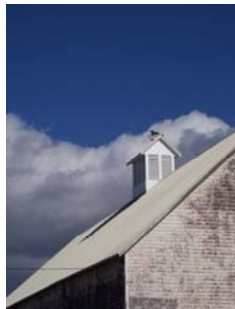


Implementation



Introduction

In terms of the recommended implementation section, the City of Berlin felt it was important to create detailed steps that will put the Master Plan into action. According to RSA 674:2, III, the Master Plan may include the following sections:

“..(m) An implementation section, which is a long range action program of specific actions, time frames, allocation of responsibility for actions, description of land development regulations to be adopted, and procedures which the municipality may use to monitor and measure the effectiveness of each section of the plan.”

This Chapter will enable the Berlin Planning Board and City Council to oversee the completion of the implementation actions of this Master Plan. Each of these actions was assigned a timeline and a responsible party to assist with future evaluation of the progress on these tasks. This chapter is dynamic and should be reviewed and modified after 12 months to measure the progress made on the implementation actions.

There are numerous actions specified here. One of the overarching observations is that there need to be some new entities created to take responsibility for these. Failing that, all too many of them will likely fall onto the shoulders of the City Council and the Planning Board, both of whom already have full agendas. In addition to clarifying roles and responsibilities among the various economic development groups, it is recommended that the City Council formally establish a Local Energy Committee to assist in this implementation effort, and that it begin to recognize and communicate with some of the existing community taskforce groups more formally. Although the Planning Board is assigned many specific implementation responsibilities, its broader charge is to be the keeper of the list of assigned tasks, to be in contact with the responsible parties on at least an annual basis to see what progress has been made, what additional resources are needed, etc., so as to keep the implementation process moving and on track.

The previous chapter topics serve as the framework for this section, and are followed by the implementation actions. It divides tasks amongst the various parties and spells out priorities by

suggesting near-term, mid-term, and long term completion goals. Or, as noted in some instances, the assignment may be ongoing.

Demographics

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Begin to plan for services that will be required by a larger elderly population. This may include transportation, housing, access to healthcare, and other support services.	Ongoing	Tri-County CAP/Elder Programs, BHA, City Health Dept.	Planning Board (PB), and City Council
Ensure that Berlin's regulations provide opportunities for a diverse mix of housing unit types that can accommodate the changing composition of Berlin's households. This should include provisions for accessory apartments, smaller units, artist live-work space, opportunities for higher densities in some areas, and other techniques.	Ongoing	Housing Coordinator	Housing Authority, Tri-County CAP, and City Council, PB
Update this chapter with 2010 Census data when it is available	When Available	Planning Board	

Natural Resources and Hazards

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Review current steep slope development ordinance to limit the impact of developments on steep slopes and at higher elevations.	1-3 years	Planning Board	Local Stewardship Committee/ CAP (LSC/CAP)
Designate view shed areas of high value and make open space subdivision mandatory in those areas.	1-3 years	Planning Board	LSC/CAP
Review site plan review regulations to ensure they reinforce the Steep Slope Development Standards, and reduce the impact of development on steep slopes.	1- 3 years	Planning Board	LSC/CAP
Consider buffer regulations that protect the natural upland vegetation adjacent to wetlands.	1-3 years	Planning Board	LSC/CAP
Make all of Berlin's land use regulations "farm friendly" and ensure they support non-traditional agricultural operations as well.	1-3 years	Planning Board	LEC and LSC/CAP

Natural Resources and Hazards (continued)

