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## **Burlington Steps It Up to Improve Walkability**

**City finishing the construction season with a focus on sidewalks and crosswalks**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – October 30, 2014  
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While Burlington already is recognized as a walkable city, Mayor Miro Weinberger last year called on City Departments and community partners to go further and help the City attain national recognition as a gold-level Walk Friendly (and bike friendly) Community. At the direction of the Mayor, the “Go For Gold” leadership team, and residents at numerous public meetings, City leaders are focusing on ways, both big and small, to improve the City’s pedestrian facilities.

“A quality pedestrian environment – both downtown and throughout our neighborhoods – helps support local retailers, encourages active lifestyles, and creates a community where people want to live, work, and play,” remarked Mayor Miro Weinberger, “By working together, we can become one of the most walkable small cities in the country. The gold-level recognition will be a special honor, but more important will be the improvements we make to get there.”

“We hear from residents every day about how important the pedestrian network is to their quality of life” mentioned Director of Public Works Chapin Spencer, “and Team DPW is committed to working with the public and our many partners to make Burlington even more walkable.”

### **SUCCESSFUL CONSTRUCTION SEASON CONTINUES INTO LATE FALL:**

Over the last year, the Department of Public Works (DPW) has worked hard to increase its capacity to respond to the sidewalk issues raised by residents. DPW’s efforts are paying off.

<b>Sidewalk Reconstruction Statistics</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014 (YTD)</b>	<b>Change</b>
Sidewalk repairs (in linear feet)	3,173	4,910	+55%
Number of reported sidewalk issues resolved	22	48	+118%

Final 2014 results will be even greater as DPW is targeting 33 reconstruction projects for completion in October and early November alone. [See attached maps for locations.](#)

### **There are three major reasons for these 2014 achievements:**

- **Optimized crews:** Last winter, DPW adjusted its operations and set monthly production targets.

### Non-Discrimination

The City of Burlington will not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination on the basis of political or religious affiliation, race, color, national origin, place of birth, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, veteran status, disability, HIV positive status or genetic information. The City is also committed to providing proper access to services, facilities, and employment opportunities. For accessibility information or alternative formats, please contact Human Resources Department at 865-7145.

- **Invested more funds and brought in more help:** DPW is investing an additional \$49,000 this fall (approximately a 10% increase in annual funding) with an outside contractor (All Seasons Excavating of Colchester, VT) to assist us in catching up on outstanding sidewalk repair requests.
- **Focused attention on sidewalks:** This year, DPW has made sidewalk repair work a major goal. Last year, DPW crews were working on a large Pearl Street streetscape project and responding to issues related to a number of severe storm events.

#### **CITY-WIDE SIDEWALK ASSESSMENT UNDERWAY:**

While DPW has been able to fix more reported sidewalk issues, a comprehensive approach to assessing, funding, and maintaining our pedestrian network is needed to successfully steward City pedestrian facilities over time. Assessment expert Sally Swanson Architects has been selected to assess all 127 miles of sidewalk in the City this fall. The scope of work will have the consultant:

- Inventory and map the City's sidewalk network and pedestrian signal infrastructure.
- Develop methodology for prioritizing projects and developing an annual capital program.
- Identify areas that are not ADA-compliant and develop an ADA transition plan.

The data from the assessment also will help determine a sustainable level of capital funding to adequately maintain the City's sidewalk infrastructure. This inventory, along with other facility assessments underway for other municipal capital assets, will form the basis of the Mayor's 10-year City-wide capital plan to present to the City Council and the public in early 2015.

#### **PEDESTRIAN UPGRADES COMING TO NORTH AVENUE:**

On the heels of unanimous City Council approval of the North Avenue Corridor Study earlier this month, staff is taking two concrete steps to improve walkability along North Avenue:

**Safe Routes To School Improvements:** Funded by a VT Agency of Transportation (VTrans) grant, DPW will be enhancing pedestrian accommodations at three North Avenue intersections later this year, weather permitting. The improvements include:

- At Plattsburgh Avenue intersection: installing new crosswalks across North Avenue and Plattsburgh Avenue, and new ADA ramps and changes to the sidewalk in the southeast corner of the intersection to reduce pedestrian crossing distance along Plattsburgh Ave
- At Shore Rd/Heineberg Rd intersection: installing new pedestrian countdown signals
- At Ethan Allen Shopping Center: installing new pedestrian countdown signals

**Grant Sought for Five New Crosswalks:** Ten days after City Council approval of the Corridor Study, DPW staff submitted a Transportation Alternatives grant to VTrans to add an additional five crosswalks and associated infrastructure at key North Avenue intersections (Ward Street, Burlington College, Killarney Drive / Village Green Drive, Gosse Court, and Green Acres Drive / Cayuga Court). We expect to hear whether the application was successful early next year.

