

PROPERTY LINES

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Celebrating the People Who Make R-BAR Shine

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We wish you a lot of happiness and joyful moments

PROPERTY LINES

An Official Publication of the
READING-BERKS ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, INC.
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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

National Association of REALTORS® (NAR)
1-800-874-6500 www.nar.realtor

Pennsylvania Association REALTORS® (PAR)
1-800-555-3390 www.parealtors.org

PAR Legal Hotline (MEMBER ONLY BENEFIT)
1-800-727-5345

PA State Real Estate Commission
1-833-367-2762 www.pals.pa.gov

Bright MLS Support Center
1-844-522-7444 BrightMLS.com/Support

TechHelpline
866-829-1436



Message from the President

As we prepare to close the chapter on 2025 and step confidently into 2026, this moment gives us a valuable opportunity to pause, reflect, and appreciate how far we've come together as an association. Last December, during our installation, I proudly declared 2025 "The Year of Governance"—and what a year of meaningful progress it has been.

Governance Achievements

From day one, the Board and staff embraced the challenge with an "all hands on deck" spirit. We launched three major task forces—Strategic Planning, Policy, and Bylaws—each focused on strengthening a core area of our Association. I'm pleased to share that all three groups not only met their goals, but delivered outcomes that will serve us well for years to come.

Strategic Outcomes

We now have a refreshed [Strategic Plan](#) that will guide us through 2028, a modernized set of [Bylaws](#) aligned with how we truly operate, and [policies and procedures](#) that reflect today's realities and support tomorrow's growth. The Policy Task Force will continue its work into 2026, as we further refine the structure and guidance our Board, staff, and committees rely on to succeed.

I know that not every decision made this year was easy or universally applauded—but each one was made thoughtfully, with fairness, consistency, and the long-term health of the Association in mind.

Financial Health Update

And speaking of health—financial health specifically—we've made tremendous strides. Your Association had been operating at a deficit for many years and even decades, at times nearly \$90,000. After thoroughly reviewing each line item and seeking new revenue opportunities, we reduced the deficit to approximately \$45,000. Even better, since approving the 2026 budget, Ali (your Association Executive) has already identified nearly \$10,000 in additional annual savings, none of which impact member services. And this was done even with Bright not paying dividends of approximately \$26,000 per year for this year and next.

Future Planning & Initiatives

To continue this momentum, I established the R-BAR 2030 and Beyond Task Force, focused on building a financially strong and sustainable future. Some exciting ideas are already being explored—from a REALTOR® Prom-style Gala to a high-stakes Bingo fundraiser supporting two nonprofits, as well as R-BAR. These and other events will fall under our newly created FUNraiser Committee, and we'd love to see your involvement, ideas, and energy.

Advocacy & Influence

Let me be perfectly clear: this is not a story of doom and gloom. We are not at the edge of extinction—we are on the edge of greatness. We are fully awake, wide-eyed, and making the right moves to ensure R-BAR remains a strong, respected voice in Berks County, PAR, and NAR. As our Government Affairs Director, Mark Mohn, often says: "If real estate is what you do, then politics is your business." And he's right. We've built powerful relationships at every level of government, and they matter.

Member Engagement

This past November, we also launched an initiative designed to increase member engagement and begin identifying and developing future Board leaders. As your 2026 President, Melissa Fox, put it so well: we need to meet our members where they are. So please—tell us where you are, and we will show up.

Emerging Leaders & Young Professionals

We are also relaunching a refreshed under-40 group—a modern hybrid of YPN—to re-energize our younger professionals and help them find their place in leadership. The group will choose its own name, and we welcome every voice ready to make a difference.

Association Identity

Remember: we are not an association led by 13 directors or powered by 35 committee members. We are a community of more than 1,100 REALTORS® and Affiliates, and each of you plays a meaningful role in the strength, growth, and future of R-BAR.

Volunteer Appreciation

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to all our volunteers—our chairs, vice chairs, committee members, and every member who showed up throughout the year to support our events. Whether it was the Veterans Breakfast, the 5K Run for Shelter, the Thanksgiving Day Meals on Wheels (which R-BAR proudly celebrated its 40th year hosting), the Angel Tree program, or the many other activities that brought our members together. Your dedication made each one meaningful.

Staff Recognition

I also want to recognize the tremendous work of our staff. Courtney Dombrowski, Marketing and Communications Director; Laura Culp, Membership and Events Director; and Mark Mohn, Government Affairs Director, have all devoted countless hours to ensure our Lunch & Learns, CIC events, Government Affairs/RPAC programs, our Annual Meeting & Holiday Party and many more events were offered seamlessly and successfully. Their care, consistency, and attention to detail make these events shine.

Association Operations

Our new Association Executive, Ali Columbus, together with the entire staff, manages the day-to-day operations of the Association with professionalism and heart. They make sure your questions are answered, support your needs as members, and stand behind every volunteer who gives their time to our committees, events, and Board.

Government Affairs & Advocacy Wins

We are especially fortunate to have the advocacy strength brought by Mark Mohn. His work has elevated R-BAR's visibility and respect among political and community leaders at every level of government. Thanks to his efforts, R-BAR now has a seat at tables where we've never been invited before—giving us influence on decisions that affect your business and, most importantly, the rights and access to housing and homeownership to those we serve.

Board Recognition

Finally, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the 2025 Board of Directors. Their unwavering support for the initiatives set at the start of the year—and their willingness to lean in with conviction, passion, and follow-through—allowed us not only to accomplish everything we set out to do, but even more. Because of their leadership and dedication, our Association is stronger, more prepared, and on firmer footing than ever before.

Together, we made 2025 a year of significant progress. Together, we will make 2026 a year of possibility, pride, and forward momentum.

It has been an honor to serve,
Dave Snyder
2025 R-BAR President

Dave Snyder 2025 R-BAR President



*Thank
You*

THANK YOU.

2025 Board of Directors



David Snyder | Eva Eisenbrown | Melissa Fox
Nelson Gamez | Mark Chaknos | Glenda DeLillo
Anthony Borelli | Julia Curry | Scott Jaraczewski
Jenniffer Jimenez | Brandon Lesagonicz
Lacey Pennypacker | Brad Weisman

THANK YOU!

2025 R-BAR Bylaws Task Force

Dave Snyder - Chair
Anthony Borelli | Scott Jaraczewski
Mike McDevitt | Lisa Tillman | Brad Weisman

THANK YOU!

2025 R-BAR Policy Task Force

Julia Curry - Chair
Eva Eisenbrown | Glenda DeLillo
Jenniffer Jimenez | Brandon Lesagonicz

THANK YOU!

2025 R-BAR Strategic Plan Task Force

Melissa Fox - Chair
Jen Barkman | Mark Chaknos | Laura Culp
Courtney Dombrowski | Odette Gacet | Nelson Gamez
Sharon Kehres | Steve Kope | Mark Mohn
Lacey Pennypacker | Tina McCoy | Brendan Wewer

Notes from Your Association Executive



Hello R-BAR Members,

As we approach the end of another remarkable year, I want to take a moment to reflect on what we've accomplished together and share a glimpse of what's ahead.

This year, we navigated challenges, embraced new opportunities, and strengthened the connections that make our community and industry thrive. From hosting impactful events that delivered actionable takeaways, to sharing tools and programs designed for your success, and supporting local initiatives that reflect our shared values - every milestone was possible because of your dedication and engagement.

Looking ahead, our focus remains clear: continuing to empower and engage members, foster community connections, and drive operational excellence. Expect exciting announcements in the coming months, including enhanced digital resources and fresh opportunities for professional development.

I also want to express my heartfelt gratitude:

- **To our Board of Directors...** since joining, I've witnessed your passion for the industry and our Association firsthand. Your insights and support have been invaluable in helping me transition smoothly

The 2025 Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee for the Reading-Berks Association of REALTORS® conducted interviews with qualified candidates for the open seats on 2026 Board of Directors.

The below slate of 2026 nominees will be voted upon by the membership on Wednesday, December 18th at the Year-End Brunch where we will be conducting our Annual Meeting. Upon approval, the 2026 Board of Directors will be installed into office at the same event.

The R-BAR Nominees are:

President-elect (2026) - **Brad Weisman**, Keller Williams Platinum Realty
Director (2026 - 2029) - **Jennifer Barkman**, Coldwell Banker Realty
Director (2026 - 2029) - **Jordan Kreitz**, Keller Williams Platinum Realty
Director (2026 - 2029) - **KJ Fry**, RE/MAX of Reading

and set the stage for success. Thank you!

- **To Dave Snyder, our 2025 R-BAR President...**

Thank you for investing so much time and energy into guiding me. Your expertise in the Association, business management, and leadership has been a tremendous resource, and I deeply appreciate the trust and grace you've extended. Thank you!

- **To Melissa Fox, our 2026 President-Elect...** It's been a pleasure traveling and planning with you. I've learned a lot from you and your leadership already, and look forward to continuing to work together and what next year will bring. Thank you!

- **To our incredible staff - Courtney Dombrowski, Laura Culp, and Mark Mohn:** I see and feel your dedication to the Association and our members daily. I am grateful for all that you each do, and look forward to everything ahead. Thank you!

So, on behalf of the entire R-BAR team, thank you for your membership and commitment. Let's carry this momentum into the new year with optimism, creativity, and purpose.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and a prosperous year ahead! ☺

Sincerely,
Ali Columbus

The Year-End Brunch

December 18th

Doors open at 9 a.m. | Program begins at 9:30 a.m.
Neag Planetarium at the Reading Public Museum
Early Bird \$40, After December 4th \$50
ims.realestateinberks.com to register



Melissa Fox
2026 President



Event includes:

- Annual Membership Meeting
- Installation of 2026 Board of Directors
- Unveiling of 2026-2028 Strategic Plan
- Presentation of 2025 R-BAR Awards
- Presentation of 5K checks & Food Drive trophies
- 2025 Recap and Photos

Bright's Policy Updates: What You Need to Know

The real estate industry—and the professionals who power it—have seen significant change since the 2024 NAR settlement. As the landscape continues to evolve, it's more important than ever that Bright's policies reflect the realities faced by brokers and agents every day.

To better support you and your business, Bright will implement three policy updates effective December 10, 2025. These updates were shaped through conversations with brokers, agents, and other real estate professionals to ensure they provide more flexibility, clarity, and control while maintaining the accuracy and reliability that our MLS community depends on.

