BRISTOL
VERMONT

TOWN PLAN

Adopted by Town Vote
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Proposed for Amendment
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1. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Entering Bristol on Route 116 from the east, one passes a sign identifying the town as the "Gateway to the Green Mountains." It's a fitting description of this quintessential mountain town of approximately 3,900 residents and 23,362 acres. West of Bristol's inviting, compact village is a plateau that marked the shores of Lake Vermont and the Champlain Sea thousands of years ago, as they arose in turn during the melting of the Wisconsin glacier. To the east of the village, rises the heavily wooded Hogback ridge. Part of the Green Mountain National Forest begins just to the south of Main Street and the New Haven River, a portion of which is the Bristol Cliffs Wilderness Area. Agriculture, forestry, and other natural-resource-based endeavors surround the village. The beauty of our setting also enhances the numerous opportunities for outdoor recreation.

B. Purpose

In planning for the future of Bristol, the Planning Commission has kept in mind four fundamental charges:

- To protect the health and beauty of this remarkable natural setting;
- To foster a vibrant, prosperous, and socially inclusive human community;
- To support the historically successful and commercially sound downtown; and
- To sustain our foundation of value-added natural resource based industries.

This Town Plan defines a long-term vision for the Town of Bristol and a means for achieving that vision. The plan is designed to serve as a primary reference when making community decisions and to provide guidance to local officials when setting public policy. The plan:

- Provides historical data and background information,
- Describes Bristol's current conditions, character and challenges, and
- Includes town goals, policies and tasks.

C. Vision

The following broad vision reflects both research and consideration by the Planning Commission and many eloquent comments by residents attending public meetings. This statement, which will continue to evolve, expresses our highest aspirations for the community we love.

> *Bristol's citizens will have a deep sense of community yet remain independent and self-reliant. The town will be economically, environmentally and culturally diverse. It will have access to appropriate transportation and communication options. Affordable energy efficient housing opportunities will be available close to the village area and within walking*

distance of its businesses. Other support services, such as childcare, health centers, and a wide variety of local- owned retail facilities will operate in the village of Bristol. The village area will remain the heart and core of Bristol.

The natural environment in both the rural and village sections of the town will be clean and healthy. Local merchants and businesses will benefit from tourism that fits into and reinforces the healthy, working landscape.

The town will have a healthy, local economy. The local economy will include businesses that are diverse, energy efficient, and compact. The economic climate will foster locally-owned and entrepreneurial enterprises. Employment opportunities will be stable and will provide competitive wages. These businesses will place minimum demands on municipal services, emphasize recycling and conservation, and provide meaningful work without limits to career growth.

There will be competitive returns on investment for employers and businesses. Businesses will often provide a type of economic growth that conserves or even restores environmental quality. These businesses will be attracted to the economic opportunities and quality of life in Bristol. They will rarely require local tax credits or incentives. Many businesses will add value to locally produced renewable natural resources.

There will be a cooperative relationship between local government and local businesses leading to good communication and coordinated changes where needed. Local government and local business will work together closely, effectively and efficiently. The local permit process will be clear, consistent, efficient, and predictable.

Bristol will maintain its quality of life by committing itself to changes for its energy future. This is a critical time for encouraging and supporting renewable energy sources and promoting energy efficiency. Energy prices are expected to rise and consume a larger part of household, business and municipal budgets. To keep Bristol an affordable place to live, the town will ask the Energy Committee to take the lead in researching and reporting back to the Selectboard about energy-saving possibilities.

D. Planning Process

When the Planning Commission undertook the project of revising and rewriting the Town Plan, it looked first to the citizens of Bristol for input on the many issues the plan needed to address. In 2006, a survey was sent from the Planning Commission to every home and business in the town. 684 completed surveys were returned. Survey results were collated by a volunteer working with Smart Growth Vermont and referred to by the Planning Commission while preparing the plan. Full versions of the survey results are available at the town offices in Holley Hall. A copy of the graphic presentation of the survey results is attached here as Appendix V.

Drafting and implementing the Town Plan, and any ordinances based on said plan, will not discriminate against any individual or organization solely on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, gender, economic status, national origin, familial status, sexual orientation or disabilities.

E. Authority

The Planning Commission has prepared this Town Plan in accordance with the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act, Title 24 VSA Chapter 117.

F. Interpreting the Plan

The Bristol Town Plan is a guide for future growth within the town and provides for the development of land, public services and facilities commensurate with that growth. The terms "goal", "policy" and "task", for use in this plan, are defined as follows:

- **Goal.** Expresses the long-range community vision relative to one or more issues or topics. This is a statement of achievement to which the town aspires.
- **Policy.** Expresses the town's intent or position with regard to specific issues or topics. In certain settings, such as during Board of Adjustment hearings or Act 250 proceedings, policy statements should serve as the basis for determining a project's conformance with the town plan. While other sections of the plan, in particular the narrative sections and goal statements, provide useful context for understanding the policies, it is the policies that serve as the final statement regarding the town's position.
- **Task.** Describes a specific action to be taken to support one or more policies and achieve the community's long-term goals.

The town recognizes and appreciates the difficulties and challenges involved in balancing the rights of all individuals within a community. It accepts the premise that individuals may find that some property rights may need to be restricted in order to preserve the rights of others in the community. At the same time, the town continues to place a high value on property rights and intends that restrictions to those rights should be no more than necessary.

The Planning Commission, Selectboard, and Zoning Board of Adjustment or their successor will only approve land use changes and proposed projects that in their judgments conform to the entire Town Plan.

G. Guidelines for Consistency in the Chapters to Follow

Each of the subsequent chapters concludes with a series of numbered Goals, Policies, and Tasks. These are the concrete, substantive outcomes related to each of the Town Plan's main sections. The Tasks listed are also collected at the very end of the document for ease of reference.

2. POPULATION

Over the coming decades we anticipate Bristol's population growing in ways that preserve our compact village structure and the forested and agricultural character of our town as a whole, that allow Bristol to be financially and logistically manageable, and that foster a vibrant, inclusive sense of community.

A. Formation of the Town

On June 26, 1762, Benning Wentworth granted a charter for the Town of Pocock to Samuel Averill and 62 associates for 23,600 acres. As soon as 50 families had settled, they could hold a town organizational meeting. Landholders were required to cultivate five acres of every 50 acres, live on it, and improve it.

The first known European to become a resident, a fugitive from New York named John Broadt, arrived in 1773 and built a cabin about a mile west of the present village. Around 1784, a survey committee met in Canaan, Connecticut to decide on a method for a first division of land in Pocock. In 1785, the first survey of the town was made, and a pardon was obtained for John Broadt, who subsequently returned to New York.

The first permanent settlers arrived in Pocock in 1786. Samuel Stewart and Eden Johnson and their wives came from Skenesboro (Whitehall), New York. On March 3, 1788, the first town meeting was held, and on October 21, 1789, an act of the legislature changed the name from Pocock to Bristol for reasons that are now unknown.

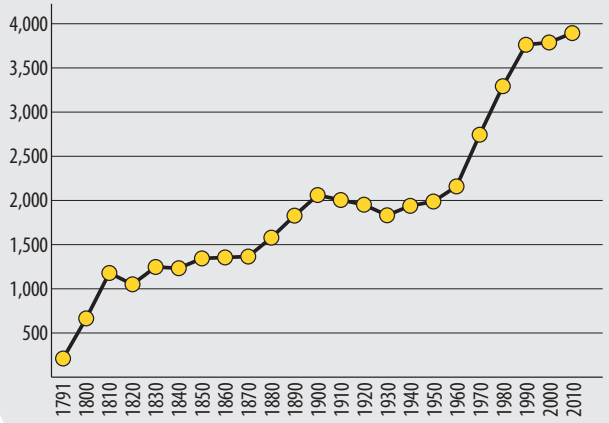
B. Historic Growth Patterns

In 1791, the first year of the federal census, Bristol's population was 211 people. In the next nine years the population more than tripled to 665 people in 1800. By 1810, the population was 1,179 people, and grew steadily throughout the 1800s, reaching 2,000 people by 1900.

For the first half of the 20th century, the population remained around 2,000 residents. Starting in the 1960s, Bristol grew by about 500 people per decade. This trend ended by 1990, and the population has remained at around 3,800 people into the 21st century. The 2010 Census counted Bristol's population at 3,894 people (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Population Change in Bristol

Source: US Census Bureau



C. Age Distribution

Changes in the age distribution of Bristol's population have, in many ways, followed the broader demographic shifts in the region and state. The largest component of the population is part of the "baby boom" generation, which is now moving from starting and raising families towards retirement (see Figure 2). The subsequent generations have been smaller and therefore, the town has been seeing a decline in young adults and children as a percentage of the population. In the 1990s, this trend was more

conspicuous in Bristol than in the region as a whole. It is not yet known if it continued in a similar fashion during the 2000s. This trend may present a problem for existing and prospective employers, local commerce, tax revenues, and the character of Bristol.

Also of particular note is the ongoing increase in residents above the age of 75, much like the region and state. As the population of Bristol and its neighbors continues to grow older, there will likely be an increased need for services that meet the needs of the elderly population.

D. Projections

Figure 3 presents several population projections including the statewide MISER projection and the Addison County Regional Planning Commission extrapolations of US Census information using the Small Population Projection Model. While projections are useful in estimating demand for housing and services, they cannot always anticipate unforeseen events that may lead to rapid rises or declines in population or age groups. These projections were prepared following the 2000 Census and need to be updated to incorporate 2010 data.

Goals

1. The town's rate of growth will not exceed the community's ability to afford, finance and construct needed educational facilities and other municipal facilities.
2. Elderly services will meet the needs of the town's elderly population.
3. New opportunities for young adults ages 18 – 28 will be created.

Policies

1. Target population to continue modest growth.
2. Maintain Bristol's age diversity and multi-generational nature.
3. Support childcare options, economic opportunities, housing choices, and recreational activities to encourage young adults to make Bristol their home.

Figure 2. Distribution of Bristol Residents by Age Group

	0-17	18-24	25-39	40-54	55-64	65-74	75+
1980	29%	12%	21%	22%	7%	5%	5%
1990	28%	9%	28%	17%	8%	6%	4%
2000	28%	7%	20%	27%	8%	6%	5%
2010	22%	7%	18%	25%	14%	7%	7%

Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 3. Population Projections

	Census		Projection			
	2000	2010	2010	2015	2020	2025
MISER	3,788	3,894	3,872	3,918	3,963	n/a
ACRPC Low	3,788	3,894	3,983	4,108	4,223	4,328
ACRPC High	3,788	3,894	4,257	4,499	4,746	5,002

MISER Population Projection for Vermont Municipalities (2000-2020)
Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Figure 4. Demographic and Housing Profile

Source: US Census Bureau

	Bristol	5-Town Area	Addison County	Vermont
Population Count				
1950	1,988	4,593	19,442	377,738
1960	2,159	4,615	20,076	389,881
1970	2,744	5,815	24,266	444,731
1980	3,293	7,917	29,406	511,456
1990	3,762	9,104	32,953	562,758
2000	3,788	10,325	35,974	608,827
2010	3,894	10,649	36,821	625,741

	Bristol	5-Town Area	Addison County	Vermont
Household Count				
1950	n/a	n/a	5,000	103,538
1960	627	1,263	5,229	110,754
1970	795	1,624	6,627	132,041
1980	1,115	2,653	9,386	178,394
1990	1,376	3,305	11,410	210,650
2000	1,460	3,845	13,068	240,634
2010	1,585	4,225	14,084	256,442

	Bristol	5-Town Area	Addison County	Vermont
Housing Unit Count				
1950	646	1,491	6,420	121,911
1960	703	1,640	7,025	136,307
1970	858	1,988	8,535	165,063
1980	1,225	3,147	12,002	223,198
1990	1,471	3,774	14,022	271,214
2000	1,546	4,210	15,312	294,382
2010	1,691	4,684	16,760	322,539

Population Growth (average annual growth rate)				
1950s	0.8%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
1960s	2.4%	2.3%	1.9%	1.3%
1970s	1.8%	3.1%	1.9%	1.4%
1980s	1.3%	1.4%	1.1%	1.0%
1990s	0.1%	1.3%	0.9%	0.8%
2000s	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%

Household Growth (average annual growth rate)				
1950s	n/a	n/a	0.4%	0.7%
1960s	2.4%	2.5%	2.4%	1.8%
1970s	3.4%	5.0%	3.5%	3.1%
1980s	2.1%	2.2%	2.0%	1.7%
1990s	0.6%	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%
2000s	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%	0.6%

Housing Unit Growth (average annual growth rate)				
1950s	0.8%	1.0%	0.9%	1.1%
1960s	2.0%	1.9%	2.0%	1.9%
1970s	3.6%	4.7%	3.5%	3.1%
1980s	1.8%	1.8%	1.6%	2.0%
1990s	0.5%	1.1%	0.9%	0.8%
2000s	0.9%	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%

Average Household Size				
1990	2.71	2.75	2.68	2.57
2000	2.58	2.69	2.55	2.44
2010	2.46	2.52	n/a	n/a

Figure 5. Vital Statistics for Bristol Residents

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Births	66	71	72	41	44	61	37	41	40	41
Deaths	26	37	32	33	24	28	26	38	33	27
Natural Increase	40	34	40	8	20	33	11	3	7	14

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Births	49	43	42	41	43	49	45	41	49	
Deaths	41	25	34	39	34	22	35	21	28	
Natural Increase	8	18	8	2	9	27	10	20	21	

Source: Vermont Department of Health

3. HOUSING

Affordable, energy-efficient housing for the residents of Bristol must also take into account the needs of renters and homeowners alike, of the retired and elderly as well as of families that are just starting out. The Town Plan must support effective cooperation between residents, developers, builders, and regulatory agencies as they attempt to meet these needs.

A. Trends

According to the US Census, in 2010, Bristol had 1,585 households and 1,691 housing units. The number of housing units represents an increase of 97% since 1970, while Bristol's population has grown 42% in that same time period due to a decline in average household size. The most rapid housing development occurred during the 1970s with the rate falling through the 1980s and 1990s. The rate of housing development increased modestly in the 2000s. During the last decade, 145 homes were constructed in Bristol. (See Figure 4).

Bristol has a larger share of multi-unit and mobile homes than most communities in the region. The availability of housing options other than single-family homes supports a more diverse population, with Bristol having a larger percentage of non-family and single-person households than neighboring towns. Most of Bristol's housing is year-round, and like the overall Addison County region, the proportion of seasonal homes in Bristol has declined by about half since 1970, see Figure 6.

B. Household Size

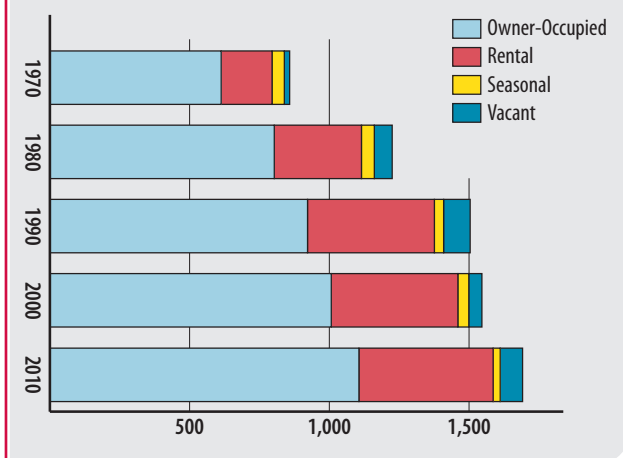
Bristol's average household size in 2000 was 2.58 people and it is likely that number had fallen to around 2.45 in 2010. In 1970, the average household size was 3.44 people (see Figure 4). This trend in shrinking household size is similar to that in Addison County and across the state. The decline in average household size is a significant factor in the growing number of units, because the smaller the average household size, the more housing units that will be needed to accommodate the same population. It is the growth in households and housing units, rather than population, that drives demand for many municipal services.

C. Rentals

Bristol has a higher proportion of renters than most of the region's towns. Both younger and older households are more likely to rent. Bristol village has a number of large historic homes that either have been converted to multiple rental units or that are suitable for such conversion. Such conversions, if done thoughtfully, can be beneficial for landowners, renters and the community. However, if not done thoughtfully, they can be detrimental to the character of the building, street and neighborhood.

Figure 6. Bristol Housing Units by Occupancy

Source: US Census Bureau



Since 1970, vacancy rates in Bristol have remained slightly lower than the Addison County region. A vacancy rate of below 5% is considered unhealthy for the real estate market, and at the start of the 2000s, Bristol's vacancy rate was approaching 3%. It appears that the vacancy rate did rise by the end of the decade, but the exact figure is not yet known.

D. Housing Costs and Affordability

Bristol experienced escalating housing prices, beginning in 2003; a trend that was also evident across the region and state. While the recent economic downturn has brought the increasing prices to an end, home prices have not fallen substantially from the peak experienced in 2006 and 2007. As shown in Figure 7, home prices in Bristol have historically been, and continue to be slightly below the average county-wide but above the statewide average.

Given the wider variety of rental opportunities in Bristol, average monthly rents tend to be lower than county and state averages. As with home prices, there has been a steady, but more gradual, increase in rental costs.

