



TOWN OF AMHERST

RECREATION & PARKS MASTER PLAN



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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PREPARED FOR:

THE TOWN OF AMHERST RECREATION AND PLANNING DEPARTMENTS

PREPARED BY:



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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

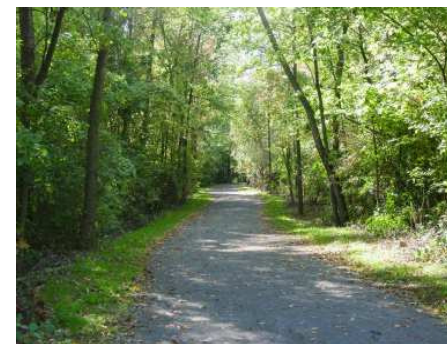
The Town of Amherst **"Recreation and Parks Master Plan"** contains action plans (recommendations) to guide decision-making relating to parks, open space, recreation facilities, programs and services within the Town for the next ten years and beyond. This document is a concise summary of all of the policy initiatives that should be pursued to meet the recreation and parks needs of Amherst residents and is supported by the extensive research, consultation, and analysis contained in the **"Background Report"**. The Master Plan should be read in association with the Background Report.

The Master Plan has identified both the short and long term recreation and parks needs and priorities of residents. Its action plans provide not only a philosophical basis to guide the Town in the future, but also provide a very detailed and practical assessment of improvements that should be undertaken to specific parks and facilities. In doing so, the entire delivery system has been assessed in order that the roles and responsibilities of the Town relative to other service providers can be articulated.

Extensive consultation, research, and analysis have been undertaken and blended together to produce this Master Plan. The Plan is a balance between the needs and concerns of the public and the realities of implementation – the end result being a fiscally responsible Plan that meets the highest priority needs of Amherst's present and future populations. The Plan has also been designed to be flexible in order to deal with forces of change such as emerging social and leisure trends, thereby ensuring that an appropriate level of recreation facilities, parks and services are sustained into the future. This Plan is an update to the Recreation and Parks Master Plan that was prepared for the Town in 1992.

CONTEXT

Recreation is an essential service within the community as it contributes to the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of residents and enhances the overall quality of life. The Town is a major provider of all types of recreation services, including parks, facilities, pathways, and programming.



The timing of the Master Plan could not be more appropriate. The Town, like most other urban municipalities, is facing the challenge of balancing a healthy community with an economically prosperous one. Increased fiscal pressures and infrastructure demands are evident. Public expectations surrounding municipal services, and recreation in particular, continue to rise.

Since the 1992 Master Plan, the Town of Amherst has redeveloped both the Audubon Recreation Center (now the Amherst Pepsi Center) and Clearfield Community Center, acquired and developed the North Amherst Recreation Center, acquired a significant amount of natural land and open space, made considerable headway in establishing a linked trailway network, and undertaken minor improvements to other parks and facilities.

Despite the Town's recent efforts, the overall quality and quantity of the Town's recreation facilities remain deficient to fully meet the leisure-time needs of its current citizens, let alone future ones. The shortage of certain types of facilities and play areas and the aging condition of others can be attributed to insufficient reinvestment in recreation. The result is two-fold – not only must the Town address existing deficiencies and the needs of current residents, it must also work proactively to meet the needs of its growing population.

In order to enhance the quality of life of its residents, it is imperative that the Town address the current deficiencies within its recreational system not only through capital investment, but also through improving the way in which it coordinates with the community and makes use of other community resources. This Plan not only provides a guideline for facility and park investment, but also for the development of a delivery system that is forward-thinking and community-responsive.

STUDY AREA

The study area for the Recreation and Parks Master Plan encompasses the entire Town of Amherst and the Village of Williamsville, which are located within the County of Erie. Although Williamsville is a separate municipal entity, its location within Amherst and its role within the overall recreation system necessitate its inclusion in this Plan. As such, all references to the Town of Amherst include the Village of Williamsville, unless otherwise noted.

The Town of Amherst has a population of 116,510 (2000 Census). The physical character of Amherst's neighborhoods varies from urban in the southwest to rural in its northern extremes. It contains a number of significant institutional land uses, including the State University of New York at Buffalo (North Campus), Daemen College, and Erie Community College. The highest concentration of residents is in the southwestern portion of the Town.

The strategic nature of this document requires that the entire recreation and parks system be examined on a Town-wide level. A more detailed analysis was also undertaken by dividing the Town into six smaller territories. These six "Planning Analysis Areas" have assisted in identifying neighborhoods with inadequate recreation facilities, parks and services.

THE PROCESS

Community Consultation

Guided by the Town's Recreation and Planning Departments and the Steering Committee (Recreation Commission), the Master Plan process began in the summer of 2001. Community organizations, civic administration, political officials, and the general public participated in the planning process through:

- a random sample mail survey distributed to 2,500 Amherst households (570 surveys were completed);
- a survey completed by 26 local community recreation groups;
- telephone interviews with other key groups including School Districts and post-secondary institutions;
- interviews with the Town Board, Recreation Commission, Parks and Playground Committee, and key Town Staff;
- two focus group sessions (one with youth and one with community organizations) held to obtain further input, identify issues and discuss potential solutions; and
- public meetings and open houses to present the draft Plan to the public.

Population Projections

Population projections by age/sex cohort consistent with the Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan were prepared. These projections are critical in forecasting the current and future need for recreation facilities and parks. The Town's current population (year 2000) is 116,510 and is expected to grow by approximately 4% over the next ten years (to 121,339 in 2010) and by approximately 9% over the next twenty years (to 127,264 in 2020) – this represents a steady, but modest growth rate. Over the next twenty years:

- the 5 to 19 age group will remain steady in absolute population;
- the 20 to 34 age group will increase slightly in population;
- the 35 to 54 age group will experience a significant decline in population; and
- the 55+ age group is expected to grow by approximately 38%.

Trends

The Master Plan process also included a thorough examination of local, regional, and national trends affecting the realm of leisure and recreation. Table 1 provides a concise summary of the key trends that are expected to have significant implications on the future of recreation in Amherst.

Table 1: Key Trends Affecting Recreation

CATEGORY	TREND / SUBJECT AREA	DESCRIPTION / IMPLICATIONS
Socio-demographic	aging of the population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased demand for seniors' programming, including active living & wellness; decreased/stable demand for child & youth programming
	ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> greater diversity may lead to demand for new sports/activities and the need for increased sensitivity to how current facilities are used
	growing economic disparity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> income is a significant barrier to participation
	sports tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> balancing and/or prioritizing local needs with impact on the economy
	changing patterns of work and leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the number one barrier to participation for both youth and adults is "lack of time"; translates into need for multi-purpose facilities & more flexible hours
Participation	children & youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children become less active as they enter adolescence; long term health risks & economic impacts – need to find ways to engage those who are inactive
	adult activity patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adults are more active than they were ten and twenty years ago; active adults will become active seniors as they age
	popularity of physical recreation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased demand for trails and open space; swimming continues to be the most popular recreational activity for all ages; increased demand for unstructured and individual activities (e.g., golf, walking, aerobics, skateboarding, in-line sports, open gym time, drop-in opportunities)
	female participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increasing female participation may help offset potential decline in male sports
	declining participation in sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> income is a key variable; potential to increase sport participation rates if adequate facilities exist
Delivery System	volunteerism in decline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> need to attract growing seniors cohort and youth as volunteers
	school district budget pressures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accessibility & affordability of school facilities for community use in jeopardy, creating greater pressure on Town-run programs and/or facilities;
	facilities planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> emphasis on market-driven standards; "one-stop shopping" - multi-purpose and multi-generational facilities; increased activity among females and seniors has implications on facility design
	programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children & youth remain focus, but more emphasis on older adults & seniors as members soar
	role of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> affordability & accessibility are priorities, but budget is limited (must do "more with less"); community-led programming is important, but onus to lead remains on the Town
	user fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> subsidy should be based on ability to pay, not age
	partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> greater need for creative arrangements with other providers; need to reduce duplication and reallocate responsibilities based on strengths

