

# Welcome to the Plan!

## **An ongoing conversation...**

planBTV South End marks a significant moment in an ongoing conversation about the future of the South End. It establishes a foundation and direction that will guide public policy, as well as public and private investment moving forward. It provides a “big picture” framework for the future of our neighborhood—a framework we’ve shaped together. But the conversation doesn’t stop here. We must continue working and planning together to further shape, refine, and realize the projects, policies, and initiatives identified within this plan, and work to make important things happen.

## **...about an important part of our community.**

There’s a lot we South Enders and South End enthusiasts agree on, but we certainly don’t agree on everything. During the preparation of planBTV South End, people from different parts of the neighborhood and different walks of life—from artists to employees to business owners to residents and more—expressed many different views and perspectives. This plan has given voice to these diverse points of view and concerns by capturing the ideas of South Enders in their own words—and it’s much better as a result. Thank you! Ultimately, planBTV South End has sought to find balance where possible, defining a path forward that’s mindful of the full range of perspectives while also recognizing the important role that the South End plays in the city and the region as a whole.

## **Stay involved!**

Moving a plan forward takes time, and the real work begins now. Continuing this conversation and implementing this framework will happen as the South End’s many partners, businesses, organizations, and groups of citizens come together to preserve and enhance the South End. Let’s roll up our sleeves and make good things happen!



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# Introduction

# Why Do We Need a Plan?

## To Guide Change

Over time, all places change and evolve. Change can bring many social, environmental, and economic benefits and challenges. How this change impacts neighborhoods depends on how communities and their residents choose to engage with that change. In some places, change simply happens with little involvement on the part of the community. Sometimes this undirected change can bring a welcome evolution. Other times, this change can erode or even eliminate characteristics that made these

planBTV South End is all about **preserving what we love** about this funky neighborhood and **sparking improvements** where they're needed as the South End evolves.

places special to begin with because the community didn't take the time to consider the direction they really wanted to go.

From lumber processing and manufacturing, to transportation, arts and food, the South End has been in a constant state of change and evolution. But what's next? By

preparing this plan as a community, we're getting out in front of the next wave of change for the South End. We're shaping how and where we'd like to see the neighborhood evolve, and identifying the improvements we would like to see. Instead of sitting back and letting change simply happen, we're identifying improvements to make the South End more walkable, bikeable, sustainable, connected, and an ever-more resilient neighborhood that's important to the City and the region. We're identifying opportunities for a South End where neighborhoods continue to thrive, where enterprises continue to flourish, where a diversity of meaningful jobs are based, and where a creative spirit is visible throughout the area.

## To Coordinate Plans and Studies

planBTV South End is part of a phased effort to update Burlington's comprehensive plan, neighborhood-by-neighborhood. This effort began with planBTV Downtown & Waterfront in 2010, which is a powerful example of what our community can accomplish when we come together to create a vision for a neighborhood's future. planBTV South End, launched in Spring 2014, was the next step. planBTV South End is also rooted in a number of previous planning initiatives which can be found in the appendix and on the planBTV South End project library at: [www.planbtvsouthend.com](http://www.planbtvsouthend.com). Key recommendations of these studies are incorporated throughout this plan.

## To Create Benchmarks

Finally, planBTV South End includes many related studies to help us understand where we are today. The information contained in these studies not only points to important issues to address in the plan but also provides a snapshot in time, so that as change takes place we can measure it. These benchmarks will help us determine how the implementation of the plan's strategies are moving us towards the plan's vision.

# #OurSouthEnd

# Plan Focus Area



## The South End Neighborhood

The South End neighborhood is bounded by Lake Champlain, Maple Street, South Union Street/Shelburne Road, and the southern Burlington boundary at Queen City Park Road. Despite its zoning and land use patterns, many describe it as a mixed-use neighborhood in which a whole range of activities thrive—from single-family neighborhoods to industrial operations.

However, many opportunities and challenges stem from the neighborhood’s geographic and iconic center: the Enterprise Zoning District. This zoning district acts as a spine that runs north to south, mainly along the Pine Street corridor, bisecting the residential areas of the neighborhood and separating many of the South End’s single-family residences from the lake and the open spaces along its edge. In addition, the character of buildings and uses changes within the Enterprise District, with more large-footprint industrial operations concentrated in the southern part, and historic buildings adapted into offices, artists studios and shops concentrated near downtown.

It is within the Enterprise District that much of the discussion about the South End’s future is focused. With stable, historic residential areas flanking its sides, the Enterprise District presents the greatest opportunity for the community to implement policies, projects and other activities that will preserve and enhance this neighborhood.

Consequently, the Enterprise Zoning District has been identified as the “focus area” and many of the plan’s strategies address this part of the neighborhood. This district does not permit housing, in order to ensure that this portion of the City is available for enterprise uses that provide a diverse economic base for the City, to get work done in a place where they can spread out and make noise.

# What's in planBTV South End



## A Snapshot of Studies and Conversations

The “About the South End” section presents key information collected during Phase 1 of this planning process. This began with research on the history of the neighborhood, and an assessment of today’s land use, transportation, stormwater, brownfields, and real estate market conditions.

The “What’s Important” section highlights the content of the community discussions that provided the foundation for this plan. The City hosted many forums for conversation about the neighborhood, and creative South Enders designed art-based engagement pieces to enhance this discussion. From formal presentations and Planning Commission meetings, to Art Hop and plan release parties, the planning team worked with South Enders and South End enthusiasts throughout the process to create and revise this plan.

## A Roadmap for the Future

The “Our Plan for the South End” section provides guidance for the future of the neighborhood, organized in two parts:

- **Priority actions to preserve and enhance** the South End’s distinctive characteristics
- **Strategies to guide policy and projects** addressing economic development, the arts, transportation, public spaces, housing, stormwater and the reuse of brownfield sites

It’s important to note that this plan is part of an ongoing discussion about the South End. As a roadmap, this plan does not outline turn-by-turn directions for how to get where we want to go. Rather, it identifies a destination and points us in that general direction. It’s up to us to work together to find the best route to get there!