Here's What's Changing

- New photo option after closing.** You will have a new option to remove all photos except the main exterior photo from public sites when a listing closes, is withdrawn, or goes temporarily off market. All photos will remain available within the MLS. This new option helps protect your clients' privacy while keeping valuable photo data accessible for comps, appraisals, and other professional needs.
- Final seller concessions information required at closing.** You will now be required to enter final seller concessions information when a transaction closes. If there were no concessions, simply enter zero. Remember: Concessions are not compensation. They are negotiable incentives provided to the buyer. Mentions of commission or compensation remain prohibited within Bright MLS.
- Office Exclusive form upload required.** When entering an Office Exclusive listing in Bright, you'll now be required to upload the Office Exclusive form. Both this form and the MLS client disclosure forms* have been updated based on subscriber feedback and can be downloaded from BrightMLS.com/ListingForms.

*Note: At this time, the client disclosure forms are not required to be uploaded.

Training Opportunities

These policy updates are designed to make your work in Bright smoother, more transparent, and more in tune with today's real estate environment. Get more details and context around the changes by signing up for one of the following:

- Register for a webinar to get a detailed walkthrough of these policy changes and answers to your new-policy-related questions: BrightMLS.com/PolicyWebinar
- Book a chat with a Bright Coach: BrightMLS.com/OfficeHours

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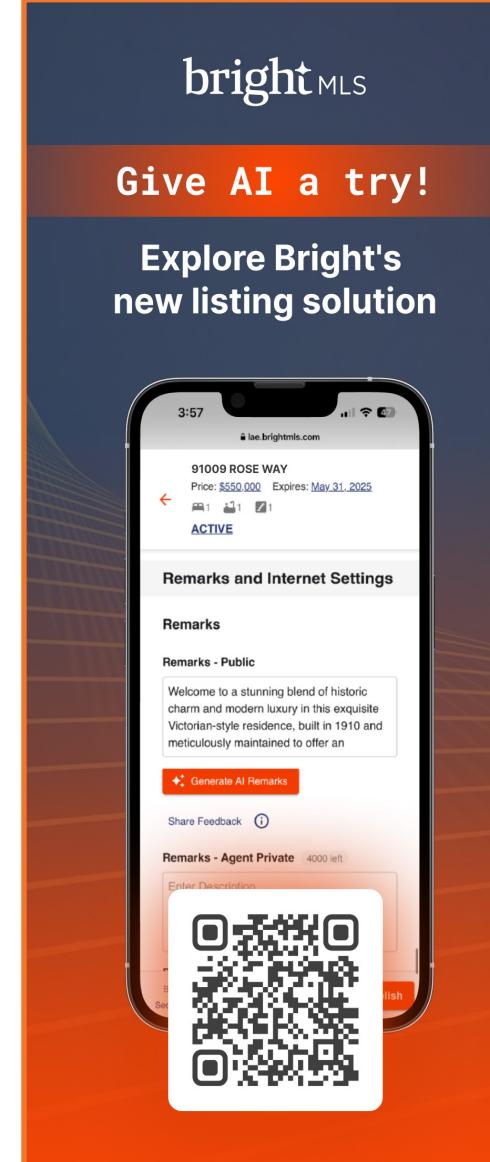
Explore Your New Listing Management Experience

January 15th | 10 a.m.

Discover a smarter, faster way to add and edit your listings! Bright's new Listing Management system combines seamless mobile responsiveness with the time saving power of AI-assisted features for an enhanced experience that helps you get more done with less effort. Join us for a walkthrough of the new system and learn about all of its efficiency-boosting benefits.

 Scan Here to Register

Webinar for R-BAR Members Only!



WELCOME

Orientation & Induction Class - September 22nd, 2025



Irene Donovan - Berks Properties, Inc.

Enas Elmenoufy - Century21 Gold

Annie Brito Garcia, Bella Fair - Coldwell Banker Realty

Atreyu Heller, Pamely Heredia, Robert Melendez - Iron Valley Real Estate

Kyra Hicks - JM Diamond Realty LLC

Brittney Gutierrez, Nicholas Luettgen, Mark McFadden, Dylan Mummolo, Alana Sterner - Keller Williams Platinum Realty

Jeremy Gibney - Pagoda Realty

Johanna Almonte-Calleja - RE/MAX of Reading

Erika De La Mora, Devon Guistwite, Johan Mora, Jairo Vasquez - Realty One Group Alliance

Orientation & Induction Class - November 24, 2025



Mohamed Fawzy - Century21 Gold

Franklin Capellan, Arisel Fernandez, Damaris Soler, Kimberley Lewis - Iron Valley Real Estate

Keleigh Nelligan - JM Diamond Realty LLC

Moises Abreu, Jennifer Fernez, Carmen Labrador, Erin Mays, Amber Perez - Keller Williams Platinum Realty

Carla Murray - Pagoda Realty

Lana Lewis - RE/MAX of Reading

Lugi Almonte-Guzman, Mariel Lamar, Yariliza Nazario - Realty One Group Alliance

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DEI CORNER

December

- 12/3 International Day for People with Disabilities
- 12/7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 12/14-22 Hanukkah
- 12/16 – 12/24 Las Posadas
- 12/21 Winter Solstice
- 12/25 Christmas
- 12/26 Kwanzaa Begins
- 12/31 New Year's Eve

January

- 1/1 New Year's Day
- 1/3 Mahayana New Year
- 1/6 Three Kings Day
- 1/13 Korean American Day
- 1/19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 1/27 International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust

February

- Black History Month
- 2/2 Groundhog Day
- 2/14 Valentine's Day
- 2/16 President's Day
- 2/17 Ramadan Begins
- 2/17 Lunar New Year

**The above list is not meant to be all inclusive, but rather, a sampling of cultural holidays, happenings, & celebrations.*

United Way Day of Caring



Children's Home of Reading

Family Promise



SafeBerks



THANK YOU!

2025 R-BAR Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee

Julia Curry - Chair

Odette Gacet - Vice - Chair

Donna Bagenstose | Denise Commings

Jenniffer Jimenez | Spiro Kasapidis | Dave Mattes

Doug Metcalfe | Robert Saharig | Tiffany Smolarski

Ron Weaver

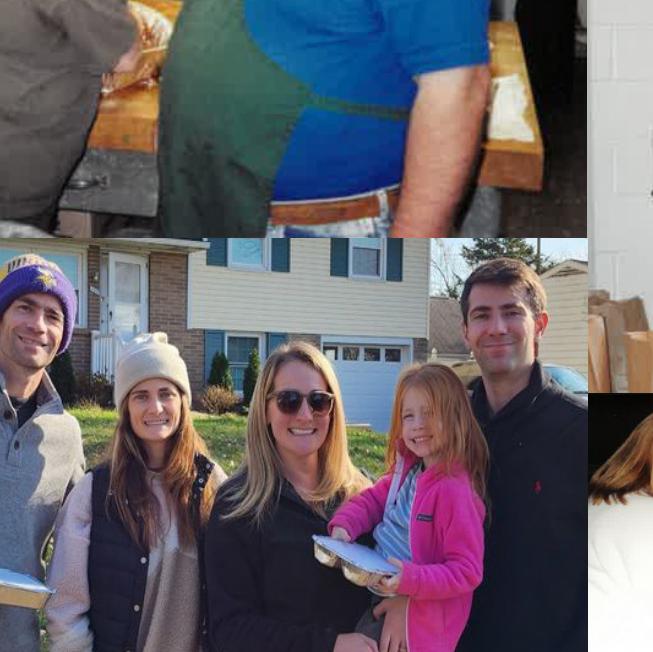
abilitiesinmotion.org

Real estate agents serve up dinners for seniors

First Year - 20 meals
This Year - 240 meals



40 Years of Serving Thanksgiving Meals on Wheels



ADVOCACY UPDATE

By Mark Mohn, R-BAR Government Affairs Director

Howdy!

Welcome to 2025's last hurrah! Just passed by Halloween and Thanksgiving, with Christmas and New Year's just around the corner. I certainly wish everyone a blessed holiday season for whatever your particular traditions are.

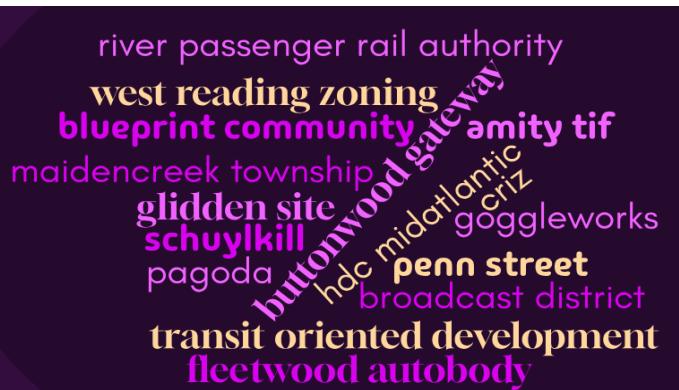
2025 has certainly been a wild ride, hasn't it? All of our hopes and expectations back in January have faced some extreme challenges throughout the year, and while there have been a significant amount of disappointments, I'd like to take a moment to focus on some of the positives that will set us up for a great 2026 and beyond.

Since this is an Advocacy article, I'll start with the heavy lift and talk politics. As you know, R-BAR, PAR, and NAR are far more focused on working with REALTOR® Champions and advocates than any particular political party affiliation. Locally, R-BAR's PAC endorsed 3 candidates in this year's election cycle: Sheriff Mandy Miller, Donna Reed for Reading City Council President, and Gavin Milligan for Maidencreek Township Supervisor.

Congratulations to Sheriff Miller and Council President Reed on their successes, and kudos to Mr. Milligan for a very competitive race, even though it ended in defeat. Turnout numbers this year were significantly strong for a local election cycle, particularly for Democrats. There are multiple municipalities that saw a bit of a "Blue Wave" and will be facing a significant change in leadership come the new year. It will be interesting to see what, if any, changes occur, and if this year's results are a blip on the radar, or do they represent a more fundamental change in regional politics. If you have not been paying attention to these changes, I wholeheartedly encourage you to do so moving forward.

Moving away from politics, let's shift to economic development. 2025 has been a great year for it, and it's just the tip of the iceberg. Remember back in the day when folks said nothing ever happens in Reading or Berks County? Well, take off the blinders people. There is a TON happening!

