

Relationship to Other Plans

The impacts, both positive and negative, associated with growth and development knows no boundaries. It is incumbent on every community to look beyond its borders, and evaluate the potential impacts associated with changing land use patterns. Individual developments must be compatible with adjacent neighborhoods, and so too must the plans of communities and regions. This portion of this Plan briefly examines its compatibility with similar plans in adjacent communities and that of the region.

Compatibility with Adjacent Municipalities

Burlington shares boundaries with three communities: the cities of South Burlington and Winooski, and the Town of Colchester. The Winooski River separates Burlington from Colchester and Winooski. Only with South Burlington, do land uses abut directly.

CITY OF SOUTH BURLINGTON

The table below presents a comparison of proposed land uses along the border shared between Burlington and South Burlington. For the most part, land uses are compatible. In two instances, one in each community, residential uses abut non-residential use. This is the result of historical growth and land use patterns, and must be addressed on a case-by-case basis through proper site planning to mitigate any possible adverse impacts.

Boundary/Location	ZONE	
	So. Burlington	Burlington
<u>Lake Champlain - Route 7</u>		
Lakeshore-Central Ave.	Recreation	Residential (RL)
Central Ave.-Railroad	Residential MD	Industrial
Railroad-Pine St.	Commercial	Residential (RL)
Pine St.-Route 7	Commercial	Commercial/ Residential (RL)
<u>Route 7</u>		
I-189-Home Ave.	Commercial	Commercial/ Residential (RL)
Home Ave.-Proctor Ave.	Commercial	Residential (RM)

Boundary/Location <i>continued</i>	ZONE	
	So. Burlington	Burlington

Route 7-Spear Street

Route 7-S. Prospect St.	Residential MD	Residential (RM)
S. Prospect-Spear St.	Residential/OS	Open Space (RCO)/ Institutional (UC)

Spear Street

I-189-Quarry Hill	Residential/OS	Open Space (RCO)/ Institutional (UC)
Quarry Hill Rd.-Route 2	Residential MD	Institutional (UC)

Route 2-Patchen Road

Rte. 2-Cent. Woods	Commercial	Institutional (UC)
Cent. Woods-Grove St.	Conservation/OS	Conservation (RCO)

Grove Street-Winooski River

	Residential MD	Residential (RL)
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MD = Medium Density

LD = Low Density

OS = Open Space

UC = University Campus

SOURCE: So. Burlington Planning Department

Two areas of particular interest to the City of Burlington are the gateways into the city between Williston Rd. and I-89, and between Shelburne Rd. and I-189. Burlington will continue to monitor proposed developments in these areas for their potential impact on traffic congestion into and out of the city, and their visual relationship to the city’s gateways. For more on the treatment of Burlington’s Gateways, see the *Built Environment Section*.

CITY OF WINOOSKI

The Winooski River forms the boundary between Burlington, and the City of Winooski, and Town of Colchester. All three communities call for shoreline protection of these fragile areas in their respective land use policies.

Winooski and Burlington share the Winooski River Bridge (US Rt. 7) as a gateway. The Winooski Plan proposed strengthening the City’s central commercial area adjacent to this gateway, and Burlington supports a small mixed commercial zone at Mill Street surrounded by low density residential on Grove and Chase Streets. These uses are generally complimentary. For more on the treatment of this gateway and the Grove Street neighborhood, see the *Land Use Section*.

TOWN OF COLCHESTER

The Colchester Plan states:

"Warners Corner Planning Area serves as a gateway to the town from the City of Burlington and is appropriate for providing concentrated commercial services and high density residential occupancy. The development of this area mirrors the development patterns of the north end of Burlington."

The New North End is the most suburban section of Burlington, and adjacent "concentrated commercial services and high density residential" land uses are not necessarily compatible. Yet the river and Route 127 act as a buffer to minimize potential disharmony. Colchester and Burlington must work together to insure an adequate traffic circulation and transportation program to prevent congestion.

SHARED RESOURCES AND ISSUES

Compatibility refers to more than adjacent land uses; it also includes the use of, and impacts upon shared resources, such as the lake and river, air, transportation systems, and regional facilities.

Transportation

Burlington shares two major arterial entrances with South Burlington, and one each with Winooski and Colchester. A tremendous amount of traffic flows through these communities traveling in and out of Burlington. This Plan suggests strategies to reduce the number of these trips to ease congestion in all communities and parking problems in Burlington.

Many communities are developing innovative approaches to traffic management. The South Burlington Transportation Management Association is one such strategy designed to ease congestion along US Route 7. Colchester and Winooski may also want to explore similar strategies to limit new trips. All four communities must work cooperatively to address congestion at our borders, and in support of expanded public transportation options throughout the region.

