

# 2009



## Comprehensive Plan Town Of Amity



**Prepared by:**

**The Amity Comprehensive Planning Board**

**In Cooperation with the Board of:**

**Town of Amity  
Town Hall  
Belmont, New York 14813**

**April 2009**

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## **I. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS**

### **A. OVERALL MISSION:**

To preserve, protect and enhance the quality of life of the residents of the Town of Amity.

### **B. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS**

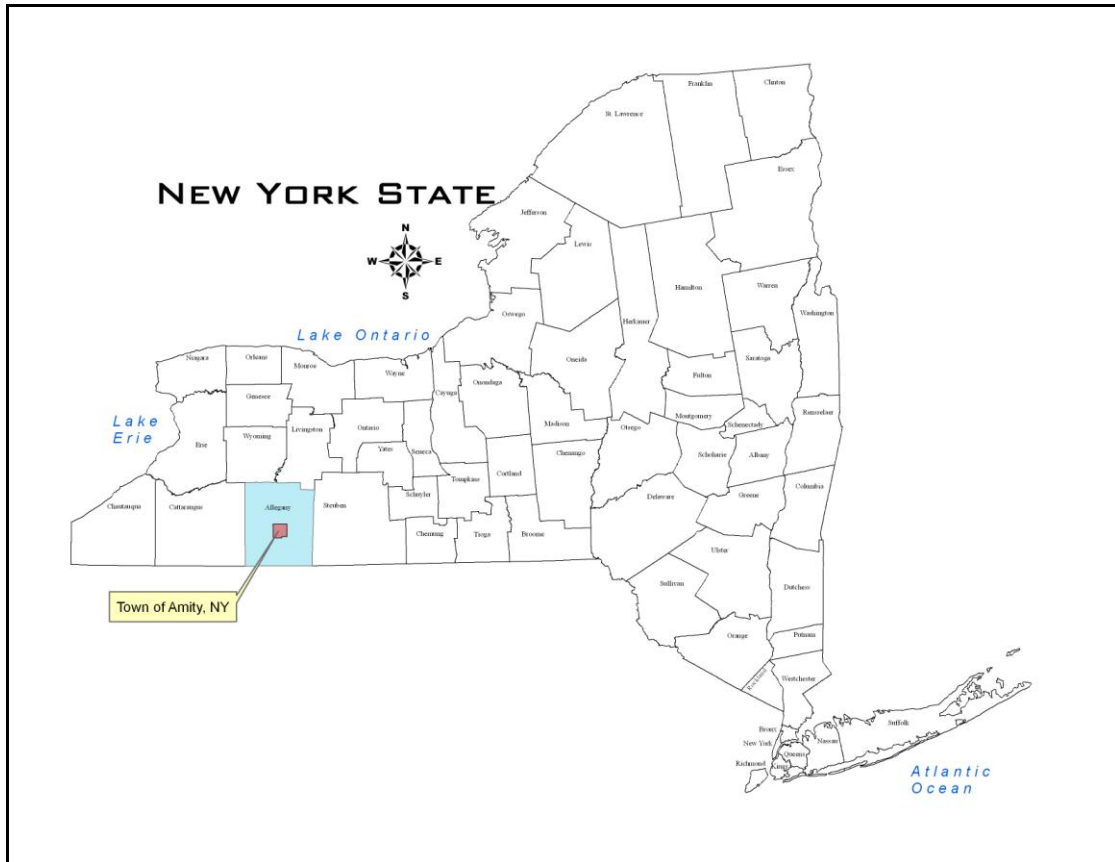
The Town of Amity Comprehensive Plan has been in the works for about three years. The Town of Amity created and appointed the Comprehensive Planning Board at a meeting on February 2006. During the first two years, focus was put onto organization, creating a survey and mailing that survey, and developing a demographic profile for the Town with the assistance of Maureen Harding. In the third year, the Town contracted with ACDEP Services to guide them through the remainder of the project. A website was created to hold the information of the Town and its Plan development process. A public forum was held in May 2008 to determine what issues were on the minds of the Town. During the summer and fall of 2008, the Amity Comprehensive Planning Board worked through reviewing the various issues indicated in the NYS law that a comprehensive plan should address. In the fall of 2008, the board began compiling the information that had been created during this time. In the following winter, the draft plan was provided to the Town Board for review and posted onto the Town website. The Town incorporated all comments that could be agreed on into the plan. Finally, the Town Board accepted the plan and undertook SEQR review. A Public Hearing was held in April 2009 and the Plan approval process was completed.



*Scene along Route 244 in the Town of Amity*

## **II. TOWN OF AMITY BACKGROUND**

Amity is a town in Allegany County, New York, USA. The Town is just south of center in the County. Allegany County is located in the southwestern part of New York State. The Town of Amity is about 78 miles southwesterly from Rochester, 77 miles southeast of Buffalo, 88 miles west of Elmira, NY and 125 miles east of Erie PA; however, the Pennsylvania border is only 18 miles south of Amity. The population was 2,245 at the 2000 census with an estimated 2007 population of 2,140. The name of the town means “friendship.” The name of the Village within the Town, Belmont, means “beautiful mountain”.



The Town of Amity is near the middle of Allegany County and is northeast of Olean, New York. The county seat, Belmont, is in Amity. Communities and locations in Amity:

- Amity Lake - A small lake by the eastern town line.
- Belmont - The Village of Belmont, the county seat, is in the center of the town.
- Belvidere - A hamlet in the northwest part of the town on Route 19. It was originally called “Hobbyville.”
- Withey - A hamlet in the northeast corner of the town on Route 244.
- Irish Settlement – A road and area on the eastern side of the Town off NYS Route 244.
- The Crossroads – a new name for the area including Belvidere at the intersections of Interstate 86, CR 20, Hess Road, and NYS 19.

## A. HISTORY

Amity was formed from Angelica and Scio on Feb. 22, 1830. A part of was taken off to create the Town of Ward in 1856. Amity is an interior town, laying a little south of the center of the county.

The first settlement was made in 1804, near Belvidere, by John T. Hyde. Harry Davis, from Hampshire County, Massachusetts, settled near Philipsville in 1805. The first child born was Hannah Hyde, Nov 4, 1804. The first marriage was Laomi Athley and Rachel Baker in 1807. The first death was Harvey Manning, who was fatally injured in 1806 when an ox-cart ran backward against him down a hill. Polly Baker taught the first school in 1810. Ebenezer Hyde kept the first inn at Belvidere in 1809. Alvin E. Parker kept the first store at Philipsville in 1830. Philip Church built the first sawmill on the Genesee River in 1806, and the first gristmill in 1808. The first religious meeting was held at the house of Samuel Van Campen, by Rev. Robert Hubbard (Presbyterian) in 1814. The first church, Baptist, was formed by Rev. Jonathan Post in 1816. The first school was taught by Polly Baker in 1810. [Sources: J. H. French, Gazetteer of State of New York, 1860. History of Allegany County, N.Y., 1806-1879., F.W. Beers & Co.]

Belmont was incorporated as a village under the name of Philipsburg on Feb. 21, 1853. The county seat was moved from Angelica to Belmont in 1860.

Belvidere received its name from the homestead of Judge Philip Church and is in the northwest part of town. The post office was established about 1835 and originally called Hobbyville after the postmaster general, whose name was Hobbie. The name was changed to Belvidere after the railroad was completed.

Withey is located on Philips creek in the eastern part of town.

Schools that have been in the Town include: Amity School - District No. 4, Withey Public School - District No. 4, Belmont High School, Belmont Central School and Genesee Valley Central School [created in 1996 by merging the Angelica and Belmont Central School Districts].

Early churches were: Presbyterian - Jan. 30, 1832, Baptist - organized 1816 as the Baptist Church of Amity; changed to Belmont in 1867, Methodist Episcopal Society - organized Jan. 15, 1834, St. Philip's (Episcopal) Church - organized 1853, Christ Church (Episcopal) - organized at Belvidere 5 July 1859, St. Mary Catholic Church - parish of Belmont abt. 1840.

Cemeteries in the Town of Amity include:

- ❑ Forest Hill Cemetery - code #5-1; (Town 3, Range 2MR, lot 31), Cemetery Hill Road;
- ❑ St. Mary's Belmont Cemetery - code #5-2; (lot 19), County Route 48.
- ❑ Christ Church Cemetery - code #5-3; (lot 1), County Route 20.
- ❑ Abbott Cemetery - code #5-4; (lot 2), N.Y. Route 19.
- ❑ Thibou-Norton-Windus - code #5-5; (lot 36) N.Y. Route 19.

