

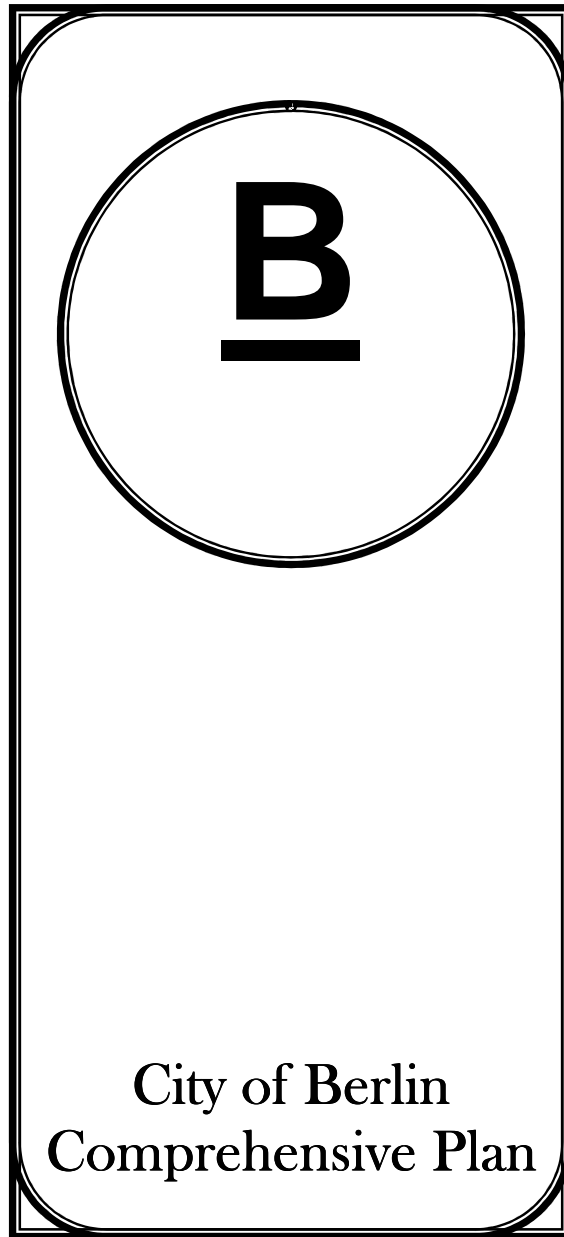


## **City of Berlin Comprehensive Plan.**

**The Comprehensive Plan was adopted in January 2003. It has been reviewed by the Plan Commission and is a living document that is often consulted and amended as economics dictate.**

**Noted in the Index “List of Figures and Maps” you will see there are 7 Maps listed. These documents are too large to be included in this on-line document. Maps can be obtained by contacting the Zoning Office.**

**For any questions, concerns, or additional information, please contact City Hall Zoning Office at 361-5402.**



Revised: June 9, 2010

KUNKEL ENGINEERING GROUP, LLC  
COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLANNING

# City of Berlin - Comprehensive Plan

## Planning Commission - 2010

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. Defining a Comprehensive Plan**

Components of a comprehensive plan encompass many of the functions that make a community work, such as transportation, housing and agriculture as well as other land uses. The plan also considers the interrelationships of those functions. The comprehensive plan reflects broad community interests and values; it is built upon economic growth estimates, population trends, and the condition of the natural and historic resources. Comprehensive planning therefore helps coordinate the various plans, programs, and procedures of a community by providing information which is vital to the functioning of a community. Implementation of the comprehensive plan must be linked to the local budget, cooperation with other units of government, and the needs and capabilities of the private sector.

### ***Why a comprehensive plan is important to the City***

When a City develops and adopts a comprehensive plan it has officially made a statement of the local government's policy regarding the physical development of the community. The existing community, local officials and potential new residents and business will know how the City envisions its future.

Comprehensive plans are policy oriented. (A policy is a rule or course of actions that guides or directs future actions.) Comprehensive plans provide an assessment of a community's needs and a statement of the community's values. The plan provides a long-term perspective to guide short-term community decisions.

The comprehensive plan serves as a blueprint for the community's physical development. The plan also clarifies the relationship between physical development policies and social economic goals. Based on the information in the plan, the plan becomes a public guide to community decision-making. The comprehensive plan is usually the only public document that describes the community as a whole in terms of its complex and mutually supporting networks.

### ***How does a comprehensive plan work?***

There is a fundamental function of how a comprehensive plan operates. A comprehensive plan is:

- *A guide to physical development.* It will help guide how, when, where, and why to build, rebuild, conserve and protect.
- *Long range* in perspective. It will express the future in terms of guiding statements as opposed to a rigid, precise future.
- *Internally consistent.* It will consider the interrelationships of each of the functional areas and different land uses.
- *Made up of policy statements.* It describes how the community wants to look in the future, what its character will be. (Rural, urban, suburban, etc.)
- *A guide to decision making.*
- *Fiscally feasible.*



- *Legally sound.*
- *Dynamic.* The plan will reflect a picture in time, as time changes and factors that created the original plan change so the plan must be changed.

In summary, the comprehensive plan is designed to serve as a long-range policy guide to the physical development of a community. It reflects the overall “vision” concerning future growth and land use. It establishes the policy parameters within which local land use operates. The plan should be fluid and amended as the foundations upon which it is based changes, but should not be modified to simply respond to an individual property owner’s desire to reach a higher level of development intensity than the plan would otherwise allow. Most importantly the comprehensive plan will need to reflect what the community as a whole wants.

## **B. Planning in the City of Berlin & Green Lake County**

The ‘Smart Growth’ Comprehensive Plan for the City of Berlin is part of a larger multi-jurisdictional planning effort currently being conducted throughout Green Lake County. The City of Berlin, being one cog of a much larger effort has been involved locally at the City and Town level, as well as regionally with the County wide planning efforts.

In 1999 Green Lake County conducted a visioning process including a household survey. With the assistance of the residents of the City, the County was able to conduct a household survey that included specific responses to conditions at the City level and important for long range planning in the City. These opinions extrapolated from the County survey are used as an introduction to many of the critical elements of this plan. As a method of strengthening positions and recommendations in the plan the opinions gathered from the survey were matched with facts about the City. As part of the multi-jurisdictional effort this combination of strong public input along with statistical analysis assures the City that strategies and recommendations in the plan will not only be good for the City but will also be supported by the County. The following is a summary of some opinions gathered from the City’s people as part of the County wide household survey.

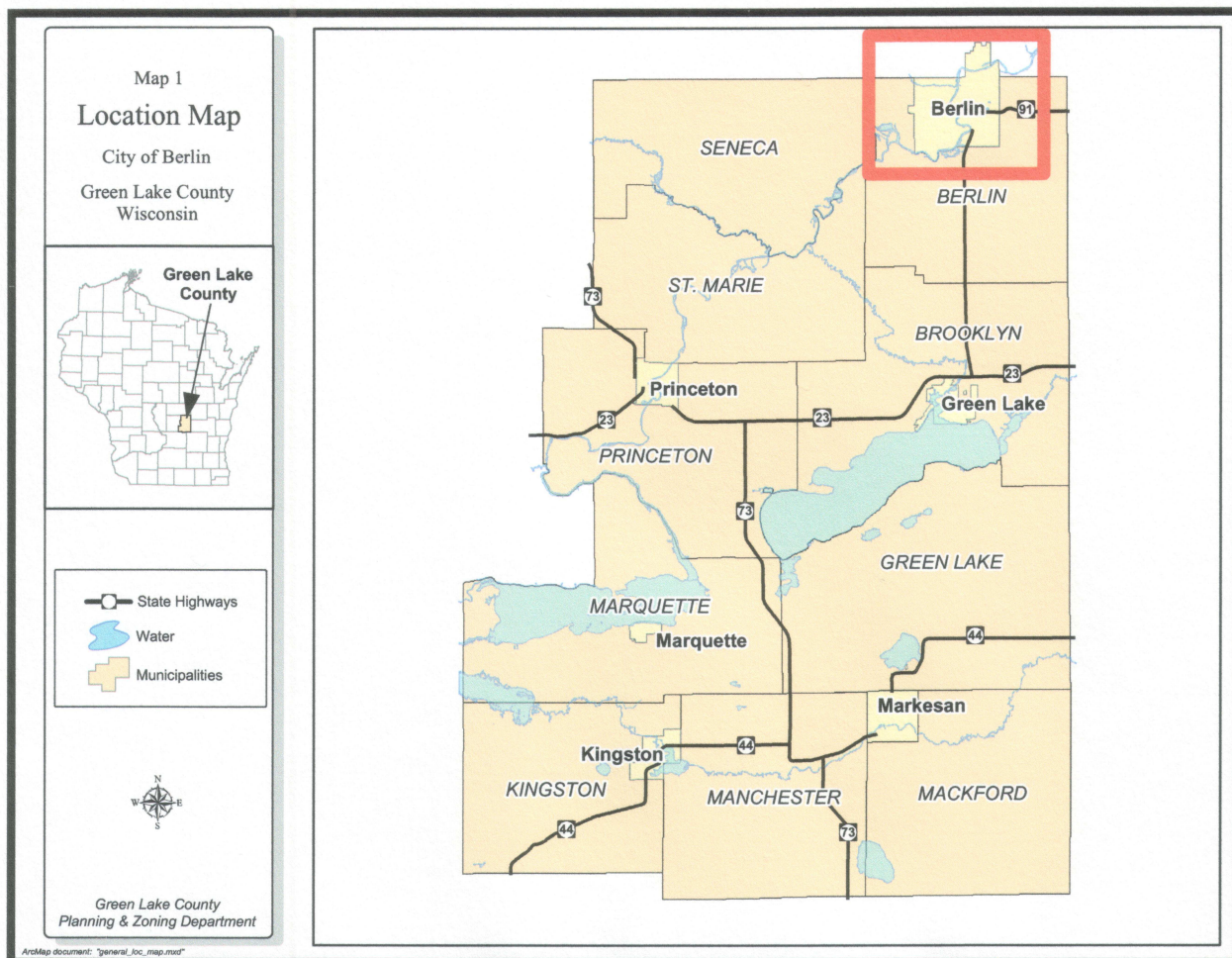
- 95% ‘Agreed’ or ‘Strongly Agreed’ that protecting and preserving the natural resources, such as the soil, water and wetlands, was important to them.
- 92% ‘Agreed’ or ‘Strongly Agreed’ that preserving the open spaces (woods, meadows and scenic vistas) was important to them.
- 90% ‘Agreed’ or ‘Strongly Agreed’ that protecting the agricultural land was important to them.

## C. Introduction to the City

The City of Berlin is located in northeastern Green Lake County. (Map 1). State Highway 91 is the main entry into the City if approaching from the east. This main entry ties the City of Berlin to the Cities of Ripon and Oshkosh to the East. The Town of Berlin defines the east, west and southern borders of the City and like the City, the Town is influenced by its close proximity to the Cities of Ripon and Oshkosh. While the City of Berlin has not been growing, it is evident that the pressures of growth and development are nearing. With a combination of a growing commuting population and affordable land prices in both the City and the Town, Berlin has the opportunity through this multi-jurisdictional planning effort to take steps to make change happen in an orderly manner.

The City of Berlin has some major geographic features and natural resource areas that enhance the identity of the City and therefore need to be protected. These features include such areas as the large wetland/marshes and the Fox River.

The community's 2022 vision, drawn from the County wide survey results and planning meetings, envisions the City 20 years from now, with quality residential, commercial and industrial growth clustered with compatible uses around the City. The City's 'small town' charm, natural features, and surrounding farms and open spaces have been protected, preserved and even improved upon.



## **II. LAND USE VISION & GOALS**

### **A. Community Vision**

#### ***What's the Vision?***

Information collected from the City's responses to the countywide survey & visioning process has provided the baseline of information used to build the City's Vision Statement. A vision is a positive, preferred future – one that people aspire to achieve. People were asked to describe the City they would like to see in 20 years; the following summarizes their responses.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

*By the Year 2022 the City has accomplished a balance between economic growth and the conservation of our natural, cultural and historic resources. A diverse economy supports our hard working citizens with well-paying jobs. Proper planning has encouraged commercial and economic growth in the City while focusing new residential development in designated areas. Surrounding the City as well as throughout the County a visitor can still enjoy the open spaces and natural areas the way they appeared 20 years ago. The family farms still exist around the City and we have preserved our productive agricultural land. Our water resources, the rivers and streams, have been well managed and preserved and have remained uncontaminated. The City has remained safe and has kept that rural, small town feel.*

The City recognizes that many elements of growth need to be dealt with fairly and consistently, some of these elements are:

- The need to protect the natural resources, scenic beauty and historic resources.
- The right of property owners not to be unduly harmed by adjoining land uses.
- To ensure development occurs in a way that is cost-effective for future services.

The City seeks to address these principles through an open, public, and collaborative process that will include the comprehensive planning and implementation process.

#### ***Emerging Theme***

The predominant theme that has emerged from the initial planning activities is that the people value the 'small town' feel of the City. The land base is the key to the City's future. The quaint shops, scenic vistas and natural features, provide the beauty and economic base. Development is important also, it will assist in supporting the City's residents, however it will need to be done in a manner that does not diminish the existing character of the City.

### ***Comparing Survey Responses from Different Groups***

The statistics were analyzed to look at how residency status, occupancy status, length of residence, age, employment status, and primary source of household income affect the vision chosen in the questionnaire. The vision question on the questionnaire asked respondents to choose the option that most closely matched their vision of the future.

There was little variation in vision responses based on residency, occupancy, years of residence, or age. This provides a base of consensus for the community to work with, one that emphasizes two themes:

- A theme of natural resource protection and preservation.
- Protection of the existing character of the City.

This general community consensus gives planners a starting point and a long-term goal to aim for.

### ***Other Survey Results***

Most City residents also want to see other preservation efforts around the county; such as preserving the natural and scenic resources. "Preserving open space (woods, meadows and scenic vistas) is important to me." A response that further re-enforces the opinions expressed in support of natural resource protection.

## **B. Land Use Goals**

The City established the following long-term goals for land use and development. In order to implement the City's vision for the future; maintain and improve the community's quality of life; promote the comfort, safety, health, prosperity, aesthetics and general welfare; provide for orderly development; and protect the City's natural resource base, City officials and citizens of the City will work to:

- **NATURAL RESOURCES**

Conserve, protect and improve the environmental resources of the City and its surrounding area.

- **HOUSING**

Encourage a high quality living environment in all residential neighborhoods and to assure adequate, decent, safe and affordable housing for all City residents.

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Ensure that the City maintains a strong, diverse economy. Work with a range of private and public partners to retain existing businesses and attract new employers providing high quality jobs.

- **COMMERCIAL**

Develop and maintain attractive, convenient, and safe business districts that include a full range of goods and services that complements both existing and future residential developments.

- **DOWNTOWN**

Help local shop owners to run prosperous businesses. Help residents find the goods they need within the city. Keep the downtown area attractive to residents and to tourists alike.

- **INDUSTRIAL**

Attract and maintain industry, which will provide local employment opportunities and contribute to the city tax base without adversely affecting adjoining land uses, the residential character of the community, its tourism potential, or the environment.

- **TRANSPORTATION**

Develop and maintain a well-integrated and cost-effective transportation system capable of moving people, goods and services to, from, and within the community. Where possible encourage the use of non-automobile forms of transportation. Help people with limited access to transportation to get the assistance they need.

- **UTILITIES & FACILITIES**

Maintain and provide community facilities and services to make the City a safe, attractive community in which to live, work, play, visit and raise a family.

- **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Provide adequate water, sewer and other infrastructure to support the orderly and cost effective development of the community.

- **LAND USE**

Develop and maintain effective land use controls to implement the Comprehensive Plan, such as zoning and subdivision ordinances, and other regulations. Consistently administer land use regulations to assure consistent results.

- **COMMUNITY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Encourage orderly community growth and development that is sound and attractive, will result in the least possible environmental impact, and will maximize public expenditures and goods and services received.

- **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Preserve the older buildings in the City. Determine ways to keep them useful and functional well into the future in order to assure that they are maintained and treasured as links with the past.

- **PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE**

Provide residents and visitors with enough well-maintained, attractive parks and open spaces for people of all ages, with emphasis on preserving their historic and natural resources.

- **COOPERATION**

Establish shared interests and goals for land use and development with surrounding towns, and develop shared plans for action. Explore opportunities provided by Wisconsin's cooperative boundary agreement legislation.

### **III. CITY HISTORY & LOCATION**

#### **A. History**

The need to construct a road from Fond du Lac to Stevens Point, with a Fox River crossing at the most feasible place, led to the founding of Berlin in 1846. In June of 1847, three people from a search party that initially looked for the crossing point purchased land here, and the fourth, Nathan Strong, preempted a tract, built a shanty and lived among the Mascoutin, Menominee and Winnebago Indians at that location. A ferry began running in 1848, the year the Menominee ceded their tribal lands lying northwest of the Fox River. Soon afterward a float bridge was built and was replaced in 1856 by a more substantial one. Berlin developed as a transfer point under the stimulus of the bridge and the road to Stevens Point, a linkage completed in 1849. The railroad connection with Milwaukee via Ripon, opened in 1857, again made Berlin a transfer point from rail to stage and wagon road. The river contributed to Berlin's early growth, bringing passengers on steamboats from Oshkosh and carrying freight.

Berlin, from the first years, served as a supplier of goods and services for the developing rich farmland, which stretched south to Ripon and in the originally timber-covered areas to the north. With a population of only 250 in 1850, it grew to almost 2,800 by the Panic of 1857, and after a brief decline continued to grow to 5,305 by the year 2000. With a variety of ethnic groups, the initial New York-New England settlers were joined by Germans, Irish, Poles, and Welsh -- creating a town with varied religious and educational institutions, and distinctive neighborhood patterns.

One significant part of the business sector was devoted to handling farm produce from the surrounding lands, another was as a wholesale center for a wide trade area, and another was centered on retail trade. Berlin also had a variety of service-oriented businesses and small factories. Two particular business developments drew state and regional attention -- cranberry production and the granite quarries. Utilizing the marshy land around the Fox River, Berlin in the early 1870's became the center of the cranberry-growing boom, which turned into a permanent part of the region's agriculture. The granite beds two miles east of the Fox River provided most of the jobs in Berlin between 1883 and 1916. They employed more than 300 men by 1890 and the railroad carried away as many as 2,000 carloads of paving blocks, crushed stone, and building stone for use in the construction field.

Berlin is situated on both sides of the historic Fox River, which linked the Mississippi and St. Lawrence Rivers -- serving as a trail way for Marquette and Joliet during their exploration of the St. Lawrence waterway. Later, trappers and Indians would barter on the shores of the Fox and eventually fur and leather factories would spring up and utilize both the river and the railroad to distribute their products.

## ***B. Location & Political Boundaries***

Today, Berlin Wisconsin is a city with a population surpassing 5,000 persons. Most of the City lies within the northeast corner of Green Lake County, with a portion extending northward into Waushara County.

The City is located on the Fox River on Highways 91 and 49 approximately 20 miles west southwest from Oshkosh and State Highway 41.

The 2 counties of Green Lake and Waushara contain almost 650,000 acres of land. Approximately 2,200 acres are water.

Tanning, leather products, fur products (including mink coats), houseboat building, textiles, foundry products, photographic and optical equipment, and other industrial facilities have played a major role in the economic base of Berlin.

The commercial facilities provide retail sales and service for a radius of approximately 12 miles, although some businesses such as automotive retailers and makers of mink coats draw from considerably further distances.

