



## Introduction

Bristol is a small town located in Addison County and nestled at the edge of the Green Mountains. In the last decade, investments in public infrastructure and community gathering spaces in Bristol have created a place that is welcoming and walkable for visitors and residents alike. These improvements have fostered private development in a compact and pedestrian-friendly village that retains its historic charm.

## Public Infrastructure Investment

In 2009, the community received a \$75,000 grant from the Downtown Transportation Fund to support reconstruction of Prince Lane. Located behind Bristol's Main Street and providing access to the local pharmacy, grocery store, and parking, this street was a disorganized and unattractive expanse of pavement. Funding supported work to improve sidewalks and pedestrian access as well as the installation of new lighting and landscaping. The project also created more attractive and usable rear access to businesses on Main Street with outdoor seating and dining options.

Creating a safe and attractive experience for pedestrians in Bristol is a continuing community goal. In 2015, additional funding from VTTrans supported major streetscape improvements at Bristol's central intersection, including new traffic lights, sidewalks, bulb outs, and landscaping.

**“One of Bristol’s greatest assets is that the village is compact and walkable,” says Ian Albinson, Executive Director of Bristol CORE, Bristol’s Downtown group.**  
**“Enhancing that walkability and access to Bristol’s resources and businesses is beneficial for residents and attractive to visitors.”**

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## Village Green Improvements



Bristol's village green is centrally located in the downtown and contains a bandstand, veterans memorial, peace garden, children's playground and fountain. It is an important community asset, hosting events and festivals throughout the year, including the annual July 4th celebration and Great Bristol Outhouse Race, summer band concerts, Movies in the Park, Bristol Harvest Festival, and Lumen Celebration of Fire & Light.



In 2013 a local Playground Committee formed to raise money for new playground equipment in the green. They secured a \$24,000 grant from the national nonprofit, KaBOOM and organized local volunteer groups, including the Bristol High School football team and the Middlebury College women's hockey team to help with construction and keep labor costs low.

Bristol also leveraged state funds from the Agency of Transportation and the Downtown Transportation Fund to improve the village green and the intersection connecting it to Main Street. The project cost \$104,669 and included pedestrian improvements, new trash receptacles, benches, and lighting to the green and adjacent intersection.

## Bristol Co-Housing



Housing options within walking distance to goods and services appeals to a growing segment of Vermont's aging population. But it also appeals to younger generations attracted to Vermont for its quality of life. In small villages like Bristol a lack of housing options can stagnate growth. That's why the recent co-housing development on 2.4 underused acres in the heart of Bristol's downtown is so encouraging.



The project aimed to create a vibrant, multi-generational community in the heart of the village where almost everything residents will need is accessible on foot. The project involved rehabilitation or reconstruction of three historic homes along North Street along with infill construction of six new structures. The historic Peake House was rehabilitated for use as a community space, with a common kitchen, and meeting rooms. The project added 14 new housing units, just steps away from Bristol's village green, Main Street businesses, and other amenities including the post office, a grocery store, a hardware store, local schools, and a health and wellness center with both traditional and alternative medical service options.

## Bristol Works!



This privately funded, mixed-use redevelopment project in the heart of Bristol involved repurposing a 5.7-acre light industrial business park most recently home to Autumn Harp, a natural skin care company which outgrew the existing campus. The redevelopment now includes Mountain Health Center, Marble Works Pharmacy, Porter Primary Care, Red Clover Family Dentistry, the Bristol Police Department and Addison Northeast Supervisory Union offices. In addition to offices, the property continues to support a vital manufacturing component with Vermont Farm Table, a company making furniture from recycled materials and Bristol Bakery Wholesale which produces baked goods for emerging, regional brands in the cracker and cookie categories.

**“Our vision was to create new opportunities for economic development, community-building, and an infusion of the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit in Bristol” says Kevin Harper, Managing Partner for Bristol Works! “We’ve found a successful mix of local services in the health and wellness sector along with manufacturing and incubator space. The business park now supports over 125 jobs while encouraging community engagement for people of all ages and increasing opportunities for innovation and collaboration.”**

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## Outdoor Recreation



Bristol boasts abundant natural beauty with extensive recreational opportunities. In 2017, the Bristol Trail Network (BTN) formed to support the creation and maintenance of trails around Bristol to highlight natural, cultural and historic resources and to promote recreation and economic development. The group recognized the importance of fostering human connections to the natural landscape and enhancing Bristol's potential as an all-seasons destination for recreation and tourism.

BTN, in partnership with the Bristol Historical Society, improved a small walking path among the foundation ruins of a historic Coffin Factory at the bottom of South Street and plan to install interpretive signs and historic photos capturing the site in its heyday. The next step will be to connect trails from the high school to the new Coffin Factory loop. Future plans also include new trails around a new business park development behind the Fire Station, and on Stony Hill recently purchased for development of multi-family housing.



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