

COMMUNITY UPDATES

The 2012-2017 designation period marked a significant era of community planning and reinvestment for the Designated Downtown Area and the City. This included the creation of the City's first comprehensive land use plan for the downtown and waterfront, *planBTV Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan*, a thorough and collaborative process to create plans for the redevelopment of the Burlington Town Center property, the Downtown Parking and Transportation Management Plan, Wayfinding Signage Program, the development of the Public Investment Action Plan for allocation of Waterfront TIF district funds, the creation of the City's first comprehensive, 10-year capital plan, and the completion of several significant capital projects throughout the downtown and waterfront.

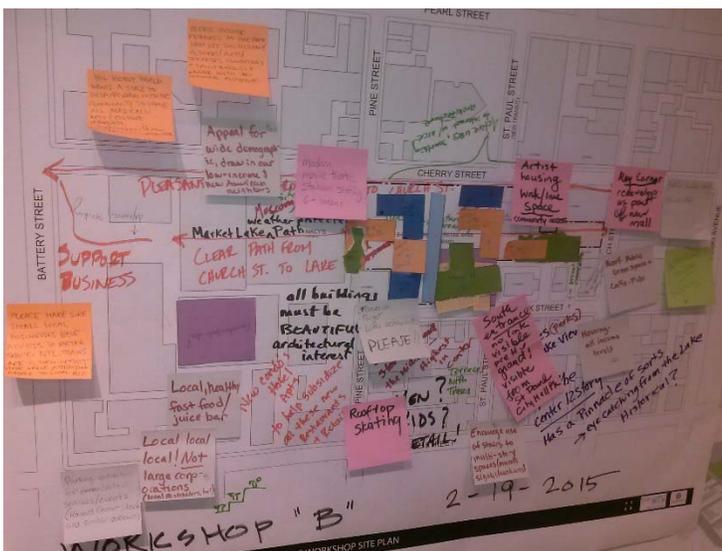
PLANBTV: DOWNTOWN & WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN



Burlington residents participating in a planBTV workshop in 2013.

In early 2011, the development of *planBTV*, the Downtown and Waterfront Plan, began with a series of studies to inventory and assess existing conditions and to identify primary needs, challenges, and opportunities for the designated area. The plan's goal was to refine broad city-wide goals for sustainable development into focused, actionable, area-specific strategies to ensure the vitality of the city's downtown. The planning process placed an emphasis on finding ways to promote and improve mixed-uses and quality urban design, affordable and workforce housing, transportation and parking management, and the quality and capacity of public infrastructure. Following two years of unprecedented public process, research, more than 100 public events which engaged more than 1,200 participants, City Council unanimously adopted *planBTV* in 2013.

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE BURLINGTON TOWN CENTER



Community comments on redevelopment scenarios for the Burlington Town Center property in 2015.

Following the adoption of *planBTV*, the Burlington Town Center owner, GGP, sold the property to Devonwood Investors in December 2013. Devonwood cited the bold vision for the property articulated in *planBTV* as a factor in the decision to invest in the underutilized, suburban-style facility. In November 2014, Mayor Weinberger and Devonwood Investors announced a partnership to comprehensively redevelop the property with mixed-use buildings on these two central blocks, including the creation of at least 270 additional housing units at a range of income levels, re-opening of St. Paul and Pine Streets, adding new retail, office space, housing, and related public improvements.

The City and Devonwood began a transparent, public process soliciting, receiving, and incorporating public input into their negotiations to create a development

agreement addressing public amenities, public infrastructure investment, the project’s scale. A broad coalition of community organizations and local businesses supported the redevelopment vision for the property. This process culminated in two public votes in November 2016, through which Burlington voters approved a change to the zoning in downtown to facilitate the redevelopment of the property, and the approval of up to \$21.8M in TIF investments to re-establish the two streets that have been foreclosed by the existing building and to make streetscape and stormwater improvements to six additional blocks on Bank & Cherry Streets.

