had a higher median annual income, 3% higher than the \$42,876 median family income experience by Amherst County residents. Table 3.5 provides a comparison of annual median incomes.

**Table 3.9
Median Annual Family Income**

AMHERST	Amherst County	Appomattox	Altavista	Brookneal	Pamplin
\$44,181	\$42,876	\$29,187	\$40,039	\$35,592	\$36,250

Source: 2000 Census

The largest proportion of the families of Amherst, 23.80 %, earn between \$35,000 and \$49,999 annually. The next largest proportion of families earns between \$25,000 and \$34,999. This is 21.4 percent of families in the Town of Amherst. Nearly 10 % of Amherst families earn less than \$10,000, and 7.4 % of families earn between \$10,000 and \$14,999 annually. Only 2.6 % of families earn between \$150,000 and \$199,999, and no Amherst family earns more than \$200,000 annually. Median annual family income for the Town of Amherst in 2000 was \$44,181.

**Table 3.10
Town Of Amherst Family Annual Income Distribution - 2000**

Income Level	Number of Families	Percent of Total
Less than \$10,000	40	9.80%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	53	7.40%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	40	8.70%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	47	21.40%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	116	23.80%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	129	11.80%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	64	5.20%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	28	2.20%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	12	2.60%
\$200,000 or more	14	(X)
TOTAL FAMILIES	543	100%
Median family income	\$44,181	(X)
Per capita income	\$18,457	(X)

Source: US Census Bureau

HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

For a number of years the structure of the American household has been experiencing significant changes. Female-headed households, non-family, and those with one person sixty-five years old or older have shown considerable increases. Along with this increase in household makeup has been a slight reduction in the number of married couples with children. In fact, for the first time in decades, the U.S. Census showed that the married couples without children households exceed the number of married couples with children. This can be attributed to a number of factors such as couples are having fewer children, waiting longer in life to have children, extended life spans and increased number of the baby boom generation who have children that have left the home.

For the purposes of comparing household types, the following definitions were utilized by the Census. A household is defined as one or more people living in a residence. A family is more than one person living together, either married or of the same bloodline. The head of a household is one of the people who owns or rents the residence and was indicated first on a Census questionnaire. It is possible that respondents with second marriages or divorce may have had some difficulty in defining their household makeup.

It will be important to consider the changes in family structure and possible support needs for the future.

**Table 3.11
Town of Amherst – Household Types 1990 to 2000**

Household Types	1990 – Number	%	2000 – Number	%
Total Household	405	100.00	941	100.0
Married Couple	222	54.8	391	41.5
With Children	91	22.5	138	14.7
Without Children	131	32.3	253	26.9
Female Householder, no spouse	40	9.9	131	13.9
With Children	19	4.7	85	9.0
Without Children	21	5.2	46	4.9
Male Householder, no spouse	16	3.9	31	3.3
With Children	7	1.7	22	2.3
Without Children	9	2.2	9	1.0
Non-Family Households	126	31.1	189	20.1
Living Alone	-	-	181	19.2
Two or more persons	-	-	8	0.8

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Within family structure changes, it is necessary to take a special look at the number and growth of female headed households. This family structure is growing in general and must be analyzed to fit public programs and policies accordingly. If a city or town sees an increase in female headed households it may want to create or expand programs which provide services to female heads of households, but it may also want to analyze reasons for the increase. For example, an increase in female-headed households may signify the need for increased child care opportunities.

In 1990, 11.88 % of the total households in the Town of Amherst were headed by females. That number increased by 2.72 % by 2000, to 14.60 %. This means that nearly 15 % of households in Amherst are headed by females, and that this percentage is climbing. A summary of the percent change in female headed households within Region 2000 towns is provided in Table 3.6.

To put this percentage change into perspective, the Town of Amherst had the second lowest percent of female headed households of the six Central Virginia towns and cities which were studied; however, Amherst had the third lowest rate in 1990. In addition to having the second lowest percentage, the Town of Amherst also experienced the second lowest increase in female headed households since 1990, with an increase of 2.72 %. Only Altavista had a lower increase, with a slightly lower percent change of 2.46 %. This shows that although the Town of Amherst has seen increases in its overall percentage of female headed households, it has experienced lower increases in its number of female headed households in comparison to most other Central Virginia cities.

Table 3.12
Percent Change Of Female Headed Households in Central Virginia Cities And Towns 1990-2000

	2000		1990		Percent Change 1990-2000
	Female Headed Households	Percent of Total Households	Female Headed Households	Percent of Total Households	
Altavista	254	16.90%	219	14.44%	2.46%
AMHERST	137	14.60%	60	11.88%	2.72%
Appomattox	143	20%	117	17.21%	2.79%
Brookneal	82	16.10%	66	11.96%	4.14%
Pamplin City	11	14.10%	7	9.09%	5.01%

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

HOUSING ISSUES

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

When the cost and affordability of owning a home in Amherst is compared to other areas in the state and region, housing within the Town is relatively affordable for most residents. However, the ability of owning a single-family home is still beyond the financial capabilities of a segment of the population.

Table 3.13
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units

Year	AMHERST	Amherst County	Virginia
2000	\$101,400	\$88,800	\$125,400
1990	\$63,300	\$56,800	\$90,400

The median value of owner-occupied housing rose from \$63,300 in 1990 to \$101,400 in 2000 representing a 36.57% increase. This increase in value speaks the quality of the homes in the Town and is also probably due to the new development that has taken place in the Town over the last five years. The value of Amherst homes as indicated from the 2000 Census shows the housing stock value is increasing but it also highlights that the cost of home ownership in the Town is increasing and the challenge to ensure there remains affordable housing options for all residents.

The trend for steady increases in housing prices over the last decade was generally seen across the country. Virginia, according to the U.S. housing price index, saw a 10.7% increase in housing costs between the years of 1980 and 2004. This increase represented the largest gain in twenty-five years.

A key element to consider when examining housing affordability is to examine the amount of income needed, on average, to pay for housing costs. This includes costs for owning a home and in renting a home.

In Amherst for 1990, the median dollar mortgage amount paid was \$486, as compared to \$823 in the year 2000. This is a 69.34% increase. This mortgage increase can be expected as the value of the housing stock in the Town has increased dramatically over the ten-year reporting period.

Renter occupied housing also showed an increase over the same time period. In 1990, median rent was \$184. This figure rose to \$358 by 2000 representing a 48.6% increase. As noted in Table 3.7 below, while Amherst does not have the highest median contract rent rate, the Town did show the largest percentage increase between 1990 and 2000. Median contract rent in the Commonwealth of Virginia was

\$650 in 2000, which is also much higher than rents in other Central Virginia towns. Summary of local rent rates is provided in Table 3.7.

With the current trend, there will be an increased need to insure that affordable housing is always available to meet the myriad of economic levels. Small, moderate and lower income homes should not be neglected or torn down in favor of newer, larger homes or developments. There should also be efforts to ensure that maintenance of the older homes is continued so that these, often lower-valued properties, are viable housing stock for the lower and moderate and first-time home buyers. Mobile home placement should continue to be allowed in approved and established mobile home parks. Lastly, affordable rental units should continue to be available for those whom homeownership is not a viable option.

**Table 3.14
Median Contract Rent in Central Virginia Towns
Percent Change 1990-2000**

	2000	1990	Percent Change 1990-2000
Altavista	\$420	\$294	30.00%
AMHERST	\$358	\$184	48.60%
Appomattox	\$449	\$309	31.18%
Brookneal	\$390	\$284	27.18%
Pamplin City	\$379	\$300	20.84%

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

POVERTY RATE

Another important measure of a community's economic and social well-being is its poverty rate. Poverty threshold is determined by crossing income with family size, thus the poverty level for a family of four would be different than the level for a family of seven. Of the five Central Virginia towns, Brookneal had the highest rate of poverty at 19.80%, followed by Pamplin City with 19%, and Appomattox with 18.40%. Amherst experienced the second lowest poverty rate of the five Towns, with 18%. Altavista, with 13.5% of its population below the poverty line, experienced the lowest rate of the towns studied. However, it should be noted that all cities experienced poverty rates higher than both the statewide average of 9.9% and the nationwide average of 12.5%. Poverty statistics are also given on the household level.

The Town of Amherst has seen an increase in poverty in the decade between 1990 and 2000. In 2000, 13.30% of the families in the Town of Amherst were below the poverty level. In 1990, only 7.90 % of Amherst town families were below the poverty level; this shows an increase of 5.40%. Also in 2000, 18% of individuals living in the Town of Amherst were below the poverty level, an increase of 8.20% from the 1990 rate of 10.20%.

This trend of increasing poverty rates seems consistent among most Central Virginia towns and cities, as only Pamplin City saw reductions in individual and family poverty rates. The Town of Amherst experienced the third highest increase in percent of families below the poverty level between 1990 and 2000 of the six cities and towns. However, with a percent change of 8.20%, the Town of Amherst saw the largest increase in individuals below the poverty level of all the Central Virginia towns and cities which were studied; the next closest percent increase was Appomattox which saw a raise in the amount of individuals below the poverty level by 3.90%.

Table 3.15
Poverty Rates in Central Virginia Towns - Percent Change 1990-2000

Locality	2000		1990		Percent Change Families 1990-2000	Percent Change Individuals 1990-2000
	Percent Families Below Poverty Level	Percent Individuals Below Poverty Level	Percent Families Below Poverty Level	Percent Individuals Below Poverty Level		
Altavista	13.60%	13.50%	7.00%	10.20%	6.60%	3.30%
AMHERST	13.30%	18%	7.90%	9.80%	5.40%	8.20%
Appomattox	20.90%	18.40%	12.00%	14.50%	8.90%	3.90%
Brookneal	15.20%	19.80%	14.60%	19.10%	0.60%	0.70%
Pamplin City	16.70%	19%	21.70%	21.20%	-5.00%	-2.20%

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

Table 3.16
Households on Public Assistance in Region 2000 Towns - 1990 & 2000

	2000		1990		Percent Change 1990-2000
	Households with Public Assistance Income	Percent of Total Households	Households with Public Assistance Income	Percent of Total Households	
Altavista	55	3.70%	118	7.78%	-4.08%
AMHERST	58	6.40%	26	6.44%	-0.04%
Appomattox	41	5.90%	56	8.24%	-2.34%
Brookneal	31	5.90%	64	11.59%	-5.69%
Pamplin City	4	5.40%	6	7.79%	-2.39%

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Analyzing households which receive public assistance is important. This rate indicates which proportion of the population is not able to adequately and independently ensure housing is available. In 2000, 6.40% of Amherst Town households received public assistance, the highest percentage of the five Central Virginia towns which were compared. As seen in Table 3.9, the Town of Amherst saw a slight decrease -0.04% of households receiving public assistance between 1990 and 2000. Although all of the Central Virginia towns saw decreases in the percent of households with public assistance income, the Town of Amherst saw the smallest decrease by far. It will be important to see that there is housing that will be affordable to meet the Housing needs of the Town population.

KEY FINDINGS

- In 2000, 2,251 persons were living in 941 housing units in the Town. There were 1,003 total housing units with 62 units noted as vacant for an occupancy rate of 94%. In 2000, only 66.30 % of housing was owner-occupied.
- In 2000, 706 or 70.4% of the housing units within the Town were single-family detached units. Mobile homes represent a relatively small percentage of housing stock within the Town at 2.8%.
- The town's average household size is 2.20 residents per dwelling unit.
- While the Town of Amherst has the highest median household income of any town in the region (\$33,000), this is lower than the same statistic for Virginia (\$46,677) and Amherst County (\$37,393). However, the Town's 18% of individuals below the poverty level appears to be increasing.

CHAPTER 4

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL AMENITIES

INTRODUCTION

Preserving the legacy of the past for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations is important to the Town of Amherst. To that end, the Town supports efforts to restore, maintain and preserve historically, architecturally, archeologically and culturally important sites and buildings within the Town. The Town also supports festivals, fairs and other activities which preserve the practices of the past and celebrate the diversity and unique history that served in paving the quality of life and cultural structure of current Amherst. Lastly, the Town recognizes that it is the unique architectural and historical resources that serve as the foundation to the economic improvement strategy for the Town.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL INVENTORY

The Town of Amherst, in conjunction with the Amherst County Historical Museum, has identified several structures that have historical significance within the Town. Each of these buildings is in varied degree of preservation. The Town, in the development of a downtown economic restructuring strategy, supports the preservation and potential reuse of these vital resources in accordance with approved methodologies.

The following structures are located within the Central Business District:

- Ascension Episcopal Church (1848) – 253 South Main Street. This is the last church built in the Lexington Parish, as active participant in the establishment of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America and its first Diocese of Virginia.
- Amherst Court House (1870) – 113 Taylor Street. This building is built on the site of the original 1808 court house. Additions to the existing building were made in 1935, 1965, and 2003.
- Hill Hardware (c. 1910) – 171 South Main Street.
- Masonic Lodge (1914) – 180 South Main Street
- Sandidge Residence (1885) – 327 South Main Street. This L-plan Italianate style house has been in the Sandidge family since 1905.
- Tinsley-Sandidge House (1760's) – 268 South Main Street. This structure retains elements from home that was built in 1760's. The home in 1938 was relocated from its original location and remodeled.
- Law Office of Robert Tinsley (1805) – 265 South Main Street. This building has undergone several building stages. It is currently a private residence.
- Amherst Traffic Circle – Intersection of U.S. Route 60 and North and South Main Streets. At one time, this was one of only two remaining traffic circles in the Virginia state highway maintenance system.
- Clinton Lodge AF & AM – (1941) – 180 South Main Street. This building's history includes housing the Town's post office and police department as well as the upstairs lodge meeting hall.

Other structures within the Town:

- Amherst Depot (1913) – 328 Richmond Highway. This building was built by Southern Railway south of its current location along a railway line constructed prior to the Civil War and is to be utilized as a key tourism promotion asset.
- Dulwich Manor (1895A) – 550 Richmond Highway. Currently utilized as a bed and breakfast, this double-porched dwelling has served as a primary residence and a school within its history.
- Edgehill (1840) – 130 Sunset Drive. This home provides a unique structure with its stone foundation, hip-slate roof, and rear facing chimneys.
- Edgewood (c1790) – 138 Garland Ave – This combination Federal and Greek Revival home was once a Masonic school called the Higginbotham Academy. The home has been restored and is being used as a residence.

- Amherst Milling Company (c1813) – 140 Union Hill Road. This mill is still in operation and includes a mixture of modern machinery and old grinding stones.

There are a number of resources and events that ensure the historical fabric of the community is preserved and celebrated. These include:

- Amherst County Historical Museum – 154 South Main Street. The museum, housed in a circa 1905 Georgian Revival home, offers residence and visitors a look into the past of Amherst County and Town. Special attractions at the museum include Native American and grist mill exhibits as well as information on a log school located on the same site in the 1890's.
- Amherst County Library – 382 South Main Street. The library provides a full line of modern library services and resources which includes considerable information on local history and culture.

The Town of Amherst, per the recently developed Downtown Economic Restructure Plan & Physical Improvement Strategy, is committed to establishing itself as a commercial, cultural, and resource center for Amherst County and Region 2000. As outlined in the Downtown Restructuring Plan, the ability of the Town to capitalize on the anchors of its historical architecture and aesthetic geographic beauty is vital to this vision's success. The Plan recommends that the Town endeavor to implement several efforts including:

- Complete a detailed inventory of buildings for National Register Designation;
- Investigate Virginia Landmarks and National Register Nomination for various resources;
- Create a central gathering space that highlights the architectural resources of the Court House,
- Create a cohesive façade color and style scheme to be utilized on buildings along the CDB corridors;
- Incorporate signage, lighting, and banners that combine to emphasize the historic, cultural, and geographic beauty of the Town.

CHAPTER 5

ECONOMY

INTRODUCTION

The analysis of a community's economic well being is essential to assessing the overall quality of life in the community. Both the strengths and weaknesses within the economy should be noted, resulting in an economic development plan which confronts weak areas while enhancing strong ones.

As shown by the information contained in this chapter, the economy of the Town of Amherst is in good shape. Yet, it must be noted that the majority of the information contained herein relates to the Town of Amherst as it was at the time of the 1990 Census. Unfortunately, economic data is unavailable for the area annexed January 1, 1994.

LABOR FORCE

An area's labor force is a very important factor in sustaining and expanding economic and industrial development.

In 1990 the population of Amherst Town was 1,914 (adjusted for annexation). The total civilian labor force was 449 (not adjusted for annexation). According to the 2000 Census, of the 1,873 residents over 16, there were 967 considered to be within the civilian labor force. Of the 967 in the civilian labor force, 449 were actively seeking employment. Population growth was 17.61% from 1990 to 2000 and the growth of the civilian labor force was 115% for the same period (The civilian labor force from the 1990 Census did not include the annexation population). A summary of the labor force data from 1990 to 2000 is provided in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1
Town of Amherst Labor Force Status 1990 – 2000

Population Description	1990	2000
Persons 16 years and older	878	1,873
In Labor Force	449	967
Civilian Labor Force	449	967
Employed	433	907
Unemployed	16	60
Armed Forces	2	0
Not in Labor Force	427	906

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

When looking at the overall makeup of the Amherst Town Labor Force it is important to view the gender composition of those in the labor force. This allows the ability to see what part of the population is active in the work market and ensure options for employment are available to all populations. In 1990 there were 392 males living in the Town that were 16 years or older. Of these 227 were counted as part of the labor force. This compared to 839 males over 16 in 2000, of which 524 were in the labor force.

In 1990, there were 484 females living in the Town 16 years or older and this compares to 1,034 in 2000. Females in the labor force in 1990 numbered 224 compared to 443 in 2000. The chart below illustrates

specific gender makeup of the labor force from 1990 and 2000.

**Table 5.2
Gender Composition of Town of Amherst Labor Force 1990 – 2000**

Labor Force Status	1990 – Male	1990 – Female	2000 – Male	2000 - Female
Persons 16 years and older	392	484	839	1,034
In Labor Force	227	224	524	443
Civilian Labor Force	225	224	524	443
Employed	219	214	494	413
Unemployed	6	10	30	30
Not in Labor Force	159	268	315	591

Source: 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census

After the diversity of the work force is examined, it is important to see if those in the work force are actually being employed. The Town of Amherst has enjoyed a relatively low unemployment rate compared to the national average. The Virginia Employment Commission provides unemployment data for an area. However, detailed data is not provided at a Town level. For the purposes of unemployment the information provided in Table 5.3 is based on Amherst County information. It should be noted for the purposes of economic development and workforce interest, county and regional information is a good measure for the area as a whole.

**Table 5.3
Unemployment Rates in the Region 2000 area**

Locality	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Amherst County	2.1%	3.6%	5.5%	5.0%	4.5%	4.0%	3.1%
Appomattox County	2.5%	4.3%	5.6%	5.5%	4.4%	4.5%	3.6%
Bedford County	1.9%	3.2%	4.5%	3.9%	3.5%	3.1%	2.9%
Campbell County	2.3%	4.2%	5.6%	4.9%	4.2%	3.8%	3.2%
Lynchburg	2.4%	4.1%	5.8%	5.5%	5.0%	4.4%	3.6%
Virginia	2.3%	3.2%	4.2%	4.1%	3.7%	3.5%	3.0%
United States	4.0%	4.7%	5.8%	6.0%	5.5%	5.1%	4.6%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

With the exception of Bedford County, the unemployment rate has been fairly consistent within the Region 2000 localities and has generally been slightly above the yearly unemployment rate for the state. Again, in general the area enjoys relatively low unemployment.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

As noted earlier, the employment picture of a locality depends to a large degree on the economic profile of surrounding areas. This can be seen by the number of persons within the labor force that are employed from within an area and by looking at those who commute to surrounding areas. According to the 2000 Census of the 907 employed workers that resided in the Town, 28.3% worked in the Town, 27.4% were employed in the County of Amherst, and the largest percentage, 41.9% worked outside of Amherst County. Unfortunately, detailed information from the 2000 Census data on employment migration is not available for towns. Based on the average time in commuting from the 2000 Census it can be assumed that Lynchburg City is a primary employment destination. Thus, Amherst is in some respects a bedroom community of the City of Lynchburg. The chart below provides a summary of mean commuting time for Region 2000 workers.

Table 5.4
Mean Travel Time to Work (in minutes) for Workers Living in Region 2000 Localities

Town Altavista	Town Appomattox	Town Brookneal	TOWN AMHERST	Appomattox County	Amherst County	Bedford County	Campbell County	Lynchburg City
21.7	27.8	24.4	22.1	29.0	23.6	27.8	23.5	16.8

Source: 2000 Census

It can be seen that the only other town in the region with a lower mean travel time to work is Altavista at 21.7 miles. The mean travel time for Town residents corresponds to the travel time to the City of Lynchburg. The City of Lynchburg, with the highest concentration of employment opportunities, not surprisingly has the shortest mean travel time. It is worth noting that Amherst Town workers had the third shortest mean travel time. This reflects the employment opportunities within a reasonable drive from the Town.

EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY

OCCUPATIONAL SECTOR

The U.S. Census collects occupational data which is represented in the categories noted in Table 5.5. The table contains data on the 1990 and 2000 occupations of employed Town residents who are 16 years of age and older.

What is interesting is the increase in the percent of the labor force working in the management, professional field with an increase of 32% as compared to 24.4% in 1990 and representing the largest group. What was the highest working sector in 1990, the sales and office occupation, in 2000 represents the second highest percentage at 25%. The service sector, as in 1990, represents a third or 16.5% of the working population. What is striking is that while farming, fishing, and forestry only represented 2.31% in 1990, according to the 2000 Census, no persons were working in this field. This general decline in this field is being seen across the nation.

**Table 5.5
Occupations of Amherst Town Work Force – 1990 & 2000**

Occupation	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management, professional related occupation	106	24.48%	293	32%
Service Occupation	99	22.86%	150	16.5%
Sales & Office Occupation	112	25.87%	227	25%
Farming, fishing, & forestry occupation	10	2.31%	0	0%
Construction, extraction, & maintenance	69	15.94%	77	8.5%
Production, Transportation & Material Moving	37	8.55%	0.6	-

Source: 1990 and 2000 U. S. Census

Table 5.6 provides a more detailed summary of the occupation breakdown by gender for Amherst Town employed residents. By looking at the occupational sectors by gender, it is evident that there are some clear trends in the occupational employment. Male workers in the Town account for, according to the 2000 Census data, 100% of the construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations. Males also account for 73.8% of the production, transportation, and moving operations. Women, on the other hand, make up 70.34% of education, training, and library occupations, 54.98% of professional and related occupations, and 66.52% of sales and service occupations. A glance at the data reveals that there are opportunities for both genders across the occupational spectrum.

Table 5.6
Gender By Occupation For The Employed Civilian Population 16 Years And Over in 2000

Occupations	Male	Female
	494	413
Management, professional, and related occupations:	147	146
Management, business, and financial operations occupations:	52	30
Management occupations, except farmers and farm managers	39	17
Farmers and farm managers	0	0
Business and financial operations occupations:	13	13
Business operations specialists	5	8
Financial specialists	8	5
Professional and related occupations:	95	116
Computer and mathematical occupations	15	0
Architecture and engineering occupations:	14	0
Architects, surveyors, cartographers, and engineers	14	0
Drafters, engineering, and mapping technicians	0	0
Life, physical, and social science occupations	0	0
Community and social services occupations	4	14
Legal occupations	9	0
Education, training, and library occupations	35	83
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations	10	7
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations:	8	12
Health diagnosing and treating practitioners and technical occupations	3	8
Health technologists and technicians	5	4
Service occupations:	76	74
Healthcare support occupations	5	26
Protective service occupations:	26	0
Fire fighting, prevention, and law enforcement workers, including supervisors	26	0
Other protective service workers, including supervisors	0	0
Food preparation and serving related occupations	5	17
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	40	15
Personal care and service occupations	0	16
Sales and office occupations:	76	151
Sales and related occupations	30	38
Office and administrative support occupations	46	113
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0	0
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations:	77	0
Construction and extraction occupations:	56	0
Supervisors, construction and extraction workers	5	0
Construction trades workers	51	0
Extraction workers	0	0
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	21	0
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations:	118	42
Production occupations	79	26
Transportation and material moving occupations:	39	16
Supervisors, transportation and material moving workers	0	0
Aircraft and traffic control occupations	0	0
Motor vehicle operators	12	0
Rail, water and other transportation occupations	0	0
Material moving workers	27	16

Source: 2000 U. S. Census

INDUSTRY SECTOR

It is also important to look at employment by industry in the Town and surrounding areas when examining the overall strength and diversity of jobs available for Amherst residents. Occupation indicates the trade of the labor force; by looking at the industry data we see where these workers were actually working. Table 5.7 provides a summary of trends for Amherst Town workers for 1990 and 2000.

There is a clear decline in the number of workers working in the agriculture, forestry, fishing field. There was also a surprising slight decline in persons working in the professional, scientific, and management industry. It is anticipated and desired that this employment area will increase in the region with the advancement of more technology based and health oriented industry in the region. There was also a substantial increase in those working within the manufacturing area. It is assumed that this is in part to the success of the Zane Snead, Brockman Park, and Lynchburg area industrial base. This is also a fairly unique statistic nationally as the manufacturing base is declining in many other areas. Lastly, the largest industry sector increase between 1990 and 2000 was within the education, health, and social services area. Amherst schools are one of the areas largest employers and the location of County services within the Town support the impact this industry has on the local employment base. The substantial increase in the public administration sector can also be contributed to the location of county and town governmental services within the Town.

**Table 5.7
Amherst Town Industrial Classifications 1990 & 2000**

Industry	1990	% of Total Employed (433)	2000	% of Total Employed (907)	Difference
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	14	3.2%	4	0.4%	- 10
Construction	15	3.5%	52	5.7%	+37
Manufacturing	73	16.9%	190	20.9%	+117
Wholesale trade	7	1.6%	16	1.8%	+9
Retail trade	65	15.0%	96	10.6%	+31
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	18	4.2%	66	7.3%	+48
Information	N/A	-	20	2.2%	+20
Finance insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	14	3.2%	37	4.1%	+23
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	42	9.7%	40	4.4%	-2
Education, health, and social services	125	28.9%	258	28.4%	+133
Art, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service	7	1.6%	32	3.5%	+25
Other services (except public administration)	32	7.4%	34	3.7%	+2
Public Administration	21	4.8%	62	6.8%	+41

Source: 1990 and 2000 U. S. Census

By examining the occupational sector of our labor force, it is easy to see a clear picture of the workforce. More females are working in the service sector, while the labor intense sector is dominated by male workers. As seen when viewing the occupational sectors, the industry data support the fact that females

are also working more within the retail trade area. Professional business, service, public administration, and finance and real estate provide employment fairly evenly across genders (see Table 5.8).

**Table 5.8
Industrial Classifications by Gender in Amherst Town - 2000**

Industry	Both Genders	Male	Female
Total Labor Force Available	907	494	413
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	4	4	0
Construction	52	45	7
Manufacturing	190	151	39
Wholesale trade	16	13	3
Retail trade	96	36	60
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	66	52	14
Information	20	5	15
Finance insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	37	22	15
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	40	21	19
Education, health, and social services	258	78	180
Art, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service	32	17	15
Other services (except public administration)	34	16	18
Public Administration	62	34	28

As noted earlier, the employment picture of the entire region is important in viewing the economic strength of a single locality. Just as the environmental picture goes beyond locality boundaries, so does the employment viability for area residents. Table 5.9 provides the percentage of workers within the industrial classifications for workers of other Region 2000 towns and of Amherst County.

Amherst has the highest percentage of workers within the education, health, and social services sector, at 28.4%, than the other towns and Amherst County. In addition, the Town and Appomattox had the highest percentage of workers in the Public Administration, both with 6.8%. The Town's role as the County seat and as a key service center for the county plays a large part in this statistic. Further, the Town shows the highest percentage of the four towns and Amherst County for workers within the professional, scientific, management, administrative sector. Being in the largest percentages for these industry classifications contributes to the overall financial stability of the Town and the favorable economic outlook.

The Town also has a healthy percentage of its workers within the manufacturing sector. This working sector provides a good portion of the well-paying jobs and is a factor of the success of the L. Barnes Brockman, Sr. Business and Industrial Park within the Town and the Zane Snead Industrial Park just outside of the Town's limits.

**Table 5.9
Industrial Classification Employment for Some Region 2000 Localities**

Industry	AMHERST		Appomattox		Altavista		Brookneal		Amherst County	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Employed Civilian Population 16 years and over	907	100%	707	100%	1,454	100%	492	100%	14,634	100%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	4	0.4%	8	6.1%	10	0.7%	10	2.0%	256	1.7%
Construction	52	5.7%	69	9.8%	69	4.7%	32	6.5%	1,165	8.0%
Manufacturing	190	20.9%	176	24.9%	523	36.0%	182	37.0%	3,197	21.8%
Wholesale trade	16	1.8%	25	3.5%	35	2.4%	26	5.3%	592	4.0%
Retail trade	96	10.6%	78	11.0%	171	11.8%	51	10.4%	1,701	11.6%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	66	7.3%	38	5.4%	76	5.2%	14	2.8%	802	5.5%
Information	20	2.2%	3	0.4%	18	1.2%	10	2.0%	227	1.6%
Finance insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	37	4.1%	28	4.0%	43	3.0%	15	3.0%	791	5.4%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	40	4.4%	28	4.0%	61	4.2%	18	3.7%	596	4.1%
Education, health, and social services	258	28.4%	117	16.5%	253	17.4%	68	13.8%	3,451	23.6%
Art, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service	32	3.5%	45	6.4%	85	5.8%	14	2.8%	694	4.7%
Other services (except public administration)	34	3.7%	44	6.2%	65	4.5%	26	5.3%	631	4.3%
Public Administration	62	6.8%	48	6.8%	45	3.1%	26	5.3%	531	3.6%

Source: 2000 U. S. Census

The Town also has a healthy percentage of its workers within the manufacturing sector. This working sector provides a good portion of the well-paying jobs and is a factor of the success of the L Barnes Brockman, Sr. Business and Industrial Park within the Town and the Zane Snead Industrial Park just outside of the Town's limits in Amherst.

As the Town, county, and region become more technically advanced and there is a continued advance in the aging population there will continue to be changes in the make-up of the occupational and industrial sectors and the availability opportunities of area workers.

In order to get a more accurate and visual feel for the industrial classification, listed below are some of the major employers in the Town and Amherst County, and the number of people they employ. Amherst's economy is stable due to the presence of a variety of industries and employers within the Town and County that include:

- Glad Manufacturing (plastics) 380 employees
- Buffalo Air Handling (air handling) 246 employees
- Grief Brothers Inc. (paper linerboards) 316 employees
- Sweet Briar College (higher education) 394 employees

There is also a good industry distribution available within the region that has an overall positive impact on

the Amherst Town employment base for Amherst workers. With the recent completion of the U. S. Route 29 Bypass, the value of these employers to the region is expanded due to the increased ease and reduced travel time to these key regional employers.

