

Economic Development Implementation Actions (1/16/2026 DRAFT)				
ID	Action Type	Action	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
ED-1	Regulatory	Develop and consider adoption of an accessory commercial use ordinance that allows small, low-impact commercial activities accessory to a residential use in appropriate zoning districts. The ordinance should expand opportunities beyond traditional home occupations while maintaining neighborhood character through clear performance standards.	Dept. of Community Development; Planning Board; Town Council	Short
ED-2	Regulatory	Reevaluate the Limited Business (LB) zoning district to better distinguish neighborhood-scale uses from higher-intensity commercial activity. The Town should consider creating two LB districts, one appropriate for areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods and another suited to corridor locations such as Metacom Avenue, with appropriate buffering and land-use transitions.	Dept. of Community Development; Planning Board; Town Council	Short–Medium
ED-3	Intergovernmental / Legislative	Monitor the impacts of <u>state land-use mandates</u> , including the by-right adaptive reuse law, and <u>regularly engage Bristol’s state delegation</u> to advocate for amendments that support appropriate redevelopment while protecting commercial districts and the Town’s economic base.	Town Council; Town Administrator; Dept. of Community Development	Short–Medium (monitoring and advocacy ongoing)
ED-4	Program / Grants	Encourage appropriate reinvestment in aging commercial and industrial buildings, including <u>identifying and pursuing</u> grant programs and façade or rehabilitation assistance to support code compliance, energy efficiency, and occupancy.	Dept. of Community Development; Town Council	Medium
ED-5	Study	Evaluate strategies to address high commercial rents and limited affordable space for small and locally owned businesses, including shared or flexible commercial space models and public–private partnerships.	Dept. of Community Development; Town Council; Business Community	Medium
ED-6	Land Use / Regulatory	<u>Inventory vacant and underutilize commercial properties</u> ; create incentives and/or disincentives to encourage occupancy and reuse of vacant storefronts and underutilized commercial buildings, <u>while supporting active commercial ground-floor uses in business districts</u> .	Dept. of Community Development; Town Council	Short–Medium
ED-7	Program	<u>Establish a municipal single point of contact or business assistance function to support new business start-ups and existing business expansions by providing guidance on local regulations, permitting and approvals, zoning and tax requirements, and by coordinating interdepartmental review to improve efficiency and service.</u>	Town Council; Town Administrator	Short–Medium
ED-8	Program / Partnership	<u>Establish an outreach program (annual/biannual) to meet with key employers and businesses, document barriers (permitting, regulations, utilities, workforce), and identify potential municipal actions to support.</u>	Town Council; Town Administrator	Short–Ongoing

ED-9	Program / Partnership	Consider participation in the Grow Smart “Main Street” program or similar technical-assistance initiatives to support downtown revitalization and small business development.	Dept. of Community Development; Town Administrator	Medium
ED-10	Land Use / Regulatory	Continue to support downtown housing development <u>on upper stories above commercial ground-floor uses</u> as a strategy to enhance year-round economic activity and support local shops and restaurants.	Dept. of Community Development; Planning Board; Town Council	Ongoing
ED-11	Study / Plan	Study long-term parking management options for downtown that protect walkability and historic character while addressing peak-season pressures, and <u>identify implementation options consistent with downtown planning goals.</u>	Dept. of Community Development; Police Department; DPW	Medium
ED-12	Program / Partnership	Maintain and strengthen Explore Bristol as the Town’s primary tourism and visitor economy partner; <u>expand long-term capacity.</u>	Town Administrator / Partners: Explore Bristol; Economic Development Partners	Ongoing
ED-13	Capital / Infrastructure	Improve tourism-related infrastructure, wayfinding signage, and visitor amenities, in collaboration with Explore Bristol and downtown organizations to expand the local visitor economy.	DPW; Dept. of Community Development	Medium
ED-14	Program / Partnership	<u>Partner with arts/cultural organizations to expand year-round programming and creative economy initiatives.</u>	Dept. of Community Development; Town Administrator	Ongoing
ED-15	Program / Partnership	Support networking and coordination among blue-economy firms, research institutions, and marine trades to <u>strengthen industry clustering, shared infrastructure use, workforce development, and collaboration.</u>	Town Administrator; Town Council	Ongoing
ED-16	Capital / Infrastructure	Identify and pursue municipal actions that support Bristol’s commercial fishing sector and working waterfront, including infrastructure improvements.	Harbor Commission; Public Works; Town Council	Medium
ED-17	Land Use / Zoning Update	Strengthen water-dependent uses through waterfront zoning updates, infrastructure maintenance, and partnerships with marine-service providers.	Harbor Commission; Dept. of Community Development; Town Council	Ongoing
ED-18	Transportation	Maintain appropriate designated boat-transport corridors for moving vessels between boatyards and the waterfront to reduce conflicts, improve safety, and support Bristol’s marine industries and working waterfront.	DPW; Police; Town Council	Ongoing
ED-19	Study / Plan	<u>Review the</u> Ready, Set, Rhody vulnerability assessment for the Thames Street business district and <u>incorporate the program’s recommended resilience and infrastructure improvements into capital planning.</u>	Dept. of Community Development	Short
ED-20	Program / Partnership	Partner with RWU to expand workforce pathways in marine trades, engineering, blue-tech, and hospitality, including apprenticeships and local job pipelines.	Town Administrator; Dept. of Community Development; BWRSD	Ongoing

ED-21	Land Use / Zoning Update	Rezone preserved farmland and properties with agricultural conservation easements into the Agricultural zoning district.	Planning Board; Town Council	Short
ED-22	Program / Partnership	Promote and support enrollment in the Farm, Forest and Open Space (FFOS) program to maintain farmland and open space.	Assessor; Dept. of Community Development	Ongoing
ED-23	Program / Partnership	Facilitate leasing of publicly owned or conserved land for small-scale or community farming.	Town Council	Ongoing
ED-24	Program / Partnership	<u>Coordinate with state agencies and local stakeholders to support aquaculture/shellfish enterprises, including permitting coordination and waterfront infrastructure needs.</u>	Harbor Commission; Dept. of Community Development	Ongoing
ED-25	Land Use / Regulatory	<u>Review and update commercial signage standards to balance visibility with historic and scenic resources and neighborhood character.</u>	Dept. of Community Development; Planning Board; Town Council	Medium