



Memo

Date: January 25, 2022

To: Transportation, Energy, and Utility Committee

From: Laura Wheelock, P.E., Senior Public Works Engineer
Olivia Darisse, P.E., Public Works Engineer

CC: Chapin Spencer, Director of Public Works
Norm Baldwin, P.E., City Engineer/Asst. Director – Technical Services
Robert Goulding, Public Information Manager

Subject: Great Streets - Main Street Project Update

The City of Burlington is excited to bring forward the six-block Main Street Great Streets concept to transform the main artery into and out of our City and rebalance the streetscape for pedestrians, economic vitality and climate resiliency.

Burlington is one of the great cities in America. While we have excellent businesses and community institutions on our Main Street, it is not itself yet a 'Great Street.' The City, stakeholders, and business have already partnered to rebuild St. Paul Street and City Hall Park into holistic public spaces – planned as Great Streets concepts. Additionally, with upcoming milestones to meet to make use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) obligations, the timing is right to begin the reintroduction of Main Street Great Streets with our community. The consensus is clear – cities need an integrated streetscape that serves everyone and helps protect our environment. This is the project that will further that goal.

In September 2021, we presented a background of the Great Streets Initiative, the Main Street concept, and the next steps in moving this project forward. Since that time, we have procured a design consultant, obtained authorization to seek voter authorization on project funding, performed preliminary engineering studies and investigations, and begun engaging with stakeholders and community members.

During this TEUC meeting, we will provide a presentation with information on the development of the concept, public engagement strategies, and the project timeline. The project team will be bringing the proposed ballot item to request voter authorization of the project funding to the January 24th City Council meeting, and expect to receive feedback that will influence the

information we bring to the TEUC meeting. As such, presentation materials will be provided for review on the day of the meeting.

For further updates please visit www.greatstreetsbtv.com.

Background

The Great Streets Initiative is a culmination of many years of planning and project development, including the public vote in March of 2015 to use the City's downtown TIF district to make new investments in the downtown public infrastructure, to ensure that Burlington residents have a downtown that is a vibrant, walkable and sustainable urban center. Through this initiative, we've advanced several key projects envisioned by plans such as *Main Street, St. Paul Street, City Hall Park, and Downtown Streets Standards*.

The premise of the Great Streets Initiative is to work with citizens, stakeholders and City officials to arrive at a design that provides a balance between a corridor's various needs and uses. In June 2016, the City launched the Great Streets Initiative through advancement of the Downtown Streets Standards development, the Main Street concept design, St. Paul Street concept design, and the City Hall Park Design. By early 2017, it was clear that more work would need to be done on Main Street's concept before advancing it to final design. As a result, the Main Street concept was put on hold while the city advanced the St. Paul Street and City Hall Park projects to construction. We are resuming the Main Street effort from where we left off in 2017.

With the St. Paul Street and City Hall Park projects complete, the City is refocusing its efforts on the Main Street concept plan. During the upcoming TEUC meeting, the Main Street project managers will provide a presentation on the background of what went into the Main Street concept and where we are headed.

The City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in August 2021 in order to procure a design consultant to advance the Main Street plans through approval of a final concept design. The concept will focus on the redesign of six blocks of Main Street from Union Street to Battery Street. The City selected Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) as the design consultant.

The project team attended the October 18, 2021 City Council meeting to provide a project update, obtain authorization to award the design contract to the selected consultant, and obtain authorization to seek VEPC authorization to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for the pieces of the project that do not yet have that authorization in place. In November 2021, VEPC authorized the use of TIF funding for the project. Voter approval is required to utilize the funding, and the City will be seeking this approval on the March 2022 ballot. For more information regarding TIF funding please visit www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/Downtown-TIF-District.

Thank you.