**Table 5.10
Region 2000 Employers**

Name	Product	Approximate Employment
BWXT (McDermott Intl.)	Nuclear Fuel	2,200
AREVA	Nuclear Maintenance & Repairs	1,600
Thomasville Furniture	Furniture	625
R.R. Donnelley Printing Company	Publishing, Printing	550
Ross Products (Abbott Laboratories)	Adult/Infant Nutritional	800
BGF Industries	Fiberglass Fabrics	700
Southern Air	Heating/Cooling Systems	750
M/A-COM	Communications Equipment	500
C. B. Fleet Co., Inc.	Pharmaceuticals	450
Georgia-Pacific Corp.	Paperboard	425
Glad Manufacturing Co., a division of Clorox (<i>formerly First Brands</i>)	"Glad" Brand Plastic Bags	380
Griffin Pipe Co.	Gray & Ductile Iron Pipe	340
Progress Printing	Publishing, Printing	350
Intermet-Archer Creek Foundry	Ductile Iron – Automobile parts	328
Timken, Inc.	Bearings Manufacturing	320
Greif, Inc., Riverville Mill (formerly Virginia Fibre Corp.)	Paperboard	316
Schrader-Bridgeport	Tire Valves	300
Frito-Lay Inc.	Snack Foods	300
Buffalo Air Handling	Air Handling Systems	256
Barr Laboratories	Generic Pharmaceuticals	425
Tessy Plastics	Injection Molding	140
Belvac Production Machinery, Inc.	Canmaking Equipment	150
Andrew Corporation	Telecommunications Equipment	150

Table 5.10, Continued

Name	Product	Approximate Employment
Centra Health, Inc. (Two Hospitals)	Health Care	3,800
Central Virginia Training Center	Health Care	1,600
Lynchburg City Schools	Education	1,554
Genworth Financial	Insurance	1,607
Thomas Road Baptist Church/Liberty	Church, Private University & School	1,000
J. Crew Outfitters	Mail Order/Distribution	1,000
Lynchburg College	Private College	530
Sweet Briar College	Private College	394
Randolph College	Private College	350
Nationwide Insurance	Insurance	340
Central Virginia Community College	Public College	314
Wachovia	Financial Services	250
Verizon	Utility	163
Belk Department Store	Retail	125
Bausch & Lomb	Contact Lens Distribution	110

Source: Region 2000 Economic Development Council

WAGES

Because incomes have changed considerably in the last decade, the Census does not adequately reflect income trends. It does however provide a snapshot of income and provides a general comparison and picture into the economic realities of an area.

The Virginia Employment Commission provides more detailed economic and labor market data based on trends and extrapolated data. However, the VEC does not provide detailed income values for areas smaller than counties. However, as the economic profile of the region is similar, these county values provide valuable information. Table 5.11 provides average weekly wage statistics for the last Quarter of 2006 for the region and state.

**Table 5.11
Average Weekly Wage Statistics**

Area	Average Weekly Wage	Equivalent per hourly wage	Salary per year assuming 40-hour work week
Amherst County	\$565	\$14.13	\$29,380
Appomattox County	\$519	\$12.98	\$26,988
Bedford County	\$612	\$15.30	\$31,834
Campbell County	\$616	\$15.40	\$32,032
Lynchburg City	\$734	\$18.35	\$38,168
Virginia	\$822	\$20.55	\$42,744

Source: 2000 U. S. Census

The VEC data shows that Amherst County residents have, on average, the second to the lowest wages of the five larger regions in the area. More telling is the fact that the average wage for the entire area is considerably lower than that of the state. While this does show that wages are generally less in the region, the value of these wages when viewed with the other economic indicators, such as housing costs, must be considered. As noted in Chapter 3, housing cost within the Town and County are reasonable when compared to the state and nation. It is however, important to consider the wage information over time, even in an area where cost of living is lower, to ensure that wage rates are not falling too far behind the regional and state wages.

QUALITY OF LIFE AND TOURISM

The positive economic benefits of a successful town center in maintaining and attracting families and in attracting outside visitors through tourism is being realized by communities across Virginia and the Country. The Town of Amherst as the county seat and location of the majority of County services, as the location of the largest concentration of historic buildings in the County, with its physical location among rolling hills and mountains, and as host of numerous yearly entertainment events, is positioned to expand its ability to capitalize on these resources.

Downtown Economic Restructuring Plan & Physical Improvement Strategy

The Downtown Economic Restructuring Plan & Physical Improvement Strategy, a comprehensive downtown revitalization plan developed in 2007, provides long term strategy to capitalize on the current resources within the Town and develop additional resources that together will provide vital positive economic benefit to the Town through increased investment in local businesses, increased visibility of current resources, and increased tourism through marketing of the community. The Plan provides long term strategies that revolve around four (4) primary action strategies:

- Expand the reach of it's value and resources within Amherst – create a comprehensive marketing campaign for the community;
- Develop a physical revitalization plan of the central business district that includes a detailed inventory of historic resources, creation of a central community gathering place, and create a more flowing transportation network for both pedestrians and vehicular traffic;
- Expand public and private investment to include new restaurants and other businesses to locate within the central business district;
- Create an organizational structure that will guide the long term revitalization of the

community center, marketing, and financial investment.

The implementation of the Downtown Economic Restructuring Plan & Physical Improvement Strategy, the Town of Amherst will provide valuable jobs, increase property values, and other positive economic impacts to the community.

KEY FINDINGS

- The Town's economy is in pretty good shape from the perspective of employment rate and stability.
- Per the Virginia Employment Commission, the Town had a 3.1% unemployment rate in 2006.
- Of the Town's 907 employed workers in 2000, 28.3% worked in Town and 41.9% worked outside of Amherst County –most probably to the south in and near the City of Lynchburg.
- Average wage rates are low in Amherst County as compared to state and federal levels, but this is somewhat offset by the comparatively low cost of housing.

Aging population and technological advances will contribute to the future makeup of the Town's occupational and industrial sectors as well as opportunities for Town residents and business operators.

CHAPTER 6

NATURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Natural resources play a vital role in the life and development of a given area. The Town of Amherst recognizes that clean air and water are important to the future of the Town. This portion of the comprehensive plan provides an inventory and assessment of the natural resources within the Town, County, and Region. It considers the role of these resources on the community and in shaping future development within the Town that will ensure that these valuable resources are maintained and protected.

LAND RESOURCES

Of primary concern here is information on physiography, geology and soils. Such knowledge is especially useful in determining opportunities and constraints on developmental activities, locating economic resources, and identifying key resources and scenic areas to be protected.

The Town of Amherst lies within the Piedmont physiographic province -- a broad, elevated belt situated between the Coastal Plain and Blue Ridge provinces, and extending from Alabama to New Jersey. The Piedmont is essentially a plateau with mature stream development, giving rise to rolling terrain. Monadnocks occasionally dot the landscape, and the land in and around the Town is typical of the Piedmont.

The geology of the Town is such that igneous and metamorphic rock underlie essentially the entire area. Metamorphic rock form the bedrock for the Town. For the most part, the rock in the Town does not directly place constraints on activities. Bedrock is usually too deep to affect construction and where it is near the surface, bedrock normally offers a good foundation. Hazards from earthquakes or large scale land-sliding are not apparent.

The soils in the area are almost all residual--having formed from the rock material below them. Alluvial soils, or those deposited by water such as the soil found in flood plains, account for the remainder. Several soil associations have been discovered in the Town. A soil association is designated by the names of two or more soil types that constitute significant portions of the association. The association itself relates soils of similar characteristics.

Soil associations are very large units and, therefore, characteristics can vary widely within an association. Likewise, soils vary widely in their suitability for various uses. Depending on factors such as depth, permeability, plasticity, drainage and size composition, a particular soil may be a constraint or an opportunity for uses contemplated. For the most part, the soils found in the Town of Amherst do not pose great constraints to development activities.

WATER RESOURCES

The water resources of an area are extremely important for planning consideration. The amount and distribution of water determines supplies for industrial and residential consumption, and offers recreation and habitat among many other benefits. On the negative side, flooding, pollution, and droughts can be devastating to an area.

In general, the entirety of Amherst County has good surface water resources, large supplies of which can be obtained from the Buffalo River and its major tributaries. This Buffalo River water is readily available to the Town of Amherst.

The Town is included within the Robert E. Lee Soil and Water Conservation District, RELSWCD. The Town, Amherst County, the Amherst County Service Authority (ACSA), local colleges, and the RELSWCD work with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to preserve and enhance the public water supply and resources within the Town and County. The approved Amherst County Watershed Protection Program consists of enhanced land use controls, an ongoing watershed survey program led by the Soil and Water District, and a successful Best Management Practice (BMP) cost share program all aimed at the protection of the areas drinking water supply. The BMP program provides financial incentives to local agricultural land owners to initiate BMPs that result in improved water quality and land resources. Through the 75% "cost share" funds, provided through the DCR-Chesapeake Bay Initiative, and the matched 25% contribution from the ACSA, property owners are able to implement these protective land use and stream protection practices at no cost. This program has twice received national recognition from the Region III of EPA.

There have been no identified problems for surface waters in the county. The rivers and streams are "generally satisfactory for secondary contact recreation, propagation of fish and aquatic life, and other beneficial uses" (Department of Environmental Quality).

There are very few direct discharges to surface water in Amherst County. Ten establishments have a total of 13 National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits. One of these permits belongs to the Town of Amherst for discharge from the Town's sewage treatment plant into Rutledge Creek.

Accessible ground water can be found throughout the county. Most supplies have been found in fracture zones or joints in bedrock, or just above bedrock in the weathered rock zones at depths usually within 60 feet of the surface. This water can be tapped with most large-diameter dug or bored wells. However, shallow wells of this type are susceptible to contamination, sedimentation, and irregular periods of decreased yield.

The superficial zone of soil and partially weathered rock is usually cased off in drilled wells, with water being obtained from bedrock fractures. These subsurface openings occur in long, narrow low areas usually found in bedrock fractures, and at depths of less than 200 feet. Two wells on the same property exemplify the inconsistencies of ground water distribution where a 225-foot well yielded 37 gallons per minute while a 273-foot well was dry.

The quality of water from properly-drilled wells is good in the locality, although in a few cases, hard, iron-containing water has been reported. Contamination by unsanitary surface sources can usually be eliminated by casing all well bases. Chemically, the water is soft to moderately hard, and low in total mineral content.

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

Flood plains are flat areas contiguous to water courses and serve a vital function in the hydrologic system. As the channel capacity of a stream is exceeded due to, for example, intensive precipitation, the floodplain acts as a temporary water storage area for the excess. It also provides habitat for wildlife and fertile land for agriculture. Because rivers and streams often coincide with transportation routes, and the flat land is usually easily developable, man has often built structures in the floodplain. But because flooding is a recurrent phenomenon, structures in such areas must eventually be affected by flood waters or be protected by very expensive means to prevent damages.

Several streams with flooding potential can be found within the Town of Amherst. These include Tribulation Creek, Williams Creek, Higginbotham Creek, Rutledge Creek and Buffalo River. Maps have been prepared by Federal Emergency Management Administration and are available for consultation when it becomes necessary to more accurately pinpoint the approximate extent of the 100 and 500-year flood plains.

AIR RESOURCES

Air resources include the prevailing climate of the area and quality of the air. Climate is generally described by meteorological trends and by measurable factors such as rainfall rates and temperature. Air quality is more difficult to describe but is usually indicated by measurements of air-borne pollutants, which are produced by certain human activities and are considered potentially harmful to the public health at relatively low concentrations. Normally, the lower the pollutant concentration, the better the air quality is considered to be.

CLIMATE

The Town of Amherst has a modified continental climate, with mild winters and warm, humid summers. Mountains to the west mitigate the effects of winter storms moving easterly, while the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean to the east contribute to the humid summers. These large bodies of water also help make winters milder than they otherwise would be.

Occasionally, severe weather in the form of hurricanes and other tropical storms affect the area. Though such storms are usually downgraded by the time they reach Amherst, heavy rains and strong winds may still affect the county. Tornadoes are extremely rare in the area. Thunderstorms, however, are relatively frequent and may produce severe lightning, high wind, and damaging hail.

The average annual precipitation for the county exceeds 40 inches. The following table shows the distribution of precipitation over the year at nearby Lynchburg. July is typically the wettest month with 4.39 inches of precipitation, while February is the driest with 3.1 inches. Snowfall is generally less than 15 inches a year.

Table 6.1
Lynchburg, Virginia: Average Precipitation
(Water Equivalent In Inches)
Normal Period 1971 - 2000

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	ANNUAL
3.54	3.1	3.83	3.46	4.11	3.79	4.39	3.41	3.88	3.39	3.18	3.23	43.31

SOURCE: Virginia State Climatology Office, Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Virginia.

Table 6.2
Lynchburg, Virginia: Average Fahrenheit Temperatures
Normals Period 1971 - 2000

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	ANNUAL
34.5	37.8	46	55.3	63.4	71	75.1	73.8	67.1	56.1	46.6	38.2	55.4

SOURCE: Virginia State Climatology Office, Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Virginia.

Another important measure of the climate of an area is heating degree days. This is a statistic which measures how often and to what extent the average daily temperature falls below 65 degrees Fahrenheit. Heating degree days is a useful indicator of fuel consumption trends for heating purposes.

**Table 6.3
Lynchburg, Virginia: Heating Degree Day Normals
(65 Degree Fahrenheit Base)
Normals Period 1971 - 2000**

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	ANNUAL
930	749	576	294	106	14	7	1	48	276	538	815	4354

SOURCE: Virginia State Climatology Office, Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Virginia.

AIR QUALITY

The quality of an area's air depends on many factors. For instance, topography, forest cover, industries, and population concentrations play important roles at the local level, but little is known about how these factors modify or contribute to the overall air quality picture. However, air pollution is a regional problem since a relatively pristine area may receive large amounts of pollutants from distant sources. Pollutants may even have significant impacts on climate both in small areas and over large regions.

Table 6.4 records total emission in Amherst County in tons per year for 1993.

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality has designated Amherst County to be a Class 2 No Significant Deterioration Area. This Class 2 designation allows for normal growth and economic development provided siting practices and pollution control measures are acceptable.

**Table 6.4
Amherst County: Emissions in Tons per Year (1993)**

POLLUTANT	TONS PER YEAR
SO ₂	2,229
TSP	301
CM	190
VOC	44
NO _x	644

SOURCE: Department of Environmental Quality, Air Regional Office

As noted above, air quality is a regional issue and can not be defined by a single community. The Town of Amherst is a part of the larger Region 2000 area and a component of the Central Virginia Metropolitan Planning Organization. Currently DEQ indicates that the CVMPO air quality meets federal standards. It should be noted that currently DEQ has not placed an ozone monitor in the area. If in the future the area does warrant monitoring and there is a change in the air quality finding, planning for air protection could be a required element. As such, the regional growth in population and transportation locally and regionally will be important to monitor over time and consider how the area can collectively strive to maintain current air quality enjoyed in the region.

CHAPTER 7

LAND USE

INTROCUCTION

Current land use and development patterns within the Town of Amherst have taken place through the interaction of elements such as geography, natural resources, demographic trends, available utilities, and transportation patterns. A key role of the Comprehensive Plan is to consider the changes in these patterns and develop a land use plan that accommodates for housing, commercial, utilities, transportation and recreational development needs in the future that are orderly and harmonious with the community.

The purpose of this section is to ensure that future growth and development is well planned. As such, the Comprehensive Plan sets forth the management goals, objectives, and policies that will help maintain and shape development patterns.

EXISTING LAND USES

The following section provides an overview of the land use classifications and primary location for each of these uses within the Town. The location of these land use types is important in assuring that future growth is consistent and harmonious with these uses.

RESIDENTIAL

The oldest residential development within the Town occurred along what is now North and South Main Streets and was centered around the Central Business District (CBD). Most of the Town's current housing development has occurred on the edge of Town, and most dramatically, has been the development that has followed after the annexation in 1994 and along various existing or new sewer lines.

Within the residential areas, single-family detached homes, at 70.4% of the occupied housing units, make up the majority of the residential units. Multi-family use constitutes approximately 23% of the housing stock and mobile units make up the smallest housing stock classification at 2.8%.

Single-family neighborhoods are well defined within the Town. Current single-dwelling development is of moderate density with some more dense development within available plots of the older neighborhood sections.

Other types of housing consist of townhouses, apartment duplexes and some scattered duplexes or single home conversions. Most of the new multi-family construction has occurred in recent years and is primarily located in the 1994 annexation area. Mobile homes, in one specified and approved mobile home park, provide safe and affordable housing options. The increased cost of building a home, the decline in family size, the general aging of the population, and actions by the Commonwealth of Virginia to encourage higher density development in areas where there are adequate water and sewer utilities and roads indicate that multi-use and higher density development will be continuing trends in the future.

COMMERCIAL

Commercial land uses in the Town of Amherst are generally found in one of three major areas – the Central Business District (CBD), along South Main Street in the Ambriar area, and along U. S. Route 60. The CBD is defined as the Main Street area bounded approximately by Lee Street and the traffic circle. The CBD is the historic center of both the Town and County of Amherst. The CBD area has several shops which include a few antique shops, barber shops, a hardware store, and restaurants. Also within the CBD are government service offices, the Court House, professional offices and banking.

The Town of Amherst is the county seat of Amherst County, and as such, can be classified as a sub-regional service center. Residents from throughout the County come to the Town to access the Town and County services. Within the Town are the primary day-to-day services that are necessary for its residents and include governmental services, schools, banks, insurance, medical and dental facilities, and other professional services. These key destinations and services, along with the unique physical features of the area are the anchors for this commercial district and would serve as the basis for any revitalization initiative.

The Town, through an awarded Downtown planning grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, in 2007 undertook the development of an Amherst Downtown Economic Restructuring Plan and Physical Improvement Strategy. This study proposed a detailed ten year strategic plan to revitalize the commercial center of Amherst that includes a marketing strategy to promote the Town and area resources; a physical improvement plan that includes upgrading of existing buildings, infill development of open spaces, reconfiguration of some street, sidewalk, and vacant areas to create walking and recreational spaces; a financial reinvestment strategy to create private investment in the area; and lastly an organizational framework to implement the plan over time.

The Town of Amherst's second major commercial area is found along South Main Street (U. S. Business 29). This area's main commercial enterprise is the Ambriar Shopping Center. Within the Ambriar Shopping Center are a variety of tenants including a discount store, an auto parts store, a fast food restaurant and a bank. Other specialty shops, automobile dealerships and automotive repair shops are located north of the shopping center along South Main. The Town is in the process of implementing improvements along South Main Street that will provide walking and biking access between the CBD and North Main Street with the commercial establishments, high school, library, and other destinations. This will encourage pedestrian access from the residential areas that adjoin this major transportation and business corridor and create a unique shopping experience for visitors to these shopping and community destinations. A detailed long-term land use, utilities and transportation plan specifically for the Ambriar commercial area (Ambriar Small Area Development Plan) was adopted in 2007.

Between the Downtown Master Plan, the Ambriar Small Area Development Plan, and the installation of sidewalk along South Main Street, the Town is working to create a safe commercial corridor that combines the resources of each of these primary shopping areas. With the connection, a large percentage of the residential areas will have safe pedestrian access to all of the primary destinations – commercial, governmental, school, and recreation. – within the Town and provides a key connection between the residential, commercial, and public/semi-public land uses. Creating a walkable community is recognized as a key amenity to maintain and attract families and visitors to the Town by creating a unique shopping experience.

It is well-known that transportation corridors have considerable impact on commercial and residential development. The recently opened Route 29 Bypass around Madison Heights and Lynchburg is no different. It will be important for the Town to carefully plan for commercial growth that capitalizes on the changes along U.S. 29 and serves as a key gateway to the services within the commercial areas.

INDUSTRIAL

Within the Town of Amherst is the L. Barnes Brockman, Sr. Business and Industrial Park. The park is comprised of just over 150 acres broken into 14 lots. The park is arranged in a format to accommodate a variety of commercial and industrial uses. All water, sewer, street, street light, electrical, and cable modem infrastructure is on site. Ten of the sites are equipped with stormwater detention. The park is owned by the Town and is managed by the Amherst Industrial Development Authority.

There is also industrial zoned land that lies near Route 29 and the Norfolk Southern Railway that is adjacent to the Zane Snead Industrial Park located in the County.

PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC

Because the Town of Amherst serves as the seat of government for Amherst County, public and semi-public land uses occupy a significant portion of the Town. There are many local government facilities in the town, including the Amherst Town Hall, the Amherst County Courthouse and annexes and the

Amherst County Administration Building. Central and Amherst Elementary Schools, Amherst County Middle School, Amherst County High School, and the main branch of the Amherst County Public Library are also located within or near the Town's corporate limits, as are the offices of various state and federal agencies, including the United States Post Office. Public parks and recreation facilities are primarily found at the school sites, though there is a mini park located across South Main Street from Town Hall.

Other public/semi-public facilities in the Town include the Traffic Circle, the fire and rescue squad buildings and the many structures used by the Town or County for water, sewer, maintenance or other related public functions. The numerous churches found within the Town of Amherst also constitute much public-semi-public land.

The public and semi-public facilities within the Town are vital resources and serve as primary anchors in sustaining the Amherst community. The services and resources provided assure the Town as a destination to all the residents of the county. The recently developed Downtown Economic Restructuring Plan provides a vision of utilizing some of these public and semi-public facilities as attractive public spaces or court yards that serve as the hubs for connecting the public and semi-public areas to the commercial and residential areas that surround these facilities.

VACANT

Within the CBD a number of vacant sites provide opportunity for "infilling" through adaptive reuse of vacant structures, or demolition and possible reconstruction, or use of existing open areas with the CBD area. A 2007 downtown revitalization study proposed some key examples of where these adaptive reuse and infill utilization of vacant properties within the Town can provide unique economic and alternative land use opportunities.

There are also vacant areas that lie in the area annexed in 1994. However, this area lends itself to residential growth.

There is also land available within the industrial park for industrial and commercial development opportunities along with the areas adjacent to the 29 bypass.

Currently the majority of vacant land within the Town lends itself to current by-right development per the Town of Amherst zoning.

ZONING

The Town of Amherst's zoning ordinance is designed to keep incompatible land uses separated. Zoning has the tendency to maintain property values; stabilize and maintain the character of neighborhoods and business districts; control nuisances and maintain architectural standards; and reduce traffic congestion while providing uniformity within each zoning district.

The zoning districts used by the Town of Amherst are listed below. This information has been formulated from the May 2007 Town of Amherst Zoning Map.

- Agriculture A-1 Agricultural District
- Residential R-1 Intent of Limited Residential (low density)
- Residential R-2 General Residential District
- Residential R-3 Intent of High Density Residential District
- Residential R-4 Manufactured Home District
- Transitional T-1 Transitional Use Zone District
- Business B-1 Light Commercial District
- CBD Central Business District
- Business B-2 General Commercial District
- Business E – 1 Business Park District
- Industrial District M-1 Intent of Industrial District

These districts should continue to be reviewed, amended and added to as conditions warrant, for they are the basis for implementing the future land use plan which follows later in this chapter. A copy of the Town of Amherst Zoning Map is provided as Map 7.1.

LAND USE TRENDS

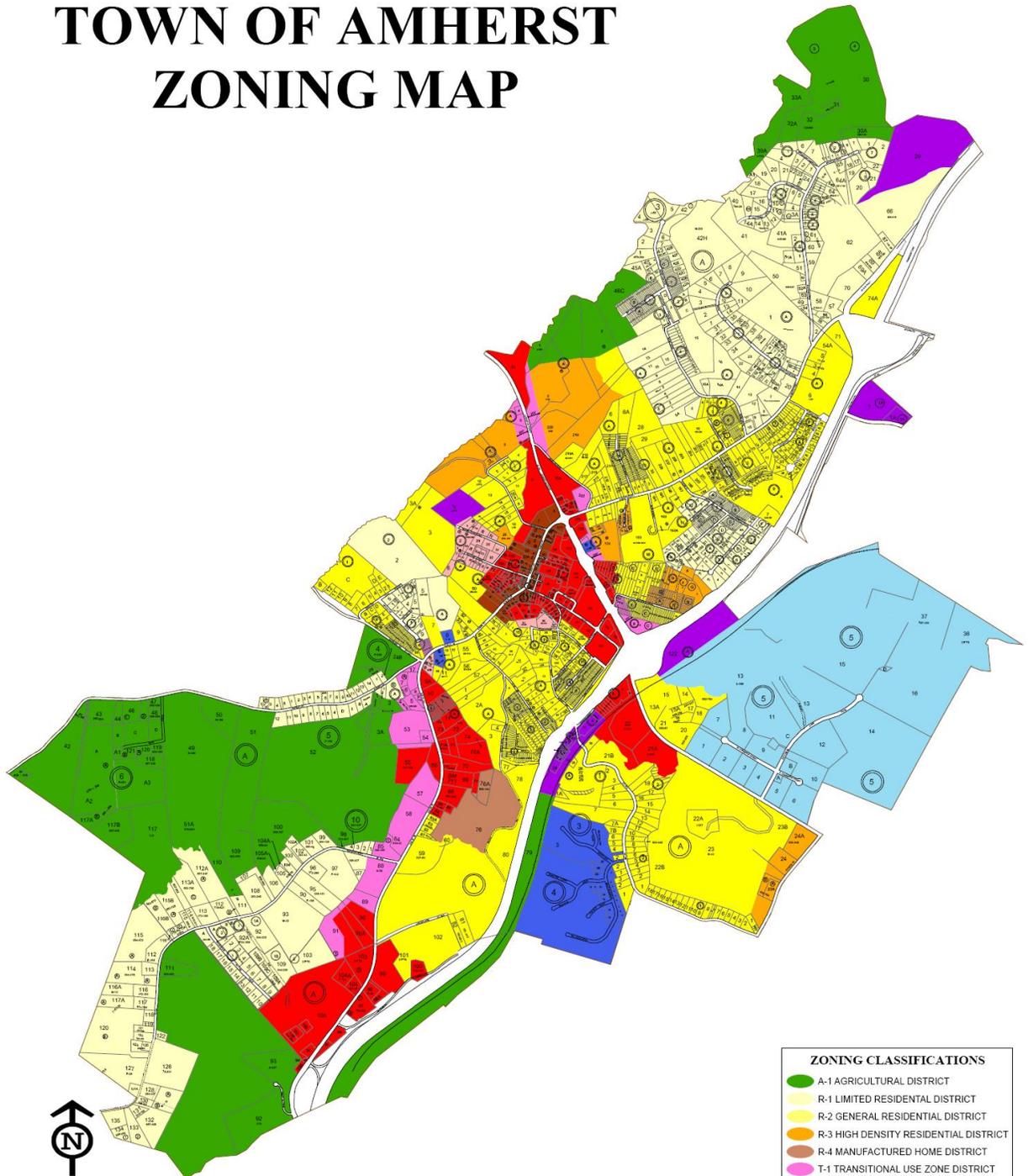
Growth within and around the Town of Amherst is fairly certain. The natural beauty, temperate climate, low crime, and relative low cost of housing and living within the Town and the concentration of services – especially water and sewer utilities - will encourage real estate development in the Town. In addition, with the recent completion of the Route 29 Bypass and the relative ease in commuting to the jobs to the south in Lynchburg and other Region 2000 areas, the Town is positioned to be a “bedroom” community. Lastly, the proximity to the natural resources of the mountains and James River in combination with the reasonable land price, especially when compared with areas such as Albemarle, Bedford, and Rockbridge, the area will continue to be a draw to development and an influx of new residents.

The Town continues to utilize an approach to accommodating growth that maximizes the value of the residential growth while maintaining the physical and natural resources that are the attraction to the area. As such the Town utilizes mixed used development, as well as the ongoing coordination with water and wastewater planning, in directing development.

The reasonable cost of land, proximity and ease of reaching natural resources and economic markets, the concentration of governmental and service resources, and beauty of the region enhance the value of the Town of Amherst. However, the Town must work to create an environment that attracts future commercial investment that enhances the Town’s role as a vital service center to residents living in and around the Town.

Map 7.1
Town of Amherst – Zoning Map

TOWN OF AMHERST ZONING MAP



REGION 2000
LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL
828 MAIN STREET 12TH FLOOR
LYNCHBURG, VA 24505
(434) 845-3491
FAX: (434) 845-3493

April 8, 2009

CONTITIONAL ZONING INDEX	
	CZ-1 B-2 (MCDONALD'S) 7/20/94 - TAX MAP# 96A4-A-17-4E
	CZ-2 B-1 (WILKINS) 4/12/95 - TAX MAP# 96A3-A-14
	CZ-3 B-1 (SHRADER) 7/12/95 - TAX MAP# 96A3-A-8
	CZ-4 R-3 (MILL RACE) 4/9/97 - TAX MAP# 96-4-A

ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS	
	A-1 AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT
	R-1 LIMITED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
	R-2 GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
	R-3 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
	R-4 MANUFACTURED HOME DISTRICT
	T-1 TRANSITIONAL USE ZONE DISTRICT
	B-1 LIGHT COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
	CBD CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
	B-2 GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
	E-1 BUSINESS PARK DISTRICT
	M-1 INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT



CHAPTER 8

TRANSPORTATION

§15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia requires the planning commission of every locality to prepare a comprehensive plan for consideration by the governing body and for the governing body of every locality to adopt a comprehensive plan. Localities must review their comprehensive plan and associated transportation plan at least every five years, pursuant to §15.2-2230 of the Code, to determine whether it needs to be updated.

The comprehensive plan must include a specific section dedicated to transportation planning or reference a separate document that serves as the community's transportation plan (§15.2-2223).¹ The comprehensive plan, therefore, provides policy guidance and criteria for making both land use and transportation decisions and recommendations. This chapter of the Town of Amherst's comprehensive plan is intended to meet the letter and spirit of Chapter 527 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly.²

Introduction

The development of the Town of Amherst, whether measured by land use, utility placement, or density of buildings, has been greatly influenced by its transportation facilities. An historical review of the Town's road network reveals little structural change in the past two centuries. Main Street (U.S. 29 Business) generally follows the route of the stage road between Lynchburg and Charlottesville. Kenmore Road was once known as the road connecting to Pedlar Mills, and Sunset Drive was the road leading from Bethel on the James River. U.S. 60 has long connected Lexington and other Shenandoah communities with Piedmont county seats such as Amherst, Buckingham, Cumberland, and Powhatan. Thus, even before the Town's incorporation in 1910, the general framework providing for the future development patterns of the Town were long established.

