

Common Ground

Volume 9, Issue 4

January/February 2003

Berkshire
Regional
Planning
Commission

Smart Growth Workshop a Success

Nearly 80 people came out for the first in a series of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's Smart Growth workshops: *Maintaining a Sense of Place*. The workshop, held on November 16th at the Springlawn Mansion in Lenox, played host to Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Mr. Moe spoke to the attendees about the national movement to combat sprawl and the need to take local action, including involving local legislators in the inefficiencies of local spending and state statutory requirements, and the disconnect between comprehensive plans and zoning.

To further illustrate these points a panel of local land use attorneys, Donald Dubendorf and Phillip Heller, provided a brief overview of their views of impediments to smart growth. The panel also answered questions from the audience. Of greatest concern from the attendees is "Where do we go from here?" and "How do we build support to achieve our goal?"



Richard Moe at the BRPC Smart Growth Workshop

Currently, BRPC is working to address these concerns and promote a smart growth program in the Berkshires. As such, BRPC has scheduled a follow up meeting on January 16, 2002 as part of their regularly scheduled Commission meeting to hear about the newest legislation proposed by the Zoning Reform Working Group to address the inconsistencies and outdated state Zoning Act (see below). A small working group will be created for which their responsibility will be to track the zoning reform initiative and continue to hold sessions in the Berkshires on these efforts.

Funding for the November workshop and the future events has been provided by: the Berkshire County Historical Society, the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, the Center for Environmental Studies at Williams College, the Egremont Land Trust, the Green Pastures Fund, the Highland Communities Initiative, the Nature Conservancy, the Turkeybush Foundation, the Sheffield Land Trust, the Trustees of Reservations, the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area, Inc., and the Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation.

An Act to Promote Land Use Reform

Legislation was filed for this legislative session to modify both MGL Chapter 40A, the Zoning Enabling Act, and MGL Chapter 41, the Improved Methods of Municipal Planning Law and the Subdivision Control Law. The proposed Massachusetts Land Use Reform Act is the first major updating of the Commonwealth's planning, zoning and subdivision control statutes in 27 years. The Act encourages communities to adopt or update their local comprehensive plans and enables them to develop effective land use regulations that are consistent with those plans by giving them the tools they need to better shape their futures.

It's ironic that Massachusetts originated the idea of "Smart Growth", but still has outdated laws that don't always allow "Smart Growth." In fact, Massachusetts was recently listed by the American Planning Association as one of the 28 states with the most outdated state land-use laws. These proposed changes came from the Zoning Reform Working Group, a group of planners, local officials, land use attorneys, environmental advocates, and state legislators.

Highlights of changes proposed for The Zoning Act, Chapter 40A:

- Adds a general purposes section of the Zoning Act (c. 40A, § 2);
- More comprehensively addresses exemptions from Zoning Ordinance and Bylaws (c. 40A, § 3)
- Adds a requirement that a zoning bylaw or ordinance be consistent with an adopted plan (c. 40A, § 5);
- Revises the format, language style and substance of Section 6 ,the "grandfathering" section (c. 40A, § 6);
- Establishes a statewide framework for site plan review (c. 40A, § 7);
- Changes the Transfer of Development Rights section (c. 40A, § 9);
- Allows Development Impact Fees (e. 40A, § 9D);
- Establishes a Negotiated Special Permit process to address potentially troublesome development projects (c. 40A, § 9E);
- Allows a process for mediated resolution of land use appeals (c. 40A, § 17);

(Continued on page 2)

Also Inside this Issue:

New federal stormwater regulations for DPW facilities effective March 10, 2003. (See page 2)

BRPC receives grants to purchase 3D Analyst software (See GIS Update, page 3)

Berkshire Transportation Forum (BTF) meeting to be held on Thursday, February 6th (See Transportation Update, page 3)

Programs, Projects and Grants

Municipal Environmental Stewardship Project: Is your DPW Facility Compliant?

All Berkshire communities, regardless of population, must comply with new federal stormwater regulations at their DPW facilities by March 10, 2003. The main purpose of this new regulation is to prevent wetlands and water bodies from being exposed to pollutants being carried by stormwater runoff. Through a grant from the DEP, BRPC is working with Adams, Dalton, Lanesborough and Mt. Washington to comply with the new regulations. BRPC is working with the DPW supervisors to assess stormwater runoff at their facilities and develop a strategy to minimize or eliminate stormwater discharges into sensitive water resources.

