



THE CITY OF BURLINGTON

2019 EQUITY REPORT

FOREWORD FROM

MAYOR WEINBERGER



This is our second-ever Equity Report, which will provide residents with data about whether and how our community is becoming a more equitable place. It will be presented at polling places on Town Meeting Day alongside the City's Annual Financial Report as part of the City's new core reporting to the community.

I believe in the principle that what gets measured, gets done—and this report is an effort to measure, evaluate, and bring resources to address the fundamental inequities that exist in our community. Burlington is the best place in Vermont to start a family, find a job, or begin a new life in the United States—and there is more we can do to create opportunity for all our residents in the years ahead.

Many of these measures will stay the same year over year, so residents can easily evaluate the changes. Other measures will focus on specific City projects that are tied to these broader trends in the community in order to help evaluate and hold the City accountable for our efforts to make this a community where all residents have access to information and resources and receive the same high-quality services.

The engine driving the data collection at the heart of this process is known as BTVStat, a performance management system instituted in Burlington in 2016. Like many communities, this “Stat” system evaluates the progress of City Departments across a variety of operational metrics. Unlike most other communities, however, in Burlington BTVStat also tracks equity metrics. We believe that the City needs to evaluate not just how many scholarships were provided to access City programming, for example, but whether the number of scholarships reflects the actual community need.

As we continue to create the Equity Report every year, we will be able to improve it. I ask members of the community to let us know how we can improve the metrics that we have identified, what data are missing, and what new areas of focus we should consider. I look forward to continuing this work and ensuring that measuring equity in the City becomes part of the core of what we do.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Weinberger'.

MIRO WEINBERGER, MAYOR



ABOUT THE REPORT

This second annual Equity Report is driven by the theory that a city works best when all residents have the ability to put their skills, insights, and ideas to work influencing and advancing a shared civic vision.

Structural inequities, however, prevent those skills, insights, and ideas from informing a community's future. Therefore, this report attempts to identify and measure these inequities with the goal of better aligning the services the City provides to improve residents' ability to participate, contribute, or benefit from the Burlington community. No single report can do this comprehensively, and the 2019 Equity Report should be a resource to inform discussion, evaluation, further exploration, and policy analysis alongside input from many other community stakeholders.

The Equity Report grows out of BTVStat, the City's performance management system implemented by the Mayor in 2016 to focus on evaluating City department performance across a variety of metrics. In 2018, the Mayor added equity measures as a unique metric set alongside more traditional operational measures, and the City's Innovation & Technology Department has been developing those department-specific measures, along with metrics based on census data and other sources. In 2019, the Mayor and City Council also created the new position of Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Director to oversee the City's efforts to develop, revise, and implement the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan for the City of Burlington in partnership with the leadership team and relevant stakeholders.

The City's inaugural Equity Report was published in 2018, and this report also serves as an accountability measure, reporting back to the community on progress made on the 2018 Equity Report recommendations.

HOW THE 2019 EQUITY REPORT IS STRUCTURED

The 2019 Equity Report looks at data across multiple levels. It provides equity indicator metrics that help evaluate disparities in the community (and that can be measured over time) and information about City initiatives related to these inequities. The report focuses on a range of equity indicators across five domains: Economy, Education, Health, Housing, and Justice. Each domain is broken down into 2-3 topics or subcategories that represent areas of focus within the domain with 2-3 equity indicators presented under each topic.

Equity Indicators: Outcome-level metrics intended to track disparities over time and to serve as a catalyst for change by informing where inequalities persist.

City Initiatives: While these broader trends tracked by the equity indicators are beyond the ability of the City to change independently, the City has or can develop specific initiatives in response to identified or evolving needs across Burlington. This year's report ties specific City initiatives to these equity metrics so that the community can evaluate the City's progress on this work.

METHODOLOGY

In addition to modeling our approach on the Equality Indicators Framework developed by the CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance and adapting it to the Burlington context, we drew upon an array of readily available public and private reports and data sources, such as the U.S. Census' annual American Community Survey (ACS), the 2019-2023 Vermont State Health Improvement Plan, Burlington School District's 2018 Equity and Inclusion Data Report, the 2017 and 2019 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), and others.

Generally, data came from two different types of sources: publicly available data and internal City data. We attempted to use the most recently available data for all indicators. Where possible, we have tried to report disaggregated data by gender, race/ethnicity, or other demographic characteristics, but in many cases the sample size for a given population was too small to report with confidence. Because ACS data are estimates, they contain a degree of statistical uncertainty, referred to as margin of error (MOE). ACS estimates include a MOE at the 90% confidence level, which is the Census Bureau's standard. However, for this report, when the MOE for certain groups was high (due to small sample sizes), making estimates unreliable, that data was not included. Specific MOEs are not listed for each estimate reported; however, the full ACS datasets used in this report are available on the City's Open Data Portal for review. That portal is accessible via <https://data.burlingtonvt.gov/pages/home/>.

Data Limitations

The report is constrained by the available data. Some of the limitations and constraints are listed below along with strategies used to address them.

- **Relatively small population sizes in Burlington make reporting data on people of color a challenge.** Given the relatively small number of people of color who live in Burlington and the City's small size overall, estimates for most metrics are not as precise for these groups and in some cases large margins of error make it difficult to report certain measures with confidence. As much as possible, we have attempted to include data disaggregated by race and ethnicity with a note about data precision and a reference to the data source.
- **There is lack of data on the LGBTQ+ community at the national, state, and local level.** Often, population-

level data are collected by biological sex (male or female). For the purposes of this report, data disaggregated by gender will be reported as it was collected, which in many cases does not include non-binary gender identities.

- **Population-level data may not be timely.** Although this report is designed to measure equity across various domains and indicators in calendar year 2019, the timing in which the most recent U.S. Census data are released makes reporting the timeliest data a challenge. Therefore, the most recent population-level data available in this report are from 2018.

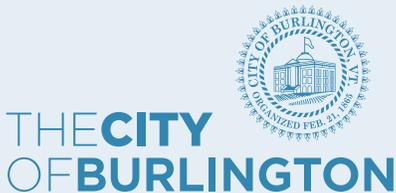
Equity Defined

Drawing from the advocacy organization PolicyLink and other sources, including the 2018 Vermont State Health Assessment, the 2019 Equity Report defines equity as the ***just and fair inclusion into a society in which all people can participate, prosper and reach their full potential.***ⁱⁱ PolicyLink and the 2018 Vermont State Health Report emphasize the importance of equity for those who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage, historical injustice, and other systemic inequalities often associated with social categories of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, social position, sexual orientation, or disability, or for other groups of individuals that experience disadvantage or injustice based on their social identity.ⁱⁱⁱ

The report also highlights measures related to five demographic groups. Unfortunately, because of Burlington's small population, disaggregated data that could provide a better understanding of the different challenges faced by these groups is often not available. The highlighted groups in this report include women, people of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community, people living with disabilities, and individuals of lower socioeconomic status. The focus on these demographic groups follows the model of the 2018 Vermont State Health Assessment, plus an additional group (women). Using disaggregated data to examine unique experiences of these and other various groups is integral to eliminating inequities—because once inequities are highlighted and understood, they are more likely to be addressed—and this is the area of the report where the data limitations are most acute.