The most significant change to this scheme was the addition of a limited access highway (U.S. 29 Bypass) skirting the east side of the Town, which has since been linked at the southern end of the town to a bypass circumnavigating Faulconerville, Monroe, Madison Heights, and a section of Lynchburg. Three interchanges are located within or adjacent to the Town of Amherst:

- At the southern terminus of South Main Street, between Ambriar Shopping Center and Sweet Briar College.
- At U.S. 60's intersection with the bypass, just east of downtown Amherst
- At the northernmost terminus of North Main Street (as it transitions to Boxwood Farm Road)

For the most part, this transportation infrastructure is synonymous with the Town's road network. For the future, many aspects of continued physical development and economic growth are dependent upon a well-operating road network. As critical as it is to have a transportation system that facilitates transit through and within Virginia's Region 2000, it is also important to minimize possible adverse effects of the road network, especially to protect residential neighborhoods from unnecessary traffic, while ensuring that the design of the Town's streets will contribute to the qualities of a small town enjoyed by Amherst residents as well as serve its traffic needs by supporting safe and efficient transit.

Central Virginia Metropolitan Planning Organization

Amherst is the only of Region 2000's towns that is included within the boundaries served by the Central Virginia Metropolitan Planning Organization (the federally designated transportation planning agency for the Lynchburg urbanized area). The primary activities of the CVMPO are developing and updating the

¹ Chapter 527 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly added § 15.2-2222.1 to the *Code of Virginia*. The amendment establishes procedures by which localities submit proposals that will affect the state-controlled transportation network to the VDOT for review and comment. The chapter also directs VDOT to promulgate regulations to carry out the provisions of the statute.

² No item in the comprehensive plan is thought to create a **substantial traffic impact** on state highways or **substantial changes** to transportation infrastructure, and thus this plan is not required to be submitted to VDOT for review.

Central Virginia Long Range Transportation Plan, developing and updating the Central Virginia Transportation Improvement Program, and developing and executing the annual Central Virginia Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Transportation Network Inventory/Existing Conditions

The Town of Amherst is served by two arterial highways, U.S. Routes 29 and 60. U.S. Route 29 bypass is a limited access highway which skirts the Town. However, U.S. Route 29 Business and U. S. Route 60 intersect at a traffic circle within the Town's borders. U.S. Route 29 is a multi-lane highway passing from Baltimore, Maryland, through Amherst and southward to Lynchburg, Danville and on to Pensacola, Florida. About 15 miles south of Town, Route 29 intersects with U.S. Route 460, a major east-west highway. Route 29 intersects with Interstate 64 approximately 50 miles to the north. The U.S. Route 29 bypass travels along the eastern edge of the Town, and U.S. 29 business (North and South Main Street) runs through the heart of Town.

U.S. Route 60, a two-lane highway through Amherst, is an east-west highway stretching from the Atlantic Ocean at Virginia Beach to the Pacific Ocean at Los Angeles. Route 60 provides both a direct route of travel from Amherst to the state capitol in Richmond and the area's link with Interstate 81, a north-south interstate that passes through the Shenandoah Valley.

Interstate 81, which intersects Route 60 near Lexington, Virginia, terminates to the north at the New York-Canadian border, and to the south at Knoxville, Tennessee. Also near Lexington is the westbound portion of Interstate 64, which permits easy access to West Virginia before ending in St. Louis.

Several of the aforementioned highways, including U. S. Route 29, are a part of the National Highway System (NHS) as designated by the Congress of the United States. This designation stresses the importance of these highways to the economic and defensive well-being of the nation. Interstate highways are now classified as a sub-group of NHS highways.

All of the other roadways except for U.S. Route 29 Business (North Main Street and South Main Street) within the Town of Amherst are state secondary roads, frontage roads, or privately maintained streets.

The street system in Amherst appears to function well overall for the purposes of transporting vehicular traffic. Traffic counts provide the best means for analyzing the number and type of vehicles using the roads. Using these traffic count numbers roads are analyzed for the ability to adequately transport travelers at varying degrees of efficiency. This level of service classification is defined accordingly:

- **Level of service A** No vehicle waits longer than one signal indication
- **Level of Service B** On rare occasion vehicles wait through more than one signal indication
- **Level of service C** Intermittently vehicles wait through more than one signal indication; occasionally backups may develop; traffic flow still stable and acceptable.
- **Level of Service D** Delays at intersections may become extensive, but enough cycles with lower demand occur to permit periodic clearance, preventing excessive backups. LOS D has historically been regarded as a desirable design objective in urban areas
- **Level of Service E** Very long queues may create lengthy delays
- **Level of Service F** Backups from locations downstream restrict or prevent movement of vehicles out of approach creating "gridlock" condition.

The Town of Amherst has established an acceptable level of service classification of C for its roads. In order to meet this goal, a number of transportation improvements will be necessary along some of the primary arterial and collector roads, such as South Main Street, to accommodate anticipated future population, transportation, and land use growth.

Another vital form of transportation is pedestrian travel. Pedestrian travel, via foot or bicycle, is a means of travel that can be utilized by almost all citizens. Within the Town there exist some areas where the sidewalks are of adequate width and structure to accommodate use. There are, however, a number of areas within the Town where sidewalks or bike lanes need to be placed to accommodate safe pedestrian travel from primary residential areas to key public/private destinations. Currently the Town has initiated a key project to increase the safety by which residents can move along the key South Main Street commercial corridor. It will be important for the Town to continue to provide similar improvements in

designated areas within the Town.

Recently bicycles were included in traffic counts; however, the traffic counters are usually not placed in areas of heavy bike use. Pedestrian counts are not taken except at special locations where a problem between pedestrian movement and motorized vehicle movement may exist. Recently, VDOT has developed a state-wide system whereby consideration of pedestrian access is required within road construction projects. This is an important step in transportation planning and a viable planning resource for the Town.

AIR SERVICE

There are no licensed public airports in Amherst County. However, air service can be found in nearby Lynchburg. Two airports, one a regional commercial airport and the other a general aviation airport, can be found in the Lynchburg metropolitan area.

Lynchburg Regional Airport is the air service provider for the greater Lynchburg area. The airport is located along U. S. 29 within Campbell County, just outside the City of Lynchburg limits. As of April 2009, the facility as of has 14 daily arriving and departing flights. Regional service is provided by Delta Connection and US Airways Express. The airport is located along the area's major highway and with the completion of the U.S. Route 29 bypass has increased the time and ease of traveling to the airport from Amherst. The airport has two runways; one measuring 7,100 feet in length; and the other measuring 3,387 feet. Expanding the capabilities of the airport is currently being considered within long term facility planning.

Falwell Aviation, Inc. is the general aviation airport located on U.S. Route 460 in the City of Lynchburg. The hard surface runway is 2,900 feet in length and has lights for night landings. The airport is attended from 8:00 A.M. to dusk daily. Repairs, fuel, lodging, and surface transportation are available.

Both airports are used by small aircraft for business and pleasure flying. Commercial passenger service is available at Lynchburg Regional. Falwell Aviation also has facilities for the landing of small private jet aircraft. Air freight service is available from Lynchburg Regional.

Other air services are available in localities such as Charlottesville, Roanoke, Richmond and Washington, D.C., and Greensboro, North Carolina.

RAIL SERVICE

Norfolk Southern's north-south mainline between Washington, D.C., and Birmingham, Alabama, passes through the Town of Amherst. This line serves First Brands with two or three freight stops per week. Freight service is provided through the Norfolk Southern Railway into Lynchburg along the same north/south transport as well as service to east/west of the city. The region uses rail as a cost-effective and reliable means of goods transport.

Passenger service to the Town was discontinued decades ago, with no prospect of this service being resurrected even though the Amtrak Crescent, using the NS mainline, passes through the Town on its daily trip between Washington, D.C., and New Orleans.

The Crescent may be boarded at Lynchburg and Charlottesville. There has been consistent interest in the development of an expanded passenger service to the area. That includes additional Amtrak service and additional passenger rail service through the proposed TransDominion Express, a passenger rail service that would connect the far west region of the state to a Lynchburg hub that would then provide access to points north including Charlottesville, Richmond, and Washington D.C. The area should continue to investigate and look for opportunities to support these additional rail connections.

The Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transit is partnering with Amtrak to provide an additional regional train between Lynchburg, Charlottesville, Washington, D.C., and points north. This train would be based in Lynchburg, which means that the train would depart on time each morning (the Crescent line has such a long route that it is frequently delayed before it reaches Lynchburg on its northern run). It is anticipated that this additional daily service will begin in the third quarter of 2009.

BUS SERVICE

Greyhound Bus Company has flag stop passenger service in Amherst, stopping for passengers as necessary while traveling U.S. Route 29. There is also a primary loading hub in Lynchburg at the Kemper Street Station.

**TABLE 8.1- ROADWAYS WITHIN THE TOWN OF AMHERST
(FEDERAL AID SYSTEM, "COLLECTORS" AND ABOVE)**

Rte No.	Route Type	Facility Name	Segment To	Segment From	Road Seg. Length	Thru Lanes	Pavement Width (ft)	Avg. Lane Width (ft)	Posted Speed Limit	AADT
29	URBAN XPWY	AMHERST HIGHWAY	RTE 29 BUS SOUTH	NEW AMHERST SCL	0.03	4	48	12	65	21,000
29	URBAN XPWY	AMHERST HIGHWAY	NEW AMHERST SCL	ROUTE 60	1.9	4	48	12	65	21,000
29	URBAN XPWY	AMHERST HIGHWAY	ROUTE 60	OLD AMHERST NCL	0.29	4	48	12	65	17,000
29	URBAN XPWY	AMHERST HIGHWAY	OLD AMHERST NCL	RTE 29 BUS NORTH	0.98	4	48	12	65	17,000
29	URBAN XPWY	AMHERST HIGHWAY	RTE 29 BUS NORTH	NEW AMHERST NCL	0.62	4	48	12	55	17,000
29	URBAN MINOR ARTL	S MAIN ST	AMHERST SCL	RTE 60	0.86	2	46	12	25	3,700
29	URBAN MINOR ARTL	N MAIN ST	RTE 60	AMHERST NCL	1.07	2	48	12	45	2,800
60	URBAN PRINC ARTL	LEXINGTON TURNPIKE	AMHERST WCL	RTE 29 BUS	0.43	2	20	10	45	2,500
60	URBAN PRINC ARTL	LEXINGTON TURNPIKE	RTE 29 BUS	RTE 29 BYPASS	0.52	4	52	12	45	7,000
60	URBAN PRINC ARTL	RICHMOND HIGHWAY	RTE 29 BYPASS	AMHERST ECL/UAB	0.11	2	20	10	45	4,900
659	URBAN COLL	DEPOT STREET	RTE 29 BUS	RTE T-1101	0.1	2	36	10	25	
659	URBAN COLL	DEPOT STREET	RTE T-1101	RTE 29	0.38	2	14	7	35	
659	URBAN COLL	UNION HILL ROAD	RTE 29	AMHERST SCL	0.16	2	16	8	35	
659	URBAN COLL	UNION HILL ROAD	AMHERST SCL	RTE 606	0.95	2	18	9	55	
643	URBAN COLL	KENMORE ROAD	AMHERST WCL	RTE 29 BUS	0.43	2	14	7	35	
1101	URBAN COLL	SECOND STREET	RTE T-659	RTE T-1102	0.15	2	32	12	25	660

Planning Assumptions

Population

The population of the Town of Amherst more than doubled between the 1990 and 2000 Censuses, jumping from 1,060 to 2,251. This substantial increase was due in large part to a 1994 boundary adjustment encompassing 2,086 acres adjacent to the Town. This increased the Town's land area from 1.5 square miles to approximately 4.5 square miles.

The U.S. Census Bureau has estimated the Town of Amherst's 2007 population to have declined slightly, dipping to 2,208, while the Weldon-Cooper Center has projected that the Town's population will increase by a small margin (3.7% since 2000) to 2,322 in 2010.

Three primary areas were included in the 1994 boundary adjustment:

- Land to the south of the Amherst County Public Library including Waughs Ferry Road, Amherst County High School, and the Ambriar area
- The land generally to the north of Ridge Drive, including Grandview Drive, Walnut Street, Dogwood Street, and Arthur Court
- Land to the east of the Norfolk Southern railroad, including the site of Brockman Park, Union Hill Road, and the vicinity of Dulwich Manor.

Adjacent to Union Hill Road (the third area listed above) is development known as Poplar Grove which will likely become the epicenter of a major portion of greater Amherst area's housing production for the foreseeable future. While not currently within the Town limits, traffic and other impacts of the Poplar Grove development will directly impact the Town.

Access between Amherst's Central Business District and Poplar Grove is achieved via Dulwich Drive and U.S. 60, or more directly, Union Hill Road (which transitions to Depot Street). Union Hill Road's width and alignment are not suitable for the anticipated increase of traffic due to development in this area, and a major renovation of this roadway is currently programmed in the VDOT Six Year Plan.

Employment

According to the Census Bureau, jobs in the Town of Amherst have increased by 43% between 1990 and 2000, rising from 433 to 747. The number of those employed by management and professional occupations almost tripled between the last two census cycles, those working in sales and office occupations more than doubled, and service workers increased by 50%. Of course, a substantial reason for these increases is the increased population due to the 1994 boundary adjustment, and we cannot assume that all of these workers are employed within the town limits.

However, recent growth in retail, banking, and other sectors within the town is consistent with the data shown by the Census Bureau, Employment Commission, and other agencies.

Three areas within the Town are the current locations of this retail and service growth: Downtown, Ambriar, and U.S. 60 Main Street at U.S. 29 Bypass.

Amherst's central business district, or **downtown**, is located along Main Street near the center of the town. Within the district are typical uses for such an area, including the Amherst County Court House and ancillary facilities, Amherst Town Hall, restaurants, retail stores (including hardware, gifts, antiques, and sporting goods), banks, and professional offices (including attorneys and insurance agents). Much of the future development that is likely to take place within the downtown district will probably involve rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, as well as redevelopment of certain sites, and will probably not result in an inordinate burden on transportation facilities, although the continued availability of adequate parking facilities for both employees and customers is critical.

Just to the east of downtown on Washington Street lies the Amherst County Administrative complex, which is likely to see a renovation and/or expansion in the next decade. With the County's acquisition of a nearby church lot, the addition of parking and pedestrian facilities to link the various buildings within the complex will be probable.

Some recent development has occurred just to the north of the core downtown area, and includes the construction of a new United States Post Office, a new bank and a drug store. Elements of the access management philosophy were put into place to help preserve the efficiency of the nearby traffic circle, including interconnectivity between parcels and shared driveways. This type of access management should be encouraged and/or required with all new development of this type within the town.

East of the town's well-known traffic circle, between Main Street (U.S. 29 Business) and the U.S. 29 Bypass is a section of **U.S. 60** that contains a growing density of retail and service development. The corridor is home to several gas stations, a motel, a fast food restaurant, a bank, and a shopping center. There is significant room for additional development and/or redevelopment to occur within this corridor, and the addition of traveler-oriented businesses (such as gas stations and fast food establishments) will likely continue in this area. This may be hastened by the ultimate development of a visitors center at the intersection of U.S. 60 and the U.S. 29 Bypass (SAFTEA-LU Enhancement Grants have funded the relocation of Amherst's railroad depot for this use).

If development along this corridor continues, it will be critical to utilize best practices in access management to reduce vehicular conflicts along this stretch of highway, which contains two lanes in each direction with a bi-directional turn lane in between. Traffic calming measures may be necessary to slow through traffic in this area.

The third area of potential growth is the **Ambriar** area at the southern end of the Town of Amherst, between Amherst County High School and the intersection of South Main Street and the U.S. 29 Bypass. A significant tract of land that has been zoned commercial lies to the west (behind) and to the north of Ambriar Shopping Center. The tracts to the north of the shopping center are located on the west side of South Main Street and directly across from Amherst County High School are known as the "Ambler Property," and are currently being considered for development. This area was studied at length in 2007 and a Traffic Impact Overlay Plan was adopted. Reference to this document is made in order that it be incorporated into this plan as an appendix.

Projected new development within this area is anticipated when the former Ambler property (across from Amherst County High School) is developed, but re-use (on a small and moderate scale) of existing facilities is also evident, with the conversion of a residential structure to a small engine repair shop, the conversion of a section of the Ambriar Shopping Center into a University of Virginia Health System Dialysis Center, and the opening of a new clothing department store in that center in the spring of 2009.

Preservation of Community Character

One of the primary elements that makes Amherst a popular place to live and work is its small town charm. Amherst is easy to navigate by foot or by bicycle. There is a clear transition between central business district, tree-lined, densely-built residential streets, and country roads leading into town that are dotted with houses and farms. This small town network, surrounded by countryside, reinforces the idea that Amherst is the county seat and commercial hub for much of the surrounding area, and plays well into Amherst County Tourism's slogan proclaiming that Amherst is 'Virginia's Most Civilized Wilderness.'

To preserve this character, it is critical that decisions involving development and transportation take into account the historic and current uses of an area, how the residents currently utilize the adjoining transportation network, and how even slight changes to road width, alignment, and sidewalk placement can have dramatic impacts on the feeling and operation of a neighborhood.

Some roads within town actually resemble and operate as rural byways, including Kenmore Road and Sunset Drive. The character of these areas is defined by sunken roadbeds, fence and tree-lined right-of-ways, and a mix of pastureland and residential property.

Garland Avenue, on the other hand, was first a major thoroughfare, serving as the route of the Lynchburg to Charlottesville Stage Road. However, in recent years, a closely-built neighborhood has developed along this corridor, and both roadways (Garland Avenue and Scotts Hill Road) now end in cul-de-sacs. In this case, the current form and function of the neighborhood would be worth preservation.

Assessment of Multi-Modal Transportation System

The Town of Amherst's multi-modal transportation system is functional, and typically performs at a level above that of other localities within the region. Generally speaking, the Town's moderate to low traffic counts, subtle terrain changes, and road layout present few problems for vehicular travel.

Two areas within Amherst either are, or soon will, experience vehicular traffic stressors that will require improvements: Union Hill Road and the Ambriar area of South Main Street.

Union Hill Road

Adjoining Union Hill Road (the third area listed above) is the neighborhood primarily known as Poplar Grove, which will likely become the epicenter of the majority of the greater Amherst area's housing production for the foreseeable future. While not currently within the Town limits, traffic and other impacts of the Poplar Grove development will directly impact the Town.

Access between Amherst's Central Business District and Poplar Grove is achieved via Dulwich Drive and U.S. 60, or more directly, Union Hill Road (which transitions to Depot Street). Union Hill Road's width and alignment are not suitable for the anticipated increase of traffic due to development in this area, and a major renovation of this roadway is currently programmed in the VDOT Six Year Plan (see below).

Additionally, Union Hill Road becomes Depot Street once it crosses the Norfolk Southern rail line, and Depot Street is a narrow, moderately steep, winding passage that connects to Second Street (the primary east/west route in the downtown district). Depot Street, unless widened and realigned in such a way that it would spoil the character of the neighborhood, is not a desirable connection for Union Hill Road traffic to gain access to downtown.

Ambriar Area (from the 2007 Ambriar Study/Traffic Impact Overlay Plan)

1. Current Situation
 - South Main Street has two (2) lanes of traffic and a continuous center turn lane;
 - There is an average of 6,200 vehicles on this roadway daily;
 - There are no traffic signals along this roadway;
 - There is an acceptable level of service (D on Lancer Lane, and level of service B at all other access points) throughout the corridor.
2. Maximum Development – all of the parcels developed at their highest density
 - A “worst case scenario,” which could happen anytime with the current zoning;
 - Would produce an average of 25,000 vehicles on South Main Street daily;
 - Would create an unacceptable level of service F (backups from locations downstream restrict or prevent movement of vehicles out of approach creating “gridlock” condition) at all access points along South Main Street;
 - Would allow one or more driveways for each parcel of land, a potential of 20 or more driveways (this is important because with every access point the travel speed along a corridor decreases).
3. The Median Point – the point at which a traffic signal would be needed
 - The median point, the point at which traffic signals will need to be installed is approximately 10,000 ADT;
 - 10,000 average daily trips could occur on this roadway with as little as ten percent (10%), or nine (9) acres of development. (this estimate is dependent upon which parcels are developed and how densely are developed)

Pedestrian Facilities

An assessment of the Town of Amherst's pedestrian facilities is also underway.

Main Street

The Town of Amherst is served by the primary arterial road in Main Street which traverses the town and joins southern and northern portions and runs through the Town's Central Business District core. Main

Street also runs adjacent to the elementary and high school, Amherst Public Library, and other public facilities. The corridor is served by sidewalk, either developed years ago or recently developed through various funding partnerships, the majority of the route. With the exception of limited and specific areas, the sidewalks along Main are generally in good condition. Further, the newly developed sidewalks have been constructed to meet design width, clearance, and ADA guidelines that ensure a pleasant pedestrian experience. Despite the recent upgrades and the fairly complete sidewalk network within the Town's core, there are still a number of areas that lack adequate facilities to serve pedestrian needs.

South Main Street

For the purpose of this section, Main Street is defined by the section that begins at the southern border of the Town and continues to Lee Street. Noted deficiencies and opportunities noted include no sidewalk along the section between Ambriar Shopping area and Senior Lane. This section is currently being addressed through an awarded Transportation Enhancement grant.

Central Business District (CBD)

The CBD represents the section of Main Street that includes Lee Street to the Intersection of U. S. Route 60 and the Town's traffic circle. This area is a very busy section of Town and includes a primary business and public facility location within the Town and County. The intersection of Main and Second Streets presents a confusing crossing orientation, sends pedestrians into a side of Second Street with no sidewalk, and currently lack curb cuts or other ADA accommodations. The Town's traffic circle is a unique amenity and key community gateway feature. However, there is no clear direction to guide pedestrians safely through the area.

North Main Street

This section of Main Street represents the northern section of the Town between the traffic circle and the terminus of the street at the U. S. Route 29 interchange. This section of Town is represented primarily by residential development and is also the location of the Amherst Elementary School. This section of Main Street is served by a well constructed, pedestrian friendly sidewalk along the entire eastern side of the street.

While the area is served by an efficient pedestrian system, there is a future opportunity for creating crosswalks and walking opportunities that would enhance the ability of students, with their parents, to walk to school.

Route 60

Route 60 is one of the County's three major highways and as such is a primary transportation corridor within the Town and County. Further, this corridor represents a key Town of Amherst gateway from the western, southern, and eastern portions of the Commonwealth as the road connects to U. S. Route 29. As a key community gateway U. S. Route 60 often presents the first impression of the Town to area visitors. This route, at the intersection of U. S. Route 60 and Main Street (U.S. Business 460), is also the location of the community landmark the Amherst traffic circle.

There are currently no pedestrian facilities along this road but there is evidence that many residents walk along U. S. Route 60 between Main and Taylor Street to access the local grocery store.

Residential Areas

In general the residential development within the Town is quite rural and represents mid to low density development. While there are no sidewalks that expand off Main Street into the residential areas, given the limited density and the low volume of traffic within the residential areas, there appears to be no need at this time to expand the sidewalk network into these areas. It should be noted however, should any large scale development be planned along any of the residential roads take place, the Town should consider the construction of sidewalks along these routes and within the residential community along the primary feeder road.

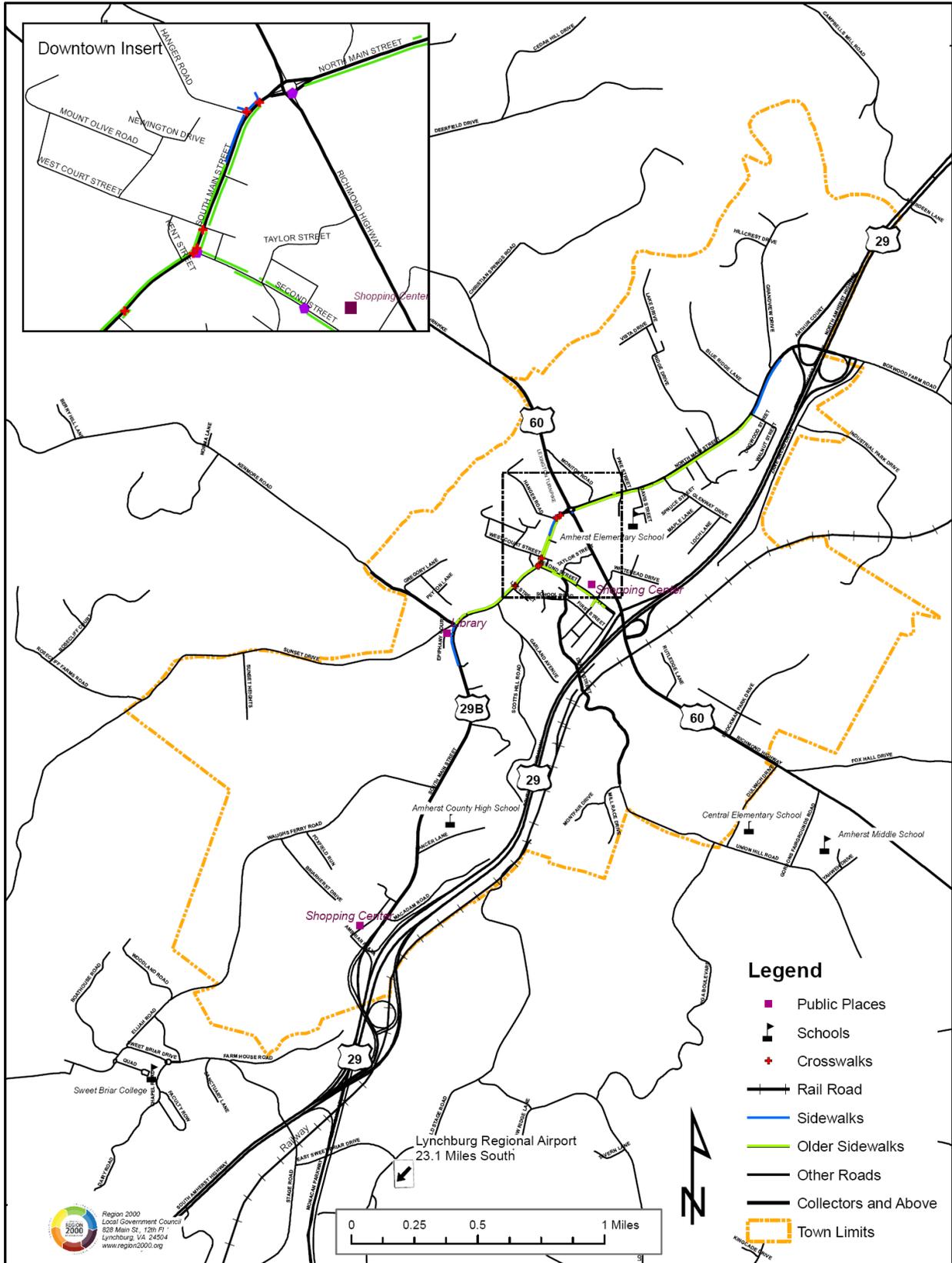
Bicycling Network

Currently there are no bicycle accommodations within the Town of Amherst. There are, however a number of identified routes from the Central Virginia Planning District Commission Regional Bicycle Plan, developed in 2000, which incorporate roads that run through or generate at the Town. In addition, the

Town has many low traffic roads within the residential areas that are quite wide and offer potential share the road or signed routes within the Town. Identified routes from the 2000 Regional Bicycle Plan are represented by the pink colored lines on the Current Facilities Map.

While the residential areas of Town do not represent a priority for sidewalk development in the near term, these same areas represent a sound network for creating bicycle connections and accommodations.

Map 8.1 Town of Amherst Streets and Sidewalks Map



Region 2000
 Local Government Council
 828 Main St., 12th Fl.
 Lynchburg, VA 24504
 www.region2000.org

CHAPTER 9

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

Community and public resources are made available for individuals, families, businesses and industries. Through the Town, County, and Region these resources are the backbone of a community. The purpose of this section is to inventory the existing public services provided within the community. Community facilities and services such as schools, police, fire protection, public utilities, libraries, medical facilities, open space and recreation are vital components of a community. The provisions for these services are among the major expenses and responsibilities of a local government. A comprehensive plan provides a mechanism to review all these resources and establish a guide to ensure that they are sustainable for the future. Map 9.1 provides an overview of the location of the key community resources, such as schools, rescue, fire, and government buildings, within and near the Town of Amherst.

PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

STATE AND COUNTY SERVICES

Coordination

The Amherst County Department of Public Safety has assumed the responsibility for coordinating the efforts of Amherst County's three volunteer fire departments, three volunteer/paid staff rescue squads, the Amherst County Sheriff's Department and the Town of Amherst Police Department as well as planning for and managing large-scale emergencies and natural disasters and operating the county's emergency response dispatch center.

Law Enforcement

Offices for the Amherst County Sheriffs Department are located in the Town and include the main administration and jail building. The Department is the primary law enforcement agency for the areas of Amherst County outside the corporate limits of the Town of Amherst. Services provided by the approximate 80 person staff include field operations (patrol and enforcement), criminal investigations, crime prevention and corrections. Court house security is also provided by the Sheriff's Department. When necessary, assistance is provided by the Sheriff's department to the Amherst Police Department. All full time Town of Amherst police officers are sworn Deputy Sheriff's for Amherst County and assist Sheriff's Department staff when necessary, and upon request beyond the corporate limits of the Town of Amherst. The two agencies have a successful working relationship.

The Town is provided additional law enforcement assistance through the Virginia State Police. Ten State Police officers patrol the highways throughout the region and provide assistance in criminal investigations. The State Police headquarters that provides assistance to the Town of Amherst is located in Appomattox County. One State Police Special Agent/Narcotics Officer is assigned to Amherst and Nelson Counties and works part time from a desk in the Police Chief's office.

Corrections

Amherst County has joined the Blue Ridge Regional Jail system, and a new jail facility is planned on Route 210 in Madison Heights. This will move all of the county's corrections operations to outside the Town of Amherst.

Rescue Services

Emergency ambulance and rescue services are provided to the Town of Amherst by the Amherst Life Saving Crew (ALSC). The ALSC provides primary emergency medical services (EMS) and rescue to the Town and the entire north-central portion of Amherst County from its one station located at the intersection of U.S. Route 60 and Whitehead Drive. The ALSC provides the following valuable services to the community: basic and advanced life support; vehicle rescue; water rescue; medium-duty rescue; fire

suppression support; rescue and EMS classes; and public education seminars. The ALSC is technically a volunteer organization with a rescue department with approximately 40 active members, but to assist with staffing and the ability to respond in a timely manner to emergency calls, the volunteer staff is supplemented daily during weekdays through Amherst County-paid positions.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Fire

Fire protection is provided to the Town by the all-volunteer Amherst Fire Department. The Amherst Fire Department operates from its one fire station on Second Street in the Town of Amherst. All of the members are certified under current evaluation standards. These volunteer firefighters provide an outstanding and invaluable service to the Town. The Department also provides service to areas outside of the Town of Amherst.

