

2013

Burlington Legacy Project

Prepare by: Wanda
Hines; Director
SEIP/CEDO



[LEGACY PLAN SUMMARY]

This 2030 vision plan provides a blueprint for change for the economic, environmental, social, and cultural health of Burlington for generations to come and is the result of hundreds of people coming together from around the City to build a common vision for Burlington's future. The Legacy Plan contains the following identified sectors: Diversity & Equity, Economy, Education and Life Long Learning, Environment, Governance, Neighborhoods, and Transportation.

Legacy Action Plan



<http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/Legacy/Legacy-Action-Plan/Legacy-Action-Plan/>

Hand-out prepared by: Wanda Hines, Director SEIP, CEDO, 1/30/13

In 2000, the City Council adopted the [Legacy Action Plan](#), Burlington's 2030 vision. This plan provides a blueprint for change for the economic, environmental, social, and cultural health of Burlington for generations to come and is the result of hundreds of people coming together from around the City to build a common vision for Burlington's future. Through this process, they recognized the challenges that increasing suburban sprawl poses not only to the economic and social vitality of our city, but also to the environmental and social health of our entire region. They have seen that Burlington's growth has subsided in recent years and that this trend may not bode well for the future.

Working together, they have committed to reversing this trend and to spurring the growth in high-quality jobs, affordable housing opportunities, and public and private infrastructure that will assure Burlington's continued preeminence as the economic and cultural hub of northern Vermont.

At the same time as this plan calls for carefully planned growth, it recognizes that we cannot abandon our commitment to the very things that make Burlington a special place in which to live, work, and raise our families.

It affirms that growth can only happen together with a firm commitment to preserving our city's physical and natural environment, maintaining open space, and strengthening the integrity and quality of life in our neighborhoods and families. It also recognizes that our commitment to the health and vitality of future generations begins with investing in greater educational, employment, social, and recreational opportunities for the young people of today.

Working collaboratively with unity of purpose, we will achieve the healthy future detailed in this plan through the strong, active involvement of all the city's residents in governance and day-to-day decision-making. People from all sectors of our community must continue to strive together to make our collective vision a reality.

This Burlington Legacy Project Action Plan provides a road map to a healthier tomorrow. It calls for those who "work, live and play" in Burlington to "navigate together the exciting and rewarding journey that it details".

Legacy Action Plan Update <http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/Legacy/Update/>

We are in the process of updating the [Legacy Action Plan](#), originally adopted by Burlington City Council in 2000. The update attempts to capture the changing and evolving priorities and interests of Burlington stakeholders while preserving the original vision outlined a decade ago. The update also attempts to harmonize the Legacy Plan with two HUD-funded sustainable communities initiatives currently underway: the Downtown/Waterfront planning effort known as [PlanBTV](#) and the regional sustainability planning effort known as the [ECOS project](#).

The draft updated Plan reflects input from community stakeholders shared at Legacy Town Meetings, the PlanBTV and ECOS engagement processes, discussions at neighborhood planning gatherings, diversity and equity celebrations, conversations around climate and transportation planning, and through other community engagement activities. The draft updated Plan is organized around sectors, goal, and actions. Goals are the general, long-range desired outcomes of the community. Goals are used to help define indicators that will gauge our progress towards achieving these goals. This update also includes new and emerging actions.

The updated Plan not only captures and honors the original structure, it also includes some new and emerging sectors and goals. Sectors are the key themes and originally included Economy, Neighborhoods, Governance, Education and Lifelong Learning and Environment. Since the Plan was written in 2000, a new sector - Diversity and Equity - has emerged from the community engagement process. And, Transportation has emerged as a free-standing theme rather than a subset of the Economy.

THE LEGACY PLAN: Sectors

- Diversity and Equity
- Economy
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Environment
- Governance
- Neighborhoods
- Transportation

SEE BELOW identified Goals and Priority Action

Diversity & Equity

CREATING an inclusive and expansive City of Burlington through responsiveness and accountability.