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Images courtesy of: Luke Awtry,
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No single report can reasonably aspire to be a comprehensive analysis of all data related to the City, its residents, and measures of equity and inequity in the community. We would like to give special thanks to representatives from ANEW Place, Burlington City Arts, the Burlington High School City and Lake Semester Class, the Burlington School District, the City University of New York's Institute for State and Local Governance (ISLG), the Champlain Housing Trust, the Community Health Centers of Burlington, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Outright Vermont, the Peace & Justice Center, and Pride Center of Vermont for their feedback in developing the 2019 Equity Report. We'd also like to give special thanks to the many City staff who contributed data and provided feedback on early drafts of the report.

As we prepare to begin collecting data for next year's report, community feedback on what would be most useful to see in future reports will help us refine that effort. We welcome suggestions for refinements or additional areas of focus. For additional detail on the metrics reported here, please visit <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/equity>. Please send questions and comments by email to BTVStat@burlingtonvt.gov or by mail to City Hall, 149 Church Street, #34, Burlington, VT 05401.

ACCOUNTABILITY

PROGRESS ON 2018 EQUITY REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Progress made during the last year and ongoing work



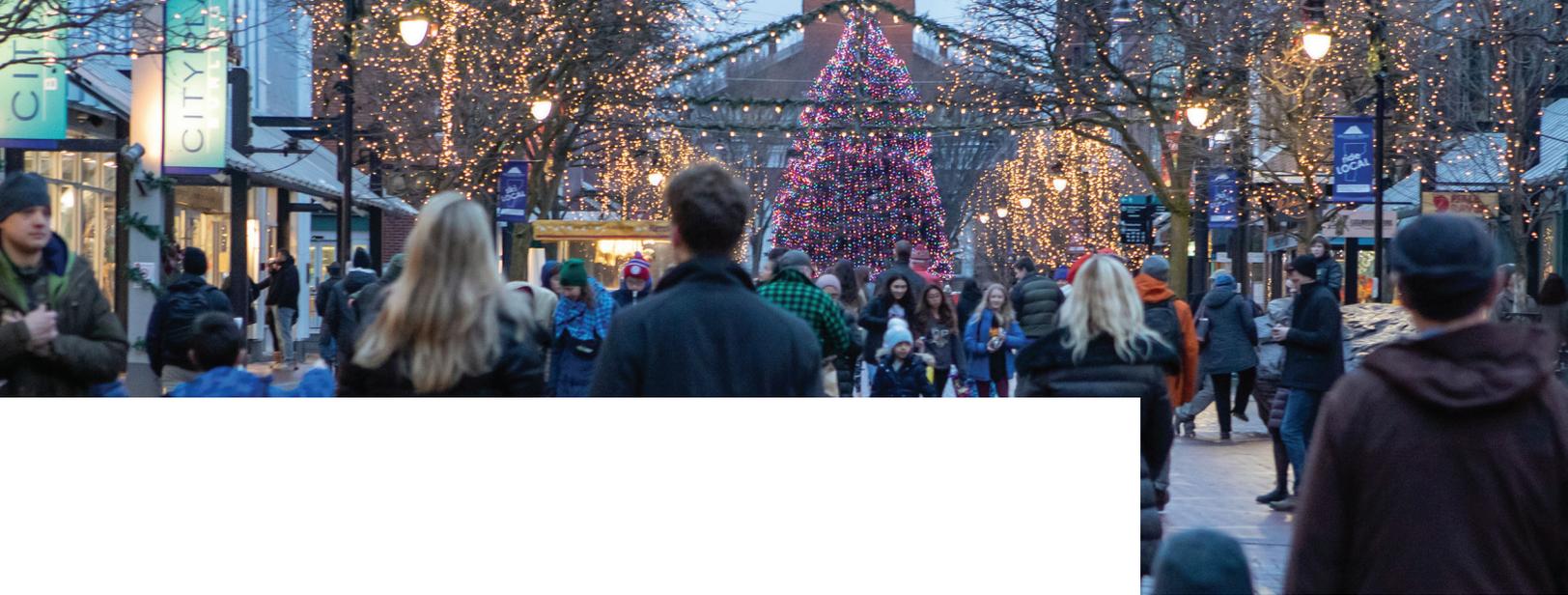
1 Continue Housing Reforms to Improve Community Access

The Mayor and City Council focused on several policy areas intended to increase the number of new housing units, make new or existing units more affordable, and reduce climate impacts of Burlington's housing in 2019. These included: (1) making it easier for people to create accessory dwelling units (ADUs), (2) implementing new regulations for short-term rentals (i.e., Airbnb), (3) reforming requirements for building new parking in certain parts of the city in order to reduce a major cost driver of housing and align our land use policies with our climate goals, (4) strengthening energy efficiency requirements for rental housing, and (5) restoring and increasing the funding for the City's Housing Trust Fund (HTF), which supports the creation of more permanently affordable homes in the community. These changes require Council or public action and are being reviewed by Council committees. For up-to-date information, please visit <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/mayor/housingpolicy>.

2 Better Coordinate City's Youth Programming Goals and Outreach Strategies

The City has made significant changes over the past year in how youth programming is developed, supported, and evaluated. Some examples are highlighted below:

- Scholarships were increased \$25,000 annually thanks to a major philanthropic donation from the Pomerleau Foundation. In Fiscal Year 2019, the departments budgeted a combined \$65,000 for recreation scholarships, and the City never turns a family away from programming due to ability to pay. The Pomerleau Family Children's Recreation Fund will greatly increase the City's scholarship capacity.
- For the first time, City departments coordinated outreach for youth programming at multiple events across the year, like Kids Day, leveraging departments' ability to help recruit for one another.
- The City's My Brother's Keeper Initiative (a national program that addresses opportunity gaps faced by young men of color) was expanded to include



Burlington's total population is 42,513.



14% of people in Burlington speak a language other than English at home.

This represents roughly 500 households with one or more person over the age of 14 in the home with limited English proficiency.

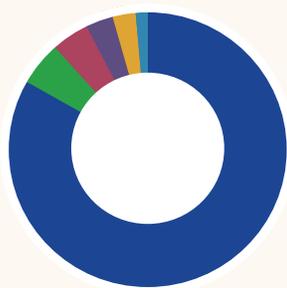
Overall, the City's population has remained relatively stable over the past 50 years, with an estimated **10% population increase in Burlington since 1970** (38,633), compared to **64% growth in Chittenden County** over the same time period (99,131 in 1970 to 162,052 in 2018).

1,300

veterans live in Burlington (3% of the total population).



13% of Burlington residents are people living with a disability.



- 82.9% White
- 6.3% Asian
- 5.3% Black/African American
- 2.8% Hispanic/Latino
- 2.7% Two or more races
- 1% American Indian

These categories do not capture other important groups – for example, the federal reporting structure does not have a category for Arabs or Arab-Americans.¹



The median age in Burlington is 27.1 years compared to the **Vermont state median age of 42.9 years** (the third highest in the nation and well above the national median of 37.9 years).

