

6. TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

INTRODUCTION

It is important to have a safe, accessible, and cost-effective transportation system in the City of Berlin for residents and visitors. This chapter considers various types of transportation and mobility, from traditional vehicular traffic to pedestrians and alternative modes of movement throughout the City.

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Traffic Congestion:** Current flows through the City result in heavy vehicle traffic on Broadway Street and Huron Street.
- **Street Repair and Maintenance:** While most Berlin’s residential and commercial areas feature sidewalks, enabling community members to walk across the community, residents note that many local sidewalks and roadways need repair and regular maintenance.
- **Regional Trails:** The Mascoutin Valley State Trail offers about 21 miles of total trail mileage and runs from the edge of the City of Berlin to Ripon. Any future paths for cyclists or snowmobiles should build off and connect to the existing trail network.



VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

Of those who responded to the survey, **44%** regularly walk around the City and **20%** bicycle around the City. Improving safety and enhancing pedestrian and bicycle amenities and addressing gaps in the existing sidewalk network can improve the quality of life for residents.

As the population ages, elderly and disabled residents have noted they face challenges accessing essential services such as pharmacies and grocery stores.

When survey respondents were asked to rank priorities for City-wide investments, street repair and maintenance was the top choice. Sidewalks were also identified as an area of need for improvement.

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY GOALS, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS

Goal 1

Increase mobility and access for all through a well-integrated, multi-modal transportation system.

STRATEGIES

1. Continually move toward the implementation of a Complete Streets (see sidebar below) network that is safe, convenient and attractive for everyone regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.
2. Provide bicyclists with a well-designed space to ride and/or park their bicycles throughout the City, especially Downtown.
3. Collaborate with the Berlin Community School District on safe transportation for students, including walking, biking, and bussing, both within neighborhoods and near the schools.
4. Seek compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (see sidebar below) whenever an existing facility (sidewalks, trails, etc.) is reconstructed.
5. Provide adequate downtown public parking to support business growth while maintaining a compact downtown environment with a variety of uses to encourage walkability.
6. Ensure that subdivision and development applications provide adequate streets for safe and efficient traffic movement and include necessary bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes, trails).

Complete Streets are streets that provide safe, convenient, and comfortable routes for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. A network of complete streets makes the transportation network safer and more efficient for everyone, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. A “Complete Street” right-sizes infrastructure based on functional classification and traffic volumes and may include sidewalks, multi-use paths, bicycle lanes, automobile lanes, street trees, public transportation facilities, and traffic calming devices.

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities, similar to other civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. The ADA guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to enjoy employment opportunities, purchase goods and services, and participate in state and local government programs.

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

ACTIONS

- A.** Biennially evaluate City roads using the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program.
- B.** Annually review and update the City's Official Map, or as needed.
- C.** Evaluate road performance and traffic concerns on a regular basis, considering need for narrow streets or other traffic-calming measures to slow traffic through neighborhoods, minimize construction, stormwater, and maintenance costs, and maximize safety.
- D.** Work with the Berlin School District to provide bicycle education in grade schools and middle schools every year.
- E.** Every 2-3 years, evaluate the availability of publicly provided parking (especially in Downtown and other commercial areas) to maintain a healthy supply of parking spaces. If the evaluation suggests an undersupply of parking, consider improvements such as short-term parking, compact car spaces, better signage to under-utilized parking lots, and expanding/building new parking lots.
- F.** Review the City's off-street parking requirements periodically (at least every five years) to assess their effectiveness in making efficient use of land for vehicle parking.

Goal 2

Provide safe travel options to and from the City through a cost-effective transportation network that conserves resources and is coordinated with other governing agencies.

STRATEGIES

- 7.** Repair and maintain existing transportation infrastructure to the greatest extent possible. Evaluation of existing infrastructure should consider financial feasibility, Plan goals and objectives, County and State transportation plans, and other utility needs.
- 8.** Use the City's Official Map to plan for new portions of the transportation system to be compatible with existing and future land use patterns, maintaining safety and operational efficiency.
- 9.** Encourage development of a transportation system that minimizes environmental impacts, including:
- 10.** Consider the use of Green Street (see sidebar below) principles in new and reconstructed streets to mitigate the stormwater runoff impact of the street.
- 11.** Leverage new technology to improve safety and reduce the environmental impact of the City's transportation system.



- 12. Work with State and County agencies to integrate transportation plans that will benefit City residents and develop efficient transportation infrastructure throughout the region.
- 13. Connect any future trails and sidewalks in the City with regional (County/State) trails, as opportunities arise.

ACTIONS

- G. Work with the Town of Berlin and Green Lake and Waushara Counties to promote the addition of bicycle accommodations along town and county roads, including exploring funding opportunities through the Department of Transportation [e.g., Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)].
- H. Consider steps on an annual basis to complete connections with the regional bikeway network. Work with neighboring jurisdictions, WisDOT, Wisconsin DNR and other key stakeholders to plan, study and fund expansion of the regional network.
- I. Identify a system of truck routes throughout the City and mark them with unique signs to enable them to be easily identified.

