



# Prospectus: Williamsville

A Detailed Look at the Exciting Projects for the Village in 2017

## What's Next

### March 13, 2017

Mayor Brian J. Kulpa will give his annual State of the Village Address at 7:30 p.m. at the Historic Village Meeting House, 5658 Main St., Williamsville, NY 14221.

### May 2017

Weather permitting, the \$1.5 million dollar S. Long Street Green infrastructure project will begin, restoring the Village right-of-way and completing much needed storm water management goals

### July 2017

In addition, the Village anticipates the joint project with the DOT to begin, starting with the addition of the H.A.W.K. signal installation in the heart of the Village.



## 2017: Nurturing a Resilient Community

- Manage budget within constraints of 1.15 percent tax cap
- Youngs Road interchange at New York State Thruway
- Become designated NYSERDA Clean Energy Community
- Complete Picture Main Street Construction
- Complete Spring Street green infrastructure project
- South Long Street green infrastructure project
  - Neighborhood and park improvements
  - Stormwater management infrastructure
  - Relocation of the DPW Garage off of Main Street block
- California Drive \$40 million dollar private investment in a new residential project
- Hydro power dam on Ellicott Creek
- Village Trolley connecting with Daemen College and ECC
- Consolidate sewer department with Town of Amherst or Erie County



Photo by F. Dyche



# South Long Community

Village of Williamsville, NY

## Project Principles

### Village Character

Interesting architecture should line Village streets. Streets in turn, should be Village scaled. Streetscapes should engage with clearly defined entrances and attractive landscaping.

### Appealing Living Spaces

Changing lifestyles, a maturing population, and smaller household sizes in Williamsville create demand for new and varied housing options.

### Dynamic Open Space

An improved S. Long Park would make a significant contribution to the Village quality of life.



## Investing in Infrastructure and Community Planning

### Action 1: Infrastructure Investment

For the last four years the Village of Williamsville has tied economic development to green infrastructure. The two desperate needs go together. Spring Street in the Village of Williamsville is the prime example: A green infrastructure project that captures 100 percent of the storm water and releases it clean into Ellicott Creek has created a beautiful public plaza where people gather to shop at recently opened small businesses that have been spurred by the public investments.



Behind you are parking spaces with "permeable paving" that allow water to flow into the gaps between pavers into a special highly porous gravel below. The gravel is interconnected forming a continuous storm drain system.



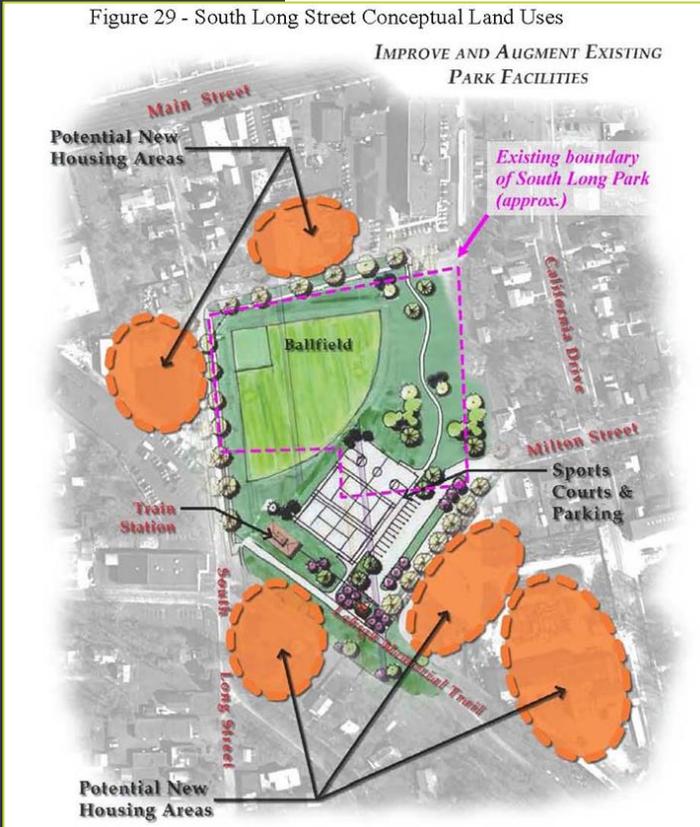
A series of planters along East Spring Street are filled with sandy soils over interconnected porous gravel beds. Special plantings that tolerate both wet and dry conditions absorb water while providing visual appeal.