There's a bunch of projects that you might have seen in the paper, with a variety of investor/developers doing



incredible adaptive reuse projects, both in Reading and beyond. We receive questions about them all of the time and no worries, we are tracking everything. As soon as we know something, you'll know something. Right now, there are a lot of moving pieces, confidential happenings, and unknown variables.

If you are not familiar with any of the projects outlined in the above word cloud, or want to learn more, there's a very simple thing you can do. Come join us at Government Affairs Committee meetings and events and also at Commercial Industrial Council (CIC) meetings and events. We'll be discussing progress on all of these projects and others throughout 2026, many times visiting the actual sites and municipalities where things are happening. Hearing from the people who are doing the work, and learning where there are opportunities for others to get involved - networking and connecting, helping move all of Berks County forward.

Pay attention to all of your emails, read Property Lines (the March edition should have a nice piece explaining and updating all of the Wyomissing happenings), and check out updates as we provide them. Join CIC and use your membership. And show up when we put events together. Things are much greater (and a lot more fun!) when you are there live and in-person, instead of just reading about it later...

To quote Timbuk3: "The Future's So Bright, I Gotta Wear Shades".

Rock on,

Mark

THANK YOU!

2025 R-BAR Government Affairs Committee

Mike McDevitt - Chair

Brandon Lesagonicz - Vice - Chair

Jason Burkholder | Glenda DeLillo | Shon Elk

Eva Eisenbrown | Todd Hummel

Diane Longacre | Sharon Kehres | Ean Kofsky

Dave Mattes | Noelle Seaton | Dave Snyder

Angela Tolosky | Vicki Venezia | Brad Weisman

2025 Advocacy Breakfast



NAR Advocacy at Work

Shutdowns and Elections: What's Next for Real Estate

The Advocacy team continues to play a leading role in every major policy discussion shaping real estate. In this episode, taped live at the NXT Conference in Houston, Shannon McGahn and Patrick Newton break down the government funding deal that ended the shutdown, examine the latest election results and explain what these developments mean for NAR's advocacy priorities heading into 2026.

[LISTEN TO THE PODCAST HERE](#)



THANK YOU

2025 Contributors & Investors



\$5,000



Sustain: \$2,000

Jason Burkholder



\$1,000 annual minimum



Sandra Behm



Antonio Borelli



Mark Chaknos



Mitchell Darcourt



Sharon Kehres



David Mattes



\$500 - \$999.99 annual minimum



Michael McDevitt



\$250 - \$499.99 annual minimum



David DeTurck



Diane Longacre



Eva Eisenbrown



Melanie Mattes



Arlene Parisi



Zylkia Rivera

Jerry Amadio | Eric Angstadt | Yohanny Baret | Katie Broskey | Judy Brown | Jerry Buffa | Pete Champagne | Joseph Colon | Ali Columbus | Juan Cortes-Carreno
Jeffrey Crosby | Glenda DeLillo | Shon Elk | James Ernst | Erica Fair | Taylor Ferretti | Ronald Flowers | Thomas Franey | Jack Fry | Nelson Gamez | Christopher Harmer
Darren Kostival | Amy Leed | Brandon Lesagonicz | Keith Malone | Mark Mohn | Sean Moretti | Jean Pedersen | David Rittenhouse | Steven Sims | Ed Stauffer | Angela Tolosky

THANK YOU!

2025 R-BAR RPAC Trustees

Vicki Venezia - Chair

Dave Mattes - Vice - Chair

Sharon Kehres - Treasurer

Jason Burkholder | Diane Longacre

Mike McDevitt | Merlin Weaver



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Contributions are not deductible for income tax purposes. Contributions to RPAC are voluntary and are used for political purposes. The amount suggested is merely a guideline and you may contribute more or less than the suggested amount. You may refuse to contribute without reprisal and the National Association of REALTORS® or any of its state associations or local boards will not favor or disfavor any member because of the amount contributed. 70% of each contribution is used by PA RPAC to support state and local political candidates. Until PA RPAC reaches its goal, 30% is sent to National RPAC to support federal candidates and state and local candidates. C. S. Lewis once said, "If we offer PA RPAC a sacrifice, it may effect to retain your entire contribution for use in supporting state and local candidates. Under federal law only 70% of your contribution (checks not drawn from corporate accounts) can be donated to RPAC. If you wish to pay with corporate funds, 100% of your contribution up to \$999 will be directed to the PA RPAC administrative fund, which utilizes the funds to engage in other political activities. 30% of corporate investments \$1,000 or more will be directed to the NARS Political Advocacy Fund, which utilizes the funds to engage in other federal political activities, and the state RPAC administrative fund will retain 70%.

\$99+ RPAC RECEPTION



2025 RPAC RECAP



RPAC Telethons



Endorsements



RPAC Grand Slam



State of the Market Report Berks County, PA

Q3 2025

Available Inventory

487

Current active listings in
Bright MLS as of 10/1/25

Median Sold Price

\$300,000

As of October 2025
from Bright MLS

Income Needed for Median-Priced Home

\$100,000

\$280,000 mortgage at current
interest rate (6.4%) + estimated
taxes and insurance x 30%
(affordability index)

Did You Know?

22% of the U.S. population* lives within

5 hours of Berks County



*73 million people

Median Household Income

\$77,684



Affordable Mortgage
\$225,000

Over 11% of credit card users
are only making minimum payments.

The average minimum payment is over

\$110 per month.

Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia



Questions?

Contact Mark Mohn

Government Affairs Director

mark@realestateinberks.com

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Upcoming Trainings

Friday, Dec. 5 | 9 am - 5 pm

Friday, Dec. 12 | 9 am - 5 pm

Friday, Dec. 19 | 9 am - 5 pm

Wednesday, Jan. 21 | 9 am - 5 pm

Wednesday, Jan. 28 | 9 am - 5 pm

Friday, Jan. 30 | 9 am - 5 pm

Friday, Feb. 6 | 9 am - 5 pm

Friday, Feb. 10 | 9 am - 5 pm

Friday, Feb. 17 | 9 am - 5 pm

General Module

Fair Housing, Agency, & Ethics

Satisfies PA Required topic,
NAR Ethics, & NAR Fair Housing requirements.

Residential Module

Fair Housing, Agency, & Ethics

Satisfies PA Required topic,
NAR Ethics, & NAR Fair Housing requirements.

Risky Business: Consumer Protection Through Risk Management

Residential Module

General Module

Fair Housing, Agency, & Ethics

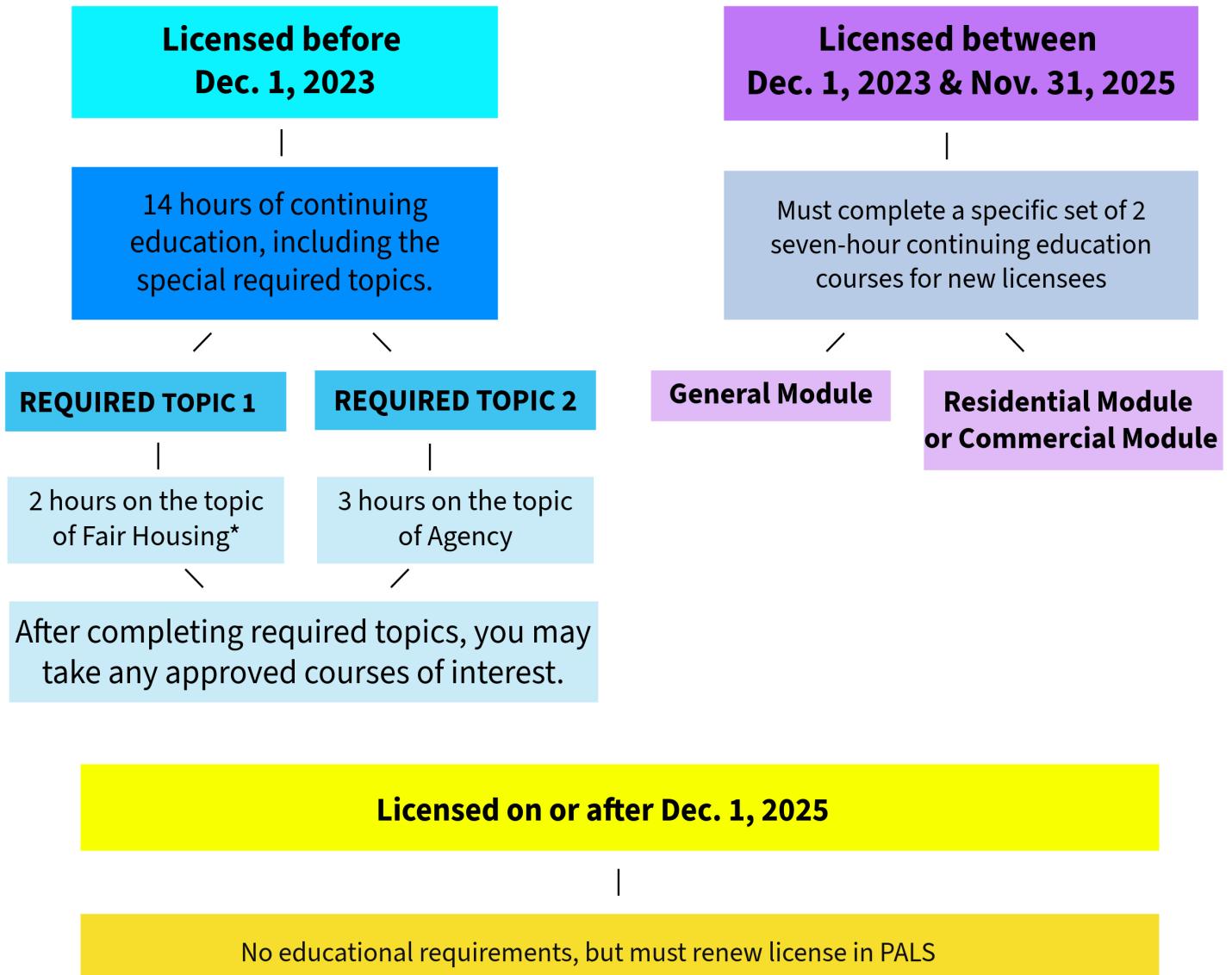
Satisfies PA Required topic,
NAR Ethics, & NAR Fair Housing requirements.

