

RECONNECTING DOWNTOWN BURLINGTON

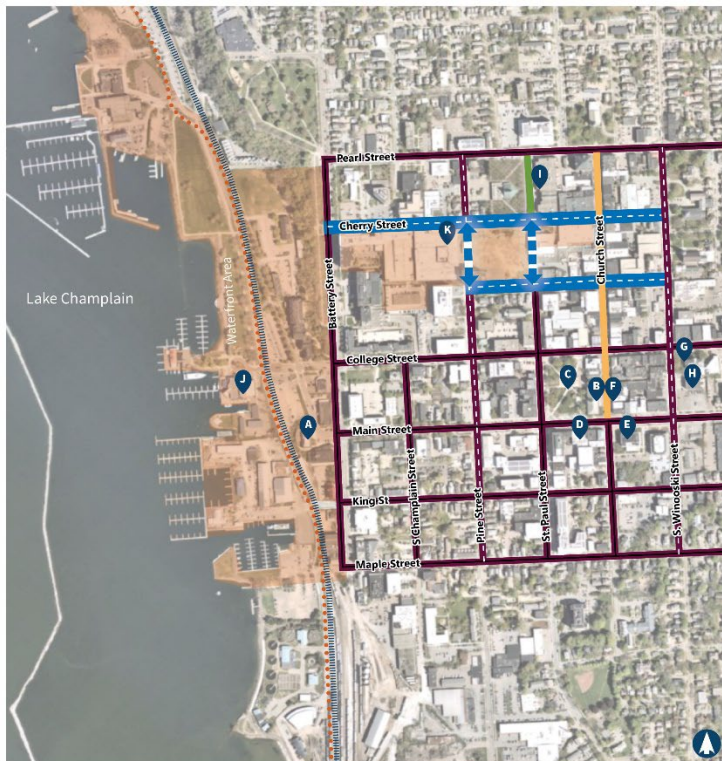
Reconnecting downtown Burlington will establish new, direct access to public transit, reduce emissions and travel time for all modes of transportation, improve public safety and residents' quality of life, and establish new opportunities to rebuild a community and improve economic conditions for disadvantaged residents and businesses in the downtown.

The City of Burlington is Vermont's largest city and the population, economic engine, and cultural hub of Chittenden County. Burlington is a small city with under 50,000 residents and is one of the country's most celebrated, progressive, livable, and dynamic small cities. Like many urban communities in the 1950s, Burlington's downtown became a central focus for redevelopment as industrial activity, transportation, and land use patterns changed. Suburbanization and reduced waterfront commerce threatened Burlington's economy, so Burlington voters approved the Champlain Street Urban Renewal Project in an effort to acquire enough developable land for commercial expansion in the downtown. Little Italy, centered along Champlain Street, became the focal point of this transformation. The intent was to reclaim the waterfront for public use, shift economic activity into the downtown core, and connect the downtown and waterfront with commercial activity. It relocated every resident, demolished every structure, rezoned the area for commercial development, and created large parcels to incentivize commercial expansion. Sections of St Paul Street, Pine Street, Bank Street, and Champlain Street were clipped in order to build a series of hotels, a courthouse, parking garages, senior housing, and a suburban-style mall. Burlington's approach to Downtown Urban Renewal created a legacy of harm as neighborhoods and small businesses were eliminated, street patterns were altered, and the historic context of downtown was significantly changed to attract large-scale, suburban-style development. Burlington's downtown community, character, and its vibrant, interconnected downtown neighborhoods were gone.

In 2014, Burlington was presented with a generational opportunity to reconnect and rebuild the fabric of the downtown. The windowless suburban mall that disconnected Bank and Cherry Streets was purchased and demolished. The CityPlace Burlington developers subdivided this main parcel, transferred ownership of the clipped sections of Pine Street and St Paul Street to the City at no cost, and committed to a public-private partnership to rebuild these streets, reconnect Bank and Cherry Streets, and coordinate street and sidewalk improvements in all directions. Three additional downtown Burlington VT property owners have signed agreements pledging the transfer of ancillary property rights to guarantee the reconstruction of these clipped blocks. The private partners will bring affordable housing back to the downtown through an established partnership with the Champlain Housing Trust, and new buildings will follow Burlington's Form Based Code standards to activate the street for community connections with street-level retail, cafes, and public spaces.

Bank Street and Cherry Street are parallel, disconnected east-west streets in the northern section of Burlington's downtown core. A bird's eye view (Figure 1) clearly illustrates the oversized, intrusive commercial development that has become a physical barrier to street and social connections in the project area. The traditional street grid prior to Urban Renewal connected Burlington's Little Italy with the Old North End (ONE) neighborhood immediately north, starting at Pearl Street, and the Battery Street / King Street neighborhood immediately south. People-scaled, mixed-use development still activates these neighborhoods, but the lack of

housing and limited commercial diversity in the project area creates a bleak environment with no sense of community for people along Bank Street and Cherry Street. The disconnected nature of the streets and the development style that replaced downtown housing have become a barrier to social connections, diverse economic opportunities, and housing, which all contribute to the socioeconomic disadvantages in this neighborhood.



- LEGEND**
- Study Area Blocks
 - ◆ Study Area Proposed Connections
 - Bike Path
 - ▬ Railroad Tracks
 - ▬ Church Street Marketplace
 - ▬ Downtown Transit Center
 - ▬ Sidewalk—Both Sides
 - ▬ Bike Route
 - ▬ Waterfront District TIF Area
- A. Union Station—Amtrak
 - B. City Hall Park
 - C. City Hall
 - D. Flynn Theater
 - E. Chittenden County Superior Court
 - F. Church Street Marketplace
 - G. Burlington Fire Department
 - H. Fletcher Free Library
 - I. Downtown Transit Center
 - J. ECHO Leahy Center for Lake Champlain
 - K. Burlington High School (temporary location)

