

9. Services and Facilities

Introduction

In 2010, the Town approved a bond referendum of \$9 million dollars to fund improvements to the downtown historic public building, street and drainage improvements and open space acquisition. This funding is being used to help restore the downtown Naval Reserve Armory in conjunction with the grant to renovate the building into a Maritime Center.

Police Department

The Bristol Police Department is a nationally and state accredited police Department. Although new to the law enforcement field, universities, hospitals and other professional organizations have, for many years, undergone similar accreditation processes to prove compliance with a set of professional, nationwide and state standards. Accreditation serves to distinguish participating organizations as having met professional standards of conduct and service. The Bristol Police received its initial National Accreditation Award in November 2007, and most recently was reaccredited in November 2013. The initial State Accreditation Award was received in December 2013. Each Accreditation cycle is for three years, consisting of an onsite assessment and panel review in front of the commissioners.

Senior Center

For more than 40 years, the Benjamin Church Senior Center has operated with a mission to provide seniors a safe, supportive and nurturing environment. The Center acts as an advocate for the rights and well-being of our senior citizens on a wide variety of issues. It is a place where seniors can access information about resources, programs and services available on the local, state and federal levels. The Center, located in the historic Benjamin Church Home, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 – 3:30 and offers many social, wellness, and educational opportunities for adult members 55+ in the Bristol area, with programs specially designed to meet the interest of the generation they serve. Programs include a daily meal in a social setting, weekly bingo, cards, knitting and dancing, services such as trips to the grocery store or medical appointments, and recreational outings. Wellness programs are offered with Visiting Nurses of Bristol County. The Center

also provides assistance with accessing services such as tax preparation, housing, health insurance and food stamp (SNAP) enrollments. The Center addresses issues of access by providing free transportation using the Center's own bus and driver.

Accomplishments

Following the historic March 2010 floods, the Town was able to secure just over \$4 million in grants from the US Economic Development Agency Special Appropriations and US HUD Community Development Block Grant –Disaster Recovery Program to complete Phase 1 of the Tanyard Brook Culvert Improvement project. The project extended from the outfall at Walker's Cove north to Garfield Avenue and included installation of a tide gate at the outfall with an enlarged culvert. This was a long anticipated project by the Town and will mitigate flooding in the Tanyard Brook watershed which includes a low-moderate income residential neighborhood and many businesses. The planning for Phase 2 of this culvert improvement project is currently underway.

The Town continues to work on improvements to the downtown waterfront that include amenities for the commercial fishermen. Phase 1 of the State Street Dock Upgrade was completed in 2012 which substantially improved the crumbling and unsafe wharf. Improvements included a walkway around the wharf, an area for loading and unloading of commercial fishing boats, and infrastructure for future improvements such as lighting, installation of a crane, and water service.

In 2011, the Town completed construction on the new Fire Department Headquarters at Annawamscutt Drive. This new building was built as an addition to the existing Hydraulion Fire Station and includes rescue and an emergency operations center. The Building was constructed with energy conservation and sustainability in mind and earned a LEED Silver certification. As part of this transition for the rescue department, the Town sold the former rescue building at the intersection of High and Franklin Street which was no longer large enough to garage the modern rescue vehicles.

The Town's new Animal Shelter and Humane Education Center is nearing completion. This building, located at Minturn Farm Road, replaces the current shelter which is in a serious state of disrepair. The new shelter was designed with a state of the art layout and will serve the Town for many years to come.

The Town was fortunate to receive the former Quinta Gamelin Army Reserve Building on Asylum Drive in Colt State Park for use as the new Community Center. This building is the perfect fit for the programming that the Department of Parks and Recreation conducts and is adjacent to the other Town-owned recreational facilities at the Town Beach. The Town Beach parking lot was improved with ARRA Funding to make it a green parking lot and has received state recognition for the design and implementation. As a result of the parking lot improvements and new drainage system on the north side funded in part with a RIDEM 319 grant, the Town beach has not been closed as a result of high bacteria levels in two years. This is quite an accomplishment and is used as a model for other projects in the State.

With an ARRA funding energy grant, the Town completed the following renovations to save energy in Town-owned buildings: New boilers in the Senior Center, Department of Public Works, Downtown Naval Reserve Armory and Police Station; new windows in the Burnside Building, Town Hall, and Fire Station at Church Street, and new light bulbs in the Water Pollution Control Facility. It is expected that the Town will see significant savings as result of this investment.

The Bristol County Water Authority recently completed installation of water line upgrade which will provide improved water service to the Poppasquash Road neighborhood for fire protection.

The State Veterans Home on Metacom Avenue is in the planning stages to complete a substantial construction project to build a new facility funded by the state approved bond.

The Town has made repeated attempts to site a solar farm on the Town landfill. This project involved a third party contractor building the solar, selling the energy to the National Grid and paying the Town rent. However, these attempts did not advance since the Town's contractor did not win at the National Grid auction.

Roger Williams University expanded their campus since the 2009 Plan Update with the construction of a new sports complex, a new dormitory, and a new sailing center (in progress). In conjunction with the new residential dormitory, RWU installed a new water tower which improves water services on the campus and in the neighborhood. This was a significant benefit to the Town and the residents where water service had been very poor previously and impacted public safety.

Statement of Goals and Policies

Continually seek to strengthen the quality of all of the Town's public facilities, including maintaining high quality school facilities, sufficient and high quality public water and sewer systems to meet projected growth, and provide adequate services and facilities for emergency situations. Growth management policies will ensure sustainable services and facilities for present and future generations. The Town should lead by example and design facilities that meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Efficiency Design) neighborhood design silver certification. The Capital Improvement Plan with a five year horizon and annual capital budget should be continue to be updated and implemented.

Based on the critical issues described in the Introduction and the overarching goal stated above, this section presents the goals and policies developed by the Town of Bristol to guide its services and facilities. These goals encompass goals expressed in the other elements of this plan.

Goal 1. Continually seek to strengthen the quality of the Bristol/Warren School System's facilities in order to smooth the progress of teaching and programming.

Policies to achieve Goal 1

- A. Continually review and seek to improve teaching and program quality through appropriate coordination of all levels of government.

Goal 2. Provide Bristol with sufficient water to meet projected growth.

Policies to achieve Goal 2

- A. Protect current water sources from further deterioration.
- B. Promptly implement the program to upgrade the water delivery system to include new pipes and looping to improve circulation and pressure.
- C. Increase efforts to conserve water at all levels of use.
- D. Ensure that Bristol maintains into the future its options to use surface reservoirs.
- E. The costs and benefits of future supply systems should be evaluated carefully by the town.
- F. Implement strong effective measures to improve the management structure and administration of the BCWA.
- G. Establish a municipal drought management response strategy between the Town and the BCWA, in conjunction with state agencies and in compliance with the State Guide Plan Element 724 Rhode Island Drought Management Plan.

Goal 3. Manage growth so as not to overtax the sewer system

Policies to achieve Goal 3

- A. Implement plans to expand gravity flow sewers.
- B. Plan for growth in areas that are, or can be, served by the sewer system.
- C. Direct growth away from areas that have no sewers and lie over or near critical environmental resources.
- D. Reduce the amount of stormwater infiltration into the sewer system during significant storm events.
- E. Revisit the Wastewater Facilities Plan of 2000 and determine effectiveness of the implementation and additional projects that may need to be addressed.

Goal 4. Maintain a favorable tax base.

Policies to achieve Goal 4

- A. Encourage balanced growth.
- B. Manage growth in concert with the fiscal capacities of the community.

Goal 5. Maintain public infrastructure and services at a high level of excellence.

Policies to achieve Goal 5

- A. Measure and monitor the quality of services so as to maintain high quality.
- B. Plan for changing service requirements as demographics and economics change.
- C. Continue to update and fund the five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the Town's infrastructure and ensure adequate funding for Town services.

Goal 6. Plan for and provide adequate services and facilities for emergency situations.