THE PROCESS (CONTINUED)

Leisure Delivery System and Programming

The Plan addresses the methods of recreation and parks service delivery in the Town of Amherst, covering such topics as relationships among the key providers, the role of the Recreation Commission and Recreation Department, and ways to improve coordination and communication with stakeholder groups. Existing programs and future programming needs were also assessed.

Recreation Facilities

Surveys and interviews with participants provided the necessary information upon which to base the projection of current and future needs for a variety of sports and community recreation facilities. Existing standards of supply and recommended provision levels were also considered in the context of future demand. The standards were then revised accordingly, taking into consideration not only current participation levels and public requests, but also recreation trends. Improvements to existing facilities were also recommended.

Parks and Open Space

An inventory of publicly accessible parks and open space areas (including outdoor recreation facilities and amenities) was compiled and recommendations for park improvements were catalogued. The Town's parks and linked open space network was also evaluated in terms of supply and demand through the application of a modified parkland hierarchy and provision standards.

Implementation

Action plans for the implementation, monitoring, and updating of the Master Plan were proposed.

THE ISSUES

The following are considered to be the key issues and directions arising from the community consultation program. The issues are not listed in any priority order:

- There is demand for regulation size hardball diamonds, football fields, soccer fields, playgrounds, and a recreation complex (e.g., indoor pool, fitness center, gymnasiums, youth/family space, etc.). Less frequent requests included additional ball diamonds (little league, girls softball, and adult slo-pitch), water play/splash pads, leash-free dog areas, outdoor basketball courts, ice pads, and expanded golf facilities.
- Although parks, natural areas and trails are rated very highly and more are always preferred, residents appear to be generally satisfied by the existing supply of parks in the Town. The development of new trails or pathways, although desired, creates concerns related to safety and their impact on residential property values.
- The Town needs to reinvest in recreation and renew its commitment to this basic service. The adoption of a mandate and mission statement was suggested as a means of clarifying this new direction.
- Improved communication and coordination between the Town (including staff and the Recreation Commission) and community organizations is required. A greater level of assistance (financial and otherwise) is also required to ensure that local recreation groups are able to continue to provide community-responsive programs and services.
- Park and facility maintenance and scheduling practices and procedures require improvement.
- There is a need for formal policy, guidelines, and processes to govern: the allocation of Town facilities and fields; the usage of Town facilities by non-residents; and the process by which groups may obtain financial assistance.
- School facilities and fields are becoming increasingly less accessible by community organizations, resulting in greater demand for affordable and accessible facilities and fields. Creative arrangements must be explored to ensure that these facilities remain accessible to the community at large.
- Greater efforts should be made to recognize the value and contributions of volunteers within the community.

For more information and analysis on the aforementioned issues, please refer to the Master Plan's Background Report.

ACTION PLANS, TIMING & PRIORITIES

The action plans (recommendations) contained within the Master Plan's Background Report have been reproduced in this summary document and have been divided into the following sections:

- Section 2: Leisure Delivery System & Programming
- Section 3: Existing Recreation Facilities
- Section 4: Existing Parks & Open Space Areas
- Section 5: New Recreation Facilities & Parks
- Section 6: Implementation

Each action plan has been assigned a recommended timing and priority. The ranking of action plans is based on **high, medium and low priorities**. The priority rankings are largely based on the degree of need and safety concerns, as identified throughout the Master Plan process (including public consultation, trend and demographic analysis, assessments of facilities, parks, programs, and services, etc.). Despite the priority ranking system, all action plans are important and, if properly implemented, would benefit recreation services within Amherst.

The proposed timing of the action plans has also been referenced based on **short, medium and long term timeframes**. Specific timeframes have not been included for some recommendations as priorities may shift due to budgeting issues and other uncertainties. Furthermore, some action plans do not have a specific timing associated with them. The timeframes are defined as follows:

- Short term (2004 to 2008)
- Medium term (2009 to 2013)
- Long term (2014 to 2022)

It should be noted that the priorities and timing indicated for the action plans are based upon ideal circumstances. Budget pressures, changes in participation rates or demographics, availability of volunteer resources, and other factors may impact upon the implementation of the proposed action plans. The action plans are based upon what is needed and not necessarily what is financially achievable by the Town or its partners. The Town should reconcile the action plans with its fiscal capacity and focus on the highest priority items.

Furthermore, in the event that an action plan is not implemented within the proposed timeframe, it may become a higher priority within the next timeframe (e.g., from a medium priority in the short term to a high priority in the medium term), particularly if the recommendation pertains to a safety concern. For this reason and others, it is important that the Town regularly monitor and update the Master Plan and its action plans.

The following exhibit provides an easy reference for understanding the implementation tables contained in the succeeding sections. Within the tables, the action plans have been placed in the order they appear in the Background Report and, in most cases, the order is not indicative of the recommended priority or timing of implementation.

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
<i>Reference number / Unique identifier (<u>not</u> in priority order)</i>	<i>Subject, Facility, or Park</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Page reference for the Background Report</i>	<i>High, Medium, or Low (high priority action plans should be addressed before lower priority items)</i>	<i>Short term (2004 to 2008) Medium term (2009 to 2013) Long term (2014 to 2022)</i>	<i>Blank space for staff to record information as the Plan is implemented</i>

SECTION 2: LEISURE DELIVERY SYSTEM & PROGRAMMING

OVERVIEW

The delivery system is the way that recreation and leisure services are delivered to the public. The Town of Amherst is the primary provider of public recreation facilities and parks and also administers a number of leisure programs and services for all ages.

In addition to the Town, there are a number of other public, quasi-public, and private sector organizations that play important roles in the leisure delivery system, including local School Districts, the State University of New York at Buffalo (North Campus), Erie Community College (North Campus), the YMCA, the Jewish Community Center, the Boys and Girls Club, private fitness, golf, and tennis clubs, and others. Although school facilities represent a significant resource in the Town, their continued availability and affordability are ever-present concerns.

There is also an active network of community organizations and volunteers within the Town. These organizations, which include minor sports associations, special interest groups, and individual volunteers, have traditionally played a large role in the delivery of recreation programs to the various communities within the Town and have a strong track record of active participation in the provision of community services, fundraising and sponsorship. There are, however, few formal relationships or procedures among community organizations and the Town of Amherst. Many groups indicated their frustration in trying to get their needs addressed by the Recreation Department and Recreation Commission. Furthermore, the overall leisure delivery system is somewhat fragmented, with most groups operating independently from each other. The action plans attempt to address many of these concerns through improving coordination and communication and establishing formal policies and procedures to guide the delivery of services in an equitable and efficient manner.

