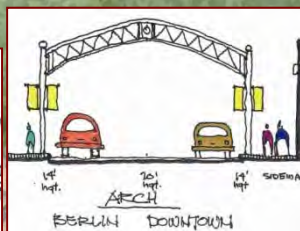
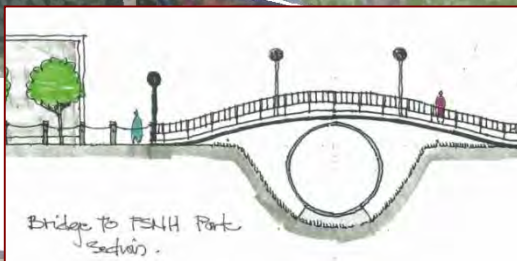




Moving Downtown Forward

Economic & Design Strategies for the City of Berlin

January 2012



HEB

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Moving Downtown Forward

Why This Project and Why Now?

With high tax rates, a still-wounded economy, and other existing City priorities and opportunities, why invest scarce time, energy and investment – *now* – into Berlin's downtown?

Financial and Economic "ROI": Return on Investment: Downtown Berlin is the community's front door; it is the "main lobby" to the Berlin community. That main lobby is currently underdeveloped, and could look better. If allowed to remain as is, it will continue to decline and to attract low-value and high needs uses. It will not provide its current tax and business-base with the flow of customers and support needed to survive and thrive. A "do-nothing" strategy results in moving downtown backward.

Conversely, there are several existing commercial buildings and sites downtown that – *once redeveloped* – will add substantially to the taxable base. As existing sites, they can be returned to higher-values quickly. An improved downtown leverages the value of *all* downtown properties. The implementation of this strategy will result in a greater tax-base, new jobs, new entrepreneurs, and economic diversification.

Look out for your own: Downtown Berlin is fortunate to have several talented and committed merchants that have found ways to survive during the past few years when other retailers have not. Investment now – *by generating additional retail traffic and offer business training services* – will help maintain this core of dedicated businesses, while attracting new ones.

Opportunity knocks: While no time is without its risks, there are compelling reasons *why now*. With the sulphur emissions gone, Berlin can rebrand itself as the attractive small city that it is. The exciting *New Hampshire Grand* strategy can be successfully leveraged. However, if this "Grand" strategy is neglected, it will be another opportunity missed. Failure to identify and promote this new future for Berlin permits others to do it for you. Unlike Moving Downtown Forward, they may be looking to the past.

Perhaps most importantly, Berlin's downtown now has the vision, the leadership, the partners, and the enthusiasm to make it a reality. City officials, merchants, investors, building owners, PSNH, Main Street leaders and many others in the region and state would like to see a renaissance for the Berlin Downtown, and are willing to do their part. With help from the economic development community and with the recommended Economic Development Project Manager, the MDF team is ready and able.

Come Home: A community is about the people and families that form its structures, its boundaries, and its character. A community – "*a common union*" – is built over time. But it also deteriorates over time as economic times get hard, and good people are forced to leave for opportunities elsewhere. A great hometown becomes just a memory. A community with a downtown without a future – no matter how impressive the community's past – is dying. A community with a vision of a better future, with an ambitious yet realistic strategy to achieve that vision, and with the commitment of good people – *volunteers and staff* – to do the hard work a better future requires, is an opportunity to bring back the City's pride and provide a reason to *come home*. Our vision of a successful homecoming follows.

On behalf of the Moving Downtown Forward Project Team, we are very pleased to present this exciting strategy and design to the City Mayor and Council, to the Downtown Task Force, and to the Berlin community. We look forward to working with you to make it a reality, and to Berlin's better future.

Sincerely,

Jay Poulin, P.E.
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Project Lead/Engineering

John Wacker
John Wacker & Associates
Streetscape & Park Design

Stuart Arnett
Arnett Development Group
Economic Strategy



Coming Home – A Moving Downtown Forward Story (Imagine if you will...)

It was so familiar, yet different.

He grew up here. He once knew every street, every family and all of the stores. Even though he has been gone for years, he still thinks of it as home. Standing now in front of City Hall was a coming home. Years ago, his wife's mother had needed care so they had moved west "for a little while". Then came the jobs and the kids, and time just flew by without a chance to come back home. But this summer, Raymond discovered a workshop was being held in the new Courthouse Square Inn and Conference Center near where he grew up that he could attend – although he could not envision such a place – so he was back again. In many ways, his hometown looked the same, but then again...

As people hurried by, he accidentally bumped into a woman attending to one of the many flower-planters along Main Street. A nice surprise: she was an old high school friend, one who had stayed behind and still spent her extra time on community projects. They recognized each other almost immediately:

"Raymond, is that really you?"

"Anne-Marie ...?"

There were big smiles and hugs, and the required catching-up. Coaches and teachers had retired, and parents had passed away. A few common friends were discussed, some had fared well, others less so. No gossip, just "catching up". But Raymond was the most curious about his home town. It was so *different* than he remembered it.

"Tell me Anne-Marie, who the heck are all these people? You are the first person I recognized."

"Oh yeah, this is how most weekends are now. We have lots of visitors coming to the PSNH Park for events, and this week it's an ATV ride-in for some charity. There's a concert in the New Energy band shell. I hear it's sold out again..."

"What New Energy is there here? And there's a band shell now? "

"Yes, it was named after all the renewable energy from here – they say we are the region's biggest producer – and that's a nice draw for a lot of these new young people. Also, supposedly it is for all the "new energy" coming from people who live here, because of all the changes. I could use some of that new energy myself; there's still a bunch of flower boxes I still need to weed..."

They wandered down street as they visited.

"Raymond, look here. You can go into the PSNH Park down there, over the new bridge. The band shell is over there, just past the Kids Park; you can see the light posts from here. See, the lights go with the design of the new street lamps and entry-way arches...and boy, did people raise a stink about that design! Seems everyone either loved them, hated them, or both! But we did end up with a national award, and they are becoming sort-of our trademark downstate..."

"Well I'll be... I'll go into the Park next, but first I wanted to scout out a good restaurant for dinner for the family tonight. Guess I'll need to go to Gorham, huh?"

"Why, are all four restaurants booked again? That figures, with all these visitors, that tends to happen on weekends. But there is a great coffee shop in the new tunnel-thing that goes through the old-T-Bird's building lobby. Also, your hotel has a really nice lounge. Check there, at the visitor kiosk, to see if you can get reservations; it's that little building just down from the park entrance. Hey, you might even see some other familiar faces at the Park. That's where a lot of the old gang tends to congregate, and trade stories...."

I'd go with you, but I'm on my way to the Farmers Market before it runs out of seafood again. It's the last weekend they are located on Pleasant Street...seems they've outgrown the site again, moving into their own pavilion next. But it is a good time for them to move, as I hear rumors that a big Manchester developer is ready to use that pad now for a new retail project. Can you believe it supposed to have a little walking-path along the stream? What will they think of next? I never realized how many waterways are downtown until we had to plant all these flowers".

"People walk along the water now? Where?!"

"Well, the new PSNH Park is really nice for a quiet river walk, and there are picnic tables overlooking the falls. Another place is just behind the Courthouse Business Condo's near City Hall. They have a path along the river. It was built for those new small-techy companies that are in the old Courthouse, but anyone can go there. And there's an art gallery in the old courthouse, too, that's usually open. Lucky you're walking; it gets tight for parking with all those families dropping off kids at the Albert Family Center."

They stopped walking for a moment.

"Say Raymond, why not bring your family by this afternoon, say at about four? We'll be meeting at the new St. Anne's Community Center. A bunch of us former Notre Dame'ers are hosting an old time "Soirée" as a fund-raiser. We're using the proceeds for French signs for Sherbrooke Week; it's our year to host this Festival. Now I regret not paying better attention in Sister Elyse's French class, or to memere! "

A shared smile, then a tug on his sleeve.

"Raymond, please come. I know everyone would be so glad to see you again, and your French would come in handy."

Raymond hesitated. He had prepared his family to see his old hometown, even meet a few old classmates and to reminisce how it used to be. But he had just assumed that the old special sense of place was lost forever. His feelings now were different, and unexpected. What would he tell his family about his old hometown? Could he still show them the proud city with a past, but also – *just maybe* – with a future? Gone was his dread of a classmate reunion with the usual "good-old-day" stories that always ended with a sense of loss. He noticed a different feeling; was it a new sense of pride?

"Sure Anne-Marie, that would be great, thanks! Now show me again where that Visitor Center is...."

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SECTION 1

What is this Strategy?

A Narrative Exploration of “MDF”: Moving Downtown Forward

A. Questions and Answers:

What is this strategy?

In the recently adopted City of Berlin Master Plan, in the Chapter on Economic Development, one of the eight recommendations was to adopt a comprehensive Downtown Development strategy. This strategy is that follow-up as recommended. This Strategy should be viewed within the framework of the Berlin Master Plan. It was also written after consulting the several other plans and initiatives that might affect the Berlin Downtown.

Why strategize?

Unlike a plan, a strategy *assumes competition*. It is the recommended way to win; to attract the economic and cultural resources sought by Berlin and by other competing communities. Berlin's downtown has competitors for the same shoppers, visitors, investors, merchants and leaders as are sought by other communities and regions. While Berlin's downtown must be competitive, the strategy also assumes much *collaboration*, at times with these same competitors.

How should we read the strategy?

This strategy is part of the City's Master Plan, which is a policy document adopted by the Berlin Planning Board on behalf of the City Council and the public. There are four inter-dependent sections, and all should be considered collectively:

1. This *narrative section*, which explains the process, the desired outcomes and specific recommended steps to take in the future.
2. There is the *design section*, which consists of conceptual drawings of streetscapes and the PSNH Park, as well as supporting narrative and base information.
3. A bulleted *Action Plan*, which is further divided into an *Economic Section* and a *Design Section*. This is the “blueprint” listing the concise steps, timelines, budget options and the recommended implementers.
4. An *assessing data base* of all downtown properties.

Additional helpful attachments are also included if believed to be helpful.

How to use this Strategy?

Once the strategy is generally understood and supported, it is envisioned that a smaller group will be involved in its implementation. This implementation team will work from the Action Plan, with the Economic Narrative and Design Drawings as core sources. See the following section on *Leadership and Implementation*.

Whose work is this?

While the team that assembled this strategy was very fortunate to have many people and organizations assist it, responsibility for the Strategy is as follows:

The design components of the strategy were completed by John Wacker of **John Wacker & Associates** of North Conway, NH. This narrative and the Economic Development sections were the responsibility of Stuart Arnett of **Arnett Development Group LLC** of Concord, NH. Both John and Stu were led by Jay Poulin, P.E., of **HEB Engineers** of North Conway, NH. Mr. Poulin acted as the team's leader and engineering/infrastructure specialist. The team worked across their respective areas of expertise, mixing suggestions and experiences to produce a much richer strategy than would have resulted in a "one-at-a-time" series of efforts.

Whose strategy is this?

This strategy is presented to the City Council, the Downtown Task Force and to the City Planning Board. However, it is meant to be a community-based initiative that is "owned" by the citizens, store owners, property-owners, residents, and government officials, both today and in the future as the strategy takes shape. Community building requires a team. Inclusiveness is required for success.

What is covered?

The study area is depicted in the included design drawings. Additionally, the downtown's cultural, social and economic roles as parts of the entire community - and as the North Country's city - were incorporated into the recommendations.

Why bother to do anything for Downtown?

For the many advocates of downtown that have helped with this strategy's formation, the answer to the question of "*why bother to invest in downtown*" seems obvious. It is Berlin's "front door" for visitors, and the historic and cultural core of the community. But it is good policy to review why a public financial investment is recommended. This strategy contends that Moving Downtown Ford - or MDF - will have very positive public "ROCBA": *Return on Community-Based Assets*. Any investment by the public should result in a high Return on Investment as measured by tax base growth, new jobs and entrepreneurs, better aesthetics, enhanced community pride, and a growing population that returns home, or discovers Berlin as a new home. Consider the benefits:

- Downtown is a *job center*. Many families today derive primary or secondary incomes from downtown business. As Berlin becomes increasingly successful in attracting new entrepreneurs and tech-savvy companies, the downtown can become a launching pad for fast growth businesses.
- Downtown offers an opportunity to add to the overall *city tax base*. Many properties are assessed at abandoned or discounted valuations. While other newer properties may be fully (or over) assessed, there is the potential to bring several million dollars of private property valuation onto the grand list efficiently if the key downtown properties are redeveloped.
- Downtown is also an *efficient investment target*. It is mostly built, with sites and structures already existing. Unlike new industrial parks or new highway shopping plazas, the downtown does not need expensive new infrastructure, nor does it require the taking of prime agricultural lands. Investment leverages itself; it improves all downtown properties.



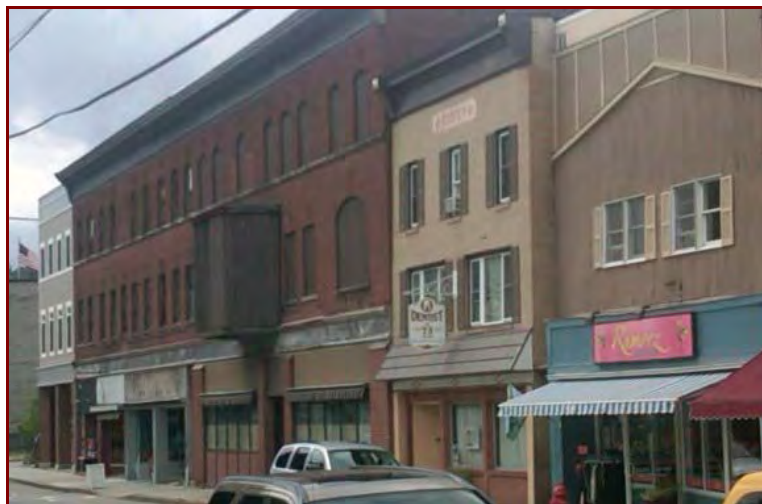
- Lastly, as a dynamic downtown generates more retail business, it generates fewer calls for public safety or welfare assistance. Instead of being a growing *expense* for the City, downtown becomes a *revenue producer* for the community.

What are the Goals?

- There are two tracks: *design of physical features* and the *revitalization of the downtown economy*. The redesign has two components: an enhanced Smith-Hydro PSNH Park and an improved streetscape. The economic track focuses on a revitalized downtown via better services and marketing, supporting the redevelopment of several real estate properties, and better internal communications and external marketing.
- Specific measurable outcomes are herein recommended, such as increasing the taxable worth of downtown commercial properties, and the creation of a targeted number of jobs. These were suggested after looking at assessing data, the number of empty storefronts and upper floors, and possible market-rate housing units. These targets are suggested, but their adoption and possible revision should be very early on the agenda of the MDF Leadership Team, so that the goals are understood and owned. What is important is that the measurements be both realistic and “a stretch”, and lead to the desired outcomes of a better design and a better economy for downtown Berlin.

Is this the same strategy as was requested in the RFP?

- Yes and no. The Strategy team – in coordination with City Officials – modified this strategy from what was originally conceived, making it more relevant and comprehensive. As examples, the design area was enlarged, additional importance was given to the PSNH Park potential, and the merchant interviews became the most reliable economic indicator versus a data-exercise such as shift-share analysis.



B. Components of the Strategy

The trio of expertise that developed this strategy – engineering, design and economics – was a unique approach. Typically, a community would pursue one question at a time. By thinking about all three at once, the City's leadership has ensured compatibility and greater efficiency. This will help as different people engage in MDF. Some will seek assurances about “bricks-and-mortar” questions. Other will be attached to the visual representation of the vision as creatively captured by our designers. Still others will want to know the “bottom-line” impact; *what are the economic reasons to proceed, and what can we expect back for our investment?*



The Strategy is divided into components including design drawings, a structured “what, when and how-much” Action Plan with recommendations, and this economic narrative. Attachments include presentations made to the original MDF Task Force, and proceeding notes from two well-attended public dialogue sessions. The reader is encouraged to carefully review all of the components, as they each hinge on the others. A one-view of the strategy will raise more questions than answers.

Important components include:

- **Downtown Development and Economic Development**

This strategy is focused on downtown. However, the new thinking, the added economic development capacities, and the recommended strategies will also enhance economic development in Berlin *community-wide*.

- **A Berlin-Centric Strategy**

While proudly in the North Country, the city of Berlin is not the same as the North Country. In the sparsely populated North Country (35,000 population) Berlin has both the negative and positive attributes of being the region's most densely populated community.

In the past ten years, many of the negative attributes – the industrial smell, the high tax rate for City services, and the concentration of lower-income households– have been the attention getters, and reputation makers. Berlin will not succeed trying to pass itself off as an “almost-as-good” rural, bucolic destination. It is what it is; *an attractive small city in an attractive rural setting*. As a city, Berlin has several unique and very positive attributes for those that value city amenities along with a “grand adventure”.

Berlin is the North Country's only significant city. Uniquely, Berlin has certified 24/7 city services, including EMS and public safety professionals. It hosts regional financial offices, a regional healthcare facility, in-town doctors with a walk-in public clinic, a late-night pharmacy, optometrists and dentists, and regional government offices. It has several local media outlets, a state liquor store, and a convenient grocery store. Cars can be fixed, bicycles can be rented, chipped teeth can be mended, and plumbing unplugged. A full-service, 24/7 city is an advantage to a visiting population that wants access to vital services. Unscheduled access to a pharmacy may be as important as finding a secluded yurt.

As a City, Berlin can also attract industries, businesses, and investors that value 24/7 municipal services. As an example, a company that uses water in its production – such as food processing – would rather buy their water from an EPA-approved city water system, and dispose of the water via a permitted and maintained city sewer system than operate their own well and septic systems. Industrial fire insurance is less expensive as city-maintained water pressures are higher, and certified Fire Departments are available any time of the day. Entrepreneurs may occasionally seek the solitude of the deep country, but they also need regular peer-to-peer contact to “break bread”, and to break-up the solitude. Employers want to be near employment services, labor pools, commercial banks, full-service law firms and CPAs. Berlin’s ubiquitous high-speed internet is attractive to small start-ups and large businesses alike.



As a city, Berlin offers authentic, historic, and interesting buildings with “walk-to” amenities. Creative-economy entrepreneurs often seek interesting “work-live space” within a walkable community of peers.