These statistics are due in large part to the higher number of college students in Burlington.

In 2019 there were **14,986 STUDENTS**

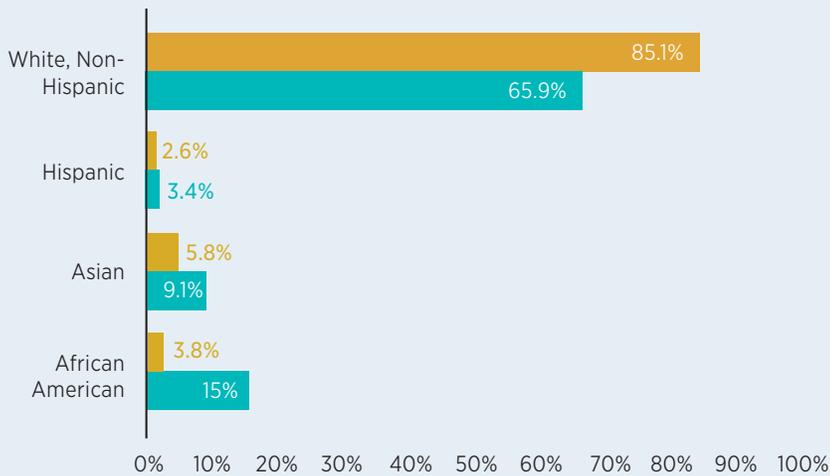
at the University of Vermont (UVM) and Champlain College combined, of which an estimated 3,900 lived off campus.

Burlington's youth population (those under the age of 18) has a much different demographic makeup than that of the adult population.

Burlington Population by Race and Age*

U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

● Youth (Under 18) ● Adult (18+)



1/3
of Burlington's youth are people of color.

Burlington is seeing a large demographic shift in our community. As these youth grow, the overall population will continue to evolve, further highlighting the need to continuously evaluate equity and to identify how the City can better support its diversifying population.

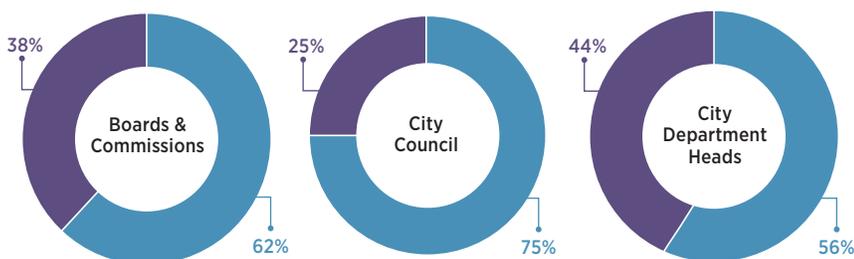
*Given the relatively small number of people of color in Burlington, census population estimates for some groups of youth are not reliable and are therefore not included in this chart.

City Workforce Demographics

9% of City employees are people of color (a slight increase from 7% in 2018), and **37% are women**.

Diversity of City Leadership

● Women ● Men



For the purposes of this report, data disaggregated by gender will be presented as it was collected, which in many cases does not include non-binary gender identities.



In 2019, 114 refugees arrived in Vermont,

a 70% decrease from 2016 due to stricter immigration policies under the current federal administration, which have pushed refugee admissions nationally to a historic low. Over the last thirty years, more than 5,000 refugees have resettled in the Greater Burlington area from Bosnia, Bhutan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Vietnam, Tibet, and dozens of other countries.



24.7%

of people in Burlington **live below the poverty line**, nearly double the state poverty rate of 11.4% and significantly higher than the national poverty rate of 14.1%.²

While U.S. Census Bureau poverty estimates explicitly exclude people living in group housing—such as dorms, correctional facilities, or residential nursing homes—these calculations do include college or graduate students who live in off-campus housing. Because many post-secondary students have low incomes, they may contribute to high poverty rates in the areas where they live. The non-college student adjusted poverty rate in Burlington is closer to 16%.³

In the 2019 Human Rights Commission Municipal Equality Index (MEI), a measure of conditions for LGBTQ+ individuals, **Burlington scored 98** (compared to the national average of 60 out of 100).

The MEI examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are of LGBTQ+ people who live and work there. Cities are rated based on non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement, and the city leadership's public position on equality.⁴



ECONOMY

How is the City performing on measures of economic growth and well-being? Who is benefiting, and who is being left behind?

The ability to find and advance in careers that pay above a livable wage, to access capital, to start a business, or own assets are all forms of economic opportunity. However, barriers like generational poverty, affordable housing and childcare, and reliable transportation make access to these opportunities inconsistent across the community. The City can increase access to these opportunities in multiple ways, including its outreach and recruitment for employment within the City or by prioritizing resources for investment in opportunity-creating initiatives.

Income

Gender and Median Annual Income

Like the state and country as a whole, there is a persistent wage gap between men and women. In Burlington, the median annual income for women working full-time is \$37,349, about \$8,000 less than the median annual income for men of \$47,634. This translates to an average wage gap for women of about 21 cents less for every dollar earned by a man (compared to the 16 cents wage gap at the state level). The disparity is even more pronounced for women of color and women living with a disability.

Median Full-Time Annual Earnings by Gender
U.S. Census Bureau,
2014-2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates
● Men ● Women



households is \$30,357, nearly \$22,000 less than that of white households at \$52,092. Local data are not reliable enough to report on the median household income of other demographic groups.

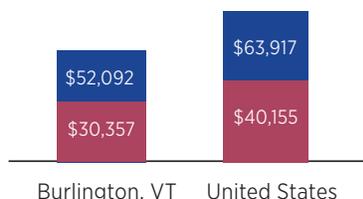
Poverty by Race

Poverty can have pervasive negative effects on well-being outcomes for adults and children. In Burlington the adjusted poverty rate is approximately 16% (when accounting for the undergraduate and graduate students) and the overall poverty rate is 24.7%. When these poverty rates are examined across racial and ethnic groups, the rate is higher overall in Burlington when compared to state and national poverty rates. In Burlington, Black or African American people and families are most disproportionately impacted by poverty, with an estimated 32.5% living in poverty.