Burlington International Airport

Owned by Burlington, but located in South Burlington, Burlington International Airport (BIA) serves as an important transportation hub and economic resource for northern Vermont and northeastern New York. However, continued growth of the airport may pose additional impacts on neighborhoods in South Burlington, Winooski and to some extent Williston. Airport officials are encouraged to work closely with South Burlington and Winooski representatives to minimize disturbance. Similarly, communities surrounding the airport must ensure future development is both compatible and located safely outside federally designated operational limits.

Water Quality

Burlington's plan identifies measures to protect the quality of Lake Champlain and the Winooski River. Colchester's plan mandates protection and improvement of water quality in Mallets Bay, and further suggests shoreline protection to prevent pollution and erosion. South Burlington, too, wants to maintain and protect the water quality of Lake Champlain as well as rivers and streams. Winooski calls for improved water quality in the lower Winooski River.

Urban stormwater runoff is the largest threat to water quality in this country. As Burlington, and our neighboring communities continue to grow, consideration should be given to joint efforts to monitor and address stormwater management.

Housing

Presently Burlington provides approximately 85% of the subsidized affordable housing for low-income people in Chittenden County, with Winooski providing most of the rest. South Burlington and Colchester propose creating affordable housing in their municipalities. This is a goal compatible with Burlington's plan and should be aggressively pursued. All communities in the region must make take measures to address their fair-share housing responsibilities.

Compatibility with the Regional Plan

Largely, the Regional Plan articulates a strong and visionary future for Chittenden County. The Plan emphasizes future development that fulfills the concept of "growth centers" at both the regional and local scale. In doing so, it recognizes the importance of mixed-use development, higher densities, walkable communities, sharing responsibilities for affordable housing, protecting open space, and planning for future infrastructure to name only a few.

1. Land Use:

The Regional Plan presents a hierarchy of progressively larger scale and more intense mixed-use development in the creation and designation of "planning areas." The creation of these "planning areas" provides a very important framework to focus a wide range of objectives and policies governing future land development. However, as presented they do not reflect some of the more important differences in land use patterns and intensities envisioned across the region. By example:

- The "Metropolitan I" areas are too extensive and decentralized in order to effectively support the concentrated development pattern envisioned. Metropolitan I Areas must clear in their intent and purpose, and given their regional significance should reflect the highest (not just high) priority for infrastructure and public transportation investments.
- The "Metropolitan II" Areas are also very expansive, and it is extremely unlikely that they can effectively encourage the concentrated development pattern envisioned. The CCRPC is faced with a very difficult challenge in this

regard given the need to recognize both what already exists, in addition to the desired development pattern of these areas.

- Rural Areas are vast and encompasses a wide variety of development types and intensities. Again, we encourage the CCRPC to consider dividing it into two – creating a category for “conservation and recreational areas” that are distinct from rural residential and highlight large areas of open space serving agricultural, forestry, recreational or land conservation roles.

As noted above, the planning areas provide a framework for focusing a wide range of objectives and policies governing future land development. As such, very clear criteria that govern future public investments (such as expansion or extension of water or wastewater capacity) within or adjacent to this area is necessary. The CCRPC also needs to develop clear and measurable growth objectives, and specific and direct policy statements that will effectively guide future development and investment into this framework.

2. Transportation:

The Regional Plan importantly emphasizes the “land use-transportation nexus” and the need for careful planning for transportation infrastructure. It is necessary however for the land use plan to clearly define the priority – transportation infrastructure is developed to serve and support land development, not the other way around.

Despite laudable goals, priorities and innovative non-highway investments, over 70% of the new investments proposed in the preferred alternative are dedicated to new highway construction. Many of these new investments do not appear to support a concentrated land use pattern thus creating a substantial disconnect between many of the proposed investments – particularly highway-related infrastructure – and the vision. The current Metropolitan Transportation Plan appears to have neglected to consider which combination of transportation investments resulted in the best overall performance of the desired land use and development pattern.

3. Affordable Housing:

The CCRPC has recently adopted housing targets for each community that treat all communities equally with regard to providing future housing, and at long last recognizes that all of the region’s communities have a responsibility of providing their fair share. However, we note that it assumes that the current situation is equitable, and does not take into account the current imbalance in how housing – and particularly affordable housing – is current provided.

Conclusion

Burlington's plan is largely compatible with those of its neighboring communities. Nevertheless, as long as municipalities must continue to rely on local property tax as their primary means of revenue generation, it will be impossible to adequately address issues of growth distribution within Chittenden County and fulfill the goals of Act 200.