This strategy acknowledges and builds upon the City’s partnership with the North Country. We similarly recommend a “*Berlin-centric*” strategy for Berlin’s downtown to:

1. Acknowledge the *real benefits of being the city* in a wondrous natural area.
2. Implement this strategy via a *City-driven effort and a City-contracted Project Manager*.
3. Control and drive Berlin’s unique economic destiny *internally*.

• Leadership and Implementation

A nautical saying goes: “There are those that need to row, and there are those that need to steer”. We envision three levels of leadership: one rowing, one steering, and one doing both. These three levels are:

1. **Mayor, the City Council and City Officials**
2. **Moving Downtown Forward Leadership team** of key community leaders, and a
3. **Berlin-centric Implementation Team** of existing staff, regional partner agencies, and a newly-acquired project implementation capacity: a **Project Manager**.

1. Mayor, Council and Officials:

This strategy is based on Berlin-centric, community-accountable *leadership*. In the Action Plan, we suggest that the City Council, and particularly the Mayor, understand, support and promote this strategy before commencing its implementation. *If this strategy is not supported by the people’s elected representatives, it will not succeed.* That is not to say elected candidates and Councilors will not have questions and disagreements on aspects of the strategy, now and in the future. But if the people’s elected representatives do not understand why a successful downtown is vital, if they see this as either unnecessary or as counter-productive – as just another expense – then it will fail. Conversely, a Council that is supportive – but “hands off” enough to give the “rowers” the flexibility and autonomy they need – they will be a powerful advocate for economic success and community pride.

Timelines: This strategy looks at action items for “now”, but also looks three, five and ten years ahead. Leadership will require a shared vision, and patience. As this strategy is based upon financial leverage – that the City’s investment over time should be about 10% – the vision will need articulate and dedicated supporters to find good partners – utilities, grant and foundation sponsors, and private investors – to make up the remaining 90%. While all Councilors can be valued advocates for the vision, the *visibility of a Mayor* makes that position particularly important for demonstrating visible support, while ensuring real-result accountability to the tax-paying public.

2. **Moving Downtown Forward Leadership Team:**

This recommendation is to create an action-oriented team of helpful and supportive volunteer community leaders to determine on-going policy questions, provide oversight and reporting for the City, and help to implement tasks that are appropriate for volunteers. It is recommended that the MDF Team be charged by the Mayor to act on behalf of the Mayor and Council, and include at least one Council representative as a liaison.

Key recommended tasks include Main Street business services and real estate redevelopment. It is vital that both the Berlin Main Street program and the Berlin Industrial Development and Industrial Park Association (BIDPA) also be MDF team members.

The MDF process should be open, inclusive and motivated. Other members should include those community-based organizations that have the redevelopment of Berlin and its downtown as part of their respective organization’s mission. Its meeting should be open and inclusive, except for that rare occasion when a proprietary discussion must occur. The media, as well as citizens and partners, should be encouraged to attend within a structured meeting agenda.



Members of the MDF team should also be willing to help implement parts of the strategy. There will be many times where a helping hand will be needed to help with events, to offer suggestion, and just-plain work. Team MDF is not for second-guessers or sideline-sitters.

Individual members should be selected based upon their record and interest in the community, their willingness to help and upon their skill sets. MDF work will need talented people to work as strategy overseers and community leaders. The recommendation is to include people with strong skills in the following areas, among others:

- Marketing and promotion
- Real estate development
- Event planning and execution
- Business development training and services
- Finance and fund-raising
- Communications, and media and community-relations
- Measurement and evaluation

The **MDF Leadership Team** serves a vital function. It is the link between the Council and day-to-day results. It is the eyes and ears for the community. It is an advocate for MDF and for the needed resources and new partners. It is a source of help and good ideas – and constructive criticism – for the Project Implementation Team. It will celebrate successes, and modifying the strategy to accommodate change.

3. The Project Implementation Team & the Contracted Project Management Capacity



As valuable as MDF Team help will be, there is a presumed higher level of time and required expertise needed to implement this strategy. Knowing how resource restrained the City and its partners are, the strategy first looks to better utilize existing people and organizations.

By regularly convening a confidential meeting to discuss client needs and progress, the Implementation Team can coordinate services, and monitor clients to avoid

duplication. The Implementation Team should be made up of paid staff and/or contractors that are engaged in helping either people or projects in downtown Berlin. Unlike the MDF Team, this group's meeting most often will be closed, as they discuss specific clients and business opportunities in confidence.

This Strategy's recommendations *include contracting additional capacity to implement this strategy*. While existing staff and volunteers can and should be maximized, the scale of this vision requires more: in time, in capability and in proven expertise in several skill areas.

The capacity to implement specific projects in the Action Plan is labeled as *Project Management*. By focusing on just high priority projects – as determined by the MDF Leadership Team – project management can be more flexible and less expensive than a full-time economic development position. Also, as the strategy evolves, different skills will be required at different times. Contracting out on a recurring basis – every two to three years – will ensure a good match between MDF's current needs and the skills assigned.

There are several possible paths for the City for contracting Project Management:

1. It can be contracted *internally to existing staff*. The City is fortunate to have a talented group of senior managers. If so assigned, they would need to be able to re-assign portions to specialists. It could also be contracted to a part-time, non-permanent employee, but is unlikely that one person will bring the full array of needed talents.
2. The City also has a long-standing community development contract with the regional *community action organization*. This contract could be broadened.

3. There are several *public entities* that might want to contract with the city, such as the Community College, or any of the regional planning and development entities.
 - a. With this option of using regional organizations, it will be important for the City to guarantee that the organization can and will act “Berlin-centric”. As an example, how will the regional organization contractor ensure that a possible investment opportunity is not steered elsewhere in the region?
4. It is possible that the state’s commitment to a *North Country Agent* could be broadened to take on downtown project management under contract. Again, the issue of multiple allegiances would need to be conclusively addressed in the City’s favor.
5. A recent trend in economic development is the entry of *private-sector project managers*. This Berlin strategy is the work of a private-sector team working under government leadership. The advantages include access to a much-larger talent pool, a deeper experience base, pay-as-you-need, and no long term obligations. The City would need to communicate its on-site expectations, and to ensure the ability to rearrange priorities with the contractor as needed.

The enclosed Action Plan, as well as this narrative and design drawings, can serve as the base for a *Request for Proposal* or *Request for Qualifications* (RFP or RFQ) to be issued by the City. A bid process allows the City to choose a “best-bid” response. The different responding entities would offer different ideas on how to implement the strategy, which in itself could be useful.

Each choice has its pluses and minuses. But the strategy will not succeed without a paid or contracted entity – a person or persons – dedicated to moving downtown forward.

- **The Importance of the Business and Property Owner Interviews**

Interviews with many existing merchants, civic leaders, shoppers, program directors, business owners, property owners and the local media became a significant part of original data generation, versus using a static data exercise. Over twenty-five hours of on-site interviews were conducted, and many other calls and correspondences were shared to build an understanding of the downtown economic situation and its many opportunities.

- **Measurements to Ensure Results**

The Action Plan recommends that the City Planner or the Regional Planning Agency develop up to 20 “EZ Measures” for possible adoption by the MDF Team as measures of success to be used over time. Examples of the measures were included in earlier presentations to the MDF. To be “EZ”, the measures should be readily available and require little original staff research to update. These indicators could come from credible government sources (i.e.: Covered Payroll, that measures employment from Employment Security), from merchants (credit card billing locations), from new technology (visits to a web-site or the kiosk), and from internal City sources including the Building Inspector and Assessor.

EZ Measures give the community a “dash board” to measure its “return-on-community-based assets”, and continue the support for downtown investment. Measures are also required by funding-partners. Getting any bad news early – a measurement that is *not* improving – can avert spending scarce resources on an unsuccessful tactic.

Like all of the MDF strategy, results of the EZ Measures should be publically available and widely shared.

- **Costs and Budget Options**

These recommendations conclude that the City of Berlin will need to invest in downtown in order to achieve the vision sought. Two types of investments are recommended:

- *Operating Costs*: The acquisition of needed addition skills and capacity (people or persons).
- A budget for *capital costs* and other *vendor costs* that are needed to implement the strategy.

The Action Plan suggests that the City commit to an affordable, steady funding level for a ten year period. The strategy realizes that today’s Council cannot commit for a Council of tomorrow, but an unambiguous commitment to invest if at all possible – consistently and patiently – will have real benefits.

- This commitment will help the implementers prioritize their tactics. There is a lot that could be started; priority decisions need to be made.
- It allows for the funding of multi-year projects for the physical improvements in the streetscape and for the redevelopment of commercial real estate
- It shows possible funding-partners that the community knows what it wants and is prepared to do its part; that it won’t be a “start-stop-start” headache for the funder.

The recommendation is to fund \$150,000 in combined operations and capital costs annually. The Plan shows how consistent City investment can leverage up to another \$9 for each \$1 invested by the City.

- **Including Short and Long-term Actions**

The Action Plan recommends actions from “now” until 3-to-10 years. This action list should be modified at least annually by the MDF Team to reflect changes over time. Recommendations get less specific as the timetable get longer; projects after 3 years are nearly certain to change based upon progress to date and other economic factors.



- **Important to Develop Partnerships**

Downtown development is a team activity. It requires a multitude of skill sets, a variety of perspectives, and the specific resources of property-owners, funders, and downtown businesses. As one example, an on-going partnership with PSNH will be a key for success. Foundations and other funders will appreciate the assurance that MDF will be a capable and trusted partner. Partnership success is when the future ribbon-cutting platforms are “standing-room-only”!

- **The NH Grand Strategy and Berlin as a Provisioning Center or Base Camp**

As an important part of the North Country, Berlin is fortunate to be included in a creative tourism-visitor initiative now in its early stages of implementation. The *NH Grand Initiative* takes advantage of a true unique attribute of the North Country – its authentic Grand Hotels – to uniquely brand the region: *Grand Hotels, Grand Adventures*. It is an excellent strategy for North Country tourism development.

The *NH Grand* strategy envisions Berlin City as one of the several provisioning centers, or “base camps”. Visitors on their Grand Adventures would go to Berlin to provision: to stay, eat, shop, and generally support their adventure.



While Berlin is the best “24/7” destination for needed public services (including police, EMS, hospitals, pharmacy and high-speed internet) it currently lacks either significant overnight accommodations or adventure outfitters. Its most unique active “adventure” feature is the state ATV Park. The Heritage Park is also unique as a Berlin *Grand*

Adventure feature. Both sites are being further developed.

- **An ATV Opportunity**

An attractive – and unique to Berlin - Grand Adventure is the **Jericho Mountain State Park**, which “...provides opportunities for miles of trail riding for ATV, UTV, trail bike, and snowmobile enthusiasts alike” (nhstateparks.org).

This state park is still developing its capacity as a Park and as a campground, with over 200 camp ground sites envisioned. Better promotion will help support this self-funded park, will provide new shoppers and visitors for downtown, and will help fill rooms in any new hotel/hospitality complex.

The proximity of this unique park in Berlin, and the planned accommodation of ATV and snow machine riders (who can legally drive into downtown from the park) are attributes that were figured into the proposed designs for the PSNH Park and for the downtown’s economic strategy.

- **Heritage Park**

Another unique attribute of Berlin City is its varied ethnic and cultural heritage. Immigrants from Quebec, Norway, Russia and Ireland found their way to Berlin, and their influence continues. Berlin City has always been a community that revolves around industry, and being industrious. Strategies that promote leisure and recreation will become more important as the North Country becomes “Grand”. These recommendations acknowledge that Berlin’s industrious heritage is a unique and valuable attribute, deserving to be showcased. Berlin should always acknowledge and celebrate its industrious past.

- **Sherbrooke Quebec, Boston and Berlin New Hampshire**

Berlin is at the “end of the road” for the *NH Grand* target markets (Philadelphia, New York City, Connecticut, Boston and remainder of Massachusetts). Competing New Hampshire communities are reached before Berlin by visitors coming from the targeted population centers to the south. As part of this strategy, we recommend Berlin *look north*, to populations closer and already familiar with Berlin. Sherbrooke Quebec is about the same distance away as Concord NH. There are existing cultural ties between this community and Berlin. There is also not the multitude of New Hampshire competitors between Sherbrooke and Berlin as there is between Berlin and the metro areas to the south.

- **Branding and the “New Energy City in North Country”**

The good news of Berlin’s recent progress needs to be communicated, both internally and to desired external markets. Things are changing for the better. Whatever challenges the community faces, they are less than are assumed by many, and its economic opportunities are greater than generally known. A re-branding of the “new” Berlin is needed.

A possible branding of Berlin and its downtown is suggested in this strategy: as the “**New Energy City**”. While further thought for this branding should be overseen by the MDF Leadership Team, this brand and logo possibility accomplishes some of the required objectives of a new identifier. First and most important is the word “new”. New is not a word generally associated with the City of Berlin; most of the news in recent times has been about what is past. “New Energy” is a double word-play. It speaks to the significant reality that Berlin produces vast amounts of “re-new” able energy within its boundaries from the several hydro sites, with more renewable energy coming from the newly permitted wood-to-energy facility. *Being a significant generator of perpetually renewable energy is a unique marketing attribute*, especially to an affluent, educated population actively seeking to “minimize their carbon foot print”.



Note that the current environmental “A+” standard is no longer to be just “green”, (defined as lower carbon generation and energy consumption), but to be “blue”; to produce *more clean energy than one uses*. While there are not confirmed figures on energy produced within Berlin versus energy used by the community of Berlin, undoubtedly more is generated and exported from Berlin than used by Berlin ; Berlin is very “blue”, and that is, well... *cool!*

The double word-play is that “New Energy” also speaks to the *new excitement and optimism in the community* as new opportunities gradually replenish the local economy. This feature is why you would *not* want to call it the “Re-newable Energy City”, as that eliminates the community-energy word-play.

Lastly, including the word “City” has a real value that we explore elsewhere in this strategy. Having city amenities available in a “blue” Berlin within a wondrous natural setting increases the “cool” quotient.

- **Tax Base, Assessing and the Assessor**

This strategy first engages existing people and resources into action before bringing on anyone new. One existing resource is assistance from the City Assessor. Why?

A measure of success – and a recommended Goal – is a significant increase in the real value of privately-owned real estate in the targeted area; *a greater downtown tax-base*. This Action Plan includes a spreadsheet that shows the most-recent property values for every downtown parcel divided into various categories and locations. Over time, the MDF Team should expect to see these values increase. The Assessor’s role in providing this updated information is important for these reasons:



1. By having the Assessor update the spreadsheet, you are ensured of “apples-to-apples” as other factors change, such as coefficient values, property exemptions, and any revaluation or appeal affects.
2. The Assessor’s report will also add objectivity and credibility; there is no “spin” or bias.
3. The Assessor may have great ideas – or raise good concerns – otherwise missed.

- **The Importance of Media and Communications**

Local media: The community is fortunate to have local media outlets including two newsprint products. These media companies are also downtown businesses. The media should be encouraged to understand the Moving Downtown Forward process, and report its progress back to the community. The Project Manager and MDF Leadership Chair should be readily available and helpful explaining the MDF process. Open communications with the media and community is recommended, and only a few operations of the MDF process need to be handled confidentially. If there is trust between the MDF and the media, everyone benefits.

Social Media, and Traditional Regional and National media: The MDF Team and the Project Manager need to adopt rules for media communications, especially when an opportunity arises to accurately describe a MDF success to a media source such as the Associated Press or others. Non-local media may come with a “Berlin-as-problem” bias. We recommend that an effective Communication Plan be established, including internal protocols, volunteer and staff media training, and outreach efforts including via social media to local regional and national.

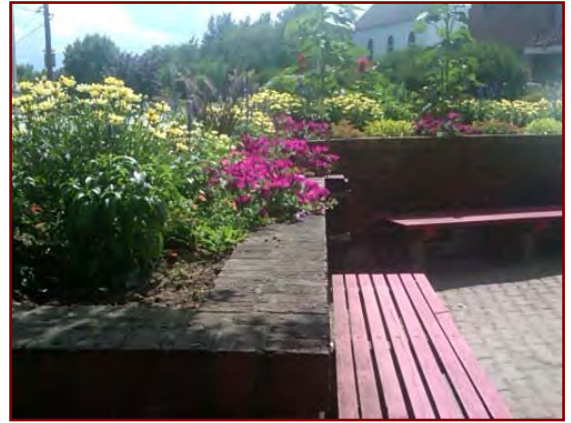
- **Integration with Other Plans and Reports**

A list of other reports and plans reviewed and incorporated is included in the Strategy's attachments.

- **The Challenges and Importance of Real Estate Redevelopment in Downtown:**

An important goal with subsequent recommendations is for the redevelopment of several key real estate buildings and sites. Left undeveloped, they will continue to drag down economic activity and curb-side attractiveness. Redeveloped, they become economic generators, and add cultural amenity while providing a significant property-tax base boost.

Each of these sites has challenging "issues" along with their opportunities. Redevelopment will require hard work, patience and savvy. But it is worth the effort. Knowing how to work with private owners and investors is a key attribute for success. At this time, four of the key properties are owned either by the City or BIDPA. The other key properties will require private-public collaboration. It is *not* recommended that the City ever take on a privately owned site unless it must take it – due to tax delinquencies – or unless the redevelopment opportunity is overwhelming, with very minimal risk to the taxpayers.



Environmental Concerns - Modern reconstruction requirements make redevelopment more expensive, with ADA accessibility, asbestos and residual PCB traces now expensive considerations.

The recommendation is that the City's BIDPA first work on the redevelopment of the three buildings and one parcel that are already owned either by the City or BIDPA. Second, that it gauge from a "360" degree perspective (money, markets, places and people) which of the remaining key-properties would best deserve BIDPA's attention now. If a privately-owned site is either not ready, or the owner not willing to collaborate, there are many other actions BIDPA can take to move downtown forward until that specific situation changes.

Berlin has also been fortunate to have significant redevelopments sponsored by the *Tri-County Community Action Program*. Tri-County is experienced at seeking grant funding, and has overseen quality restorations and new construction. BIDPA is encouraged to coordinate its redevelopment thinking with this proven downtown property developer.

