



Extension

Strengthening Connections: Downtowns & Trails Bristol, New Hampshire 2019 Final Report

By Shannon Rogers, PhD, Nature Based Economic Development State Specialist &
Geoffrey Sewake, JD, MELP, Community Economic Development Field Specialist

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For any questions on the program or the findings, please contact:

Shannon Rogers, PhD
Nature Based Economic Development Specialist
Associate Extension Professor
UNH Cooperative Extension
603-862-5171
shannon.rogers@unh.edu



Introduction

The town of Bristol, NH (pop. 3,050 in 2016) has many natural, built, and social assets. Some of this is due to the town's location at the end of the Lakes Region and as part of the gateway to the White Mountains. With a historic downtown and strong social infrastructure, including the library, community center, and school system, community members also have a strong sense of connection and culture of volunteerism. Recognizing their assets and wanting to better capitalize on them, Bristol has been considering its economic vibrancy goals. As it pertains especially to natural assets, Bristol began exploring this in collaboration with the Newfound Lakes Region Association, the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension (UNH Extension) and Plymouth State University with the Newfound Region Business Summit in April of 2015. Additionally, in early 2018, Bristol also participated in a Plan NH Charrette that looked at Kelley Park.

Beginning in the Spring of 2018, Bristol entered into a formal partnership with UNH Extension as part of the Community & Economic Development team's new Downtowns & Trails Pilot Program. UNH Extension has been providing assistance in further exploring actions that can be taken to better leverage natural assets for economic vibrancy. The first step was connecting with the town's Economic Development Committee to implement the pilot programming. UNH Extension developed materials and worked with the committee on the following tasks:

- 1 Reviewing the importance of, and opportunities for, linking downtowns and trails
- 2 Assessing the downtown area, linkage area and appropriate trails using Esri Collector for ArcGIS mobile application
- 3 Developing and training volunteers to complete interviews with businesses, residents, and community leaders on their interest in this initiative
- 4 Developing and training volunteers to administer an intercept survey for those using the trails to determine their interest and use of downtown
- 5 Engaging the larger community to gather information and learn about the results of the assessment. This will help determine community support and interest going forward. This engagement may take the form of a community forum and/or discussions, posters, social media etc. to gather information from different groups in town

The following report will explain these steps in more detail, share the data and analysis, provide a summary and next steps for the community. This report, in conjunction with a community meeting on February 20th, 2019, are the culmination of the pilot study.



Key Findings

Bristol has many assets that it can build upon to pursue a strong connection between its downtown, bike path and Newfound Lake. The goal of this work is to help the community better leverage its assets for economic vibrancy. The following summarizes the findings in several categories.

Infrastructure

Downtown:

- The recent improvements to the town square as well as the beautification efforts are well received by both visitors and residents
- To better accommodate bike riders, a bike rack would be a welcome addition to the town square
- A fully operational public restroom would also better support trail users and visitors
- Downtown's proximity to Kelley Park is an asset that may not be fully leveraged
- Downtown's proximity to the bike path, lake and Kelley Park are not well signed and could benefit from better wayfinding

Bike Path:

- The bike path is appreciated and used by some residents and visitors
- Many, however, have never used it and some commented that the path does not feel safe due to the disconnection of the path (i.e. one must cross the road several times to stay on the path)
- It is scenic and provides a fairly quick connection to the Lake
- As many are aware, portions of the road (3A) on the pathway from downtown to the lake, need to be built back up and leveled to better support cyclists
- Signage about the bike path is missing

Mix of Businesses

- The downtown and portions of 3A provide a good mix of businesses that trail users would potentially frequent, including restaurants, cafés, ice cream, gas stations, a brewery and gift shops
- Visitors hail from local, national, and international locations
- Visitors are spending on food, gifts, and gas in the community
- Not included in the business mix is a bike shop that would support trail users
- Some businesses have limited hours that may be discouraging for residents and visitors

Communication/Opportunities for Regional Collaboration

- Given the community's presence in the Newfound Lakes Region, deepening the collaborative efforts on a regional scale to promote and further develop the connections between the downtown and the lake may be beneficial



The Economic Benefits of Trails & Natural Space

Trails and natural spaces provide us with many benefits and services. Some of which are quantifiable (such as spending on recreation) and others, such as water purification and flood control as well as cultural and spiritual benefits, as less easily quantified but nonetheless important. These “ecosystem services,” which are essentially benefits humans receive from nature, all contribute to community well being and quality of life. The Outdoor Industry Association (2017) reports the following economic impact of the outdoor recreation economy in the U.S.:

Ecosystem Services:

Ecosystem Services are benefits humans receive from nature that contribute to our quality of life and well-being.