Now, it's South Long street's turn. Currently, the plans to restore the right-of-way along S. Long is under review, and construction is planned to start in 2017. New sidewalks and rain garden planters will replace the asphalt and existing sidewalk we see today in the Village's right of way.

Over 1.3 million gallons of storm water run-off that polluted our waterways and creeks will now be processed through this green infrastructure.



Figure 29 - South Long Street Conceptual Land Uses



## Action 2: Refine Plans

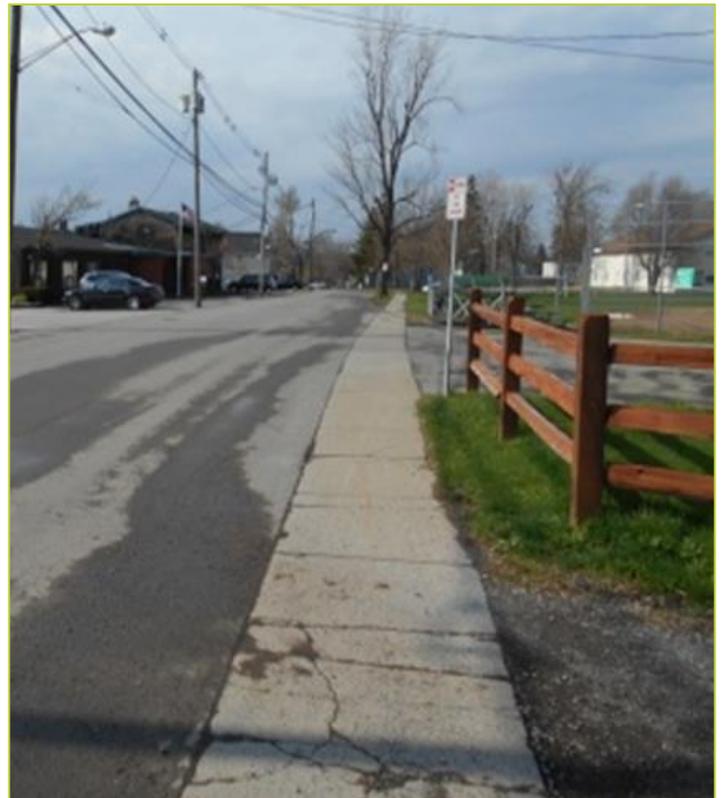
The Village of Williamsville's Community Plan is now 6 years old. While the general goals are still applicable (graphic pictured to the left), the following steps should be taken to refine and update the portion of the plan that applies to the S. Long Neighborhood.

- Winter 2017- neighbors have come together to envision a better land use address park connections and improvements
- Summer 2017- Natale Development has purchased the former Darling industrial site. The developers and the community are in the process of refining the best options and layout of the \$40 million dollar investment the company plans to make.

## Action 3: Relocate the Village DPW

The current location of the Village's Department of Public Works and the DPW's side yard negatively impact this neighborhood.

- Garage- the current garage is aging and taking up valuable real estate on the block proximate to Main Street.
- Side yard- the current Department of Public Works side yard is located in between S. Long Park and the Lehigh Memorial Trail and historic Train Depot. Relocation of the side yard provides an opportunity to connect the two parks.





# Ellicott Creek Hydropower

Re-building dated Village infrastructure with a new purpose

## Power Generation

The Village has partnered with Acadia Energy Corporation out of Rochester, NY to conduct the preliminary research and gather data about energy usage and production.



## Amherst Utility Co-Operative

The Amherst Utility Cooperative (AUC) was formed in 1998 as a way of generating savings through the joint purchase of energy. Today the AUC purchases natural gas and electricity for the Town of Amherst, the Village of Williamsville, three school districts and three fire companies. The AUC may be able to generate savings by purchasing hydro-power from the dam.