The fact that housing costs are increasing is not surprising, but what is of concern is that these costs have been increasing at a faster rate than household income in recent years. The ability to afford housing is especially problematic for the town's elderly residents on fixed incomes and young people just starting out. The state definition of affordable housing is based on what a household earning 80 percent of the county median family income could afford while spending 30 percent or less of their gross income on housing. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many Bristol households – both renters and homeowners – are spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

Figure 7. Median Sale Price of Primary Residences

	Bristol	Addison County	Vermont
1988	$152,900	$154,700	$158,400
1989	$152,900	$158,200	$164,300
1990	$156,500	$150,300	$157,800
1991	$132,800	$148,800	$153,100
1992	$143,100	$145,000	$147,700
1993	$138,800	$145,200	$144,800
1994	$140,400	$138,200	$142,600
1995	$124,500	$133,000	$141,600
1996	$133,700	$131,700	$138,900
1997	$142,700	$138,200	$144,000
1998	$150,400	$153,700	$147,100
1999	$143,900	$155,100	$144,000
2000	$154,400	$154,400	$150,600
2001	$149,600	$157,000	$156,300
2002	$157,600	$163,600	$163,500
2003	$183,600	$183,600	$177,600
2004	$193,700	$194,000	$190,000
2005	$212,100	$218,200	$206,400
2006	$234,600	$221,600	$211,100
2007	$225,600	$222,400	$210,300
2008	$179,800	$214,300	$202,600
2009	$209,300	$214,400	$193,100
2010	$201,300	$204,500	$194,000

Source: Vermont Department of Taxes
Adjusted to 2010$ using the Consumer Price Index.

E. Future Housing Need

The need for housing is driven both by increases in population and the decline in household size. Bristol's population continues to grow at a relatively slow rate, but average household size has been decreasing more rapidly. In the Addison County Regional Plan, the ACRPC estimates that Bristol will need approximately 1,861 housing units by 2025 (see Figure 8). Bristol's growth in households and housing units was greater in the 2000s than estimated by the ACRPC's projections.

F. Housing Concerns

Housing for low-income Bristol households will often be rentals or mobile homes. Units affordable to this population sometimes may be substandard. Bristol should work with area housing agencies to be sure that low-income households are safely housed. When enforcing health and safety regulations on rental housing or mobile homes compels improvements, the town should help identify federal and state funds that can be used to keep units affordable.

The town can also provide information about and help people access state programs, such as Weatherization and Efficiency Vermont, which provide energy evaluations and can help make improvements to reduce energy usage and expenses for low-income households.

Mobile home parks provide shelter to many of Bristol's lower-income households. The difficulty of building new parks under current regulations makes the preservation of existing parks very important. On the local level, enforcing health and building codes will help to keep the parks safe places to live and prevent parks from becoming rundown.

Goals

1. Rental housing and housing to purchase will be generally available in Bristol.
2. Housing in Bristol will be affordable to rent and to own and will be energy efficient to operate.
3. Property taxes in Bristol will be affordable.
4. Residential development will have limited impact on municipal services costs and the rural, agricultural, and historic character of the town.

Policies

1. Ensure an adequate supply of quality housing choices for Bristol's population.
2. Maintain a mix of housing types and values.
3. Ensure the timing and rate of new housing construction does not exceed Bristol's ability to provide adequate public facilities and services. For all new construction, explore ways to familiarize home builders, owners, and renters with energy efficiencies and conservation guidelines and incentives, such as Efficiency Vermont's Energy Star Homes program.
4. Ensure new residential development will be compatible with Bristol's current community character.
5. Provide equal treatment of, and non-discrimination against, mobile homes, modular housing, and prefabricated housing.
6. Encourage the development of low-cost housing in areas with easy access to necessary facilities, services and businesses.
7. Promote housing that is affordable to rent, own, and operate and increase the availability of rental housing.
8. Consider carefully housing developments that contain homes of a single style.
9. Encourage cluster housing to preserve significant amounts of open land in order to minimize the impact on the open landscape.
10. Protect individual home and business owners from unreasonable restrictions in the form of design and architectural controls.
11. Encourage the development of residential retirement homes and communities, recognizing that Bristol will have an increasingly elderly population and that many elderly may want an alternative to a single-family residence.
12. Allow for the provision of so called "in-law" apartments as a means of encouraging affordable housing.
13. Rely on the use of incentives and positive reinforcement that would help to create affordable homes or home sites in the effort to provide housing that is affordable to rent, own, and operate.

Figure 8. Household Projections and Housing Unit Demand

	Census		Projection			
	2000	2010	2010	2015	2020	2025
Households	1,460	1,585	1,520	1,606	1,690	1,773
Housing Units	1,546	1,691	1,596	1,686	1,774	1,861

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

14. Work to provide innovative housing arrangements and programs with the Addison County Community Land Trust, Helping Overcome Poverty Effects (HOPE), Vermont State Housing Authority, and similar groups that contribute to the provision of housing that is safe and affordable to rent, own, and operate.
15. Consult with the Vermont Green Building Network for best practices and recommendations for building codes.

Tasks

1. Develop a plan for housing needs of the elderly.
2. Review setbacks in certain districts when necessary for additions of "in-law" apartments or apartments that are for elderly use.
3. Explore possible locations for additional high density housing and lodging.

4. UTILITIES AND FACILITIES

The utilities, educational facilities, and related ordinances of the Town of Bristol are listed in the Figures 9 through 16. The purpose of the present section of the plan is to consider ways to make the best use of these resources for the benefit of Bristol's residents as well as to provide for prudent stewardship of them.

A. Current Status and Concerns

Municipal Buildings. The Town of Bristol has several principal structures and properties in its possession, which require on-going maintenance and care. With the recent completion of improvements to the municipal offices in the basement of Holley Hall, the upgrading or replacement of fire department facilities has been recognized by the Selectboard and by the fire department as the town's next priority. A committee appointed by the Selectboard is presently researching the requirements, locations and costs of replacing the existing fire department buildings. An initial feasibility study has recently been drafted.

The present condition of Howden Hall is a result of recent upgrading, primarily through the efforts of private fund-raising. Additional work is in the planning phase for interior renovations.

Recent energy efficiency improvements have been made to the Town Barn and former Village Garage. Another needed improvement on this property was the recent replacement of the salt shed to provide a functional and environmentally safe structure.

A former chlorination building located on Briggs Hill is being considered by the town as a possible net-zero electricity metering site and would include installation of a turbine to generate electricity and return power to the grid, resulting in reduced overall power costs associated with municipal facilities.

Solid Waste. The Bristol Land Fill and Recycling Center has operated as an "Enterprise Entity" since its inception. The state recently approved a 5-year re-certification, allowing continued operation as an unlined landfill accepting less than 1000 tons per year. It is expected to continue operation as such through 2032. It is expected that subsequent operation will generate sufficient funds for closure costs, although those funds are currently lagging behind previous projections. A review of possible alternatives to generating landfill revenues needs to be undertaken. Post-closure costs shall be financed by a combination of operation income and funds from operating a transfer station upon closure.

Wastewater. The downtown business district is the only area in town served by a public wastewater system. Capacity of this system is limited and thus exerts a direct influence on the ability to expand downtown services. Some pre-treatment options have been formulated that would provide some additional capacity within the existing system. The town is also investigating funding options for implementation, since the projected $500,000 cost for the improvements could adversely impact the 30 users presently connected to the system.

Figure 9. List of Town-Owned Buildings and Lands

- Bartlett Falls, Bristol Mfg. Co. lands, (no buildings) 29 acres, Lincoln Road
- Briggs Hill Cemetery
- Briggs Hill parcel (no building), 0.5 acres, intersection of Briggs Hill & Lincoln Rd
- Bristol Green, band stand, Peace Park, etc., West Street, North Street, School St
- Bristol Fire Station (N. H. Munsill Hose Co.), North Street
- Gravel pits (no buildings), 4 acres, Routes 116 & 17
- "Hallock" parcel (no buildings), 0.5 acres, Route 116 south
- Varney Cemetery, Hardscrabble Road
- Holley Hall (Municipal Office & Town Hall), corner of West & South St, which is also designated as an emergency shelter
- Howden Hall, (including the "Coach House"), West Street
- Lawrence Memorial Library, North Street and Lawrence Lane
- "Eagle Park" (no buildings), 5 acres, Lincoln Road
- "Lord, Shackett" parcels (no buildings), 2 acres, Route 116 south
- Meehan Road Cemetery
- Memorial Park (no buildings), 31 acres, Drake Woods Road (Route 17)
- Bristol Elementary School, Mountain St, which is also an emergency shelter
- Municipal Landfill (no buildings), 15 acres, Pine Street
- "Riding Ring" parcel (no buildings), 1 acres, Liberty Street
- Skating rink, Airport Drive
- Sycamore Park (no buildings), 11 acres, Route 116 south
- Sewer District property, Basin St, administered by the Downtown Sewer District
- All sewer & stormwater lines, dry wells, and support facilities, which are displayed on plans on file in Bristol Town offices.
- Stoney Hill Property (no buildings), 31 acres, Routes 116 & 17
- Town Garages, Recycling Center, Scales, Dog Pound, Water Dept, gravel storage, etc.; Pine Street
- Water District property, which is administered through the Bristol Water District
- Briggs Hill (old chlorinator facility)
- Municipal spring, end of Pumphouse Road
- Pump Storage Facility, easterly of Mountain Terrace
- All district water lines, hydrants, and control facilities including pumphouse, water storage, valves, etc., which are displayed on plans on file in Bristol Town offices.
- Forest land, 113 acres, more or less, in Town of Lincoln (including a discontinued water line through Lincoln and the easterly portion of Bristol. It should be noted that the easements for this line apparently have not been legally abandoned.)

Figure 10. List of Municipal Departments and Utilities

- **Bristol Police Department.** Serves the former incorporated village, now the Bristol Police District. This district is self-governing with a separate Grand List. The Selectboard oversees the operation of the department.
- **Bristol Fire Department.** This department is largely funded by town appropriations, but receives vital additional support from the N.H. Munsill Hose Co., a private organization comprised of volunteer firefighters.
- **Bristol Water District.** Supported by Bristol Water Dept. The Selectboard serves as a Board of Water Commissioners for the district.
- **Downtown Sewer District.** Supported by Bristol Sewer Dept. The Selectboard serves as Sewer District Commissioners.
- **Bristol Landfill and Recycling Center.** Operated by the Town of Bristol as an "Enterprise Entity" and is not supported by property taxes.
- **Department of Parks and Recreation.** In addition to responsibility for the parks and recreational facilities listed above, this department leases or utilizes parts of the following: Bristol Clay Studio on Main Street, and The "Hub," Bristol Recreation Club, Inc. on Airport Drive.
- **Road Department.** This department maintains the local roads, streets and sidewalks throughout Bristol.

Figure 11. List of Private Lands and Buildings

This is a compilation of certain properties held by private entities, the use of which is considered as providing services to the community. This plan in no ways infers or suggests the suitability of any of the following as qualifying for tax-exempt status.

- American Legion Post 19, land and buildings, Airport Drive
- Bristol Recreation Club, Inc., land and buildings, West Street and Airport Drive
- Bristol Rescue Squad, land and buildings, North Street
- Masonic Hall, land and buildings, North Street
- N. H. Munsill Fire Dept., land and building, Fitch Avenue
- "The Watershed", Plank Road

Figure 12. List of Religious Organizations

- Baptist Church, Park Street
- Federated Church, North Street
- The River Church, Rocky Dale Road
- Seventh Day Adventist Church, Rocky Dale - Routes 116 and 17
- St. Ambrose Catholic Church, West Street and School Street

Stormwater Collection System. The Town of Bristol recently completed a $1,500,000 project to improve a major stormwater collection system, which conveys run-off from the mountainside east of Mountain Street down Spring Street, North and South Streets to the New Haven River. The project included replacement of inadequate clay tile pipe and installation of additional inlets along the entire route, as well as the restoration of the curb and resurfacing of North Street to previous grades.

Water System. Bristol village is served by a public water system. There are no immediate planned upgrades to the system other than ongoing maintenance and a water main replacement along North and South Streets in concert with the stormwater project discussed above. On-going maintenance of the water system includes upgrade and replacement of aged fire hydrants, meter reading and repair, main flushing, valve exercising and general facility maintenance.

Emergency Management. Emergencies can affect the town's infrastructure, private property and natural features. An inclusive outline of what emergency management entails may be found in the Vermont League of Cities and Town's "Handbook for Vermont Selectboards" (2007). Emergency management is mostly the responsibility of the Selectboard, including appointment of an Emergency Management Director [20 VSA 6(a)]. Planning and development of emergency services, including an "all-hazards plan," is coordinated and assisted by the Vermont Director of the Emergency Management Division, Department of Public Safety. Bristol's Hazard Mitigation Plan is available at the Town Office.

Major emergency management activities are divided into the following phases: response, recovery, mitigation and preparedness. The duty of the Planning Commission lies primarily in long-term mitigation. Ongoing efforts should be made to lessen the impact of natural disasters through improved zoning and other regulations. These include review and establishment of codes and standards, security of hazardous waste facilities, minimum standards for private road construction and drainage, and ensuring that flood hazard regulations and zones are properly written and enforced. Flood Hazard Area Regulations will be updated as a part of the ongoing review and planning for new Zoning Regulations.

Several existing programs directly support mitigation: the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMAP), for NFIP insured property, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (PDM). The state contact for Vermont Emergency Management is 800-347-0488 or via the website at vem.vermont.gov.

Goals

1. The community facilities and utilities that Bristol maintains will have a positive impact on the town's quality of life.
2. The town's fire, police, and rescue departments will continue to enjoy strong community support.
3. Septic, stormwater and water systems will be upgraded to meet town needs.

Policies

1. Encourage the development of and improvements to community facilities and utilities that enhance the quality of life for residents and develop the attractions that support and increase opportunities for economic gain while decreasing energy use.
2. Maintain the long-term view, rather than short-term, in evaluating whether to increase or reduce town holdings.
3. Recognize privately owned sites and facilities that are voluntarily put forth by the owners of such sites.
4. Encourage utilities and individuals seeking Certificates of Public Good for projects in Bristol to work with affected landowners and the Bristol Town government to develop aesthetic mitigation plans.
5. Collocate, or place underground, energy transmission and distribution lines, telephone lines, and other communication lines in the same corridor and/or on the same infrastructure to reduce their visual impact when feasible.
6. Assure that new water and sewage uses meet state-approved safe water standards and sewage disposal standards.
7. Review and propose ordinances that address mitigation of natural and human-caused disasters, ensuring that controls are in place to lessen as much as possible the results of such occurrences.

Tasks

1. Explore alternative sewage treatment options to accommodate new development.
2. Review and inspect all town facilities and buildings periodically, ensuring that insurance and maintenance protects the town's investments.
3. Maintain current Operation and Maintenance Manuals for the town's service departments (i.e. landfill, water and sewer) that address technical standards and requirements and insure continuity in their operations when there are staffing changes.
4. Review process whereby the owner of a site or facility may submit in writing a plan to the town for designating its use and protection by the town. Such a designation would create a recordable lien on such a site, which would run with the property. If accepted, this submission would then be added to a town listing of such sites.
5. Develop five- and ten-year plan for the routine maintenance and major renovation (if needed) of all the town-owned buildings, including possible funding sources.
6. Explore the feasibility of extending the water lines down to the Lovers Lane Area.

Figure 13. List of Educational Facilities

- Union District No. 28 High School (Mt. Abraham H. S.) (also designated as an Emergency Shelter) Airport Drive
- Bristol Elementary School, Mountain Street
- Red Cedar School, Hardscrabble Road
- Bristol Family Center, Lovers Lane

Figure 14. List of State and Federal Land

- State-owned parcels on Bristol Pond, Bristol Pond Access, Monkton Road
- Stoney Hill parcel (20 yr. lease to the State of Vermont from Town of Bristol), Lovers' Lane and Routes 116 & 17
- Green Mountain National Forest, including the Bristol Cliffs Wilderness Area

Figure 15. List of Public Utilities

- The entire Town of Bristol is served by Green Mountain Power, and their facilities are included and appraised in the town's Grand List

Figure 16. List of Ordinances, Agreements and Policies

In part because of statutory requirements, and in part because of the desire of Bristol's town government to formulate policies and directives, the town maintains two volumes entitled "Ordinances, Agreements, Policies." Many, if not all, of municipal activities are governed by these documents, and specific information regarding service areas, participants, capacities and future expansion policies may be found therein. It must be emphasized that many of these documents are subject to change, sometimes annually. Therefore, it is less important to quote statistics from therein in this plan, than it is to furnish reference to the documents so that ongoing review may update the particular concerns of the viewer. A complete listing of the contents of the said volumes is as follows:

Volume I

- 1. Town of Bristol Leash Ordinance
- 2. Town of Bristol Parking Ordinance
- 3. Town of Bristol Purchasing Policy
- 4. Town Hazard Communication Program
- 5. Core Area Sewer System Ordinance
- 6. Town School Transportation Policy
- 7. Town of Bristol Water Ordinance
- 8. Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Plan
- 9. Town of Bristol Solid Waste Ordinance
- 10. Water Use Ordinance
- 11. Water Expansion Policy
- 12. Agreement with Library
- 13. National Bank Collateralization Agreement
- 14. Indirect Discharge Permit ID-9-0208-1A
- 15. Street Naming & Numbering Ordinance
- 16. Personnel Policy, Policy for Benefits for Part Time Employees
- 17. Water Agreement with KTP Mobile Home Park
- 18. Hinsdale Sewer Agreement and Information
- 19. Cain Hill, Dumas Road, Gardner Lane, Drake-Smith Road Agreement (Minutes)
- 20. Landfill Certification
- 21. Solid Waste Management Plan
- 22. Bristol Recreation Club By-Laws
- 23. Curbside Pick-up Contract (Pat Palmer)
- 24. Resolution Declaring State of Emergency After Flood of 1998
- 25. Y2K Policy
- 26. Trespass Ordinance for Town Properties
- 27. Mountain Street One-Way Ordinance
- 28. Agreement Between Vt. National Bank and Town of Bristol Re. Kingsland Bay
- 29. Declaration of Covenants for Lawrence Memorial Library
- 30. Policy for Popcorn Machine on Park and Policy for Trash Pick-up on Park for Organizations
- 31. Policy for Re-appointment to Planning Commission and ZBA

Volume II

- 1. Highway Policy Regarding Abutters and Private Owners
- 2. Bristol Waste Management Stipulation of Settlement
- 3. Ducharme Agreement and Bill of Sale
- 4. Town Road and Bridges Standards
- 5. New Police Charges – Approved April 9, 2001
- 6. Agreement with Bristol Historical Society
- 7. New Haven Spring Protection Plan
- 8. Skateboard Ordinance
- 9. Partnership with Addison County Humane Society
- 10. Contract with Raymond Beaver
- 11. Stop Sign Ordinance
- 12. 2005 Contract with Addison County Humane Society
- 13. Richard Russell Agreement on Land on Route 17
- 14. Agreement Between Town of Bristol and Recreation Club, Inc.
- 15. Policy for Video and Audio Recording by Police Department
- 16. Downtown Designation Resolution Signed Jan. 23, 2006
- 17. Municipal Ordinance Adopted by Selectboard Oct. 17, 2005
- 18. Ordinance for Regulation of Parking (See Vol. I, No. 2)
- 19. Trespass Ordinance for Town Properties
- 20. Agreement to Use a Well With Nathan Fitzgerald
- 21. Conditions of Approval for Use of the Public Right of Way for Buried Utility Lines
- 22. Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- 23. Policy for Conducting Background Checks for Recreation Department Employees, Contractors and Volunteers
- 24. Town & Village Speed Ordinances
- 25. Open Container Ordinance
- 26. Veterans Memorial Maintenance Agreement
- 27. Emergency Management Resolution, Re: National Incident Management System
- 28. Placement of Political Signs on Town Property and Highway Rights of Way

5. TRANSPORTATION

This section addresses current and projected transportation situations in the town. It contains a review of the existing transportation system, road use patterns, known structural problems, classification and usage in relation to anticipated growth during the next five years and is used to project the need for transportation improvements listed in this section.