Market Trends in Property Valuation



It's License Renewal Season!

You will need to renew your PA real estate license, through PALS (Pennsylvania Licensing System), by May 31, 2026. License renewal will open in the spring of 2026. But, you must complete continuing education (CE) requirement prior to renewing your license. Follow below if you are unsure what CE course you need to complete to renew your license.

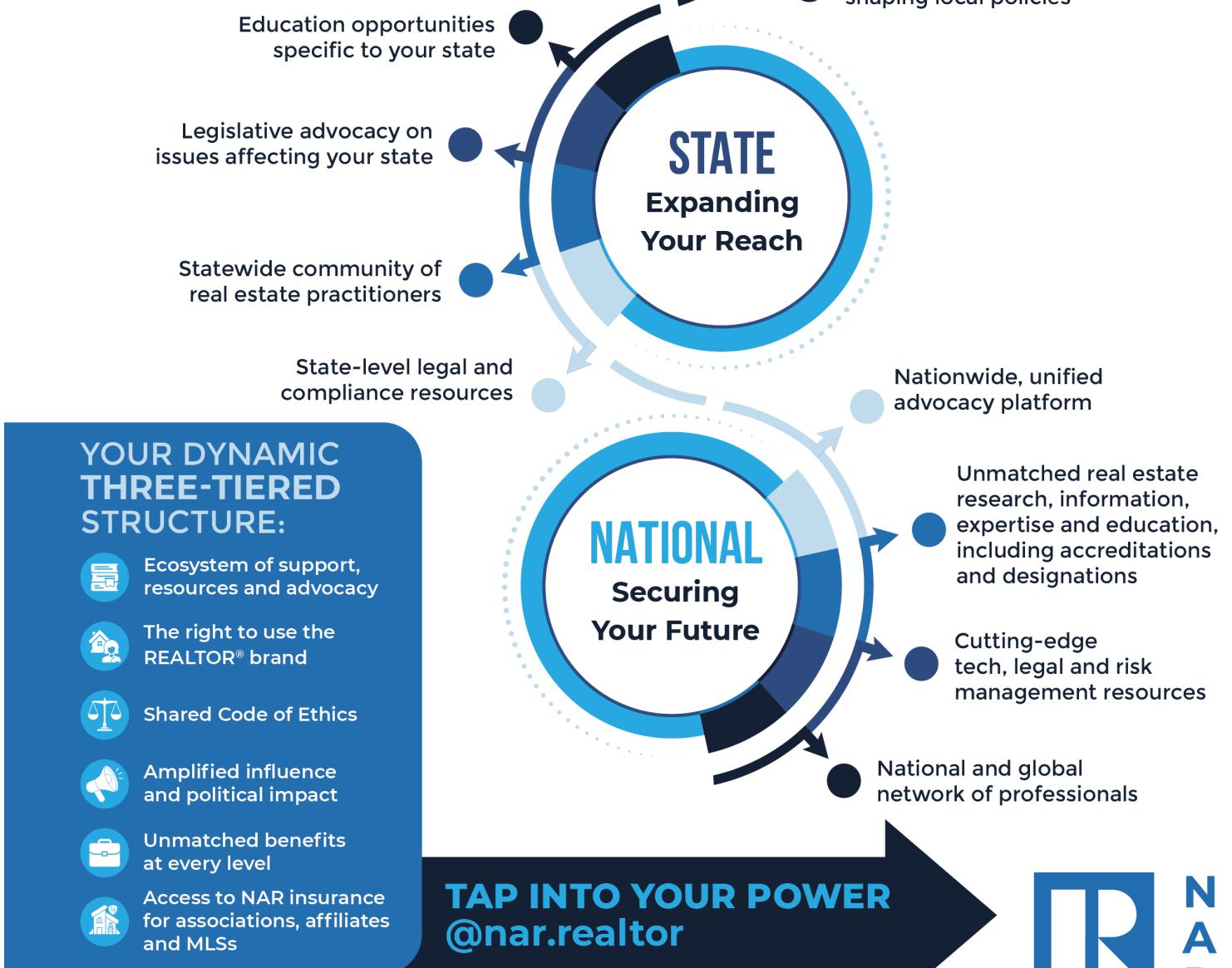


*Please note that this requirement is different from NAR's new Fair Housing/Anti-Bias training requirement. All Continuing Education Fair Housing courses will satisfy the NAR requirement, but not all NAR Fair Housing required trainings meet the PA Continuing Education requirement.

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A Dozen AI Prompts Every REALTOR® Can Use

At our November Lunch & Learn, *The Agent Advantage: How AI Can Make You Unforgettable*, presented by Alyse Mitton, President of Interlace Communication in Hamburg, attendees received a practical takeaway sheet titled “A Dozen AI Prompts Every REALTOR® Can Use.” The bolded portions below serve as context or instructions and do not need to be entered into your AI tool. Everything else can be used exactly as written or customized to fit your voice, your business, and your clients.

1. Listing Description Enhancer

Role: Act as an experienced real estate copywriter who understands what motivates homebuyers.

Prompt: “Write a warm, inviting property listing for 3-bedroom, 2-bath ranch in Wyomissing. Highlight the open layout, updated kitchen, and backyard patio. Keep it under 150 words and use friendly, conversational language that feels authentic and local.”

2. Social Media Caption Generator

Role: Act as a real estate social media strategist who knows how to grab attention and drive engagement.

Prompt: “Create three catchy Instagram captions about this week’s open house at [address]. Include emojis & a short call to action (CTA).”

3. Follow-Up Message

Role: Act as a client relationship coach who helps REALTORS® maintain warm communication.

Prompt: “Write a professional but personal follow-up email to someone who toured a home but hasn’t made an offer. Mention the property highlights, show genuine interest, and end with an invite to chat.”

4. Open House Reminder

Role: Act as a community-focused REALTOR® who writes engaging posts that draw foot traffic.

Prompt: “Write a short, upbeat Facebook post reminding people about an open house this Sunday at {address}. Include a friendly reason to stop by and a clear call-to-action.”

5. Neighborhood Spotlight Post

Role: Act as a local storyteller who knows Berks County neighborhoods inside and out.

Prompt: “Write a blog post highlighting notable

community features in [neighborhood name]. Include information about nearby parks, local amenities, small businesses, and community activities. Use a warm, welcoming tone that focuses on the neighborhood’s character and lifestyle offerings.”

6. Client Appreciation Note

Role: Act as a REALTOR® who values relationships and gratitude.

Prompt: “Write a short thank-you message to a first-time homebuyer I just helped close on their new home. Make it personal, upbeat, and written as if it came straight from me - not corporate.”

7. AI Image Prompt

Role: Act as a real estate staging designer who creates images that appeal to modern buyers.

Prompt: “Create a realistic image of a cozy modern living room with neutral tones, natural light, and greenery - ideal for staging or listing promotion.” (Use AI tools like [Dall-e](#) or [Midjourney](#))

8. Headshot Caption Creator

Role: Act as a personal branding photographer and social media coach.

Prompt: “Write three friendly captions I can pair with my professional REALTOR® headshot. Each should sound approachable, confident, and true to my personality - not salesy.”

9. Property Comparison Script

Role: Act as a buyer’s agent who explains choices clearly and compassionately.

Prompt: “Write a short, conversational explanation comparing two homes - one with a bigger yard, one with a newer kitchen. Help the client see pros and cons without pressure.”

PRO TIP FROM ALYSE:
“ALWAYS START YOUR PROMPT BY
TELLING AI WHO IT SHOULD BE -
THAT ONE SENTENCE CAN CHANGE
EVERYTHING.”

10. Testimonial Polisher

Role: Act as a reputation manager helping REALTORS® showcase client stories beautifully.

Prompt: “Polish this testimonial so it’s concise, heartfelt, and natural: [paste testimonial here]. Keep their voice but make it flow smoothly for a website or social post.”

11. Bio Polisher

Role: Act as a personal branding coach who helps REALTORS® sound approachable and credible.

Prompt: “Rewrite my REALTOR® bio to sound more authentic and trustworthy. Highlight my experience, community ties, and passion for helping people find their perfect home.”

12. Time-Saver Template

Role: Act as a real estate marketing manager who plans consistent, engaging content.

Prompt: “Create a weekly content calendar for a REALTOR® in Reading, PA who posts three times a week. Mix property listings, community news, and homeowner tips.”

Alyse Mitten

President & Founder of Interlace Communications
Schedule a FREE Discovery Meeting with Alyse for anyone who would like more direction regarding AI.
[CLICK HERE](#) for Alyse’s Discovery link
Alyse@iciconnect.com
iciconnect.com

6 N. 3rd St. | Hamburg, Pa 19526

THANK YOU!

2025 R-BAR Education Committee

Joe Peterson - Chair

Erica Fair | Ronnie Rea | Noelle Seaton | John Showalter



On December 9, 2025, from 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. ET, NAR will hold a virtual economic and real estate summit that will provide a year-end review and a forecast on the economy and housing for 2026.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)





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Pennsylvania Association of Realtors

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2026 REAL ESTATE MARKET OUTLOOK
Jan. 13 at 10 a.m.



DR. LISA STURTEVANT
Bright MLS Chief Economist

DAVID DEAN
2026 PAR President

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Dr. Lisa Sturtevant, chief economist at BrightMLS, and PAR President David Dean will provide a timely economic update featuring insights on current market conditions, interest rates and consumer spending. [REGISTER HERE](#)

Training Recordings

FROM SAFE TO SOLD: HOW SMART AGENTS TURN SAFETY INTO PROFIT - In this high-impact and actionable webinar, Tracey "the Safety Lady" Hawkins reveals how smart agents use safe showing practices to grow their business and increase profits – from safe open houses and security-aware listing presentations to buyer safety consultations.

Learn how to protect your clients from AI-driven threats like deepfakes, phishing emails, wire fraud and social engineering. Defend yourselves from crypto scams, too!

It's not just about safety, it's about strategy, cybersecurity, safe work practices and showing your value by leading with safety. [RECORDING HERE](#)

BIG APPRAISAL CHANGES COMING: WHAT REALTORS® NEED TO KNOW - Major changes are coming soon in how appraisals will be reported on your listings—and how that information is shared with lenders. These updates will affect timelines, the look and content of appraisal reports, and how you communicate with appraisers and clients.