## A Dam Problem Becomes an Opportunity

The dam in Ellicott Creek was constructed in the 1920s to prevent flooding in the business district along Main Street. Every winter, the Village Department of Public Works pulls the gates out to prevent ice buildup and flooding. The dam needs extensive infrastructure repairs.

Additionally, an extension of this dam, now long gone due to erosion, is needed in order to re-water the sluiceway to the Williamsville Historic Water Mill now owned by Sweet Jenny's. So, if the Village has to build a new dam, why not build one with the capability to generate hydro-electric power to benefit the municipal buildings and businesses on Main Street?





# Historic Meeting House

A model of preservation in the Village of Williamsville, NY

**1835** -- The Disciples of Christ constructed what is known today as the Williamsville Meeting House.

**1894** – Only 116 members of the Disciples remained due to exodus to the growing City of Buffalo.

**1948** – Weakened roof beams forced removal of the original 40-foot wooden steeple and bell tower.

**1976** – The disbanded and the Village purchased the church for \$1.

**1986** -- Meeting House was named a Village of Williamsville Historic Landmark.

**1997** – With approval from SHPO, the Village hired International Chimney Corp. to construct and install a \$70,000 replacement steeple and bell tower.

**1998** – Ninety-five percent of the Meeting House had been restored to its original 1871 condition.

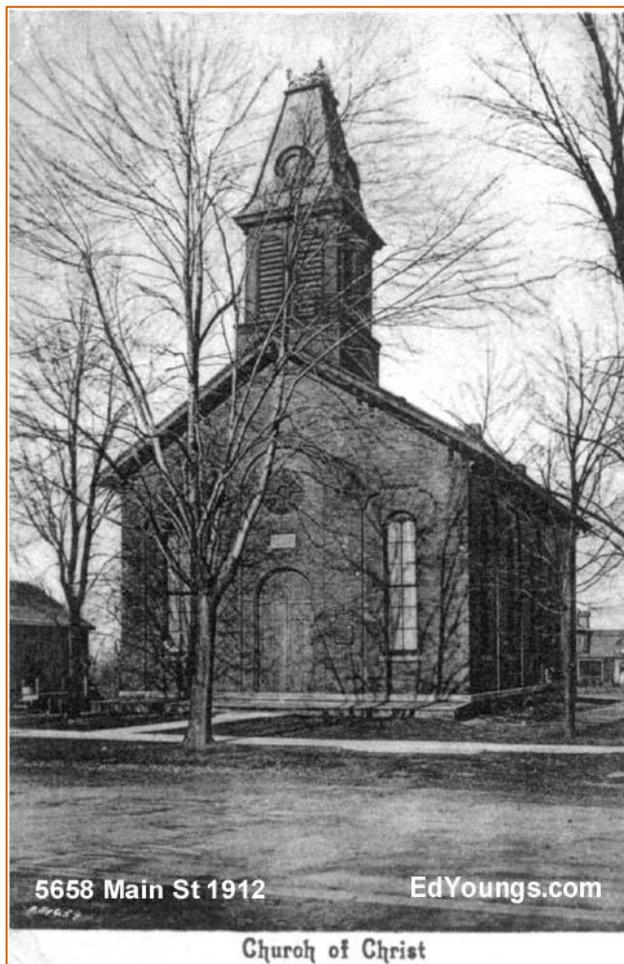
**2002** -- Placed on the National Register of the Historic Places.

**2014** – New interior paint job, flooring and sound/video system are installed.

**2016** – Village replaces the \$50,000 roof



## *A Village Landmark: Almost Fully Restored*



In 1976, the Village of Williamsville purchased the Church of Christ for \$1 to prevent it from being torn down. Over 40-years later the Village makes good use of the building as a vibrant performance center and community space; and reverts it as an historic asset.

In 2016, the Village invested in a \$50,000 roof replacement.

Critical funding needed to repair the ornate stained glass windows and refurbish the pews is the last piece of the puzzle to complete the restoration of this Village gem.





# Picture Main Street

The signature streetscape project of the Village of Williamsville, N.Y.

