



**INDICATORS OF** ★★★★★★★★  
**DOWNTOWN HEALTH**



Ever wonder about the “health” of your local downtown? We did! Partnering with UVM’s Center for Rural Studies, Preservation Trust of Vermont and the State’s Downtown Program, we are working on developing a set of indicators that will provide a holistic framework for assessing the health of our downtowns. Our hope is that these indicators will help in the assessment of the impacts and benefits of new growth centers on nearby downtowns. Thanks to the Walter Cerf Community Fund, the Windham Foundation and Vermont Community Foundation’s Sustainable Communities Program for their support of this project.

For more information, please contact Noelle at (802) 864-6310 or noelle@smartgrowthvermont.org.

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**PAUL BRUHN HONORED AS RECIPIENT OF THE**  
★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★  
**ARTHUR GIBB**

*Award*  
FOR INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP



Paul Bruhn 2008 ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Paul Bruhn, founder and Executive Director of the Preservation Trust of Vermont, has been chosen as the recipient of the 2008 Arthur Gibb Award for Individual Leadership, for his significant contribution to preserving Vermont’s landscapes, village centers and historic landmarks.

While working in Washington, D.C. as Chief of Staff for Senator Patrick Leahy, Paul developed a passion for historic preservation. In 1980, he co-founded Preservation Trust of Vermont, an organization that has touched the lives of Vermonters in almost every city and town in the state. The organization has contributed to the rehabilitation of over 1,500 properties, including large and small scale projects that include the Latchis Hotel in Brattleboro, the Vergennes Opera House, the Ferrisburg Grange and the Grand Isle Lake House, which is owned by the Preservation Trust of Vermont.

A Vermont native, Paul grew up in Burlington. The building on Church Street that housed his family’s business, Bruhn Office Equipment, is coincidentally the same building where he works

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COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT ON: **DANVILLE** ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★



Nestled between the Green Mountains and the Connecticut River Valley is the Town of Danville. A patchwork of farms and forests blanket the town’s hillsides, just as they have for generations. Danville Village, at the center, has long served as a hub for this tight-knit community.

Unfortunately, most new development over the last few decades was scattered across the rural portions of the town; the village has suffered as a result. Danville’s zoning has unintentionally made it more difficult to build in the villages than in the countryside, resulting in a loss of village businesses as the population became more dispersed. “The village is the heart of the community, but our zoning hasn’t been treating it that way,” said Kim Prior, a member of the Danville Planning Commission.

This is a common problem. Zoning standards in many of Vermont’s towns require large minimum lot sizes and deep setbacks that are difficult to comply with in a traditional village center. Such standards make it hard for owners to develop small or irregularly shaped village parcels, and forces owners of larger parcels to build in ways

that are more appropriate for the rural countryside than a village.

The Town has selected Smart Growth Vermont to help identify a range of options to make Danville’s zoning bylaws more “village friendly,” including the creation of new village-specific districts and standards.

Broad community involvement has guided the project from the start. Before making any recommendations, Smart Growth Vermont organized three focus groups and conducted a survey of village residents. Draft recommendations were then presented at a community meeting, where several dozen Danville residents helped prioritize options and guide next steps. The goal throughout is to create new village districts and standards that accurately reflect what Danville’s citizens want for their community’s future.

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**LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER**



Ten years ago, I became increasingly concerned that farm fields were being replaced by suburbs and strip malls. The vision of compact settlement surrounded by a working landscape was quickly disappearing. Many people realized the importance of Vermont's unique qualities, but we needed common ground. I founded this organization to bring people together to create solutions that integrated new growth and preserved Vermont's character and beauty.

Clean air and water, economic vitality, land to produce local food, open countryside to enjoy, decent homes people can afford, and transportation options when fuel costs spiral are issues we all care about. My original concept – an organization to educate and influence state land use and planning policy – has evolved; now we also provide communities the assistance they need to plan their future. Our new name, Smart Growth Vermont, better reflects what we do and our accomplishments over the last ten years:

- We brought people together in 1998 to discuss the importance of our downtowns and sparked renewed interest in the Downtown Program.
- We successfully increased tax credits for the **23 downtown and over 80 village centers** to \$1.6 million.
- We provided trainings, workshops, and on-on-one assistance to over **100 cities and towns** across Vermont.
- We continually update our web-based **Community Planning Toolbox** so towns have access to successful examples of smart growth planning.
- We supported the state's Working Group on **Growth Centers; the bill, passed almost unanimously** in both the Senate and House, now helps towns channel growth in areas with needed infrastructure.