Join Michelle Czekalski Bradley, Certified General Appraiser, USPAP instructor and national valuation expert, for a clear, practical breakdown of what's changing, why it matters and how it will affect your deals. [RECORDING HERE](#)

REAL LIFE, REAL CONSEQUENCES - PAR's Legal Hotline team reviews recent State Real Estate Commission disciplinary cases, many of which are similar issues that hotline attorneys have warned callers about in the past. Learn more about violations and the disciplinary decisions that were given. [RECORDING HERE](#)



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Goosehead Insurance - Coley Insurance Group	Insurance
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Univest Bank & Trust Co.	Mortgage Lender/Bank
Fleetwood Bank	Mortgage Lender/ Bank
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Fidelis Mortgage Corporation	Mortgage Lender
Horizon Farm Credit, ACA	Mortgage Lender
Lending Heights Mortgage - Hummel Mortgage Team	Mortgage Lender
Mortgage America - Wyomissing	Mortgage Lender
Truist Bank Mortgage Lending	Mortgage Lender
Diamond Credit Union	Mortgage Lender/Credit Union
Members 1st Federal Credit Union	Mortgage Lender/Credit Union
Riverfront Federal Credit Union	Mortgage Lender/Credit Union
Sun Federal Credit Union	Mortgage Lender/Credit Union
Visions Federal Credit Union	Mortgage Lender/Credit Union
Lausch's Moving Co.	Moving Company
Office Service Company	Office Supplies/Furniture/Promotional Products & Apparel
Real Estate Exposures	Photography
Moselem Springs Golf Club	Private Golf Club
TransferMortgage, LLC	PropTech
Compleat Restorations	Property Maintenance
Caring Transitions of Reading, PA	Senior Relocations/Downsizing/Estate Sales
Guardian Transfer	Settlement Services
Homesale Settlement Services	Settlement Services
Stewart Abstract	Settlement Services
Sentry Abstract Company	Title Insurance
Dierolf Plumbing and Water Treatment	Water Treatment

3 Hidden ChatGPT Features Every Agent Should Use

June 5, 2025 | TechHelpline

As a real estate agent, you likely use ChatGPT to accelerate the creation of email responses, social media posts, or a blog for your website.

But are you using ChatGPT efficiently? Did you know there are features and capabilities you can unlock to improve ChatGPT's performance?

Here are three hidden ChatGPT features that can boost your ChatGPT skills and help increase your AI efficiency.

Chat history search: Find your best prompts – fast

Ever had a “perfect prompt” moment but then forgot how you phrased it – and when? If you’ve ever wasted time scrolling through endless chat threads looking for that one genius moment, here’s a time-saving tip.

For paid ChatGPT versions, “Chat History Search” is a surprisingly powerful tool. Instead of starting from scratch, you can type in a keyword or phrase from a past conversation created by your stellar prompt, and ChatGPT will show you every thread where that word or phrase appeared.

Let’s say you once wrote a killer prompt that generated a social media calendar in a perfectly formatted Word doc with columns. If you remember having “social media” as part of your prompt, ChatGPT will search for that phrase. A list of past chats will appear, including your search phrase, allowing you to find, copy, and reuse that stellar prompt!

How to use it:

–On your desktop version, click the search icon (magnifying glass) in the upper left of your ChatGPT screen.

–Type in anything you remember: part of the prompt, a client name, or a topic like “video script.”

–Your chat history will instantly filter to show every match.

This can save real estate agents time and brainpower. Think of it like your own built-in prompt vault—especially helpful if you didn’t save a prompt to a separate doc or library.

Pro tip: If you are an advanced user, ask ChatGPT how you can create a custom GPT called “Prompt Library” to store your favorite prompts for future use.

ChatGPT Search works with:

ChatGPT Plus
ChatGPT Teams

Customize ChatGPT: Let it get to know you

Tucked away in your ChatGPT settings is a feature called Customize ChatGPT. It’s the fastest way to make ChatGPT get to know who you are and what you do, so it can better learn your voice.

To access, click on your account name in the upper right-hand corner (newest version) and select from the pull-down “Customize ChatGPT.” A fill-in-the-blank form will open that, once complete, and will help teach ChatGPT how to behave, write, and prioritize what matters to you.

It will ask the name you want to be called, what you do, what traits you want ChatGPT to have to reflect your voice (suggestions are at the bottom), and a section that says, “Anything else ChatGPT should know about you?”

There’s also an Advanced pull-down at the bottom you can ignore, as it simply shows ChatGPT’s selected capabilities, and all of them are listed by default.

How to use it:

–Tell it who you are: “I’m an experienced full-time real estate agent working with retired buyers and sellers focusing on luxury listings in Portland, Oregon.”

–Explain your tone preferences: “I prefer conversational but professional writing that sounds like me: friendly, clear, personable but professional.”

–Highlight how you work: “I write newsletters, create Instagram captions, draft listing descriptions, and answer buyer questions.”

–Set limits and preferences: “Avoid generic adjectives like ‘beautiful’ or ‘stellar’; I like specific, lifestyle-driven benefits that connect emotionally with my clients.”

Once completed and saved, ChatGPT will use your profile as context whenever you start a new chat. According to ChatGPT, it can make your future experiences smarter, faster, and more personal.

Pro tip: You can revise your Custom ChatGPT anytime – if you are changing client focus, want to modify your brand voice, or alter your writing tone – you can update your settings.

Customize ChatGPT works with:

ChatGPT Free (but is less reliable than paid versions)

ChatGPT Plus
ChatGPT Teams

Perfecting a single sentence: A little tweak can mean a big result

It sounds simple, but one of the most powerful things ChatGPT can do is help you optimize a single sentence. Sometimes, you write yourself into a corner – and get stuck! Turn to ChatGPT for the rescue.

Take the sentence that just isn’t working, then paste it into ChatGPT and give it a prompt asking it to solve what’s wrong.

If the issue is transition – the sentence doesn’t flow logically to the next sentence or paragraph – cut and paste those into ChatGPT to show the context.

Words carry weight, often more than images. One perfected sentence can save a blog post.

Also, if you need a single powerful or clever sentence or phrase for a headline, email subject, or social post, ChatGPT can be a lifesaver.

Maybe it’s the opening line on your next Just Sold postcard or the hook for your monthly client email newsletter. Whatever the context, ChatGPT can take your initial idea or draft and offer five or more stronger, more clever versions.

ChatGPT can even provide different emotional tones, urgency levels, or voice styles if you ask.

How to use it:

Take your draft sentence: “Check out this really nice

house for sale in Winter Park! It’s well-designed with recent upgrades.”

Now ask ChatGPT to give you six versions that:

- Make it sound more urgent and/or
- Add an emotional appeal and/or
- Give it a clever spin and/or
- Add a call to action

You can also ask it to match your brand voice, whether polished and professional or casual and conversational. Remember, the goal is not to automate your writing but to help you sharpen your writing.

This tip is fast, powerful, and available on every version of ChatGPT.

Pro tip: In the paid versions, teach it your writing style by uploading samples of things you posted in the past: blogs, emails, newsletters, client presentations, and social media posts.

Single Sentence improvement works with:

ChatGPT Free
ChatGPT Pro
ChatGPT Teams

The little things count with AI

The real power of ChatGPT is more than using it for big projects. It’s in the small hidden gems that, for a daily user, can collectively shave hours off your week. Unlocking these features will help increase your efficiency, giving you more time to spend with clients instead of in front of a computer screen.

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From the City of Reading: Call for Comments from R-BAR Members

By: David Barr, Community Development Director for the City of Reading | david.barr@readingpa.gov

Beginning January 1, 2026, the City of Reading proposes to begin requiring any City property owner who offers a property for sale to have that property inspected for code compliance. Sellers would be responsible for paying an inspection fee (\$200) when they request the inspection. Once the inspection is completed the officer will prepare a pre-sale inspection report outlining all code violations. If the officer finds no code violations, s/he will issue a certificate of compliance, which will be valid for one year from the date of inspection. If code violations are found, the seller may fix the violations or give the buyer a copy of the report, listing all violations. **If violations will not be remediated prior to the settlement date, to complete the sale, the buyer must commit to abating the violations within 12 months from the purchase date.**

Does this Replace a Home Inspection?

This is a code and zoning inspection only, not a general home inspection for maintenance or other non-code matters.

Why Switch Back to Pre-Sale Inspections?

According to the [PA Residential Real Estate Transfers Law](#), sellers are required to provide any details about the home that buyers may find problematic. So, if the pre-

inspection reveals significant problems with a house, the seller is required to directly correct

that problem or disclose/include that information in the listing. When the City of Reading stopped requiring pre-sale inspections it made it possible for sellers to plausibly deny any knowledge of the kinds of problems that an inspection would have discovered.

The current practice makes it possible for a buyer to purchase a property without a full understanding of whether it has serious and costly code violations. Once they learn of these violations later, they may decide not to correct them, and leave the house either vacant, or rent/

occupy them anyway. This contributes to the blighted property issue in the City of Reading.

Another significant factor is a requirement that the seller notify the City of the buyer's name and address within three days of the transfer. That requirement helps end the practice by some absentee owners of falsely listing the property address as their own address.

Pre-sale inspections also allow for the verification of the property's allowable use before sale and its compliance with zoning ordinances. In particular, pre-sale inspections would allow the City to identify single family properties that have been illegally converted to multi-family use. Pre-sale inspections are particularly important when a property is repeatedly transferred to absentee owners who are difficult to hold to local standards. The pre-sale inspection will apply not only to buyers and sellers in Pennsylvania but also to those out-of-state, and gives the City the opportunity to hold property owners responsible for meeting property improvement standards. Our current "reactive" approach – by pursuing negligent property owners after they cause problems, rather than preventing problems in the first place, is costly and inefficient.

This would align the City's practices with most other municipalities, and assure that buyers have as much information as possible before committing to purchase a home.

Can Community Development Support This Added Workload?

Pre-sale inspections had been the standard practice within the City of Reading in the past but were discontinued based on the high vacancy rate in our property maintenance inspection staff. Now that we are at near full staffing we consider it appropriate to revert back to that practice.