Private redevelopment must be the largest financial investment source for redevelopment of real estate over time. However, private investment will also need to see that there is a vision, and the City is a serious and capable partner. The City can assist attracting reinvestment by being helpful and discreet with permitting, by adopting and utilizing incentives such as RSA 79-e, by constructing needed public amenities via Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District bonding, while working to secure other incentives. The City should have the capacity to successfully utilize Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), state tax credits via the NH CDFA, and credit enhancements through agencies including the NH Business Finance Authority and the federal Small Business Administration, and US Rural Development or the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). Berlin has a long history of providing small – but key – direct loans through the Berlin Economic Development Company (BEDCO), the Northern Community Investment Corporation (NCIC), the Coos Economic development Corporation (CEDC) and the regional County Enterprises. With the recent disbanding of BEDCO, and leadership changes in the CEDC and AVER, this provides an opportunity for the MDF Team to establish Berlin-centric set-asides for worthy downtown redevelopment projects.

- **The PSNH Park, Streetscape Improvements & Downtown Economic Success**



This strategy's two-pronged approach finds that the *future economic vitality of downtown is closely linked with how its looks - the streetscape- and how it links downtown and the newly upgraded Smith-Hydro PSNH Park.* Success of the PSNH Park, the streetscape and downtown are co-dependent and inseparable. Perhaps no other northern New England community has an equivalent opportunity to co-develop with a

willing, trusted and community-minded partner like the PSNH such a stunning waterfront park for both recreational and economic gain.

This parallel development of the Smith-Hydro PSNH Park is an exciting prospect, which will generate significant economic benefits. While it is expected that PSNH will be the lead enterprise in the redevelopment of the Park, the City and MDF will need to work closely, jointly and patiently with PSNH as improvements are made incrementally. The community will need to remember that – as a regulated utility – PSNH has “many masters”, and must receive a wide diversity of approvals before making investments into the Park.

While the Jericho Mountain State Park is not downtown, its potential to generate ATV-based visits for downtown is substantial, and it is a unique *Grand Adventure* attribute for Berlin. A City-State partnership for the development and marketing on this exciting Park should be pursued.

C. Economic Development Summary:

This Strategy is the result of a multi-disciplinary, community-based effort. All of the participants shared a belief that we could collectively help create a better future. The strategy offers a high-level vision of this better future, as well as a very specific task-by-task “to-do” list for tomorrow. It is realistic and ambitious. With investment, commitment and hard work, it can succeed.

Any strategy reflects the situation it addresses, the good points and the bad. This is a good strategy because downtown Berlin is a very good place, and is becoming better. It is a creative strategy because the community is ready for creative ideas; and its leadership is engaged, hard-working, and anxious to “walk the walk”. That is a great start to a successful end.

We hope this is a very good strategy, and have invested our best efforts and thinking toward that end. The good people of this proud and resourceful community deserve no less.

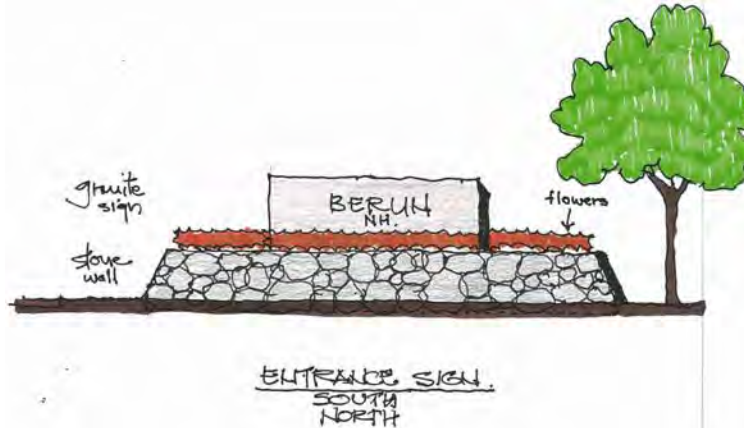


SECTION 2

A New Vision of Downtown Berlin

A New Vision of Downtown Berlin

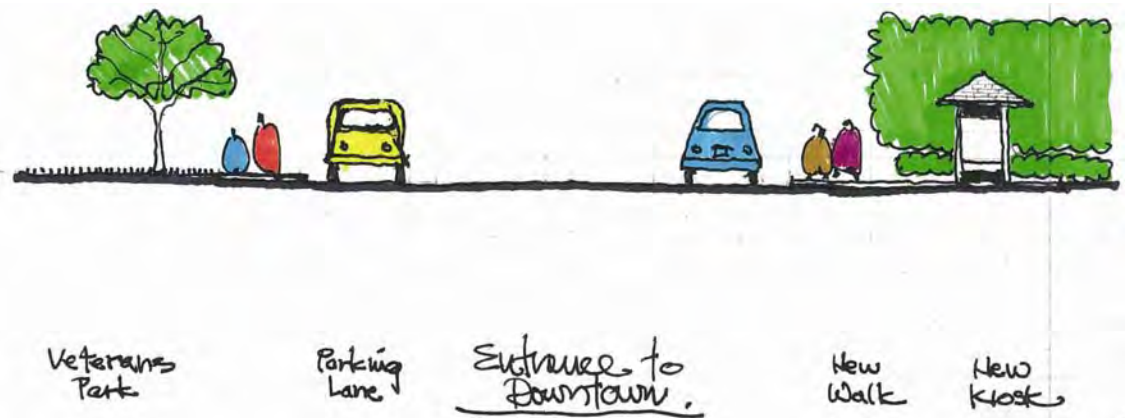
Moving Downtown Forward has at its core the redesign of the city streetscape from Veterans Memorial Park on the south to St. Ann's Church on the north, some 3/4 miles, including Main Street, Pleasant Street, and Cole Street. The goal is to have, along with a major economic plan, a new and unified look to the downtown which will attract more businesses and shoppers, and help create a vibrant downtown center.



With new emphasis on event programming and planning for monthly activities in the downtown core, Berlin's vitality can be restored. This strategy proposes the inclusion of the 20 plus acre Smith-Hydro Park and its re-design for more public uses, along with new easy accesses for all citizens and visitors. The economy of the downtown will be greatly improved with more diversity of shops and other new vitality for many vacant properties. There will be new life in the City of Berlin.

STREETSCAPE - ZONE I

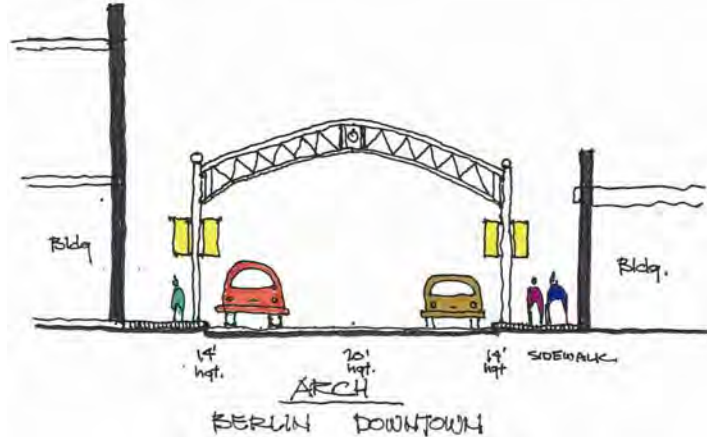
The streetscape concept plan begins at the south where the one way street system begins at the Veterans Memorial Park. A new gateway sign, a new County sponsored information kiosk, a new vehicular south entrance to the Smith – Hydro Park, and new plantings to add to the park-like character of the entrance to the downtown are proposed. There are new sidewalks proposed to connect to the downtown core and at the side of the tennis courts.



There is an existing park with sculptures which needs some grading, a sidewalk and a softer entrance with steps to provide easy access and more public use of the open space.

STREETSCAPE – ZONE 2

At the Theater and curve of Main Street, there is the first of a series of white painted steel archways which continue through this zone on Main and Pleasant Streets. There is crosswalk paving to accent the opening to the downtown. Additional crosswalks are designed for safety and to accent the pedestrian nature of the streetscape.



Street lighting, colored unit pavers, street trees, benches, trash containers, planters and many more flowers add to the life of the streets. There is the potential for several pocket parks along Main Street and Pleasant Street and this will provide many green and open space breaks that will be unique to this downtown in Berlin.



The largest open space on Main Street will be the focus of the new downtown across from the Cote Building. It is proposed to have a new visitor information center adjacent to the new proposed walkway and bridge into the Smith - Hydro Park. There will be increased sitting areas and places for the public and visitors alike to gather and to meet.



Across the street from the new information Center and bridge to the park is a proposed arcade through the Old T Birds Building connecting the downtown to Pleasant Street and connecting Pleasant Street to the downtown for easy access to shopping and to parking already provided in City owned lots.



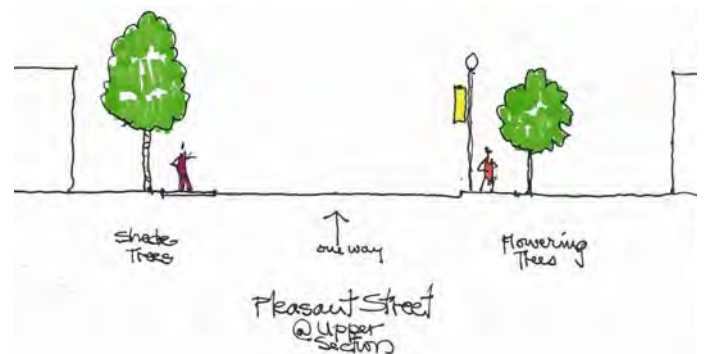
At the site of the old paint factory there is a fenced area and two large concrete slabs, one owned by the City, the other is privately owned. There is a great opportunity for purchase by the City, to create a new park and open space use here. It could be the site of the Farmers Market as well as many other public events.

This new Pleasant Street Park can be utilized now as an open space. Then, in the future, when and if needed, it can be sold as a new building site as the downtown grows to the point of needing more space.

Throughout the zone there are new street trees, new paving and lighting with arches interspersed. At the City Hall intersection there is textured paving to slow the traffic and to indicate pedestrian importance in the downtown.

Shown on the concept drawings are sidewalk connections to the properties to the west of Pleasant Street as many residents need easy access on foot to shop and work on Main and Pleasant Streets. In addition, Cole Street, visually and functionally a part of the downtown is shown to have new street trees and replaced or improved sidewalks thereby completing the character of the downtown core.

The Green-Pleasant intersection, perhaps the most intense in the City, needs paving treatment and trees as shown to soften at the large asphalt paving areas of this corner. Here begins the transition from the active downtown except for mixed use offices, the parking area of the Post Office, the park space to the north, the transit office and motel adjacent to the supermarket.



Paving and trees are very much needed to bring all areas of the Downtown in this zone to conformance with the rest of the plan. At some point perhaps new uses will evolve for the existing motel and a safer connection can be provided to the supermarket as there is increased walking by residents to this important function in the City.

STREETSCAPE – ZONE 3

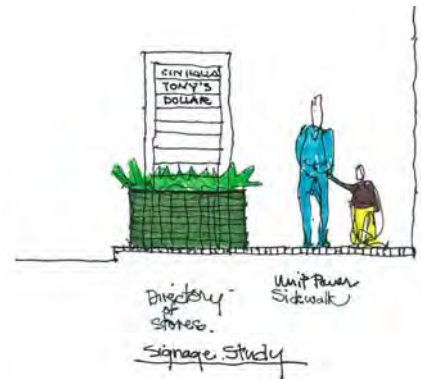
The Rite Aid Block across from City Hall will offer new development opportunities for the City as it becomes demolished and sold for new uses. The streetscape design and details are proposed to continue all the way to the St. Ann's intersection and down Pleasant Street to Mason.



We suggest that the present garage operation, behind the Church, be relocated nearby so as to create a small green space as you enter the downtown from the north as a welcome area with an entrance sign.

As you enter the downtown from the north, there are some residences and mixed commercial uses. Street trees and new paving and lighting need to be added to join the Main Street theme. The Mason - Pleasant intersection needs to have the same paving treatment as the others like City Hall.

Streetscape amenities such as trash and ash, containers, benches for seating and way-finding signage and other features will be proposed as the action plan unfolds and as the preliminary design for the streetscape proceeds to the next level. Furniture as installed at the Bickford Place Park will be used thereby creating a unity and a visually functional and maintainable streetscape.



PSNH PARK

At the large open space break on Main Street, across from the Cote Building, there is a proposed Information Center Building. There is a new entrance to the PSNH PARK which crosses the "green pipe" by bridge, and arrives at a new children's play area and a community band shell with an amphitheater for performances.



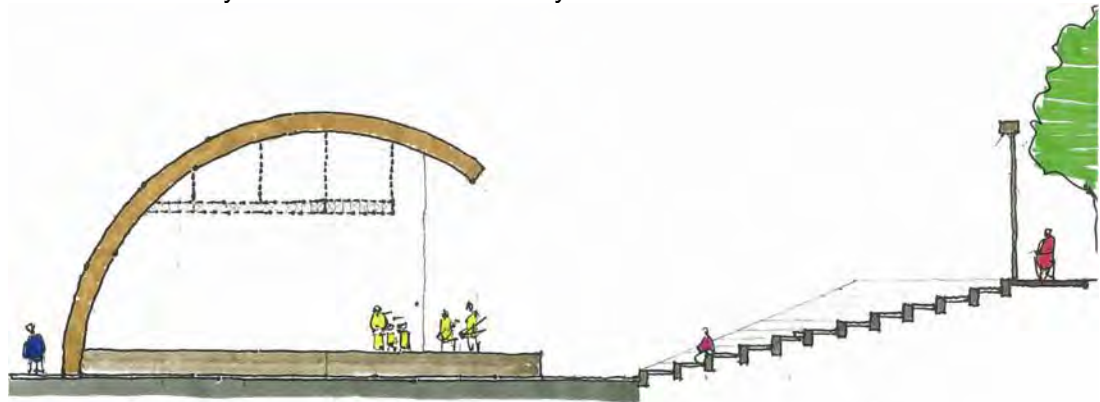
Other new uses of community gardens, adult recreation, pickleball, walking trails and exercise trails are possible. All need to be fitted to the existing requirements of the Park land in so far as there are operating and site restrictions as imposed by the existing conditions and the governing bodies.

The entire Park has great potential as a public space with a variety of active and passive uses. At the Tondreau side of the Park to the north, the existing parking lot needs to be re-designed and there can be other activities such a skateboard area or other recreation for the youth and adults of the community.



The park concept plan proposes the opening of the entire park landscape by generous and definitive tree and brush removals for safety and visual connections. This will make the Park inviting and useful for the entire public and provide the true feeling of a park and improved pedestrian safety as well. This Park becomes a most unique centerpiece of the downtown experience

With a new bridge proposed from inside the park to the east crossing the river, a connection is provided to the linear park developed by the City and invites the many existing users of that park into the PSNH Park from the east and thence back into the downtown activity core for increases vitality.



• BANDSHELL @ PSNH PARK •

SECTION 3

The Action Plan

What:

To Do

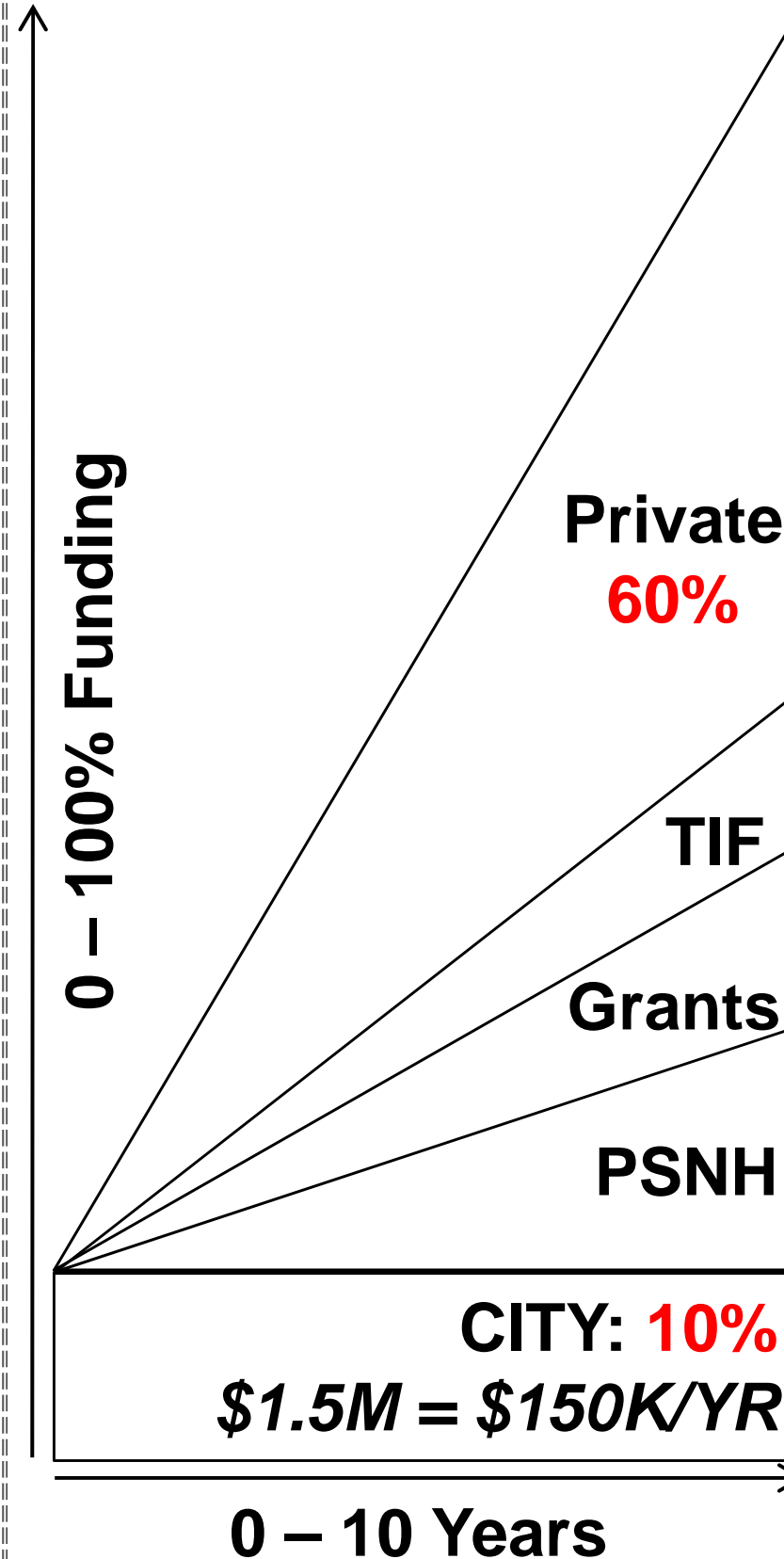
Funding Needs

Streetscape	\$ 5M
PSNH Park	
Downtown Vibrancy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Services• Events	\$ 10M
Communication & Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Energy City	
Real Estate Re-development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 – 11 Commercial Properties	

