



TOWN OF BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND

PLANNING BOARD COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN UPDATE MEETING

Agenda

Thursday, April 23rd, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Reynolds School Conference Room, 235 High Street, Bristol, RI 02809

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Agenda Items

B1. Review Draft Transportation Element (*continued from March 26th meeting*)

B2. Review Draft Services and Facilities Element

C. Adjournment

Date Posted: April 17, 2026

Posted By: mbw

Transportation

Introduction

Bristol's transportation system is central to the Town's economic vitality, public safety, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. As a historic coastal community located on a peninsula, Bristol depends on a limited number of regional corridors, including Routes 114 and 136 and the Mount Hope Bridge, to connect residents, businesses, and visitors to neighboring communities and the highway network. These geographic constraints, together with a compact historic street pattern and scenic roadway designations, require a transportation approach that supports safety and mobility while preserving community character.

Transportation infrastructure in Bristol is increasingly affected by coastal hazards and climate change. Flooding, sea level rise, and extreme weather events pose risks to low-lying roadways and regional connections. While vulnerability assessments and adaptation strategies for transportation assets are addressed more fully in the Natural Hazards and Climate Change Element, this Transportation Element recognizes the need to coordinate mobility planning with long-term resilience efforts to maintain reliable access for residents, businesses, emergency services, and regional travel.

This Transportation Element builds upon prior corridor planning efforts, the Town's Safety Action Plan, and townwide Bicycle Network Plan and incorporates public input gathered during the Comprehensive Plan update. It establishes coordinated goals, policies, and implementation actions to advance a safe, connected, and resilient multimodal transportation system that improves access, strengthens regional connectivity, and enhances neighborhood livability.

2016 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Progress

- **Metacom Avenue Corridor Improvements:** [RIDOT](#) implemented key recommendations from the 2007 Metacom Corridor Management Plan, including a speed study, left-turn lanes, [crosswalks at key intersections](#), and a continuous center turn lane, resulting in improved traffic safety and operations along Metacom Avenue.
- **Bristol Bicycle Network Planning:** Completed the Bristol Bicycle Network planning effort, funded through the RIDEM Bikeways Program, to improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. [The study focused on Downtown but included some townwide analysis.](#) ~~townwide~~. The effort included alternatives analysis, public engagement, and concept designs for enhanced bicycle facilities and shared-street treatments.
- **Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program:** Implemented a resident request-based traffic calming program to reduce vehicle speeds and enhance neighborhood safety.
- **Safety Action Plan Prepared and Adopted:** Completed and locally adopted a municipal Safety Action Plan under the federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program, identifying high-risk intersections and priority safety countermeasures for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists through a data-driven and [a several month-long](#) community-engagement ~~ment~~ process.
- **Town-Wide Wayfinding System:** Implemented a coordinated wayfinding program featuring a consistent red, white, and blue design theme that improves navigation and reinforces Bristol's civic identity, drawing inspiration from the community's annual Fourth of July Celebration.

- **Gooding Avenue Pedestrian Improvements:** Completed sidewalk and ADA accessibility upgrades along Gooding Avenue, including reconstruction of access serving adjacent commercial parking areas, improving walkability and safety along the corridor. Also, an improved RIPTA bus stop at Hope Street serving the area was completed.
- **Ferry Road Sidewalk Extension:** The Town received two grants to plan bicycle and pedestrian improvements, including conceptual designs for extending sidewalks from the Constitution and Wood Streets area to Metacom Avenue to improve pedestrian connectivity to Roger Williams University and surrounding neighborhoods. This project has been included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), is currently in design, may extend to Old Ferry Road, and is anticipated to be completed in 2028. ~~Extended sidewalks from the Constitution and Wood Streets area to Metacom Avenue, improving pedestrian connectivity to Roger Williams University and surrounding neighborhoods.~~
- ~~**Downtown Bus Pull-Off Areas:** Installed designated bus pull-off areas (“bus boxes”) in downtown Bristol to allow buses to safely exit the travel lane for passenger boarding, and improving traffic flow and safety along state routes.~~
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Goal 1: Provide a safe, accessible, and connected multimodal transportation system for all users.

- A. Implement a Complete Streets approach that accommodates pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and people of all ages and abilities.
- B. Incorporate green infrastructure and stormwater management practices into roadway and streetscape projects where feasible to improve resilience and environmental performance.
- C. Support complete streets principles by promoting bicycle and pedestrian facilities that improve access and safety throughout Bristol’s downtown and neighborhood corridors, reinforcing connections to the East Bay Bike Path, waterfront destinations, and major community nodes.
- D. Expand and improve pedestrian and bicycle networks connecting neighborhoods, schools, parks, downtown, waterfront areas, and regional paths, including the East Bay Bike Path and Colt State Park.
- E. Promote the safe and predictable use of shared-use paths and bicycle facilities through design, maintenance, signage, education, and coordination with enforcement, with specific attention to speed differentials and emerging mobility technologies such as electric bicycles, consistent with state regulations and best practices.
- F. Close critical sidewalk, crossing, and accessibility gaps, with priority on Hope Street, Ferry Road, Metacom Avenue, and other key corridors.
- G. Require and encourage physical connections between neighborhoods and key destinations, including schools, commercial areas, employment centers, and recreational facilities, through a connected network of public roads, sidewalks, off-street paths, and bicycle facilities.

H. Support neighborhood street connections that improve emergency access, local service delivery, and resident mobility, while preventing cut-through traffic and preserving neighborhood character.

Goal 2: Reduce congestion and transportation-related environmental impacts while improving local and regional connectivity.

A. Promote land use and development patterns that reduce reliance on the automobile by supporting walking, bicycling, and other alternative modes of transportation.

B. Encourage alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel, including public transit, ridesharing and vanpools, walking, and bicycling.

C. Coordinate with RIPTA to improve bus stop safety, accessibility, visibility, and amenities, including shelters where appropriate.

D. Identify opportunities for park-and-ride facilities and supporting multimodal connections to reduce congestion on regional corridors.

E. Implement adopted transportation and corridor study recommendations, including the Metacom Avenue Corridor Management Plan, through development review and capital planning.

F. Manage access along major roadways by limiting curb cuts, consolidating driveways, and improving intersection operations.

G. Coordinate with RIDOT and neighboring communities to pursue regional transportation strategies that reduce cut-through traffic and congestion.

H. Reduce air and water pollution by supporting low-emission and non-motorized transportation options and incorporating green infrastructure where feasible.

Goal 3: Maintain safe, efficient, and well-managed transportation access for downtown, neighborhood, and waterfront areas, including the movement of people, goods, and services.

A. Maintain safe and efficient circulation in downtown, waterfront, and commercial areas to support businesses, institutions, and tourism.

B. Promote “park-once” behavior through coordinated parking management, pedestrian connections, and wayfinding that encourage walking between destinations.

C. Expand bicycle parking and visitor-supportive facilities at downtown, waterfront, park, and cultural destinations.

D. Explore seasonal or local mobility options, such as shuttles or trolley-style service and institutional partnerships, that reduce parking pressure and enhance visitor access.

E. Implement coordinated gateway and streetscape improvements that reinforce community identity and improve navigation.

F. Support efficient goods movement and deliveries through curb management and design strategies that minimize conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists.

G. Maintain the Town's prohibition on the creation of new private roads to promote a connected public street network, ensure long-term public access, and avoid fragmented roadway ownership and maintenance.

H. Maintain the Town's policy of allowing on-street parking on all non-arterial roadways to support neighborhood access, local activity, and shared use of the public right-of-way.

Transportation Context

Bristol's location on a peninsula strongly shapes local and regional circulation patterns. Vehicular access into and out of Town is limited to Routes 114 and 136, including the Mount Hope Bridge connection to Aquidneck Island. Approximately 120 miles of roadway are maintained by the Town of Bristol. Key corridors, including Metacom Avenue (Route 136), Hope Street and Ferry Road (Route 114), ~~along with and select downtown streets~~ [Gooding Avenue and a portion of Poppasquash Road](#), are under state jurisdiction.

Bristol's historic development pattern has resulted in a compact street network with narrow rights-of-way and limited opportunities for roadway expansion. Transportation improvements must therefore balance safety, mobility, and accessibility with preservation of the Town's historic character. Route 114 (Hope Street and Ferry Road) and High Street are designated Scenic Roadways under the State Scenic Roadway Program. This designation requires review of roadway changes to protect scenic and historic character and influences transportation design, maintenance, and streetscape decisions. [Route 114 is also a designated evacuation route and a low-lying roadway vulnerable to storm inundation and future sea level rise.](#)

Map TR-1 illustrates Federal Highway Administration roadway classifications within Bristol, demonstrating the concentration of regional traffic along Routes 114 and 136 and the extensive network of local and collector streets that support neighborhood access.

Neighborhood Circulation and Connectivity

Several Bristol neighborhoods, particularly those located along Metacom Avenue and Hope Street, lack internal street connections and rely on a limited number of access points to ~~major corridors~~ [arterial roads](#). This pattern can concentrate traffic at a small number of intersections, increase reliance on Metacom Avenue for short local trips, and create [congestion](#) challenges for emergency response and municipal services.

