

**READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN UPDATE**

**ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 21, 2023**

**READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

**C/o**

***Berks County Planning Commission***

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The preparation of this report has been financed in part through grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors who are responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at the time of publication. This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation.

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## **Section 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction to the *Public Participation Plan***

The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for all of Berks County and is responsible for regional transportation planning activities. RATS communicates with interested parties to ensure effective and innovative transportation planning that is representative of and responsive to the needs of the entire region. To achieve this goal, RATS provides the public with an active role in the development of transportation plans, programs, and projects, beginning in the early stages of and throughout the planning processes.

This *Public Participation Plan* (PPP) provides a framework to ensure that the RATS transportation planning process includes a proactive participation process and complies with federal participation plan requirements. This PPP identifies current and previous outreach efforts and outlines steps to be taken to improve.

### **1.2 Background**

Public participation processes involve the timely notification of information to the public to provide input early in and throughout the planning and programming processes. RATS provides interested parties with opportunities to comment on those processes, including this *Public Participation Plan*. The *Public Participation Plan* ensures that the public involvement activities of RATS transportation planning processes comply with the proactive public involvement requirements of Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The requirements for public involvement are set forth primarily in 23 CFR Section 450.316(a)(1)(2)(3) and (b) which addresses elements of the metropolitan planning process. The requirements pertaining to the *Long Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP) (23 CFR 450.322) also include provisions addressing public outreach [450.322(f)(7), 450.322(g), 450.322(i), and 450.322(j)]. The process that addresses public involvement in the *Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP) (CFR 450.32) is described in Section 450.316(a). Additionally, regulations require an opportunity for at least one public meeting in air quality nonattainment Transportation Management Areas (TMA's) should be addressed through the PPP described in 450.316(a). A TMA is designated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as an urbanized area with a population greater than 200,000 as determined by the most recent Decennial Census.

The PPP details strategies and procedures RATS will use to achieve its long-standing commitment to participation in regional transportation planning efforts. The PPP applies to transportation planning activities for which participation by interested parties is a required component, and outlines RATS transportation planning activities that comply

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with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and other applicable standards for collecting and addressing public comments.

### **1.3 Federal Certification Review Recommendations**

Pursuant to 23 United States Code (USC) Section 134(k) and 49 USC 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning in Transportation Management Areas (TMA's) every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, with a population of over 200,000. The latest Certification Review conducted for RATS occurred in November 2020, with the final report of that Review released on March 3, 2021. The review did not make any formal recommendations for improvements to this PPP. There were several subject areas within the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan where the MPO was encouraged to make improvements. Those areas will be addressed within that LEP Plan but are noted here for consistency.

1. The Review Team finds that RATS did not address the recommendations using the specific techniques identified in the 2017 report; however, the Team finds that the MPO addressed the intent of most of the recommendations. Specifically, the Review Team finds the MPO has made certain documents available to the region's largest LEP population in its native language; and, provided notices to that language group concerning the availability of language assistive services in its native language as a foreword to the document. Nonetheless, the Review Team finds that based on demographic data provided in the LEP Plan, the region has other LEP language groups that need to be made aware of the language assistive services the MPO provides. Accordingly, the Team encourages the MPO to add language Tag Lines for its current "front piece", relevant to its linguistic population, for inclusion in vital documents. Examples of language Tag Lines can be found in Pennsylvania's 2021 Transportation Program General and Procedural Guidance document.
2. The Review Team found that the recommendation concerning the website, although addressed in the MPOs LEP Plan, is not readily observable on the website. The Team found that the reason that changes have not been made to the website as indicated is that the website is not within the MPOs direct authority and control to address. During the virtual review discussion, the MPO revealed that the website is administered and maintained by Berks County. As a result, RATS is unable to unilaterally alter the website:
3. To improve the overall process, the Review Team encourages RATS to revisit the language in the LEP Plan, and anywhere else that it appears, concerning the availability of translation of the website. This information should be revised to accurately reflect how the MPO communicates information contained on its website to LEP language groups.

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## **1.4 RATS Contact Information**

For more information on this *Public Participation Plan* or on RATS regional transportation planning activities, please contact us through the Berks County Planning Commission using the information shown on the front cover of the document.

## **Section 2: Public Participation Goals:**

### **2.1 Overview**

RATS recognizes the obligation to provide adequate information to persons regarding transportation plans and programs. It also seeks out and encourages participation in the development of these plans and programs as well as any substantial amendments to them. Therefore, RATS will ensure that adequate information is provided to individuals and groups to evaluate various proposals. RATS will also provide forums to obtain views on transportation planning and project related issues.

RATS recognizes that persons affected by public action should have a voice in policy formulation. Although the various transportation planning and programming activities are designed to have long term beneficial effects on the community, these activities may also have an adverse impact on some individuals. Therefore, it is important that everybody knows what is being planned and is given every opportunity to present their views.

RATS recognizes the need to consult and coordinate with appropriate public and private agencies such as federal and state departments, local municipalities, county departments, and private organizations. It will also confer with social service agencies regarding the needs of their clients including the elderly, persons with disabilities, low income, and those of minority and/or Limited English Proficient groups.

To comply with the various requirements, RATS sets forth these Public Participation Goals, including:

- Ensure that interested parties in Berks County have an active and ongoing role in the regional transportation planning process
- Guarantee an established and dependable process with open meetings and public access to technical data and non-technical information
- Increase the level of understanding of the transportation planning process in the region and identify how interested parties can become more involved
- Provide interested parties with multiple opportunities for meaningful involvement in the regional transportation planning process
- Identify, seek out and engage minority populations, low-income populations, Limited English Proficient populations, persons with disabilities, and all groups and organizations listed in Section 4.1 as Interested Parties
- Employ effective techniques for outreach and communication

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- Serve as a guide to RATS / BCPC staff for outreach and participation activities and efforts for transportation and other planning activities
- Document what we learn from interested parties in a format for consideration and use by the MPO Board ('the Board'), Berks County Planning Commission (BCPC), BCPC staff, and others to improve our outreach and participation efforts.

### **Section 3: Outreach Techniques and Strategies**

#### **3.1 Overview**

RATS uses a wide range of communication mechanisms and community engagement techniques to provide for meaningful participation from interested parties, including:

- Communication by mail, phone, fax, email, or person-to-person contact
- BCPC's website containing documents, meeting schedules, agendas and minutes, transportation-related announcements, and educational tools
- Input at public meetings, public hearings, and workshops that are held at convenient and accessible locations and times
- Partnering with community, civic, and business groups to produce forums and input sessions when requested
- Distribution of planning documents, brochures, fact sheets, and maps documenting planning efforts
- Distribution of public notices and press releases
- Internet and direct mailed surveys
- Using the BCPC's *eFlash* electronic notifications of important events
- Using the BCPC's Facebook page
- Exploring the creation of a separate RATS Facebook page, along with other social media
- Visualization techniques to help board members and the public understand potential outcomes of transportation plans and/or programs
- Consultation with agencies and officials responsible for planning activities within the county that are affected by transportation
- Ensuring that vital documents are translated into Spanish and made available digitally and in print
- Including notices on all documents and on the website that certain translated documents are available, and other translations are available on request
- Incorporating virtual public outreach and input

#### **3.2 Contact Lists**

RATS staff continually develops and maintains databases of stakeholders, media and interested organizations and parties. These lists are updated regularly to reflect current information. Contact lists expand throughout the transportation planning process as

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people, organizations and agencies become involved and offer their opinions or just want more information. To establish new contacts, RATS uses a range of strategies, such as:

- Mailing list registration is available at all public meetings / hearings
- Mailing list registration is available via the BCPC website or email
- Announcements of public meetings, public hearings, workshops, and other project-specific opportunities made available online, through news releases, email notification, targeted mailings, social media (Facebook), or announced at public meetings
- Working with existing stakeholders to suggest potential participants or encourage participation
- Working with professional, civic and community organizations to provide representatives, suggest participants, and encourage participation
- Making special efforts to engage social service providers who work with transportation-challenged clients

### **3.3 Visualization Techniques**

RATS uses a wide range of accessible information resources to help participants understand different proposals, impacts and possible outcomes related to regional transportation programs and plans. Visualization techniques used to illustrate these concepts may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following materials and practices:

- Printed small and large scale maps
- Aerial photographs, alone or with GIS mapping overlays
- Photographs, sketches, artist renderings, images, diagrams, charts, and other graphics
- Printed maps that allow comparison of proposals
- Scenario planning discussions
- Online maps
- Virtual public engagement that includes visual aids and voice descriptions
- Internet web based content that is:
  - Easy to read (sans serif fonts)
  - Does not require extensive page scrolling or multiple 'click-throughs'
  - No advertising
  - Documents available for download in standard software formats, i.e., Adobe .PDF, Microsoft products

### **3.4 Virtual Public Involvement**

The COVID-19 Pandemic forced public meetings to go from in-person gatherings to virtual environments for many months. RATS staff adapted to these challenges and continues to improve where possible. Since all online processes are controlled by

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County of Berks Information Services Department policies and procedures, RATS staff uses the following products and techniques:

- Microsoft Teams Live, Facebook Live, and YouTube for live meeting broadcasts
- Incorporation of screen-shared agendas, attachments, documents, and presentations
- Ensuring the public is aware that meetings are recorded for transcription purposes
- Allowing for Public Comment at the beginning and end of all meetings
- Posting agendas and meeting links on the Berks County, Planning Commission, and RATS websites at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting
- Posting all meeting materials at least 48 hours prior to the meeting

## **Section 4: Consultation with Interested Parties**

### **4.1 Overview**

Federal guidance originally from SAFETEA-LU legislation dictates that:

*“The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan planning process”. [§ 450.316(a) Interested parties, participation and consultation]*

### **4.2 Consultation with Tribes and Federal Land Management Agencies**

MPO’s must consult with federally recognized Tribes and Nations to provide opportunities for review and comment on key planning documents. PennDOT maintains their Tribal Consultation Guide which describes which Tribes and Nations have interests throughout the Commonwealth, specifies which are to be included in review activities and how they are to be addressed. Many Tribes and Nations accept electronic submissions however there are still some who require hardcopies of all draft documents.

Regulations also require coordination with Federal Land Management agencies in the development of the TIP and LRTP. There are two (2) federal lands in Berks County: Hopewell Furnace National Historic Park, administered by the National Park Service, and Blue Marsh Lake, administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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### **4.3 Consultation in Developing this *Public Participation Plan***

The Reading Area Transportation Study develops all plans and programs in consultation with the interested parties defined above. To develop this *Public Participation Plan*, RATS first assembled a draft list of participation strategies and ideas based on a review of the existing Public Involvement Process Resolution, past experiences, and guidance from federal transportation planning legislation. All activities undertaken during the Public Comment Period are documented in the Appendix.

## **Section 5: Title VI and Environmental Justice**

### **5.1 Overview**

RATS *Environmental Justice Summary* serves as a guide for RATS to use to identify concentrations of Title VI and Environmental Justice populations, including minorities and low-income populations. This Summary is updated with every TIP and LRTP update; at a minimum of every two (2) years. The foundation for these efforts is stated in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:

*“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program receiving Federal financial assistance.” --Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000)*

The President’s 1994 Executive Order on Environmental Justice states:

*“Each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.” --Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 1994*

As concentrations of these groups are located, RATS will work with agencies and organizations that encompass these groups to ensure they are aware of draft Plans and Programs and have opportunities to provide input.

### **5.2 Target Outreach Areas**

RATS uses its data collection and analysis capabilities within the *Environmental Justice Summary* process to support participation efforts and help ensure meaningful access to its public participation opportunities. RATS uses the *Environmental Justice Summary* to analyze the relationship between the region’s populations and its regional investments, plans and programs.

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Geographic analysis assists RATS to identify environmental justice communities and target outreach to these areas as necessary. Using the Environmental Justice Summary, RATS will specifically:

- Identify the locations of environmental justice communities throughout Berks County
- Where possible, host public meetings in accessible locations and times within these communities, and
- Identify one or more organizations that serve these communities and proactively share information with the organizations to disseminate throughout their respective networks and communication channels.

Additionally, staff will work with PennDOT officials to help guide their public outreach efforts when project-specific meetings are being planned. RATS will develop and maintain an updated listing of accessible locations that may be used for public meetings in environmental justice communities.

## **Section 6: Limited English Proficiency (LEP)**

### **6.1 Overview**

“Limited English Proficient” or “LEP” persons are those individuals who do not speak English as their primary language, and who also have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The key commonality among LEP persons is their inability to communicate effectively in the English language, regardless of their native tongue. Persons who are multi-lingual, in that they speak one or more other languages in addition to being proficient in English, are not considered to be Limited English Proficient.

### **6.2 LEP Assessment**

As a recipient of federal financial assistance, RATS has an obligation to reduce language barriers that can preclude meaningful access to RATS’ programs, information and services by LEP individuals. An integral part of this effort is the completion of a “Limited English Proficiency Self-Assessment” or LEP Assessment, which is designed to balance four factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or service.
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals encounter the program and/or activities.
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided to people’s lives, and
4. The resources available to the federal financial recipient and costs.

This assessment along with detailed reviews of the latest Census data examines the most prevalent non-English speaking populations and their geographic dispersion



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throughout Berks County. That analysis is detailed in a separate Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan that accompanies this PPP. Presently, under LEP guidelines, translation of 'vital documents' is provided in Spanish only. However, the front piece of all RATS documents will include language taglines in over 30 different languages stating that assistance will be provided in those languages on request.

### **6.3 Meaningful Access for LEP Individuals**

RATS will take reasonable steps to endure that LEP persons have meaningful access to key transportation planning decisions and have opportunities to become involved in the regional transportation planning processes. RATS will use one or more of the following tools to reasonably accommodate LEP individuals:

- Provide on request, with seven (7) days advanced notice (based on document size and complexity), translated copies of materials in Spanish as well as other languages if requested. RATS, through the County of Berks, has an active contract with a firm that provides translation services.
- Provide on request, with seven (7) days advanced notice, oral interpretation services for public meetings. RATS, through the County of Berks, has an active contract with a firm that provides interpretation services.
- To actively engage LEP persons, meeting announcements, press releases and public notices will be distributed to organizations that target these groups in appropriate languages.
- RATS will provide notices to local minority media outlets and community service organizations regarding the availability of language translation services. Those outlets and organizations currently include the Daniel Torres Hispanic Center, WFMZ-Spanish Edition (television), Rumba 92.3 (WRBW) FM (radio), WXAC 91.3 FM Albright College (radio), and Palo (monthly subscription print magazine).
- RATS' vital documents will include statements in Spanish, the most common non-English language identified by Census data, that translations are available free on request. RATS, through the County of Berks, has an active contract with a firm that provides translation services.
- The Berks County website, which hosts content for RATS, will continue to provide language translation software. That software provides translation between English and Spanish, as well as translation between multiple other languages. RATS will continually make efforts to develop points of contact with representatives of non-English speaking communities.
- RATS will make available vital documents and Executive Summaries, where appropriate, in Spanish.
- RATS will include notices on all documents and on the website that certain translated documents are available, and other translations are available on request.
- BCPC staff will undergo periodic training in products and procedures provided through Berks County contracts to be used to communicate with individuals needing language assistance.

## **6.4 'Vital' Documents**

RATS considers vital documents to be those that convey critical information to the public or are required by law or federal regulation. Based on this definition, the MPO will consider vital documents to include, but not limited to, the following:

- Title VI Policy*
- Title VI Complaint Procedures*
- Title VI Complaint Forms*
- Annual Meeting Schedule*
- Notices for special Public Meetings*

Additionally, the following documents will be either condensed into 'Executive Summary' formats and will have those Executive summaries translated into Spanish, or will be translated in their entirety (based on document size and complexity):

- Long Range Transportation Plan*
- Transportation Improvement Program*
- Environmental Justice Summary*
- Public Participation Plan*
- Limited English Proficiency Plan*

These documents will be made available in print and online. Vital documents will be made available in alternative languages and formats, if requested. Other documents may also be made available in alternative languages and formats, if requested.

## **Section 7: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

### **7.1 Overview**

To ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), RATS' Public Meeting Notices and comment opportunities provide multiple input methods. Public meetings and hearings are always held at ADA-accessible locations on established public transportation routes. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of RATS, or has complaints that a program, service, or activity of RATS is not accessible to persons with disabilities should call the ADA Point of Contact at (610) 478-6300 x6304, email [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com), or visit our website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo/reading-area-transportation-study-2023-meeting-schedule>

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## **7.2 Meaningful Access for Persons with Disabilities**

RATS staff coordinates with local disability advocacy groups to ensure information is readily available to all. RATS may use one or more of the following tools to reasonably accommodate people with disabilities:

- Provide on request, with advanced notice, copies of materials in larger, sans-serif type
- Provide on request, with reasonable advanced notice (based on document size and complexity), Braille or raised-print notices and materials
- Provide on request, with advance notice, sign language interpreters
- Record materials to audio/visual media
- Verbalize information provided through visual presentations or written materials
- On request, structure seating to provide visibility for participants who lip-read or cannot adequately hear deliberations
- When necessary, mount microphones at wheelchair height
- When necessary, provide hand-held microphones to participants
- Ensure that persons who speak during virtual meetings can be heard
- Provide on request, with reasonable advanced notice, Closed Captioning services for virtual public meetings

## **7.3 Web Access for Persons with Disabilities**

The County of Berks instituted web content for departments of county government. The County uses the same web content administration software provided by the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP). One of the many reasons behind that decision included the accessibility options within the software. Those options, along with countywide website design standards, include:

- Minimal use of images
- Those images that exist must have an “ALT-TEXT” option
- Image maps must have a text equivalent
- A ‘text-only’ web page browser option that removes all images
- No ‘roll-overs’
- Use of easily readable Sans-Serif fonts
- Pages and content designed for the least number of click-throughs
- Pages designed to minimize scrolling
- Documents designed for download are created in standard software packages i.e., Microsoft products and Adobe PDF; and

## **7.4 Notifications and Services**

Representatives of the disabled have been included on our mailing lists and were forwarded surveys (Section 4.2) to garner their input. At all in-person meetings hosted

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by RATS, accommodations will be made for wheelchair access and, with four (4) days advanced notice, American Sign Language interpretation services. Documents in Braille or large print type and audio recordings can be made available with appropriate notice, depending on the size and complexity of the document. The availability of these services is detailed in Public Notices. Any questions, concerns, requests for accommodations or complaints should be made to the ADA Point of Contact listed in Section 7.1.