BRPC is working with each of the Supervisors to develop a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which will identify stormwater runoff problems at their facilities, prioritize their importance and outline a plan to address the problems. The SWPPP will include a site map showing current stormwater runoff, especially around potential pollution sources, and lay out a plan to routinely inspect the property

All Berkshire communities ... must comply with new federal stormwater regulations at their DPW facilities by March 10, 2003.

for stormwater problems and monitor runoff for pollution. Maintaining accurate records of all inspections, spills and response actions is important.

The ultimate goal of the project is to get DPW facilities moving towards a level of "No Exposure." According to the USEPA, this condition exists at a facility when "all industrial materials and activities are protected by a storm resistant shelter to prevent exposure to rain, snow, snowmelt, and/or runoff." Once all the stormwater problems identified in the SWPPP have been addressed, the town can file a No Exposure Certificate with the

USEPA and it is relieved from many of the reporting and monitoring requirements of the new regulations. So, reaching a goal of No Exposure not only benefits the environment, it benefits the town and DPW Supervisor.

The USEPA has developed a model SWPPP that towns can reference as they develop SWPPS for their facility. It can be downloaded at www.epa.gov/region01/steward/necat/muni/index.html for a model. *Contact: Lauren Gaherty*

Potential Sources of Stormwater Pollution at DPW Facilities:

- Vehicle fueling areas (fuel should never be exposed to rain and snow: pumps and tanks should be sheltered and spilled fuel should be prevented from reaching surface or groundwater)
- Stormwater outfalls (if possible, replace these with some type of infiltration mechanism, such as grassy swales or creating sheet flow into vegetated areas)
- Materials piles (locate these so runoff can't carry any particles or leachings into nearby waterways)
- Vehicle maintenance and washing areas (conduct all these activities inside to eliminate exposure to stormwater runoff)

Community Preservation Act Forum

Could your community use state funds to preserve open space, restore historic buildings, and help citizens maintain their homes? If so, attend the

Community Preservation Act Forum

January 15, 2003

7-9 p.m.

Cummingtown Community House

Main Street, Cummington, MA

Free and Open to all

for more information, contact Wendy Sweetser at (413) 587-0716 *14

An Act for Land Use Reform in Massachusetts (continued from page 1)

Highlights of changes proposed for the Improved Methods of Municipal Planning Law, Chapter 41:

- Requires consistency between Master Plans and Zoning Bylaws or Ordinances (c. 41, § 81 D)

Highlights of changes proposed for the Subdivision Control Law, Chapter 41:

- Eliminates the statutory exemption for ANR land divisions (c. 41, § 81 L, O, P, T, X)
- Establishes the furtherance of a Master Plan as a valid purpose of the Subdivision Control Law (c. 41, § 81 M)
- Clarifies the date of submission of plans as the next regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting (c. 41, § 81 O)
- Allows Subdivision Regulations to require affordable housing (c. 41, § 81 Q)

- Requires consistency of Subdivision Regulations with an Adopted Master Plan (c. 41, § 81 Q)
- Allows Subdivision Regulation to require land for parks and playgrounds (c. 41, § 81 Q, U)
- Allows the Planning Board to specify the method of Performance Guarantees (c. 41, § 81U)

The proposed changes are bound to raise considerable discussion. BRPC will have representatives from the Zoning Reform Working Group explain the proposed amendments at our January Commission meeting (Thursday January 16, 2002.) The full text of the legislation is available at our website, www.berkshireplanning.org. For more information contact Tom Matuszko or Joellyn Warren.

Transportation Update

- The next **Berkshire Transportation Forum (BTF) meeting** will be held on Thursday, February 6th at 7:00 PM in the BRPC 2nd Floor Conference Room. If you are on the BTF mailing list you will receive materials. They are also available at libraries, town halls, and www.BerkshirePlanning.org, or by contacting Zoe Neaderland. The main subject is the coarse screening of all the different alternatives for improving transportation in the Berkshires.
- The revision of the **Regional Transportation Plan** is coming along productively and on schedule. The goals, objectives and summary of problems have been drafted, revised, and remain posted for comment (see the transportation section of the web site or contact BRPC). BTF meetings were held on December 12th and 19th to gather all ideas for alternatives.
- The results of the **Origin-Destination Study** are available. This data will be available for planning purposes and used to improve the regional traffic model.
- A draft report laying out a range of alternatives for the **Great Barrington Traffic Circulation Study** will be available in January.
- Having been successfully toasted and roasted at a party on Friday, December 13th, Transportation Manager **Charlie Cook retired** on December 31st.

How to Reasonably Screen 100 Alternatives

The number of alternatives to be considered in the Regional Transportation Plan seems likely to be on the order of one hundred different suggestions. A broad range of old and new ideas is a sign of productive discussion, but it raises concern of how to screen them to a reasonable number in a technically sound, feasible, understandable manner.

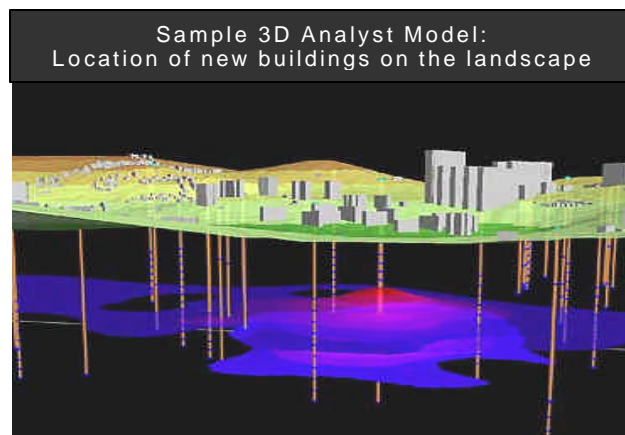
A process is built into the update of the RTP to help sort for the alternatives with the most potential to achieve the Plan's goals. There are four goals with four objectives within each. Measures have been identified that quantify each objective. One key measure will be used for each goal to provide coarse screening. All the measures will be used to evaluate the smaller resulting set of alternatives. The results of coarse screening will be presented at the February 6th meeting to help officials and members of the public narrow the range of alternatives in an informed manner. The table below summarizes the coarse screening measures:

Goal	Draft Screening Measurement
Efficient land use, development and management	Reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in Berkshire County
Economic Development and Fiscal Responsibility	Reduction in Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD) in Berkshire County
Community & Quality of Life	Reduction of accidents at the most dangerous locations
Preservation of sensitive environments and open space	Minimize acres of documented wetlands, lakes, ponds, aquifer or flood plain impacted by the transportation system.

GIS Update

BRPC GIS is beginning work on several new projects this month. Mapping is starting for the Cleveland Watershed portion of the Pittsfield Watershed project. The BRPC intends to employ the methodology developed in the EPA Phase II Stormwater Mapping Demonstration project in Dalton for a new Stormwater Assessment project in Adams. BRPC has also recently received the new color orthophotos that were flown in the spring of 2001. BRPC is awaiting authorization from MassGIS to release this data to potential users and will hopefully be able to distribute this data soon. BRPC is also awaiting authorization to distribute Pictometry software and images and will let those communities who have expressed interest know as soon as it is received.

Contact: Mark Maloy.



BRPC Receives Grants to Fund Purchase of 3D Analyst Software

In a continuing effort to better integrate existing land use planning efforts with innovative mapping and analytical tools, BRPC has received grants from the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and the Highland Communities Initiative for the purchase of a software extension for our existing geographic information system (GIS). The 3D Analyst program, a three-dimensional visualization, topographic analysis and surface creation tool, uses current GIS data layers (i.e. topographic maps, satellite images, aerial photographs, scanned images, etc) to develop dynamic and interactive maps that will elevate our current visualization and analysis capacity to a new level of visual reality (see sample above). Additionally, this project will include staff training related to software operation and management and the implementation of 3-D visual simulations for the towns of Dalton, Florida, and Hinsdale. Contact: Joellyn Warren

Transportation Term of the Month: Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) & Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)

VMT is the sum of all the miles traveled by cars and trucks in Berkshire County. VHD is the difference between how long these trips would take with no traffic as compared to with realistic levels of congestion. The traffic model is run for each separate alternative to provide this and other results, such as change in traffic on each road.

