

planBTV South End

Scope of Work

Introduction and Project Overview

Historically, the Enterprise District along and west of Pine Street, Burlington's major industrial corridor, has seen new and expanded industrial uses, and the adaptive reuse of old warehouses and factories. The Enterprise District is one of the only places in the city where many commercial-industrial uses are permitted. Traditionally, these businesses have provided many well-paying jobs to both white and blue-collar workers, added significantly to the regional economy and city tax-base, and helped to underwrite the cost of city services and utilities.

Despite these industrial uses, this area is adjacent to several residential neighborhoods, and there is growing pressure to allow new uses such as retail and housing. Several retail and service establishments have recently opened along Pine Street confirming this demand. Nearby residents have traditionally been concerned about the impact of through-traffic, particularly trucks, on neighborhood streets; noise from nearby industrial uses; safety of pedestrians and children; and access to local parks and the lake. The City has been working to protect these residential areas from the impacts of nearby industrial uses, and continues to promote future uses that are less transportation and trucking oriented. Traffic calming techniques and designated truck routes have been employed to discourage through-traffic and trucks in residential areas. The long anticipated completion of the Champlain Parkway should also help to address many of the traffic concerns.

With the gradual transition away from trucking-dependent industry, this area has recently seen significant adaptive reuse for office, retail and service uses causing many to wonder about the future direction of this portion of the city. Is it to continue as a predominantly commercial-industrial district that supports value-added enterprise, or will it convert to a more mixed-use commercial district that supports additional housing? While the area has experienced a significant decline in manufacturing over the years, opportunities remain for the future of the sector.

The City may need to maintain some place where commercial and industrial uses can remain and flourish if the City's objectives as a sustainable community are to be realized. The location, extent and character of this (or these) area(s) must be evaluated within the context of overall citywide objectives for land use and community development. As additional jobs are brought into the area, the city is also aware of the increased need for additional housing to support these new enterprises.

The Barge Canal, a Superfund Site, presents specific challenges for development within and surrounding the site. That area, along with surrounding properties, has been identified as brownfields sites that would preclude many types of re-development or use. Other issues such as homeless encampments and the associated trash, presence of wildlife habitat and potential recreational opportunities will also need to be dealt with.

Working with businesses and residents, the City wishes to develop a detailed master plan (planBTV-South End) that outlines future development, infrastructure, greenspace, and circulation needs and opportunities for this portion of the city.

The development of a master land use and development plan for Burlington's South End/Enterprise District has been a long-standing action-item in the City Municipal Development Plan. Several activities are already taking place in the South End and staff strongly believes there is a need for a concerted planning effort and community dialogue. Here are some of the activities that have happened or are under way:

- In May 2013, a group of city staff attended the Eco-District Incubator, a three-day intensive workshop in Portland, OR, to discuss the potential of developing such a district in the Pine street corridor.
- The Community & Economic Development Office recently procured the following two grants:
 - EPA Technical Assistance – Consisted of a visit by Global Green, USA to evaluate the district with the LEED-Neighborhood Development lens. A report will be submitted to the city shortly.

- EPA Area-Wide Planning Grant - \$200,000 grant for assessment and planning (most of the money to be used for Phase 1 analyses as per this scope of work) NOTE: The grant area is limited and does not include the entire South End District.
- Railyard Enterprise Project – A transportation scoping study to evaluate the potential for street grid expansion north of the barge canal and west of Pine Street.

The planning process will place an emphasis on a community conversation, similar to the downtown & waterfront planning process, to find 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.

The project is intended to address the following problems and barriers to success:

- lack of a coherent and shared vision for the development of the south end district
- lack of available information/education regarding economic impact of the south end – particularly for local property owners/tax-payers
- lack of available information/education regarding the state and needs of public infrastructure necessary to support existing and future development
- lack of specificity of development regulations with regard to urban design objectives and standards which facilitates public opposition to new development and appeals of local regulatory decisions.
- presence of frequent flooding and limited stormwater catchment capacity.
- limitations on the use the Superfund Site (Barge Canal) and surrounding properties because of contamination.
- risk of flight of expanding business to suburbs in search of larger spaces, lower costs and easier access.
- lack of workforce housing opportunities for young professionals, singles, couples and empty-nesters
- extremely tight and expensive real estate market
- limited available supply of parking
- traffic congestion through very limited access points into and out of the area

This Plan will provide recommendations, tools, and strategies that will help us to achieve the following goals and outcomes:

1. Maintain Burlington as a regional population and economic center that offers meaningful jobs at livable wages and a diverse housing stock that serves all incomes, while encouraging the continued growth of the city's commercial the tax base.
2. Promote urban development measures that facilitate economically competitive, environmentally sound, socially responsible, and aesthetically-pleasing land-use combinations and urban design elements.
3. Emphasize the importance of preserving historic and cultural features and architecture, and encouraging high-quality building design to complement the existing fabric.
4. Strengthen the linkages between the south end and surrounding neighborhoods.
5. Promote a mix of land uses including the need for affordable/workforce housing, both local and world class businesses, entertainment and culture, live/work spaces, etc.
6. Provide a focused sustainable transportation and accessibility system within the context of the existing street network and emphasizing alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle (SOV). This should build upon the Complete Streets system and Street Design Guidelines included in the Citywide Transportation Plan.
7. Provide a comprehensive parking allocation and management system that meets visitor, business, and resident needs consistent with the goal of increasing public transit and reducing dependence on the single-passenger automobile.
8. Provide the quality and capacity of public infrastructure, including transportation, water/sewer, stormwater necessary to support new or expanded commercial and residential development.
9. Improving access to the lakeshore and waterfront bike path.

