PlanBTV:
Burlington’s Comprehensive Plan
Presentation to: Planning Commission
August 14, 2018
Our Plan for Action

**Burlington is...**

**DYNAMIC**

Burlington is a major growth center in Chittenden County and Vermont, despite occupying just 10 square miles. It will continue to grow by leveraging its strengths while being nimble, creative, and purposeful in addressing its current needs and future challenges. It will prioritize innovative solutions that are environmentally, economically, and socially sound.

**DISTINCTIVE**

Burlington is an urban village, with a rich architectural legacy set within an exceptional natural setting. Together these characteristics provide the foundation for its vital economy, human-scale environment, and high quality of life. Burlington will remain the core of a regional population, economic and cultural center, and will grow in a way that allows it to meet its current and future needs without compromising these celebrated characteristics.

**INCLUSIVE**

Burlington will grow in a way that meets the needs of both its current and future residents. It is part of a region that, together, shares in the responsibility of providing a diverse housing stock and a healthy job market. It is accessible, affordable, provides jobs for all skill levels, and offers meaningful opportunities for participation in decision-making. The city welcomes residents of diverse social, demographic, cultural, and economic backgrounds and of all abilities.

**CONNECTED**

Burlington will grow through the benefit of a thoughtful and holistic understanding of the city’s many and inter-connected physical, social, economic, and environmental systems, and through the careful coordination of land use and development policies and decisions.
Our Plan for Action

Framework for each Theme

**What is this theme about?**
“Burlington is a major growth center in Chittenden County and Vermont, despite occupying just 10 square miles. It will continue to grow by leveraging its strengths while being nimble, creative, and purposeful in addressing its current needs and future challenges. It will prioritize innovative solutions that are environmentally, economically, and socially sound.”

**Vision Statement**
Narrative that illustrates the priorities for how Burlington will continue to be a dynamic city in the future.

**Why is this important?**
Discusses why being dynamic is vital to Burlington’s success as a city, both in the present and in the future.

**Policies**
Based on Vision & Importance, sets the high-level goals for the future... “As a dynamic city,

**Action Items**
Proposes specific steps to take to reach the goals expressed in the policy statement.
As the Action Items are Developed...

= policy statements

= action items

We will identify:

And, these symbols will identify how each action will be cross-referenced to a specific topic:

- **LU**: Relationship to an EXISTING element
- **NEW**: A policy or action that is new, or has a new focus
- **LAND USE (LU)**
- **ENERGY (E)**
- **HOUSING (H)**
- **FACILITIES & SERVICES (CFS)**
- **EDUCATION (K-12)**
- **TRANSPORTATION (T)**
- **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (NAT)**
- **BUILT ENVIRONMENT (BE)**
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ED)**
- **HISTORIC PRESERVATION (HP)**
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Burlington as a Dynamic City

Burlington is a major growth center in Chittenden County and Vermont, despite occupying just 10 square miles. It will continue to grow by leveraging its strengths while being nimble, creative, and purposeful in addressing its current needs and future challenges. It will prioritize innovative solutions that are environmentally, economically, and socially sound.

What is the Dynamic theme all about?

- Being a regional nucleus and growth center in county
- Economic Vitality
- Diverse economic, housing, and transportation options
- Leader of/center for innovation/problem solving
- Meeting the basic needs of residents in a way that is environmentally, socially, and economically sound
- Evolving in response to new and chronic challenges, rather than being static at a point in time
- Management of public utilities and services (particularly capacity to support land use patterns)
- Becoming a Net Zero Community
- Adaptation and Resiliency to Climate Change
Burlington as a Dynamic City

Vision Statement

Over the next 20 years and beyond, Burlington will prioritize meeting the basic needs of all of its residents, protecting its natural resources and consume them at the same rate it replenishes them, and maximizing the benefits of local wealth and resources and invest that wealth back into the community.

In order to achieve these hallmarks of sustainability, the city will continue to evolve and grow, and will fulfill its opportunity and responsibility as Vermont's largest city. In order to balance the benefits and burdens of this growth, the city will continue to iterate its land use and development policies in order to prioritize areas that should grow, and reinforce areas that should be protected and maintained.

The city will continue to be a leader in developing and implementing measures to become a Net Zero Energy Community, protect our natural resources—particularly Lake Champlain, adapt to the effects of climate change, promote the health of residents, address the rising cost of living, and respond to major demographic and technological shifts.