Bristol's approach to neighborhood circulation emphasizes improving internal connectivity while maintaining appropriate access management along Metacom Avenue. Where appropriate, neighborhood circulation should direct traffic to existing signalized intersections rather than creating new direct access points along the corridor. Evaluation of new or improved neighborhood connections should incorporate neighborhood input and preserve safety and character.

Metacom Avenue (Route 136)

Long-term circulation strategies identified in the Metacom Avenue Corridor Management Plan (2007) remain relevant, including recommendations related to roadway safety, access management, pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, transit operations, landscaping, signage, and site design. [Many of the recommendations have been incorporated into the Town's zoning and land use regulations.](#) The Town will continue to refer to this plan when evaluating development proposals and coordinating incremental improvements along the corridor.

These strategies include improving internal connections between commercial areas and adjacent neighborhoods to reduce reliance on Metacom Avenue and the parallel local street network (including Hope Street) for short local trips. Incremental implementation of shared access connections and service road segments has demonstrated benefits and should continue where feasible in order to improve safety and circulation while minimizing additional curb cuts and turning conflicts along the corridor.

Transportation Safety

Safe Streets and Roads for All Safety Action Plan

~~Bristol prepared and adopted a~~ municipal Safety Action Plan (as part of the statewide Safe Streets and Roads for All initiative funded through a 2022 United States Department of Transportation grant) [was prepared for Bristol and was locally adopted.](#) The plan applies a Safe Systems approach to improve safety for all roadway users and reflects a data-driven and community-informed process that included crash analysis, identification of the High Injury Network, and public engagement.

The Safety Action Plan establishes priority safety needs and recommended improvements for both Town-maintained and State-maintained roadways. It positions Bristol to pursue future implementation funding and provides a framework for advancing targeted safety projects that align with local, regional, and state transportation planning efforts.

Priority Improvement Locations

The Safety Action Plan identifies priority locations based on crash data, roadway characteristics, and community input.

On Town-controlled streets, recommended improvements include the following:

- Bay View Avenue. This corridor presents opportunities for traffic calming, lane adjustments, enhanced pedestrian infrastructure, and bicycle accommodations consistent with Complete Streets principles.
- Sherry Avenue and Perry Street. These streets function as neighborhood cut-through routes and serve as important walking paths for students traveling to and from the high school. Recommended actions include intersection safety treatments, improved signage, sidewalk and crossing enhancements, and continued evaluation of alternative routes such as the Wood Street Connector.
- Naomi Street. This street experiences cut-through traffic and pedestrian safety concerns, including sidewalk gaps and constrained intersections. The Plan recommends improving

pedestrian continuity, filling sidewalk gaps, and implementing targeted traffic calming and signage improvements.

- Poppasquash Road. This corridor presents safety challenges related to speeding, limited sight distances on curves, and interactions with the East Bay Bike Path. Recommended improvements include speed management, visibility enhancements, improved crossings, pedestrian facility upgrades, and coordination with longer-term coastal resilience planning.

On State-owned roadways, implementation will require coordination with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation. Priority corridors include:

- Metacom Avenue (Route 136). Recommended improvements include enhanced pedestrian crossings, sidewalk continuity, bicycle accommodations, intersection safety improvements, and speed management.
- Hope Street and Ferry Road (Route 114). Recommended measures include improved crosswalks, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, traffic calming treatments, and intersection upgrades while maintaining regional mobility.

The Town will use the Safety Action Plan to guide capital improvements, pursue state and federal funding, and coordinate with RIDOT and other partners.

Traffic Calming and Speed Management

The Town of Bristol maintains an established Traffic Calming Policy to address neighborhood concerns about vehicle speeds and roadway safety on Town-maintained residential streets. The policy provides a formal process through which residents may initiate traffic calming requests by submitting a petition demonstrating at least sixty percent support within the defined area of influence.

Requests are evaluated through traffic studies and reviewed by Town staff, including Police and Public Works, with recommendations presented to the Town Council for final action and funding. Potential measures include speed humps, roadway narrowing, electronic speed feedback signs, and other design-based strategies intended to reduce vehicle speeds and enhance safety. Requests for removal of installed measures also require Town Council approval.

Public engagement conducted during the Comprehensive Plan update revealed strong and consistent concern regarding speeding, unsafe driving behaviors, and difficult pedestrian crossings, particularly along Metacom Avenue, Hope Street, Ferry Road, and downtown streets. Residents expressed strong support for traffic calming measures, improved crosswalks, clearer markings, and enhanced pedestrian visibility.

Public Transit (RIPTA) Service

Public bus service in Bristol is provided by the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority ([RIPTA](#)) and is an important component of the Town's transportation system. Route 60 primarily serves Hope Street and downtown Bristol and is a high-ridership corridor that provides frequent and reliable service. This route supports access to employment, education, healthcare, and commercial

destinations and plays a central role in supporting downtown vitality. Route 60X primarily serves Metacom Avenue and provides more limited service.

Enhanced frequency, reliability, and stop amenities along Metacom Avenue could improve transit access to neighborhoods and employment areas and support transit-supportive development patterns. The Town supports exploring opportunities to enhance service along Metacom Avenue without reducing service levels along Route 60 or negatively affecting existing ridership.

The Town will continue coordinating with RIPTA to improve the safety, accessibility, and functionality of bus stops in Bristol. Improvements should include ADA-compliant access, enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connections, and the installation of shelters or seating and other rider amenities where warranted. The Town has identified the following priority locations for future bus stop improvements:

- Hope Street and State Street (northbound and southbound)
- Hope Street and Franklin Street (northbound and southbound)
- Hope Street and Fales Road
- Hope Street before Creek Street (northbound)
- Roger Williams University (northbound and southbound)

~~The Town will continue coordinating with RIPTA to improve the safety and accessibility of bus stops, including ADA-compliant access, pedestrian and bicycle connections and shelters where appropriate. The Town has prepared a list of priority bus stops where amenities should be considered.~~

Public engagement indicated interest in improved service frequency, clearer bus route information, additional shelters and benches, potential local or seasonal shuttle services, and coordination with Roger Williams University to reduce automobile dependence.

Map TR-2 illustrates RIPTA bus routes and stops, the East Bay Bike Path, and highlights the concentration of transit service along Hope Street (Route 114) and Metacom Avenue (Route 136).

Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

East Bay Bike Path

Bristol's bicycle network is anchored by the East Bay Bike Path, a regionally significant shared-use path connecting Bristol to Warren, Barrington, East Providence, and Providence. The path serves both recreational and transportation functions and is an important component of the Town's active transportation network.

High user volumes, speed differentials, roadway crossings, and constrained segments present ongoing safety and connectivity challenges, particularly during peak tourism seasons and special events.

The Town will continue to coordinate with state and regional partners to improve safety, strengthen connections to key destinations, and integrate bicycle facilities with pedestrian networks, transit service, and land use planning.

Bristol Bicycle Network Plan

The Town of Bristol completed the Bristol Bicycle Network and Connector planning effort to improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout the community. While the study was initially intended to explore improved connections between Roger Williams University and downtown Bristol, the scope expanded to evaluate broader townwide connectivity between the East Bay Bike Path, downtown, waterfront destinations, civic sites, and surrounding neighborhoods.

As part of the planning process, consultants developed conceptual design approaches for several corridors, including a shared-street concept for Thames Street. The concept emphasizes traffic calming, raised crosswalks, improved intersection design at State Street, and shared-street elements intended to slow vehicle speeds and enhance pedestrian and bicycle comfort. Public engagement indicated support for the Thames Street concept as a way to strengthen connections to Independence Park, State Street Dock, Rockwell Park, Fireman's Memorial Park, and the Prudence Island Ferry, while allowing portions of the street to function as pedestrian-oriented space during community events.

The Wood Street Connector [\(bicycle/pedestrian\)](#) was also identified as an important component of the active transportation network. This concept would provide a safer and more direct bicycle and pedestrian connection between residential neighborhoods and downtown Bristol, while improving overall access to the East Bay Bike Path and reducing cut-through traffic on nearby neighborhood streets.

The Bicycle Network planning effort establishes a framework for incremental, context-sensitive improvements that enhance safety and will advance Bristol's identity as a walkable and bicycle-friendly community.

~~Bristol serves as the mainland access point for year-round ferry service to Prudence Island, located within the Town of Portsmouth. This privately operated ferry service utilizes a Town-owned dock along Bristol's Thames Street waterfront. Sea level rise assessments prepared by Fuss & O'Neill have identified the dock as vulnerable to future coastal flooding and inundation, indicating that elevation or other resiliency improvements will be necessary to maintain long-term accessibility. Bristol serves as the mainland access point for year-round ferry service to Prudence Island, which is located within the Town of Portsmouth. This ferry service is privately operated, with access occurring through Bristol's Thames Street waterfront.~~

The Town recognizes that mainland parking demand associated with Prudence Island residents presents ongoing challenges. Bristol may work with property owners and residents to identify and support appropriate parking and access solutions that reduce impacts on residential streets while maintaining safe and reliable access to ferry service.