To realize the 2030 vision, in 2011 a new sector "Diversity and Equity" was added to the Legacy Plan. Legacy and diversity interested stakeholders are committed to accessing resources that allow for choice and growth of leadership to create an inclusive and welcoming Burlington for all populations:

Leadership

GOAL: In 2030, Burlington demonstrates strong leadership and local government commitment to diversity and inclusion of minority/ethnically diverse residents of color.

Priority Actions:

- Cultivate and support multicultural leadership that truly reflects diversity of the city.
- Examine and assess current number of minority/ethnically diverse residents serving on city commissions, councils and boards to develop a strategy to ensure they are representative.
- Create access to resources that allow for choices and growth of leadership through and across the sectors; civic engagement, economic development, education, employment, and health.

Workforce and Work Environment

GOAL: In 2030, the city of Burlington will have knowledge of and maintain a workforce reflective of our community and create a healthy supportive work environment for all employees

Priority Actions:

- Make the City of Burlington a model employer through improved training, hiring, and recruitment practices.
- Mandate the integration of Cultural Competency training for all city departments with standard city training.
- Provide mandatory Cultural Competency supervisor training on recruitment and selection, which incorporates conceptual and practical information supporting diversity goals.
- City of Burlington workforce reflects the minority/ethnically diverse make-up of our community.

Measurement and Accountability

GOAL: In 2030, the city of Burlington measures performance to ensure our efforts effectively lead toward established goals and accountability becomes the norm.

Priority Actions:

- Include diversity indicators, benchmarks and best practices in department-annual report reports.
- Include Diversity report card in City of Burlington's annual report.
- Research best practice indicators to measure & build cultural competency of city departments, non-profits, social services, schools and businesses.

Making Our City More Livable

GOAL: In 2030, the city of Burlington partners and works with minority/ethnically diverse community members to ensure that everyone has a path to action to determine needs, set clear goals, and devise, evaluate and carry out projects/activities to make our city more livable.

Priority Actions:

- Develop and build a multicultural space/community resource center as a safe space to organize, build community cohesiveness and celebrate diversity.
- Include a new Diversity & Equity Sector in the updated Legacy Plan.
- Ensure that Burlington School District (BSD) teachers are representative of the nearly 30% minority/ethnically diverse student population which includes almost 3600 students.
- Establish recurring Diversity Engagement Dinners to provide residents an opportunity to participate in government decision making which pertains to allocation of revenue, community development, housing programs, comprehensive development plan and the city's budget.
- Consistently document civic engagement events to provide local government direct knowledge of minority/ethnically diverse population needs, concerns, goals and projects/activity to make our communities more livable.
- Create minority/ethnically diverse leadership legacy pipeline to cultivate, nurture, mentor and support the next generation of youth and young adults.

ECONOMY

Maintaining Burlington as a regional population, government, cultural, and economic center with livable wage jobs, full employment, social supports, and housing that matches job growth and family income.

Burlington understands that sustainability depends on stimulating and maintaining economic growth and vitality. To that end, realizing the Legacy vision depends on the hard work and excellence of many key stakeholders, including:

Creating a Vibrant Urban Center

GOAL: In 2030, Burlington has absorbed the greater portion of the region's population growth, expanding to as much as 65,000. The city is the center of culture, commerce, education, health care, and government. Housing and job growth have kept pace with the population.

Priority Actions:

- *Implement the recommended actions identified in the Chittenden Regional Planning Commission's ECOS Project. Continue to work with regional planners and neighboring communities to insure that Burlington is the primary growth center of the region, intended to prevent sprawl by absorbing a higher percentage of regional growth than any other community.*
- *Continue to redevelop vacant former industrial areas known as "brownfields" to absorb significant commercial and/or mixed-use growth.*
- *Implement the recommended actions identified in the new Downtown and Waterfront Plan to continue to ensure the continued vitality of those areas. Continue redevelopment of the waterfront as a mixed-*

use neighborhood accessible to all city residents for business, housing, cultural, and recreational needs.