- Accounts for \$887 billion in annual U.S. consumer spending
- Supports nearly 7.6 million jobs across the U.S.
- Generates \$124.5 billion in annual federal, state and local tax revenue
- Adds \$524.8 billion in active outdoor recreation trip and travel expenditures
- According to U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the outdoor recreation economy grew 3.8 percent in 2016 in comparison to the overall U.S. economy’s 2.8 percent growth. BEA estimates that outdoor recreation accounted for 2 percent of the overall U.S. Gross Domestic Product in 2016, contributing \$373.7 billion to the economy (BEA, 2018)

Closer to home, in the state of Vermont, a recent study of Mad River Valley emphasized the importance of trail tourism, specifically in terms of mountain biking (SE Group, 2014). Further, the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council (2016) examined four trail networks in the state, estimating that these networks alone generated nearly \$30 million in economic impact from out-of-state visitors. Trail tourism is particularly beneficial for economic impact when it attracts non-local visitors. Kingdom Trails, one of the four trail networks examined in the Vermont Trails and Greenways study, is a prime example of destination trail tourism. Local trail users and non-local visitors alike visit businesses including restaurants, breweries, coffee shops, ice cream shops, etc. and non-local visitors further support the economy through use of overnight accommodations.

Beyond recreation, research has shown that homes near trails also command higher property values, the presence of trails can attract new residents to move to or stay in a location, and trails also encourage physical fitness.

Trails in New Hampshire

The NH Bureau of Trails includes more than 1,200 miles of wheeled OHRV trails, over 300 miles of state owned rail trails, and over 7,000 miles of snowmobile trails (NH Trails Bureau, 2018). Further, volunteer organizations manage more than 4,000 miles of hiking trails in the state (NH State Parks, 2018). Special interest organizations also have their own estimates of certain types of trails, for example the Rails to Trails Conservancy reports that NH currently has 75 total rail trails which encompass 558 miles (Rails to Trails Conservancy, 2018).

Bicycle Trails

There are many studies that show the economic impact of cycling and cycling infrastructure, such as bike paths and rail trails, this includes the fact that:

- People who ride bikes buy other things and are more likely to make multiple or repeat trips to local stores
- Bicycling tourism brings millions of dollars to cities and towns across the country
- Bike accessible business districts benefit from catering to cyclists as customers (League of American Bicyclists)

Assessments

As detailed in the introduction section of this report, the pilot program involved three different types of assessments:

1

An assessment of the physical characteristics of the downtown and the 2.5 mile portion of the bike path that connects the lake to the downtown (as chosen and designated by the committee) via a mobile spatial app (ESRI's ArcGIS collector)

2

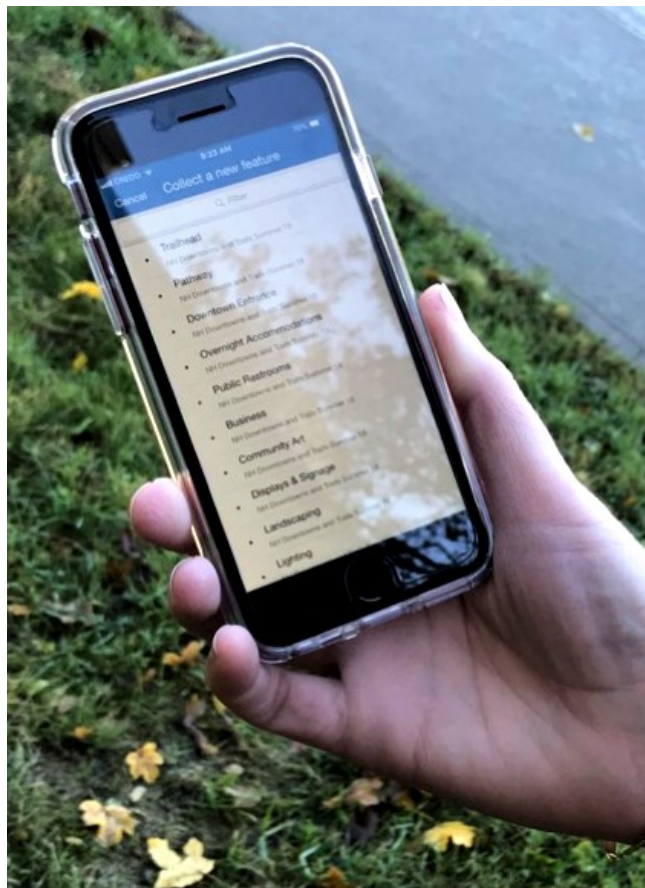
An assessment of key informants through interviews with business owners and community leaders