A. Roads and Highways

Bristol's major transportation routes include Vermont Route 116, Vermont Route 17, and the town's Class 2 highways.

Vermont Route 116 is a "minor state arterial", a north/south corridor that travels through the downtown area and continues north into Chittenden County and the Burlington area.

Vermont Route 17 is also a "minor state arterial," that travels east and west, through downtown Bristol and to the Mad River Valley and ski areas and Route 100 to the east and New Haven and New York State to the west.

The Burpee/Bristol-Monkton Road to Route 116 continuum, known as a "major collector", increasingly serves regional north/south traffic connecting to Chittenden County.

Portions of these road systems were the subject of a recent study, "Northwest Project - Bristol Recommendations" by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission. The most significant result of that study is the potential for increased use of these roads. It suggested that if the rate of increased use continues as it has for the past 20 years, traffic will double over the next ten years. Increased travel would include both arterial traffic to and from Chittenden County, and feeder traffic from increased development along the affected corridors.

Additionally, Bristol has approximately 42 miles of paved and unpaved town highways. These roads are also bearing increased development and use. Other than Routes 17 and 116, village streets will probably not see the same rate of increased use since there is comparatively little undeveloped land within the downtown area.

B. Travel Patterns

Through traffic passes through Bristol on Routes 116 and 17, which are maintained by the State of Vermont. Through traffic is also carried on town-maintained roads like the Burpee/Bristol-Monkton Road. About the same amount of traffic is counted outside the village on Route 116 and on Monkton Road – an average of approximately 3,000 vehicles per day. Through traffic also enters Bristol on Route 17 from the west, and some goes east over the mountain by Route 17. Local traffic to and from the village from local roads has not been counted. Addison County Transit Resources (ACTR)

Figure 17. Bristol Roads Summary Table

Classification	Mileage	Comments
Class 1	1.225	East St, Main St, West, St, Hardscrabble Rd, River Rd, Lincoln Rd, Monkton Rd, North St, South St, Hewitt Rd, Burpee Rd, and 5.5 miles of village streets
Class 2	11.090	
Class 3	24.130	
Subtotal (maintained)	**36.445**	
Class 4	5.600	Purinton/Ed Orvis Rd (1.6 mi), Choiniere Rd (0.75 mi), Beaver Meadow Trail (0.95 mi), 0.5-mile trail near Memorial Park, Harvey Dr (0.31 mi), LaFrance Rd (1.44 mi), upper end of Spring St (0.05 mi)
Subtotal (town)	**42.045**	
State Highways	13.353	Route 116 (11.04 mi), Route 17 (2.313 mi)
Total Public	**55.398**	

Source: Vermont Agency of Transportation

Figure 18. Paved Town Roads Table

Description	Mileage	Comments
East, Main and West Sts	1.225	Town maintained portions of Rts 116 & 17
Class 2 highways	11.090	
Village streets	5.490	
Class 3 paved road sections:		
Notch Rd	0.800	estimated
Lower Notch Rd	0.750	estimated
Plank Rd	0.610	
Briggs Hill Rd	0.500	estimated
Meehan Rd	0.500	0.22 mi at Rt 116 end/ 0.3 mi at Ireland end
Lower Hardscrabble Rd	0.450	
Total Paved	**21.445**	

Source: Vermont Agency of Transportation

provides local bus service to Middlebury and Vergennes. Bicycling and walking provide some transportation and recreation.

C. Transportation Infrastructure

The transportation infrastructure of Bristol is shown on a large-scale map of the town's road system, which is available at the Town Offices. This map is periodically updated by the Vermont Agency of Transportation, and is used by the agency in calculating the town's annual state highway funding. Reduced copies of current maps are included in the appendices of this document.

Maintenance. The town spends approximately $800,000 per year on town road maintenance. State highways are maintained by the state. A bridge on Route 116, 2 miles south of the village, has a stop light to control access to a one-way temporary bridge, and is planned to be rebuilt by the state AOT. The repair of the washed out culvert a half-mile north of the "stop light bridge" was completed in 2007.

Access Management. Safety on our town roads and highways is the number one criteria. Due to this concern, there are several regulations about access to highways.

The Bristol Selectboard oversees access approval. Access requirements include: room for emergency vehicles to enter and turn around and leave, entrance width minimums, turns of 90 degrees onto highways, slope of road near a highway to prevent sliding onto the highway, and minimum sight distances along a highway from an access road.

Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) drawing 'Standard B-71' (Standards for Residential and Commercial Drives) will be considered for major roads in Bristol, like Routes 17 and 116 and Monkton Road. AOT drawing 'Standard A-76' (Standards for Town & Development Roads) will be considered for the same major roads. The AOT "Vermont State Standards for the Design of Transportation Construction Reconstruction and Rehabilitation on Freeways, Roads, and Streets," (July 1, 1997, as amended) will be considered for minor roads and village streets, in so far as these standards pertain to minor roads and streets in Bristol. These standards are available from the Town Office and are also available on line at the AOT site.

Traffic Management and Calming. Public interest in the exploration of additional traffic controls and traffic calming systems has been expressed.

Town Roads. Gravel roads use about 5,000 cubic yards of gravel per year for maintenance.

Bridges. There are eight bridges in the Town of Bristol in the state list, four of which are listed as structurally deficient. The South Street bridge is now closed to traffic and is on the state list for eventual work. Town culverts and other bridges have been mapped and conditions recorded. There are no covered bridges in Bristol.

Parking. Parking in the village is perceived to be limited. Public parking can be found bordering the town green and along Main Street. Opportunities exist to use existing parking/paved areas downtown more efficiently and provide parking for business owners, employees and upper floor tenants off Main Street, which would free up spaces for customers. Several ideas for improvement of parking are circulating.

A 2002 Traffic and Parking Study, which outlines current conditions and makes suggestions for improvement, is available at the town offices, and a summary can be found in the appendices to this plan. The study determined that Bristol had enough parking spaces, but these are not well-managed. Some cars park all day on Main Street, thereby preventing adequate flow of spaces opening up during business hours. The need for better traffic flow and more parking will need to be continually weighed against the desire to retain the current quality and character of the downtown area. All new development is required by the Bristol Zoning Regulations to have on-site parking.

Sidewalks, Paths and Trails. There are sidewalks in some parts of the village, which have been inventoried, and a paved walkway between Liberty Street and Mount Abraham Union High School. The town recognizes the importance of sidewalks for people getting around the village without cars. Other town roads with significant pedestrian use could use sidewalks where truck traffic is heavy.

In general, the municipal infrastructure appears to be well-built and readily accessible. In the planning and design for additional or replacement sidewalks, it is recommended that the width, where possible, be a minimum of five feet. However, because of the existing structural limitations on many of the older buildings on Main Street, it is recognized that there is need for improved accessibility to some businesses in that area.

Along the state highways, some residents have asked for wider shoulders for walking, horseback-riding, and bicycling. Currently, state highways leading into and through Bristol have narrow shoulders, which make them hazardous for walkers, horseback riders, and bicyclists.

One of the most popular hiking trails in town is on privately owned land at the southeast edge of the village. The trail goes to ledges that overlook Pine Street. An attempt is being made to re-direct parking away from the Mountain Terrace access.

D. Public Transportation

Addison County Transit Resources (ACTR) provides various forms of public transportation to the Bristol community. The Tri-Town Shuttle Bus (TTSB) is a commuter bus that runs several times a day on weekdays between Middlebury, Bristol and Vergennes. Based on long-expressed community desires, ACTR has expanded TTSB to increase the frequency of service to hourly from every two hours.

ACTR will often expand its TTSB service to provide additional transportation for special events (Bristol Harvest Festival, AC Fair and Field Days, etc.). Year round, riders can connect with ACTR in

Figure 19. Structurally Deficient Bridges

Road	Bridge #	Location	Repair Status
Route 116	8	2 mi south of village	in line for funding
Route 116	12	2 mi north of village	no status
Route 116	6	0.2 mi south of Bridge 8	no status
South St	31	0.1 mi south of Main St	in line for funding

Source: Vermont Agency of Transportation

Figure 20. Structurally Sound Bridges

Road	Bridge #	Location	Comments
Route 116	11	just west of Lincoln Rd	recently rebuilt
Route 17	13	1 mi east of 116	
Hewitt Rd	11	junction w/ South St	approximately 35 years old
Harvey Rd	20		built c. 2000

Source: Vermont Agency of Transportation

Middlebury for rides to East Middlebury, Ripton and the Snow Bowl. Occasionally during the winter season, ACTR also provides a bus to Sugarbush; this bus mainly serves youth in the community.

In addition to these intra-county services, ACTR provides services to Chittenden County via the Burlington Link and the Route 116 Commuter, as well as to Rutland County via the Rutland Connector.

ACTR also operates a demand-response transportation system, comprised primarily of volunteer drivers who use their own cars and are reimbursed mileage. This system serves people who have Medicaid insurance that need rides to medical appointments, people age 60 or older and/or those with an ADA disability, as well as vulnerable populations. ACTR also transports senior citizens in the weekly meal-site programs offered by CVAA and uses its wheelchair-accessible vehicles to transport patients to kidney dialysis, cancer treatment and other critical care services.

Public transportation is an important part of Bristol's transportation infrastructure that links commuters to jobs, employers to new and existing workers and businesses to new customers. It also allows individuals and families to save money on transportation-related costs and gives vulnerable populations access to healthcare, nutrition, and social services.

It is important to note that while ACTR is primarily funded via state and federal grants, these funds require an average 20% match from the local communities served. ACTR raises local match funds in many ways – through municipalities, businesses, institutions and individuals. Thus, it remains important for the town to continue to provide its fair share of local matching funds to ensure that current and expanded services will be available for residents.

Elderly Services operates a transportation system throughout Addison County that includes 10 specialized vans and specially trained drivers to elders who use the Adult Day Center.

There is no taxi service available in Bristol; the closest taxi resource is in Middlebury.

Bristol has no passenger train, inter-regional bus, or airline services. The closest services for these are available in Rutland and Burlington, Vermont and Port Henry, NY.

E. Current Status and Concerns

In addition to the general concerns outlined above, there are a number of specific issues that need to be treated within the next five years. The town's Selectboard is certainly aware of these problems, and some of them are in the process of being addressed at this time. As with most major problems, the solutions entail considerable expense, and in each case financing will remain a major concern.

South Street Bridge. This bridge has been of limited use for several years due to its structural problems and the town no longer has the means to keep the bridge open. Efforts to replace this bridge with state funding assistance are continuing.

West Street – North Street Intersection. A lot of congestion has been observed at the West Street – North Street intersection. The Chief of Police has suggested providing an advance green light to facilitate turning from West Street to North Street.

Burpee Road - Monkton Road Intersection. These roads are part of a major north/south corridor and this intersection should be improved. The state advocates making this a T-intersection.

Basin Street - East Street Intersection. This project might be tied in to the need to upgrade the waste-water system along these streets. The grade for Basin Street is unacceptably steep, and the street might be rebuilt in such a way that the steep portion of the street is set back further from the intersection. An engineering study on this area was completed in 2008.

Paving Gravel Roads. When the town evaluates the feasibility of paving a gravel road, the Vermont Local Roads Program at St. Michael's College could be consulted for assistance, and residents along the roads in question should also be considered.

Vermont Route 116 Re-Alignment Project. Although a state project, the town continues to be concerned about the completion of the bridge-highway re-alignment project on Route 116 two miles south of the village. The installation of a stop light for one-way traffic on this bridge was intended to be temporary, and although it served at the time to keep the bridge open, it is now proving to be an impediment. This project also included a new intersection at River Road, as well as a replacement of the present small bridge on Route 116 southerly of the intersection with Carlstrom Road.

Other. Additional concerns that have been raised include:

- Consideration of ways to improve the intersection of Lincoln Road with Routes 17 and 116.
- A solution to the continual erosion of a portion of Ed Orvis Road (Town Road No. 14).
- The Lords Prayer Rock at the easterly end of East Street, and its effect on proper drainage and traffic.

Where feasible, new bridges should be of wood and/or stone construction. The concept of covered bridges is encouraged if practical.

The need for additional sidewalks in the downtown area should be reviewed, specifically on those streets used by students traveling to and from school facilities. Safe Routes to School grant money was used to add new sidewalk to Pleasant Street and Liberty Street to complete the sidewalk system to the high school.

A partial list of specific road sections needing improvement for safety reasons includes:

- The Lord's Prayer Rock section of Route 17.
- The curve on South Street near the entrance to the former Lathrop Band Mill.

❖ The bridge on Route 116 near Sycamore Park.

It should be noted that the village's intact traditional village street pattern is recognized as one that supports efficient transportation by encouraging walking, bicycling, and infill development. Also, the village and town location along the Route 17/116 corridor allows for efficient car and truck transportation between Addison and Chittenden counties.

Goals

1. Bristol will have a safe, integrated, economical and environmentally friendly transportation system to move people and freight within and through the region.
2. Bristol will reduce traffic on collector and local roads and maintain mobility along arterial highways.
3. Adequate, well-managed public parking and a state designated Park & Ride will be developed.
4. Bristol will have infrastructure so that people can walk and bicycle safely along town roads.
5. In encouraging new businesses to locate in Bristol, consideration will be given to energy use and transportation impact.

Policies

1. Encourage driveways and feeder roads and decrease curb cuts on collector roads.
2. Require that all potential driveway locations be designated and approved prior to any subdivision or building permit.
3. Control access to public roads to maintain safe use of those roads.
4. Consider the addition of wider shoulders within the rights-of-way for the benefit of pedestrians and bicycles during planning for construction or improvement of any existing or new town or state highways. Apply this same consideration to any new roads for new development.
5. Encourage bicycle use and walking whenever possible and develop sidewalks and pedestrian and bicycle lanes where appropriate.
6. Provide cost-effective system maintenance and improvements that promote safety, preservation, and hazard mitigation on a priority basis.
7. Encourage new high-density developments to have accessible sidewalks and use traffic calming elements and traditional neighborhood design principles such as mixed-use, village-style development incorporating on-street parking and grid street alignments, where appropriate.
8. Assure that freight needs are addressed and freight passage is as efficient as possible while taking into account the quality of life in the community.
9. Support the development of infrastructure that will promote and enable the use of the most efficient transportation means feasible in order to reduce our carbon footprint.

10. Continue to support public transportation options, including more access to frequent, low cost service, such as ACTR, and rail on all major travel routes.

Tasks

1. Review the town's present sight line requirements for new driveways, taking into account the steepness of the affected highway, present speed limits, etc.
2. Adopt a highway standards policy that would consider the following:
   a. A requirement that new driveways and access roads be designed to standards which consider Vermont's AOT standards A-76 and B-71 and among other things, address minimum widths, angle of entry, slope of entry, and proper treatment of dead end roads.
   b. A standard for acceptance of new roads into the town highway system.
   c. A method for reviewing existing situations that cannot meet one or more of these standards and a method for mitigating or allowing such situations.
   d. Design standards that would mitigate excessive water run-off, including easements to the municipality for proper off-highway drainage.
3. Review recommendations in the 2002 Traffic and Parking Study regarding traffic calming measures and parking in the downtown area.
4. Work to make the town, particularly the private sector in the downtown, and in the development of additional so-called hamlet areas, pedestrian-friendly and more accessible to people with disabilities.
5. Coordinate transportation planning and programming to be compatible with the land use planning efforts of local and regional plans.
6. Investigate the feasibility of using more rail traffic.
7. Investigate the possibility of a public transportation option for the Bristol, Lincoln, Starksboro and Hinesburg area.
8. Consider the provision of wider and more accessible shoulders sufficient for safe bicycle or pedestrian traffic along at least one town road from the village to Sycamore Park and to Bartlett Falls.
9. Explore methods of expressing support for train service (currently provided by Amtrak via the Ethan Allen Express) between Rutland, Vermont and New York City as an efficient transportation option for Bristol residents to travel out of state.
10. Encourage and support park-and-ride or commuter parking spaces/areas by designating convenient/accessible space near the town center with access to public transportation.
11. Explore traffic calming and truck restriction measures throughout the Village Planning Area.

