

Services & Facilities

Goal 1.

Provide high-quality, resilient, and efficient municipal facilities, infrastructure, and public services that support community needs and protect environmental resources.

Policies

- A. Maintain municipal buildings and facilities so that they remain safe, functional, accessible, resilient, and capable of supporting municipal services.
- B. Support efficient municipal operations through strategic investment in municipal facilities, technology improvements, co-location of services, and consolidation of municipal functions where appropriate.
- C. Pursue regional coordination, shared services, and intergovernmental partnerships where such arrangements improve service delivery, operational efficiency, or cost effectiveness.
- D. Continue to update and fund the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in order to prioritize long-term infrastructure, facility, resiliency, and operational needs.
- E. Coordinate municipal infrastructure planning with state agencies, regional partners, utility providers, and quasi-public agencies to support efficient service delivery and environmental protection.
- F. Continue to utilize technology, GIS, and asset management systems to improve municipal operations, infrastructure maintenance, and public service delivery.
- G. Support adaptive reuse, redevelopment, or disposition of underutilized municipal and institutional properties in ways that support community needs, economic activity, housing opportunities, historic preservation, and efficient use of public assets.
- H. Measure and monitor the quality of municipal services in order to maintain a high level of public service delivery.
- I. Plan for changing municipal service needs as demographics, infrastructure demands, and community needs evolve.

Goal 2.

Provide resilient, coordinated, and effective public safety and emergency response services that meet the evolving needs of the community.

Policies

- A. Continue to assess public safety facilities to ensure they are adequately sized, appropriately located, and resilient to climate impacts while supporting efficient and coordinated emergency response services.

B. Continue to modernize emergency communications infrastructure, equipment, and interoperability capabilities in order to support reliable emergency response operations.

C. Continue to evaluate long-term facility needs associated with police, fire, rescue, and emergency management operations.

D. Support continued volunteer recruitment, retention, and training efforts necessary to sustain the Town's combination fire service model.

E. Coordinate public safety planning and capital improvements with hazard mitigation, resiliency, and emergency preparedness initiatives.

Goal 3.

Protect public health, water quality, coastal resources, and infrastructure through effective wastewater, stormwater, and drainage management.

Policies

A. Maintain and upgrade wastewater infrastructure and treatment facilities in order to ensure reliable service and protect water quality in Mount Hope Bay and the Narragansett Bay watershed.

B. Continue to modernize wastewater treatment technologies and collection systems to improve operational efficiency, regulatory compliance, resiliency, and environmental performance.

C. Reduce infiltration and inflow (I&I) within the wastewater collection system through inspection, repair, maintenance, and targeted capital improvements.

D. Improve stormwater management through drainage infrastructure improvements, flood mitigation projects, and strategies that reduce runoff and improve water quality.

E. Encourage the use of low impact development (LID), green infrastructure, and stormwater best management practices in municipal projects and new development where appropriate.

F. Coordinate infrastructure planning and capital improvements with climate resiliency and hazard mitigation planning.

G. Continue road, drainage, and infrastructure maintenance programs and utilize GIS and asset management systems to support infrastructure planning and maintenance activities.

Goal 4.

Support reliable, resilient, and high-quality drinking water infrastructure and regional water supply planning through coordination with the Bristol County Water Authority and regional partners.

Policies

A. Support continued maintenance and modernization of water distribution infrastructure to improve system reliability, emergency preparedness, and fire protection capabilities.

B. Encourage water conservation and protection of regional drinking water resources through land use planning, infrastructure improvements, and public education efforts.

C. Coordinate with the Bristol County Water Authority, neighboring municipalities, and state agencies regarding long-term water supply planning, resiliency, and infrastructure improvements.

Goal 5.

Reduce solid waste disposal and increase recycling and waste diversion through efficient solid waste management and sustainable materials management practices.

Policies

A. Continue to evaluate opportunities to improve solid waste management and increase waste diversion through recycling, reuse, and other waste reduction strategies.

B. Continue public education and outreach efforts to increase awareness of recycling, waste reduction, and diversion opportunities.

C. Support programs and infrastructure improvements that improve operational efficiency, reduce disposal volumes, and preserve long-term landfill capacity.

D. Evaluate opportunities to reduce construction and demolition waste through material reuse, deconstruction, and salvage practices where appropriate.

E. Monitor evolving regulations related to biosolids management, PFAS, and waste disposal in order to identify long-term operational and infrastructure needs.

F. Continue to provide residents with opportunities for proper disposal or recycling of electronic waste and other materials requiring special handling.

Goal 6.

Promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainable infrastructure and operational practices in municipal, commercial, and residential development.

Policies

A. Continue to pursue energy efficiency improvements in municipal facilities, infrastructure, vehicles, and operations in order to reduce long-term operating costs and municipal energy use.

B. Encourage incorporation of energy-efficient design, renewable energy systems, electrification opportunities, EV charging infrastructure, and LEED or equivalent sustainability principles in new municipal buildings and major facility renovations where feasible.

C. Continue to evaluate opportunities for renewable energy generation and sustainable infrastructure improvements within municipal facilities and operations.

D. Promote public awareness of available renewable energy and energy efficiency programs through coordination with state and regional partners.

E. Continue to monitor and modernize municipal equipment, vehicles, buildings, and infrastructure and prioritize energy-efficient replacements where appropriate.

Goal 7.

Support continued investment in school facilities to meet the educational and community needs of Bristol residents.

Policies

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

B. Support ongoing investment in school facility improvements, including construction of the new high school and upgrades to existing school buildings.

C. Coordinate municipal planning and capital improvement planning with the Bristol Warren Regional School District to address long-term facility needs.