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Review and consider protection of the limited agricultural land that remains through outright purchase, purchase of easements/development rights, and donations.	3-5 years	Planning Board	Ammo. Land Trust
Berlin's regulations, relative to erosion and sediment control, should be revisited to ensure that they are following the most current Best Management Practices (BMPs).	1-3 years	Planning Board	LSC/CAP
Review and promote BMPs to reduce nonpoint source pollutants from industrial, commercial and residential developments.	1-3 years	Planning Board	LSC/CAP
Consider maintenance plans for all storm water systems in industrial, commercial, and residential developments.	1-3 years	Planning Board	Director of Public Works (DPW)
Consider standards for natural buffers along the Androscoggin River, the Dead River, and the streams and brooks that empty into these surface waters.	1-3 years	Planning Board	LSC/CAP
Promote the use of permeable surfaces, and other Low Impact Development (LID) techniques that promote infiltration and storm water treatment in the site plan review process.	6-12 months	Planning Board	LSC/CAP
Consider the required road widths for new development and incorporate bio-retention areas in the design standards.	1-3 years	Planning Board	Fire Dept. and DPW
Snow removed from streets and parking areas should be stored away from wetlands and water bodies. This will allow for a higher rate of filtering out of pollutants and infiltration of water as it melts. Find new locations for snow storage. Review new technologies.	First 6 months	City Staff	City Council and Planning Board
Continue to monitor and document all underground storage tanks in Berlin.	1-3 years	Fire Dept.	
Continue to examine the Brown Farm water protection zone to determine if it should include more of the underlying aquifer.	1-3 years	Planning Board/Berlin Water Works	BIDPA and LSC/CAP
Consider leasing underutilized City-owned land to individuals interested in using it for gardening/farming.	3-5years	City Council (policy)/ PB, Housing Coordinator	LEC

Natural Resources and Hazards (continued)

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Continue efforts to secure conservation easements on undeveloped land with significant natural resources. Create overlay districts where appropriate such as the Mt. Forist & Mt. Jasper Overlay Districts	1-3 years	PB/City Council	LSC/CAP, Ammo. LT as necessary
Identify city owned (and other) lands that would be suitable for the expansion of community facilities.	1-3 years	PB	Planning Board, City Council, and Ammo. LT
Protect areas that are known to support or have the potential to support important wildlife.	3-5 years	LSC/CAP	Planning Board, City Council
Concentrate habitat protection efforts on preserving corridors between habitats and protected open space, particularly along waterways, to allow wildlife to avoid conflict with humans while maintaining the ability to gain access to food, shelter, water and breeding areas.	Ongoing	LSC/CAP	Planning Board, City Council
Review the land use ordinances and building codes to ensure that they meet the recommendation of the Wildfire Mitigation Plan.	6-12 months	Planning Board	Emergency Services Coord., and Fire Dept.
Reduce the potential loss of life and property from natural hazards in Berlin by discouraging development in areas of high risk, and ensuring that local codes and standards relate to the type of natural hazards that Berlin experiences.	6-12 months	Planning Board	Emergency Services Coord., Fire Dept., and LSC/CAP

Community Facilities

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Explore the possibility of a shared Safety Services Complex that could accommodate the needs of the Fire and Police Departments before proceeding with individual additions or renovations.	6-12 months	Police Dept., Fire Dept., and Emergency Services Coord.	City Council

Community Facilities (continued)

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
If a shared facility is not desired by the City, create a plan for the construction of an addition next to the fire station. Future use of the addition shall include, but not be limited to, administrative offices and a training center that can be utilized on a regional basis.	6-12 months	Police Dept., Fire Dept., and Emergency Services Coord.	City Council
If a shared facility is not desired by the City, create a plan for the construction of additional office and garage space at the Police Department. The Department is in need of a 6,000 square foot garage, and 10,000 additional square feet to solve the Department's remaining space needs.	6-12 months	Police Dept.	City Council
Explore the possibility of centralizing Emergency Dispatching and communications through a single communications center both within Berlin, and possibly with other communities. Also explore a shared safety services building/personnel with other communities	3-5 years	Police Dept., Fire Dept., and Emergency Services Coord.	City Council
Assist the Library with the development of a long range plan that addresses the building and site constraints, and any opportunity for expansion.	3-5 years	Library Dept.	City Council
Strive to see that the renovation or construction of City-owned facilities include efforts to create High Performance Buildings. This will ensure that conservation measures become the focus of these structures and that the long term operations and maintenance of these buildings will be financially and environmentally sustainable from the beginning without additional cost. May wish to follow some LEED standards, even if full certification is not pursued.	6-12 months	City Staff	City Council
Work to disconnect the storm drains from the sewer system, and reduce other sources of stormwater infiltration.	Ongoing	DPW/ Pollution Control	City Council
Develop an inventory of all City owned land, and a plan for how this land will be managed in the future.	ongoing	PB/Housing Coordinator	City Council, and Planning Board