Policies to support Goal 6

- A. Maintain the high quality of Bristol's emergency services and facilities.
- B. Continue to update hazard mitigation plans which will result in fewer storm related impacts and losses to life and property.

Goal 7. Continually improve the efficiency of government while working to achieve excellent and equitable services.

Policies to support Goal 7

- A. Seek ways to cooperate with the private sector to maintain and improve facilities and services.

- B. Seek new, more efficient ways of including volunteers in the operation of Town government.

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Implementation Actions

#	ACTION	TIME FRAME ¹				RESPONSIBLE AGENT
		S	M	L	O	
SF-1	In 2013, the Town prepared a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in order to prioritize future funding needs. The Town should continue to update and put aside money in the Town's budget to implement the CIP and comprehensive plan for prioritized issues.	√			√	Town Administrator and Town Council, Finance Department
SF-2	Continue the road and drainage maintenance program. Continue to implement and utilize a GIS database for management of pavement and sidewalk maintenance.	√			√	Department of Public Works
SF-3	Consider appointing an existing position in Town government to assume the functions of a "Recycling Coordinator." Improve and emphasize public education of recycling and provide bilingual sources of recycling information.	√			√	Town Administrator, Town Council.
SF-4	Continue and step up efforts to increase public awareness of the role of citizens in keeping Bristol clean.	√			√	Department of Public Works.
SF-5	Continue to utilize compost facility and use landscape maintenance specialists to assist the Department of Public Works crews.	√			√	Town Administrator.
SF-6	Move forward with the recommended improvements for the Phase 2 Tanyard Brook and State Street Reservoir. Seek Federal and State Grants to augment funding of this project to supplement the Town bond.	√	√			Department of Public Works
SF-7	Upgrade Bristol County's current water supply sources to ensure long term viability. Construct new water towers in high demand areas and where required to increase pressure (along northern part of Metacom Avenue) and maintain existing towers.		√	√		Bristol County Water Authority
SF-8	Continue taking necessary steps toward the long term rehabilitation and long-term availability of the drinking water reservoirs, the treatment plant and	√			√	Bristol County Water Authority

¹ S: short-term; M: medium-term; L: long-term; O: ongoing

#	ACTION	TIME FRAME ¹				RESPONSIBLE AGENT
		S	M	L	O	
	the raw water transmission lines; including, the Shad Factory Pipeline. Add other reservoirs. Maintain watershed rights and ownership to Shad Factory Pipeline.					
SF-9	Prepare a local drought management plan that includes public education, local water conservation regulation, and enforcement and with assistance from state agencies and the BCWA in developing coordinated response actions.	√				Town Council and Bristol County Water Authority.
SF-10	Maintain the current minimum 10,000 square foot lot size in most undeveloped areas that are sewered and 2 acres on Poppasquash, which is lacking public water and sewer. While smaller lots can be developed with suitable wastewater treatment, Poppasquash is vulnerable to well-water drawdown and intrusion of salt or brackish water into the aquifer that feed the wells. A combination of lack of sewer facilities and endangerment of the underground water resources require strong consideration for two-acre zoning. Consider rezoning other vacant areas with no public water and sewer to two-acre minimum lot size. Maintain conservation development initiatives.	√			√	Planning Board and Town Council.
SF-11	Explore options for additional water supply for temporary shortages. Consider creation of a desalination plant for additional emergency water supply. See action item 9 above.		√	√		Bristol County Water Authority, Town Administrator and Community Development Department.
SF-12	Encourage water conservation techniques such as gray-water usage, blue buildings, and low-flush toilets. This should be required on all government buildings and encouraged in all future commercial and industrial buildings.	√			√	Bristol County Water Authority, Department of Community Development and Town