Leisure programming deficiencies and needs were also examined, resulting in recommendations to improve the scope of program opportunities. For the most part, however, the public has indicated that the recreational opportunities in Amherst are quite good. The results of the household survey indicate that Amherst residents are quite satisfied with children's programs, while some improvements could be made to programming for adults and people with disabilities.



ACTION PLANS

Through discussions with, and surveys of, the general public, community groups, Town staff, and local leaders, a number of issues related to the Town's recreation delivery system emerged. Some of these issues require a more detailed analysis than this Plan can provide, nevertheless, action plans have been recommended in an effort to improve the overall coordination, effectiveness, and efficiency of the delivery system. The action plans address issues such as:

- departmental structure
- playground maintenance
- coordination and communication
- facility scheduling and allocation
- access to school facilities
- partnership arrangements
- public awareness
- financial assistance for community groups
- the structure of the Recreation Commission
- mandate, vision statement, and objectives
- staffing
- programming opportunities by major age group

The action plans regarding the delivery system are contained in Table 2. Recommendations have been numbered for ease of reference and are not listed in order of priority. For more information on how the action plans were developed and the structure of the table, please refer to pages 7 and 8. The column entitled "PAGE" refers to the page number in the background report where detailed information and analysis of each topic area are located.

Table 2: Action Plans – Leisure Delivery System & Programming

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
1	Departmental Structure	Establish a committee that coordinates the functions and decisions of the Recreation Department, Parks Division, Youth Board and Seniors' Services.	41	Low	Short Term	
2	Departmental Structure	Establish a clear, equitable, and detailed division of responsibilities between the Recreation Department and the Parks Division.	41	Low	Short Term	
3	Departmental Structure	Give consideration to the amalgamation of the Recreation Department and the Parks Division, resulting in the formation of a Parks and Recreation Department.	41	Low	Short to Medium Term	

Table 2: Action Plans – Leisure Delivery System & Programming (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
4	Playground Maintenance	Conduct an audit and inspection of playground equipment in order to identify deficiencies. Qualified individuals should conduct the inspections at appropriate intervals. Repair identified hazards immediately.	42	High	Ongoing	
5	Playground Maintenance	Establish a program for the replacement and maintenance of playground equipment and ensure that it is updated on an annual basis. This will require allocating sufficient funds in the Capital Improvement Program for the immediate improvement of play equipment.	42	High	Short Term	
6	Playground Maintenance	Approach and work in cooperation with neighborhood associations and community groups to ensure that playground safety issues are identified and rectified.	42	Medium	Ongoing	
7	Coordination & Communication	Hold semi-annual meetings with those directly involved in local leisure and recreation services in order to improve coordination between the Town and community groups, as well as among community groups. The minutes of these meetings shall be distributed to all groups, including those that were unable to attend, and/or posted on the Town's web-site.	43	High	Ongoing	
8	Coordination & Communication	Create a central registry containing contact information for the representatives of local community groups. This registry should be produced, maintained and regularly updated by the Town.	43	High	Ongoing	

Table 2: Action Plans – Leisure Delivery System & Programming (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
9	Coordination & Communication	Consult affected groups prior to undertaking projects that would impact upon their activities.	43	High	Ongoing	
10	Coordination & Communication	Distribute the minutes of the Recreation Commission meetings to all community groups.	43	Medium	Ongoing	
11	Coordination & Communication	Provide a support network for the training, coordination and recognition of volunteers.	43	Medium	Ongoing	
12	Coordination & Communication	Explore the feasibility of implementing an Internet-based program registration system.	43	Low	Medium to Long Term	
13	Facility Scheduling & Allocation	Seek creative arrangements in order to accommodate the facility and playing field needs of all community groups.	44	High	Ongoing	
14	Facility Scheduling & Allocation	Prepare and adopt allocation and scheduling policies for municipal ball diamonds, soccer fields, ice surfaces, gymnasiums, and indoor fields. The policies should give priority to Town-run programs, residents, and youth and the number of hours should be based upon the size of the group. The policies should be developed in consultation with the user groups. Implementation of the policies will require the Town to collect information from each group regarding the number, age, and residency of all registered participants.	44	High	Short Term and Ongoing	
15	Facility Scheduling & Allocation	Encourage the development of joint-use facilities and fields in order to maximize use. Scheduling must, however, not create conflicts between uses and activities.	44	Medium	Ongoing	

Table 2: Action Plans – Leisure Delivery System & Programming (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
16	Access to School Facilities	That the Town pursue reciprocal use agreements with the public School Districts and/or post-secondary institutions to ensure that indoor and outdoor school facilities remain accessible to community user groups and that Town facilities and parks are available for school and community education activities.	44	High	Ongoing	
17	Partnership Arrangements	That the Town, where appropriate, consider entering into partnerships with reliable third party organizations in developing, financing, operating, and/or maintaining recommended capital and operating improvement projects in an effort to better serve the residents of Amherst through improving cost efficiency, customer service, and accessibility.	45	High	Ongoing	
18	Public Awareness	That the Town explore ways to increase public awareness of its trails, pathways, and programs.	45	Low	Ongoing	
19	Public Awareness	That the Town, over time or as the program guide evolves, include contact information for community-based recreation organizations in its program guide.	45	Low	Ongoing	

Table 2: Action Plans – Leisure Delivery System & Programming (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
20	Financial Assistance for Community Groups	<p>That the Town establish a decision-making framework for assessing requests for financial assistance and facility improvements in consultation with community organizations. Criteria may include, but shall not be limited, to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the availability of funds; - consistency with the Master Plan; - the number of people that would benefit from the assistance; - demonstrated current and long-term need; - level of community support; - level/type of contribution by requesting body; - priority should be given to activities that serve children, youth, seniors and individuals at-risk; etc. 	46	High	Short Term	
21	Mandate, Vision Statement & Objectives	<p>That the Recreation Department develop and formally adopt a mandate, vision statement, and/or guiding principles pertaining to recreation and parks services that recognizes the importance of these services to improving the social, cultural, economic, and physical wellbeing of the community. Issues such as core services and target markets should be addressed to guide the decisions of administrators and politicians when making decisions between competing courses of action.</p>	47	High	Short Term	
22	The Structure of the Recreation Commission	<p>That the Town investigate ways to improve the effectiveness, responsiveness, and representation of the Recreation Commission.</p>	47	High	Ongoing	

Table 2: Action Plans – Leisure Delivery System & Programming (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
23	Staffing	Review the job descriptions of senior Recreation Department staff in an effort to identify the need for, and viability of, adding more staff to take on the expanded duties recommended in this Plan. A comprehensive review of park and facility maintenance schedules and responsibilities should also be undertaken at that time.	49	High	Short Term	
24	Programming - General	In cooperation with the School Districts, ensure that duplication of programming between the Town and Community Education is avoided and that gaps are identified.	50	Medium	Ongoing	
25	Programming - Preschool Children	Continue to monitor registration levels in preschool programs offered by the Recreation Department and the Amherst Youth Board (Family Room) and adjust the supply accordingly, particularly in the north and east.	51	Medium	Ongoing	
26	Programming - Preschool Children	Consider offering additional evening and weekend programming opportunities for preschool children.	51	Medium	Short Term	
27	Programming - Children	Greater effort should be made to accommodate the needs of the community-based child and youth basketball program and to offer more open gym time.	52	Medium	Short Term	
28	Programming - Youth	The Town should make a continuous effort to identify the leisure programming needs of local youth by encouraging suggestions from youth.	53	Medium	Ongoing	
29	Programming - Youth	Greater effort should be made to accommodate the needs of the community-based child and youth basketball program and to offer more open gym time.	53	Medium	Short Term	