3

An assessment of residents and visitors to the downtown, the lake, and bike path via a survey tool

The following section will discuss the process of conducting these assessments as well as the findings and what the data means for the community and its goals of economic vibrancy through better connecting the downtown with the bike path and lake.

UNH Extension's Community and Economic Development team conducts programming to help communities learn how to assess needs, engage people, make informed decisions, develop effective strategies and take action. In the case of the Downtowns & Trails pilot programming, we trained committee members and additional community volunteers to conduct the key informant interviews and surveys. Over 20 community members were trained during the Summer of 2018 to conduct the interviews and surveys, which resulted in at least 127 additional residents and visitors being engaged in the process.



Physical Characteristics of Downtowns & Trails

The characteristics used to conduct the downtowns and trails community assessments are research-based and are adapted from multiple sources. These characteristics are adapted from a list of characteristics used to conduct a general downtown assessment through the First Impressions program. The downtown characteristics have been adapted from multiple states' First Impressions programs and the National Civic League's Civic Index by UNH Extension staff. The downtown characteristics are based on what makes a downtown vibrant for a resident, visitor, or business owner, and are based on the built environment.

Building on the downtown characteristics, the purpose of the downtowns and trails characteristics are to assess the connectivity between a downtown and nearby trails and assess amenities in the downtown that are useful to trail users. The characteristics specific to downtowns and trails were adapted from multiple trail town guides, including the Trail Town Program in Pennsylvania and Michigan's Trail Town Program.



Broadly speaking, research and practice shows that there are essentially four categories that need to be in place for a successful connection between downtowns and trails. Natural, economic, built and social/leadership conditions need to be assessed when considering how to better leverage natural assets for economic vibrancy. Having a trail as well as an additional natural feature, such as rivers, lakes, beaches, and community forests enhance the connection because they provide more opportunities for residents and visitors to create and enjoy enhanced quality of life that the natural assets provide. Additionally, certain economic conditions need to be in place such as the right type of businesses that a trail user might frequent—such as bike shops/sporting goods stores, restaurants, breweries, cafes, restrooms and overnight accommodations. There are also features of the built environment, such as the layout of the central business district, the presence of bike racks/bike parking, sidewalks, benches, that are important to understand. Finally, the most successful programs, such as Pennsylvania's Trail Town program, have strong community leadership and participation that can be sustained over a long period.