Race and Median Income

In the United States, there has been a persistent racial income gap making it more difficult for households of color to achieve economic security. In Burlington, the median household income for Black or African American

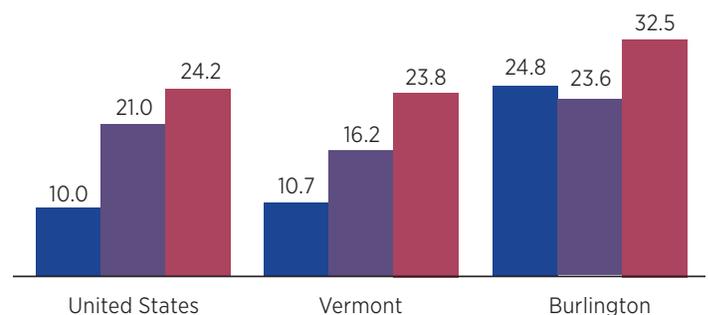
Median Income by Race
U.S. Census Bureau,
2014-2018 ACS 5-Year
Estimates
● Black or African American
● White



Population by Race That Experienced Poverty in the Past 12 Months

U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018
ACS 5-Year Estimates

● White ● Hispanic/Latino ● Black or African American



Employment

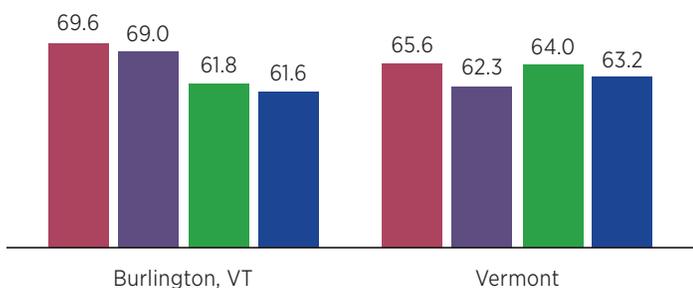
Employment Status by Race

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the national employment to population ratio—or the proportion of the civilian labor force that is employed—has steadily increased over the last several years. In Burlington, among racial and ethnicity groups, Blacks or African Americans (69.6%) and Hispanics or Latinos (69.0%) had the highest proportions of people employed, while Asians (61.8%) and Whites (61.6%) had the lowest proportions.

Employment to Population Ratio for Population 16 Years and Over

U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates

● Black or African American ● Hispanic or Latino origin
● Asian origin ● White (not Hispanic or Latino)

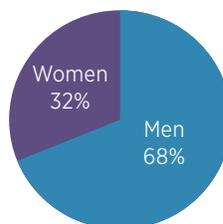


Employment Status and Disability

However, for people living with any disability, the proportion of the population that is employed is much lower. In Burlington, the employment to population ratio was 35% for persons with a disability as compared to 61% for persons without a disability.

Business Development

Business Ownership by Gender



Burlington, VT

Owning a successful business benefits individuals, their families, and communities and can help to alleviate income disparities. Although the number of businesses owned by women has increased slightly in Burlington since 2010 (by an estimated 7.5 percentage points), women are still a minority among local business owners and often face greater challenges than men when it comes to accessing capital to grow their businesses.

City Initiatives

New Investment Funds to Create New Opportunities for Burlington-based Entrepreneurs

As part of the Burlington Telecom (BT) sale, the Mayor and City Council required the new owner to commit to invest an additional \$3 million over 10 years to support entrepreneurial activity and direct business investments in Burlington companies. With BTV Ignite, the City awarded the first \$50,000 to STEM and workforce development programming and opened the application process for the first \$250,000 in direct business investments in 2019. The priority for these business investments are companies led by women, person(s) of color, or people living with a disability.

Livable Wage Ordinance

In November 2001, the City Council enacted a Livable Wage Ordinance (LWO) to provide a minimum level of compensation for City employees and employees of entities that enter into service contracts or receive financial assistance from the City of Burlington. In 2014, the LWO was extended to cover seasonal and temporary employees who work more than 10 hours per week and have been employed by the City for more than four years. In 2019, at the Council and Mayor's request, the Human Resources, Innovation & Technology, & Clerk/Treasurer's departments analyzed the cost of further extending the LWO to include every City employee. The current livable wage is \$14.44 an hour with insurance and \$15.83 an hour without.

City Employee Data Collection

With support from the City's BTVStat Analyst, in 2019 HR created a City Workforce Dashboard to track and report employee demographics such as gender and race. This was made public on the City performance dashboard in January 2020. Work will continue to expand the dashboard to include hiring and retention statistics as well.



EDUCATION

How can we better ensure access to high-quality education and benefits of lifelong learning to all members of our community?

Equity in education requires establishing systems so that every individual has an equitable opportunity to pursue a high-quality education. Factors such as limited English proficiency, low socioeconomic status, racial bias, and disability often serve as barriers to achievement. The Burlington School District (BSD) is a separate entity from the City, but the City can support BSD's work addressing some of these obstacles through efforts like the Early Learning Initiative (ELI) or the My Brother's Keeper Initiative. ELI provides scholarships for high-quality child care to low-income Burlington children and the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative builds community and closes opportunity gaps experience by youth of color. Using public data provided by the Agency for Education and BSD, the Equity Report highlights available measures to demonstrate how different demographic group may have differing impediments to learning, varying access to quality education, and limited achievement outcomes. The priority initiatives on the next page highlight the City's focus on youth engagement in 2019 and actions taken to ensure more equitable access to educational programming both within and outside of the school district.

Please note, the full 2018-2019 BSD Equity & Inclusion Data Report and the Agency of Education's complete 2018-2019 academic year data were not yet released as the 2019 Equity Report went to print. This information will be posted on www.bsdrv.org when it becomes available.

Impediments to Learning

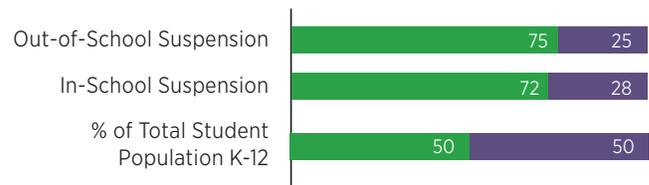
School Suspensions by Income Level

BSD offers Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) to all students whose household income is at or below 185% of the federal poverty line. These students represent half of the students in grades K-12 in the district but comprise a disproportionately high number of both in-school suspensions (72%) and out-of-school suspensions (76%) compared to peers from higher-income families. The disparity highlights inequity in suspension rates across income, which can contribute to lower graduation rates and higher dropout rates among low-income students.

BSD Suspensions by Income Level 2017-2018

BSD Equity & Inclusion Data Report

● FRL ● Non-FRL



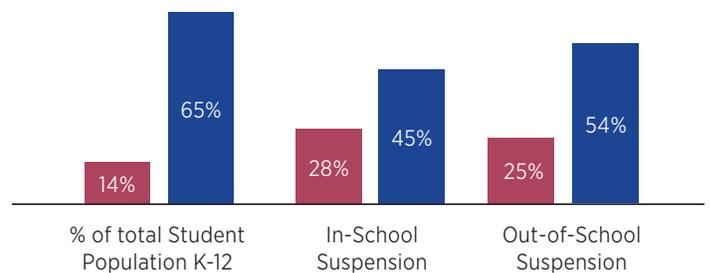
School Suspensions by Race

During the 2017-2018 school year, Black students disproportionately received suspensions when compared to White students, with 28% of Black students receiving in-school suspensions as compared to 14% of the total student population.