Figure 1: Downtown Burlington

While great strides have been made in recent years to establish partnerships that will rebuild public infrastructure to reconnect the community, residents in the project area face some of the most challenging socioeconomic conditions. Here, residents have inadequate affordable housing and healthcare, limited employment opportunities linked to a narrow resource base, lack of a trained workforce – particularly among youths, and growing disparities and increasing poverty among Burlington’s Black, Indigenous, and people of color. The landscape created after Urban Renewal displaced working-class neighborhoods and community, closed small businesses, deepened the racial and economic divisions that continue to present day, and reinforced the infrastructure barriers faced by low-income

communities and communities of color. Downtown neighborhoods face higher rates of poverty, unemployment, income inequality, and higher rates of crime. Between 2017 and 2021, more than half of all policy incidents have occurred in Burlington’s downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Undoing the far-reaching consequences of Urban Renewal will require resources and investments in youth workforce development and employment programs to address the socio-economic disparities and strengthen community capacity. Towards a Safer Downtown Burlington is a pilot program included as an element of reconnecting downtown Burlington. Burlington’s Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) has a successful track record of close to 40 years working with low-income and other under-represented populations to

fight poverty and engage the community to build a vibrant, healthy, and equitable city. CEDO has operated two workforce development and job training programs within the last five years. Like the Towards a Safer Downtown Burlington proposal, these programs focused on historically underserved and vulnerable populations, including immigrants and refugees. To improve conditions for the next generation of Burlingtonians, this project includes a workforce development project that will train approximately 120 youth with in-demand skills and build community capacity that will enhance safety in Burlington.

LOCATION

Burlington was established in the late 1700s on lands of N'dakinna, home to the Western Abenaki people in what is now Vermont. The project area is located in Census Tract 10. This census tract is located in an Area of Persistent Poverty, is not a Historically Disadvantaged Community, and is not a RAISE Grant Urbanized Area (but is within the Burlington UA 11755).

Reconnecting Downtown Burlington will focus on streets that were removed or restricted after Urban Renewal: Cherry Street, Bank Street, Pine Street, and St Paul Street. Bank Street is a short, 3-block street with sidewalks, metered parking on both sides, and stop-controlled intersections. Urban Renewal clipped Bank Street at the western end, removing two blocks between Battery Street and Pine Street. Bank Street now runs east/west from Pine Street at the western end to Winooski Avenue at the eastern end. A circuitous and uncomfortably dark sidewalk leads pedestrians from the Pine Street intersection past parking garages and the backside of hotels before connecting with Battery Street. This path also branches off to a shared-use path connection for people to walk or bike another uncomfortably dark, narrow route between a parking garage and a 3-story windowless wall to Cherry Street. Northerly connections with Bank Street are very limited. Bank Street connects southerly to College Street at Pine Street, St Paul Street, the Church Street pedestrian marketplace, Center Street (a one-block, one-way northbound street), and Winooski Avenue. Other than the Church Street pedestrian marketplace and Winooski Avenue, no northerly streets connect with Bank Street.

Although Cherry Street retains its original connections to Battery Street at the western end and Winooski Avenue at the eastern end, it has the most restrictive north/south connections. Pine Street connects Cherry Street with Pearl Street to the north. Near the middle of Cherry Street, Green Mountain Transit's (GMT) Downtown Transit Center (DTC) occupies the northernmost block of St Paul Street. GMT is Vermont's regional transit service and the DTC is their main hub for transfers and downtown connections. Other long-distance transit lines also stop on Pearl Street at the northeast corner of the DTC and Pearl Street. Vehicles and bicycles are prohibited from traveling through the DTC (except southbound vehicles accessing the Courthouse parking garage on the east side), but a sidewalk connects pedestrians through the DTC between Cherry Street and Pearl Street.

All surrounding streets have sidewalks on both sides. Transit connections are along Battery Street, Winooski Avenue, or Cherry Street, but the limited street connections between Bank Street and Battery Street / Cherry Street is a barrier to transit accessibility. Winooski Avenue is a dedicated bike route with bicycle lanes in both directions and Pine Street is a bike route with shared-lane signs and markings. However, since Pine Street does not connect Bank Street to Cherry Street, Winooski Avenue receives higher traffic volumes. This deters many people from

biking on Winooski Avenue, and the disjointed nature of Pine Street is a barrier for the bikeway network. This project will install Bicycle Boulevards on Pine Street, Bank Street, and Cherry Street to improve connections for people biking in the area.

On-street metered parking is prevalent throughout the downtown, including on Bank and Cherry Streets. Land use on the south side of Bank Street is quite different west of St Paul Street, where Little Italy began and the original structures survived Urban Renewal. These former 2- and 3-story architecturally styled homes are now small businesses and apartments. Looking east, the south side of Bank Street has one mid-rise commercial building at the corner of Bank Street / St Paul Street and otherwise contains a mix of original commercial buildings from one- to four-stories. Land use on the north side of Bank Street is a clear marker of mid-century Urban Renewal. At the western end, commercial buildings constructed along Bank Street during Burlington's Urban Renewal are in flux. The bank at the western end has dramatically scaled back its commercial operations and banking space, converting the remaining space into apartments. A new apartment building is being constructed immediately south of the bank, in the footprint of the former banking drive-thru. At the northwest corner of Bank St / Pine St, the former Macy's department store is the temporary home of Burlington High School through 2025. An occupied eight-story office building stands adjacent to Macy's / BHS on the east side. This building spans across what would have been Pine Street to the north and retains the former driveway to the Town Center Mall parking garage. That driveway will be reconstructed as the new block of Pine Street, traveling underneath the office building. Moving east, the former mall has already been demolished. The CityPlace Burlington development team is planning a LEED-certified development with housing, new street-level retail, outdoor public spaces, restaurants, and local service businesses in place of the suburban style mall. As part of the agreed-upon redevelopment effort, the driveway to the 3-story bank at the north side of the St Paul St / Bank St intersection will shift to rebuild the missing block of St Paul Street.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

In 1996, the city established the Waterfront Tax Increment Finance (WTIF) District – its first substantive step to removing economic and transportation barriers after Urban Renewal. After the WTIF investments successfully created jobs, space for community connections, and increased the local economy, the Downtown TIF District was created in 2011. Burlington voters approved TIF redevelopment of Cherry Street from Battery Street at the west to Church Street at the east, and for Bank Street from Pine Street to Church Street.