Green Streets are a stormwater management approach that incorporates vegetation (perennials, shrubs, trees), soil, and engineered systems (e.g., permeable pavements) to slow, filter, and cleanse stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., streets, sidewalks). Green streets are designed to capture rainwater at its source, where rain falls, whereas a traditional street is designed to direct stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces into storm sewer systems (gutters, drains, pipes) that discharge directly into surface waters, rivers, and streams.

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

ROAD NETWORK

Regional Highway System

Berlin is served by a network of highways regulated by the DOT that support regional connectivity and local mobility. The primary route is State Highway 49, which runs north-south through the City and functions as a major arterial, facilitating access to local employment centers and neighboring communities. Complementing this are several major and minor collectors that link Berlin to nearby towns such as Aurora, Warren, and Seneca. This system plays a vital role in supporting Berlin's industrial base and commuting patterns across the region.

Local Roads System

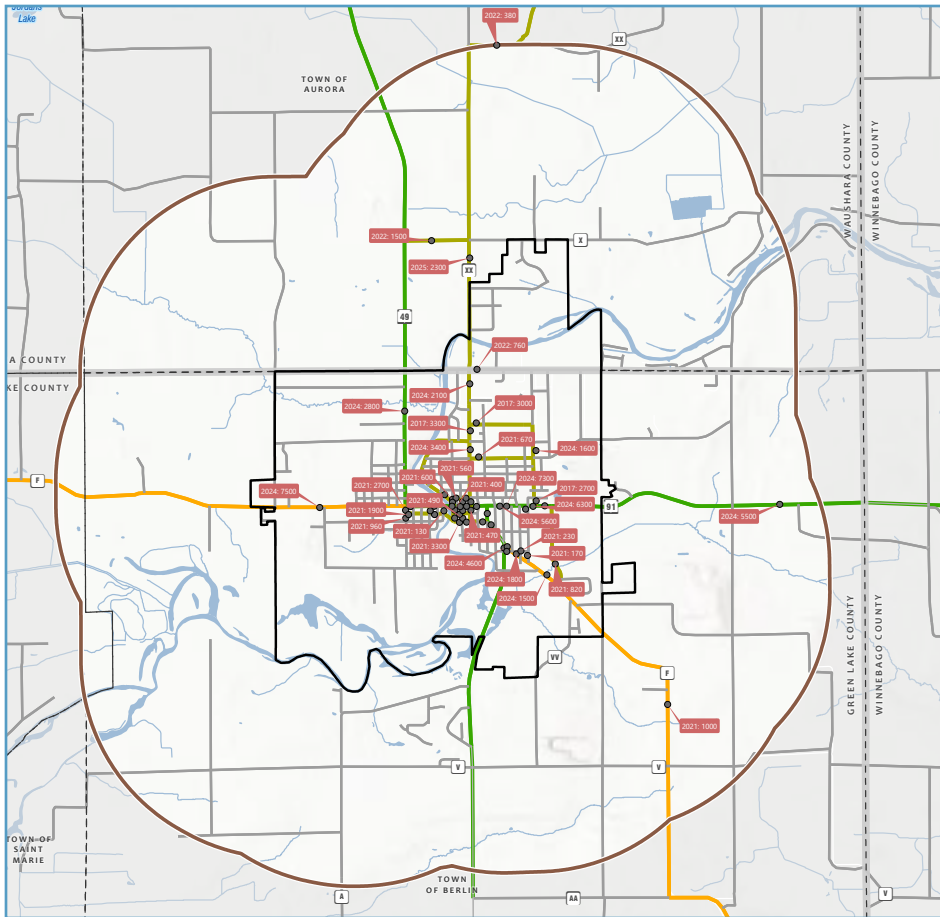
Berlin, Wisconsin's local road system is owned and maintained by the City of Berlin and is composed primarily of minor collectors and local streets. These roads support local traffic flow and link neighborhoods to major routes like State Highway 49.

RAIL NETWORK

The Wisconsin and Southern Railroad (WSOR) runs through parts of Green Lake County and has lines that pass near Berlin in the neighboring City of Ripon, supporting regional freight movement.

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

MAP 6.1 - TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Berlin maintains a modest but functional sidewalk network that supports pedestrian movement within the City, particularly in residential neighborhoods and near schools, parks, and the downtown area. These sidewalks provide safe routes for walking and are essential for local connectivity, though some gaps remain in coverage, especially in newer developments or along busier corridors.

Berlin is also connected to several regional trail systems that enhance recreational and non-motorized travel options. Notably, the nearby Mascoutin Valley State Trail runs through Green Lake County and offers a scenic crushed limestone path for walking, biking, and snowmobiling. While the trail does not enter the City directly, it is accessible within a short drive and provides a valuable link to the broader network of Wisconsin’s multi-use trails.

Bicycle facilities in Berlin are limited, with some shared roadways that accommodate cyclists.