Clearinghouse Reviews

The following comments were submitted by the BRPC under the direction of the Clearinghouse Review Committee between 8/24/02 and 12/13/02:

- Sewer Extension and Improvement (Stockbridge). ENF comments submitted to MEPA on 9/30/02.
- Sewer Extension (West Stockbridge). ENF comments submitted to MEPA on 9/30/02.
- Stone Ledge Subdivision (Lenox). ENF comments submitted to MEPA on 10/29/02.
- Silk Mill Dam Removal (Becket). ENF comments submitted to MEPA on 11/22/02.
- Pittsfield Municipal Airport Improvements (Pittsfield). Notice of Project Change comments submitted to MEPA on 11/29/02.
- Oak 'N Spruce Resort Expansion (Lee). Notice of Project Change comments submitted to MEPA on 12/13/02.
- Specialty Minerals, Inc. NPDES permit (Adams). ENF comments submitted to MEPA on 12/13/02.
- Upper and Lower Root Dam Repairs (Lenox). Notice of Project Change comments submitted to MEPA on 12/13/02.
- Construction and Demolition Waste Transfer Station (Pittsfield). ENF comments submitted to MEPA on 12/13/02.

Contact: Amy Pfeufer

BRPCconnections

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Blaine Yatabe

Rebekah McDermott

Planner

GIS Coordinator

Traffic Planner

Associate Planner

Planning Associate

Bookkeeper

Secretary

Office Administrator

Planning Interns

Date

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mon - January 6 - Savoy Community Development Meeting - Savoy Town Hall - 6:30 PM

Weds - January 8 - BRPC Executive Committee Meeting - BRPC Conference Rm - 3:30 PM

Tues - January 14 - New Ashford CDP Meeting - New Ashford Town Hall - 6:30 PM

Weds - January 15 - BRPC Transportation Committee Meeting—BRPC Conference Rm - 4PM

Weds - January 15 - Community Preservation Act Forum - Cummington Community House— 7 PM

Thurs - January 16 - BRPC Full Commission Meeting - BRPC Conference Rm - 7:30 PM

Weds - January 22 - BRPC Regional Issues Committee Meeting - BRPC Conference Rm - 3:30 PM

Weds - January 22 - Hancock CDP Meeting - Hancock Town Hall - 6:30 PM

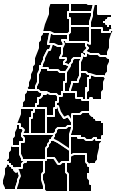
Weds - February 5 - BRPC Executive Committee Meeting - BRPC Conference Rm - 3:30 PM

Thurs - February 6 - Berkshire Transportation Forum Meeting - BRPC Conference Rm - 7:00 PM

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Common Ground



Population Projections — 2010 - 2030

In late November, preliminary **Population Forecasts** were circulated to all Berkshire community Select Boards and Planning Boards, the region's two Mayors, and to the BRPC commission members and alternates for community and public review and comment. The Table below presents a summary of county and community Census population counts from 1970 - 2000, projected figures for 2010 to 2030, and the percent change in population over the past thirty years and the thirty year projection period ahead.

Population forecasts are produced for the region's communities with the goal of providing information for community discussion and planning — as a starting point for consideration of future community scenarios -- and for

long-range regional transportation planning purposes.

Predicting population changes 10 to 30 years in the future is a risky endeavor, since the region is subject to external economic and other influences. Particularly challenging is forecasting community figures in a region with communities of such small size. For this reason the full forecast packet sent to communities (availability information on back) contains tables and charts showing "mid range" predictions and "hi" and "lo" alternatives for each community and the county, underscoring the degree of difficulty and full range of possibilities of population changes which may be ahead. A review of BRPC forecasts from the 1990's indicates a consistent expectation that the county decline will end by 2010.

