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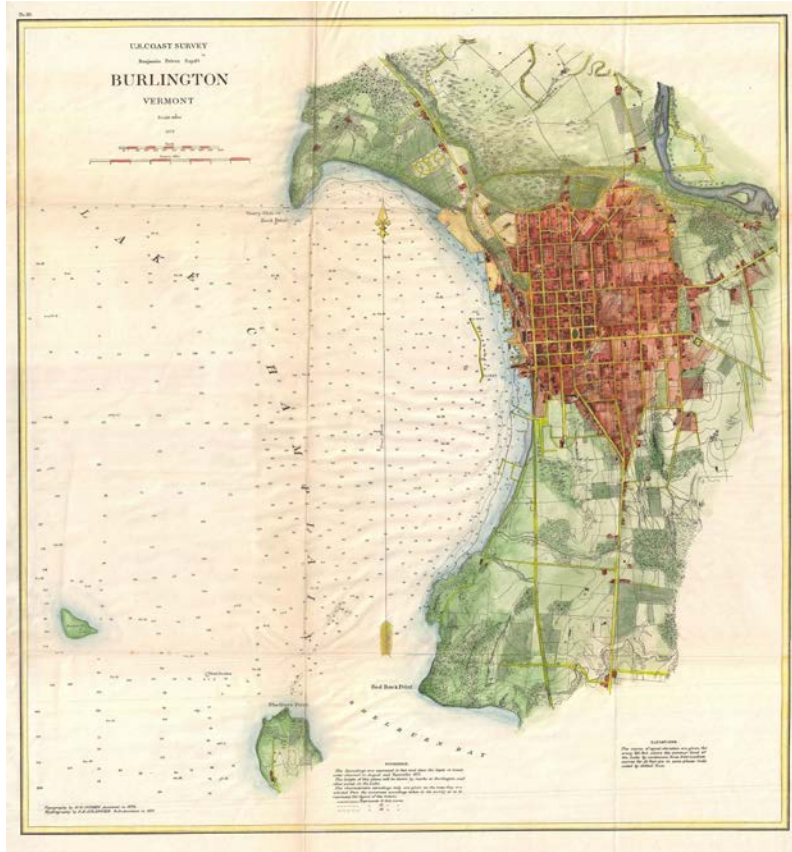
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CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT



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Several smaller maps are incorporated into the relevant sections of the Plan as necessary.

Introduction

Burlington's "Municipal Development Plan" presents a vision for land use and development over the next ten to twenty years. It will prepare the city for growth, provide a reliable basis for public and private investment, and guide the city through the early twenty-first century. This plan has been prepared and adopted in accordance with the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (VSA Title 24, Chapter 117).

Planning in Burlington

Land use planning has played a central role in shaping the City of Burlington since 1925 when voters authorized "the creation of a Municipal Planning Commission in accordance with Act No. 107 of the Laws of Vermont of 1921." This action eventually resulted in the city's first land use plan and zoning ordinance in 1947, a subdivision ordinance in 1955 to control the layout of city streets, and subsequent revisions to each as needed.

In the 1960's, the City undertook a major urban renewal program in an effort to revitalize the downtown area. Large tracts of land were created in the Central Business District (CBD) to be available for commercial development. However, urban renewal also eliminated neighborhoods, altered street patterns, and significantly changed the historic context of the downtown.

Since 1973, in accordance with the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (VSA Title 24, Chapter 117), a Municipal Development Plan for the City of Burlington has been prepared every five years. In 1988, the Vermont legislature amended the Act and other statutes affecting land use planning. Collectively known as "Act 200," these changes encouraged comprehensive planning at the state, regional and local levels, facilitated cooperation between communities, and offered a forum to resolve disputes. Communities that choose to plan must do so in an effort to address a common set of statewide goals. The *1991 Burlington Municipal Development Plan* was Burlington's first plan to be guided by the goals of Act 200.

A new approach to the update of the Municipal Development Plan, now branded planBTV, has recently been developed in Burlington. Instead of preparing an overall update every 5 years, the Department of Planning & Zoning is now constantly working on various area-wide master plans or topic specific plans that eventually update the relevant chapters of this plan. The recent 2013 Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan is a great example of this new approach, which will allow for a more in-depth look and understanding of the dynamics and character of each distinct city neighborhood.

The creation of planBTV is greatly advanced by the inclusion of several past and new planning studies and technical reports prepared by various city departments. To the extent practical, these priorities are also included in this Plan.

All of these plans are to be considered incorporated into this plan, and are adopted herein by reference:

- *Urban Reserve Interim Use and Stewardship Plan*, October 1997
- *North Street Revitalization Plan*, November 1998
- *Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan*, December 1998
- *Street Tree Master Plan*, February 2000
- *Harbor Management Plan*, October 2000
- *Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development*, 2008
- *planBTV-Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan 2013*
- *planBTV-Open Space Protection Plan 2014*
- *planBTV-Climate Action Plan 2014*

Purpose and Role of the Plan

A community's Municipal Development Plan, or "Master Plan," must be both visionary and strategic. The Master Plan outlines goals and objectives for the future and is the principal guide directing land use policy and decision-making. It defines the policies, programs and specific actions necessary to attain these objectives.

A Master Plan must be prepared every 5 years in accordance with state statute and has standing in statewide regulatory proceedings including Act 250. As mentioned above, Burlington's new approach to land use planning provides more frequent updates to the

Municipal Development Plan with the preparation of area master plans or topic specific plans. All City plans and programs which effect land use and development, including the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, Impact Fees and Capital Improvement Plan, must be in conformance with the policies and directives found in the Municipal Development Plan.

For the vision presented in this plan to become a reality however, other steps must follow its adoption. These include:

- **revision of municipal ordinances and bylaws** to ensure the Plan's goals and policies are properly reflected, implemented and enforced;
- **development of a capital budget and program** to outline long-term public investment needs and commitments;
- **development of area-specific master plans, programs and policies** to offer more detailed and site-specific strategies for selected parts of the city;
- **ongoing evaluation** of plans, policies and programs; and
- **continuing community involvement** in the planning and governing process.

This Master Plan must be considered a "living document" and not placed on a shelf until the next revisions are due in 2011. It will be continually reviewed, modified and expanded as necessary to reflect changing circumstances and opportunities. In fact, the process for revising this plan has already begun, and over the next 2-3 years a comprehensive re-write of the City's Master Plan will take place.