Burlington Department of Public Works (DPW) will manage this design/construction project. Immediately after grant award announcements, DPW will request USDOT approval to initiate the NEPA process prior to grant funds being obligated. A public hearing will be scheduled and a consultant will prepare the NEPA documentation and final design services. Design plans for all blocks west of Church Street are paused at 75% until construction funding has been secured. Design plans for the blocks east of Church Street (one block of Bank Street and one block of Cherry Street) are advancing from conceptual design in 2023. Temporary construction easements and state and local permitting is already complete and may need minor amendments to include the blocks east of Church Street.

Construction services will be procured through an Invitation to Bid. Construction activities on Cherry Street, Pine Street, and St Paul Street will occur simultaneously. Construction activities on Bank Street will begin approximately one year after construction is initiated on the adjacent streets. DPW has adopted a Public Engagement Plan that will guide meaningful and targeted public outreach at all phases of project delivery.

Construction activities will remove all surface infrastructure – sidewalks, pavement, bike racks, parking meters, street lights, and more – and will reconstruct every element to achieve Great Streets. Burlington adopted Great Streets design standards for all downtown streets to ensure a vibrant, sustainable, safe, and walkable community for the next generation. CityPlace partners will construct the new sub-surface infrastructure and utilities on the new blocks of Pine Street and St Paul Street. CityPlace will also construct new surface infrastructure, except furnishings, plantings, and lighting – which the city will install – on the south side of Cherry Street and north side of Bank Street between Pine and St Paul Streets, and on the new blocks of Pine and St Paul Streets.

At the end of this project, the city will have reconstructed 4,900 feet of new granite curbing, 5,000 cubic yards of accessible sidewalk, 1,800 cubic yards of pervious brick pavers, relocated all overhead utilities into underground conduit, replaced aged and failing subsurface utilities, and replaced standalone parking meters with kiosks. More than 70 new street trees will be installed and supported by soil cells for superb growth in this urban environment, and more than 1,800 new shrubs and perennials will be installed within new raingardens to infiltrate stormwater runoff before it reaches Lake Champlain. Every intersection will be necked down with curb extensions or converted to raised intersections for pedestrian safety and visibility and to slow traffic and prevent serious or fatal injuries if crashes occur. Public art, benches, and pedestrian-scale lighting will provide functional space for people to rest, pause, reflect, and connect.

Reconnecting downtown Burlington as a public-private partnership allows the city to invest in the community and build workforce development for the next generation of Burlingtonians. The workforce development tasks will begin by procuring a project manager and a consultant. Next, community meetings will launch the Toward a Safer Downtown Burlington program and recruit participants. A youth development and skill gap study will then inform a youth workforce training program and community capacity building program. The consultant's work will end with data collection and reporting to evaluate the success and sustainability of this exciting program.

SAFETY

Burlington’s downtown accounts for the highest rates of crime and some of the highest crash rates in the city, and vulnerable road users are disproportionately impacted by serious and fatal crashes on Burlington roadways. Reconnecting Bank Street and Cherry Street will reduce the frequency and severity of crashes and improve the environment for public safety.

Reducing Fatalities and Serious Injuries & Protecting the Community

Between 2017 and 2021, more than half of police incidents in the city have occurred in the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.¹ In addition, 1,953 crashes were reported in Burlington between 2016 and 2020. Of these crashes, 38 resulted in serious injuries or fatalities and 92% occurred in neighborhoods experiencing economic, equity and/or health disadvantages.

Residents living within the project area experience some of the most challenging socioeconomic conditions in the state and are among those disproportionately impacted by crashes. Crashes specific to Bank Street and Cherry Street are depicted below (Figure 1).

