

## Department of Planning and Zoning

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**TO:** Burlington Conservation Board  
**FROM:** Meagan Tuttle, Comprehensive Planner  
**DATE:** November 1, 2018  
**RE:** Updated draft 2019 planBTV: Burlington Comprehensive Plan

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"planBTV" refers to a collection of plans that outline a vision for land use and development in Burlington over the next 10-20 years. All of the plans in this collection are rooted in the overarching policy document *planBTV: Comprehensive Plan*. In past years, this plan has been adopted and referred to as the *Burlington Municipal Development Plan*. Over the last year, the Planning Commission and Planning Staff have been working on an update to this plan, consistent with the statutory requirements to update the plan every five years.

### Conservation Board comments on 2014 plan

The *2014 Municipal Development Plan*, and particularly the Natural Environment Chapter, was shared with the Conservation Board. The Board's feedback on potential updates to the plan regarding this element were discussed at the April and June 2018 meetings. In addition to detailed edits to the text of this element, the following general comments were shared by the board regarding this update.

- When discussing potential locations for public access to shorelines through easement or acquisition, also address "in ways that will not harm" these areas.
- Opportunities for green infrastructure is not limited to public properties, and more specific criteria and incentives for property owners to comply with minimum standards.
- Is the master plan update an opportunity to talk about increasing the Conservation Legacy Fund?
- Recognize the efforts of the Burlington Wildways Coalition.
- Many of the action items are underway and have been for some time. Recognize ongoing measures as distinctive from new action items that need to be undertaken.

### Elements for Board consideration in 2019 update

A draft update to planBTV has been warned for public hearing by the Planning Commission and can be found online at:

[https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/sites/default/files/PZ/planBTV/MDP2019/2019planBTVUpdate\\_Draftv1.2\\_LowRes\\_forPCPH\\_11012018.pdf](https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/sites/default/files/PZ/planBTV/MDP2019/2019planBTVUpdate_Draftv1.2_LowRes_forPCPH_11012018.pdf)

One of the overarching objectives of this plan update was to eliminate redundancy across the plan's policies, actions, and narrative elements, and to make a stronger connection between the city's comprehensive plan and other planning documents. Therefore, the plan no longer organized around the traditional structure of individual chapters for housing, transportation, etc. Instead, the plan is organized into two sections: Our Plan for Action and Our Future Land Use.

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- Our Plan for Action is organized around four themes reflecting core characteristics and values of Burlington—dynamic, distinctive, inclusive, and connected.
- Our Future Land Use identifies areas in Burlington that we are planning to conserve, sustain, and grow.

Further, the plan explicitly relies on the tremendous body of work by various city departments and boards regarding specific issues and topics. Considerations for the city's natural and open space resources are an excellent example of this new structure. While the updated plan continues to place a very important focus on these resources, there is no longer a Natural Environment chapter—their value and importance is now discussed throughout the plan. Instead, the plan's narrative, land use maps, and guidance for implementation discuss these resources at a higher level, and make frequent reference to the detailed analyses and recommendations of the *Open Space Protection Plan*, the *Urban Forestry Master Plan*, the CCRPC's *All Hazards Mitigation Plan*, and the *Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Master Plan* to name a few.

While there is no longer a Natural Environment chapter, there are some sections of the plan which focus on its former contents. The following sections may be of interested to the Board:

- "How is Burlington Developed" section on pages 12-14
- "Burlington as a distinctive city" theme, pages 30-41
  - Specifically, Policy 1 and associated actions regarding protection of the quality of the city's natural resources on page 36
- "Burlington as a dynamic city" theme, pages 42-53
  - Specifically, Policy 10 and associated actions regarding climate change resilience on page 53
- "Burlington as a connected city" theme, pages 66-79
  - Specifically, Policy 16 and associated actions regarding the integrity and connectivity of the city's natural resources on pages 72-73
- "Planning to conserve" section, pages 82-84
- Additionally, the index on page 107 outlines all action items from across the plan related to the city's Natural Environment.

I look forward to attending your meeting on November 5, 2018 to present the draft plan. The Conservation Board is invited to review the updated draft and offer comments for consideration either on November 5 or in advance of the Planning Commission's Public Hearing on December 5, 2018.