## A Grassroots Movement

Picture Main Street was never just a plan drawn up by Village officials or state representatives who wanted to make Main Street a better place. It was – and remains – a grassroots movement initiated by the citizens of the Village of Williamsville. Inspired by the 2010 referendum to reject dissolution of their beloved Village – and empowered by the creation of a new Community Plan – Villagers pushed their elected leaders to finally do something about the noise, traffic and unsafe conditions on Main Street. What resulted was a coordinated effort among residents, elected officials, state representatives and transportation experts who all had a hand in creating the plan.



Photo by Trey Measer



Sharon Cantillon/Bufalo N

## Picture Main: A Campaign for a Better Way to Live

Picture Main Street started as a streetscape plan.

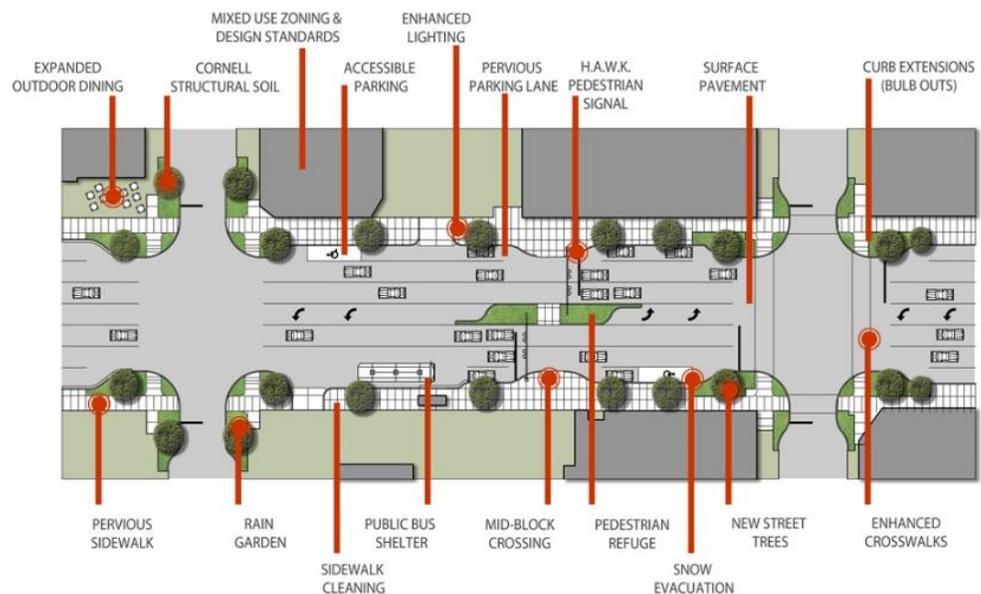
It developed into a mindset.

And then, finally...it became a campaign for a better way to live.

Talk to anyone on Main Street in the bustling Village of Williamsville and it's likely they know about the initiative to improve the pedestrian experience of the busy thoroughfare with \$3 million in upgrades.

The plan includes elements that will:

- Improve the walkability of Main Street.
- Create a safer environment for motorists and pedestrians.
- Support economic development and community life in the Village.
- Create a signature street identity with bulb-outs, pedestrian refuge islands and crossing signals, crosswalks, street greenery and a H.A.W.K. signal – one of the first of its kind in New York State.





# Williamsville Trolley

Connecting the Village & Our Neighbors

## Key Partners

### GBNRTC

The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council is a key partner in the research and feasibility of implementing trolley service in Williamsville.

