

BRTA Coordinated Transit Plan

On behalf of the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA), BRPC prepared a Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan. As of this year, transit authorities must have an annually updated Coordinated Plan in order to receive federal funding. The continuation of RideWorks, a program which helps people in areas not served by public transportation get to and from work, is the highest priority in the Coordinated Plan. The Plan also recognizes the achievements and importance of the BerkshireRides program of the Transportation Association of Northern Berkshire, Inc. Both the RideWorks and BerkshireRides programs attempt to bridge gaps in transportation needs and to assist a large population of people on fixed and/or limited incomes that are not able to access jobs or work related transportation.

A key finding of the Coordinated Plan is that there are large populations of people who would benefit greatly from expansion of service areas.

The Coordinated Plan is available on the BRPC website and also in print upon request.

BRPC Contact: *Alison Church*

BRPC Welcomes New Staff

In July, BRPC will welcome Transportation Planner Kristina Hodges. Kristina has previously worked as an intern at the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and she will bring enthusiasm to all elements of transportation planning. Kristina’s primary roles will be involvement in the MPO and TAC meetings, traffic data Collection, bike/ped planning, and various studies, including the Lee Area Traffic Study.

Municipal Survey Results

As part of the recently enacted “Expedited Permitting” legislation, regional planning agencies statewide are working to evaluate local permitting processes in Massachusetts. Local officials across the state were sent a survey regarding local permitting characteristics, and opinions about development. Of the 215 municipalities that answered the survey statewide, 16 Berkshire

communities, half of the County’s total, provided responses. Of the Berkshire responses:

- 63% have no planning staff
 - 63% post bylaws and other forms online and have written lists of application requirements for special permits
 - 69% have a Community Development or other land use plan
 - 60% mandate training for at least one municipal board
 - Lack of local desire for development was seen as the biggest barrier to permitting
- The BRPC, with the input of local municipalities, will use the survey results to determine what initiatives would be most effective in making permitting easier for both applicants and permit granting boards across the County.

BRPC contact: *Joellyn Warren*

Clearinghouse Reviews

Berkshire Biodiesel ENF (Pittsfield)

CMAQ Update

Over the next four years, Berkshire County will receive approximately \$1 million per year in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) money.

Last year, the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) used CMAQ funds to cover the cost difference between a standard gas-powered bus and a more fuel efficient and innovative gas/electric hybrid bus.

Upcoming Events

July 5	Executive Committee Meeting	3:30 P.M.	BRPC	
July 5	Transportation Advisory Committee	5:00 P.M.	BRPC	
July 9	MPO Meeting	4:00 P.M.	BRPC	
August 1	Executive Committee Meeting	3:30 P.M.	BRPC	
August 1	Full Commission Meeting	5:00 P.M.	BRPC	
August 30	Census LUCA Workshop	9:00 A.M.	BRPC	

Traffic control measures that are eligible for CMAQ funding include:

- programs for improved public transit
- trip-reduction ordinances
- parking facilities which serve multiple occupancy vehicle programs
- programs to limit/restrict vehicle use in downtown areas during periods of peak use
- provisions for shared-ride services
- programs to restrict portions of roads to pedestrian, buses, or HOV use.
- programs for bicycle amenities in both public and private areas
- programs to control extended idling of vehicles
- ordinances to facilitate non-automobile travel and utilization of mass transit
- construction of pedestrian facilities

BRPC Contact: *Alison Church*