PUBLIC INVESTMENT ACTION PLAN

In January 2014, the City announced six Public Investment Action Plan (PIAP) projects for the Waterfront TIF District to strengthen existing waterfront resources, resolve uncertainty surrounding the future of the Moran Plant, and increase public access to and use of the waterfront. The Plan, which was the first public process in Vermont to determine how TIF funds would be utilized, calls for \$9.6 million in TIF funds to leverage an additional \$33 million of direct investment. PIAP is an implementation effort designed to move *planBTV* elements from concept to reality, and generated 120 initial proposals in response to a community-wide RFP. The following projects were selected from the PIAP process:

<u>Project</u>	<u>TIF Allocation</u>	<u>Total Project Cost</u>
New Moran	\$6,300,000*	\$26,000,000
Waterfront Park Upgrades	\$800,000	\$1,700,000
Community Sailing Center	\$500,000	\$5,000,000
Burlington Harbor Marina	\$500,000	\$5,000,000
ECHO Sustainability Park	\$500,000	\$3,800,000
Waterfront Access North	\$500,000	\$8,661,000
Project Management	\$500,000	
TOTAL	\$9,600,000	

** New Moran would receive \$4.3 million of new TIF dollars, in addition to a reauthorization of \$2.1 million of TIF dollars approved by City Council in 2011 for redevelopment of the Moran Plant.*



Cover of the 2014 Downtown Housing Strategy Report.

DOWNTOWN HOUSING STRATEGY REPORT

In the spring of 2014, the City released the downtown housing strategy report which found the City experiencing an "affordability crisis" due to limited housing supply and growing housing-wage gap. It included recommended strategies to create more livable, walkable, sustainable, affordable city. Since the year 2000, downtown has seen only about 120 new market rate homes developed. Recommended strategies include economic incentives to increase production of multi-family housing; land-use policies that encourage diverse housing development, and in particular Form Based Code zoning reform; engaging regional and state partners around housing strategies to grow the regional economy; developing new, well-managed downtown student housing for UVM/ Champlain students, to free up neighborhood housing for single and multi-family use; expanding range of housing options to benefit both employers and affordable housing community.

DOWNTOWN FORM-BASED CODE

A key recommendation from *planBTV: Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan*, City Council unanimously approved a resolution in March 2014 supporting "the proposed form-based code to promote and advance new infill development and adaptive re-use in the Downtown and Waterfront." The resolution created a joint committee of the Planning Commission and City Council to bring a final recommendation to City Council and the Planning Commission for adoption. The guiding principles of the code come directly from *planBTV*: a vibrant economy, housing and

transportation choices, active and healthy living, environmental and cultural stewardship, a sense of place, and creativity and innovation. It is anticipated that the Form-Based Code will be adopted into the *Burlington CDO* in the upcoming renewal period.

DOWNTOWN PARKING & TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT PLAN



City staff, the BBA and other partners celebrating the arrival of new "smart meters" in downtown Burlington.

In late 2014, following a year-long public/private collaboration between the Department of Public Works (DPW), CEDO and BBA, the City Council unanimously approved downtown parking changes to improve visitor experience, ensure sustainable parking system, address longstanding concerns of residents, merchants, and visitors about downtown parking. In addition to these changes, the partners developed the *Downtown Parking & Transportation Plan*, which was also unanimously adopted by Council in late 2015. The plan represents more than two years of close collaboration and a new attempt to approach downtown parking issues systematically and comprehensively. The plan builds on extensive public input and recent steps to improve customer experience, including parking meters that accept credit cards and a new pay-by-phone option.

Since this plan was adopted, the City has been exploring changes to off-street parking requirements in the *Burlington CDO*, in order to facilitate additional infill development within the designated downtown. In 2016, City Council adopted an amendment to provide for more efficient and effective use of parking facilities in general. In addition to establishing additional parameters for acceptable off-site parking facilities, and strengthening provisions for off-site parking that is used to meet a site's minimum parking requirements, the amendment clarified the ability for sites with unused parking to make that parking available to off-site users. This amendment allows for companies such as Unified Parking Partners, now operating in downtown, to help unlock private parking assets to increase public access to parking.

INVESTMENTS IN THE CHURCH STREET MARKET PLACE



Marketplace alley mural promoting Burlington's history.

During the previous designation period, several significant investments were made in the Church Street Marketplace. In 2012, a project began to replace Church Street's aging electrical system and install new underground conduit, 46 LED street lights, and improve access to electricity for cart vendors and special events (funded by FHWA and the Vermont Downtown Program). The Pearl Street & Church Street intersection was reconstructed which installed signs, landscaping, sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic signals, trees and new bike lanes (funded through a FHWA grant administered by VTrans). The Church Street Marketplace activated the Marketplace Alley by installing a \$100,000 mural promoting the region's history since the 1609 arrival of Samuel de Champlain, and the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, Burlington Business Association, and the Church Street Marketplace, launched "Burlington Bears Its Art" whimsical fiberglass Bears painted by local artists on display on the Marketplace and in the greater Burlington area.