6. ENERGY

Careful planning will be necessary to meet the energy needs of Bristol's residents and businesses at a time of rapid technological, environmental, and economic change. This will require both a spirit of innovation and close coordination with the Bristol Energy Committee and with statewide agencies such as Efficiency Vermont.

A. Current Status

Bristol residents are serviced with electricity from Central Vermont Public Service (CVPS). Propane, fuel oil, diesel, kerosene, gasoline and wood pellets are available from local dealers. Firewood can be purchased from local bulk dealers. Many residents cut their own wood from private woodlots or the Green Mountain National Forest. Bristol is also home to one of the largest producers of wood chips for commercial use in the state. An increasing number of residents utilize net metered renewable energy such as wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal.

B. Electricity Infrastructure and Services

CVPS has a local substation that services Bristol and many surrounding towns with 12.5 KV power lines. The anticipated growth of the area has led CVPS to produce a 20-year plan to expand these lines to 34.5 KV.

CVPS has a wide range of programs available to three categories of users: Residential, Small Commercial and Farm, and Large Commercial and Industrial. Each category has about twelve different energy efficiency offerings for their customers. Also, as part of a program to promote alternative energy sources, CVPS offers customers the ability to buy "cow power". This power is generated by burning methane gas from a digester that converts cow manure to methane gas.

C. Regional Trends

Residential customers use over 50 percent of the electricity sold in the Addison Region (Addison County minus Hancock and Granville). However, relatively few homes use electricity as their primary heat source. Commercial customers represent about 30 percent of electricity sales in the region. Industrial users consume approximately 15 percent.

According to the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, the largest portion of energy used in the Addison Region is for transportation, and virtually all of it comes from petroleum products imported into the region. In Vermont as a whole, nearly one-third of all energy consumed is for transportation. After transportation, the largest percent of energy used by residential customers is for space heating and cooling and domestic water heating. Residential users are the biggest user group of energy in the Addison Region.

D. Energy Conservation

The consumption of most fuels seems to be on the increase in Bristol, and will continue to grow as the population grows. Efficiency and conservation measures such as improved insulation and weatherization of new and existing structures can have a profound impact on energy use, and are encouraged in the town. In regard to local renewable resources, without conservation efforts, future supplies of firewood and wood chips may be in jeopardy for bulk dealers. Therefore, forest management plans and regeneration activities should be encouraged in order to have a continuing source of wood. In order to conserve gasoline, car-pooling and the development and use of walking and bicycle facilities are encouraged.

The District Environmental Commissions, Act 250, routinely require various energy efficiency and conservation measures on approved projects. Some of the most common are the installation of water-conserving plumbing fixtures such as low-flow toilets, aerator-type faucets, insulation for domestic hot water lines, and specification insulation of the R-values in all heated buildings.

Goals

1. The Town of Bristol will be committed to energy efficiencies and conservation, in order to save town financial resources and to provide for a more sustainable and self-reliant future.
2. The town will support the Bristol Energy Committee and give consideration to energy efficiencies and conservation when engaged in residential and economic planning.
3. To meet town energy goals, Bristol will encourage sustainable food production, creating green collar jobs, and broad public transportation options and policies
4. Bristol will incorporate efficiency standards into operations of town buildings and schools.
5. Town purchasing practices will include a provision related to energy efficiency and conservation (making long term energy use and cost a consideration in purchasing decisions.)

Policies

1. Encourage Bristol residents to take advantage of CVPS energy saving programs and the programs and resources offered by Weatherization, Efficiency Vermont, the Building Performance Institute, and the Vermont Energy Star Homes program.
2. Promote the economic benefits of energy efficiency and conservation and support the development and utilization of renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar, geothermal, and biomass/biofuels.
3. Encourage forest management and forest regeneration plans and efforts to explore local pelletization and wood chip manufacture.
4. Make energy efficiency a primary consideration when the Town of Bristol renovates buildings, purchases or replaces equipment, appliances, fixtures, and lighting, and formulates policies. For example, a town truck that can run on biofuel.

5. Avoid undue adverse impacts to health, safety, property and environmental quality from energy infrastructure and energy services.
6. Identify and pursue incentives for retrofitting existing buildings to increase energy efficiency with assistance from the Bristol Energy Committee.
7. Explore possible funding alternatives to finance efficiency and conservation measures and renewable energy installations.
8. Encourage and publicize for businesses the Vermont Economic Development Authorities low interest loans for efficiency improvements or investments.

Tasks

1. Evaluate existing zoning for its impact on the use, development and location of renewable energy utilization, and develop zoning guidelines for installation of wind turbines.
2. Explore and develop the designation of Bristol as a "Pilot Town," and consequent grant eligibility.
3. Promote Bristol as an example town for energy policy, resources, and efficiency and conservation measures.
4. Make educational materials available for homeowners, builders, businesses and nonprofits concerning clean energy and energy efficient technologies, including materials for the Vermont Energy Star Homes program and Home Performance With Energy Star residential energy audit program.
5. Facilitate the use of Efficiency Vermont's services to Bristol's businesses and industries.
6. Consider the adoption of building codes to increase energy efficiency to the Vermont Energy Star Homes program standard.
7. Install bicycle racks at all public facilities where feasible.
8. Establish and maintain a town library of resource materials on energy conservation and practices, especially as they pertain to housing, transportation and industry. Also include a list of energy specific agencies or organizations, and the services they offer.
9. Reduce reliance on current electrical grid supply by supporting use of renewable energy net metering and/or encourage protecting the grid by including renewable feeds.
10. Study the hydropower potential of the New Haven River and Baldwin Creek.
11. Encourage and support energy cooperatives such as wood pellet production and cooperative/multi-family wood burning furnaces.
12. Work more closely with State legislative representatives to learn of and encourage energy independence through state policy and funding.
13. Add energy resources and information to the town website.
14. Support the work of the Bristol Energy Committee as it hosts town gatherings to solicit, gather, and disseminate information resources.

7. EDUCATION

Planning for the education of our town's children bears on every aspect of Bristol's social health and economic vitality. Such planning must take into account such other broad issues as population, housing, and transportation.

A. Current Status

Two public educational facilities are located in Bristol. The Bristol Elementary School offers grades K – 6, and is governed by a five-member Bristol School District Board. The Mount Abraham Union High School, covering grades 7 – 12, is governed by a 13-member board, of which five members are Bristol residents. Other towns included in the union, known as the Addison Northeast Supervisory Union (ANESU), are Lincoln, Monkton, New Haven, and Starksboro. Each of these towns has two members on the Supervisory Board.

Given the current demographic and housing trends in Bristol, enrollment at Bristol Elementary is not projected to return to the high figures of the 1990s in the near future. However, changes in the economic and housing conditions could quickly reverse the currently declining enrollment.

In addition to Bristol's population, Mt. Abraham's enrollment is linked to demographic changes in Lincoln, Monkton, New Haven, and Starksboro. Recent population growth in those towns contributes to much of the growth in Mt. Abraham's enrollment. In 2004, eight new classrooms were completed at Mt. Abraham, bringing total capacity to approximately 1,200 students.

In addition to the public school system, there is one private school operating in Bristol. The Red Cedar School serves students from kindergarten through grade 8. It draws students from throughout Addison County, as well as from Chittenden, Rutland and Washington counties. The school offers a bus service to Chittenden County and northern Addison County.

Bristol also hosts a new neighbors-teaching-neighbors program called Hogback Community College. It is administered through Vermont Family Forests, with classes meeting in residents' homes and at the conserved land of the Waterworks, as well as in various municipal, school and church facilities. Hogback Community College is intended to serve residents of the entire five-town area.

B. Concerns

Bristol should offer educational programs for all ages and levels that provide challenging, effective and affordable opportunities for creative learning and personal and professional growth. Linkages between area employers and education facilities should provide pertinent skill training and adult education.

Figure 21. Public School Enrollment

	Bristol Elementary	Mount Abraham
1990-91	369	731
1991-92	362	713
1992-93	444	724
1993-94		
1994-95		
1995-96		
1996-97	459	883
1997-98	492	864
1998-99	466	841
1999-00	447	874
2000-01	429	860
2001-02	405	891
2002-03	368	907
2003-04	358	960
2004-05	339	947
2005-06	325	960
2006-07	308	943
2007-08	294	931
2008-09	301	855
2009-10	304	811
2010-11	294	757

Source: Vermont Department of Education

Goals

1. Bristol's school system will provide quality education.
2. Bristol will attract and retain effective, experienced educators.
3. Bristol's school facilities will be used for community activities.

Policies

1. Encourage the development of long-range plans by the Bristol Elementary and Mount Abraham School Boards and encourage wide distribution of such plans.
2. Support technology access and skills for teachers and students.
3. Encourage the monitoring of housing, population and demographic changes in the five-town area in order to more accurately project the impact of these changes on the town's education system and budget.
4. Encourage citizen participation in the school policy-setting process.
5. Encourage programs to support life-long learning for Bristol's residents.
6. Support opportunities for community adults to be more involved in the life of Mount Abraham Union High School.
7. Provide adequate physical space when designing school facilities and operate those facilities so that, in addition to their primary mission of educating children, they also, when feasible, may provide other community services such as adult education, preschool and senior citizen programs, recreational activities and public meeting space.
8. Support educational programs that provide residents with the skills needed by employers in the region and adult-educational programs for small-business owners and farmers.

Tasks

1. Identify and develop alternative ways to support the educational infrastructure that would ultimately place less emphasis on the property tax.

8. RECREATION

Bristol has a diversified recreation department in addition to having a thriving and successful Youth Center and Skate Park. In planning for our town's future, we must build upon this success.

A. Current Status

Our Recreation Department offers over 280 different classes each year including martial arts, aqua aerobics, gymnastics to belly dance, dog obedience, art classes and summer camps. (Visit www.bristolrec.org or call 453-5885 for a complete class listing). The town also has a fully equipped pottery studio, which offers classes for kids and adults. In addition, our "pottery on wheels" teacher travels to Monkton and New Haven to teach after-school classes in clay, in addition to summer camps in pottery and arts and crafts. Bristol recreation facilities and parks include:

- The Pottery Studio at 27 Main Street.
- The Hub/Youth Center off of Airport Drive.
- Sycamore Park, and the Edith Stock Memorial Bird Sanctuary that is part of Sycamore Park.
- Parlato's Park now referred to as "Eagle Park."
- Memorial Park (on Route 17 near Jerusalem).
- Barlett Falls area.
- Lord's Prayer Rock Park

B. Hiking Areas

Many hiking opportunities exist in Bristol. Listing of a trail, which is located or accessed on private property, is not intended to have regulatory effect or to restrict future uses of that private property by the landowner. Popular hiking trails include the following:

- The Bristol Ledges – Trail marker starts at the end of Mountain Terrace
- The Bristol Wilderness area – Off York Hill Road in Lincoln
- Bristol Pond
- The Watershed Center (Public access to 600 acres owned and operated by a non-profit).

C. Canoeing and Boating

Flat-water canoeing and other boating is possible on Bristol Pond (Lake Winona), which is a mile long. The New Haven River is used for whitewater boating in the spring high water season and some use inner tubes to float in the summer.

D. The Hub/Youth Center

Since its inception in 1998, The Hub has operated as a drop-in center for youth ages 12 to 19 years. The Hub is conveniently situated in the Bristol Recreation Park adjacent to Mt. Abraham High School and about five blocks from the center of Bristol village. This location encourages a great number of youth and other community members to take advantage of the skate park, basketball courts, ice skating rink, and tennis courts that are a part of the recreation park. Young people can come inside The Hub at any point during its hours of operation to take advantage of pool tables, foosball, internet access, games galore, art supplies, sports equipment, snacks and a laid back living room-style environment. The Hub also offers diverse programs during out-of-school time at no charge. From guitar lessons to cooking to tracking animals to snowboarding, the youth center seeks to support the varied interests of young people in the area. Aptly named, The Hub is not only a safe, substance-free gathering place for young people after school, but it is also a focal point of the greater community's care and concern for adolescents.

E. Bristol Recreation Club/Field

The Bristol Recreation Club owns and maintains the 10-acre Recreation Field. The site includes a grand stand, snack shack, playground, tennis courts, softball, baseball, football and soccer fields, the skate park, the youth center building, the ice rink and warming hut The Recreation Club is also home to Bristol Youth Sports, a nonprofit group that facilitates youth soccer, basketball, and field hockey.

F. Outdoor Sports

Many people in town enjoy numerous outdoor sports that take advantage of our natural resources. These activities including hunting, fishing, bicycling, cross country skiing, and riding snowmobiles, ATVs and horses.

Goals

1. The town will continue to provide quality facilities both public and private (with permission of the property owner) and programs to facilitate recreation and leisure for citizens of Bristol.

Policies

1. Capitalize on the interest in leisure time activities within the area, region and state. This interest can create opportunities to both support "quality of life" and to provide opportunities for financial gain.
2. Expand and improve Recreation Club facilities.
3. Continue support of the Bristol Recreation Department.
4. Create or improve trails for various recreational activities when feasible.
5. Encourage Conservation easements, which do not unduly restrict agriculture or forestry, where public money is involved.
6. Maintain and create public facilities and spaces that facilitate social and leisure-time activities among town residents.

7. Support the improvement and/or development of facilities for cultural organizations, including program performance and exhibition space, workshops, teen center, and artists' studios.
8. Promote arts, entertainment, evening activities, special events, and cultural and seasonal activities to benefit area residents and attract tourists.
9. Nurture community-mindedness and social interaction among town residents by promoting opportunities for residents, particularly the young and elderly, to gather for recreation, education and other activities.

9. CHILDCARE

The expense of childcare and the limited number of facilities can be a significant challenge for parents in the Bristol area. The situation is particularly difficult for low-income families, single-parent families and those who work evenings. Because of the reliance on childcare for these residents, it is an important component of local infrastructure.

A. Current Status

The Bristol Family Center at 18 Orchard Terrace, Bristol, (802-453-5659) is one of the region's three largest childcare centers. Its early childhood program is licensed by the Vermont Agency of Human Services Childcare Division and is also accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Additional providers offer childcare from their homes. A current list of all known childcare providers within this area is maintained by the Addison County Child Care Services at 81 Water Street in Middlebury (802-388-4304).

B. Information and Aid

Childcare information and aid may be found at the Addison County Child Care Services. This program is administered for the region by the Mary Johnson Children's Center, which is also located at 81 Water Street in Middlebury. The program's mission is to work with families to:

- Find the best possible childcare placement for their child in the county
- Help eligible families receive the funding needed to pay for childcare
- Provide continuing education, training, support, and resources
- Coordinate the Addison County Early Childhood Council

Additional childcare information may also be found on-line at www.mjccvt.org and www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us.

Goals

1. Bristol will have a sufficient number of affordable facilities to meet its child care needs.

Policies

1. Support the provision of high-quality, safe and affordable childcare options to meet the needs of Bristol area residents.
2. Ensure that town policies and ordinances do not impede the provision of high-quality, safe and affordable childcare services.

Tasks

1. Contact Addison County Child Care Services to identify steps that can be taken to meet child care needs of Bristol.

10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We need to address the fact that since 1990 Bristol's unemployment rate has been consistently higher than that of the county and state, while both income and wages have remained lower than in the county or state.

A. Jobs in Bristol

Bristol is the second largest center of employment in Addison County after Middlebury, which has approximately twice the number of employees. The Vermont Department of Labor counted nearly 1,300 people working in Bristol in 2010. Their numbers, however, are based on employees eligible for unemployment insurance and therefore do not include business owners, sole proprietors, partners, and some agricultural workers. Including those workers may increase the total employment number by as much as 30%. Between 1989 and 2010, Bristol's local economy added 25 business establishments and the number of people working in town increased by 347 (see Figure 22).

The largest employer in town is the school system. Within the private sector, retail is the largest employer followed by leisure and hospitality, and professional and business services. During the past 20 years, the goods producing sectors (manufacturing, construction, agriculture and forestry) have contracted, while the service sectors have grown. The business and professional services sector has grown the most significantly since 1989.

B. Where Town Residents Work

An increasing number of Bristol residents are commuting out of the town to their primary places of employment. In 2000, only 28% of employed Bristol residents worked in Bristol. Nearly twice the number of residents worked outside of Addison County in 2000 than did in 1980; a trend that likely continued through the 2000s. This mirrors similar trends across the nation, where commuting times have grown and people work further from their homes.

C. Income and Wages

From 1980 to 2000, the median family income in Bristol grew by more than twice the rate of the rest of Vermont, and 18% faster than the rest of Addison County. This is a welcome trend for Bristol, although annual average wages have remained rather lower than Addison County or Vermont.

Annual average wages for Bristol workers remain lower than the average for the county or the state. The average annual wage paid by an employer in Bristol in 2010 was approximately $34,000 as compared to an average of more than $39,000 statewide or $37,000 in Addison County.