Characteristics that are Critical to Assess

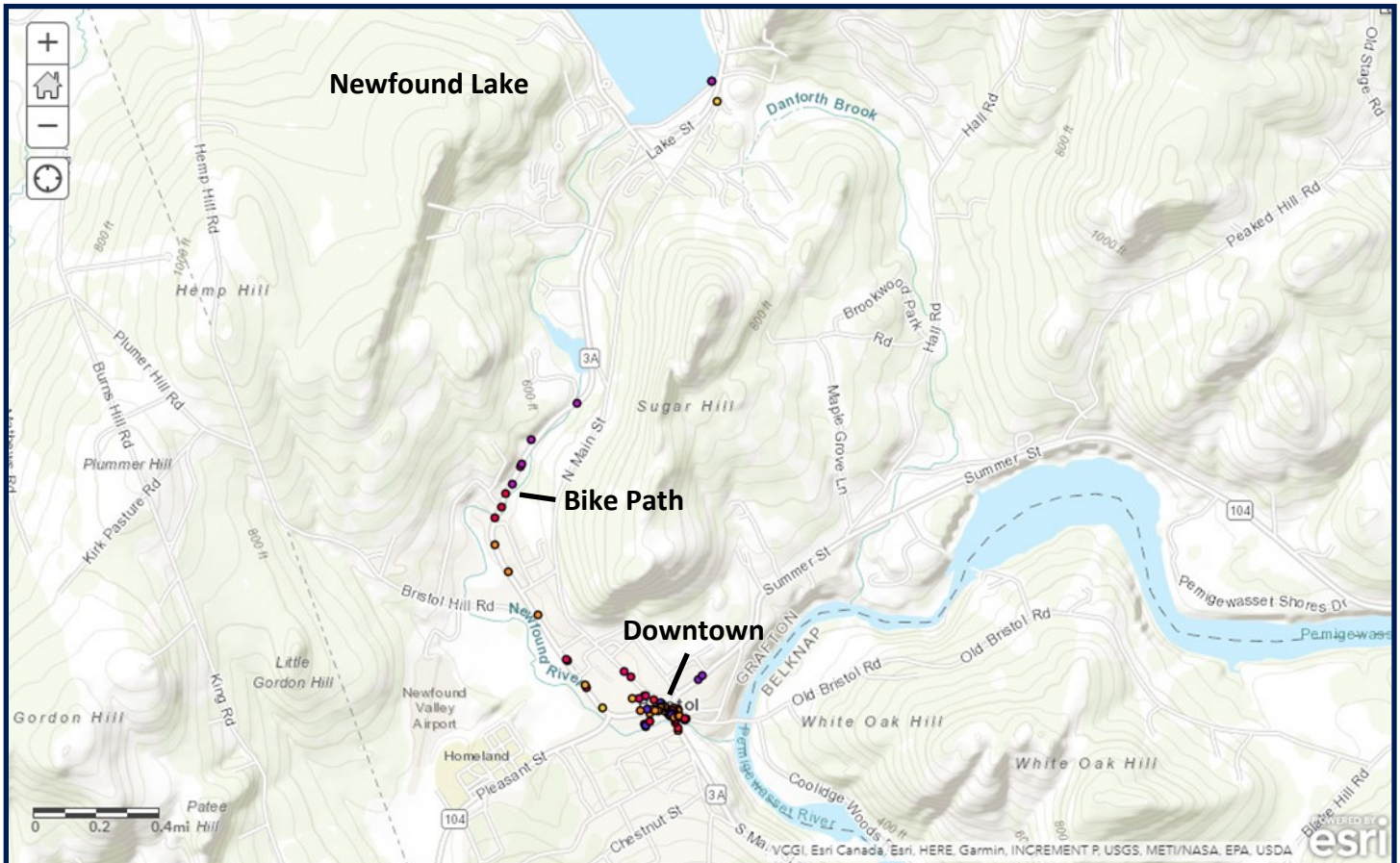
The following provides an explanation of characteristics that are critical to understand when connecting downtowns and trails.

	Trailhead- Point where a trail begins. (Is the trailhead well marked? Is there a kiosk, maps, community information, parking, restrooms?)		Natural Feature- Rivers, lakes, community forests.
	Pathway- Path leading people from the trail to the downtown area.		Park- Parks, parklets, pocket parks.
	Downtown Entrance- Where people enter the downtown. (Is it clear where the entrance is? Is the entrance attractive and welcoming?)		Point of Interest- Historical homes & buildings, architecture, fountains, memorials, statues, museums, plaques.
	Overnight Accommodations- Hotels, motels, campgrounds.		Public Facility- School, library, town/city hall, post office.
	Public Restrooms- Availability of public restrooms near trails and around the downtown area.		Seating- Benches, stoops, chairs, lawns, places people gather that are not considered a park, outdoor seating, outdoor dining, benches.
	Business- Types of businesses, especially those relevant to trail users – casual restaurants, coffee shop, drugstore, bike shop, grocery store, local shops.		Sidewalks & Crosswalks- Pedestrian safety, sidewalks, crosswalks, quality, connectivity, usability for a range of abilities.
	Community Art- Murals, artwork, musicians, concerts, street performers.		Streets & Transportation- Streets, bicycle lanes, bicycle racks, shared bicycles, buses, cars, taxis, ridesharing, street parking, public and private lots, traffic lights.
	Displays & Signage- Pedestrian signs, wayfinding signs, parking signs, business signs, municipal signs.		Waste & Recycling- Availability and quality of waste and recycling receptacles.
	Landscaping- Flowers, trees, green spaces.		Other- Other characteristics that do not fit into any of the existing categories.
	Lighting- Availability and quality of lighting on streets, in parking lots, in parking garages.		