- Rogers Cemetery - code #5-6; (lot 43) N.Y. Route. 19
- Pendleton Cemetery - code #5-7; (lot 54), Back River Road
- Abbott Cemetery aka Van Campen or Hyde Cemetery - code #5-8; plowed over, was on lot 44, N.Y. Route 19
- Cemetery - code #5-9; moved to Forest Hill, was located on lot 29
- Eymer - code #5-10; (lot 63), Eymer Road
- Windfall Road Cemetery - code #5-11; (lot 7) Windfall Road
- Davis Cemetery - code #5-12; (lot 35) Black River Road (Lloyd Morehouse Farm)
- Downing Cemetery - code #5-13; Tuckers Corners

\*code #s refer to the Allegany County Cemetery Index card file at the Allegany County Historical Society and LDS Family History Library microfilm. See Western New York Genealogical Society Journal, Vol. II, No. 1

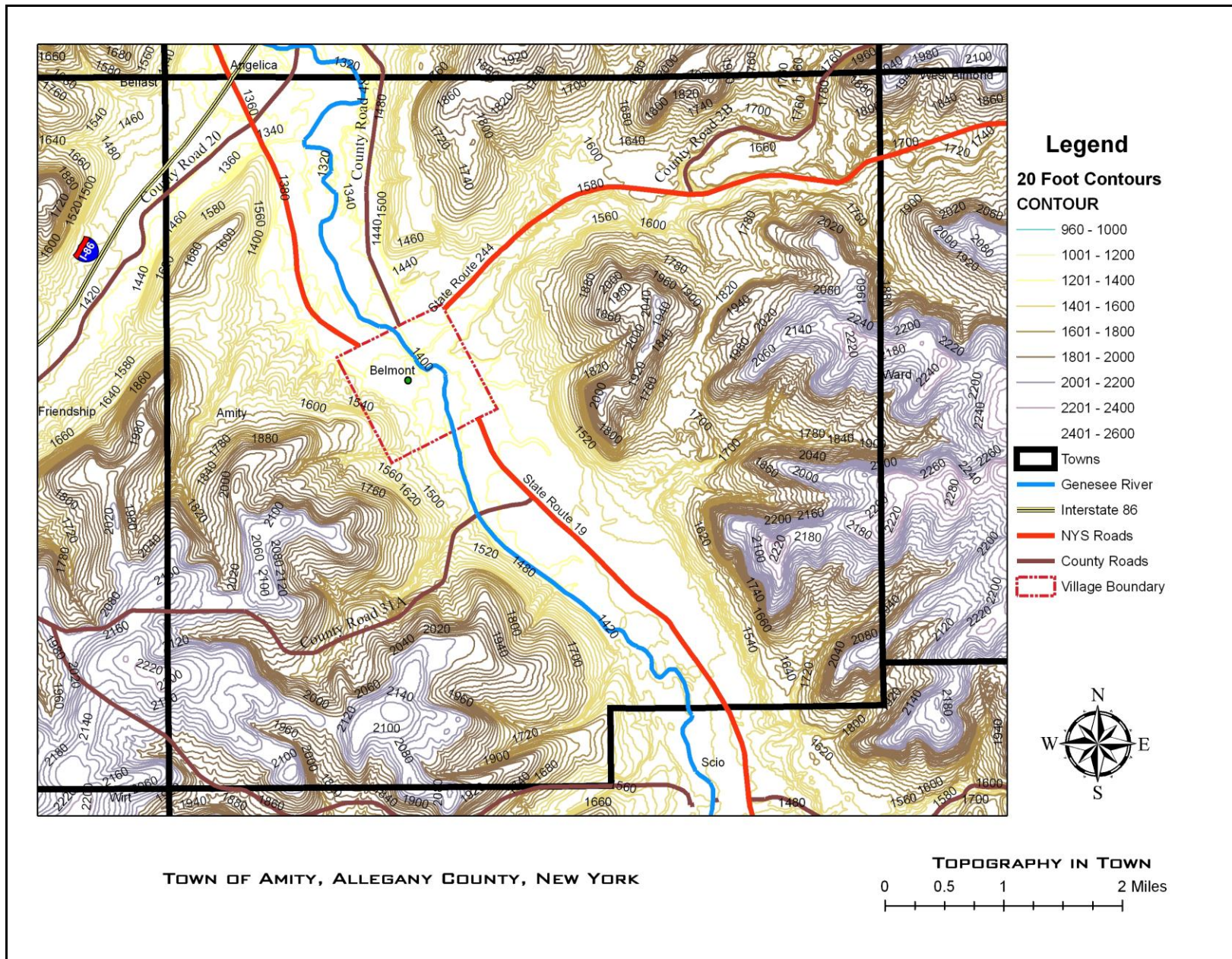
## **B. NATURAL AND MAN-MADE RESOURCES**

### **1. Geography:**

According to the United States Census Bureau, the town has a total area of 34.6 mi<sup>2</sup> (89.7 km<sup>2</sup>). 34.5 mi<sup>2</sup> (89.5 km<sup>2</sup>) of it is land and 0.1 mi<sup>2</sup> (0.2 km<sup>2</sup>) of it (0.23%) is water.

The Genesee River flows northward through the town. The Southern Tier Expressway (New York State Route 17/Interstate 86) passes through the northwest corner of the town, north of Belvidere. New York State Route 19 and New York State Route 244 intersect at Belmont. The highest point is Cooley Hill at 2,300 feet above sea level on the eastern part of the Town and the lowest point is the Genesee River in the north at 1,320 feet above sea level.





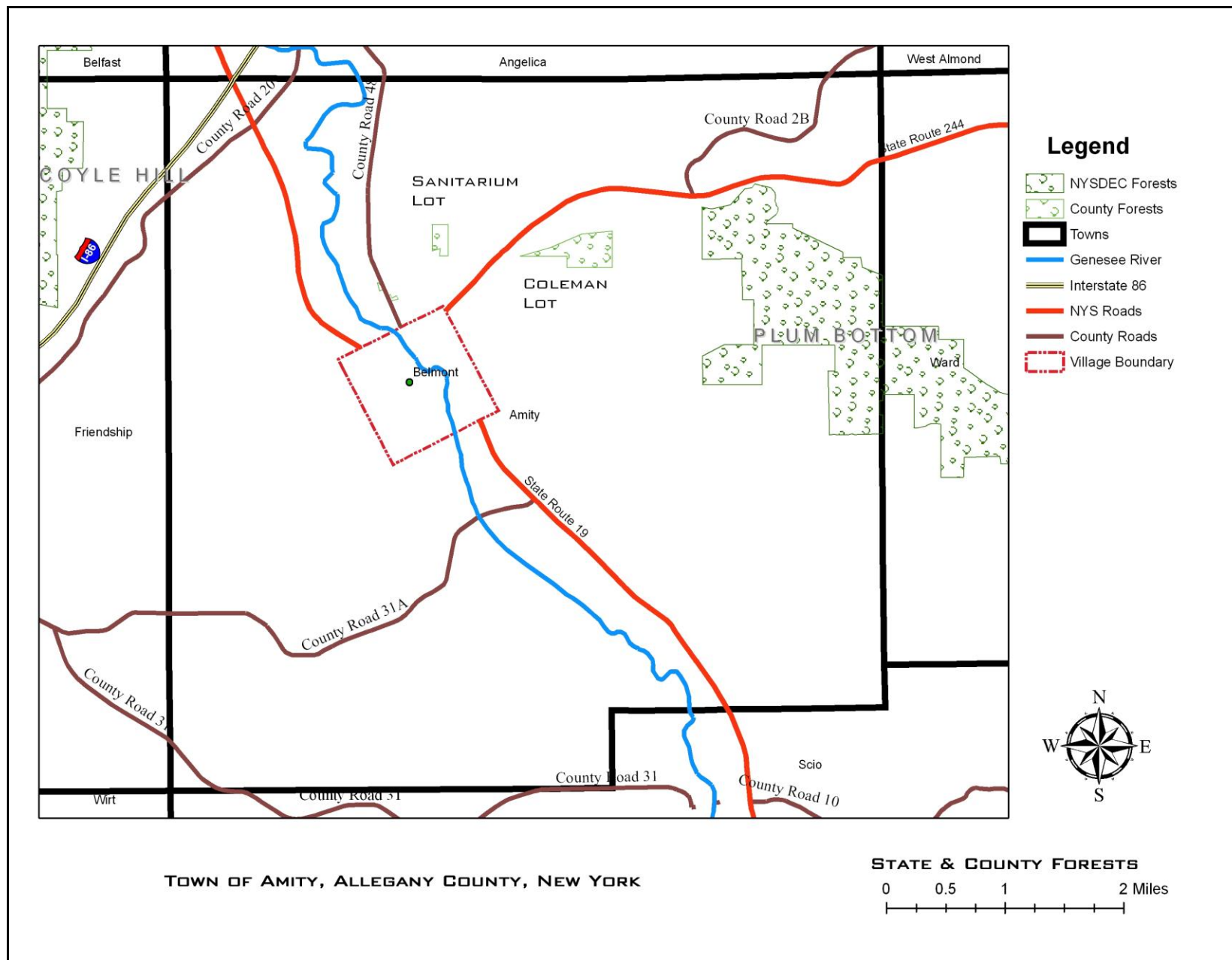
## **2. County and State Forests**

There is one County Forest within the Town of Amity located adjacent to NYS Route 244 at the end of Starvation Hill Road. There is one New York State Forest in the Town of Amity known as Plum Bottom State Forest that covers 1,666 acres located on the eastern side of the Town with access from Reddy Road and Plum Bottom Road.

