



City of Burlington
Department of Public Works

Technical Services Engineering Division
645 Pine Street, Suite A
Burlington, VT 05402
P 802-863-9094 / F 802-863-0466 / TTY 802-863-0450
www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPW

Memo

Date: February 8, 2022

To: Parks & Recreation Commission

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 October 2021, we procured a design consultant, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) to help progress the concept design and begin re-engaging the community in the Great Streets conversation and its focus on Main Street. To date, the consulting team has completed survey collection and inspections of water and sewer infrastructure. Other preliminary engineering tasks in progress include traffic modeling, soil investigations, and right-of-way research.

In November, the project obtained authorization to seek voter approval on the use of TIF to fund the project. The project team joined CEDO to present at NPAs throughout January to provide education on TIF funding for the project and the associated March ballot item. In early February the project team hosted project meetings for the downtown community and business owners to present the project in its early conceptual stages and solicit feedback on the 2016

concept development effort. Engagement efforts will continue throughout the next several months and include presentations on the concept development at NPAs, leadership meetings, targeted focus groups.

Over the next three months, the City will be working with the consultant to gather and respond to public feedback on the project, and to advance the concept design beyond the work completed in 2016. Advancements of the concept will inform the Department of Parks and Recreation on specific changes being made to green spaces and the ecological components being proposed within those spaces.

During the February Parks and Recreation Commission 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 return to the Parks and Recreation Commission in April for approval of the design concept, and specifically the designation and utilization of green spaces, per requirements in the City Ordinances. The project team will also be seeking your support to bring the concept design to the City Council for approval.

For further updates and a list of upcoming engagement opportunities 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.

Thank you.