The Berlin planning area is noted for and provides excellent natural recreational facilities for boating, fishing, hunting, camping, and swimming. The City is within 25 miles of the following lakes: Winnebago, Butte des Morts, Winneconne, Poygan, Pine, Long, Gilbert, Morris, Witters, Pickerel, Spring, Tuttle, Crystal, Rush, Puckaway, and Big and Little Green Lakes.

*Source: City of Berlin 1967 Comprehensive Plan.*



## **IV. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS & NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **A. Introduction**

This chapter describes and analyzes the natural resource base of the City. The natural resource base is the appropriate first layer of data and analysis in the comprehensive plan because the long-term health of the land and water is directly affected by current and future land use decisions.

### **B. Soils/Suitability for Development**

“Soil is a natural, three-dimensional body at the earth’s surface that is capable of supporting plants and has properties resulting from the integrated effect of climate and living matter acting on earthy parent material, as conditioned by relief (varying elevations of the land surface) over periods of time” (Green Lake County Soil Survey 1977). Plant and animal life have a symbiotic relationship with soil. Vegetative cover and organic matter accumulation from living organisms contributes to the formation of soil while the existing soil provides the nutrients and shelter required by organisms living within and on top of the soil. Soils also act as a natural filter for waters infiltrating the surface into the groundwater below. Some soils are not well suited for this filtration process. Soils that are very porous, located on steep slopes or in low-lying areas where the water table is high are at risk for groundwater pollution. For this reason, state and county regulations regarding the placement of septic systems in the Towns are enforced. Good groundwater supplies are currently abundant. It should be the City’s goal to maintain this supply, as it might become a more vital resource in the future.

According to the Green Lake County Soil Survey (1977) there are three predominant general soil associations (types) found within the City of Berlin: Willette-Poy-Poygan, Kidder-Rotamer-Grellton and Boyer-Oshtemo-Gotham Associations (See Soils Map).

- Willette-Poy-Poygan Association is the most dominant type of soil, located throughout the City paralleling the rivers and defining much of the southern border of the City. This soil type is described as ranging from poorly drained to very poorly drained, nearly level organic soils and can have a subsoil of silty clay. Unless drained, groundwater is usually at or near the surface most of the year. Generally this soil type has severe limitations for use as sites for housing, septic tank absorption fields, roads and landfills. The areas with this soil type are mainly along the Fox River and are generally referred to as ‘marsh’, wetlands and floodplains.
- The second most common soil association is Kidder-Rotamer-Grellton runs east and west through the center of the City, on both sides of the Fox River. This soil type is moderately to well drained and ranges from nearly level to steeply sloping. It has a subsoil that consists of mainly loam, clay loam, and sandy clay loam. This soil, also located in the Town of Berlin, East of the City is generally suitable for row crops with some concern for erosion. There are very few limitations for using sites in these areas for housing, sanitary leach fields, roads or landfills.

- The third most common soil association is Boyer-Oshtemo-Gotham Association. Being located in the west-central portion of the City it is generally of higher elevation than the proceeding two types, it is well drained and ranges from nearly level to steep slopes. This association has a subsoil mainly of loamy fine sand, sandy loam and loamy sand underlain by sand or stratified sand and gravel. It is similar to Kidder-Rotamer-Grellton in that there are few limitations for man-made developments however it has severe limitations for use as sanitary landfills.

It must be noted that the above general soil associations are just that, “general”. There are often several other minor soil series that exist within these associations that may or may not be suitable for development. To obtain detailed soil maps and descriptions for a specific area to ensure proper land uses, refer to the *Soil Survey of Green Lake County, Wisconsin, 1977* (On file with NRCS, Green Lake County office).

Lands within the City of Berlin that contain steep slopes (lands having potential high erosion problems) or are susceptible to wetness due to flooding and ponding are considered to be Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA). Although certain land use practices and developments are not restricted on these soils, individuals must view these areas as potential problem areas where further investigation and action must be taken to prevent improper land uses. These areas are identified within the Environmentally Sensitive Areas section and shown on the Natural Resources Map.

## C. Wetlands/Surface Water

Wetlands contain some of the most unique and important ecosystems found on the planet. According to the State of Wisconsin, “the term ‘wetlands’ means an area where water is at, near or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophilic vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions” (Wisconsin Stats 23.32(1)). Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, sedge meadows and similar areas. The City of Berlin contains more than **600 acres of wetlands** (16% of the entire City) It is necessary to note that the United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resource Conservation Service’s identification of wetlands located within farmed areas is not included within this approximate acreage. The NRCS wetland acreage is not included in the total approximate acreage because the WDNR did not inventory lands used for agriculture. NRCS Wetland Inventory Maps can be obtained at the local NRCS office.

The majority of the wetland acreage located in the City is associated with the Fox River. These wetlands have water tables that are located at or just below the soil surface and are dependent on the floodplain of the River. The high water tables along with surface water runoff from the surrounding landscape keep the wetland soils saturated or inundated throughout most of the year. These soils then allow growth of wetland vegetation in these areas. The City of Berlin also contains several wetlands associated with Barnes Creek. These wetlands are often referred to as “floodplain” wetlands.

Wetlands, especially floodplain wetlands and large wetland areas, have great value. Among many important functions, they filter pollutants out of the water, control flooding

during significant precipitation events and spring runoff, offer habitat for a variety of plant and animal life, and recharge groundwater systems. The mixed marsh/scrub-shrub wetland community found in and around Berlin is a good example of a wetland complex designed by nature to carry out important ecological functions. Wetlands are designated by the state and federal governments as environmentally sensitive areas that should be protected from development.

The main surface water within the City is the Fox River along with several lesser tributaries feeding into the river. These tributaries, as well as the river not only serve the purpose of draining watersheds in which they exist, but also provide links to adjacent wetlands. In spring, these wetlands provide additional water storage capacity needed during spring runoff to prevent flooding. They also assist in filtering excess nutrients and debris out of the surface waters to improve the water quality of the receiving streams and rivers. Good water quality throughout the Fox River is important to the fisheries in the area, especially downstream as there are many species that use the river and its tributaries for spawning.

In an effort to protect the public welfare, a number of regulatory constraints have been placed on development activities occurring within and, sometimes, adjacent to wetlands, and streams. From a planning perspective, it can be assumed that any activities involving earthmoving within wetlands or within and adjacent to the Fox River will require approvals from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), as well as county and local governments.

## **D. Topography & Drainage Patterns**

The topography of the land in the City of Berlin determines the movement and drainage of water towards the community's streams, rivers and lowlands. An area's watersheds, drainage basins and drainage corridors guide water movement. (See Topographic Map)

### ***What's a Watershed? Why is it Important to Protect?***

A watershed is an area of land that collects and concentrates precipitation and other water, and delivers it to a common outflow. This same process of collection and concentration applies to the sediment and contaminants carried by water. Therefore, maintaining the health and integrity of the watershed by limiting sediment and contaminants becomes critical. Land use and development decisions made every day can have an impact on watershed health.

### ***Drainage Basins and Corridors***

Within each watershed are smaller "sub-sheds" called drainage basins. Basin drainage corridors are low channels that function to convey surface waters from watershed basins to surface waters as perpetual streams or as intermittent drainage ways and creeks. Levels of sedimentation and pollution in these drainage corridors, particularly during significant rainfalls, greatly affect the health of local surface water resources. Major drainage corridors should be protected from development. As development is proposed, it is also important that sufficient easements should be provided in order to ensure

maximum flow through major drainage corridors. Watershed studies have documented a number of impacts related to human activities within drainage basins:

1. **Agricultural run-off** can result in increased water sediment, nutrients and temperature.
2. **Channelization** resulting in decreased stream length, severe loss of habitat, and associated riparian vegetation.
3. **Diversion and Groundwater Extraction** including well irrigation and domestic use, diversion ditches, direct pumping from a stream, or other water uses. This activity can reduce groundwater flow, decrease base flow, reduce habitat availability, and decrease water quality.
4. **Transportation & Utility Corridors** including use of riparian corridors for roads and utilities. These activities can increase sediment, nutrient and contaminant inputs, and reduce habitat quality.
5. **Recreational & Public Use Activities** resulting in trampling, soil compaction, soil erosion, and other disturbances leading to increased sedimentation and nutrient inputs. Such activities are often linked with increased hardened surface areas, with roads and parking lots.
6. **Residential, Commercial and Retail Development** results in construction activity, increases in impervious surfaces, increased stormwater runoff, point source and non-point source pollution, sedimentation, surface water drainage, nutrient inputs, and loss of water loving or water dependent vegetation.

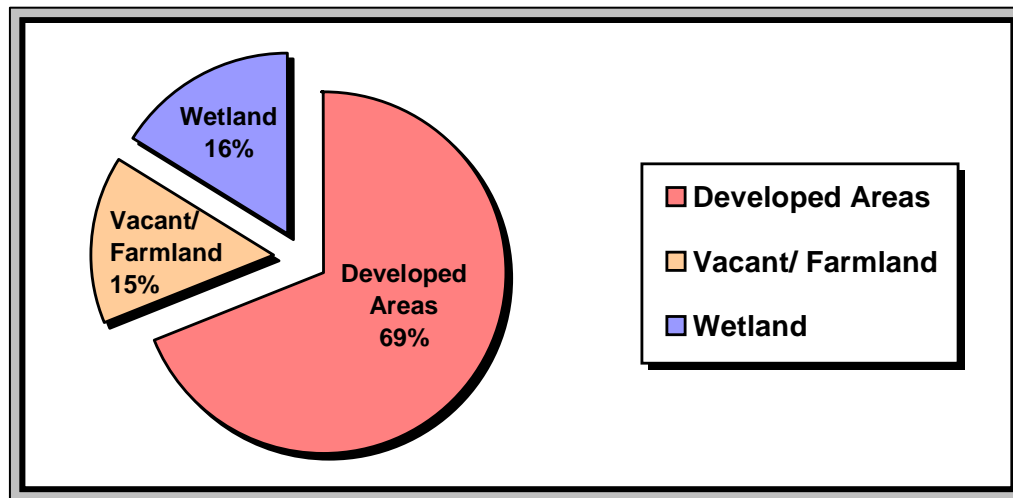
Therefore, land use and development planning and implementation needs to minimize such development activities, or minimize their impacts, within drainage basins in order to improve or maintain water quality.

## **E. Vegetative Cover**

Large tracks of undisturbed vegetative cover within the City of Berlin are generally found along the Fox River. These areas are composed of a diverse mixture of wetlands, grasslands and some agricultural crops. The following table provides a simple breakdown of the entire City by percents of coverage for each land cover category. Agricultural/Vacant land covers approximately 14% of the total land area.

The City also contains a variety of wetland communities equaling 16% of the total land area. Many of the wetlands are concentrated in areas along the Fox River; however, there are also many small wetland communities interspersed among the agricultural lands within the City limits.

**Figure 1. City of Berlin - Land Classes By Percentage of Total Land Area**



The City of Berlin's general land use classifications (Figure 1) shows us that the land use percentages equate to the following acres.

- 69% Developed Area = 2,587
- 16% Wetlands = 600 Acres
- 15% Vacant/Farmland = 563

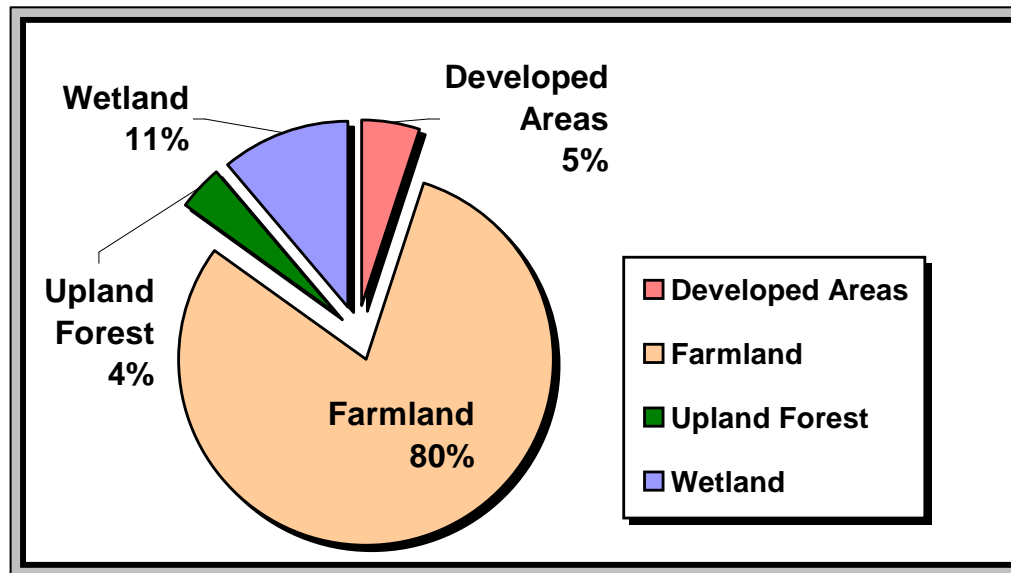
#### ***Town of Berlin Vegetative Cover***

Because much of the new development in the area is occurring along the borders of the City and the Town it is important to look at the natural environment that defines the Town of Berlin. Some important facts are defined below and illustrated in Figure 2. The Town of Berlin consists of the following.

- Agricultural crops composed primarily of corn, small grains (i.e., oats), and alfalfa cover approximately 80% of the total land area.
- 11% of the Town is wetlands. Many of the wetlands are concentrated in areas along the Fox River similar to the City; however, there are also many small wetland communities interspersed among the agricultural croplands and forests within the Town of Berlin.
- Upland forests within the Town comprise approximately 4% of the total land area and are scattered around the Town. These forests are composed of several cover types with the broad-leaved deciduous mixed forests comprising the largest percentage.

The mosaic of vegetative covers found throughout the Town offers excellent habitat for a variety of wildlife. The presence of wildlife and other natural resource features provide an enjoyable setting for the year-round residents and recreational opportunities that attract a variety of people to the area. The loss of these resources would impact wildlife habitat availability and potentially diminish the quality of life the Town currently enjoys.

**Figure 2. Town of Berlin - Land Classes By Percentage of Total Land Area**



## **F. Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

The designation and protection of environmentally sensitive areas is important for soil and water quality and as wildlife habitat. (See Attached Map) Areas identified as “Environmentally Sensitive Areas” in Wisconsin are described as natural features and sensitive environmental areas protected from development impacts {WI Admin. Code NR 121.05(1)(g)2c}. Environmental corridors are designated in order to:

- Protect general public health, safety and welfare;
- Protect surface and groundwater quality;
- Reduce damage from flooding and stormwater runoff;
- Maintain important wildlife habitats and outdoor recreational areas (with the support of local government units); and
- Reduce public utility costs and environmental damages.

For the purposes of this study, “environmentally sensitive areas” include identified wetlands, shoreland areas along navigable waters with a county designated 75 foot buffer, adjacent areas with steep slopes greater than 12.5%, conservancy and floodplain districts, as discussed in the shoreland zoning ordinances of Green Lake County and the

State of Wisconsin, publicly owned areas, and critical drainage corridors. These areas should be protected from development. Although not an official component of the ESA definition, hydric soils must also be addressed as an area of concern. This could most easily be done when the area is transitioning from one use to another, usually from agriculture to another proposed use.

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (1987), hydric soils are “soils that are saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions that favor the growth and regeneration of hydrophilic (wetland) vegetation”. In other words, hydric soils are wet soils that are frequently associated with seasonal high water tables, ponded water, or flooding. Areas of mapped hydric soils have not specifically been included as a component of the ESAs because they may include a variety of land use types that do not, in and of themselves, constitute an ESA (e.g., active agricultural lands). However, areas of mapped hydric soils likely contain wetlands that, in some cases, have not been mapped by the WDNR wetland inventory because they are in active agricultural use or are smaller than the two-acre minimum mapped by the WDNR. In addition to regulatory issues associated with the wetlands that may occur in areas of hydric soils, they pose potential problems for development (e.g., poor suitability for conventional septic systems, poor drainage, flooding, etc.). As a result, areas shown on the General Soils Association Map, which would contain these hydric soils, should be examined closely when new uses or developments are proposed.

## **G. Conservation and management**

The natural resource base of the City is an important aspect of its identity. With 16% of its total land area consisting of wetlands, much of which is directed linked to the Fox River natural resource management cannot be overlooked. The City has identified three main goals that are directly linked to natural resource protection. It is the City’s intent to preserve the small town charm of the City, work to protect the surrounding open spaces, and protect the natural resources. Specifically the natural resources will be protected by ensuring that the rivers, streams, wetlands and marshes, are preserved in their natural condition and protected from development pressures. The City intends to accomplish this by:

- Enforcing stream and river setback requirements.
- Encouraging all landowners to maintain and enhance natural buffers along the waterways and wetlands.
- Work with the County and surrounding towns in identifying and preserving important natural resource areas

### Sources

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Schultz, G. 1986. Wisconsin's Foundations – A Review of the State's Geology and Its Influence on Geography and Human Activity. Cooperative Extension Service University of Wisconsin. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, Dubuque, Iowa.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Water Regulation and Zoning. 1992. Wisconsin Wetland Inventory Map.



## **V. AGRICULTURE**

### **A. Characteristics & Trends**

While agriculture does not play a large role in the economic life of the City it is the predominant land use surrounding the City and can directly affect water quality that the City is dependent on. Once agricultural land is developed or replaced by another use it cannot easily be returned to agricultural production. As was noted in the previous section (Figure 1) 80% of the Town of Berlin is still classified as agriculture, the future uses of this land will affect the future of the City.

Due to development patterns, the soil composition, natural topography and the prominent nature of the marshes protecting the Fox River most of the agricultural lands in the Town do not cause significant environmental concerns, such as problems with erosion or excessive nutrient or sediment loading to the rivers and streams.

The preservation of agricultural land in the Town is important in many aspects. As a predominant feature of the landscape it is what the Town's people identify with as a large part of the reason they live in the Town. While agriculture is responsible for only 1% of the City's employment base its preservation is important to most of the population. According to the Vision Document and Household Survey completed by the County in 2001 the following opinions were gathered from the City's residents.

- 90% agreed that protection and preserving agricultural land was important.
- 95% felt that preserving the natural resources, such as the soil, water and wetlands were important.
- 92% wanted open spaces (woods, meadows, and scenic vistas) preserved.

There are many issues facing the farmer and the local farm economy. Two of the most predominant changes in the recent past have been the growth in the non-farming population and the uncertain future of the farm economy throughout Wisconsin.

While the Town has experienced nearly 30% growth over the past 30 years this growth trend is not expected to continue. According to the Department of Administration's population projections the Town is expected to grow by less than 5% over the next 20 years (Figure 14), a rate that is more easily absorbed into the landscape. Commercial growth and development can be expected immediately adjacent to the City of Berlin but most of the Town is expected to be able to maintain its rural character.

While additional housing has been built for non-farming residents the number of family farms has been decreasing. The combination of a struggling agricultural environment throughout much of Wisconsin as well as new areas of employment being available to farm families has dramatically altered the 'traditional' farm. Many of the farms still in operation are much larger than they were 10 years ago. The 'economies of scale' have encouraged local farmers to produce more milk and till more acres in order to pay bills.

The future of farming in Green Lake County as well as throughout the State is a topic that poses too many questions to be sufficiently discussed in a comprehensive plan. It will be important for the future of the City of Berlin to work with the adjoining towns and to closely track changes around the City. As land transitions out of agriculture and into other uses the secondary effects will be felt in the City, through the environmental, economic, and aesthetic impacts that it will cause.