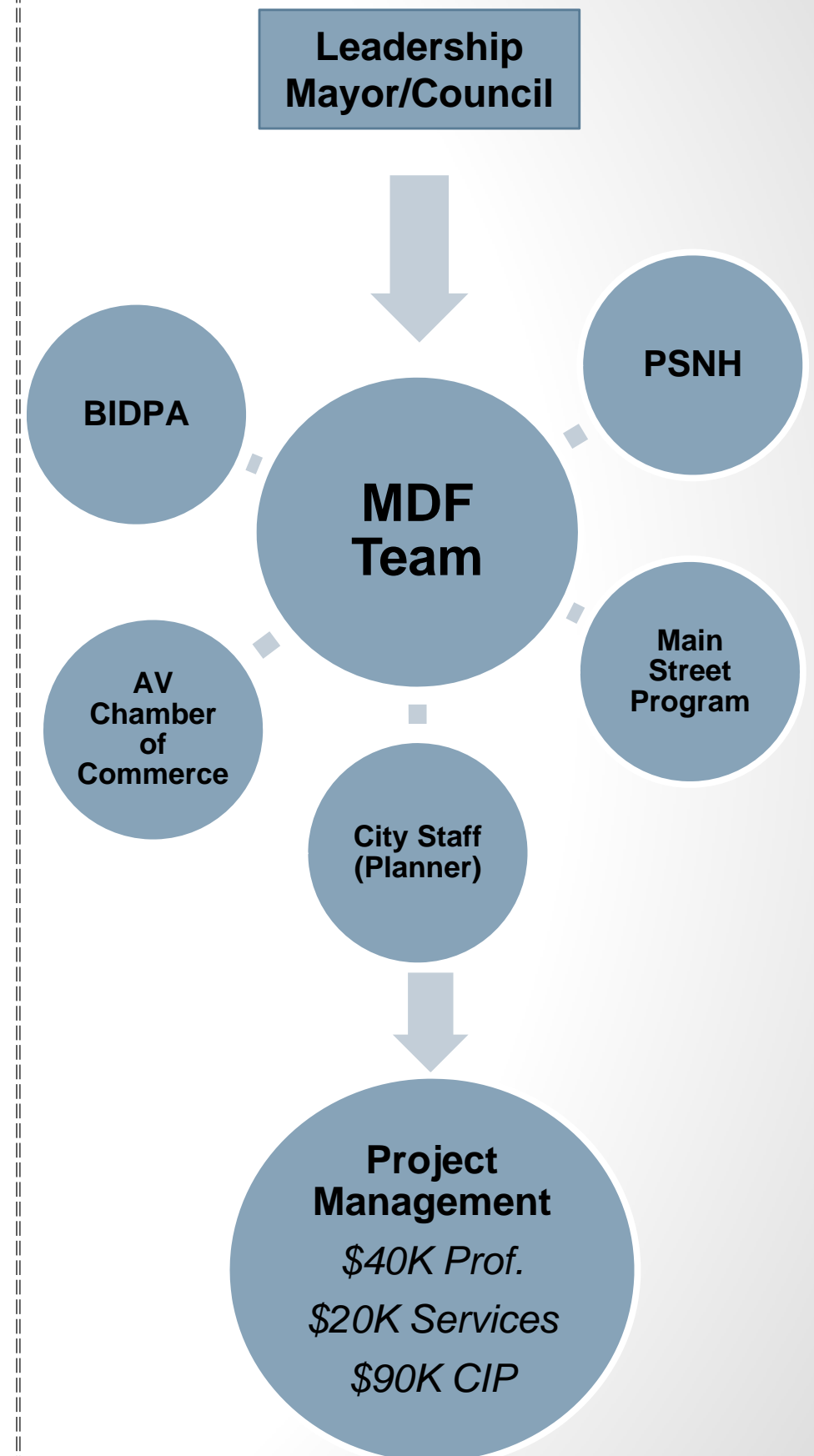
Total: \$ 15M

When:

Over 10 Years



How:



CITY OF BERLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE - MOVING DOWNTOWN FORWARD

H.E. Bergeron Engineers, Inc.
w/ John Wacker & Associates and Arnett Development Group, LLC
North Conway, NH 03860
(603) 356-6936

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	Now - 6 Months			6 - 12 Months			1 - 3 Years			3+ Years		
			Task	Responsible Entity	Cost	Task	Responsible Entity	Cost	Task	Responsible Entity	Cost	Task	Responsible Entity	Cost
To Provide and Economically Viable Downtown	Greater Supply of Quality Spaces (+ 10,000 sf)	Leadership and Advocacy	High: Develop MDF Committee	Mayor	\$0	High: Council Adopt MDF	Council	\$0	Review and Recommit MDF	Council	\$0	Review and Recommit MDF	Council	\$0
		Implementation Team with Project Manager	High: Identify and contract-recruit a MDF Project Manager (PM)	City Manager	\$ 40,000	High: Develop Interagency Accountability (Recurring)	MDF Project Manager	\$0 (Included in \$40,000)	Assign priority projects to Project Manager	MDF Committee	\$40,000 annually	Assign priority projects to Project Manager	MDF Committee	\$40,000 annually
		Develop Incentive Package	Convene NCIC, CEDC, DRED. To determine what can be set-aside as "package"	Tri-County	0	Issue a "Doing Business in the Downtown" marketing piece	MDF PM	\$500	Reprint, and Update every-other year	MDF PM	\$500 annually	Reprint, and Update every-other year	MDF PM	\$500 annually
		BIDPA as City Joint Developer	City & BIDPA MOU on former T-Bird and Courthouse	Manager, Mayor & BIDPA Chair	0	Prioritize BIPA strategy to help private owners develop other Kep Properties	BIDPA Board	\$7,500 for market and building assessments	Take on next priority building project	BIDPA with contracted assistance	\$200,000 +	Take on next priority building project	BIDPA with contracted assistance	\$200,000 +
	Greater Supply of Businesses and Residents in Those Spaces:10 Market-rate Housing Units	Improved Business Services	List Services from all providers	City Planner	0	Canvas businesses as to awareness and "gaps"	AV Chamber	0	Web-based info and CRM system installed	MDF PM	3,000	CRM system on-going	MDF PM	#3,000 annually
		City Attributes for Tourism w/ NH Grand Strategy	List Unique attributes, including Heritage Park, Jericho Hill-ATV, Industial past and future, and "New Energy"	MDF Leadership Team	0	Meet w NH Grand staff to see how best to focus on Berlin City attributes, include these in NH Grand marketing	Planner, Main Street and MDF PM	0	Berlin as "New Energy City" promotion within the NH Grand effort	Planner, Main Street and MDF PM	\$4,000 annually	Berlin as "New Energy City" promotion within the NH Grand effort	Planner, Main Street and MDF PM	\$4,000 annually
		Annual EZ Measurements against Plan	Select 10 from 20 provided EZ Measures	City Planner	0				Collect data from EZ sources annually and present to MDF Committee	Planner, MDF PM, and Assessor	0	Collect data from EZ sources annually and present to MDF Committee	Planner, MDF PM, and Assessor	0
		Investment Traget Set: 1% of Operating Budget	Introduce at Dec and Jan Council meetings	MDF Consultant Team	0	Council adoption annually as target	Mayor, Council, CFO, andCity Manager	1% of budget	Council adoption annually as target	Mayor, Council, CFO, andCity Manager	1% of budget	Council adoption annually as target	Mayor, Council, CFO, andCity Manager	1% of budget
Grow Tax Base within Downtown Area	Higher Valuations: Increase Valuations by 50%	Hospitality & Meeting Space	Work on/with former JCP site to ready for market	CD Contractor, Planner, FD, Manager	0	Work on/with former JCP site to ready for market	CD Contractor, Planner, FD, Manager	0	Work on/with former JCP site to ready for market	CD Contractor, Planner, FD, Manager	0	Use new Hotel prperty tax proceeds to help pay-down TIF bond	Council and Manager, Assessor	0
		Family & Recreation Outfitter(s)	Recruit for BIDPA space: existing and next	BIDPA and Realtor	2,000									
		Develop 55+ market housing	Develop with Realtors what market is, could be, buying criterion	MDF PM	0	Determine if any City, BIDPA properties could work for this market	BIDPA and MDF PM	\$4,000 building and market assessments	Seek MOUs, grant funding, co-developer	BIDPA and MDG PM	\$500	Commence development	Private developer with BIDPA, MDF PM	\$200,000 to \$1m
		Develop 4 City-Owned properties (3 buildings, 1 vacant pad)	BIDPA to develop a prioritization process, based upon the buildings importance to Downtown and MDF,			Conduct "360 Opportunity Assessments": Money, Markets, People and the Place on Old T-Bird and Courthouse	BIDPA and MDF PM	\$2,500						
	Fewer Delinquencies: 90% Current	Marketing of "The New-Energy City"				Discussion of new brand ID for Berlin	MDF, PM, NH Grand	0	Adoption of logo and graphic	MDF Committee, PM and NH Grand	\$2,000	On-going PR regarding Berlin as "New Energy City in Great North Woods" (or similar)	MDF, NH Grand, PM	\$2,000 annually
		Aggressive "Repo" of Key Properties	Recommend to Csl a fair but aggressive process to tax-deed key properties in tax-default	Manager, Assessor					Tax deed a Key Property that is legally delinquent	Assessor, City Manager, Council, Legal Counsel	Loss of back-taxes	Redevelopment of site	BIDPA with contractors, private developers	\$20,000 to \$200,000
		TIF District(s) \$___M Capital Financing	Internal assessment of possible public investments needed in downtown, and best TIF boundaries	Pannaer, assessor, DPW and outside contractor	\$5,000	Seek TIF adoption before any major expansions downtown, before April 1st	Council and City Manager	0	TIF established and \$___m of city capital improvements are made	Council, Manager, DPW, contractors	\$____m CIP	TIF proceeds exceed debt service, difference is used to lower tax rates	Council	0
		PSNH Park as Major Econ Attraction	Awareness w PSNH regarding economic impacts	PSNH and Leadership Team	0	Park improvements begin and "New Energy City" publicized	PSNH and MDF PM	\$____CIP and \$1,000	Improves are completed in phases; economic advantages get PR	PSNH	\$5,000 annually	New Energy Park in the New-Energy City is opened	PSNH	see above
Downtown Becomes a Job Hub	Jobs with Futures: 200 Jobs with Benefits	Partnership with Sherbrooke				Approach Canadia Commercial Consul via NH Canadian Council	City Manager, Mayor, MDF PM and Berlin State Senator	0	Sponsor a Counsul-Council- Mayor visit to Berlin, and reverse to Sherbrook	Mayor and Council, NH Council, MDF PM, AV Chamber	\$2,000	Host Tourism, Cultural and Industrial Forums every other year	AV Chamber, NH Council, Canadian Consul, MDF PM, Mayor and Council	5,000
		Publicize City-Quality 24/7 Services for Businesses	Update web-site to include "City Services" link	City Planner	0	Update annually	City Planner	0	Update annually	City Planner	0	Update annually	City Planner	0
		Growth of Community Services Facilities							Understand "3rd-place" strategy. Identify gaps in community-spaces for creative-entrepreneurial businesses	MDF Leadership Team	0 to \$3,000	Update every 3 years	Leadership Tem	
		Culture and Infrastructure for Innovation							Based upon "gaps: identified, seek investment into these community attributes	PM and Leadership Team	0	First new amenity project begins	Private investment w City assistance, possible TIF and/or RSA 79-e funding	TBD by scope of project, mostly private investment
	Entepreneurs: 10 New Retail, and 10 Upper Floor Entrepreneurs	One-stop for Business Services				MOU for a One (virtual) Stop for new business start-up assistance	WREN and WMCC, SBDC	\$1,000						
		Business Launch/Incubator/ Growth Space				Assess former T-Bird and Courthouse against market demand, costs and possible grant sources	Planner, BIDPA, Main Str, PM	\$2,500 site assessment	Transfer control to BIDPA, commence development cycle, secure CDFA/other development funfing	Council, BIDPA, MDF PM, contractors, private developers	\$100,000 to \$200,000 for costs and grant match	Commence and complete redevelopment	BIDPA, and MDF PM	\$1m to \$_____
		WMCC Connection	Include WMCC in MDF	Mayor and Csl, WMCC	0	Include WMCC in MDF	Mayor and Csl, WMCC	0	Include WMCC in MDF	Mayor and Csl, WMCC	0	Include WMCC in MDF	Mayor and Csl, WMCC	0
		Live - Work Space				Review land-use regulations to encourgae this unique mixed use (ie fire codes)	Planner, FD, MDF Committee, Planning Board	\$2,000 for model ordinance work	Include WMCC in MDF	Mayor and Csl, WMCC	0	Assist Private or Tri-County developer	City Manager, Planner MDF PM	0

CITY OF BERLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE - MOVING DOWNTOWN FORWARD

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DESIGN ACTION PLAN

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	Now - 6 Months			6 - 12 Months			1 - 3 Years			3+ Years		
			Task	Responsible Entity	Cost	Task	Responsible Entity	Cost	Task	Responsible Entity	Cost	Task	Responsible Entity	Cost
Improve Downtown Streetscape	Implement the Streetscape Vision	Final Design Master Plan & Develop Construction Financing				Fund & Contract For Design Consultant	City Manager	\$100,000	Identify Grant, Tax Credit & Sponsorship Funding Opportunities	MDF Project Manager, City Manager	\$0			
		Implement the Streetscape Plan	Move South Welcome Sign & Identify Upgrades to Directional and Informational Signage	DPW, Main Street Program	\$0	Coordinate with NCIC for Information Kiosk	City Planner, NCIC	\$0	Construct Phase I Improvements	MDF Project Manager, DPW	\$1,500,000	Construct Phase 2 & 3 Improvements	MDF Project Manager, DPW	\$1,500,000
		Develop & Deploy a Maintenance Program										Coordinate w/ Owners and Tenants	Main Street Program, DPW	\$0
	Preserve & Enhance Historical Integrity	Update Zoning & Site Plan Regulations	Coordination meeting with Historical Society to establish guidelines	Planning Board	\$0	Update Design Standards & Regulations	Planning Board, Land Use Consultant	\$5,000						
		Develop Incentive Program for Upgrading Existing Buildings							Identify funding opportunities	MDF Project Manager, Main Street, Better Buildings	\$0	Implement Façade Improvement	MDF Project Manager, BIDPA	\$300,000
Enhance PSNH Smith Hydro Park for Public Use	Implement the new PSNH Park vision	Final Design Master Plan	MOU PSNH & City with Adoption by Council	City Manager	\$2,500 (legal fees)	Fund & Contract For Design Consultant	City Manager, PSNH	\$75,000						
		Implement the Master Plan	Develop Tree Clearing Plan & Removal	City DPW, PSNH	\$40,000				Construct Phase I Improvements (New Entrance, Active Use Areas)	City Manager, PSNH	\$1,000,000	Construct Phase 2 & 3 Improvements (Parking, Trails & Community Spaces)	City Manager, PSNH	\$1,000,000
		Develop Maintenance Program with PSNH									Prepare Maintenance Plan	City DPW, PSNH	\$10,000	
	Integrate the Park with Main and Pleasant Streets	Implement the connection between the Park and Downtown activities							Install Directional & Informational Signage	City DPW	\$10,000	Construct Unity Street Bridge	City Manager, PSNH	\$400,000
Downtown Is Valued as a Community Assett	Increase Use of PSNH Park	Informational Visitor Center to compliment the Kiosk	Develop Plan for Implementation, Staffing, and Funding	AV Chamber of Commerce, Main Street	\$5,000	Construct Visitor Center	City Manager	\$20,000	Visitor Center Staffing & Maintenance	AV Chamber of Commerce, Main Street	\$10,000 (annually)	Evaluate & Update Materials	AV Chamber of Commerce, Main Street	\$1,000 (annually)
		Add programing for Park							Develop Park Programming	PSNH, AV Chamber of Commerce, Main St., WMCC	\$0	Evaluate & Update Programming	PSNH, AV Chamber of Commerce, Main St.	\$0
	More Great Events and Community Programming for Downtown	Coordinate Downtown Activities with other City Events	Promote & Coordinate Downtown Activities	Heritage Park, WMCC, ATV Park, AV Chamber of Commerce, Main St.	\$0	City Department Calendars Coordinated	City Manager	\$0	Evaluate & Update Cooridnated Activities	Downtown Event Coordinator	\$0	Evaluate & Update Cooridnated Activities	Downtown Event Coordinator	\$0
		High-success Downtown activities	Continue Successful Downtown Events	Main St. Program	Sponsorship	Continue Successful Downtown Events	Main St. Program	Sponsorship	Continue Successful Downtown Events	Main St. Program	Sponsorship	Continue Successful Downtown Events	Main St. Program	Sponsorship
		Establish a Downtown Event Coordinator				Identify Downtown Events Coordinator	AV Chamber of Commerce, Main St. Program, City Staff	\$0						
		10-15 On-Street Event Per Year	Maintain existing successful & Identify new Downtown event opportunities	AV Chamber of Commerce, Main St. Program, City Staff	\$0	Maintain existing successful & Identify new Downtown event opportunities	AV Chamber of Commerce, Main St. Program, City Staff	\$0	Maintain existing successful & Identify new Downtown event opportunities	Downtown Event Coordinator	\$0	Evaluate & Update Downtown Event opportunities	Downtown Event Coordinator	\$0

SECTION 4

Attachments

ATTACHMENT A

Master Plan Economic Development Recommendations

Economic Development



Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the economic characteristics of the City of Berlin and the related issues and opportunities presently confronting the community. The first portion of the analysis focuses on historic employment trends for the city, as well as the county and state, based on changes in employment, wages and establishments at the industry sector level. This is followed by a review of changes in the labor force and unemployment rates, occupational characteristics of the workforce, and concludes with a summary of the city's tax base and bonding capacity. The second portion of the chapter outlines the key opportunities and initiatives that the City must address as part of a long-term strategy for sustained economic development.