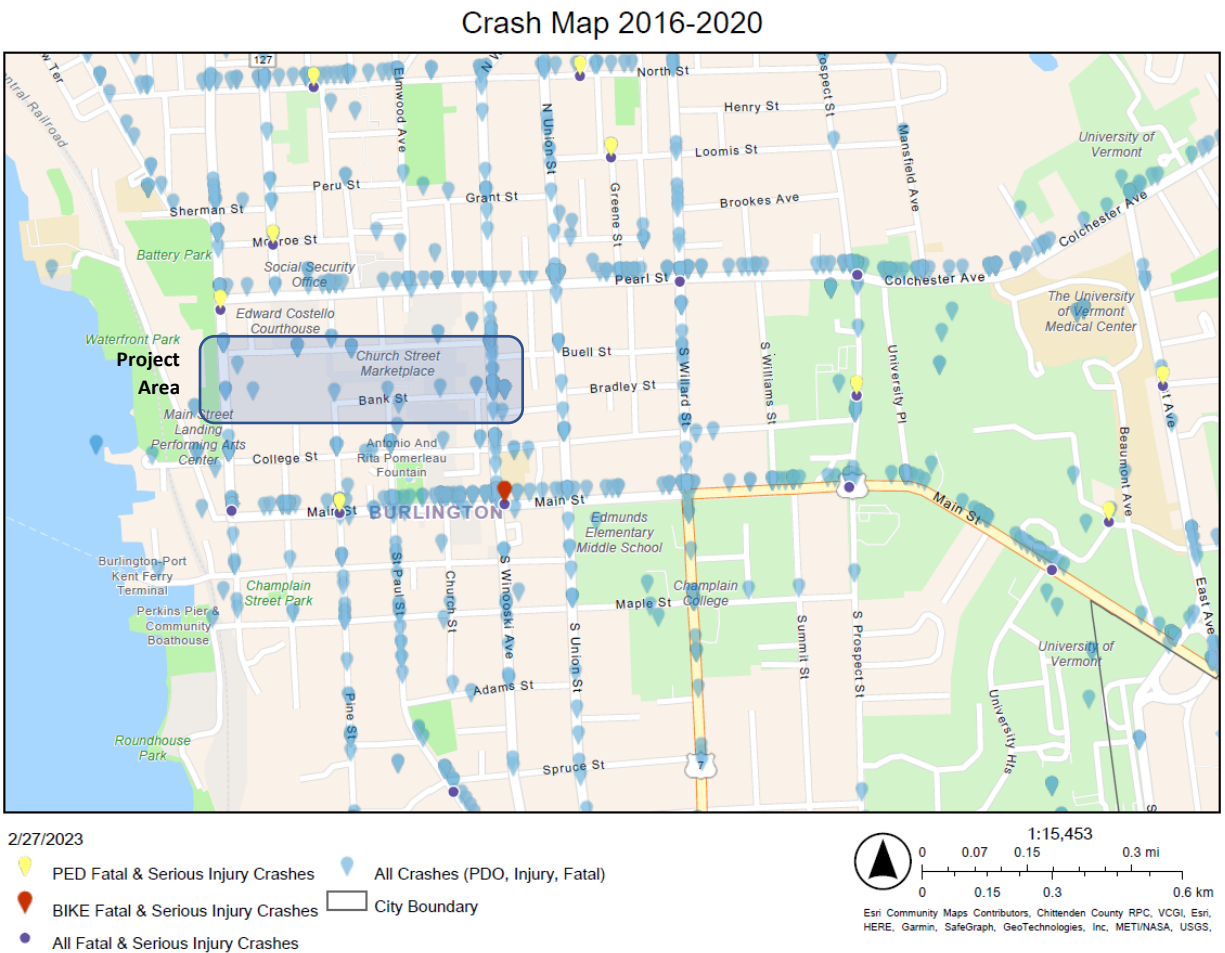


Figure 1: Traffic Crashes in Burlington and the project area

¹ 2023 Burlington Police Department dataset

Crash narratives indicate that 25% of crashes involved deficient infrastructure for people walking and biking (i.e. no crosswalks or limited visibility at crosswalks, no bike lanes), which can be mitigated by implementing FHWA's Proven Safety Countermeasures. This project includes the following proven safety countermeasures:

- Filling gaps in the sidewalk network,
- Low-stress bikeways, and
- New crosswalks with high-visibility markings, signs, and street lighting.

Safety in the downtown core will be improved in a variety of ways through this project. As recommended in the USDOT's National Roadway Safety Strategies for Safer Roads, all of the street sections included in the project area will be re-built as Complete Streets. The blocks have been designed to the City's Great Street standards, which create spaces that are:

- walkable and bikeable, safe for all modes and levels of accessibility
- sustainable, through stormwater treatment, expanded tree canopy, and permeable surfaces
- vibrant, to support downtown's diverse range of public and private destinations and activities
- functional, serving all users, flexible, maintainable and affordable

Every intersection will be necked down with curb extensions or converted to raised intersections for pedestrian safety and visibility and to slow traffic and prevent serious or fatal injuries if crashes occur. Not only will all streets and sidewalks be built to Great Streets standards, Bank Street will be Burlington's first shared, curbless street. Bank Street's design speed aims to achieve travel speeds less than 20 miles per hour. This design approach for slow traffic speeds aligns with the USDOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy for Safer Speeds through Roadway Design.

The Benefit-Cost Analysis quantified safety benefits using the crash modification factors (CMF) from the CMF Clearinghouse and applied USDOT recommended monetary value for crashes by severity. CMFs are not yet available for features such as curb extensions and curbless streets that are significant elements of this project. Four intersections in the project area see an average of 3.2 crashes per year. After applying the CMF for raised crosswalks (CMF 0.7), this number was reduced such that 0.96 crashes will be avoided per year. Bank and Cherry Streets see an average of 0.6 bicycle crashes per year. After applying the CMF for bicycle boulevards (CMF 0.37), there is an expected reduction of 0.38 crashes per year. Midblock crossings in the project area see 0.2 injury crashes annually. After applying the CMF for midblock crossings (CMF 0.82), there is an expected reduction of .04 crashes annually.

By reconnecting Bank Street and Cherry Street, vulnerable roadway users will be protected with bicycle boulevards on Pine St, Bank St, and Cherry St and wide, comfortable sidewalks on all streets. Sidewalks will have 6' of clear space and up to 9' of additional width from tree belts and furnishing zones. People walking and biking will save time and have fewer crossings and less exposure to vehicles by being able to travel on the new blocks of Pine Street and St Paul Street. Currently, pedestrians traveling from the Bank Street / Pine Street area to the Downtown Transit Center (DTC) have the option of taking a circuitous, steep shared-use path through an alley between a parking garage and windowless three-story building or taking a roundabout route to

Church Street. The new connections from Bank Street to Cherry Street will save about 5 minutes by foot. People bicycling are not able to ride along Church Street, so people bicycling from the Bank Street / Pine Street area to the DTC currently have the option of taking the same circuitous, steep shared use path or taking a roundabout route to Winooski Avenue, where traffic volumes are the highest of all downtown streets. This project will construct a more direct, well-lit, and attractive connection that is a drastic improvement for bicyclist and pedestrian safety (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Options for walking & biking to the Downtown Transit Center from Bank St

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

This project will repair our downtown street grid, and, in doing so reduce travel times, improve air quality, and enhance our active transportation network.

Reducing Pollutants & Addressing Disproportionate Impacts on Underserved Communities

Approximately 4,600 people live within ¼ mile of the project area.² The USDOT defines this as an Area of Persistent Poverty, where residents experience very high rates of pollution and socioeconomic disadvantages when compared to the rest of Vermont. Here, residents are living above the 90th percentile for 95% of all EPA registered pollution hazards; and at the 100th percentile for exposures to air toxins that pose cancer and respiratory health risks.

This project will restitch the fabric of the downtown street grid. This connectivity will reduce travel times for all modes in the area and save 84.167 hours of travel per day. These reduced travel times will result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions and air and noise pollution – a significant benefit for the many underserved communities living in and traveling through the project area.