### ***Farmland Preservation***

With the residents identifying farmland preservation as one of the most important items to be accomplished, the City recognizes the importance of identifying, preserving and protecting the quality farmland that surrounds the City. This will be accomplished by:

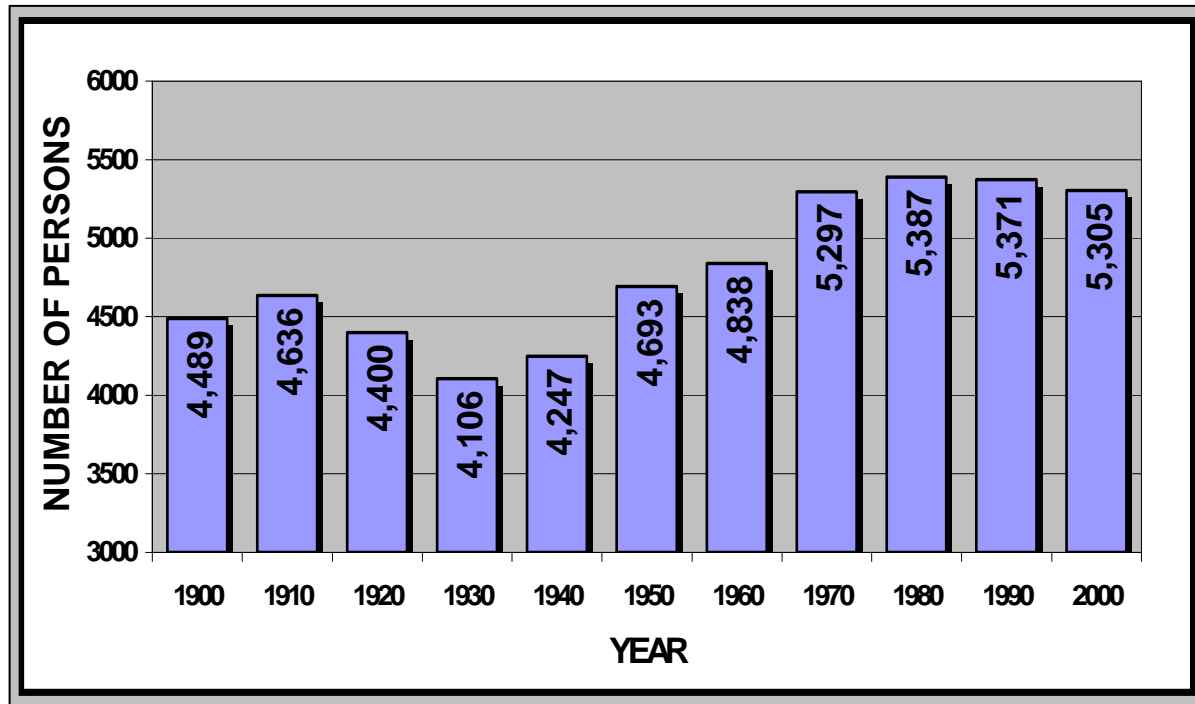
- Supporting farmland preservation programs at the County and State levels.
- Supporting the existing agricultural operations and encouraging the establishment of new family farms.

## **VI. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS & PROJECTIONS**

### **A. Characteristics & Trends**

The population data used in this document describes permanent residents only.

**Figure 3. Population Trends, 1900-2000**



*SOURCE: U.S. Census.*

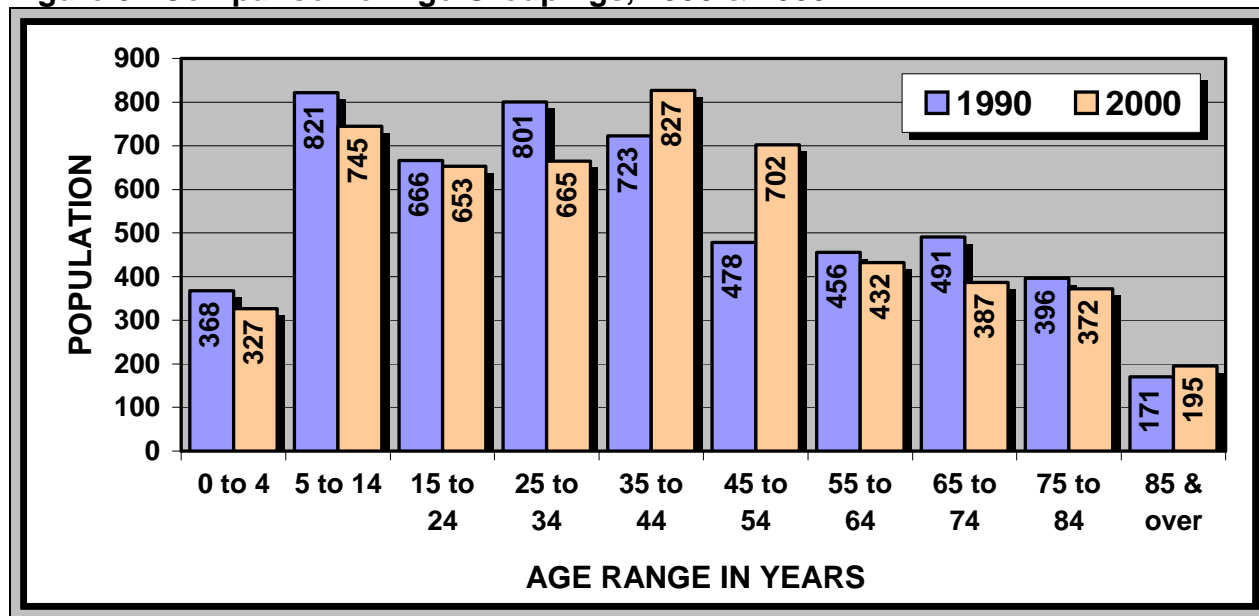
Looking at the above Figure 3, the population of the City of Berlin has remained relatively steady, with slow growth over the past 100 years. Based on official census information, Berlin's resident population is remaining constant while both County and State populations are growing.

**Figure 4. Percent Change in Residential Population, By Decade.**

<u>Year</u>	<u>City of Berlin</u>	<u>Green Lake County</u>	<u>Wisconsin</u>
1970-80	1.7%	8.8%	6.5%
1980-90	-1.5%	1.5%	4.0%
1990-00	0%	2.4%	9.6%
<b>1970-2000</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>21.4%</b>

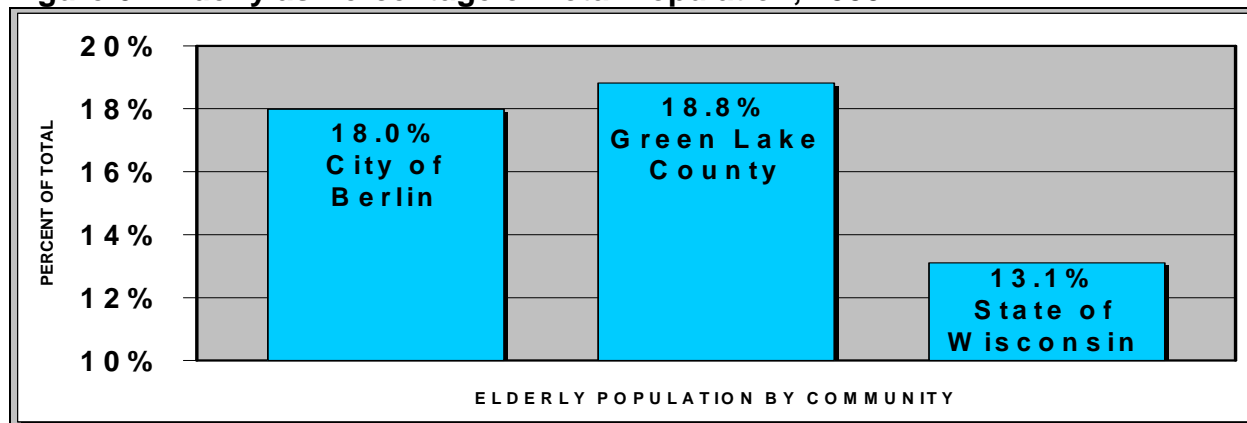
*SOURCE: U.S. Census*

**Figure 5. Comparison of Age Groupings, 1990 & 2000.**



Having an older population is, of course, a community asset. Retired people play a pivotal role in creating and maintaining the community's quality of life. But increases in elderly populations can create special needs for the City, such as healthcare and affordable housing.

**Figure 6. Elderly as Percentage of Total Population, 2000**



SOURCE: U.S. Census.

The elderly component of the resident population is likely to increase as the Baby Boomers, those born between 1946 and 1964, age and become part of the retirement crowd and as some seasonal visitors approaching retirement age make the decision to live in the City year-round. Figure 5 shows that currently a large portion of the population is between the ages of 35-54. Over the next 20 years this population will be moving into and expanding the 55 and over category, changing the demands and pressures that the City may experience.

Census statistics show the range of educational levels among the residents of the City of Berlin. The City, the Town of Berlin and the County are all similar, with the percentage of residents having a high school degree varying by only 1.2% between the three statistical areas. However, the levels of City residents that have obtained a degree beyond high school are much lower than the state levels, while staying fairly even with other local communities.

**Figure 7. Educational Levels for Residents Age 25 & Older, By Percentage.**

EDUCATION LEVEL	City of Berlin	Town of Berlin	Green Lake County	State of Wisconsin
Less than High School Degree	18.6%	16.5%	18.1%	15.0%
High School Graduate	42.4%	41.2%	41.9%	34.6%
Some College - No Degree	17.2%	19.2%	19.6%	20.6%
Associate or Bachelor's Degree	21.7%	22.2%	20.4%	30.0%

SOURCE: US. Census

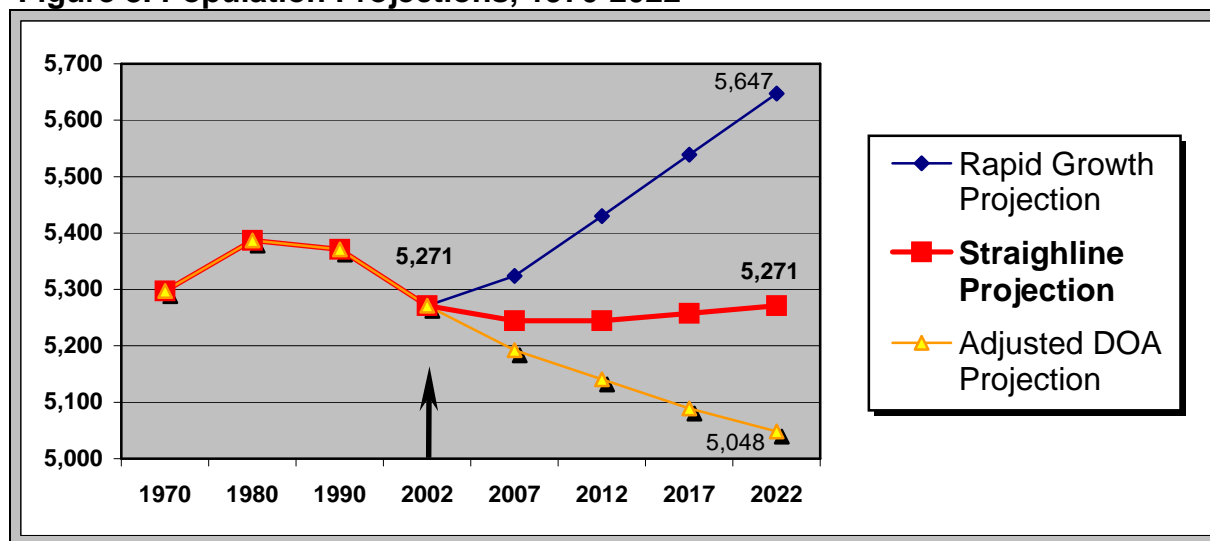
### Other Population Characteristics

- Households headed by married couples
  - 52% City of Berlin*
  - 59% Green Lake County
  - 53% State of Wisconsin
- Households headed by married couples with children under 18 years old.
  - 23% City of Berlin*
  - 24% Green Lake County
  - 24% State of Wisconsin
- One-person (non-family) households
  - 30% City of Berlin*
  - 27% Green Lake County
  - 27% State of Wisconsin
- One person (non-family) households 65 years and older
  - 15% City of Berlin*
  - 14% Green Lake County
  - 10% State of Wisconsin

## B. Population Projections

As can be seen below the Straight-line scenario is the projection chosen for the City of Berlin. This scenario was determined by taking into consideration the historic population growth of the City, the population growth of surrounding communities from 1970 to the present, and projections using Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) figures, adjusted and estimated to the year 2022. The 'Rapid Growth Projection' is based on what a community closer to a large city may experience and the 'Adjusted DOA Projection' is what the State of Wisconsin expects to see. With Berlin's population history it is most likely that the population will remain about the same for the next 20 years.

**Figure 8. Population Projections, 1970-2022**



In order to understand and shape land development patterns, it will be necessary to express estimated changes in the number of households, not just the number of people. Throughout the County, as well as the City, the number of people per household has been declining. Due to an aging population and families having fewer children we can expect housing densities to continue to decline. Based on this assumption it is expected that while the City's population will stay relatively constant there will be a need for an additional 102 housing units over the next 20 years.

**Figure 9. Projected Population, Number of Households & Density, 1980-2022**

YEAR	Number of Persons	Percent Change	Number of Households	Percent Change	Household Density
1980	5,387		2,121		2.54
1990	5,304	-1.5%	2,138		2.48
2002	5,271	-0.6%	2,170	1.5%	2.43
2007	5,245	-0.5%	2,176	0.3%	2.41
2012	5,245	0.0%	2,195	0.8%	2.39
2017	5,258	0.2%	2,233	1.7%	2.36
2022	5,271	0.2%	2,272	1.8%	2.32

SOURCE: US Census

City trends in the aging of the population are expected to match county and national trends in that the age groups of 45 to 64, 65 to 84, and 85+ will grow both as a proportion of the total population and in absolute numbers. Notice both the red and blue lines illustrating the '55-64' & '65 & over' population. By the year 2022, more than 1/3 of the City's population will be over 55 years of age. In contrast, the younger age groups will tend to decrease in both percentage and absolute terms.