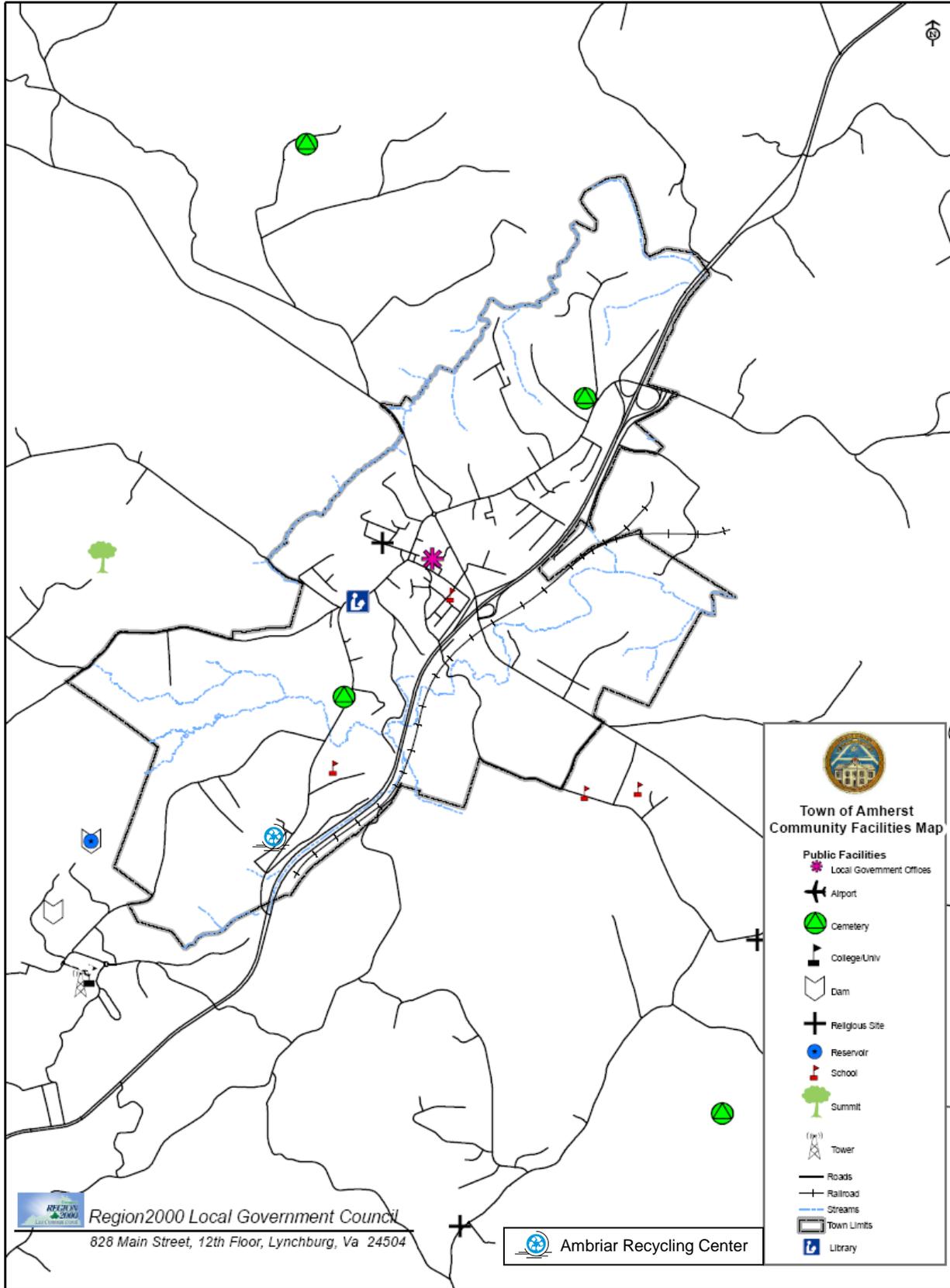
The Town of Amherst has recognized the Amherst Fire Department as the “official fire prevention and firefighting agency of the Town” in the Town Code.

TOWN SERVICES

Law Enforcement

The Town of Amherst Police Department has the primary responsibility for addressing civil distress, law enforcement, and the public safety in general, for the area included within the Town’s corporate limits. This law enforcement agency has five full-time officers. It is supported by the Amherst County Sheriff’s Department and the State Police as well as other local, state and federal agencies. In addition to enforcing a variety of Town ordinances and different provisions of the Code of Virginia, the Town of Amherst Police Department serves as the Town’s coordinating agency for fire and rescue, emergency services and the full range of other public safety issues

**Map 9.1
Town of Amherst Community Resources Map**



UTILITY SERVICES

WATER

The Town of Amherst provides municipal water service to residents and businesses within and just outside the Town's corporate limits. This water service is a major resource, asset, and responsibility for the Town. The Town's goal is to provide its residents and business operators with adequate, safe, dependable and low cost supply of drinking water.

The source of the Town's drinking water is the Buffalo River, a surface water source located in the upper middle subbasin of the James River. The Town of Amherst Water Treatment Plant is a conventional surface water filtration plant. At various points in the treatment process chemicals are added to the water. Aluminum sulfate and soda ash are used to remove contaminants dissolved in the water. Chlorine is added to disinfect the water. Fluoride is added to the water to promote strong teeth. Carbon is added to improve the taste and odor of the water. Lime and orthophosphate are added to the water to make it less corrosive. The water travels through a series of mixing chambers, then into settling chambers where contaminants and suspended matter settle out. The water is then filtered before being pumped to the distribution system. The Town's water must meet state and federal requirements administer by the Virginia Department of Health.

The Town's municipal water system includes one water treatment plant with at total production capacity of 1,000,000 gallons per day, one 1,000,000 gallon storage tank and one 1,000,000 gallon storage tank under construction, and many miles of transmission and distribution piping. Map 9.2 provides an overview of the Amherst municipal water service distribution area.

A summary of the Town's CY 07 water use and FY08 projected revenue pattern is as follows:

User Class	Users	Gallons/yr	Revenue/yr
Residential-IT	968	42,876,498	\$201,913
Commercial-IT	140	27,151,470	144,808
Residential-OT	139	7,329,547	56,006
Commercial-OT	13	20,615,330	192,410
Sweet Briar College(usage)	1	20,377,500	65,901
Sweet Briar College(contract)			31,119
TOTAL	1,261	118,350,345	\$692,157

The Town's current distribution has recently been connected to the Amherst County Service Authority, the County's public water and wastewater agency, which provides services in southern Amherst County and is also connected through the City of Lynchburg to water systems in Bedford and Campbell County.

The Town's water source is of high quality and protecting this resource is of prime importance. To support the long-term protection of these water supply resources, the Town, Amherst County, the Amherst County Service Authority (ACSA), local colleges, and the RELSWCD work with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to preserve and enhance the Town's public water supply and resources. The approved Amherst County Watershed Protection Program consists of enhanced land use controls, an ongoing watershed survey program lead by the Soil and Water Conservation District, and a successful Best Management Practice (BMP) cost share program all aimed at the protection of the area's drinking water supply. The BMP program provides financial incentives to local agricultural land owners to initiate BMPs that result in improved water quality and land resources. Through the 75% "cost share" funds, provided through the DCR-Chesapeake Bay Initiative, and the matched 25% contribution from the ACSA, property owners are able to implement these protective land use and stream protection practices at no cost. This program has twice received national recognition from the Region III of EPA.

The Town is in the process of inventorying and evaluating all of its water distribution piping and appurtenances to support the development of a comprehensive replacement/rehabilitation plan.

WASTEWATER

The Town of Amherst provides municipal sanitary sewer service to most, but not all, residences and

businesses within the Town limits and also to several areas just outside the corporate limits. The Town's sanitary sewer infrastructure consists of approximately 20 miles of sewer pipes, three relatively small sewer pumping stations, and one 0.6 MGD wastewater treatment plant. Pollution was removed from wastewater from 673 residences and 133 non-residential users plus substantially all of the flow from Sweet Briar College. The Town is prevented from fully utilizing the reserve capacity of the treatment plant as a result of actions taken by the State Water Control Board down through the years which have imposed increasingly higher standards on the quality of effluent.

A summary of the Town's CY 07 sewer and FY08 projected revenue pattern is as follows:

User Class	Users	Gallons/yr	Revenue/yr
In-Town Residential	673	28,189,082	\$164,901
In-Town Commercial	128	26,224,000	166,610
Out-of-Town Residential	0	0	
Out-of-Town Commercial	5	11,286,850	143,418
Sweet Briar College(contract)	1	20,377,500	29,631
TOTAL	807	86,077,432	\$504,560

Map 9.3 provides an overview of the Amherst municipal wastewater service area.

Wastewater Collection System

The Town's wastewater collection system was installed in three major phases: service downtown was installed in the 1930's; service north of U.S. Route 60 was installed in the 1950's; and the interceptor from Sweet Briar College/Ambriar area to the wastewater treatment plant was installed in the 1970's. Much of the 1930's and 1950's vintage wastewater collection network, which includes both concrete and terra cotta pipes, is deteriorating. There are two major results of this deterioration, the first being structural failure which causes line stoppages. The second is inflow and infiltration which occurs when holes and cracks in the sewer lines allow rainwater or groundwater to enter the system. Of course, this excess water stresses the operation of the wastewater treatment plant.

Work to improve the Town's wastewater collection system is expected to be a significant Town effort in the coming years. Replacement of old collection pipes and manholes as problems are identified is both time-consuming and costly. The Town is in the process of inventorying and evaluating all of its sewer collection piping and manholes to support the development of a comprehensive replacement/rehabilitation plan.

Although some excess capacity exists, no major expansions of the sanitary sewer service area are expected to be funded by the Town of Amherst in the next few years. Massive septic failure is unlikely due to the prevalence of favorable soil conditions in the greater Amherst area, a point backed by the records of the Amherst County Health Department which show no unusual problems related to septic tank failures. However, the Town is generally agreeable to extending sewer into new service areas under the policy that the party requesting the extension must pay for the full capital cost of such extensions, including appropriate costs related to the impact of the new user(s) on the sewer plant.

Rutledge Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant

The Town of Amherst owns and operates the Rutledge Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant which is located behind the Zane Snead Industrial Park at 448 Industrial Drive. The plant was originally constructed as a 0.40 MGD plant in 1974 and was refurbished and expanded in 2005 to a rated capacity of 0.60 MGD. The plant holds VPDES Permit No. VA0031321, which had an effective date of December 28, 2004 and an expiration date of December 27, 2009. Following are the effluent quality standards imposed on the plant by that permit:

Parameter	Q< 0.38 MGD		Q>0.38 MGD	
	Monthly Avg.	Avg.	Monthly Avg.	Weekly Avg.
BOD ₅	11.1 mg/l	16.7 mg/l	7.4 mg/l	11,1 mg/l
TSS	30 mg/l	45 mg/l	30 mg/l	45 mg/l
Ammonia-N(Jun-Nov)	14.7 mg/l	14.7 mg/l	12.1 mg/l	12/1 mg/l
Fecal Coliform	200 N/Cml	----	200 N/Cml	----
Total Hardness	120 mg/l (min)	----	120 mg/l (min)	----

The upgraded plant design utilized Kruger Double Ditch system technology and features the following unit processes:

- Screening & Grit Removal
- Influent Pumping
- Lime Conditioning
- Phased Isolation Oxidation Ditch (Secondary Treatment)
- Disc Filtration (Tertiary Treatment)
- Disinfection (Ultraviolet Light)
- Post Aeration
- Aerobic Sludge Digestion and Sludge Drying Beds

An industrial wastewater pretreatment program is in place whereby wastewater with higher than normal concentrations of the various pollutants is identified and treated at its source before it gets to the Town's wastewater collection and treatment facilities. Continuation of a strong but reasonable industrial sewage pretreatment program and laboratory work will continue to be a priority.

Nutrient Removal

On November 21, 2005, after much study by DEQ and discussion by the various “stakeholders”, and in order to work towards cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay, the State Water Control Board approved nutrient waste load allocations for the largest sewer plants located in the James River basin. At the Rutledge Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant's 600,000 gal/day (0.6 MGD) design capacity, the average concentration would be limited to 6 mg/l of nitrogen and 0.5 mg/l of phosphorous. In effect this establishes the total amount nitrogen (10,964 lbs/yr) and phosphorous (914 lbs/yr) that the Rutledge Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant would be allowed to discharge to Rutledge Creek. Although it was well-known that nutrient removal requirements would eventually be placed on the plant, since the exact numbers were not known when the 2005 plant upgrade was designed the recently completed plant is not able to achieve that level of nutrient removal at the 0.6 MGD level.

However, it is possible but not guaranteed that the Town will be able to meet these limits in the short run since the plant is currently “hydraulically underloaded” – that is, the actual flow received at the plant is substantially below the designed flow rate capacity. An Interim Operation Plan completed in 2005 confirmed that the Town is operating the plant in such a way to achieve optimum nutrient removal, but – again - this mode of operation is made possible due to the actual flow rate being significantly lower than the full design flow rate.

A strategy to address potential treatment plant upgrades was developed per DEQ mandate in 2005 in a Basis of Design report. The BOD report explained what would need to be done to remove nutrients from the Town's wastewater. In summary, and all other things being equal, the BOD report indicated that an additional \$3,500,000 in improvements would be required to meet the waste load allocation regulation at full design flow. The Town's difficulty in this is that, in effect, the state is asking for the Town's ratepayers to fund an expensive project almost immediately after another one has been finished. Projects of this magnitude typically occur not more frequently than every couple of decades, or once per generation, which coincides with the normal 20-year funding programs. Complicating this problem is that, in addition to potential upgrades that may be required to address regulatory requirements, there may be need to upgrade pipes and capacity as the community grows.

When the state issued the Town's current Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit on December 28, 2004, it contained a "reopener" clause so that instead of a fixed set of regulations over a 5-year permit term the Town would be subject to new rules as soon as they are adopted. The new requirements were imposed on the Town via a statewide "General Permit" which set the deadline for nutrient removal compliance as January 1, 2011.

The nutrient removal issue is very complicated and is sure to be a very expensive problem for the Town of Amherst and its municipal sanitary sewer ratepayers.

It is believed that the Town's sewer plant can meet or almost meet the nutrient removal requirements for the next few years, but as flow to the plant increases the ability to remove the nutrients (particularly phosphorous) decreases. In other words, if the Town can limit inflow and infiltration problems and if a major sewer user does not come online in the next few years, major capital construction can probably be postponed for five to ten years. However, if the state's nutrient removal goals cannot be met after January 1, 2011 then there is a "notice of violation" procedure and a charge for excess nutrient discharges – anticipated at \$4-13/lb – that the Town would need to pay.

The Town's strategy involves doing very little for the time being except for keeping an eye on the situation and doing a PER to thoroughly evaluate the Town's sewer plant situation in 2009 – concurrent with the issuance of the next sewer plant permit - and that construction will be needed a few years after that point.

For the short run, the Town has planned to stand together with most other sewer plant operators whose facilities discharge into the Chesapeake Bay via participation in the Nutrient Credit Exchange Association. Under this program, plants that achieve better nutrient removal can give or sell "credits" to sewer plants that cannot. The significance of this is that, without trading, each and every one of the "significant dischargers" (i.e. sewer plants) must meet its individual permit limits by installing any necessary improvements for nitrogen and phosphorus removal and have them in service by the compliance deadline. This is expected to result in a very large number of facility upgrades; create severe competition for engineering services, qualified contractors and tradesmen; cause excessive bid prices; and create serious challenges meeting compliance deadlines and potential regulatory enforcement actions. Under a "base case" (no trading) scenario, an overwhelming demand for quality construction-related services that cannot be satisfied at any price within the short regulatory deadlines is anticipated. Although most of the upgrades will ultimately be required, the idea is that trading will allow the upgrades to be phased in over time and thus level the demand for construction-related service providers.

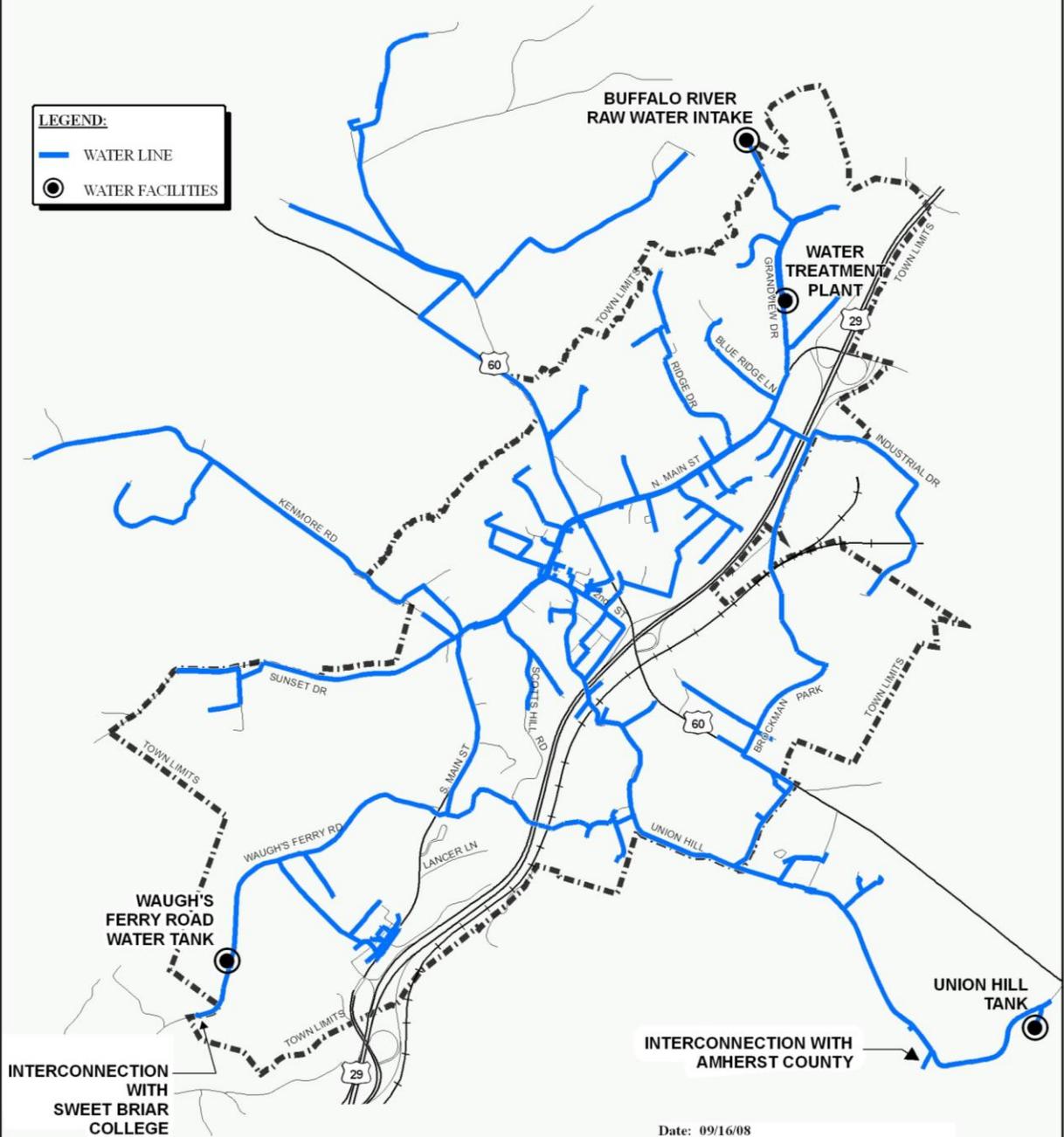
Map 9.2
Town of Amherst Water System Map

Town of Amherst Existing Water System

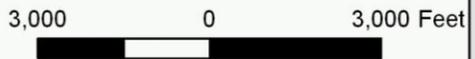


LEGEND:

- WATER LINE
- WATER FACILITIES



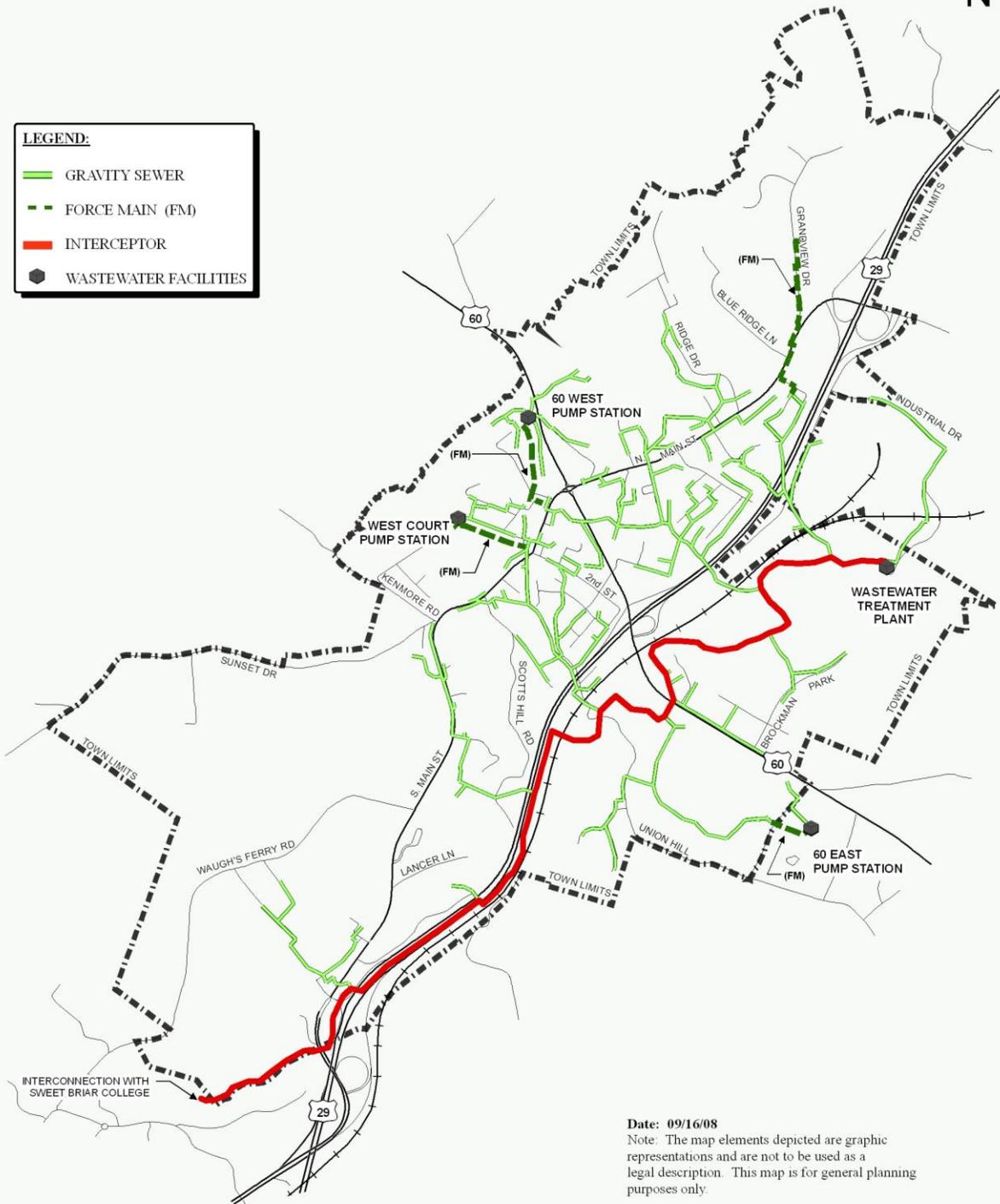
Date: 09/16/08
 Note: The map elements depicted are graphic representations and are not to be used as a legal description. This map is for general planning purposes only.



Map 9.3
Town of Amherst Wastewater System Map

Town of Amherst Existing Wastewater System

- LEGEND:**
- GRAVITY SEWER
 - - - FORCE MAIN (FM)
 - INTERCEPTOR
 - WASTEWATER FACILITIES



Date: 09/16/08
 Note: The map elements depicted are graphic representations and are not to be used as a legal description. This map is for general planning purposes only.



SOLID WASTE

The Town of Amherst provides solid waste collection services to all residences and businesses connected to its municipal water system. All refuse collection is performed by private contractor; monthly assessments for curbside collection customers are billed through the Town's utility billing system and dumpster customers are billed directly by the contract hauler in a franchise-type arrangement

Recycling is encouraged by the Town. Amherst County operates a recycling center in the Town located at Ambriar Shopping Center. Items received at the site include: plastics # 1 and # 2, cardboard, mixed paper, aluminum cans, newspaper and the three colors of glass. Further, at the County landfill, residents and businesses can recycle scrap metal, yard waste, and tires. Through a partnership with the City of Lynchburg, the Town's residents can participate in a household hazardous waste program.

Currently, all solid waste from the town is deposited in the Amherst County Landfill. There is however, the recent development of regional solid waste planning, lead by the Virginia's Region 2000 Local Government Council, has resulted in the formation of a regional solid waste authority. The Region 2000 Services Authority is expected to be fully operational by July 2008. It will provide participating jurisdictions with lower operational costs, a potential excess revenue stream, streamlined management, and a stronger business approach to activities associated with solid waste management. Currently, participation in this regional authority approach includes membership from Bedford, Campbell, Nelson and Appomattox Counties and the cities of Bedford and Lynchburg. It is understood that Amherst County may form some connection with this regional system in the future.

OTHER UTILITIES

Other utilities furnished to the Town of Amherst are via private sources. An inventory of these providers follows:

- Electricity - American Electric Power (Appalachian Power)
- Telephone - Verizon
- Internet/Cable Television – Comcast
- Cellular Telephone - 360 Communications; Cellular One; Ntelos
- Pager Service - Numerous Providers

HUMAN SERVICES

HEALTHCARE

There are no hospitals within Amherst County. For this reason the City of Lynchburg serves as the major medical center for the Town of Amherst. With the completion of the new Route 29 Bypass, a Town resident can be at a Lynchburg hospital in approximately 15 minutes. The City has two hospitals, both of which are owned and operated by Centra Health, Inc.

Lynchburg General Hospital is a 270 bed capacity, emergency and critical care center that specializes in cardiology, emergency medicine, orthopedics, neurology, and neurosurgery. LGH is recognized nationally for its orthopedic and cardiac programs. The hospital is undergoing a major renovation that will expand services and bed-space. Virginia Baptist Hospital, founded in 1924, is a 317 licensed bed facility serving Central Virginia with quality health care for the whole family. It is the regional hospital for cancer care, women's and children's care, mental health and chemical dependency treatment, outpatient surgery, physical rehabilitation, and home health. Virginia Baptist has among its specialties maternity and premature infant care. Collectively, these two facilities and their accompanying medical centers are adequate in both location and services provided in order to meet the health care needs of the residents of the Town of Amherst.

Within the Town limits of Amherst, there are two medical practices, two dental practices, and one eye doctor. The Amherst County Public Health Department provides services such as prenatal care, immunizations, communicable and venereal disease control, home health services, family planning and crippled children's services. Sanitarians from the health department also inspect restaurants, perform soil

tests and issue septic tank permits, and analyze water samples. The department also maintains vital statistics for Amherst County, recording birth and death certificates as well as marriage and divorce documents.

The Central Virginia Community Service Board has an office in Amherst and provides services in the areas of mental health, mental retardation, substance abuse and prevention services.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

AMHERST COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The primary goal of the public school system is to create an environment that is conducive to developing the minds of children, to explore new opportunities through education, and to develop a citizen who will become a vital and productive part of a community. The Amherst County Public Schools (ACPS) has developed a total educational plan to direct and support area students to develop the fundamental skills and processes to achieve these goals.

The Town of Amherst does not own or operate its own school program but is supportive of the Amherst County Public Schools.

The public primary and secondary school system in Amherst County is operated by the Amherst County School Board. Amherst County Public Schools (ACPS) currently operates a total of 11 educational facilities: seven elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school and one alternative school. Two of these schools, Amherst Elementary School and Amherst County High School are located within Town limits. Two others, Central Elementary School and Amherst Middle School are located just outside of Town limits. The ACPS had a total school enrollment in 2006 of 4,664 students. The Town of Amherst provides support and assistance to the County Schools in every reasonable way that it can.

Comprehensive vocational programs are available in grades 7 through 12. The programs are designed to provide exploratory opportunities for a variety of students as well as occupational training for those young people desiring to enter any of a number of relevant job positions. Current programs offer training in agricultural education, business education, marketing education, health occupations, food occupations, consumer and homemaking education, drafting, auto mechanics, and electricity/electronics. Facilities and equipment meet "state of the art" standards. Instructional programs are fully competency based and have been validated by advisory committees composed of businesses and industrial representatives. Program areas make use of computers and software related to business and industrial applications. Articulation agreements have been arranged with Central Virginia Community College to provide for sequential development of competency based skills from grade 11 through community college levels in business, auto mechanics, electricity, electronics, drafting and engineering design.

A wide range of competitive sports is played each fall, winter and spring on the varsity and junior varsity levels under the auspices of the Virginia High School League. Athletic programs are offered in football, basketball, soccer, cross country, indoor track, volleyball, baseball, softball, tennis, track and field, golf and wrestling. The Virginia High School League also sponsors one-act plays, debates and forensics at the secondary level.

Amherst County schools also offer a wide variety of educational opportunities for adults. These offerings include learning to read and write, preparing for the GED exam, developing skills to secure employment, upgrading existing careers and enjoying certain vocational pursuits. A cooperative effort with other agencies provides training for adults who are entering the work force.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Within the area there is a wealth of postsecondary educational resources. Within Region 2000 there are four liberal arts colleges, one university, one community college, and two business colleges. In addition just 90 miles from Region 2000's borders are the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech—both of which regularly collaborate with area businesses on R&D projects, internships, and other programs. Lynchburg

is also served by satellite campus locations of the University of Virginia, Averett University, and Bluefield College, which collectively offer programs ranging from complete graduate degrees to single-day seminars.