Suspensions by Race at BSD 2017-2018

BSD Equity & Inclusion Data Report

● White ● Black



Student Achievement

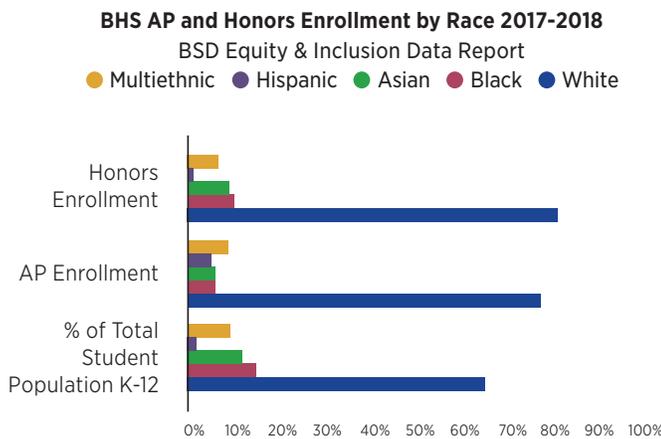
Academic Proficiency by Income

The achievement gap refers to the observed, persistent disparity in measures of performance among different subsets of students. The average academic performance of the lowest income students in the U.S. lags about

three to four years behind that of the highest income students—an achievement gap that has remained constant for over four decades. Burlington School District data from the 2017-2018 school year (the most recent available as the 2019 Equity Report goes to print) demonstrates that significantly fewer students who qualify for FRL perform at or above proficiency than higher income students.

Race and AP Enrollment

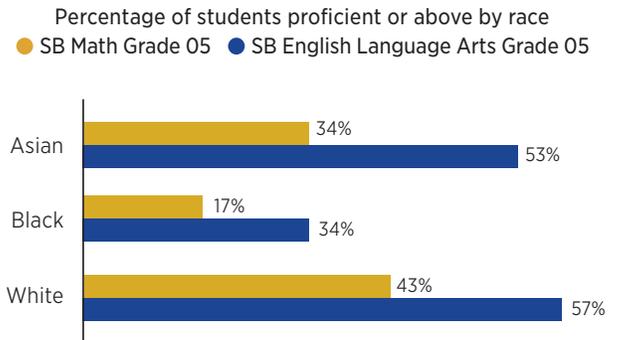
BHS offers a variety of Advanced Placement (AP) and Honors courses, which allow students the opportunity to continue challenging themselves and even receive college credit. Although students of color make up one in three K-12 students in the district, only one in five students enrolled in AP and Honors courses are students of color. These types of disparities may widen achievement gaps like high school and college completion and the types of jobs students secure as adults.



Academic Proficiency by Race

When fifth graders in BSD were assessed using the Smarter Balanced Assessment, Black students were half as likely (17%) as Asian students (34%) and 2.5 times less likely than White students (43%) to achieve proficiency or above in math. When assessed in English language arts, the disparity was still present, but narrower. Black students were scoring proficient or above (34%) 1.6 times less often than Asian students (53%) and 1.7 times less often than White students.

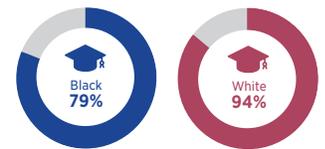
Smarter Balanced Assessment by Grade (2017-2018 School Year)



Race and High School Completion by Race

Lack of a high school degree or GED limits earnings and economic stability. While the gap in high school completion by race is diminishing, nationally fewer Black adults have attained a high school degree or higher (85%) than their White counterparts (93%). In Burlington this disparity is even greater.

Burlington Adults With a High School Degree or Higher



City Initiatives

Early Learning Initiative's First Steps Scholarship Program

In 2019, the pilot year of the First Steps Scholarship met its goal of enrolling 20 qualifying Burlington children in high-quality childcare. First Steps is part of the Mayor's Early Learning Initiative to expand access to high-quality childcare for Burlington children aged 0 to 3 years old given the shortage of available spots, the high cost of care, and the demonstrated value to a community of high-quality care. The City is attempting to more than double the size of the initiative in 2020. Over the past two years the City has also supported the creation or ongoing construction of up to 85 new high-quality childcare spots for children in Burlington.

MBK/MSK Initiative and Professional Development Opportunities

Working with BSD, in 2019 the City expanded MBK to include a My Sister's Keeper chapter, which facilitated academic exploration, professional development, and community building among girls of color at BHS. This year, CEDO and HR will be partnering to increase the number of low-barrier internships within City departments and bolstering direct recruitment of youth of color, low-income youth, and first-generation youth.



HEALTH

What are the health disparities faced by our community?

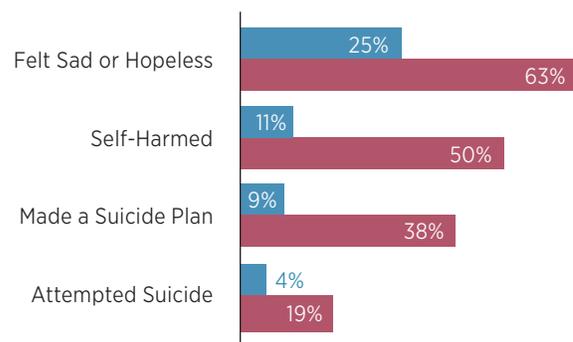
As defined by the Vermont Department of Health, health equity “exists when all people have a fair and just opportunity to be healthy.” This requires reducing and ultimately eliminating disparities in health and its determinants that adversely affect marginalized groups. Obstacles such as poverty and discrimination result in a lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care. The City can support the work of public health organizations, like the University of Vermont Medical Center, the Community Health Centers of Burlington, and Howard Center to address these challenges through initiatives aimed at reducing language barriers, supporting comprehensive efforts to provide treatment to those struggling with substance abuse disorder, and more. The City of Burlington and its partners at the Chittenden County Opioid Alliance (CCOA) are committed to focusing on the issue of the opioid epidemic by focusing on continued action through CommunityStat, a monthly coordination meeting of City, State, nonprofit, and law enforcement organizations run by the Mayor. While Chittenden County saw a 50% decline in accidental or undetermined opioid-related deaths in 2018 (the most recent year with available data), there is still much work to be done to combat the opioid epidemic. The City can also help improve access to nutritional food, offer quality year-round programming for all ages, and provide open and green spaces for recreation and community gatherings.

Mental Health

LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health

Due to stigma and discrimination, LGBTQ+ youth experience worse mental health than their heterosexual and cisgender peers. While Burlington-specific data is not available, the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) measures the experience of LGBTQ+ high schoolers across Vermont. Compared to heterosexual and cisgender youth, LGBTQ+ youth were 2.5 times more likely to feel sad or hopeless, 3.8 times more likely to engage in self-harm, 4 times more likely to make a suicide plan, and 4.75 times more likely to attempt suicide. The disparity in mental health between LGBTQ+ and heterosexual and cisgender youth grows larger as symptoms become more serious.

Youth Mental Health
2019 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Vermont Dept. of Health
● Heterosexual/Cisgender ● LGBTQ+



Mental Health in Adults Living With Disabilities

Adults living with disabilities often face other challenges such as lower employment rates and household income that can negatively impact mental health. In Vermont, 24% of adults live with at least one disability. This group is four times more likely to report poor mental health (28%) than adults living with no disability (7%) and five times more likely (10%) to report having seriously considered suicide in the last year than adults living with no disability (2%).