Seasonal passenger ferry service connecting Providence, Bristol, and Newport includes a limited stop in Bristol that was introduced in recent years and currently operates primarily on weekends during the peak visitor season. In addition to supporting tourism and visitor access to downtown Bristol, this service provides Bristol residents with a seasonal non-automobile travel option to regional destinations. The Town supports the continued operation of seasonal service to Bristol and encourages the exploration of expanded service, where feasible, and may coordinate, as appropriate, with service providers and partners to support pedestrian and bicycle access, traveler information, and wayfinding within the public right-of-way.

Mount Hope Bridge and Regional Connectivity

~~The Mount Hope Bridge is a critical regional transportation asset linking Bristol to Aquidneck Island and providing the most direct connection to employment centers, services, and destinations in Newport County. The bridge supports commuter travel, tourism, goods movement, and regional connectivity for residents and businesses throughout the East Bay. The Town will continue coordinating with the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority regarding maintenance activities, construction impacts, asset management, and public communication related to bridge operations. Given the bridge's importance to regional mobility, the Town should work with state and regional partners to prepare for potential extended closures or major service disruptions, including evaluation of contingency transportation strategies such as temporary ferry service or other alternative travel connections. The bridge's designation as a National Historic Landmark further underscores the importance of preserving and maintaining this iconic structure as both a transportation asset and historic resource.~~

~~The Mount Hope Bridge is a critical regional connection linking Bristol to Aquidneck Island and supporting commuting, tourism, goods movement, and emergency access. The Town will continue to coordinate with the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority on construction impacts, asset management, and public communication.~~

Parking and Downtown Access

Parking management is an important component of Bristol's transportation system, particularly within the historic downtown and waterfront areas where street widths are constrained and seasonal visitation increases demand. Public engagement identified parking availability, turnover, and time limits as recurring concerns, especially during peak summer months and special events.

Downtown Bristol relies heavily on on-street parking supplemented by municipal and privately owned surface lots. While this pattern supports walkability and a compact development form, high-demand periods can result in circulation inefficiencies and competition between short-term visitor parking, employee parking, and ferry-related parking demand. Parking associated with Prudence Island ferry users also contributes to pressure on nearby streets and waterfront areas.

A comprehensive parking and curb management approach will be important to improving turnover, supporting local businesses, and reducing unnecessary vehicle circulation. This may include:

- Evaluation of utilization patterns
- Time limits
- Loading zones
- Seasonal demand
- Enforcement practices
- Review and update of the Town's parking ordinance and associated signage to ensure consistency, clarity and enforceability
- Evaluation and identification of satellite public parking locations outside of Downtown
- Implementation of a shuttle service to key destinations (coordinated with satellite parking)
- Strategic siting of public EV charging infrastructure

These strategies support downtown vitality, improve circulation efficiency, and reinforce Bristol's commitment to maintaining a walkable and accessible historic Downtown.

Reference Documents

Consistency with the Rhode Island State Guide Plan

This Transportation Element is consistent with the Rhode Island State Guide Plan, specifically Moving Forward RI 2050: The Long-Range Transportation Plan (State Guide Plan Element 640). Bristol's emphasis on Complete Streets, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, and implementation of the Bicycle Network Plan advances the State's goals to connect people and places and promote travel choices across a multimodal system. Coordination with RIDOT on safety improvements and access management along state corridors, including Route 114 and Route 136, supports a safer and more reliable regional transportation network. Policies incorporating green infrastructure and stormwater considerations into transportation projects further advance environmental sustainability and long-term system resilience, consistent with statewide transportation priorities.

Supporting Plans

Town of Bristol, Rhode Island. *Bristol Safety Action Plan*. August 2025.
Adopted September 10, 2025. Prepared by VHB (with Cambridge Systematics and SmithGroup).

Town of Bristol, Rhode Island. Bristol Bicycle Network Project. Established 2020.
Prepared by Fuss & O'Neill (with Toole Design) under the RIDEM Bikeways Program Grant.

Bristol Comprehensive Plan Update Transportation DRAFT #2 4/16/2026 [\(Staff and PB Comments\)](#)

Town of Warren and Town of Bristol, Rhode Island. *National Grid (RI Energy) Easement Trail Feasibility Study*. June 2016. Prepared by Horsley Witten Group, Inc., and Bradford Associates LLC.

Next Steps:

[Send to Bristol Police Department for Review/Comments
Planning Board to Review Again at April 23rd Meeting](#)

Transportation Implementation Actions (4/16/2026 Draft)				
ID	Action Type	Action	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
T-1	Planning / Study	Update the Scenic Corridor Management Study in coordination with RIDOT for Hope Street (Route 114), Ferry Road, and High Street to advance context-sensitive roadway design, safety, and streetscape improvements consistent with scenic and historic corridor goals.	Short–Mid-term	Department of Community Development
T-2	Planning / Study	In coordination with RIDOT, identify priority intersections on Metacom Avenue / Hope Street / Ferry Road for phased improvements (turn-lane needs, signal timing/coordination, crossing safety, and access management- coordinate Metacom Ave cross streets).	Short–Mid-term	Department of Community Development
T-3	Infrastructure / Capital Improvement	Work with RIDOT to implement roundabouts at locations identified in existing plans and through safety and operational analysis along Route 136 including by Roger Williams University	Long-term	Department of Community Development
T-4	Infrastructure / Capital Improvement	Advance roadway resurfacing, sidewalk rehabilitation, ADA curb ramp installation, and safety improvements along Hope Street and Ferry Road.	Mid-term	Public Works; Department of Community Development
T-5	Infrastructure / Capital Improvement	Advance sidewalk installation and related pedestrian safety improvements along Metacom Avenue to improve walkability, accessibility, and connectivity along the corridor.	Long-term	Public Works; Department of Community Development
T-6	Planning / Study	Identify and prioritize sidewalk extension projects and submit eligible projects for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to advance implementation of the Town’s sidewalk and pedestrian network.	Short–Mid-term	Department of Community Development
T-7	Coordination / Partnerships	Coordinate with RIDOT to advance and fund priority safety improvements identified in the Bristol Safety Action Plan on state-controlled corridors, including Metacom Avenue (Route 136) and Hope Street / Ferry Road (Route 114), through inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and other funding programs.	Short-Mid-term	Department of Community Development
T-8	Programs & Services	Implement targeted safety improvements on local Town streets identified in the Safety Action Plan, such as Bay View Avenue, Sherry Avenue, Naomi Street, and Poppasquash Road, incorporating visibility improvements, traffic calming, and pedestrian infrastructure where crash history and risk are elevated.	Short–Mid-term	Public Works; Department of Community Development; Police Department
T-9	Planning / Study	Prepare neighborhood circulation studies, particularly in neighborhoods along Metacom Avenue and Hope Street, to evaluate local street connections that improve emergency access, support local service vehicles, and provide access to signalized intersections.	Mid-term	Department of Community Development; Public Works; Fire & Police

T-10	Coordination / Partnerships	Coordinate with RIDOT, Statewide Planning, neighboring communities, and local partners to evaluate safety and connectivity along the East Bay Bike Path and related bicycle routes in Bristol. Actions may include identifying priority roadway crossings, improving signage and pavement markings (3D crosswalk markings), enhancing wayfinding to key destinations, supporting public education related to shared-use path etiquette and e-bike use, and strengthening connections between the Bike Path, neighborhoods, downtown, parks, schools, and transit stops.	Short–Mid-term	Department of Community Development; Police Department; Public Works
T-11	Infrastructure / Capital Improvement	Advance implementation of priority bicycle and pedestrian improvements identified in the Bristol Bicycle Network Project, with an initial focus on Thames Street enhancements, including raised crosswalks, shared-street design elements, and improved intersection treatments at State Street to support safer, slower vehicle speeds and better connectivity between the East Bay Bike Path, downtown destinations, and waterfront attractions.	Short–Mid-term	Department of Community Development; Public Works
T-12	Infrastructure / Capital Improvement	Evaluate opportunities for wider shoulders for bicycles, clearer bicycle lane markings, and consistent striping to improve bicycle safety and network continuity.	Short-term	Public Works; Department of Community Development
T-13	Infrastructure / Capital Improvement	Install additional bicycle racks at key destinations, including downtown, parks, the waterfront, and public facilities, and install bicycle repair stations.	Short-term	Department of Community Development; Parks & Recreation
T-14	Environmental & Resilience	Expand Safe Routes to School initiatives by supporting walking school bus programs, improving pedestrian and bicycle connections to schools, offering bicycle safety education for children including a bicycle safety training course.	Short–Mid-term	Department of Community Development; School Department; Police Department
T-15	Coordination / Partnerships	Work with partners to establish a multi-use trail (ped/bike) on the electric easement of the Rhode Island Energy property to provide an alternative to Metacom Avenue in coordination with the Town of Warren.	Long-term	Department of Community Development
T-16	Planning / Study	Identify existing paper streets and assess their potential as roads, pedestrian walkways, and/or bicycle paths.	Long-term	Department of Community Development
T-17	Planning / Study	Develop a phased implementation strategy for the Bristol Bicycle Network Project identifying priority segments, cost estimates, funding sources, and coordination requirements for both Town and state-controlled roadways.	Short-term	Department of Community Development
T-18	Planning / Study	Examine options to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access to Unity Park via Franklin Street, with a focus on safety, accessibility, and neighborhood compatibility.	Mid-term	Department of Community Development; Parks & Recreation
T-19	Planning / Study	Undertake a municipal parking survey and utilization study and develop a comprehensive parking and curb management strategy, including short-term parking, loading zones, time limits, event management, enforcement mechanisms, and pricing or permit considerations where appropriate.	Short-term	Department of Community Development; Town Administrator; Police