Population Forecasts: Preliminary (11-21-02)					FORECASTS:			%CHANGE %CHANGE	
Community	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	1970-2000	2000-2030
Adams	11,722	10,381	9,445	8,809	8,471	8,734	9,363	-25%	6%
Alford	302	394	418	399	414	457	521	32%	31%
Becket	929	1,339	1,481	1,755	1,932	2,255	2,710	89%	54%
Cheshire	3,006	3,124	3,479	3,401	3,686	4,244	5,043	13%	48%
Clarksburg	1,987	1,871	1,745	1,686	1,720	1,875	2,119	-15%	26%
Dalton	7,505	6,797	7,155	6,892	7,083	7,752	8,773	-8%	27%
Egremont	1,138	1,311	1,229	1,345	1,405	1,559	1,785	18%	33%
Florida	672	730	742	676	696	763	864	1%	28%
Great Barrington	7,537	7,405	7,725	7,527	7,731	8,481	9,641	0%	28%
Hancock	675	643	628	721	778	892	1,057	7%	47%
Hinsdale	1,588	1,707	1,959	1,872	1,962	2,194	2,538	18%	36%
Lanesborough	2,972	3,131	3,032	2,990	3,104	3,425	3,904	1%	31%
Lee	6,426	6,247	5,849	5,985	6,225	6,910	7,943	-7%	33%
Lenox	5,804	6,523	5,069	5,077	5,235	5,746	6,519	-13%	28%
Monterey	600	818	805	934	1,039	1,222	1,479	56%	58%
Mount Washington	52	93	135	130	146	174	212	150%	63%
New Ashford	183	159	192	247	268	309	368	35%	49%
New Marlborough	1,031	1,160	1,240	1,494	1,560	1,739	2,006	45%	34%
North Adams	19,195	18,063	16,797	14,681	14,045	14,410	15,374	-24%	5%
Otis	820	963	1,073	1,365	1,536	1,825	2,226	66%	63%
Peru	256	633	779	821	952	1,158	1,440	221%	75%
Pittsfield	57,020	51,974	48,622	45,793	44,184	45,488	48,476	-20%	6%
Richmond	1,461	1,659	1,677	1,604	1,794	2,120	2,576	10%	61%
Sandisfield	547	720	667	824	885	1,011	1,192	51%	45%
Savoy	322	644	634	705	782	917	1,108	119%	57%
Sheffield	2,374	2,743	2,910	3,335	3,648	4,265	5,169	40%	55%
Stockbridge	2,312	2,328	2,408	2,276	2,314	2,513	2,829	-2%	24%
Tyringham	234	344	369	350	376	431	509	50%	45%
Washington	406	587	615	544	604	710	858	34%	58%
West Stockbridge	1,354	1,280	1,483	1,416	1,464	1,616	1,847	5%	30%
Williamstown	8,454	8,741	8,220	8,424	8,694	9,548	10,839	0%	29%
Windsor	468	598	770	875	967	1,132	1,364	87%	56%
County Total	149,352	145,110	139,352	134,953	135,700	145,875	162,650	-10%	21%
North	45,541	43,713	41,254	38,629	38,362	40,802	45,078	-15%	17%
Central	85,510	81,838	77,636	74,929	74,820	79,782	88,156	-12%	18%
South	18,301	19,559	20,462	21,395	22,519	25,291	29,416	17%	37%
Pittsfield MSA	99,816	93,871	88,695	84,699	84,057	89,126	97,963	-15%	16%

Methodology & Assumptions: County

Population forecasts for Berkshire County communities are derived from future county totals for the forecast period (2010-2030) produced by the REMI model (Regional Economic Models, Inc.), a widely used forecasting and policy simulation model.

The REMI model takes national and regional (Northeast) level economic forecasts produced by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) and Census Bureau population data and forecasts, and then apportions Berkshire County a future share of projected population growth or change based on the model's estimate of the region's likely future population and economic trends. The model incorporates a full range of historical demographic and economic data from 1969 to the present: 2000 is the latest actual data year.

REMI-produced future county population totals:

2010: 135,700
2020: 145,875
2030: 162,650

Sources: U.S. Census: 1970-2000; Regional Economic Models, Inc. for County Totals & BRPC for community figures for 2010-2030 Forecasts

Con't. on next page

REMI provides the “long view” in population projections. What some might view as overly optimistic future population figures represent that long view — that an area such as

Regional Implications

Berkshire County — with its economic history, location near important economic centers, and historical population

growth trend – won’t continue in unending decline, but will rebound and regain population, and new or expanded economic activities and employment opportunities.