**Figure 10. City Population Projections, by Age Groups, 2002-2022**

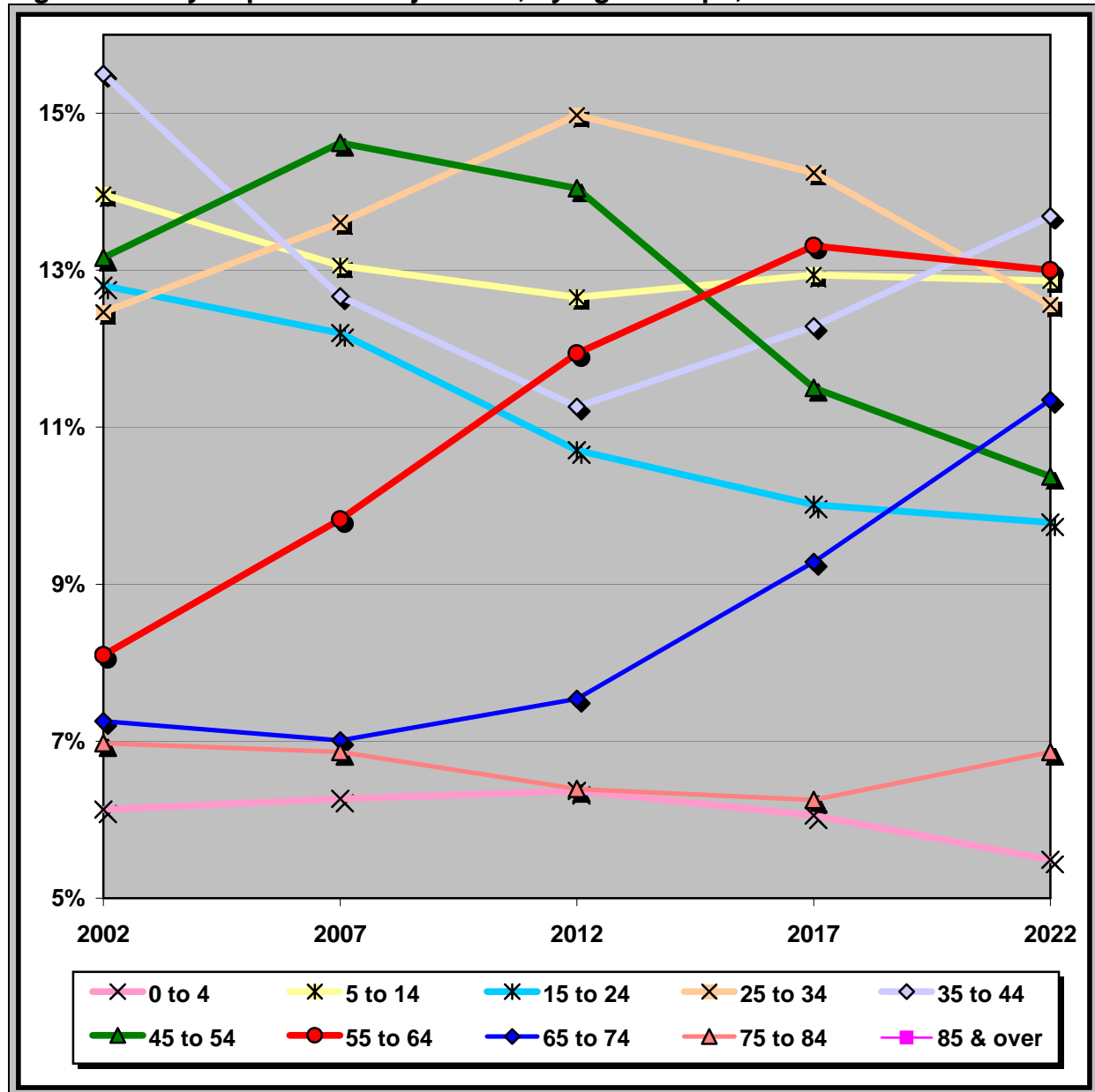


Figure 11. City Population Projections, Ages 0-24, 2002-2022

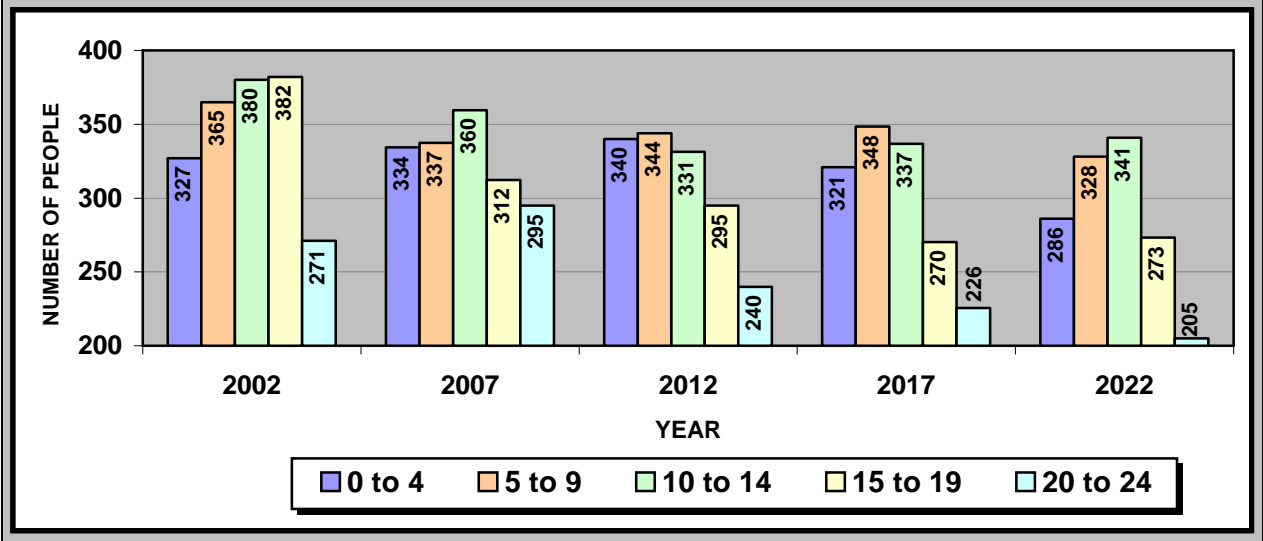


Figure 12. City Population Projections, Ages 25-54, 2002-2022

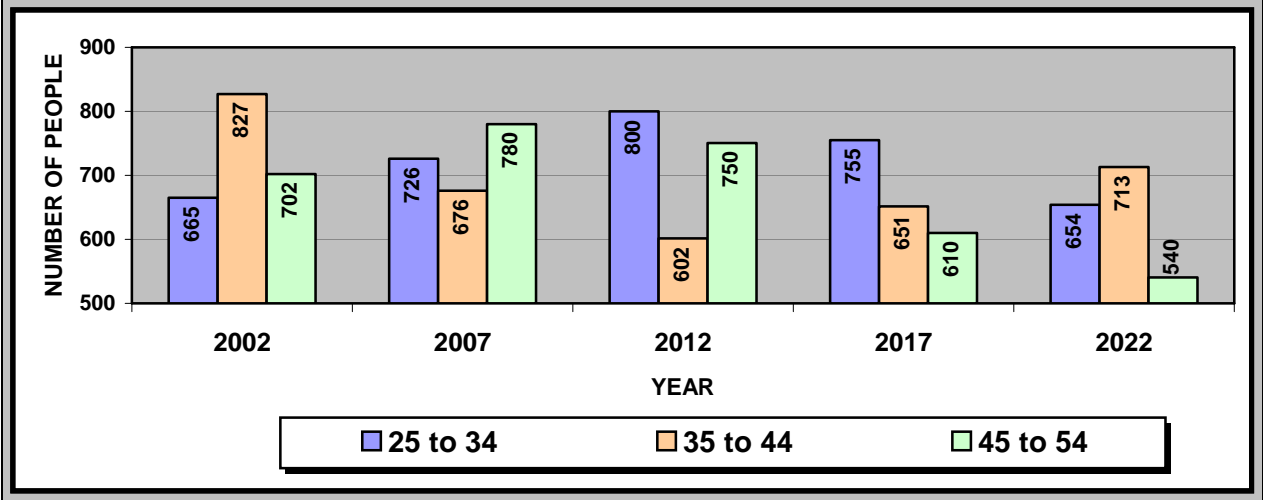
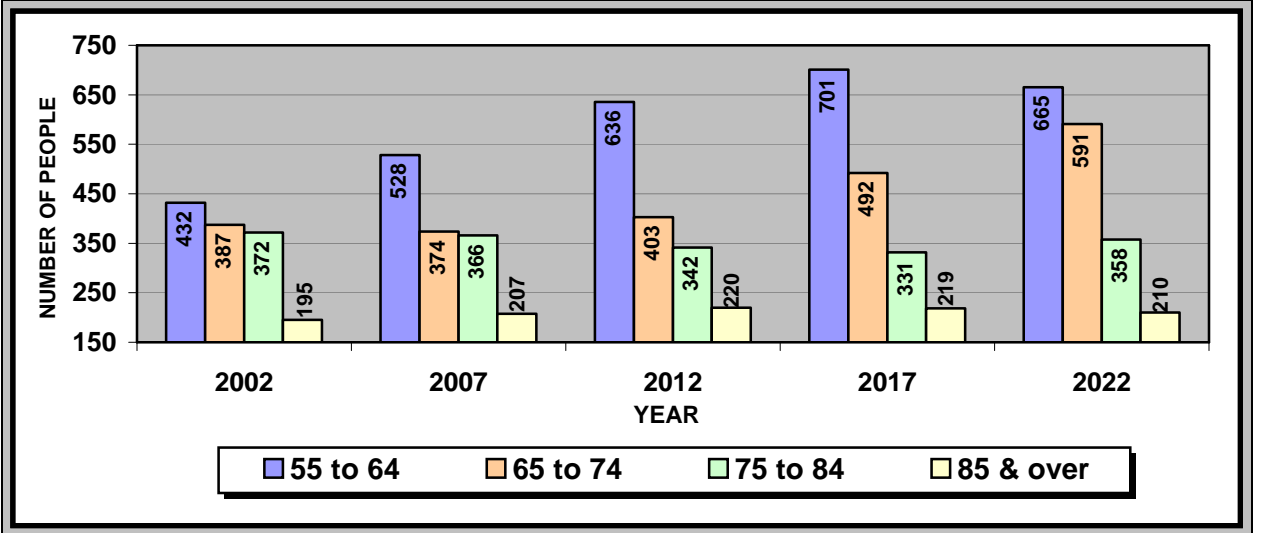


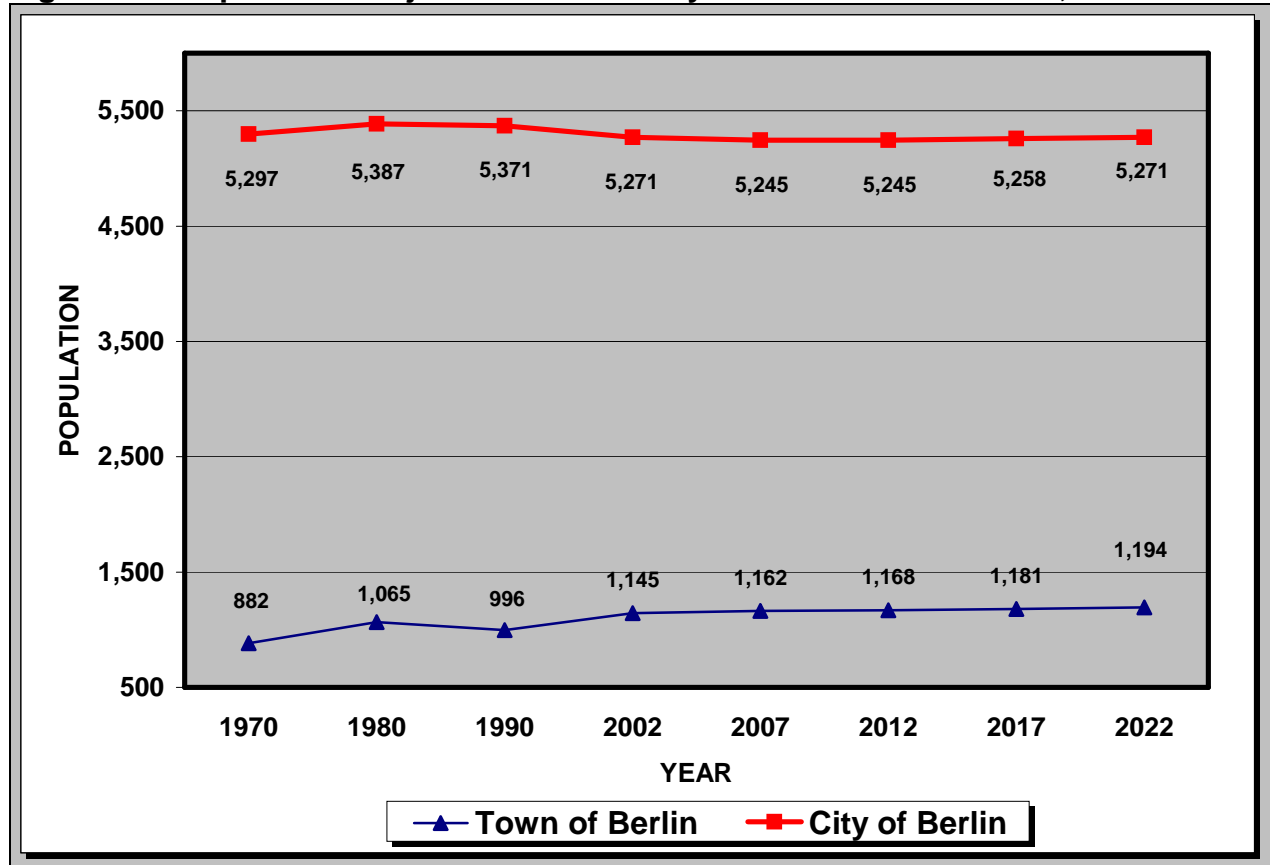
Figure 13. City Population Projections, Ages 55 & over, 2002-2022





Along with the changes in the population make-up, it is important to consider changes occurring outside of the City. The Town of Berlin, while being much smaller in population has experienced a much greater percentage increase over the past 30 years. As can be seen in the following figure, since 1970 the City has grown by only 0.2% while the Town has grown by almost 30%. According to DOA projections, the expectations for the Town are that its population has crested and will see little growth over the next 20 years. With both communities being located relatively close to the Cities of Ripon and Oshkosh and the Interstate system, future growth predictions will be difficult to predict due to the strong influence of these factors.

**Figure 14. Population Projections for the City and the Town of Berlin, 1970-2022**



## **VII. HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS & TRENDS**

### **A. Housing Inventory**

The 1990 and 2000 US Census data shows increases in housing units for both year-round residents and seasonal use. (Figure 15) The most notable change in housing is the increase in number of vacant housing units. Other interesting changes have taken place over the past decade. The City has experienced:

- A total year-round population decline of 66 people while the number of year-round residents (houses) has increased by 32. This change can be partly attributed to an aging population and the average household density declining.
- An increase of 149 total housing units. The breakdown of these units shows that there is a gross increase of only 32 year-round residential units and an increase of 105 vacant units.

**Figure 15. Number of Housing Units, 1990 & 2000.**

YEAR	Year-Round Residents	Percent Change	Vacant Units	Percent Change	Recreational, Seasonal & Occasional	Percent Change	Seasonal as a Percentage of Total	Total Housing	Percent Change
1990	2,138	---	100	---	7	---	0.31%	2,245	---
2000	2,170	---	205	---	16	---	0.67%	2,391	---
<b>Numeric Change</b>	<b>+32</b>	<b>+1.5%</b>	<b>+105</b>	<b>+105%</b>	<b>+9</b>	<b>+129%</b>	<b>+0.36%</b>	<b>+149</b>	<b>6.5%</b>

Source: U.S. Census.

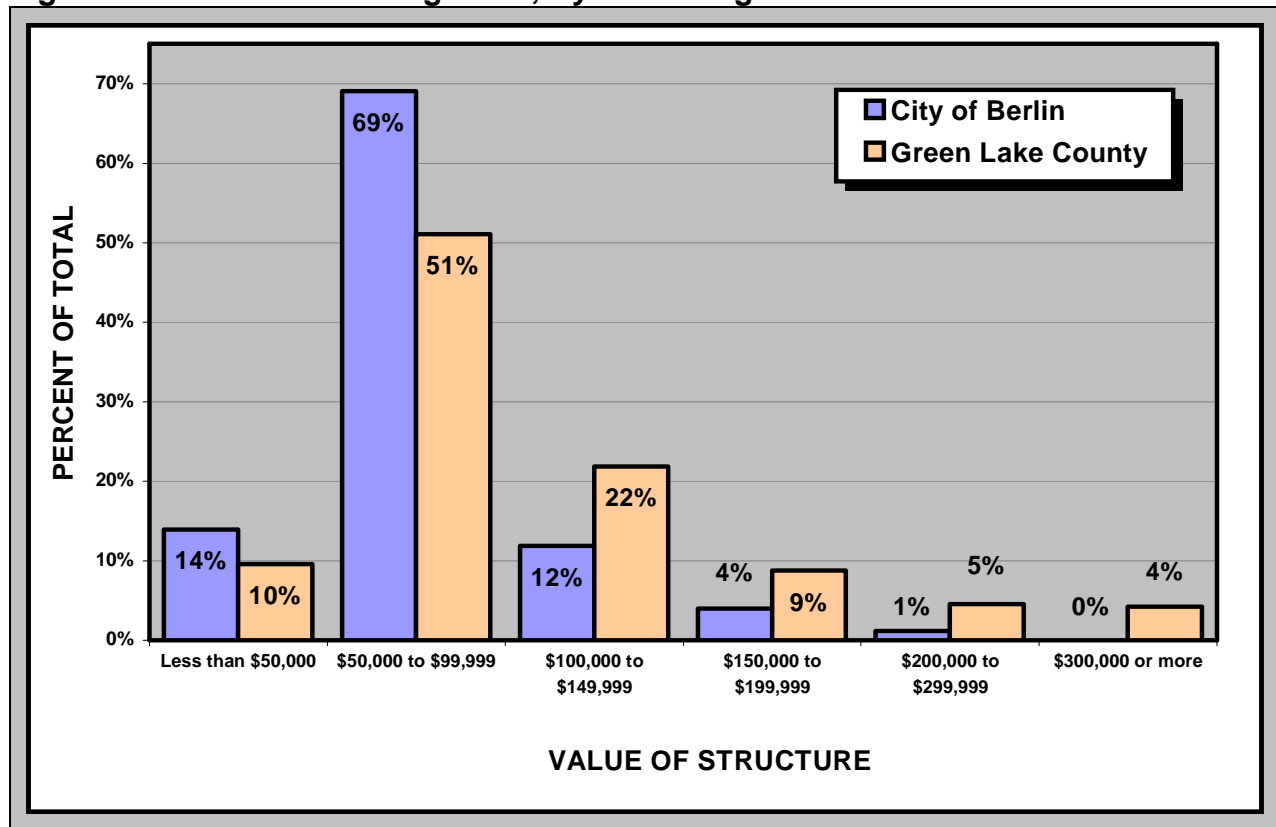
Figure 16 shows the breakdown by percent of the type of housing being provided, either as owner occupied or rental units. The City has a higher percentage of rental properties than the County with a proportionately higher vacancy rate. The vacancy rate of home ownership has made a significant change when comparing the City to the County. In 1990 the City's homeowner vacancy rate was less than that of the County however, by 2000 the City had exceeded the County's vacancy rate.

**Figure 16. Owner or Renter Occupied Housing, By Percent, 1990 & 2000.**

Community	Owner-Occupied		Renter Occupied		Homeowner Vacancy Rate		Rental Vacancy Rate	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
City of Berlin	67.8%	68.5%	32.2%	31.5%	1.6%	3.1%	2.5%	13.3%
Green Lake County	75.1%	77.2%	24.9%	22.8%	2.2%	2.2%	3.6%	9.5%

Figure 17 shows the value of housing units in the City of Berlin. The chart shows us that most (83%) of the City's housing stock has a value that is less than \$100,000. Comparing the City's home prices to that of the Town of Berlin and to the Countywide housing value we see that the City has a median home value that is less than both the Town of Berlin and the County.

**Figure 17: Value of Housing Units, By Percentage**



SOURCE: 2000 U.S. Census

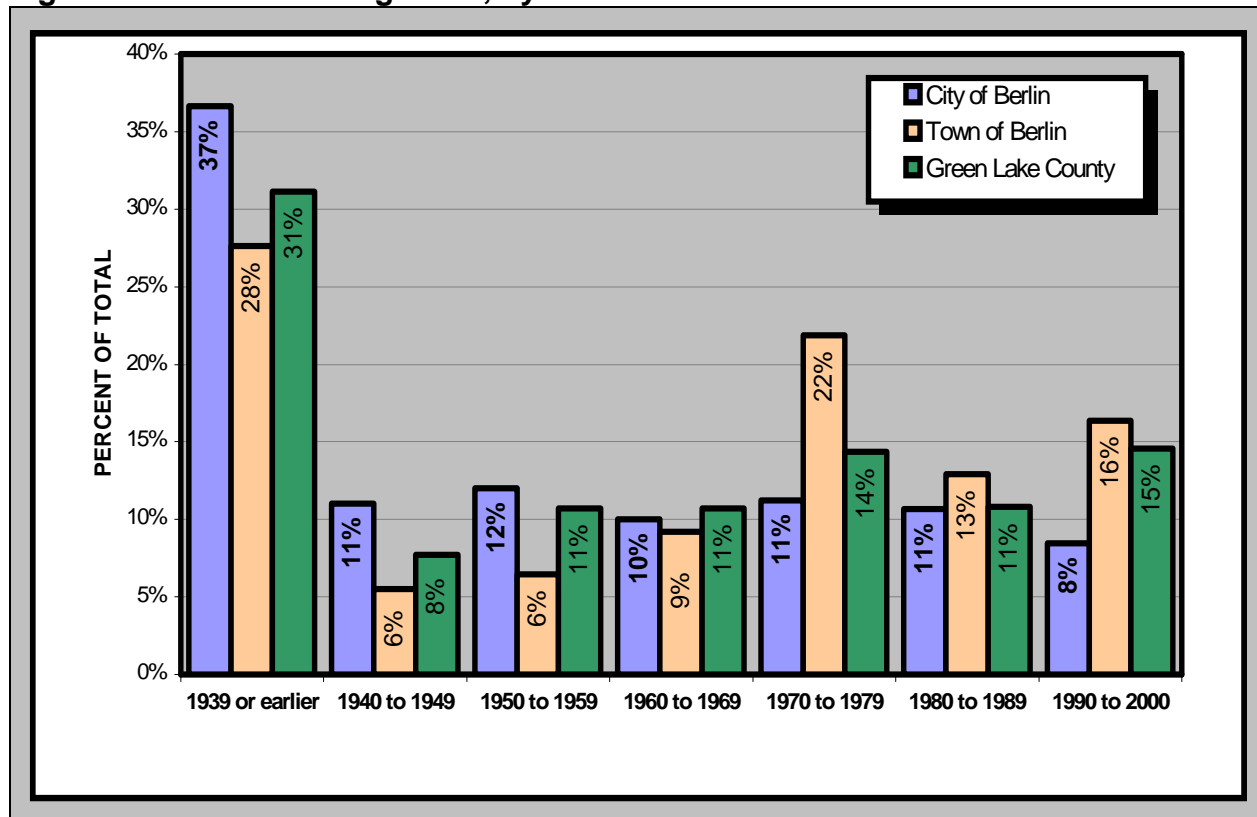
**Figure 18. Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing Units, 1990 & 2000.**

Community	City of Berlin		Town of Berlin		Green Lake County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Median Value	\$41,700	\$77,000	\$62,600	\$115,300	\$49,800	\$90,100
Percent Increase	85%		84%		81%	

## B. Housing Stock

Another important characteristic of the City is the age of its housing stock. As can be seen in Figure 19 the City has some noticeable differences than both the Town of Berlin and the County. The City's houses are typically older, with 37% being built before 1939. Over the past 20 years the City's housing stock has increased by only 19% while the Town of Berlin and the County's housing stock has increased by 29% and 26%, respectively. These statistics should not be viewed as a problem for the City. Part of the charm and character that gives the City its identity is its older homes.