- Maintain and expand the number of businesses that offer essential goods and services within the city, readily available to all residents.

Other Actions:

- Reform the city tax structure. This might include lobbying the state to allow a consortium of towns to adopt local option taxes, including sales, rooms and meals, and fuel taxes; use of sales tax incremental financing at the municipal level to finance public and infrastructure enhancements; and establishment of a local property transfer tax to fund open space acquisition and preservation.
- Invest in new and existing infrastructure to support additional growth.
- Reform permitting processes and other regulations to remove or revise standards that are inconsistent with controlled, sustainable growth.
- Invest in and maintain an advanced telecommunications system with citywide accessibility for all.
- Build on the city's strong tourism base, focusing on the environmental, historical, recreational, cultural, and commercial attractions that draw tourists.
- Allocate resources to maintain diverse cultural opportunities accessible to all, from art in public places to affordable studios and rehearsal spaces, teaching facilities, exhibition and performance venues, and lifelong education opportunities.

New Actions:

- *Continue to grow and maintain an advanced telecommunications system with citywide accessibility for all.*

Economic Security

GOAL: In 2030, all Burlington residents have access to livable-wage jobs, full employment and the necessary education and training to meet their families' basic needs for food, shelter, clothing, health care, child care, and transportation.

Priority Actions:

- Support efforts to assure access to affordable high quality health care for all through collaborative measures between providers, organizations, businesses, and individuals.
- Support existing and new outreach and prevention programs.
- Increase the availability of high-quality child care options that are affordable and accessible to all residents.
- Develop a job readiness training center for higher skilled jobs in collaboration with local educational institutions, employers, and the Vermont Department of Employment and Training.
- Provide an economic "safety net" for those who are unable to earn enough to meet their basic needs and collaborate with state agencies to eliminate disincentives such as the loss of welfare benefits for individuals returning to the workforce.

Other Actions:

- Seek more local control and community input into job training and social service programs that use state and federal dollars.
- Develop a regional technology high school and invest in better job skills training for youth.
- Make the research and resources of higher education institutions available to drive new business and job development.
- Ensure that all residents have access to affordable capital and financial services.

New Actions:

- *Provide training for employers on best practices for meeting employment needs by tapping the assets of diverse city residents, including taking advantage of multigenerational and multiracial workforces.*

- *Encourage employers to re-examine HR policies that serve as disincentives to recruitment and retention of diverse employees, including older and low-income workers.*

Economic Self-Reliance

GOAL: In 2030, Burlington has become more self-reliant through local ownership, control, and maximum use and reinvestment of local resources, *including the expanded growth, distribution, and consumption of local food.*

Priority Actions:

- Develop and implement additional incentives and technical support to create a dynamic business mix. Create new businesses, livable-wage job opportunities, and economic development by providing goods and services locally. Support micro and small business development, including women- and minority-owned enterprises.
- Increase production and marketing of agricultural products in the Intervale and support the distribution and consumption of locally produced foods through *expansion of the Intervale Food Hub, public and farmer’s markets, a “food train,” community gardens, community supported agriculture (CSA), and local foods in schools.*
- Develop an “Eco-Park” in the Intervale to create well-paying jobs tied to local agriculture and natural resources.
- Develop more affordable commercial and incubator spaces downtown and in other designated areas throughout the city.
- **Other Actions:**
- Combine the purchasing power of major institutions in the city (including the University of Vermont, Fletcher Allen Health Care, and the City of Burlington) to support businesses that will direct dollars to the local economy. *Start with consolidated purchasing between the School District and Burlington City Government.*
- Encourage individuals, businesses, and organizations to invest savings in local financial institutions that reinvest funds directly back into the community.
- Promote active community reinvestment among all local banks and financial institutions.
- Provide creative financing and affordable capital for business growth through public/private partnerships.