Figure 22. Businesses, Employment & Wages in Bristol

	Establishments	Employees	Average Wages	Total Wages
1980	77	807	$22,000	$17.7 million
1981	92	824	$21,300	$17.6 million
1982	89	757	$21,600	$16.4 million
1983	97	776	$22,600	$17.5 million
1984	91	698	$23,400	$16.3 million
1985	104	721	$22,900	$16.5 million
1986	108	786	$23,800	$18.7 million
1987	115	832	$24,000	$19.9 million
1988	117	929	$24,900	$23.1 million
1989	119	924	$24,800	$22.9 million
1990	126	949	$25,400	$24.1 million
1991	130	893	$25,900	$23.2 million
1992	127	1,000	$25,700	$25.7 million
1993	128	990	$26,800	$26.5 million
1994	115	1,051	$27,000	$28.4 million
1995	115	1,128	$25,900	$29.1 million
1996	116	1,104	$25,600	$28.3 million
1997	118	1,105	$25,600	$28.2 million
1998	113	1,051	$26,300	$27.7 million
1999	118	1,103	$27,300	$30.1 million
2000	129	1,184	$28,200	$33.4 million
2001	133	1,235	$28,600	$35.4 million
2002	125	1,156	$30,300	$35.0 million
2003	119	1,198	$28,900	$34.7 million
2004	134	1,321	$28,700	$37.9 million
2005	136	1,378	$28,100	$38.7 million
2006	139	1,502	$28,600	$43.0 million
2007	142	1,478	$28,800	$42.6 million
2008	136	1,372	$31,000	$42.5 million
2009	137	1,255	$32,100	$40.3 million

Source: Vermont Department of Labor (wages converted to 2010$ using the CPI)
note that only jobs covered by unemployment insurance are counted

Figure 23. Businesses and Employment in Bristol by Sector

	Establishments		Employment	
	1989	2010	1989	2010
Ag & forestry	3	6	n/a	35
Mining	1	1	n/a	n/a
Construction	20	19	43	60
Manufacturing (durable)	9	6	112	53
Manufacturing (non-durable)	3	1	18	n/a
Goods Producing Subtotal	36	32	208	355
Wholesale trade	1	2	n/a	n/a
Retail trade	26	20	137	186
Information	1	4	n/a	11
Finance, insurance, real estate	3	8	n/a	15
Professional & business services	13	37	73	112
Education & health services	10	12	43	64
Leisure & hospitality	9	11	120	118
Other Services	11	11	33	33
Service Providing Subtotal	77	106	458	552
Federal government		1		13
Local government		4		351
Government Subtotal	6	5	257	363
Total	**119**	**144**	**924**	**1,271**

Source: Vermont Department of Labor

D. Small Businesses in Bristol

Given the importance of small businesses to Bristol's economy and the livelihood of its residents, it is a goal of the town to retain existing small businesses and to cultivate new small businesses. In the past, many small businesses that started in Bristol moved elsewhere when they required additional space or infrastructure. Space for businesses to grow is important to the stability of Bristol's economy, and should be considered in making land-use decisions.

Town support for small business education programs and business-planning programs can help a wide range of small businesses. The town currently maintains an active revolving loan fund for use by local businesses. Town-supported festivals and seasonal events can also improve sales from small businesses, and can serve as marketing for small businesses from the community.

E. Industrial or Business Park

Bristol has sporadically worked to site an industrial or business park in the town, but infrastructure, location and transportation access issues have prevented the development of a park to date. Industrial and business parks serve to attract investment and jobs into the community, while restricting their impacts to a limited area. A light industry industrial park, business park, or business incubator has wide support in Bristol, and as a center for employment in the five-town area, Bristol is a logical location for one.

Goals

1. Bristol will attract and maintain businesses, including agricultural and farm-based businesses that are consistent with the town's character.
2. Bristol employers will provide wages that are comparable to wages paid elsewhere in Addison County and Vermont.
3. Bristol will provide a favorable climate for light industry development that is appropriate for, beneficial to, and acceptable by the community.

Policies

1. Support continued appropriate-scale commercial activity in Bristol's downtown.
2. Support the development of tourism-related enterprises that are appropriate to the town's character and scale.
3. Encourage retention of existing businesses and cultivate new businesses.
4. Provide infrastructure in appropriate areas for the retention and attraction of businesses that are consistent with the town's character.
5. Support business education and assistance programs and the dissemination of their services. These programs include the Small Business Development Center in Middlebury, the Vermont Women's Business Center, the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity, Bristol Downtown Community Partnership, and the Addison County Economic Development Corporation.

6. Encourage citizens and town government to purchase goods and services from local businesses.
7. Encourage appropriate light industry growth in designated development areas.
8. Support development of recreation and recreation-related businesses that capitalize on the town's natural, scenic and historic resources.
9. Encourage those uses that have limited adverse impact on agricultural land use and the farm economy.
10. Encourage the use of locally-grown agricultural and forest products, including the processing, manufacturing and marketing of value-added agricultural and forest products.
11. Encourage efforts to improve the downtown retail and business climate.
12. Encourage an economic climate that retains and attracts businesses.
13. Facilitate public improvement projects that will promote economic development.
14. Emphasize the location of new non-industrial commercial and retail businesses near population centers (particularly the village) to provide access to work without use of a motor vehicle.
15. Support policies to help create new jobs in Bristol as well as to help businesses expand to meet the ever-changing business and environmental needs for our community.
16. Permit residents to operate a limited-impact small business on their property, provided that such a business is allowed as a conditional use and meets the requirements for a conditional use permit.
17. Pursue and encourage a balanced economic base while ensuring the economic stability of Bristol residents.
18. Promote the availability of modern communication infrastructure for business and residences.
19. Sustain the town's agricultural economy, encouraging future generations to continue farming in town.
20. Encourage property owners to search for innovative and\or affordable ways in which access to individual businesses and retail establishments can be improved or altered.

Tasks

1. Assess the needs of existing and potential light industry.
2. Study the feasibility of establishing a site that is appropriate for development of a light industry industrial park, incubator park, or business park, including the necessary town infrastructure for its development.
3. Consider using real estate tax abatement, tax stabilization or other local property tax relief mechanisms to encourage development of a light industry industrial park, incubator or business park.
4. Explore commercial building codes that would include specifications for energy efficiency and conservation.

11. RESOURCES HISTORIC, SCENIC, CULTURAL & NATURAL

It is vital, while planning for Bristol's future, to remember the historic, scenic, cultural and natural resources that have long made this an interesting, exciting, and rewarding place to live. Our prosperity is inseparable from the richness of our heritage and the health and beauty of our natural environment.

A. Historic Resources

Almost none of Bristol's present landscape is the same as that which existed when the first town planners in the 1700s laid out the commons (the Town Green), the roads and bridges, the fencing of lots, schools and public buildings. Fires and floods were frequently the instruments of change. In 1898, a fire destroyed all of the contiguous buildings on the north side of Main Street. The Drake-Farr block of stores at the corner of Main and South Streets burned in 1914. Except for the Dunshee block, a 1924 fire destroyed all of the remaining contiguous buildings on the south side of Main Street. Multiple floods and fires destroyed or incapacitated virtually all of the forges, factories and mills along the New Haven River. The Bristol Manufacturing Company, once a nationally known coffin maker, suffered major flood damage in 1927. That flood and the effects of the Great Depression brought it to bankruptcy in 1937. Its closed buildings were destroyed by fire in 1947.

The venerable Colonial-style Bristol Inn, erected in 1818 in the heart of the village, was torn down in 1961 to make room for a Grand Union grocery store and a parking lot. It is presently a Rite Aid drugstore. The Bristol Inn Annex, however, was preserved and is now located on Mountain View Street and used for housing. A beautiful Gothic-style Catholic Church, built in 1877 on the northwest corner of the green, was torn down in 1971 and replaced with a contemporary brick structure a few yards away on the corner of Park and West Streets.

Some noteworthy buildings in Bristol include:

- **The Hatch Block.** The Hatch Block at 29-31 Main Street is a 3-story wood vernacular Italianate structure with a central hallway and a 2-tiered front porch. It was originally a 2-story building built about 1871 and served as a hotel, furniture store and undertaking parlor. Early in its history it became the birthplace of the Bristol Band. During the mid-20th century, there were a series of restaurants at the east bay. A series of bar establishments followed at this location.

- **The Thomas Building.** This 2-story Federal period building at 27 Main Street was built about 1835 as a private residence. It was converted into commercial use. The Ramie C. Martin paint and paper business was there from 1907 to 1942. Way's Hardware was there until 1962. Tony and Madine Thomas owned and operated their Sporting Goods store there until 2004 when this was followed by a series of antique stores.

- **Deerleap Building.** Originally known as the Van Patnode building, this one story clapboard building was built in 1920 and operated as a garage by a succession of three owners. In 1990, new owners redesigned its façade in the Colonial-style and added a cupola with weather vane. The building is currently home to Art on Main, a cooperative arts and crafts gallery.
- **Kilbourn's Cyclone Grist Mill.** Behind the south side of Main Street sits this 1924 Grist Mill occupied later by a toy company and completely renovated and updated in 2004, to a residence, offices and studio.
- **Dunshee Block.** This block at 19-21 Main Street is a 7,500 square foot, three-story Italianate building built in 1880 originally with retail below offices and retail above. Since mid-1980s five apartments have been located in the second and third floors, with retail and offices on first floor. By 1990, this building was in serious disrepair. In 2000, seventeen community-minded "investors" came together, purchased the property, and substantially upgraded it. This group took full advantage of historic tax credits, and this redevelopment project became the cornerstone for a community investment concept that has continued in use in Bristol since that time.
- **Almost Home Market.** 28 North Street has been the home of a series of small country markets, delis, and related businesses for over 110 years. The location operated as Brown's Market from 1938 to 1966. It was Bristol Market, a health food store location prior to Almost Home Market, which opened in 2003. The building has two residential apartments above the store.
- **Bristol Railroad Station.** This building at 83 North Street was erected as a railroad station in 1892 and is now a residence.
- **Bristol Firehouse.** This classic American Firehouse was built on this site in 1898.
- **Holley Hall.** Built as a municipal building, at its present location, the building has remained basically unchanged since it was erected in 1884.
- **Howden Hall.** Howden Hall began its life as a church, dedicated in 1842. The second word in the name is not really descriptive, as the building is actually named after two individuals "Howden" and "Hall." In the middle years, this building was utilized by the school district for various classrooms, and since 1991 as a home for the Historical Society and for other municipal meeting purposes, including the home of the Bristol Rotary Club for some 20 years.
- **Lawrence Memorial Library.** The Library was built in 1911, as a gift of William A. Lawrence, who paid for the building and gave the land.
- **Colonial Theatre/Brown McClay Funeral Home.** Built in 1915, this building on South Street operated as a theatre until 1956. It was converted to a funeral home in 1961.
- **Bristol High School.** This building is on Park Place, behind the Green, and was built in 1856 and converted to its present office and health club uses in the 1980s.

- **Local Churches.** These include: (1) Federated Church on North Street was built in 1840; (2) The first Baptist Church on Park Street on the Green was built in 1819, but substantially renovated several times in the 1800s; and (3) The original Congregational Church built in 1889 was converted to the Libanus Masonic Lodge in 1948.

- **Private Residences.** Bristol has many historic houses including the Dr. David Bosworth Homestead (1805) at the corner of Park and North Street; the E.B. Patterson/Dr. Dewees Brown House (c. 1898) at 6 West Street; the William A. Lawrence/Crystal Palace (1897) at 48 North Street; the Harry Dunshee/G.L. Heffernan House (1877) at 60 West Street; the Edward Dunshee/Merritt Allen/Clair & Ruth Lathrop house known as "The Maples" (1832) on Hewitt Road; the Gaige-Moor/Prudence Tomasi House (1817) at 1 North Street, Peake House at 16 North Street.

B. Scenic Resources

All approaches to Bristol show its scenic quality. The view from the New Haven Fire Department on Route 17 shows the ridge of the Green Mountains, with Mount Abraham, which is the third highest in Vermont at 4,100 feet, and other peaks along the ridge, and valleys in between. A second ridge runs through the middle of the town with the village in a notch of this ridge. Another scenic approach is going south along Route 116, south of the Route 17 intersection as mountains surround the road. The view of Mt. Abe from Daniels Corner, the Route 17 and 116 intersection, just west of the village, has stopped many a camera-clicking tourist.

A hike from the edge of the village on private property to the ledges above the village is a popular route. Hikes through the woods are also available at the Watershed Nature Center at the northwest corner of Bristol and many other places.

Bristol's streams provide several scenic spots. The most visited spot is Bartlett Falls. It is town property and was used 100 years ago to generate electricity for the village. Its ledges and pool get crowded in warm weather. Another town-owned scenic waterfall is Memorial Park on Route 17 near Jerusalem. Its gorge has wooden steps leading down into it. Route 17 and the Lincoln Road and Notch Road follow mountain streams.

Forest Road 90 goes south of the Notch Road to the Beaver Meadows area, which used to be farmland but beavers made dams and ponds, which have filled and made new meadows. Much wildlife viewing can be done here and all along the Green Mountain ridge and the Watershed and many places in Bristol. Bristol Cliffs Wilderness Area provides a more isolated scenic nature experience.

C. Cultural Resources

Many organizations and individuals perform remarkable efforts to provide emergency services, and cultural, recreational and social activities and facilities for the quality of life in Bristol and surrounding areas. The following is a partial listing and short commentary on some of the better-known groups

that are presently active in the community. This list is not necessarily complete and there are many other individuals and groups who contribute significantly to the community's well-being.

The Bristol Recreation Department (Arts, Parks and Recreation Department). The department was formed as a branch of town government in 1997. It is listed in the plan's Utilities and Facilities section, but is included here since it serves in many ways as a cultural asset to the town and to the surrounding communities. It provides recreation and educational opportunities for both children and adults, and collaborates with the programs and activities of over twenty private service organizations and individuals, not the least of which is to act as the major participant in Bristol's annual Harvest Festival. As its title infers, it is also responsible for the town's parks and recreation areas; it also operates several entities located on private properties, including The Hub youth center, the skate park and a pottery studio. The Department serves the town as the contact with several state and federal agencies, and is active in obtaining grants for various programs.

Lawrence Memorial Library. Bristol's historic library was built by Mr. William Lawrence in the colonial revival style, and conveyed to the town in 1911, whereby the library was named. Mostly funded by townspeople, the library operates with a board elected by the voters of Bristol. The mission, as it has for many town libraries, has expanded in recent years. As always, it provides free access to information, services and programs through books, magazines and newspapers, thereby nurturing the intellectual and cultural life of the community. However, the ways in which this access is provided have expanded with words and music on tape and CD, DVDs, videos, free internet access, discounted and free passes to area museums, notary service and delivery of library materials. Recent physical improvements include handicap access, a children's room and extensive restoration of the main library room.

Bristol Rescue Squad, Inc. Prior to 1970, ambulance service was provided by Brown's Funeral Home. The Bristol Rescue Squad, Inc. was formed at that time and assumed those services. By 1992, First Responder units were organized in Starksboro, Lincoln, New Haven and Monkton to supplement the work of the Rescue Squad. The Squad has improved the quantity and quality of its work until today it is comprised of approximately 27 members, 3 fully-stocked ambulances, and is housed in its new quarters on Monkton Road.

The Bristol Recreation Club, Inc. A private, non-profit organization, it has been in existence since 1921. It owns and maintains the so-called Recreation Field, located in the westerly part of the village area. This facility serves many users, including the town's recreation department that operates the youth center (The Hub) and the skateboard park. The facility also includes tennis courts, an ice-skating rink, and lighted athletic fields. Along with parcels owned by the town in the vicinity, the area recently was rezoned as a "Recreational" district.

The Bristol Band. The community band, recently incorporated, has functioned in one guise or another since about 1870. It provides several services to the community. Primarily, the band plays weekly concerts on the green's Bandstand through the summer months. The community has shown a high level

of interest in these concerts which attract an enthusiastic gathering and that provide opportunities for local organizations to hold fund-raising activities in conjunction with the concerts.

Other important band functions include providing opportunities for musicians to use their talents in contributing to the community's quality of life, providing funds for young musicians for music participation, education, and instruments, and representing the Bristol community at out-of-town concerts and celebrations.

Bristol Historical Society. Formed in 1977, the society's goals are to discover, collect and preserve information and materials on the history of Bristol. It welcomes donations of photos, diaries, genealogies, artifacts and oral testimonies supporting that history. The society presently maintains a headquarters and museum in the town's Howden Hall on West Street.

Fourth of July Committee. An outgrowth of former activities of the Recreation Club, centering around the 4th of July, this group of dedicated citizens annually put on the single most attended event in the community's annual list of activities. The event is reportedly the oldest continuing 4th of July event in Vermont. The festivities of the 4th include Bristol's infamous Outhouse race, a large parade, fireworks and an afternoon of entertainment and other opportunities on the green. Members of the committee find that the work of preparing and running events, as well as fund-raising, is strenuous and invite other community members to participate in the committee activities.

The Outlook Club. The Outlook Club began as a women's book club, known as the Bristol Women's Club, which was formed in 1900 and functioned continually until 2010. Its purpose was to promote culture and community improvement. Its records indicate sponsorship and contributions to many local worthy causes over the years.

Bristol Friends of the Arts (BFA), Art On Main. A non-profit organization, BFA's mission is to enrich the lives of Bristol area residents by providing opportunities to participate in and to appreciate the arts and cultural heritage of the community. BFA supports Art On Main, a cooperative arts and crafts gallery, and also promotes and participates in activities of Bristol Historical Society and restoration of the town's historic Howden Hall.

Northeast Addison Television (NEAT). A non-profit, community television station serving Bristol and the neighboring 5-town area, it was launched in 2003 with a mission of using locally run television to strengthen community life. In addition to broadcasting local events, the station provides production workshops, movie camps, after-school labs, teen internships and on-the-job training. Original works by young film-makers are also broadcast. NEAT also collaborates with other local organizations including the Recreation Department and the local schools.

Bristol Downtown Community Partnership and Design Review Commission. The town has recently received a "Downtown Designation" from the State of Vermont (see Appendix C). The Bristol Downtown Community Partnership, an independent non-profit tax-exempt entity, was formed to undertake efforts to support the business community in this area, via community events, marketing, eco-

nomic restructuring, and community education on the benefits of shopping locally. Under the rules of this designation, a Design Review Commission appointed by the Selectboard was established to review alterations and construction in the designated area, and to make recommendations to the appropriate municipal panel.