**Figure 19: Total Housing Units, by Year Built**

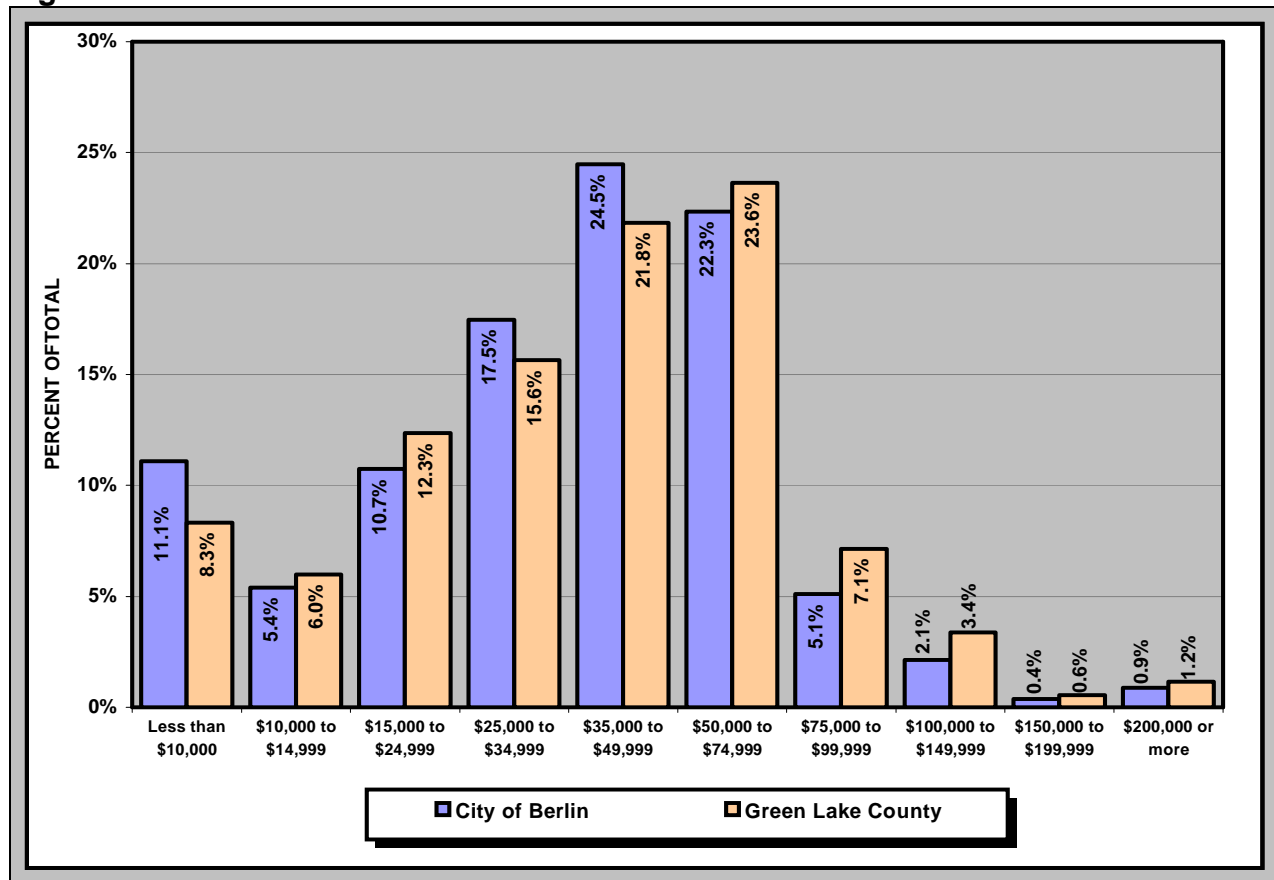


SOURCE: 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census

Historically (1940-1970) the amount of residential building in the City as well as throughout the County has been relatively low. Being largely dependant on agricultural production it is not a surprising statistic, the farms were already occupied and the tourism/commuter market had not yet developed. More recently the City has done a good job at attracting commercial and industrial businesses but with the general population being more mobile than it was in the past an increase in employment does not directly correlate to an increase in new homes.

## C. Household Income Statistics

**Figure 20: Household Income of Year-Round Householder**



SOURCE: 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Data from the U.S. Census shows that the City's household income is less than that of the County and the entire State. While the median income appears close it is important to remember that almost half (44.7%) of the household population makes less than \$35,000 per year (Figure 20). Comparing all of the housing data discussed in the previous pages the following conclusions can be made.

- Many of the homes in the City are older (almost ½ were built before World War II).
- The median price of the homes in the City are less than that of the Town of Berlin.
- The income being made by the average household is enough to afford the average home.

### **Median Household Income**

City of Berlin	\$36,896
Town of Berlin	\$44,659
Green Lake County	\$39,462
State of Wisconsin	\$43,791

## D. Housing Needs & Affordability

### ***Local Housing Demand***

One gauge of affordability for the purchase of local housing is to compare household income with the value of the housing units for a specified time period. The rule of thumb used in financing home purchases is to use a household's income, multiplied by 3, and that will indicate the maximum price that the household can afford. When comparing 1990 to 2000 statistics we see that a lot has changed in the City over the last 10 years. The US Census shows the following facts

- In **1990** the **median income** was **\$22,433**.
- In **2000** the **median income** was **\$36,896**. *(an 64% increase)*
- In **1990** the **median value** of a house was **\$41,700**.
- In **2000** the **median value** of a house was **\$77,000**. *(an 85% increase)*

Using the formula described above the following conclusions can be draw about the change over the past 10 years.

In 1990, a local family achieving the median household income of \$22,433 should, theoretically, be able to afford a home selling for \$67,299. This was a good sign when the median value of a home was only \$41,700. In other words the average family would need to commit approximately \$400 a month for the average home, when the bank would allow up to \$600 per month, or a 50% margin of difference.

In 2000, the same local family achieving the median household income now earning \$36,896 should be able to afford a home selling for \$110,688. According to the U.S. Census the median home is now \$77,000. The median family would now need to commit approximately \$700 a month in order to purchase the average home, with the bank allowing up to \$1000 per month. Currently this does not seem to be a problem, the census data confirms this fact with other statistics. They are:

- 35% of the owner-occupied housing units do not have a mortgage.
- 66% of those with a mortgage are paying less than 1/3 of their income towards their mortgage payments.

There are areas of concerns. One of the areas of concern is in regards to the elderly population. Currently nearly 18% of the population is elderly (65 or older). It is expected that 22% of the City's population will be 65 or older by the year 2022. As of the 2000 Census 31% of the population was on Social Security. A common trait of the retired population is that they live on a fixed income. While the current statistics show that housing is still affordable, this could easily change as the retirees' income stays relatively constant and the cost of housing continues to increase.

The City of Berlin has the goal of promoting residential development in areas that are designated and suitable for residential purposes and are compatible with their neighboring uses. In order to accomplish this goal the City has made it its policy to:

- Work with the surrounding towns to provide locations for housing that can be serviced by adequate utilities and community facilities.
- Work with the towns and Green Lake County to ensure that alternate housing sites (ie: apartments or duplexes, etc.) are available in locations that can be served by utilities and community facilities.
- Provide opportunities for other types of housing, in suitable areas of the City that will accommodate housing for the elderly.

## **VIII. ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS & TRENDS**

### **A. Economic Base**

The City of Berlin is a manufacturing dependent community. While agriculture appears to be the predominant land use surrounding the City according to the U.S. Census, agriculture has very little to do with the number of employed persons (1%). As can be seen in Figure 21 below, manufacturing while declining significantly since 1990, is still the largest industry for employment for both the City and the county. This is common in many smaller cities in rural counties where the primary industry was manufacturing but more recently has been transitioning out of production based businesses into diverse types of office and technology based services. 'Education, health & social services' is listed as the second highest industry of employed persons for the City. A portion of this employment base does represent the influence of the commuting population.

**Figure 21. Industry of Employed Persons 16 Years & Over**

INDUSTRY	1990 Percent	2000 Percent	County Percent
Manufacturing	43%	29%	26%
Education, health & social services	17%	19%	16%
Retail	15%	14%	11%
Construction	5%	6%	8%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accomodation & food service	2%	7%	7%
Ag., mining, forestry & fisheries	<1%	1%	7%
Public administration	1%	5%	5%
Finance, insurance, real estate	3%	4%	5%
Transportation, warehousing & util.	4%	4%	4%
Professional, scientific, management administrative & waste management	4%	4%	4%
Other service	3%	3%	4%
Wholesale	3%	3%	3%
Information	0%	2%	2%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

SOURCE: US Census 1990 & 2000.

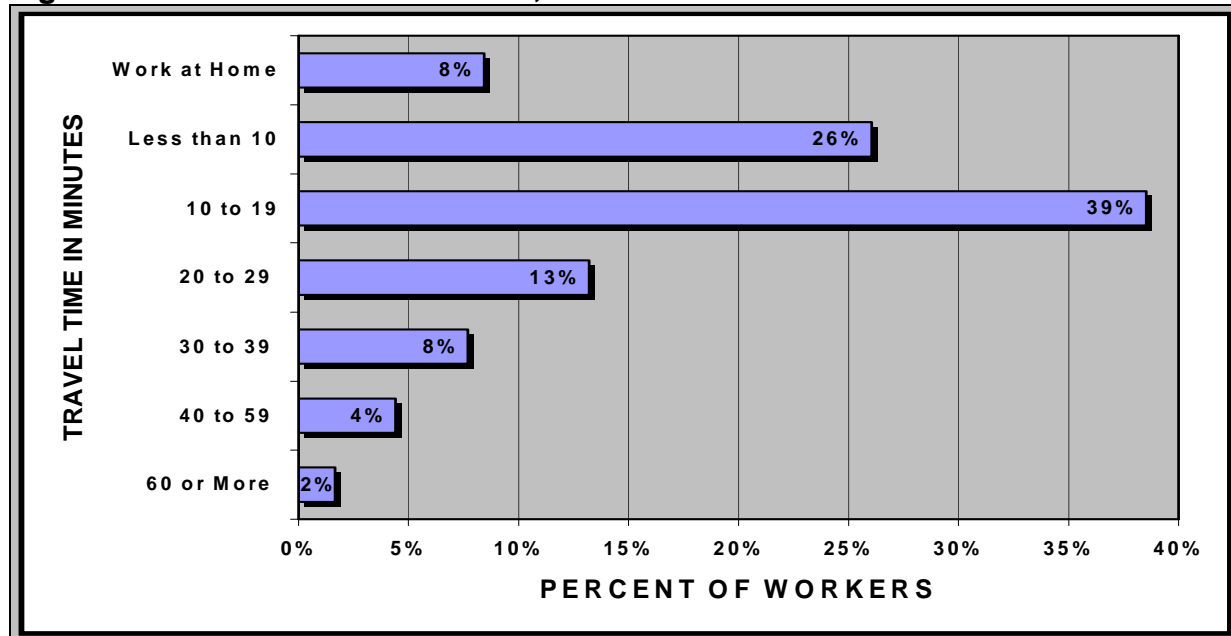
### **B. Labor Force Characteristics & Trends**

The difference in employment characteristics and the amount of land dedicated to a particular use can be very deceiving. Agricultural uses take up a lot of land but do not employ a proportionate number of people. With the surrounding area '*looking*' like an agricultural community it is important to note that it has little effect on the employment base. Manufacturing is the primary industry for the City's residents. The same is true for the County from a land use perspective; it generally '*appears*' to be made up of mainly agricultural uses with a strong tourism influence (ie: tourism = retail employment). When examining the statistics it is obvious that manufacturing plays an important role throughout the County.



The combined influence of manufacturing, healthcare, and retail as employment leaders in the City begins to shed light on established market trends that will continue to influence the City in the future. Historically, residents of small cities in predominately agricultural areas had to travel less and did not necessarily leave the area to go to work. However that is beginning to change. Currently less than 2% of the households in the City of Berlin have what the U.S. Census Bureau terms as “farm self-employment income”. The Town of Berlin is also seeing this change, with only 13% of their working population being dependent on agriculture.

**Figure 22. Travel Time of Workers, 16 Years & Over.**



SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census

Data from Figure 22 shows that 8% of the City’s residents work at home. It is impressive to see that 26% of the population travels less than 10 minutes. The largest single group of commuters are traveling up to 20 minutes. At this distance they can find employment ranging from the City of Green Lake to Ripon or Oshkosh. With another 21% of the population willing to drive up to 40 minutes each way to work, employment opportunities can be found all through the Oshkosh area and portions of the Fox Valley.

#### **Other Employment/Commuting Characteristics (from 2000 Census)**

- When commuting to work:
  - 72% drive alone*
  - 16% carpooled*
  - 9% walked*
- The mean travel time to work is 18 minutes.

### ***Local Businesses and Employment Opportunities***

There are several aspects of the City that make it desirable to businesses. Such things as:

- 2 State Highways providing easy access for trucking.
- 3 established industrial parks that provide full municipal services.
- Land values are lower than those closer to larger metropolitan areas.

While these features are positive aspects of the City there are also some negative factors that would limit the possibilities of attracting businesses to the City. Such things as:

- The City does not have a population base large enough to provide an employee base for a large commercial or industrial venture.
- The Cities of Ripon and Oshkosh can provide full municipal services. They are already established retail centers and are closer to the Interstate System.

Future commercial development in the City and Town of Berlin is targeted along STH 91 and CTH F as these two transportation corridors already have commercial businesses located along them. The Future Land Use Map (Map 8) identifies these areas. It is important to note that it has been the policy of the City with the cooperation of the ETZA Committee to annex any properties into the City that require municipal services (ie: sewer and water).

The City has established a goal of ensuring that services and employment opportunities, when offered to the local residents, will be compatible with neighboring land uses. The local economy and economic development in the City as well as the surrounding towns will be supported by the City in the following ways. The City will:

- Work with the surrounding towns to sustain the long-term viability of local farms.
- Work cooperatively with the Town of Berlin to support quality commercial development along STH 91 and CTH F.
- Help the local entrepreneurs and businesses find either existing buildings or new building sites that will support their business ventures.

## **VIII. TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES**

### **A. Transportation Facilities, Road Inventory & Traffic Trends**

Primarily two major highway corridors, STH 91 and STH 49, influence the City of Berlin and its transportation system. Highway 91 enters the City at its eastern limits and runs due west and terminates at the center of the City. The other State Highway runs north and south, with an east-west crossing of the Fox River. This highway serves as the major connecting point to the City of Green Lake. County Trunk Highway F is the other major access road to the City, connecting it with the Town of Berlin from the west. Within the City limits are a series of local streets that traverse the City in a common grid pattern. The use and traffic volume of the two major highways directly influence the quality and use of these local roads.

While Highway 91 only has a few miles of its total length within the boundaries of the Town and terminates in the City it is the most heavily traveled highway and will have the largest impact on the City. STH 91 is the main highway that connects the Cities of Berlin and Oshkosh and has significantly increased in traffic volume. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) has studied this Highway extensively and is nearing completion of the plans to upgrade the adjoining system with a new bridge crossing the Fox River, within the City of Berlin. Any improvements to this Highway system, between the City of Berlin and the City of Oshkosh will directly influence growth and development pressures in the area. The improvements along this corridor will also reduce travel time to the City of Oshkosh.

The other major influence on the transportation system is the impact of State Trunk Highway (STH) '49'. Highway 49 bisects the Town of Berlin and serves as the regional connector from the City of Berlin to the City of Green Lake and Highway 23. STH 49 has a speed limit of 55 mph along most of its length, consists of one lane each way and has 'at-grade' crossings. While these conditions do not in-and-of-themselves cause problems, due to the 'hilly' nature of segments of this road safety could become an issue if traffic volume significantly increases. Daily it serves as the main route for local residents commuting to and from work between the Cities of Berlin and Green Lake.

The greatest impact to the transportation system in the City will be the construction of the new bridge crossing of the Fox River in 2003. The following is an excerpt from the State DOT Project Report:

*Current traffic volumes on Huron St. (STH 49) are at 16,000 ADT (average daily trips) and the existing roadway is an urban cross section with parallel parking on each side. The City of Berlin is a "main street" type community, which relies heavily on the downtown commercial business district and associated parallel parking. This segment of roadway warrants the existing Fox River bridge to be replaced (2004) and future capacity and safety improvements to maintain acceptable levels of service. In lieu of capacity expansion on existing alignment that would include the replacement of the Fox River bridge with a 4-lane structure*

and ultimate removal of parallel parking, the Department in cooperation with area stakeholders have agreed to pursue an alternative option.

*The alternative option is to construct a secondary Fox River Bridge crossing & approaches, which could ultimately be converted into STH 49 one-way pair systems utilizing the local street system currently in place. Preferred alignment of the secondary Fox River Bridge crossing is from Franklin Street to Ceresco Street.*

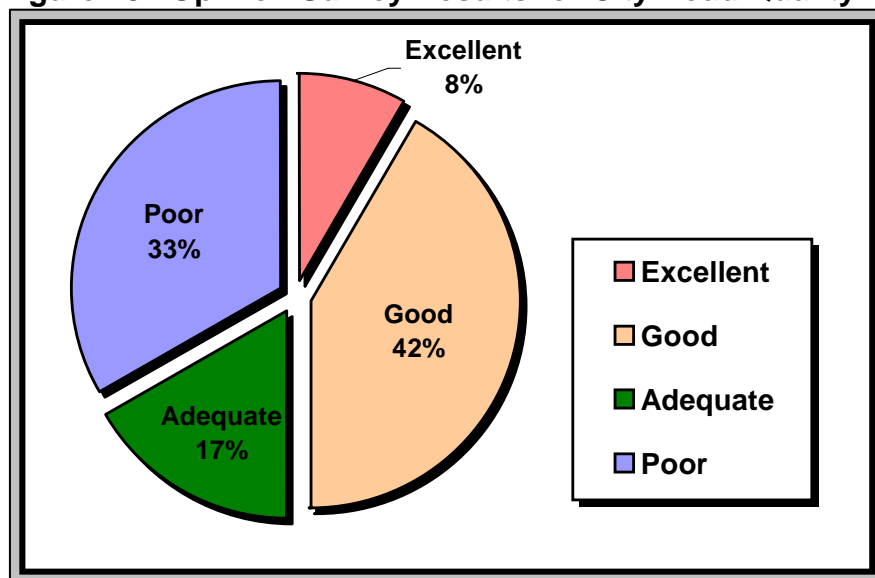
This project is expected to begin in 2003 and has a construction cost estimate of \$1,000,000 with the City being responsible for 25% of the cost. The follow up to this project would be to replace the existing bridge in 2004 at a cost of \$811,000.

While this project is crucial for safe travel between the east and west sides of the Fox River it will be important for the City to manage land use changes along the new crossing. The future land use map shows the intention of the City to allow mixed-use development along this new route, allowing the downtown to grow.

## B. Road Quality & Maintenance

Within the City of Berlin there are a series of local roads that provide access throughout the City. While these roads serve a vital function they have much lower traffic volumes and are therefore often overlooked. It is important that care be taken with improvements to these roads. The care and maintenance of these roads is not only a safety factor, it is important to consider the role they play in preserving the 'small town' character of the City.

**Figure 23. Opinion Survey Results for City Road Quality**



Source: Green Lake County Household Survey, 2000

The residents of the City have a mixed outlook on the quality of the roads in their City. As can be seen from the household survey results, 50% agreed that the quality was good to excellent, while another 17% felt that quality was adequate.

While existing quality is important, it is also important to consider the maintenance aspect. During the survey process when residents were asked to rate the quality of the City streets they lived on, 82% felt that maintenance ranged from adequate to strongly agreeing that it was well maintained.

## **C. Transportation Needs**

The City's population and transportation needs will continue to be influenced by its proximity to the Cities of Ripon, Oshkosh and most importantly growth within the City itself. Residential development may create traffic problems by increasing the number of daily trips by both City and Town residents who are regularly commuting to work or shopping in another city. These changes in land uses can increase traffic on the community's local roads. The greatest transportation related challenge for the City will be accommodating these increases while minimizing traffic problems and 'bottlenecks' in those areas where residential development has increased. These conditions can eventually create the need for more roads and wider roads in residential areas.