#### **FIRST CITY-WIDE PEDESTRIAN / BIKE MASTER PLAN COMING SOON:**

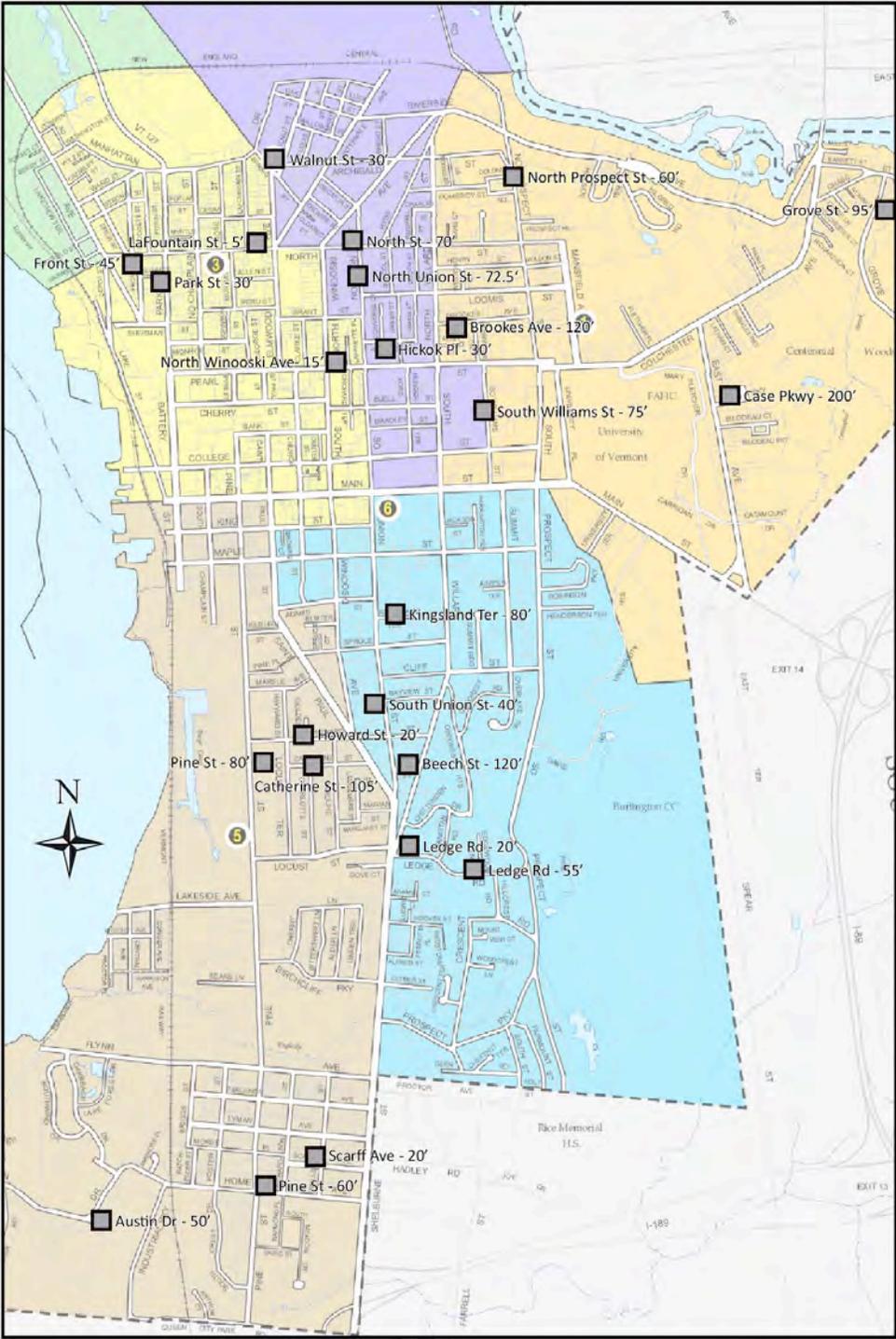
DPW staff currently is developing the scope of work for the City's first pedestrian/bike master plan. Extensive public engagement will enable this plan to identify where new facilities are desired, what policies and design standards should be updated, and a roadmap for achieving the vision of a gold-level Walk and Bike Friendly Community. Due to financial constraints, this planning effort was going to be more limited in scope, but thanks to financial support from AARP and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, the City will be able to develop its first City-wide pedestrian/bike master plan.

“We are pleased to financially support this master plan,” remarked AARP State Director Greg Marchildon. “Our members rely on the City’s pedestrian facilities to maintain their mobility and ensure access to services, shopping, and other destinations.”