Summary of Major Findings

1. Employment growth in Berlin and Coos County lags behind the rest of New Hampshire

- Between 1996 and 2006, the state experienced a net increase of approximately 85,500 jobs representing a growth rate of 15.8%. In comparison, the county's employment base grew by only 2.9% (394 jobs) while the city had a net loss of 786 jobs, a decrease of almost 17%.
- The vast majority of job growth occurred in the first half of the decade, with the second half dropping off substantially due to a decrease in the goods producing sectors where over 17,000 jobs were lost in the state between 2001 and 2006. However, the service producing sectors also fell off during this time contributing to the slower growth.
- Recent employment projections prepared by the State indicate that construction of the federal correctional facility in Berlin will not completely offset the job losses resulting from the mill closures if no other economic initiatives are undertaken.

2. Berlin's economic base is not as diversified as the rest of New Hampshire

- The City of Berlin's employment base has been considerably impacted by the region's transitioning economy. Given the city's long relationship with the wood and paper processing industry, the closure of the Fraser Pulp Mill in Berlin and the subsequent ripple through other sectors largely contributed to a loss of 1,120 private sector jobs, including 970 goods producing and 150 service-related jobs, over ten years. As

elsewhere in the county, government sector growth helped to offset these losses with the addition of 334 jobs, approximately two-thirds of which were state positions.

- The county's losses in goods producing sectors were deeper than the state's with a decrease of 30% representing 1,000 jobs. This steeper rate of decline is primarily a factor of the region's reliance on a single industry cluster related to wood and paper manufacturing that incurred major closures and layoffs during this time period. Some of these losses were offset by service sector gains of 823 jobs (10.5%), as well as gains in the government sector, which had a net increase of 571 jobs, a growth rate of 24%.

3. Berlin's role as a regional employment center is declining

- The City of Berlin's economy continues to represent the largest employment center in Coos County despite these major losses. Overall, the city's job base totaled 3,868, representing approximately 28% of Coos County's total covered employment as of 2006. This percentage dropped from roughly 35% of countywide employment ten years prior in 1996.
- Coos County's three largest growth areas were Health Care; Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; and Accommodations and Food Services. Health Care added the largest number of total jobs with 406 (22.5%), as well as the most new establishments (22) and grew at a steady pace throughout the decade. This sector, along with Retail Trade, represents the largest portions of the regional employment base accounting for approximately 15% each.
- Growth in the Arts/Entertainment/Recreation and Accommodations/Food Services sectors are a reflection of the region's tourism economy. Combined, these two sectors account for approximately 16% of the county's total employment base, although the latter employs almost three times as many workers.
- The City of Berlin's labor force experienced a short growth spurt in 1998, but this was followed by a fairly steady decline through 2005. Overall, the city's labor force declined by 9%, or 464 workers, over this ten-year time period. This decline in the labor force was accompanied by a spike in the unemployment rate to over 10%. As workers were removed from the labor force, either through out-migration, retirement, or for other reasons, the unemployment rate eventually returned to 1997 levels. However, the city's rate still remains higher than the county and the state rates.

4. Wage levels in Berlin grew at a slower rate than Coos County and the state

- Average weekly wages in the city across all sectors increased by approximately 25% over the past decade. At the county and state levels, average wages increased by 37% and 53%, respectively, over the course of the decade.
- Although average wages in the city rose more slowly than within Coos County, wages for workers in Berlin were generally higher in most industry sectors. Sectors where the city's average wages are higher than the county's include Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Transportation/Warehousing, and Accommodations and Food Services. Conversely, the city's average wage levels are lower than the state's in almost all industry sectors with the exception of Agriculture/Forestry, and Arts and Entertainment.

5. Outstanding debt levels in Berlin are not excessive and the potential to bond remains strong

- From 2000 through 2004, local property valuation in the city experienced a few years of decline followed by a period in which values remained relatively flat. Equalized values also declined initially but began to show some positive growth in 2003 and 2004. During this four-year time period the equalization ratio dropped at least 10% annually indicating that local valuation was rapidly diverging from actual market conditions.
- A citywide revaluation of property brought local values into parity with market values in 2005 resulting in a 68% increase over 2004 values and a corresponding reduction in the tax rate of 38%. Since 2005, local valuation has shown moderate but steady increases of 0.8% and 1.9% respectively, for 2006 and 2007. Equalized values also initially showed positive growth of 3.5% in 2006 followed by a decline of 2.4% in 2007. This loss of value, combined with preliminary sales data for 2008, suggest that the effects of the downturn in the national housing market have stalled the recovery of property values in the city.
- The city's base valuation for debt purposes, as of 2007, was approximately \$459.4 million, which allows for a debt limit of \$13.8 million. The city's outstanding debt service that is comparable to this debt ceiling is approximately \$1.9 million, which leaves \$11.8 million available for additional financing of municipal bonds.

6. Berlin Has New Opportunities but May Not Be Ready to Fully Realize This Potential

The new, soon to be constructed Federal Prison, along with the development of the ATV Park, both present tangible opportunities for the City in the next few years. Likewise there are numerous initiatives within Coos County which are described elsewhere in this report that represent opportunities for Berlin as well as the County. However, Berlin has a downtown and deteriorated multi-family housing stock which must be addressed so as to attract new residents and tourists to the City. Likewise development of the ATV Park is behind schedule and the City needs to acquire land for future industrial development. Finally the recent closure and demolition of the Fraser Pulp Mill have created a series of possible new opportunities for the City. These challenges and opportunities require an organizational capacity and City wide commitment of experienced staff and adequate resources in order to be fully evaluated and implemented.

Summary of Major Recommendations

The economic base of both Berlin and the rest of Coos County have changed considerably over the past 30 or more years, as the region has been transformed from an almost total reliance on the pulp and paper industry to that of a more diversified economic base. However, the City and the region have not been able to attract the full spectrum of higher paying industries found in the southern part of New Hampshire or in eastern Massachusetts, so the wage rates and income levels lag the rest of the state. Furthermore, with the recent closing of the Fraser Mill, Berlin's share of total employment within Coos County has declined from approximately 35% to 28%. Also, the population base of the City has declined considerably as discussed in the demographic chapter of this Master Plan.

Clearly, the City of Berlin and the County have a need to transform their economic base, and there are, in fact, a number of initiatives at the County level which seek to create a plan to help achieve this goal. In addition, the new Federal Prison, both during its construction and when it is completed in the next few years, will create new opportunities for the City. However, Berlin needs an economic development strategy to fully benefit from these actions and to position itself for future opportunities. The underlying premise behind each of the following recommendations is that Berlin becomes more pro-active with its economic development initiatives. There is always a risk that new initiatives may not make money or may take longer to implement than initially thought, but there is also a risk to the “do nothing” approach. The result of inaction can now be seen in the form of disinvestment by the private sector, increased vacancies, a stagnating tax base and difficulty in attracting new businesses, particularly in the downtown.

The major recommended action items for the City of Berlin over the next 12 to 18 months regarding its’ Economic Development Plan, in order of priority, are as follows:

1. Make Downtown Redevelopment a Priority

A downtown in any city represents the “soul” of the city, particularly to people new to the area (i.e. tourists, federal prison workers, and prospective new employers). The deteriorated/vacant status of three major properties in downtown Berlin not only is a poor reflection of how people actually “feel” about their own community, but it also detracts from the overall business climate and tax base of the City and the success of the remaining downtown businesses. The three major blighted and vacant properties in downtown include the Rite Aid Block, the Cote Block and the foundations left after a fire on Pleasant Street. The Cote Block and the Pleasant Street properties are both for sale and the Rite Aid site is reportedly being retained for a new Rite Aid store. In addition, there are a number of other downtown buildings in need of new investment, including the former Coos County Courthouse. The following recommendations are offered relative to the downtown area.

- The City should develop a master plan for the downtown. The City should assure that this happens, perhaps undertaking it in partnership with an organization that agrees to be assigned the responsibility for implementing the recommendations of this planning process.
- The City should encourage, support, and develop a memorandum of understanding with an organizational entity to take charge of the revitalization of downtown. The entity chosen should have the personnel and the sophistication to pursue a wide variety of grants and to utilize creative financing in the redevelopment of these properties. The economics of downtown redevelopment at the present time are marginal and, as the Tri-County Cap Agency discovered, it took a considerable focus on the part of one individual and the creative usage of four to five different sources of funding to fully redevelop the Cornerstone Block. This project is a significant improvement to the downtown and others like it will be needed.

- The City should work in partnership with both for-profit and not-for-profit development entities to redevelop underperforming properties throughout the Downtown, including lower and upper Main Street and Pleasant Street. Key parcels should include the Cote Block and related Pleasant Street properties, the Rite Aid properties north of Mason Street, and the former Coos County Courthouse. The prioritization of projects should await the completion of the downtown master plan. The City's efforts could include, but not necessarily be limited to, seeking State and Federal funds for these projects, working with developers and other interested parties, and providing adequate public parking, streetscape improvements, and other public utilities and amenities.

- The City's downtown master planning process should consider which buildings to retain, where additional parking may be required, overall design considerations, and how to phase and implement the agreed upon action items. The City should be prepared to participate in the funding of some portion of the necessary improvements, particularly in the area of infrastructure upgrades, parking, landscaping, etc.

- Upon completion of the downtown plan, the City should assure itself that the current zoning not only permits the type of development the plan suggests, but actively promotes and attracts it. The City may wish to consider some elements of Form Based Zoning, which would require any new buildings to be developed in a manner consistent with existing buildings with respect to placement and design (i.e. placed at the back edge of the sidewalk with parking to the rear, buildings to be multi-story, durable materials, etc.).

2. Continue to Upgrade the Housing Stock

Over the past eight years, the Berlin Housing Authority and the City have become more aggressive in acquiring and demolishing multi-family buildings which are often not in compliance with either building codes or life safety codes. The need for a more aggressive policy in this regard grew out of a study by Applied Economic Research in 1999, which highlighted the need to reduce the blighted multi-family housing stock that was no longer necessary for a declining population base. The initial work of the Androscoggin Valley Economic Recovery Corporation (AVER) in 2001 further highlighted this need, and a series of sometimes fatal fires during this decade have also underscored the urgency of this need. This effort needs to be continued at a more aggressive pace, with specific targets established for the more blighted neighborhoods in the City, including but not limited to the Lower East Side, the Granite Street area, and parcels in the general vicinity of the former Notre Dame High School. The recommended action items in this regard are as follows.

- The City should develop a financing and organizational plan to implement the above goal in five years. This financing plan may include a combination of City bonding, Housing Authority funds, HUD funds, etc. If necessary, work should be undertaken with the City's Congressional Delegation in this regard to secure an earmark.

ATTACHMENT B

MDF Task Force Meetings Summaries



Civil • Structural • Surveying

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MEETING MINUTES

Date:	June 13, 2011	Time:	4:00 – 6:00 pm	Project #:	2011-044
Project Description:	Berlin Downtown Economic & Design Study				
Meeting Location:	Berlin City Hall Auditorium				
Owner/Client:	City of Berlin				
Prepared by:	Jay Poulin, P.E., Project Manager				

Page 1 of 4

Attended By:

Downtown Action Plan Committee (Present)

- Melissa Frenette (Coos County Family Health)
- Dick Huot (BIDPA, Tri-County CAP, NFHP)
- Sylvia Poulin (Main St. Program)
- Tom McCue (City Councilor, Main St. Program)
- Dave Morin (Berlin Planning Board, Downtown Business Owner – shoe store)
- Max Makaitis (Housing & Economic Development Director)
- Ernie Allain (Berlin Planning Board, former DPW Director)
- Mike Caron (Caron Building Center)
- Laura Jameson (WREN, Theatre North)
- Pam Laflamme (City Planner)

Downtown Action Plan Committee (Missing)

- Kelly Guilmette (Northway Bank)
- Elizabeth Rudiger (Downtown Business Owner – Savoir Flair)
- Alison McLean (PSNH)

Downtown Action Plan Team

- Jay Poulin (HEB)
- John Wacker (John Wacker & Associates – Design Analysis)
- Stu Arnett (Arnett Development Group – Economic Analysis)

Purpose of Meeting:

- Introduction of HEB Team and Committee

Items discussed:

1. Introduction of the Team and the Committee.
2. Listen to Committee concerns regarding economic and streetscape development.

Sylvia Poulin

- Create downtown campus feel.
- Need to be a walk-able community.
- Continuity of design streetscape.
- Include PSNH park into study (Approx. 10-acre park?).
- Study limits from Glen Ave to St. Anne's Church.
- Need market analysis of what's missing to support retail activity.
- Economics – where do we go from here? What are we missing?
- What works:
 - Women's clothing – Maureen's, Rumors
 - Gifts – Savoir Flair, Cindy's gift
 - Dining – 3 pizza/sub shops, Chinese & Tea birds (general 3 star)
- Needs: Sports, Restaurants, Men's Clothing
- Coos Branding – Berlin is identified as "Marketplace – Provider of Goods"

Dave Morin

- Need a uniform streetscape for Main Street.
- Blend vacant spaces.
- Need well-blended businesses.
- Incubator business space would be helpful.
- Many Berlin businesses have personal touch – owner in store.
- Previous tenants with good draw:
 - Woolworths used to be general store on Main St. (Family Dollar doesn't cut it)
 - JCPenney
 - Corporate decisions to downsize – local stores did well.
- No drive-through between Main St. & Pleasant St. – only walkway connections.

Tom McCue

- Study needs to include Pleasant Street.
- If shoppers don't see parking on Main Street, they pass-by.
- Need to look at expanding business hours.

Mike Caron

- Need Pleasant St to Main St connection.
- Wal-Mart is a draw – need to bring those people to downtown.
- Estimated approx. 100 people live in the project scope area.

Dick Huot

- City owns parking lots on Pleasant St. (Salvation Army, CCFHS & Citizens Bank).
 - City can use for development if needed.
- Need to promote river and ATV park for tourist draw – how do we capture people from away?

Laura Jameson

- Farmers Market typically draws 55 vendors with products within 100 mile radius.
 - Includes 13 farmers with fresh products.
- Need design elements and design guidelines identified.
- Quality of life in Berlin; inexpensive to live.

Ernie Allain

- Remove telephone poles from sidewalks.

Max Makaitis

- 3 major projects will bring life and money to the city:
 - Gorham Mill (\$11 million payroll).
 - Prison (\$15 million payroll + \$10 million in purchases).
 - Biomass (\$2 million payroll + \$25 million in wood purchase) .

3. Review Committee expectations, including desired outcomes; define a “successful” project.

Dave Morin

- Streetscape and development plan.
- Identification of complementary businesses to attract.

Max Makaitis

- Identify complimentary business to Wal-Mart – **Capitalize on Wal-Mart.**
- Antique pawn shop may work.
- Need appealing entrance to PSNH park on Main St. – **Make PSNH happy.**
- Think of Berlin as Renewable/Clean Energy City.

Tom McCue

- Give public opportunity to show pride – **Create Community Spirit.**
- Rt. 16 travelers – they are coming through, who do we retain them?.

Sylvia Poulin

- Androscoggin River is an asset.
- Need action plan with connectivity – **Plan Ready to Go.**
- Identify business wish list.

Dick Huot

- **Need culture and entertainment.**

Mike Caron

- Nowhere to go at night?

Laura Jameson

- We need to tell our story.

4. Confirm project scope and boundaries (limits of work).

John Wacker

- Reviewed proposed project scope area and all agreed.
- Project area to span from Glen Ave to St. Anne's Church, and include Main St. & Pleasant St. and Cole Street to capture parking areas and other connections.
- The need for phasing with the action plan was discussed.

Max Makaitis

- Suggested plaques in PSNH park to identify significant or historic feature.

5. Review economic program needs and opportunities.

Discussed in Item #2 above.

6. Review streetscape program needs and opportunities.

Discussed in Item #2 above.

7. Are there funding sources we should be aware of (including implementation), so we can keep their criterion in mind?

Funding for the study came from Tillotson, City and PSNH funding. There are no specific funding requirements for the study.

Regarding implementation, the following funding sources may be available;

- RBOG – USDA Rural Development – Rural Business Opportunity Grant
- CEDS – US EDA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Tillotson – they like to see seed monies develop into real projects
- TIF – Tax Increment Financing
- NHCLF – Community Loan Fund

8. Review project schedule.

- Develop goals and agenda for 6/29/11 public meeting.
- Invite entire community to listening session #1 on 6/29/11.
- Action Team to prepare agenda.
- Need to promote project at meeting.
- Meeting will be conducted at Bickford Place Park 6-8pm on 6/29/11.
- Pam to advertise meeting soon.
- Snacks and drinks will be made available.

9. The role of City staff and Committee for a successful process and Report.

- Tom McCue stated that City Manager, Mayor and City Council all support Main St. program and this study.

10. Determine how this effort is to be coordinated or based upon other reports, plans or efforts.

- a. Studies and reports to review:
 - i. Pam to e-mail copy of reports and studies.
 - ii. Copies of Destination Development LLC Coos Branding study given to action team.
- b. One-on-one interviews or visits:
 - i. Suggested interviewing Andre Caron.
 - ii. BALLE – Business Alliance for Local Living Economies.