Region 2000 postsecondary institutions include:

- Central Virginia Community College, a two-year institution which was established as a member of the Virginia Community College System. It provides State-supported educational facilities beyond the high school level for the cities of Lynchburg and Bedford and the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell. The curricula and programs of the College serve more than 228,000 people within this geographical jurisdiction. In fact, a new branch of CVCC is scheduled to open in the Town of Amherst in the Mountain View Shopping Center in early 2009.
- Liberty University was founded in 1971. It is a four-year, private Christian liberal arts university which offers 60 programs of study. The university's "professors integrate a Christian worldview into every subject area." The university offers 18 varsity athletics teams.
- Founded in 1903, Lynchburg College is a private, independent, co-educational, residential college. Its undergraduate and graduate student enrollment is 2,400. It offers 35 majors and 43 minors, personalized classroom environment, and interdisciplinary teaching and learning. It also offers 21 varsity athletics programs and more than 70 student clubs and organizations.
- Randolph College, founded as Randolph-Macon Woman's College in 1891, is a private liberal arts and science college which focuses on rigorous academics within a global perspective. Randolph has a student population of 730, coming from 43 states and 48 countries. More than 25 majors are offered and students compete in 14 athletic teams.
- Founded in 1902, Sweet Briar College is a private, women's liberal arts and sciences college with a student population of 700. It offers more than 40 major, minor, and certificate programs and has seven varsity athletics programs.

DISTANCE LEARNING/ADVANCED TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Center for Advanced Engineering and Research in Lynchburg brings opportunities for graduate-level engineering and technical courses to the area workforce. Through partnership with Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia, Old Dominion University, and Virginia Commonwealth University, the Center offers 15 master's degree programs, all conducted in flexible, interactive class structures. Graduate engineering include courses in civil, electrical, general, mechanical, and nuclear engineering.

There also exists, through the Commonwealth Graduate Engineering Program (CGEP) the ability to obtain a masters degree through a distance learning program. The CGEP provides the opportunities for qualified individuals to earn a mater's degree part time through graduate learning with five Virginia universities: George Mason University, Old Dominion University, the University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Virginia Tech.

LEISURE AND INFORMATION SERVICES

PARKS AND RECREATION

The Town of Amherst is surrounded by the natural beauty of the rolling hills, mountains, and beautiful streams that dot the area and the proximity to the James River. There are locally wide ranges of passive and active recreational outlets for the pubic to enjoy. The recreational outlets are provided and maintained by a combination of local, state, federal and private entities.

Within the Town of Amherst are a number of public spaces. The Town of Amherst has developed a miniature park across the street from the Town Hall. The Village Garden Club maintains this "MiniPark" site with an assortment of blooming plants and is regularly adorned during the various seasons of the year. Also within the Town of Amherst is one of the few remaining traffic circles. The circle, adorned with a fountain and in constant bloom through the watchful eye of Village Garden Club, is located at the intersection of U.S. Route 29 Business and U.S. Route 60. The Town, in recognition of value of public spaces for passive recreation, has within the recent Amherst Downtown Economic Restructuring Plan and Physical Improvement Strategy planned development of a "town square" area and other scenic amenities within the Town. In addition the plan calls for creating walkable corridors that allow safe access

to area school park facilities and other trails within the area.

Sport Park

Coolwell Park

This multi-purpose park comprised of 33 acres provides passive and active opportunities. With picnic facilities, a children's play area, restrooms, lighted all-purpose fields, outdoor basketball courts, a nature trail, an amphitheater, and an indoor facility used for hobby and craft classes that is available for rent, it is the best equipped facility in the county.

Lake Parks

All three of these lakes were constructed to provide recreational opportunities and to provide as flood control measures. Mill Creek is further distinguished by being designated as the Town's future public drinking water supply.

Stone House Park

Located in the Temperance area of the county, this park is located on a 41 acre watershed lake and is open for fishing only. There is a boat ramp providing access into the lake (no gasoline powered boats allowed.) Other facilities include a covered picnic pavilion, picnic tables, grills, a play area for children, and restroom facilities.

Thrashers Creek Park

Located in the Temperance area, this park rests on a 36 acre watershed lake open for fishing only. Facilities include (no gasoline powered boats allowed) picnic tables, grills, a play area for children and restroom facilities.

Mill Creek Park

Located in the Temperance area, this park comprises a 194 acre lake. Facilities include a boat ramp, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, and a play area. Like the other two lake parks, gasoline motors are not allowed.

Pedlar Reservoir

Pedlar reservoir was established in 1907 as a drinking water source for the City of Lynchburg. The original water lines conveying water to the city were constructed of redwood. The impounded water covers approximately 125 acres and holds approximately 1 billion gallons. The contributing waters to the reservoir is 35 square miles in size. The city allows limited recreation by some Lynchburg residents. Several permits for fishing are available daily from the Department of Billings and Collections. The permit includes a fishing license and a boat provided by the City of Lynchburg. Pedlar supplies ninety percent of Lynchburg's drinking water.

River Parks

Monocan Park

Located on the James River at the end of Route 652 in Elon, Monocan Park is the only public place in the county allowing speed boats and water skiing. Facilities at the park include a boat ramp a small dock for boat access to the river, a covered pavilion, a picnic area, a small play area for children, and restroom facilities.

Rivers Edge Park

Situated along the James River in Madison Heights across from Lynchburg's river front, this park is a work in progress. There exists a boat ramp suitable for backing bateaus into the water and approximately 0.7 mile of shoreline. The County has an approved master plan for park development which includes hiking and biking trails, fishing coves, a ferry landing which will join with the Lynchburg landing, and a restored building to be used by vendors. It is hoped that the Rivers Edge park trail will connect with the James River Heritage Trail. There are plans to provide a pedestrian/bike bridge under the Expressway Bridge which will link the park with Percival Island and Lynchburg's riverfront.

Trails

James River Heritage Trail

This trail system joins with Lynchburg's Blackwater Creek Trail/Riverfront and Percival Island. It crosses over the James River via a former railroad bridge and continues along the former railroad right-of-way for

1.4 miles to the current terminus. The long term plan contemplates this trail continuing from the terminus 2.4 miles to another former railroad bridge which crosses the James River into Campbell County.

Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail

The former Blue Ridge Railroad provides the basis of this hiking/biking/equestrian trail. It begins in Nelson County at the former depot in Piney River and continues one mile to the county line where it crosses the Piney River into Amherst. From there it will continue another four miles, cross back into Nelson, and end in the community of Tye River.

Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail

A state-wide system of trails for viewing wildlife includes Amherst County in its "Mountain Phase" of a three phase trail system.

Appalachian Trail

Approximately 25 miles of this nationally recognized trail passes through Amherst County.

Maps that indicate where the various trails are located can be obtained at the Amherst County recreation office.

National Forest

The County has approximately 38,000 acres of the George Washington National Forest situated within its borders. It is predominantly the northwestern part of Amherst County. A subset of the national forest is 7,600 acres designated as the Mount Pleasant National Scenic Area. Outdoor recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking, observing scenery, hunting, fishing, and camping abound in these areas.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Amherst County Public Library System provides a full range of services for youth and adults. The three primary roles of the Amherst County Public Library are provision of general information to all citizens of Amherst County, provision of current topics and titles to meet the recreational, informational, and educational needs of all citizens in various media formats, and provide resources needed for lifelong learning including literacy. The headquarters and main branch of the Amherst County Public Library is located at the intersection of South Main Street and Kenmore Road in the Town. It occupies the remodeled and expanded former First Colony Telephone Building. The Amherst library has 9,600 square feet of space, including a meeting room on the lower level which consists of 1,500 square feet. The system's branch library is located in Madison Heights in the James River Shopping Center.

The library system has in excess of 100,000 items including print books, electronic books, audio books, music CDs, DVD and VHS video, online databases, and magazines and newspapers. Public computers are available offering basic office software, educational games for children, access to numerous databases, and Internet access. Both libraries offer wireless access to users who own their own laptop computers.

CHURCHES

Churches continue to be an important part of the quality of life in Amherst. In addition to offering spiritual fulfillment, church facilities and programs contribute greatly to the community through the volunteering and services that they provide to the area community.

The following churches are located within the Town of Amherst:

- Amherst Baptist Church
- Amherst Presbyterian Church
- Ascension Episcopal Church
- Blue Ridge Baptist Church
- Church of Epiphany (Anglican Catholic)
- Emmanuel United Methodist Church
- Morning Star Baptist Church
- Mount Olive Baptist Church
- Saint Francis of Assisi (Catholic)

MASS MEDIA

Various new outlets distribute information to area residents. Some of these are summarized below:

<u>Television</u> -	WDBJ - 7 (CBS)	Roanoke
	WSLS - 10 (NBC)	Roanoke
	WSET - 13 (ABC)	Lynchburg
	WJPR/WVFT - 21/27 (FOX)	Lynchburg/Roanoke
	Blue Ridge Public Television	Roanoke
<u>Radio</u> -	WGOL (97.9 FM)	Lynchburg
	WWWL/WYYD (AM 1420/108 FM)	Lynchburg
	WJJS/WXYU (AM 1320/101.7 FM)	Lynchburg
	WLVA (AM 590)	Lynchburg
	WBRG (AM 1050)	Lynchburg
	WRVL (88.3 FM)	Lynchburg
	WXLK/WLYK (K92) - 92.3/100.1 FM	Roanoke/Lynchburg
	WPVR/WFIR (95 FM/AM 960)	Roanoke
	WLNI (105.9 FM)	Lynchburg
	WKDE (AM 1000/105.5 FM)	Altavista
	WLDJ/WRDJ (102.7/105.3 FM)	Lynchburg/Roanoke
	WVLR (AM 1320)	Madison Heights
<u>Newspapers</u> -	Amherst New Era-Progress - Amherst (Weekly)	
	Lynchburg News & Advance - Lynchburg (Daily)	
	Piedmont Area Journal - Lynchburg (Weekly)	
	Blue Ridge Business Journal - Roanoke/Lynchburg/New River Valley	

INTERNET

In general, broadband internet service in Amherst is limited to that provided through Comcast cable modems. This has proven to be expensive for many of the Town's residents and business operators.

In 2007 the Town of Amherst installed an antenna array at the Town Hall for the purpose of providing "municipal WiFi." Access to the internet is available through this service from the traffic circle to past Garland Avenue along S. Main Street from the courthouse complex to Mount Olive Baptist Church. A plan to extend this service area is being implemented.

The Amherst County Public Library and several local businesses also provide WiFi service without charge.

Chapter 10

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Section 1 of the Comprehensive Plan outlines historical and current economic conditions in the Town of Amherst. It discusses some of the barriers to and opportunities for its future economic stability. This Economic Development Plan outlines the strategies and actions that the Town of Amherst will use to maintain an economically secure future.

The Town of Amherst's philosophy in developing its Economic Development Plan is that the community can best support a sound economic development effort by reducing regulatory hurdles, fostering the private sector's ability to support economic development, and encouraging government agencies to develop programs and projects that will support the community's economic well being. The Town desires to achieve the same goals as other communities such as:

- facilitating the creation of more and better jobs,
- improving the overall tax base relative to the overall cost of providing services,
- diversifying the economic base as insurance against industry downturns, strikes and company downsizing,
- ensuring an effective infrastructure to meet growth and technology demands,
- ensuring availability to cultural, environmental and natural resources which enhance the quality of life for the residents of the community.

Like every other community, the Town of Amherst will work to meet these goals by improving the competitive position of the Town and surrounding region, attracting new business and industry and innovative economic opportunities, providing support to existing industry and commercial enterprises, and protecting and enhancing cultural and natural resources. The Town of Amherst will work to maintain its position as the major center for commerce and industry in northern Amherst County and an important economic development zone for the Lynchburg Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The Town of Amherst has defined its role in these activities as summarized within this Economic Development Plan. The Town's economic development program centers on the following initiatives which are outlined in more detail below:

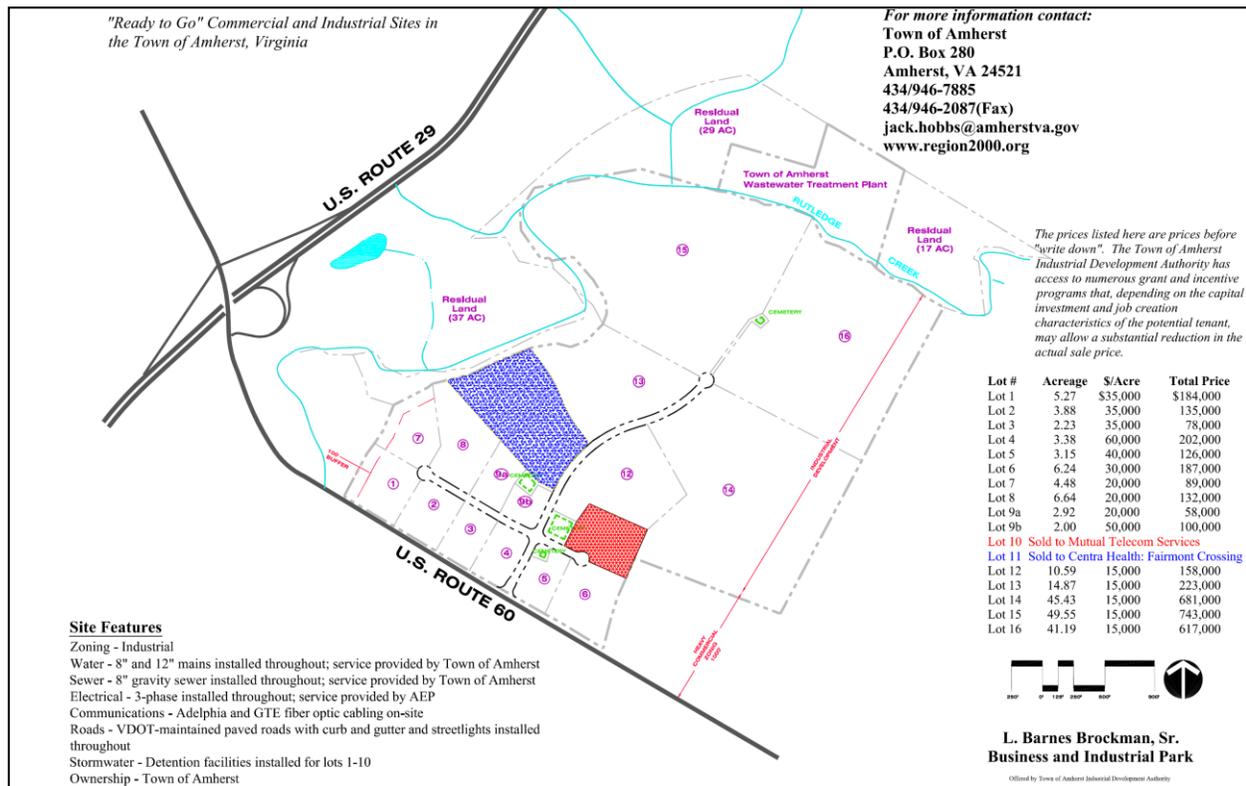
- Supporting the Brockman Park Project
- Fostering the reinvigoration of the downtown area, and
- Supporting other local, regional and state agencies in their economic development initiatives.

Brockman Park

Background - The Town of Amherst's L. Barnes Brockman, Sr. Business and Industrial Park on U.S. Route 60 East consists of over 140 usable acres divided into 16 commercial and industrial sites. Streets, water lines, sewer lines, electricity, and fiber optic telecommunication cables have been installed to serve the sites, one of which occupied by Centra Health's Fairmont Crossing 120-bed nursing home and another by Mutual Telecom Services, Inc., a telephone equipment integration and services company. Fourteen sites ranging in size from 2 to 33 acres remain. The Town has invested \$3,000,000 in the project, and the Town's goal is to recover these monies through taxes, land sales, and grants in the coming years. Brockman Park is also located in Amherst County, and as the benefits of that development will accrue to both the Town and County the two governments have an arrangement to jointly and aggressively market the sites.

Generally, the range of potential commercial and light industrial uses allowed in the park is extremely broad as defined by the Town of Amherst zoning ordinance. More practically, however, the range of uses for Brockman Park is likely to reflect those already in the region. Most probably the first two tiers of smaller lots (2-7 acres) off U.S. Route 60 will prove most attractive to a limited range of light manufacturers (machine shops, assembly of pre-manufactured parts, printing, etc.), area distributors taking advantage of the recently completed Lynchburg/U.S. Route 29 Bypass, small technology firms, and service businesses that do not rely on retail traffic. In time, the potential exists for a developer to purchase one or two lots on which to build several speculative office buildings or production space that

can be used by small growing businesses and start-ups. Larger lots at the rear of the development offer potential for heavier taxable investment in plant and machinery, plus a greater number of jobs. For these reasons, the larger lots are being reserved for manufacturers, processors, large-scale data centers, etc. rather than storage yards, freight terminals, and warehouses.



Map 10.1 Brockman Park Master Plan

Geographic Target Markets - Over the past decades Campbell and Bedford Counties have been beneficiaries of expansions and relocations of Lynchburg firms seeking the best possible locations. These communities offered opportunities (land, utilities, access) that, in effect, have captured much of the region's natural business growth. Existing firms will account for as much as 70%-80% of all new growth in a region in any given year; but Amherst has captured such growth to a much lesser extent than other communities. The region is projected to continue growing. To take advantage of this fully improved business park strategically located on U.S. Route 60 and U.S. Route 29 Bypass, the firms seeking to locate in Brockman Park are likely to be affiliated in some way with the Lynchburg metropolitan area.

A second market opportunity for Brockman Park tenants is relocations from outside Region 2000 and State of Virginia. Continued movement of firms will take place nationally and internationally, and the Town and County of Amherst are positioned with an industrial park that can prove attractive. Most probably, the larger sites, numbers 13-16, will offer the greatest potential for this type of relocation.

Marketing Message - In marketing Brockman Park, representatives of the Town and County of Amherst will have to be prepared to convey two themes:

- (a) Community Characteristics -- All persons working with clients must be fully aware of and be able to recite a range of community information important to representatives of prospective businesses; and the means must be available to document such information. Topics such as cost-of-living, the quality of schools, work force training, recreational opportunities, supporting services (machine shops, computer support, medical services, etc.) are important and must be addressed to business visitors. The Region 2000 Economic Development Council provides considerable assistance in this regard, but more specific local data is always required. These community characteristics, which also involve resources of the region, must "sell" the client on

Amherst as a general location. These will probably be most important to relocations outside of Region 2000 as local firms will already have basic knowledge or will determine many such matters to be unimportant.

(b) **Site Specific Characteristics** -- The “message” on Brockman Park must project the reasons to select this particular physical location over others in the region. Characteristics on which marketing is to be based include (1) sites for a variety of commercial-industrial uses in a semi-rural environment; (2) waterlines, sewer lines, streets, electricity, and fiber which have already been installed to serve all sites; (3) availability of County and Town services; (4) the major improved industrial park on the north/south U.S. 29 axis between Charlottesville and Lynchburg; and (5) location at the northern terminus of Lynchburg’s U.S. 29 Bypass, providing access to a majority of businesses and population in the region within 30 minutes. Together, these are the factors that will distinguish the Brockman Park from others with which it will compete. Staff, local elected representatives, and members of the AIDA all should be able to convey these themes.

Brochures have been developed and need to be maintained. These documents will be used in several ways:

(a) **Town-County Cooperation** - to highlight Town and County characteristics and convey the fact that the communities have a solid working relationship.

(b) **Outside Relocations** - Virginia Economic Development Partnership, American Electric Power, economic development consultants, and other groups and agencies who could be a first point of contact for companies locating facilities in Virginia will be solicited for their assistance and provided sufficient brochures for their use. Note that this is a repetitive process taking advantage of all opportunities to convey the Amherst message. It is not realistic to expect immediate dividends from this effort as it will take time to fully educate many of these “allies” on the potential in Amherst.

(c) **Regional Expansions and Relocations** - Again, probably the greatest potential for success lies in the Region 2000 target market area. An intensive effort will be made to distribute the Amherst flyers and discuss the merits of a Brockman Park location with those businesses/persons that might influence another business location. These include area banks, engineering firms, realtors, attorneys, existing Amherst businesses, utilities, and others to be identified. Help in spreading information about the park will be sought from entities such as the Amherst Chamber of Commerce, Sweet Briar College, local and regional publications, and Region 2000. This, most particularly, must be a repetitive process that sets a “state-of-mind” in the region for Amherst as a preferred business location.

Framework for Negotiating with Potential Tenants - A number of factors/guidelines that establish the framework within which Brockman Park lots will be offered have been established. None of these guidelines are considered absolutely rigid, but deviation while negotiating a transaction will require considerable justification. The factors are as follows:

(a) **Asking prices** – Lots in Brockman Park are priced according to size, location and desirability. The prices shown on the master plan graphic above should be considered a starting point for negotiations.

(b) **Incentives** - The base price of each site can be reduced in value/cost by up to the total (Town and county) taxes that will be paid in 3-5 years by a new development. The minimum new investment to qualify for a price reduction incentive will be \$500,000 on lots 1-9 and \$1,000,000 on lots 12-16. In no event will the cost of a lot be reduced by more than 75% of its original value unless specifically approved by the Town Council. This formula will make it possible to obtain highly competitive costs for sites when factoring both County and Town taxes, to the extent that a reduction could easily get to the \$10,000 per acre or less cost on many sites.

(c) **Real Estate Commissions** - Commissions on the sale of sites will be paid at the rate of 6% to properly registered realtors/brokers.

(d) Project Responsibility - Development of all projects on behalf of the Town of Amherst will be by the Town of Amherst Industrial Authority. Projects will be recommended by the Authority to the Town Council for final acceptance or rejection.

Downtown Reinvigoration

The Town of Amherst has recently focused much attention on how to improve its downtown area. This culminated in a consultant's study on economic restructuring and improving downtown Amherst's physical attributes. The vision articulated in the study is that:

- Downtown Amherst will position itself as the quaint downtown destination for local residents and visitors in the greater Amherst area.
- Downtown Amherst will become the center of community activity where residents and visitors can gather in a pleasant, pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Downtown Amherst will strengthen its existing retail base and recruit new businesses and investments while ultimately becoming a more complete center with new shops, restaurants, and residences.
- Town allies will be active partners with the goal of promoting downtown, recruiting businesses and enhancing the whole community.

To achieve this vision, the Town of Amherst will employ the following policies:

Branding and Promotion – One of the outcomes of the study was a branding campaign that would use the logo shown below. The Town will encourage the use of adopted logo materials as a way to promote the identity of downtown Amherst. Possible extension of this uniform branding to other organizations and efforts include web sites, e-blasts, brochures and maps, promotional materials developed and used by Amherst County and regional agencies and the Amherst County Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 10.2 Amherst Brand

Technology – The Town of Amherst recognizes the increasing role that technology plays in a community's success. In support of this, the Town will continue to maintain and improve its web site and municipal wireless internet service.

There is an increased emphasis on technology infrastructure, technology and business facilities for new businesses, and development of a technology zone with appropriate local incentives. The Town will pursue opportunities that will encourage bringing technology jobs to the community. For instance, the Town might develop a component or an extension of Brockman Park for technology specialties, or even downtown, where technology businesses are encouraged with special tax and other incentives as is found in technology zones per Virginia Code Section 58.1-3850 which gives communities the ability to provide tax breaks and other incentives to attract and retain technology businesses.

Town Square – The Town of Amherst will sponsor improvements off E. Court Street that will result in a Town Square. This will be the Town's signature public gathering spot and will be a multi-use space for events, parking, farmer's market, etc. In addition, this public works project will be a feature of the Town's celebration of the centennial of the granting of its charter in 2010.

Festivals and Events – Healthy downtowns often feature events and festivals. The Town will continue to

support events that feature enjoyable activities held in downtown Amherst.

Downtown Organization – Many organizations and individuals are interested in improving downtown Amherst. Along with the Town of Amherst, these include downtown merchants and business operators, local service clubs and community groups, the Amherst County Chamber of Commerce and Amherst County. To facilitate the promotion and improvement of the downtown area, the Town will support the creation of an organization that will coordinate downtown revitalization efforts. This organization should be developed based on the “main street” model promoted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.



Map 10.3
Conceptual Layout for Town Square Project

Parking – It is recognized that increased activity in downtown Amherst will aggravate the problems associated with the availability of parking spaces there. This problem will be addressed under the transportation section of the Comprehensive Plan.

Signage – With the goal of welcoming newcomers, visitors and tourists, the Town will develop and install a downtown wayfarer signage program as time and funding permits. The benefits of this would be to direct individuals to appropriate in-town venues such as the courthouse, museum, library, and various government offices as well as restaurants and retail outlets.

Support for Local, Regional and State Groups

The Town has many partners in economic development and will endeavor to support their activities as benefits the Town of Amherst as follows:

Amherst County Chamber of Commerce – The stated mission of the voluntary association of the individuals and companies interested in promoting commerce in Amherst County known as the Amherst County Chamber of Commerce is “To advance commercial, industrial, professional domestic and global interests in Amherst County and its trade area; to increase members' presence; to be of service to members in any way we can help for...”Your business is our business.”

Chamber activities include community outreach via various publications and brochures, maintenance of a website (www.amherstvachamber.com), distribution of relocation and travel packets, a customer-to-customer and business-to-business referral service, sponsorship of networking opportunities and promotion of community events. The Town will support these activities through its chamber membership

and participation in many of the activities that more directly benefit the Town of Amherst if, for no other reason, it would fall to Amherst County or the Town of Amherst to provide those functions if the Chamber did not exist.

Amherst County

In recent years Amherst County has greatly expanded its economic development effort by providing staff dedicated to that area, funding tourism and industrial park development, and creating a county industrial development authority. Recent and ongoing county initiatives include:

- Developing the capacity, programs and facilities necessary to attract new business investment and employment to the area
- Completion of an industry cluster and target industry study
- Creating and maintaining a website to promote the area as a place to visit, live and do business
- Supporting incentives for local business investment
- Promoting the retention and growth of existing local businesses and working to remove the restraints on the growth of existing local businesses
- Promoting and expanding recreation, tourism and cultural opportunities in the area via development of a visitors center and promotion of local events and destinations
- Sponsoring a branch of Central Virginia Community College in the Town of Amherst.

The Town of Amherst will support these activities since they will benefit the Town's residents and business operators. In particular, the Town will endeavor to support the county's tourism promotion initiatives as they evolve and expand in the coming years.

Region 2000 Economic Development Council

Many of the Town's residents work in areas south of Amherst County, most notably in and near the City of Lynchburg. Lynchburg is also the regional hub for commerce with the only malls and services such as hospitals and airports. As a formal recognition that the Town of Amherst is strongly linked economically to the region, the Town is included by the Bureau of the Census in the Lynchburg Metropolitan Statistical Area. The Region 2000 Economic Development Council is a public-private regional economic development organization. Business and civic leaders, as well as government officials and educators, work together in this organization to create a supportive environment for businesses throughout the greater Lynchburg area.

In general, Region 2000's work plan includes:

- Cultivating a capable workforce
- Supporting the region's existing businesses and attracting new businesses and new jobs
- Promoting our region to the world

Specifically, the Region 2000 Economic Development Council serves as a catalyst to creating more wealth in Region 2000 communities, better jobs and higher incomes for Region 2000 citizens, greater earnings for Region 2000 companies, and larger tax bases for Region 2000 communities through activities related to:

- Workforce Recruitment – Deliver effective recruitment programs to help businesses find a qualified workforce of professionals, college graduates, and technology-based employees; stimulate appropriate and measurable career and technical education programs to assist filling entry-level positions.
- Center for Advanced Engineering and Research – Propel the growth and success of Region 2000's economy by establishing a university-based science and engineering research organization to create new products and processes; help recruit and retain science and engineering talent for local businesses.
- Existing Business Support – Coordinate a program with local economic developers to gather input from existing businesses on regional business issues; to facilitate services supporting employer retention and expansion; and to offer appropriate business-to-business networking opportunities.

- New Business Attraction – Increase the growth of quality jobs and capital investment through aggressive recruitment strategies.
- Regional Marketing – Promote Virginia's Region 2000 to enhance our image as a preferred, strategic business location as well as a preferred place to live.
- Communication and Metrics – Provide stakeholders, public officials, and citizens of Region 2000 with information that illustrates measurable objectives and achievements.

The Town will support these activities through its membership in Region 2000 and participation as appropriate in the organization's activities.

Virginia Economic Development Partnership

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership provides marketing, economic and demographic information, and site selection information for the whole Commonwealth of Virginia. The VEDP works on a national and international level to promote Virginia for economic development. The most direct way this organization supports the Town of Amherst is via its detailed research on available industrial sites, proposing Town sites to major investor/employer prospects, and coordination of site visits by those prospects.

The Town is well represented by direct participation of Amherst County and Region 2000 in many of the VEDP's activities. The Town of Amherst will support future VEDP initiatives as appropriate to the Town as they develop.

Chapter 11

WATER UTILITY PLAN

The principal purpose of this Water Utility Plan is to outline the Town's strategy to meet current and future needs associated with its water source, treatment capacity, transmission and storage, and distribution and fire protection. The goal of the Town of Amherst's water system will continue to be to provide the Town's residents and business operators with adequate, safe, dependable and low cost supply of drinking water.

The Town has no known critical water problems such as an inadequate source or insufficient pipes to provide adequate quantities or pressure (except during fire events) in any part of the Town's water service area. Future in-town development, such as that anticipated in the Ambriar area and during the buildout of Brockman Park, will contribute to higher water usage, but these are not expected increase flow rates to above the 1.0 MGD capacity of the existing plant unless an extremely large water user locates in Brockman Park. Therefore, the most pressing issues associated with the physical aspects of the Town's water system are protection, enhancement and expansion of the source(s) of water and the replacement of aging and deteriorating water distribution lines.

The expansion of the water service area outside of the Town of Amherst's corporate limits is unlikely unless conditions change and developers provide funding to offset all capital and operating cost increases involved. In other words, the cost to install new or larger pipes and expansions or improvements to the processes at the treatment plant as a result of large, new out of town developments should not be borne by current ratepayers.

Source

The Buffalo River has been an excellent municipal water supply for the Town since the 1950's. However, recent drought events and changes in regulatory practices have brought the water supply "security" concern to the forefront.

The Town will protect the quality of the water in the Buffalo River via support of activities and initiatives that regulate adverse development in that watershed.

Due to drought concerns and concerns about limitation on the town's water supply being a limiting factor for the Town's growth in general, the Town will work to identify and secure additional or optional water resources. These include extending contracts with adjacent municipal water distribution systems that will allow the purchase of water in drought situations and working with Amherst County to obtain better authority to use existing impoundments in the Buffalo River watershed.

The Town is subject to a mandate to develop an approved water supply plan. The Town is participating in a regional effort on this matter with adoption planned toward the end of 2009. As such, the Town's water supply plan will become an integral part of this comprehensive plan. It is important that the Town retain its flexibility in terms of its water supply future. For instance, water may come from wells, be impounded on the Buffalo River, used from Mill Creek Reservoir via discharge to Buffalo River or via extension of the Town's raw water line to that source, or via purchase Amherst County or a regional authority.