We have compiled 5 years of data for Certificate of Transfers and found a range of 15 to 23 transfers have been occurring per week, or between 61 and 90 per month. We will assume an average of 20 pre-sale inspections per week, which can be supported initially by one primary inspector for this program, supplemented by other PMI staff as needed to meet surges in requests. This will ensure consistency in the approach and



standards applied during the process, while also ensuring timeliness. Expedited sales can be accommodated if identified in the application.

What if I need the inspection expedited?

For closings within 15 days a "Rush Fee" of \$50 (in addition to the \$200 inspection fee) will be added, and the inspection expedited to meet this timeframe.

What if Buyers Do Not Address Code Violations within 12 months?

New property owners will receive escalating fines in accordance with the City's policy for any violations that are not addressed within 12 months. If we find that compliance is a widespread problem, the City will consider revising this policy and disallow sale of properties until all violations have been corrected in accordance with section 107.6 from the adopted IPMC 2018 by the City of Reading that refers to the transfer of ownership¹

1 107.6 Transfer of ownership.

It shall be unlawful for the owner of any dwelling unit or structure who has received a compliance order or upon whom a notice of violation has been served to sell, transfer, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of such dwelling unit or structure to another until the provisions of the compliance order or notice of violation have been complied with, or until such owner or the owner's authorized agent shall first furnish the grantee, transferee, mortgagee or lessee a true copy of any compliance order or notice of violation issued by the code official and shall furnish to the code official a signed and notarized statement from the grantee, transferee, mortgagee or lessee, acknowledging the receipt of such compliance order or notice of violation and fully accepting the responsibility without condition for making the corrections or repairs required by such compliance order or notice of violation. Failure to comply with this section constitutes an offense of this code punishable as set forth in Section 106.4.

[§ 180-1301. Adoption of International Property Maintenance Code.](#)



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The Top 10 Issues to Watch in Commercial Real Estate in 2026

Melissa Dittmann Tracey | NAR CREATE

increasingly turning to technology like predictive analytics, climate-risk software, drone surveys and smart building systems to gauge risks to investments. On-site inspections also remain essential.

Takeaway: Risk analysis is now driving key decisions on which projects to prioritize, informing buy-sell-hold strategies, refinancing and more. “Portfolio risk is something that has moved more to the forefront for investors, lenders, auditors and occupiers,” Hentschel says. “Going forward, risk and resiliency expertise is likely to develop as a specific subset within commercial real estate.”

3. The Changing Nature of Real Estate: Back to the Fundamentals

Cap rate compression may have been a major driver to profitability in the past, but it can’t be any longer, the report says. Owners and operators are finding they have to do a better job at managing assets more efficiently. Finding the “right” building and managing it well is more critical than simply choosing the “right sector.”

Takeaway: Focus on the basics—location, demand drivers, tenant satisfaction and operational management have become key to growing income streams.

4. Capital Sources & Flows

The slowdown in transaction volume is making it more challenging to raise money for new real estate investments and leading to less money coming back to investors on their existing investments. Plus, foreign investors have been more cautious, and real estate is increasingly competing against investment in infrastructure, particularly energy and digital infrastructure.

Takeaway: Investors and real estate professionals will continue to find the market for fundraising more challenging and competitive. They will need to work hard to find capital and should be prepared to discuss liquidity, long-term viability and why a property is a smart investment.

5. Transformation of Real Estate Through Technology

AI is quickly reshaping commercial real estate, increasing demand for data centers and being integrated into tools designed for financial analysis, underwriting and building operations. Innovators are setting out to simplify and speed up tasks that once took more time

and effort to complete. Owners and operators in the future will use AI tech tools for such functions as better organizing data, reviewing contracts and strengthening cybersecurity. Gaining access to the data within a building’s multiple systems, however—such as lighting, access controls and HVAC—has proven challenging.

Takeaway: To prepare for future AI solutions, property owners and operators need to get control of data inputs from multiple systems being gathered by a “fragmented ecosystem of investors, asset managers, property managers, contractors and building systems,” the CRE report warns. “Companies and individuals will have to work harder to understand and innovate—or get left behind in this new fast-paced cycle of AI-driven innovation.”

6. The Future of Real Estate

The rapid integration of AI into commercial real estate offers access to unprecedented data and tools for improved decision-making, Hentschel says. That shift will change the way commercial real estate professionals and investors make decisions—from conventional statistical analysis to the “Bayesian approach.” Named for Thomas Bayes, an 18th century mathematician who studied probabilities, the Bayesian approach factors in probabilities and updates expected outcomes as new evidence becomes available.

Takeaway: Real estate decisions must go beyond “location, location, location.” “We have so much more data and more tools,” the report notes, adding that success will depend on disciplined thinking—using insights to carefully weigh risks, opportunities and long-term outcomes.

7. Global Chess: The Crisis of Confidence & Uncertainty

Market uncertainty—from interest rates, tariffs, global shifts and more—can slow investment and demand. “The most certain thing right now is the uncertainty—and it’s pervasive,” the report says.

Takeaway: The market requires navigating a “what-if” environment. “Business decisions will need to be weighed carefully, even if they appear to be the right choice today,” the report reads. “There may be a resetting of return expectations across asset classes, depending partly on the movement of interest rates and inflation. Volatility in the marketplace always makes what could have been an easy decision a lot more complicated.” Commercial real estate expertise will grow even more valuable in helping identify opportunities and in navigating these more volatile markets, the CRE report notes.

8. Housing Attainability

Rising costs and housing shortages are making it more difficult for renters, first-time buyers, middle-income families and seniors to find suitable housing. In Rhode

Island alone, according to the report, 40,000 new housing units are needed to meet current and projected demand. Yet the state hasn’t built more than 3,000 units in any single year in over two decades.

Takeaway: No single solution exists. Incremental, creative and collaborative solutions across public and private sectors are essential to improve housing access and affordability. For example, land use and zoning policies and entitlement requirements could help make building faster and cheaper. “Everyone has a role to play, and it’s everyone’s responsibility to push or pull the lever at his or her disposal,” the report says.

9. Pricing Risk

More than \$950 billion in commercial loans mature in 2025; maturing loans will remain at peak levels for another two years. This will create pricing and refinancing challenges, particularly in private debt markets. Banks are extending loans to avoid taking back properties, but private debt can carry more uncertainty due to more limited transparency in the underwriting.

Takeaway: Opportunistic buyers are waiting for distressed property that they can pick up at discounts, but it’s been slow to materialize. The continued offloading of this “debt bomb” will likely lead to transaction activity remaining flat in 2026 and 2027 and then a gradual improvement in 2028 as pricing gaps narrow and the market grows more competitive. The CRE report says the industry will need to embrace a holistic approach to valuation and pricing risk, identifying the underlying factors that support value over the long haul.

10. Flow of People

Population growth, migration and household formation are slowing, creating challenges for both residential and commercial real estate. For example, household formation among Millennials is slowing down, and Gen Z has not yet fully entered the market. Also, international immigration has experienced a sharp decline. Overall, household growth in the first quarter of 2025 slowed to 1.26 million annually, well below the 1.93 million average between 2019 and 2022, according to Harvard’s Joint Center for Housing Studies.

Takeaway: With slower population growth, developers and investors will need to rethink strategies and consider renewing their focus on locations with more density than the pandemic-fueled craze of suburban greenfields. “Commercial property owners and developers will need to focus on locations that are able to attract and retain workers, particularly the younger workforce,” the CRE report says. “The ‘build it and they will come model’ is going to be inherently riskier in this slower growth environment.”

At NAR NXT, the Counselors of Real Estate shares its annual look at the top-of-mind issues pressing on commercial real estate in the year ahead.

The commercial real estate market is entering a year of opportunity and challenge, influenced by economic uncertainty, shifting population trends and continued technological innovation. [The Counselors of Real Estate](#), a global organization of property advisers and an affiliate of the National Association of REALTORS®, each year offers an analysis of the trends and risks that will shape real estate decisions in the coming year. On Sunday at [NAR NXT, The REALTOR® Experience](#), John Hentschel, global chair of The Counselors of Real Estate, unveiled the organization’s 2026 “Top 10 Issues” report. Here are highlights of the 10:

1. Fiscal & Monetary Policy

The U.S. economy remains resilient despite a record \$37 trillion in national debt and ongoing uncertainties—from AI to geopolitical tensions. Yet, jobs, consumer spending, inflation and the stock market have remained relatively strong over the past year, the report reads. Rising investments in onshore manufacturing and tariff revenue may further help. But the report notes that commercial real estate has been uneven, with certain sectors struggling more than others—notably the for-sale housing and B and C office markets.

Takeaway: Barring unforeseen events and policy changes, real estate will continue to be a key driver of growth and stability for the economy, in the year ahead.

2. Portfolio Risk

Managing risk in commercial real estate has become more data driven. Investors now weigh numerous factors beyond property type and location risks, including potential threats within financing and valuation; insurance; extreme weather and natural disasters; regulatory environments; and even air quality. They’re increasingly turning to technology like predictive analytics, climate-risk software, drone surveys and smart building systems to gauge risks to investments. On-site inspections also remain essential.



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Appetizers & Drinks (up to \$400) sponsored by:



THANK YOU!

2025 R-BAR Commercial & Industrial Council

Tina McCoy - Chair

Brendan Wewer - Vice - Chair

Jen Barkman | Jason Burkholder | Suzanne Cody

Natalie Dorsheimer | Eva Eisenbrown | Mel Ficarro | Aaron Gantz

Allison Kalbach | Alex Roche | Ernie Salgado | Dave Snyder

DID YOU KNOW?

NAR provides various commercial real estate resources, including:

- [Create](#), a quarterly publication for commercial practitioners, members of the National Association of REALTORS® and commercial real estate industry leaders.
- [Commercial Market Insights](#)
- [Commercial Metro Market Reports](#)
- [NAR REALTOR® Benefits for Commercial Practitioners](#)



CIC NETWORKING NIGHT

Thursday, Jan. 15th | 5 - 7 PM
John R Post Center at Alvernia University
401 Penn St. Reading, PA

KICK OFF 2026 WITH THE COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL—NETWORK, CONNECT, AND EXPLORE BERKS COUNTY'S FUTURE!