Table 2: Action Plans – Leisure Delivery System & Programming (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
30	Programming - Adults	The Town should maintain and enhance the existing cultural and passive recreational programming opportunities and events in the community.	54	Medium	Ongoing	
31	Programming - Adults	The Town should consider offering introductory level fitness and aerobics programs for adults.	54	Medium	Short Term	
32	Programming - Adults	The Town should consider offering a women's basketball league/program.	54	Medium	Short Term	
33	Programming - Seniors	The Recreation Department, in cooperation with the Senior Services Department, should carefully monitor the need for expanded and new programming to address the needs of two generations of seniors.	54	Medium	Ongoing	
34	Programming - Seniors	When the Amherst Center for Senior Services and programming near their respective capacities, a comprehensive review of the need for additional or expanded outreach services should be undertaken.	54	Low	Long Term	
35	Programming - People with Disabilities	Continue to adapt local recreation facilities, parks and playgrounds for access and programming for people with disabilities.	55	High	Ongoing	
36	Programming - People with Disabilities	Monitor and respond to the needs of people with disabilities through regular consultation with local organizations and individuals.	55	Medium	Ongoing	

SECTION 3: EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES

OVERVIEW

Each of the Town's five indoor recreation facilities (Amherst Pepsi Center, Clearfield Community Center, Harlem Road Community Center, North Amherst Recreation Center, and the Amherst Center for Senior Services) has been assessed based on an analysis of recreation components. Action plans for minor improvements to existing municipal facilities have been proposed, as have recommendations pertaining to public/Town access to school recreation facilities.



ACTION PLANS

The action plans regarding existing recreation facilities are contained in Table 3. Recommendations have been numbered for ease of reference and are not listed in order of priority. For more information on how the action plans were developed and the structure of the table, please refer to pages 7 and 8. The column entitled "Page" refers to the page number in the background report where detailed information and analysis of each topic area are located.

Table 3: Action Plans – Existing Recreation Facilities

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
37	Clearfield Community Center	Install a retractable wall or netting in the large gymnasium to allow the court to be divided in two.	57	Medium	Short Term	
38	North Amherst Recreation Center	Consideration should be given to expanding the North Amherst Recreation Center should the need for additional indoor and/or outdoor facilities be required in this area.	58	High	Medium Term	
39	North Amherst Recreation Center	Explore the possibility of installing a scoreboard and bleachers within the Center.	58	Medium	Short Term	
40	Harlem Road Community Center	Consider installing a proper heating and cooling system.	59	Low	Short Term	

Table 3: Action Plans – Existing Recreation Facilities (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
41	Amherst Center for Seniors Services	Develop bocce courts in order to expand outdoor recreation activities. Provide direct link to the Walton Woods Park trail system. (see also recommendation 124)	60	Medium	Short to Medium Term	
42	Schools	The Town shall establish and/or maintain regular contact with the local School Districts, Colleges and University to ensure that community access to school facilities remains both available and affordable and to discuss potential partnership opportunities in relation to future capital projects.	62	High	Ongoing	
43	Schools	Pending the outcome of the Erie Community College institutional assessment, the Town should discuss the opportunity of acquiring and/or operating the ECC North Campus indoor and outdoor recreational facilities for community use.	62	High	Short to Medium Term	

SECTION 4: EXISTING PARKS & OPEN SPACE AREAS

OVERVIEW

This section provides an analysis of existing parks and open space areas in Amherst. Public open space and parks contribute to the quality of life of Amherst residents by not only providing the land base for recreation activities and facilities, but also by contributing to the ecological health of the municipality and enhancing the aesthetic quality of the community.

There are 54 public and quasi-public parks and natural areas within the Town totaling 2,835 acres (see Map 1). Each park was evaluated during the Master Plan process for its ability to meet the current and future needs of Amherst residents. Action plans are proposed on a park-specific basis, detailing necessary improvements in keeping with the overall strategies of the Plan.

The Town also has an extensive network of paved bicycle and pedestrian paths and has plans to upgrade existing trails and develop new paths over the coming years. The trailways are a valuable asset to the community as they assist not only in alleviating traffic congestion, but also in providing space for a variety of unstructured, low-impact recreational pursuits. The continued development of both nature trails and paved trails received a great deal of support from the public through the household survey and is also supported by the Master Plan.

ACTION PLANS

The action plans regarding existing parks and open space areas are contained in Table 4. Recommendations have been numbered for ease of reference and are not listed in order of priority. For more information on how the action plans were developed and the structure of the table, please refer to pages 7 and 8. Also note that the "park #s" identified under "topic area" correspond with the numbering on Map 1. The column entitled "Page" refers to the page number in the background report where detailed information and analysis of each topic area are located.



Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
44	Amherst State Park (Park #40)	That the park be developed in accordance with the Amherst State Park Master Plan.	66	High	Short Term	
45	Amherst Veterans Canal Park (Park #3)	Develop a second overlook/seating area on the east side of the boat launch.	66	Medium	Medium Term	
46	Amherst Veterans Canal Park (Park #3)	Resurface the parking area with asphalt paving.	66	Low	Medium Term	
47	Amherst Recreation Complex (Amherst Pepsi Center) (Park #4)	The Town, in conjunction with the Amherst Girls Softball Association, should explore the possibility of installing light standards on one or more of the existing softball diamonds.	67	High	Short Term	
48	Amherst Recreation Complex (Amherst Pepsi Center) (Park #4)	The Town, in conjunction with the Amherst Girls Softball Association, should develop two additional girls' softball diamonds at the Amherst Recreation Complex. The development of the diamonds would require the elimination of three mini soccer fields and, therefore, should not take place until the fields are replaced elsewhere.	67	High	Short to Medium Term	
49	Amherst Recreation Complex (Amherst Pepsi Center) (Park #4)	Install a basketball/multi-purpose pad.	67	Low	Short Term	
50	Bassett Park (Park #5)	Implement all elements of the park-specific Master Plan.	68	High	Short to Medium Term	Restroom facility completed in 2003

Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
51	Briarhurst Park (Park #6)	Install a proper base and border around the swing set.	69	High	Short Term	
52	Briarhurst Park (Park #6)	Remove the practice diamond backstop and shift the soccer field to the north in order to minimize baseball/soccer conflicts.	69	Medium	Short Term	
53	Briarhurst Park (Park #6)	Repair soccer standards netting.	69	Low	Short Term	
54	Briarhurst Park	Paint the basketball nets and backboards.	69	Low	Short Term	
55	Briarhurst Park	Paint the tennis court surface.	69	Low	Medium Term	
56	Campus Drive Recreation Area (Park #7)	Undertake a park-specific master plan.	69	Medium	Short to Medium Term	
57	Cantalician Center (Park # 55)	Install additional creative and traditional play equipment to accommodate different age groups and levels of skill, including apparatuses for children with disabilities.	69	Medium	Short Term	
58	Central Amherst Baseball Complex (Park #8)	Install washrooms.	70	Medium	Short to Medium Term	
59	Central Amherst Baseball Complex (Park #8)	Undertake minor repairs to benches, bleachers and backstops.	70	Low	Short Term	
60	Central Amherst Baseball Complex	Resurface the parking area with asphalt paving.	70	Low	Medium Term	

Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
61	Cindy Drive Play Area (Park #43)	Hold a neighborhood meeting regarding the future of the park. Potential uses for the park include playground equipment and associated neighborhood parkland amenities.	71	Medium	Short Term	
62	Clearfield Community Center Park (Park #9)	Correct drainage problems on mini soccer fields and at the east end of the park.	71	Medium	Medium Term	
63	Clearfield Community Center Park (Park #9)	Install an outdoor sand volleyball court.	71	Low	Short Term	
64	College Park (Park #44)	Develop park for passive recreational purposes and install playground equipment, trails, benches, and picnic tables.	72	Medium	Medium Term	
65	Creekwood Park (Park #10)	Repave/paint tennis courts and cut back vegetation on fence / or remove tennis courts.	72	Medium	Short Term	
66	Creekwood Park (Park #10)	Cut back vegetation on basketball court fence and repair vandalized nets.	72	Medium	Short Term	
67	Creekwood Park (Park #10)	Link park with trail to proposed N.W. connector road bike trail.	72	Medium	Medium Term	
68	Creekwood Park (Park #10)	Remove sandbox.	72	Low	Short Term	
69	Creekwood Park (Park #10)	Consider developing a small paved parking area.	72	Low	Medium Term	

Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
70	Dana Heights Recreation Area (Park #11)	Install a swing set.	73	Medium	Short Term	
71	Dellwood Park (Park #12)	Install picnic tables.	73	Low	Short Term	
72	Eggertsville Community Park (Park #45)	Proceed with plans to conduct a neighborhood meeting, develop a park plan, and install playground equipment and other passive recreational amenities.	73	High	Short Term	Meetings and plans completed; project bid 06.04
73	Fetto Park (Park #46)	Implement all elements of the recently completed par-specific master plan.	74	Medium	Short Term	Park plan developed; discussed at neighborhood meeting 05.27.04
74	Fisherman's Wharf (Park #54)	Examine the State-owned parcel on the south side of Tonawanda Creek Road for the development of a parking area.	74	Medium	Medium Term	
75	Garnet Park (Park #13)	Install permanent washroom facilities.	74	Medium	Short Term	
76	Garnet Park (Park #13)	Stripe the parking lot.	74	Low	Short Term	
77	Garrison Park (Park #14)	Replace the wading pool with a spray pad/water play area at such time that the wading pool requires substantial capital upgrades.	75	High	Unknown	
78	Garrison Park (Park #14)	Resurface the basketball court.	75	Low	Short to Medium Term	

Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
79	Getzville Fire Department Park (Park #15)	Examine the site's potential use as a trailhead for the Peanut Line multi-use trail.	76	Medium	Short Term	
80	Glen Park (Park #16)	Replace steep path from Main Street with steps.	76	High	Short Term	
81	Glen Park (Park #16)	Install proper signage at park entrances.	76	Medium	Short Term	
82	Glen Park (Park #16)	Repair/replace benches.	76	Medium	Short Term	
83	Glen Park (Park #16)	Re-pave pathways.	76	Medium	Short to Medium Term	
84	Glen Park (Park #16)	Consider developing public washroom facilities.	76	Medium	Short to Medium Term	
85	Glen Park (Park #16)	Install ornamental lighting.	76	Low	Short to Medium Term	
86	Great Baehre Conservation Area (Park #17)	Develop trails linking the conservation area to adjacent residential neighborhoods.	77	Medium	Medium Term	
87	Island Park (Park #19)	Replace the wading pool with a spray pad/water play area at such time that the wading pool requires substantial capital upgrades.	77	High	Unknown	
88	Jurek Post (Park #20)	Explore the potential acquisition of Jurek Post for future recreation uses.	78	High	Short Term	
89	Jurek Post (Park #20)	Paint the play equipment and shelter.	78	Low	Short Term	

Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
90	Jurek Post (Park #20)	Install picnic tables.	78	Low	Short Term	
91	Kingsgate Park (Park #21)	Replace the baseball backstop.	79	Low	Short to Medium Term	
92	Margaret-Louise Park (Park #24)	Evaluate a two-acre area of the park near the cellular tower as a possible location for a fenced leash-free dog area.	80	Medium	Short Term	
93	Margaret-Louise Park (Park #24)	Develop trails linking the park to adjacent residential neighborhoods.	80	Medium	Medium Term	
94	Margaret-Louise Park (Park #24)	Examine the possibility of developing a nature center.	80	Medium	Medium Term	
95	Marinaccio Property (Park #47)	Develop a trail into the park from Lombard Lane and nature trails within the park in the long term.	80	Low	Long Term	
96	Mel Ott Baseball Complex (Park #25)	Explore the possibility of constructing a larger pavilion.	81	Low	Short to Medium Term	
97	Nature View Park (Park #47)	Prepare a Master Plan for this significant natural area.	81	High	Short Term	
98	North Amherst Fire Company (Park #26)	Transfer the ownership of 7± acres of the land recently acquired by the Town of Amherst to the North Amherst fire district.	82	Medium	Short Term	
99	North Amherst Fire Company (Park #26)	Install picnic tables.	82	Low	Short Term	
100	North Amherst Fire Company (Park #26)	Resurface the basketball court.	82	Low	Medium Term	

Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
101	North Amherst Recreation Center Park (Park #27)	Should the recreation facilities and parks in this area be expanded, consideration should be given to developing a maintenance garage to serve Northeast Amherst.	82	High	Unknown	
102	North French Soccer Complex (Park #29)	Facilitate the development of a central building with a shelter, permanent washrooms, and concession stand.	83	High	Short Term	
103	North French Soccer Complex (Park #29)	Install lighting on two soccer fields and give consideration to developing two mini fields across one or more full size fields at such time as the three mini fields at Amherst Recreation Complex are replaced by softball diamonds.	83	High	Short to Medium Term	
104	North French Soccer Complex (Park #29)	Plant shade trees annually.	83	Medium	Ongoing	
105	Oakwood Conservation Area (Park #30)	Expand Oakwood Golf Course into the Conservation Area to create an 18-hole course.	83	Medium	Medium Term	
106	Paradise Park (Park #31)	Work with the Amherst Soccer Association to develop additional soccer fields at this site.	84	High	Short Term	One new soccer field completed in 2003
107	Paradise Park (Park #31)	Pave and expand the parking lot.	84	Medium	Short Term	Completed in 2003
108	Paradise Park (Park #31)	Develop two tennis courts and one basketball court.	84	Medium	Short Term	Basketball court completed in 2003
109	Paradise Park (Park #31)	Develop an internal trail system and evaluate potential linkages to future on and off road bikeways	84	Medium	Short to Medium Term	
110	Paradise Park (Park #31)	Install proper signage at park entrances.	84	Low	Short Term	

Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
111	Paradise Park (Park #31)	Regrade the existing kickball diamond.	84	Low	Short Term	
112	Paradise Park (Park # 31)	Facilitate the development of a central building with a shelter, permanent washrooms, and concession stand.	84	Medium	Short to Medium	
113	South Long Street Recreation Area (Park #33)	Install a proper base and border around swings and teeter-totters.	86	High	Short Term	
114	South Long Street Recreation Area (Park #33)	Repair benches.	86	Medium	Short Term	
115	South Long Street Recreation Area (Park #33)	Discontinue allocating the diamond to adult softball organizations or remove the diamond from the park at such time that a suitable replacement diamond becomes available.	86	Medium	Short Term	
116	South Long Street Recreation Area (Park #33)	Paint the basketball backboard and teeter-totters.	86	Low	Short Term	
117	South Long Street Recreation Area (Park #33)	Resurface the basketball court.	86	Low	Short Term	
118	South Long Street Recreation Area (Park #33)	Replace/repair tennis court fencing.	86	Low	Medium Term	
119	South Long Street Recreation Area (Park #33)	Give consideration to developing permanent washroom facilities.	86	Low	Medium Term	

Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
120	Dann Lake Park (Park #54)	Develop master plan for passive recreational use, trails and environmental enhancements	86	Medium	Medium Term	
121	Sweet Home Park (Park #52)	Negotiate a long-term lease or purchase of the 40-acre parcel on the east side of Sweet Home Road as a vital addition to Nature View Park.	86	High	Short Term	
122	Sweet Home Park (Park #52)	Negotiate an agreement to ensure the long-term community use of the recreation facilities on the 60-acre parcel.	86	High	Short Term	
123	Sweet Home Park (Park #52)	Proceed with the planning, design, and implementation of Phase 1 of the park development.	86	High	Short Term	
124	Sweet Home Park (Park #52)	Explore a partnership with Sweet Home Junior Football for the outfitting of the football field.	86	Medium	Short Term	
125	Walton Woods Park (Park #35)	Install proper signage at park entrances (mandated by NYS grant requirements)	87	High	Short Term	
126	Walton Woods Park (Park #35)	Install internal trail maps/signage.	87	Low	Short Term	
127	Walton Woods Park (Park #35)	Extend the park entrance closer to the Amherst Center for Senior Services. (see also recommendation 41)	87	Low	Short Term	
128	Wehrle FAA Recreation Area (Park #36)	Expand the parking lot.	88	Low	Short to Medium Term	
129	Wehrle FAA Recreation Area (Park #36)	Install an irrigation system.	88	Low	Medium Term	

Table 4: Action Plans – Existing Parks & Open Space Areas (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
130	West Royal Parkway Recreation Area (Park #37)	Undertake minor repairs to the baseball backstop.	88	Low	Short Term	
131	West Royal Parkway Recreation Area (Park #37)	Install swings.	88	Low	Short Term	
132	Windsor Woods (Park #53)	Install creative playground equipment.	89	Medium	Medium Term	
133	Windsor Woods (Park #53)	Remove debris from the property.	89	High	Short Term	
134	Windsor Woods (Park #53)	Develop trails along the road frontage and the stream located along the southern property line.	89	Medium	Medium Term	
135	Linked Open Space System	Continue in efforts to develop a comprehensive, linked trail system in Amherst, including pedestrian and bicycle linkages between key community and passive parks, open spaces and recreation facilities.	91	High	Ongoing	
136	Linked Open Space System	Establish a uniform trailway funding strategy (capital and operating expenditures).	91	High	Short Term	
137	Parkland Acquisition	In evaluating whether to accept the dedication of parkland or fees in lieu of parkland in new subdivisions, consideration should be given to the overall parkland requirements established in this Plan.	91	High	Ongoing	
138	Existing Policy Framework	Implement the recommendations pertaining to parkland funding and acquisition contained in the Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan.	92	High	Short Term	

SECTION 5: NEW RECREATION FACILITIES & PARKS

OVERVIEW

The Master Plan process involved an extensive and comprehensive assessment of the demand for recreation facilities and parkland within Amherst. By comparing requirements (demand) to the inventory of existing recreation opportunities (supply), the need for a variety of additional indoor and outdoor facilities, as well as parkland, was identified.

With regard to the supply of parkland in the Town, the previous hierarchy and standards were modified to more accurately reflect current circumstances. The Master Plan has proposed a classification system that uses three categories of parkland (neighborhood, community, and passive), each with distinct attributes and uses. The Plan further recommends that the Town maintain an overall standard of 4.25 acres of public accessible neighborhood and community parkland per 1,000 population. This standard is slightly higher than the existing supply of 3.98 acres per 1,000 population. In order to correct the parkland deficit between the existing and proposed standards, it is recommended that the Town explore creative arrangements in order to provide adequate levels of parkland to those neighborhoods with inadequate access to parks.

A combination of market-driven and population standards, as well as public opinion was used to assess and estimate community demand and need for recreation facilities in Amherst. The Master Plan relies most heavily on population standards. Market-driven standards have been used where applicable and where data was available. The use of standards is felt to be the most accurate, rational, and scientific approach to determining facility needs. Other contributing factors, such as demographics trends, public opinions, and user group comments have also been incorporated in order to provide an overall estimation of need.

Table 5 on the following page contains a summary of the facility and parkland provision levels recommended in this Plan. Provision levels (or standards) are the recommended measures for the supply of recreation areas and facilities within Amherst. They are based on a combination of accepted industry/municipal standards, market-driven factors (demand, trends, demographics, etc.), and the past and present circumstances within the Town.



Table 5: Recommended Provision Levels by Facility/Park Type

FACILITY / PARK	RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF PROVISION
Recreation/ Community Centers	One community/recreation center and gymnasium per 20,000 population.
Arenas/Ice Pads	One indoor ice surface per 700 participants.
Indoor & Outdoor Pools	One indoor or outdoor pool per 20,000 population. No new outdoor pools are recommended.
Spray Pads/Water Play Areas	One spray pad/water play area per 11,000 children (ages 0-14).
Soccer Fields	One mini field per 50 to 70 participants (age 10 and under) and one full field per 35 to 40 participants (age 11 and over). Each lighted soccer field is equivalent to 2 unlighted soccer fields due to the increased usage potential of the lighted facility.
Football Fields	One football field per 20,000 population (including school fields at 50% availability).
Ball Diamonds	One baseball/hardball diamond per 80 participants and one softball diamond per 100 participants. Each lighted diamond is equivalent to 2 unlighted diamonds due to the increased usage potential of the lighted facility.
Tennis Courts	One tennis court to 2,000 population. Each lighted court is equivalent to 2 unlighted courts due to the increased usage potential of the lighted facility.
Outdoor Basketball Courts	One outdoor basketball court per 5,000 population.
Play Structures	One playground for every 3,000 population or within a 1/3-mile radius (in built-up residential areas), whichever is greater. The radius should be uninterrupted by barriers such as major roads, railways, and watercourses.
Parks Hierarchy	<p>4.25 acres of active “neighborhood” and “community” parkland per 1,000 population (this standard does not include passive parks, nature preserves, public golf courses, or trailways). The three tier parks hierarchy is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neighborhood Parks (0.75 acres/1,000 population) - Community Parks (3.5 acres/1,000 population) - Passive Parks (supply is not correlated with population).