Church Street Winter Lights Festival

In 2013, the Top Block fountain was removed in order to improve pedestrian access and increase leasing opportunities on the Marketplace (funded by FHWA). The Church Street Marketplace

launched Winter Lights, a light festival running from February through early April, sponsored by Citizens Bank, as a way to celebrate and activate the Marketplace in the late winter months. A similar light program was launched in 2014, Summer Lights, to activate and enliven the Marketplace on summer nights. In 2014, City Council unanimously voted to prohibit smoking on the Church Street Marketplace to protect pedestrians and diners on Church Street from secondhand smoke and promote Burlington’s healthy-living brand. Finally, in 2015, Church Street completed its own build out of a fiber network for the length of the marketplace, and launched 1 gigabyte free public Wi-Fi service, sponsored by LL Bean.

REINVESTING IN THE BURLINGTON WATERFRONT



New skate park on Burlington's Waterfront Access North



The portion of the bike path to the north of Waterfront Park was under construction through December 2016 to improve and realign the path and its surrounds.



The Community Sailing Center waterfront campus and education center broke ground in late 2016 just north of the Moran Plant on the Burlington waterfront.

During this designation period, significant public investments were made in enhancing the Burlington Waterfront as an accessible public place for residents and visitors. In September 2012, the City and VTrans announced a new waterfront and railyard access project to explore potential alignments for a link between Pine and Battery Streets by creating a new urban street grid to include a multi-modal network of rail, truck, car, transit, bike, and pedestrian connections to access Burlington’s southern waterfront and railyard.

In September of 2013 construction of Waterfront Access North (WAN) began. WAN included a series of long-planned improvements to the site around the Moran Plant that included remediating environmental concerns, burying power lines, creating new parking, establishing storm water treatment facilities to protect the lake, and the new “Andy A_Dog Williams” skate park. In late 2015, the City celebrated the grand opening of this first major new waterfront investment in 20 years.

Burlington Parks, Recreation and Waterfront completed upgrades to Waterfront Park and Phases 1a and 1b of the Bike Path Rehabilitation Project. In 2014, a new boardwalk was installed at the foot of College Street in Waterfront Park and overhead utilities were buried. Phase 1a of the Bike Path was completed in 2015, and included the reconstruction of the bike path between Perkins Pier and Penny Lane, to ensure it meets current multi-use path standards and to meet its current level of use. Phase 1b was completed in late 2016, and included the rehabilitation and realignment of the bike path from the new skate park to approximately one mile to the north. This phase also included addition of “pause places” along the path to create access to the lake and incorporate fitness equipment, bike racks and wayfinding information; a new pocket-park with a deck overlooking the lake; improvements to the waterfront dog park; and ADA access to the recently acquired Texaco Beach.

While outside of the designated area, an important extension of the City’s waterfront also occurred in this designation period. As part of a development agreement for the former Burlington College land just to the north of the Urban Reserve, the City

acquired 12-acres of property, including the aforementioned Texaco Beach, space for enlarged community gardens, a large playfield, the existing path connecting the waterfront bike path to North Avenue, and the wooded bluff overlooking Lake Champlain. This acquisition will ensure public waterfront access along a vast stretch of the shore of Lake Champlain within the City.

2016 also saw the advancement of two waterfront PIAP projects. In June 2016, City Council approved a public-private Marina Project Agreement that includes a new public park, perimeter-wide floating breakwater open to the public, a floating facility with public restrooms, an interior dock with 160 slips, a waterfront plaza, pump-out facilities, and a water taxi stand. Construction of the Marina is expected to be complete in the next designation period. The Community Sailing Center broke ground on its Community Waterfront Campus & Sailing Education Center, just to the north of the new skate park. This facility will include classroom space, new boats and docks, indoor boat storage, locker rooms, staff offices and maintenance facilities. This project is also expected to be complete in the next designation period.

REINVESTING IN THE DOWNTOWN CORE

Significant public and private investments were made to redevelop key public spaces, critical infrastructure, and important sites within the designated area.



Eagles Landing project ground breaking.

In September 2013, City Council unanimously authorized the sale of the City's Brown's Court Parking Lot to Champlain College to construct 300 new student beds, ground floor retail and parking, adding to the vitality of St. Paul Street within the downtown core. Called "Eagles Landing", the project will house Champlain College students, and help advance community-wide goals of reducing student impact on low-density residential neighborhoods. As part of an appeal of the zoning permits for the project, a settlement engaged both Champlain College and UVM, the City, and Preservation Burlington in a partnership to develop "The Neighborhood Project, a program which will generate strategies to address neighborhood sustainability in near-campus and historic City neighborhoods. Eagles Landing construction broke ground in December 2016; construction of the project and the development of a neighborhood stabilization program are expected to be completed in the next designation period.