11. Summary of the program for the study.

Cc: File



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MOVING DOWNTOWN BERLIN FORWARD
Prepared for Committee Meeting 08/15/11

AGENDA

1. Where are we now and what have we discovered? (45 min)

- a. Essentially complete with data gathering
- b. Conducted Public Input Session #1 6/29/11
 - i. What were the clear themes?
- c. Economic Strategy Review
 - i. Progress to date
 - ii. Major discoveries
 - iii. Possible actions moving forward
- d. Design Strategy Review
 - i. Progress to date
 - ii. Major discoveries
 - iii. Possible actions moving forward

2. Where to next? (15 min)

- a. Review purpose and goals of Sept. 14th Public Input Session
- b. Needs/concerns from committee

Moving Downtown Forward

Design & Economic Action Plan

Committee Meeting Presentation

November 14, 2011

Presented by:

Jay Poulin, HEB Engineers

Stu Arnett, Arnett Development Group

John Wacker, John Wacker Associates

HEB
Civil • Structural • Surveying

JWA

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Group, LLC
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Presentation Agenda: *MDF*

- Status & Update
 - Economic Strategy
 - Design Strategy
- Your Actions Today
 - Goals
 - Measures
 - Leadership Team
- Discussion and Next Steps

Previous Steps

- Master Plan Adoption
 - Economic Development Chapter recommends a *Downtown Plan*
- Other plans and studies
- Assessing data
- Merchant interviews
- State-regional outreach
- Berlin meetings:
 - City Council
 - BIDPA
 - MDF Committee
 - City staff
 - Community listening forums
 - Media
- Interim Reports
 - July, August and Sept

Thoughts Worth Repeating

- Berlin is a *City* in the North *Country*
- Change is all “better”
- Tourism issues:
 - *NH Grand Base Camp* issues
 - Look North - *Sherbrook*
- Tax base upside for real estate
- Need a co-developer of key real estate
- Gaps in Core Competencies
- Role of City Government is key
 - Leadership and ownership
 - Consistent investment: 1%?
 - Demand results
- SWOT:
 - Concerns: 8
 - Positives: 20

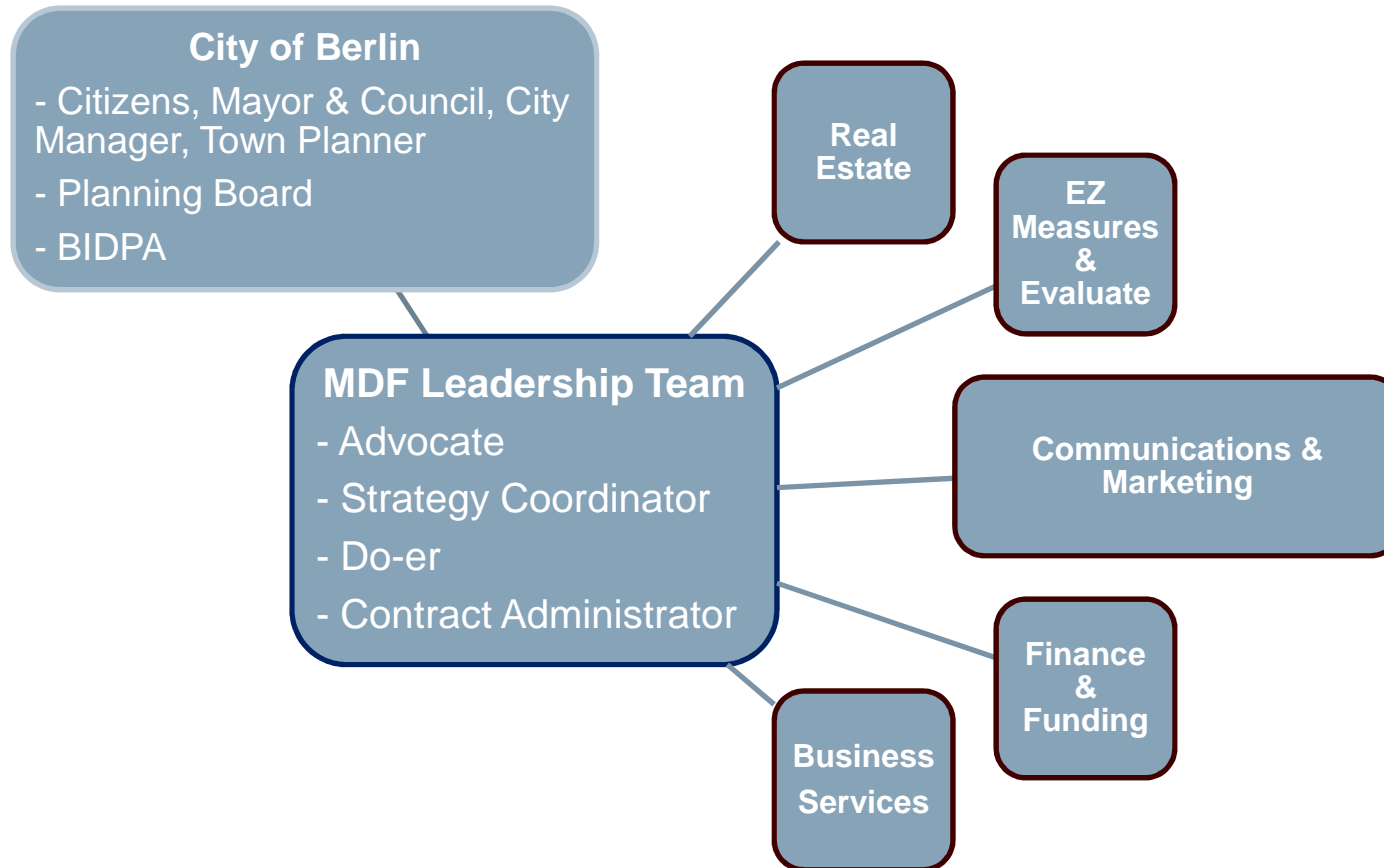
Economic Goals: *Moving Downtown Forward* Envisions a Downtown that is...

- Economically viable
 - Greater supply of quality spaces
 - Greater supply of quality business and residents in those spaces
- Growing tax base
 - Higher valuations
 - Fewer delinquencies
- A job hub: More and better...
 - Jobs with futures
 - Entrepreneurs
 - Retailers
 - Upper floors of inventors and creative
- Is Well Designed
 - Traffic, people, safety
 - Natural beauty
 - PSNH Park

Suggested Targeted Measures

- Economically Viable:
 - 50% increase in gross retail sales
- Tax Base
 - 50% increase in taxable assessed values
- Job Hub
 - 100 new jobs
 - 20 new entrepreneurs
- Well Designed
 - Streetscape
 - PSNH Park

MDF Implementation Team



Design Goals: *Moving Downtown Forward* Envisions a Downtown that....

...is built as envisioned in the ***Conceptual Streetscape Design Plan***

...includes an enhanced ***PSNH Smith-Hydro Park*** for new public uses.

...offers more great ***Events and Community Programming*** for Downtown



Engineering for your future!

Discussion, Questions and Next Steps

- December 5th
- January 2012
- Thank you!
 - Jay Poulin at:
603-356-6936 or
jpoulin@hebengineers.com

ATTACHMENT C

Community Input Sessions Summaries



Civil • Structural • Surveying

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MEETING MINUTES

Date:	June 29, 2011	Time:	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Project #:	2011-044
Project Description:	Berlin Downtown Economic & Design Study				
Meeting Location:	Bickford Place/Former Rite-Aid Building				
Owner/Client:	City of Berlin				
Prepared by:	Jay Poulin, P.E., Project Manager				

Page 1 of 3

Public Input Session #1

Attended By:

- See attached Attendance List

Purpose of Meeting:

- To hear the ideas, vision, and concerns of the Citizen's of Berlin relating to the Downtown Area

Items discussed:

1. Question to Attendees: What does a vibrant, successful downtown look like and feel like to you?

- People walking
- No empty storefronts
- Specialty shops – coffee/sweets
- Space continuity – no gaps
- Active night life after 5 pm
- Parking – maybe a garage?
- 2nd floor occupied by housing & business
- Space is affordable, viable, (finished)
- Open Space should be less passive/more activities
- Bike lanes, access – connect to Gorham
- Better trash pick-up with city
- B&B's
- Crafters
- Community space – gardens
- Not too many Rules on signs
- Dog parks
- Hotel with amenities – pool, ect.
- Music, activities
- Rail-to-Trail
- Get into water & clean up banks

2. Question to Attendees: What services are needed that are not currently provided?

- Hotel w/ health club & restaurant
- Public rest rooms
- Winter farm market & crafts place
- Bike racks
- Location for Youth to go
- Information about town
 - Info-Booth, Brochures
 - On line Event Calendar
 - Transportation/bus awareness
- Restaurants/Bars
 - Restaurants
 - Evening nightclub
 - Coffee shop/bakery
- Evening Activities
- Shopping
 - Convenience/grocery market
 - Men's clothing
 - Toy store
 - Local, American-made store
 - Sell what Wal-Mart doesn't (yard)
 - Outfit/serve tourists (ATVs etc.)
- Activities
 - Playground
 - Swimming pool – "wet area"
 - Chess Tables
 - Walking trails
- Free Wi-Fi
- Events
 - ½ Shell for performances
 - Ski jump
 - More planned events
 - Close street for pedestrian mall
- Sidewalk pianos
- Better lighting, snow removal – sidewalks
- Fresco's & murals.
- Historic trees available from other sites (Monticello)
- Upper triangle
- Business,
 - Incubator space & 3rd spaces
 - Prison families – opportunities?
 - Availability of capital for new business
 - More industry

- Arts & entertainment
- Focal spot for community
- Get people up to Berlin
- Need a team to go out “will you come”
- Reverse reputation – internal/external
- Fill up Bickford bldg with flea market
- Parking
- Lighting/safety
- Promote clean air
- Signage & traffic relief

3. Question to Attendees: What do you like about our current downtown/favorite?

- Rivers (2)
- Mountains(2)
- Walking (2)
- Natural amenities
- Opportunity to open Dead River
- Fishing
- Clean-air
- Activities now
- River Fire (900 people) & Halloween
- Existing stores
- City Hall & Library architecture
- Industrial history “paint smokestacks”
- Bikeable/close
- Not suburban
- Super Sunday
- Parking

4. Question to Attendees:

A) By show of hands, how many use PSNH/Smith Park?

- Approx. 25% use park regularly (once every other week)
- Most say they use the park for walking

B) For those who don’t use park, why not?

- Don’t feel safe
- Lighting is not good
- Lack of signage
- South access feels like trespassing on PSNH property

5. Question to Attendees using Index Cards: I would spend more time downtown if..... (2 reasons)

- Stores
 - Crafts, arts,
 - Handmade, fabric/quilts,
 - NH made products
 - Antiques
 - natural products
 - Clothing
 - Books
 - Electronics
 - Health
 - Sporting goods,
 - Pet Store
- Nightlife
 - Later/Sunday hours
 - family friendly after 5 pm
 - Theatre
- Activities
 - Events
 - DJ & dancing
 - chess tables
 - River access
 - Mountain Bike Trail System
- Events
 - Concerts
 - Flea markets
 - Annual Event “Moving Downtown”

-
- Fitness, Sports
- Dining
 - Restaurants
 - coffee shop
 - outdoor dining
 - donuts
 - bakery
 - fruit store
 - soda fountain
- Better/More Parking
- Places to socialize – Bickford Place a good start
- Less empty spaces, better energy feel, cleaner,
- Public rest rooms
- Pocket activity areas
- Less bench sleepers, fewer transients & loitering
- Sidewalks cleared in winter
- Hotel
- Snow mobile & ATV access
- Business park main
- Free wi-fi
- Town is cleaner
 - Store fronts
 - Trash

Cc: File

**Berlin Downtown Economics and Design Action Plan
Public Input Session #1 - June 29, 2011
Attendance List**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Lucien Langlois	Planning Board	723-6936
Helen Langlois	Citizen	752-7472
Fran Cusson	Business Owner & Planning Board	752-2268
Rick and Nancy Cusson	PSNH	752-3223x5873
Jacklyn Nadeau	BCCHS	752-7928
Elizabeth Ruediger *	Business Owner	752-3930
Pat MacQueen	City Manager	752-7532
Yvonne Nanasi	NH Preservation Alliance	246-7186
Amy Poulen	Brown St.	915-6128
Bev Higgins	52 Main St.	752-3212
Cindy Morin	Business Owner 171 Main St.	752-7362
David Morin *	Business Owner 171 Main St.	752-4810
Sylvia Poulin *	100 High St.	381-1520
Kelli Poulin	Owner - Greetings Jewelers	752-1520
Henry Boucher	Zoning Board 44 Countryside Ave.	752-6011
Meliss Frenette *	Coos County Family Health	752-2040
Aline Boucher	Planning Board	723-4038
Martha Creegan	Planning Board	752-3938
Max Makaitis *	Tri-County CAP	752-2003
Robert Theberge	State Rep.	723-8996
Roland Theberge	Berlin City Council	752-7033
Paula Kinney	Chamber/Main St.	752-6060
Mark Danoski	Coulombe Real Estate	752-7535
Laura Jamison *	Planning/WREN	723-1004
Craig & Crystal Martin	Owner - Rumorz	752-1118
Colette Caron	Building Owner	752-4800
Andre Caron	Housing Coordinator	752-4800
George Stanley	Landlord, retailer, citizen	348-3607
Donna Wesson	Citizen	348-0267
Jim Cochran	Enriched Learning Center	215-0002
David Kennedy	Enriched Learning Center	730-7068
Lorraine Reed	Landlady & quilter	
Robert Reed	Landlord	723-4161/752-2607
Dick Poulin	Landlord/Middle Earth	
Pam Laflamme *	City Planner	752-8587
Barb Tetreault	Berlin Daily Sun	752-5858
Cimbra Badenhausen	Berlin Better Buildings	326-6166
Rep. Gary Coulombe	Coos District 4 Rep.	723-0102
Maura Annette Chappelle	Berlin Reporter	915-0183
Robin Gallagher	Owner - Betty Davis	752-5141
Rayleen Roy	Owner - Skinplicity	752-4640
Ernie Allain *	Planning Board	752-5667
Jay Poulin	HEB - Consultant Team	356-6936
John Wacker	JWA - Consultant Team	978-618-2311
Stu Arnett	ADG - Consultant Team	219-0043

* Indicates member of Downtown Action Plan Committee



Civil • Structural • Surveying

H.E. Bergeron Engineers, Inc.

PO Box 440, 2605 White Mountain Hwy
North Conway, NH 03860-0440
www.hebengineers.com
Phone (603) 356-6936
Fax (603) 356-7715

MEETING MINUTES

#002

Date:	September 13, 2011	Time:	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Project #:	2011-044
Project Description:	Berlin Downtown Economic & Design Study				
Meeting Location:	Bickford Place/Former Rite-Aid Building				
Owner/Client:	City of Berlin				
Prepared by:	Jay Poulin, P.E., Project Manager				

Page 1 of 2

Public Input Session #2

Attended By:

- See attached Attendance List

Purpose of Meeting:

- To hear the ideas, vision, and concerns of the Citizen's of Berlin relating to the Downtown Area.

Items discussed:

1. Progress to-date:

- Conducted Public Input Session #1 June 29, 2011.
 - What were the clear themes?
 - More vibrant downtown.
 - Need for accommodations (hotel, event space, etc.)
 - Park and river access.
- Completed Inventory Phase
 - Merchant interviews.
 - Review existing reports (NH Grand, Berlin Master Plan, CEDC Action Plan).
 - Review assessing data.
 - Site reviews.
 - Land use analysis.
- Begin Developing Action Plan

2. Design Action Plan:

- Research to date
- Major Discoveries
 - Downtown zones
 - PSNH Smith Park
 - Streetscape
 - South Downtown Entrance
 - South Main Street Entrance
 - PSNH Park – Main Street
 - North Main Street
 - North Pleasant Street Entrance
 - Route 110 Intersection
 - South Pleasant Street

3. Economic Action Plan

- Research to date
 - Data Collection
 - Reports and Studies
 - City Council and Staff
 - BIDPA

- Media
- Farmer's Market
- Assessing Records
- Interviews
- Major Discoveries
 - Similar, not the same
 - City: City of Berlin
 - Who is the City's Developer?
 - ❖ Mayor
 - ❖ Planner
 - ❖ BIDPA
 - ❖ Tri-County CAP
 - Country: North Country
 - Regional Developers
 - ❖ AVER
 - ❖ Coos EDC
 - ❖ BEDCO
 - ❖ Tri-County
 - ❖ NCIC
 - ❖ "Grand"
 - ❖ NCC
- Initial Thoughts:
 - Market Assessment
 - Supply
 - Existing Spaces
 - Future Spaces
 - Product Mix
 - Real Estate
 - Demand
 - Base Camp and ATV
 - ❖ Yes and No...
 - Residential
 - ❖ "50% Empty
 - ❖ Federal Prison
 - Capacity and Leadership
 - Image and Communication
 - 5+ Years ago
 - Internal
 - External
 - Role of Mayor
 - Need for Capacity: Get it done
 - Single-Point-of-Reference
 - Real Estate Development
 - Team Convener and watchdog
 - Public and Confidential Advocate for the City

4. Next Steps

- Develop Recommended Actions
 - MDF Committee
 - Community Leaders
 - Officials and Stakeholders
- Implementation Schedules, Budgets and Accountable Entities
- Adoption by City, Others
- Get It Done!

Cc: File

9/13

MOVING DOWNTOWN FORWARD

Attendees

Name	Affiliation	Contact
Red Tarbox	MT. Washington Seiner	752-2145
Ron Danault	Concerned Citizen	rondon1955@gmail.com
Lise Gaudin-Danault	Small Bus. owner	osmosis4you@yahoo.ca
MELANIE MAYNOR	UBUNTU HEALING	MELANIE.MAYNOR@HOTMAIL
RICHARD TREMPE	TREMPER OPTICIANS	752-3382
GREG S. ESTRELLA	RESIDENTIAL	752-7118
LOUISE M. ESTRELLA	RESIDENT	752-7118
Jaklyn F. Hadreau	BOCHS	752-7928
WAYNE T. Mounihan	WTMPC	752-3322
MAUREEN PARRY	maureenis	752-7569
Fran Cusack	ALBERT THEATER / PLANNING BOARD	752-2268
Madha Cusack	Planning Board	752-3938
Bob Telescott	Berlin Sun	bohtea & bohtea@btsun.com
Joanne Roy	Northland Dairy Bar	752-6210
Andre Duchesne		752-1697
Pam Laflamme	City of Berlin	plafamme@berlinh.gov
Silva Poulin	BERLIN MAIN ST. PROGRAM	381-1520
PAULA KINNEY	CHAMBER	728-0537
Scott Gregory	Tea Birds Cafe	326-9338
Kayleen Roy	SKINPLICITY	752-4640
James E. Michalski	Family Resource Center	466-5190 x307
Russ Otis	CITY OF BERLIN	723-2855
CHRIS DUBOY	BERLIN EMS / RIVERFIRE	752-2946
Gary Coufamine	Berlin Fire Dept / NH House of Rep.	723-0102
Bridget Young	Citizen	425-503-4822
		bridget.young@gmail.com

ELIZABETH RUEDIGER Business Owner 752-3930

Julia L. Mortenson Operations officer/Business owner
Mortenson.Julia01@gmail.com

Tam McCre attorney@tamccre.com 752-1238

Cindy Morin Business owner 752-7362

David Morin Morin Shoe Store 752-4810

David Kenney Enriched Learning Center 215-0002

Louis Cote Forest Transportation 752-5605

Pick Paulin Middle Earth/Den 752-7400

PAUL GREMER Mayor, Berlin 752-4693

PAT MACQUEEN CITY MGR BERLIN 752-7532

Allison McLean PSNH 345-8023

Pat McDermott PSNH 634-2386

Moving Downtown Forward

Design & Economic Action Plan

Public Listening Session
September 13th, 2011

Presented by:

Jay Poulin, HEB Engineers

Stu Arnett, Arnett Development Group

John Wacker, John Wacker Associates

HEB
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JWA

 **Arnett**
Development
Group, LLC
ArnettDevelopmentGroup.com

Engineering for your future!

