



## PLANNING CHALLENGE GRANT INITIATIVE

### 2007 PROJECT SUMMARY

#### METACOM AVENUE CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Project Sponsor:** Town of Bristol, Department of Community Development

**Contacts:** [Sponsor]: Ms. Diane Williamson, AICP (401) 252-7000

[Statewide Planning Liaison]: Michael C. Moan (401) 222-1236

**Project Cost:** \$62,686      **Challenge Grant Amount:** \$50,000

**Completed:** June 2007      **Products:** Study Report available at: [www.bristolri.us](http://www.bristolri.us) and <http://www.planning.ri.gov/misc/pcgrants6.htm>

#### Background

This Planning Challenge Grant study represents an opportunity for the Town of Bristol to integrate land use and transportation planning along one of its two major arterials, Route 136. The study was funded via a \$50,000 Challenge Grant from the RI Division of Planning/Statewide Planning Program.

#### Objectives and Process

In 2003, the RI Statewide Planning Program conducted a series of corridor studies throughout the state. Goals for the East Bay Corridor which specifically relate to Metacom Avenue include the following: reduce isolation of neighborhoods east of Route 136 through enhanced pedestrian controls and crosswalks; improve curb appeal of existing development and signage through revised zoning ordinances; and reduce curb cuts by interior connections of shopping areas.

- Create a sense of place by defining three Metacom Avenue areas with a separate identity: Tupelo and Gooding-Narrows in the north, and Juniper Hill in the Franklin Street/Bay View Avenue of the central area. These designations respect the character of current development and integration with natural resources.
- Present design concepts to enhance future development and redevelopment by setting high standards.
- Identify a series of links for a service road alignment between Tupelo Street and Gooding Avenue and links through residential neighborhoods. This will provide alternative vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle access for residents and business customers to avoid the congested northern section of Metacom Avenue.
- Recommend a series of zoning amendments to implement Metacom Avenue recommendations.

Pare Corporation and Bradford Associates prepared the Metacom Avenue Corridor Management Plan under the direction of the Town of Bristol Planning Department. A steering committee comprised of Metacom Avenue residents, business people, residents at large, and representatives of Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program and Rhode Island Department of Transportation provided input during three steering committee meetings. Public workshops were held January 18 and February 15, 2007.

#### Major Findings and Recommendations

- Amending the Metacom Overlay Zone to strengthen traffic-related provisions, including access management and design guidelines is recommended.
- A new zone, Metacom Mixed Use zone is recommended in the vicinity of Tupelo Street, Gooding Avenue, and BayView Avenue, Franklin Street, Minturn Farm Road. This zone enables a density of development and a vibrant mixture of residential and commercial use that minimizes dependence on private automobile for many local trips.
- Multifamily or R-6 zoning is proposed as a transition between Metacom Mixed Use zones and adjacent single-family zones and uses.

- Several options are presented to preserve views of the Fales and Usher farms, two distinctive landmarks that help define Bristol for southbound travelers. Options include cluster zoning with 200-foot buffers to Metacom Avenue, preservation through RIDEM's Open Space Bond Fund or conservation easements, or other open space preservation mechanism.

Short and long term traffic recommendations are proposed to improve traffic safety and capacity on Metacom Avenue while retaining the two-lane roadway. As Metacom Avenue, Route 136, is a State road, these recommendations are presented to the Town of Bristol for proposed traffic improvements by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation. Emphasis is on providing residents with an opportunity to walk or bicycle to local destinations as options to the use of private vehicles for local trips.

Other recommended improvements include:

- Left turn lanes
- Cross-walks
- RIPTA stops
- Roundabouts
- Speed limit reduction
- Sidewalks
- Intersection improvements
- Signal optimization and removals
- Neighborhood interconnections
- Continue development of a service road West of Metacom Avenue

#### Next Steps

Implementation of these recommendations will help the Town of Bristol achieve its goals of retaining Metacom Avenue as a residential neighborhood, assuring that future development is attractive, that pedestrian and bicycle use is facilitated, and that traffic safety and capacity are improved.

Funding for the Challenge Grant Initiative  
 is provided by the Federal Highway  
 Administration.