D. Recognize that Bristol’s elementary schools are located in historic buildings and encourage improvements that balance facility needs with preservation of historic character.

E. Promote safe pedestrian and bicycle access to schools consistent with transportation and Complete Streets policies.

F. Encourage the shared use of school facilities for community programs and recreation.

G. Facilitate reuse or redevelopment of school properties that may become closed in the future.

Goal 8.

Maintain and enhance Rogers Free Library as an accessible, resilient, and flexible community connector that supports lifelong learning, technology access, civic engagement, and community services for residents of all ages.

Policies

A. Support continued investment in Rogers Free Library facilities, technology, collections, sustainability improvements, and free community programming.

B. Promote Rogers Free Library as a community gathering space and community connector that supports education, workforce development, financial literacy, digital access, civic discourse, and local economic development.

C. Encourage partnerships between Rogers Free Library, the Bristol Warren Regional School District, older adult/community service providers, community organizations, and municipal departments to expand outreach, programming, and public access to services and information.

D. Support continued efforts to improve accessibility, neighborhood outreach, and equitable access to library services, programs, and resources for all residents.

Introduction

Municipal facilities and services in Bristol support the day-to-day functioning of local government, public safety, infrastructure systems, and community services that are essential to public health and quality of life. These include public buildings and roads, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, solid waste management, all of which require ongoing maintenance, coordination, and capital investment.

This element documents existing conditions, evaluates the adequacy of facilities and services, and identifies future needs to support the community over the twenty-year planning horizon. As a largely built-out coastal community, Bristol's focus is on maintaining and upgrading existing public services and facilities, addressing aging infrastructure, and incorporating resilience to flooding and sea level rise.

Progress Since the 2016 Comprehensive Plan

Since adoption of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the Town has implemented several actions identified in the implementation program related to public services and facilities. Completed actions include improvements to municipal facilities, drainage infrastructure, and municipal energy efficiency initiatives.

Completed actions include:

- Implementation of drainage improvements at the Police Station and Guiteras parking lots to address stormwater runoff and water quality concerns.
- Completion of drainage improvements at the Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Implementation of improvements associated with Phase 2 of the Tanyard Brook and State Street Reservoir project, including successfully securing federal and state grant funding to supplement Town bond financing and support project implementation
- Completion of an energy audit of municipal buildings to identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency and reduce long-term operating costs
- Implementation of LED streetlight upgrades to improve energy efficiency and reduce municipal energy use
- Adoption of a resolution designating Bristol as a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Municipality

- Adoption of a new Public Institutional Zone to allow a mix of uses in decommissioned school buildings on High Street (Walley and Byfield on Town Common), and completed planning and secured funding for the reuse of the former Walley School.

These completed actions demonstrate progress toward improving municipal infrastructure, addressing stormwater management issues, and increasing energy efficiency in municipal operations.

Municipal Facilities

Maintaining, modernizing, and efficiently utilizing municipal facilities remains an ongoing priority to ensure that public buildings effectively support municipal operations, public services, long-term space needs, and responsible use of taxpayer resources. The Town is undergoing a significant transition in its municipal facilities system, including the relocation of municipal departments, repurposing of existing public buildings, and evaluation of surplus municipal properties for future reuse or redevelopment.

The Town is in the process of repurposing the former Guiteras School into a consolidated municipal government center. Beginning in 2026, several municipal departments currently located in multiple buildings throughout the community will transition into the renovated facility, improving operational efficiency, interdepartmental coordination, and long-term space planning for municipal services.

This transition will also require evaluation of the future use, redevelopment, or disposition of existing Town office buildings that may become surplus following consolidation of municipal functions. Potential future uses may include adaptive reuse, housing, mixed-use redevelopment, municipal or community-serving uses, or other private investment opportunities that support economic activity and return underutilized properties to the tax roll.

Several additional significant municipal facility needs have been identified by the Town:

- The Department of Public Works is in need of a new salt storage shed. The existing structure is deteriorating and is located adjacent to the Tanyard Brook floodplain, creating operational and environmental concerns. Replacing the facility would help reduce the potential for salt-related impacts to nearby water resources, habitat, and wildlife.
- The DPW mechanic's garage is at the end of its useful life and should be replaced to support the safe and efficient maintenance and repair of the Town's vehicle fleet.
- The Town's Police Station, originally constructed in the 1970s, no longer adequately meets the operational, space, technology, security, and accessibility needs of a modern police facility. The Town should continue planning for substantial modernization or development of a new police facility, potentially on the existing site, to support long-term public safety operations and service delivery.
- The Everready Fire Station is located within a flood hazard area, creating potential long-term vulnerability concerns. The Town should evaluate flood mitigation improvements, retrofitting options, or potential long-term relocation strategies for the facility.

- The Water Pollution Control Facility is in need of continued upgrades and modernization to improve treatment efficiency, operational resiliency, regulatory compliance, and the use of newer treatment technologies.

Public Input

Public engagement conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan update identified several priorities related to public facilities and municipal services. Residents noted concerns regarding aging infrastructure, including stormwater systems, roadways, and certain public facilities. Roadway conditions and drainage issues were frequently cited, particularly in areas experiencing flooding or infrastructure limitations.

Participants also expressed interest in developing a coordinated Townwide facilities plan to help guide future capital investments and ensure that municipal facilities continue to support community needs. Public feedback emphasized the importance of maintaining strong public safety and public works services while making targeted improvements to infrastructure systems and municipal facilities.