“We applaud the City's commitment to addressing issues with the current sidewalk network, and the speed of their response to improving pedestrian safety on North Ave following the recent City Council vote,” said Local Motion Executive Director Emily Boedecker. “The upcoming pedestrian/bike master plan will be the most important project to date in the City's bid for gold, and we are looking forward to engaging the public and working closely with the City on this plan over the next few months.”

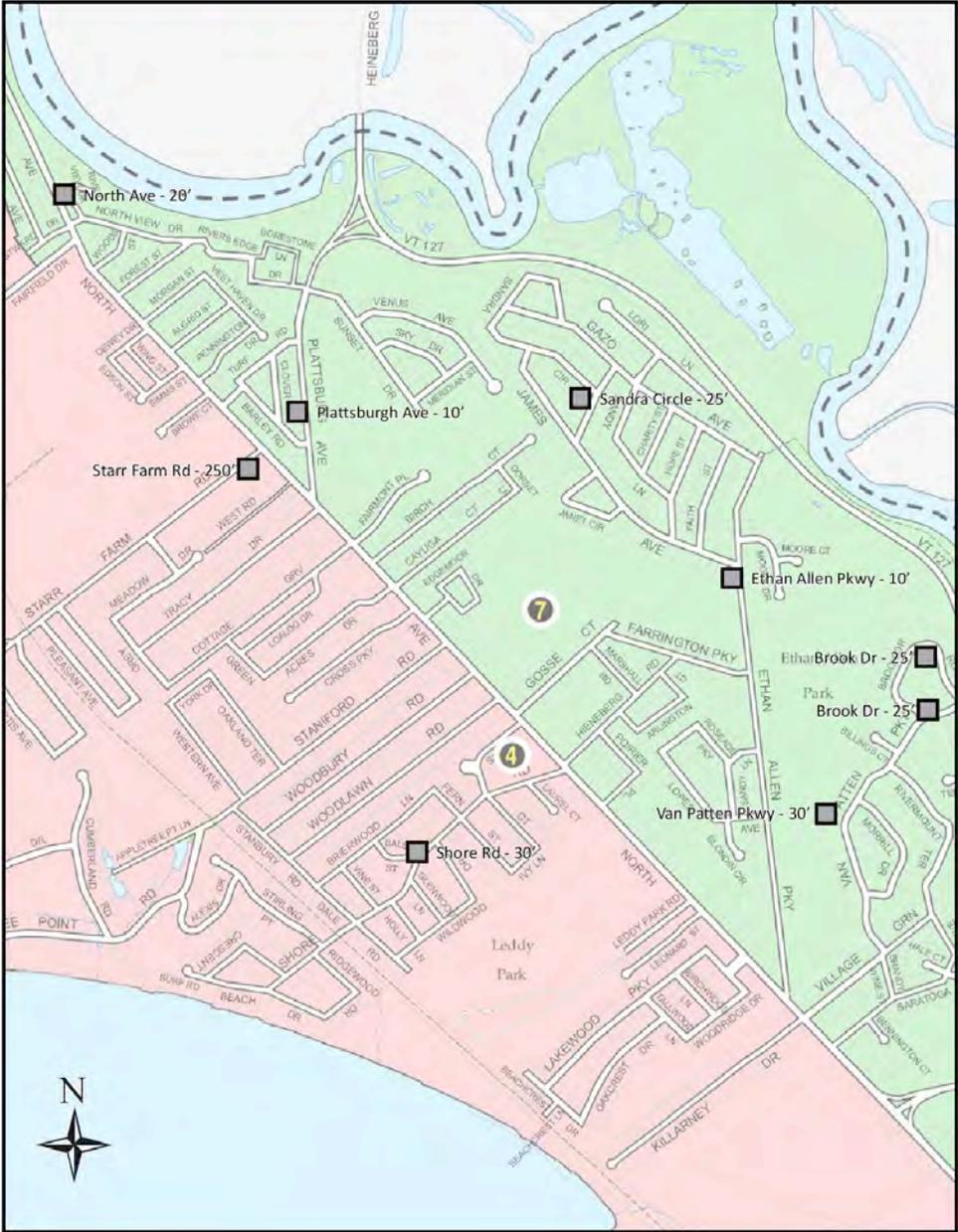
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# Burlington Sidewalk Replacement



<b>Legend</b>		
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> City Ward 1	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid black;"></span> City Ward 5	
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: grey; border: 1px solid black;"></span> City Ward 2	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: tan; border: 1px solid black;"></span> City Ward 6	
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> City Ward 3		
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Sidewalk Replacement Street Location with length of slab		

# New North End Sidewalk Replacement



Legend

-  Sidewalk Replacement Street  
Location with length of slab
-  City Ward 4
-  City Ward 7