## **Section 8: Public Participation in Meetings**

### **8.1 Overview**

RATS welcomes comments and ideas related to regional issues from interested parties from the Berks County area as well as adjacent counties/MPO's as applicable. There are many opportunities and levels of involvement for persons related to the regional planning process, and for those who wish to address the Board directly. Except for those meetings that are appropriate Executive Sessions, all meetings of the Reading Area Transportation Study Technical and Coordinating committees are open to interested parties and include opportunities to comment on both agenda and non-agenda items.

### **8.2 Public Comments at Board Meetings**

All those in attendance will be asked to sign-in at the meeting location or, if virtual, to announce their presence for the record. Those wishing to comment will be asked to indicate those wishes at their signature or in the Chat feature. Individuals may be requested to limit the length of their comments, and individuals may also be requested not to duplicate like or similar comments of others preceding them.

Proceedings of meetings of the Boards are made available as meeting minutes or meeting summaries, which are posted on the Berks County Planning Commission's website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>, and also for review at the Berks County Planning Commission's offices. Please call the BCPC at 610-478-6300 for more information.

### **8.3 RATS Committees**

RATS has several committees that meet on an as-needed basis in which citizens, advocates, private sector representatives and others can obtain the same information given to the representatives of the professional planning and transportation agencies involved in RATS activities. Committee meetings give interested parties an opportunity to learn the pertinent facts surrounding an issue. All committee meetings are advertised and open to the public.

## **Section 9: Public Notices**

### **9.1 Overview**

To ensure that the public has ample opportunity to take part in the regional planning process, RATS is committed to providing timely notification, complete information, and full public access to key decisions. This section describes the procedures that RATS will use for all public notices.

### **9.2 Public Notice Requirements**

RATS uses public notices to announce the following types of events and participation opportunities:

- The Boards' annual meeting schedules – advertised annually through the Berks County Commissioners and on the RATS website
- Special, rescheduled, or cancelled Board meetings – advertised according to PA Sunshine Law requirements
- Comment Periods – advertised at least 30 days prior to the date the Board is scheduled to take formal action on any major decisions (45 days for the PPP, see Section 10); and
- Meetings related to Comment Periods – advertised at least seven (7) days in advance (see Section 10.2).

Public Notices for these events and participation opportunities will be:

- Advertised in the form of paid legal advertisements. One paid advertisement will be placed in a newspaper of general circulation in the region (*Reading Eagle*) and, if available, one in a newspaper with circulation targeted to minority communities
- Public notices for special public meetings or major forums may be advertised in the form of paid display advertisements
- Distributed to other media outlets or organizations that serve targeted outreach groups identified in this document
- Posted on the agency's web pages at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>;
- Sent electronically through the BCPC's eFlash electronic mail system
- Posted on the BCPC's Facebook page
- Sent to libraries with a request for posting
- Sent to SCTA/BARTA (transit provider) with a request for posting

Public Notices will provide the following information (where applicable):

- Type or name of meeting/participation event/activity/public comment period
- Subject of meeting/participation event/activity/public comment period
- The date, time, and location of meeting/participation event/activity
- The web link for a virtual meeting

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- Start and end dates for public comment periods
- Contact information (Address, Telephone Number, E-mail address and/or website)
- ADA Point of Contact information
- Brief summary of the proposed action, plan, program or amendment
- Where to obtain copies of the plan or materials
- How to provide formal public comments
- If formal action on a major decision will be taken by the Board, the date, time and location of the meeting where that action will be taken
- Offer to provide accommodations for people with Limited English Proficiency; and
- Offer to provide accommodations for people with disabilities; and
- Directions on how to file complaints under Title VI and other nondiscrimination statutes

## **Section 10: Public Review and Comment Periods at Key Decision Points**

### **10.1 Overview**

RATS values the efforts stakeholders and the public make to participate in the regional planning process. RATS will provide at least 30 days for public review and comment before taking formal action on any major decisions (45 days for PPP). This *Public Participation Plan* defines a major decision as the official adoption of:

- the *Regional Long Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP)
- the *Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP)
- *Air Quality Conformity Determination*
- *Public Participation Plan* (PPP)
- A Major Amendment to the regional plan or TIP

### **10.2 Public Comment and Review Period Requirements**

RATS will inform the public and interested parties of Public Comment Periods, using the Public Notice procedures described above, at least 30 days prior to the date scheduled for Board adoption or major amendment of a Regional LRTP, TIP, *Air Quality Conformity Determination*, or major amendment (45 days for PPP).

Documents and information on which public comments are being sought will be made available to stakeholders, other interested parties, and the public at locations throughout the County. These locations include BARTA offices, BCPC offices, PennDOT District 5-0 offices, and the BCPC website <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>. Information on where and how to access public comment documents will be included in the Public Notice.

~~Prior to formal action by the Board on the adoption of a regional LRTP, TIP, *Air Quality*~~

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*Conformity Determination, Public Participation Plan, or major amendment, at least one public meeting will be held for the purpose of providing information to and obtaining comment from the public. The public meeting may be held as part of a regular meeting of the Board or held as a separate public meeting. Public Notice for this meeting can be combined with the Public Notice issued for the related Public Comment Period described in Section 10.2.*

### **10.3 Additional Public Review and Comment Periods**

If the draft regional LRTP, TIP, *Air Quality Conformity Determination*, or major amendment differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the initial public involvement effort, an additional 15-day Public Comment period will be offered.

If the draft *Public Participation Plan* changes appreciably during the review and comment period, an additional 30-day public review and comment period is provided prior to the Board taking formal action.

Additional Public Review and Comment periods will be conducted in accordance with procedures for regular Public Review and Comment periods listed in Section 11.2.

### **10.4 The Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**

The regional LRTP is a long range (20+ years) strategy and capital improvement program developed to guide the effective investment of public funds in multi-modal transportation facilities in the context of the regional vision. The regional plan provides the context from which the region's *Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP), a short-range capital improvement program for implementing transportation projects, is drawn. The LRTP is updated every four years in consultation with interested parties.

RATS' early and ongoing public participation process in developing the LRTP will follow these steps:

- Step 1: Public Participation Surveys, through the internet and targeted mailing, will be used to gather initial input (when update cycles correspond, this can occur in concert with the TIP update). When available, staff will also use input gathered as part of any of PennDOT's public input processes
- Step 2: At the same time, Public Officials Surveys sent to local officials and the legislative delegation, will be used to gather governmental input.
- Step 3: Initial input, including at least one (1) Public Meeting/Workshop, will be compiled, and used in the design of the next phase of outreach and participation, such as workshops and other public meetings. This Public Meeting/Workshop may be held in conjunction with a regularly scheduled RATS MPO Technical or Coordinating Committee meeting.

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- Step 4: Ongoing input will be used to develop draft regional plan materials in consultation with interested parties.
- Step 5: Draft regional plan materials will be presented for review and comment by the public and interested parties using the Public Review and Comment procedures for a 30-day public comment period. Draft materials will be made available during the 30-day public comment period on the BCPC website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>, BCPC's offices, BARTA's offices, and PennDOT District 5-0's offices, and local libraries. Information on where and how to access public comment documents will be included in the Public Notice with Information to be included that details how to access documents electronically or in printed form. Vital draft regional plan documents will be made available in Spanish and alternative formats on request in accordance with the procedures for accommodating Limited English Proficient persons and persons with disabilities contained in this *Public Participation Plan*. During this stage, two (2) Public Meetings will be held. These generally include one during the day in a hybrid format that includes both in-person and electronic access in a downtown Reading location, and a second meeting held in the evening in a rural location that is generally in-person only. Staff strives to accommodate requests for presentations at other meetings.
- Step 6: All comments received will be considered and the response to comments will be documented and provided to the Board prior to taking action on the draft regional plan materials
- Step 7: The Board takes formal action on the regional plan
- Step 8: A Public Participation Report for the regional plan will be developed. The Report will document all comments received and the response to comments and will also document all public participation and outreach activities. This Report may take the form of a Chapter or Appendix in the L RTP
- Step 9: Adopted final regional plan materials will be made available on the BCPC website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>, BCPC's offices, BARTA's offices, PennDOT District 5-0's offices. Vital regional plan documents will be made available in Spanish and alternative formats on request in accordance with the procedures for accommodating Limited English Proficient persons and persons with disabilities contained in this *Public Participation Plan*. Information will be included that details how to access documents electronically or in printed form.

### **10.5 The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

The regional *Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP) identifies the region's highest priority transportation projects, develops a multi-year program of implementation, and identifies available federal and non-federal funding sources for the identified projects. The TIP covers a four-year period of investment and is updated every two years through



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a cooperative effort of local, state and federal agencies including participation by the general public and consultation with interested parties. Transportation projects included on the TIP are to be consistent with the regional LRTP. The entire range of projects included in the TIP must conform to federal air quality standards.

RATS early and ongoing public participation process in developing the TIP will follow these steps:

- Step 1: Public Participation Surveys, through the internet and targeted mailing, will be used to gather initial input. When update cycles correspond, this can occur in concert with the regional LRTP update and /or any PennDOT public input processes
- Step 2: At the same time, Public Officials Surveys sent to local officials and the legislative delegation, will be used to gather governmental input
- Step 3: Initial input will be compiled and used in the design of the next phase of outreach and participation, such as workshops and other public meetings
- Step 4: Ongoing input will be used to develop draft TIP materials in consultation with interested parties
- Step 5: Draft TIP materials will be presented for review and comment by the public and interested parties using the Public Review and Comment procedures for a 30-day public comment period. Draft materials will be made available during the 30-day public comment period on the BCPC website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>, BCPC's offices, BARTA's offices, PennDOT District 5-0's offices, and local libraries. Information on where and how to access public comment documents will be included in the Public Notice with information included that details how to access documents electronically or in printed form. Vital draft regional plan documents will be made available in Spanish and alternative formats on request in accordance with the procedures for accommodating Limited English Proficient persons and persons with disabilities contained in this *Public Participation Plan*. Information will be included that details how to access documents electronically or in printed form. During this stage, two (2) Public Meetings will be held. These generally include one during the day in a hybrid format that includes both in-person and electronic access in a downtown Reading location, and a second meeting held in the evening in a rural location that is generally in-person only. Staff strives to accommodate requests for presentations at other meetings.
- Step 6: All comments received will be considered and the response to comments will be documented and provided to the Board prior to taking action on the draft TIP materials
- Step 7: The Board takes formal action on the TIP
- Step 8: A Public Participation Report for the TIP will be developed. The Report will document all comments received and the response to comments, and will also document all public participation and outreach activities
- Step 9: Adopted final regional plan materials will be made available on the

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BCPC website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>, BCPC's offices, BARTA's offices, and PennDOT District 5-0's offices. Vital regional plan documents will be made available in Spanish and alternative formats on request in accordance with the procedures for accommodating Limited English Proficient persons and persons with disabilities contained in this *Public Participation Plan*. Information will be included that details how to access documents electronically or in printed form.

## **10.6 Major Amendments to the Regional LRTP or TIP**

Once a TIP or LRTP has been developed and approved the program is subject to revisions as the budgeted transportation program experiences changes in project scheduling and estimated costs. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will only authorize projects and approve grants for projects where the total cost is programmed in the current approved TIP. RATS must modify the TIP or regional LRTP to adjust to the changing cost and schedule if a planning partner or the Commonwealth would like to continue to advance the project.

The definition of a major amendment varies by the type and/or cost of program to be amended. Definitions and procedures for regional LRTP and TIP major amendments are included in the respective regional LRTP and TIP documents and are available on the BCPC's website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>. **If a proposed revision to the TIP or regional LRTP adds a project, deletes a project, or impacts the schedule or scope of work to an air quality significant project, RATS will review the proposal and determine if a new *Air Quality Conformity Determination* is required prior to formal approval of the change. If the revision requires that a new *Air Quality Conformity Determination* is necessary, an amendment to the regional LRTP shall also be developed.**

RATS' public participation and comment for major amendments to the regional LRTP or TIP will follow these steps:

- Step 1: RATS will inform the public and interested parties of the comment period for the proposed major amendment using the Public Notice procedures described in Section 10.2, at least 30 days prior to the date scheduled for Board action on the proposed major amendment
- Step 2: Proposed major amendment information will be presented for review and comment by the public and interested parties using the Public Review and Comment procedures for a 30-day Public Comment Period described in Section 10.2. Proposed major amendment information will be made available during the 30-day public comment period on the BCPC website, at the BCPC offices, BARTA's offices, and PennDOT District 5-0's offices. Information on where and how to access public comment documents will be included in the public notice

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- Step 3: All comments received and the response to comments will be documented and provided to the Board prior to taking action on the proposed major amendment
- Step 4: The Board takes action on the major amendment
- Step 5: After federal and state approval of the requested changes, RATS will update the appropriate TIP or regional LRTP documents on the BCPC website. Updated documents will also be available at the BCPC offices, BARTA offices, and PennDOT District 5-0 offices.

### **10.7 Air Quality Conformity Determination Report**

The *Air Quality Conformity Determination* report is a companion document to the regional LRTP and to the TIP. The *Air Quality Conformity Determination* report documents the process used by RATS for making the transportation-related conformity determination for the regional LRTP and TIP for ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). The Conformity Determination is required by the federal Clean Air Act. RATS conformity finding is based on criteria and procedures in EPA's Transportation Conformity Rule (40 CFR Part 93) and satisfies all applicable conformity requirements. The *Air Quality Conformity Determination* report is developed as part of the regional LRTP or TIP update, in which case public participation and public comment procedures for the regional LRTP or TIP update will be followed as described in Sections 10.4 and 10.5, respectively. The *Air Quality Conformity Determination* report is also updated as required by certain amendments to the TIP or regional LRTP, in which case public participation and comment procedures for major amendments to the regional LRTP or TIP will be followed as described in Section 10.6.

### **10.8 The Public Participation Plan**

This *Public Participation Plan* describes the various objectives, strategies, and tools to engage the public and encourage participation in the development of transportation plans and programs. RATS will periodically update the *Public Participation Plan*. This may be due to new official planning regulations and procedures, or after any public or Board evaluations of the Plan's effectiveness.

RATS' public participation and public comment process for updating the *Public Participation Plan* will follow these steps:

- Step 1: Revisions to the *Public Participation Plan* are developed in consultation with interested parties before the draft document is submitted for the public review and comment process
- Step 2: The draft *Public Participation Plan* will be presented for review and comment by the public and interested parties using the Public Review and Comment procedures for a 45-day Public Comment Period described in Section 10.2. The draft *Public Participation Plan* will be made available during the 45-day public comment period on the BCPC website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning->

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[commission/transportation-reading-mpo](https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo), at the BCPC offices, BARTA's offices, and PennDOT District 5-0's offices. Information on where and how to access public comment documents will be included in the public notice. The draft *Public Participation Plan* will be made available in Spanish and alternative formats on request in accordance with the procedures for accommodating Limited English Proficient persons and persons with disabilities contained in this *Public Participation Plan*

- Step 3: All comments received and the response to comments will be documented and provided to the Board prior to taking action on the draft *Public Participation Plan*
- Step 4: The Board acts on the draft *Public Participation Plan*
- Step 5: A *Public Participation Plan* will be produced and made available on the BCPC website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>, at the BCPC offices, BARTA's offices, and PennDOT District 5-0's offices. The *Public Participation Plan* will be made available in and alternative formats on request in accordance with the procedures for accommodating Limited English Proficient persons and persons with disabilities contained in this *Public Participation Plan*.
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## **Section 11: Access to Information**

### **11.1 Overview**

RATS will provide reasonable access to public information, including technical information and meeting notices:

- In electronically accessible formats on the BCPC website at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>;
- Links to the website will be provided on the BCPC Facebook page
- Links will also be advertised digitally through the BCPC eFlash service
- In print at the Berks County Planning Commission office in the Berks County Services Center, 633 Court St., 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Reading, PA 19601; and
- BARTA's offices located at 1700 N. 11<sup>th</sup> St., Reading, PA 19604; and
- at PennDOT District 5-0 offices located at 1002 Hamilton St, Allentown, PA 18101.

### **11.2 Response to Special Request**

To facilitate public involvement while also using limited staff resources efficiently, RATS will make information available to interested parties on a regular basis through the various processes and activities outlined in this *Public Participation Plan*.

When RATS receives special requests to perform an analysis that is not considered as part of the planning process, or other special data or information, the agency will

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determine the reasonableness of the request. Parameters for determining the reasonableness (as used in this document) will evolve around the preparation time and costs to respond, as well as the relevancy to the transportation planning process and the agency mission. RATS will determine reasonableness of and respond to all requests on an individual basis.

**Section 12: Evaluation of *Public Participation Plan* and Public Meetings**

- The Board will review and revise the *Public Participation Plan* and processes based on input from the public, interested parties, and the Document Review Network in terms of their effectiveness in providing full and open access to all.
- Public Meetings, Public Hearings and special workshops scheduled for the public and interested parties will include a means of providing feedback on the effectiveness of the process of communication and meeting format.
- The *Public Participation Plan* will be reviewed at a minimum every two years, in the year prior to a TIP update, to ensure effectiveness and completeness.

**Section 13: Applicability**

This *Public Participation Plan* and any subsequent amendments shall be effective immediately upon the adoption by the Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee (the Board). This *Public Participation Plan* replaces any previously adopted Public Involvement Process resolutions.