The Master Plan recommends that the following new recreation facilities (listed in general priority order) be developed. It is important to understand that not all of these projects may be financially feasible for the Town to undertake during the proposed timeframes.

Short Term (2004-2008):

- a community recreation center (with a gymnasium, outdoor spray pad/water play, playground, and other indoor and outdoor amenities) in the Eggertsville area
- soccer fields at Paradise Park (this project is already at the planning stage)
- soccer fields, a senior hardball diamond, a junior football field, etc. at Sweet Home Park (this project is already at the planning stage)
- explore the possibility of constructing a skate park within the Town
- explore the possibility of establishing a leash-free zone (dog park) within Margaret-Louise Park

Short to Medium Term (2004-2013):

- six additional soccer fields
- two additional girls' softball diamonds at the Amherst Recreation Complex (this may require the elimination of the existing soccer fields, which must be replaced elsewhere)
- a spray pad/water play area in North Amherst
- an additional junior football field (possibly reconstruct the outdoor field at North Amherst Recreation Center)

Medium Term (2009-2013):

- a community recreation center (with a gymnasium, indoor pool, playground, and other indoor and outdoor amenities) in Northeast Amherst
- nine additional public golf holes (Oakwood Golf Course is the preferred location)

Short to Long Term (2004-2022):

- six to twelve play structures in a variety of locations (this will require the Town to acquire or lease land in areas that are currently deficient in the supply of neighborhood parkland)
- ten outdoor basketball courts / multi-purpose pads
- tennis courts in a variety of locations

ACTION PLANS

The action plans regarding new recreation facilities and parks are contained in Table 6. Recommendations have been numbered for ease of reference and are not listed in order of priority. For more information on how the action plans were developed and the structure of the table, please refer to pages 7 and 8. The column entitled "Page" refers to the page number in the background report where detailed information and analysis of each topic area are located.

Table 6: Action Plans – New Recreation Facilities & Parks

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
139	Recreation/ Community Centers	That the Town explore partnerships with other service providers and/or organizations for the joint development, financing, operation, and/or maintenance of the recommended community centers.	97	High	Ongoing	
140	Recreation/ Community Centers	Pending the outcome of the ongoing Community Center Feasibility Study, develop a community recreation center (with a gymnasium, outdoor spray pad/water play, playground, and other indoor and outdoor amenities as required) in the Eggertsville area.	97	High	Short Term	
141	Recreation/ Community Centers	Develop a community recreation center (with a gymnasium, indoor pool, playground, and other indoor and outdoor amenities as required) in Northeast Amherst.	97	High	Medium Term	
142	Arenas/Ice Pads	Undertake a detailed needs assessment to evaluate the need for additional ice surfaces.	99	Medium	Medium Term	
143	Indoor Pools	Develop an indoor pool/aquatic facility in conjunction with a community recreation center in Northeast Amherst.	101	High	Medium Term	
144	Outdoor Pools / Wading Pools	The Town should not develop any new outdoor pools or wading pools.	103	High	Ongoing	

Table 6: Action Plans – New Recreation Facilities & Parks (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
145	Spray Pads/ Water Play Areas	Develop a spray pad/water play area in conjunction with the proposed community recreation center in Eggertsville and monitor its usage.	103	High	Short Term	
146	Spray Pads/ Water Play Areas	Pending the successful operation of the spray pad/water play area in Eggertsville, develop a second spray pad/water play location in North Amherst, possibly in Paradise Park.	103	High	Short to Medium Term	
147	Soccer Fields	Continue to explore the acquisition and/or long term lease of the soccer fields located at the North Campus of Erie Community College. If these fields become unavailable for community use, they will need to be replaced elsewhere.	107	High	Ongoing	
148	Soccer Fields	Continue with plans to develop soccer fields at Paradise and Sweet Home Parks.	107	High	Short Term	
149	Soccer Fields	Install lighting on two (2) fields at the North French Soccer Complex.	107	High	Short Term	
150	Soccer Fields	Develop six (6) additional fields within the Town. The fields should be clustered at one or two sites to reduce maintenance costs and benefit from better use of resources for the scheduling of games and tournaments.	107	High	Short to Medium Term	
151	Soccer Fields	If and when the three mini soccer fields at the Amherst Recreation Complex are removed, they should be replaced at an alternative site.	107	High	Unknown	

Table 6: Action Plans – New Recreation Facilities & Parks (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
152	Soccer Fields	In order to ensure the viability of existing fields, better turf management practices are required, including making allowances for field rest periods and installing proper drainage and irrigation at key facilities.	107	Medium	Ongoing	
153	Soccer Fields	Drainage improvements are required for the mini fields at Clearfield Community Center.	107	Medium	Medium Term	
154	Football Fields	Ensure that a lighted junior football field is developed at Sweet Home Park. The field and associated amenities should be built with the cooperation of the football user groups in an effort to meet their specific requirements.	108	Medium	Short Term	
155	Football Fields	A third municipal football field should be developed in the Town. To meet this need, the reconstruction of the existing outdoor practice field at the North Amherst Recreation Center as a full-size football field suitable for use by both the Buffalo Destroyers and local junior football should be considered. The Amherst Soccer Association should also be consulted to ensure that their use of this field would not be unduly impacted. If this option is not feasible, alternate park sites should be examined for their potential to accommodate a junior football field. If school sites are considered, a long-term agreement should be developed to ensure adequate access to the field and to establish maintenance standards.	108	Medium	Short to Medium Term	
156	Football Fields	The need for additional football fields should be reassessed if and when a school is built adjacent to Sweet Home Park.	108	Low	Unknown	

Table 6: Action Plans – New Recreation Facilities & Parks (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
157	Ball Diamonds	Ensure that the 90-foot senior hardball diamond at the Amherst Recreation Complex remains available for use by local not-for-profit baseball organizations.	112	High	Ongoing	
158	Ball Diamonds	The redevelopment of Jurek Post as an adult softball complex is not recommended as a Town project at this time. Should the Town undertake the necessary improvements to the minor/youth ball complexes, or should the Town adopt a mandate that is different from the direction proposed in the Master Plan, then the development of an adult baseball complex at Jurek Post may be reconsidered.	112	High	Ongoing	
159	Ball Diamonds	Continue with the proposed plan to develop one lighted senior hardball diamond at Sweet Home Park.	112	High	Short Term	
160	Ball Diamonds	Assist local not-for-profit baseball organizations in installing swing cages in order to address safety concerns. The Town may also facilitate additional investments in youth ball complexes, including the development of permanent washroom facilities, and the replacement and/or improvement of fencing, backstops, irrigation, drainage, etc.	112	High	Short to Medium Term	
161	Ball Diamonds	In conjunction with the Amherst Girls Softball Association, develop two additional girls' softball diamonds at the Amherst Recreation Complex. The development of the diamonds would require the elimination of three mini soccer fields and should not take place until the fields are replaced elsewhere.	112	High	Short to Medium Term	
162	Ball Diamonds	Work with local School Districts to improve school diamonds to a standard required for community usage.	112	Medium	Ongoing	