*This organization is one that I care about, one that is vital to Vermont's future.* I hope that, in 50 years, we will still recognize our state. Not a stagnant Vermont, but one that incorporates growth and traditional values. In today's tight economy, your gift is doubly important. Your membership will help us meet the increasing needs of Vermont's communities in the 21st century.

Thank you,  
John Ewing, *Chair, Board of Directors*

*PS. Please use the envelope in this newsletter to make a gift, or visit [www.smartgrowthvermont.org](http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org) to make a secure gift online.*

**HOLIDAY CONTRIBUTION**



**ARE YOU LOOKING FOR THE RIGHT GIFT FOR THAT SOMEONE SPECIAL?** Why not make a gift on their behalf to Smart Growth Vermont. Simply purchase a membership in the name of the people you want to honor or remember and we will send a card to them to acknowledge your gift. This holiday season, we have a special card that was created by Vermont Artist, Katherine Monstream. You can reserve your gift through our online giving site, or by calling us or dropping us a note. This is a safe, secure and thoughtful way for you to show that special person how much you appreciate their interest in preserving Vermont's unique character.

**PAUL BRUHN HONORED AS RECIPIENT OF THE**



**ARTHUR GIBB**  
*Award*

FOR INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP



> *Continued from front...*

today. After college, Paul worked as a newspaper reporter and launched the Chittenden Magazine, a monthly publication printed from 1969 to 1973. Paul turned to politics to work with his friend, Patrick Leahy, who, at the time, was the State's attorney for Chittenden County. He helped run Leahy's campaign for US Senate and spent the next four years as Leahy's Chief of Staff.

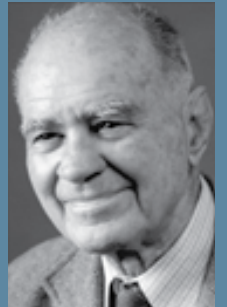
The work of Paul Bruhn and the Preservation Trust of Vermont reaches beyond the preservation of historic buildings. For example, in 1994, PTV developed a partnership with the Freeman Foundation, which allows them to provide seed money to communities for historic preservation projects. Mad River Glen worked with PTV to reconstruct the single chair lift, which is considered an icon in the Vermont ski industry. PTV also negotiated with Wal-Mart to encourage building small scale stores in downtown districts. And, perhaps one of the organization's most successful accomplishments has been the development of the field services program, which has allowed PTV to hire part-time staff to work

directly with communities who wish to move their projects forward. The program has been so successful that it is now being replicated across the nation.

Paul will be honored Wednesday, December 10, from 6:00 to 8:30 pm, at the Vergennes Opera House. There is still time to register for the event. Visit [www.smartgrowthvermont.org](http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org) for details or to register online.

**ARTHUR GIBB**

This prestigious award honors an individual whose leadership has brought about a positive and lasting change in the way their community integrates growth with conservation. Widely considered the father of Act 250 and the prime force behind the state's billboard law, Arthur Gibb was Chair of the environmental Board and a state senator from Addison County. He passed away in 2005 at the age of 97.



*“The organization has contributed to the rehabilitation of over 1,500 properties, including large and small scale projects.”*

**FROM THE TOOLBOX:**

In each newsletter, we will feature a land use issue, tool and case study from our online Community Planning Toolbox. To learn more, visit [www.smartgrowthvermont.org/toolbox/](http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org/toolbox/).

**Issue: Scenic Road Design**

The road corridors that weave through Vermont are more than a way to move us from point A to B. They help shape our perceptions of our sense of place and natural beauty. Depending on where, how and what we build along our roadways, we can either erode or strengthen our villages, scenic views and rural landscape.

**Tool: Road Corridor Visual Analysis**

Before a community can develop strategies to preserve scenic resources along a road corridor, they first must examine and analyze the corridor. A visual analysis can help identify how the road is used, what makes the landscape special, what the key natural features are, and what resources your community wants to protect and why.



**Case Study: Moretown**

Moretown has a strong agricultural heritage and landscape that attracts residents and visitors. When Moretown and Middlesex were planning to seek designation of the Route 100B corridor as a Vermont Byway, they analyzed the roadway and developed a management plan to achieve their goals for this road.

As a result, Moretown has updated their bylaws by clarifying allowed and conditional uses, as well as drafting development guidelines for potentially harmful activities such as resource extraction. The community also plans for: informational brochures; a road-side kiosk; way-finding signs; the restoration of the old one-room school house; and the removal of a town sand-pile to establish a community park.

*“... having access to tools that have been used successfully by others will be a great help to our planning efforts.”*

- Daniel W. Monks, *Bennington Planning Director*

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