T-20	Planning / Study	Review and update the Town's parking ordinance to ensure consistency with adopted parking management strategies, clarify time limits and loading provisions, and install or replace signage to accurately reflect ordinance requirements and improve enforceability.	Short-Mid-term	Department of Community Development; Town Administrator; Police Department; Public Works
T-21	Programs & Services	Pursue a local or seasonal shuttle service that serves residents and visitors, connects to destinations, shopping, and public parking areas, and helps manage downtown parking demand and congestion, including evaluation of vehicle acquisition, driver staffing or contracted operations, and identification of potential partnerships and sustainable funding sources.	Mid-term	Town Administrator; Department of Community Development
T-22	Planning / Study	Develop a siting strategy for public EV charging (downtown/municipal lots/parks) aligned with parking management and visitor access.	Short–Mid-term	Department of Community Development; Town Administrator
T-23	Planning / Study	Evaluate the feasibility of small-scale parking structures to address areas with limited accessible parking; identify vacant or surface parking lots in the downtown area that may be suitable for future parking decks through a range of ownership or partnership approaches.	Long-term	Department of Community Development; Town Administrator
T-24	Planning / Study	Identify and evaluate potential satellite public parking locations outside the downtown core to reduce pressure on on-street parking, support seasonal demand, and provide dedicated parking opportunities for Prudence Island ferry users and residents	Mid-term	Department of Community Development; Town Administrator
T-25	Infrastructure / Capital Improvement	Design and implement approved satellite parking facilities, including wayfinding, lighting, ADA access, and integration with shuttle service or ferry access as appropriate.	Long-term	Public Works; Department of Community Development
T-26	Coordination / Partnerships	Coordinate with RIPTA on bus shelters, benches and route info/signage, prioritizing stops with safety issues and high ridership potential. Implement necessary rider amenities at bus stops identified within this Plan.	Short–Mid-term	Department of Community Development
T-27	Environmental & Resilience	Coordinate with RIDOT, RIDEM, and other relevant state agencies to address recurring flooding and long-term vulnerability along Poppasquash Road, including evaluation of long-term adaptation strategies that account for projected sea level rise, such as inland rerouting, elevation, or relocation.	Long-term	Department of Community Development; Public Works
T-28	Environmental & Resilience	Incorporate permeable paving and other stormwater management practices into applicable Town transportation projects and redevelopment projects.	Ongoing	Public Works; Department of Community Development

T-29	Environmental & Resilience	Implement end-of-road stormwater retrofit projects to reduce runoff, erosion, and pollutant loading to coastal waters, prioritizing locations where local streets discharge directly to water bodies or drainage systems.	Mid–Long-term	Public Works
T-30	Operations & Maintenance	Maintain and apply the Town’s adopted wayfinding program by ensuring that new or replacement signage is consistent with established wayfinding design standards and themes.	Ongoing	Department of Community Development; Public Works
T-31	Operations & Maintenance	Preserve and maintain the landscaped tree island at the intersection of Routes 114 and 136 as part of any roadway improvement projects, consistent with highway safety requirements.	Ongoing	Public Works
T-32	Operations & Maintenance	Continue to accommodate marine transport routes through ongoing roadway maintenance and design practices, including adjustable signage, utility clearance considerations, and intersection geometry that allow the safe movement of boats and oversized marine trailers to and from the waterfront.	Ongoing	Public Works; Harbor Commission
T-33	Operations & Maintenance	Coordinate with the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority and regional partners to plan for potential Mount Hope Bridge closures or major disruptions, including evaluation of contingency transportation strategies such as temporary ferry service and alternative regional travel routes.	Medium-term	Police; Public Works; Harbor Commission; Town Administrator
T-34	Coordination / Partnerships	Evaluate opportunities to support private ferry or water transportation services connecting destinations within and nearby Bristol to enhance transportation choice.	Long-term	Harbor Commission
T-35	Operations & Maintenance	Coordinate with RIDOT to manage roadway operations, access and improvements along Routes 114 and 136 in a manner that reinforces Metacom Avenue as the Town’s primary higher-capacity arterial corridor and preserves the scenic, historic, and pedestrian-oriented character of Route 114 (Hope Street).	Ongoing	Department of Community Development; Police Department; Public Works
T-36	Study/Capital Improvement	Implement safety improvements along Franklin Street to address constrained roadway widths. Potential improvements may include removal of on-street parking from one side of the roadway, traffic calming, and related streetscape enhancements.	Mid-term	Public Works, Department of Community Development, Police Department

Note: Need to identify actions in CIP

MAP TR-1
Transportation:
Road Classifications
TOWN OF
BRISTOL
RHODE ISLAND
 Comprehensive Plan, 2026



Legend

Federal Highway Administration Road Classifications

- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local Roads

N

Location Inset

0 0.25 0.5 1

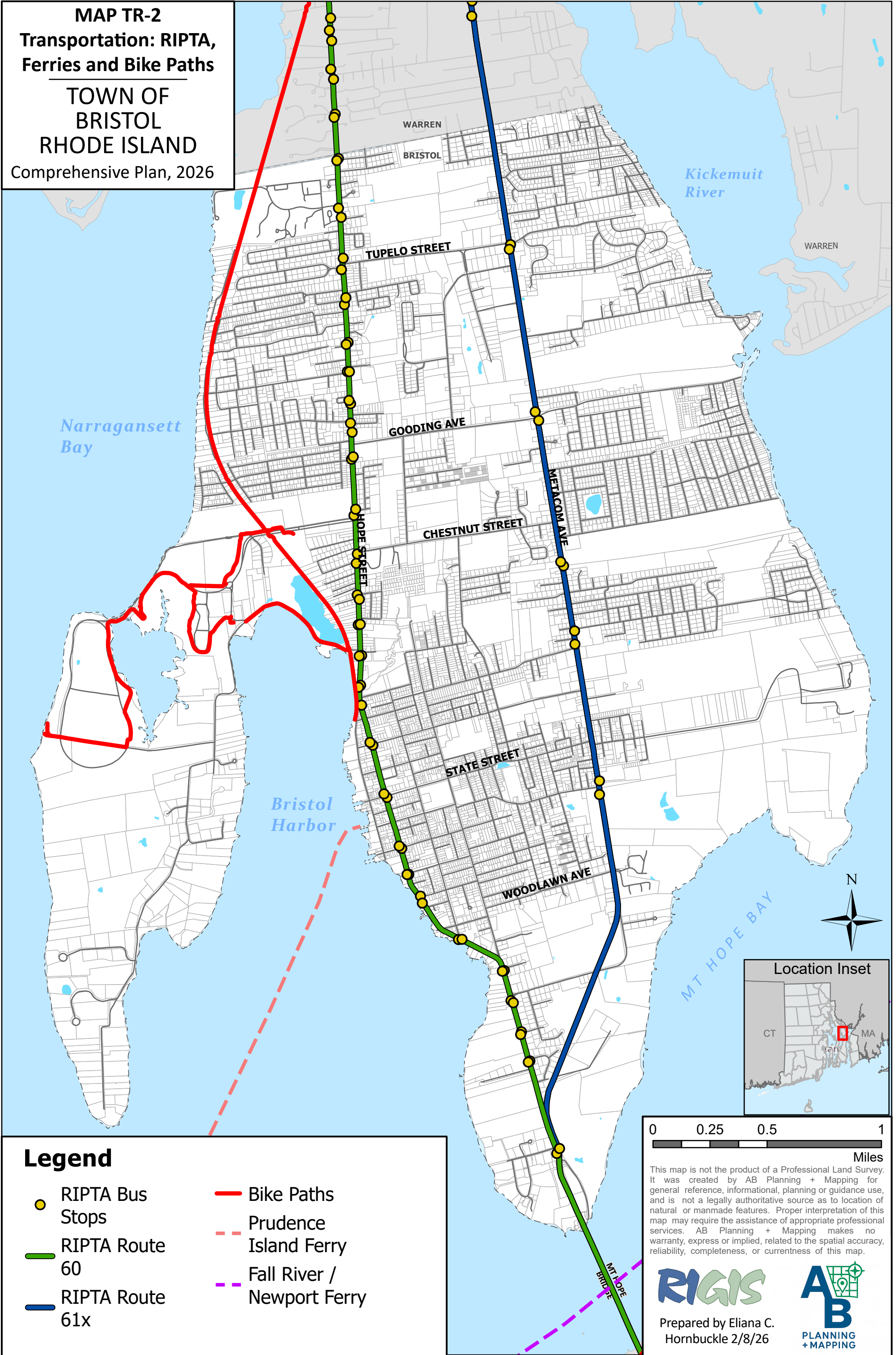
Miles

This map is not the product of a Professional Land Survey. It was created by AB Planning + Mapping for general reference, informational, planning or guidance use, and is not a legally authoritative source as to location of natural or manmade features. Proper interpretation of this map may require the assistance of appropriate professional services. AB Planning + Mapping makes no warranty, express or implied, related to the spatial accuracy, reliability, completeness, or currentness of this map.