Burlington's new Downtown & Church Street Marketplace wayfinding signage.

In January 2015, the City initiated substantial capital improvements to City buildings, including repairs to Fire Station #1 in downtown and the Fletcher Free Library. The City also completed a Wayfinding Signage Program and installed new signage connecting Church Street Marketplace, downtown and the waterfront, giving the district a comprehensive, consistent, understandable wayfinding system. Furthermore, after two years of preparation, the City Council unanimously approved a \$50M comprehensive 10-year capital plan to address the city's core infrastructure, including major streets, sidewalks, fire engines, bike path, water/sewer/stormwater lines, facilities, IT infrastructure, etc. While these investments address the city as a whole, many projects will occur within the designated area during the next designation period.



Proposed improvements to City Hall Park as part of the Great Streets Initiative.

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 downtown’s public infrastructure, and to ensure that Burlington residents have a downtown that is a vibrant, walkable and sustainable urban center. The Great Streets Initiative first phase includes the development of Design and Construction Standards for the redevelopment of public rights of way within the City’s downtown core; a Master Plan and construction documents for the reconstruction of six blocks of Main Street (Battery to Union) and two blocks of St. Paul (Main to Maple); and the reconstruction of City Hall Park based on the 2012 Imagine City Hall Park process. The reconstruction of the

park will include a children’s splash fountain, new pathways, improved greenspace and stormwater infrastructure, and outdoor performance spaces. It is supported by more than \$1M in philanthropic gifts from the Pomerleau Family and other benefactors. It is anticipated that the construction projects associated with the Great Streets Initiative will be completed during the upcoming renewal period.



Hotel Vermont entrance on Cherry Street.

Private investment brought new housing, hotels, Class-A office space, modern retail spaces, and community space to the designated area. In 2013, Champlain Housing Trust removed a warehouse, and added a 14-unit efficiency building onto an historic 2-unit dwelling at the corner of Pine & King; all 16 units are affordable. The Stratos Building opened in 2014, adding 34 new for-sale and for-rent condos ranging from 500 to 1,900 sq.ft. on St. Paul Street. In 2013, Hotel Vermont opened on Cherry Street, introducing a Vermont-inspired boutique hotel, new restaurant space, outdoor gathering area, and a new parking facility. In 2015, the Hilton Garden Inn was opened on Main & St. Paul Streets. This project combined the adaptive reuse of the Burlington Armory and infill development to create a hotel close to Church Street Marketplace that also includes associated parking and a commercial space on Main Street. With these hotel additions, downtown Burlington now has 4 hotels within walking distance of its waterfront and commercial destinations.



Grand opening of the GMT downtown transit center on St. Paul Street between Pearl and Cherry Streets.

In 2013, the former Burlington Free Press Building was sold, and in 2015 it reopened with modern ground floor retail spaces and 33 upper story residential units. In August 2016, it was announced that One Burlington Square will be renovated and receive a new façade, supplying 50,000 sq.ft. of Class A office space in a LEED certified building for UVM Medical Center; its construction is anticipated to be complete in the next designation period. The King Street Center opened its new facility on King Street in 2015, to continue the operation of its pre-school and after school programs for youth aged 1-18. And finally, Green Mountain Transit (formerly CCTA) opened a new \$7.7M Downtown Transit Center on St. Paul Street in December 2016. This facility provides riders with an indoor ticket counter with seating, restrooms, and Wi-Fi; has a covered and heated outdoor waiting area; and its opening coincided with GMT’s launch of its real-time bus tracking service.

DOWNTOWN SAFETY & CLEANLINESS



Kickoff event for the BBA's "Adopt-your-sidewalk Program" in 2016.

The Burlington Business Association and Church Street Marketplace led several initiatives to improve the safety and cleanliness of the downtown district. In November 2015, the BBA's Downtown Action Group created a heat map of security cameras in downtown to assist law enforcement and identify gaps in surveillance video coverage. This initiative was aimed at decreasing retail theft and creating a safer environment for downtown visitors. This work was expanded in January 2016, when BBA and CSM gathered downtown retailers and loss prevention staff from around Chittenden County to participate in a community forum hosted by Chittenden County State's Attorney, TJ Donovan, to discuss shoplifting and its impacts on large and small retailers in Burlington and the surrounding area. This included a dialog about what

retailers are seeing in their stores and how it needs to be addressed by the courts. In August 2016, BBA and CSM partnered with the Vermont Retail & Grocer's Association to pursue changes in the state legislature that would help Vermont retailers who are victims of high levels of retail theft (Organized Retail Crime).