Masons and Order of Eastern Star. Libanus Lodge No. 712 was consecrated in 1826, and the Eastern Star chapter was installed in 1901. Volunteer work, scholarships, senior meals, and support of needy families and the community food shelf are some of the fraternal organization's contributions to the community.

Knights of Columbus. The Bishop Robert F. Joyce Council of the St. Ambrose Parish in Bristol is an integral part of the Knights of Columbus organization. Monthly meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at St. Ambrose. The Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic Family Fraternal Service Organization. Founded in 1882, and headquartered in New Haven, CT, there are now nearly 13,000 councils and nearly 1.7 million members plus their families who are actively involved in volunteer service programs for the Catholic Church, their communities, their families, young people, and one another. Fellowship is promoted among members and their families through educational, charitable, religious and numerous programs and projects directed to benefit the parish and community.

N. H. Munsill Hose Company. The N.H. Munsill Hose, Hook, and Ladder Co. (the Hose Co.) was originally started in 1893 and throughout the early years, carried out all the town's fire fighting duties as a completely volunteer organization. It wasn't until 1972 that the name was changed to the 'Bristol Fire Department". The Hose Co. has since evolved into a support organization, made up of qualified fire fighters. The group supplements the efforts of the town's taxpayers by raising funds for equipment and other expenses. In no small way, it also contributes to the spirit and enterprise of the members and to the excellent protection the department gives to the community.

American Legion. Bristol American Legion Post 19 is a non-profit organization serving veterans, their families, children and youth programs, the elderly, and various other causes in our five town area and beyond. The total membership averages 800-900, and this includes the Sons of the American Legion and the Auxiliary. They annually donate over $50,000 to various causes that include: $6,000 in scholarships to MAUHS seniors, fund the annual academic banquet, Little League, Babe Ruth and Legion Baseball programs, major contributor to the new Elderly Services Project in Middlebury and the new wing at Porter Hospital, financially assist Cub Scout Pack 543 on summer camp costs, the only contributor to girls AAU basketball program, and many more worthy causes in our five town area. The Legion is the chartering organization for Boy Scout Troop 543. The American Legion motto is "For God and Country." Post 19's motto is "Continuing to Serve."

D. Natural Resources

Natural resources are an integral part of Bristol, offering many benefits that enhance the quality of life in the community. The diversity and abundance of natural resources has historically supported

the quality of life that is so important to residents and helps to distinguish Bristol as an inviting and healthy community. Excellent agricultural soils and fertile farmland, bodies of surface water, established ground water sources, varied soils, renewable and non-renewable resources and tracts of contiguous, undeveloped land make up some of the community's natural resources. (See Appendix S, Biologically Significant Areas Map.)

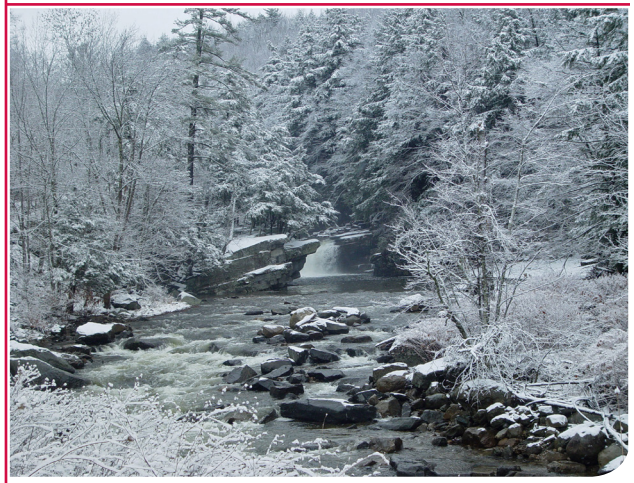
Topography. The landscape of Bristol originated approximately 450 million years ago when the forces of plate tectonics created the foundations of the Green Mountains and the Champlain Valley. The carvings of glacial ice masses 18,000 to 10,000 years ago and more recent physical and chemical erosion has refined our topography and created the current Bristol landscape. The terrain of Bristol is generally recognized as mountains and river valleys in the east and gently rolling knolls and fields in the west, both instrumental in the development of the community as it exists today.

The fertile farmland found in the low-lying portions of Bristol has supported the local dairy industry for generations. Located predominantly in the western third of the town, lacustrine silts and clays deposited from the ancient Champlain Sea have provided excellent agricultural soils from which Bristol and surrounding towns have benefited. The pore structure of these materials enables enhanced retention of nutrients and water, enhancing crop growth. Bedrock in these low-lying areas is predominantly dolomite, which is mildly susceptible to physical and chemical weathering.

The prominent ridgeline running from the north to the south of the town is composed of the Hogback Mountain in the north and South and Elephant Mountains in the south. In many places, receding glaciers have exposed the Cheshire quartzite bedrock, which is largely resistant to erosion. This is most apparent on the western side of South Mountain and on the western and southern sides of the Hogback Mountains, known as the Bristol Ledges and Deer Leap, respectively. In many locations, this rock face rising out of the Champlain Valley is so steep that vegetation cannot maintain a foothold, and occasional rock slides occur. These are readily visible as a different color to the cliff surface, with huge mounds of talus at the toes of the cliffs. Quartzite foothills are also found in the northwest section of Bristol around the former Vergennes Waterworks. The highest point in Bristol is atop South Mountain, with an elevation of 2,325 feet.

The most prominent surface waters in Bristol are Bristol Pond (formerly known as Lake Winona) and the New Haven River, both of which afford excellent recreation opportunities and provide essential habitats for a variety of plant and animal species. The lowest point in Bristol is where the New Haven River enters the Town of New Haven to the west at approximately 328 feet.

The New Haven River carves one of the several valleys that run through the mountainous eastern section of Bristol. The other major river valleys are Baldwin Creek along the State Route 17 corridor toward South Starksboro, and the Notch Brook flowing out of the Green Mountain National Forest through the gap between South and Elephant Mountains. Much of the town's historic development has occurred along the New Haven River and in the relatively level terrain on the western side of Bristol. This was due to the primacy that mills and agriculture once had in the economic vitality of Bristol.



As Bristol's steeper terrain becomes more easily accessible for development, careful decision-making of development is warranted. One example is the prominent and steep ridgeline running from the north to the south of the town. Because steep terrain such as this is not best suited for development, development should be carefully handled.

The Town of Bristol has been hit with two presidentially-declared disasters in the past 10 years, both as a result of flash flooding. In 1998, heavy rains caused the New Haven River to flood, washing out several town roads as well as State Routes 17 and 116. In addition, several residences were made uninhabitable and were subsequently the targets of FEMA-funded buyouts. In 2004, a stalled summer storm dropped large amounts of rain onto South Mountain and Deer Leap causing flooding to residences and businesses in the core village area as well as inflicting damage to town and state highways. The 2004 storm caused over $300,000 in damage to the Town of Bristol of which $265,000 was reimbursed through State and Federal sources. While the Town of Bristol has sought assistance to determine risks associated with development along the river in areas of erosion hazard, some Bristol landowners have been resistant to participating in the regional geomorphic assessments.

The Town of Bristol contains several tracts of contiguous, forested land. These include the Green Mountain National Forest (encompasses much of South and Elephant Mountains), the Hogback Mountain Ridge, and the Watershed Center in the northwestern section of town. In addition to the recreational resource and productive resource base (forestry), these areas serve as excellent wildlife habitats, including deer wintering areas, and they allow larger species the ability to migrate more freely.

Soils. Bristol's soil is valuable as an agricultural asset, as a natural filter for rainwater, runoff, and wastewater systems, and as a base for local flora. The soils of Bristol are quite varied due to both the wide differences in terrain and the effects of glaciation. As the glaciers receded approximately 10,000 years ago, bedrock on the ridgelines was left exposed and a vast amount of till was deposited in their wake, with post-glacial lakes and flooding responsible for the deposition of various silts and clays.

Approximately half of Bristol consists of soil types of "Rock", "Very Rocky Complex" and "Extremely Stony Loams". Much of this area is set aside as conservation land to maintain water quality or is part of the Green Mountain National Forest.

Much of the area adjacent to Bristol Pond and the area immediately east of Hogback and west of Vermont Route 116 and north of Vermont Route 17 consist of muck and peat. State and federal regulations protect hydric areas that are rated Class II wetlands.

Bristol's soils are varied in nature. Some areas are prime for agricultural uses, other areas with gravelly, sandy loams are best suited for development, and other areas that are stony and silt loams are marginally suited for development.

The following mixture of soil types can be found along the main north-south corridor on the western side of the town, more or less bordering Monkton Road, Hardscrabble Road, Burpee Road, North Street and Vermont Route 116, and including the village area:

- Gravelly, sandy loams and loamy fine sands;
- Stony, very fine sandy, and fine sandy loams;
- Other stony and silt loams; and
- Heavy clays.

It is important to note that this area has the most productive farmland and the highest concentration of important farmland soils identified with ratings as prime, statewide and local by the USDA National Resource Conservation Service.

The northwestern section of the town west of Lower Hardscrabble Road has some scattered areas with loamy fine sand, sandy loams and stony loams. The northeast section of the town east of Vermont Route 116 and north of Vermont Route 17 has a large mixture of loamy, gravelly and sandy soils. There are also areas with steep slopes having stony loams, rocky complex and rocky soils. The northeast section of the town east of Vermont Route 116, south of Vermont Route 17, and north of the New Haven River has mostly rock complex and stony loams. There are some areas along Briggs Hill Road with gravelly sandy loams.

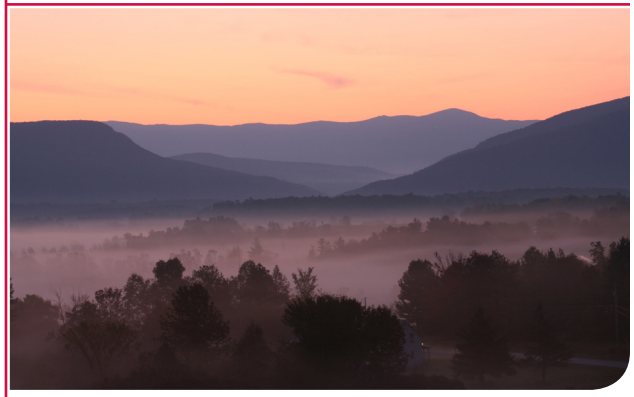
Mineral Resources. Kame terrace deposits, comprised of sand, cobble and gravel, were deposited along the eastern spine of the Green Mountains during the retreat of glaciers over some 10,000 years ago; 225 years ago the Bristol village was established on this level plain of the delta/kame deposits.

Gravel is the main subsoil component throughout the Bristol village. This type of subsoil offers excellent drainage qualities and creates soils with high percolation rates that village residents are able to benefit from. Resources of gravel are also valued for use in construction and road maintenance.

There are both active and inactive gravel extraction areas sited in the town of Bristol, as well as soil, sand, and rock sites. As the town decides on extraction of these resources, it will need to balance that resource with maintenance of other natural resources in an area.

Ecosystems. Bristol is home to a variety of ecosystems, including rivers, ponds, bogs, vernal pools, mountain ridges, cliffs, talus slopes, and many varieties of forest communities. A Vermont Fish and Wildlife database of significant biological areas shows 15 types of natural communities (9 of which are forest community types) in Bristol.

The Bristol Cliffs area includes northern hardwoods talus forest, dry oak-hickory-hop hornbeam forest, red spruce-white pine forest, hemlock forest, and red pine forest. Other notable features of Bristol Cliffs are its open talus slope (largest in Vermont), unique cold-air community at the base of the slope,



Cheshire quartzite cliffs, and nesting Peregrine falcons (they also nest at Deer Leap and Elephant Mountain).

The spine and western slope of Hogback Mountain in Bristol, is an area of contiguous habitat and corridors for bear, deer (including deer wintering areas), and smaller mammals. East and Southeast of Bristol Cliffs are North Gilmore Ponds, with their surrounding dwarf shrub bog communities. North of the talus slope is a vernal woodland pool. Other areas of note include Bristol Cobble, near the southwest corner, with its temperate calcareous cliff, lower Bristol Notch road, and Rocky Dale ledges.

The main biologically significant area in Bristol's lower elevations is Bristol Pond (Lake Winona). Its high-density fish population includes northern pike (to at least 30 inches), pickerel, small-mouth bass, perch, panfish, catfish and crappie. Many rare (to Vermont) plant species grow in the surrounding peatlands and marsh. Osprey have nested there since 1992. Also notable are The Watershed Center and cedar swamp, and Hardscrabble Hills, site of a second vernal pool.

Currently, there is no comprehensive compilation of Bristol mammal or bird populations. However, a reptile and amphibian database shows 24 species, including 3 species of turtle, 6 of snake, 6 of salamanders, 8 of frogs and toads. Four of these species are rare or uncommon in Vermont: the timber rattler, black ratsnake, northern watersnake, and Jefferson Salamander (no recent sightings). Fish species (besides the above listed) include brook, rainbow and brown trout (with some native populations of all three), found chiefly in the New Haven River and its tributaries.

Groundwater. Groundwater can be found almost anywhere in Bristol in both shallow and deep aquifers consisting of fractured or porous rock and various sediments. The vast majority of Bristol residents obtain their potable water from groundwater aquifers, including the residents of the village area, where water from the municipal distribution system is ultimately drawn from a groundwater source on the north slope of South Mountain.

In addition to supplying potable water to residents of the town, groundwater is often responsible for adding water to our ponds and rivers; especially in times of drought. In this capacity, groundwater aids in supporting the ecosystems and biodiversity of our lands and helps maintain the natural beauty of Bristol.

There are several bands of moderate to good groundwater potential. These areas include the Route 116 corridor, the Bristol village, the valley formed by Beaver Brook and Baldwin Creek, the New Haven River and its floodplain, and the valley area at the southwestern extent of Vermont Route 116 through Bristol. These areas could potentially have groundwater yields sufficient for municipal or industrial uses due to the thick deposits of coarse grained, stratified glacial drift such as kame terrace and stream alluvium. As surficial material becomes thinner or more finely grained, ground water potential decreases. The majority of the town has groundwater potential suitable only for residential use

due to the deposition of more fine-grained glacial drift (silts and clays), swamp deposits, or exposed hardpan till or bedrock ledge.

Surface Water. The most prominent bodies of surface water in Bristol are Bristol Pond (Lake Winona) and the New Haven River. In addition there is Baldwin Creek, Notch Brook, other tributaries and bogs, vernal ponds and wetlands. These areas vary in sensitivity and necessitate mindful decision-making regarding development and use.

Bristol surface waters enter three watersheds: the Otter Creek, Little Otter Creek, and Lewis Creek. The New Haven River is the largest surface water body, with Baldwin Creek and Notch Brook being major tributaries. Lands east of the Hogback Mountains and all the area south of the village area drain into Otter Creek via the New Haven. Much of this watershed, including most of Notch Brook, is in the Green Mountain National Forest. Lewis Creek receives the water from the north central part of town between the Hogback ridge to the east and the hills west of Monkton Road. Little Otter Creek drainage extends into the northwest corner of Bristol.

Each of these watersheds have established non-profit local groups dedicated to conservation, including the New Haven River Anglers Association, Lewis Creek Association, the Watershed Center and New Haven River Watch.

Bristol ponds outside the National Forest include: Bristol Pond (Lake Winona), Vergennes Waterworks and a nearby unnamed pond labeled Bristol NW. Bristol Pond is widely known for its bass and pike fishery and attracts local as well as out of state anglers to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife access at the north end.

All of these waters are state class B. Two class A2 (drinking water) designated flows are not currently used for that purpose. They are two small tributaries to the Little Otter near the old Vergennes Waterworks and an upper reach of Notch Brook.

The New Haven River and Bristol's groundwater are closely linked. Hydrogeologic studies have shown the volume of flow to diminish above the village area to be re-established by the springs from above and below South Street Bridge. Natural filtering and cooling of the water results from the thick gravel deposits on both sides of the river. Good wild trout habitat has been well documented repeatedly by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Wetlands. Vermont's wetland regulations are based upon the National Wetlands Inventory (http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/wetlands.htm). Many significant Class II wetlands, as defined in the Vermont Wetlands Inventory, can be found in Bristol:

Bristol Pond (Lake Winona) and the surrounding area. This area includes a significant Northern White Cedar Swamp and a Black Spruce Woodland Bog, and various marshes that harbor many diverse species of plants and animals. Several threatened and endangered species find refuge in Bristol's largest wetland.

The area west of Vermont Route 116, east of Hogback Mountain and north of Vermont Route 17. The lower part drains into Baldwin Creek and the New Haven River, and the far northern part flows north in Lewis Creek. This is mostly marshland with some Northern White Cedar Swamp and Bog.

Much of the area in The Watershed Center where the Norton Brook flows into the Little Otter Creek in the northwest part of the town, including the Old Vergennes Watershed pond and the marshes flowing out from it.

The area around Sycamore Park where Notch Brook joins the New Haven River near the junctions of Route 116, New Haven River Road and Carlstrom Road. This includes a rare Sugar Maple-Ostrich Fern Riverine Floodplain Forest, and River Gravel Shore and diverse marshlands.

Other smaller wetland areas are dispersed throughout the town.

Flood Hazard Areas. Flood hazard areas are discussed in the land use chapter of this plan.

Water Quality. Preserving ground water quality is a difficult task. The major threats to ground water are rooted in human development, but the best places for community expansion are close to the sources we depend on for potable water. Additionally, activities that used to be common practice such as pouring out used motor oil or household chemicals onto the ground, while decreasing in frequency, continue to occur. Threats to water quality include:

- Fertilizer and pesticide infiltration
- Landfill or septic leachate
- Leaking underground storage tanks
- Accidental or intentional release of hazardous materials
- Aquifer recharge area disruption
- Depletion through overuse

Agriculture and Forestry. Bristol has a wide variety of agricultural and forest lands that help to maintain open, undeveloped space and the rural nature of the town. These areas are important to the community, and will continue to be in the future; therefore, agriculture and forestry should be supported to be viable uses of the land.