We will celebrate and build upon our strengths, but continue to take stock of the ways our community and the world around us is changing, and adapt our policies, tools, and programs to be responsive to the opportunities and challenges presented. Burlington will build upon its ‘big ideas, bigger ideals’ ethos by thinking beyond the limits of its size and location, and utilize bold, creative, long-term solutions that will address our community’s needs and opportunities.
Burlington as a Dynamic City

Why is this important?

• Because Burlington is a regional nucleus with a relatively small geographic footprint.
  Burlington will continue to be 25-30% of regional population and 33% of region’s jobs. Responsibilities associated with being the region’s core anticipates that there will be continued and sustained growth primarily through infill and redevelopment in areas that are already zoned for growth, while protecting the city’s natural systems, scale, urban form, neighborhoods, and heritage.

• To ensure there is adequate infrastructure to support our future growth.
  Carefully coordinate growth with municipal facilities, utilities, and transportation system. As we grow, will require innovative approaches to service generation and delivery-- such as 100% renewable electricity, and goal to become Net Zero Energy, and Integrated Water Planning underway.

• To be more resilient to the effects of climate change.
  Many impacts are already being experienced in Vermont. The recommendations for strengthening our community and mitigating risk in the Climate Action Plan and All Hazards Mitigation Plan are incredibly important to advance.

• Because the economy, technology, and demographics are changing where and how we live.
  The most generational change is happening within and between the Boomers and Millennials, which is impacting preferences for work, housing, community, transportation and families. Further, the sharing economy, online shopping, and transportation technology are changing how we use our homes, cars, and where we shop.
Burlington as a Dynamic City

So, as a dynamic city, Burlington will:

1. Promote land use, development, housing, transportation, and economic development policies and public improvements that support Burlington’s role as a growth center, and target sustainable development activities into core areas of the city.

2. Encourage a wide range of land uses and housing and non-residential development models that respond to and benefit from the different and evolving needs of households, new technologies, and changing environmental and economic factors.

3. Coordinate land use and development with the availability and capacity of public services, facilities, and utilities to ensure a high level of service and mitigate hazards.

4. Pursue projects and policies that will strengthen its built, natural, and social environments in order to be more adaptable to and resilient against the effects of climate change.*

5. Make tangible efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and become a Net Zero Energy community.
As the Action Items are Developed...

1 Promote land use, development, housing, transportation, and economic development policies and public improvements that support Burlington’s role as a growth center, and target sustainable development activities into core areas of the city.

Supporting ACTION ITEMS:

1.1 Advocate for and proactively support the development of additional housing at all income levels consistent with the regional Building Homes Together goal of 3,500 new housing units in Chittenden County by 2022. To meet this goal: consider regional land use approaches, reducing regulatory barriers and disincentives to new housing production, and utilizing underdeveloped and undeveloped properties in neighborhood mixed use and residential zoning districts.

1.2 Examine opportunities for allowing higher density, mixed use development, that is designed to support alternative transportation, along portions of the City's major corridors and transit routes, including Pine Street, Shelburne Road, North Avenue, Main Street, Colchester Avenue, and Riverside Avenue.

1.3 Evaluate neighborhood mixed use areas to better understand the capacity of these areas to accommodate additional development. In some parts of the city, this may include a neighborhood master plan similar to planBTV: Downtown and Waterfront, while in others, it may simply evaluate the physical capacity of a group of properties for infill or redevelopment.
As the Action Items are Developed...

Coordinate land use and development with the availability and capacity of public services, facilities, and utilities to ensure a high level of service and mitigate hazards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting ACTION ITEMS:</th>
<th>RELATED TOPIC (s)</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP TO 2014 MDP:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Implement policy, operational and capital improvements that will help the city become more resilient to natural, technological and societal hazards and mitigate the impact of these hazards.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Maintain grid reliability while working to leverage the electric grid to displace fossil fuel in the thermal and ground transportation sectors, as outlined in BED Tier 3 plan and BED Integrated Resource Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>NEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Make use of existing buildings, facilities, and services before adding new capacity.</td>
<td></td>
<td>CFS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Evaluate the zoning for public school sites in comparison to necessary capital improvements and projected needs of the district, and identify zoning changes necessary to enable existing schools and district properties to be renovated or redeveloped to meet future needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>NEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Estimate future school enrollments based on a combination of population, land use, and housing projections, and better estimate the potential impacts on school facilities as a result of new developments during the Technical Review Committee.</td>
<td></td>
<td>K-12 B K-12 E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reorganizing planBTV