In 2016, the BBA offered opportunities for the business community to be engaged in caring for the downtown's sidewalks and trees. In April, BBA hosted a tree and green belt care workshop, to inform businesses on how they can help care for and maintain the trees and green belts in front of their shops. And in May, the BBA kicked off the "Adopt-Your-Sidewalk" program, which is a grassroots effort in which businesses pledge to clean and maintain the sidewalks around them, to ensure that downtown is as clean and welcoming to residents and visitors as possible.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

During the designation period, the partners continued efforts to achieve community sustainability goals. In January 2015 Burlington became the first city in the U.S. to source 100 percent of its electricity from renewable sources. In 2016, with the advancement of plans to redevelop the Burlington Town Center, the City and many community partners resumed studies regarding the feasibility of creating a district heating system, tapping into waste heat from the McNeil Electric Generation Plant to service the institutions and/or other significant developments in the downtown core and along a potential pipe route.

Since the winter of 2015, a low-barrier warming shelter has been operating in the City of Burlington. The first year, the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity opened the shelter for 2 months and served 92 individuals. In 2016, COTS continued the shelter two blocks from City Hall, serving 250 individuals. Beginning in the 2016-17 season and going forward, Community Health Centers of Burlington, Safe Harbor Clinic will operate the shelter; this winter, it has served 114 guests since opening on November 1. The low-barrier warming shelter reduces the use of the emergency room and detox centers and connects individuals to support, community services, and permanent housing.



Community event regarding the redevelopment of the Burlington Town Center site.

In August 2016 the BBA partnered with AARP Vermont, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, and Local Motion to create "Together for Progress," a new initiative which aims to address several key issues facing Burlington. The group advocated for the redevelopment of

Burlington Town Center, as well as initiatives outlined in the Regional ECOS Plan; planBTV Downtown and Waterfront; planBTV Walk/Bike Master plan; and the Downtown Parking and Transportation Plan.

TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

During the designation period, the partners have been working to expand access to technology, innovation and entrepreneurship through capital, financial and programmatic contributions.



Welders working in the Generator "maker-space" in Memorial Auditorium.

Burlington was named a US Ignite Partner in 2013, and the program was relaunched in 2014 as BTV Ignite. The mission of BTV Ignite is to facilitate collaborative efforts between public, private, educational, non-profit, and entrepreneurial partners to grow and attract tech-centric talent and leverage the City's gigabit internet service and 21st Century application development to drive economic growth. In March 2014, Burlington's first "maker's space"—Generator—opened in the basement of Memorial Auditorium. Generator's launch was made possible with significant help from CEDO, Burlington City Arts, and the Parks department; in particular, CEDO helped initiate a change to City's zoning ordinances to allow for makerspaces. In

addition to this maker space, co-working spaces have been formed in Burlington since this time, several of which are located in the designated downtown area.

In May 2015, Burlington was selected as one of two cities in which the Kauffman Foundation would pilot a new initiative, called Metro Strategy. The goal is to develop an intervention strategy to improve conditions for entrepreneurial growth in Burlington, mainly through programmatic grant making. Kauffman expects to provide approximately \$500,000 in grant funding for initiatives that will improve entrepreneurial growth in Burlington. This program is expected to continue in the next designation period.

BTV Stat, a data-driven management system that will be used to improve the operational performance of City departments and provide better services for the community was launched in October 2016. Once all departments are on board in 2017, each department will present data on a quarterly basis and BTVStat meetings will be held monthly.



Parkmobile zone sticker on a downtown parking meter.

To advance the goal of building a 21st Century street network, the City implemented smart meters in 2014, and piloted digital parking kiosks. While the kiosks have been removed, the City plans to expand the core of downtown that is served by smart meters. These allow for more payment methods, and can accommodate real-time parking information and/or demand-based pricing should the City engage these services in the future. In November 2015 BBA, DPW and CEDO partnered with ParkMobile to launch a one-year trial to demonstrate the technology; this allows for parking meter payments to be made by smart phone or online. The service has been extended and expanded to additional meters throughout downtown.