



**Lake Champlain Regional
Chamber of Commerce**

June 12, 2014

Mayor Miro Weinberger
Room 34
City Hall
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear Mayor Weinberger,

As the Director of Burlington Young Professionals, I am writing to express support for the Burlington Downtown Housing Strategy Report. Young Professionals see Burlington as a premier place for the opportunity to achieve work-life balance. But they struggle to find quality, affordable housing within the city. Part of achieving the work-life balance that young professionals are looking for involves increasing the availability of market rate housing in Burlington. Our organization is made up of healthy individuals that thrive to have an accessible lifestyle, where biking and walking to work is part of their daily routine.

Many employers struggle, not just to attract, but to retain young, talented professionals. We have seen an increase in young professionals moving to Burlington for our emerging tech and entrepreneurial scene. As the first point of contact for a lot of relocating young professionals, I have to prepare them for our "sticker shock." Often they are not immediately deterred because the City offers them a better lifestyle balance than the cities from which they come. But after a period of living here, many begin to see their budgets tighten and realize the effect their high rents have had on their savings. They have trouble seeing opportunity to develop professionally and personally without being able to save for a future home in Burlington.

Young professionals are extremely important to the economic development in Vermont. Burlington Young Professionals supports the City in developing market rate housing to support the growing workforce and opportunity in Burlington. This growth, in turn, will add to the health and sustainability of the State's economy.

Sincerely,



Emily Piper
Graphic Designer & Director of Burlington Young Professionals
Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce

