

Mayor Miro Weinberger's 2021 Action Plan to Fulfill the Promise of Housing as a Human Right in Burlington

Ten-point plan outlines roadmap to double rate of housing production and end chronic homelessness

Overview: Burlington Must Redouble its Efforts to Combat the Housing Crisis

The root of all housing affordability challenges in Burlington and Chittenden County is a severe, long-standing, and intensifying shortage of homes that demands large government investment and dramatic regulatory change to correct. This shortage must be overcome for Burlington to make good on our deeply held community value that decent, stable housing is a human right available to all. Properly serving the most vulnerable – those experiencing chronic homelessness – requires both substantial numbers of new homes and additional system change and focus.

Since 2012, the City has taken many steps to address housing availability. Over the last decade, nearly 1,300 homes have been built in Burlington, including 370 permanently affordable homes as a result of the City's Inclusionary Zoning requirements and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development HOME Investment Partnerships Program funding. The City has collaborated with nonprofit partners to create low-barrier, winter warming shelters, a year-round low-barrier shelter in 2020, and a Coordinated Entry System to improve services and data about our homeless challenges.

Yet, as we approach the second anniversary of the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, our housing challenges have evolved and intensified, laying bare the deficiencies of our current systems and policies. It is clear from our recent American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) survey, which received nearly 4,000 responses, that the public demands housing progress. We are in a moment that calls for dramatic further action aimed at fulfilling the promise of housing as a human right in Burlington.

The Mayor's 2021 Action Plan to Fulfill the Promise of Housing as a Human Right in Burlington commits to:

- **Double housing production over the next five years; and**
- **End chronic homelessness in Burlington by the end of 2024**

The Action Plan will achieve these goals by implementing the following 10 initiatives:

1. Invest at least \$5 million of ARPA funds, with at least \$1 million designated for initiatives to better serve the chronically homeless and \$4 million to build new permanently affordable housing.
2. Create a Special Assistant to End Homelessness position within the City's Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) to provide a single point of accountability for expanded community effort.
3. Strengthen through new investment Chittenden County's "Coordinated Entry" command center team that drives weekly progress towards [functional zero](#) with a comprehensive, real-time, by-name data effort.
4. Support the creation of 78 new homes for formerly homeless residents (25 percent of the goal for new, permanently affordable housing) by partnering with affordable housing developers.
5. Invest in approximately 30 shelter pods and related infrastructure to create a new low-barrier facility for 2022.
6. Set a goal to support the creation of 1,250 total homes, including 312 permanently affordable homes, by the end of 2026 (25 percent of the total [Building Homes Together 2.0](#) goal).
7. Fully fund the Housing Trust Fund to voter-approved levels in fiscal year 2023.
8. Open new housing opportunities through the creation of a mixed-use Enterprise Innovation District in a portion of the South End.
9. Open new on-campus University of Vermont (UVM) student housing opportunities by rezoning the former Trinity Campus to reduce UVM's pressure on the housing market.
10. Open new housing opportunities City-wide through ["missing middle"](#) zoning reforms, which will expand opportunities for new homes to be created in every neighborhood in ways that reflect the character of these parts of the City.