Residents also expressed interest in expanding community spaces and amenities within public facilities. Ideas included additional meeting spaces, performing arts and cultural programming, and the use of public buildings for community events and activities. Recreation opportunities for youth and families were also identified as an area for potential expansion.

Public feedback also highlighted interest in improvements to municipal services such as recycling education, composting programs, and broadband access. Participants emphasized the importance of maintaining existing infrastructure while continuing to modernize public facilities and services to support the needs of Bristol residents.

Public Facilities and Infrastructure Mapping

The following maps provide an overview of the Town's public facilities and infrastructure systems and support planning, maintenance, and capital investment decisions. Select maps are accompanied by tables identifying specific facilities or system components.

Map SF-1 – Public Facilities

Map SF-1 shows the location of municipal facilities, including public safety, administrative, educational, and community facilities. Facilities are generally concentrated in the downtown and waterfront areas, with additional sites distributed throughout the town.

Map SF-2 – Water Supply System

Map SF-2 displays the public drinking water system for Bristol, which includes Bristol County Water Authority (BCWA) water towers, water mains and hydrants. The BCWA supplies water to Barrington, Warren and Bristol.

Map SF-3 – Sewer System

Map SF-3 depicts sewered areas, sewer lines, and pump stations serving the Town's developed areas. The accompanying table identifies pump station locations. (maybe remove this level of detail and just

have dots on the map and remove table from narrative or put in an appendix – pump station at animal control center added to map and table).

Label	Location Description
1	South end of Clubhouse Lane near North Farm Yacht Club
2	South of Clubhouse Lane, east of East Bay Bike Path, west of Seabreeze Lane
3	North of Patricia Ann Drive, east of East Bay Bike Path, west of Seabreeze Lane
4	North of Tupelo Street, near 17 Tupelo
5	South of Tupelo Street, near 86 Tupelo
6	North of Brooks Farm Drive, near 23 Brooks Farm Driver
7	North of Broadcommon Road, east of 97 Broadcommon Road
8	South of Kickemuit Ave and Wilcox St. intersection, near 2 Harrison Street
9	South of Peter Road, near 12 Peter Road
10	North cul-de-sac of Leila Jean Drive, near 20 Leila Jean Drive
11	South of the east-most end of Annawamscutt Drive, near 2 King Philip Ave
12	Colt State Park; southwest of the Chapel by the Sea, east of Colt Drive.
13	Colt State Park; east of 1 Colt Drive
14	Colt State Park; near pavillions in northeast section of the park.
15	South of Poppasquash Road, near 1 Poppasquash Road
16	West of Monroe Ave and Creek Lane intersection; in Veterans Park
17	West of 7 Kennedy Ct; south of Almeida Flats apartments.
18	Near animal shelter (10 Minturn Farm Road)
19	South end of Thames Street; east of 1 Thames Street
20	South of Burke Road, near 8 Burke Road
21	Southeast of 3 Sequoia Ct
22	North of Plant Ave, near 2 Plant Ave.
23	West of Ferry Road and Fairview Drive intersection; west of 155 Ferry Road
24	RWU; near North Campus Office Building (Roger Williams Lane #0)
25	RWU; south of US Sailing Center (1 Roger Williams Univ Way) in athletic fields
26	RWU; east of Bayside Courts
27	RWU; south of Maple Hall
28	RWU; south of Cedar Hall
29	RWU: south of Willow Hall

Map SF-4 – Stormwater System

Map SF-4 illustrates the general extent of Bristol’s stormwater infrastructure, including stormwater pipes, outfalls, and known and mapped private stormwater systems

Wastewater Infrastructure

Wastewater collection and treatment services are provided through the Town's wastewater system and Wastewater Treatment Facility. The system serves most developed areas of the community and plays an important role in protecting water quality in Mount Hope Bay and the broader Narragansett Bay watershed.

Because Bristol is largely built out, infrastructure planning is focused primarily on maintaining and improving existing systems rather than expanding service areas. Continued investment in wastewater infrastructure is necessary to ensure reliable service, meet regulatory requirements, and protect environmental resources, and improve long-term system resiliency.

The Town continues to pursue improvements to wastewater infrastructure and the Wastewater Treatment Facility through maintenance projects, system upgrades, and long-term capital planning. Priority improvements include modernization of treatment technologies, evaluation of tertiary treatment and nutrient removal improvements, reduction in chemical use where feasible, and evaluation of photovoltaic systems.

In addition to completed projects, the Town has secured funding through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) to support the design and engineering of additional wastewater and stormwater infrastructure improvements. These projects include evaluation of system deficiencies, upgrades to aging infrastructure, and improvements to outfalls and drainage systems, including areas such as the Ferry Road corridor.

The Town continues to make targeted investments in its wastewater treatment and collection systems to improve performance, address aging infrastructure, and respond to evolving regulatory requirements and climate-related risks. Maintaining a reliable and efficient wastewater system is essential to protecting public health, water quality, and the Town's coastal resources.

At the treatment facility, the Town is planning for a series of upgrades to improve operational efficiency and environmental performance. These include transitioning from chlorine-based disinfection to ultraviolet (UV) systems, which reduce chemical handling and improve treatment outcomes, as well as evaluating the need for additional capacity through the construction of equalization or storage tanks to better manage wet weather flows. The Town is also evaluating improvements to biosolids handling and storage, as disposal options have become more constrained due to emerging contaminants such as PFAS and changing regulatory requirements.

Within the collection system, the Town is prioritizing efforts to reduce infiltration and inflow (I&I), which can strain system capacity and increase treatment costs. Ongoing and planned work includes system inspection, repair, and targeted capital improvements to reduce excess stormwater entering the system.