Treatment

Although the Town's water plant produces excellent water, current and anticipated regulations will require continuous improvement to that facility.

A project that will result in the alteration of the chemical addition regime at the water plant is under design. The purpose of this project is to enable the Town to meet new disinfection and turbidity removal rules.

Another concern is the limitation on treatment capacity. The Town will continue to study changes in its water sales patterns and begin working toward expansion of the water plant (after the source issue has been resolved) or the development of other "finished" water sources at the appropriate time.

Transmission & Storage

The Town has a good water pipe network for the transmission of water between the water plant, the current and proposed water tanks, and the service areas.

Construction on the 1,000,000 gallon Union Hill water tank was finished in January 2009. This event eliminated tankage as the Town water system's limiting factor.

Distribution and Fire Protection

Study and improvement of the water distribution system is an ongoing effort. There are many miles of aging concrete, cast iron, plastic and ductile iron pipes in the system, and a replacement strategy for the aging network is being developed via an asset inventory/replacement study. A concern is the presence of small diameter piping in many parts of the Town's water service area – both inside and outside of the Town's corporate limits. The pipes are for the most part adequate for domestic water service for the customers they serve but many are inadequate for fire flow (i.e. fire hydrant) purposes.

The Town will create a pipe replacement strategy in the coming years and work to continuously improve its distribution system.

The Town will install fire hydrants on all adequately sized pipes as these old and/or smaller lines are replaced.

Conclusion

Improvements to the Town of Amherst's water distribution system will require significant financial resources over the next few decades. The Town's budget and utility rates should be reviewed against a full water distribution system replacement program that is to come out of the asset inventory/replacement study. The outcome of that study will drive many decisions on the water distribution system. A very costly pipe replacement program is anticipated.

In the future, the Town will endeavor to facilitate processes where better and more detailed plans for water improvement projects and water sources can be developed.

Chapter 12

SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

The principal purpose of this Sewer Infrastructure Plan is to explain the Town's strategy to meet current and future needs associated with its wastewater treatment plant, collection lines and sewage pump stations.

The Town has no known sanitary sewer capacity issues – i.e. where pipes are too small – in any part of the Town's sewer service area. Future in-town development, such as that anticipated in the Ambriar area and during the buildout of Brockman Park, will contribute to higher flows at Rutledge Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant but these are not expected increase flow rates to above the 0.6 MGD capacity of the existing plant. Therefore, the most pressing concerns with the Town's wastewater system are nutrient reduction and sludge management at the wastewater treatment plant and the replacement of aging and deteriorating sewer collection lines.

The expansion of the sewer service area outside of the Town of Amherst's corporate limits is unlikely unless conditions change and developers provide funding to offset all capital and operating cost increases involved. In other words, the cost to install new or larger pipes and expansions or improvements to the processes at the treatment plant as a result of large, new out of town developments should not be borne by current ratepayers.

Rutledge Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant

The nutrient requirements imposed on the Town via a statewide General Permit set the deadline for nutrient removal compliance as January 1, 2011. The recently upgraded plant is nearly capable of meeting these standards at the existing incoming flow rate but probably will not be able to achieve the desired level of treatment when operating at the plant's full 0.6 MGD hydraulic capacity. Currently, the Town is enrolled in the Nutrient Credit Exchange Association. Under this program, plants that are able to achieve better nutrient removal can give or sell "credits" to other wastewater plants that are unable to reach the required loading limits so trading "credits" will allow upgrades to various plants to be phased in over time.

The upgrade needed to meet final waste load allocations (WLA) for enhanced nutrient removal will require considerable construction improvements at the Rutledge Creek facility. According to a Basis of Design Report for the Rutledge Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, the upgrade should consist of adding a three-stage anaerobic selector, secondary anoxic tanks with re-aeration, and secondary clarifiers with a return activated sludge pump station. This improvement project will allow the plant to surpass imposed WLA limit and allow for opportunities in the form of nutrient exchange with other facilities located in the Upper James River Basin and equip the Town with the technology to provide higher levels of treatment for the future. The second improvement needed at the Rutledge Creek facility involves sludge management. Currently, sludge from the plant is treated in aerobic digesters and transferred to sludge drying beds. Dried sludge is removed and hauled to a local landfill for final disposal. Since the plant upgrade in 2005, additional sludge has been generated due to the nitrification/denitrification occurring in the plant. As a result, the sludge drying beds are undersized for a 0.6 MGD wastewater treatment plant. Additionally, an increase in sludge volume is expected when the new nutrient removal processes are introduced and when the Town's anticipated growth areas begin to develop. A sludge dewatering facility needs to be installed at the facility, and the existing sludge drying beds can be used as a back-up system for the sludge dewatering process.

Collection System

The Town's wastewater collection system is composed of over 115,000 linear feet of mostly terra cotta and concrete pipes as depicted on the attached Town of Amherst sanitary sewer system map. A sewer collection system replacement plan is underway to allow for sewer projects to be continually funded as part of a sewer system capital improvements program. To achieve a full system replacement, the Town will implement a segmental replacement strategy over an extended period of time. For example, over the next 20 years, the Town could replace approximately 6,000 linear feet of sewer line each year to achieve the stated goal. Analysis of the current survey work will determine the priority of attention given to each segment.

Wastewater Pump Stations

The Town of Amherst owns and operates three wastewater pump stations, and upgrade or replacement of these subsystems will be included in the referenced sewer system replacement plan.

Conclusion

Improvements to the Town of Amherst's wastewater collection and treatment system will require significant financial resources over the next few decades. The Town's budget and utility rates should be continuously reviewed against a full sanitary sewer collection system replacement program that is to come out of the asset inventory/replacement study. The outcome of that study will drive many decisions on the sewer collection system. A very costly pipe replacement program is anticipated.

In the future, the Town will endeavor to facilitate processes where better and more detailed plans for sewer improvement projects can be developed.

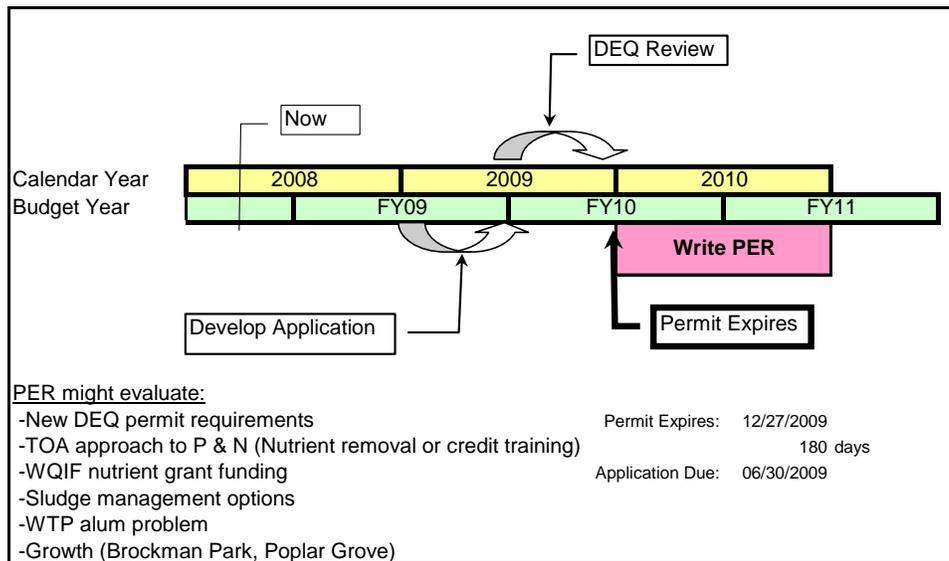


Figure 12.1 Sewer Plant Improvement Planning Timetable

The outcome of the first portion of the next 5-year sewer plant (VPDES) permit cycle, explained in the graphic above, will drive many of the decisions on the sewer plant improvements, but costly upgrades are anticipated. Following are preliminary estimates of the near-term anticipated capital needs for the Town's wastewater infrastructure:

Annually:	\$ 500,000	Pipe replacement at approximately 6,000 LF/yr
FY11:	\$ 250,000	Design of wastewater treatment plant upgrades as a result of a reissued VPDES permit
FY12:	\$4,250,000	Construction of nutrient removal and sludge processing equipment at the wastewater treatment plant.

Chapter 13

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

While it is recognized that the transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan can be most influential and/or is most costly, it is important to note that roads in the Town of Amherst are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and that new construction is almost always funded by VDOT or developer finances and not by Town monies. These features make transportation planning a long range effort as well as one of the most frustrating to implement. In spite of these difficulties, it is important that the Town strive for a transportation system which has the capability of moving people and goods in a convenient, efficient and safe manner.

Unfortunately it is often less costly to plan too many street improvements as it is to plan for too few. Safety concerns and growth projections drive public financed transportation infrastructure to overbuilding, and efficient use of government funds is often overwhelmed by these factors. Financial considerations drive developers toward underbuilding. One cost avoiding approach often taken by developers is to propose installation of private roads within single family developments, a feature that is being encouraged by state programs but a trend the Town will have to minimize and/or control in the future. It has long been the policy of the Town of Amherst to rely on VDOT and its 6-year planning processes to provide transportation improvements inside and near the Town. Many roads inside the Town need to be rebuilt, rehabilitated or substantially improved due to age, poor construction, and lack of adequate maintenance in past years. These include Walnut Street and Whitehead Drive.

Particular projects worthy of Town pursuit include improvements to the Union Hill Road railroad crossing which has long been a recognized safety hazard. Also, improvement of Union Hill Road from U. S. 29 Bypass to Dulwich Drive is needed in light of the recent residential development along that road. In addition, it is recommended that adequate signage be installed to encourage the bulk of the Union Hill Road traffic entering the core of Amherst to utilize Norfolk Avenue to connect to Second Street (behind, or to the east of, the Amherst County Administration Building).

For many years the safety characteristics of school driveway intersections with arterial roads has been a concern to the Town Council, the Amherst County School Board, the parents of school children and other residents of the community. The Town will continue to encourage VDOT to make these areas as safe as possible, through adequate design of improved intersections and installation of traffic calming measures and other traffic control devices.

The Town of Amherst will continue to work towards improving the non-stop, free flow of traffic between the Town and southern Amherst County and Lynchburg. However, the Town will also work to protect the interests of the Town's business operators in the Ambriar vicinity while maintaining the safety of individuals using the roads in that area and minimizing the public costs of any needed the improvements.

The Town of Amherst's longstanding policy is that it does not pay for road right of way or construction, but minor or incidental costs for improving non-public roads for inclusion in the State maintenance system may be approved by the Town Council on a case-by-case basis. The Town will encourage improvement and future state maintenance of certain non-public roads insofar as the residents of the nearby lands request such improvements. Roads worthy of consideration include Walnut Street, an extension of Waughs Ferry Road to the Sweet Briar College gate and, although it is clearly outside the Town limits, the Town will also support the improvement of Christian Springs Road toward the Town's Buffalo River raw water intake by VDOT and/or Amherst County.

Downtown Parking

An often forgotten feature of transportation planning is the provision of adequate parking. Many have expressed concern that downtown Amherst is experiencing a lack of parking crisis and that strong steps need to be taken to find additional parking spaces while protecting existing spaces. While there are no specific recommendations at this time, concepts that the Town will consider in the coming years include:

- installing a municipal parking lot
- improving its approach to on-street and metered and non-metered parking spaces
- reviewing then improving and more strongly enforcing stronger regulatory measures to require new

spaces when new traffic generators move in

- requiring the inclusion of on-street parking on new public streets
- requiring more parking areas inside new multifamily developments.

Pedestrian Facilities

Another relatively new aspect of transportation planning is working towards uniform and integrated approaches to pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, and bikeways. As a regional approach to this transportation aspect, the Virginia Department of Transportation, Region 2000 Regional Commission, and the Central Virginia Metropolitan Planning Organization have developed plans and strategies for improving these aspects of the greater Amherst area.

As growth accelerates and residential development along arterial roads continues, the Town of Amherst will need to have plans and policies in place for the installation of curb, gutter and sidewalk throughout the Town to meet the needs of a denser and more urban community. Particular emphasis will be placed on extending sidewalks on North Main Street, South Main Street, and Richmond Highway (U. S. 60 East). A map showing the existing and anticipated development of the Town's sidewalk system is included in this plan, and the Central Virginia Metropolitan Planning Organization has been asked to develop an improved strategy that will support a more detailed sidewalk plan for the Town of Amherst.

Selected recommendations from that plan include:

Crosswalks-

- Install a crosswalk across Second Street at the intersection of Second Street and South Main Street.
- Install a crosswalk across U. S. Route 60 on the southeastern side at the traffic circle. This crosswalk should include the use of the existing island as a pedestrian refuge.
- Once sidewalk is complete along South Main Street, install a crosswalk that will permit travelers to safely access the shopping area.

Sidewalks-

- Continue to develop as a top priority the sidewalk installation along South Main Street.
- By installing new sidewalk, extend the sidewalk along the eastern portion of South Main Street to the point of a newly constructed crosswalk at the eastern side of the Amherst Traffic Circle
- Extend the sidewalk along Hanger Road to create a safe linkage for the residents living within Amherst Village Apartments. This connection would only be beneficial if the property owner created a linkage on their property by which residents from the retirement home and public in general would be allowed to use the facility
- Extend the existing sidewalk along north side of Second Street
- Install new sidewalk along the southern side of Second Street. This new sidewalk would end at the newly striped cross-walk. Look for the opportunity to extend the current garden plot to discourage pedestrians from continued use of the southern side of South Main Street.
- Install a sidewalk along U. S. Route 60 from the Traffic Circle to Taylor Street. This would be a lower priority improvement. Another linkage option would be to ensure pedestrian linkages within any development in the corner corridor between U. S. Route 60 and South Main Street.

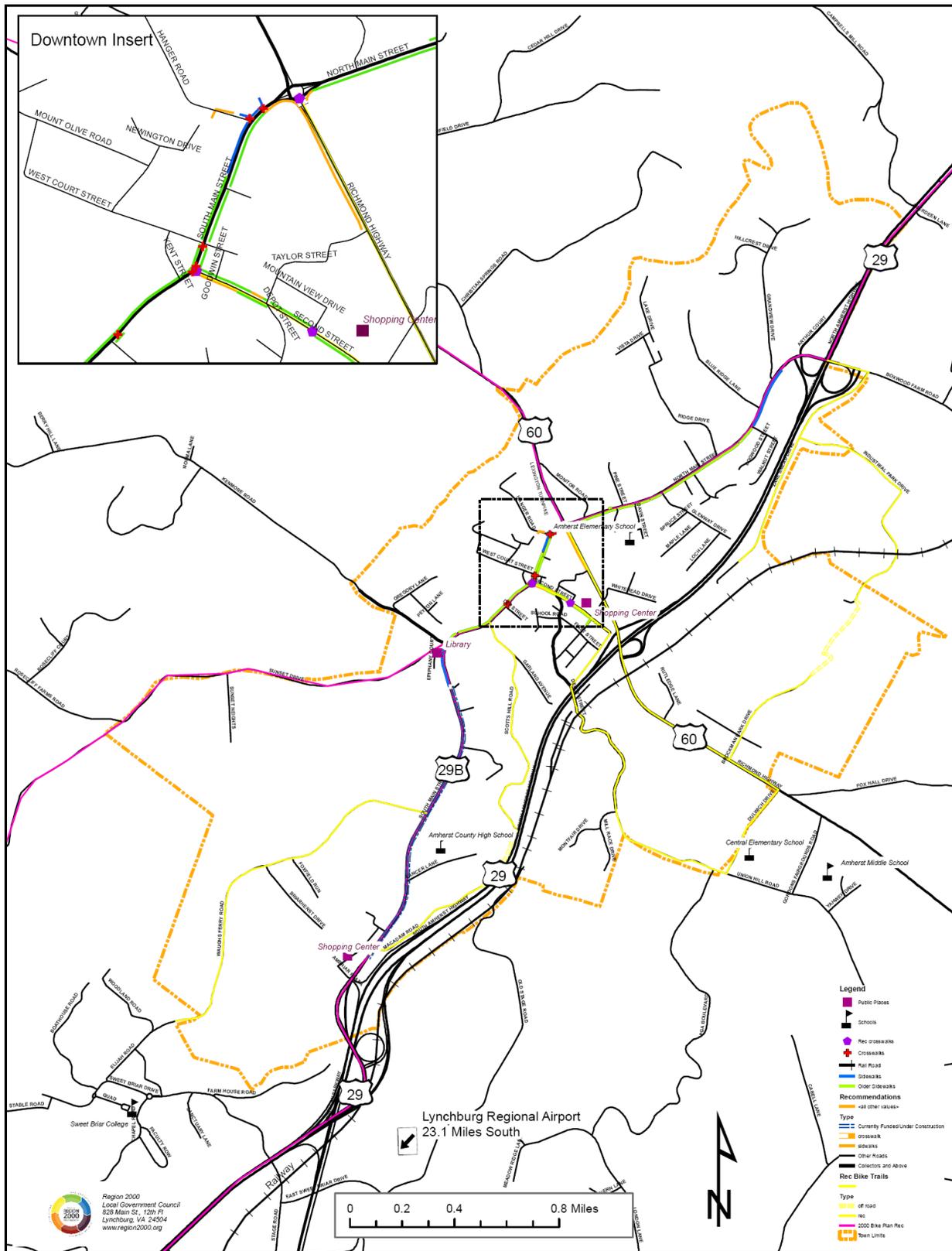
Table 13.1 - Planned Transportation Projects within the Town of Amherst

PROJECT NAME & DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST
VDOT FY 2009 Six Year Improvement Program	
Route 29, Northbound Lane Bridge Replacement and Approaches over Buffalo River - UPC 77301	\$6,655,000
Central Virginia Transportation Improvement Program FY 2009-2012	
Route 659 (Union Hill Road) – west of N/S Railway crossing to Route T-606, road reconstruction & Rutledge Creek bridge replacement	\$4,243,000
Central Virginia MPO 2030 Long Range Plan Update	
Route 659 (Union Hill Road) – bridge over Rutledge Creek	See next
Route 659 (Union Hill Road) – west of N/S Railway crossing to Route T-606, road reconstruction	\$4,243,000
Town of Amherst Transportation Enhancement Grant Program	
South Main Street Pedestrian Connector (sidewalk)	\$1,111,557
County of Amherst Transportation Enhancement Grant Program (within TOA)	
Amherst Train Depot Relocation & Rehabilitation	\$1,115,840
Recommendations Appearing Within This Document³	
Provide bicycle accommodation through addition of 2' of additional pavement on both sides along Union Hill as a component of the road realignment.	\$246,727
Install a crosswalk across 2 nd Street at the intersection of 2 nd and South Main	\$9,000
Install a crosswalk across U. S. Route 60 on the southern side as you approach the traffic circle. This crosswalk should include the use of the existing island as a pedestrian refuge.	\$9,000
Once sidewalk is complete along South Main Street, install a crosswalk that will permit travelers to safely access the shopping area.	\$9,000
Continue to develop as a top priority the sidewalk installation along South Main Street.	
By installing new sidewalk, extend the sidewalk along the eastern portion of South Main Street to the point of a newly constructed crosswalk at the eastern side of the Amherst Traffic Circle	\$14,200
Extend the sidewalk along Hanger Road to create a safe linkage for the residents living within Amherst Village Apartments. This connection would only be beneficial if the property owner created a linkage on their property by which residents from the retirement home and public in general would be allowed to use the facility	\$10,000
Extend the existing sidewalk along north side of Second Street	\$4,300
Install new sidewalk along the southern side of Second Street. This new sidewalk would end at the newly striped cross-walk. Look for the opportunity to extend the current garden plot to discourage pedestrians from continued use of the southern side of South Main Street	\$14,900
Install a sidewalk along U. S. Route 60 from the Traffic Circle to Taylor Street. This would be a lower priority improvement. Another option would be to ensure pedestrian linkages within any development in the corner corridor between U. S. Route 60 and South Main Street.	\$42,000
Install a sidewalk along US 60 (Richmond Highway) from Taylor Street to the relocated Amherst Train Depot located on the east side of US 29 Bypass.	\$76,000
Install a sidewalk along US 60 (Richmond Highway) from the Amherst Train Depot to Dulwich Drive (passing Brockman Park), and then along Dulwich Drive to Central Elementary School.	\$273,600
Install a sidewalk connecting Central Elementary School to Amherst Junior High School, either following Union Hill Road and Gordon's Fairgrounds Road, or	\$45,000- \$90,000

³ Costs do not include right-of-way or engineering. These costs are based on estimates obtained from the VDOT Transportation & Mobility Planning Division Statewide Planning Level Cost Estimates, 2009.

following the more direct path along Route 9722	
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Map 13.1 Town of Amherst Transportation Plan



Chapter 14

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Natural resources play an important part in the life and development of a given area, and these resources will be increasingly important to the future of the Town of Amherst. To this end, a view of the environment in and around the Town of Amherst is offered in an attempt to promote sound environmental practices which will help ensure the future viability of our corner of the world. The principal purpose of this Environmental Management Plan is to outline the Town's strategy to preserve and protect the air, water and land resources in and around the Town.

LAND RESOURCES

Development patterns are dependent on floodplain, physiography, geology and soil characteristics of the various parts of town. Such knowledge is especially useful in determining opportunities and constraints for developmental activities, locating economic resources, and identifying scenic areas. Care will be taken during development review processes to ensure that sensitive areas are not harmed more than necessary.

WATER RESOURCES

In general, the entirety of Amherst County has good surface water resources, large supplies of which can be obtained from the Buffalo River and its major tributaries. There have been no identified problems for surface waters in or near the Town.

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

Several streams with flooding potential can be found within the Town of Amherst. These include Tribulation Creek, Williams Creek, Higginbotham Creek, Rutledge Creek and Buffalo River. A map based on information developed by the Federal Emergency Management Administration delineates the Town's floodplains.

The Town will work to maintain and enhance a healthful natural environment. It will maintain and enhance water resources and air quality to the extent practical. Risks to personal safety and property from natural hazards will be minimized. Vegetation and scenic areas will be preserved, protected and enhanced, and the viability of wildlife resources will be enhanced to the extent practical.

The Town will promote growth that is environmentally sound throughout the Town by ensuring that development preserves the scenic and environmental character of the town and that proposals for development include adequate planning for transportation, parking, lighting and recreation is in harmony with the natural environment.

The Town of Amherst places a high value on the natural environment and will strive to encourage the use of environmentally friendly practices where practical. The Town will continuously review and orient zoning regulations to provide for a controlled growth which will be friendly to the environment.

Water, air, noise, light and other pollution will be discouraged within and near the town limits.

Map 14.1 Town of Amherst Floodplain Map

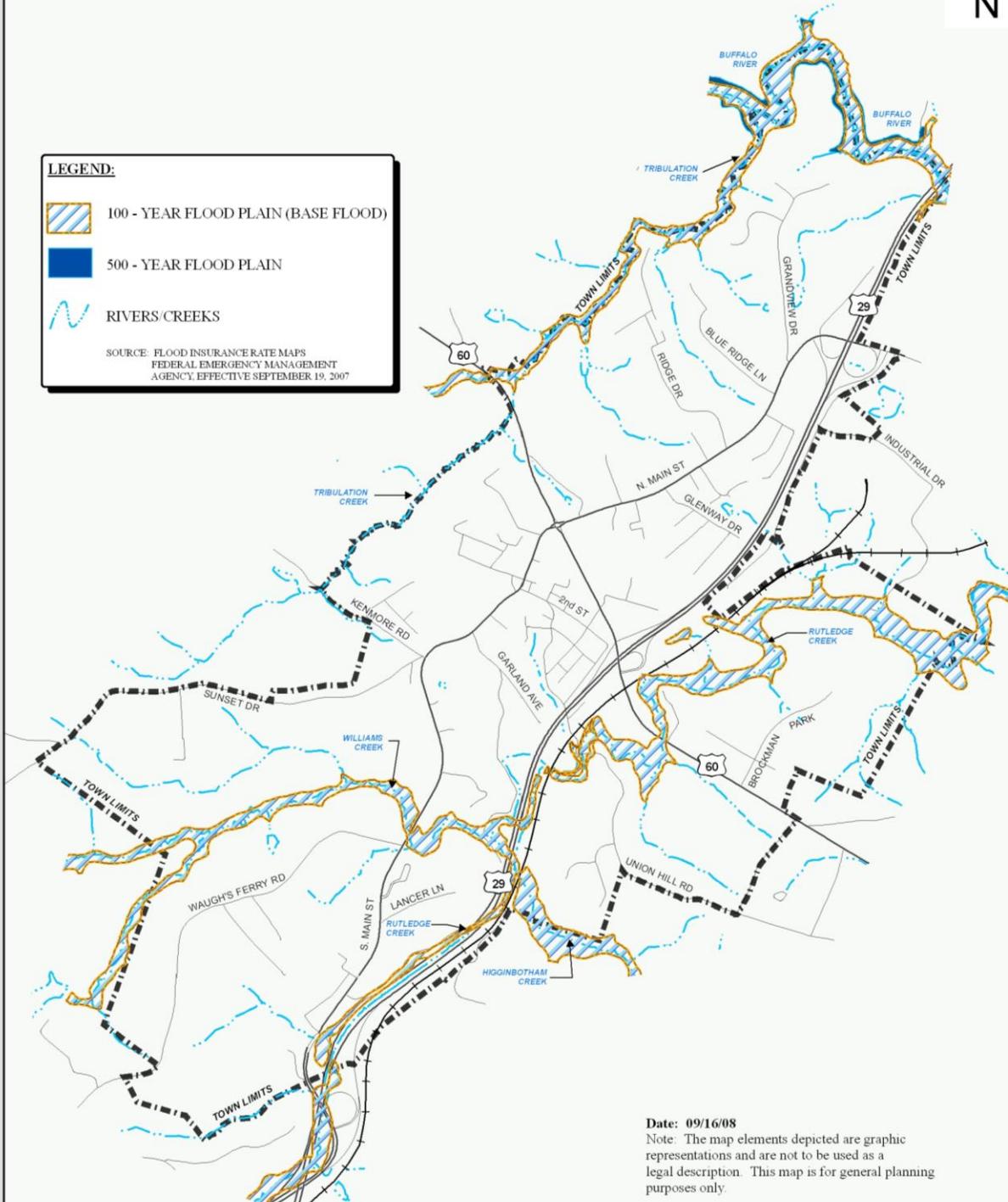
Town of Amherst Floodplain Map



LEGEND:

-  100 - YEAR FLOOD PLAIN (BASE FLOOD)
-  500 - YEAR FLOOD PLAIN
-  RIVERS/CREEKS

SOURCE: FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAPS
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
AGENCY, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 19, 2007



Date: 09/16/08

Note: The map elements depicted are graphic representations and are not to be used as a legal description. This map is for general planning purposes only.

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Chapter 15

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

The residents of the Town of Amherst take immense pride in their community's history and culture. Restoration of historic properties has been on the rise in the Town over the past few years, again showing that Amherst citizens are proud of their past and intent on preserving their heritage for future generations.

The Town of Amherst discourages the demolition of historic structures unless all other options have been explored. It is sincerely felt that something very important to the community is lost whenever a structure of historical or architectural importance is destroyed. This is especially true for those unique one-of-a-kind structures located throughout the area.

The Town of Amherst supports the continued preservation of historical structures. While no formal historic district ordinance or architectural review board is planned for the Town, the Town encourages the use of historically and architecturally appropriate materials, colors and designs when renovating a structure. Also, prior remodeling which included inappropriate materials, colors and/or designs is encouraged to be corrected to enhance the historic and esthetic qualities of a given structure.

The Town strongly supports the reuse of older structures where possible. Instead of tearing down old houses, warehouses, or other buildings, owners will be encouraged to adapt these structures for a new use. Though it is often costly to convert an old house to a professional office or make a warehouse over into a commercial center, costs can still run below the price of new construction. In addition, tax breaks and other financial incentives may be available to assist in the restoration and conversion process. However, the Town believes that the most important reason for reusing old structures where possible is the retention of important community landmarks which have both a sentimental and an esthetic value within a historic town. This is the case with two relatively recent projects, the first of which is the Amherst County Courthouse remodeling and expansion. The other project showcasing adaptive reuse of an important Amherst landmark is the current moving of the old Amherst Train Depot to a new location near the intersection of Routes 29 and 60, which is to be followed by a faithful adaptive restoration of that building by a private group so the building can be used as a tourism center.

The Town encourages archaeological exercises to learn more about the ancient past of the area. In light of this, the Town strongly encourages that any important archaeological site not be disturbed by development unless all reasonable options have been taken.

The efforts of the Amherst County Historical Museum, the Chamber of Commerce, and other civic groups and interested individuals dedicated to preserving Amherst's past while building for a better future are deeply appreciated by the Town of Amherst. Continued support of their efforts will be forthcoming, with a note that communication and cooperation will be the keys to their future success.

The Town of Amherst is committed to establishing itself as a commercial, cultural, and resource center for Amherst County and Region 2000. The ability of the Town to capitalize on the anchors of its historical architecture and aesthetic beauty is vital to this vision's success. The Town will endeavor to implement several efforts including as funding becomes available as follows:

- Complete a detailed inventory of buildings for National Register Designation as funding becomes available;
- Investigate Virginia Landmarks and National Register Nomination for various resources;
- Create a cohesive façade color and style scheme to be utilized on buildings in the Central Business District and along the Town's main traffic corridors;
- Incorporate signage, lighting, and banners that combine to emphasize the historic, cultural, and geographic beauty of the Town.

The Town will help to identify and protect Town properties and structures that are of historical, architectural, or archaeological significance by:

- Supporting organizations concerned with historic preservation in the Town of Amherst
- Encouraging owners of historic properties to preserve and maintain them.
- Acting as a clearinghouse for information on funding sources for historic preservation.

- Promoting compatible land uses in the vicinity of historically, architecturally or archaeologically significant property.

Following is an inventory of the Town's known and recognized historic resources. It is understood that sites and features may be added to this list when better information becomes available.