Access

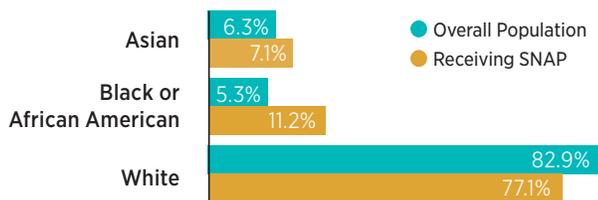
Health Screenings by Income

Health screenings allow for the detection of disease or medical conditions in the early stages when treatment is often safer, more feasible, and less expensive. Medicaid recipients, a proxy for low-income individuals, are less likely to access health screenings than those with commercial insurance. In the Burlington Hospital Service Area, this disparity is exemplified in access to developmental screenings in the first three years of a child’s life (76% compared to 85%), cervical cancer screenings (61% compared to 76%), and breast cancer screenings (49% compared to 74%).

Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food by Race

In 2019 an estimated 9.8% of Vermonters struggled with food insecurity, down slightly from the prior year and slightly lower than the 12.3% national estimate. The USDA defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food insecurity does not exist in isolation, as low-income families are affected by multiple, overlapping issues like affordable housing, social isolation, health problems, medical costs, and low wages. Participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a proxy measure of food insecurity. In Burlington, Black or African American and Asian residents use SNAP benefits at a disproportionately higher rate than White residents. In an effort to address this disparity, BPRW provides nutrition programming, in which the City observed a tenfold increase in participation from specific demographic groups after hiring members from those communities as advisors to design and administer their nutritional programs.

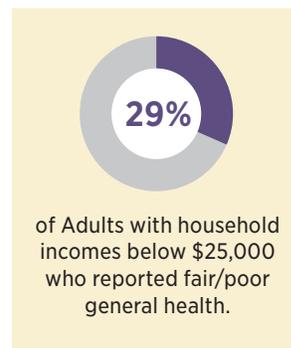
Percentage of SNAP Recipients by Race
U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Health Outcomes

Low Birth Weight by Income

Low birth weight is a term used to describe babies who are born weighing less than 2,500 grams (5 pounds, 8 ounces). Over 8% of all newborn babies in the United States have low birth weight. Although infrequent, low birth weight is strongly associated with infant mortality and morbidity. In Chittenden County, mothers with Medicaid insurance were 1.4 times more likely (7.6%) than mothers with other types of health insurance coverage (5.3%) to deliver babies with low birth weight.



General Health by Income

Insufficient resources, limited access to health care and nutritional food, and higher stress levels are among some of the drivers of poor health among lower income individuals. As household income increases, the proportion of adults

experiencing poor health decreases. In Vermont, 29% of adults with household incomes below \$25,000 reported fair or poor general health. This group of adults is six times more likely to report fair or poor health than adults making \$75,000 or more.

City Initiatives

Language Access Policy

Language Access Policies give clear guidance for how government agencies and other organizations provide translation and interpretation services based on Department of Justice criteria. While Burlington is not required to develop a Language Access Policy, the Mayor directed staff to complete a draft for feedback from the Council and community because language can be a barrier for accessing City programs and services. In 2019, the Clerk/Treasurer's Office committed to translate sample ballots, which will be available in Arabic, Burmese, French, Nepali, Somali, and Swahili for the first time at the Town Meeting Day 2020 elections. The Language Access Policy is scheduled to come before the Council formally in early 2020 as part of a community feedback process.

CommunityStat

The massive coordination effort of CommunityStat, which brings together dozens of State, municipal, nonprofit, health care, and social service organizations for structured monthly meetings, has played an important role in the substantial reduction in opioid overdoses in Burlington and a community-wide focus on treatment. The City should maintain the emphasis on continuing to reduce overdose deaths in 2020.

Open and Green Space Access

Nearly 99% of Burlington residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, much higher than the national average of 54%. Since fiscal year 2014, the City has added 67 acres of managed and conserved open space, for a total of 427 acres.



HOUSING

What are the barriers to accessing affordable, quality, and convenient housing?

Housing is increasingly understood to be an important determinant of success in life, affecting health, access to education, and the opportunity for upward mobility. Nationally, according to a report released by the Obama administration in 2016, the accumulation of local barriers to housing development “including zoning, other land use regulations, and lengthy development approval processes...is jeopardizing housing affordability for working families [and] increasing income inequality by reducing less-skilled workers’ access to high-wage markets.” Burlington fits this description all too well, with its high cost of housing in part the result of restrictive zoning policies that have kept its population static while surrounding Chittenden County has grown 64% since 1970. With many job opportunities based in Burlington, the cost of housing makes it difficult for employees to live close to their work. The City has made increasing the number of homes in Burlington a high priority, with more than 900 new housing units built since 2012, more than twice the amount built over the prior eight year period. Housing costs and rent as a percentage of income are still extremely high in Burlington, and multiple City initiatives underway would help increase the supply of housing, make living in Burlington more affordable, and improve the environmental impact of Burlington homes.

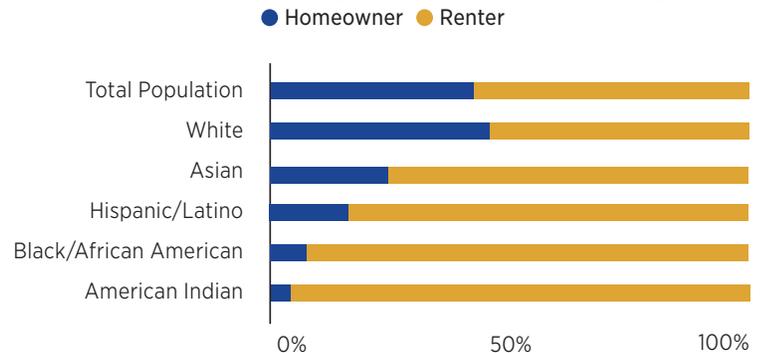
Affordability

Percentage of Homeowners and Renters by Race

In addition to providing a stable place to raise a family, owning a home offers one way for an individual to build equity and stable wealth. Historically, discriminatory policies have kept families of color from obtaining homes and/or benefiting from homeownership. Although many of these practices no longer formally exist, the implications have resulted in generational racial disparities in homeownership. In Burlington, 96% of the homes are owned by White families. The remaining 4% of homes are owned by people of color.

Percentage of Homeowners and Renters by Race

Source: 2017 HUD Burlington Assessment for Fair Housing



Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income

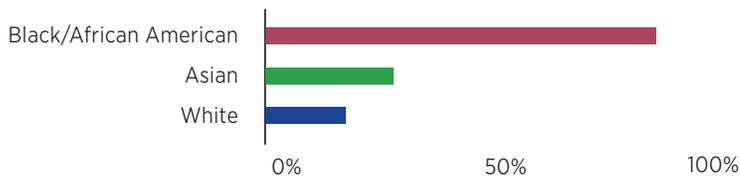
A household is considered cost-burdened when more than 30% of income is spent on rent, while severely burdened households are those that spend more than 50% on rent. Research demonstrates that rent-burdened households have higher eviction rates, increased financial fragility, and wider use of social safety net programs, compared to other renters and homeowners. In Burlington, about 60% of all renter households are cost-burdened, nearly 10% higher than the state and national rate.