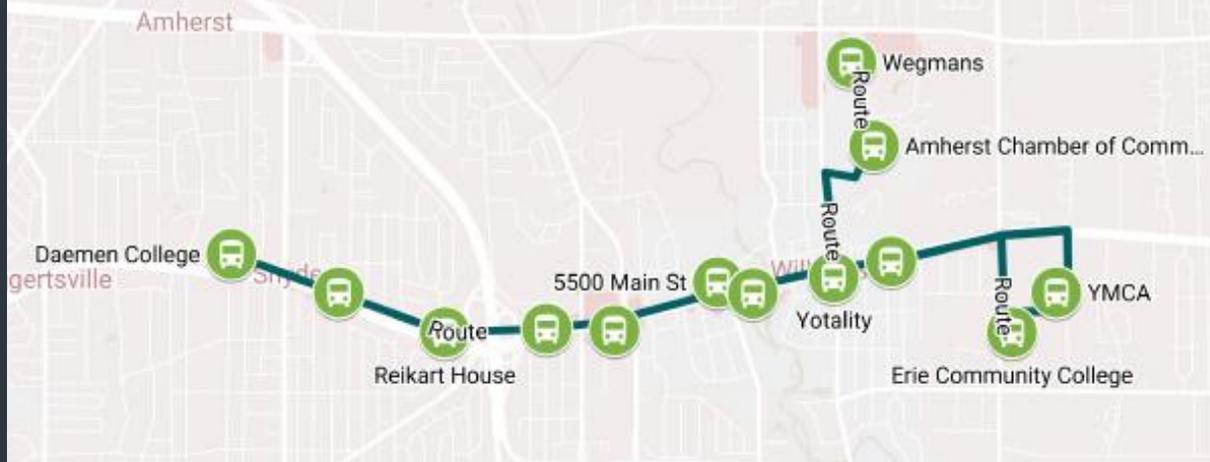
### Daemen College

With 65% of their students arriving to campus without cars, connecting students to the walkable community found in Williamsville, NY is key to creating a vibrant campus community.

### Erie County

### Community College

ECC's North Campus is located just to the East of the Village. They have committed to working with the Village to connect Daemen College to their campus and to connect their employees and students to the Village.



## Trolley Objectives

- Provide the neighboring communities of Snyder and Daemen College with access to the Village's walkable retail community
- Connect Daemen College and Erie County Community College
- Provide better access for area residents to the Village, the neighboring colleges, and to the YMCA
- Decrease the area's dependence on cars for short trips, making for more enjoyable commutes and errand running
- Connect the area's substantial daytime population of almost 8,000 people to the retail along Main Street.
- Provide a car-free option to tourists who want to visit the beautiful parks, world-class retail, and award winning restaurants in the Village of Williamsville.





# Re-Tree Williamsville

## Restoring rights-of-way and returning green to the Village

### A Good, Green Investment

“Plant a tree in a city, and it pays off in dividends... trees are one of the single best infrastructure investments cities can make”

-Laura Bliss, *CityLab*  
October 21, 2016

### Combating the Emerald Ash Borer



The Village of Williamsville has taken up the fight against the Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive species that has decimated the population of ash trees throughout the Northeast United States.

The Village inoculated 74 municipal ash trees in 2015 and has removed 57 trees in 2015-2016. The Village will save or replace as many trees as possible.



### *A Green Village is a Safe, Healthy, and Valuable Village*

The essence of the Village of Williamsville is defined by its walkable, historic neighborhoods linked to vibrant business and with tree lined streets. Those streets with their overarching mature tree canopies are ubiquitous to the Village and create a feeling of refuge for pedestrians and have a calming effect on vehicular traffic. Nothing beats a beautiful Village home with a healthy mature tree.



*Before*



*After*

Neglect over time, the October storm of 2006, and most recently the Emerald Ash Borer have all taken a toll on the Village trees. Enter the Village of Williamsville Tree Board, a group of volunteer laborers and dedicated Village officials. Since 2007, they have planted more than **1,000 trees** restored a total of **12,232 square feet** of asphalt to green space. The Village of Williamsville has been designated as a Tree City, USA every year since 2004.

For 2017 in conjunction with a NYSDOT led sidewalk project, the Village intends to plant approximately **90 trees** through the Union Road corridor.

Please feel free to log on to the Village website to browse the tree page or visit <http://www.walkablewilliamsville.com/trees> to request a tree.



# Youngs Road Interchange

Infrastructure improvements will help fix Main Street congestion



Photo: Buffalo News

## Thruway Partners



The New York State Thruway Authority for years has been criticized for the placement of the Williamsville Toll Barrier. Village officials in the past few years have refrained from adding to that criticism and instead have worked to develop a relationship with Thruway officials. That relationship has resulted in better communication, regular meetings and great cooperation. The Thruway Authority has been responsive during the recent bridge painting and landscape improvements on Wehrle Drive and the Village looks forward to continuing this relationship.