10. Maintain and enhance other south end parks and recreation opportunities.
11. Provide the foundation for the development of a Form Based Code for the south end to guide and regulate future development in a coherent and consistent manner centered on urban form, design, and performance.
12. Use existing commissions/committees as a vehicle for informing the public and interested stakeholders about the plan and getting them involved in the planning process and implementation phase; involve all interested parties through a charrette method.

PROPOSED PHASES AND ACTIVITIES

Phase 1: Existing Conditions Analysis (Completion Schedule: 6 months)

This first phase of the project proposes the preparation of a series of existing condition analyses and assessment to identify the primary needs, challenges and opportunities. This assessment will provide the information and perspective necessary to develop a meaningful and realistic visioning and planning process, and will include the following sub-tasks:

Sub-task 1.1: Development Inventory

This subtask will assist in determining land available to meet our community's future land use needs. They will also help identify opportunities for future development that may occur within the study area.

Sub-task 1.2: Housing Analysis

The housing needs assessment will collect, organize and analyze housing information identifying any outstanding gaps, needs and opportunities for south end housing by type and market segment.

Sub-task 1.3: Economic Analysis

This sub-task includes: a real estate market analysis to understand the needs and opportunities for housing, office, industrial and retail space to understand existing gaps, limitations and opportunities.

Sub-task 1.4: Existing Water/Wastewater/Stormwater Infrastructure Analysis

An understanding of the capacity and limitations of existing infrastructure is essential. This sub-task will evaluate our existing water flow capacity, the capacity of our current wastewater treatment plants for treating dry weather flows and explore opportunities for innovative stormwater management solutions to reduce peak discharge and improve water quality in the lake. Understanding how much development and resultant flow we may want in the next 10-20 years is critical.

Sub-task 1.5: Transportation, Parking and Traffic Demand Analysis

This sub-task includes a study of existing conditions for all modes of transportation and the impacts of a more development in the South End. An inventory of current parking and projected needs based on possible build-out will be developed, and alternative transportation demand and parking management solutions will be considered. (This task will assume that the Champlain Parkway will be built)

Sub-task 1.6: Brownfields Assessment

Inventory environmental information available in the area to identify where brownfield sites might be located in the study area. BERA is already doing part of the work for 453 Pine Street and parts of the Railyard Area. Sampling on an as-needed basis, especially when it comes to identifying areas where housing could be developed.

Sub-task 1.7: Eco-Districts Discussion

Eco-Districts present a very interesting governance model that could be very beneficial for the future development of the south end area, especially areas along Pine Street. There is a need to engage a core group of stakeholders in this discussion to explore the possibilities of setting up an Eco-District, defining its potential boundaries, establishing its governance model, etc.

Phase 2: Master Planning Process (Completion Schedule: 6 months)

Burlington has gone through several processes to develop a vision for the city: the Municipal Development Plan, the Transportation Plan, Parks Master Plan, Open Space Protection Plan, the Waterfront Revitalization Plan and most recently planBTV-Downtown & Waterfront Plan. Each has included the development and/or reconsideration of a community vision. The formal kick-off to this planning effort will also re-evaluate, and re-affirm as appropriate, this evolving community vision which will guide the city in the preparation of the South End plan.

This phase will entail a significant public involvement process to develop, articulate and visualize future scenarios for the South End, and develop a consensus around priorities and objectives. The public process will be similar to the one followed for the Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan with a charrette, public workshops and many other public engagement tools. Information and analysis collected under Phase 1 will be used to inform participants about needs, limitations and opportunities to be considered in order to ground the planning process in a real-world present-day context.

Implementation of the plan will have a central place in the planning process to ensure a feasible, realistic and implementable vision. Building upon each of the previous tasks, specific actions and recommendations will be developed regarding how to best achieve the vision and plan. Examples will include: mechanisms for funding new development, redevelopment, and supporting infrastructure; regulatory mechanisms including a Form-Based Code; non-regulatory tools such as capital improvement planning, city operations and maintenance, development assistance/support, special events and marketing; and a monitoring process and performances measures to allow the City to closely evaluate the progress and impacts of the new Plan.

Public Engagement

A comprehensive approach for actively engaging the public throughout the planning process should include to a minimum the following outreach and engagement activities, similarly to the planBTV-Downtown & Waterfront process. Particular efforts will be made to engage the wide diversity of residents that make up Burlington. Below are some examples of the outreach and engagement activities that are proposed for this project.

Outreach Activities	Engagement Activities
Emails for regular project updates	Design Charrette (3-5 days)
Website (under the planBTV umbrella)	Online interactive tools
Local Media - North Avenue News articles and ads – Free Press – TV stations	Visits to Neighborhood Planning Assemblies (NPAs)
Facebook Page (perhaps using an existing one)	Other public meetings or stakeholders meetings – We come to you!
The Road Show – Visit events around the community (farmer’s markets, etc.)	Youth Engagement with Schools and Colleges (future generations)