



Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf
Champlain Valley Head Start
Champlain Valley Weatherization Service
Community Action Programs
Financial Futures Program

Fair Housing Project
Mobile Home Program
Vermont Tenants
Voices Against Violence

Bridging gaps, building futures.
July 9, 2014

City of Burlington

RE: Downtown Housing Strategic Report

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the City of Burlington's Downtown Housing Strategy Report. It is well written and infused with hope for the future.

I concur with the objective to develop a housing strategy that positions Burlington for 21st century prosperity. It is also affirming to see the need to focus on affordability and acknowledge that housing is one of the major barriers to prosperity.

While young professionals may be leaving the downtown for other places to live and the reality of adequate available student housing is a constant in the equation, those who are underemployed in the service sector and the work of rapid re-housing of those who have low income hold an important place in the prosperity of the City of Burlington.

The underemployed and those who have very low income are the most vulnerable to a shift in housing priorities and access to employment and services. Please make these Burlingtonians an equal part of the move to prosperity for all.

The balance in this report is heavily weighted toward those who can afford housing on their own and weighted by its absence against those who need additional assistance to have a decent place to live.

We have champions in our midst who lead the way to an equal balance: Champlain Housing Trust and the Burlington Housing Authority. My hope is that their voices would figure prominently in fulfilling the goal of prosperity in Burlington.

I am grateful for your consideration and your work.

My best to you,

Jan F. Demers
Executive Director