## Much-Needed Ramp Would Solve Multiple Problems

Williamsville leaders are creating partnerships to work for a Thruway interchange at Youngs Road that would alleviate traffic congestion in the Village while creating direct Thruway access to Buffalo Niagara International Airport.

The game-changing project, the benefits of which would extend to all of Western New York, has been on the area's wish list for years while development has steadily expanded in southeast Amherst – clogging Village streets with traffic and pushing Village leaders to end the inertia.

The Youngs Road-Wehrle Drive area, which is home to large employers such as Ingram Micro, Northrop Grumman and the Erie Community College North Campus, draws thousands of office workers from Buffalo, Cheektowaga and nearby towns. Absent a convenient Thruway exit, they are forced to drive on Village streets, which creates a traffic nightmare at peak rush hour times.

Village officials traveled to Albany in November 2015 to speak with state officials about the possibility of such an interchange at the busy Youngs Road location.

Thruway Authority leaders historically have supported such an interchange but have said the local community – Amherst – and Erie County must support the plan because Youngs Road is a county road.

After returning to the Village, officials created partnerships with Erie County and with the Town of Amherst. The Erie County Executive and the Amherst Supervisor both said they would support such a plan.





**Project Has Long History**



**1996:** The Amherst Chamber of Commerce comes out in support of the idea of a new Thruway interchange at Youngs Road.

**1997:** Consultants were hired not only to look at relocating the Williamsville Toll Barrier but also to build additional interchanges, possibly at Youngs Road.

**1997:** Town Board agrees to study interchange issue. Opposition begins to surface and the idea is eventually dropped.

**Since then:** Many more workers have been hired in Wehrle Drive office parks. The Village brings the issue up again.

Village of Williamsville  
5565 Main Street  
Williamsville, NY 14221

**The Time is Now For a Youngs Road Interchange, officials say**

The project to build a Youngs Road interchange may be eligible for funding through airport Passenger Facility Charge funds, which are collected by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority and are only eligible to be used on airport-related projects.

“The Village is not going to throw our hands up and wait for someone else to do this,” Williamsville Mayor Brian J. Kulpa said. “We are going to pull together a team and get to work – we are interested in solutions and we see this as helping a regional traffic problem.”

**Suggested solution to traffic woes**

*Williamsville officials want Thruway interchange at Youngs Road*



“(It) is a great idea,” said Amherst Supervisor Dr. Barry A. Weinstein. “The powers that be rejected it many years ago, and it's been on the backburner ever since.”

**Early Discussions For New Thruway Interchange in Northtowns**  
Submitted by WGRZ Web Staff  
Tuesday, November 24th, 2015, 12:22am

Topics: News

**THE REGION** SECTION | D  
BUFFALONEWS.COM THE BUFFALO NEWS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2015

**Williamsville revives bid for new I-90 interchange**

*Officials are seeking to ease congestion*

By ROBERT J. MCCARTHY  
SUNSHINE AVENUE

There are three roads in Williamsville that are notorious for getting stuck in traffic jams: the I-190 interchange, the I-190 interchange, and the I-190 interchange.

When the Village Board voted to study the I-190 interchange, it was a sign that the Village was serious about addressing the traffic issues that have plagued the area for years.

And in the process, the Village has found a potential solution: a new interchange at Youngs Road.

“It’s a great idea,” said Amherst Supervisor Dr. Barry A. Weinstein. “The powers that be rejected it many years ago, and it’s been on the backburner ever since.”

While the Village has not yet decided whether to proceed with the project, it is clear that the Village is serious about addressing the traffic issues that have plagued the area for years.

AmherstBee.com December 2, 2015 3

**Village of Williamsville**

**Youngs Road thruway interchange proposed**

By SNA WALTERS  
STAFF WRITER

Local officials are trying to revive an old plan for a Youngs Road interchange off the Thruway, with direct access to the Buffalo Niagara International Airport.

Williamsville Mayor Brian Kulpa said that around 20 to 30 years ago, the Village Board and Erie County were working on the project, but it was terminated.

“Regardless of why it failed before, we don’t want to repeat that mistake,” he added.