Table 6: Action Plans – New Recreation Facilities & Parks (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
163	Ball Diamonds	Where possible, future diamonds should be clustered at park sites to reduce maintenance costs and benefit from better use of resources for the scheduling of games and tournaments.	112	Medium	Ongoing	
164	Tennis Courts	Installing lighting at existing tennis courts may be explored as an alternative or partial solution to meeting demand.	114	Medium	Ongoing	
165	Tennis Courts	Develop two tennis courts to serve Planning Analysis Area 2 (possibly at Paradise Park).	114	Medium	Short Term	
166	Tennis Courts	Develop two tennis courts to serve Eggertsville (possibly at Eggertsville Community Park or at the recommended community recreation center).	114	Medium	Short Term	
167	Tennis Courts	Develop two to six tennis courts. Tennis courts are best supplied in groupings of two and, ideally, four.	114	Low	Medium Term	
168	Tennis Courts	Develop two to six tennis courts. Tennis courts are best supplied in groupings of two and, ideally, four.	114	Low	Long Term	
169	Outdoor Basketball Courts	Develop 9 outdoor basketball courts. The bulk of these courts are required in the northern and central portions of Amherst. Potential sites include Paradise Park, Sweet Home Park, Willow Ridge Park, Jurek Post, Windsor Woods Park, Amherst Recreation Complex, and the recommended community recreation center in Northeast Amherst, among others.	115	High	Short to Medium Term	
170	Outdoor Basketball Courts	Develop 1 outdoor basketball court.	115	Medium	Long Term	

Table 6: Action Plans – New Recreation Facilities & Parks (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
171	Play Structures	In cooperation with community partners, work towards making playgrounds and play equipment accessible for people with disabilities.	117	High	Ongoing	
172	Play Structures	Continue with plans to install play structures at Sweet Home Park and Eggertsville Community Park.	117	High	Short Term	
173	Play Structures	In consultation with neighborhood residents, explore the need to install play structures at Cindy Drive Play Area.	117	High	Short Term	
174	Play Structures	Install play structures in College Park, Windsor Woods, and the recommended community recreation centers in Eggertsville and Northeast Amherst. A combination of creative and traditional play equipment at each site is recommended.	117	High	Short to Medium Term	
175	Play Structures	The Town shall identify and acquire appropriate sites within the six (6) geographic areas that have been identified as being deficient with regard to neighborhood parkland and play structures (see also recommendation 181).	117	High	Short to Medium Term	

Table 6: Action Plans – New Recreation Facilities & Parks (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
176	Golf Courses	Develop nine (9) additional public golf holes within the Town, ideally at Oakwood Golf Course. A feasibility/market study should first be undertaken to examine the anticipated costs and revenues associated with expanding Oakwood Golf Course to 18 holes and to ensure that there is sufficient need for additional golf facilities in Amherst. The expansion of the golf course should not, however, come at the expense of higher priority action plans in this Master Plan, especially those that are intended to address current deficiencies as opposed to future needs.	120	Medium	Medium Term	
177	Golf Courses	<p>All net profits from the Town's municipal golf courses shall be directed into a general recreation fund (as opposed to a specific golf course improvement fund) so that monies may be used for capital improvements to any and all facilities and fields (including golf courses) under the jurisdiction of the Recreation Department.</p> <p>Capital funds for improvements to existing recreation facilities and for the development of new facilities are in short supply at the present time. In this regard, the Master Plan supports a variety of creative approaches, including partnerships with other municipalities, community organizations, not-for profit providers and the private sector. The Town may also wish to consider revenue-generating activities, such as the operation of a golf driving range, as another option to raise capital funds for recreation. Although the Master Plan does not consider the development and operation of a driving range to be a high priority, such an initiative could be supported if it would improve other recreation opportunities through bolstering the general recreation fund and not draw focus or money away from other leisure activities.</p>	121	High	Short Term	

New Recreation Facilities & Parks

178	Skate Parks	The Town of Amherst should consult with local children and youth in order to identify the need for a skate park in the Town. At this time, fundraising opportunities should be explored with local residents, groups, organizations, and businesses.	121	High	Short Term	
179	Leash Free Zones (Dog Parks)	The Town should engage community groups interested in the establishment, maintenance and ongoing management of the zones.	124	Medium	Ongoing	
180	Leash Free Zones (Dog Parks)	The Town should, at a minimum, follow the guidelines proposed in this Plan when establishing and/or operating a leash free zone.	123	Medium	Ongoing	
181	Leash Free Zones (Dog Parks)	The Town of Amherst should explore the possibility of creating a leash free zone on a trial basis. Pending the outcome of the trial, the Town should develop additional leash free zones as needed. Public consultation is the preferred method for determining need.	124	Medium	Short Term	

Table 6: Action Plans – New Recreation Facilities & Parks (continued)

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
182	Future Municipal Parkland Requirements	The Town shall acquire land (or identify available and appropriate municipal lands) for the community recreation centers, soccer fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, play structures, and other recreation facilities and parkland recommended in this Master Plan. Land may be acquired through methods such as parkland dedication, donations, long-term agreements with public and/or private landholders, acquisition through funds collected through the recreation and open space fund, etc.	132	High	Ongoing	
183	Future Municipal Parkland Requirements	Six (6) geographic areas within the Town have been identified as being deficient with regard to neighborhood parkland and play structures (see Map 7-2 and Table 7-21 in the Background Report for the general locations). The Town shall identify and acquire appropriate sites within these areas for park/playground development. Alternately, the Town may explore other arrangements for addressing these deficiencies, including partnerships with the not-for-profit and/or private sector, joint-use agreements with other providers, infill redevelopment, etc. (see also recommendation 174)	132	High	Short to Medium Term	
184	Future Municipal Parkland Requirements	The Town shall identify the passive parks (or areas within passive parks) that are able to accommodate active recreational usage and consult with local residents regarding the future use of these sites. Any lands redeveloped for active recreational use shall be re-categorized as Neighborhood or Community parkland, thereby reducing the Town's future parkland requirements.	132	Medium	Ongoing	

SECTION 6: IMPLEMENTATION

OVERVIEW

The Recreation and Parks Master Plan is a long-range, strategic planning document intended to guide decision-making in the municipality for the next 10 years. With any document that utilizes a long term planning horizon, the further into the future that projections are made, the more difficult it becomes to ensure accuracy. As a result, there is a need for the action plans to be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure that the Plan remains reflective of current realities and responsive to the changing needs of the community. Steps for monitoring and updating the Master Plan are contained within the Background Report. It is also imperative that the Master Plan be linked to the Town's budget process and that the action plans be reconciled with the Town's fiscal capacity.



ACTION PLANS

The action plans regarding the implementation of the Master Plan are contained in Table 7. Recommendations have been numbered for ease of reference and are not listed in order of priority. For more information on how the action plans were developed and the structure of the table, please refer to pages 7 and 8.

Table 7: Action Plans – Implementation

#	TOPIC AREA	ACTION PLAN	PAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING	COMMENTS/ STATUS
185	Monitoring the Master Plan	That the Town implement a system for the regular monitoring of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan.	134	High	Ongoing	
186	Updating the Master Plan	That the Town implement a system for the regular review and updating of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan.	135	High	Ongoing	
187	Implementation - General	That the Town establish a process to link the Implementation Strategy to the CIP/budgeting process in an effort to reconcile needs with the fiscal capacity of the Town.	134	High	Short Term	