² EPA’s Environmental Justice Screen

Transportation-Efficient Design, Modal Shifts to Active Transportation, and Net Zero 2030

Not only will this project reduce the amount of hours car spend on downtown roadways, it will also add 0.75 miles of new downtown bikeways, 8,000 linear feet of new, accessible sidewalks, public art, and benches that make it easier and more functional for people to get where they need to go without a vehicle, to rest, reflect, and connect. This will further aid in the reduction of vehicle miles traveled through modal shift, as it creates critical connections to the Downtown Transit Center as well as modal shift to active transportation. Every mile that someone travels by non-motorized means keeps 0.73 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions out of the atmosphere, further reducing transportation-related air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in this community. Alternative transportation is one of the Four Fossil Fuel Energy Reduction Pathways outlined in Burlington's Net Zero Energy Roadmap, the city's plan for reducing and eventually eliminating fossil fuels use from the heating and ground transportation sectors by 2030.

QUALITY OF LIFE

The reconnection of Bank Street with Cherry Street and the coordinated mixed-use development will provide direct, multi-modal access to everything that makes a livable community and improves residents' quality of life: transportation choices, food, neighbors, outdoor space, vibrant sidewalks and plazas, and employment. This project will reduce automobile dependency and transportation-related expenses that are a burden to many households. In turn, residents will have an opportunity to convert their transportation expenses toward housing, food, and self-care.

Integrating Affordable Housing, Land Use, and More Livable Communities

The Champlain Street Urban Renewal project displaced the residents and businesses that formed a mixed-use neighborhood in the project area. Zoning policies for next 40 years prioritized commercial growth and severely limited downtown housing options (illustrated in Figure 3). Zoning specifically restricted housing construction in the downtown and established imposing requirements that limited developers' ability to maximize investments and offer affordable housing. The 1991 Municipal Development Plan (MDP) acknowledges that "city policy in the 1960s removed almost all housing from downtown." By the early 1990s there were fewer than 360 homes in the district and nearly 45% of those were located in two age-restricted buildings for older adults. Those trends continue today, with much of the remaining housing options located in above market-rate developments.

Burlington's extremely low vacancy rate (0.5% to 3% over the past ten years) makes it difficult to find any housing at all, particularly for residents facing economic barriers. Residents living within the project area experience some of the most challenging socioeconomic conditions in the state. The 4,674 residents within ¼-mile walking distance of the project area are living with low incomes (in the 97th percentile), have higher rates of unemployment (87th percentile), are linguistically isolated (89th percentile), and people of color (91st percentile). Burlington, like Vermont, is predominantly white (87%). However, the white population has steadily decreased (12%) over the course of 30 years. The CCRPC's annual ECOS report found 99.7% of the population growth in the county over the last ten years is Hispanic, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian, or Native Hawaiian residents (11,746 of the 11,778 new residents in Chittenden County from 2010-2020). Unfortunately, racial disparities are also increasing as diversity increases. In the project area, white households earn an average of \$59,750 annually, with 19% of white residents living below the poverty line; compared to \$13,843 annual earnings

for Black households and 27% living below the poverty line (2020 ACS 5-year estimates). Unemployment rates are also three times higher for Black residents than for their white counterparts. The severe lack of housing, difficult economic conditions, racial inequities, and challenges of mental health services also created a drastic increase in homelessness in Burlington and the region after the COVID-19 pandemic. While much of the country experienced an average 8% decline in homelessness, Vermonters navigating homelessness skyrocketed 259%. The Black community is disproportionately impacted, with 13% of Black or African American Burlingtonians and 27% of Black families accessing emergency shelters but only making up 3.7% of the population. This is the only race with higher rates of homelessness than their percentage of the overall population.

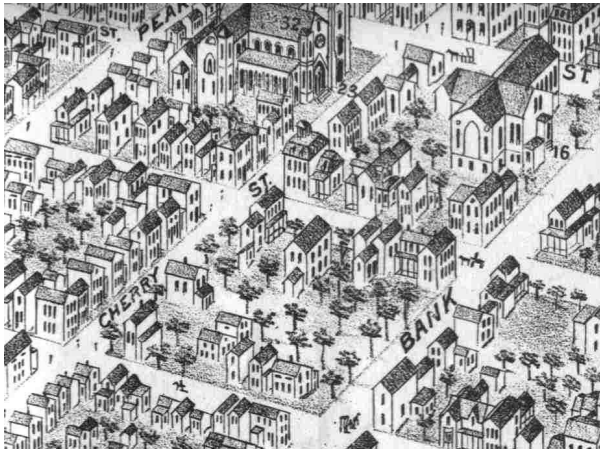


Figure 3: Project area in 1877 vs 2021 (top left and top right, respectively). Cherry St at St Paul St, 1946 vs 2006 (bottom left c. Louis McAllister and right c. Carrie Mardorf, respectively)

Burlington’s historic zoning policies directly impacted the disparities that downtown residents face, but this project will offer new opportunities to directly improve the quality of life for the disadvantaged communities living in the project area. CityPlace Burlington will build 400+ market-rate rental units, with approximately 70 units available for purchase. Another 80+ units of affordable housing will be built in partnership with Champlain Housing Trust, a Community Land Trust that develops and stewards permanently affordable homes and related community assets. Downtown residents will be able to connect in a children’s play room, at the terraces,

gardens, and decks, in the sauna, or in the 40,000+ square feet of new street-level retail, restaurants and businesses that will also be located on site. The community will be able to connect on an observation deck with waterfront views and in a new community event / meeting space. These mixed-use additions will begin to redress the limited housing availability, high rental costs, limited infrastructure for social connectivity, and high costs of auto-dependent transportation for residents already living with financial stress and language barriers.

MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

The fragmented street network after Urban Renewal separated working-class communities and made the alternative routes – now carrying higher volumes of traffic – less appealing to walk, bike, or connect with people outside. The public-private partnership to Reconnect Downtown Burlington will establish new transportation infrastructure that directly improves system-wide connectivity based on clear, consistent public feedback.

Increasing Affordable Transportation Choices & Reducing Vehicle Dependence

planBTV Downtown & Waterfront, planBTV Walk Bike, and nearly every recent comprehensive plan for Burlington acknowledges that pedestrian mobility should be the highest priority in the downtown. This project makes every effort to reduce reliance on single occupant vehicles, increase transit use, increase connectivity of the bike network, and allow people to live, work, play, and move freely.