**Section 14: Future Efforts**

**14.1 Overview**

RATS recognizes the need to continuously enhance our outreach efforts and periodically update this Public Participation Process. The following activities will take place to fulfill these goals:

- Further identify and consult with interested parties (ongoing)
- Continue to seek out EJ/LEP organizations, resources, and points of contact in the various communities (ongoing)
- Review and evaluate the effectiveness of the *Public Participation Plan* (every two years in year prior to updating TIP)
- Continue to review and, if necessary, update Limited English Proficiency Assessment every two years consistent with the *Public Participation Plan* evaluation
- Conduct review of ADA accessibility features of meeting spaces and the website (annually)
- Continue working with disability advocates to continuously make online materials easier to access using electronic methods.

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- Consider the formation of a Public Participation Panel or Subcommittee, with appointment opportunities extended to the public and interested parties (on adoption of this Process).

**READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN and LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN  
UPDATE PERIOD ACTIVITIES**

The following activities occurred prior to and during the *Public Participation Plan / Limited English Proficiency Plan* update period, which took place between June 4, 2023 and July 18, 2023:

1. Online Survey Monkey survey created, in both English and Spanish, along with printed surveys in English and Spanish. Copies of first page of online surveys attached, along with copies of printed surveys.
2. Initial email, including Public Notice and electronic links to surveys and documents, forwarded to over 250 groups, organizations and individuals. Copy of email attached.
3. Links to documents and surveys added to Berks County Planning Commission website. Images attached.
4. 6/4/2023, Legal Advertisement run in the Reading Eagle. Advertisement attached.
5. 6/5/2023, information included on Berks County Planning Commission (BCPC) Facebook page. Image attached.
6. 6/5/2023, Article/Notices included on the Berks Community Television (BCTV) website. Images attached.
7. 6/14/2023, Evening (7:00 p.m.) Public Meeting held at Berks County Agricultural Center auditorium facility. Meeting held in rural area. Meeting survey created and made available; 0 returned. There were no attendees from the public and one (1) Berks County Planning Commission staff member (presenter). Meeting materials, including PowerPoint discussion, attached.
8. 6/23/2023, Follow-up email sent as a reminder of the second Public Meeting and to complete surveys. Copy of email attached.
9. 6/23/2023 and 6/26/2023, information regarding second Public Meeting included on Berks County Planning Commission (BCPC) Facebook page. Images attached.
10. 6/27/2023, Second Public Meeting held at Berks County Services Center (Commissioner's Boardroom, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor). Afternoon (2:00 p.m.) meeting held in facility that is transit accessible, located in City of Reading. Meeting also held virtually to allow for non-in-person attendance. Meeting survey created and made available; none returned. Four (4) in-person attendees total, including Berks County Planning Commission staff (2 persons), Berks County Information Services support staff (1 person) and

- one (1) Berks County Commissioner. Three (3) persons attended virtually, including SCTA/BARTA staff (1 person), Western Berks Ambulance Assn. staff (1 person) and Berks County Information Services support staff (1 person). Only one (1) comment germane to the PPP/LEP update was from SCTA/BARTA staff noting their experiences reaching out to the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance and various faith-based organizations have been helpful. Meeting materials including image of virtual meeting attached.
11. Comments were received via two separate emails (07/14/2023) from Michael Donchez, PennDOT District 5-0 staff. Comments germane to the LEP were limited to text formatting and two date corrections. Comments germane to the PPP include spelling, grammar, and formatting corrections. Additionally, recommendations for minor text additions/corrections were made. MPO staff concurs and will make those corrections. Both emails attached.
  12. Comments were received via email (07/17/2023) from Vanessa Shamberg, FHWA staff. These comments were substantive enough that staff chose to delay adoption of the draft PPP and LEP to further review and respond to these comments. A copy of Ms. Shamberg's email along with MPO staff responses is attached.
  13. As of the close of the Public Comment Period (07/18/2023), a total of ten (10) online surveys and no (0) written surveys were returned. All responses received were English; no Spanish responses to the Surveys were received. The summary of responses is attached.
  14. Staff submitted (8/23/2023) revised documents to Vanessa Shamberg, FHWA staff per her previously submitted comments for additional review. Staff also included Khan Mitchell (FHWA Civil Rights Specialist) along with Stacey Waters and Debra Allen (both PennDOT Bureau of Equal Opportunity). On 8/28/2023, staff received documents with embedded comments from both FHWA officials (unable to reproduce for this document). Staff reviewed and incorporated changes suggested by those comments.
  15. Both documents set for review/recommendation by RATS Technical Committee 9/7/2023. If a favorable recommendation is received, the RATS Coordinating Committee (Reading MPO) should adopt on 9/21/2023. Minutes from both meetings to be attached upon approval.



1. Online Survey Monkey survey created, in both English and Spanish, along with printed surveys in English and Spanish. Copies of first page of online surveys attached, along with copies of printed surveys.

## Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Public Participation Plan Survey

In one way or another, our transportation system affects our daily lives. We travel back and forth to work, school, shopping, medical appointments, and recreation activities. The goods we buy are shipped between factories, warehouses, and stores. People and goods travel in cars, trucks, trains, or busses; we also walk, bicycle, carpool, take a taxi or an Uber/Lyft, or telecommute. Over time, our transportation needs outgrow the current transportation system and changes are needed.

The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) is a committee of local officials that engage in transportation planning for Berks County. It reviews the transportation needs of our area and prepares several required plans and programs. One of those, called the Public Participation Process, outlines the policies and methods used by RATS to gather and use meaningful public input as part of the transportation planning process. Please help us improve this Process by answering the questions below. Thanks!

1. Have you ever seen or heard about the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS)?

Yes

No

2. Do you know who undertakes transportation planning in Berks County?

Yes

No

3. Are you familiar with the transportation planning process?

Yes

No

4. Do you know where the funding comes from for transportation improvements?

Yes

No

Next

**Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS)  
Public Participation Plan Survey**

(Take this survey online! <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission>)

In one way or another, our transportation system affects our daily lives. We travel back and forth to work, school, shopping, medical appointments, and recreation activities. The goods we buy are shipped between factories, warehouses, and stores. People and goods travel in cars, trucks, trains, or busses; we also walk, bicycle, carpool, take a taxi or an Uber/Lyft, or telecommute. Over time, our transportation needs outgrow the current transportation system and changes are needed.

The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) is a committee of local officials that engage in transportation planning for Berks County. It reviews the transportation needs of our area and prepares several required plans and programs. One of those, called the *Public Participation Process*, outlines the policies and methods used by RATS to gather and use meaningful public input as part of the transportation planning process. Please help us improve this Process by answering the questions below. Thanks!

**Have you ever seen or heard about the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS)?**  Yes  No

If you checked 'No' above,

- Do you know who undertakes transportation planning in Berks County  Yes  No
- Are you familiar with the transportation planning process?  Yes  No
- Do you know where the funding comes from for transportation improvements?  Yes  No

If you checked 'Yes' above, where have you seen or heard about RATS?

- Print Media (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Television (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Social Media (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Municipal Newsletter (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**As we develop plans and projects that may impact you, what would be the best ways for us to get information to you? (Check all that apply)**

- Direct notification (by postal mail or email) of meetings and documents
- BCTV Programs and BCTV Community Calendar notices
- Public Meetings, RATS meetings, and presentations to community groups
- Newspaper articles and press releases
- Legal Advertisements and/or block ads in newspaper
- Website information, including downloadable documents
- Documents on file at libraries and other community organizations
- Municipal Newsletters
- Paper notices posted on bulletin boards
- Social Media (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Advertising-type newspapers (the *Merchandiser*)
- Other methods (please describe at the end of this survey)

**If you have concerns as we develop those plans or about transportation projects, which of the following methods are effective ways for you to get information to us? (Check all that apply)**

- Public meetings, special presentations & workshops
- Paper Surveys returned by postal mail
- Electronic Surveys completed online
- Social Media (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Public Meetings, RATS meetings, and presentations to community groups
- Small group meetings (community organizations, agencies, & individuals)
- Telephone or fax
- Other methods (please describe at the end of this survey)

**What obstacles prevent you from attending a meeting about transportation planning? (Check all that apply)**

- Not an interesting subject
- No specific project that directly affects me
- Need special accommodations (please explain below)
- Fear/distrust of government
- Can't leave work to attend meetings
- Child / Elder care concerns
- Meeting time / location conflicts (please explain below)
- Language barrier (please explain language needed below)
- Lack of available transportation
- Other (please describe at the end of this survey)

**Do you participate in Virtual (online) meetings?**

Yes  No

If No, which challenges do you face? (Check all that apply)

- I don't use or have access to a computer or phone
- I'm not comfortable using technology
- I'd rather meet face-to-face
- Other reason (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, which benefits do you receive? (Check all that apply)

- It saves me time
- I don't have to drive anywhere
- I don't have access to transportation
- I can view recorded meetings at a more convenient time
- I prefer virtual vs. face-to-face

Which types of platform(s) do you use regularly? (Check all that apply)

- Desktop Computer / Laptop
- Tablet / Mobile Phone
- Neither



## Estudio de Transporte del Área de Reading Encuesta del Plan de Participación Pública

De una forma u otra, nuestro sistema de transporte afecta nuestras vidas cotidianas. Viajamos de ida y vuelta al trabajo, a la escuela, para ir de compras, a las citas médicas y a las actividades recreativas. Los productos que compramos se transportan entre fábricas, almacenes y tiendas. Las personas y las mercancías viajan en automóviles, camiones, trenes o autobuses; también caminamos, pedaleamos, compartimos el automóvil, tomamos un taxi o un Uber / Lyft, o trabajamos desde la casa. A lo largo del tiempo, nuestras necesidades de transporte superan la oferta del sistema de transporte actual y se necesitan cambios.

El Reading Area Transportation Study (Estudio de Transporte del Área de Reading, RATS por sus siglas en inglés) es un comité de funcionarios locales que participan en la planificación del transporte para Berks County (Condado de Berks). Revisa las necesidades de transporte de nuestra área y prepara varios planes y programas requeridos. Uno de estos, llamado Public Participation Process (Proceso de Participación Pública), describe las políticas y métodos utilizados por RATS para recopilar y usar aportes públicos significativos como parte del proceso de planificación del transporte. Ayúdenos a mejorar este proceso respondiendo a las siguientes preguntas. ¡Gracias!

1. ¿Alguna vez ha visto o escuchado sobre el Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS)?

Sí

No

2. ¿Sabe quién lleva a cabo la planificación del transporte en Berks County?

Sí

No

3. ¿Está familiarizado con el proceso de planificación del transporte?

Sí

No

4. ¿Sabe de dónde provienen los fondos para mejoras en el transporte?

Sí

No

Sig.

**Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS)  
(Estudio de Transporte del Área de Reading)**

**Public Participation Plan Survey  
(Encuesta del Plan de Participación Pública)**

(¡Conteste esta encuesta en línea! <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission>)

De una forma u otra, nuestro sistema de transporte afecta nuestras vidas cotidianas. Viajamos de ida y vuelta al trabajo, a la escuela, para ir de compras, a las citas médicas y a las actividades recreativas. Los productos que compramos se transportan entre fábricas, almacenes y tiendas. Las personas y las mercancías viajan en automóviles, camiones, trenes o autobuses; también caminamos, pedaleamos, compartimos el automóvil, tomamos un taxi o un Uber / Lyft, o trabajamos desde la casa. A lo largo del tiempo, nuestras necesidades de transporte superan la oferta del sistema de transporte actual y se necesitan cambios.

El Reading Area Transportation Study (Estudio de Transporte del Área de Reading, RATS por sus siglas en inglés) es un comité de funcionarios locales que participan en la planificación del transporte para Berks County (Condado de Berks). Revisa las necesidades de transporte de nuestra área y prepara varios planes y programas requeridos. Uno de estos, llamado Public Participation Process (Proceso de Participación Pública), describe las políticas y métodos utilizados por RATS para recopilar y usar aportes públicos significativos como parte del proceso de planificación del transporte. Ayúdenos a mejorar este proceso respondiendo a las siguientes preguntas. ¡Gracias!

**¿Alguna vez ha visto o escuchado sobre el Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS)?**  Sí  No

Si marcó “No” arriba,

- ¿Sabe quién lleva a cabo la planificación del transporte en Berks County?  Sí  No  
¿Está familiarizado con el proceso de planificación del transporte?  Sí  No  
¿Sabe de dónde provienen los fondos para mejoras en el transporte?  Sí  No

Si marcó “Sí” arriba, ¿dónde ha visto o escuchado sobre RATS?

- Medios impresos (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Televisión (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Redes sociales (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Boletín municipal (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Otro (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_

**A medida que desarrollamos planes y proyectos que pueden impactarlo a usted, ¿cuáles serían los mejores métodos para brindarle información? (Marque todos los que apliquen)**

- Notificación directa sobre documentos o reuniones ( vía postal o correo electrónico)
- Programas de BCTV y anuncios del BCTV Community Calendar
- Reuniones públicas, reuniones de RATS, y presentaciones a grupos comunitarios
- Artículos de periódicos y comunicados de prensa
- Anuncios legales y/o bloqueo de anuncios en periódicos
- Información en la web, incluidos los documentos descargables
- Documentos archivados en bibliotecas y otras organizaciones comunitarias
- Boletines municipales
- Avisos impresos publicados en tabloneros de anuncios
- Redes sociales (especifique)\_\_\_\_\_
- Periódicos publicitarios (como el *Merchandiser*)
- Otros métodos (por favor, describa al final de esta encuesta)

**Si usted tuviera inquietudes a medida que desarrollamos los planes o sobre los proyectos de transporte, ¿cuáles de los siguientes métodos serían formas efectivas para que usted pueda brindarnos información? (Marque todos los que apliquen)**

- Reuniones públicas, presentaciones especiales y talleres
- Encuestas impresas devueltas por correo
- Encuentras electrónicas completadas en línea
- Redes sociales(especifique)\_\_\_\_\_
- Reuniones públicas, reuniones de RATS, y presentaciones a grupos comunitarios
- Reuniones en grupos pequeños (organizaciones comunitarias, agencias e individuos)
- Teléfono o fax
- Otros métodos (por favor, describa al final de esta encuesta)

**¿Qué obstáculos le impedirían asistir a una reunión sobre planificación de transporte? (Marque todos los que apliquen)**

- No es un tema interesante.
- No es un proyecto específico que me afecte directamente.
- Necesito acomodados especiales. (Por favor, explique abajo)
- Miedo/ falta de confianza en el gobierno
- No puedo ausentarme del trabajo para asistir a reuniones.
- Tengo preocupaciones con el cuidado de niños o envejecientes.
- Conflictos con el horario o localización ( Por favor, explique abajo)
- Barreras con el idioma (Por favor, explique abajo)
- Falta de transportación disponible
- Otros (por favor, describa al final de esta encuesta)



**¿Participa usted en reuniones virtuales( en línea)?**

**Sí**    **No**

Si contestó “**No**”, ¿qué dificultades enfrenta? (Marque todos los que apliquen)

- No uso o no tengo acceso a una computadora o teléfono.
- No me siento cómodo usando la tecnología.
- Prefiero reuniones presenciales.
- Otra razón (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_

Si contestó “**Sí**”, ¿qué beneficios recibe? (Marque todos los que apliquen)

- Me ahorra tiempo.
- No tengo que manejar a ningún sitio.
- No tengo acceso a transportación.
- Puedo ver las reuniones grabadas en un horario que me convenga.
- Prefiero las reuniones virtuales en lugar de las presenciales.

¿Qué tipo de plataforma(s) usa regularmente? (Marque todos los que apliquen)

- Computadora “desktop” (de escritorio) / “laptop” (portátil)
- Tableta/ teléfono celular
- Ninguno

**Por favor, díganos sus sugerencias para mejorar la participación pública en el proceso de planificación del transporte.**

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Por favor, devuelva esta encuesta a:

Berks County Planning Commission  
633 Court Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Reading, PA 19601

Para más información sobre RATS y el proceso de planificación del transporte, por favor visite nuestro sitio web:

<https://countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>

Nos esforzamos constantemente por mantener listas de contactos precisas y actualizadas. Aunque tratamos de comunicarnos electrónicamente, entendemos que el correo postal sigue siendo la mejor manera para que algunos residentes escuchen sobre nosotros. Si usted desea estar en nuestras listas de correo para recibir avisos de reuniones y oportunidades para revisar documentos, provea **UN** (1) método para contactarlo, ya sea por correo electrónico **o** correo postal.

**correo electrónico** \_\_\_\_\_

**o**

**Nombre** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dirección** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ciudad** \_\_\_\_\_

**Código postal** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gracias por completar nuestra encuesta. Su aportación se usará para crear el Public Participation Process( Proceso de Participación Pública), que asegurará una mejor comunicación entre el público y los responsables de tomar decisiones.**

2. Initial email, including Public Notice and electronic links to surveys and documents, forwarded to over 250 groups, organizations and individuals. Copy of email attached.

**From:** [Golembiewski, Michael](#)  
**To:** [Golembiewski, Michael](#)  
**Subject:** RATS Draft Public Participation Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, June 1, 2023 2:32:37 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[PPP\\_LEP\\_Advertisement\\_English.pdf](#)  
[PPP\\_LEP\\_Advertisement\\_Spanish.pdf](#)  
[PPP\\_Survey\\_Spanish.pdf](#)  
[PPP\\_Survey\\_English.pdf](#)

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Good afternoon, all!

Apologies for any multiple copies of this email you may receive. We ask that you please pass this information on to those who may be interested. Thank you!