New Actions:

- *Expand the City’s Environmentally Preferred Purchasing Policy to include local food and vendors.*

Education and Lifelong Learning

PROVIDING youth with high-quality education and social supports, and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

One of Legacy’s key missions is to provide “quality education for all.” Legacy is committed to improving not only our schools but also increasing youth opportunities that provide for lifelong learning. This vision is being realized through the work and diligence of many key institutions, projects and initiatives.

Our Schools

GOAL: In 2030, Burlington parents send their children to schools that are models of educational excellence where students develop skills for a lifelong commitment to learning. Schools promote tolerance and respect for all people and are safe from violence and harassment.

Priority Actions:

- Design, implement, and evaluate a pilot educational program in the schools that emphasizes character development, personal responsibility, and conflict resolution skills.
- Embrace the diversity of the community by assuring a welcoming environment in schools, including support systems to integrate new students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Other Actions:

- Work with local artists to design, implement and fund enhanced visual and performing arts programs for all Burlington schools.
- Develop programs to eliminate discriminatory behavior in schools and provide an annual “report card” to the community as a measure of how well we are doing in reducing incidents.

New Actions:

- *Implement the WSD-BSD Partnership for Change, funded through the Nellie Mae Foundation.*

Youth Opportunities

GOAL: In 2030, all Burlington youth have access to meaningful and rewarding recreational, cultural and employment opportunities that support positive values, self identity and integration into the community.

Priority Actions:

- *Conduct a needs assessment for teen and t'weens to better* provide youth with more diverse out-of-school activities and opportunities including a 24-hour youth center, skatepark, and other gathering places.
- Provide more “placebased” experiential, and out-of-school educational opportunities for youths, including internships, workstudy programs, and community service requirements.
- Commit to a stronger link between the schools and social service providers to provide an integrated support network for youth at risk.

Other Actions:

- Increase cooperation between higher education and local schools by developing special college preparatory programs and other opportunities for city students to take advantage of higher education resources in the community.

Completed:

- Develop enhanced dropout reduction policies.

Lifelong Learning

GOAL: In 2030, Burlington residents from preschoolers through senior citizens have access to lifelong education programs that assure the skills needed to learn, work, raise a family, contribute to the community, and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Priority Actions:

- *Continue to* fund effective early childhood education programs to assure equal educational opportunities for all.
- Develop schools to serve as multigenerational community centers for educational, cultural, and recreational activities, including parent education, social services, pregnancy prevention, and other supports for all community members.
- Support and adequately fund libraries and other literacy programs.

Other Actions:

- Strengthen programs to promote pregnancy prevention and effective parenting skills.

New Actions:

- *Increase intergenerational activities and programming.*
- *Coordinate the dissemination of information to increase awareness of multigenerational programming and lifelong learning opportunities.*

Environment

PRESERVING environmental health

Burlington is fortunate to have a plethora of players and stakeholders working to make our 2030 vision a reality. Here is a sampling of what's going on:

Air Quality

GOAL: In 2030, harmful air emissions in the city have been reduced significantly and air quality is greatly improved.

Priority Actions:

- Provide for safe, bicycle and pedestrian access to all areas of the city and surrounding communities. '
- Promote and invest in alternatively fueled vehicles and other nonpolluting technologies for transportation.
- Invest in a system for ongoing monitoring and reporting of air quality.

Other Actions:

- Improve and protect air quality by minimizing the use of fossil-fueled vehicles in the urban core.
- Provide financial incentives for businesses to reduce air pollution.
- *Implement the [urban reforestation plan](#).*

Lake Champlain Water Quality

GOAL: In 2030, water quality in Lake Champlain has improved significantly. The lake is accessible to all residents, whether for drinking water, swimming, fishing, or travel. Ongoing monitoring provides an annual report to the public on the environmental health of the lake. Burlington youth grow up with an understanding of their role as caretakers of the environment.

