

GIS and Data Services



The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) is the regional planning agency for Berkshire County, providing assistance to the thirty-two Berkshire cities and towns in a diverse set of topics including GIS and Data Services.

What is GIS?

Geographic Information System (GIS) is a computer-based system for capture, storage, retrieval, analysis, and display of spatial data. The essential elements in this definition for local governments are “spatial” and “analysis”: where are things, why do we want to know about them, and how can our community use this information to make better decisions?

Obtaining GIS Services

Municipalities and organizations can obtain GIS and data services through the below mechanism.

- Municipal projects requiring less than 7 hours—No Charge via Local Technical Assistance
- Municipal projects requiring more than 7 hours —Fee for service
- Outsource—long term projects within a municipality at a reduced rate
- Private / Non-Profit—fee for services

As BRPC is a government entity, local municipalities do not need to go through procurement to contract with BRPC to provide services to them.

Outsource GIS

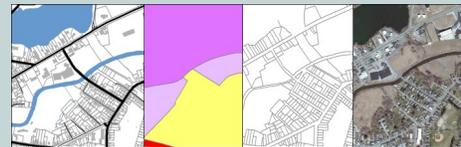
BRPC staff is available to work in town / city halls under contracts with the local governments 1/2 -3 days a week, acting as staff for the town – so-called “Outsource Planner”. Communities can utilize this program to get in-house GIS support in running their own GIS. The Outsource GIS rate is a reduced rate from our normal rate as the community, not BRPC, is responsible for providing workspace, computers and software.

Mapping Services Offered

- Official maps / status of road maps
- Official zoning maps
- Scenic Mountain Act maps
- Community display maps
- Town owned land maps
- Master plans maps
- Open space & recreation plans maps
- Environmental concerns maps, including information such as wetlands, endangered species habitat, biomap, floodplains
- Customized mapping
- Emergency response maps
- Mapping of census data

Additional GIS Services

- GIS planning and setup
- Abutter lists
- Parcel digitization and assessor maps
- GIS organization and management
- Field data collection
- Buildout analysis
- Walkability analysis
- Wind energy suitability mapping



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Data Services

Berkshire Benchmarks is a program of the BRPC that tracks and reports on important economic, environmental, and social conditions in the Berkshire region. Berkshire Benchmarks does this through its website (www.berkshirebenchmarks.org), which includes a data clearinghouse and regional indicators. The data clearinghouse is an interactive database containing a plethora of data related to the region, ranging from population to education to healthcare and employment. The regional indicators tracks specific data points over time to determine how the region is doing in meeting its long-term goals.

Through the Berkshire Benchmarks program, municipalities and other organizations can obtain community snapshots, detailing information specific to their community, topic-specific reports, such as on population and poverty, or customized reports based on the needs of the community.

Berkshire Benchmarks POPULATION BRIEF

COUNTY POPULATION BRIEF

Berkshire County has been experiencing a decline in population since the 1970s as seen in Exhibit 1. In 1970, the population of the county was 400,000. In 2011, the population declined to 317,714, a decrease of 18.8% people, or 4.7% per year. Our current population lags a decade behind the year 1940.

When comparing our population decline to Massachusetts, we see that our decline is much more rapid than the state's. While Massachusetts has lost 1.2 million people since 1970, Berkshire County has lost 188,286 people, or 15.5% of the state's total population loss.

When examining the makeup of our population, we see that the majority of our population is under the age of 18. This is a trend that we see in other parts of the state as well.

The larger communities, which all see a decline in population, all see it in the same order of the county. While the specific numbers, which are used to generate the data, are not the same, the trend is the same.

Berkshire Benchmarks POPULATION BRIEF

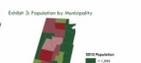
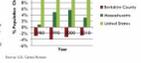


Exhibit 2: Population by Municipality

Municipality	1970	1980	1990	2000	2011	% Change
Berkshire County	400,000	364,000	340,000	325,000	317,714	-18.8%
Adams	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	0.0%
Becket	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Dalton	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Egremont	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Great Barrington	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Hancock	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Hinsdale	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Lenox	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Monterey	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
New Ashford	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
New Marlborough	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Otis	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Peru	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Pittsfield	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Richmond	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Stockbridge	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Tyringham	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
West Stockbridge	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Total	400,000	364,000	340,000	325,000	317,714	-18.8%

Field Data Collection

BRPC has the ability to collect data in the field through the use of advanced tools such as GPS and tablet based data collection. BRPC can use this technology to collect information such as property conditions, sign locations, street trees, street lights, hydrants, trail mapping and storm water features.



Who's using us?

Outsource—The town of Adams has been using BRPC to provide GIS services to the town through out Outsource program for over 10 years. (\$10,000/year for 2 days/month)

Assessor maps—Great Barrington, Hancock and Windsor utilize BRPC to maintain their assessor maps. (\$1,000+ depending on number of parcels)

Zoning maps—Dalton, Egremont, Great Barrington, Lanesborough, Lenox, Monterey, New Ashford, and Sheffield have used BRPC to create their official zoning maps (Covered under LTA policy)

Official Map/ Status of Roads—Hancock, Monterey, New Ashford, New Marlborough, Otis, Peru, Richmond, Stockbridge, and Tyringham have used BRPC to research their roads and create maps

Master plan / Open Space and Recreation plan maps— Adams, Becket, Dalton, Egremont, Great Barrington, Hinsdale, Lanesborough, Lenox, Monterey, North Adams, New Marlborough, Pittsfield, Savoy, Sheffield, Tyringham, and West Stockbridge have utilized BRPC to create maps for their plans

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