dynamic

distinctive
inclusive
connected

LU  NAT  BE  H  HP  ED  T  CFS  K-12  E
LAND USE  NATURAL ENVIRONS  BUILT ENVIRONS  HOUSING  HISTORIC PRES  ECONOMIC DEVT  TRANSP  FACILITIES SERVICES  EDUCATION  ENERGY

planBTV Draft Review | Presented to Planning Commission August 14, 2018
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Burlington as a Distinctive City

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What is the Distinctive theme all about?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural Context &amp; Features</th>
<th>Youthful City (both age and culture)</th>
<th>Center for education and healthcare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lake Champlain</td>
<td>A place where people can get a start</td>
<td>Center for innovation and technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture &amp; Built Environment</td>
<td>Our place in history and in the future</td>
<td>Arts &amp; Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community &amp; Neighborhood Character</td>
<td>Social and Cultural Diversity, and more so than other parts of the region/state</td>
<td>Industry &amp; Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Use Centers</td>
<td></td>
<td>How institutions add to the community’s cultural richness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Burlington as a Distinctive City

**Vision Statement**

Burlington is located within an outstanding natural setting—situated on a peninsula surrounded by Lake Champlain and the Winooski River, with views of the Adirondack Mountains to the west and the Green Mountains to the east. Burlingtonians value—and the city is known for—being in close proximity to both natural and recreational resources, supporting high-quality arts and educational opportunities, and benefiting from a diverse and robust year-round economy.

The City is a place where people can get their start—from companies launching, experimenting and growing, to residents of diverse cultures having access to jobs and housing. The city leverages the industries at the core of its economy—education, healthcare, the arts, industry, technology, food production, and environmental services—to provide economic and cultural value for the city and the region.

Development patterns enable growth, while also protecting important natural and man-made features. This is achieved by concentrating high density, mixed-use development in the downtown core, which is a distinctly urban place, and in activity centers that support surrounding neighborhoods. Residential neighborhoods are diverse in their scale and character, and possess unique built, social, and cultural identities. Medical and educational institutions have a respected place in the community and are concentrated on core campuses. And developed areas are surrounded by and integrated with a network of open spaces and natural systems which are cherished as valuable natural and economic assets of the community.

The city is built for people, with buildings offering connections to streets that are attractive public spaces. The built environment reflects a legacy of moderately-scaled buildings, high-quality urban design, and a rich architectural heritage. New development complements the unique and historic design characteristics of each neighborhood.
Burlington as a Distinctive City

Why is this important?

• Because Burlington identity is complex and always evolving.

  Burlington has a dual identity as a city and a Vermont village. It's vitality and sense of community come from its high-quality natural environment, strong residential neighborhoods, and the creativity and diversity of its people. Future growth must nurture this human scale, social character and sense of place.

• Because Lake Champlain and other natural resources are cherished and valuable assets.

  The natural environment is the foundation and chief ingredient in Burlington's character. Burlington recognizes that conservation of these assets and development are not inherently at odds, but rather that development that is cohesive with these systems is central to our environmental quality, economic prosperity, and quality of life.

• Because the built environment is an important factor in making Burlington the special place it is.

  City is laid out to experience on foot, with streets that are vibrant public places accommodating users of all abilities. Buildings reflect a rich architectural heritage, moderately-scaled buildings, and high-quality urban design. Neighborhoods and commercial districts have distinct design elements and characteristics, as well as patterns of growth permitted for the future.

• Because the city's distinctive characteristics fuel its economy.

  Burlington is widely recognized as an environmentally-friendly community, incubator for new and locally-owned business, and a highly desirable place to live and work. A variety of industries provide a diverse economy that weathers fluctuations, and businesses not only provide an economic base, but also provide rich educational, cultural, and medical resources; support festivals and events; contribute to investments in public infrastructure; and are stewards of our natural resources.
Burlington as a Distinctive City

Burlington will preserve and foster its distinctive identity by:

1. Creating new opportunities for mixed-use infill and redevelopment at a variety of urban densities consistent with the moderate scale and urban form of the most densely developed areas, while conserving and strengthening adjacent residential neighborhoods.