Availability

Home Loan Denial Rates by Race

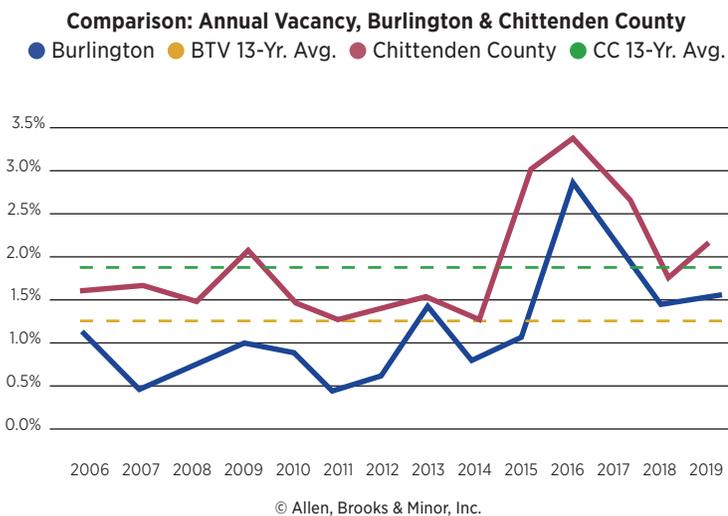
Nationally, there has been a persistent disparity in homeownership by race for decades. As of October 2019, the rate of homeownership for Black households was just 42.7% while White households’ rate of homeownership was 73.4 %. The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) reports home loan application and denial rates by race. In Burlington and South Burlington, potential home loan applicants who are Black are three times more likely (83.3%) than Asian applicants (26.4%) and four and a half times more likely than White applicants (18.2%) to get denied for a home loan.

Home Loan Application Denial Rates by Race
Burlington-South Burlington, VT 2018 FFIEC MSA/MD Aggregate Report



Rental Vacancy Rate by Location

The national vacancy rate for rental units fell in 2018 to 4.4%, the lowest point since 1994. In Burlington the average rental vacancy rate in 2019 was 1.6%, up slightly from the 13-year average of 1.2% and compared to the Chittenden County 13-year average of 1.9%. Low vacancy rates often mean rents continue to get pushed higher, particularly since demand in Burlington still outpaces supply. Local and regional rental vacancy rates rose slightly in 2019 due to significant new growth in the City of Burlington and in Chittenden County as a whole. In 2019 there were 645 new units built in Chittenden County, of which 215 were in Burlington.



Quality

Rental Housing Certificates of Compliance

City housing code requires inspections of Burlington's approximately 10,000 rental units. Certificates of Compliance (COCs) are issued to landlords once an inspection is completed. Since 2015, the City has issued COCs valid for between one and five years, based on a landlord's compliance with the housing code and history of code violations. A five-year COC is issued to properties demonstrating full compliance with the code and fewer years depending on the number and type of violations.

City Initiatives

Burlington's Housing Trust Fund

The Housing Trust Fund (HTF) is one of the main tools to increase the number of affordable housing units in Burlington. While the Mayor has consistently increased the required allocation to the HTF, voters will decide on Town Meeting Day 2020 whether to restore this dedicated tax to the full amount, effectively doubling the available funds.

Tenant Protections

The Mayor asked CEDO and the Department of Permitting & Inspections to examine potential tenant protections and make recommendations to strengthen the City's ordinance in 2019. These recommendations are before the City Council's Community Development & Neighborhood Revitalization Committee.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

A major policy effort in 2019 is now before the City Council. Reforming existing ADU regulations in 2020 would make it easier for people in Burlington to age in place, increase the total number of homes in Burlington, and enable people to earn additional money from their property by creating an ADU.

Eliminating Parking Minimums

In 2019, the City sought to eliminate requirements for building new parking in certain parts of the City. Parking spaces cost tens of thousands of dollars, and that is priced into the construction of a new home or rental unit. This increases the cost of housing and incentivizes car use. In 2020, the Council will vote on whether to align Burlington's land use policies with our climate goals.

Energy Efficiency in Rental Units

Increasing energy efficiency in rental housing can improve the quality and comfort of rental units, lower tenants' utility costs, and help the City achieve its climate goals by reducing energy utilization and greenhouse gas emissions. In 2019, Burlington Electric Department and the Department of Permitting and Inspections, City Planning, and CEDO developed a proposal expected to come before the City Council's Ordinance Committee in 2020 for evaluation.



JUSTICE

How safe and fair is our community?

Burlington is a safe city, thanks to strong communities and dedicated first responders who work together to keep our neighborhoods, roads, parks, businesses, and schools safe. From 2012 to 2019, the total number of offenses requiring police response fell about 30%, from 5,885 in 2012 to 4,121 in 2019. This decline is driven by a decrease in property offenses, including a 41% drop in larcenies, a 48% drop in vandalism, and a 66% drop in burglaries.

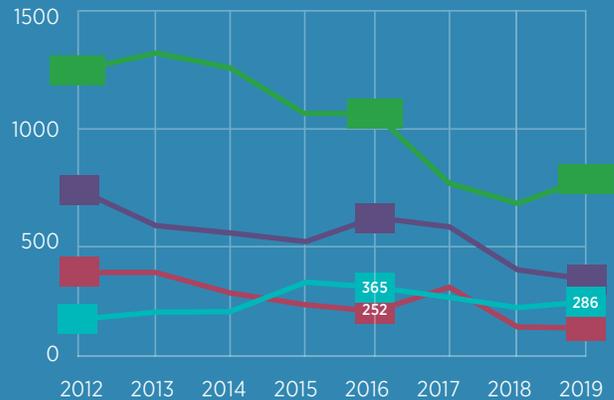
Part of keeping a city safe is ensuring that its public spaces are accessible to everyone and that everyone using those spaces is treated fairly. By reviewing data on justice and safety across different areas, such as types of police interaction by race or gender, the demographic breakdown of the Burlington Police Department (BPD), and the outcomes of court decisions, the City hopes to identify any potential patterns of inequity that can be evaluated and discussed.

Offenses Trending Down



Property Crime Decreasing Across Categories

● Burglary ● Larceny/Theft ● Retail Theft ● Vandalism



Interaction with Law Enforcement

Traffic Stops by Race

One of the most common interactions the police have with the public is a traffic stop. In 2019, Burlington police pulled over 2,063 vehicles, 9.6% of which were operated by Black drivers. This is nearly double the proportion of Black residents of Burlington (5.3%), and while some measures like the outcome of searches or warnings issued are trending toward parity, other disparities remain. A full report was released in 2018 providing additional metrics and context around traffic stops and is available at <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/Police/Data/Reports>.

Demographics of Police Contacts

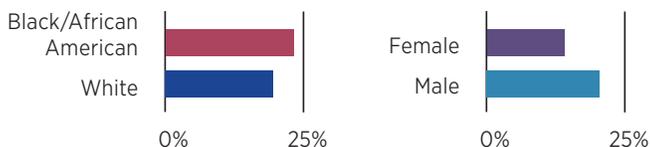
● Asian ● Black ● Other ● White



Court Decisions by Race and Gender

After arrest, a defendant usually attends an arraignment hearing, where a judge decides whether or not to assign bail to ensure the defendant’s return to court. Using data from bail hearings in the Chittenden County Court on Burlington arrests, the BPD independently collected and analyzed data and found that 20% of White defendants had some amount of bail assigned versus 24% of Black defendants and 18% of female defendants had some bail assigned versus 22% of male defendants. There is very little data on how this compares to other courts in the state. Please see BPD’s Arraignment Report at <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/Police/Data/Reports>.