Bristol's forest component is largely in the eastern half of the town. The largest segment is the Green Mountain National Forest, which includes the 3,738 acre Bristol Cliffs Wilderness in the southeastern part of the town. The other forests are private property with modest acreage in town ownership.

The farm component is largely in the western and northern areas of the town. Of the 100 or so farms of 100 years ago, there are now only 6 dairy farms. The trend toward larger farms is somewhat offset by the diversification of smaller farms into specialty production, such as organic vegetables and beef,

goat cheese and other products. Bristol has a farmer's market and some local businesses and growers participate in Addison County Localvores.

Goals

1. Bristol will conserve and protect natural resources, scenic resources, historical assets, recreational assets and wildlife assets that provide a significant benefit to the general public.
2. Bristol will benefit from community education programs that increase awareness of the positive intrinsic value of natural resources and the need to maintain diversity of ecosystems.
3. Bristol will support viable options for keeping agricultural land open for crops and pasture.
4. Bristol will identify strategies to begin reducing risks associated with development along the New Haven River in areas of erosion hazard.

Policies

1. Encourage and promote efforts to enhance the appearance of historic structures and districts.
2. Support the listing of historic sites and buildings on both the National and Vermont Register of Historic Places if the property owner desires it.
3. Promote and support the activities of organizations and individuals that are involved in community historical, cultural, scenic resource development and eco-tourism.
4. Encourage management of natural resources for benefit and enrichment of the community and support the efforts of the Bristol Conservation Commission.
5. Identify, manage, and protect the quality and quantity of public surface water, groundwater, and wetland resources, and encourage private property owners to adopt conforming practices.
6. Encourage landowners to allow access to the New Haven River for any future assessments of reaches previously not studied.
7. Promote and support the activities of organizations and individuals that are involved with public and private agencies, such as Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund(VSJF) and Vermont Community Foundation (VCF), to develop long-term sustainable options for agriculture and forestry.
8. Evaluate opportunities to conserve lands with high natural resource value, especially those adjacent to town-owned or already conserved properties.

Tasks

1. Identify and inventory significant historic structures, sites and districts.
2. Provide information and technical assistance regarding how to maintain and renovate historic structures in keeping with their history.

3. Increase the education of residents about the town's historic structures and sites.
4. Identify and inventory significant public scenic resources.
5. Apply the findings of geomorphic assessment to determination of setback requirements necessary to preserve riparian corridors and control water quality of the New Haven River and Baldwin Creek.
6. Review public access to the New Haven River, Baldwin Creek and Bristol Pond.
7. Consider the potential impact of wastewater treatment plant output to the New Haven River.
8. Develop a management plan to minimize introduction of invasive species into Bristol's natural communities.
9. Develop adequate stream bank buffers and setbacks that recognize the dynamic nature of the New Haven River and ensure additional infrastructure is not added in at-risk areas.
10. Continue process of adopting flood erosion hazard risk-reduction strategies into town zoning regulations.
11. Make an examination of the rights to water under the town.
12. Work with adjacent towns, local not for profit groups, and state agencies to develop biking and hiking trails that promote access to natural resource areas.

12. LAND USE

A. Overview

Natural growth and historic economic patterns have determined Bristol's land use settlement. Bristol is anchored by a village area that includes most of the high-density residential development and most of the commercial and limited industrial development within the town. Major east/west and north/south state roads, Routes 17 and 116, respectively, run through town. Several areas of residential concentration and small areas of limited commercial development have formed along these roads outside the village area. Bristol's forestry and wood products industries continue to contribute significantly to statewide forest product use, and Bristol's agricultural industry remains a vital sector of the local economy. Bristol also has several ongoing extraction operations that help to meet local road and drainage needs for gravel.

For consideration of current and future land uses, Bristol has been divided into three Planning Areas as shown on the Land Use Planning Areas Map (Appendix A):

- **Village Planning Area.** The Village Planning Area is largely made up of the former Village of Bristol. It includes 5% of the town's land area.
- **Rural Agricultural Planning Area.** The Village Planning Area is surrounded by rural land, which has seen limited low-density residential development. The lower elevation lands in this category are either (1) presently used for agriculture, (2) suitable, but not presently used, for agriculture but still not forested or (3) relatively small tracts of second-growth forest stands or brushy land. The Rural Agricultural Planning Area includes 44% of the town's land area.
- **Rural Conservation Planning Area.** The Rural Conservation Planning Area, includes mountains, steep slopes and some environmentally sensitive areas. Conservation, forestry, and recreation are three especially valuable uses of this area. The Conservation Planning Area accounts for 51% of the town's land area. Public lands within the area account for approximately half of that total, and most all forms of development or extraction would never be likely to occur on these lands. Private lands within this area are and will be subject to town planning and zoning. Commercial extraction is not allowed on such private lands. In addition, some of them may be subject to additional restrictions through easements or covenants that have been entered into by past or present owners.

While there are many issues discussed in this section, the ultimate recommendation is to reinforce and continue the settlement patterns that have already developed. As this Town Plan anticipates continued population growth and additional housing needs, the Village Planning Area requires particular attention in order to encourage a compact village pattern while balancing interests in appropriate size and type of economic growth along with residential growth. It is also recognized that economic pres-

sures on farmers and other users of the land resources located outside the Village Planning Area, will continue to create pressure for less restrictive zoning in those areas.

B. Current and Future Land Use and Settlement Patterns

Types of Uses. Bristol from its inception has enjoyed a full range of uses of its land: agricultural, residential, commercial (retail and office), manufacturing, timber harvesting and the extraction of sand, soil, gravel and rock. The other substantial "land uses" in Bristol are areas dominated by mountains and steep slopes, rivers and streams, and a large pond, which lie primarily in the conservation area. Sand, soil, gravel, and rock deposits sometimes closely adjoin pockets of substantial residential development.

The Selectboard has endorsed a request from the Planning Commission and Conservation Commission for state funding and assistance with further mapping that will clarify resources and limitations in Bristol and will be helpful for future land use planning.

Village Planning Area. The concentration of commercial facilities and some manufacturing has traditionally been in and around the Village Planning Area. This is also where the largest concentration of residential development has occurred. The development density increases closer to the downtown area. The Village Planning Area has very effective transportation access. Two major routes, Route 17, a major east-west route and Route 116, a major north-south route coincide in the downtown area.

The development pattern of increased density in proximity to the Village Planning Area has evolved quite naturally, and in recent years has been supported by the Town Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Due to geographical limitations, the logical growth patterns for the Village Planning Area are to the north and to the south. Based upon the survey conducted and participation at public meetings, there appears to be a desire to protect the Village Planning Area and nearby areas from further development of industrial uses, but have also expressed support for the continued light industrial use in the area including, but not limited to, the Pine/Maple/Munsill site, hopefully as a mixed-use development which could include components of office, light industrial, and perhaps residential on this long-established site.

This Town Plan envisions an expansion of the Village Planning Area to ensure that it can continue to accommodate future growth. It remains the goal of this Town Plan to continue to concentrate commercial and residential development in and around the Village Planning Area. The reasons for this are numerous and include caring for our unique community appearance, environmental protection, overall community aesthetics, easy pedestrian access, less auto dependency, fuel consumption and air pollution, and to encourage a sense of place and community. Although the basic uses provided do not need extensive revision, the zoning lines and designations left over from the village/town merger in 1995, in many cases still need to be clarified.

Since our last Town Plan, Bristol's downtown has received "Downtown Designation" from the State of Vermont. The property owners within this area are now eligible for various governmental support and grants. Further, the Bristol Downtown Community Partnership, an independent non-profit tax exempt entity, undertakes efforts in support of the business community in this area, and a Design Review Commission now reviews development within a design district which is the same as the designated downtown district to "protect the historic mix and commercial residential character and resources within this area, and to encourage new construction which will reinforce the best qualities of its existing character."

Given this entire plan's emphasis on protecting the downtown, as well as the importance of providing for Bristol's long-term residential needs, extraction will not be allowed in the Village Planning Area (see Appendix B).

Rural Agricultural Planning Area. It is widely recognized and appreciated that the open land that lies on three sides of the Village Planning Area contributes substantially to the aesthetics and quality of life for all our citizens. Bristol's Rural Agricultural Planning Area, some 11,639 acres or approximately 44% of the town, encompasses working farms, open meadows and fields, most of the New Haven River as well as many other streams, forests, low density housing, and several long-standing industrial and commercial sites.

It is recognized that those who own this land may bear a disproportionate responsibility for maintaining this community benefit. As such, continued efforts to support programs including use-value appraisal and dedication of development rights that help ease this burden will be supported. Zoning approaches to maintain this open space will be carefully considered. While we continue to support the existence of farming, we recognize that alteration of open land to forested land, while at times less aesthetically pleasing, may, in the long run, be the best alternative to development, for purposes of protection of water resources, for reduction of erosion and flooding, and for the exchange of carbon dioxide. Because of this, nothing is this plan shall be construed as preventing such alteration.

While trying to maintain our open areas, we also need to recognize the need for commercial and light industrial growth in portions of the Rural Agricultural Planning Area. To balance the residential growth in the Village Planning Area and the rural nature of the surrounding land, we will need to zone in such a way as to allow for commercial and light industrial growth centers. Among the locations to be considered for such growth centers could be portions of Route 116 South and Burpee Road. The current mix of uses, proximity to the Village, and access to major truck and commuter routes make these the logical areas for growth.

Rural Conservation Area Planning Area. While one could argue that the Village Planning Area is what defines Bristol as a community, it is also the mountains and rugged terrain, including those portions bordering the Village Planning Area on the east, that make our town unique. A large portion of these mountainous areas lies within the Rural Conservation Planning Area, and a substantial portion is either federal or state-owned land. The remainder is in private ownership, some of which is protected

by conservation easements and other restrictions. Land within the Rural Conservation Planning Area provides significant public benefits and recreational use, and is a source of forest products.

The lands in the Rural Conservation Planning Area are currently protected by the most restrictive municipal zoning in Bristol, which discourages dense development and promotes only uses that are compatible with the limitations or special features of this area. Residential development is presently permitted only with a density of 1 unit per 25 acres, or at a higher density, only as part of a planned unit development. It should be recognized, however, that the Rural Conservation Planning Area, while an area where development should be limited, is not a "Preservation Area" nor or all parts of it environmentally sensitive.

C. Specific Land Use Issues

Resource Extraction. The appropriate use of Bristol's natural resources inventory, both renewable and non-renewable, presents real challenges for the community. Deposits of soil, sand, gravel and rock ("earth resources") many times closely adjoin pockets of substantial residential development, and commercial extraction of these resources is often not compatible with this residential development (See Appendix E).

Extraction of soil, sand, gravel and rock has been a recent contentious issue for the community of Bristol. Section 526 of the current zoning regulations is vague on this topic and has been interpreted in two ways: to either allow extraction in only limited areas, or to allow extraction in all areas assuming certain conditions are met.

Bristol has a long history of extraction operations, with upwards of 25 pits having been in operation at one time or another. Based on the survey conducted and participation at public meetings, there appears to be public support for the concept that extraction of these resources should be permitted at least in limited areas in Bristol, but only when it can be done in a manner that takes into account public health, safety and welfare, to include such matters as aesthetics, visual and sound impacts, noise, air quality, water quality, size of the excavation area, hours of operation, reclamation plans, traffic and erosion. It is also understood that extraction may be necessary in connection with preparing a site for other types of development that have received any necessary permits, and that material extracted for this reason can be sold commercially. This provision shall not be construed as permitting the extraction and processing of soil, sand, gravel or rock solely for resale. On-site processing of such material is permitted only when the primary use of such material will be for on-site development and is undertaken in compliance with any regulations applicable to extraction as a principal use of land.

While there has been widespread agreement that where extraction is permitted that it must be done so only pursuant to a clear regulatory scheme dealing with all of the affects created by the extraction, drawing the line between the areas where extraction could be permitted with restrictions, and those where it would not be permitted under any circumstance, has been a very difficult issue. Information collected by the Planning Commission from a survey in 2006 and a poll of voters on Town Meeting day in 2011 suggests general support for permitting commercial sand and gravel extraction, with more

support for new extraction projects located outside the village area (Survey Question #34). Sand/gravel was also ranked among the lowest goals that Bristol as a community should pursue (Question #10).

The Planning Commission's initial proposed solution to all of this input was to prohibit extraction in certain zoning districts. After further consideration and input, and as a part of the ongoing re-zoning discussions, and supported by the poll taken of voters, it has been determined that the area prohibiting extraction should be identical to the Village Planning Area. It is anticipated that the rezoning now under discussion will result in these areas being included within the Village Planning Area where extraction will be prohibited. A final decision related to extraction has been to redefine the Village Planning Area so that it now includes residential growth areas to the north and south of the current village area. Due to the nature of the uses in the Village Planning Area, extraction would not be allowed anywhere in this area. Quarrying will continue to be prohibited in all zoning districts until this use can be further studied.

Industrial Uses. Bristol's history has included not only its rural, agricultural heritage and its development of a successful, commercial downtown, but also a substantial history of industrial ventures. Among other noteworthy operations, Bristol was the home of the Bristol Manufacturing Company, which at the turn of the last century was a large national supplier of coffins, and of the Drake Smith furniture factory. Three lumber companies still exist in Bristol, one of which recently converted from a lumber-processing operation into a wood chip manufacturer. As Bristol has evolved, however, residential and downtown business uses have increasingly made light industry development preferable to further heavy industrial development.

The distinction between light and heavy industry is made on the basis of the activity's nature and scope, and the degree of off-site impacts. Light industry should result in no substantial off-site impacts and its primary processing, assembly, packaging, and storage activity should take place indoors. Where light industry activities abut residential or downtown properties, activities should be attractively screened from abutting properties and public right-of-ways.

The town recognizes that some industry, such as lumber mills and manufacturers of forestry products, although commonly regarded as heavy industry, can be situated and operated with no substantial off-site impact. These historically important uses would therefore not be prohibited, even where some of their primary activities take place outdoors. Similarly, extraction and quarrying would not in all cases be considered prohibited uses, except in the Village Planning Area. The town does intend, however, that quarrying be prohibited until the town has deliberated further on all the potential impacts of quarrying.

Flood Hazard Areas. The Town of Bristol has established a Flood Hazard Area overlay district within its zoning ordinance. The purpose of that district is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the residents of Bristol and to prevent increased flood damage due to excess development. The Flood Hazard Area includes all special flood hazard areas and flood way areas designated by the Federal

Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) for the Town of Bristol as currently exist or as are revised in the future. (See Flood Hazard Areas Map, Appendix D.)

Any development in this overlay district is required to meet minimum flood proofing standards and conform to flood hazard regulations. No public sewer facilities should be extended to these areas. Any extension or additions to transportation or public water facilities in these areas should be carried out only after careful consideration of whether the infrastructure will facilitate further development within the flood hazard area.

At any time when either landowner or FEMA finds, through field analysis, that there are differences on the ground from areas shown on the FIRM maps, such alterations should be made known to Town of Bristol and made a part of any permit or permitting process under the town's ordinances.

Fluvial Erosion Hazard Areas. Bristol should undertake a careful review of the fluvial erosion hazards along major waterways, which may identify a need to regulate development, land alterations and other activities to avoid and minimize losses in the hazard areas. The State of Vermont has established geomorphic assessment procedures for defining Fluvial Erosion Hazard Areas and has data available to assist the town in establishing those areas.

Design Review District. The Design Review District was created by ordinance in 2006 in connection with the Downtown Designation process. It is an overlay zoning district that includes the entire area that is part of Bristol's designated downtown (the current Block Commercial zoning district and portions of the Municipal and Neighborhood Commercial zoning districts). A map of this overlay district may be found in the appendices to this plan.

Virtually all development in the overlay district, whether new or modification of existing buildings or sites, must be reviewed by the Design Review Commission, whether or not a variance is sought in connection with the application or whether or not a building permit is required. The review, which is not intended to be onerous, is aimed at maintaining the design character consistent with the historic mix of commercial and residential buildings in the Design Review District. It is acknowledged that the zoning provisions that enable this process are in need of revision. (See Downtown District map, Appendix C.)

Flexibility in Zoning Densities. In order to promote the most appropriate use of land, to bring about the maximum preservation of undeveloped land, and in order to protect and enhance the qualities of open land such as scenery, aesthetics, the ability to carry out agricultural and forest practices, and conservation of wildlife habitat and recreational use, Bristol shall seek to incorporate the following tools into its zoning ordinance:

- **Lot Size Averaging / Density-Based Zoning.** In zoning districts where the maximum density would be less than one home for every two acres of land, Bristol should consider using lot size averaging or density-based zoning. This zoning technique allows landowners to create smaller house lots (typically one acre or smaller in size) while keeping the overall density of

the district low (ex. 1 home per 5, 10 or 25 acres). This is accomplished by revising the zoning district standards to include both a minimum lot size and a maximum density. This technique provides maximum flexibility for landowners to develop their land in a way that works best for them. Owners can create house lots for family members or to sell when income is needed, while retaining more of their acreage. This approach works well for landowners who from time-to-time want to create a lot, but who do not want to develop their entire property.

- **Cluster Development / Planned Unit Development.** The Town of Bristol's zoning ordinance already incorporates provisions for cluster development, or as it is referred to in-state law, Planned Unit Development (PUD) into most of the town's zoning districts. Typically within a PUD, development will be "clustered" onto a smaller portion of land than would otherwise be allowed under the zoning with the remaining land set aside as permanent open space or working land. The PUD provisions of the town's zoning regulations have not been frequently used and the re-zoning process should seek opportunities to encourage greater use of PUDs.