A key infrastructure priority is the planned relocation or replacement of a sewer line along Ferry Road, which is currently vulnerable to coastal flooding and sea level rise. This project, supported through Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank funding for design, represents a critical investment in protecting essential infrastructure and improving long-term system resilience.

Together, these initiatives reflect a comprehensive approach to wastewater system management that integrates capital improvements, regulatory compliance, and climate resilience planning. The Town will continue to pursue state and federal funding opportunities to support implementation of these projects over the planning horizon.

Stormwater Management and Water Quality

Stormwater management is an important municipal service in Bristol due to the Town's coastal location, historic development patterns, and aging drainage infrastructure. Effective stormwater management helps protect water quality, reduce localized flooding, and support the health of Mount Hope Bay and Narragansett Bay.

Stormwater runoff contributes to water quality impairments in several local water bodies, including Bristol Harbor, the Kickemuit River, and Mount Hope Bay. The Kickemuit River and Mount Hope Bay are waterbodies subject to Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements, which establish limits on pollutants such as bacteria and nutrients and require municipalities to implement measures to reduce pollutant loading from stormwater runoff.

Bristol is regulated as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community under the Rhode Island Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES). As part of this program, the Town is required to implement a comprehensive stormwater management program that includes:

- Public education and outreach
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination
- Construction and post-construction stormwater management
- Pollution prevention and good housekeeping practices
- Water quality monitoring and reporting

The Town has undertaken a range of stormwater and water quality initiatives in response to these requirements. Efforts include drainage improvements in areas experiencing runoff and infrastructure limitations, public education programs, shoreline cleanups, and storm drain marking. The Town has also participated in water quality monitoring efforts in Bristol Harbor, Silver Creek, and the Kickemuit River, in partnership with Save Bristol Harbor.

A significant focus of recent stormwater planning and investment has been the Tanyard Brook watershed, which is a key drainage system in Bristol and a contributor to downstream flooding and water quality impacts. The Town has completed improvements associated with the Tanyard Brook and State Street Reservoir project, including drainage upgrades and system improvements designed to increase capacity, reduce flooding, and improve water quality. These efforts were supported through a combination of Town funding and federal and state grants.

The Town continues to evaluate opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure and low impact development (LID) techniques, such as rain gardens, infiltration practices, and reduction of impervious surfaces, to improve stormwater management and water quality outcomes. These approaches are particularly important in a largely built-out community where traditional infrastructure expansion is limited.

Future Needs

- Continue investment in the Tanyard Brook and Silver Creek watersheds and other priority drainage areas to reduce flooding and improve water quality.
- Upgrade aging stormwater infrastructure, including pipes, culverts, and outfalls.
- Reduce impervious surfaces and expand the use of green infrastructure and low-impact development techniques.
- Maintain compliance with MS4/RIPDES permit requirements and advance progress toward TMDL pollutant reduction targets.
- Establish sustainable funding mechanisms, such as a stormwater management district or utility.
- Incorporate climate resilience into stormwater system design, including consideration of sea level rise and increased storm intensity.
- Prioritize ongoing maintenance of stormwater infrastructure and staff training to ensure proper system management.

Water Supply

Public water service in Bristol is provided by the Bristol County Water Authority (BCWA), which serves Bristol, Warren, and Barrington. BCWA obtains its drinking water supply from Providence Water's system of surface water reservoirs located in northwestern Rhode Island. The primary source is the Scituate Reservoir, which, together with five tributary reservoirs, provides approximately 41 billion gallons of total storage capacity.

The Bristol County Water Authority continues to invest in long-term system reliability and resiliency improvements. Following a major leak in the East Bay Pipeline, BCWA prioritized development of a redundant emergency water supply connection through the Pawtucket Pipeline Project, which will improve emergency interconnections and system reliability within the East Bay region.

Continued maintenance and upgrading of water distribution infrastructure remains important to ensure reliable service, adequate water pressure, fire protection capabilities, and long-term system resiliency. BCWA is also continuing efforts to identify and replace lead service lines within the regional water system, including programs intended to assist property owners with replacement of older private-side service lines.

Public Works

The Town continues to evaluate long-term Department of Public Works facility needs to ensure that municipal operations, fleet maintenance activities, roadway maintenance, drainage operations, and public service functions can be conducted safely and efficiently. The existing DPW mechanic's garage and related facilities are aging and no longer fully meet current operational and employee support needs. Identified deficiencies include limitations related to ADA accessibility, outdated HVAC systems, lack of fire suppression infrastructure within vehicle storage areas, inadequate employee locker and support facilities, and limited space for staff training, meetings, and operational coordination. The significant February 2026 snowstorm demonstrated the importance of adequate employee support

facilities, as DPW staff worked extended and overnight shifts to maintain roadways and respond to emergency conditions, highlighting the need for improved locker, changing, and rest areas within the facility.

A feasibility study completed for the facility evaluated existing conditions and operational needs and developed conceptual design options for modernization and future expansion of the Department of Public Works complex (see illustration - awaiting). Recommended improvements included upgraded maintenance and operational space, employee support facilities, and operational enhancements such as a drive-through truck wash to improve fleet maintenance efficiency and year-round operations.

The Department of Public Works has also continued to modernize municipal operations through the use of technology and data-driven asset management systems. DPW field crews utilize mobile tablets and GPS-based systems to document drainage infrastructure maintenance activities and track field operations in real time. The Town also utilizes a pavement management system to evaluate roadway conditions and prioritize road resurfacing and reconstruction projects as part of long-term capital planning and infrastructure maintenance efforts.