Prepared by Eliana C. Hornbuckle 2/8/26

PLANNING + MAPPING

MAP TR-2
Transportation: RIPTA,
Ferries and Bike Paths
TOWN OF
BRISTOL
RHODE ISLAND
 Comprehensive Plan, 2026



Legend

- RIPTA Bus Stops
- RIPTA Route 60
- RIPTA Route 61x
- Bike Paths
- Prudence Island Ferry
- Fall River / Newport Ferry



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Services & Facilities

Draft Background Narrative

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 Facilities and Services implementation program. Completed actions include improvements to municipal facilities, drainage infrastructure, and municipal energy efficiency initiatives.

Completed actions include:

- Implementation of drainage improvements at the High School parking lot and Guiteras School parking lot 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 zoning amendments establishing a Public Safety Facilities zoning designation
- Adoption of a resolution designating Bristol as a Property Assessed Clean Energy Municipality
- Adoption of zoning amendments to include a new Public Zone to allow a mix of uses (but not residential) in decommissioned school buildings on High Street (Walley and Byfield on Town Common and Reynolds on High Street), and moving forward with planning for 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

Bristol provides municipal services through a number of public buildings and facilities that support the operation of local government, public safety, and community services. These facilities include Town administrative offices, public safety buildings, public works facilities, and other municipal service locations.

The Town continues to evaluate opportunities to improve the efficiency and functionality of municipal facilities. Planning efforts have included evaluation of the reuse of the former Guiteras School as a consolidated municipal government center. The concept would relocate several municipal departments currently located in multiple buildings into one facility, improving operational efficiency and long-term space planning for municipal services.

This transition will also require planning for the reuse, redevelopment, or disposition of existing Town office buildings, including potential sale or conversion to housing or other private uses.

Several specific facility needs have been identified:

- The Department of Public Works is in need of a new salt storage shed. The existing structure is failing and is located near the flood zone of the Tanyard Brook
- The DPW mechanic's garage is at the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced for safe and efficient repairs to the Town's vehicles
- The Everready Fire Station is particularly susceptible to sea level rise and is located within the flood zone; the Town should consider relocating this facility
- The Benjamin Church Senior Center has identified needs related to space limitations, accessibility, and ability to serve the community

Maintaining and upgrading municipal buildings remains an ongoing priority to ensure that facilities remain functional, accessible, and capable of supporting the services provided by the Town.

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 residential neighborhoods. The accompanying table provides a listing of labeled facilities.

Label	Facility Name
1	Rockwell School
2	Mt. Hope High School
3	Colt Andrews School
4	Benjamin Church Senior Center
5	Senior Services and Community Resources Center
6	Defiance Hose Co.
7	Hydraulion Engine Co. #1, Fire Dept. Headquarters and EMA
8	Ever-Ready Engine Co.
9	Dreadnaught Ladder Co.

Map SF-2 – Water Supply System

Map SF-2 illustrates the public water system, including water mains, hydrants, and water towers within the Bristol County Water Authority service area.

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.

Label	Sewer Pump Station 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	South end of Thames Street; east of 1 Thames Street
19	South of Burke Road, near 8 Burke Road
20	Southeast of 3 Sequoia Ct
21	North of Plant Ave, near 2 Plant Ave.
22	West of Ferry Road and Fairview Drive intersection; west of 155 Ferry Road
23	RWU; near North Campus Office Building (Roger Williams Lane #0)
24	RWU; south of US Sailing Center (1 Roger Williams Univ Way) in athletic fields
25	RWU; east of Bayside Courts
26	RWU; south of Maple Hall
27	RWU; south of Cedar Hall
28	RWU: south of Willow Hall

Map SF-4 – Stormwater System

Map SF-4 shows stormwater infrastructure, including pipes, outfalls, and culverts, and highlights key drainage features such as the Tanyard Brook system.

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.

The Town continues to pursue improvements to wastewater infrastructure and the Wastewater Treatment Facility through maintenance projects, system upgrades, and long-term capital planning.

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. These water bodies are 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, often in partnership with organizations such as Save the Bay, Roger Williams University, and the Eastern Rhode Island Conservation District.

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 Phase 2 of 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.

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 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

- Continued investment in the Tanyard Brook watershed and other priority drainage areas to reduce flooding and improve water quality
- Upgrading aging stormwater infrastructure, including pipes, culverts, and outfalls
- Reducing impervious surfaces and increasing use of green infrastructure and LID techniques
- Meeting MS4 permit requirements and advancing compliance with TMDL pollutant reduction targets
- Establishing sustainable funding mechanisms, such as a stormwater management district or utility
- Incorporating climate resilience into stormwater system design, including addressing sea level rise and increased storm intensity

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, and composting opportunities available at the transfer station. Bristol has also supported pilot and voluntary options for food waste diversion and composting, reflecting increasing interest in reducing organic waste. Recent planning efforts have included exploration of strategies to further reduce organic waste and expand composting and other diversion initiatives consistent with statewide waste management goals.

As of 2024, Bristol’s solid waste performance exceeds statewide averages but has not yet met state-mandated targets:

- **Bristol MRF Recycling Rate (2024): 25.6%**
- **Bristol Rate of Overall Material Diversion from Landfill (2024): 33.2%**

For comparison:

- **State MRF Recycling Rate: 17.2%**
- **State Overall Diversion Rate: 29.5%**

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 under 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 response departments. 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 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 Fire Department is primarily volunteer-based, with five full-time staff positions. The Ever-Ready Fire Station is located within the flood zone and is particularly vulnerable to sea level rise.

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.

A key priority is addressing the vulnerability of the Ever-Ready Fire Station, which is located within the flood zone and at risk from sea level rise. The Town should evaluate options for relocation, elevation, or other resiliency measures to ensure continued emergency response capability.

The Bristol Police Department may require future expansion or reconfiguration of its existing facility to accommodate operational needs, including space for personnel, equipment, and specialized units.

More broadly, the Town should 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.

Public Education

Existing Conditions

The Bristol Warren Regional School District (BWRSD) is a public PK–12 school system serving the Town of Bristol. The District consists of five school buildings, three of which are located in Bristol:

- Colt Andrews School – Grades K–5 (570 Hope Street, Bristol)
- Mt. Hope High School – Grades 9–12 (199 Chestnut Street, Bristol)
- Rockwell School – Grades K–5 (1225 Hope 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) and Little Friends Preschool located in the downtown area (300 High 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 2024

School	Total	PK	PF	KF	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Bristol Warren District	2621	57	0	166	174	182	210	205	169	202	217	222	200	203	190	224
Colt Andrews School	409	0	0	59	57	70	79	79	65	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rockwell School	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 School	491	57	0	65	78	72	81	75	63	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bristol Warren Public Schools	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.

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 (525 Hope Street) serves as the public library for Bristol and is a key civic and community facility within the downtown. The library consists of an 1877 historic brownstone building and a 2008 addition, which expanded capacity and improved accessibility, including compliance with ADA standards. The facility currently includes just over 28,000 square feet across three stories.

The library employs 31 staff members and is supported by a seven-member Board of Trustees appointed by the community, as well as the Friends of Rogers Free Library, a 501(c)(3) organization.

In addition to traditional library services, including book lending and literacy programming, the library provides a range of resources and services that reflect evolving community needs. These include public access computers, printers, and high-speed internet, which are increasingly important for residents engaged in remote work and online services. The library also offers technology assistance, meeting rooms for community use, and access to extensive historical materials and records.

Rogers Free Library hosts programming for all age groups, including children, teens, and adults. Programs include educational activities, social events, and opportunities for community engagement, including programs designed to connect new residents with the broader community. Through these services, the library functions as both an educational resource and an important community gathering space.

Future Needs

The Town is leveraging grant funding to support targeted capital improvements to Rogers Free Library to ensure that the facility continues to meet community needs over the planning horizon. A \$1.75 million grant from the United States Treasury’s Community Facilities Grant program, distributed by the Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office, is funding a series of upgrades to the facility.

Beginning in 2024, community input was collected through surveys and public engagement to guide the use of these funds. Planned improvements include the creation of a maker space, development of a “Library of Things,” upgrades to meeting rooms, and improvements to storage and overall space efficiency within the building.