Community Facilities (continued)

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Support the Airport's needs for installing an automated weather service system, additional navigational aids and development of a taxi runway as it works to implement its Master Plan.	1-3 years	Airport Authority	City Council
Create a Community Center Task Force and charge them with creating a viable plan for a new Community Center, so as to respond to the survey results indicating a need for more activities geared to young adults and the population as a whole.	First 6 months	Citizen's Community Center Group	Planning Board
Work with the School Administrative Unit to continue to incorporate school properties into community life. Berlin may be able to meet some of the needs of the community by providing space for programs and services that would otherwise be housed elsewhere with additional costs.	6-12 Months	Recreation/ Emergency Services Coordinator, and SAU	City Council
Assist the SAU with long range planning for the public school facilities. With Gorham's school building issues, and capacity available at the Berlin High School, the City should support the two communities' efforts to work together.	5-10 years	SAU	City Council
Assist the SAU as they work to address the specific needs of the elementary school facilities, particularly the Hillside and Brown Schools given their condition and the need for space.	6-12 months	SAU	City Council
Support the County and the Androscoggin Valley Hospital if they decide to investigate the possibility of developing a jointly operated nursing home facility to meet the growing needs of the aging population.	Ongoing	AVH, County, Private Vendors	City Council

Housing

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
The City should develop a financing and organizational plan to continue to upgrade the housing stock. This financing plan may include a combination of City bonding, Housing Authority funds, HUD funds, etc. move to housing	ongoing	Housing Coordinator	City Council

Historic and Cultural Resources

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Actions to be developed as the chapter text is completed and reviewed.			

Transportation

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Develop a “transportation improvement plan” to guide future improvements to the City maintained portions of the transportation system. This comprehensive document should include a multi-year framework to prioritize and complete the necessary improvements while eliminating spikes in funding requests. The system should serve many transportation modes, control the flow of traffic, to reduce the number of access points to the roadway, and to promote connections between adjacent commercial properties.	ongoing	City Council (policy)	Planning Board, DPW, and LEC
Accommodate walking as a key mode of transportation in the downtown by maintaining and enhancing existing sidewalks, adding new sidewalks to the network, and requiring sidewalks in new developments (or multi-modal paths). Winter maintenance should also be a priority on all sidewalks.	Ongoing	City Council (policy)	Planning Board, DPW, and LEC
Include required provisions for bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the zoning, site plan review, and subdivision regulations.	ongoing	Planning Board	DPW, and LEC
Apply for Transportation Enhancement Funds, through the NH Department of Transportation, for the construction of additional sidewalks and multi-use paths along City streets	ongoing	City Staff	DPW, City Council, PB, and LEC
Work with local transit providers to educate the public on how they can better access public transportation, and all of the economic, social, and environmental benefits of public transportation. Using the City website may assist here.	ongoing	Tri-County CAP	City staff
Promote the different modes of transportation including air and rail	ongoing	City Council, and Chamber	Planning Board

Transportation (continued)

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Complete all actions necessary to construct Phase II of the Route 110 improvements.	6-12 months	Planning Board, and City Council	DPW