Burlington’s Great Streets standards vastly exceed the minimums for Americans with Disabilities Act and create an appealing environment and new connections that will reduce vehicle dependence in the project area. This project will widen sidewalks, add benches, bike racks and street trees, capture stormwater and beautify the street with raingardens, add bicycle boulevards, improve access to transit, and create an environment that invites people to connect between the downtown, waterfront, and surrounding neighborhoods. The area just outside of the project limits is prevalent with origins and destinations for multi-modal travel, while the project area is rather barren. This project will enable

Recent development in Burlington has created enclaves and reduced the possibilities of public pedestrian circulation. For example, in the urban renewal area west of Church Street, the traditional street pattern has been replaced by parking lots and buildings, with a consequent decline of public circulation through the area. This decline should not be allowed to continue. New development should invite pedestrian access. All neighborhoods should be linked together by sidewalks and pathways. All city streets should be public, not private, facilities.
Municipal Development Plan (1991)

Walking along Cherry Street and parts of Bank Street between Church and Battery Streets, you may have experienced a sense of urgency and desire to move quickly past the desolate, bland, and non-inviting building facades and dark unprogrammed spaces. All along Cherry Street, there are numerous opportunities for activating the street by turning the mall inside out and bringing retail and other activity back to the street. Strategic infill development, innovative building renovations, and streetscape improvements would make for a more inviting, vibrant, and safer-feeling street. Expanding the Church Street experience to the side streets and the rest of the downtown and waterfront will ultimately help generate additional economic vitality, create new jobs, and draw more visitors to Burlington.
2013 planBTV Downtown & Waterfront

people to make connections to the surrounding area and create a new environment for origins and destinations on Cherry Street, Bank Street, Pine Street, and St Paul Street.

Implementing a Community-Driven Plan to Address Gaps in the Existing Network

Development that has occurred in the project area since the 1960s is poorly suited to the community, and the community has provided clear and consistent direction to mitigate the impacts of these barriers. This project was designed after intensive public engagement. The new streetscape, amenities, and reconnected blocks will remove the barriers to physical and social connections that the community has prioritized.

planBTV Downtown & Waterfront (2013) documents the community's priorities to amend the policies that created downtown inequities and guide new development to remove barriers and redress inequities. The engagement plan was intense and creative, and truly established a new baseline for community engagement in Burlington's planning activities. Residents of the Old North End neighborhood just north of downtown have continually felt isolated from the downtown core. Although some physical infrastructure is in place, the community acknowledged that streetscaping would create a more inviting, walkable feel to make it pleasant enough to attract pedestrians. Cherry Street is a designated waterfront access point, but it lacks any improvements for pedestrians as some of the other waterfront access points have.

After planBTV Downtown & Waterfront established the community's vision to remove barriers presented by Bank & Cherry Streets, the Burlington City Council approved a public input process for the public-private partnership offered by CityPlace Burlington to ensure a robust and diverse process that brought the community-centered vision to the forefront. Over an 18-month period in 2015-2016, the community provided feedback at dedicated public presentations, a multi-day workshop / charrette, City Council and other board and commission meetings (including the Accessibility Committee and Youth Council), presentations at Neighborhood Planning Assemblies, comment boxes, and a city website.

Economic Competitiveness and Opportunities for Youth-focused Employment

planBTV is all about ensuring that Burlington continues to be a dynamic city of opportunity at the heart of a regional population. This establishes the vision, policies, and priorities to promote an economy that offers job opportunities for all skill levels, provides equal access for people of all abilities and backgrounds, establishes the necessary supportive services to enable participation in the workforce and strengthens local partnerships that support economic development, job creation, and youth education. The City's annual Equity Report acknowledges the structural inequities that prevent historically marginalized groups from interacting with Burlington in this way: generational poverty and low socioeconomic status, affordable housing and childcare, reliable transportation, limited English proficiency, and racial bias and discrimination.

Towards a Safer Downtown Burlington (TSDB) is a workforce development component of this project that aims to remove barriers to mobility, to access employment, social services and community connections, among other aspects. TSDB consists of five interlinked components:

- (i) A **Community Outreach** program targeted toward underserved Burlington communities in the project area and neighboring communities. The Community Outreach program is aimed at increasing awareness of the TSDB and its various components. It will have a special focus on vulnerable youths, including low-income and youths of color, including immigrants and refugees.
- (ii) A **Youth Development and Skills Gap study** aimed at better understanding youth definitions of success, obstacles they face in achieving success, the skills they need to succeed and how they perceive they can be helped by others to do so.
- (iii) A **Youth Workforce Training program**, which provides multiple pathways to learning the right mix of skills to thrive in a world of rapid change. In addition to learning and strengthening academic skills, youth will be exposed to a greater breadth of skills including digital literacy, critical thinking and problem solving; initiative and entrepreneurship; communication and collaboration skills; emotional intelligence and self-awareness and effective oral and written communication.
- (iv) A **Community Capacity building program**, which seeks to stabilize communities by enhancing the capacity of community-based and civic organizations to prevent violence. This particular component will work to build up the capacity in community-based organizations with the necessary skills and experience to provide gun violence intervention programming centered on high-intensity life coaching for individuals at the greatest risk of gun violence.
- (v) **Data Collection and Performance Reporting** – This component of TSDB will be used not just to understand program effectiveness, but to respond to the evolving community needs. Specifically, in addition to identifying the most appropriate indicators and metrics to assess the benefits of TSDB, data will also be used as a tool to more deeply understand changing needs and to craft programs and shift implementation and resource allocation to better respond to the needs of the community.

Other dimensions of the Youth Workforce Training program will include:

- ✓ Personal and Professional Development (PPD) training
- ✓ Sports and mentoring
- ✓ Volunteering, service learning
- ✓ Enrollment of highest risk youth in structured programs for a duration of 6 months
- ✓ Pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship-style training (on-the-job training and mentoring)
- ✓ Additional supports, including transportation and childcare to ensure greater trainee success
- ✓ Post-placement and follow-up for 6-12 months.