These improvements align with the library’s strategic plan through FY 2029, which emphasizes financial sustainability, expanded community programming, and continued development of the library as a flexible space that supports both individual and community needs. The library will continue to serve as an important community partner and a central location for education, engagement, and access to resources.

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) provides services for Bristol residents ages 50 and older. These services include a daily lunch program, transportation to medical appointments and food stores, volunteer opportunities, and social and recreational programming. The Senior Center has operated out of the historic Benjamin Church House since 1972 and is located north of downtown adjacent to the Bristol Housing Authority, with which it partners to provide services. Funding is provided through a combination of municipal support, state grants, and non-profit contributions.

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, substance use, and mental health and suicide prevention. Programming has included meal distribution and cooking demonstrations in partnership with the East Bay Food Pantry, 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.

Future Needs

The Quinta-Gamelin Community Center is well integrated with the Town’s recreational system and continues to be supported through Parks and Recreation programming. The Bristol Health Equity Zone is expected to continue operating with support from RIDOH and local partners, with ongoing opportunities to strengthen coordination, data tracking, and measurable outcomes.

The Benjamin Church Senior Center faces several ongoing challenges related to space, accessibility, and service capacity. A 2019 needs assessment, funded through a Rhode Island Foundation Organizational Development grant and supplemented by an independent survey, identified several key concerns. These included the need for increased funding to sustain and expand senior services, improved transportation

options such as additional or larger vehicles, and increased space to accommodate demand for programming and meals. The study also identified limitations associated with operating in a historic structure, including accessibility and usability challenges for residents with limited mobility.

These findings highlight the need for the Town to continue supporting senior services through stable funding, expanded transportation options, and evaluation of facility improvements or alternative locations that can better accommodate current and future needs. Additional consideration may also be given to expanding space for programming and exploring opportunities to better integrate senior services with other community facilities.

The Town should continue to support the long-term viability of senior services and ensure that facilities and programming remain accessible, adequately funded, and responsive to the needs of Bristol's aging population.

Energy Production and Consumption

Improving energy efficiency in municipal operations can reduce long-term operating costs and support 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.

Funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was used to upgrade facilities at several Town-owned buildings, including the Department of Public Works, Police Station, Naval Reserve Armory, and the Benjamin Church Senior Center. These improvements included installation of new windows and other energy efficiency measures to reduce heat loss and improve building performance. The Fire Department headquarters (4 Annawamscutt Drive) has achieved Silver LEED certification.

In addition to municipal investments, institutional and private sector partners have contributed to local energy efficiency efforts. Roger Williams University, located in the southern portion of Town, has developed multiple LEED-certified buildings, including a residence hall and admissions center.

Bristol currently receives electricity from Rhode Island Energy, with generation sources that are still largely dependent on natural gas. The Town is currently exploring development of a Community Electricity Aggregation (CEA) Plan. This program would allow Bristol to aggregate electricity demand across residents and businesses, enabling the Town to secure competitive electricity supply options that may offer lower costs and increased use of renewable energy. Public input on the plan is ongoing, and if

adopted, Bristol would join several Rhode Island municipalities offering expanded renewable energy purchasing options.

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.

A major investment in solar energy was completed in Bristol in 2024 with support from the Rhode Island Commerce Renewable Energy Fund. The Town partnered with the Toray Group, based in North Kingstown, to develop a solar installation located on the closed Bristol Landfill. The project consists of 20,692 solar panels and generates approximately 8,700 megawatt-hours annually. After several years of planning and securing an off-taker, the successful completion of this project represents a significant achievement for the Town and supports Rhode Island's goal of achieving 100 percent renewable electricity by 2033.

Future Needs

Bristol can continue to build on recent progress by expanding local renewable energy generation and increasing access to alternative energy supply options. Continued development and potential implementation of a Community Electricity Aggregation program would allow residents and businesses to opt into electricity portfolios with a greater share of renewable energy sources.

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.

Capital Improvement Planning

Long-term planning for municipal infrastructure and facilities is an important component of managing public investments and maintaining reliable services. Capital improvements include major repairs, upgrades, and replacements to municipal buildings, public works facilities, drainage systems, and other infrastructure.

Capital improvement planning allows the Town to identify infrastructure needs in advance, prioritize projects, and coordinate funding for necessary upgrades and maintenance. Continued coordination

between municipal departments, the Town Council, and other agencies will help ensure that infrastructure investments are planned in a strategic and fiscally responsible manner while maintaining the services that support the community.

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.

Services and Facilities Implementation Actions (4/17/2026 DRAFT)				
ID	Action Type	Action	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
FS-1	Capital Improvement / Planning	Renovate the former Guiteras School for use as a new Town Hall and plan for the reuse, redevelopment, or disposition of existing Town office buildings, including potential sale or conversion to private or residential uses, to support long-term municipal space needs.	Mid-Term	Town Council, Department of Community Development, Public Works
FS-2	Capital Improvement	Expand the Police Station to utilize recently acquired abutting property, consistent with the Capital Improvement Program, to meet current and future operational needs.	Mid-Term	Police Department, Town Council
FS-3	Capital Improvement / Planning	Evaluate relocation or floodproofing of the Everready Fire Station due to vulnerability to sea level rise and flooding, and implement a long-term solution to ensure continued emergency response capability.	Mid- to Long-Term	Fire Department, Public Works, Town Council
FS-4	Capital Improvement / Services	Evaluate and plan for expansion, relocation, or renovation of the Benjamin Church Senior Center to address capacity, accessibility, and service needs, including transportation support for seniors.	Mid-Term	Senior Center, Town Council, Public Works
FS-5	Capital Improvement	Design and construct a new salt storage facility to replace the existing deteriorating structure currently located in a flood-prone area near Tanyard Brook, ensuring continued operations and protection of materials during storm events.	Short- to Mid-Term	Public Works, Town Council
FS-6	Capital Improvement	Replace the existing DPW mechanic's garage, which is at the end of its useful life, to support safe, efficient maintenance and repair of municipal vehicles and equipment.	Short- to Mid-Term	Public Works, Town Council
FS-7	Capital Improvement	Upgrade sewer infrastructure where necessary, with priority given to low-lying and flood-prone areas, to improve system reliability and support pre-disaster mitigation and resiliency efforts.	Mid- to Long-Term	Public Works, Water Pollution Control, Town Council

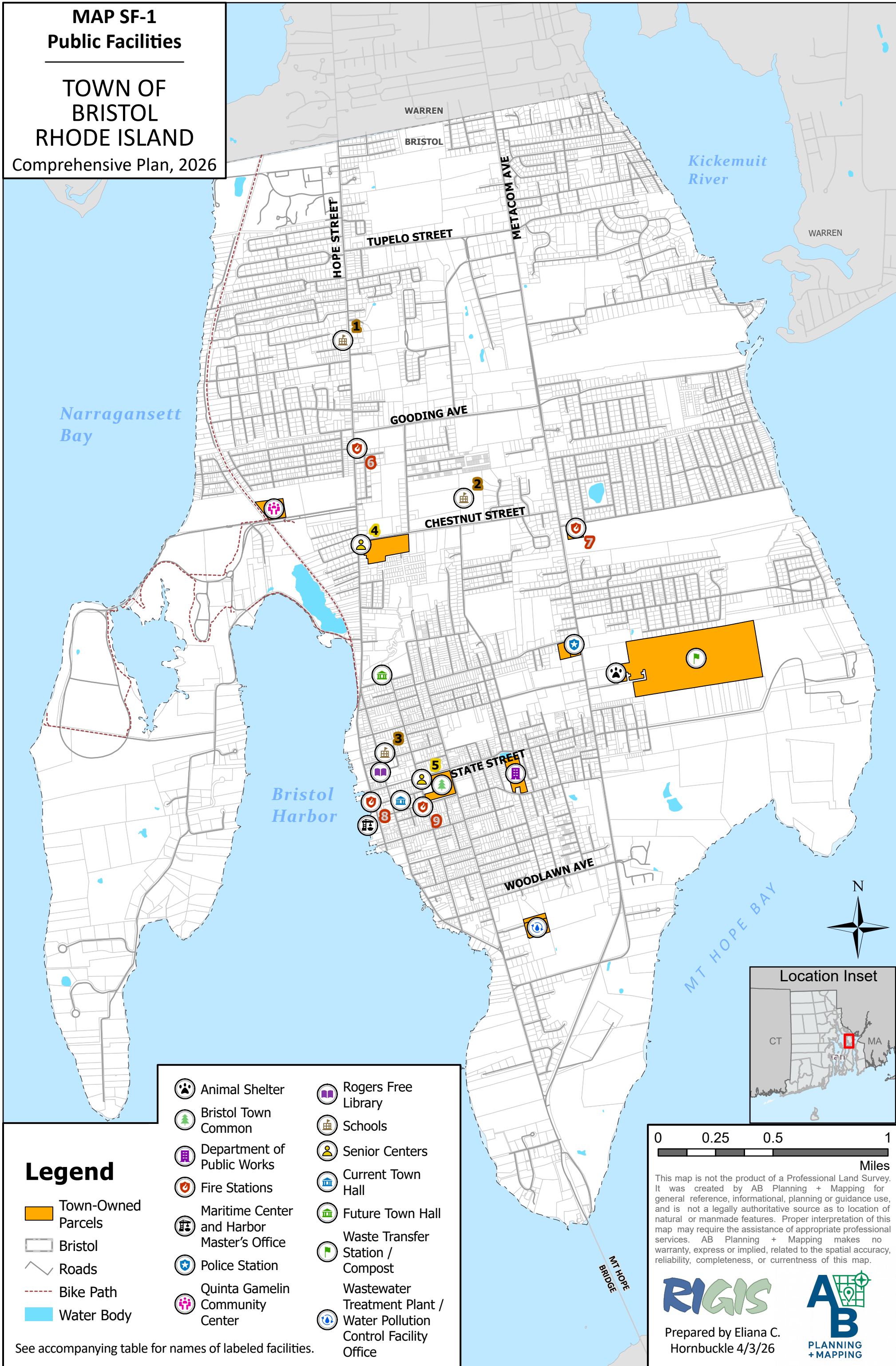
FS-8	Policy / Capital Improvement	Evaluate and consider establishment of a stormwater management district or similar funding mechanism to support drainage improvements, stormwater system maintenance, and reduction of impervious surfaces in areas with poor drainage.	Mid-Term	Public Works, Department of Community Development, Town Council
FS-9	Study / Planning	Prepare a comprehensive municipal facilities plan to guide long-term investment, consolidation, maintenance, and reuse of Town buildings and facilities.	Mid-Term	Department of Community Development, Public Works, Town Council
FS-10	Study / Capital Improvement	Assess Town-owned buildings for structural, safety, and energy efficiency needs and implement prioritized improvements, including establishing a baseline and achieving measurable reductions in municipal energy use.	Ongoing	Public Works, Town Administrator, Energy Committee
FS-11	Program / Policy	Identify and implement renewable energy projects on Town-owned properties, such as solar installations, to reduce municipal energy costs and increase use of renewable energy.	Short- to Mid-Term	Public Works, Town Administrator
FS-12	Program / Capital Improvement	Evaluate and consider implementation of a community electricity aggregation program to provide residents and businesses with options for electricity supply that may offer lower costs and increased use of renewable energy.	Mid-Term	Public Works, Town Administrator
FS-13	Program / Policy	Develop and implement a strategy to achieve state-mandated recycling and waste diversion targets, including expansion of composting, special waste collection programs, and public education efforts.	Short- to Mid-Term	Public Works
FS-15	Program / Town Administrator	Designate staff or assign responsibilities to serve as a Recycling and Materials Management Coordinator and expand public education efforts on recycling and food waste diversion, including development of bilingual outreach materials.	Short-Term	Public Works, Town Administrator