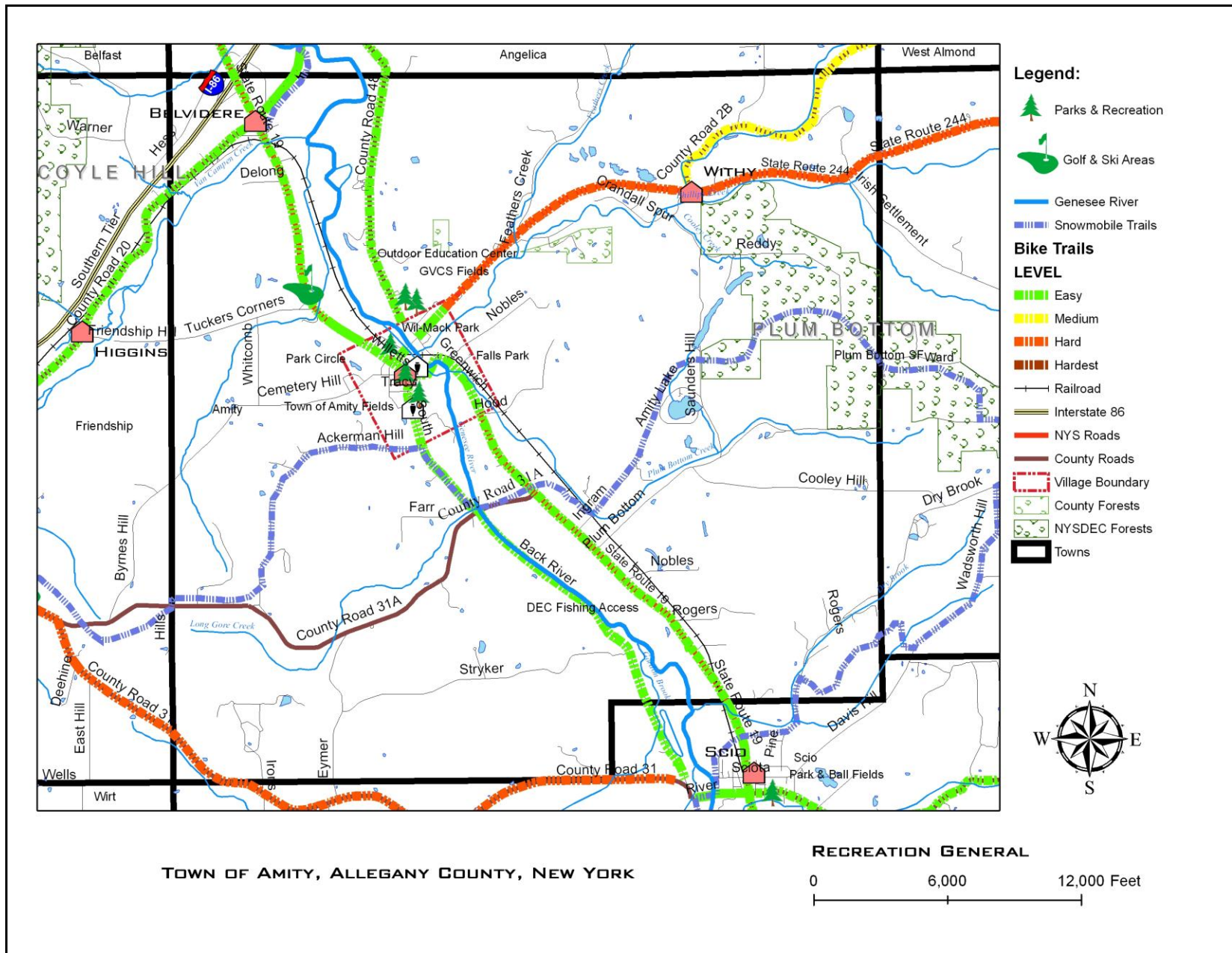
## **3. Recreation & Parks**

Parks are located at the Park Circle in the center of the Village of Belmont adjacent to the Library that includes a Civil War memorial. A small pocket park is dedicated to the World War I and II veterans near the bridge across the Genesee River on NYS Route 19. A small park is under reconstruction as part of the bridge replacement adjacent to the Fire Hall and waterfalls that will include a handicapped access-fishing platform. An Outdoor Education Center is associated with the BOCES and Genesee Valley Central School properties and is open to the public. A monument is located on the County Seat property in honor of the Viet Nam War Veterans. Another monument is at the same location in honor of the Fire Fighters and emergency responders.

Baseball playing fields and tennis courts are located at Wil-Mac Park in the Village of Belmont. Large soccer fields are located behind the former Belmont Central School. There is a large gym in the old school that may become available in the near future for use. Genesee Valley Central School has Soccer, outdoor track, tennis courts, baseball/softball fields and playgrounds as well as two gyms utilized for Basketball, wrestling, Volleyball and other sports, a weight room, an indoor track and a swimming pool inside the facility with some public access to these facilities.







## C. STATE OF THE TOWN

Other topics on the state of the Town are included within the various sections that follow.

### 1. Demographics





As of the census of 2000, there were 2,245 people, 885 households, and 601 families residing in the town. The population density was 25.1/km<sup>2</sup> (65.0/mi<sup>2</sup>). There were 1,120 housing units at an average density of 32.4/mi<sup>2</sup> (12.5/km<sup>2</sup>). The racial makeup of the town was 97.68% White, 0.76% African American, 0.04% Native American, 0.09% Asian, 0.09% from other races, and 1.34% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race was 0.76% of the population. The Population for the Village of Belmont is estimated in July 2007 at 886. Population change since 2000: -6.7%



There were 885 households out of which 30.6% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 52.5% were married couples living together, 11.3% had a female householder with no husband present, and 32.0% were non-families. 26.6% of all households were made up of individuals and 12.8% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.48 and the average family size was 2.98.



In the town the population was spread out with 25.6% under the age of 18, 7.3% from 18 to 24, 26.5% from 25 to 44, 24.1% from 45 to 64, and 16.4% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 39 years. For every 100 females, there were 100.6 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 95.8 males.

The median income for a household in the town was \$34,153, and the median income for a family was \$40,387. Males had a median income of \$31,394 versus \$21,065 for females. The per capita income for the town was \$15,304. About 7.8% of families and 11.6% of the population were below the poverty line, including 15.3% of those under age 18 and 4.2% of those ages 65 or over.

The most recent information available is estimated data for 2007. The estimated Population in July 2007 was 2,140. Population change since 2000: -4.6%

Males: 1,073  (50.2%)  
Females: 1,067  (49.8%)  
Median resident age:  38.7 years  
New York median age:  35.9 years

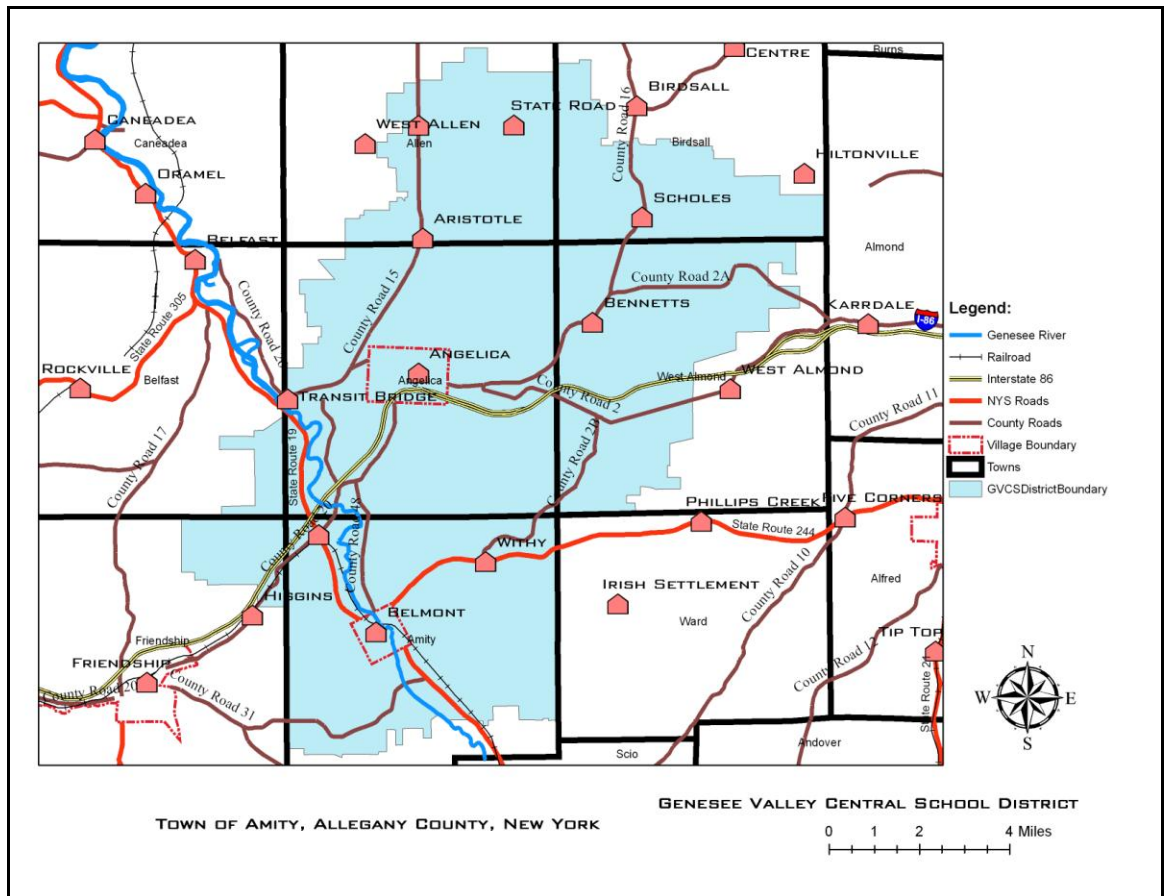
Estimated median household income in 2007: \$42,700 (it was \$34,153 in 2000)  
Town of Amity  \$42,700  
New York State:  \$53,514

Estimated median house/condo value in 2007: \$73,000 (it was \$47,000 in 2000)  
Town of Amity  \$73,000  
New York State:  \$311,000

A detailed demographic analysis is included in the appendices.