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**  
**DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**  
**And**  
**DRAFT LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN**

The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Coordinating Committee has prepared the *Draft Public Participation Plan* and the *Draft Limited English Proficiency Plan* for Berks County. These are operational documents that address methods to disseminate information about and gather public input on various transportation planning efforts in Berks County. This announcement is designed to give citizens, local governments and interested organizations an opportunity to comment on the *Draft Plans*. Two (2) Public Meetings will be held to take comments on the *Draft Plans*: Wednesday, June 14, 2023, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Berks County Agricultural Center auditorium, 1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, PA 19533, and Tuesday, June 27, 2023 beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Berks County Commissioner's Boardroom located in the Berks County Services Center, 633 Court Street, Reading, PA 19601. The June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting will also be available online through Microsoft Teams by using this link <https://www.countyofberks.com/calendar/public-meetings/planning/rats/rats-public-participation-plan-public-meeting>. **These meetings are not about specific projects or issues; rather, they are about the exchange of information and how to best engage the public in the transportation planning process.**

Copies of the *Draft Plans* and links to online surveys are available for public review on the Berks County Planning Commission's web page at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission> and at the following locations:

**Berks County Planning  
5-0  
Commission  
Street  
633 Court St – 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
18101  
Reading, PA 19601**

**BARTA Executive Offices**  
  
1700 North 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
  
Reading, PA 19604

**PENNDOT District**  
  
1002 Hamilton  
  
Allentown, PA

Please submit written comments to: Mr. Michael Golembiewski, Transportation Modeler,

Berks County Planning Commission, 633 Court St. – 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Reading, PA 19601. Comments will be accepted beginning June 4, 2023, through the close of business on Tuesday, July 18, 2023. Comments may also be faxed to (610) 478-6316 or sent by email to [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com).

The Plans will be made available again at these same locations following approval. The Berks County Planning Commission offices are handicapped accessible and are served by BARTA routes. These documents will be made available in alternative languages or formats if requested. **If you need translation/interpretation services, we ask that you contact us no later than June 7, 2023 at [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com), or call 610-478-6300.**

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*Coming Together & Working Together  
to Achieve Success!*

**Michael D. Golembiewski | Transportation Modeler  
Berks County Planning Commission**

633 Court Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Reading, PA 19601  
Phone: 610-478-6300 ext. 6304 Fax: 610-478-6316



**Email:** [mgolembiewski@countyofberks.com](mailto:mgolembiewski@countyofberks.com)

**Web:** [www.countyofberks.com/planning](http://www.countyofberks.com/planning)

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3. Links to documents and surveys added to Berks County Planning Commission website. Images attached.

County of Berks - Planning Commission


countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission

Government Services Community How Do I Search...

## Welcome to the Office of County Planning

### Our Mission

The Berks County Planning Commission serves as the area-wide planning organization for Berks County. The Commission provides a regional blueprint for land use, transportation and community facilities. It assists local units of government with development and preservation activities and provides guidance to the Berks County Board of Commissioners and other departments of county government. The Commission and its professional staff also serve as community advisors for modern planning practices and advocates for sound regional growth management. Finally, since the Commission is involved with a range of activities with a number of partners, it plays a very important coordinating role in community development issues and projects.



### News / Announcements

#### RATS Draft Public Participation Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan


Public Comment Period Open

[View](#)


#### BCPC 2022 Annual Report

See what the Planning Commission did in 2022

[View](#)



**David N. Hunter, AICP**  
Executive Director



County of Berks - 2023 DRAFT P

countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo/plans-and-programs/public-participation-pl...

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## 2023 DRAFT Public Participation Plan And DRAFT Limited English Proficiency Plan

[Survey \(English\) \(Print Version\)](#)   [Survey \(Spanish\) \(Print Version\)](#)

The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Coordinating Committee has prepared the Draft Public Participation Plan (en Español) and the Draft Limited English Proficiency Plan (en Español) for Berks County. These are operational documents that address methods to disseminate information about and gather public input on various transportation planning efforts in Berks County. This announcement is designed to give citizens, local governments and interested organizations an opportunity to comment on the Draft Plans. Two (2) Public Meetings will be held to take comments on the Draft Plans: Wednesday, June 14, 2023, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Berks County Agricultural Center auditorium, 1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, PA 19533, and Tuesday, June 27, 2023 beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Berks County Commissioner's Boardroom located in the Berks County Services Center, 633 Court Street, Reading, PA 19601. The June 27th meeting will also be available online through Microsoft Teams by using this link <https://www.countyofberks.com/calendar/public-meetings/planning/rats/rats-public-participation-plan-public-meeting>. These meetings are not about specific projects or issues; rather, they are about the exchange of information and how to best engage the public in the transportation planning process.

Copies of the Draft Plans are available for public review at the links above and in print at the following locations:

Berks County Planning Commission 633 Court St - 14th Floor Reading, PA 19601	BARTA Executive Offices 1700 North 11th Street Reading, PA 19604	PENNDOT District 5-0 1002 Hamilton Street Allentown, PA 18101
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Please submit written comments to: Mr. Michael Golembiewski, Transportation Modeler, Berks County Planning Commission, 633 Court St. - 14th Floor, Reading, PA 19601. Comments will be accepted beginning June 4, 2023, through the close of business on Tuesday, July 18, 2023. Comments may also be faxed to (610) 478-6316 or sent by email to [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com).

The Plans will be made available again at these same locations following approval. The Berks County Planning Commission offices are handicapped accessible and are served by BARTA routes. These documents will be made available in alternative languages or formats if requested. If you need translation/interpretation services, we ask that you contact us no later than June 7, 2023 at [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com), or call 610-478-6300.

Si necesita servicios de traducción/interpretación, le pedimos que se comunique con nosotros a más tardar del 7 de junio del 2023 a las [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com), o llame al 610-478-6300.

**Quick Links**

- [County Buildings/Facilities](#)
- [County Park Locations](#)

**Resources**

- [Pennsylvania State Website](#)

**Looking for Information?**

If you are having trouble finding information  
Please contact *the Webmaster*.



4. 6/4/2023, Legal Advertisement run in the Reading Eagle. Advertisement attached.

To place a Classified ad  
call 610-376-1527 #3 or  
send an email to

CLASSIFIED@READINGEAGLE.COM

# cla

C4

Sunday, June 4, 2023 » MORE UPDATES AT FACEBOOK.COM/READINGEAGLE

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### AUCTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Auction vehicles**  
V&M Towing  
81 Berkley Park Rd.  
Reading, Pa 19605  
610-926-3724  
Auction on Monday 6/5/23 at  
8:00 a.m.

2004 Sterling Tractor,  
VIN 2FZHATDC34AN18669  
2008 Chevy Malibu,  
VIN 2G1WS553089277519

DICK HENRY  
AUCTIONEER/REALTOR  
610-858-3065

**IT'S THE QUICK** response  
that keeps people coming back  
to classifieds. Call today to  
place your fast-action ad.

## MERCHANDISE

### MISCELLANEOUS

Beam scale - \$40; 2 Golf Bags  
w/misc. clubs - \$50 ea. Golf  
Hand Cart - \$30; Craftsman  
Sabre Saw - \$35; Back mas-  
sager - \$25; ConAir Bath Spa  
- \$25; Revlon Hot Rollers - \$20.  
610-375-7199

S & W 40 cal. handgun - \$350;  
Mossburg Rifle slug gun w/  
scope - \$350. 484-256-5993

### MERCHANDISE

0BUYING-Antqs./collectibles  
1 item to contents. Moving or  
downsize. 484-529-0851

Vinyl Record Collections  
Wanted, Cash paid for LPs and  
45s. Rock/Soul/Jazz. Leave a  
message. 484-655-2881.

## MERCHANDISE

Wanted to Buy - Estate Jew-  
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tiques. 484-432-9770

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a bitter taste to prevent  
gnawing, allow healing.  
Weaver's Farm Supply  
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(www.fleabeacon.com)

### PUBLIC NOTICE READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN And DRAFT LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN

The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Coordinating Committee has prepared the Draft Public Participation Plan and the Draft Limited English Proficiency Plan for Berks County. These are operational documents that address methods to disseminate information about and gather public input on various transportation planning efforts in Berks County. This announcement is designed to give citizens, local governments and interested organizations an opportunity to comment on the Draft Plans. Two (2) Public Meetings will be held to take comments on the Draft Plans: Wednesday, June 14, 2023, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Berks County Agricultural Center auditorium, 1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, PA 19533, and Tuesday, June 27, 2023 beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Berks County Commissioner's Boardroom located in the Berks County Services Center, 633 Court Street, Reading, PA 19601. The June 27th meeting will also be available online through Microsoft Teams by using this link <https://www.countyofberks.com/calendar/public-meetings/planning/rats/rats-public-participation-plan-public-meeting>. These meetings are not about specific projects or issues; rather, they are about the exchange of information and how to best engage the public in the transportation planning process.

Copies of the Draft Plans are available for public review on the Berks County Planning Commission's web page at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission> and at the following locations:

**Berks County Planning Commission**  
633 Court St - 14th Floor  
Reading, PA 19601

**BARTA Executive Offices**  
1700 North 11th Street  
Reading, PA 19604

**PENNDOT District 5-0**  
1002 Hamilton Street  
Allentown, PA 18101

Please submit written comments to: Mr. Michael Golembiewski, Transportation Modeler, Berks County Planning Commission, 633 Court St. - 14th Floor, Reading, PA 19601. Comments will be accepted beginning June 4, 2023, through the close of business on Tuesday, July 18, 2023. Comments may also be faxed to (610) 478-6316 or sent by email to [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com).

The Plans will be made available again at these same locations following approval. The Berks County Planning Commission offices are handicapped accessible and are served by BARTA routes. These documents will be made available in alternative languages or formats if requested. If you need translation/interpretation services, we ask that you contact us no later than June 7, 2023 at [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com), or call 610-478-6300.  
RE June 4 A-1

5. 6/5/2023, information included on Berks County Planning Commission (BCPC) Facebook page. Image attached.


County of Berks - Planning Com | X Berks County Planning Commis | X +

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 Berks County Planning Commission

Page · Public & Government Service


633 Court St, Fl 14th, Reading, PA, United States, Pennsylvania

(610) 478-6300

[countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission](http://countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission)


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**Berks County Planning Commission**  
June 2 at 2:00 PM · 🌐

As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation planning in Berks County, the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) is obligated to have plans in place in order to ensure consistent public outreach and dialog throughout the transportation planning process. Now six years old, these documents have been updated to reflect changing demographics and communication methods. English and Spanish versions are available. A Public Review Period is now open until July 18th. For more information and to see the documents, click the link below:

 COUNTYOFBERKS.COM  
**County of Berks - 2023 DRAFT Public Participation Plan And DRAFT Limited...**  
The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Coordinating Committee has prepared the Draft Public Participation Plan (en Espanol) and the...

2 1

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6. 6/5/2023, Article/Notices included on the Berks Community Television (BCTV) website. Images attached.

### Juneteenth Parade and Festival

Join the celebration on Saturday, June 10th, 2023, at...

COMMUNITY  
JUN 06, 2023  
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### Vice President & Provost

Alvernia University appoints Dr. Leamor Kahanov as the new...

EDUCATION  
JUN 06, 2023  
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### Transportation Program to Medical Care for Local Patients

South Central Pennsylvania Veterans are now able to participate...

HEALTH & WELLNESS  
JUN 06, 2023  
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Explore Playlists by Local Creators

Upcoming Local Events

- JUN June 7 @ 9:00 am - July 16 @ 8:00 pm  
**7** LGBTQ+ Art Showcase
- JUN 11:00 am - 5:00 pm  
**10** Reading Juneteenth Day Parade & Festival
- JUN 9:00 am - 11:00 am  
**17** Safe Berks Celebration of Peace/Walk For NO MORE

[View Calendar](#)



### Visions Celebrates 10 Years with Ty Muse, President/CEO

This May, Visions Federal Credit Union celebrated the 10th...

BUSINESS & ECONOMY  
JUN 06, 2023  
[Read More](#)



### Reading Area Transportation Study Draft Public Participation Plan

The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Coordinating Committee has...

ESPAÑOL  
JUN 05, 2023  
[Read More](#)



### Governor's Advisory Council Seeks Candidates for Fish & Boat Commission Board

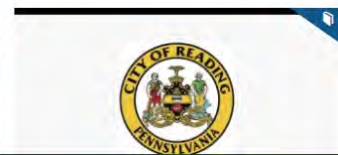
The Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation...

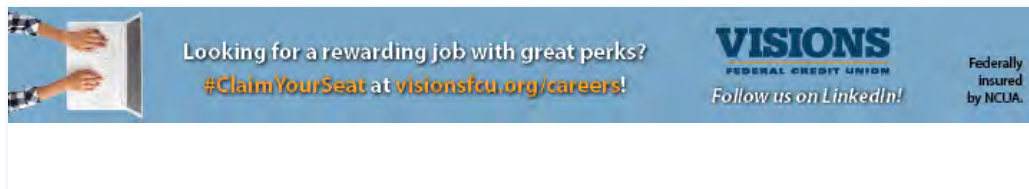
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# Reading Area Transportation Study Draft Public Participation Plan

## by The County of Berks

Jun 05, 2023



The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Coordinating Committee has prepared the [Draft Public Participation Plan](#) and the [Draft Limited English Proficiency Plan](#) for Berks County. These are operational documents that address methods to disseminate information about and gather public input on various transportation planning efforts in Berks County. This announcement is designed to give citizens, local governments and interested organizations an opportunity to comment on the *Draft Plans*. Two (2) Public Meetings will be held to take comments on the *Draft Plans*: Wednesday, June 14, 2023, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Berks County Agricultural Center auditorium, 1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, PA 19533, and Tuesday, June 27, 2023 beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Berks County Commissioner's Boardroom located in the Berks County Services Center, 633 Court Street, Reading, PA 19601. The June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting will also be available online through Microsoft Teams by using this link <https://www.countyofberks.com/calendar/public-meetings/planning/rats/rats-public-participation-plan-public-meeting>. **These meetings are not about specific projects or issues; rather, they are about the exchange of information and how to best engage the public in the transportation planning process.**

Copies of the *Draft Plans* and links to [online surveys](#) are available for public review on the Berks County Planning Commission's web page at <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission> and at the following locations:

**Berks County Planning Commission:** 633 Court St – 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Reading, PA 19601

**BARTA Executive Offices:** 1700 North 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Reading, PA 19604

**PENNDOT District 5-0:** 1002 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA 18101

Please submit written comments to: Mr. Michael Golembiewski, Transportation Modeler, Berks County Planning Commission, 633 Court St. – 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Reading, PA 19601. Comments will be accepted beginning June 4, 2023, through the close of business on Tuesday, July 18, 2023. Comments may also be faxed to (610) 478-6316 or sent by email to [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com).

The Plans will be made available again at these same locations following approval. The Berks County Planning Commission offices are handicapped accessible and are served by BARTA routes. These documents will be made available in alternative languages or formats if requested. **If you need translation/interpretation services, we ask that you contact us no later than June 7, 2023 at [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com), or call 610-478-6300.**

El Comité Coordinador del Estudio de Transporte del Área de Reading (RATS) ha preparado el [Borrador del Plan de Participación Pública](#) y el [Proyecto de Plan de Dominio Limitado del Inglés](#) para el Condado de Berks. Estos son documentos operativos que abordan métodos para difundir información y recopilar comentarios del público sobre diversos esfuerzos de planificación de transporte en el condado de Berks. Este anuncio está diseñado para dar a los ciudadanos, gobiernos locales y organizaciones interesadas la oportunidad de comentar sobre el *borrador del plan*. Se llevarán a cabo dos (2) reuniones públicas para recibir comentarios sobre el *borrador del plan*: miércoles 14 de junio, 2023, comenzando a las 7:00 p.m. en el auditorio del Centro Agrícola del Condado de Berks, 1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, PA 19533, y martes 27 de junio de 2023 a partir de las 2:00 p.m. en la Sala de Juntas del Comisionado del Condado de Berks ubicada en el Centro de Servicios del Condado de Berks, 633 Calle Corte Piso 13, Reading, PA 19601. La reunión del 27 de junio también estará disponible en línea a través de Microsoft Teams utilizando el enlace <https://www.countyofberks.com/calendar/public-meetings/planning/rats/rats-public-participation-plan-public-meeting>. **Estas reuniones no son sobre proyectos o temas específicos; más bien, son sobre el intercambio de información y cómo involucrar mejor al público en el proceso de planificación del transporte.**

Las copias del *Borrador del Plan* están disponibles para su revisión pública en la página web de la Comisión de Planificación del Condado de Berks en <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission> y en los siguientes lugares:

**Comisión de Planificación Condado de Berks:** 633 Calle Corte Piso 14, Reading, PA 19604

**BARTA-Oficinas Ejecutivas:** 1700 Norte, Calle 11, Reading, PA 19604

**PENNDOT Distrito 5-0:** 1002 Calle Hamilton, Allentown, PA 18101

Por favor envíe comentarios por escrito a: Sr. Michael Golembiewski, Modelador de Transporte, Comisión de Planificación del Condado de Berks, 633 Calle Corte. Piso 14, Reading, PA 19601. Los comentarios se aceptarán a partir del 4 de junio de 2023, hasta el cierre de operaciones el martes 18 de julio, 2023. Los comentarios también pueden enviarse por fax al (610) 478-6316 o enviarse por correo electrónico a [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com).

al 610-478-6300.

ALSO ON BCTV

<p><b>Many Threads, One Fabric: Vol. 10 – ...</b></p> <p>a month ago · 1 comment</p> <p>DO NOT BE CONFORMIST! Hi I'm Yuritzkiri Sixtos Medina, ...</p>	<p><b>Royals Announce Training Camp ...</b></p> <p>8 months ago · 1 comment</p> <p>The Reading Royals, ECHL affiliate of the Philadelphia Flyers and Lehigh Valley ...</p>	<p><b>Muhlenberg Summer Style Program Cuts ...</b></p> <p>8 months ago · 1 comment</p> <p>The Muhlenberg School District developed MSD Summer Style in the ...</p>	<p><b>Report: Child Pop Declines ...</b></p> <p>a month ago · 1 comm</p> <p>The population is m: of fewer children – ii Pennsylvania and ac</p>
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**BCTV Comment Policy**

We welcome the sharing of ideas and feedback. Off-topic, spam, or harassing comments may be removed.

Got it

0 Comments

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- [Houlahan Delivers 3rd Annual State of the Sixth Address at Historic Colonial Theatre](#)

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7. 6/14/2023, Evening (7:00 p.m.) Public Meeting held at Berks County Agricultural Center auditorium facility. Meeting held in rural area. Meeting survey created and made available; 0 returned. There were no attendees from the public and one (1) Berks County Planning Commission staff member (presenter). Meeting materials, including PowerPoint discussion, attached.



**READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN  
JUNE 14, 2023 PUBLIC MEETING SURVEY**

In an effort to ensure that public meetings serve their intended purpose, we're asking for your input. Kindly answer the following questions so we may improve our presentation formats.

- 1. Was the meeting time and place convenient for you? If not, what would be a better time and place?**
  
- 2. How did you hear about this meeting? Did the announcement or news story adequately describe the time, place, and purpose of the meeting? Did you see/hear the announcement in a reasonable amount of time for your planning purposes?**
  
- 3. Was the meeting space adequate for this size group? Could you clearly see the speaker and any visual aids? Could you clearly hear all discussions? Were the seating arrangements adequate? If you needed any accommodations, were they made for you in a respectful and useful manner?**
  
- 4. Did you understand the presentation? Was there any jargon used that you were unclear about?**
  
- 5. Were your questions answered and/or concerns addressed? Were you given adequate time to voice your opinion? In general, do you feel the meeting served its intended purpose?**
  
- 6. Are there any other questions/concerns you may have?**

If you would like to be added to our contact list for future transportation planning updates, please include your information below.

**NAME:**

**STREET ADDRESS:**

**CITY, ZIP**

**EMAIL:**

READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
c/o Berks County Planning Commission  
633 Court St., 14<sup>th</sup> Floor Reading, PA 19601-4309  
610-478-6300; FAX: 610-478-6316

[planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com); [www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission](http://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission)

**Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS),  
Public Participation Plan (PPP)  
&  
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan  
Updates**

Public Meeting #1  
June 14, 2023  
Berks County Agricultural Center

1

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- Why are we here?
  - To review the **Transportation Planning Process**
  - To discuss **Information Sharing**
  - To examine effective methods of **Communication**
  - To talk about **Process**
- Tonight is NOT about Projects!

2

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- What is / Who are 'R.A.T.S.' ?
  - Born out of a legal agreement in 1964, the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation planning in Berks County
  - Required by the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962 in order to receive federal funding for transportation projects

3

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- What is / Who are 'R.A.T.S.' ?
  - In other words, it is a group of officials appointed by various public agencies that specifically focus on transportation planning for all of Berks County
- Two separate Committees
  - *Technical Committee*
  - *Coordinating Committee*

4

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- RATS Technical Committee
  - Advisory body only (8 members)
    - PennDOT District 5-0 (Allentown)
    - PennDOT Central Office (Harrisburg)
    - Berks County Planning Commission (2)
    - City of Reading (2)
    - SCTA / BARTA
    - Reading Regional Airport Authority
  - Meets Monthly

5

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- RATS Coordinating Committee
  - Policy Board (10 members)
    - PennDOT District 5-0 (Allentown)
    - PennDOT Central Office (Harrisburg)
    - Berks County Commissioners
    - Berks County Planning Commission
    - City of Reading
    - Berks County Townships (2nd Class, 1st Class)
    - Berks County Boroughs
    - SCTA / BARTA
    - Reading Regional Airport Authority
  - Meets every other month

6

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- RATS Advisory Committees and Staff
  - Formed and meet as needed
    - Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan
  - Berks County Planning Commission staff serves as staff to RATS
  - Other Planning Partners
    - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
    - Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
    - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
    - Dept. of Environmental Resources (DEP)
    - Legislators, municipalities, non-profits, economic development

7

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- What does RATS do?
  - Long- and Short-range planning
    - Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP, 20+ years)
    - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP, 4 years)
    - Congestion Management Process (CMP, ongoing and focused)
    - Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (2020, 2022 Update)
  - Other planning processes
    - Safety, Mobility, Transit
    - Coordination
    - Air Quality
    - Title VI / Environmental Justice / Executive Orders
    - **Public Participation and Limited English Proficiency**

8

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- What doesn't RATS do?
  - Projects
    - Contracting, construction, management
  - Engineering
    - We are planners, not engineers
  - Financial Assistance
    - We don't provide direct grants/loans/financing; but...
    - We coordinate with PennDOT for project funding through the TIP
    - Accept applications for certain programs (TA-SA)
  - Contracts/contract management

9

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- Who is RATS' Audience?
  - 428,849 persons (2020 Decennial Census)
    - 17.7% Aged 65+
    - 29.2% Racial Minority
    - 23.9% Latino
    - 7.6% non-English speakers (aged 5+)
      - 85.7% Latino
    - 14.1% Disabled
    - 11.8% Below poverty level
    - 12.5% Less than High School graduate (aged 25+)
    - 3.2% No vehicles available (workers 16+)

10

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- Who is RATS' Audience?
  - Federal Guidance dictates that the process include:
    - Citizens
    - Affected public agencies
    - Representatives of public transportation employees
    - Representatives of users of public transportation
    - Freight shippers
    - Providers of freight transportation services
    - Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities
    - Representatives of the disabled
    - Other interested parties

11

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- Who is RATS' Audience?
  - We also include
    - Business and Industry representatives
    - Economic Development representatives
    - Local governments
    - Agricultural community
    - State and federal legislators

12

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- "HOW WELL ARE WE REACHING OUR AUDIENCE?"
- "IF WE'RE NOT REACHING OUR AUDIENCE, WHY?"

13

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- Public Participation **throughout** the planning process is a key component of a successful process.
- The **Public Participation Plan (PPP)** and the **Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP)** guide RATS' efforts to successfully engage the public in a meaningful exchange of information.

14

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- **Public Participation Plan (May, 2023 Draft)**
  - Introduction
  - Public Participation Goals
  - Outreach Techniques and Strategies
  - Consultation with Interested Parties
  - Title VI and Environmental Justice
  - Limited English Proficiency
  - Americans with Disabilities Act
  - Public Participation in Meetings
  - Public Notices
  - Public Review and Comment Periods
  - Access to Information
  - Evaluation of Public Participation Plan and Public Meetings
  - Future Efforts

15

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- **Limited English Proficiency Plan (May, 2023 Draft)**
  - Introduction
  - 2020 Federal Certification Review
  - LEP Population
  - Frequency of Contact
  - Importance of Services Provided
  - Resource Availability and Cost
  - County and Municipal Language Data

16

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- Our goal is to update the PPP and LEP to:
  - Update/analyze demographics
  - Improve current methods used to disseminate information and collect input;
  - Include better methods of reaching out to those who may not use 'mainstream' methods, including:
    - Print media
    - Television news
    - Websites
    - **Social Media**
    - **Virtual Public Engagement**

17

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- **HERE'S WHERE YOU COME IN!!!!**
  - Give us input as to how to better reach you / your neighbors / your clientele;
  - What can we do that we don't already do;
  - What can we improve on;
  - What works and What doesn't work?

18

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- Please,
  - Stand up and speak up so everybody can hear you;
  - Give us your name and who you represent;
  - Tell us your thoughts, suggestions;
  - Be brief, and please remember
    - *Tonight is about information exchange, not about projects!*

19

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- Next Steps?
  - Another meeting, June 27, 2:00 p.m., Commissioner's Boardroom and Virtual;
  - Survey online  
[www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission](http://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission), or paper available;
  - Formal 45-day Public Comment Period June 4 – July 18;
  - Adoption by RATS July 20th

20

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- Wrapping up this evening:
  - Please complete meeting survey before leaving
  - **THANK YOU FOR COMING AND FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!**

21

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

## Questions??

MICHAEL D. GOLEMBIEWSKI  
TRANSPORTATION MODELER

BERKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
633 COURT ST FL 14  
READING PA 19601  
610-478-6300 X6304  
FAX: 610-478-6316  
mgolembiewski@countyofberks.com  
[www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission](http://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/berkspc](https://www.facebook.com/berkspc)

22



8. 6/23/2023, Follow-up email sent as a reminder of the second Public Meeting and to complete surveys. Copy of email attached.

**From:** [Golembiewski, Michael](#)  
**To:** [Golembiewski, Michael](#)  
**Subject:** Reminder, RATS Draft Public Participation Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan Public Meeting #2  
**Date:** Friday, June 23, 2023 1:49:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[PPP\\_LEP\\_Advertisement\\_English.pdf](#)  
[PPP\\_LEP\\_Advertisement\\_Spanish.pdf](#)  
[PPP\\_Survey\\_Spanish.pdf](#)  
[PPP\\_Survey\\_English.pdf](#)  
[PPP\\_Draft\\_May2023\\_Spanish.pdf](#)  
[LEP\\_Assesment\\_May2023\\_DRAFT\\_Spanish.pdf](#)  
[LEP\\_ASSESSMENT-MAY2023\\_DRAFT.pdf](#)  
[PPP\\_Draft\\_May2023.pdf](#)

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Good Friday afternoon!

Just a reminder that the Reading Area Transportation Study staff will be hosting our second Public Meeting to take comments on the Draft Public Participation Plan and the draft Limited English Participation Plan. That meeting will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, in the Commissioner's Boardroom located on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor of the Berks County Services Center, 633 Court Street, Reading, PA. [The meeting will also be available virtually using MS Teams](#). There are online surveys in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) that we would ask you and your constituents to complete. The Public Comments and Survey responses will be collected until the close of business on Tuesday, July 18, 2023. We look forward to hearing from you!

Mike



*Coming Together & Working Together  
to Achieve Success!*

**Michael D. Golembiewski | Transportation Modeler  
Berks County Planning Commission**  
633 Court Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Reading, PA 19601  
Phone: 610-478-6300 ext. 6304 Fax: 610-478-6316



**Email:** [mgolembiewski@countyofberks.com](mailto:mgolembiewski@countyofberks.com)  
**Web:** [www.countyofberks.com/planning](http://www.countyofberks.com/planning)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**  
**DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**  
**And**  
**DRAFT LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN**

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<b>Berks County Planning 5-0 Commission</b>	<b>BARTA Executive Offices</b>	<b>PENNDOT District 5-0</b>
Street 633 Court St – 14 <sup>th</sup> Floor 18101 Reading, PA 19601	1700 North 11 <sup>th</sup> Street  Reading, PA 19604	1002 Hamilton  Allentown, PA

Please submit written comments to: Mr. Michael Golembiewski, Transportation Modeler, Berks County Planning Commission, 633 Court St. – 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Reading, PA 19601. Comments will be accepted beginning June 4, 2023, through the close of business on Tuesday, July 18, 2023. Comments may also be faxed to (610) 478-6316 or sent by email to [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com).

The Plans will be made available again at these same locations following approval. The Berks County Planning Commission offices are handicapped accessible and are served by BARTA routes. These documents will be made available in alternative languages or formats if requested. **If you need translation/interpretation services, we ask that you contact us no later than June 7, 2023 at [planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com), or call 610-478-6300.**



**Michael D. Golembiewski | Transportation Modeler  
Berks County Planning Commission**  
633 Court Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Reading, PA 19601  
Phone: 610-478-6300 ext. 6304 Fax: 610-478-6316



Email: [mgolembiewski@countyofberks.com](mailto:mgolembiewski@countyofberks.com)



Web: [www.countyofberks.com/planning](http://www.countyofberks.com/planning)

This message and the attachment(s) are intended for the use of the individual or entity to whom it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any retention, use, dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication including attachments is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by telephone or reply to the original message at the above address and then delete all copies of the message.

Thank you.

9. 6/23/2023 and 6/26/2023, information regarding second Public Meeting included on Berks County Planning Commission (BCPC) Facebook page. Images attached.

County of Berks - Planning Comm | Berks County Planning Commis

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facebook

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**Berks County Planning Commission**

633 Court St, Fl 14th, Reading, PA, United States, Pennsylvania  
 (610) 478-6300  
[countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission](http://countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission)  
 Open now

**Photos** See all photos

**Berks County Planning Commission** 4d

Just a reminder that the Reading Area Transportation Study staff will be hosting our second Public Meeting to take comments on the Draft Public Participation Plan and the draft Limited English Participation Plan. That meeting will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 27th, in the Commissioner's Boardroom located on the 13th floor of the Berks County Services Center, 633 Court Street, Reading, PA. The meeting will also be available virtually using MS Teams. There are online surveys in both English and Spanish that we would ask you to complete. The Public Comments and Survey responses will be collected until the close of business on Tuesday, July 18, 2023. We look forward to hearing from you!

For links to the survey, the meeting link, and more - click on the link below:

COUNTYOFBERKS.COM  
**County of Berks - 2023 DRAFT Public Participation Plan And DRAFT Limited...**  
 The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Coordinating Committee has prepared the Draft Public Participation Plan (en Espanol) and the...

1

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**Berks County Planning Commission**

**Intro**

Mission  
 The Berks County Planning Commission serves as the area-wide planning organization for Berks

Page - Public & Government Service

633 Court St, Fl 14th, Reading, PA, United States, Pennsylvania  
 (610) 478-6300  
[countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission](http://countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission)  
 Open now

**Photos** See all photos

**Berks County Planning Commission** 1d

Just a reminder that the Reading Area Transportation Study staff will be hosting our second Public Meeting to take comments on the Draft Public Participation Plan and the draft Limited English Participation Plan. That meeting will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 27th, in the Commissioner's Boardroom located on the 13th floor of the Berks County Services Center, 633 Court Street, Reading, PA. The meeting will also be available virtually using MS Teams. There are online surveys in both English and Spanish that we would ask you to complete. The Public Comments and Survey responses will be collected until the close of business on Tuesday, July 18, 2023. We look forward to hearing from you!

For links to the survey, the meeting link, and more - click on the link below:

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**County of Berks - 2023 DRAFT Public Participation Plan And DRAFT Limited...**  
 The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Coordinating Committee has prepared the Draft Public Participation Plan (en Espanol) and the...

**Connect with Berks County Planning Commission on Facebook**

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10.6/27/2023, Second Public Meeting held at Berks County Services Center (Commissioner's Boardroom, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor). Afternoon (2:00 p.m.) meeting held in facility that is transit accessible, located in City of Reading. Meeting also held virtually to allow for non-in-person attendance. Meeting survey created and made available; none returned. Four (4) in-person attendees total, including Berks County Planning Commission staff (2 persons), Berks County Information Services support staff (1 person) and one (1) Berks County Commissioner. Three (3) persons attended virtually, including SCTA/BARTA staff (1 person), Western Berks Ambulance Assn. staff (1 person) and Berks County Information Services support staff (1 person). Only comment germane to the PPP/LEP update was from SCTA/BARTA staff noting their experiences reaching out to the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance and various faith-based organizations have been helpful. Meeting materials including image of virtual meeting attached.

PUBLIC MEETING  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN  
JUNE 27, 2023

Name	Affiliation	Mailing Address or E-Mail
MICHAEL COLOMBIEWSKI	BCPC/READING MPO	mgs@embiewski@countyofberks.com
ALAN PIPER	BCPC/READING MPO	apiper@countyofberks.com
KEITH BOATMAN	SCTA (V)	
ANTHONY TUCCI	(V) WESTERN BERKS AMBULANCE	
MICHAEL RIVERA	Berks County Commissioner	
CAROL LONG	IS	
MALCOLM TOWERS	IS (V)	



**READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN  
JUNE 27, 2023 PUBLIC MEETING SURVEY**

In an effort to ensure that public meetings serve their intended purpose, we're asking for your input. Kindly answer the following questions so we may improve our presentation formats.

- 1. Was the meeting time and place convenient for you? If not, what would be a better time and place?**
  
- 2. How did you hear about this meeting? Did the announcement or news story adequately describe the time, place, and purpose of the meeting? Did you see/hear the announcement in a reasonable amount of time for your planning purposes?**
  
- 3. Was the meeting space adequate for this size group? Could you clearly see the speaker and any visual aids? Could you clearly hear all discussions? Were the seating arrangements adequate? If you needed any accommodations, were they made for you in a respectful and useful manner?**
  
- 4. Did you understand the presentation? Was there any jargon used that you were unclear about?**
  
- 5. Were your questions answered and/or concerns addressed? Were you given adequate time to voice your opinion? In general, do you feel the meeting served its intended purpose?**
  
- 6. Are there any other questions/concerns you may have?**

If you would like to be added to our contact list for future transportation planning updates, please include your information below.

**NAME:**

**STREET ADDRESS:**

**CITY, ZIP**


**EMAIL:**

READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
c/o Berks County Planning Commission  
633 Court St., 14<sup>th</sup> Floor Reading, PA 19601-4309  
610-478-6300; FAX: 610-478-6316

[planning@countyofberks.com](mailto:planning@countyofberks.com); [www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission](http://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission)

**Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS),  
Public Participation Plan (PPP)  
&  
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan  
Updates**


Public Meeting #2  
June 27, 2023  
Commissioner's Board Room, Berks Co. Services Ctr.  
&  
Virtual



1

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- What is / Who are 'R.A.T.S.'?
  - Born out of a legal agreement in 1964, the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation planning in Berks County
  - Required by the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962 in order to receive federal funding for transportation projects



3

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*


- RATS Technical Committee
  - Advisory body only (8 members)
    - PennDOT District 5-0 (Allentown)
    - PennDOT Central Office (Harrisburg)
    - Berks County Planning Commission (2)
    - City of Reading (2)
    - SCTA / BARTA
    - Reading Regional Airport Authority
  - Meets Monthly



5

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*


- Why are we here?
  - To review the **Transportation Planning Process**
  - To discuss **Information Sharing**
  - To examine effective methods of **Communication**
  - To talk about **Process**
- Today is NOT about Projects!