Physical Assessment Using Mobile Data Collection

As part of the Downtowns & Trails Pilot Program in the Town of Bristol, staff and intern assessors provided characteristic feedback through the ArcGIS Collector App. The town was assessed on two different dates by two UNH Extension staff and two UNH Extension Interns between July 8th and July 16th, with one weekend day and one weekday assessment. The weather was hot and sunny both days. Assessments include walking and driving through the town for approximately three hours, observing the characteristics, taking pictures and making notes with a mobile application for phones.

Assessment Map of the Study Area



An interactive story map of these points and figures is available for view at the following website:

<https://arcg.is/q904C>

Analysis of Downtowns & Trails Characteristics

Assessors collected a total of 86 points, the most common characteristic assessed was Business (26), rounding out the top three most commonly assessed characteristic feature were Nature Feature (9), and Sidewalks & Crosswalks (6).

Characteristic	Count
Business	26
Displays & Signage	4
Downtown Entrance	1
Landscaping	2
Lighting	1
Natural Feature	9
Overnight Accommodations	2
Park	6
Pathway	1
Point of Interest	2
Public Facility	5
Public Restrooms	1
Seating	6
Sidewalks & Crosswalks	8
Streets & Transportation	5
Trailhead	5
Waste & Recycling	2
Grand Total	86

Looking at the breakdown of ratings, 64 characteristics were rated Assets, 13 were rated Asset/Opportunity, and 8 were rated as an Opportunity. Interestingly, Businesses (26) were only rated as Assets. In particular, assessors were looking for how the characteristic impacted the ability to serve trail users. They also assessed the façade and welcoming nature of the characteristics, specially the businesses.

Characteristic	Asset	Asset/Opportunity	Opportunity
Business	26		
Displays & Signage	1	2	1
Downtown Entrance	1		
Landscaping	2		
Lighting	1		
Natural Feature	6	3	
Overnight Accommodations	1	1	
Park	3	2	1
Pathway		1	
Point of Interest	2		
Public Facility	5		
Public Restrooms		1	
Seating	5		1
Sidewalks & Crosswalks	2	3	3
Streets & Transportation	2		2
Trailhead	5		
Waste & Recycling	2		
Grand Total	64	13	8

Insightful Commentary from Assessors

Assessors are provided an opportunity to provide additional context and insight into their ratings. The following are comments from assessors that may provide additional insight into why a particular characteristic may have been rated in a particular manner.

Assets

Business

- A good number of small businesses for both visitors & residents (coffee shop, brewery, pizza, school, etc).
- Cute restaurant near the end of the business district.
- Sporting goods store, could use some more prominent signage.

Landscaping

- Nice landscaping in downtown park.
- Uniform landscaping within the core center.

Lighting

- Good lighting along main street.

Natural Feature

- Beautiful view from sidewalk of river.

Park

- Well maintained tennis court.

Point of Interest

- Dog hydration station, shows they are pet friendly.

Seating

- Nice bench seating in town green area under trees.

Sidewalks & Crosswalks

- Sidewalk with nice signage lighting and flowers.
- Well paved sidewalk.

Streets & Transportation

- Free parking downtown.

Trailhead

- A lot of nice parts, bathroom, historic building, parking, seating, views and river access.

Waste & Recycling

- Waste bins with flowers on top. No recycling though.



Insightful Commentary from Assessors (continued)

Asset/Opportunity

Displays & Signage

- Hard to see sign but town has a historic district.
- Signage at edge of river garden/butterfly garden. Seems a bit unwelcoming?

Natural Feature

- Nice car pull off after bridge, not marked, access to river, but not official.
- Nice river crossing with a sidewalk. Spillway not viewable from pedestrian side.
- Storm drain and some trash in newfound river.

Overnight Accommodations

- Only inn near downtown, reservations only

Park

- Great park, parking, one way road, bathroom, but something I wouldn't have known existed.
- Nice children's playground, lack of signage from street. Difficult access from street.

Pathway

- Noticed pedestrians using the road, not sure why. Perhaps they don't know trail follows road.

Public Restrooms

- Bathrooms at park not well marked. Could be a resource for visitors, etc.