The TSDB program will provide multiple pathways to learn the right skills to thrive in a world of rapid change and invest resources that strengthen community capacity for supporting youth development and employment opportunities.

The regional housing crisis limits Burlington's ability to attract new or growing businesses, leading many to expand or locate in other parts of the state or county where workers are able to find and afford housing. Meaningful employment that offers a living wage and opportunities for growth and advancement is a key part of long-term housing security, which can have a stabilizing effect on mental health, substance abuse recovery, and helps prevent future homelessness.

The Reconnecting Downtown Burlington project will also integrate city policies that support private investments and reduce the economic barriers faced by downtown residents. Parking minimums have been eliminated to incentivize affordable housing construction. Energy efficiency incentives and requirements for new housing will also reduce the economic burdens of building and maintaining new 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.

In 1996, the city established the Waterfront Tax Increment Finance (WTIF) District to incentivize new connections for mobility, community connections, and economic opportunities after Urban Renewal. An assessment of the WTIF District's employment history in 2019 vs 2021 indicates steady employment opportunities in the most common sectors: professional & technical services, accommodation & food services, arts & entertainment, and after Burlington High School's relocation into the former Macy's building in 2021, education services. These sectors employ more than 75% of all WTIF District employees, and just five employers are responsible for approximately 95% of this employment. While steady employers are a reliable source of economic opportunity for the workforce, just one major employer leaving the downtown would have a dramatic impact. This project will directly support the reconstruction of new employment opportunities within the CityPlace Burlington development. WTIF investments have been vital to Burlington's long-term economic growth. Prior to WTIF investments in 1997, the grand list was valued at \$42,902,900. The grand list in the same area is currently valued at \$119,812,100. This opportunity drives Reconnecting Downtown Burlington and CityPlace.

Access to good-quality jobs with free and fair choice to join a union is also established in Burlington's Code of Ordinances. All employees working on the Reconnecting Downtown Burlington project and the TSDB effort (consultants, contractors, and sub-contractors) must be paid a Livable Wage (Article 21-6), employers must agree to limit Outsourcing (Article 21-7), and employers must avoid work with any organization that supports Union Deterrence (Article 21-8).

Tourism Opportunities & Long-Term Economic Growth

Diversifying employment opportunities and connecting the project area to the rest of Burlington are critical steps to improving the lives of Burlingtonians and supporting the sense of place that attracts tourism to the project area. Since the 1950's, Burlington's waterfront has transformed from an industrial hub that excluded public use to a world-renowned destination for tourism and recreation. Burlington's Waterfront Greenway is a beautiful shared use path in the footprint of a former rail line. A 2016 study conducted by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission found that 18% to 49% of travelers on the Greenway are visiting the area, with downtown Burlington having the highest proportion of visitors. The associated tourism

expenditures conservatively show that spending contributes \$1.3m to \$3.5m in revenue each year from May to September. Improving connections between the project area and the waterfront is a tangible step to bridge the gap between these economic centers; and, more importantly for the community, it is a tangible step to improving the public health and quality of life benefits that are not measured in economic assessments.

This project will also improve connections to Church Street, Burlington's pedestrian mall. The Church Street Marketplace was one of 200+ pedestrian malls that were constructed across the country between the 1960s and 1980s. Church Street is one of 30 or so that still remain, and it is still thriving – voted as the Best Public Square in the US in 2022. The American Planning Association recognized the Church Street Marketplace with a Great Public Spaces award for its historic building, thriving retail trade, carefully maintained streets and sidewalks, and strong community support. Church Street attracts 3 million visitors each year to shop, eat, meet and greet, mark milestones, or just pass the time of day. This project will directly improve connections to Church Street and support Burlington's long-term economic growth for residents and for the city's tax base.

STATE OF GOOD REPAIR

This project and the coordinated CityPlace construction will remove and replace all surface infrastructure and upgrade areas of aged, failing subsurface infrastructure. New sidewalks, pavement, bike racks, parking meters, streetlights, and benches will be modernized and last for decades to come.

Restoring and Modernizing Infrastructure

In total, the city will reconstruct 4,900 feet of curbing, 5,000 cubic yards of sidewalk, install 1,800 cubic yards of pervious brick pavers, relocate all overhead utilities into underground conduit, replace aged and failing subsurface utilities, replace standalone parking meters with kiosks, and restore the vibrancy of the downtown streetscape. This reconstruction is critical for downtown Burlington's connectivity. Burlington's Department of Public Works (DPW) uses MicroPaver to catalog and manage pavement maintenance based on the Pavement Condition Index (PCI). A PCI assigns a rating from 0 to 100 (failing to excellent), with a City goal for a total average PCI of 72 to ensure the roadway network is in a condition that is acceptable for bicycle, transit, passenger vehicles, and commercial vehicles. Cherry Street's PCI was 44 and had been scheduled for reconstruction in 2019. Since the construction impacts associated with CityPlace demolition and reconstruction would have severely impacted the new roadway, a section of Cherry Street received a top coat of new pavement instead of full reconstruction to bring the PCI temporarily up to 72. Cherry Street has and will continue to rapidly deteriorate over the coming years as full depth reconstruction (not just a new topcoat) is needed to truly fix the street. Bank Street's PCI is 53 and full reconstruction is also needed. Sidewalks follow a similar methodology to restore core pedestrian infrastructure. In 2015, DPW identified \$3.4 million worth of sidewalk reconstruction needed to make every sidewalk and curb ramp in the downtown accessible. With the current annual sidewalk budget of roughly \$1 million for the city's entire 130 miles of sidewalk, there is a backlog of work in and out of the downtown core. There are roughly 30 non-ADA compliant curb ramps within the project area and various locations of deteriorating sidewalk proximate to locations that generate high pedestrian activity. A citywide sidewalk assessment and prioritization process in 2020 established a methodology to

reconstruct and fill gaps for sidewalk connectivity. Sidewalks in the poorest condition in the most heavily pedestrianized areas and closest critical services for vulnerable residents are the highest priority projects. The factors that inform community needs and activity levels result in the downtown area needing critical attention for pedestrian accessibility as a high priority.