2

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- What is / Who are 'R.A.T.S.'?
  - In other words, it is a group of officials appointed by various public agencies that specifically focus on transportation planning for all of Berks County
  - Two separate Committees
    - *Technical Committee*
    - *Coordinating Committee*



4

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- RATS Coordinating Committee
  - Policy Board (10 members)
    - PennDOT District 5-0 (Allentown)
    - PennDOT Central Office (Harrisburg)
    - Berks County Commissioners
    - Berks County Planning Commission
    - City of Reading
    - Berks County Townships (2nd Class, 1st Class)
    - Berks County Boroughs
    - SCTA / BARTA
    - Reading Regional Airport Authority
  - Meets every other month



6

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- RATS Advisory Committees and Staff
  - Formed and meet as needed
    - Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan
  - Berks County Planning Commission staff serves as staff to RATS
  - Other Planning Partners
    - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
    - Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
    - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
    - Dept. of Environmental Resources (DEP)
    - Legislators, municipalities, non-profits, economic development




7

7

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- What doesn't RATS do?
  - Projects
    - Contracting, construction, management
  - Engineering
    - We are planners, not engineers
  - Financial Assistance
    - We don't provide direct grants/loans/financing; but...
    - We coordinate with PennDOT for project funding through the TIP
    - Accept applications for certain programs (TA-SA)
  - Contracts/contract management




9

9

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- Who is RATS' Audience?
  - Federal Guidance dictates that the process include:
    - Citizens
    - Affected public agencies
    - Representatives of public transportation employees
    - Representatives of users of public transportation
    - Freight shippers
    - Providers of freight transportation services
    - Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities
    - Representatives of the disabled
    - Other interested parties




11

11

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- What does RATS do?
  - Long- and Short-range planning
    - Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP, 20+ years)
    - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP, 4 years)
    - Congestion Management Process (CMP, ongoing and focused)
    - Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (2020, 2022 Update)
  - Other planning processes
    - Safety, Mobility, Transit
    - Coordination
    - Air Quality
    - Title VI / Environmental Justice / Executive Orders
    - **Public Participation and Limited English Proficiency**




8

8

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- Who is RATS' Audience?
  - 428,849 persons (2020 Decennial Census)
    - 17.7% Aged 65+
    - 29.2% Racial Minority
    - 23.9% Latino
    - 7.6% non-English speakers (aged 5+)
      - 85.7% Latino
    - 14.1% Disabled
    - 11.8% Below poverty level
    - 12.5% Less than High School graduate (aged 25+)
    - 3.2% No vehicles available (workers 16+)




10

10

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

- Who is RATS' Audience?
  - We also include
    - Business and Industry representatives
    - Economic Development representatives
    - Local governments
    - Agricultural community
    - State and federal legislators




12

12

RATS PPP & LEP Updates


- "HOW WELL ARE WE REACHING OUR AUDIENCE?"
- "IF WE'RE NOT REACHING OUR AUDIENCE, WHY?"



13

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- Public Participation Plan (May, 2023 Draft)
  - Introduction
  - Public Participation Goals
  - Outreach Techniques and Strategies
  - Consultation with Interested Parties
  - Title VI and Environmental Justice
  - Limited English Proficiency
  - Americans with Disabilities Act
  - Public Participation in Meetings
  - Public Notices
  - Public Review and Comment Periods
  - Access to Information
  - Evaluation of Public Participation Plan and Public Meetings
  - Future Efforts




15

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- Limited English Proficiency Plan (May, 2023 Draft)


Exhibit 1	
Limited English Proficient Population in RATS Region By Language Spoken	
Language	Estimated Number of Non-English Speakers Age 5+ Years
Spanish	26,401
Other Indo-European	877
German or Other West Germanic	865
French - Haitian or Cajun	499
Other and Unspecified Languages	465
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	462
Vietnamese	424
Russian, Polish or other Slavic	376
Other Asian and Pacific Island	243
Yagalog (incl. Filipino)	81
Korean	66
Arabic	53



17

RATS PPP & LEP Updates


- Public Participation **throughout** the planning process is a key component of a successful process.
- The Public Participation Plan (PPP) and the Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP) guide RATS' efforts to successfully engage the public in a meaningful exchange of information.



14

RATS PPP & LEP Updates


- Limited English Proficiency Plan (May, 2023 Draft)
  - Introduction
  - 2020 Federal Certification Review
  - LEP Population
  - Frequency of Contact
  - Importance of Services Provided
  - Resource Availability and Cost
  - County and Municipal Language Data



16

RATS PPP & LEP Updates


- Limited English Proficiency Plan (May, 2023 Draft)
  - Introduction
  - 2020 Federal Certification Review
  - LEP Population
  - Frequency of Contact
  - Importance of Services Provided
  - Resource Availability and Cost
  - County and Municipal Language Data



18

RATS PPP & LEP Updates


- Our goal is to update the PPP and LEP to:
  - Update/analyze demographics
  - Improve current methods used to disseminate information and collect input;
  - Include better ways of reaching out to those who may not use 'mainstream' methods, including:
    - Print media
    - Television news
    - Websites
    - Social Media
    - Virtual Public Engagement



19

RATS PPP & LEP Updates


- Please, for those in the room:
  - Stand up and speak up so everybody can hear you;
  - Give us your name and who you represent;
  - Tell us your thoughts, suggestions;
  - Be brief, and please remember
    - *Today is about information exchange, not about projects!*



21

RATS PPP & LEP Updates


- Next Steps?
  - Survey online  
[www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission](http://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission), or paper available;
  - Formal 45-day Public Comment Period June 4 - July 18;
  - Adoption by RATS July 20th



23

RATS PPP & LEP Updates


- **HERE'S WHERE YOU COME IN!!!!**
  - Give us input as to how to better reach you / your neighbors / your clientele;
  - What can we do that we don't already do;
  - What can we improve on;
  - What works and What doesn't work?



20

RATS PPP & LEP Updates


- Please, for those online:
  - Use the "Raise your Hand" feature and we will acknowledge you, or leave your comment in the "Chat"
  - Give us your name and who you represent;
  - Tell us your thoughts, suggestions;
  - Be brief, and please remember
    - *Today is about information exchange, not about projects!*
  - Be sure to mute yourself when you are finished



22

RATS PPP & LEP Updates

- Wrapping up this afternoon:
  - Please complete meeting survey before leaving (for those in-person)
  - **THANK YOU FOR COMING AND FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!**




24

*RATS PPP & LEP Updates*

## Questions??

*MICHAEL D. GOLEMBIEWSKI*  
*TRANSPORTATION MODELER*

*BERKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION*  
*633 COURT ST FL 14*  
*READING PA 19601*  
*610-478-6300 X6304*  
*FAX: 610-478-6316*  
*mgolembiewski@countyofberks.com*  
*www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission*  
*Facebook: facebook.com/berkspcp*



25

The video player displays a presentation slide with the following text:

**Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS),  
Public Participation Plan (PPP)  
&  
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan  
Updates**

Public Meeting #2  
June 27, 2023  
Commissioner's Board Room, Berks Co. Services Ctr.  
&  
Virtual

Logos for BCPC (Berks County Planning Commission) and Berks County are visible at the bottom left of the slide.

Participant avatars on the right side of the player include:

- KB: Keith Boatman
- AT: Anthony T...
- MG: Golembie...
- CL: Long, Carl

At the bottom of the player, the name "Golembiewski, Michael" is visible. The video progress bar shows 0:12 / 25:28. Playback controls include a play button, 10-second rewind and fast forward buttons, a volume icon, and a full screen button.

### RATS Public Participation Plan Public Meeting

June 27, 2023 Expires in 120 days • 5 views • Commissioner Boardroom • ... > Documents > Recordings

Add a description to explain what this video is about.



11. Comments were received via two separate emails (07/14/2023) from Michael Donchez, PennDOT District 5-0 staff. Comments germane to the LEP were limited to text formatting and two date corrections. Comments germane to the PPP include spelling, grammar, and formatting corrections. Additionally, recommendations for minor text additions/corrections were made. MPO staff will make those corrections. Both emails attached.

**From:** [Donchez, Michael](#)  
**To:** [Planning Department](#)  
**Cc:** [Koenigkramer, Vanessa A](#); [Ruth, Jennifer](#); [Golembiewski, Michael](#)  
**Subject:** RATS Public Participation Plan Public Review Comments  
**Date:** Saturday, July 15, 2023 10:34:54 AM  
**Attachments:** [Draft RATS PPP Review Comments 7-13-23.docx](#)

---

**County of Berks Warning:** This is an external email. Please exercise caution.

---

Mike

Attached are my review comments on the draft RATS Public Participation Plan for your consideration. Thanks for the providing an opportunity to review and comment.

Mike

**Michael Donchez** | Transportation Planning Specialist 1  
PA Department of Transportation | District 5-0  
1002 Hamilton Street | Allentown, PA 18101  
Phone: 610.871.4423 | Fax: 610.871.4124  
[www.penndot.pa.gov](http://www.penndot.pa.gov)

File: Draft RATS PPP Review Comments 7/13/23

Thanks you for providing the opportunity to review an comment on the RATS Public Participation Plan (PPP). I offer the following comments:

**Comment:**

**Section 3.1 Overview – 3<sup>rd</sup> last bullet** – “Ensuring that vital documents are translated into Spanish and made available digitally and in print” - may wish to revise to include “Ensuring that vital documents are translated into Spanish **or other languages if applicable** and made available digitally and in print”.

Staff might consider providing T.V. (WFMZ Berks Edition) and radio stations with public service announcements to disseminate information regarding public review and comment periods on its various documents.

**Section 3.2 Contact Lists** – Staff might consider reaching out to PennDOT District 5 office to obtain and utilize the department’s contact list for use in RATS outreach efforts.

**Section 5.2 Target Outreach Areas** – “Specifically, RATS will use its geographic analysis of target outreach areas to ensure that public meetings are held at accessible locations within these communities...”. Staff may wish to consider expanding this to include: “Specifically, RATS will use its geographic analysis of target outreach areas to ensure that public meetings are held at accessible locations **and times** within these communities...”. Holding public meetings both during the day and evening provides more opportunities for public involvement.

**Section 6.3 Meaningful Access for LEP Individuals – 6<sup>th</sup> bullet** – “The Berks County website, which hosts content for RATS, will continue to provide language translation software. That software provides translation between English and Spanish, along with over multiple other languages”. A suggested edit is “The Berks County website, which hosts content for RATS, will continue to provide language translation software. That software provides translation between English and Spanish, **along with over as well as translation between** multiple other languages”.

**Section 6.3 Meaningful Access for LEP Individuals – 8<sup>th</sup> bullet** – “RATS will **include** notices on all documents and on the website that certain translated documents are available, and other translations are available on request” - Lower case i in Include.

**Section 8.1 Overview** – “RATS welcomes comments and ideas related to regional issues from interested parties from the Berks County area”. Planning related issues can be larger than just regional issues. Freight movement is one example that can affect multiple counties, MPOs, and states. As such I suggest the following revision – “RATS welcomes comments and ideas related to regional issues from interested parties from the Berks County area **as well as adjacent counties/MPOs as applicable**”.

**Section 9.2 Public Notice Requirements** – too many returns between bullets

Public Notices will provide the following information (where applicable):

- Type or name of meeting/participation event/activity/public comment period
- Subject of meeting/participation event/activity/public comment period
- The date, time, and location of meeting/participation event/activity
- The web link for a virtual meeting
- Start and end dates for public comment periods
- Contact information (Address, Telephone Number, E-mail address and/or website)
- Brief summary of the proposed action, plan, program or amendment
- Where to obtain copies of the plan or materials
- How to provide formal public comments
- If formal action on a major decision will be taken by the Board, the date, time and location of the meeting where that action will be taken
- Offer to provide accommodations for people with Limited English Proficiency; and
- Offer to provide accommodations for people with disabilities; and
- Directions on how to file complaints under Title VI and other nondiscrimination statutes

**Section 10.2 Public Comment and Review Period Requirements – 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph** – “Documents and information on which public comments are being sought will be **make** available to stakeholders...”  
revise to “Documents and information on which public comments are being sought will be **made** available to stakeholders...”

Also, public libraries could provide another location for the general public to access and review documents during public review and comment periods. Berks County Public Libraries is made up of more than 23 public library sites throughout Berks County. Utilization of select libraries in areas traditionally underrepresented in the transportation planning process might help to increase input.

**Section 10.5 The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – last bullet** – remove double comma after “...PennDOT District 5-0’s offices,,...”

***Public Participation Plan  
DRAFT 2023***

---

Report) will be produced and made available on the BCPC website <https://www.countyofberks.com/departments/planning-commission/transportation-reading-mpo>, at the BCPC offices, BARTA’s offices, PennDOT District 5-0’s offices,, or by contacting the BCPC. Vital TIP documents will be made available in Spanish and alternative formats on request in accordance with the procedures for accommodating Limited English Proficient persons and persons with disabilities.

**Section 10.7 Air Quality Conformity Determination Report – last sentence** – need space between asrequired.

### **10.7 Air Quality Conformity Determination Report**

The *Air Quality Conformity Determination* report is a companion document to the regional LRTP and to the TIP. The *Air Quality Conformity Determination* report documents the process used by RATS for making the transportation-related conformity determination for the regional LRTP and TIP for ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). The Conformity Determination is required by the federal Clean Air Act. RATS conformity finding is based on criteria and procedures in EPA's Transportation Conformity Rule (40 CFR Part 93) and satisfies all applicable conformity requirements. The *Air Quality Conformity Determination* report is developed as part of the regional LRTP or TIP update, in which case public participation and public comment procedures for the regional LRTP or TIP update will be followed as described in Sections 10.4 and 10.5, respectively. The *Air Quality Conformity Determination* report is also updated **asrequired** by certain amendments to the TIP or regional LRTP, in which case public participation and comment procedures for major amendments to the regional LRTP or TIP will be followed as described in Section 10.6.

**From:** [Donchez, Michael](#)  
**To:** [Planning Department](#)  
**Cc:** [Koenigkramer, Vanessa A](#); [Ruth, Jennifer](#); [Golembiewski, Michael](#)  
**Subject:** Draft RATS Limited English Proficiency Plan Review Comments 7-14-23  
**Date:** Saturday, July 15, 2023 11:36:55 AM  
**Attachments:** [Draft RATS Limited English Proficiency Plan Review Comments 7-14-23.docx](#)

---

**County of Berks Warning:** This is an external email. Please exercise caution.

---

Mike

Attached are my review comments on the draft RATS Limited English Proficiency Plan for your consideration. Thanks for the providing an opportunity to review and comment.

Mike

**Michael Donchez** | Transportation Planning Specialist 1  
PA Department of Transportation | District 5-0  
1002 Hamilton Street | Allentown, PA 18101  
Phone: 610.871.4423 | Fax: 610.871.4124  
[www.penndot.pa.gov](http://www.penndot.pa.gov)

7/14/23

Thank you for providing the opportunity to review and comment on the draft RATS Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP). I offer the following comments:

Overall the plan was informative, well written, and concise. Otherwise, I have two minor specific comments:

**On page 1, Four Factor Self- Assessment**

This self-assessment is designed to balance four factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or service,
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals encounter the program and/or activities,
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided to people's lives, and
4. The resources available to the federal financial recipient and costs.

Alignment of highlighted text on second row of the four factors.

**On page 2, second full paragraph**

The Review Team finds that RATS did not address the recommendations using the specific techniques identified in the 2017 report; however, the Team finds that the MPO addressed the intent of most of the recommendations. Specifically, the Review Team finds the MPO has made certain documents available to the region's largest LEP population in its native language; and, provided notices to that language group concerning the availability of language assistive services in its native language as a foreword to the document. Nonetheless, the Review Team finds that based on demographic data provided in the LEP Plan, the region has other LEP language groups that need to be made aware of the language assistive services the MPO provides. Accordingly, the Team encourages the MPO to add language Tag Lines for its current "frontpiece", relevant to its linguistic population, for inclusion in vital documents. Examples of language Tag Lines can be found in Pennsylvania's 2021 Transportation Program General and Procedural Guidance document.

Examples of Tag Lines may also be found in *Pennsylvania's 2025 Transportation Program General and Procedural Guidance* document. A copy of translated language taglines for inclusion in documents available for public comment is available in the Title VI folder on SharePoint.

12. Comments were received via email (07/17/2023) from Vanessa Shamberg, FHWA staff. These comments were substantive enough that staff chose to delay adoption of the draft PPP and LEP in order to further review and respond to these comments. A copy of Ms. Shamberg's email along with MPO staff responses is attached.



**From:** [Golembiewski, Michael](#)  
**To:** [Vanessa Shamberg \(FHWA\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Piper, Alan](#); [David Alas](#); [Mosca, James](#); [Mitchell, Khan \(FHWA\)](#); [Waters, Stacey](#); [Allen, Debra C.](#)  
**Subject:** FW: REVISED RATS Draft Public Participation Plan and LEP Plan per FHWA Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 23, 2023 2:30:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[LEP\\_ASSESSMENT-SEPT2023\\_DRAFT.pdf](#)  
[PPP\\_September2023\\_DRAFT.pdf](#)

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All:

Over the last month, staff has been reviewing comments from Vanessa Shamberg (FHWA, received July 17, 2023) and incorporating her suggestions and necessary reformatting into our revised draft PPP and LEP. Below **in red** are our responses to her comments. Each comment will have an individual response. Her initial feedback was valuable and we look forward to additional comments and suggestions. Our goal is to have the revised documents out to the Technical Committee for their review no later than 2:00 p.m. next Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup>. The revised draft documents are included with this email.

If anybody has any additional comments/concerns, please let us know prior to then so they may be considered. I am including Khan Mitchell (FHWA) and Stacey Waters & Debra Allen (both PennDOT BEO) in this response as well so they have opportunities to provide feedback. Thank you to all for taking the time to review these two revised drafts!

Mike



*Coming Together & Working Together  
to Achieve Success!*

**Michael D. Golembiewski | Transportation Modeler  
Berks County Planning Commission**

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Good afternoon, Michael –

Thanks again for the opportunity to review the draft PPP and for all the great work that went into plan development. As I mentioned on our call a few minutes ago, I wanted to share a few comments for RATS' consideration. If you'd like to have a follow-up discussion on any of these, please don't hesitate to reach out.

- **Title VI Notice**

- On page 2, add ADA point of contact. We'll be covering this requirement in more detail during Wednesday's Bi-Monthly Planning Partners call with PennDOT.

**ADA Point of Contact (POC) added. Per the Planning Partners call and subsequent email, my name has been added as POC.**

- **Section 5 Title VI and Environmental Justice**

- On page 7, it mentions RATS has specific and explicit procedures to identify, seek out, and engage Title VI and EJ populations. I found it somewhat unclear where in the PPP those procedures were outlined. Generally, RATS seems to have a well-developed plan and approach for reaching Spanish speaking populations, but additional clarity on the approach for engaging other groups would be beneficial.