Figure 15.1 Town of Amherst Historic Resources Inventory

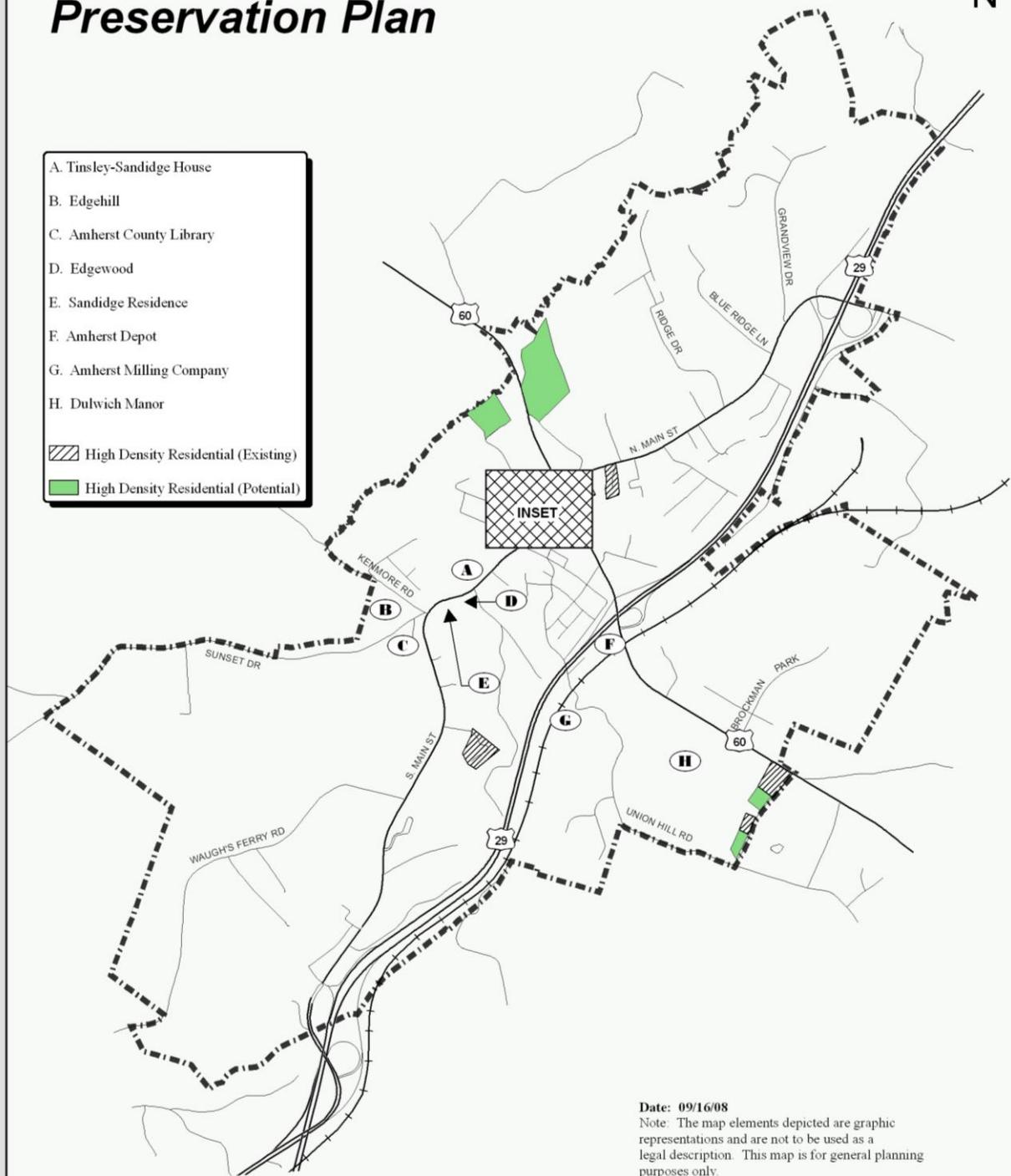
A. Tinsley-Sandidge House	268 South Main Street
B. Edgehill	130 Sunset Drive
C. Amherst County Library	382 S. Main Street
D. Edgewood	138 Garland Ave
E. Sandidge Residence	327 S. Main Street.
F. Amherst Depot	328 Richmond Highway
G. Amherst Milling Company	140 Union Hill Road
H. Dulwich Manor	550 Richmond Highway.
I. Amherst Traffic Circle	S. Main Street and Lexington Highway
J. Amherst County Historical Museum	154 S. Main Street
K. Clinton Masonic Lodge	180 S. Main Street
L. Hill Hardware	171 S. Main Street
M. Amherst Court House	113 Taylor Street.
N. Ascension Episcopal Church	253 S. Main Street.
O. Office of Robert Tinsley	265 S. Main Street

Map 15.2 - Town of Amherst Housing and Historic Preservation Plan

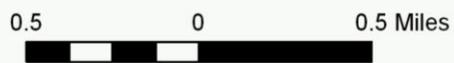
Town of Amherst Housing and Historic Preservation Plan



- A. Tinsley-Sandidge House
- B. Edgehill
- C. Amherst County Library
- D. Edgewood
- E. Sandidge Residence
- F. Amherst Depot
- G. Amherst Milling Company
- H. Dulwich Manor
- High Density Residential (Existing)
- High Density Residential (Potential)



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Map 15.3 - Town of Amherst Housing and Historic Preservation Plan Inset

Town of Amherst Housing and Historic Preservation Plan Inset for Downtown Area

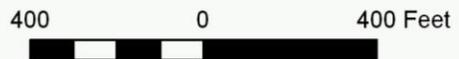


- I. Amherst Traffic Circle
- J. Amherst County Historical Museum
- K. Clinton Masonic Lodge
- L. Hill Hardware
- M. Amherst Court House
- N. Ascension Episcopal Church
- O. Office of Robert Tinsley



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Chapter 16

HOUSING PLAN

The Town of Amherst does not appear to be suffering from any major housing crisis. It seems that the housing stock has kept pace with population growth through the years, as well as with the increased need for additional housing due to the ever growing number of non-married couple families, the latter resulting from such situations as divorce, death and the desire to reside alone.

Overall, the quality of housing in the Town is generally good. However, a few areas, especially the Depot Street neighborhood, are in need of rehabilitation.

Insofar as local tradition dictates that housing, and housing improvement, is provided by private or non-profit groups, the Town does not play a direct role in this area. However, the Town has designated several areas for higher density development and has worked to make water and sewer services - which are greatly needed for higher density and lower cost housing developments – available to the vast majority of the lands within the Town of Amherst corporate limits. The Town does not play a direct role in providing housing for its citizens. The Town through the utilization of the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, other regulations and capital investments is able to guide the type, location, and density of housing.

A site-built, single-family, detached dwelling, used as a primary family residence describes and constitutes the majority of housing units within the Town. Single-family housing is expected to be the predominant form of housing within the Town for the foreseeable future. However, multi-family housing – including townhouses, condominiums and “rental” apartments- is becoming an increasingly viable housing option. Mobile homes often represent the most viable affordable housing for some families. As such they are allowed in approved existing mobile home parks.

The Town will endeavor to create the best residential environment for every resident of the Town. The location of residential development will be coordinated with the development of community facilities essential to a good residential environment. Public facilities will be planned so as to serve those areas that are deemed to be best suited for residential development.

Areas designated for construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the Town while considering the current and future needs of the Region 2000 Local Government Council (planning district) area are shown as residential on the future land use and zoning maps.

Following are specific strategies that the Town will employ to encourage the maximum availability of safe, clean, and affordable housing to meet community needs:

- Encourage a coordinated, rather than lot-by-lot, approach to development and redevelopment.
- Ensure adequate coordination between the planning for housing and transportation facilities.
- Encourage the development of facilities that are suitable for residential occupancy by the elderly.
- Encourage a range of housing types to support varied population segments and income levels.
- Encourage development which will contribute to the improvement of property values.
- Review and orient zoning regulations to provide a range of housing densities that will compliment the provision of community facilities and that will encourage varied, interesting and safe residential and mixed-use neighborhoods.
- Encourage the production of single-family, two-family, and multifamily dwelling units of the types and proportions that will satisfy the varying needs and desires of consumers.
- Encourage the maximum utilization of the master-planned residential and mixed-use concept in the Town.
- Reduce deterioration of existing housing by property maintenance ordinances and encouraging property owners to maintain their dwellings.
- Improve water, sewer, road, stormwater drainage, and other infrastructure to support housing, possibly through the use of Community Development Block Grant funds.
- Continue to support voluntary efforts toward the fair allocation of housing to all Amherst residents.

Chapter 17

PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN

The Town of Amherst is a relatively safe and crime-free community. Of course, the residents and business operators want to maintain that status and are very supportive of the Town's public safety programs. The Town will continue to search for cost-efficient ways to make the community as safe as possible.

Crisis Management

The Town of Amherst supports efforts to identify, prevent and/or limit the causes and "fallout" of both manmade and natural local disasters. The Town will continue to participate in planning exercises and support the federal, state, regional and county efforts in this regard.

The Town of Amherst Police Department has long been recognized as the Town's primary emergency management agency. To this end, the Police Department will continue to supplement the efforts of other state and local agencies in preparing for and working through civil distress.

Police

The Town of Amherst Police Department will continue to be the primary law enforcement agency operating within the corporate limits of the Town of Amherst. The Police Department will continue to provide services that supplement those provided by other federal, state and county agencies so that the residents and business operators of the Town will continue to have the best and widest array of law enforcement services at the least cost possible.

Rescue

The Town of Amherst has supported the Amherst Life Saving Crew since its creation.

The Town of Amherst recognizes that demands for lower response times and better service, coupled with the decline in numbers of individuals willing to volunteer for the training needed to maintain certification, have forced changes to the current rescue service situation. Since Amherst County provides paid rescue workers to supplement the volunteers, the Town needs to consider reducing its fiscal contribution to what is – in effect – a county service that is funded by user fees. However, the Town will expect services to be maintained in the Town as they are in the parts of Amherst County that are outside of the Town's corporate limits.

Fire

The Town of Amherst will continue to strongly support the Amherst Fire Department in its work to prevent and suppress fires inside the Town of Amherst.

The Town of Amherst recognizes that demands for lower response times and better service, coupled with the decline in numbers of individuals willing to volunteer for the training needed to maintain certification, will force changes to the current fire department situation. It is expected that Amherst County will, at some point in the near future, provide paid firefighters to supplement the volunteers. As the "volunteer" character of the Town's fire department wanes and the services provided by Amherst County increase, the Town's fiscal contribution to what will be – in effect – a county service will be reduced. However, the Town will expect services to be maintained in the Town as they are in the parts of Amherst County that are outside of the Town's corporate limits.

Chapter 18

PUBLIC SERVICES PLAN

Services to Amherst's residents are provided from an array of public, non-profit and private sources, and it is well understood that community facilities and services such as schools, police, fire protection, public utilities, libraries, medical facilities, open space and recreation are vital components of the community.

The Town will create and maintain adequate resources for the provision of needed public services in an efficient manner with minimal financial burden to Town taxpayers. The Town will provide adequate office space for the performance of government functions which is expected to require the construction of a new or enlarged Town Hall so as to provide adequate space and facilities for the growing needs of the Town.

The Town will provide government services necessary to maintain a high quality living environment for all residents of the Town and will increase contacts and cooperation between the Town of Amherst and other local and regional agencies and organizations in order to both build a mechanism to aid in the understanding of common problems and as a means of sharing information. Partners in such efforts might include Sweet Briar College, the Amherst County Board of Supervisors, the Amherst County Planning Commission, Region 2000, and the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Solid Waste

The Town of Amherst provides solid waste collection services to all residences and businesses connected to its water system. Amherst County provides recycling and solid waste disposal services. Except for the possible movement of the commercial "dumpster" refuse collection service from the Town to private haulers, no major change in the Town's solid waste program is anticipated in the years to come.

Utilities

Utilities other than water and sewer are furnished to the Town of Amherst are via private sources. Insofar as service levels are generally adequate, no change to the offerings or arrangements with any of the following are envisioned:

Electricity - American Electric Power (Appalachian Power)

Telephone - Verizon

Cable Television – Comcast

Cellular Telephone - AllTel; Ntelos

Health Care

There are no hospitals in Amherst, but as it is the commercial center for northern Amherst County there are several medical and dental offices and nursing homes located within the Town's corporate limits. The Town has historically not been involved in the promotion of the local health care system.

Education

The Town of Amherst is supportive of the programs offered by the Amherst County Public Schools system and encourages the development of additional higher education and distance learning opportunities for the Town's residents.

The Town will encourage and support the Amherst County Public Schools to provide the best educational system and facilities to all students to ensure educational opportunities which address the needs of all Town residents. The Town will work with all public agencies and civic groups to improve the public school system in both its physical facilities and educational programs, to include vocational and technical education, continuing education classes for adults and the needs of the physically and mentally handicapped persons of all ages. The Town will also encourage an increased role for education in economic development.

In 2008 the Amherst branch of Central Virginia Community College opened on Mountain View Drive. This facility will offer college level courses, a venue for continuing education classes and seminars, and "dual enrollment" opportunities for high school students. Further, this will be a venue for local businesses to provide training for their workforce.

Library

The Town is supportive of the efforts of the Amherst County Public Library.

Mass Media

There is quite a variety of print and electronic media available to the Town's residents and business operators. However, the Town will continue to improve its internet presence.

Internet

The Town will continue to encourage the development of affordable high-speed internet services to the Town's residents and business operators.

Chapter 19

PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

School and private properties contain virtually all of the Town's active park and recreation assets. There are numerous facilities within and outside the Town which offer passive recreation and many that offer active programs. Parks and recreation offerings available to the residents of the Town of Amherst certainly are not lacking but could always be improved.

An important but often overlooked Town asset is its sidewalk system, which provides an exercise venue for walkers and runners and also a meeting place for residents to see their neighbors. Of special note is Amherst County High School which has some of the finest athletic facilities in the area, including a football stadium with artificial turf and track complex, a rubber-surfaced gymnasium, baseball and softball fields, a cross country route and tennis courts.

The provision of parks and recreation services has two aspects –facilities and programming. The facilities side can be capital intensive, and the programming side carries operational costs which are largely in the form of personnel expense. The Town has been unable to fund either down through the years.

Although the Town of Amherst does not have a recreation program as such, it supports other public agencies and private for-profit and non-profit initiatives that will promote recreational activities in the greater Town of Amherst area. The Town's policy is to work with such groups to provide adequate and diversified recreational opportunities for the enjoyment of residents of all age groups and income levels.

To aid in satisfying the recreation needs of its residents, the Town will endeavor to:

- Reserve open space in areas of expected population concentrations,
- Encourage, but control, commercial recreational facilities,
- Plan for the development of a community center,
- Preserve and maintain the Town's historical structures and sites, and
- Work with civic organizations to hold community activities of interest to Town residents.

Following are initiatives that the Town is pursuing or will pursue in the near future:

- The proposed Town Square project. This project involves the conversion of the end of E. Court Street area into a multi-use space that can be utilized on a normal basis for parking but on off-peak times can be used for small but frequent music events, art shows, festivals, farmers markets, and other activities that will bring the people of the community together.
- Expansion of the sidewalk system along all of N. Main Street and S. Main Street and along U.S. Route 60 from the traffic circle to the Town's eastern corporate limits as funding becomes available.
- The development of a community center facility that can be used as a meeting area for community groups. This would probably be included into a new Town Hall complex which will be pursued as funding becomes available.

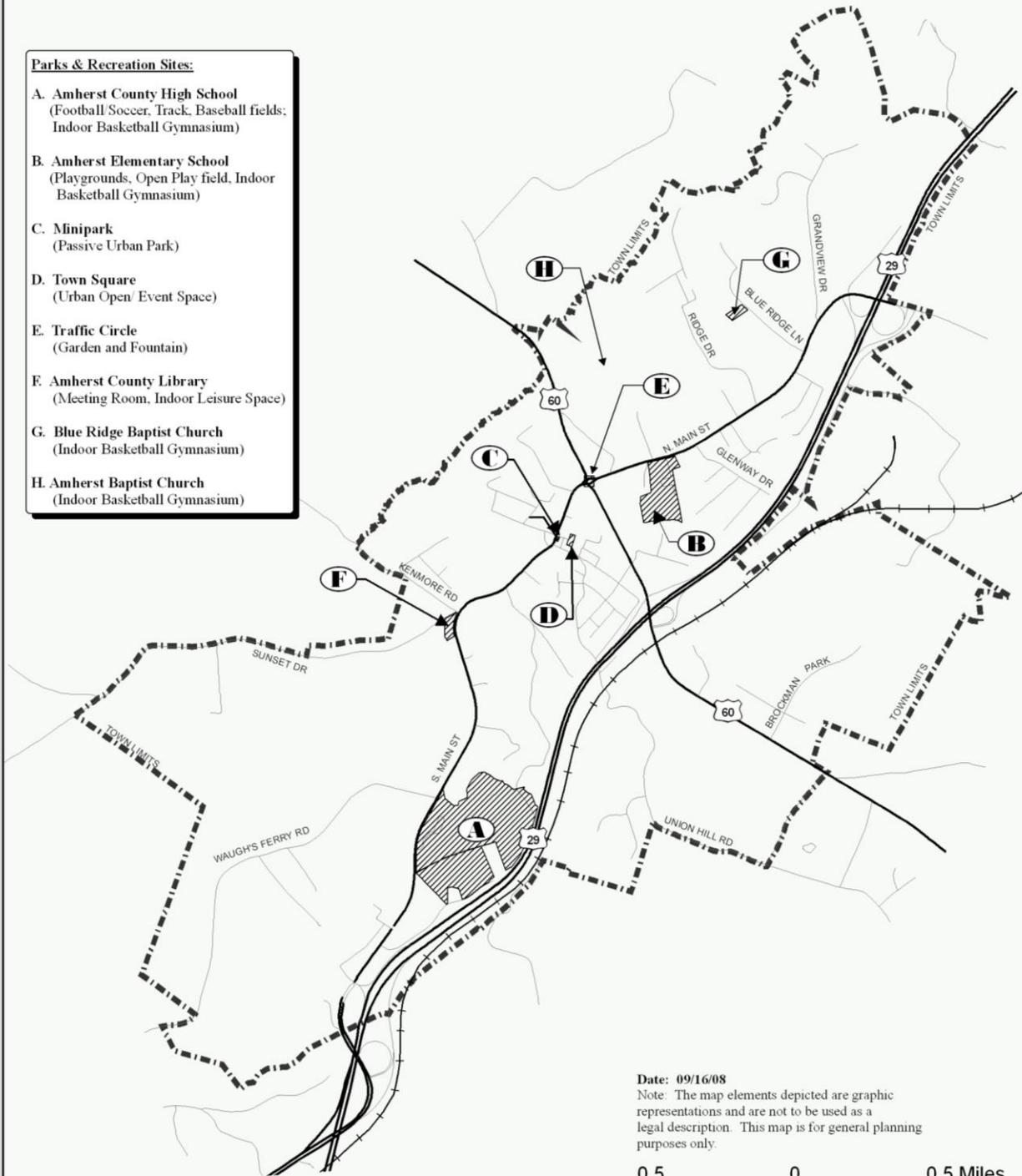
Map 19.1 – Town of Amherst Parks and Recreation Map

Town of Amherst Parks and Recreation Map



Parks & Recreation Sites:

- A. Amherst County High School
(Football Soccer, Track, Baseball fields,
Indoor Basketball Gymnasium)
- B. Amherst Elementary School
(Playgrounds, Open Play field, Indoor
Basketball Gymnasium)
- C. Minipark
(Passive Urban Park)
- D. Town Square
(Urban Open/ Event Space)
- E. Traffic Circle
(Garden and Fountain)
- F. Amherst County Library
(Meeting Room, Indoor Leisure Space)
- G. Blue Ridge Baptist Church
(Indoor Basketball Gymnasium)
- H. Amherst Baptist Church
(Indoor Basketball Gymnasium)



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Chapter 20

UNDEVELOPED/REDEVELOPMENT AREAS AND AREAS FOR SPECIAL FOCUS

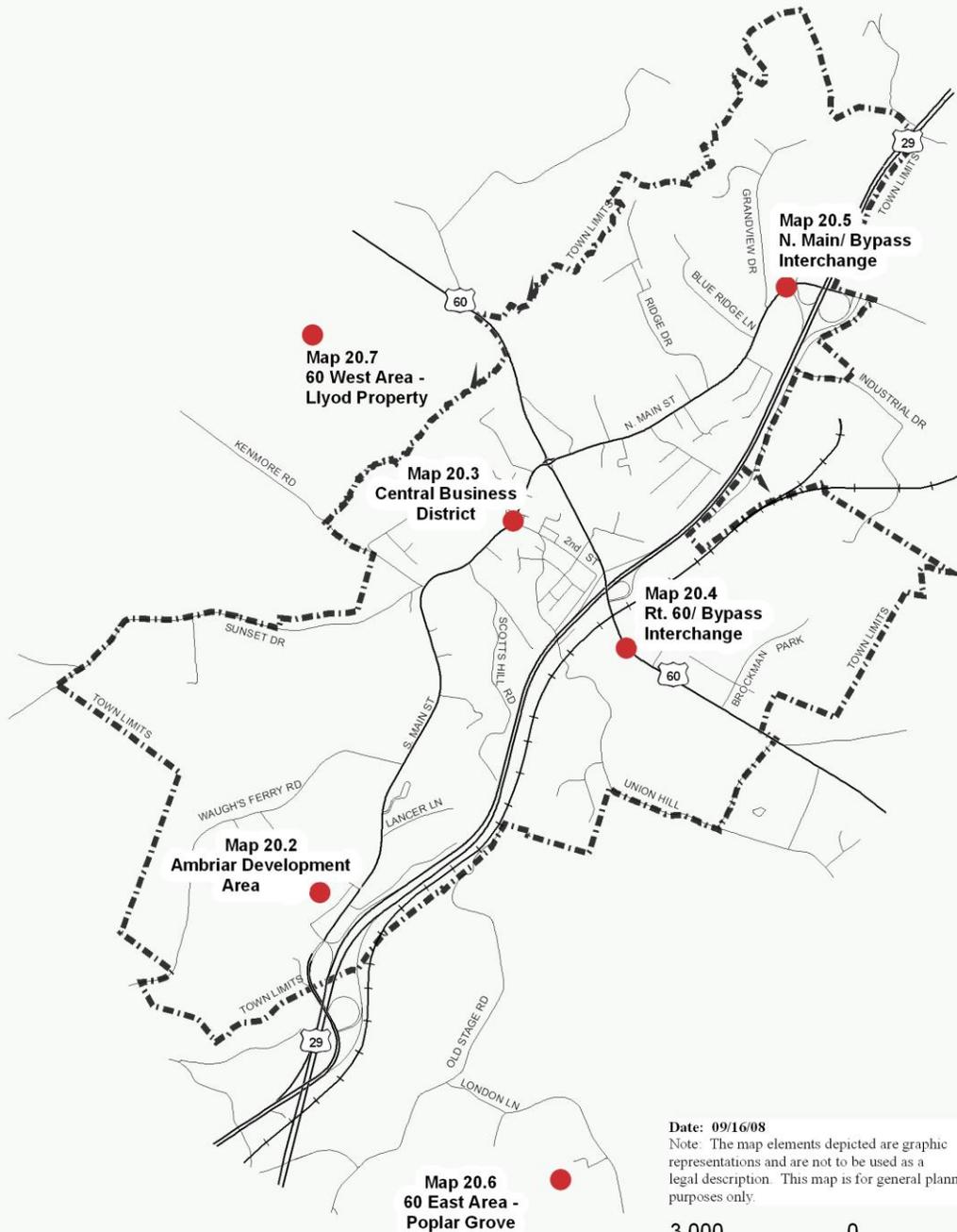
The Town of Amherst is committed to encouraging good growth within the Town's boundaries and is dedicated to meeting the physical, social, economic and environmental needs of the Town's residents and business operators. To this end, the Town of Amherst will endeavor to facilitate "good" growth – growth that will provide jobs, services and amenities for the Town's residents, strengthen the quality and variety of the Town's housing stock, diversify the Town's employment and tax base, and/or increase the tax base - insofar as the Town's tax base and public funds are not put at risk – while protecting and improving the quality of life that Amherst's residents enjoy.

Several distinct areas in and near the Town have been identified as having a strong potential to change in the coming years. In general, these changes will be the result of the Madison Heights bypass and/or the Town's general long-term development/redevelopment trend. Commercial growth might stress areas close to traffic corridors and water and sewer utilities, while high-density residential growth typically locates near municipal water and sewer utilities. Both are increasingly influenced by access to high-speed internet services. Although the comprehensive plan is intended as a general guide for the growth and development of a community, the potential for these areas developing or redeveloping in the near future warrants a closer review and discussion on the Town's desire and ability to support such.

Lands identified as being included within "special focus" areas are outlined on Map 20.1.

Map 20.1
Undeveloped/Redevelopment Areas and Areas for Special Focus

Town of Amherst Undeveloped/ Redevelopment Areas and Areas for Special Focus



Ambriar Development Area

The Town of Amherst has recognized that the character of the Ambriar area will probably change in the near future due to the recent completion of the Madison Heights bypass and since large tracts of undeveloped land along South Main Street in that area have become the focal point for developers. A significant concern is that a lack of proper planning for the future of the Ambriar area could result in haphazard development and associated undesirable impacts to adjacent lands and public infrastructure. Potential development of the Ambriar area has been the subject of intensive studies with the goal of having a better understanding of how the area would change as a result of the stress brought on by the new road configuration. These studies, sponsored by the Planning Commission, began in 2006 and examined then-current land uses, zoning, historical development trends, local regulations and the regulatory trend, and traffic flow patterns as well as different development scenarios.

Based on the study, the following conclusions and action items were developed:

Traffic Impact and Access Management

Conclusions:

- Traffic oriented businesses, including retail, restaurant and lodging establishments, will dominate the area in the future from a traffic impact standpoint yet S. Main Street is inadequate to support the full development of the area.
- Even if no large scale development takes place along S. Main Street in the Ambriar area, traffic problems characterized by volumes of traffic which are above and beyond the amount the roadway is designed to efficiently handle, long left turn queues, higher accident rates and sometimes gridlock that will occur within twenty years due to normal growth.
- Traffic control measures such as traffic lights or traffic circles will be needed on S. Main Street in the Ambriar area when the traffic reaches about 10,000 vehicles per day, and widening of the road to four lanes will be needed there when the traffic level reaches about 19,000 vehicles per day.

Action Items:

- Traffic impact and access management regulations that are appropriate for the Town of Amherst and the Ambriar situation were developed and adopted in 2008.
- Map 20.2 shows the general configuration of a reserved right of way zone way at strategic locations for future traffic signals or roundabouts and road widening that the Town of Amherst will pursue through setbacks and certain access management techniques.

Water and Sewer Utility Service

Conclusions:

- Existing water and sewer utility infrastructure in the Ambriar area is generally inadequate to support growth due to undersized pipes or sheer distance between otherwise developable property and those utility services.

Action Items:

- The Town will work with developers during subdivision, site plan review and rezoning request processes to make arrangements for the installation of adequate water and sewer lines and connections according to the general water and sewer plan for the area contained in Map 20.2.

Land Use and Open Space Preservation

Conclusions:

- The Town's then-current comprehensive plan and zoning of the area did not support the anticipated and desired changes to the Ambriar area.

Action Items:

- The Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance was amended to adjust allowable building area of sites to ensure more open space within the Ambriar area.
- A 100' wide strip between the commercial area and against adjacent residential lots as shown on Map 20.2 will be preserved. The Town will work to preserve sensitive lands such as this that

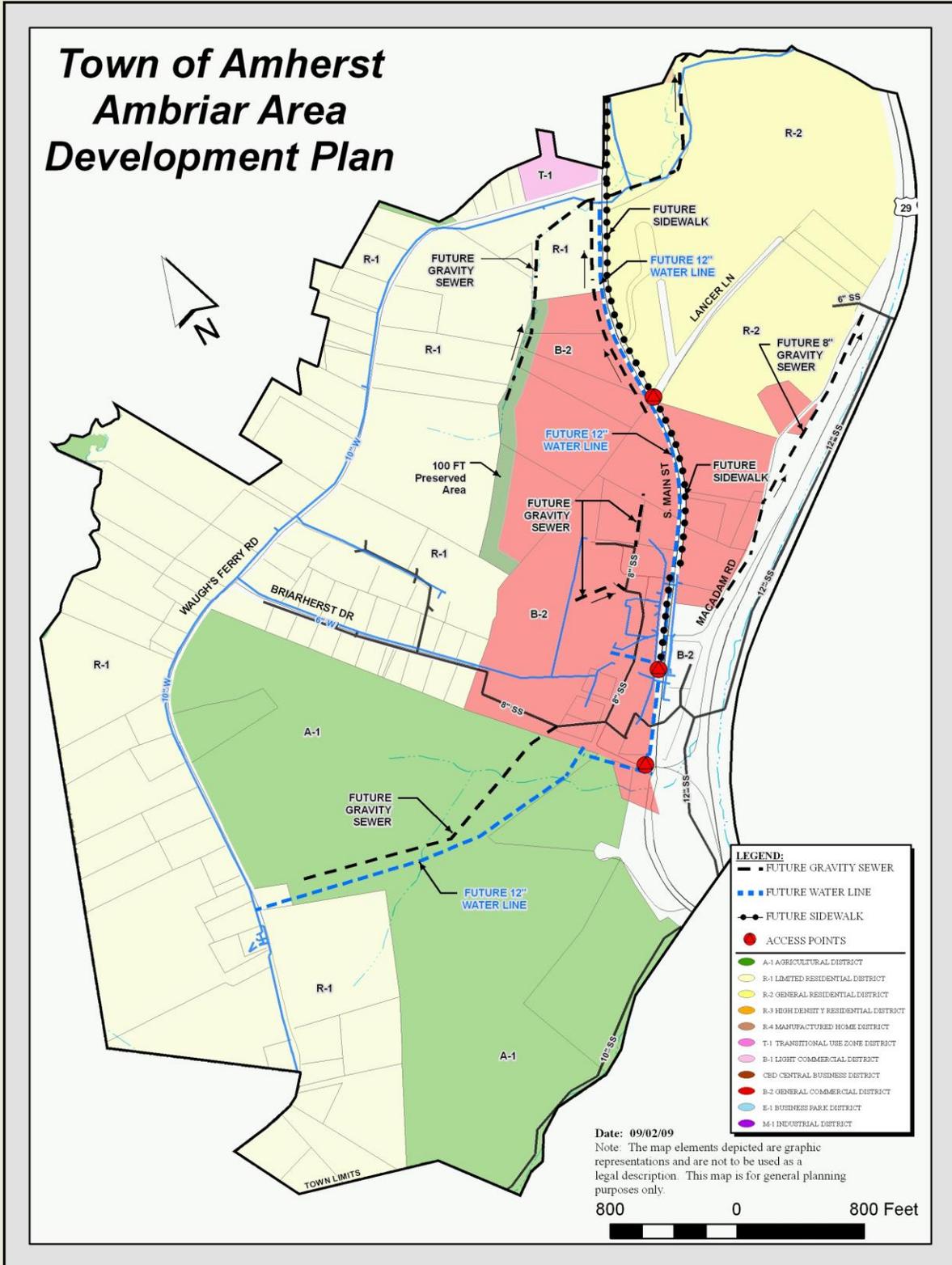
feature steep slopes and a stream bottom. For this specific area, no clearing or grading will be allowed except for the minimum necessary for new sewer mains.