## 2. Education

There are many educational opportunities in the Town of Amity. Genesee Valley Central School is located just outside of the Village of Belmont, serves students in seven Towns, and covers an area of about 117 square miles. A small number of Town of Amity children attend the Scio Central School District located just south of the border of Amity. The BOCES career and technical instruction school for most all of Allegany County is located in the Town. The area abounds with high quality Universities. SUNY Alfred and Alfred University are located in Alfred just a short 14 miles away, and SUNY Alfred maintains a Technical school in Wellsville. Houghton College is located in north on NYS 19 in the hamlet of Houghton about 20 miles away. Jamestown Community College runs a small satellite Campus in the Crossroads Conference Center building just north of the Town of Amity. St. Bonaventure University is in neighboring Cattaraugus County about a 30-minute drive from Amity.



### 3. Town Laws

At this time, the Town of Amity does not have Zoning or other land use controls in place. There are local laws that have been passed over the years that are in effect. They are as follows.

#### a. Local Laws & Ordinances List

##### ORDINANCES

Junkyard Ordinance (Restrictions reg.'s, licensing)	1966
Gen, Municipal Law 136 (Reg. of auto junkyards)	1966
Garbage Ordinance (definitions, guidelinesconvictions)	1968
Dog Ordinance (Restrictions, rights, priviledges of owners)	1970
Code of Ethics (standards, Admin., severability)	1970
Building Permit (Establishment of areas, regulations, permits, violations, 1974 Penalties)	
Junkyard Ordinance (guidelines for establishment-Not Passed)	1989

##### LOCAL LAWS

1971-1	(Continue elective offices of assessors in Amity)	1971
1975-1	(Summary statements of adopted ordinances allowed)	1975
1981 -1	(Local dog license)	1981
1984-1	(Flood damage protection) (Updated 1987-1)	1984
1984-2	(No Veteran exemption-taxes)	1984
1985-1	(Sidewalks & Roads-written notification)	1985
1986-1	(Town officers & employees-defense & indemnification)	1986
1987-1	(Flood damage prevention)	1987
1989-1	(Position of sole assessor for Town of Amity)	1989
1991	(Solid Waste Disposal – Not Passed)	1991
1991	(Sanitary Landfill – Not Passed)	1991
1991 -1	(Sets dates for filing tax rolls and hearing complaints)	1991
1991-2	(Pothole Law)	1991
1991-3	(Removal of obstructions on highways)	1991
1991-4	(Veteran's partial exemption)	1991
1992-1	(Changes dates for tax roll filing & hearing complaints)	1992
1994-1	(Cable service)	1994
1995-1	(Rules of conduct & enforcement at Wil-Mac Park)	1995
2001-1	(Conduct of Game of Chance in Town of Amity)	2000
2003-1	(Tax exempt. Of property in Empire Zone)	2003
2003-2	(Amends 1985-1-Notification of obstructions or defects on Roads, bridges, sidewalks, & culverts)	2003
2006-1	(Animal control & Enforcement)	2006
2006-2	(Administration & Enforcement of NYS Uniform Fire Prevention & Building Code) not yet approved	
2007-2	Article X of Public Service law	2007
2008-1	Repeal Tax Exemption of property in Empire Zone	2008

### **III. TOWN AND VILLAGE GOVERNMENT**

#### **A. OVERVIEW**

The Town of Amity is the primary municipal government for an area of 34.6 square miles. The Village of Belmont is a municipal government within the Town of Amity that covers about one mile<sup>2</sup>. Each government has its own set of laws that govern the residents and businesses within. It is best to consider that in most cases the Village laws are stricter than the Town's laws and only are in effect in the 1 square mile area of the Village.

#### **B. PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS AND DIRECTION**

The comments garnered during the public forum had significant regard for the differences that are perceived between the two levels of government. Many commented that they think that zoning is appropriate within the Village but not as many feel that zoning is appropriate or needed for the Town. The consensus is that there is a need for a fair government within the Town that enforces junk ordinances and related garbage laws that are already in existence. A typical comment would be "freedom to live as I please as long as I hurt nobody" or "the ability to live without a lot of governmental regulations and invasion of my privacy". The existing laws are noted in the previous section. It is possible that the community does wish to continue to exist as a rural community.

With this in mind, the primary effort should be twofold. The Code enforcement officer should take an active role in enforcing the junk ordinances that exist. The Town should consider land use laws that are short of the Zoning law concept. Possible land use controls that are good stepping-stones in rural communities include the Site Plan Review process wherein certain projects require that the developer bring the plans to the Town Board or a designated board for review and approval.

Additional concerns that were considered include need for lower taxes, public transparency in dealings of the Town and Village governments, use of public facilities for proper needs such as equipment sheds, and that the possibility of merging the Town of Amity with the Village of Belmont into a single entity.



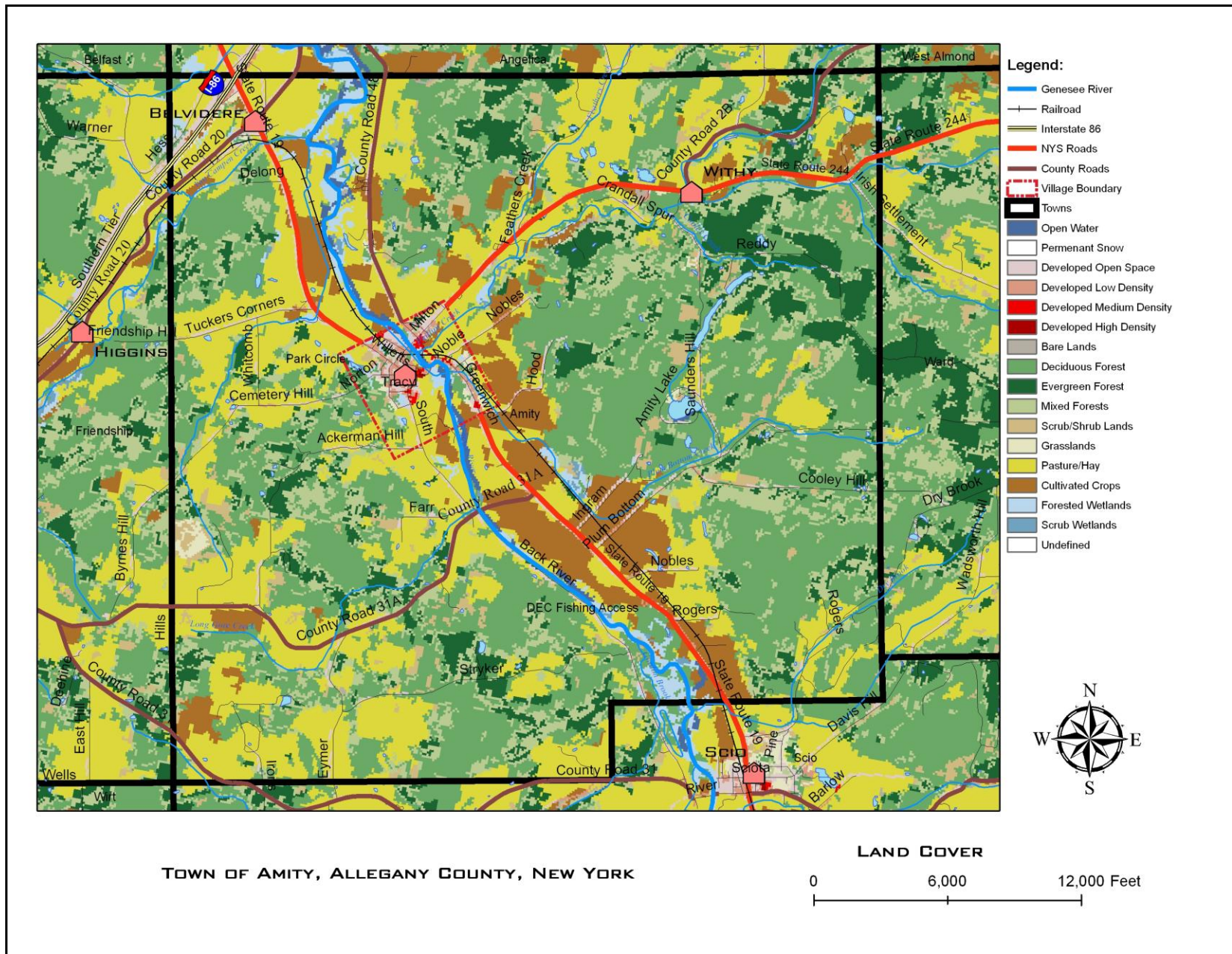
**IV. PLANNING ISSUES**

The Planning enhancements that are of utmost concern are the steady improvement of the Town of Amity without infringing on people and businesses rights to utilize their property. A discussion of future growth is also a concern that has been expressed.

**A. EXISTING LAND USE**

Land use within the Town of Amity.