- Note that under EJ, the MPO should seek out and consider the needs of low income, minority, and other disadvantaged communities as identified in your EJ Analysis.

- Under Section 5.2, consider listing the accessible locations that will be used in target outreach areas, if already identified.

- **Section 5.1 Overview and Section 5.2 Target Outreach Areas have been revised to reference the RATS *Environmental Justice Summary* as the document that we use to identify concentrations of Title VI and EJ communities. Once those communities are identified, RATS will work with organizations that target these communities to identify possible accessible locations for public meetings as necessary. Additionally, a recommendation has been added that RATS develop and maintain a listing of accessible locations that may be used in targeted outreach areas.**

- **Section 6 Limited English Proficiency (LEP)**

- In both the LEP Assessment and Section 6 of the PPP, recommend clarifying the text to clearly state for which languages translation and interpretations services will be provided for. Generally, I found it somewhat unclear if RATS is providing document translation and interpreters at public meetings for all languages upon request, or just Spanish, or Spanish and all Indo-European languages, etc. The text in some places says translation will occur "upon request" and in other places says key documents will be translated. To ensure compliance with Title VI, generally the MPO needs to:

- Provide translation and interpretation for any language upon request. For this reason, we encourage the use of taglines. It seems like RATS has this capability; I would just suggest finetuning the text in the LEP Assessment and PPP to more clearly/consistently describe it.
- The MPO has different procedures for Spanish (proactive translation of executive summaries). This is acceptable, however, we recommend providing a brief justification for why you have different procedures for this group. For example, a justification could be you previously received requests for documents to be translated into Spanish. **Language has been added to both the PPP (bottom of**

**page 8) and LEP (top of page 5) that specifies Spanish is currently the only language translated into based on the analysis in the LEP (justification requested above). Language Taglines (provided by PennDOT) have been added to the front of these documents that tell of accommodations for many other languages.**

- Under 6.3 Meaningful Access to LEP Individuals, suggest listing the local minority media outlet and community service organizations RATS provides notices to. **Local media outlets have been added to the fourth bullet point in this section.**
  
- **Section 7 American with Disabilities Act (ADA)**
  - 7.4 Notices and Services should reference the ADA point of contact. **The RATS ADA Point of Contact has been listed in Section 7.1. The requested reference has been added to Section 7.4.**
  
- **Section 9 Public Notice Requirements**
  - Consider libraries and SCTA (post notices on buses, bus stops, etc.) **Public Libraries and SCTA/BARTA (transit provider) have been added as separate bullet points.**
  - Add ADA point of contact. **ADA Point of Contact has been added as a separate bullet point.**
  
- **Section 10 Public Review and Comment Period at Key Discussion Points**
  - The PPP outlines the steps RATS will use to facilitate public participation for the LRTP and TIP (beginning on page 14 of 21).
    - In Step 3, consider stating that at least 1 public meeting/workshop will be held prior to the development of the draft LRTP/TIP or further elaborate on what the next phase of outreach and participation typically includes. **Language has been added in Step 3 that includes at least one (1) Public Meeting/Workshop which may be scheduled in conjunction with a regularly scheduled RATS Technical or Coordinating Committee meeting.**
    - Step 5 specifies that draft materials will be made available during the 30-day public comment period on the BCPC website, BCPC offices, BARTA offices, and PennDOT District 5-0 offices. Consider adding the local library system to this list, which presumably has higher foot-traffic from members of the public. In lieu of printed copies, a poster/banner that promotes public input and review, with details on how to access the online version (QR code) or to request a hardcopy, may be appropriate. **Language has been added in Step 5 that includes local libraries. Additionally language stating that details on how to access documents in printed or electronic forms will be included in the notice.**
  - Consider adding discussion on meeting format (in-person, virtual, or hybrid). MPOs should demonstrate meeting formats are effective in garnering feedback and are also accessible. **Language pertaining to meeting format / locations has been added to Step 5, along with a statement that staff strives to accommodate requests for presentations at other meetings.**
  - On page 17 of 21, it indicates that the definition of major amendment can be found in the LRTP and TIP documents at this [link](#). However, the URL does not directly link to the LRTP/TIP, which I think may be more helpful for members of the public. **Berks County government recently redid their entire web presence. The included links will be updated to take the viewer directly to [Appendix A: Procedures for TIP Administrative](#)**

**Actions (TIP) and Chapter 7: Appendix (LRTP) that outlines what constitutes a 'Major Amendment'. Additionally, within Section 10.6, the definition of a Major Amendment has been highlighted in bold text.** Going through the LRTP documents, I could not find "major amendment" using a Word search function. **LRTP Amendment procedures are contained in Chapter 7: Appendix, starting on Page 57.** Could you clarify what constitutes a major amendment for which you would go through additional public participation as outlined? **See link provided in previous response.**

- In Section 10.3, suggest using the regulatory language here and consider shortening the review period to 15 days (it does not need to be 30): **Review period shortened to 15 days**
  - 23 CFR 450.316(1)(viii) - Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement effort.
- In Section 10.4
  - Step 5 - Add public meeting during public comment period **Language pertaining to Public Meetings has been added**
  - Step 6 - Language should be revised to read, "All comments received will be considered and the response to comments will be documented and provided to the Board prior to taking action on the draft regional plan materials." **Additional language has been added**
  - Step 9 - Recommend clarifying, as it seems to repeat the public participation process. Where will the final version be posted? **Final versions will be posted to the BCPC website and will be available in print at BCPC offices, BARTA's offices and PennDOT District 5-0 office in Allentown.**
- In Section 10.5
  - Same comments as above on Steps 5, 6, and 9. **Same amendments added.**
- **Other Considerations**
  - Tribal consultation requirements should be added. MPOs/RPOs must consult with federally recognized Tribes and Nations to provide opportunities for review and comment on key planning documents. The updated list for tribal consultation in planning is found [here](#) (see pages 4-7). Many Tribes and Nations accept electronic submissions. If a Tribe or Nation requests hardcopy submissions, RATS should provide a hardcopy of the draft document. **A new Section 4.2 Consultation with Tribes and Federal Land Management Agencies has been added. The first paragraph references PennDOT's Tribal Consultation Guide which describes which Tribes and Nations have interests throughout the Commonwealth, specifies which are to be included in review activities and how they are to be addressed.**
  - The regulations require coordination with Federal land management agencies in the development of the LRTP and TIP when the MPO's area includes Federal public lands. Based on our records, there are Federal lands in Berks County (Hopewell Furnace). I would recommend adding resource agency coordination in the PPP. Generally, we are encouraging more collaboration between MPOs/RPOs and state and federal resource

agencies in the early stages of LRTP and TIP development. **A new Section 4.2 Consultation with Tribes and Federal Land Management Agencies has been added. The second paragraph references the two Federal lands in Berks County (Hopewell Furnace National Historic Park administered by the National Park Service, and Blue Marsh Lake administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers).**

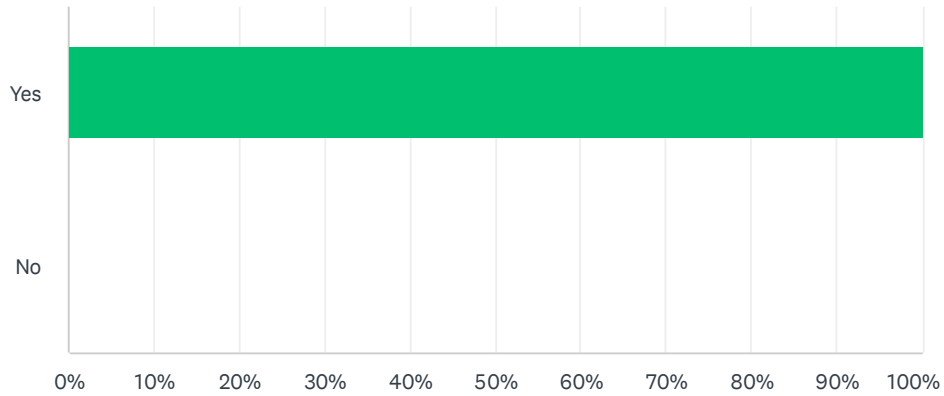
Thanks so much,  
Vanessa

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13. As of the close of the Public Comment Period (07/18/2023), a total of ten (10) online surveys and no (0) written surveys were returned. All responses received were English; no Spanish responses to the Surveys were received. The summary of responses is attached.

# Q1 Have you ever seen or heard about the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS)?

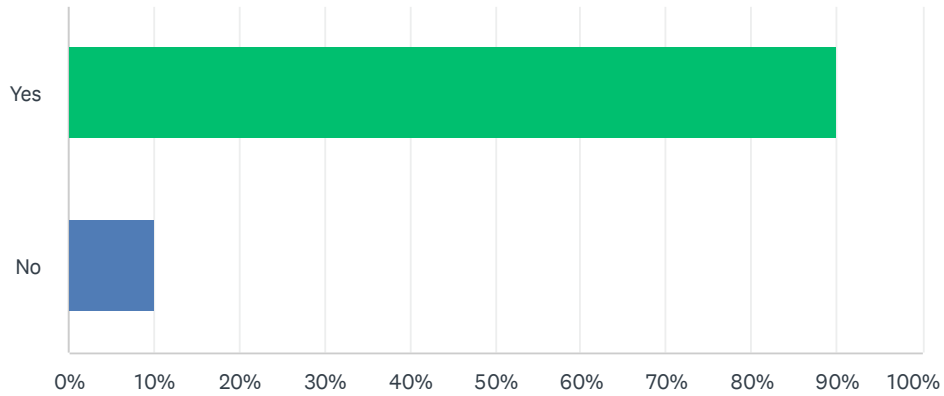
Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	10
No	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>10</b>

## Q2 Do you know who undertakes transportation planning in Berks County?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0

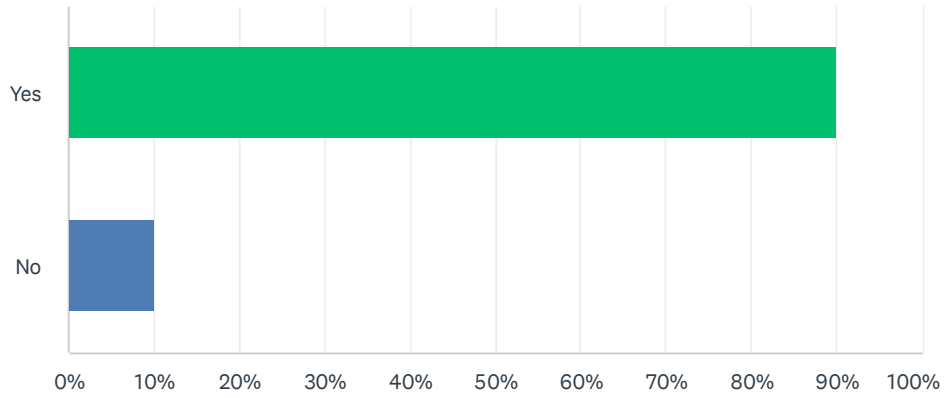


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.00%	9
No	10.00%	1
TOTAL		10



### Q3 Are you familiar with the transportation planning process?

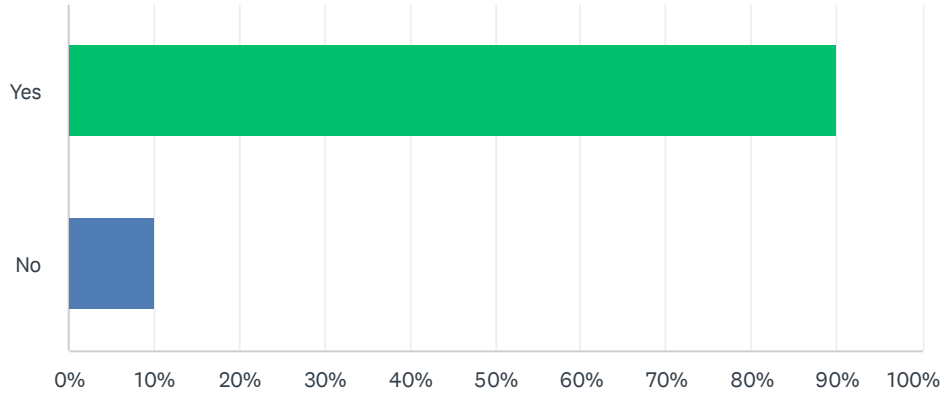
Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.00%	9
No	10.00%	1
TOTAL		10

## Q4 Do you know where the funding comes from for transportation improvements?

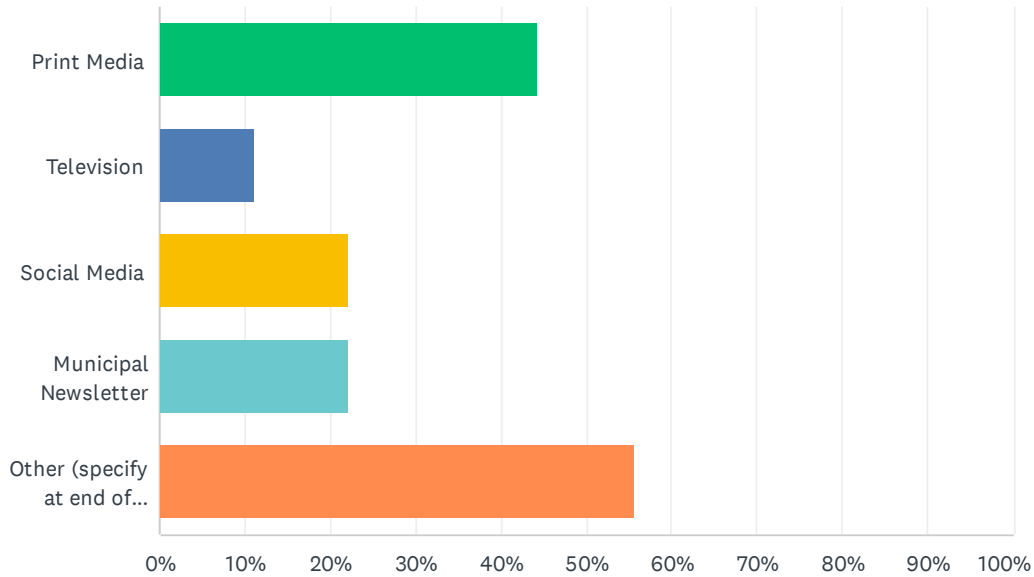
Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.00%	9
No	10.00%	1
TOTAL		10

## Q5 If you checked 'Yes' above, where have you seen or heard about RATS?

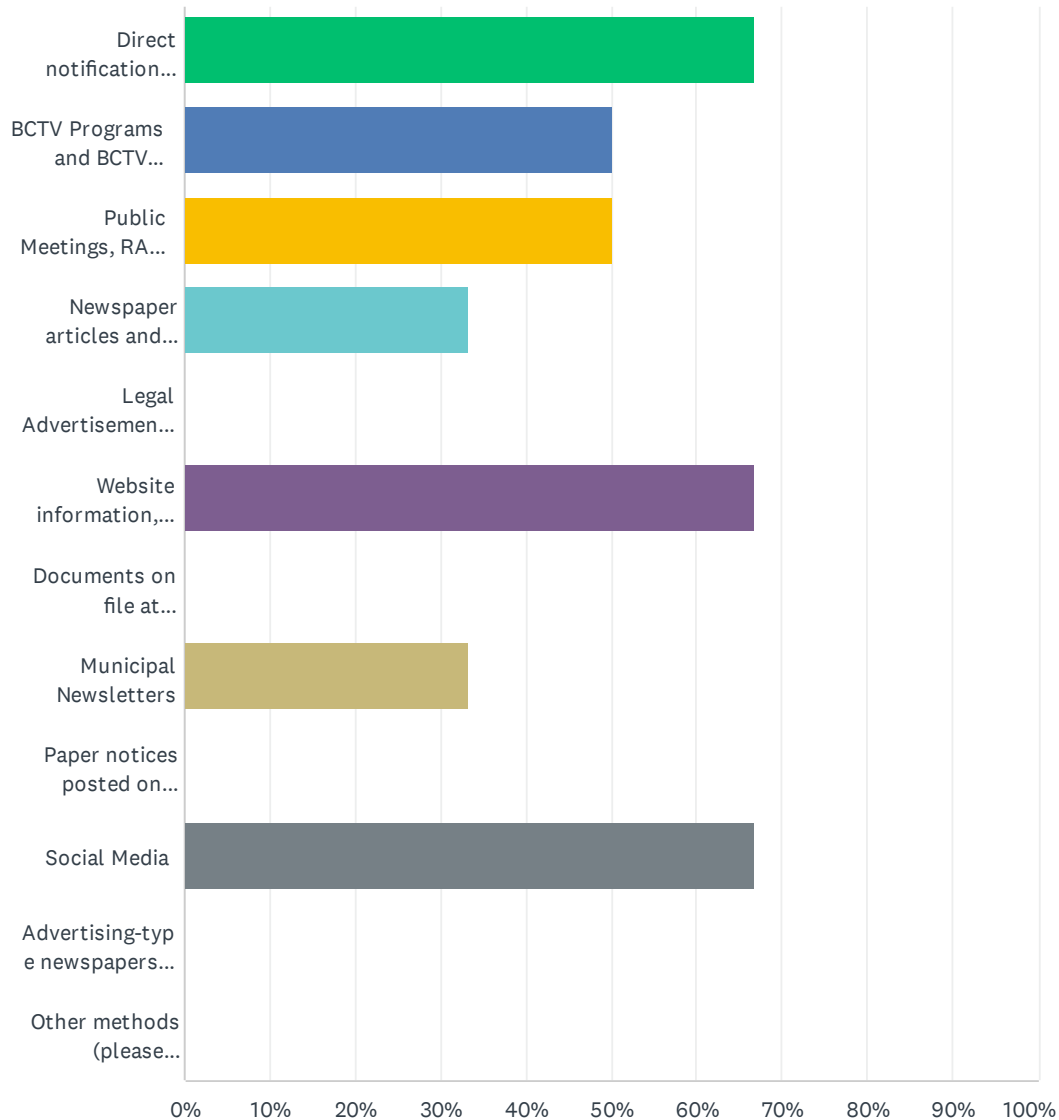
Answered: 9 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Print Media	44.44% 4
Television	11.11% 1
Social Media	22.22% 2
Municipal Newsletter	22.22% 2
Other (specify at end of Survey)	55.56% 5
Total Respondents: 9	