FS-16	Program / Town Administrator	Utilize current technologies to improve municipal operations, service delivery, and communication with residents, including digital platforms and data management systems.	Ongoing	Town Administrator, Public Works
FS-17	Ordinance / Policy	Evaluate and consider adoption of a deconstruction and material reuse ordinance for certain demolition projects to promote salvage, reuse, and recycling of building materials and reduce construction and demolition (C&D) waste.	Mid-Term	Department of Community Development, Building Official, Town Council
FS-18	Policy / Capital Improvement	Promote water conservation and efficiency measures, including use of low-flow fixtures and efficient systems, by incorporating requirements into municipal projects and encouraging adoption in new commercial and industrial development.	Ongoing	Public Works, Department of Community Development, Building Official
FS-19	Program / Services	Expand partnerships and programs that support aging in place, including educational resources and assistance for home retrofits to improve accessibility and safety for older residents.	Ongoing	Senior Center, Town Administrator
FS-20	Capital Improvement / Program	Upgrade and maintain emergency communication and warning systems, expand public awareness, and implement or enhance multi-platform emergency notification systems (e.g., text, email, and app-based alerts) for residents.	Short- to Mid-Term	Police Department, Fire Department, Emergency Management
FS-21	Policy / Regional Coordination	Evaluate and pursue shared services opportunities with neighboring municipalities to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance service delivery where appropriate.	Ongoing	Town Council, Town Administrator

**MAP SF-1
Public Facilities**

**TOWN OF
BRISTOL
RHODE ISLAND**

Comprehensive Plan, 2026



Legend

- Town-Owned Parcels
- Bristol
- Roads
- Bike Path
- Water Body

See accompanying table for names of labeled facilities.

- | | |
|--|--|
| Animal Shelter | Rogers Free Library |
| Bristol Town Common | Schools |
| Department of Public Works | Senior Centers |
| Fire Stations | Current Town Hall |
| Maritime Center and Harbor Master's Office | Future Town Hall |
| Police Station | Waste Transfer Station / Compost |
| Quinta Gamelin Community Center | Wastewater Treatment Plant / Water Pollution Control Facility Office |



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RIGIS

Prepared by Eliana C. Hornbuckle 4/3/26

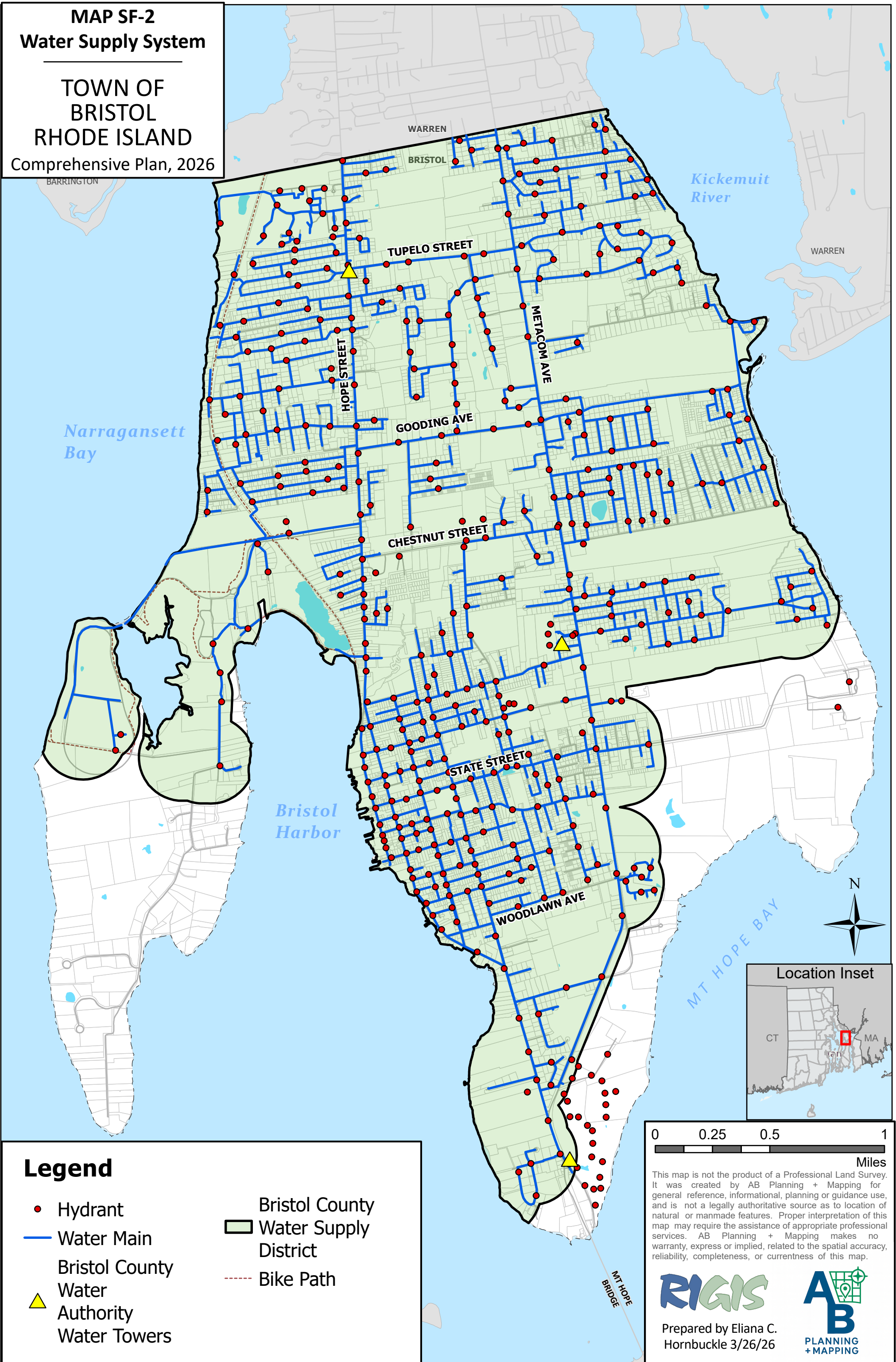


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**MAP SF-2
Water Supply System**