Sidewalks & Crosswalks

- Crosswalk to get across NH highway, but no signal to slow or stop traffic. Also only one crosswalk.
- Slightly faded sidewalk
- Well maintained core sidewalk/crosswalk infrastructure, not as well maintained outside of core.

Opportunities

Displays & Signage

- Lack of wayfinding signage in core to direct visitors and residents to the recreation opportunities.

Park

- Park could use more shade

Seating

- Lack of seating along pedestrian pathways outside of downtown green area to sit.

Sidewalks & Crosswalks

- Lack of shade along pedestrian pathways.
- Not many crosswalks along road. Only one side has a sidewalk.
- Sidewalk ends on park side of street. Users must walk in road or cross road twice to get to park.

Streets & Transportation

- Back way along North Main is quite scenic and quiet. Not terribly hilly.
- Not much margin for bikes on road.



Key Informant Interviews

Committee members and community volunteers interviewed 20 key informants including business owners and community leaders about the potential for better connecting Bristol's downtowns with the bike path and lake. Each interview focused on answering questions on the following topics:

1. The individual's role(s) in the community
2. Advantages of better connecting Bristol's downtowns with its trails, especially the bike path
3. Disadvantages/potential negatives of better connecting Bristol's downtowns with its trails, especially the bike path
4. Top assets in town
5. Top assets in the Newfound Region
6. Who else should be engaged in this process

Findings from the Key Informant Interviews

- Beautification of the downtown is an asset
- Trails and lake are a large asset
- There are many benefits to better connection but some considerations to keep in mind, such as maintenance and safety
- Trails attract a younger demographic
- Trails are seen as a way to both attract visitors and to provide a higher quality of life for residents
- There are health benefits associated with people using the bike path
- The library and community center provide many valued services to residents and visitors



Some illustrative quotes from key informants:

"[Natural Assets] Bring people to the area but doesn't change the character – outdoor, healthy lifestyle"

"Past 5+ years seen more people doing more recreational activities – 193 – trailheads [full] on Saturdays. Do as leisure / for fun. Likely to spend money in area. Great opportunity with trail access to use what's popular now to connect with downtown. Need to know about downtown – promote it! Connect - bike path ends downtown. Bike path needs to be off the road."

"Important to think about what can be done to get people to use bike path more. If desirable enough on its own, will be positive economic development from it. Why is there an increase in hiking in other areas – apply to our trails."

Intercept Surveys

Intercept Surveys are used to talk to people on the go and are meant to be brief and easy to complete. Community volunteers were trained to conduct surveys in Downtown Bristol, in the middle of the bike path at the Farmer’s market, and at the foot of the lake at Avery-Crouse Beach. Surveys were conducted on both weekends and weekdays, in the morning, afternoon, and early evening. Two versions of the survey were created—one for residents, both seasonal and year-round residents and the other for visitors. Both surveys had questions about use and impressions of the downtown and the bike path. The visitor survey included a section on visitor spending so that the community could better understand how people were spending money during their visit to town.

The following table summarizes some of the basic results of the survey:

Question	Residents-year round	Residents-seasonal	Visitors
Surveys completed	42	13	52
Average years lived in Bristol	18	32	n/a
Been on the Bristol Bike path	71%	38%	42%

When asked about their levels of satisfaction with the downtown and bike path most are moderately satisfied with both the bike path and moderately satisfied with the downtown. When asked to further elaborate on their impressions, the following themes rose to the top.

Resident Impressions

Bike Path:

- Many see the path as an asset and like that it is relatively flat, well maintained and scenic
- Others commented that it needs to be improved, including the condition of the surface and the fact that it is very close to the road and that crossing the road as the path goes from one side to the other is not ideal

Downtown:

- Many commented that they wished the bike path was longer
- Many survey respondents were very pleased with the downtown improvements, especially the look and feel of the landscaping/beautification efforts
- Many are happy with the types of businesses in the downtown, although some would like to see a more diverse mix
- The friendliness of shop owners was highlighted as a positive



Intercept Surveys Continued

Visitor Impressions

Bike Path:

- Some did not know about the path
- Some did not like that the path required crossing the road
- The paved surface was noted as a positive as was the fact that dogs were allowed
- Some expressed their discomfort along the section of the path that runs next to the road

Downtown:

- Many commented on a nice and welcoming “feel” in the downtown/central square
- The gift shops and other local places were frequented by many visitors
- Some visitors would like to see a more diverse mix of businesses, including more restaurants
- Others commented that the business hours seemed limited



Results from Visitor Surveys

Many towns do not know about their visitors. The following infographic summarizes the findings from the visitor spending profile. While not statistically representative, this does give a snap shot and some useful information to begin better understanding this component of the economy. Many visitors are spending money on food, gas, accommodations and gifts.