### Q6 As we develop plans and projects that may impact you, what would be the best ways for us to get information to you? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 6 Skipped: 4

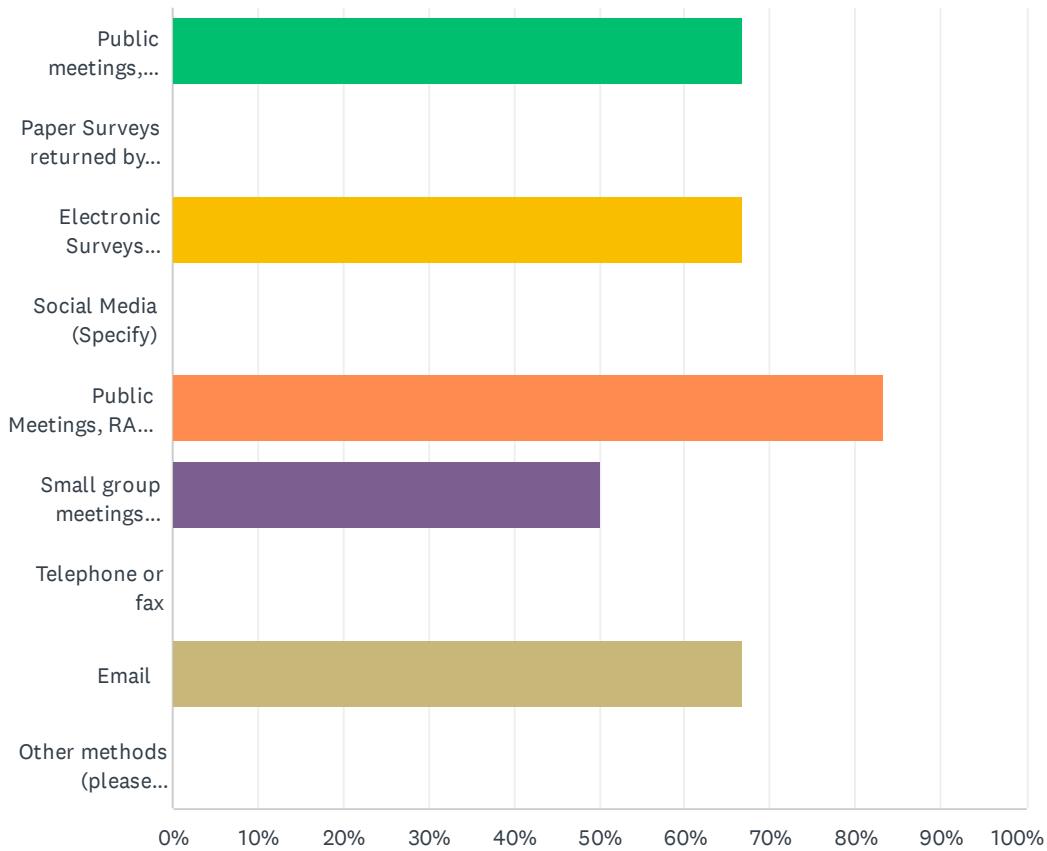


## Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Public Participation Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Direct notification (by postal mail or email) of meetings and documents	66.67%	4
BCTV Programs and BCTV Community Calendar notices	50.00%	3
Public Meetings, RATS meetings, and presentations to community groups	50.00%	3
Newspaper articles and press releases	33.33%	2
Legal Advertisements and/or block ads in newspaper	0.00%	0
Website information, including downloadable documents	66.67%	4
Documents on file at libraries and other community organizations	0.00%	0
Municipal Newsletters	33.33%	2
Paper notices posted on bulletin boards	0.00%	0
Social Media	66.67%	4
Advertising-type newspapers (the Merchandiser)	0.00%	0
Other methods (please describe at the end of this survey)	0.00%	0
<b>Total Respondents: 6</b>		

### Q7 If you have concerns as we develop those plans or about transportation projects, which of the following methods are effective ways for you to get information to us? (Check all that apply)

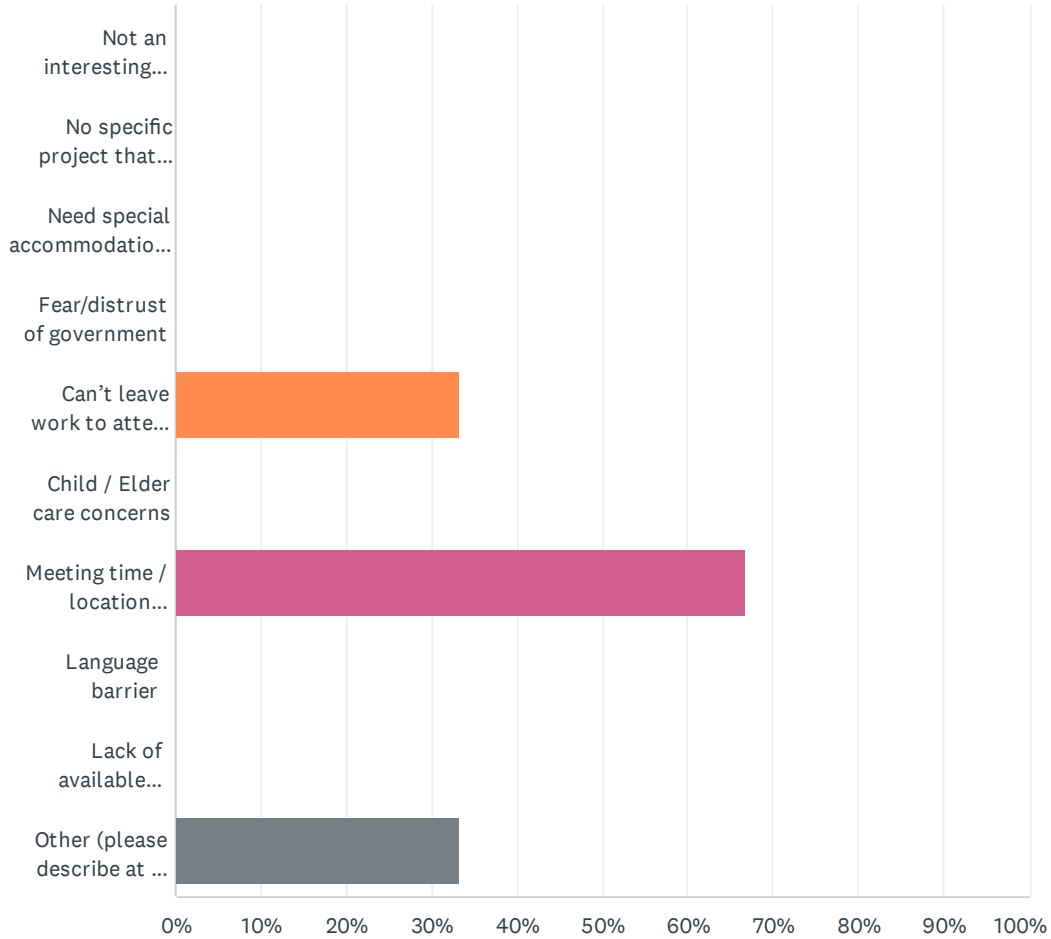
Answered: 6 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Public meetings, special presentations & workshops	66.67%	4
Paper Surveys returned by postal mail	0.00%	0
Electronic Surveys completed online	66.67%	4
Social Media (Specify)	0.00%	0
Public Meetings, RATS meetings, and presentations to community groups	83.33%	5
Small group meetings (community organizations, agencies, & individuals)	50.00%	3
Telephone or fax	0.00%	0
Email	66.67%	4
Other methods (please describe at the end of this survey)	0.00%	0
<b>Total Respondents: 6</b>		

## Q8 What obstacles prevent you from attending a meeting about transportation planning? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 3 Skipped: 7



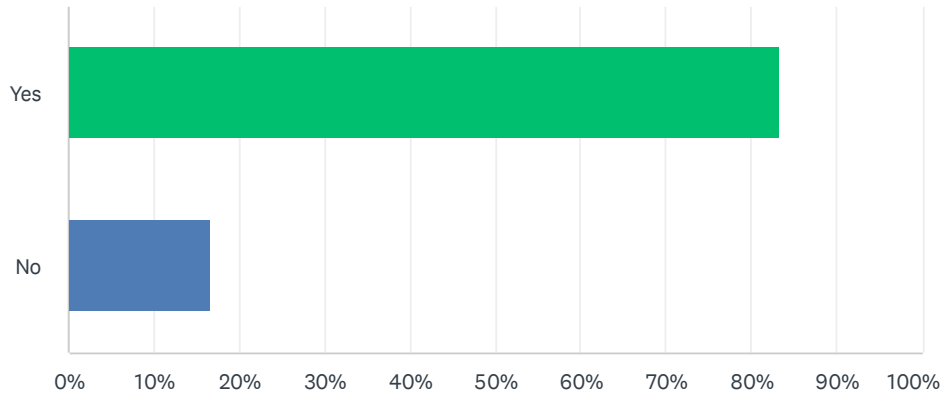
## Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Public Participation Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not an interesting subject	0.00%	0
No specific project that directly affects me	0.00%	0
Need special accommodations (please describe at the end of this survey)	0.00%	0
Fear/distrust of government	0.00%	0
Can't leave work to attend meetings	33.33%	1
Child / Elder care concerns	0.00%	0
Meeting time / location conflicts (please describe at the end of this survey)	66.67%	2
Language barrier	0.00%	0
Lack of available transportation	0.00%	0
Other (please describe at the end of this survey)	33.33%	1
<b>Total Respondents: 3</b>		



## Q9 Do you participate in Virtual (online) meetings?

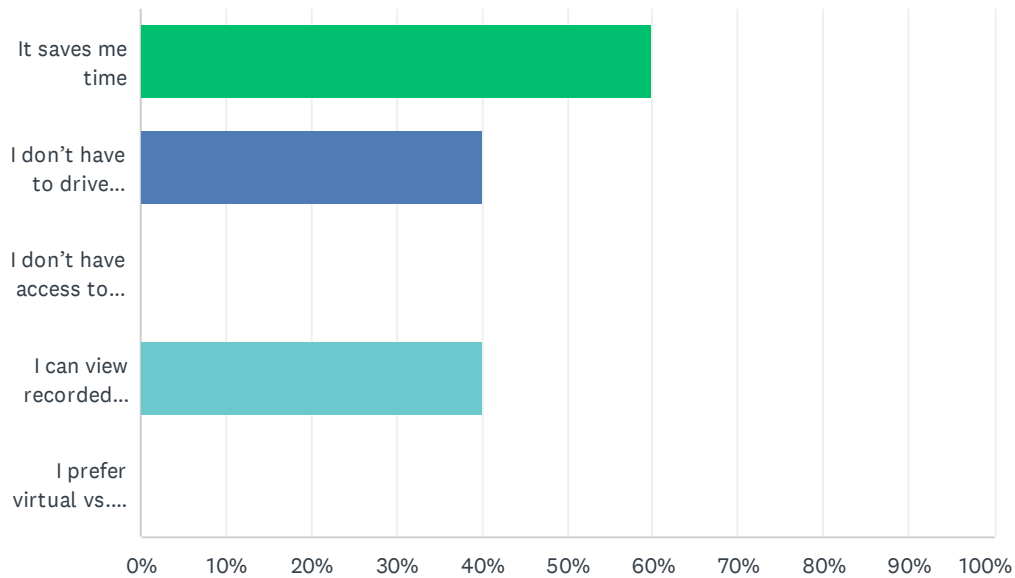
Answered: 6 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	83.33%	5
No	16.67%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6</b>

### Q10 If Yes, which benefits do you receive? (Check all that apply)

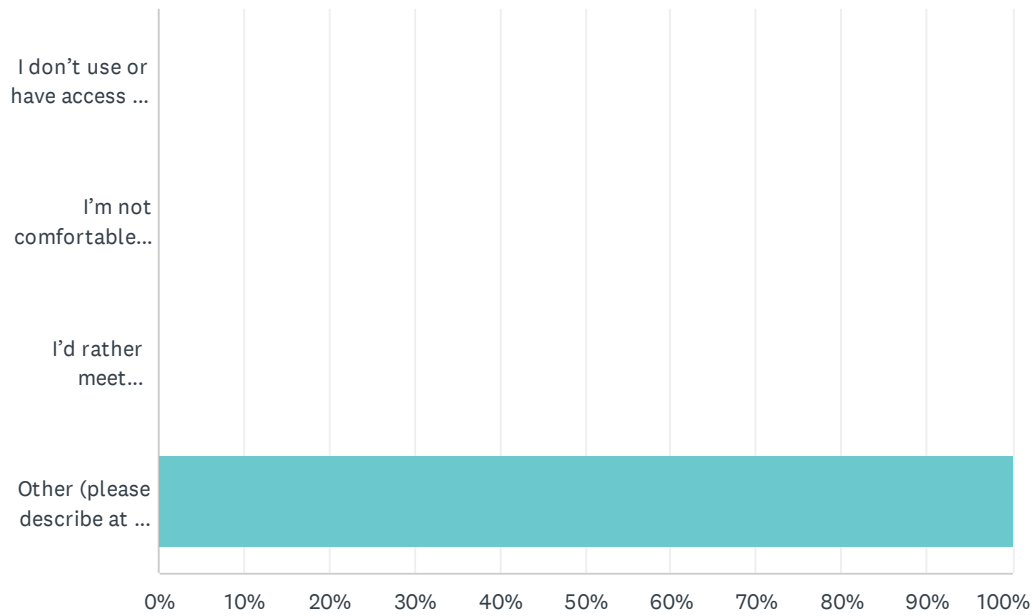
Answered: 5 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
It saves me time	60.00%	3
I don't have to drive anywhere	40.00%	2
I don't have access to transportation	0.00%	0
I can view recorded meetings at a more convenient time	40.00%	2
I prefer virtual vs. face-to-face	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 5		

### Q11 If No, which challenges do you face? (Check all that apply)

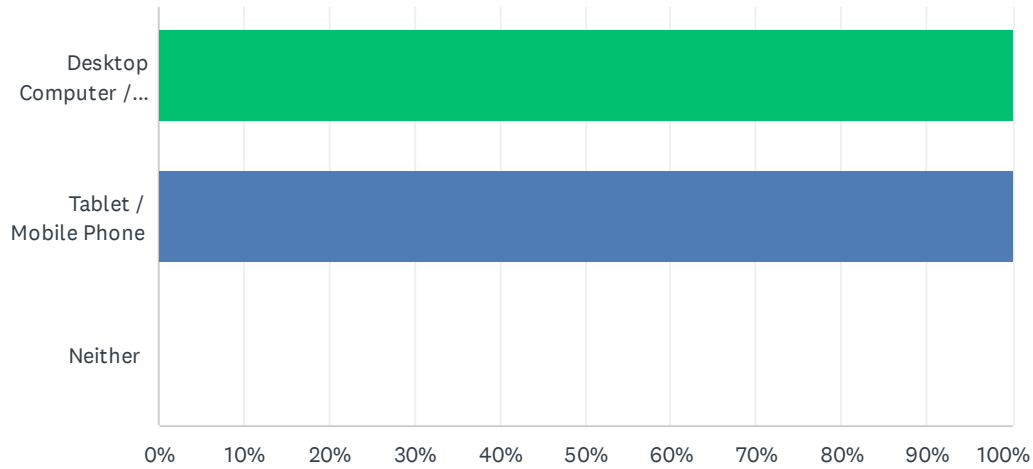
Answered: 1 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I don't use or have access to a computer or smart phone	0.00%	0
I'm not comfortable using technology	0.00%	0
I'd rather meet face-to-face	0.00%	0
Other (please describe at the end of this survey)	100.00%	1
Total Respondents: 1		

## Q12 Which types of platform(s) do you use regularly? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 6 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Desktop Computer / Laptop	100.00%	6
Tablet / Mobile Phone	100.00%	6
Neither	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 6		

## Q13 Please tell us below any ideas you have for improving public participation in the transportation planning process.

Answered: 4 Skipped: 6

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Targeted business group presentations	7/14/2023 6:12 PM
2	I think RATS is providing various ways the public can participate in the the transportation planning process in Berk County. The issue is that the public will not get involved unless the transportation issue affects them directly in their daily lives. The planning process is long and involves the TYP, LRTP, etc, funding for projects slip or are directed to other projects that require additional funding and the public may not fully understand why the project they were interested in moving forward was delayed or removed from the TYP due to funding issues. It is difficult to explain to the average citizen what steps are necessary for a project to be placed on a planning document, receive the necessary funding in the years required to design and fully fund the construction to complete the project. I think RATS should approach the municipalities in Berks and offer to attend either a Planning Commission Meeting or a Township/Borough Supervisor meeting and explain the ins and outs of the transportation planning process.	7/14/2023 9:25 AM
3	Ed Granger egranger@abilitiesinmotion.org	7/14/2023 9:08 AM
4	Do lots of advertising and social media so that people know when meetings will be. Give a virtual option for meetings.	6/5/2023 9:53 AM

14. Staff submitted (8/23/2023) revised documents to Vanessa Shamborg, FHWA staff per her previously submitted comments for additional review. Staff also included Khan Mitchell (FHWA Civil Rights Specialist) along with Stacey Waters and Debra Allen (both PennDOT Bureau of Equal Opportunity). On 8/28/2023, staff received documents with embedded comments from both FHWA officials (unable to reproduce for this document). Staff reviewed and incorporated changes suggested by those comments.

15. Both documents set for review/recommendation by RATS Technical Committee 9/7/2023. If a favorable recommendation is received, the RATS Coordinating Committee (Reading MPO) should adopt on 9/21/2023. Minutes from both meetings to be attached upon approval.