Presentation Agenda: *MDF*

- Our progress to-date
- Discoveries: Design & Economic
- What's next: Recommend Actions
- Your ideas and feedback

Design Action Plan: *MDF*

Presented by John Wacker Associates

- Research to Date
- Major Discoveries
 - Downtown Zones
 - PSNH Smith Park
 - Streetscape

South Downtown Entrance



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South Main Street Entrance



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PSNH Park – Main Street



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North Main Street



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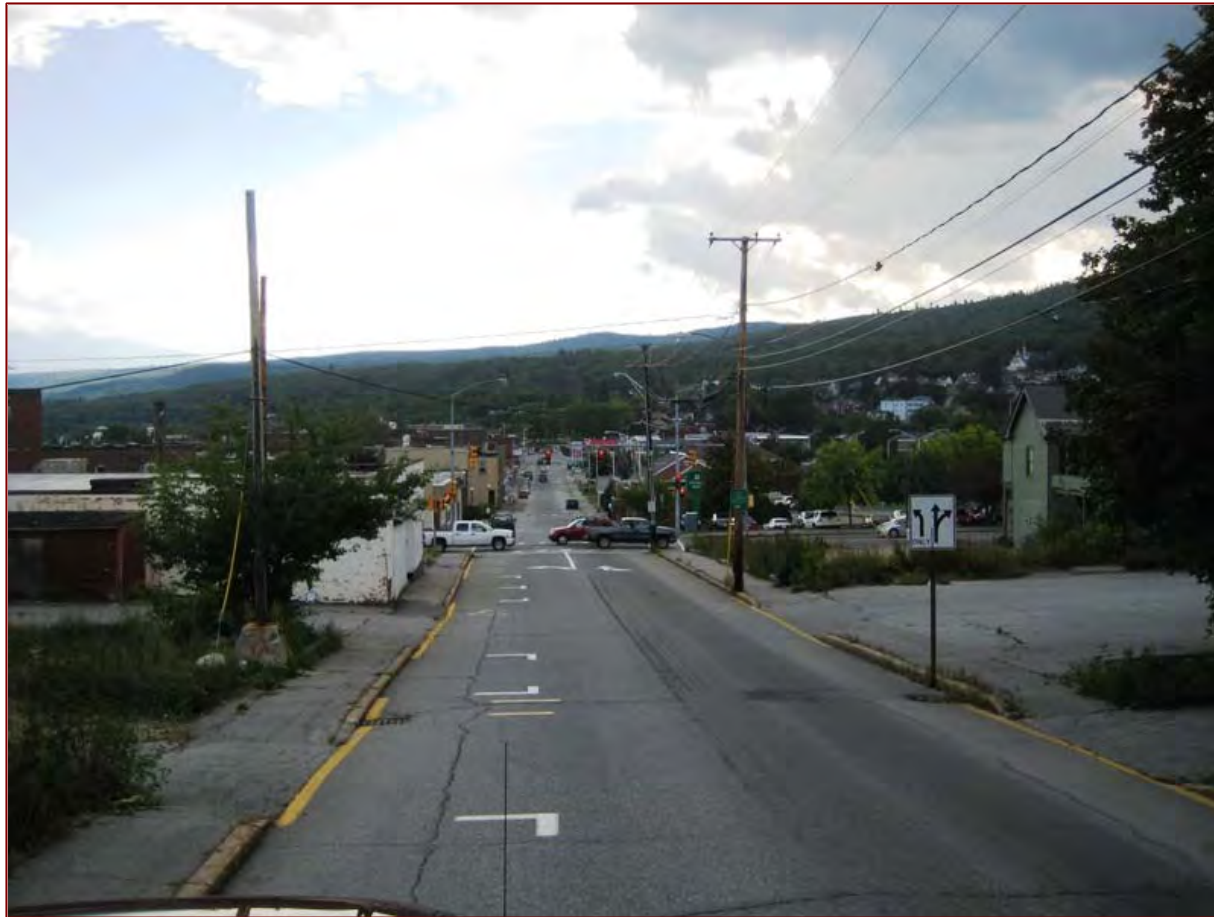
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North Pleasant St. Entrance



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Route 110 Intersection



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South Pleasant Street



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Engineering for your future!

Economic Action Plan: *MDF*

Presented by Arnett Development Group

- Research to Date
- Major Discoveries
 - Similar, Not the Same
 - Initial Thoughts

Research to Date

- Data Collection
 - Reports and Studies
 - City Council and staff
 - BIPDA
 - Media
 - Farmer's Market
 - Assessing Records
 - Interviews

Similar, Not the Same

- City
- City of Berlin
- Country
- North Country

Similar, But Not the Same

- Berlin City
- Who is the City's Developer?
 - Mayor
 - Planner
 - BIPDA
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 - NCC

Initial Thoughts

- Market Assessment

- Supply

- Existing Spaces
- Future Spaces
- Product Mix
- Real Estate

- Demand

- Base Camp and ATV
 - Yes and no..
- Residential
 - “50% empty”
 - Federal Prison

Initial Thoughts (con't)

- Capacity and Leadership
 - Image & Communications
 - 5+ Years ago
 - Internal
 - External
 - Role of Mayor
- Need for Capacity: Get it done
 - Single-Point-of Reference
 - Real estate development
 - Team convener and watchdog
 - Public and confidential Advocate for the City

MDF: Next Steps

- Develop Recommend Actions
 - MDF Committee
 - Community Leaders
 - Officials and Stakeholders
- Implementation Schedules, Budgets and Accountable Entities
- Adoption by City, others
- *Get it done!*

Your ideas and questions?

- Thank you!
- Would you like to help or know more?
- Please contact:
 - Jay Poulin at:
603-356-6936 or
jpoulin@hebengineers.com

ATTACHMENT D

Target Areas Property Assessment Spreadsheets

Moving Downtown Forward
Berlin, NH
Main Street Assessment Data
November 30, 2011

H.E. Bergeron Engineers, Inc.
w/ John Wacker & Associates and Arnett Development Group, LLC
North Conway, NH 03860
(603) 356-6936

Map	Lot	Total Square Feet	Effective Square Feet	Effective First Floor	Year Built	Total Parcel Value (2010)	Total Parcel Value (2011)	Building Value (2010)	Building Value (2011)	Features Value (2010)	Features Value (2011)	Land Value (2010)	Land Value (2011)	Total Depreciation Value	Color	Description of Building
118	115	6,985	4,877	2,257	1904	\$ 194,500	\$ 194,500	\$ 183,500	\$ 183,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	41%	brown	Holiday Center, 2 Story Conventional - 1 Main St.
118	117	1,494	998	447	1913	\$ 23,400	\$ 22,500	\$ 12,900	\$ 13,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,500	\$ 9,500	85%	yellow	Curl Up & Dye, 2 Story Conventional - 2 Main St.
118	118	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 49,900	\$ 49,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,300	\$ 38,300	\$ 11,600	\$ 11,600	N/A	vacant	Berlin City Bank, N/A (Demolition) - Main St.
118	119	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 10,800	\$ 10,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,800	\$ 10,800	N/A	vacant	Smith & Town Printers, Lot cleared with utilities (demolition) - Main St.
118	120	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 10,900	\$ 10,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,900	\$ 10,900	N/A	vacant	Smith & Town Printers, Lot cleared with utilities (demolition) - Main St.
118	121	14,920	11,364	3,516	1904	\$ 142,700	\$ 142,700	\$ 131,800	\$ 131,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,900	\$ 10,900	77%	brown	Smith & Town Printers, 3 Story Conventional - 42 Main St.
118	122	7,507	5,780	1,846	1930	\$ 142,200	\$ 77,700	\$ 132,700	\$ 147,700	\$ -	\$ (79,500)	\$ 9,500	\$ 9,500	51%	vacant	BCMP, 3 Story Duplex - 52 Main St.
118	123	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 10,100	\$ 10,100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,100	\$ 10,100	N/A	vacant	City of Berlin, Park - Main St.
118	124	21,156	15,910	5,078	2006	\$ 616,800	\$ 616,800	\$ 837,700	\$ 837,700	\$ (233,400)	\$ (233,400)	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500	18%	yellow	Cornerstone Housing North, 3 Story Retail/Apt - 53 Main St.
118	125	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 7,600	\$ 7,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,600	\$ 7,600	N/A	brown	Northway Bank, Vac. Lot w/ utilities - Main St.
118	126	39,344	26,491	12,508	1912	\$ 1,403,400	\$ 1,403,400	\$ 1,230,600	\$ 1,230,600	\$ 159,000	\$ 159,000	\$ 13,800	\$ 13,800	43%	brown	Berlin City Bank, 2 Story Contemporary - 9 Main St.
119	001	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 9,900	\$ 9,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,900	\$ 9,900	N/A	vacant	Kandel, Heinrich - Vac. Lot w/ utilities - Main St.
119	002	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 9,900	\$ 9,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,900	\$ 9,900	N/A	vacant	Holcroft, Stacy - Vac. Lot w/ utilities - Main St.
119	003	5,150	3,351	1,974	1880	\$ 112,500	\$ 94,100	\$ 102,900	\$ 84,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,600	\$ 9,600	54%	brown	Skinplicity, 2 Story Conventional - 94 Main St.
119	004	2,822	1,468	1,405	1930	\$ 74,100	\$ 64,200	\$ 60,500	\$ 50,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,600	\$ 13,600	49%	brown	Tony's Pizza, 1 Story Conventional - 102 Main St
119	006	10,275	6,313	3,308	1910	\$ 154,400	\$ 154,400	\$ 144,500	\$ 144,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,900	\$ 9,900	60%	brown	Maureen's Unique Boutique, 3 Story Conventional - 146 Main St.
119	007	5,082	2,792	1,671	1890	\$ 107,000	\$ 107,000	\$ 96,800	\$ 96,800	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 9,600	\$ 9,600	45%	brown	Tremain's Optician, 1 Story Contemporary - 148 Main St.
119	008	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,700	\$ 1,700	\$ 5,300	\$ 5,300	N/A	vacant	Tremaine, Vac. Parking Lot, paved - Main St.
119	009	4,256	2,296	1,568	1930	\$ 59,700	\$ 59,700	\$ 50,100	\$ 50,100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,600	\$ 9,600	58%	brown	David Lee Mt. Art Studio, 2 Story Conventional - 156 Main St.
119	010	9,120	6,473	2,956	1905	\$ 240,300	\$ 240,300	\$ 226,600	\$ 226,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,700	\$ 13,700	45%	brown	Gill's Flowers, Adlt Learning, 2 Story Conventional - 164 Main St.
119	011	19,612	14,171	6,992	1902	\$ 600,500	\$ 600,500	\$ 589,100	\$ 589,100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,400	\$ 11,400	41%	dark blue	City of Berlin, 2 Story Federal City Hall - 168 Main St.
119	015	3,180	1,568	1,545	2000	\$ 152,800	\$ 152,800	\$ 135,000	\$ 135,000	\$ 6,200	\$ 6,200	\$ 11,600	\$ 11,600	15%	brown	Gallus & Green Realty, 1 Story Conventional - 180 Main St.
119	016	24,912	16,153	7,128	1910	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 109,600	\$ 109,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,400	\$ 10,400	85%	dark brown	Albert Theater, 2 Story Conventional - 198-4 Main St.
119	017	2,200	1,304	1,100	1910	\$ 144,300	\$ 144,300	\$ 130,600	\$ 130,600	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	\$ 10,900	\$ 10,900	15%	brown	Moynihan, Wayne - 1 Story Contemporary, Office Building - 206 Main St.
119	018	12,082	9,579	3,412	1900	\$ 409,300	\$ 409,300	\$ 397,800	\$ 397,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,500	\$ 11,500	41%	red	City of Berlin, 3 Story Conventional, Court House - 220 Main St.
119	022	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 10,400	\$ 10,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,400	\$ 10,400	N/A	red	City of Berlin, Vac. Cement Lot - Main St.
119	042	16,644	6,928	2,440	1904	\$ 35,600	\$ 35,600	\$ 25,700	\$ 25,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,900	\$ 9,900	92%	dark brown	Poulin, Richard - 3 Story Conventional, Vac. Building - 55 Main St.
119	043	14,568	6,301	2,326	1904	\$ 34,200	\$ 34,200	\$ 24,300	\$ 24,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,900	\$ 9,900	92%	dark brown	Cote Building, 3 Story Conventional, Vac. Building - 67 Main St.
119	044	5,900	3,503	1,680	1921	\$ 70,700	\$ 70,700	\$ 61,100	\$ 61,100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,600	\$ 9,600	73%	brown	Lafrance, Ronald - Dentist Office, 3 Story Conventional - 73 Main St.
119	045	5,832	3,646	1,915	1920	\$ 66,900	\$ 66,900	\$ 57,200	\$ 57,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,700	\$ 9,700	70%	yellow	Lafrance, Ronald - 2 Story Conventional, Effic. Apts. - 83 Main St.
119	046	7,290	4,883	1,887	1921	\$ 77,000	\$ 77,000	\$ 67,300	\$ 67,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,700	\$ 9,700	68%	brown	Betty Dee's Fashions, 3 Story Conventional - 87 Main St.
119	047	7,290	4,975	2,278	1910	\$ 143,200	\$ 143,200	\$ 133,600	\$ 133,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,600	\$ 9,600	50%	brown	Middle Earth, 2 Story Conventional - 95 Main St.
119	048	12,966	9,031	4,217	1910	\$ 113,800	\$ 113,800	\$ 103,900	\$ 103,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,900	\$ 9,900	80%	red	City of Berlin, 2 Story Conventional, Apt. Bldg. - 97 Main St.
119	049	9,321	5,404	4,559	1951	\$ 206,200	\$ 206,200	\$ 195,300	\$ 195,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,900	\$ 10,900	34%	brown	Greetings Jewelers-Hallmark, 1 Story Conventional - 107 Main St.
119	051	30,342	16,015	12,469	1904	\$ 338,400	\$ 338,400	\$ 324,400	\$ 324,400	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,100	\$ 11,900	\$ 11,900	55%	brown	Dollar Store, 1 Story Conventional - 121 Main St.
119	052	16,552	8,266	8,264	1993	\$ 504,300	\$ 505,400	\$ 480,100	\$ 480,100	\$ 11,600	\$ 11,600	\$ 12,600	\$ 13,700	8%	red	Berlin Industrial Dev & Park, 1 Story Conventional - 145 Main St.
119	053	15,751	11,245	5,208	1910	\$ 289,600	\$ 289,700	\$ 278,700	\$ 278,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,900	\$ 10,900	50%	brown	Winterland Mkt Plc., 2 Story Conventional - 151 Main St.
119	054	5,979	3,433	2,982	1910	\$ 128,400	\$ 128,400	\$ 117,700	\$ 117,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,700	\$ 10,700	40%	brown	Wang's Garden, 1 Story Conventional - 161 Main St.
119	056	13,176	7,856	3,227	1920	\$ 95,200	\$ 95,200	\$ 85,500	\$ 85,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,700	\$ 9,700	80%	brown	Tex Mex, 3 Story Conventional - 177 Main St.
119	057	22,390	15,107	8,499	1920	\$ 239,800	\$ 239,800	\$ 211,400	\$ 211,400	\$ 17,100	\$ 17,100	\$ 11,300	\$ 11,300	68%	dark brown	J.C. Penny Vac. Space, 2 Story Conventional - 185 Main St.
119	058	14,268	9,653	5,196	1940	\$ 14,800	\$ 14,800	\$ 4,700	\$ 4,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,100	\$ 10,100	99%	dark brown	Rite Aid of NH, 2 Story Conventional Vac. Bldg. - 193-9 Main St.
119	059	13,308	10,666	3,292	1930	\$ 15,400	\$ 15,400	\$ 5,700	\$ 5,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,700	\$ 9,700	99%	dark brown	Rite Aid of NH, 3 Story Conventional, Vac. Former Hotel - 201 Main St.
119	060	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 11,300	\$ 11,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,300	\$ 11,300	N/A	dark brown	Rite Aid of NH, Vac. Gravel Lot Commercial Potential (Demolition) - Main St.
119	061	26,132	18,526	8,240	1960	\$ 443,600	\$ 443,600	\$ 402,900	\$ 402,900	\$ 28,300	\$ 28,300	\$ 12,400	\$ 12,400	56%	dark brown	Warner Cable, 2 Story Conventional - 227 Main St.
119	065	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400	N/A	purple	St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, Vac. Lot - Main St.
Sheet Total		427,806	276,326	137,390		\$ 7,654,200	\$ 7,561,700	\$ 7,152,200	\$ 7,139,100	\$ 34,300	\$ (45,200)	\$ 467,700	\$ 467,800			
Totals of Sheets 1 & 2:		951,532	569,788	324,449		17,815,200	17,689,600	16,079,800	16,069,600	702,400	623,000	1,033,000	1,033,100			

Moving Downtown Forward
Berlin, NH
Downtown Assessment Data
November 30, 2011

H.E. Bergeron Engineers, Inc.
w/ John Wacker & Associates and Arnett Development Group, LLC
North Conway, NH 03860
(603) 356-6936