<b>Land Use Value</b>	<b>Cover Type</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
11	Water	81.84	0.369%
21	Low Residential	162.34	0.732%
22	High Residential	16.68	0.075%
	Commercial, Industrial		
23	Transportation	127.21	0.574%
32	Quarries, mines, gravel pits	0.67	0.003%
41	Deciduous Forest	9,795.39	44.183%
42	Evergreen Forest	320.69	1.446%
43	Mixed Forest	3,821.77	17.238%
81	Pasture Hay	6,121.95	27.613%
82	Row Crops	1,592.76	7.184%
85	Urban Recreational Grasses	124.54	0.562%
91	Woody Wetlands	3.34	0.015%
	Emergent Herbaceous		
92	Wetlands	1.11	0.005%
		22,170.29	



## **B. PROPOSED LAND USE CONTROLS**

At this time, there exist virtually no land use controls within the Town of Amity. With this in mind, there is some concern that if there is successful development along the Route 19 Corridor then there should be some controls in place. However, there is an overriding feeling by the residents that there should not be too much control of their properties and how they utilize them. This leaves the Town Board in the situation of determining what level of controls should be in place. A minimum level that should be considered by the Town Board would be the creation of a Site Plan Review process wherein the Board or their designates would review any new projects that are proposed within the Town to determine that it is in the best interest of the community. A careful effort in reviewing this proposal should be one of the first implementation items for the Town of Amity. The Zoning concept generally is not favored by the public at this time and is likely not needed in its full breadth. A series of local laws that cover certain areas of concern can be created and passed more easily by the Town Board. Primary areas of concern are allowing people or businesses to create positive properties that they want without infringing on their neighbors needs and rights. The Town should not over do controls that affect the residents with pointless regulation that cannot be properly enforced such as color of paint, types of doors and similar regulations that are sometimes seen in other communities. These regulations should control types of businesses that are located next to residential units, churches, and schools. The regulations should protect agriculture within the Town from being destroyed. Once agricultural lands are lost to development there is little likelihood of reclaiming them for agricultural purposes. Enforcement of existing local, county, state, and federal statues is the most important aspect of the Town's involvement in this. Junk enforcement, building code violations, and environmental rules such as illegal dumping are the utmost concern of many of the residents.

## **C. CONSIDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL USES**

The Town of Amity has some Allegany County Agricultural District within the Town's boundaries. Allegany County offers the Agricultural Districts as an opt-in program to landowners. This program offers some advantages in the case of unwanted development on farmlands.

Comments received were in favor of keeping the agricultural lands in use as the same purpose. The issue that unfortunately confronts the Town of Amity is that the best farmlands are considered the best for future development also. The area near to the crossroads of NYS 19 and I-86 are presently in agricultural use. Most people now understand that this area is likely the next area of growth in the County. The remainder of the lands that border the Genesee River/NYS 19 corridor should be carefully planned to allow a mixed use of mostly agriculture with a narrow corridor for development directly on the NYS 19 corridor. No other large tracts should be taken out of farm use such as was done with the County Jail project beyond the Crossroads area.



*Typical Farm Lands in the Genesee River Basin*

**V. DEVELOPMENT**

Development within the Town of Amity is an on-going effort. Development is a Town-wide effort but there are a few areas that require specific mention. The Route 19 corridor in general is the primary area of development. This corridor includes the Downtown area of Belmont and the Crossroads Development Area. In addition it includes the mixed use areas adjacent to the NYS Route 19 that include farm lands, farm related industries, county offices, retail, state troopers barracks, service facilities and residential uses.

**A. AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT**

**1. DOWNTOWN BELMONT**

The downtown area of the Village of Belmont has been the primary focus for many years especially by the Belmont Betterment Association for improving the streetscape and general conditions within the downtown area. Local business owners have been integral in improving facades and keeping local businesses viable. The downtown includes restaurants, real estate agency, hair salons, pharmacy, grocery, hardware, insurance offices, real property offices, lawyers, bank, funeral home, bowling alley, taverns, post office, and more. Many offshoot agencies are related to the Allegany County Offices that are located just east of the downtown area. The County government is the largest employer in the Town of Amity and the four-hundred workers are a great economic boon to the Village of Belmont.

**2. OLD BELMONT SCHOOL**

One location in the Town of Amity that is a source of concern is the old Belmont School that was abandoned by Genesee Valley Central School in about 2002. At that time, the building was turned over to the Allegany County IDA, which immediately turned it over to its private development organization. Unfortunately, that organization went out of business very shortly after the transaction. This led to the building sitting completely vacant until 2008 when Allegany County took ownership and undertook transactions to have it start to be utilized again. Presently the building is being cared for by the Belmont Betterment Association. This group has been working to clean up from the years of neglect by removing bad flooring, ceiling, and other materials and working to bring it back up to a useable level. As of this time, the Belmont Betterment Association notified the Comprehensive Planning Board that it is actively working to secure funds to properly heat the building and bring tenants into the facility. The Comprehensive Plan supports efforts to reinvigorate the Old Belmont School Building and make it a useful part of the community again.

**3. CROSSROADS DEVELOPMENT AREA**

In recent years, a new area of interest for development has risen north of the Village of Belmont about three miles near to the hamlet of Belvidere, known as the "Crossroads". Allegany County is actively working to secure infrastructure improvements in this area to supply the open space near to Exit 30 off Interstate 86 with water and sewer. A long-term plan for this area includes new commercial

retail space, restaurants, hotels, and the possibility of new manufacturing and residential sites. The following information is related to the Crossroads Development Area.

There are presently fifty (50) acres for site development located at Belvidere known as the “Crossroads” of State Route 19 North and I-86 & County Route 20. The studies have been completed for borings, wetlands, and wildlife. There have been no negative findings for water and sewer in the development area. The SEQR report was negative. The water and sewer lines will be located on County Route 20 to Friendship from the Belvidere crossroads. The ordered historical studies for the water and sewer development along County Route 20 toward Friendship found no negative impact. Additional areas are adjacent to the site that may be utilized in the future.

#### **a. UTILITIES**

The Verizon Telephone Company has reserved enough services at the Belvidere Crossroads to accommodate all future expansions for phone and internet needs. RG&E reported in their studies that the existing transformer station at the intersection of County Route 20 and State Route 19 North is large enough to service all future development at the Crossroads.

Fillmore Gas Company will supply transmission lines from Austin Farm, on County Road 20 with a connection presently available to the Crossroads development areas.

Distribution lines will be available at thirty pounds per square inch (30 psi) with material capable of one hundred fifteen pounds (115 psi) as needed for future site development.

A water tank will be large enough to satisfy government requirements of ninety (90) minutes to meet the fire suppression needs. The water supply would be from Friendship and or Village of Belmont water the tank will be constructed at a high ground elevation to ensure a gravity feed for the construction sites at the Crossroads development sites.

The sewer system was designed for transmission to Friendship for complete treatment. The provisional line will allow the treated water to return water back to the Genesee River at Belvidere. With a new bridge over the Van Campen Creek (Railroad Bed) will have a provision for sewer to be transferred to the Belmont sewer treatment plant.

#### **b. FRIENDSHIP EMPIRE ZONE**

The Friendship Empire Zone Contiguous Area 1- Friendship East, in the Town of Amity includes the northern end of the Town of Amity and the parcels contained therein near to the Crossroads Development Area.



## **B. THE PLAN**

### **1. GOALS**

To improve the business, job and available services within the Town of Amity through active development practices.

### **2. OBJECTIVES**

- a. Retain the existing businesses within the Town of Amity.
- b. Create new opportunities for new business development within the Town of Amity.
- c. Create new Job opportunities for existing and new residents.

### **3. STRATEGIES**

- a. Promote the area for creation of new retail, tourism, manufacturing, and high technology business development.
- b. Work with Allegany County to continue to have a solid relationship between the Town and the County to provide good jobs within the area.
- c. Work with existing businesses to determine any new needs that they may have and attempt to make improvements that assist them in keeping a positive business within the community.
- d. Work with Allegany County Office of Development to bring in developers who can create new business opportunities within the Town.
- e. Continue to improve the aesthetic appeal of the Town through cleanup and renovation programs.
- f. Utilize existing facilities and buildings to their full potential as well as creating new buildings for businesses.

## **VI. INFRASTRUCTURE**

Infrastructure is a complicated part of development plans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Historically infrastructure was thought of as simply water, sewer, and roads and similar. Now we include phone, cellular phone service, internet – broadband, wireless, dial-up access, natural gas, wind energy, electric, transportation including streets, highways, trails [biking and walking], railroads, garbage services, and other items.

### **A. ASPECTS OF INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **1. Water**

The water system is provided by the Village of Belmont for the central part of the Town. A future expansion of the Friendship Water system is expected for the northwest corner of the Town. The remainder of the Town is served by on-site wells.

#### **2. Municipal Sewer**

The sewer system is provided by the Village of Belmont for the central part of the Town. A future expansion of the Friendship Sewer system is expected for the northwest corner of the Town in the next few years. The remainder of the Town utilizes on-site septic systems.

#### **3. Energy**

The Town of Amity is served by Rochester Gas & Electric [subsidiary of Energy East Corporation] for electric services. In recent years, the state has deregulated the services so that these are distributors while the customer has a choice of the supplier. Many residences still use RG&E as their supplier and distributor. National Fuel Gas offers natural Gas service in some parts of the Town of Amity. Suburban Propane delivers propane to customers from their site within the Village of Belmont. Other sources for propane, kerosene etc is available from nearby communities. One of the largest sources of heating fuel is wood as there are large stands of wood readily available. Many people in this area have converted to wood-fired outdoor furnaces that heat their homes and hot water systems. Due to the long periods of cloud cover solar is not utilized much in this area. Wind energy is a newly expanding source of energy. The Comprehensive Plan includes a draft version of a local law that would be effective for the Town to utilize in future development of wind turbines in the Town.