Sponsored by:



<https://tinyurl.com/CICJan26>

2026 CIC UPCOMING CALENDAR

Membership Drive

January 15th, 2026 | John R. Post Center

CRIZ & Transit Oriented Development

February 2026

Commercial Real Estate Market Update

March 12, 2026 at The Abe Lincoln

New Zoning & Main Street - West Reading

April 16, 2026

Boyertown Walking Tour

May 7, 2026

Adaptive Reuse

June 11, 2026

Site Visit & Summer Social

July & August 2026

Commercial Agricultural Loans & 1031 Exchanges

September 2026

County Event

October 2026

Projections from Commercial Practitioners

November 2026

Social Hour

December 2026

The new year is a great time to join a committee!

Make an Impact

Join a Committee or Plan an Event for YOUR Association!

Commercial & Industrial Council

If you're involved in commercial real estate, consider helping to plan commercial-centered events for CIC members! Events planned include:

- Walking tour
- Educational & networking sessions

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

This committee is dedicated to educating and advocating for fair housing, fostering diverse perspectives through partnerships and training, and providing a welcoming space for open, respectful discussions on important topics. Events planned include:

- Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission training
- Fair housing events
- Tours of various organizations
- Promotion of and involvement in community events

Education & Professional Development

Assist in planning educational & professional development opportunities for members.

Events planned include:

- Lunch & Learns
- Summer Open House
- New Member Orientation

Government Affairs

Become involved with municipal, city, county, state and national topics that have direct impact on your business and client's ability to achieve the American dream of homeownership.

Events planned include:

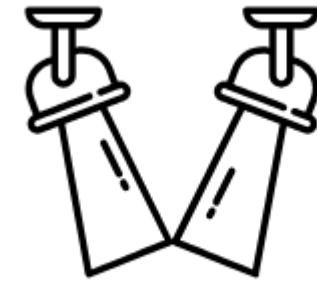
- REALTORS® Political Action Committee promotions like Grand Slam
- Legislative Breakfast
- RPAC \$99+ Reception

Outreach

Make a difference in your community by planning and volunteering for various local charitable events and organizations.

Events planned include:

- Valentine's for Veterans Breakfast
- Easter Baskets for Berks
- 5K Run for Shelter
- Annual Food Drive
- Thanksgiving Meals on Wheels
- REALTOR® Ring Day
- Angel Tree gifts



SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

Holiday Safety Made Simple

We know REALTORS® are always looking for valuable, timely content to share with their clients—especially during the busy holiday season. Feel free to use any or all of the tips below in your social posts, email newsletters, or client communications to help keep your clients, their homes, and their loved ones safe all season long. These simple reminders can go a long way in preventing common holiday hazards and promoting peace of mind.

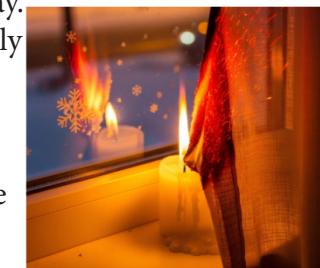
Electrical & Lighting Safety

- Inspect all holiday lights and extension cords for fraying, cracks, or broken bulbs before use.
- Never connect more than three light strands per extension cord, and avoid overloading outlets.
- Spread decorations across multiple outlets and use surge protectors when needed.
- Most home outlets can only handle 15–20 amps—always follow manufacturer specifications.
- Use outdoor-rated lights for exterior decorating and keep wiring off the ground.
- Never use electric lights on metallic trees.
- Turn off all lights before going to bed or leaving home.



Tree & Décor Safety

- Choose a fire-resistant artificial tree or keep real trees well-watered to prevent drying out.
- Keep trees and decorations away from fireplaces, heaters, candles, and radiators.
- Avoid placing flammable décor (curtains, dried foliage, paper items) near open flames.
- Use stable candle holders on non-flammable surfaces and never leave lit candles unattended.



- Do not light the fireplace if stockings or décor are hanging on the mantel.

Chimney & Fire Preparedness

- Have your chimney cleaned regularly to reduce the risk of creosote buildup and chimney fires.
- Check your fire extinguisher: the gauge should be in the green zone. Replace or service if in the red.

Ladder & Installation Safety

- Use ladders on stable, level ground and wear shoes with good traction.
- Secure outdoor decorations firmly using insulated hooks, clips, or fasteners.

Trip & Injury Prevention

- Secure all cords with clips, tape, or cord covers to prevent tripping.
- Use proper hooks or hangers for wreaths and heavy décor to prevent falling objects.

Child & Pet Safety

- Keep small, breakable, or sharp decorations out of reach.
- Choose shatterproof, non-toxic, and child/pet-safe décor when possible.
- Use a sturdy tree stand and consider anchoring the tree for added stability.

Home Security

- Set timers on lights to make your home appear occupied when you're away.
- Bring in packages promptly to avoid porch theft.
- Consider using security cameras, alarms, and upgraded locks during the busy holiday season.

Tips provided by: [RisMedia](#) & [American Red Cross](#)

Our Member Milestones

We'd like to take a moment to recognize the incredible commitment of our members who continue to strengthen R-BAR and the communities we serve. From those reaching their first milestone to those celebrating decades of dedication, these anniversaries represent hard work and a lasting impact on our industry. We proudly acknowledge members marking 1, 5, 10, 15, 25, and 45+ years as official members of the Reading-Berks Association of REALTORS® in 2025. Thank you for being an essential part of our Association's story!



Michael Abrew-Morales
Linda Alston
Maria Aponte Diaz
Max Baez
Susana Candelaria
Mackenzie Caramanica
Miguel Castillo
Alba Castillo
Reyna Cepeda
Shalani Colon
Charleny Coste Rodriguez
Melissa Dermott



Jose Acosta
Autumn Aliano
Ronald Batista
Cynthia Ann Borelli
Evan Breisch



Lizeth Alanis
Ylilda Batista
Toni Bean
Katie Broskey
Tamica Cheney

Celebrating 1 year with R-BAR in 2025

Gabriel Duran
Jacob Eckert
Shon Elk
Jeremy Eusebio
Toni Farina
Brandon Flowers
Susan Frey
Terri Gentile
Katelyn George
Jose Gomez
Belgica Guzman
Tina Hanulec
April Hoffman
Elizabeth Hoover
Eileen Jaquez
Zavian Johnson
Alexander Jones
John Paul Kasperowicz

Tim King
Heather Kocon
Coral Kreiser
William Kurteck
Aliya Lefler
Ismael Lorenzo
Diona Lovejoy
Soranyi Lozano Guzman
Tracy Magosin
Keisha Maldonado
Emily Martini
Melissa Masciotti
Doug Metcalfe
Jessica Meyer
Julia Miller
Jan Miller
Jonathan Morris
Hannah Phillips

Sarah Redding
Lisa Reyes
Julia Santangelo
Heather Scheid
Emily Schumacher
Darris Scott
Noelle Seaton
Brady Snyder
Alex Snyder
Tatianna Soria
Iain Stinson
Mouna Tabat
Henry Toro
Danny Wade
Brent Wall
Travis Weaver
Ronald Weaver

Celebrating 5 years with R-BAR in 2025

Gabriella Calloway
Petey Church
Benjamin Dalrymple
Angel Errington
Leroy Feireira-Shearin
Jon Gerhart
Emily Gordon
Chuck Gregory
Kristy Heffner
Josh Hess
Edward Hollock

Jaci Hoosier
Nichole Killeen
Robert Kipling
Tracey Lane
Melanie Licklider
Josiah Martin
Clair McKoy
Tina Miranda
Beth Niedrowski
Harry O'Neill
Michele Portner

Jeff Reichart
Brett Rottmann
Aida Sanchez
Genaro Sanchez
Renee Schorran
Shannon Simpson
Jamie Simpson
Timothy Stoltzfus
Jakob Templin
Krista Templin
Jilian Tustin

Celebrating 10 years with R-BAR in 2025

Will Eby
Taylor Ferretti
Laura Flores-Martinez
Ron Flowers
Gloria Garcia
Dave Gibson
Laura Grande
Jose Guzman
Howard Hackelton
Pat Hassler
Fran Healy

Amy Healy
Charlene Hyneman
Terry Imschweiler
Sam Kalbach
Chaz Logan
Jose Manzueta
Dan Martin
Tom McDonald
Tyler Miller
Brad Moyer
Kendra Rohrbach

Chris Smith
Alexander Smith
Julia Sutu
Justin Watson
Megan Weikel
Cathy Witter
Ann Woodward
Stephanie Young
Joshua Youpa



Celebrating 15 years with R-BAR in 2025

Joshua Abraham
Terry Dietrich
Tyler Eberly
Travis Eberly
Eric Girolamo
Tom Tasker
Aubree Hall
Justin Horst

Susan Molinaro
Taj Simmons
Barbara Stinson
Christine Storms
Tom Tasker
Alex Tolosky

Celebrating 25 years with R-BAR in 2025

Joan Antosy
Kimberly Bonenfant
Jamie Bortz
Jim Brumbach
Cindy Castner
Jeffrey Martin
David Croscup

Dawn Hickernell
Tom Hoch
Michael Klonis
Chuck Koch
Robert Marrella
Jeffrey Martin
Dave Mattes

Melissa McCoy
Nelson Oswald
Michelle Ott
Craig Stringer
Lisa Tiger
Milly Vega
Leticia Wiemann

Celebrating 45 - 50 years with R-BAR in 2025

*All the below members have earned REALTOR® Emeritus status

Tom Bellairs
Sandra Bieber
Wink Dietrich
John Gross

Doug Hayward
Ed Jenkins
Fred Levering
Marshall Lytle

Joe Peterson
Jeff Stout
Randy Weeber

Celebrating 51+ years with R-BAR in 2025

*All the below members have earned REALTOR® Emeritus status

Michael Chaknos
Harry Fry
Doug Haring
Donald Lebo

Dianne Reed
John Sylvester
Conrad Vanino
Betty Volk

What Does \$295 Get You?

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- Win-Win Program
- Instashine Car Wash Discounts
- Educational Offerings
 - Partnership with Polley for CE courses, certification & designation courses
 - Free Lunch & Learns
 - Fair Housing Trainings
- Commercial & Industrial Council
- Member Discounts
 - Supra eKEY
 - Advertising opportunities
 - R-BAR store
- Communications
 - Property Lines Newsletter
 - Member-Only Emails
 - Social Media Engagement
- Affiliate Program
- Legislative Advocacy
- Community Engagement
 - DEI Initiatives
 - R-BAR Care Benevolent Fund
 - R-BAR Scholarship Fund
 - Outreach opportunities
 - Networking options
- Dedicated Service - in-person support provided M - F



OR



An annual membership with
including the benefits below:

www.realestateinberks.com

Property Lines - December 2025 - 43

Property Lines - December 2025 - 42



4th Annual Valentine's for Veterans Breakfast

Provided by:



Honoring Our Veterans - Join Us for a FREE Hot Breakfast!