At the Nov. 23 meeting of the Village Board, officials approved a resolution seeking new partnerships to move forward with plans for a Youngs Road interchange connection to the Thruway and airport.

“This resolution was a formal way to step forward in that planning process,” Kulpa said.

Other potential partners include Erie County, the owner of Youngs Road; the state Department of Transportation; the state Thruway Authority; and Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority.

Kulpa said the interchange would support volume reduction by providing an alternative route to the Thruway and airport.



# Water & Sewer Consolidation

Finding cost savings and efficiencies in the Village of Williamsville, N.Y.

State Partners



Local Government Efficiency

Some local governments see New York State as an adversary when it comes to consolidation, but the Village of Williamsville has experienced just the opposite. Village leaders have met with representatives from the Department of State, Division of Local Government Services, to discuss ways to find short-term and long-term cost savings through consolidation. Village officials traveled to Albany in November 2015 to attend the Local Government Innovation Conference, which provided innovative case studies and new ideas for finding cost savings in Village operations. The Department of State is a great partner.



Photo: Getty Images/iStockphoto

## *Water Consolidation Complete, Village Looks to Sewer*

Times are tough for local governments across New York State.

Gone are the days when taxpayers agreed to pony up each budget cycle to support ever-growing expenses and inefficient service delivery.

Village of Williamsville leaders began to realize this years ago, and while they had already maintained one of the lowest tax rates in Western New York, they began to look for even more savings.

The Water Department was an obvious first choice. It made no sense for a small Village staff to be spending resources to maintain a water system where infrastructure aged and water rates would increase far into the future.

Instead, Village leaders had a desire to prioritize their above-ground infrastructure – which Village residents actually see on a daily basis – and to find economies of scale for its below-ground infrastructure.

The Village made an agreement to consolidate its Water Department with that of the Erie County Water Authority.

Consolidation decreased the water rate that Village users pay from \$5.81 to \$3.00 per 1,000 gallons consumed.

A surcharge of \$1.87 was added to the \$3.00 water rate to cover consolidation and existing debt costs, resulting in a total rate of \$4.87.

Beyond the immediate savings, consolidation will result in lower water rates in the future and the village will save money long-term.

Now, consolidation of the sewer department is the next logical step.





## Making New York Affordable



“We’ve made tremendous progress over the past five years to make New York more affordable, and this year we are going to keep that momentum going from the ground up. This competition will help local governments find innovative ways to reduce costs and lower taxes for their constituents – which will make it cheaper to live, work and thrive in their communities. This is about building a stronger and more prosperous New York over the long haul, and I am eager to help our local partners across the state move forward.”

- Governor

Andrew M. Cuomo

## Consolidation with Town of Amherst Sewer Would be the Next Logical Step

In the Village of Williamsville’s Sewer System, Inflow and Infiltration (I & I) has caused the sewer rate to be erratic and unpredictable in the past few years. These issues need to be taken care of and consolidation would appear to be a way to achieve this worthwhile goal.

The Town of Amherst has an entire Sewer Department that is much better equipped to handle sewer issues than that of the Village of Williamsville. Currently, sewer issues in the Village are incorporated into the existing Department of Public Works staff, which performs many other tasks, including street repair and maintenance; park maintenance; storm water and sanitary sewer collection; brush pickup; tree maintenance; buildings and grounds and community beautification.

A consolidation of the Village Sewer System would be the first step in finding regional economies of scale when it comes to wastewater treatment.

A recent Inflow and Infiltration study was completed by utilizing a Strategic Planning & Feasibility Study grant from the Empire State Development Corporation. The study found several areas in need of Inflow & Infiltration remediation, including South and North Ellicott streets; Main Street; North Long and Reist streets.

The Town of Amherst is a willing partner with the Village and the long-term goal would be to upgrade the town’s sewer treatment facility.



The Village is already sharing treatment services with the Town through an inter-municipal agreement and this plan would be the next logical step to realize total consolidation, which is a stated and worthwhile goal of Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo’s administration.

The consolidation would save Village taxpayers money. Village sewer rates increased 6.8 percent in the most recent fiscal year and the recent Inflow & Infiltration Study determined that the Village system requires \$2.9 million worth of upgrades.