Energy

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Form a Local Energy Committee and adopt an energy action plan to reduce energy consumption in Berlin.	1-3 months	City Council	Planning Board
Research & develop property tax exemptions for all three residential renewable energy systems, permitted under RSA 72:61-72. Berlin currently allows exemptions for solar, but not for wind or wood fueled systems.	1-3 years	LEC, and Planning Board	City Council
Promote voluntary efforts to insulate units and reduce the demand for heat and electricity.	1-3 years	LEC	Tri-County CAP
Because of Berlin's dense Downtown and redevelopment opportunities the City should encourage district heating and/or commercial opportunities where feasible.	First 6 Months	City Council	Planning Board, LEC
Support the creation of a regional farmers' market in the Downtown.	1-3 years	Chamber of Commerce	PB/City Council
Conduct a greenhouse gas inventory to develop some baseline data specific to Berlin.	6-12 months	Local Energy Committee (LEC)	City Council
Identify ways to reduce emissions within Berlin, and to reduce the City's contribution to global warming and the related climate change.	6-12 months	LEC	Planning Board, and City Council

Economic Development

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Make Downtown redevelopment a priority and develop an action plan for the downtown. The City's downtown action 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.	First 6 Months	MSP, AVER endorsed by City Council	Chamber, Planning Board
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.	6-12 Months	AVER, BIDPA	City Council, City Staff
The City should continue to contribute funding to economic development agencies and promote cooperation amongst all of the various development groups, as resources permit.	First 6 Months	City Council	AVER, Chamber, MSP, BIDPA
The City should reduce barriers, and promote the development of alternative energy, including appropriate thermal and electric renewable energy sources.	0-3 Years Move to ED Section	City Council	PB, and LEC
Focus on upgrading the downtown area and the key entrances to the City as described above.	Ongoing	AVER, MSP	City Council, City Staff
Coordinate/cooperate with Coos County initiatives regarding branding, promotion, and marketing, including: Developing and Funding more Promotion; Working with the State of New Hampshire and others to continue promoting snow machining, 4-wheeling, and other tourism opportunities in the Androscoggin Valley; and Promoting Berlin as the Gateway to the Upper Androscoggin and Umbagog Lake areas.	ongoing	State of NH, Bureau of Trails, and Brand Leadership Team (NCIC)	City Council, AVER, Chamber
Support the creation of a specific effort that will monitor and insure that the re-development of the complete former pulp mill site is done in a way that best serves the needs of the community.	First 6 months and ongoing	City Council	Planning Board, NHDES, EPA, BIDPA, and other economic entities

Economic Development (continued)

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Review the current zoning to make sure that it permits the types of new uses that the City would like to see occurring on the former mill site.	First 6 months	Planning Board	City Council, BIDPA, and other economic entities
Review and include the recommendations of the Chlor-Alkali study of the 4.8 acre superfund site in any future development plans for this area.	5-10 years	Planning Board	City Council
The City of Berlin should move forward with efforts to acquire an additional 100 to 200 acres for future industrial/commercial development.	ongoing	BIDPA/ AVER	City Council, Planning Board
Establish a Wi-Fi district providing free Internet service in the downtown.	1-3 years	MSP	Chamber, and AVER, BIDPA
Establish annual goals for Economic Development and then monitor progress against these goals.	First 6 months, then annually	City Council	BIDPA, AVER, MSP
Look for opportunities to develop incubator space for new or second step businesses, ideally in the downtown and in other locations where users would be supporting existing businesses.	6 to 12 months	BIDPA, MSP	City Council, AVER, Chamber

Regional Issues

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Berlin needs to focus on the reports that have most recently been completed in the Region. Assignments have been made, particularly in the Coos Economic Action Plan. The City should work with the assigned leaders for implementation.	First 6 months, then ongoing	City Council	AVER, NCIC, City Planner

Future Land Use

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Complete the layout and design of the East Side Arterial between Napert Village and Bridge Street.	0 to 12 months	Planning Board	City staff, City Council

Future Land Use (continued)

<i>Implementation Action</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
Layout new riverwalk where feasible, on both the east and west sides of the Androscoggin River, north to the Twelfth Street Bridge	0 to 12 months	Planning Board	NFHP
Develop conservation easements for areas to be preserved on Cascade Falls, and along the Dead River Falls	ongoing	Planning Board	Ammo. Land Trust, and
Complete/Connect multi-use trail system elements along the Dead River east to and through the Downtown	ongoing	City Council	Trail users, and Planning Board, Clubs, appropriate state agencies
Review (and revise as necessary) Zoning Relative to Phase II of Route 110 to assure that it is consistent with the land use layout.	1-3 years	Planning Board, City Economic Development Staff,	City Council
Continue Support Outdoor Recreation	Ongoing	City Economic Development Staff	City Council, 2121 Initiative