#### **4. Cable / Internet / Telephone**

Time Warner provides primary cable service in and near to the Village of Belmont. Others outside of their service territory utilize Dish Network or Direct TV or a rooftop antenna. Internet service is either through Time Warner's Road Runner service, Verizon DSL, Dial-up or through satellite service. Telephone is primarily serviced by Verizon. Cellular service is generally either Verizon or Cellular One [AT&T].

#### **5. Solid Waste**

Solid Waste services are provided within the Village of Belmont. Private haulers such as LaForge or SDS provide pickup service to those wishing to pay for that outside of the Village boundaries. The remainder of the population utilizes the Transfer station located at the County landfill on County Route 48 for an annual fee.



## **6. Transit Services**

Allegany County Transit services the Town of Amity. The Allegany County Transit provides special medical transportation to the West as far as Jamestown.

USA Coach (Short line) of Olean provides service to the East in Binghamton and on to New York City. The bus stops at Crosby's Mini Mart in Belmont every morning and in the afternoons on the return trip to Olean and points west.

## **7. Railroad Service**

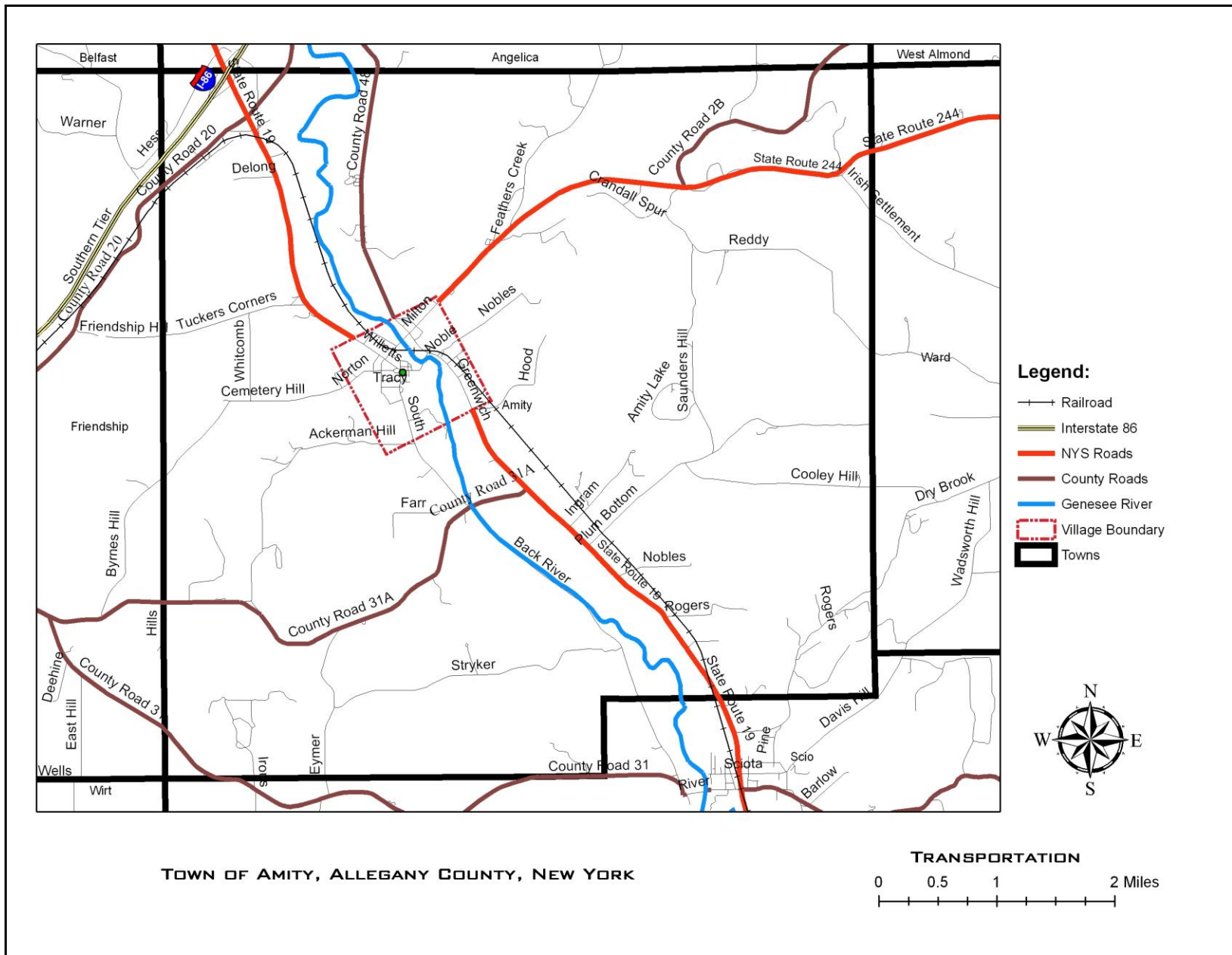
The Western New York and Pennsylvania Railroad runs through the Town of Amity coming from Wellsville through the Town and heading westerly toward Olean. The Railroad has a siding near the Crossroads Development Area on County Route 20 near to I-86 and Route 19. This railroad is an east-west line that connects to mainlines at Meadville, PA and nearer in Hornell, NY.

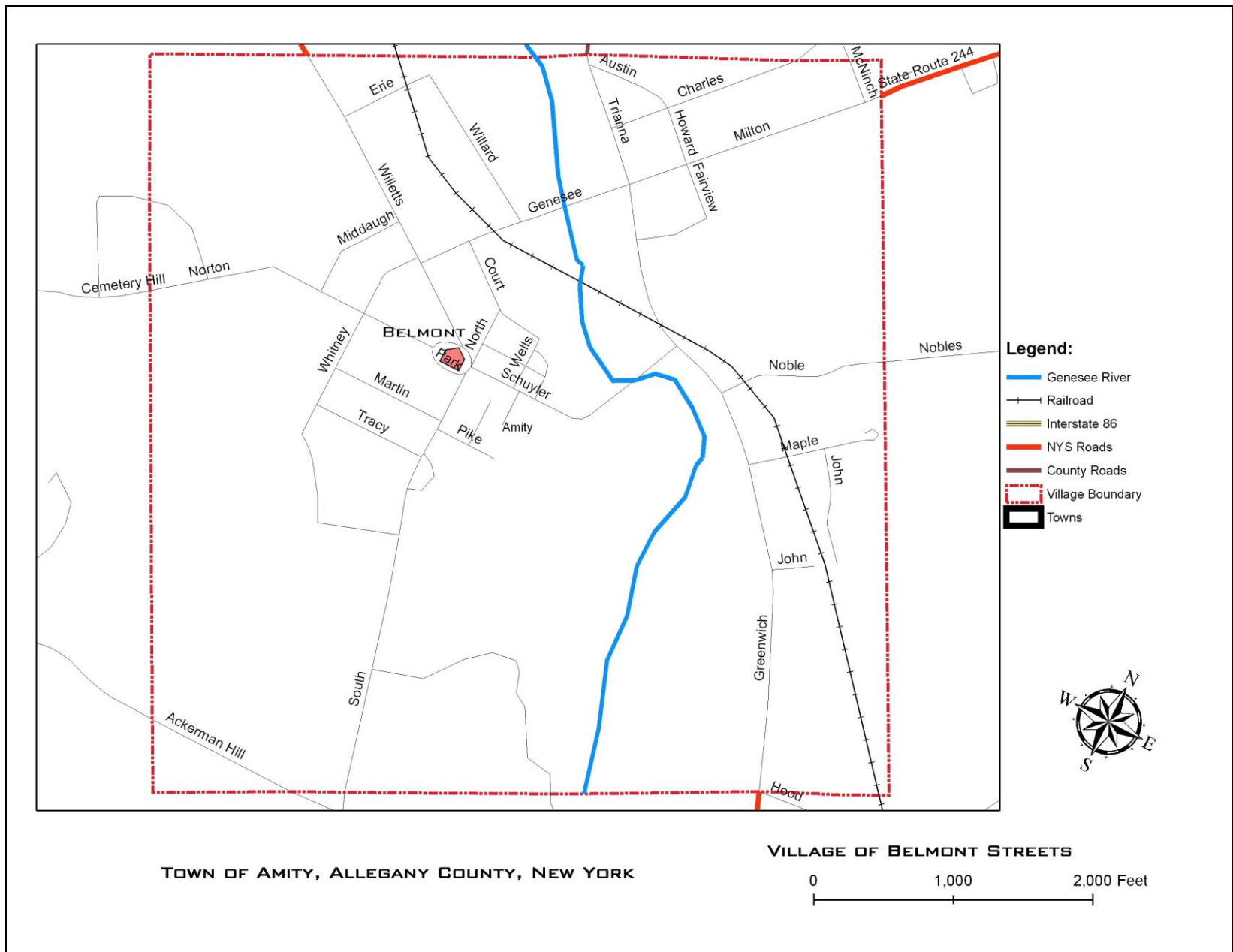
## **8. Highway Services**

The Highways are serviced by a number of levels of government. The Interstate [I-86] and State highways [19, 244] are serviced by New York State DOT crews. Allegany County services County Routes [2B, 20, 31A, and 48] by the County public works crews. The Town of Amity services all remaining roads outside of the Village of Belmont boundaries. The Village of Belmont maintains the streets and sidewalks within the Village of Belmont boundaries.