Consistent with the Capital Improvement Program, the Town will continue to evaluate options for modernization, expansion, or replacement of DPW facilities to support long-term municipal operations, infrastructure maintenance, emergency response capabilities, and workforce needs.

Solid Waste Management

The Bristol Department of Public Works (111 Mount Hope Avenue) is responsible for curbside trash and recycling collection for Town residents. Trash pickup occurs Monday through Friday according to neighborhood routes using Town-owned automated trucks. The Town enforces a “no bin, no barrel” policy, which requires that a recycling bin be placed out with the trash for collection, reinforcing participation in the recycling program.

Solid waste services for Bristol residents are provided through a combination of municipal collection programs and regional disposal facilities. Trash collected within the Town is transported to the transfer station located at 6 Minturn Farm Road, where it is processed before being transported to the Central Landfill in Johnston. The transfer station also supports recycling and composting operations and plays an important role in reducing the volume of material ultimately disposed of at the landfill.

The Town has implemented a range of programs to support waste diversion and reduce disposal volumes. These include quarterly e-waste collection events, special pick-up services for large items and materials requiring additional handling. In addition, a private subscription-based food waste composting collection service is available to Bristol residents, providing an additional opportunity to divert organic waste from the solid waste stream.

Historically, the Town also produced compost through biosolids processing associated with the Wastewater Treatment Facility. However, due to evolving regulations and concerns related to PFAS and other emerging contaminants, the Town is no longer able to continue this composting practice. These changes have created additional challenges related to biosolids handling, storage, and disposal, and may require future investment in alternative management approaches consistent with regulatory requirements.

As of 2025, Bristol's solid waste performance exceeds statewide averages but has not yet met state-mandated targets:

- **Bristol MRF Recycling Rate (2025): 25.3%**
- **Bristol Rate of Overall Material Diversion from Landfill (2025): 31.9%**

For comparison:

- **State MRF Recycling Rate: 17.8%**
- **State Overall Diversion Rate: 29.8%**

State law requires municipalities to achieve a minimum 35% recycling rate and 50% overall diversion rate. While Bristol performs above the state average, additional progress is needed to meet these benchmarks.

Long-term solid waste planning is also influenced by regional capacity constraints. The Central Landfill is projected to reach capacity around 2046, underscoring the importance of reducing disposal volumes, increasing diversion, and planning for future waste management strategies.

The Town continues to evaluate opportunities to improve solid waste management programs, increase recycling participation, expand composting, and reduce the volume of material entering the regional waste stream. Additional strategies for consideration include adoption of a deconstruction and material reuse ordinance for certain demolition projects, consistent with state planning recommendations, to promote salvage and recycling of building materials and reduce construction and demolition (C&D) waste.

Continued refinement of solid waste programs, policies, and infrastructure will help improve operational efficiency, reduce long-term disposal costs, and support environmental sustainability.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

Public safety services in Bristol are provided through the Town's police, fire, and emergency medical services. These services rely on specialized facilities, personnel, and equipment to provide timely emergency response, fire protection, and public safety services to the community. Maintaining functional, well-located, and adequately equipped public safety facilities is essential to supporting modern emergency response operations, including space needs for personnel, equipment storage, and training functions.

The Bristol Police Department (395 Metacom Avenue) is centrally located within the community, east of downtown. The Department is nationally and state accredited and includes approximately 40 sworn law enforcement personnel. Services include a special operations unit, mobile command center, detectives, as well as marine, patrol, drone, and bike units. In 2025, the Police Department responded to over 35,000 service calls. The Department is well staffed, funded, and equipped to respond to a wide range of public safety needs, and its efforts have contributed to Bristol consistently being recognized as one of the safest communities in Rhode Island.

The Town secured approximately \$966,000 in federal funding to support an interoperable encrypted radio communications project for the Police and Fire Departments. The funding will support upgraded communications equipment, including portable radio units, to improve interoperability, coordination, and communications reliability among public safety agencies. The improvements will support day-to-day emergency response operations as well as periods of increased public activity and large community events.

The Bristol Fire Department operates out of four stations distributed throughout the community:

- Defiance Hose Company No. 1 (1124 Hope Street)
- Hydraulion Engine & Hose Company No. 1 (4 Annawamscutt Drive)
- Ever-Ready Engine & Hose Company No. 2 (189 Thames Street)
- Dreadnaught Hook, Ladder & Hose Company No. 1 (72 Church Street)

The Bristol Fire Department is primarily volunteer-based, with five full-time staff positions supported by a volunteer force of approximately 150 to 200. The Department also provides emergency medical services and manages contracts with paramedical service providers. As a combination department, the volunteer force provides the majority of emergency response capacity.

There are no hospitals located within Bristol. The nearest major medical facilities include Rhode Island Hospital in Providence and Newport Hospital in Newport. Within Bristol, the Bristol Medical Center (1180 Hope Street), operated by Medical Associates of Rhode Island, provides walk-in and routine medical care to residents.

Future Needs

Maintaining effective public safety services will require continued investment in facilities, equipment, and infrastructure to meet evolving service demands and environmental conditions.

The Town is continuing long-range planning efforts related to Police Department facility needs to ensure that public safety operations remain effective and responsive to evolving service demands. The existing facility has operational limitations related to space, employee support areas, training capacity, and modernization needs associated with contemporary policing standards.

As part of these efforts, the Town has acquired adjacent property on Bayview Avenue to support future planning and expansion opportunities. Environmental remediation activities have been completed and the property has received RIDEM approval for future commercial or industrial construction use. Consistent with the Capital Improvement Program, the Town will continue feasibility analysis and long-term planning for potential expansion or construction of a modernized Police Department facility to support future operational, staffing, training, technology, and emergency communication needs.