Moving Forward

Clearly there is no shortage of recommendations here. Some are near term actions. Some may already be moving forward and just need to be encouraged and supported. Again, one observation is that there are not enough partners in place as of yet to undertake all of the actions that are recommended. As noted in the introduction, it is strongly recommended that the City Council create a Local Energy Committee, and that it strengthen communications with the ongoing efforts of a number of citizens groups. These could both take on activities that are either currently assigned to the Planning Board, or are going unattended. The schedule below identifies some immediate priorities.

Organizational Efforts:

City Council should set clear, concise economic development goals for the next twelve months, then renew and revisit those goals annually;

The City Council should make downtown redevelopment a high priority, and should designate a lead agency for that effort, either the Chamber or AVER, depending on their willingness to take on that role.

The City Council should create a specific effort to develop more detailed plans for the former mill site, including the potential layout for the completion of the East Side Arterial. Ultimately, this effort might look at other large, vacant parcels whose development would have a significant impact on the community.

The City Council should create a Local Energy Committee, and charge it with specific actions as outlined in the Energy section of this chapter.

Lines of communication need to be established/strengthened between the various citizen taskforces and the City Council. Specifically:

The Local Stewardship Committee/Community Action Program should brief the City Council on its current efforts to protect lands in the vicinity of Mounts Forist and Jasper, and ask for any direction that the members may wish to give to this overall effort; and

The Citizens Community Center Taskforce should brief the City Council on its current efforts to develop a new community center and to ask for any direction that the members may wish to give to this overall effort.

Action Steps:

There needs to be a detailed plan for the types of activity the City would like to see on the former Fraser Mill site. The Future Land Use plan leads in this direction, but it needs more detail. The City Council should direct the Planning Board to lead this effort. Areas of focus should include:

The layout for the completion of the East Side Arterial

The layout of a riverwalk

The potential uses of the Dummer Yard

A detailed discussion of the types of businesses (and other activities) desired in the entire area

A review of the zoning necessary to achieve that.

The housing clean up and neighborhood revitalization efforts by the City are to be commended, and need to continue.

A similar effort needs to be undertaken focused specifically on the Downtown. There needs to be a detailed Downtown Action Plan, focused on the physical stock of buildings and their needs, on the availability of re-investment financing, on parking and other infrastructure needs, on tax incentives needed to attract investment, the regulatory environment, and any other elements that will attract investment and revitalize this area.

The efforts to complete Phase II of the Route 110 relocation from the Police Station/Green Street underpass to the Third Avenue area need to be vigorously pursued.

There needs to be a final determination as to how the future needs of the Police and Fire Department will be met with respect to a new or expanded facility, with or without shared dispatching. Once the policy has been resolved, then facility planning should begin.

The emerging Recreation Cluster of activity that is evolving in the vicinity of Jericho Lake needs to be supported. Efforts to link that activity to the Downtown need to be continued. The trail links need to be formalized. Convenient parking for snow machines and four-wheelers needs to be developed and signage provided.

The City needs to be supportive of the Coos Branding Program, and other County-wide development efforts, as outlined in the Coos Economic Action Plan (and other documents).

The Planning Board needs to take charge of the administrative responsibility of implementing this plan. It should communicate with assigned implementation partners on an annual basis (if not more regularly) to determine progress that has been made, problems encountered, resources needed, etc., and assist accordingly.

Final Thoughts

There is a lot outlined here, some of it near term and some of it longer term. The main thing for the City to do to make progress here is to create partners, provide a clear direction, and to monitor progress. Even with a sound plan and good organization, progress will often be difficult. But, without those two items, progress will be sporadic at best, and frequently impossible.