- The Town of Amherst will encourage and support increased commercial development in the Ambriar area. Once the water, sewer, right of way preservation, access and traffic management issues are resolved, rezoning requests and site plans are open for approval per Map 20.2 provided that all other regulations in the Town Code are met.

In summary, it is the intent of the Town of Amherst to encourage the proper development of the required water, sewer and road infrastructure, and after arrangements for the installation of adequate infrastructure are in place then the lands in the Ambriar area will be rezoned accordingly.

**Map 20.2
Ambriar Area Development Plan**

**Town of Amherst
Ambriar Area
Development Plan**



Central Business District Development Area

Downtown Amherst has seen quite a bit of activity in the recent few years. In addition to presenting economic development opportunities that the Town hopes to address via public investment (see Chapter 10, Economic Development Plan), development and redevelopment of downtown Amherst is being funded and promoted to a large degree by the private sector. Recent policy decisions regarding the preservation and enhancement of the physical aspects of Downtown Amherst have included:

- Establishment of lower allowed sign sizes in the downtown area than has been imposed in other areas of the Town.
- Development and adoption of a new Central Business District zoning district to define the “Downtown Amherst” area.
- Installation of a downtown wireless internet system.
- Design and planned construction of the E. Court Street area as a “Town Square” to reinforce the downtown focal point and to demonstrate what revitalization can mean to downtown Amherst. This would probably include:
 - Developing a public space/event area, such as a “town square”, where activities such as a farmers market or small concerts could take place at different times
 - Relocating the overhead utility wires along E. Court Street.
 - Installing different pavement, street trees, seating, refuse containers, etc.
 - Creating more and better parking

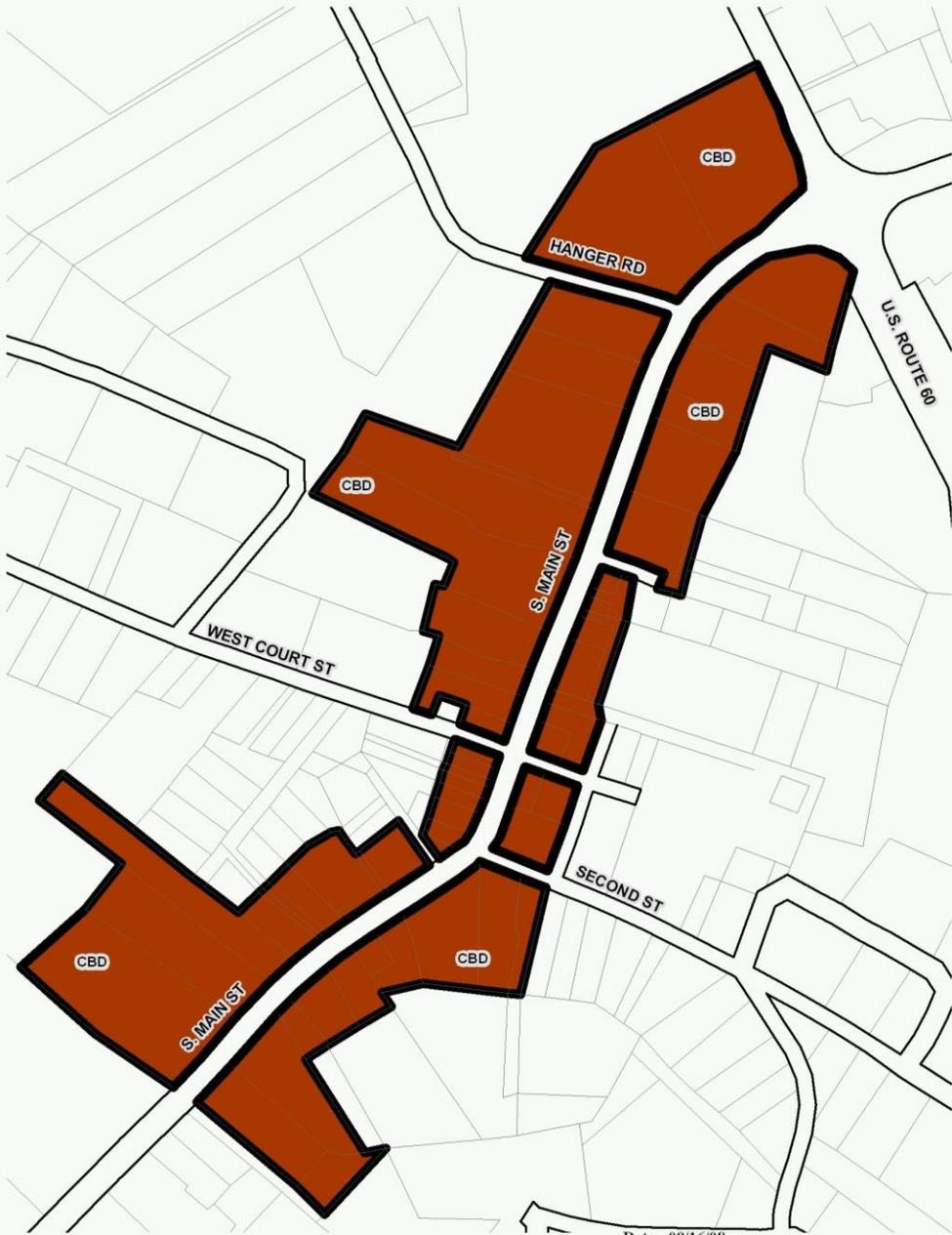
Significant work to enhance the preservation and enhancement of Downtown Amherst is ongoing. This includes the following initiatives that will be the topic of much debate in the coming years:

- Relieving the front setback requirements in some or all of the downtown area.
- Resolving the fate of the Town’s “penny” parking meters, and the parking meter poles which serve as support for American flags on flag holidays.
- Addressing the need for more parking in the downtown area, the preservation of existing parking spaces, and the potential for developing new parking spaces.
- Developing appearance motifs to provide a model that defines the “Amherst look” for contractors and business operators to use as a reference source on a voluntary basis. This might include standardized signage, color and material palettes, and various architectural features.

The defined “Downtown Amherst” is shown on Map 20.3 and contains the lots that front on S. Main Street from the traffic circle to Lee Street.

Map 20.3
Central Business District Development Area Map

**Town of Amherst
Central Business District
Area Development Plan**



Date: 09/16/08
Note: The map elements depicted are graphic representations and are not to be used as a legal description. This map is for general planning purposes only.
300 150 0 300 Feet

Rt 60/Bypass Interchange Development Area

The area around the U.S. Route 60/U.S. Route 29 Bypass interchange has not changed appreciably since the 1980's except for the relocation of the abandoned Norfolk Southern railroad station to front on U.S. Route 60 for use as Amherst's visitors center. However, the intersection of two primary highways that cross the entire width and depth of the Commonwealth of Virginia will certainly draw the attention of traffic-oriented businesses in the years to come.

For this area to fully develop and/or redevelop to its traffic-oriented business potential, the following obstacles must be overcome:

1. **Poor Visibility from Both Highways** – Not all lands are readily visible from both highways. This is due to a variety of factors that include tree coverage, topography or sheer distance from one or both highways.
2. **Lack of Adequate Utility Infrastructure** – Municipal water is reasonably available to all lands for domestic purposes, but almost all lands in this development area have limited access to municipal water insofar as fire protection is concerned. Sewer is generally available on the eastern side of U.S. Route 29 Bypass but must be pumped from individual tracts to Town sewer mains on the western side.
3. **Zoning** – Although much land near the interchange is zoned for heavy commercial use, residential zoning is still in place on several tracts. Rezoning to allow heavy commercial uses such as convenience stores that feature gasoline sales, grocery stores, and lodging and dining establishments must be carefully reviewed to protect the existing residences on adjacent lands from the negative impact of commercial development.
4. **Topography** – The lands near the interchange are not level, so significant cut and/or fill will be required before large-scale development can take place.
5. **Traffic Impact** – To avoid the proliferation of commercial entrances and their associated "conflict points", and to limit the need for traffic signals, proper planning for concentration of entrances, turn lanes and acceleration/deceleration lanes is needed.

In summary, it is the intent of the Town of Amherst to encourage the proper development of the required water, sewer and road infrastructure as shown on Map 20.4, and after arrangements for the installation of adequate infrastructure are in place then the lands in the U.S. Route 60/U.S. Route 29 Bypass area will be rezoned accordingly.

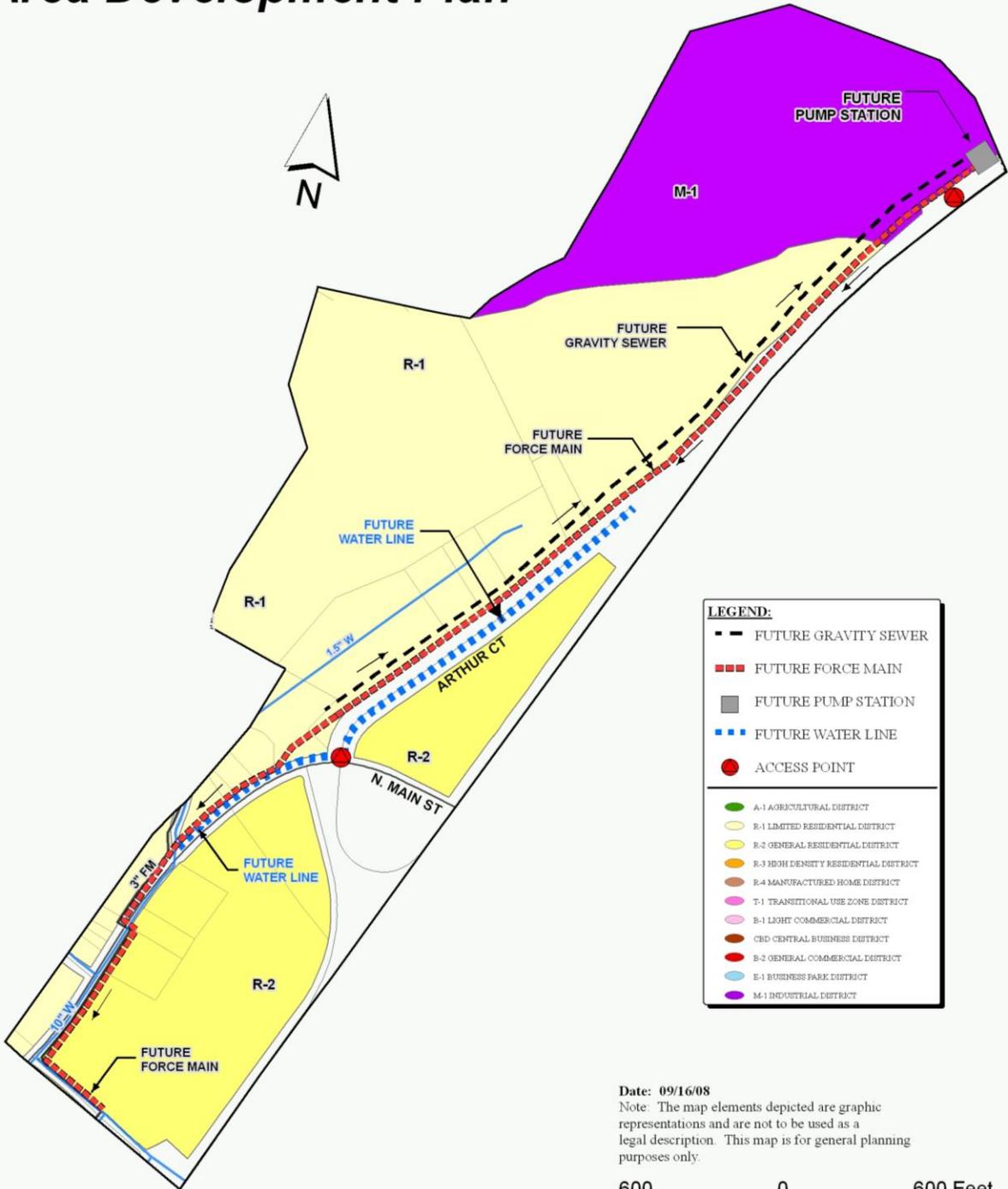
N. Main/Bypass Interchange Development Area

The area around the Town's northernmost U.S. Route 29 Bypass interchange is almost totally residential in character. Opportunities exist for traffic-oriented commercial development in this area due to the interchange. However, the water and sewer infrastructure is either nonexistent or inadequate to support significant residential or commercial growth. Another significant concern is the generation of additional significant and non-local traffic along N. Main Street – the heart of the Town's largest residential area.

No changes to the land use pattern in this area are envisioned in this plan. However, in the future this area may be traversed by water and sewer infrastructure to support heretofore undeveloped and/or underserved areas north of the Town of Amherst. The potential location of such facilities are shown on Map 20.5.

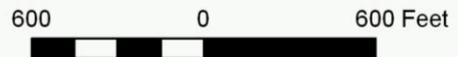
Map 20.5
 N. Main/Bypass Interchange Development Area Map

Town of Amherst North Main Street/Bypass Interchange Area Development Plan



Date: 09/16/08

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60 East Area-Poplar Grove Development Area

The new land development located in the Higginbotham Creek drainage shed east of the Town of Amherst and between Union Hill Road and Coolwell Road is known as Poplar Grove. Poplar Grove currently features an 18 hole golf course and about 120 building lots for single family dwellings. The project's developers are planning additional features to the development which may include new lots for single family dwellings and townhouses, a retail/office center, a school, and dining and lodging establishments, but firm projections on the buildout of that development are not available as yet.

It has become apparent that the Poplar Grove development must have access to a centralized wastewater treatment facility in order to achieve the density and critical mass of development needed to support this growth. Of course, the installation of a new municipal-scale wastewater treatment plant is impractical as is connection to existing wastewater treatment plants in Nelson County or Lynchburg. The Town believes that access to the Town of Amherst's wastewater treatment plant is the only practical solution to the developer's wastewater treatment problem.

However, whether to provide sewage treatment service to such a large extraterritorial sewer user is a significant and as-yet unresolved issue for the Town. A primary concern is that the Town's utility system is an attractor for businesses that generate large amounts of tax revenue for the Town, particularly taxes from restaurants and lodging establishments. Since those types of businesses would probably not be able to open or operate without access to Town utility services, and all things being equal, instead of such establishments being outside of the corporate limits the Town would prefer that they be located inside the corporate limits so the lodging and meals tax revenues could flow to the Town.

In June 2005 the Poplar Grove developers asked about procedures that would result in Poplar Grove accessing Town sewer service with the possibilities of some portion of the development coming into the Town, Town and/or county water service, and local government involvement in financing the construction of the infrastructure for the development. The Town of Amherst's position then and now on the development follows.

The Town hopes to be in a position to fully and specifically respond to the developer's specific proposals and plans to open a dialogue with the developer during the planning and design phase of the project. The benefits that the Poplar Grove development could offer the current and future residents and business operators of the Town are acknowledged, but it is understood that the Town will need to carefully study the specifics of all aspects of the proposed project due to its scale and potential impact on local services in general and utilities in particular. It is also understood that a series of documents would need to be prepared by qualified individuals and submitted for consideration by various agencies before the development and/or its connection to the Town's water and/or sewer systems would be considered fully "approved" by the Town of Amherst.

The preparation of the complete development proposal would be the developer's responsibility, design and construction of needed infrastructure would be done by the developer's organization, and the Town's tax or rate base should not be put at risk by any private development.

A plan showing the anticipated location of future water and sewer mains within Poplar Grove as well as the development's access points is shown on Map 20.6.

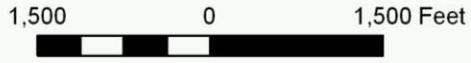
Map 20.6
60 East Area-Poplar Grove Development Area Map

Town of Amherst 60 East/Poplar Grove Utility Service Area Plan



LEGEND:	
	FUTURE GRAVITY SEWER
	FUTURE WATER LINE
	COUNTY WATER LINES
	ACCESS POINT

Date: 09/16/08
 Note: The map elements depicted are graphic representations and are not to be used as a legal description. This map is for general planning purposes only.



60 West Area-Lloyd Property Development Area

The large tracts of land assembled into one ownership west of the Town of Amherst between U.S. Route 60 and Kenmore Road is known as the Lloyd property. Although the property is for sale, the approximately 400 acres could develop as a mix of residential, golf, commercial and residential land uses. No developer has approached the Town as of this writing.

However, whether to provide sewage treatment service to such a large extraterritorial sewer user is a significant and as-yet unresolved issue for the Town. A primary concern is that the Town's utility system is an attractor for businesses that generate large amounts of tax revenue for the Town, particularly taxes from restaurants and lodging establishments. Since those types of businesses would probably not be able to open or operate without access to Town utility services, and all things being equal, instead of such establishments being outside of the corporate limits the Town would prefer that they be located inside the corporate limits so the lodging and meals tax revenues could flow to the Town.

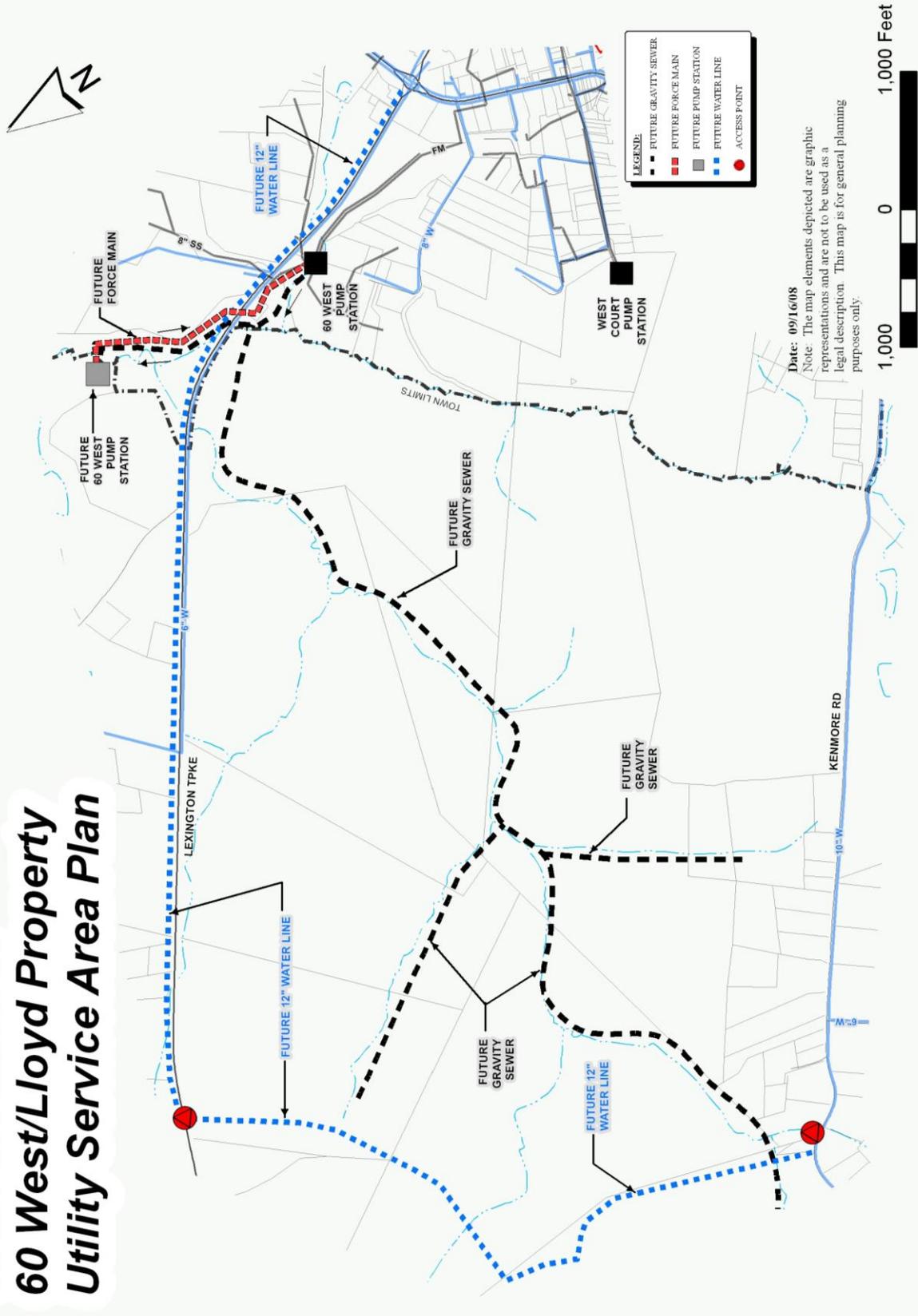
The Town hopes to be in a position to fully and specifically respond to the developer's specific proposals and plans to open a dialogue with the developer during the planning and design phase of the project. The benefits that the development of the Lloyd Property could offer the current and future residents and business operators of the Town are acknowledged, but it is understood that the Town will need to carefully study the specifics of all aspects of the proposed project due to its scale and potential impact on local services in general and utilities in particular. It is also understood that a series of documents would need to be prepared by qualified individuals and submitted for consideration by various agencies before the development and/or its connection to the Town's water and/or sewer systems would be considered fully "approved" by the Town of Amherst.

The preparation of the complete development proposal would be the developer's responsibility, design and construction of needed infrastructure would be done by the developer's organization, and the Town's tax or rate base should not be put at risk by any private development.

A plan showing the anticipated location of future water and sewer mains within the Lloyd property as well as the development's access points is shown on Map 20.7.

Map 20.7
60 West Area-Lloyd Property Development Area Map

Town of Amherst
60 West/Lloyd Property
Utility Service Area Plan



Chapter 21 - Future Land Use Plan

The Town of Amherst expects to grow at an increased rate now that new Route 29 Bypass around Madison Heights and Lynchburg has been completed. The Town of Amherst firmly believes that the Town will become a focal point of developers in the manner of the Forest community of Bedford County due to the potential offered by the new highway.

Much of this growth will be in the form of increased housing stock. Most of the new residential development in this area is expected to be single family housing, but townhouse and two-family dwellings are also possible. Potential for growth also exists outside the Town limits off U. S. Route 60 west of the corporate limits at the Lloyd property and at Poplar Grove east of the Town. These heretofore undeveloped lands could potentially be served by the Town water and sewer utilities, provided such is installed in the future.

Various factors, including recent rezoning requests and statements by real estate agents and business operators, have indicated an apparent lack of business-zoned property in the Town. New commercial development will be driven by the construction of the Madison Heights bypass and residential development in the greater Amherst area. Discussions have been held about the future land use in the area along South Main Street between Garland Avenue and Ambriar Shopping Center. Recent commercial development in the Garland Avenue/Kenmore Road area have focused attention on this part of Town as a transition between the commercial/heavy commercial "Main Street" to the quiet, pleasant residential neighborhoods of Garland Avenue and Sunset Drive. It is felt that a buffering strategy to protect residential neighborhoods from heavy commercial areas along South Main Street is necessary. For these reasons a "Transitional Use" mixed use zone was developed for this area and certain other parts of the Town. A shift from "transitional use" zoning to commercial zoning is expected to occur in the coming years as infrastructure is installed and properties are developed.

Industrial development inside the Town is limited by the amount of industrially zoned property. Excepting Brockman Park, the Town realizes that industrial development inside the corporate limits will be minimal until lands for such development are identified and rezoned and supporting infrastructure is developed.

Significant additional public and semi-public development is unlikely due to recent significant improvements of major installations inside the Town. Courthouse/jail, high school, fire station and water plant, and post office relocation/expansion/upgrade projects have all occurred during this decade. Other possibilities include the development of a new town Hall and the construction of additional office space for the Amherst County governmental operations, but locations for these have not been confirmed as of this time.

LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

GOAL

TO ACHIEVE, THROUGHOUT THE TOWN AND SURROUNDING AREA, A BALANCED PATTERN OF LAND USES THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE POPULATION, SITMULATES PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTS THE ECOLOGICAL BALANCE OF THE AREA.

Objective

1. To provide adequate land areas for the safe, orderly and efficient economic and demographic growth of the area.

LAND USE STRATEGIES

1. To outline land areas best suited to fit estimated needs for residential, institutional, commercial and industrial activities, respectively.
2. To continuously study and improve subdivision and zoning regulations designed to prevent fragmented, inharmonious and disorderly development.
3. To provide public utilities and facilities, in due time, to areas designated for intensive growth or to areas where this growth has already taken place.
4. To encourage development in areas where it is economically feasible to provide public utilities, or in areas where these public utilities are already located or plans have been made for the installation of public utilities.
5. To encourage a coordinated approach to development so as to balance the functional areas such as industrial parks, commercial centers, institutional areas and neighborhoods.
6. To guide future major transportation facilities between, rather than across, the major development areas so as to provide safe, efficient transportation services.
7. To encourage development on land that is suitable for the particular type of development.

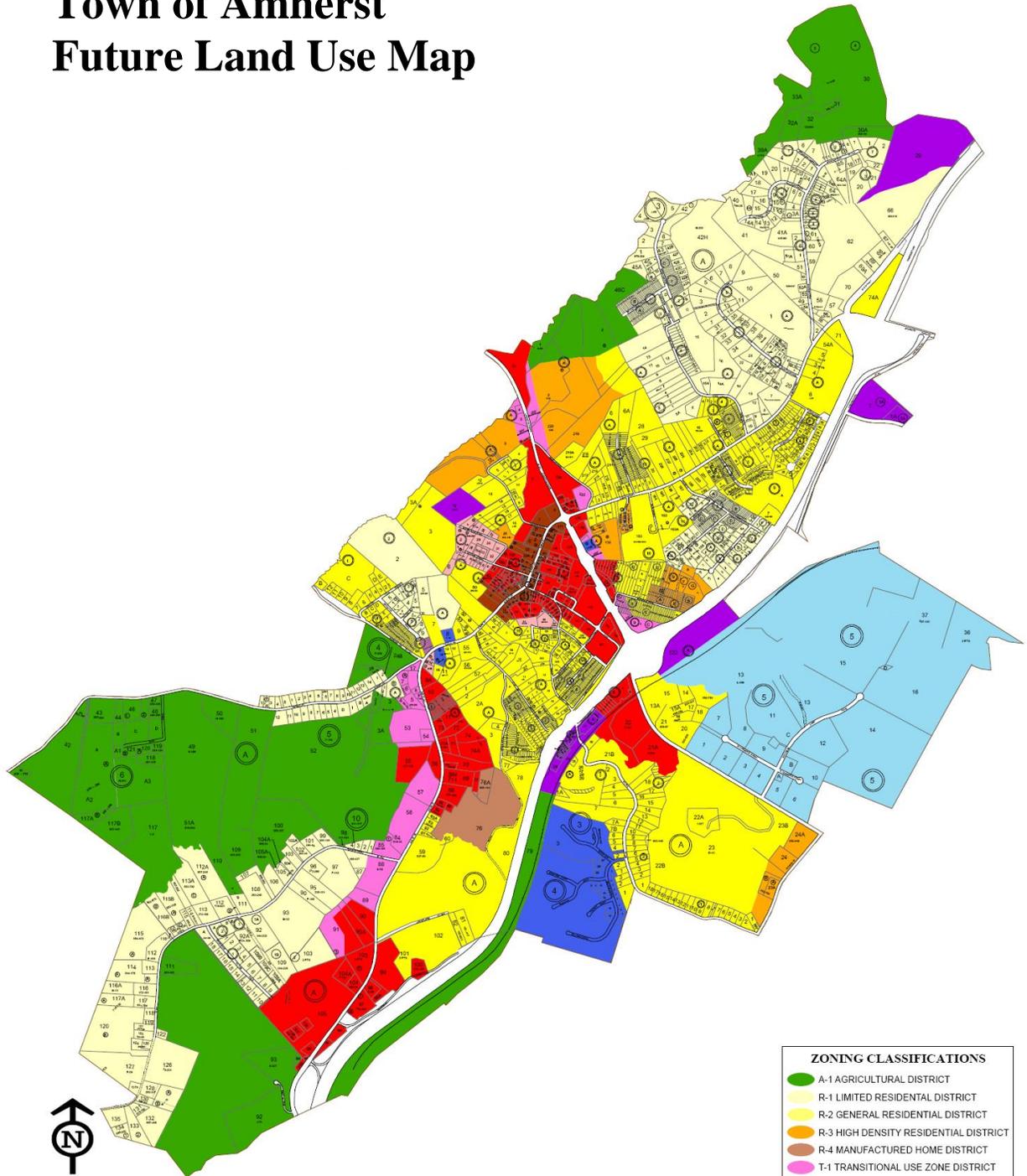
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

It is essential for the land in Amherst to be developed wisely if the Town is to remain a viable and attractive community. Conflicts among various land uses must be prevented, and new development must be conceived to enhance the Town as a desirable place to live and work. This enhancement process should include planning and constructing new developments to blend with the architecture and atmosphere of the existing historic town. New developments should also include provisions for open space with existing open space being preserved where possible and made accessible to existing residential neighborhoods. Attractive, efficient commercial and commercial/industrial areas also need to be developed. To accomplish these ends, public policies must be developed and implemented to guide and control both public and private development in the public interest. It is recognized that as actual land use continues to evolve, land use plans and attendant regulations also need to evolve.

As such, the Town of Amherst's future land use plan begins with the current zoning map as adjusted by the "special focus" discussion in Chapter 20. The Town of Amherst future land use plan is summarized on Map 21.1 with Chapter 20 of this Comprehensive Plan serving as its appendix.

Map 21.1
Future Land Use Map
 (Reference Special Focus Areas discussed in Chapter 20)

Town of Amherst Future Land Use Map



ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS	
■	A-1 AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT
■	R-1 LIMITED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
■	R-2 GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
■	R-3 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
■	R-4 MANUFACTURED HOME DISTRICT
■	T-1 TRANSITIONAL USE ZONE DISTRICT
■	B-1 LIGHT COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
■	CBD CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
■	B-2 GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
■	E-1 BUSINESS PARK DISTRICT
■	M-1 INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

CONTINGENTIAL ZONING INDEX	
■	CZ-1 B-2 (MCDONALD'S) 7/2094 - TAX MAP# 96A4-A-1745
■	CZ-2 B-1 (WILKINS) 4/1295 - TAX MAP# 96A3-A-14
■	CZ-3 B-1 (SHRADER) 7/1295 - TAX MAP# 96A3-A-8
■	CZ-4 R-3 (MILL RACE) 4/997 - TAX MAP# 96-4-A



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