If traffic continues to increase along Hwy. 91 to Oshkosh, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation could at some point determine that the Highway will need to be improved. Secondary impacts of a growing local population could eventually change this now 'rural' highway into a 4 lane highway with limited access, additional turn lanes and frontage roads. The City should closely track any such proposals. While an improvement of this magnitude may be a long way off, this type of change would have a significant impact on the 'look and feel' of the City.

The City of Berlin has the goal of maintaining a safe, orderly and efficient transportation system. This will be accomplished in part by balancing traffic flow and safety issues with community quality of life and the 'small town' character of the City. In order to accomplish this the City will:

- Work with the towns and the County to assure that development along the major entryways into the City, are compatible with the road network.
- Seek ways to enhance the appearance of the main highway corridors that serve as entryways into the City.
- Continue to maintain, and where necessary, improve the existing City road network.

## **IX. PUBLIC FACILITIES**

### **A. Utilities and Community Facilities**

As with the other elements of this plan the intent of this section is to describe the current condition and make observations. First, the utilities and public facilities provided will be outlined and second any improvements to these public services are described. Recommended improvement will be briefly described in this section with specific objectives for obtaining these improvements being detailed in Chapter XIII.

#### ***Police***

The City of Berlin's Police Department is located at City Hall with some shared services, specifically dispatch, being located at the County Sheriff's Department. The City's Police Department consists of 13 full time officers, providing full 24-hour service to the City. The Police Department provides services mainly within the City limits, responding to calls outside of the City only upon request.

#### ***Fire & Rescue***

Fire protection for the City as well as the surrounding communities is provided by a volunteer fire department, consisting of 28 volunteers. Being centrally located in the City of Berlin their district extends into the Towns of Berlin, Seneca, and St. Marie in Green Lake County, the Towns of Aurora and Warren in Waushara County, and the Town of Nepeuskun in Winnebago County.

Major equipment of the Fire Department includes 2 pumper trucks, 2 pumper/tankers, 2 grass rigs, 1 ladder truck, and 1 rescue vehicle. Although a separate organization the City also has EMT's that provide ambulatory medical care to the community, with their ambulances being housed in the Fire Department's building.

The Fire Department's needs are currently being met with the major equipment they have and with the pending purchase of a new ladder truck. By keeping equipment and training up to date the City has maintained an ISO fire rating of 4 and may potentially improve to a rating of 3, which is impressive considering all of the other cities in the County have a rating of 6.

With the City's municipal water providing sufficient volume and pressure for fire needs the biggest need for the future will come in the way of volunteers. With the size of the service area and the volunteers being limited during the day, it is a goal to increase to a force of 35 volunteers in order to assure sufficient protection in case the need arises.

#### ***Water Supply***

The city's water supply system was originally constructed in the early 1900's. Being serviced by three municipal wells the City is provided with good quality water. By regularly flushing the system and consistently maintaining it the system is in good working order. With the addition of a new water tower in the north industrial park ample water pressure and availability is expected for the City into the foreseeable future.

The City's sanitary treatment facility is located in the north industrial park. While the system is 20 years old it is still in good working condition and does not need upgrading or any major improvements. Recently the City has been inspecting (televising) the sanitary system throughout the City and has found some wear and splitting in some of the older pipes. Except for the repair of some of these areas regular maintenance and up keep of the system will keep it in good working order and not expected to need any major upgrades in the foreseeable future.

### Parks

The City of Berlin has extensive park and recreational facilities. The Park and Recreation Department is in the process of creating a Park and Open Space Plan for the City. For this reason only a summary of the existing facilities is included in this plan. It is also recommended at the end of this plan that the Park and Open Space Plan be completed and implemented according to that plan.

**Figure 24. City Parks – Name, Size, and Amenities**

Location	ACRES	Shelterhouses	Picnic Tables	Benches	Nature Area/Trail	Boat Launch	Open Play Areas	Softball/Baseball Fields	Tennis Courts	Soccer Fields	Football Fields	Playground Equipment	Fishing	Restrooms	Swimming Pool	Volleyball
Riverside Park	38	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X		X
Nathan Strong Park	1.6		X	X			X					X				
Forsyth's Park	1.3		X	X			X					X				
Longcroft Park	3.1	X	X	X		X	X					X	X		X	
Firefighters Park	0.3			X												
Volunteer Park	0.2			X												
Mound Street Park	1.3		X	X			X					X				
Berlin High School	26		X				X		X	X	X			X		X
Berlin Middle School	3.3		X				X	X	X	X	X			X		X
Clay Lamberton School	22.4						X	X		X		X		X	X	X
Washington School	5.2			X			X	X		X		X		X		
City Forest	9.6				X											
Berlin School Forest	12				X											
Berlin Locks	62.1		X	X	X	X							X	X		

The City of Berlin and the Berlin Area School District have a good working relationship and also share services, specifically in the area of outdoor athletic fields. For this reason the school's athletic fields are listed under the City's Park System. Additional information about the school system is detailed in the following section.

### ***Schools***

The Berlin School District serves the City of Berlin and the Towns of Nepeuskun, Rushford, Aurora, Poy Sippi, Bloomfield, Saxeville, Leon, Warren, Marion, Brooklyn, Seneca and St. Marie. Schools within the system include Clay Lamberton (pre-K-5), Poy Sippi Elementary (K-4), Berlin Middle School (6-8), and Berlin High School (9-12). All schools, with the exception of Poy Sippi, are located in the City limits.

The Berlin School District has undergone many changes keeping up with the growth and changes of the area. Clay Lamberton Elementary was built in 1962 with additions in 1989 and 1992. This facility is currently handling approximately 740 students and 60 professional staff members, many of whom provide services for all of the students. This facility also contains the district's indoor swimming pool. The Middle School building was originally the location of the High School. The most recent addition to this building was in the late 1980's, allowing room for the current 428-student enrollment it now handles. The High School is a modern facility built in 1996. Operating on a trimester schedule with a five period day it has an enrollment of approximately 650 students, grades 9-12.

The School District has recently purchased 79 acres just outside of the City limits in the Town of Berlin. Future plans for this site are not yet detailed but preliminarily include providing additional green space and outdoor athletic facilities with a long-range vision for providing space for any facility needs that may arise.

### ***Library***

The City of Berlin is served by a public library originally constructed in 1903, with an addition in 1976. The library serves the City as well as the surrounding towns. The staff consists of three full-time staff, one person at 30 hours per week and 5 part-time. The library's collection consists of 43,000 books, 136 magazine titles, 3,400 videos, 3,000 books on tape, 1,000 music tapes, over 100 DVD videos, 75 books on CD and 20 video games.

The long term physical needs of the library have been met with the construction of the addition in 1976. Internal improvements will allow the library to meet the community's needs into the foreseeable future.

### ***Streets & Stormwater***

The roadways within the City not only service the transportation needs of the community they are also the main corridors for the storm sewers and stormwater management. The current stormwater system is designed throughout the City to handle the 10-15 year storm. Major outlets for this system empty into the Fox River.



The existing system is operating well and while not designed for a major storm event does not appear to be in need of major upgrades. As development occurs along the periphery of the City it will be important to manage stormwater appropriately so as to avoid overloading the existing system or causing environmental concerns by overloading the Fox and its associated tributaries.

## **B. Policies and Programs**

Currently community services are largely provided to the area town residents by the City of Berlin. Services include such things as park and recreational facilities, healthcare, education and senior facilities. At this point and through the life of this plan it is expected that the demands of the community will be met by the City of Berlin. Since that demand is not expected to rise soon the towns will continue to support the City's efforts in providing these amenities to the area. The City will:

- Work with the surrounding towns in educating the residents of both the City and the Towns about available community activities and facilities in the area.
- Direct new development to those areas that are adequately served by necessary public utilities.
- Develop Capital Improvement Programs and budgets, for all programs, that will ensure City resources are sufficient and the programs are consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan and will maximize the City's return on its investments.

## **XI. LAND USE PATTERNS & TRENDS**

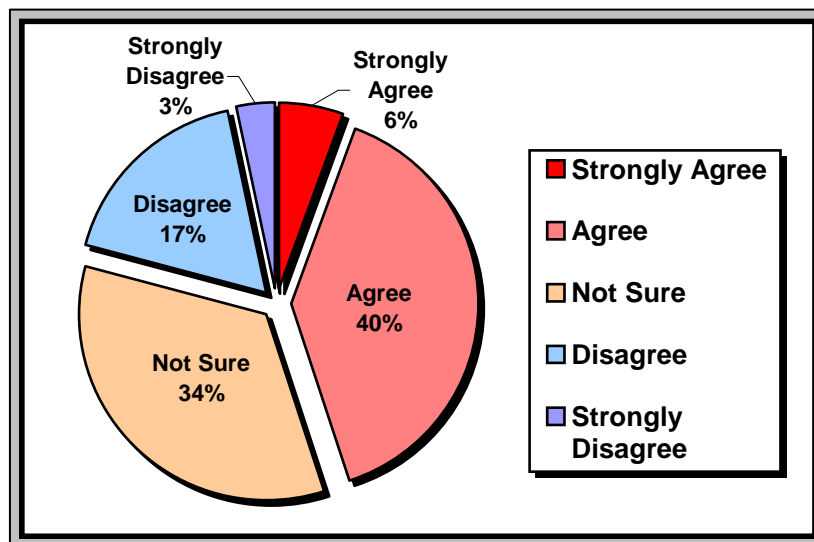
### **A. Current Land Use Patterns**

The City of Berlin relies in part on its 'small town' charm, on being an attractive older, very stable city. According to the 2000 Census data, 954 people, or 18% of the population was 65 or older. Of this population almost 12% of them were classified as living below the poverty level. With the senior citizen population being expected to grow over the next 20 years their impact on the City and its land use patterns will also continue to grow.

### **B. Summary of Community Survey Results**

While the population of the City has decreased in the past decade it has not shown dramatic change over the past 30 years. However there are many changes occurring throughout the area. The most predominant changes can be seen in the decline of agriculture as a major employer while the number of residents employed elsewhere has been increasing. The City's people see these facts, and their opinions in the County wide household survey illustrate their concerns about the future. Important statistics from the survey show that the City's people are unsure about the changes around them, and whether they are positive changes.

**Figure 25. Opinion Survey Results – 'The Land Use Changes I See Are Positive'.**



*Source: Green Lake County Household Survey, 2000*

As can be seen above the opinions of the City's people are divided when asked if they thought the land use changes they see are positive, while the largest single category of people 'Agree' that the changes are positive almost as many (34%) are 'Not Sure'. When given the option of filling in their own response when asked what the biggest challenge was for the county, over the next 20 years the most common answer was 'Development and/or sprawl' (13% of the respondents). This outranked the next most common concerns, which was 'Taxes', with 10% of the total responses.

Areas around the City of Berlin have seen the most changes and have the greatest possibility of growing more rapidly. Development brings benefits and costs, an increase in population creates additional demands for services and impacts the local infrastructure and natural resources. While not expecting great change it is important to plan for the future and try to identify the types, sizes and locations for future uses before they grow into a greater concern or causes conflicts with existing uses.

### C. Community Growth and Change

Currently there is a core business area in the center of the City. The 'downtown' can be described as a mix of commercial, retail, office, governmental buildings, public spaces and residential uses. On both the eastern and western edges of the City are the other growing commercial areas, with the new industrial park on the north end of the City. With the City having begun its development prior to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century there is a strong complement of historic structures throughout the City. This strong heritage should be preserved and complimented as new development occurs. Another strength of the City is that even though it is a relatively small city it provides a full range of services, employment opportunities, and a diverse mix of land uses.

### D. Land Needed By Type of Development

Development in the City's future will depend on the health and growth of the region's economy, the success of area tourism initiatives, and increases in local population. The simplest way to model such growth is look at the way the City's population projections will influence the need for additional housing, driving the local demand for residential land. The model projects a demand for 68 acres of residential development over the next 20 years.

**Figure 26. Total Housing Unit & Acreage Projections**

YEAR	Population Projection	Household Density	Total Number of Housing Units	Additional Housing Units	Minimum Lot Size	Demand (In Acres)	Cummulative Demand (In Acres)
1980	5387						
1990	5304	2.48	2,245				
2002	5271	2.43	2,391	146	0.25		
2007	5245	2.41	2,439	48	0.25	12	12
2012	5425	2.39	2,488	49	0.25	12	24
2017	5258	2.36	2,562	75	0.25	19	43
2022	5271	2.32	2,665	102	0.25	26	68

## E. Criteria for Future Land Use

Amended 2011

Criteria that takes into consideration state, county and City roles, values and interests in land use decisions should generally guide the location of future development. These criteria refer to basic quality of life concerns that all communities share, so it is not surprising that the guidelines at each level of jurisdiction reinforce criteria identified at other levels. Combined with the City's land use vision and goals, these criteria should frame development discussions at the local level and influence county decisions on land use.

The State of Wisconsin has adopted numerous laws, ordinances and rules that provide parameters for localities engaged in the physical planning of their community. The "Smart Growth" Comprehensive Planning legislation, adopted in 1999, provides a definition and guidelines for local comprehensive planning. This law, known as Act 9, greatly expanded state-level expectations for local and county planning.

Broadly speaking, State criteria now include:

- The preservation of productive forest and agricultural lands.
- Adequate sewer and water facilities to serve existing and future growth and minimize impacts on ground and surface water, and on soil.
- The development of economic and business resources in order to provide local jobs, create income and profit, and stimulate local economic and tax activity.
- Preserve environmentally sensitive areas as defined by N.R. 121.
- Consistent with Wis. Stat. §66.1001(3), beginning on January 1 2010, if the City engages in official mapping, subdivision regulation, or zoning, those actions must be consistent with this Plan.

The City of Berlin, through its land use planning process, has identified the following criteria:

- Maximize the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and drainage corridors. This will minimize the loss of soil and degradation to surface water.
- Minimize the co-location or adjacent location of incompatible land uses.
- Minimize the loss of natural area and open space around the river and waterways.
- Maximize the use of "infill" in areas already primarily residential and minimize the distance between existing and future development so as to:
  - Minimize the loss of open space.
  - Minimize the loss of large tracts of productive agricultural lands.

- Locate development adjacent to other compatible uses adjacent to the existing commercial developments downtown and along Highways 91 & F on the east and west ends of the City.
- Direct future commercial growth away from environmentally sensitive areas.
- Be open to reasonable proposals for resorts and other commercial development that would have substantial impact on the City's tax base and encourage tourism, particularly in areas surrounding and benefiting from the City's natural resources such as the Fox River. The City should be further open to zoning and other ordinances changes to allow such proposals, so long as the other goals of this plan and city ordinances are considered and balanced with the goals stated here.
- Be open to reasonable proposals for commercial development along the major highway corridors and arterial streets, including Highways 91, 49, and County Trunk F, even in areas now designated for residential use, if such proposals would have a substantial impact on the City's tax base. The City should be further open to zoning and other ordinances changes to allow such proposals, so long as the other goals of this plan and the city ordinances are considered and balanced with the goals stated here.

Criteria for the location of municipal development

- Additional municipal development should build on or near the location of existing municipal facilities.
- Future City park locations should be scenic locations with vehicular and pedestrian access. Residential and commercial development areas should be buffered from park activities by natural vegetation or open space.

## **F. Recommended Future Land Use Patterns**

The above criteria outline where future land use development should take place. Based on population projections and on various limits of development, this plan recommends that future commercial and retail development continues to follow current patterns. To enhance the quality of growth that occurs, it is vital for the City to continue to work closely with the Town of Berlin, Green Lake County, and other partners to develop regulatory tools and design standards that will work to preserve the City's character and minimize natural resource impacts.

### ***Future Residential Development.***

The largest part of the City's future growth in terms of buildings and acreage will be invested in different types of residential housing. In order to minimize open space impacts, the City should seek to guide housing development close to existing residential areas, within the City limits and when possible adjacent to future commercial areas.

Given age group projections, and a potentially greater demand for elderly housing options, consideration should be given to the future needs of the elderly population in the way of special housing projects, especially multi-family elderly housing, that will serve to reduce walking and driving distance for these populations. Working with private sector partners to create such resources should be seen as a way to meet the housing needs of local citizens.

***Future Commercial, Retail and Industrial Development.***

As recommended above for residential growth, business development should be located close to existing 'commercial' areas within or adjoining the City limits. The downtown area has some room for conversion of some properties into mixed uses with other sites being applicable for improvements and infill development. The existing industrial uses can be complimented with the addition of both new industrial uses as well as 'highway commercial' uses. By co-locating these types of uses the City can maximize public access and minimize the costs and loss of open space.

***Future Development Patterns***

Within the City of Berlin future land uses are expected to follow current development patterns. Urban type densities will be encouraged in these areas. With the towns being mainly rural, most development is expected to be new construction, since there are no urbanized areas to redevelop. Within the City there is the potential for both new construction and re-use of older, underutilized buildings.

The City of Berlin, wishing to keep its 'small town' charm, is planning on protecting its natural resources, encouraging open spaces and agricultural uses to be maintained and preserved around the City. It will do this by continuing to work with the towns and the County to encourage development in appropriate locations.

## **XII. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

### **A. Multi-jurisdictional Planning Efforts**

Multi-jurisdictional planning efforts are being conducted throughout Green Lake County. Current planning efforts first began in 1999 with a Visioning process. This process was organized by the Green Lake County Planning & Zoning Department and was headed by an ad hoc committee consisting of individuals representing the interests of town and city government, local business owners, lake associations and farming, as well as many other special interest areas.

A series of workshops were conducted throughout the county in order to gather input from as broad a population as possible. Meetings were held at different times and places, including a Saturday morning meeting in June in order to get the input of seasonal residents. As part of the public participation planning process these visioning meetings created the vision statement and identified the residents "preferred future". This was however only the first step. The next key step to this multi-jurisdictional public participation planning process was a household survey.

Using tax parcel information a household survey was sent to every seasonal and permanent household in the County. The survey was designed to allow respondents to freely express their opinions about planning and development. It was also designed in such a fashion that the responses of residents, by individual community, could be extrapolated from the countywide report. By designing the process in this fashion each community was able to start its planning process with strong public input. This common format assures that not only do the individual communities have a strong local voice in customizing their plans but also assures a seamless process when looking at the bigger picture of merging these independent but multi-jurisdictional plans.

### **B. Intergovernmental Cooperation**

The current planning process began in the summer of 2001. With the assistance of the State's 'Smart Growth' funding a multi-jurisdictional planning grant was received. Green Lake County sponsored the grant and provided the matching funds for the Towns to begin their planning, with the Cities contributing their own match. By assembling a grant that is funding plans for most of the communities in the County a cooperative process was begun.

By beginning and conducting the planning process on one unified timeline all of the communities involved will have completed the planning process by the end of 2003. With this being the first ever planning process for most of the communities Green Lake County Planning & Zoning Department agreed to take care of the mapping needs. With one unified mapping effort being conducted throughout the county all municipalities will have maps that will be compatible in content, technological specifications and will be capable of being updated 'in-house'. With the use of visual aids being one of the strongest ways

of presenting plans, this unified mapping approach further strengthens the cooperative nature of this comprehensive planning effort well after the planning process is completed.

### **C. Planning Throughout the County**

The four cities in Green Lake County (Berlin, Green Lake, Markesan, and Princeton) were the first to begin planning. The towns surrounding these cities were invited to become involved in the planning process. Not only are the towns producing their own plans, they are involved with the discussions at the City level also. Since most of the development in a rural community occurs in those areas surrounding a City this was an opportunity to discuss planning issues before they became areas of conflict or proposed uses could conflict with the adjoining municipalities long range plans.

