

# Community and Economic Development Office

CEDO is funded primarily by a variety of sources including federal and state grants, fees and special revenues. Estimated revenue for FY 2013 is projected to be \$4,981,849. This represents a 14.75% decrease of \$861,844 from FY 2012's estimated budget.

## Community Development Programs

The Community Development division is now managed by the Assistant Director for Community Development. It is a combination of two Assistant Managers which, in addition to cost savings, facilitates strategic focusing of the anti-poverty resources of the CDBG and AmeriCorps programs.

CDBG Entitlement Program - The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a federal revenue source for local communities to address the roots and consequences of poverty. The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) awards grants to cities and states each year on a formula basis. The city in turn awards grants and loans to local nonprofits as well as providing direct services to residents and businesses through several CDBG-funded programs. CDBG directly supports CEDO's work in affordable housing, economic development, brownfields remediation and provides funds for social services delivered through city departments and local nonprofits as well as public facilities and infrastructure improvements. CDBG supports a number of staff positions at CEDO together with other basic operating costs such as front desk reception and audit. The city's annual CDBG allocation has been reduced by 40% over the last two years as a result of federal funding reductions and a change in census data.

Neighborhood Services - One Neighborhood Services staff person works to improve the quality of life in Burlington's neighborhoods through services that include support to Neighborhood Planning Assemblies (in agenda planning, meeting logistics, and coordination with other city departments) and cultivating community leadership through informal coaching and formal training.

AmeriCorps Programs - The city sponsors an AmeriCorps\*State program focused on improving service to Burlington's increasingly diverse population through improved cultural competence. CEDO places AmeriCorps members for one-year terms in non-profits, city departments and other public agencies. In addition, the program supports staff management positions and training for host

agencies. CEDO has submitted an application for FY13 for 20 FTE program members, plus program management.

### Housing Programs

HOME - The HOME Investment Partnership Act program is designed to create affordable housing for low-income households through building, buying, and/or rehabilitating housing for rent or homeownership. As with CDBG, HUD administers the HOME program on a national basis and awards grants to entitlement communities - including the City of Burlington - each year on a formula basis. This funding supports nonprofit development of new affordable housing and rehab of existing affordable housing and provides some operational funding for the program. Burlington's HOME allocation was reduced by 29% over FY2012.

The Burlington Housing Trust Fund (BHTF) is designed to support the creation, preservation and retention of affordable housing for low-income residents. The funding comes from a dedicated tax that was approved by the voters in 1989. Grants are made to nonprofit housing organizations to fund both the development and operating costs associated with a variety of affordable housing programs and housing development. Funding has remained flat at about \$190,000 per year, with 50% allocated to actual housing developments/rehab, 35% allocated to housing groups for operations, and 15% allowed for CEDO administration.

Burlington Lead Program - Under HUD's competitive funding programs, CEDO has operated the Burlington Lead Program since 2003 to reduce lead hazards in the homes of low-income residents. Grants and loans are made for the costs of reducing lead-based paint hazards, and funds are spent on outreach and education to increase awareness of lead poisoning and how to prevent it. HUD awarded a \$2,475,000 grant for a 3-year period, and the focus will expand to include Healthy Homes work.

HOPWA- HUD Special Projects grant secured by then-Representative Sanders to support the conversion of duplexes and triplexes to ownership and occupancy by low- and moderate-income homebuyers. The funding created a revolving loan pool that provides low-interest loans to close the financial gap for income-eligible homebuyers.

Neighborhood Stabilization Program - Under an agreement with the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, CEDO operates the

NSP program to buy single-family foreclosed homes, rehab them and resell to low-income homebuyers through a sub-agreement with Champlain Housing Trust. Program terminates in March of 2013, so funding is only for a partial year.

### Economic Development

Burlington's Sustainable Economic Development Strategies Program and Business Financing and Technical Assistance Program are both funded through CDBG. CEDO's economic development division addresses poverty, unemployment, underemployment, and disinvestment through:

- 1) financial/technical assistance to all businesses;
- 2) targeted assistance to employers who:
  - a) pay a livable wage,
  - b) serve Burlington residents, and/or
  - c) contribute to the vitality of the South End and Downtown business districts;
- 3) development of affordable space for small/micro businesses; and
- 4) redevelopment of vacant/abandoned property

CEDO also provides entrepreneurs, small businesses, and nonprofits with free, experienced, comprehensive, one-on-one assistance with starting, expanding, and maintaining their businesses. Assistance includes, but is not limited to, business and financial plan development, space location, hands-on permitting assistance, financing, using Internet resources, referrals, mediation, and a variety of other services designed to enhance the viability and understanding of the commercial value of a business or business idea.

### Community Justice Center Programs

Restorative Justice Panels - Six panels of volunteers meet weekly with offenders of low-level crimes to hold them accountable and guide their reparation to the victim of the crime, the community and themselves.