Three of the Town's four fire stations are more than 100 years old and were not designed to accommodate the size and operational needs of modern fire apparatus. In addition, the Ever-Ready Fire Station is located within a flood hazard area and may become increasingly vulnerable to coastal flooding and sea level rise. The Town should continue evaluating long-term modernization, retrofitting, and potential relocation needs for fire facilities.

Public Education

Existing Conditions

The Town of Bristol is part of the Bristol Warren Regional School District (BWRSD), which provides a shared middle and high school system for both communities, while elementary schools remain locally based. Kickemuit Middle School, located in Warren, serves students in grades 5–8 as of the 2026 school year following the addition of fifth grade, and Mt. Hope High School, located in Bristol, serves all district high school students.

BWRSD consists of five school buildings, three of which are located in Bristol:

- Colt Andrews School – Grades K–4 (570 Hope Street, Bristol)
- Rockwell School – Grades K–4 (1225 Hope Street, Bristol)
- Mt. Hope High School – Grades 9–12 (199 Chestnut Street, Bristol)

Additional educational facilities include a private Pre-K through Grade 8 school located at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church (127 State Street).

The School District had a total enrollment of 2,621 students for the 2025–2026 school year, which represents a 21.2% decrease from enrollment a decade earlier (3,328 students in the 2015–2016 school year). Drops in enrollment, coupled with facility maintenance issues, led the School District to close the Guiteras Elementary School at the end of the 2024–2025 school year.

Table SF2: Bristol Warren Regional School District Enrollment: October 2025

School	Total	PK	PF	KF	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Bristol Warren School District	2,621	57	0	166	174	182	210	205	169	202	217	222	200	203	190	224
Colt Andrews Elementary	409	0	0	59	57	70	79	79	65	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rockwell Elementary	255	0	0	42	39	40	48	47	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mt. Hope High School	788	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	197	199	185	207
Kickemuit Middle School	629	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	200	211	218	0	0	0	0
Hugh Cole Elementary	491	57	0	65	78	72	81	75	63	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
District Outplacement	49	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	2	2	6	4	3	4	5	17

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education

Capital Improvements

A major capital improvement project is currently underway for BWRSD facilities. The passage of the Statewide School Construction Bond in 2018 enables communities to access capital funds, reimbursement, and bonds from the Rhode Island Department of Education.

In 2023, Bristol and Warren voters approved \$200 million in bonds for the BWRSD to update existing school buildings and replace Mt. Hope High School. Through the Statewide School Construction Bond, the State is providing 63% of the budget for the capital plan, with an additional 20% reimbursement potential at the completion of the project.

Extensive community input has been solicited for the construction plans through input sessions held at schools within the district and informational tables at community events in Bristol and Warren. The capital improvement project goals are to improve health and safety in school buildings while enhancing educational opportunities.

Construction began in Summer 2025 and is anticipated to be completed by May 2027, with courses being held in the new high school beginning in Fall 2027. Construction work will continue on the site 2027-2028 with the demolition of the existing school building and the installation of sports fields.

The following facility improvements are underway or planned for the three school buildings in Bristol:

- Colt Andrews School – installation of a new membrane roof, electrical and wiring upgrades, construction of two new bathrooms, improved HVAC system, and installation of various safety systems
- Mt. Hope High School – construction of a new two-story high school including a gym, auditorium, career technical education shops, cafeteria, and a media center/library; new site facilities include an athletic turf field, softball field, tennis courts, lighting, new parking areas, and stormwater/drainage improvements
- Rockwell School – exterior façade work, plumbing upgrades, HVAC upgrades, stormwater infrastructure installation, and assorted flooring and ceiling work

These improvements are intended to ensure that the physical facilities in the BWRSD are able to function effectively and support educational programming over the 20-year planning horizon.

The New England School Development Council prepared an enrollment projections report for the BWRSD through the 2032–2033 school year. Enrollment is projected to increase slightly for younger grade levels, with 26 additional students in grades K–5. Enrollment for older students is projected to decrease, with 12 fewer students in grades 6–8 and 125 fewer students in grades 9–12. This projected decline in high school enrollment is consistent with the Town’s overall modest population decline.

Year	PK- 5th	K- 5th	6th - 8th	9th - 12th
2026-27	1251	1187	580	796
2027-28	1255	1190	560	778
2028-29	1250	1184	560	753
2029-30	1271	1204	546	731
2030-31	1301	1233	526	704
2031-32	1296	1227	534	692
2032-33	1283	1213	568	671

Source: NESDEC

Public Library Services

Existing Conditions

Rogers Free Library, located at 525 Hope Street, serves as Bristol’s public library and is an important civic, educational, and community facility located within the downtown. The library consists of the original 1877 historic brownstone building and a 2008 addition, which expanded capacity and improved accessibility, including ADA-compliant access. The facility contains more than 28,000 square feet across three stories.

The library employs 31 staff members and is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees appointed by the community. The library is also supported by the Friends of Rogers Free Library, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that helps fund expanded programming, community events, and facility improvements.

In addition to traditional library services, Rogers Free Library provides a broad range of educational, technological, and community services that reflect evolving resident needs. These services include public access computers, printers, high-speed internet, technology assistance, meeting rooms, archival collections, and historical resources. These resources are increasingly important for residents accessing online services, education, employment opportunities, and remote work resources.

The library hosts free programming for children, teens, adults, and older adults, including educational programs, cultural events, workforce development initiatives, civic and legislative discussions, and workshops related to topics such as stormwater management, composting, sustainability, and other community initiatives. Through these services, Rogers Free Library functions as both an educational resource and an important community gathering space that supports public engagement and broader municipal initiatives.