We invite all veterans to enjoy a warm, homemade breakfast as a token of our appreciation for your service.

Caregivers are welcome to join and enjoy as well!

When: Saturday, February 14, 2026 from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Snow date February 21, 2026

Where: Wilson West Middle School Cafeteria
450 Faust Rd, Sinking Spring, PA 19608



Walk-ins are welcome! Registration is appreciated, but not required!



Visit tinyurl.com/veteransbreakfast26 | Call 610-375-8458

Email laura@realestateinberks.com



Running for a Cause: REALTORS® and Neighbors Support Local Housing at 6th Annual 5K

On a beautiful Saturday in October, REALTORS®, industry-affiliated business professionals, community leaders, and local residents participated at Gring's Mill Recreation Area for the 6th Annual 5K Run for Shelter, hosted by R-BAR.

"Two things stand out from this year's 5K — we raised the most sponsorship money ever and had the most registered runners ever," says Darren Kostival, chair of the 5K Run for Shelter Task Force and REALTOR® with RE/MAX of Reading. "Mother Nature gave us a pretty amazing day!"

Proceeds from the 5K Run for Shelter benefit Habitat for Humanity of Berks County (Habitat) and Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Berks, Inc. (NHS).

"The Run for Shelter 5K hosted by R-BAR is a great example of organizations recognizing the importance of giving back and engaging with their community," explains Tim Daley, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Berks County. "Habitat Berks uses these funds to support our workforce housing projects, as seen in the work being done through the Buttonwood Gateway Project."

Both NHS and Habitat play vital roles in educating prospective homebuyers, expanding access to financing, building and restoring homes, and creating pathways to generational wealth within Berks County communities. The funds donated to NHS go directly toward closing cost assistance grants for low-income homebuyers.

"Habitat for Humanity and NHS both work hard to make a real difference," says Lacey Pennypacker, Director on R-BAR's Board of Directors and REALTOR® with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Homesale Realty. "This event helps raise money and awareness for their efforts. Plus, it brings people together for a good cause — and a good run!"

As Daley adds, "Who better than REALTORS® to understand the importance of homeownership!"

R-BAR members are passionate about supporting Habitat and NHS year-round, but their commitment is especially evident in October, which marks 'REALTORS® Reach Out' month, a statewide initiative that highlights volunteerism and community impact. Throughout the month, REALTORS® and affiliated business partners across Pennsylvania give back through collective efforts in volunteerism, donations, and fundraising.

Last year's 5K raised \$9,421.52, split evenly between NHS and Habitat. This year's event raised nearly \$9,600, with the final total to be announced at R-BAR's Year-End Brunch in

December!

Congratulations to the overall winners, Christian Cortes-Nunez, top overall male winner, and Jess Hetrich, top overall female winner!

R-BAR extends its sincere thanks to everyone who supported this year's 5K Run for Shelter, including 21 generous sponsors, who raised the most ever for this event - \$8,950!

Gold: Breidegam Family Foundation, Fulton Mortgage Company, Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Berks, Inc, Rivera-Leinbach for Commissioner

Silver: Caring Transitions of Reading, Habitat ReStore, Jason Burkholder Team with Hometown Property Sales, Stewart Abstract of Berks Co. Inc., Sun Federal Credit Union, Truist

Bronze: Bright MLS, Burg Restoration Service, Darren Kostival, REALTOR® RE/MAX of Reading, Dierolf Plumbing & Water Treatment, Reading Fightin Phils, Univest Bank and Trust Co.

Brass: Alyssa Damiani, REALTOR® Coldwell Banker Realty, Fidelis Mortgage Corporation, Jersey Ink, Julie's Olde-Tyme Cho-chos, Muhlenberg Greene Architects

Donations: Berks Fire & Water, Darren Kostival, REALTOR® RE/MAX of Reading, Lending Heights Mortgage – Todd Hummel Team, Unique Pretzels

Save the date! The 7th Annual 5K Run for Shelter will be held October 3, 2026!



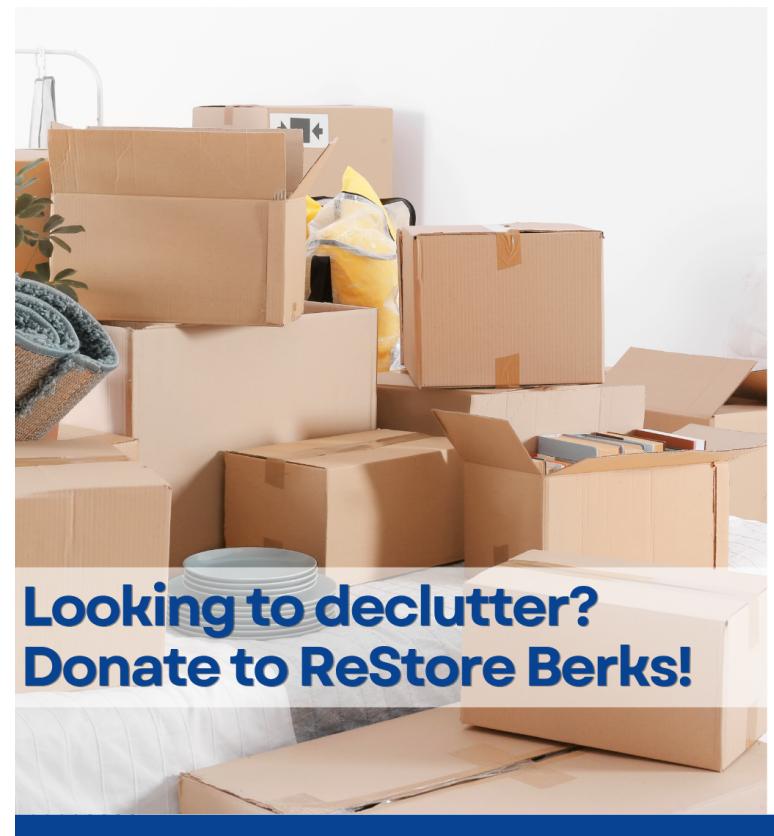
Congrats to Iron Valley Real Estate for winning the trophy for the team with the Most Registered for the 5K with 41 registrants!

Helping Clients Move, Helping Berks County Thrive

As a real estate professional, you know how overwhelming a move can be for your clients. Whether they're downsizing, preparing a home for market, or simply clearing out items they no longer need, figuring out what to do with unwanted furniture and household goods can be a major stressor. That's where ReStore Berks comes in.

ReStore offers free, convenient pickup of gently used furniture, appliances, home décor, building materials, and more. It's an easy, no-hassle service that helps your clients lighten their load—and gives their unneeded items a second life.

Every donation to ReStore Berks directly supports Habitat for Humanity of Berks County. And that



support stretches far beyond the store's walls. Habitat Berks' revitalization and homeownership efforts help strengthen entire neighborhoods, contributing to safer, more stable communities, reduced crime, and increased property values--outcomes every REALTOR® can appreciate.

By simply sharing ReStore's free pickup service with your clients, you're not only offering them a valuable resource--you're helping build stronger neighborhoods across Berks County. It's a small tip that makes a big difference.

Learn more or schedule a pickup at RestoreBerks.org/Donate.



FREE Donation Pickup!

ReStore Berks accepts:

- Furniture
- Appliances
- Cabinets
- Home Decor
- Building Supplies
- And More!

CALL OR SCAN TO
SCHEDULE YOUR
FREE PICKUP



All profits from your donations to the ReStore help



Todd Hummel - Chair

Jen Barkman - Vice - Chair

Kasey Angstadt | Brenda Baer-Edsall | Sue Bernhard

Alicia Bressler | Alyssa Damiani | Ashley Dyer

Jack Evans | Mel Ficarro | Steve Gieringer | Mike Hunter

Steve Kope | Darren Kostival | Amy Leed

Amanda Nettles | Justina Ott | Lacey Pennypacker

Ben Perfetto | Ernie Salgado | Daniel Sansary

Dario Walcott

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²Financing is based on the lesser of the appraised value (fair market value) or the contract sales price.
Interest on any portion of the loan that exceeds the appraised value of the dwelling is not tax deductible. Please consult your tax advisor.

COMMUNITY CORNER

- December, Gring's Mill Recreation Area Lights
- December 3, 6 - 7:30 pm - Holiday Lights Fun Runs & Walks
- December 5, 5 - 10 pm - ARL Festival of Trees
- December 5 & 6 - Annual Festival of Trees at Boyertown MultiService
- December 6, 10 am - 1 pm, Hamburg - Christmas In The Square
- December 6, 11 am - 4 pm, Boyertown - Chillin' on Main
- December 6, 9 am - 4 pm, Daniel Boone Middle School - Annual Daniel Boone Holiday Craft Show
- December 5 - 7, Reading Liederkranz - Christkindlmarkt 2025 at the Reading Liederkranz
- December 13, 3 - 10 pm - West Reading Santa Bar Crawl
- December 14, 9 am - 3 pm, Rooted in Wellness - Jingle & Joy with Santa Claus: An Inclusive Santa Event
- December 19, 7 am, Trooper Thorn's Irish Beef House - Reading Fire Toy Drive
- December 23, 4 pm, Pagoda City Brewing - Festivus for The Rest of Us
- December 31, 8:30 pm, Neag Planetarium - NYE 2026 Under the Stars
- February 2, 5:30 pm, DoubleTree - 24th Annual Souper Bowl
- February 14, 10 am, Berks History Center - The African American Settlement of Six Penny Creek: Charcoal, Iron, & the Underground Railroad

They're Back On!

We're thrilled to share that the Reading Pagoda's lights are shining again after an exterior renovation and testing! The newly installed LED system now glows red once more, restoring the festive tradition of signaling Santa's approach on Christmas Eve. Historically, these lights have also been used to mark other important moments in the city, making this beautiful return even more meaningful.



Help Your Clients with the Home of Their Dreams



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Ask about our variety of mortgage options, secure homeowners insurance, and more.

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