The Table on the right sorts communities by the percent change in population which took place from 1970 to 2000, as counted by the Census. These figures provide a perspective on regional changes in population forecast for the next thirty years. Between 1970 and 2000 the U.S. population growth rate was 38%, while Berkshire County lost 10% of its population. The REMI model predicts that national population will continue to climb from 2010-2030, increasing by 30%. That continuing climb in population is predicted to impact the Berkshires -- turning a 30 year trend of decline into modest (relative to the U.S.) growth of 21% in the coming thirty year projection period.

That growth is expected to be distributed unevenly throughout the region, as has been the historic pattern. While the northern (-15%) and central (-12%) sub-regions have seen population decline, southern and outlying (non-corridor) communities (+17%) have experienced dramatic changes in population (note the percent changes). A variation on those differences will continue with the region's cities and northern and central communities showing population gains (17%-18%) but that turnaround hardly approaching the 37% increase in population predicted for the southern region of the county.

Future changes in population throughout the region will be heavily influenced by factors outside regional control. Still, discussions now taking place throughout the region in the Community Development Planning program and planning for housing, community economic development, open space and recreation, and community services will serve as thresholds for future population change.

**Methodology & Assumptions: cont'd.)
Community Projections:**

The REMI-projected county totals serve as the control for community forecasts. BRPC projects population trends for each community starting with each community's historic share of county population (from 1940 through Census 2000), and alternative (statistical) future trends out to 2030. These trendlines produce an estimate of future population share for the years 2010-2030. Along with these “mid range” figures are calculated “hi” and “lo” ranges responsive to past community population fluctuations to accommodate similar future unpredictability. As a final step in the process, each community’s middle, “hi,” and “lo” range figures are then proportionally fit to the REMI (control) county totals for future years, and “hi” and “lo” county totals.

Sorted by 1970-2000 % change			Sorted by 2000 to 2030 change		
Community	%CHANGE 1970-2000	%CHANGE 2000-2030	Community	CHANGE 1970-2000	CHANGE 2000-2030
Peru	221%	75%	Pittsfield	-11,227	2,683
Mount Washington	150%	63%	Williamstown	-30	2,415
Savoy	119%	57%	Great Barrington	-10	2,114
Becket	89%	54%	Lee	-441	1,958
Windsor	87%	56%	Dalton	-613	1,881
Otis	66%	63%	Sheffield	961	1,834
Monterey	56%	58%	Cheshire	395	1,642
Sandisfield	51%	45%	Lenox	-727	1,442
Tyringham	50%	45%	Richmond	143	972
New Marlborough	45%	34%	Becket	826	955
Sheffield	40%	55%	Lanesborough	18	914
New Ashford	35%	49%	Otis	545	861
Washington	34%	58%	North Adams	-4,514	693
Alford	32%	31%	Hinsdale	284	666
Egremont	18%	33%	Peru	565	619
Hinsdale	18%	36%	Adams	-2,913	554
Cheshire	13%	48%	Stockbridge	-36	553
Richmond	10%	61%	Monterey	334	545
Hancock	7%	47%	New Marlborough	463	512
West Stockbridge	5%	30%	Windsor	407	489
Lanesborough	1%	31%	Egremont	207	440
Florida	1%	28%	Clarksburg	-301	433
Great Barrington	0%	28%	West Stockbridge	62	431
Williamstown	0%	29%	Savoy	383	403
Stockbridge	-2%	24%	Sandisfield	277	368
Lee	-7%	33%	Hancock	46	336
Dalton	-8%	27%	Washington	138	314
Lenox	-13%	28%	Florida	4	188
Clarksburg	-15%	26%	Tyringham	116	159
Pittsfield	-20%	6%	Alford	97	122
North Adams	-24%	5%	New Ashford	64	121
Adams	-25%	6%	Mount Washington	78	82
County Total	-10%	21%	County Total	-14,399	27,697
North	-15%	17%	North	-6,912	6,449
Central	-12%	18%	Central	-10,581	13,227
South	17%	37%	South	3,094	8,021
Pittsfield MSA	-15%	16%	Pittsfield MSA	-15,117	13,264

Sources: U.S. Census: 1970-2000 ; 2010-2030 Forecasts: REMI (County Totals) & BRPC (community)

Population Forecast Packet

A complete Forecast Packet which includes a summary sheet of all communities, county totals, and community level charts showing population trendlines from 1940 to 2000 and projections continuing out to 2030 are available at the BRPC office in downtown Pittsfield or online at: berkshireplanning.org