The library collaborates with the Bristol Warren Regional School District, the Benjamin Church Senior Center, local organizations, and municipal departments to expand educational opportunities and outreach services. Coordination with the Senior Center includes library staff presentations and programming offered directly at the Senior Center to improve accessibility and participation for older residents. Located on a RIPTA bus route and designed with ADA accessibility improvements, the library serves as an accessible and inclusive facility for residents of all ages and abilities.

In addition to traditional library functions, Rogers Free Library supports financial literacy, workforce development, small businesses, and local economic development initiatives, consistent with broader goals identified in Rhode Island’s statewide library strategic planning efforts.

The Town recently completed a series of capital improvements and operational upgrades at Rogers Free Library supported through a \$1.9 million United States Treasury Community Facilities Grant administered by the Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office. Improvements included creation of a maker space, development of a “Library of Things,” upgrades to meeting and programming spaces, storage improvements, and enhanced space efficiency within the building. These investments support implementation of the Rogers Free Library Strategic Plan through FY 2029, which emphasizes financial sustainability, expanded programming, accessibility, workforce development, and flexible community-centered spaces and services.

Rogers Free Library is a member of the Ocean State Libraries consortium, a statewide network that allows patrons to access and borrow materials from participating libraries across Rhode Island through a shared catalog and resource-sharing system. Participation in the consortium expands access to collections and services beyond the local library, including specialized materials such as the statewide floating large print collection.

Bristol also benefits from the presence of Roger Williams University. The University's library resources are available to the public, providing residents with additional opportunities for research, study, and access to specialized collections. Opportunities for collaboration between Rogers Free Library and Roger Williams University may further enhance educational programming and lifelong learning opportunities for residents.

Future Needs

Future improvements at Rogers Free Library should focus on maintaining reliable operations, improving energy efficiency, expanding outreach services, and supporting the library's role as a flexible community resource and emergency support facility.

Priority facility needs include installation of a backup generator and replacement of the aging HVAC system serving the historic portion of the library. These improvements would improve energy efficiency, visitor comfort, continuity of operations during outages, and the library's ability to function as a community cooling and warming center during emergencies and severe weather events.

The Library will continue implementation of grant-supported programming and service commitments associated with recent facility improvements funded through the United States Treasury Community Facilities Grant. These initiatives include workforce development programming, educational programming, community health-related initiatives, expanded technology access, flexible programming space, and other community-centered services identified in the Rogers Free Library Strategic Plan. Continued investment in technology, accessibility, flexible community space, and community partnerships will help ensure that Rogers Free Library remains responsive to evolving community needs over the planning horizon.

Additional sustainability improvements may include evaluation of rooftop solar panels and use of rain barrels or other water conservation measures to support landscaping and garden maintenance. The library is also interested in expanding neighborhood outreach services through acquisition of a mobile library electric bicycle that could bring books, library card applications, and library program information directly into neighborhoods and community gathering spaces.

Community and Senior Centers

The Quinta-Gamelin Community Center (101 Asylum Road) is located in the former Quinta-Gamelin Army Reserve Building, which became available for reuse following the 2005 base closure. The Town assumed ownership of the property in 2008. The Community Center is overseen by Bristol's Parks and Recreation Department and serves as a hub for a wide range of recreational and community activities. Its location adjacent to the Town Beach and athletic facilities allows for integration with other recreational services and programs.

The Benjamin Church Senior Center (1020 Hope Street) is a nonprofit organization that provides services for Bristol residents ages 50 and older, including a daily lunch program, transportation to medical appointments and grocery stores, volunteer opportunities, and social and recreational programming. The Center has operated out of the historic Benjamin Church House since 1972 and is located north of downtown adjacent to Bristol Housing Authority properties, with which it partners to provide services.

Funding is provided through a combination of municipal support, state grants, and nonprofit contributions.

The Town supports senior services through a coordinated partnership with the Benjamin Church Senior Center, a private nonprofit organization that serves as a primary provider of programming, meals, and transportation for older adults. The Town's Recreation Department includes a Senior Services Coordinator who works collaboratively with the Center and other outside agencies to connect residents with services and resources. The Town has also supported operations by funding a bus used by the Center for transportation services. Building on this partnership, the Town will open a new activity space for seniors at the former Walley School on the Town Common in July 2026. This new municipal space is intended to expand opportunities for recreation and social engagement while complementing, rather than duplicating, the services already provided by the Benjamin Church Senior Center.

The Bristol Health Equity Zone (HEZ) is a place-based collaborative established in 2015 to reduce health disparities and address social determinants of health. The HEZ is funded by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), with additional support from its backbone agency, East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP). The HEZ partners with local organizations to collect data, engage residents, and coordinate services that support community health. In Bristol, HEZ initiatives focus on food security, physical activity, bicycle safety, substance use, and mental health and suicide prevention. Programming has included meal distribution and cooking demonstrations in partnership with the East Bay Food Pantry, supporting the adoption of an ordinance prohibiting smoking in Town parks, and collaboration with the Bristol Police Department to establish a recovery support and treatment referral station. HEZ also received a federal grant to explore the housing crises from a grass roots perspective that will involve community outreach to identify barriers to housing.

The Town Senior Services programming also partners with AARP and has provided assistance for a walkability audit and small grants for increased pedestrian safety.

Future Needs

The Town is advancing the adaptive reuse of the former Walley School, a historic building located on the Town Common, as a community-focused public facility. Current plans include space for a Town-operated older adult/community services center, along with human services and community policing functions. Funding has been secured to support rehabilitation of the building. Reuse of the Walley School will reactivate a currently vacant yet prominent historic civic structure while co-locating public services in a central Downtown location.