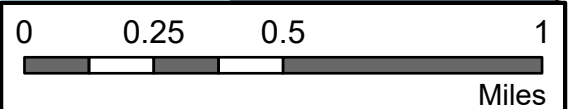
**TOWN OF
BRISTOL
RHODE ISLAND**

Comprehensive Plan, 2026



Legend

- Hydrant
- Water Main
- Bristol County Water Supply District
- Bike Path
- ▲ Water Authority Water Towers



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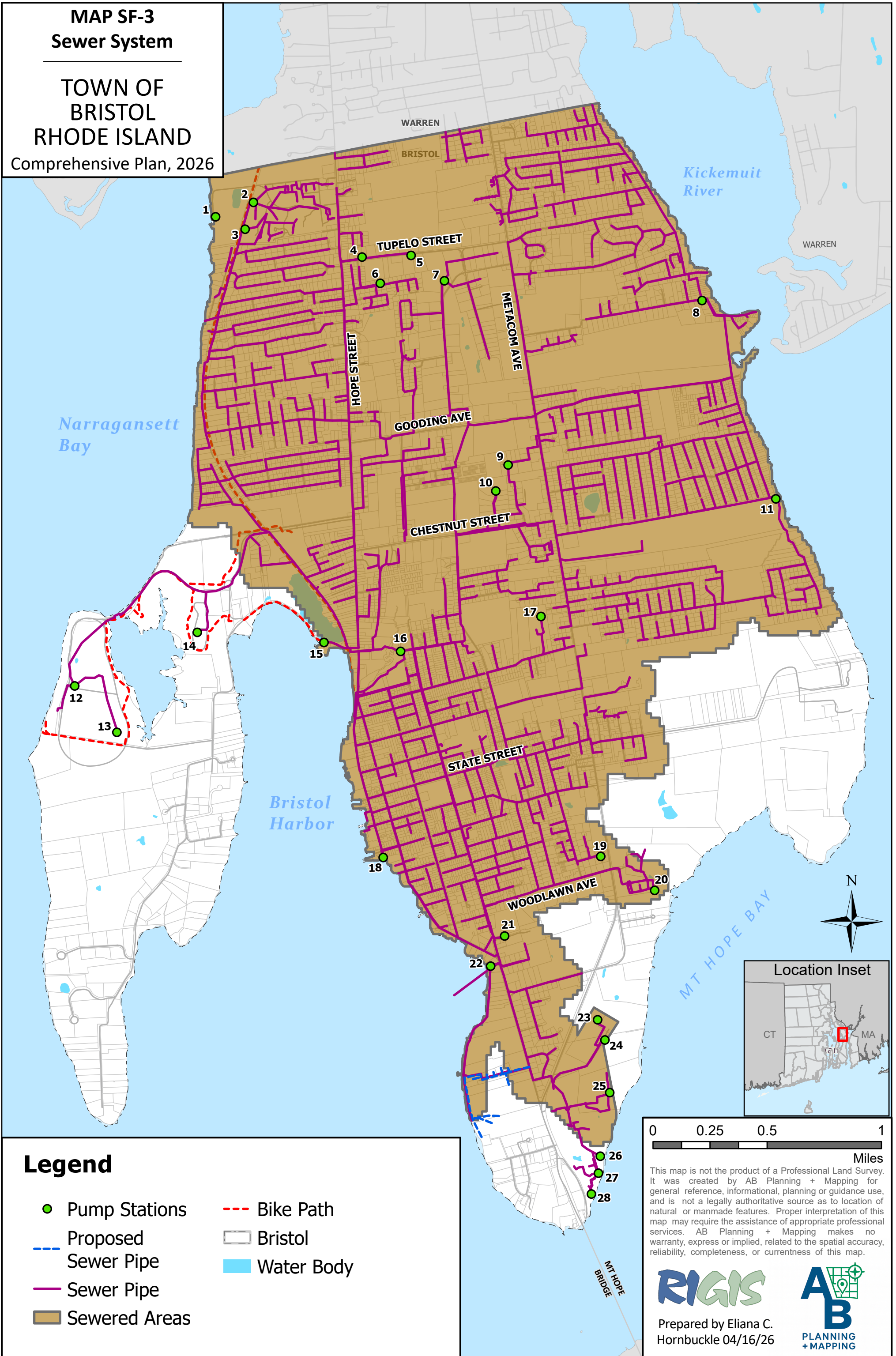
Prepared by Eliana C. Hornbuckle 3/26/26

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**MAP SF-3
Sewer System**

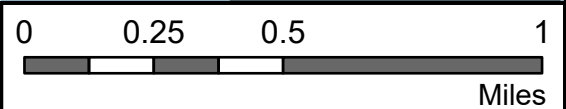
**TOWN OF
BRISTOL
RHODE ISLAND**

Comprehensive Plan, 2026



Legend

- Pump Stations
- Proposed Sewer Pipe
- Sewer Pipe
- Sewered Areas
- Bike Path
- Bristol
- Water Body



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RIGIS



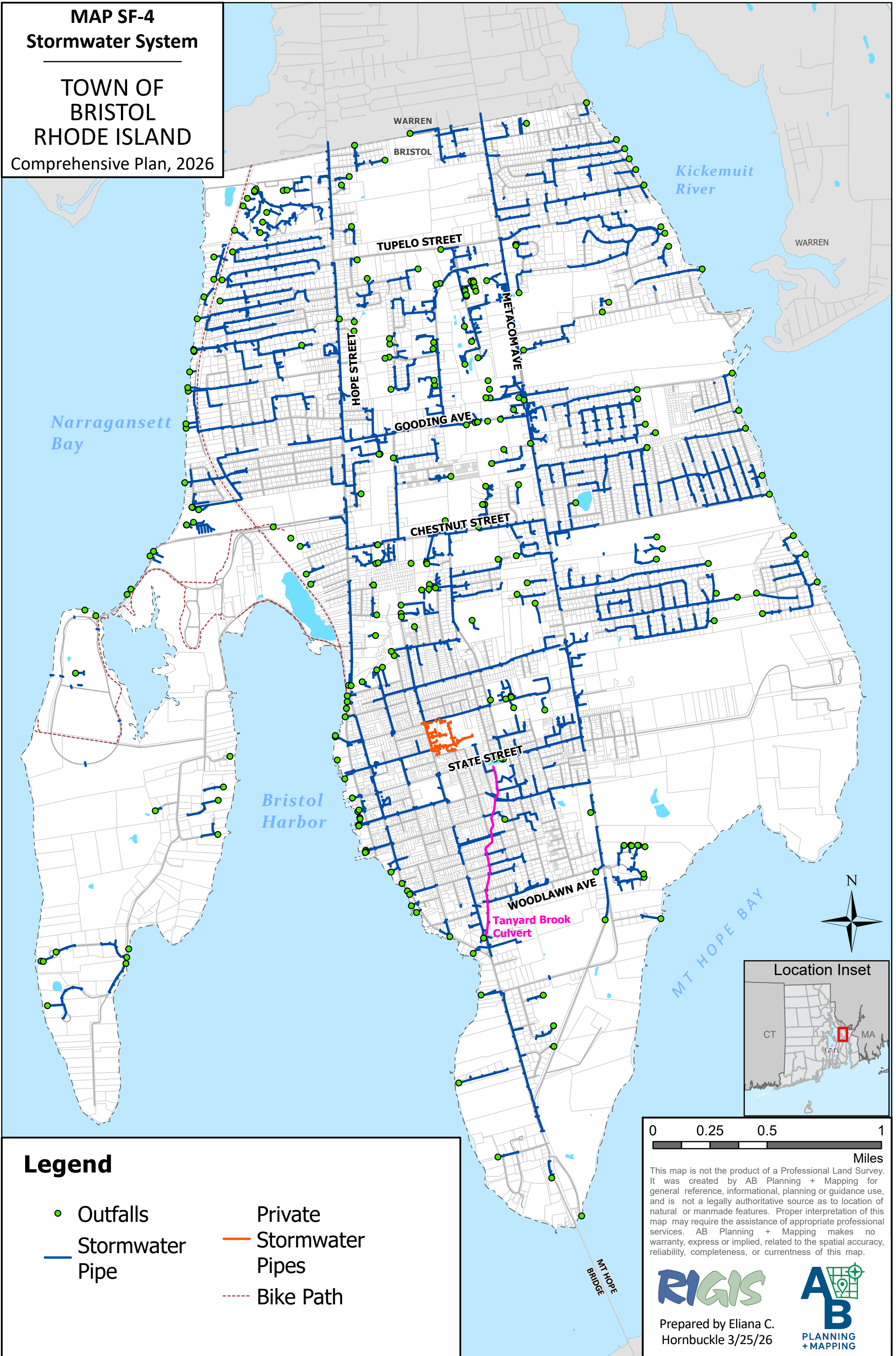
Prepared by Eliana C. Hornbuckle 04/16/26

**PLANNING
+ MAPPING**

**MAP SF-4
Stormwater System**

**TOWN OF
BRISTOL
RHODE ISLAND**

Comprehensive Plan, 2026



Legend

- Outfalls
- Stormwater Pipe
- Private Stormwater Pipes
- Bike Path



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RIGIS

Prepared by Eliana C. Hornbuckle 3/25/26

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