Goals

1. Bristol will maintain and enhance its historic settlement pattern:
   a. Anchored by a Village Planning Area containing high-density residential development and all vital municipal services;
   b. Surrounded by rural countryside with the possibility of one or more hamlets; and
   c. Enhanced by protection of our natural environment.
2. Land development will be regulated and managed in a manner that takes into account the important cultural and natural resources of our community.
3. A reasonable balance between community imposed limitations on land use and the rights of individual land owners will be maintained.
4. The town will provide and maintain conditions promoting the health, safety and welfare of its residents.
5. Property owners will be protected from a government taking for the use of the public without fair compensation.
6. The town will seek a reasonable balance between the needs of people who live within the Village Planning Area and those who do not.
7. Bristol will invite and encourage participation of all residents into the planning process.

Policies

1. Maintain the town's historic settlement pattern, consisting primarily of a Village Planning Area, a substantial Rural Agricultural Planning Area, and a Conservation Planning Area that substantially restricts development.
2. Administer land use regulations, including zoning regulations, in a fair and consistent manner in accordance with applicable development land use policies of the plan.
3. Identify and protect significant and historic structures, sites and districts.
4. Protect and conserve scenic and natural resources.
5. Encourage reasonable development patterns and careful planning as to setback, topography issues, drainage, and rights-of-way, through creation and/or enhancement of current town regulations including subdivision and site plan regulations.
6. Maintain a pedestrian-friendly compact downtown.
7. Encourage the development of business and employment opportunities, and home businesses.
8. Encourage the use of renewable natural resources for agriculture, silviculture, and compatible small businesses and light industries, particularly those that add value to local resources.
9. Support agricultural and forestry-based enterprises that have been an important part of Bristol's history, including value-added products.
10. Seek to preserve rural character at the same time as encouraging business and light industry growth.

11. **Not to enter private property without prior permission from the owner, or agent of the owner, of that property unless specifically authorized by statute.**

12. **Notify affected property owners if zoning changes are being considered that will in any way impact possible uses of their property.**

13. **Recognize with respect to the Village Planning Area that:**

    a. The downtown area is, and should continue to be, the heart of the town. It serves as the commercial and social center of the town. Pedestrian and road traffic patterns should encourage the use of the downtown area as the focus for business and municipal activities.

    b. A strong and vibrant downtown, with self-sustaining economically viable businesses, is desirable and important for the present and future well being of the people of Bristol. This recognition is particularly important for purposes of maintaining the Downtown Designation status in order to receive federal and state grant money and other government assistance for making improvements in the Village area. It is believed that these grants and assistance principally will be for making improvements in various forms of infrastructure. However, in some cases the grants and assistance will be to help individual landlords or businesses make improvements to their property.

    c. It is desirable to fully support the Bristol Downtown Community Partnership in its efforts to beautify the downtown, increase pedestrian safety, organize downtown events, and strengthen businesses.

    d. It is desirable to seek federal and state grant money and other assistance to improve the strength and vitality of downtown businesses. However, in attempting to qualify for and pursue such grants and assistance, it is not intended or desired that businesses outside the downtown be penalized or otherwise subjected to regulatory burdens more strict than those for the Downtown District.

    e. Locating a large grocery store, supermarket, or any mall-like or strip-retail facilities outside the Village Planning Area is considered undesirable for the town and would be particularly harmful to the viability of similar businesses in the Village Planning Area.

    f. Consideration should be given to developing one or more new areas where light industry can be appropriately located within the Village Planning Area.

    g. The Town Green and its open space should be preserved since these provide important recreational and social opportunities to town residents and visitors and foster a sense of outdoor community space.

    h. Continuing efforts to support the Village Planning Area, including traffic calming, increased parking, and support of mixed use development remain priorities.

    i. Extraction will not be allowed in the Village Planning Area.

14. **Maintain the present Rural Agricultural Planning Area primarily for agricultural and limited residential use in accordance with the following principles:**

    a. Recognize the economic strains on area farmers and other owners of undeveloped land, and thus be supportive of current-use programs and other programs that minimize taxes for those keeping property in its undeveloped state;

    b. Avoid zoning requirements that place unfair restriction on farming side affects; and

c. Re-zoning processes should seek opportunities to encourage greater use of PUDs in the Rural Agricultural Planning Area and flexible density-based zoning in the districts outside the Village Planning Area.

15. Recognize that there are a number of business (non-residential) establishments located outside the Village Planning Area, many of which have a long history in Bristol, and are also an important part of the character, culture and economy of the town. Recognize that, just as traditional businesses in the Village Planning Area are important, so too are those traditional businesses that are located outside the Village Planning Area.
16. Produce fair town zoning regulations with respect to excavation of soil, sand, gravel and rock.
17. Prohibit quarrying (which includes mining) until it can be further studied.

Tasks

1. Develop new regulations for extraction, which would include prohibiting commercial extraction throughout the Village Planning Area, as well as in the Rural Conservation Planning Area, and allowing it elsewhere only with restrictions as discussed in this plan.
2. Review all existing zones and conform zoning changes to the adopted Town Plan.
3. Explore locations for possible light industry development.
4. Consider the establishment of Fluvial Erosion Hazard Areas using established geomorphic assessment procedures and, if appropriate, the adoption of zoning regulations to avoid and minimize losses in these areas.
5. Consider a "right to farm" ordinance protecting the agricultural community's right to conduct business in proximity to residential areas when such activities are not protected by VSA Section 4413 (d).
6. Determine if geomorphic mapping indicates that there are environmentally sensitive areas that should be added to the conservation zone or protected by some other method.

13. COMPATIBILITY

Bristol shares its borders with Lincoln, New Haven, Starksboro, Monkton and to a lesser extent, Middlebury, and Ripton. Not surprisingly in a state that values "downtowns" (even if just a few buildings) surrounded by agricultural land or forest, virtually all of these borders basically consist of areas that are not substantially developed. There are a few exceptions to this, principally where state highways or other major roads cross from one town to the other. The two state roads which intersect and combine in the Bristol downtown, Route 17 and Route 116, present potential for additional development as they cross into other towns, Route 116 north and Route 17 East into Starksboro, and Route 116 and Route 17 to the west in New Haven. However, even at these points, no substantial development is presently planned either by Bristol or by our neighbors.

In virtually all cases, the areas at the borders of Bristol, and the six adjoining municipalities, are in Bristol's current Conservation zoning district, which allows density of only 1 unit per 25 acres, or the RA5 zoning district, which establishes a 5-acre minimum lot size. In two very small areas, one each on the Monkton and Starksboro borders, the current RA-2 zoning district, which establishes a 2-acre minimum lot size abuts the town line.

With the exception of Lincoln (discussed below), similar zoning exists in the adjoining municipalities:

- **Ripton.** Conservation District – 5 acre zoning
- **Monkton.** Conservation District and Low Density Agricultural District
- **New Haven.** RA10 – Rural Agricultural – 10 acre zoning. Flood Hazard District – 25 acre zoning
- **Starksboro.** Forest and Conservation – 25 acre zoning. Agriculture, Scenic, Rural Residential – 25 acre zoning.
- **Middlebury.** Forest Conservation District - 25 acre zoning. Agricultural Rural Residential District – 1 + 2 acre zoning.
- **Lincoln.** Open Lands - Conserved. Outlying. (The Lincoln zoning code has a "case by case" approach that allows development in certain conditions down to 1 acre zoning. Since virtually all of the border land is logically, even if not by restricted zoning, not subject to high density development, there seems to be no actual incompatibility. The area to watch is along River Road as Lincoln zoning is more permissive than Bristol's.)

The uses and densities zoned in Bristol are generally compatible with those zoned at the points where Bristol borders its neighbors. The principal exceptions to this, are the limited areas of 2 acre zoning, on the Bristol side in the case of Starksboro and Monkton, and along the Lincoln border. Actual development has historically been consistent.

14. IMPLEMENTATION

This plan is designed to serve as a primary reference when making community decisions, and to provide guidance to local officials when setting public policy. Each section of this plan has policies for the town to follow in order to reach the goals stated in those sections. In addition to those policies and goals provided throughout the plan, the Town Plan will be implemented through the review and revision of zoning regulations to support the goals, policies and tasks of this plan.

This chapter summarizes many of the mechanisms that are available to make sure the plan remains current and relevant.

When reviewing this chapter, it is important for the reader to understand the distinction between goals, policies and implementation tasks. For the purposes of the Bristol Town Plan:

- **Goals.** Expresses the long range community vision relative to one or more issues or topics. This is a statement of achievement to which the town aspires.
- **Policies.** Expresses the town's intent, or position, with regard to specific issues or topics. In certain settings, such as during Board of Adjustment hearings or Act 250 proceedings, policy statements should serve as the basis for determining a projects' conformance with the town plan. While other sections of the plan, in particular the narrative sections and goal statements, provide useful context for understanding the policies, it is the policies alone that serve as the final statement regarding the town's position.
- **Tasks.** Describes a specific action to be taken to support one or more policies and achieve the community's long term goals.

Implementation tasks are assigned to either the Planning Commission or the Select Board. In some cases, further assistance may be sought by one of these Boards from another committee, agency or employee, as for example, the Conservation Commission, the Energy Committee or the Town Administrator.

A priority schedule (1 year, 3 year, 5 years, or on going) was set for each task, thus establishing a time frame for the task to be completed.

	Task	Responsibility	Schedule
HOUSING	1. Develop a plan for housing needs of the elderly.	Planning Commission	5 years
	2. Review setbacks in certain districts when necessary for additions of "in-law" apartments or apartments that are for elderly use.	Planning Commission	1 year
	3. Explore possible locations for additional high density housing and lodging.	Planning Commission	1 year
UTILITIES AND FACILITIES	1. Explore alternative sewage treatment options to accommodate new development.	Selectboard	3 years
	2. Review and inspect all town facilities and buildings periodically, ensuring that insurance and maintenance protects the town's investments.	Selectboard	on-going
	3. Maintain current Operation and Maintenance Manuals for the town's service departments (i.e. landfill, water and sewer) that address technical standards and requirements and insure continuity in their operations when there are staffing changes.	Selectboard	on-going
	4. Review process whereby the owner of a site or facility may submit in writing a plan to the town for designating its use and protection by the town. Such a designation would create a recordable lien on such a site, which would run with the property. If accepted, this submission would then be added to a town listing of such sites.	Planning Commission	3 years
	5. Develop five- and ten-year plan for the routine maintenance and major renovation (if needed) of all the town-owned buildings, including possible funding sources.	Selectboard	on-going
	6. Explore the feasibility of extending the water lines down to the Lovers Lane Area.	Selectboard	on-going
TRANSPORTATION	1. Review the town's present sight line requirements for new driveways, taking into account the steepness of the affected highway, present speed limits, etc.	Selectboard	3 years
	2. Adopt a highway standards policy that would consider the following: a. A requirement that new driveways and access roads be designed to standards which consider Vermont's AOT standards A-76 and B-71 and among other things, address minimum widths, angle of entry, slope of entry, and proper treatment of dead end roads. b. A standard for acceptance of new roads into the town highway system. c. A method for reviewing existing situations that cannot meet one or more of these standards and a method for mitigating or allowing such situations. d. Design standards that would mitigate excessive water run-off, including easements to the municipality for proper off-highway drainage.	Selectboard, PC	3 years
	3. Review recommendations in the 2002 Traffic and Parking Study regarding traffic calming measures and parking in the downtown area.	PC, Selectboard	1 year
	4. Work to make the town, particularly the private sector in the downtown, and in the development of additional so-called hamlet areas, pedestrian-friendly and more accessible to people with disabilities.	PC, Selectboard	ongoing
	5. Coordinate transportation planning and programming to be compatible with the land use planning efforts of local and regional plans.	Planning Commission	ongoing
	6. Investigate the feasibility of using more rail traffic.	Planning Commission	5 years
	7. Investigate the possibility of a public transportation option for the Bristol, Lincoln, Starksboro and Hinesburg area.	Planning Commission	1 year
	8. Consider the provision of wider and more accessible shoulders sufficient for safe bicycle or pedestrian traffic along at least one town road from the village to Sycamore Park and to Bartlett Falls.	PC, Selectboard	5 years
	9. Explore methods of expressing support for train service (currently provided by Amtrak via the Ethan Allen Express) between Rutland, Vermont and New York City as an efficient transportation option for Bristol residents to travel out of state.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
	10. Encourage & support park-and-ride or commuter parking spaces/areas by designating convenient/accessible space near the town center with access to public transportation.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
	11. Explore traffic calming and truck restriction measures throughout the core village area.	Selectboard	1 year

		Task	Responsibility	Schedule
ENERGY	1.	Evaluate existing zoning for its impact on the use, development and location of renewable energy utilization, and develop zoning guidelines for installation of wind turbines.	SB, PC, ZBA	on-going
	2.	Explore and develop the designation of Bristol as a "Pilot Town," and consequent grant eligibility.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
	3.	Promote Bristol as an example town for energy policy, resources, and efficiency and conservation measures.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
	4.	Make educational materials available for homeowners, builders, businesses and nonprofits concerning clean energy and energy efficient technologies, including materials for the Vermont Energy Star Homes program and Home Performance With Energy Star residential energy audit program.	Selectboard	on-going
	5.	Facilitate the use of Efficiency Vermont's services to Bristol's businesses and industries.	Selectboard	on-going
	6.	Consider the adoption of building codes to increase energy efficiency to the Vermont Energy Star Homes program standard.	Selectboard	5 years
	7.	Install bicycle racks at all public facilities where feasible.	Selectboard	3 years
	8.	Establish and maintain a town library of resource materials on energy conservation and practices, especially as they pertain to housing, transportation and industry. Also include a list of energy specific agencies or organizations, and the services they offer.	Selectboard	on-going
	9.	Reduce reliance on current electrical grid supply by supporting use of renewable energy net metering and/or encourage protecting the grid by including renewable feeds.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
	10.	Study the hydropower potential of the New Haven River and Baldwin Creek.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
	11.	Encourage and support energy cooperatives such as wood pellet production and cooperative/multi-family wood burning furnaces.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
	12.	Work more closely with state legislative representatives to learn of and encourage energy independence through state policy and funding.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
	13.	Add energy resources and information to the town website.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
	14.	Support the work of the Bristol Energy Committee as it hosts town gatherings to solicit, gather, and disseminate information resources.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years
ED	1.	Identify and develop alternative ways to support the educational infrastructure that would ultimately place less emphasis on the property tax.	PC, Selectboard	on-going
CHILD	1.	Contact Addison County Child Care Services to identify steps that can be taken to meet child care needs of Bristol.	Planning Commission	1 year
ECONOMIC	1.	Assess the needs of existing and potential light industry.	Planning Commission	1 year
	2.	Study the feasibility of establishing a site that is appropriate for development of a light industry industrial park, incubator park, or business park, including the necessary town infrastructure for its development.	Planning Commission	3 years
	3.	Consider using real estate tax abatement, tax stabilization or other local property tax relief mechanisms to encourage development of a light industry industrial park, incubator or business park.	Planning Commission	3 years
	4.	Explore commercial building codes that would include specifications for energy efficiency and conservation.	PC, Energy Committee	3 years

	Task	Responsibility	Schedule
RESOURCES	1. Identify and inventory significant historic structures, sites and districts.	Planning Commission	5 years
	2. Provide information and technical assistance regarding how to maintain and renovate historic structures in keeping with their history.	Planning Commission	3 years
	3. Increase the education of residents about the town's historic structures and sites.	Planning Commission	on-going
	4. Identify and inventory significant public scenic resources.	Planning Commission	on-going
	5. Apply the findings of geomorphic assessment to determination of setback requirements necessary to preserve riparian corridors and control water quality of the New Haven River and Baldwin Creek.	PC, Conservation Commission	3 years
	6. Review public access to the New Haven River, Baldwin Creek and Bristol Pond.	Planning Commission	3 years
	7. Consider the potential impact of wastewater treatment plant output to the New Haven River.	Planning Commission	5 years
	8. Develop a management plan to minimize introduction of invasive species into Bristol's natural communities.	PC, Conservation Commission	3 years
RESOURCES	9. Develop adequate stream bank buffers and setbacks that recognize the dynamic nature of the New Haven River and ensure additional infrastructure is not added in at-risk areas.	PC, Conservation Commission	3 years
	10. Continue process of adopting flood erosion hazard risk-reduction strategies into town zoning regulations.	PC, Conservation Commission	3 years
	11. Make an examination of the rights to water under the town.	Planning Commission	1 year
	12. Work with adjacent towns, local not for profit groups, and state agencies to develop biking and hiking trails that promote access to natural resource areas.	PC, Conservation Commission	3 years
LAND USE	1. Develop new regulations for extraction, which would include prohibiting commercial extraction throughout the Village Planning Area, as well as in the Rural Conservation Planning Area, and allowing it elsewhere only with restrictions as discussed in this plan.	Planning Commission	1 year
	2. Review all existing zones and conform zoning changes to the adopted Town Plan.	Planning Commission	1 year
	3. Explore locations for possible light industry development.	Planning Commission	1 year
	4. Consider the establishment of Fluvial Erosion Hazard Areas using established geomorphic assessment procedures and, if appropriate, the adoption of zoning regulations to avoid and minimize losses in these areas.	Planning Commission	3 years
	5. Consider a "right to farm" ordinance protecting the agricultural community's right to conduct business in proximity to residential areas when such activities are not protected by VSA Section 4413 (d).	Planning Commission	1 year
	6. Determine if geomorphic mapping indicates that there are environmentally sensitive areas that should be added to the conservation zone or protected by some other method.	PC, Conservation Commission	3 years