Of those 39 spending profiles, we have visitors from NH, MA, NJ, OH, UT, Canada, Switzerland

14 of the 39 are visiting from somewhere else in NH

25 of the 39 are visiting from outside of NH

Total spending from those: **Visiting from NH** **Outside of NH**

 Food:	\$710	\$2,483
 Gas:	\$60	\$660
 Overnight Accommodations:	\$0	\$3,518
 Gifts:	\$175	\$1,284
 Alcohol:	\$5	\$395
 Recreation:	\$70	\$355

In addition to the spending patterns, it is useful to also note that while some people may be visiting for a day trip from other parts of New Hampshire, there were quite a few out-of-state visitors and even international travelers.

Summary of the Community Forum

February 20, 2019

On February 20th we held a community forum at the Minot Sleeper Library to share results from our findings and brainstorm next steps. This forum had been rescheduled from the original date of November 15th 2018 that was postponed due to a snow storm.

Over 30 community members attended and after sharing some of the findings (that are highlighted in this report) a lively discussion on the following topics followed. First the group was asked to think about what they value about the downtown and its trails. Specifically, the group shared some of the assets and opportunities as summarized below:

Assets:

- Historic Resources
- Events like the New Hampshire Marathon, Bicentennial, Navy Seals
- Seasonal balance in visitor opportunities---Bristol is at the center of many recreational and visitor attractions
- Snowmobile trails
- Proximity to other mountains like Cardigan and Tenney---multiseasonal
- Kayak rentals
- Visitors are utilizing the library to get maps and information about the town

Challenges:

- Bristol is not well known---how can it better communicate its many assets
- Visitors are often asking police where to eat, etc.
- Safety along Route 3A, especially for biking---political bodies are currently working to improve safety along 3A
- Little cellular service in town---there are boosters at the library and the town offices
- Empty store fronts



Then we brainstormed potential actions to build on the data shared and the assets of the community. After a robust list was generated, participants could vote with sticky dots on their top two most preferred actions (see below). Most of the actions fell under the heading of communications and marketing. Forming a committee to address communications received the most votes. Developing and implementing a resource for the teaching community and business owners about trail users and how to accommodate them, including more broadly being ambassadors for the town, received the second highest count of votes. An action committee, staffed by UNH Extension, formed to address these topics and will be meeting on April 2, 2019.

Summary of the Community Forum Continued

Potential Actions

1. **Address Communications and Marketing within and of Bristol via action committee (22 total votes for topic)**
 - a. Might utilize a branding/marketing company like PSU's Design Company (1 vote)
 - b. Improved wayfinding (signage) is needed in Bristol (5 votes)
 - i. Public parking
 - ii. Recreational resources like Kelley Park and the bike path
 - iii. Restrooms
 - iv. Visitor information
 - v. Historic resources
 - vi. Outdoor bulletin board with signage at new town offices (5 votes)
 - c. Brochure could provide information to visitors---
 - i. Bristol needs a map (9 votes)
 1. Newfound Lake Region Association has a map that might be used and enriched
 2. Historical Society has a walking map that is well used by visitors of the library
 3. Perhaps a map similar to the cartoon or placemat maps other communities have
 4. Maps should include places to go and where to access wifi
 5. Have maps available for the upcoming Bicentennial
 - ii. Brochures could be available at businesses, information centers, kiosks, even the historic lamp post in town square
 - iii. Utilize the library to distribute more information about the community
 - d. Improve Bristol's online presence (2 votes)
 - i. Utilize VisitNewfound.com to disperse information
 - ii. Public websites, private websites---all should do better at interlinking other organizations, businesses and assets in the community so visitors of one website can find other resources more easily
2. **Develop business owners to be ambassadors to the town (7 votes for topic)**
 - a. Would need an educational component to get employees and businesses on-board
 - i. Perhaps a workshop designed by UNH Cooperative Extension for community members and businesses
 3. Beautify empty storefronts (1 vote)
 4. Improve cellular service (1 vote)
 5. Identify value of snowmobiling in community---not addressed in the Extension program
 6. Bike rentals---it was mentioned a business is already in planning to address this
 - a. Perhaps a way to use a non-brick and mortar way of doing rentals---phone app based
 7. Additional bike trails would attract more visitors and users
 8. Collaborate with Newfound Walking Path Tours to include other tour opportunities like biking, etc.