Map	Lot	Total Square Feet	Effective Square Feet	Effective First Floor	Year Built	Total Parcel Value (2010)	Total Parcel Value (2011)	Building Value (2010)	Building Value (2011)	Features Value (2010)	Features Value (2011)	Land Value (2010)	Land Value (2011)	Total Depreciation Value	Color	Description of Building
118	127	18,223	9,936	6,845	1930	\$ 326,000	\$ 326,000	\$ 303,800	\$ 303,800	\$ 10,700	\$ 10,700	\$ 11,500	\$ 11,500	42%	brown	Exchange Place, 2 story conventional - 76 Pleasant St.
118	128	8,274	4,295	4,101	1915	\$ 85,700	\$ 85,700	\$ 75,600	\$ 75,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,100	\$ 10,100	63%	brown	Berlin City Medical Center, 1 story retail/ apt - 60 Pleasant St.
118	129	4,193	2,942	861	1890	\$ 52,100	\$ 52,100	\$ 43,600	\$ 43,600	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,600	\$ 4,900	\$ 4,900	61%	yellow	Sabatino, Anthony, 3 story multi-family - 56 Pleasant St.
118	130	1,876	1,320	608	1890	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 34,200	\$ 34,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,800	\$ 5,800	43%	yellow	Masters, Rachel, 2 story conventional home - 54 Pleasant St.
118	131	4,026	2,595	1,054	1900	\$ 39,000	\$ 39,000	\$ 31,500	\$ 31,500	\$ 1,300	\$ 1,300	\$ 6,200	\$ 6,200	62%	yellow	Springer, Joseph, 2 story multi-family - 50 Pleasant St.
118	132	2,119	1,360	616	1890	\$ 40,100	\$ 40,100	\$ 35,300	\$ 35,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800	55%	yellow	Blake, Roger, 2 story conventional home - 44 Pleasant St.
118	133	2,046	1,414	644	1890	\$ 27,500	\$ 27,500	\$ 23,700	\$ 23,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,800	\$ 3,800	62%	yellow	American Dream Home, 2 story conventional home - 38 Pleasant St.
118	134	3,660	1,972	750	1910	\$ 40,700	\$ 40,700	\$ 36,000	\$ 36,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,700	\$ 4,700	55%	yellow	Croteau, Alan, 2 story multi-family - 36 Pleasant St.
118	144	2,600	1,300	1,300	1940	\$ 152,000	\$ 152,000	\$ 85,100	\$ 85,100	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,000	\$ 15,900	\$ 15,900	34%	brown	Munce's Quick Stop, 1 story conventional - 79 Pleasant St.
118	150	6,378	3,251	3,162	1950	\$ 178,100	\$ 178,100	\$ 152,700	\$ 152,700	\$ 14,800	\$ 14,800	\$ 10,600	\$ 10,600	25%	brown	Tri-County Community Action, 1 story conventional - 31 Pleasant St.
118	151	18,120	10,329	7,350	1950	\$ 137,500	\$ 137,500	\$ 104,200	\$ 140,200	\$ 8,900	\$ 8,900	\$ 24,400	\$ 24,400	78%	brown	Traveler Motel, 1 story ranch - 25 Pleasant St.
118	152	64,566	31,794	31,305	1945	\$ 957,600	\$ 957,600	\$ 889,900	\$ 889,900	\$ 35,400	\$ 35,400	\$ 32,300	\$ 32,300	32%	brown	Shopping Plaza (IGA liner), 1 story conventional - 19 Pleasant St.
118	153	3,722	2,108	1,660	1940	\$ 124,500	\$ 124,500	\$ 80,500	\$ 80,500	\$ 14,500	\$ 14,500	\$ 29,500	\$ 29,500	32%	brown	Irving Oil, 1 story ranch - 9 Pleasant St.
119	24	2,809	1,658	825	1905	\$ 46,900	\$ 39,300	\$ 41,500	\$ 33,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,400	\$ 5,400	55%	brown	Berlin Bowling Center, 2 story cape - 292 Pleasant St.
119	25	2,750	1,924	896	1910	\$ 82,300	\$ 82,300	\$ 77,200	\$ 77,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,100	\$ 5,100	25%	yellow	Buteau, Francoise, 2 story colonial home - 286 Pleasant St.
119	26	3,572	2,493	1,175	1910	\$ 72,800	\$ 72,800	\$ 57,500	\$ 57,500	\$ 10,400	\$ 10,400	\$ 4,900	\$ 4,900	40%	yellow	Sederquist, Thomas, 2 story multi-family home 282 Pleasant St.
119	27	3,073	2,029	868	1898	\$ 97,400	\$ 97,400	\$ 88,200	\$ 88,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,200	\$ 9,200	31%	brown	Belanger, Andre, 2 story conventional - 276 Pleasant St.
119	28	6,356	3,431	1,497	1900	\$ 184,900	\$ 109,200	\$ 176,400	\$ 100,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,500	\$ 8,500	42%	brown	Legacy Holdings, 2 story cape - 270 Pleasant St.
119	28	4,729	3,310	1,120	1900	N/A	\$ 75,700	N/A	\$ 75,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	41%	yellow	Legacy Holdings, 2.75 story multi-family - 264 Pleasant St.
119	29	16,316	8,145	8,131	1925	\$ 39,200	\$ 39,200	\$ 25,700	\$ 25,700	\$ 2,200	\$ 2,200	\$ 11,300	\$ 11,300	92%	brown	Rite Aid of NH, 1 story conventional - 234 Pleasant St.
119	33	9,150	5,952	2,198	1926	\$ 108,400	\$ 108,400	\$ 97,700	\$ 97,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,700	\$ 10,700	68%	yellow	Kimball, Annette, 3 story conventional - 148 Pleasant St.
119	34	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 129,800	\$ 129,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 118,900	\$ 118,900	\$ 10,900	\$ 10,900	N/A	vacant	Vacant lot w/ cement pad - 126 Pleasant St.
119	36	12,504	8,245	3,068	1910	\$ 130,500	\$ 130,500	\$ 120,200	\$ 120,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,300	\$ 10,300	70%	brown	Charest, Paul, 3 story conventional - 112 Pleasant St.
119	37	2,942	2,003	920	1915	\$ 131,700	\$ 131,700	\$ 121,200	\$ 121,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,500	\$ 10,500	25%	brown	Law offices, 2 story conventional - 110 Pleasant St.
119	38	6,058	3,622	1,718	1930	\$ 89,500	\$ 89,500	\$ 80,900	\$ 80,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,600	\$ 8,600	49%	brown	Berlin Real Estate, 2 story conventional - 106 Pleasant St.
119	67	6,254	3,336	1,684	1905	\$ 65,900	\$ 77,400	\$ 55,000	\$ 66,500	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 7,900	\$ 7,900	48%	brown	Beauty salon, 2 story multi-family - 339 Pleasant St.
119	87	35,815	15,331	11,136	1900	\$ 1,168,800	\$ 1,168,800	\$ 1,156,400	\$ 1,156,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,400	\$ 12,400	10%	purple	St. Annes Church, 1story conventional - 345 Pleasant St.
119	88	12,291	9,003	3,419	1900	\$ 164,400	\$ 164,400	\$ 151,800	\$ 151,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,600	\$ 12,600	56%	yellow	Royer, Bruce, 3 story multi-family - 331 Pleasant St.
119	111	5,102	3,046	1,472	1920	\$ 142,000	\$ 142,000	\$ 130,800	\$ 130,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,200	\$ 11,200	24%	yellow	"WMOU" Radio Station, 2 story conventional - 297 Pleasant St.
119	112	6,784	3,844	1,986	1949	\$ 70,500	\$ 70,500	\$ 63,700	\$ 63,700	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 5,300	\$ 5,300	68%	yellow	Graham, Stephen, 1.75 story conventional - 289 Pleasant St.
119	113	2,908	1,742	880	1955	\$ 71,300	\$ 71,300	\$ 67,100	\$ 67,100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,200	\$ 4,200	32%	yellow	Henry, Patricia, 1.5 story cape - 283 Pleasant St.
119	114	4,771	2,778	1,404	1908	\$ 97,800	\$ 88,800	\$ 93,000	\$ 84,300	\$ 800	\$ 500	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	45%	yellow	Sweeny, Barbara, 1.75 story conventional - 273 Pleasant St.
119	115	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 28,100	\$ 28,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 17,700	\$ 18,100	\$ 10,400	\$ 10,400	N/A	brown	Thibodeau, Normand, barn & garage - 263 Pleasant St.
119	116	4,808	2,435	1,055	1860	\$ 70,900	\$ 70,900	\$ 65,400	\$ 65,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500	56%	yellow	Ray Rail, 2 story conventional - 255 Pleasant St.
119	117	5,657	3,630	1,479	1900	\$ 67,500	\$ 67,500	\$ 62,700	\$ 62,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800	55%	yellow	Villeneuve, Alan, 2.5 story multi-family - 247 Pleasant St.
119	241	8,207	5,038	3,900	1972	\$ 452,900	\$ 452,900	\$ 382,900	\$ 382,900	\$ 57,900	\$ 57,900	\$ 12,100	\$ 12,100	18%	brown	Citizens Bank, 1 story conventional - 173 Pleasant St.
119	242	19,788	11,635	7,338	1979	\$ 648,500	\$ 648,500	\$ 598,100	\$ 598,100	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 15,400	\$ 15,400	11%	light blue	Coos County Family Health, 2 story conventional - 133 Pleasant St.
119	242	10,712	5,369	5,324	1995	\$ 260,100	\$ 260,100	\$ 243,900	\$ 243,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,200	\$ 16,200	10%	light blue	NH State Dept of Employment & Security, 1 story conventional - 151 Pleasant St.
119	317	6,712	3,378	3,300	1990	\$ 369,700	\$ 369,700	\$ 183,900	\$ 183,900	\$ 172,600	\$ 172,600	\$ 13,200	\$ 13,200	18%	brown	Irving Mainway, 1 story store/conventional - 83 Pleasant St.
119	19	6,436	4,178	1,652	1910	\$ 53,700	\$ 53,700	\$ 44,000	\$ 44,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,700	\$ 9,700	80%	brown	Privitera, John, 1 story conventional - 234 Main St.
119	20	4,186	2,992	1,381	1920	\$ 38,500	\$ 38,500	\$ 26,600	\$ 26,600	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	\$ 9,600	\$ 9,600	79%	brown	Supreme Pizza, 2 story conventional - 244 Main St.
119	21	11,301	7,355	2,686	1905	\$ 107,600	\$ 107,600	\$ 93,900	\$ 93,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,700	\$ 13,700	75%	dark brown	The Maynesboro, 3 story conventional - 256 Main St.
119	23	4,787	2,976	2,362	1903	\$ 183,900	\$ 183,900	\$ 163,600	\$ 163,600	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,300	\$ 10,300	26%	dark blue	Berlin Public Library, 1 story conventional - 270 Main St.
119	61	26,132	18,526	8,240	1960	\$ 443,600	\$ 443,600	\$ 402,900	\$ 402,900	\$ 28,300	\$ 28,300	\$ 12,400	\$ 12,400	56%	dark brown	Warner Cable, 2 story conventional - 227 Main St.
119	62	14,186	6,947	224	1930	\$ 117,100	\$ 117,100	\$ 92,400	\$ 92,400	\$ 13,200	\$ 13,200	\$ 11,500	\$ 11,500	74%	dark blue	City of Berlin, 3 story conventional - 255 Main St.
119	63	14,017	9,954	4,667	1905	\$ 301,100	\$ 301,100	\$ 289,800	\$ 289,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,300	\$ 11,300	25%	dark blue	Berlin Fire Dept., 2 story conventional - 263 Main St.
119	64	19,676	9,774	9,718	1920	\$ 365,400	\$ 337,000	\$ 347,200	\$ 318,800	\$ 5,900	\$ 5,900	\$ 12,300	\$ 12,300	44%	brown	Berlin Bowling Center, 1 story conventional - 283 Main St.
119	66	1,382	691	691	1920	\$ 24,500	\$ 24,500	\$ 15,500	\$ 15,500	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400	\$ 7,600	\$ 7,600	71%	brown	Tyler, Mark, 1 story conventional, 325 Main St.
129	50	2,325	1,189	1,055	1940	\$ 74,700	\$ 74,700	\$ 55,800	\$ 55,800	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300	\$ 16,600	\$ 16,600	44%	brown	Hair Improvements, 1 story conventional, 340 Main St.
129	51	4,010	2,522	1,291	1988	\$ 143,000	\$ 143,000	\$ 123,400	\$ 123,400	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 18,600	\$ 18,600	24%	brown	Croteau Insurance, 2 story conventional, - 324 Main St.
119	323	46,267	22,912	14,060	1910	\$ 549,800	\$ 549,800	\$ 481,700	\$ 481,700	\$ 43,500	\$ 43,500	\$ 24,600	\$ 24,600	40%	brown	Caron Building Center, 2 story conventional - 41 Union St.
118	149	29,150	15,453	11,983	1945	\$ 765,500	\$ 765,500	\$ 753,500	\$ 753,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	16%	dark blue	U.S. Post Office, 1 story conventional - 15 Mt. Forist St.
Sheet Total		523,726	293,462	187,059		\$ 10,161,000	\$ 10,127,900	\$ 8,927,600	\$ 8,930,500	\$ 668,100	\$ 668,200	\$ 565,300	\$ 565,300			

ATTACHMENT E

Other Reports Considered

List of Reports and Plans Reviewed and Incorporated Into Downtown Strategy

- AVER: Strategic Performance Matrix
 - *“Goal 1: Identify point agency for economic development in region...”*
- Berlin Main Street Program web-site and marketing materials
- City of Berlin Budgets, FY 2011 and 2012
- City of Berlin – Assessing records, July 2011
- City of Berlin NH Master Plan 2010 – Economic Development Chapter
- *“Section B: Recommendations:*
 - 1) *The City should develop a master plan for downtown...it should include not only an evaluation of physical condition of downtown buildings, but also a marketing plan and financial strategy for assisting private investment*
 - 2) *The City should encourage, support and develop a memorandum of understanding with an organizational entity to take charge of the revitalization of downtown. The entity chosen should have the personnel and sophistication to pursue a wide variety of grants and utilize creative financing....*
 - 3) *The City should work in partnership with both for-profit and not-for-profit development entities to redevelop underperforming properties throughout the downtown...*
 - 4) *....The City should be prepared to participate in the funding of some portion of the necessary improvements...*
 - 5) *....current zoning not only permits the type of development...but actively promotes and attracts it.*
 - 6) *Tri-county CAP should be encouraged to initiate another redevelopment project on another downtown property...*
 - 7) *The “gateway” improvements at the entrances to the downtown are excellent and should be continued...*
 - 8) *...City should consider extending existing tax incentive program ...from five years (currently) to ten years.”*
- Coos Economic Development Corporation: Economic Investment Partnership November 2010
- Coos Targeted Business Strategy and Realtor outreach – NH Dept. Resources and Economic Development- Division of Economic Development
- Coos County: Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan (*NH Grand Strategy*) Dec. 2008
- Downtown Resource Center (NH)
- Economy Development for a Small Community, Arnett Development Group LLC 2010
- Northern New Hampshire Adventure Guide – www.NHGrand.com
- North Country Council – “EAP”: September 2008
- Telecommunications Development Plan, Arnett and Towle, 2006 State of New Hampshire
- Tri-County Community Action Programs, Inc. Annual Report 2010
- Various Commercial Listings on Berlin commercial properties

ATTACHMENT F

Credits and Acknowledgements

CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Project Team would like to acknowledge the good work and assistance of the many that helped us complete this Strategy.

This initiative was launched via the leadership of the Berlin City Council and Mayor Grenier, and City Manager Patrick McQueen. City Planner Pam Laflamme was our “go-to” person, and was always informed, informative and exceedingly helpful. The Housing Office, the Public Works-Recreation Department as well as the Assessing Office provided important information and sound advice.

The City’s Downtown Task Force was an invaluable link to the downtown and to the community. The Task Force was chaired by Sylvia Poulin, who brought her boundless energy and enthusiasm to this effort.

The Better Building Initiative was a vital contributor, was an underwriter of one community meeting, and is a visible and helpful downtown, store-front presence. Over a dozen downtown merchants, business managers, social service providers, realtors, bankers and building owners took time from their busy schedules to participate in hour long interviews, several with follow up sessions. They are an innovative and dedicated core to build upon.

The Public Service Company of New Hampshire – PSNH – supported this Strategy from the beginning. More importantly, they have encouraged “MDF” to continue with their support. PSNH will prove to be an invaluable partner moving forward.

The Berlin Industrial Development and Park Authority – BIDPA – hosted the two community-wide meetings, as well as smaller gatherings. Chair Mike Caron was always helpful and supportive, and BIDPA board members generous with their time and insights. This group is a strong asset for Berlin’s future.

Regional entities including the Northern Community Investment Council and its New Hampshire Grand initiative provided relevant information and counsel to match their creative strategy for the North Country. They have also designated downtown Berlin as the “kiosk #1” location, providing an early success story.

As the prime consulting firm for this project, H.E. Bergeron Engineers, Inc., hosted several working sessions and provided exceptional staff support, often on short notice. Special thanks to Liz Lajoie and Sarah Hawkes for their assistance and unfailing good spirits, and Doug Heller for his invaluable help in the development of the conceptual drawings.

Not once, or twice, but several times the citizens of Berlin robustly participated in Listening Sessions, Task Force meetings, and Public Reports. Based upon just the good will, skills and energy of these many participants, Berlin really is “The New Energy City”.

A special acknowledgement and thank you goes to the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund, which underwrote this investment. Neil Tillotson was known for his “long view”; a story is that he planted rubber trees in Africa for future use by his New Hampshire rubber-glove company, even though a rubber tree can take ten year to produce, and Mr. Tillotson was already in his eighties. The Fund has planted another seed, one we fully expect to also be productive, although much sooner than ten years! The Tillotson Fund is an example of how two good lives can help people long after they are gone, and the region and state are the beneficiaries.

While the project Team acknowledges the invaluable assistance of these and others, we are solely responsible for the Strategy, designs, assessing records, attachments and recommendations. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to work for this proud community, and hope we may further assist in Moving Downtown Forward.

Jay, John and Stu

January 2012