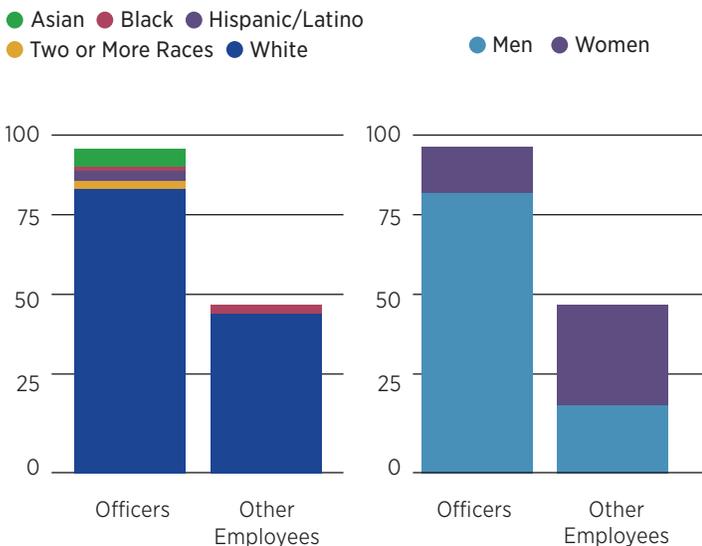
Some Amount of Bail Assigned to Defendants



Law Enforcement

Demographics of Public Safety Employees

BPD strives to recruit candidates with a wide range of backgrounds and life experiences. The department has a dedicated recruitment officer and uses social media advertising to directly target women, people of color, and veterans, both in and out of Vermont. However, the department has had limited success in recent years recruiting and retaining officers of color. Just 12% of police officers are people of color, and 16% are women.



Additional Analysis on Race and Arrests Needed

Using data that BPD has already released publicly, the 2019 Equity Report identified police outcomes of potential racial disparity that should be more carefully analyzed and understood. This analysis should include trends over time and benchmarking of Burlington’s performance against comparable communities. The Mayor has directed the Chief Innovation Officer and BTVStat Analyst to work with BPD and the Crime Data Analyst to complete a detailed report on race and arrests in the coming months.

City Initiatives

Police Department Policy Overview

In 2019, the City Council and Mayor established a special committee to review BPD’s civilian oversight structures; use of force policy; officer training; police information disclosure practices; disciplinary processes; officer wellness initiatives; and data collection, data quality, data analysis, and related public availability practices. The committee’s recommendations focused on potential changes that strengthen the role of the Police Commission and will be discussed at the Council’s Public Safety Committee in early 2020.

Community Justice Center Services Expansion

The Community Justice Center (CJC) took over the Court Diversion and Pretrial Services contract for Chittenden County, working with the State Attorney General’s Office. Assuming responsibility for this important work increased the number of employees on staff from seven to 13 in 2019.

Data Transparency

BPD’s commitment to data transparency continued in 2019 through a partnership with the Innovation & Technology Department to improve public access to department data on the City’s open data platform, <https://data.burlingtonvt.gov/pages/home/>.

2019 RECOMMENDATIONS



1 Reevaluate Advertising, Recruitment, and Retention Practices. Many City departments, especially the public safety departments, do not reflect the evolving demographic makeup of the community, with a much more diverse younger generation beginning to enter the workforce. The City should reevaluate recent efforts to expand advertising and recruitment practices and add a review of retention patterns across City departments to better understand opportunities and barriers facing prospective applicants, particularly those interested in public safety professions.

2 Establish Trusted Advisors Within City Workforce Structures. Based on the 2019 BTVStat findings showing increased participation in nutrition programs, the City is committed to hiring Trusted Advisors, or established members of New American communities who help strengthen relationships between these communities and City departments by advising

program design and outreach. The City is committed to creating stronger lines of communication for a more equitable distribution of resources and information.

3 Further Examine Transportation Needs and Ongoing Efforts to Improve Transit Within the City. The City should continue to identify and address transportation barriers that can limit resident quality of life or participation in civic life or City programming. Equitable transportation options have been a focus of prior City research and current work (PlanBTV Walk/Bike, the City Transportation Plan, and the current Winooski Avenue Corridor study are examples). Multiple stakeholders identified transportation infrastructure as a cross-cutting concern throughout the City. Burlington's small population means that public transportation options are more limited than in larger cities, which can impede access to employment, health care, education, affordable food, and social amenities for vulnerable

populations. The City should leverage the BTVStat process to better understand current barriers to transportation faced by the community and coordinate ongoing efforts to improve public transit.

4 Continue to Review City Procurement Practices.

The work underway to review City procurement policies and develop criteria for scoring energy efficiency and carbon reduction efforts of vendors in bids for City contracts should continue, as well as the exploration of other opportunities to make the procurement and contracting process more equitable and inclusive.

5 Explore Collaboration With LGBTQ+ Organizations to Better Understand Data Collection Needs in the Years to Come.

Data on LGBTQ+ individuals is extremely limited, which presents challenges to understanding the specific needs, vulnerabilities, and barriers to services for this population. This data challenge is prevalent across the state and national level, as exemplified by the lack of questions regarding sexual orientation and gender identity in the U.S. Census. The City will explore collaborations with local LGBTQ+ organizations, like Pride Center Vermont and Outright Vermont, to develop more effective frameworks for data collection in future years.

6 Evaluate Cemetery Burial Practices and Regulations in Burlington.

Funeral and burial practices vary greatly across the diverse cultures that exist in Burlington. A preliminary look at cost, time-of-day and time-of-year regulations, and cemetery space would highlight potential barriers to accommodating this breadth of traditions. The City should evaluate existing regulations with community stakeholders to assess potential changes that accommodate varied burial practices without compromising the need for clear cemetery regulation.

7 Continue and Expand Demographic Data Collection.

The City's HR and I&T departments should build on the recent efforts to collect and analyze improved demographic data on City staff, leadership, and board and commissions. Such data should be



collected at hiring or appointment, and the City should consider additional employee surveys or data collection opportunities to ensure it has updated information on its current workforce.

8 Leverage City Resources to Ensure Accurate Reporting of 2020 Census.

The 2020 Census will begin on March 12, 2020. Helping as many Burlington residents respond to the survey as possible is critical to ensure the City's data accurately reflects our population. This will support data-driven decision-making and help Burlington get the funding it needs for critical programs and services. It is estimated that Vermont receives almost \$4,000 per person per year from federal spending programs guided by data derived from the Census. The City should keep sustained attention on and support the BTV Counts Committee, which is made up of a wide range of community stakeholders with diverse connections across Burlington who are working to engage hard-to-count populations and increase the Census 2020 self-response rate for Burlington households online, by phone, or by mail.

Please send comments to
BTVStat@burlingtonvt.gov.
For additional details on the metrics
reported here, please visit
burlingtonvt.gov/equity.



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