#	ACTION	TIME FRAME ¹				RESPONSIBLE AGENT
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						Council.
SF-13	Work to improve traffic flow for residential and emergency vehicles on the east side of Metacom Avenue and the west side of Hope Street. Continue to implement the Metacom Avenue Corridor Management Plan and advocate the use of roundabouts.	√	√			Planning Board, and Department of Community Development
SF-14	Upgrade and repair the emergency communication and warning system. Increase public awareness of the system (e.g., signage). Implement an Emergency Call System to notify Bristol residents.	√				Emergency Management Officer, Police Department, Town Administrator
SF-15	Maintain emergency sheltering in locations outside of floodplain.	√				Emergency Management Officer and Police Department
SF-16	Consider expansion of the Police Station, to utilize the recently acquired abutting property, as part of the proposed Capital Improvement Plan.		√	√		Police Department.
SF-17	Continue to upgrade and improve the current sewer system.				√	Department of Water Pollution Control
SF-18	Continue to provide residents with a hazardous waste center for disposing computers and other items that can be recycled at the landfill.				√	, Department of Public Works
SF-19	Continue to explore alternative energy source for municipal power. Conduct an energy audit of Town buildings. Create an energy committee to coordinate and oversee implementation of energy saving initiatives.	√			√	Town Administrator and Town Council
SF-20	Review and if necessary, revise and update the Wastewater Facilities Plan of April, 2000.	√				Department of Water Pollution

#	ACTION	TIME FRAME ¹				RESPONSIBLE AGENT
		S	M	L	O	
						Control
SF-21	Consider creation of a Stormwater Utility District to help fund stormwater upgrades and as an incentive to reduce impervious pavement in areas of poor drainage.	√				Town Administrator, Town Council, Finance Department
SF-22	Continue to monitor and update as needed town service equipment, vehicles, and buildings. As upgrades are required, look to energy efficient replacements.	√			√	Town Administrator, Department of Public Works
SF-23	Continue to implement the drainage improvements at the High School parking lot and Guiteras School parking lot. These improvements will address stormwater runoff as well as water quality that impacts the Silver Creek watershed.	√			√	Department of Community Development, School District
SF-24	Continue to implement the Town's sidewalk maintenance program. Require new sidewalks as part of private development along Metacom Avenue.	√				Town Administrator, Department of Public Works, Planning Board, Department of Community Development
SF-25	Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include a new Public Zone to allow a mix of uses (but not residential) in the decommissioned school buildings on High Street (Walley and Byfield on Town Common and Reynolds across the street). Move forward with renovations to the former Walley School to facilitate its re-use. Consider re-use as artist space, incubator space, or shared work space.	√				Town Administrator, Planning Board, Town Council and Department of Community Development,
SF-26	Renovate Town Hall with a state-of-the-art projector and sound system for presentations to the Town Council.	√				Town Administrator, Department of Public Works
SF-27	When feasible, convert Town buildings (i.e. Quinta Gamelin) to a natural gas heating system.	√				Town Administrator,

#	ACTION	TIME FRAME ¹				RESPONSIBLE AGENT
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						Department of Public Works
SF-28	Given the expected increase in the Town's elderly population, the Town should conduct an assessment as to the space needs at the Senior Center to determine the feasibility of either a physical expansion of the existing facility or the development of a new Center. The Town should also address the potential need for an expansion of the services offered at the Center.		√			Town Administrator, Town Council, Senior Center, Department of Parks and Recreation
SF-29	Implement educational programs and services to help seniors retrofit their homes in order to support aging in place.				√	Senior Center
SF-30	Continue to move forward with changing out street lights for LED lighting. Explore the option of acquiring the street lights from National Grid as now allowed with the recent passage of the State Law for an anticipated significant annual cost savings.	√			√	Town Administrator, Town Council and Department of Public Works
SF-31	Continue to assess Town owned buildings for structural and safety requirements and energy efficiency upgrades.					Town Administrator, and Department of Public Works
SF-32	Improve the Public Works building and consider ways to improve the drainage since this is located in the Tanyard Watershed. Keep options open for re-locating out of the watershed.		√			Town Administrator, Department of Public Works
SF-33	To coordinate the drainage improvements and restoration of the Silver Creek Watershed, complete a Master Plan of the area including the High School property and the Town-Owned Golf Course.	√				Recreation Department, School Department, Department of Community Development