As mentioned in the introduction, this plan is one of a series being completed throughout Green Lake County. As part of this multi-jurisdictional planning effort all of the communities involved will be adopting their own plan that will then become a part of the countywide plan. An important component of this process will be the discussion of services that are not limited to an individual community. This will include but not be limited to discussions about school districts, police protection, local and countywide community services, and any other local, county, regional or state programs that are deemed important. This 'macro' approach of discussing these services in the County plan is to assure that it will accomplish the best possible method of providing these services throughout the region.

It is the City's intention to continue to work with the towns and the County as these planning efforts continue. The City's involvement will assure continuity in planning efforts and improved efficiencies for providing public facilities and services.



### **XIII. Implementation & Recommendations**

#### **A. The Vision**

Overall the Vision of the community in 2022 is that the City of Berlin is still a quaint city in which the community's small town feel is maintained. Natural resources – water, soils, and air – are protected, farming is still common outside of the City and the natural beauty and open space of the area is preserved. Positive aspects of life in Berlin that people appreciate today – scenic vistas, friendly neighbors, wildlife, and a healthy local economy – are still present and highly valued.

New homes and small businesses have been built throughout the City of Berlin. Locally owned businesses are valued as viable economic options for local residents. The City has also diversified its local economy with additional industrial development that compliments the local businesses of the area.

#### **B. Guidance from Community Survey Results**

The results of the County wide household survey, adopted in 2000, assists the City in providing direction for this Plan. Many of the recommendations in this plan are based on the responses from this survey.

The survey showed that the City of Berlin residents like living in the City because of the surrounding open spaces with farms, the natural environment, safety, and most importantly the small town feel. The majority of the respondents felt strongly or very strongly about the following issues.

- 95% agreed that the natural resources in the area should be protected.
- 92% felt that preserving open spaces is important.
- 90% are in favor of protecting & preserving the county's agricultural land.

Full results of the household survey were compiled in a report entitled 'A Vision' – Green Lake County', the report was prepared by the Green Lake County Planning & Zoning Department. Results specific to the City are included as Attachment 'A'.

From these survey results its citizens have given the City of Berlin a clear direction. The City will:

- Work with Green Lake County Planning and Zoning Department to assure that zoning and subdivision regulations are protecting and preserving prime agricultural lands, open spaces and the natural resources surrounding the City.
- Encourage development in areas within the City, where municipal services can easily and affordably be provided.

## C. Goals & Objectives

The City's planning goals and related objectives, outlined below, are designed to move the community closer to its vision for the future.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Goal:** To conserve, protect and improve the environmental resources of the City and its surrounding area.

**Objective #1** Ensure the environmental and natural aesthetic qualities of the area are considered when planning for future development.

**Objective #2** Protect environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains and wetlands from the negative effects of urban development.

**Objective #3** Limit development to areas where soil capability, slope, and other physical factors are favorable.

**Objective #4** Support open space preservation to protect scenic resources and environmental corridors.

**Objective #5** Ensure future development does not disrupt natural drainage ways and is consistent with storm-water management plans.

**Objective #6** Work with other communities within the watershed of the Fox River to limit farm runoff and other non-point source pollutants from reaching the river.

**Objective #7** Encourage residents to recycle all possible household waste. Make sure that informational materials on recycling are available to visitors and residents alike.

**Objective #8** Encourage businesses and industries to adopt practices that limit pollution.

**Objective #9** Encourage builders to use construction practices that limit erosion problem and that they recycle as much construction waste as possible.

**Objective #10:** Plan ahead for stormwater management. Develop a stormwater management plan that pays particular attention to the areas adjoining development. The plan should also identify priority protection areas that are vital for the protection of the City's groundwater.

### **HOUSING**

**Goal:** To encourage a high quality living environment in all residential neighborhoods and to assure adequate, decent, safe, and affordable housing for all City residents.

**Objective #1** Expand housing opportunities to meet the needs of continued population growth, increased labor supply, and the trend toward fewer persons per household.

**Objective #2** Ensure new housing developments are constructed in areas suited for development and compatible with adjoining land uses. Assure that unfavorable land uses are not located in residential areas.

**Objective #3** Actively encourage residential development in areas served conveniently and economically with public facilities and services.

**Objective #4** Implement land use controls that encourage a range of choices in housing types, designs, and costs.

**Objective #5** Provide decent and safe housing for the low and moderate income, elderly and disabled residents of the community.

**Objective #6** Encourage the rehabilitation of substandard homes in the community to provide quality living conditions and safe neighborhoods for all residents.

**Objective #7** Provide and maintain public facilities and services in all residential neighborhoods to prevent neighborhood decline and deterioration, and to encourage investment both from within and outside the neighborhood.

**Objective #8** Encourage a full range of senior housing that is serviced by City facilities, and is in close proximity to the commercial and retail services that the City provides.

**Objective #9** Allow a range of residential uses as an adaptive re-use and/or infill of vacant or underutilized properties within the city.

**Objective #10** Work to keep property taxes low enough to assure that the elderly and low-income residents can afford to stay in their homes and within the City.

**Objective #11** Work with adjoining towns to limit unplanned residential development.

**Objective #12** For economic efficiency, and to minimize open space and natural resource impacts, direct residential growth towards undeveloped areas within the City limits or adjoining existing residential areas, especially within the sewer district boundaries.

**Objective #13** Collaborate with neighboring communities, specifically the Town of Berlin, to ensure that alternate housing options are provided as new development occurs. Ensure that these developments (ie: apartments, duplexes, elderly housing, etc.) are developed in areas served by adequate utilities and community facilities.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Goal:** Ensure that the City maintains a strong, diverse economy. Work with a range of private and public partners to retain existing businesses and attract new employers providing high quality jobs.

**Objective #1** Determine which businesses are most appropriate given the type of labor force, infrastructure capabilities, and space available in the area in and around the City.

**Objective #2** Determine what kind of financial incentives the City can offer to businesses.

**Objective #3** Attract year-round as well as seasonal businesses in order to assure a diverse market and local economy.

**Objective #4** Encourage and promote year-round tourism.

**Objective #5** Assist local businesses with the technical assistance they may need to continue to be economically prosperous.

### **COMMERCIAL**

**Goal:** Develop and maintain attractive, convenient and safe business districts that include a full range of goods and services that complements both existing and future residential developments.

**Objective #1** Strengthen working relationships between the City, Chamber of Commerce and the private sector in the planning and implementation of downtown revitalization efforts.

**Objective #2** Explore and further develop the potential tourism/hospitality industry in the City by establishing closer links with the regional tourist base.

**Objective #3** Conduct market/economic studies in order to determine specific businesses that should be encouraged to locate within the City.

### **DOWNTOWN**

**Goal:** Help local shop owners to run prosperous businesses. Help residents find the goods they need within the city. Keep the downtown area attractive to residents and to tourists alike.

**Objective #1** Recognize and encourage business development in the Central Business District (CBD) as the focal point of commercial, cultural, governmental, employment and entertainment activities within the City.

**Objective #2** Promote the CBD as an attractive location for business. Special attention should be paid to the contribution of historic preservation in order to preserve the character and charm of the downtown.

**Objective #3** Implement physical changes that will enhance the historical look and feel of the downtown, including making it more pedestrian friendly.

**Objective #4** Define funding opportunities, implementation strategies, and time schedules for revitalization efforts downtown.

**Objective #5** Educate the community on the history and the value of the downtown.

**Objective #6** Look for ways to increase the attractiveness of the downtown area.

## **INDUSTRIAL**

**Goal:** Attract and maintain industry, which will provide local employment opportunities and contribute to the city tax base without adversely affecting adjoining land uses, the residential character of the community, its tourism potential, or the environment.

**Objective #1** Expand marketing efforts to promote the industrial parks to potential businesses.

**Objective #2** Expand industrial park infrastructure when necessary.

**Objective #3** Make industrial business retention and expansion an economic development priority.

**Objective #4** Assure an adequate supply of industrial land in appropriate locations and with sufficient infrastructure.

**Objective #5** Maintain a coordinated program of municipal and civic cooperation to attract and strengthen industry in the City.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

**Goal:** Develop and maintain a well-integrated and cost-effective transportation system capable of moving people, goods and services to, from, and within the community. Where possible encourage the use of non-automobile forms of transportation. Help people with limited access to transportation to get the assistance they need.

**Objective #1** Improve the ability of the major street networks to carry projected traffic volumes.

**Objective #2** Minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicular traffic by constructing sidewalks along arterial and collector routes.

**Objective #3** Promote the separation of truck and through-traffic from local traffic as much as possible.

**Objective #4** Study the need and demand for parking throughout the City specifically within the Central Business District.

**Objective #5** Provide for parking and vehicular needs without diminishing the feasibility of improved pedestrian routes.

**Objective #6** Design future street and highway improvements that are compatible with existing land uses.

**Objective #7** Encourage 'off-road' paths and sidewalk routes for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially within the parks and open spaces.

**Objective #8** Seek ways to enhance the appearance of entranceways into the City.

**Objective #9** Implement ways to allow safe and efficient transportation routes without diminishing adjoining land values or threatening the historic value of any properties.

**Objective #10** Provide bicyclists with adequate space to ride and/or park their bicycles throughout the City, especially downtown.

**Objective #11:** In cooperation with the State of Wisconsin and the Town of Berlin complete a transportation corridor study of Highway 91 to identify possible land use conflicts and future traffic problems, recommending traffic calming strategies and to minimize impacts on the adjoining land.

**Objective #12:** In cooperation with the State of Wisconsin conduct a study on the impacts of the proposed new bridge crossing of the Fox River. Once the bridge is complete continue to track the impacts to traffic and adjoining land uses.

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

**Goal:** Maintain and provide community facilities and services to make the City a safe, attractive community in which to live, work, play, visit, and raise a family.

**Objective #1** Provide adequate facilities in which to house city offices and equipment.

**Objective #2** Provide adequate police and fire protection to all areas of the community.

**Objective #3** Assure health and medical facilities are available to meet the needs of all residents.

**Objective #4** Provide a complete range of governmental and social services to the citizens of the community (i.e.: library and senior citizen facilities)

**Objective #5** Encourage and ensure space for a wide range of social, cultural and educational activities for the benefit and enjoyment of all residents.

**Objective #6** Conduct a study to insure that the City's wastewater treatment facility is up to date and can accommodate any projected growth from the City.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Goal:** Provide adequate water, sewer and other infrastructure to support the orderly and cost effective development of the community.

**Objective #1** Ensure that water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer facilities can be provided to existing and planned development throughout the City.

**Objective #2** Provide adequate services for the disposal and recycling of solid waste.

**Objective #3** Promote the extension of public services only in areas environmentally suitable for urban development.

**Objective #4** Implement a long-range capital improvement program to maintain and when necessary expand the City's roadways and public utility system.

### **COOPERATION**

**Goal:** Establish shared interests and goals for land use and development with the surrounding towns, and develop shared plans for action. Explore opportunities provided by Wisconsin's cooperative boundary agreement legislation.

**Objective #1** Pro-actively coordinate City, town and county planning activities.

**Objective #2** Develop an ongoing meeting schedule with area municipalities to share ideas and successes regarding land use development and citywide improvements.

**Objective #3** Determine the location for, and maintain public bulletin boards, posting public notices, minutes, and items of general public interest.

**Objective #4** Work with local newspapers to establish the best ways to reach the public with civic news and events.

**Objective #5** Explore the feasibility of a City sponsored newsletter covering governmental and community events.

**Objective #6** Using the Internet and/or cable TV assure that all public information is accessible.

**Objective #7** Pro-actively work to coordinate City, Town, and County planning activities.

### **COMMUNITY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Goal:** Encourage orderly community growth and development that is sound and attractive, will result in the least possible environmental impact, and will maximize public expenditures and goods and services received.

**Objective #1** Continue to maintain an active planning process that will assure orderly, harmonious and rational growth, development and redevelopment patterns.

**Objective #2** Promote compatibility in adjoining land uses throughout the City, making sure they are compatible with both existing and anticipated future land uses.

**Objective #3** Encourage compact developments that promote the efficient use of land and reduces development and infrastructure maintenance costs.

**Objective #4** Provide suitable sites in sufficient quantity for each type of land use, encouraging development within the City first, in order to minimize sprawl.

### **LAND USE**

**Goal:** Develop and maintain effective land use controls to implement the Comprehensive Plan, such as zoning and subdivision ordinances, and other regulations. Consistently administer land use regulations to assure consistent results.

**Objective #1** Limit unplanned development outside of the City boundaries.

**Objective #2** Prohibit developments that may be a detriment to the environment.

**Objective #3** Encourage complimentary adjacent uses.

**Objective #4** Use taxing and funding mechanisms (tax increment financing districts) to encourage appropriate kinds of development within the City.

**Objective #5** Adopt a policy of encouraging appropriate levels of development / redevelopment that balances commercial, residential, and industrial uses.

**Objective #6** Identify physical features, such as historic buildings, natural areas, etc., that contribute to the community's character.

**Objective #7** Establish and/or update ordinances and guidelines that protect and enhance the community's character.

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

**Goal:** Preserve the older buildings in the City. Determine ways to keep them useful and functional well into the future in order to assure that they are maintained and treasured as links with the past.

**Objective #1** Update and maintain the City's Architectural/Historical Survey Report as a method of determining which buildings should be preserved and recognized due to their historic significance.

**Objective #2** Work with the Historical Society to educate building owners about the significance of their buildings and appropriate ways to refurbish those buildings.

**Objective #3** Explore feasibility of using municipal funding mechanisms to help owners restore blighted properties.

**Objective #4** Adopt a zoning ordinance that will allow for adaptive reuse of buildings that cannot be used for their original purposes.

**Objective #5** Use marketing and the potential tourism market as a mechanism for raising awareness of, and preservation of, historic buildings and neighborhoods.

**Objective #6** Consider pursuing funds and assistance through both public and private sources, such as the State of Wisconsin's 'Main Street' program.

### **PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE**

**Goal:** Provide residents and visitors with enough well-maintained, attractive parks and open spaces for people of all ages, with emphasis on preserving their historic and natural resources.



**Objective #1** Make full use of, and where possible, preserve all of the natural beauty of the environmental resources in the City.

**Objective #2** Actively pursue opportunities for acquiring new land for the development of additional parks and open space needs.

**Objective #3** Incorporate historically significant areas and buildings into park expansion/improvement efforts.

**Objective #4** Provide safe and accessible facilities for activities and community events for all segments of the community.

**Objective #5** Develop a Parks Program, which encourages and attracts people to both visit and live permanently in the City.

**Objective #6** Coordinate efforts between the City, area towns, the county, and public and private schools to provide a unified park and recreational program.

**Objective #7** Identify representatives from local organizations in the community, such as sports groups, churches, youth groups and the City, in order to reduce repetition in programs and guarantee that the recreational needs of the community are being met.

**Objective #8** Provide safe and scenic routes for the recreation and transportation needs of the bicyclists in the community.

**Objective #9** Provide a Park, Recreational and Open Space Plan that is up to date and encourages the implementations of needs identified during the planning process.

## **D. Implementation and Action Planning**

The implementation of the plan is when the real work begins. This plan is a compilation of opinions of the residents with facts about the community and its environment. The previous section reviewed the goals, which are formalized statements that outline the opinions of the people into specific categories. By adding objectives it will assist in developing the preferred future outlined in the Vision Statement.

Since this plan will become a part of the County plan and be closely linked with the Town of Berlin's Plan it is the City's intention to continue to work with the towns and the County as these planning efforts continue. The City's involvement will assure continuity in planning efforts and improved efficiencies for providing public facilities and services. Since most land use controls for the towns are in the hands of the County, they will be discussed and recommended for updates as part of the County plan. With land uses being heavily influenced by adjoining uses addressing the land use controls with the broader perspective of the countywide plan will assure a more unified, holistic answer to all land use issues.

### ***Integrating Elements***

The goals and objectives relate to each of the elements outlined in this plan. For example, both the natural resources section and the housing chapter of this plan have compatible goals and objectives outlined below. The analysis within the plan, as well as the objectives, are closely related. Similar objectives under different sections will assure that implementation of one item will support multiple goals in different elements. Following the recommendations of an annual review will guarantee that goals are still valid and that objectives are compatible with the goals of other elements.

### ***Measuring Progress***

With the City's plan being one part of the larger multi-jurisdictional effort it is closely tied to the broader countywide effort. After adoption of this plan the objectives should be prioritized. This session will allow the City to set specific timelines for accomplishing them. As a part of this action the involvement of the county will also assure that their planning objectives mesh with the City's. With the assistance of the UW-Extension Agent as facilitator the prioritized objectives supporting the goals of the City will be set. By following this common format for all of the communities involved in the planning process it will assure all of the communities that an action plan, which identifies the 'who, what, when', will set the mechanism in place that will measure the process of implementation.

### ***Updating the Plan***

The State of Wisconsin's 'Smart Growth' law requires that each community update its plan at least once every 10 years. With the amount of changes that can take place in any community it is recommended that the plan be reviewed and updated, if necessary, every year. As part of the Action planning session discussed above implementation items will be prioritized and accomplished accordingly. As these items are accomplished the resulting action will also necessitate the review of the plan in order to assure it is achieving the associated goal or goals as applicable.









***Intent***

As part of the multi-jurisdictional planning efforts being conducted throughout Green Lake County a series of both formal and informal meetings will assure the broadest cross-section of opinions and participation throughout the life of the current planning process.

These efforts are intended to not only satisfy State requirements but to unify the County in its land use planning efforts. This approach assures each participating municipality that their independent plan will be reflecting the voice of their constituents. By merging opinions previously discussed at the municipal level the County's public participation efforts will be strengthened. This 'grass-roots' approach will assure the countywide plan of success by folding in the opinions gathered at the local level.

***Purpose***

In order for the Comprehensive Plan to operate effectively, according to the law, and to address the needs of the citizens, the residents must be kept informed and provided an opportunity to participate in the planning process. Further, public participation is used to collect data and opinions that can be obtained in no other way. Written comments from the residents included on the survey will be shared throughout the planning process with local citizens and elected officials alike. The information received will be used in conjunction with data gathered during the planning process to assist with determining the needs of the Town and developing community goals.

As a multi-jurisdictional planning effort public participation will be solicited at a County, City and Town level.

***Public Participation Efforts***

1. County-wide Visioning Process
2. County-wide Household Survey
3. Receive and record written survey responses
4. Meeting notices in public places and legally posted
5. County, City, Village, and Town level public presentations/workshops
6. County, City, Village, and Town level planning meetings detailing progress.
7. County, City, Village, and Town level Public Hearings

## ***Methodology***

- Conduct a Countywide visioning process in order to get overall opinions of a diverse cross section of the population. Hold meetings at different times, places and hours in order to gather as diverse a cross section as possible.
- Conduct a Countywide household survey using tax parcel information in order to collect data from seasonal as well as year-round residents. The survey will collect data and opinions from the residents concerning direction and type of growth, residency, and concern over specific issues such as natural resources protections and the loss of agricultural lands.
- Share household survey results with each community that is specific to that community.
- When conducting planning efforts within the specific communities hold planning meetings on a regular basis at meetings that are open to the public and invite their participation.
- Invite local Towns to be involved with planning efforts at the City level and encourage their involvement.
- Inform the Cities of the planning efforts at the Town level and encourage their involvement.
- Hold at least one public hearing at the conclusion of the planning process, prior to adoption of the plan.



The following strategies that will be used to implement the plan are outlined below. They are to be used as specific methods for accomplishing the goals and objectives outlined in this plan. By reviewing at least annually, it will allow the City to check off those that have been accomplished, begin pursuing the next strategy, adding additional priorities as they present themselves, re-organize existing strategies and re-prioritizing as applicable. Prioritizing will be important not only for accomplishing the most important tasks first but also to identify tasks that are dependent on other strategies.