Summary, Recommendations & Next Steps

Making the Connection Stronger

Bristol has many natural, built, and social assets to build upon towards the goal of better connecting the downtown with the bike path and lake in order to create more economic vibrancy. There are specific steps and actions that can be taken towards these goals:

Recommendations the committee and other volunteers could address in the short term:

- Create a subcommittee in collaboration with other town and regional groups to consider next steps
- Consider the needs of bike path users when setting hours that businesses are open as well as opportunities for new businesses. Current business owners can also consider trail users when looking at their product and service offerings. The town, in conjunction with UNH Extension, may want to offer training for businesses on accommodating trail users
- The community may consider promoting their trails on Trailfinder: <https://www.trailfinder.info/>
- The committee may want to continue its connection with Newfound Pathways and the Newfound Lakes Region Association to emphasize regional connectedness
- Wayfinding is missing in many places-investment in several signs indicating where the bike path is from the downtown as well as where the downtown is located from the lake. This could include updating the kiosk at the Newfound River/Farmer's Market area to promote the downtown/bike path
- Bike racks are missing from downtown. There are some relatively easy ways to provide bike parking in towns that UNH Extension can share should the committee be interested

Recommendations that may Require Funding/longer term:

- A public restroom is key for many trail users and folks traveling back and forth to the lake. The presence of a port-o-potty at the Farmer's Market site is a positive but may not be sufficient/sustainable with increased use
- Seeking funding for infrastructure improvements to the bike path to raise and level the road is a good, long term goal
- Further research on visitors to the community may expand the understanding of spending patterns as well as the adequacy of overnight accommodations



Appendix

Demographics Bristol, New Hampshire



Extension

By Shannon Rogers, PhD, State Specialist of Nature Based Economic Development & Geoff Sewake, JD, MELP, Community & Economic Development Field Specialist

A Brief Summary

The Town of Bristol (pop. 3,050), located immediately to the west of Interstate 93, is about 40 minutes (37 miles) north of Concord, and two hours (104 miles) from Boston. It is home to the southern shore of the Newfound Lake recreational area, Profile Falls, a portion of Wellington State Park, Sugar Hill State Forest, and Kelley Park. The Town plays host to the Bristol Rail Trail, a farmer's market, marina, Newfound Valley Airport, Minot Sleeper Library, Tapply Thompson Community Center, a beautiful downtown square, and the three of the six Newfound Area School District schools, including the district's middle and high school. The closest public university, Plymouth State University, is 16 miles north of Town. Dartmouth College, New Hampshire's Ivy League school, is about 40 miles west of Bristol.

Bristol acts as the beginning and end to many significant political, ecologic and geographic regions: As the western edge of the Lake Region Planning Commission, as the western edge of the Lakes Region tourist region, as the eastern edge of the Lake Sunapee tourist region, as the southern edge of the White Mountains tourism region, as the southern edge of the foothills of the White Mountains, as the eastern terminus of the Sunapee Highlands, as the southeast corner of Grafton County, as a northern border town of Merrimack County, and as a western border town of Belknap County. But while it remains at the edge of many regions, it is perhaps that closeness (or just on the edge of) that has attracted and has the potential to attract a diverse range of businesses and residents. Current employers and businesses include, Freudenberg, Newfound regional schools, Mid-State Health Center, two breweries, a vibrant downtown core, and a number of professional service providers. Of particular note, over the last ten years, Bristol's median age has moved by 12.1 percent, from 47.1 to 41.4, an age lower than that of the state at 42.4, and one a great deal many New Hampshire communities would be envious of as they roll over how to meet the needs of a older population.

By the Numbers



3,050 people



41.4 median age



22% w/ Bachelor's or Higher



\$54,015 median household income

10.5% population in poverty



1% non-white

5.6 miles to I-93

24.1 minutes (commute)



\$192,400 median home value

43.6% seasonal housing



Sources

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