Harbor Department and Waterfront Facilities

The Harbor Department manages and maintains a range of public waterfront facilities that support recreational boating, commercial marine activity, tourism, public access, and harbor operations. These facilities include public docks, moorings, marina infrastructure, boat ramps, waterfront access points, and support buildings that contribute to the Town's coastal economy and quality of life.

Continued investment in harbor and marina infrastructure remains important to maintaining safe and reliable public access to Bristol Harbor and supporting long-term waterfront resiliency. Several waterfront facilities are aging and require ongoing maintenance, repair, or replacement due to exposure to coastal weather conditions, saltwater, and long-term wear.

One of the Town's major planned waterfront infrastructure projects involves replacement of the aging piers at Rockwell Marina, which are approximately 35 years old. The Town is evaluating phased replacement of the existing dock systems with modern aluminum pier infrastructure and associated utility upgrades, including electrical improvements. Planning efforts also include refinement of project costs, evaluation of materials and phasing strategies, and identification of potential State and federal funding opportunities to support implementation through the Capital Improvement Program.

The State Street Boat Ramp and associated dock facilities provide an important public access point to Bristol Harbor and support recreational boating, commercial marine activities, and harbor operations. The Town should continue to evaluate opportunities to repair, upgrade, and modernize these facilities to improve safety, accessibility, operational efficiency, and long-term resilience to coastal hazards (add implementation action?).

The Town will continue to prioritize maintenance and resiliency improvements to waterfront infrastructure, including docks, piers, seawalls, boardwalks, and related public access facilities, to support harbor operations, public safety, coastal recreation, and long-term adaptation to coastal flooding and sea level rise.

Energy Production and Consumption

Improving energy efficiency in municipal operations reduces long term operating costs and supports environmental sustainability goals. The Town has undertaken efforts to evaluate municipal energy use and identify opportunities for improvement, including completion of an energy audit of municipal buildings and conversion to LED streetlighting. These initiatives have reduced energy consumption and improved operational efficiency. The Town will continue to pursue additional energy efficiency improvements in municipal buildings, infrastructure, and operations as part of ongoing capital planning and facility upgrades.

The Town of Bristol supports the use of renewable energy technologies and reduced dependence on fossil fuels, consistent with Rhode Island's clean energy goals. The Town has made investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy over time, including upgrades to municipal facilities and support for local and regional energy initiatives. The Fire Department headquarters at 4 Annawamscutt Drive has achieved Silver LEED certification, reflecting the Town's commitment to incorporating energy efficient design into public facilities. The Town will continue to consider high performance building practices, including LEED or comparable standards, in the design and construction of new or substantially renovated municipal facilities, as appropriate.

In addition to municipal investments, institutional and private sector partners have contributed to local energy efficiency efforts. Roger Williams University has developed multiple LEED certified buildings, including a residence hall and admissions center, demonstrating the role of institutional partners in advancing energy efficiency and sustainable design within the community.

Bristol currently receives electricity from Rhode Island Energy, with generation sources that remain largely dependent on natural gas. At the state level, Rhode Island's renewable energy portfolio is dominated by solar and offshore wind, with smaller contributions from onshore wind, hydroelectric generation, and landfill gas or anaerobic digestion. Bristol has contributed to these efforts through local

renewable energy generation, including a significant recent investment in solar energy on municipally owned land.

In 2024, the Town completed development of a large-scale solar installation on the closed Bristol Landfill through a partnership with private and institutional partners. The project occupies more than 90 acres of capped landfill and includes over 20,000 solar panels, generating approximately 8,700 megawatt hours of electricity annually, or enough to power more than 700 homes and businesses. This project represents the largest capped landfill solar installation in Rhode Island and demonstrates how previously developed municipal sites can be repurposed to support critical infrastructure needs. The project reflects a collaborative effort among the Town, state agencies, and private partners, and advances both local energy objectives and the State's Renewable Energy Standard (R.I. Gen. Laws § 39-26, as amended), which requires that 100 percent of electricity demand be offset by renewable energy by 2033.

Future Needs

Additional opportunities exist to expand renewable energy generation on municipal and private properties. The Town can identify sites suitable for solar or other renewable energy projects and leverage available funding programs, including Rhode Island Energy and the Rhode Island Commerce Renewable Energy Fund.

The Town can also support energy efficiency improvements at the building scale. Given Bristol's large inventory of historic structures, incremental upgrades such as insulation, window improvements, and heating system upgrades represent an important opportunity to reduce energy consumption. Programs offered by Rhode Island Energy, including free home energy assessments and rebate programs available through Clean Heat Rhode Island, provide tools to support these improvements.

Continued investment in energy efficiency, renewable energy generation, and energy supply options will help reduce long-term energy costs, improve environmental sustainability, and support statewide clean energy goals.

Definitions

MRF Recycling Rate: This is our simplest measure of recycling, which divides the total tons of mixed recyclables (materials placed in your bin/cart at home) sent to Resource Recovery's Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) by the total of these tons plus the tons of trash delivered to Resource Recovery for landfilling. Resource Recovery automatically collects both of these numbers when your city or town's trucks cross our scales.

Rate of Overall Material Diversion from Landfill: This measure expands on the previous one even more, by adding in all other materials that are diverted from the landfill for reuse or recycling such as books, bulky rigid plastics, cooking oil, electronic waste, food scraps, (recyclable) mattresses, motor oil & filters, paint, paper shredded at special events and tires. We divide these tons by their total plus the total tons of landfilled trash.