

From: Danis, Heather [<mailto:heather.danis@state.vt.us>]
Sent: Friday, October 31, 2014 4:10 PM
To: Brian Pine
Subject: Housing plan comments

Hello Brian,

The Burlington District Office of the Vermont Department of Health supports the city of Burlington's efforts to establish more safe, affordable housing. Housing is an important determinant of health--the quality of the housing in which one lives impacts a wide range of health, functioning, and quality of life outcomes. By extension, the built environment directly affects access to healthy foods and physical activity opportunities, impacts how well residents are able to connect socially with each other, and supports residents in choosing to live free from substance abuse and tobacco. To maximize the positive health impacts of these efforts, we make the following recommendations:

1. Designate new multi-unit apartment/condominium buildings as tobacco-free. In the case of complexes, designate half of the multi-unit structures as tobacco-free. Create incentives for developers and multi-unit property owners to designate housing tobacco-free.
2. Enhance mixed use development.
3. Eliminate parking minimums and establish parking maximums. Work with landlords and developers to create financial incentives for renters and owners who don't require parking.
4. Include sheltered, secure, accessible bicycle storage for 25% of residents in new development of multi-unit housing.
5. Reform the building code to require: incorporating radon resistant features in construction of new homes.
6. Require that the lowest livable space in rental units be tested for radon at least once every 5 years, and require that test results be disclosed to tenants within 30 days after results are received and prior to signing a new rental agreement.
7. Ensure zoning regulations do not impede access to residential support services. For example, location of shelters and transitional housing.
8. Include common indoor/outdoor space in all new and redesigned multi-unit housing properties to increase social capital, positively impact mental health through social interaction and enhance community connectivity.
9. Adhere to the National Council of Architecture Registration Boards (NCARB) guidelines for design of interior space, landscape design and wayfinding particularly for development of housing for elderly residents to ensure their safety and connectedness.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Heather

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