*Typical Town of Amity Road*





## **B. THE PLAN**

### **1. GOALS**

The Goal for the Town of Amity Infrastructure is to provide adequate infrastructure for the existing and future needs of the Town.

### **2. OBJECTIVES**

- a. To improve technology based services to a level on par with most areas of the country for cable, phone, internet, cellular, wireless and services that will be created in the coming years.
- b. To increase water and Sewer capacity to a level capable of sustaining the existing needs and the needs for development in the Route 19 corridor.
- c. To continue to improve Town roads as needed based on growth.

### **3. STRATEGIES**

- a. Actively work with local utilities to bring in more up to date technology such as Verizon Fios or Time Warner Road Runner to more households.
- b. Review the present capacity of the Belmont water and sewer systems and make the appropriate upgrades to these systems to encourage new growth along the Route 19 corridor.
- c. Undertake the necessary steps to bring all required infrastructure services to the Crossroads Development Area.

## **VII. HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **A. OVERVIEW**

The Town of Amity has a rich history and has been a vibrant community for many years. As the County Seat for Allegany County, it has been the site of many significant events in the history of the County including court cases, and legislative meetings. The community hosts a large number of monuments within its borders, National Historic Register buildings and sites as well as the County Historical Museum and the Horn Room in the Town Hall. The recording of history is an on-going activity and requires good record keeping and proper archiving. The community has some good cultural resources that need continued care and improvement in the coming years including the Fountain Art Center and Library.

### **B. THE PLAN**

#### **1. GOALS**

The Goal of this section is to actively work to enhance the historical and cultural offerings within the Town of Amity.

#### **2. OBJECTIVES**

- a. Have a person that is the designated historian for the community.
- b. Have a group that has the purpose to work on historical issues.
- c. Improve access and use of historic sites within the Town.
- d. Improve and renovate historical buildings, sites, and monuments.
- e. Work to actively preserve Historic Documents and properly archive the Town's records.

#### **3. STRATEGIES**

- a. Whereas all Towns are expected to have a Town Historian, the Town of Amity should appoint a Town Historian. If the reason no one is interested is the existing remuneration then this should be considered to be increased in the next budget year.
- b. Direct the Town Historian to work with interested people in the community to develop a Historical Society for the area. This either could be Amity centric or could cover a wider area such as Scio-Belmont-Angelica, etc.
- c. Develop a marketing plan to bring tourists to the community to enjoy the historical sites and monuments. This could include an expanded section on the Town and Village websites, signs, lists/pamphlets/brochures and flyers.
- d. Assist community organizations with local projects that have historic or cultural relevance by acting as the sponsor agency in grant applications if needed. In addition, the Town can work more closely with the local organizations to assure that they are having successful projects. Some of the known projects include the buildings that are on the Historic Register, various monuments around the community and determining

- what other historic buildings that are not yet on the Historic Register may be benefited by being nominated.
- e. Work with the New York State Archives and other agencies to develop a good records management program for the Town's records to assure that they will be available for future generations.
  - f. A photographic History of the Town of Amity would be a good project to undertake.



*Allegheny County Courthouse in Belmont*



## **VIII. NATURAL RESOURCES, RECREATION, AND ENVIRONMENT**

### **A. OVERVIEW**

During the public forum, various people described their Town as a beautiful place with abundant wild life. They noted that they liked the fresh air, proximity to hunting and fishing, proximity to the Genesee River, that the Town had great wide open spaces with excellent natural resources. With these thoughts in mind, the Town of Amity promotes the following.



*Amity Lake & Plumbottom State Forest is representative of nature in Amity*

### **B. THE PLAN**

#### **1. GOALS**

To support the availability of recreation, natural resources and environmental aspects of the Town of Amity and continue to promote the proper use of these resources.

#### **2. OBJECTIVES**

- a. Improve access to natural resource and recreational areas within the Town.
- b. Continue to develop positive wildlife habitat within the Town on NYS owned properties and privately owned properties with programs that are available for property owners interested in this kind of use of their properties.
- c. Improve the waterfalls at the crossing of NYS 19 and the surrounding area.
- d. Encourage better clean-up programs of trash along all roads within the Town but especially County Routes 48 and 20 that are the primary access to the County Landfill.
- e. Consider the track of Plum Bottom Creek with input by the NYSDEC to redirect the creek back to its old course.

**3. STRATEGIES**

- a. Develop a better safer access ramp by the fire hall to encourage fishing, walking, and availability in the case of emergency rescues in the river. Investigate other locations along the Genesee River for improved access and implement Town or County access points. Possible locations may include the former Belmont Conservation Club, Back River Road, Fire Hall, Belvidere Access points, and near Laidlaw at the intersection of the Genesee River and Philips Creek.
- b. Develop a walking trail system that allows safe walking along the river.
- c. Improve the scenic beauty of the community.
- d. Develop safe biking trails along roads and on mountain trails within the Town.
- e. Utilize the NRCS programs that assist in wildlife nurturing.
- f. Promote the New York State clean up of the dam area and development of a park in this area for fishing, picnicking, bird watching, and related activities.
- g. Create a group Adopt-a-highway program within Amity to take better care of the roads of the Town.
- h. The Town of Amity Code Enforcement officer should be directed to aggressively track and fine people who knowingly dump garbage and refuse in non-legal dump areas.
- i. Plum Bottom Creek causes some flooding issues due to the unnatural route it now takes. The Town, County, and NYSDEC should undertake a review of this waterway and determine if routing it back to its original course would be a positive improvement.



## **IX. COMMUNITY PRIDE**

### **A. OVERVIEW**

The number one thing that people referenced that they liked about the Town of Amity is the rural lifestyle. People enjoy the fact that this community is not the big city. They do not want to lose the “down home feel”. They like the “Country Atmosphere” that they feel by living here. The major thing that they did not like is the junk that many people perceive as littering the community. The junk laws are not enforced well enough and this makes many people unhappy with the local government. Conversely, though there is a sizeable group of people that live here that are the keepers of this material and see it not as junk but as useful parts for tractors, cars, and other equipment. It is a classic case of one man’s trash is another man’s treasure.

### **B. THE PLAN**

#### **1. GOALS**

To continue to support and promote the rural lifestyle and community pride within the Town of Amity.

#### **2. OBJECTIVES**

- a. Retain the country atmosphere without infringing on the rights of neighbors.
- b. Do not allow unrestrained growth that would allow the area to lose the country atmosphere.

#### **3. STRATEGIES**

- a. Enforce existing Town and New York State junk laws throughout the Town.
- b. Keep agriculture as an important aspect of the Town by promoting the “Right to Farm” laws.
- c. Promote local organizations efforts and the projects that they are working on to improve the community. The comprehensive plan supports the local organizations that are known to be actively working on programs including: local church groups, Rotary, VFW, Belmont Betterment Association, Library board, Camelot Choraleers, GVCS, and its related sub-organizations.


## **X. HOUSING**

### **A. OVERVIEW**

Housing in the Town of Amity is mostly single family residential. There are a few multiple residential facilities such as the Village Court Apartments located downtown in Belmont, ARC residence and a STEL residence. There are also assisted living facilities. In addition to these, the County Jail facility is in the Town of Amity, which has a varying population that presently ranges approximately around 100 – 130. About ½ of the jail population are federal prisoners being held through contract by the county with the remainder being county inmates.

Total population: 2,140 (Urban population: 0, Rural population: 2,140 (32 farm, 2,108 nonfarm))

Houses: 1,137 (887 occupied: 654 owner occupied, 233 renter occupied)

% of renters here:  26%

State:  47%

Housing density: 33 houses/condos per square mile

Median price asked for vacant for-sale houses and condominiums in 2007 in this state: \$386,378.

Median contract rent in 2007: \$410 (lower quartile is \$316, upper quartile is \$526)

Median rent asked for vacant for-rent units in 2007: \$405

Median gross rent in Amity, NY in 2007: \$542

Housing units in Amity with a mortgage: 222 (17 second mortgage, 30 home equity loan, 0 both second mortgage and home equity loan)

Houses without a mortgage: 209

Household type by relationship

- Households: 2,168
- In family households: 1,817 (476 male householders, 127 female householders)
- 494 spouses, 614 children (566 natural, 23 adopted, 25 stepchildren), 18 grandchildren, 5 brothers or sisters, 20 parents, 12 other relatives, 51 non-relatives
- In non-family households: 351 (121 male householders (96 living alone)), 165 female householders (137 living alone), 65 non-relatives
- In group quarters: 51 (all institutionalized)
- Size of family households: 272 2-persons, 138 3-persons, 123 4-persons, 46 5-persons, 21 6-persons, 3 7-or-more-persons.
- Size of nonfamily households: 233 1-person, 41 2-persons, 7 3-persons, 5 4-persons.
- 379 married couples with children.
- 138 single-parent households (35 men, 103 women).

Estimate of home value of owner-occupied houses in 2000 in Amity, NY:

- Less than \$10,000: 0
- \$10,000 to \$14,999: 2
- \$15,000 to \$19,999: 24
- \$20,000 to \$24,999: 4
- \$25,000 to \$29,999: 36
- \$30,000 to \$34,999: 35
- \$35,000 to \$39,999: 47
- \$40,000 to \$49,999: 96
- \$50,000 to \$59,999: 65
- \$60,000 to \$69,999: 51
- \$70,000 to \$79,999: 27
- \$80,000 to \$89,999: 14
- \$90,000 to \$99,999: 17
- \$100,000 to \$124,999: 7
- \$125,000 to \$149,999: 0
- \$150,000 to \$174,999: 0
- \$175,000 to \$199,999: 4
- \$200,000 to \$249,999: 2
- \$250,000 to \$999,999: 0

Rent paid by renters in 2007 in Amity:

- Less than \$100: 4 people
- \$100 to \$149: 6
- \$150 to \$199: 13
- \$200 to \$249: 1
- \$250 to \$299: 12
- \$300 to \$349: 24
- \$350 to \$399: 34
- \$400 to \$449: 22
- \$450 to \$499: 38
- \$500 to \$549: 29
- \$550 to \$599: 6
- \$600 to \$649: 5
- \$650 to \$699: 3
- \$700 to \$749: 1
- \$750 or more: 0
- No cash rent: 25

All data quoted above from [www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com) November 2008.

## **B. THE PLAN**

### **1. GOAL**

The Goal for housing in the Town of Amity is to increase the availability of residential housing and continue to offer affordable conditions to live in this Town.

### **2. OBJECTIVES**

- a. Control housing costs and local taxes on the housing.
- b. Encourage residential growth in the Town.

### **3. STRATEGIES**

- a. Utilize buildings that exist and rehabilitate them for housing in the near future.
- b. Improve the water, sewer, and other infrastructure to accommodate new housing in the Town.
- c. Encourage developers to choose small tracts that have compact housing plans that save open space while increasing the number of residences within the Town. These sites should be within or directly adjacent to existing water and sewer infrastructure.

## **XI. HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **A. OVERVIEW**

The Town of Amity has excellent services due to its proximity to various agencies location here. The police coverage is provided within the Village of Belmont by the Belmont Police Department. The Allegany County Sheriff's Department is located within the Town of Amity on NYS 19 just south of the Village of Belmont. This is also the location of the County Jail and Public Safety facility. The Public Safety facility is also the base for the Dispatch Center for most of Allegany County 911 services. The New York State Trooper's barracks are located within the Town of Amity on NYS 19 just north of the Village of Belmont and is staffed full-time by the NYS Troopers.

Fire response service is primarily covered by volunteers with the Belmont Fire Department located within the Village of Belmont. The Belmont Fire Company covers the Town of Amity and a portion of the Town of Ward. Mutual aide that requires an aerial ladder is available through Towns of Alfred, Wellsville, Cuba, and Houghton.

Ambulance Service is provided by the Amity Rescue Squad that has its facility located on NYS 244 just east of the Village of Belmont. The Rescue Squad is a volunteer facility with excellent equipment and facilities. Amity Rescue Squad's responsibility is to cover the entire Town of Amity and a portion of the Town of Ward. The Squad answers calls from Angelica, Friendship, and Wellsville. Cuba Hospital provides a twenty-four hour Urgent Care facility. The facility located on Route 244 known as the Amity Rescue Squad building is a New York State, Red Cross approved site. The facility is FAA approved for Air Flight with refrigeration capabilities and as an inoculation center, boasting twenty-four hour a day security via recording cameras.

Presently there is a small medical clinic located within the Town near the Crossroads area that is affiliated with Jones Memorial Hospital. All other medical facilities require the patient to travel to one of the nearby communities: Wellsville [Jones Memorial Hospital] ~ 10 miles, Cuba [Cuba Hospital: Urgent Care] ~ 17 miles, Hornell [St. James Hospital] ~ 29 miles or Olean [Olean General Hospital] ~ 30 miles based on their needs and the specialty that they are requiring. In extreme cases, patients will be transferred to one of the Regional Care Centers in Buffalo, Rochester, or Sayre, PA.

### **B. THE PLAN**

#### **1. GOAL**

The Goal of this section is to continue to provide excellent service to the residents and businesses with regard to health and safety issues.

#### **2. OBJECTIVES**

- a. Increase volunteerism for the Ambulance (Amity Rescue Squad) and Belmont Fire Department within the Town.
- b. Continue to acquire the best and up to date equipment for the ambulance and fire squads.

**3. STRATEGIES**

- a. Offer additional tax incentives to the members that are active in the squads.
- b. Work with local training officials to assist members to become properly trained.
- c. Apply for grants through state, federal, and private foundations to offset the needs of the squads.

## **XII. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

<b><u>Timeline</u></b>	<b><u>Implementation Strategy</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
1 – 3 Years	Clock Project	Encourage the Belmont Betterment Association to install large outdoor clock near the falls bridge after the replacement and picnic area are completed.
1 – 3 Years	Wind Energy Facilities Law	Adopt a local law in the Town of Amity for Wind Energy Facilities regulations.
1 – 3 Years	Wind Energy law	Adopt a local law in the Town of Amity for guidelines for Agricultural mitigation for wind power projects.
1 – 3 Years	Emergency Operations Plan	Create and adopt an emergency operations plan for the Town of Amity, Village of Belmont in conjunction with Allegany County and State resources.
3 – 5 Years	Exit 30 Lighting	Develop a lighting plan, resources for funding and install lights at Exit 30 on Interstate 86.
3 – 5 Years	Review Town of Amity Comprehensive Plan	Review Town of Amity Comprehensive Plan for additions, revisions, and changes to the existing plan.
3 – 8 Years	Water and Sewer along Rt 19 Corridor	Work with the County to develop and adopt water and sewer districts for required lines. Install lines for connection to the Village of Belmont water and sewer systems from Crossroads Development area (Belvidere)

### **XIII OTHER PLANS - APPENDICES**

1. Participants
2. Additional Maps
3. Allegany County Comprehensive Plan
4. HUD Consolidated Plan
5. Empire Zone Business Plan
6. Allegany County Agricultural District #2
7. Allegany County Transit Plan
8. Harding Demographic Analysis
9. Allegany County Tourism Marketing Plan
10. Wind Energy Facilities Regulations
11. Guide lines for Agricultural mitigation for wind power projects
12. Emergency Operating Plan – Town of Amity and Village of Belmont.
13. Survey Results from 2007

## **APPENDICES**



## Appendix 1

The following people and organizations assisted in the development of this plan. At this time, we would like to thank all of these people for their help in creating the first Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Amity. If anyone is not listed we are thankful to you as well, it was unintentional that you were left off the list. Thank you all.

Current Comprehensive Planning Board Members	Geraldine VanSkiver	GENERAL ASSISTANCE
Robert C. Ellis	Donald Brown	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Joseph Zajicek	Nancy Casterline	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Randy Potter	Ivan Cherry	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Liz Willson	Wesley Cline	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Deb Bogle	Pamela Cooper	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Mary Plummer	Charles Criss	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Lisa Plummer	Anne Criss	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Town of Amity Board:	Bill Greene	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Lois Reynolds	John Hangland	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Mark Presutti	Rose Heller	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
James Cooper	Herb Herrington	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Brian Clendenin	Sandra Hunt	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Jeffery Zenoski	Monty Jennings	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Belmont Betterment Association	Janet Mahoney	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Ray Detine	Maurice Middaugh	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Other people who have assisted us with their comments and/or time:	Ellen Middaugh	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Vince Evans	Ann Mills	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Gail Funk	Harold Mitchell	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Judy Hurd	Karen Morgan	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Frank Pasquale	Robert Morgan	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Gary Petrichick	Ann Tucker	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Lois Reynolds	Phil Windus	INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBER
Louise Windus	Dan Woolston	EMPIRE ZONE
Don Zajicek	John Foels	OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT
Larry Tucker	Kier Dirlam	PLANNER
Daniel Hunt	Maureen Harding	PLANNER
Zena Andrus	Joe Oroz	SOIL & WATER DISTRICT
Steve Antes	Fred Sinclair	SOIL & WATER DISTRICT
Lane Baggett		
Jim Danaher		
David Greene		
Michael Hand		
Dan Reynolds		
Frank Sardina		
Randy Swarthout		
Tom Taylor		

## Appendix 2. Additional Maps

Appendix 3. Allegany County Comprehensive Plan

**THIS APPENDIX IS NOT INCLUDED IN THIS COPY OF  
THE PLAN**

**YOU MAY DOWNLOAD THIS PLAN VIA THE LINKS ON  
THE TOWN WEBSITE:**

**[www.townofamity.com](http://www.townofamity.com)**

Appendix 4. HUD Consolidated Plan

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Appendix 5. Empire Zone Business Plan

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**[www.townofamily.com](http://www.townofamily.com)**

Appendix 6. Allegany County Agricultural District #2

Appendix 7. Allegany County Transit Plan

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## Appendix 8. Harding Demographic Analysis



Appendix 9. Allegany County Tourism Marketing Plan

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## Appendix 10. Wind Energy Facilities Regulations

## Appendix 11. Guide lines for Agricultural mitigation for wind power projects

Appendix 12. Emergency Operating Plan – Town of Amity and Village of Belmont.

## Appendix 13. Survey Results from 2007