Priority Actions:

- Minimize the use of pollutants, including pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers by both public and private entities in the city.
- Implement broad-based environmental education programs for people of all ages in the community, emphasizing how individuals can make a difference in their environment.
- Invest in a system for ongoing monitoring and reporting of water quality in the watershed.

Other Actions:

- Provide financial incentives for businesses to reduce water pollution.
- Continue to upgrade waste water and storm water systems and explore alternative systems to prevent point source pollution.
- Design and implement an annual Earth Day education program citywide that includes beach, stream, and neighborhood cleanups.
- Support and expand the Lake Champlain Basin Science Center.
- Coordinate water, sewage, land use, and transportation services with other municipalities.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GOAL: **By 2030, Burlington has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 20% of 2007 levels, and is on its way to reducing emissions by 80% by 2050. Burlington continues to monitor progress on reduction efforts with consistent and regular ghg monitoring.**

Priority Actions:

- Implement the [Climate Action Plan](#).
- Create and implement a climate preparedness plan.

Governance

INCREASING participation in community decision-making

To realize the 2030 Legacy Vision a broad section of Burlington citizens are needed in all aspects of decision-making not only in the voting booths, but also in a wide-array of public participation programs, among initiatives to attain sustainability.

Responsive Government

GOAL: In 2030, Burlington is a national model for its responsive style of governance and informed, active citizenry. Voter turnout has increased to 66 percent. Residents have an active voice in decisions affecting their neighborhoods.

City government will be responsive and accountable to the voters, with the Mayor overseeing city departments while balancing strong input from commissioners and other committed citizen volunteers.

Priority Actions:

- Increase diversity—including youths and minorities—on decisionmaking boards of all types and provide a regular “report card” on progress.
- Implement a neighborhood design process as part of each municipal development plan update, providing residents with more of a voice about how their neighborhood will grow in the future.
- Implement more effective and centralized management.
- *Continue to develop and use* creative and centralized information about public meetings to increase participation in civic activities.

Other Actions:

- Decentralize more decision-making to the neighborhood level through neighborhood town meetings, block parties, and the making of budget decisions by neighborhoods.
- Use referenda and community polling through neighborhood polling stations, cable television access, neighborhood gatherings, and the internet to increase public input in decision-making.
- Replace polling stations by mailing ballots to every resident in the city for elections.
- Provide electoral information and polling centers in multiple languages and formats with outreach to new residents.

Youth Civic Participation

GOAL: In 2030, youth participation in Burlington civic activities is significant and young voters turn out at the polls ahead of national averages. Youth are empowered to participate in decisions that affect their city and neighborhoods.

Priority Actions:

- Implement a civics curriculum in all city schools *with an emphasis on civic engagement and responsibility.*
- Identify and support community service and internship placements for students to participate in civic affairs.
- *Increase opportunities for youth to be involved in decision-making processes.* Provide youth representation on city boards and commissions, with the representative(s) to be chosen by youths themselves.

Other Actions:

- Strengthen school student councils and develop meaningful connections between the councils, the community, and student government associations at local colleges and universities.
- **Present an annual youth agenda to the city council.**
- Create and support a student advisory committee to the school superintendent that would also advise city commissions and boards on key issues.

Neighborhoods

IMPROVING the quality of life in neighborhoods

Burlington residents have expressed the need to restore and strengthen our neighborhoods as Burlington expands into a larger city. In order to encourage interconnectedness, increase the quality of life, and improve housing options, Burlington has initiated the following projects.

Quality of Life

GOAL: In 2030, Burlington's development has enhanced the quality of life in neighborhoods that reflect the demographic diversity of the city as a whole. Development preserves neighborhood identity, minimizes traffic and noise, and provides ample open space. Neighbors feel safe on the streets and free from domestic violence in their homes, while enjoying many opportunities for working together on community improvement.

Priority Actions:

- *Implement the actions identified in the Downtown and Waterfront Plan.*
- Support restorative justice programs and alternative models of dispute resolution and community service.
- Increase education and prevention efforts to reduce sexual and domestic violence and child abuse.
- Strengthen neighborhood block/street associations citywide, *expand opportunities for celebration and both face-to-face and virtual connections*, and support neighborhood cleanup activities on a regularly scheduled basis.