Offender Re-entry Program - Resource Navigation, Circles of Support and Accountability and Employment support for offenders reintegrating into the community after incarceration.

Parallel Justice for Victims of Crime - Community and government engaged to support victims regardless of whether offender is caught or prosecuted.

### Special Projects

Legacy - The Legacy staff and Steering Committee are engaged in updating the Legacy Action Plan, which was originally drafted in 1999 and provides a vision for a healthy and sustainable community through the interconnection of the economy, environment, education and equity. The update is proceeding in conjunction with a regional sustainability planning effort funded by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. During FY 2013, the Legacy staff will also continue work on the updated Climate Action Plan, coordinate efforts of the Burlington Sustainability Action Team (or Mayor's Green Team), and work on grant opportunities through the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, Environmental Protection Agency and other funders.

Social Equity Investment Project (SEIP) - Launched in 2007, the Social Equity Investment Project (SEIP) is a national, award-winning, innovative social development resource created to help the City of Burlington have knowledge of and effectively address the growing sensitivity and challenges of becoming an increasingly ethnically and culturally diverse community. SEIP activity and participation includes workshops, panels, facilitator, talk show host, leadership consultation, event sponsorships, cultural competency awareness training and strategic planning to strengthen our collective work and more effectively achieve an equitable, sustainable community for future generations.

### Highlights included:

Diversity and Unity Retreat: The SEIP and City of Burlington presented a successful strategic planning diversity retreat to bring together the City of Burlington's Diversity and Unity Stakeholder Leaders. The retreat served to deepen the understanding of Burlington's history with its minority/ethnically diverse residents of color, explore the support and development of a measurable action oriented Diversity & Equity strategic plan, and enhance the lives of and make the City of Burlington livable for all citizens.

Diversity and Equity new sector: Last year, the SEIP worked diligently with the Legacy Project to include a new sector, “Diversity and Equity.” Legacy and diversity interested stakeholders are committed to accessing resources that allow for choice and growth of leadership to create an inclusive and welcoming Burlington for all populations.

Diversity and Equity Resolution: The SEIP and Diversity Retreat Steering Committee members guided action steps to present the Burlington City Council with a Diversity and Equity Resolution. Successful, in the fall 2011, the Burlington City Council unanimously passed the unprecedented Diversity and Equity Resolution co-sponsored by City Councilors Karen Paul, Vince Brennan, Emma Mulvaney-Stanak and David Berezniak.

Bi-Annual Diversity Engagement Dinner held in November 2011. Sixty-two community members, 98% of whom were minority/ethnically diverse people of color (44 adult and 16 youth), attended. Over the last few years, community leaders and residents have advocated that minority/ethnically diverse people of color need a routine engagement venue to document social equity issues, build cohesive community relations, embrace shared vision, and explore quality of life interest and concern.

#### ACCD (Agency of Commerce and Community Development) Designated Downtown Program

The State of Vermont’s Designated Downtown Program provides various benefits for communities whose downtowns receive designation as Designated Downtown Districts, including income tax credits for rehabilitation of older historic buildings, reallocation of sales tax receipts for building materials, and financial assistance from various programs specifically for Designated Downtown Districts.

#### Moran Plant Redevelopment

CEDO continues to work on the redevelopment of the Moran Plant which includes a family adventure center with a world-class indoor ice and rock climbing facility, restaurant and café, and expanded community sailing center. Year-round, public access to the building (including observation deck) and all activities within the building are targeted at public enjoyment and enrichment to create a variety of recreation and education opportunities and amenities for the people of Burlington in a public facility that ensures access to and enjoyment of Lake Champlain. Also

proposed are upgrades to the bike path, increased green space and park amenities, children's splash area, seasonal refrigerated skating rink and a rebuilt skatepark. Burlington's Parks and Recreation Department will play a prominent role in this project with an office in the building and management of the site amenities including the new splash area and skatepark. This is being accomplished with a variety of grants, TIF and tax credits.

#### Other Special Projects:

Staff is assisting Public Works on the development of the Side Streets project to extend the look and feel of the Church Street Marketplace to the immediately adjacent streets. St. Paul and lower Church Streets completed this past year. Staff is assisting Public Works on the development of the Waterfront Transportation projects and the College Street Access project completed in 2011.

#### Brownfields

Burlington's Brownfields Program provides technical assistance and assessment funding to facilitate the re-development of "Brownfields" sites in Burlington. Brownfields are abandoned, idled or underused properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by the presence or potential presence of environmental contamination. The Burlington Brownfields Program focuses on resolving impediments to small/medium business growth, green space creation, affordable housing development, and the mitigation of aging petroleum infrastructure in Burlington Harbor and on the shoreline.