2. Retaining and enhancing Burlington’s historic buildings, architectural features, and archaeological resources, and encourage the adaptive reuse and historically sensitive redevelopment of underutilized sites and buildings.

3. Improving and protecting the quality of Lake Champlain, the Winooski River, and other surface water sources throughout the city and within our watershed.

4. Strengthening the City’s role as a cultural and arts center, and supporting efforts to expand public art within the City’s built environment.

5. Utilize a comprehensive economic development strategy to identify targeted approaches to build upon the city’s unique character, core industries, and economic advantages to further strengthen a mixed economy.
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What is the Inclusive theme all about?

- **Economy & Job Market**
- **Housing**
- **Community Services & Spaces**
- **Community Engagement, particularly representation in decision-making**
- **Cultural & Social Inclusion**
- **Responsive Government**
- **Accessibility- physical, social, all ages, incomes, and backgrounds**
- **Access to Education, Childcare**
Burlington as an Inclusive City

Vision Statement

Neighborhoods provide a rich quality of life for households that are diverse in age, family situation, income, and cultural background. All people have access to safe, decent, and affordable housing that meets their needs. Diverse housing options have significantly reduced the need for shelters for the homeless, offered new opportunities for low- and moderate-income people to own their own homes, and relieved the pressure on the rental housing market.

The City’s economic base includes both regional businesses and services as well as businesses and services that support nearby residents. The economy includes meaningful job opportunities that pay a livable wage for all skill levels, and residents who are not fully participating in the city and regional economy have access to educational, job training, and job retention services. Our public education system, early childhood learning programs, and childcare resources ensure that parents are able to participate in the workforce, and that all Burlington children have the opportunity to succeed regardless of family income.

Whether a native of Burlington, a transplant from another state, or a new arrival from another country, all members of our community feel safe, welcome, and included. All residents can participate in the city’s recreational, educational, and civic opportunities. City buildings, facilities, parks, and streets are accessible by the public and are designed to be inclusive of people of all abilities.

Burlington is a community where a broad section of its residents passionately participate in decisions that affect them, have a clear voice in policy-making that is open and accessible, and have access to information from city government that aids in participation and decision-making. Elected officials and public servants continue to engage with the community using methods that are appropriate for and convenient to residents, and are responsive to the long-term needs of our community as a whole.
Burlington as an Inclusive City

Why is this important?

- **Because safe, decent, affordable housing is fundamental to the well-being of all residents and our economy.**

  To grow in a sustainable way, must increase the availability, quality, and affordability of housing and fill gaps in the housing ladder, to provide greater opportunities in an equitable way across our community. The implementation of the Housing Action Plan is key, as well as other strategies to reduce cost, increase supply, and provide housing for the most vulnerable.

- **Because access to meaningful employment and support services are essential to our vitality.**

  Unemployment is low, but many residents are under employed or do not earn a livable wage, especially people of color, people with disabilities, women, and young people. Providing workforce support and training, life-long educational opportunities, high-quality childcare, reliable transportation, and services and amenities near peoples homes and work is critical for meaningful employment.

- **To ensure the built environment provides equal access and opportunity in all parts of our city, and to everyone.**

  Targeting housing and commercial growth and infrastructure investments that balance economic opportunity across the city without displacing residents and ensuring that the built environment is comfortable and accessible to all users is critical to welcoming and supporting all residents.

- **Because our community is stronger as a result of its diverse values and viewpoints.**

  To make decisions that are responsive to the concerns of the public, we must expand opportunities for representation and participation in decision-making, and accessibility of information in multiple formats and for diverse audiences.
Burlington as an Inclusive City

Burlington will become a more inclusive community by:

1. Implementing the Housing Action Plan strategies, and support other housing models, organizations, and programs that fill in gaps in the housing ladder, increase the overall supply of housing in the community, and ensure perpetual housing affordability.

2. Supporting and implementing programs and enforce laws and ordinances which promote housing safety and accessibility, and ensuring that no renters or buyers are discriminated against.

3. Enhancing the built environment by improving opportunities for equal access for people of all abilities and backgrounds, that are safe, well-maintained, and promote interaction throughout the City.