Other Actions:

- *Continue to expand the use of "three-dimensional" planning, using computer and physical modeling to identify areas where building density and heights can increase while maintaining critical view corridors, air flow, and sunlight.*
- Strengthen public/ private partnerships to create and implement a plan for lowering alcohol and drug abuse in the city.
- Increase the scope and effectiveness of community based policing. *The city and other stakeholders should sustain, enhance, and develop multi-layered strategies in responding to criminal justice issues consistent with the range of community needs, the city's existing community policing objectives, and maintenance of public safety.*
- *Continue to place all utility lines underground.*

Completed:

- Adopt an open space protection plan supporting conservation education, the establishment of a "land conservation fund," and a development review process to assure that there is accessible, well-maintained open space in all neighborhoods.

Housing

GOAL: In 2030, every Burlington resident—regardless of age, income, family makeup, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnic background—has access to safe, accessible, affordable housing. Homeless shelters are no longer needed. Preservation and construction of housing keeps pace with job and household income growth in the city.

Priority Actions:

- Support public-private partnerships for capitalization, construction, permitting, and inspection assistance to construct affordable *and workforce* housing.
- Strengthen code enforcement and provide incentives and disincentives to support minimum housing standards.

- Work closely with the University of Vermont to build additional student housing on campus and resolve neighborhood issues of noise, congestion, and parking. *Keep construction in pace with increased student enrollment.*
- Invest in rehabilitation of older housing stock while preserving its architectural integrity.
- Revise building codes and provide incentives to encourage owner investment.
- *Continue to* redevelop “brownfields”— underutilized former industrial sites—for use as housing construction sites.
- Revise zoning regulations in targeted areas as part of the neighborhood design process to allow “building up, not out,” creating an environment that is safe, accessible, and attractive, while also allowing for scenic views.

Other Actions:

- Develop alternative models of home ownership such as cooperatives and cohousing.

New Actions:

- *Ensure that housing is accessible to transportation and services.*
- *Link housing with services, especially for seniors and the “hard to house.”*
- *Require universal design for all new residential construction.*

Transportation

GOAL: In 2030, every Burlington resident has access to a diverse, seamless, multi-modal transportation system to travel easily to jobs, businesses, and recreational and cultural activities. Increased public transit and alternative transportation provides local and regional travel that is safe, accessible, efficient, and environmentally sound. Transportation within, to, and from the city relies less on individual vehicles and integrates the automobile with rail, bus, shuttle, boat, air, pedestrian, and bike transport.

Priority Actions:

Implement the actions noted in the City's [transportation plan](#), including:

- Implement “complete streets” throughout the City, as mandated by state law as well as the transportation plan.
- Provide for safe bicycle and pedestrian traffic, both in the city center and in connecting neighborhoods to schools, businesses, recreation areas and a regional system.
- Establish park-and-ride facilities with shuttles or other “people-mover” capabilities to the south, north, and east of downtown to reduce the number of automobiles traveling to the city center.
- Implement local and regional rail service to Burlington from New York to Montreal and beyond.
- Expand public transit service. Increase investment in public transit to expand services locally and regionally, exploring a regional gas tax and other funding mechanisms. Develop a multi-modal transportation center. Extend service hours, especially on evenings and weekends. Improve bus stops, with better seating and shelter.
- Ensure accessible routes throughout the city to residents who are mobility impaired.
- *Improve sidewalk maintenance with a priority for spending in the city budget.*

ACTION:

Progress toward the Burlington Legacy Project’s goal of a sustainable city will require broad-based collaboration among a diverse range of government entities, businesses, organizations, educational institutions, health care providers, neighborhood groups, and individual citizens. Each must take responsibility for portions of this plan, providing the direction, commitment, and resources it will take to make this vision a reality.