The strategies are further clarified by adding 'Committees & Organizations' that would serve as the leaders for initiating the tasks. They would also be responsible for notifying other interested parties and identifying additional resources that may be needed. It is assumed that each of the tasks will also involve appropriate City staff. An estimated allotment of time is also provided. Once a task is initiated it should be completed within the defined amount of time. This will assure completion of tasks and allow the City to move on to the next item. When the estimated time states 'On Going' this will be a task, that once initiated becomes a regular function of the City.

**COMMITTEES & ORGANIZATIONS****TIME  
(IN MONTHS)****Strategy for preserving and protecting the City's natural resources**

- ❑ *Conduct an environmental/ecological audit to determine which areas need to be protected/preserved. Review and revise as necessary the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that development adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas is appropriate. Control development with zoning tools such as Conditional Use Permits. Identify revisions to zoning, wetland and floodplain maps along with existing stormwater drainage ways.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **ongoing**
- ❑ *Update the subdivision ordinance to include protection of environmental corridors including rivers, streams, wetlands, drainageways and floodplains as well as other environmental resources.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **5 yrs.**

**Strategies to preserve, protect & enhance the quality of housing in the City**

- ❑ *Use the powers of a Community Development Authority (CDA) to finance or act as a conduit for financing private development of elderly multi-family housing.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission, CDA** **Ongoing**

- ❑ *Apply for Department of Administration's (DOA) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money for site acquisition, preparation and public service costs for low and moderate income housing.*

  - **City Staff, Plan Commission, CDA** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Develop criteria and standards for new housing and distribute through Requests For Proposals (RFPs) to property owners and developers in the area.*

  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Survey residents to determine need and interest in alternate types of housing developments and rehabilitation programs.*

  - **City Staff** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Survey church and civic groups to see if any are interested in helping low income and elderly householders with regular maintenance and repairs.*

  - **City Staff, Commission on Aging** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Inform seniors and low-income residents, who are having trouble paying their property taxes, of the deferment program run by the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority.*

  - **City Staff** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Using the zoning and subdivision ordinances, require buffers or screening between residential areas and adjoining inappropriate uses.*

  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Review and revise, if necessary, the zoning ordinance in order to restrict inappropriate uses from developing adjacent to residential areas.*

  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Use government sponsored funding sources to help the elderly, low income, and handicapped residents to improve their homes and to make them more accessible.*

  - **City Staff, CDA** **Ongoing**

### **Strategies for ensuring the maintenance of a strong local economy.**

- ❑ *Use development incentives to encourage business location and expansion in developed areas.*

  - **City Staff, Plan Commission, CDA** **Ongoing**

**Chamber of Commerce**
- ❑ *Work with the Towns to discourage scattered commercial development.*

  - **City Staff, City Plan Commission, ETZA** **Ongoing**

- ❑ *Use Tax Increment Funding Districts (TIF) to encourage economic development within the City.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission, CDA** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *In conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce/BCDC establish an incubator for both commercial and industrial entrepreneurs.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Chamber of Commerce, Berlin Community Development Corp.**
- ❑ *Develop a business mentoring program where more experienced business owners and managers help less experienced owners and managers to start a business, avoid pitfalls and become profitable.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Chamber of Commerce**

### **Strategies for encouraging quality commercial areas in the City.**

- ❑ *Conduct feasibility/best use analysis for development of vacant/underutilized properties.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission, ETZA** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Offer governmental assistance to encourage redevelopment and infill of vacant/underutilized properties, especially focusing on buildings of historic significance.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission, CDA** **Ongoing**  
**Historic Society, Business Improvement District**

### **Strategies for preserving and improving the City's downtown**

- ❑ *Review and rewrite if applicable the zoning ordinance to encourage infill development and higher densities throughout the downtown business district.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Business Improvement District**
- ❑ *Review zoning ordinance language and district boundaries to assure that 'highway commercial' does not detract from the historic nature of the downtown.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Offer governmental assistance to encourage redevelopment and infill of vacant/underutilized properties, especially focusing on buildings of historic significance.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission, CDA** **Ongoing**  
**Business Improvement District**

- ❑ *Develop a parking study of the entire downtown to determine any deficiencies and designate future spaces where needed.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
  - Business Improvement District**
- ❑ *Develop a capital improvement plan for additional items that will enhance the downtown, such as ornamental lighting, benches, plantings and paver bricks instead of concrete.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Investigate financial and technical support that may be available if the downtown were designated a State 'Main Street' community.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
  - Business Improvement District**

### **Strategies for improving the City's industrial base**

- ❑ *Develop a master plan for industrial space development. Include plans for adequate sewer, water, drainage, transportation links, and design standards.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission, BCDC** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Use such funding mechanisms as a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District to encourage industrial development in the City.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission, BCDC** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Work with the City of Berlin and Green Lake & Waushara County Economic Development Corporations to determine types of businesses are most appropriate for the City.*
  - **City & Co. Staff, City Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
  - Co. Plan & Zoning Committee, ETZA, TREDC**
- ❑ *Develop marketing materials for targeted industries.*
  - **City Staff, Chamber of Commerce** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Target appropriate businesses through phone calls, mass mailings, brochures and personal contacts.*
  - **City Staff & ED Team, Chamber of Commerce, BCDC** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Develop a plan of action for use whenever a business owner shows interest in the City. Determine who will be in charge of implementing each part of the plan.*
  - **City Staff & ED Team, Chamber of Commerce. BCDC** **6 mo.**

## **Strategies for improving the local transportation systems**

- ❑ *Conduct a detailed study including a capital improvement plan that would identify the need for additional sidewalks and bike paths.*
  - **City Staff** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Work with the County to determine the feasibility of a regional bike route that would connect the Cities throughout the County and connect the City to the recreational areas around Green Lake County.*
  - **City & Co. Staff, City Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Park & Rec. Commission, ETZA**  
**Co. Plan & Zoning Committee**
- ❑ *Monitor DOT traffic studies and conduct independent studies as deemed appropriate. Conduct corridor studies that will examine the effects of increased traffic and the impact on land uses.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Business Improvement District**

## **Strategies for improving cooperation with neighboring communities**

- ❑ *Establish meetings between governmental staff and elected officials throughout Green Lake County as needed.*
  - **City & Co. Staff, City Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Co. Plan & Zone Committee, ETZA**  
**City Council, County Board**
- ❑ *Hold informal meetings to share information between municipal representatives and area business leaders.*
  - **City & Co. Staff, City Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Co. Plan & Zone Committee, ETZA**  
**City Council, County Board, Chamber**
- ❑ *When updating the City's Comprehensive Plan notify the adjoining towns and counties of the changes.*
  - **City & Co. Staff, City Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Co. Plan & Zoning Committee, ETZA**
- ❑ *On an as needed basis, hold meetings with the City's municipal neighbors. UW-EX Community Resource Development Program can provide educational support for these meetings. The purpose of the meetings will be to discuss current initiatives and shared goals in the areas of land use, conservation and development.*
  - **City & Co. Staff, City Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Co. Plan & Zoning Committee, ETZA**

## **Strategies for improving the local Utilities and Public Facilities**

- ❑ *Conduct a Stormwater Management Plan for the City. Pursue grant monies from such sources as: Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Watershed Programs, WDNR Lake Protection Grants or any other sources available.*
  - **City Staff, City Plan Commission, Park & Rec. Commission** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Review and update, if necessary, the wastewater treatment facility plan, including the determination of the need for hiring an engineering firm for a full review.*
  - **City Staff, Sewer and Water Commission** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Annually review the Citywide Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan.*
  - **City Staff, City Council Park & Rec. Commission** **Ongoing**

## **Strategies for assuring appropriate land uses and land use controls**

- ❑ *Review and update the Comprehensive Plan once a year.*
  - **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Compare current zoning to the recommended future land use map and where appropriate, rezone properties within the City that are in contradiction to the Comprehensive Plans.*
  - **City Staff, City Plan Commission, ETZA** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *In order to track land use changes, develop a computerized citywide parcel map with existing and future land use categories, using the latest Geographical Information Systems (GIS) technology. Requiring all computerized maps to be kept in a format compatible with the countywide system.*
  - **City & Co. Staff, City Plan Commission** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Work cooperatively with the adjoining towns and the counties to discourage scattered commercial developments.*
  - **City & Co. Staff, City Plan Commission Co. Plan & Zoning Committee, ETZA** **Ongoing**
- ❑ *Revise the City's subdivision ordinance. Require an area development plan for entire acreage of parcels proposed for development including all future additions with the property. Include in the initial draft of such revised subdivision ordinance proposals providing for the relaxation of certain development requirements for areas of the city containing large parcels of undeveloped land, with the goal of promoting the reasonable residential development of such land into with larger parcel sizes and larger residential structure having a substantial impact on the City's tax base. Such proposals should include the possibility of allowing pole building construction, reducing currently required City road construction standards to standards similar to town roads (i.e. no curb and gutter, sidewalks, etc.). Such proposals should also include the*

*possibility of allowing such parcels to avoid or delay connection to City sewer and water service, through the allowance of private well and septic requirements.*

- **City Staff, City Plan Commission** **2 yrs.**

- *Rewrite portions of the zoning ordinance, as applicable, in order to encourage infill development.*

- **City Staff, City Plan Commission** **Ongoing**

- *Develop economic development incentives to encourage business location and expansion within the City.*

- **City Staff, CDA, Chamber of Commerce** **Ongoing**  
**BCDC, BID**

### **Strategies that will encourage historic preservation**

- *Monitor governmental assistance programs to encourage redevelopment and reuse of historic properties.*

- **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**  
**Chamber of Commerce, Historic Society**

- *Market historic storefronts to antique dealers, craft makers, artists, Amish furniture makers and other specialty retailers with a historic link.*

- **City Staff, Business Improvement District** **Ongoing**

- *Review and update the Architectural/Historical Survey report.*

- **City Staff, Historic Society** **12 mo.**

- *Maintain downtown façade improvement loan program.*

- **Business Improvement District** **Ongoing**

- *Maintain an inventory of historic buildings that are most in need of maintenance, repair or on the verge of being classified as blighted.*

- **City Staff, Plan Commission** **Ongoing**

# **City of Berlin Comprehensive Plan**

## **Addendum**

Green Lake County and its participating local communities completed a multi-jurisdictional Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan with the adoption of the County's Plan in September 18, 2003. This planning project was developed under the State of Wisconsin's Smart Growth Planning Law and received grant funding in support of this project. As part of the State's final review process, and as recommended by the State, the following information is being provided as an addendum to the adopted plan.

### ***IV. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS & NATURAL RESOURCES***

#### **Program Integration**

The goals of this plan will be achieved through implementation of federal, state, County, and local soil and water conservation programs. The following is a brief description of some of the applicable programs.

**Conservation Reserve Program** – was developed to assist landowners in voluntarily converting highly erodible and environmentally sensitive cropland from the production of annual crops to less intensive uses such as permanent grass, legumes, forbs, wildlife cover or trees. Regular sign-up for the program usually occurs twice per year during an announced time period. In most cases, it involves offers of entire fields. Applications are available at the Farm Service Agency.

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).** The intent of this program is to provide a voluntary conservation program for farmers who face serious threats to soil, water, and related natural resources. The program provides technical, financial, and educational assistance primarily to designated priority areas.

### ***V. AGRICULTURE***

#### **Coordination of Programs**

As part of this multi-jurisdictional planning effort most of the towns in the County also completed their own local plans. While agriculture is not a predominant land use in the City it is important in the surrounding towns and directly affects the City.

Several agencies have programs that are directly related to the concept of farmland preservation. The following is a list and description of agencies that can provide valuable assistance in the effort to implement this plan.

**Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)** administers programs for credit consultation and loans to promote and support desirable land uses, resource enterprise adjustments, and economic and social development.



**Soil Conservation Service (SCS)** provides personal, equipment, and technical services to implement and further support resource conservation programs including soil surveys, detailed resource inventories, conservation planning, and applications of approved soil and water conservation practices.

**Land Conservation Committee (LCC)** provides technical and educational assistance in relation to the conservation and management of soil and water resources, land use planning, watershed protection, flood prevention, and basic environmental quality.

## **VII. HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS & TRENDS**

Prior to the visioning sessions, which prepared the direction for the comprehensive plan a windshield, survey was conducted in order to determine the structural characteristics of the housing stock throughout the City. With the City of Berlin having been relatively stable in size and population, for a long period of time, much of the housing stock is older (built prior to 1940) and is single family. The windshield survey indicated generally well-maintained housing throughout the City. This survey indicated that no more than 10% of the housing stock in the City appeared to require additional maintenance.

The exterior appearance is a good indicator of the general condition of a structure, and a common method of surveying the structural characteristics of a community. This survey indicated that with the stable population of the City, the housing stock was in good condition and with continued attention, could be expected to meet the needs of the local population throughout the life of this plan.

As a result of unmet housing needs through out Wisconsin and the United States, other units of government and non-governmental organizations have developed programs. These organizations have been developed to assist in providing affordable housing for low and moderate-income people, those with special physical or mental needs and for the homeless and elderly. The following is a summary of some of the federal and state housing programs.

### **Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR)**

*Community Development Block Grant Program* – provides funds to local units of government on a competitive basis for rehabilitation, acquisition, site development and handicapped accessibility improvements for low- and moderate-income households. Funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

*HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD)*. Provides funds to non-profit organizations, housing authorities and local governmental units for acquisition, rehabilitation and new construction of rental housing projects for low-income persons. For-profit developers may participate in the programs as co-owners with

a non-profit or local governmental entity, or directly through the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA).

*Low-Income Weatherization Program.* Provides funds through local weatherization programs for units occupied by low-income persons.

### **Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago**

*Affordable Housing Program (AHP).* Provides loans or grants for not-for-profit organizations or public entities to finance the purchase, construction, or rehabilitation of affordable rental housing.

*Community Investment Program (CIP).* Provides funds at below-market interest rates advances for financing the purchase or rehabilitation of rental housing.

### **US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**

*Section 202/811.* Provides capital advances under an annual competition to non-profit organizations for rehabilitation or construction of affordable multi-family rental and co-op housing for elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

*Multi-Family FHA Mortgage Insurance.* Provides federal mortgage insurance for private lenders to finance construction or rehabilitation of multi-family properties, nursing homes, intermediate care facilities, or board and care homes.

### **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)**

*Affordable Housing Tax Credit Program.* Provides federal income tax credits for construction, rehabilitation and preservation of affordable rental housing.

*Blueprint Loan.* Provides short-term financing for front-end costs associated with creating multi-family housing under federal, state, and local programs.

*Foundation Grant.* Provides grant funds to non-profit sponsors to help meet the housing needs of low- and moderate-income elderly, disabled, or persons in crisis.

*Housing Improvement Loan Programs (HILP).* Provides mortgage loan funds for rehabilitation and improvements for one- to four-unit owner-occupied dwellings.

*Multi-Family Taxable Revenue Bond Loan.* Provides long-term loan, non-recourse mortgage loans through the sale of taxable bonds. Commonly used by developers of tax credit projects.

## VIII. ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS & TRENDS

### Labor Force Projections

With the City's population expected to remain constant the actual change in economic characteristics is expected to change gradually over the next 20 years. Current trends are expected to continue. The amount of people employed in manufacturing is expected to continue to decline. With an increase in *Education, health, and social services* it is expected to become more predominant in the overall economic base.

### Projections by Industry for Employed Persons 16 Years & Over

INDUSTRY	1990 Percent	2000 Percent	2010 % Projected	2020 % Projected
Manufacturing	43%	29%	24%	21%
Education, health & social services	17%	19%	21%	22%
Retail	15%	14%	14%	14%
Construction	5%	6%	6%	6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation & food service	2%	7%	8%	8%
Ag., mining, forestry & fisheries	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Public administration	1%	5%	5%	6%
Finance, insurance, real estate	3%	4%	5%	6%
Transportation, warehousing & util.	4%	4%	4%	4%
Professional, scientific, management administrative & waste management	4%	4%	4%	4%
Other service	3%	3%	3%	3%
Wholesale	3%	3%	3%	3%
Information	0%	2%	3%	4%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

SOURCE: US Census, 1990, 2000.

The projections show a long-term decline in manufacturing. Throughout the United States this trend has been occurring for years and has affected the City. As can be seen in the chart above the percent change has been declining between 1990 and 2000. If this trend continues over the next 20 years as is illustrated, manufacturing will be playing a smaller role in employment for the City. Since the manufacturing base in the region is predominantly smaller, locally owned businesses it is difficult to determine if the local trend will follow national trends. It will be important for the City to track any significant changes through the life of this plan.

## **IX. TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES & NEEDS**

With the City of Berlin being a small urbanized area, surrounded by rural towns the development of a mass transit system is not feasible nor would it be economically viable. The City of Berlin is the largest population center in the area and is located more than 20 miles from a major urban area. Developing a mass transit system for this community is not feasible since the City is small enough that it is still largely a walkable community.

Throughout the County the population is centered in several small urbanized areas with the majority of the land area remaining undeveloped. For this reason community services are limited. Currently, Health and Human Services handles the demand for special services needed by the disabled. With the population being projected to remain relatively constant over the life of this plan additional development for special transportation facilities and programs for the disabled is not projected to take place in the City or the County during the life of this plan.

The City does not have any railroad facilities. Rail lines that previously provided service throughout the County have been abandoned. Railroad facilities are not expected or planned to be re-introduced into the area during the life of this plan.

The City does not have any public airports. The closest public airport is in Oshkosh and serves the needs of the region. With the Oshkosh airport being located more than 20 miles away its only influence on the City is as a destination for the local population using it for vacation or business travel.

Since the City is a relatively small urban area the trucking throughout the City is limited in volume. Local industrial uses do not generate heavy truck traffic. The closest industrial base that generates heavy semi traffic is in the City of Oshkosh with that traffic primarily using Interstate 41.

The only waterway in the City that can be used for water transportation is the Fox River. Historically the Fox River did serve as an important transportation corridor. With the loss of the timber industry, fur trading and the advent of paved roads the importance of the river as a transportation route diminished. Current environmental regulations also limit dredging which was necessary in order to make a deep enough channel in the river for large boats.

Currently, Green Lake County is developing a Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). These efforts will assist the City in the future in assessing the quality and maintaining the road system around the City. With the series of State highway improvements taking place within the City and throughout the region the County's road improvement plan will assure proper road quality.

## **XI. LAND USE PATTERNS & TRENDS**

### *Land Needed By Type of Development*

With the City's population remaining relatively constant but the number of people per household declining it is a natural occurrence that there will still be a growing demand for housing. This is happening throughout the County as well as the State. The growth in commercial and industrial development is targeted for areas in the City, where the infrastructure in place to service these businesses.

### **Land Use Projections by Type**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Additional Housing Units</b>	<b>Housing Demand (In Acres)</b>	<b>Additional Commercial Acres</b>	<b>Additional Industrial Acres</b>	<b>Cummulative Growth of Development (In Acres)</b>	<b>Change in amount of Ag./ Vacant Acres</b>
<b>2003</b>						563
<b>2008</b>	48	8	5	20	33	530
<b>2013</b>	49	8	5	21	34	495
<b>2018</b>	75	13	8	32	52	443
<b>2023</b>	102	17	10	43	71	372
<b>Cumulative Demand</b>	274	47	28	116	191	

As has been the trend historically throughout the County a small amount of commercial and industrial development is expected to be scattered in the rural areas. These uses tend to serve a local demand and do not threaten the agricultural character of the County or the City's intent of growing its industrial base.