4. Ensuring all Burlington residents will have access to meaningful employment at a livable wage.

5. Involving a broad section of citizens in a meaningful way in all aspects of decision-making, and ensure that city government is responsive to citizens.
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Burlington as a Connected City

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What is the Connected theme all about?

- Coordinated land use and development with transportation options and environmental considerations
- Transportation Services & Options
- Connections to our region: economic, social, physical
- Connections like internet, telecom, etc.
- Cohesion in decision-making and public administration
- Connections to Recreation & Natural Resources
- Opportunities for diverse cultures to connect and engage

People & Place

Economy & the Natural Environment

2019 update to planBTV: Burlington's Comprehensive Plan

planBTV Draft Review | Presented to Planning Commission August 14, 2018
Burlington as a Connected City

Vision Statement

The urban fabric of the city integrates areas of mixed-use development, residential neighborhoods, and open spaces in close proximity to one another so that they are easily accessible by transit, walking, and biking. Burlington is at the core of a regional transportation system, which is interconnected and offers a wide range of mode choices that are increasingly competitive with the automobile, and are safe, affordable, and convenient for residents, employees, and visitors.

Public and private investments have protected significant natural areas and important natural and recreational systems for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations. The shorelines outside of downtown and along the river remain largely undeveloped, comprising a network of protected and conserved lands that offer habitat and travel corridors for wildlife; agriculture; trails and paths for recreation; and ecological, natural, and cultural interpretation.

Parks and open spaces, public facilities, and schools serve as public gathering spaces and community centers, and include facilities that serve the needs of the surrounding population. These are places where residents of diverse cultures and backgrounds enjoy opportunities to engage with their neighbors and are welcome in the community.

Elected officials and public servants are purposeful and thoughtful in decision-making and administration, with careful consideration given to how action on one issue can impact others—positive or negative—over time. City services and facilities are managed in a way that are highly efficient and conserve resources. A high priority is placed on maintaining, upgrading, and improving the effectiveness of existing systems, facilities, and infrastructure before building new.
Burlington as a Connected City

Why is this important?

• Because the complex and integrated natural, built, economic, and social systems are what make our city work-- or not work.

  Land use, housing, transportation, climate change, the economy, and our community's well-being are all inter-related topics that we cannot plan for in isolation. And we are inextricably linked to our municipal neighbors, serving as an economic and cultural hub, while relying on our region to supply land for energy generation and municipal services/facilities.

• Because our physical cultural and economic health are inseparably linked to our natural systems.

  These systems do not recognize political or legal boundaries, nor can they be isolated from our day-to-day activities.

• To ensure we have vibrant nodes of activity that support surrounding neighborhoods.

  Neighborhood activity centers should support the every day needs of nearby residents-- services, education and child care, community facilities-- within walking distance of where people live, and parks and public spaces offer opportunities for residents to connect with one another and for diverse cultures to interact.

• Because mobility is necessary for residents to participate in all our community offers.

  Transportation infrastructure is a key piece of realizing our land and economic development and environmental protection goals, but it is also fundamental to supporting a diverse and inclusive community.

• To more efficiently use public buildings, and deliver more effective services and results.

  The city must be a steward of and leader in designing and maintaining high-performance facilities, and facilitating coordinated decision-making and service delivery, and information sharing across quasi-independent departments.
Burlington as a Connected City

Burlington will increase the connectivity among and integrity within its systems by:

1. Protect, preserve, and improve the integrity of natural areas, open space, and recreational systems of local, regional, and statewide significance, and protect them from degradation or harmful and incompatible development.

2. Coordinate land use, development, and transportation decisions in order to create multi-modal corridors featuring an interconnected transportation system that support a wide range of services and choices that are increasingly competitive with the automobile as the dominant mode of choice.

3. Guide neighborhood-serving amenities into neighborhood activity centers and near residential areas, to ensure access to important services and amenities, particularly for those who can not or prefer not to drive.

4. Coordinate the ongoing care, upgrade, replacement, or expansion of existing public property, parks, buildings, facilities, and utilities, in order to ensure they adhere to approved standards, serve the community and adjacent neighborhoods, are built in a cost effective way, and minimize disruption.

5. Increase consistency and coordination in decision-making and public administration among quasi-independent departments, commissions, and municipalities.