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

The City and its CityPlace partners have committed a diverse pool of funds to bring the community-centered vision to reality.

Meaningful Public Engagement

Reconnecting Downtown Burlington will have several opportunities for the public to oversee elements of this transformational project.

A Public Art Selection Committee will anchor a public art piece that addresses or reflects social/other concerns that are of importance to our community beyond this point in time, and that creates a unique sense of place.

An Advisory Committee will guide the Transportation Safety for Downtown Burlington (TSDB) youth workforce development program. The Committee will consist of representatives from local government, non-profit partners that support youth development, employers in the project area, businesses, and key training institutions. The Committee will provide technical expertise and serve as an advocate for the TSDB program.

A public hearing will collect community feedback prior to environmental review and permitting.

The city's Public Engagement Plan will guide all other engagement activities related to the design and construction for Reconnecting Downtown Burlington.

The city's Public Engagement Plan, much like the USDOT's Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making, establishes a framework for the community to "inform every decision we make." Core values include transparency, mutual accountability, easy participation, meaningful engagement, inclusiveness and equity, respect, and evaluation. Project managers will consider impacts and equity before deciding on and implementing a public outreach plan. An assessment is provided in the Public Engagement Plan to guide this work. The tools for engagement follow a Spectrum of Engagement. "For this plan, the public is considered stakeholders who should have meaningful opportunity to shape, alter, or be informed about DPW project work."

Formal Public-Private Partnerships

The community formally supported the public-private proposal to reconnect downtown Burlington by approving two ballot items in November 2016. That action allows the city to bond for \$21.8m in TIF to fund public improvements to Bank and Cherry Streets and for the acquisition, construction, and streetscape improvements to rebuild the clipped sections of Pine and St Paul Streets.

The City of Burlington and CityPlace Burlington executed a Development Agreement (updated in October 2022) for this partnership. This establishes the private sector contributions to include:

- Residential housing and residential amenities, including a mix of unit sizes and including both market rate and affordable housing units and rental and owner-occupied units.
- First class retail space designed to attract a mix of local, regional and national retailers, service providers, and restaurants.
- Community space.
- A parking garage including long-term bicycle parking facilities.
- Uncovered short-term bicycle parking facilities.
- Re-establishment of St. Paul Street as a public street between Bank and Cherry Streets.
- Re-establishment of Pine Street as a public street between Bank and Cherry Streets.
- A publicly accessible space to observe the views of Lake Champlain.

Innovative Financing

The city is financing this project by leveraging Tax Increment Financing, City Capital, and Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) through U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy. The \$12 million CDS funding for improvements to Cherry Street was announced in December 2022. This combination of local matching funds will offset \$15 million of the estimated costs for completing the design and construction of this project.

Burlington's residents have shown consistent support for building infrastructure in concert with new commercial development. The Waterfront Tax Increment Finance (WTIF) District has shown that investments successfully created jobs, space for community connections, and increased the local economy. TIF is designed to have tax increment revenue fund improvements, not increase taxes. This allows the city to use increment (the increased tax revenue generated by this growth) to retire any debt associated with the construction of improvements without directly impacting individual taxpayers in the district. If the City does not utilize the tax increment revenue to fund improvements in Burlington, at the end of the life of the district the majority of funds will be returned to the State of Vermont to be used elsewhere. The waterfront grand list prior to the TIF District was valued at \$42,902,900. After public improvements, the current WTIF grand list is valued at \$119,812,100. Burlington voters have already approved TIF redevelopment of Cherry Street from Battery Street at the west to Church Street at the east; and for Bank Street from Pine Street to Church Street.

The CityPlace Partners will establish the footprint of Pine and St Paul Streets that reconnect Bank and Cherry Streets, install new sidewalks and amenities adjacent to their buildings, and construct mixed-use development for economic, transportation, and community connections. If

CityPlace construction of Pine and St Paul Streets begins by the agreed-upon date, the City will reimburse the developer through the WTIF budget waterfall; otherwise, the developer will still be responsible for street construction but would not be reimbursed with WTIF or other public funds. CityPlace and their partners will invest approximately \$175 million towards redevelopment.

The City has completed the NEPA process to allocate at least \$275,000 in HOME Investment Partnership Program funds to CityPlace and the Champlain Housing Trust (CHT), a Community Land Trust that develops and stewards permanently affordable homes and related community assets, to construct approximately 85 affordable housing units within the project. The total development cost of the CHT portion of the project is estimated at \$26 million and the city is expecting to allocate additional local and federal funds in support of this project. CHT has prepared an application for \$10.5 million to the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board for their portion of CityPlace.

Innovative Project Delivery

The design standards, financing structure, and public-private partnerships are unique to a project of this size and scale in Burlington. Burlington has adopted form-based code that offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning. The form-based code was developed at same time that the city adopted Great Streets design standards. These innovative, forward-thinking design standards address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. For this project, public-private investments adhering to these standards will coalesce into a cohesive, community-centered downtown that is vibrant, walkable, and sustainable.

The Downtown Code, Great Streets, and the opportunities they present will remove barriers, reduce disparities, and coalesce at a large scale with the proposed project. The established public-private partnership will reconnect the fabric of the downtown and apply innovative approaches to address some of Burlington's most critical constraints for the community. This collaborative approach is the first step for Burlington to provide an environment for sustainable social connections and undo the legacy of harm that has lasted a generation.

PROJECT SCHEDULE & READINESS

Reconnecting Downtown Burlington is a public-private partnership. The private CityPlace partners executed a Development Agreement with the City and their phase of work is already underway. The Town Center mall was demolished in 2018 to establish the footprint for new land use development and for the new blocks of Pine Street and St Paul Street that will reconnect Bank and Cherry Streets. CityPlace construction activities will include their land use development and basic sidewalk infrastructure on the south side of Cherry Street, north side of Bank Street, and the basic street, sidewalk, and utility infrastructure for the new blocks of Pine Street and St Paul Street (Figure 1).

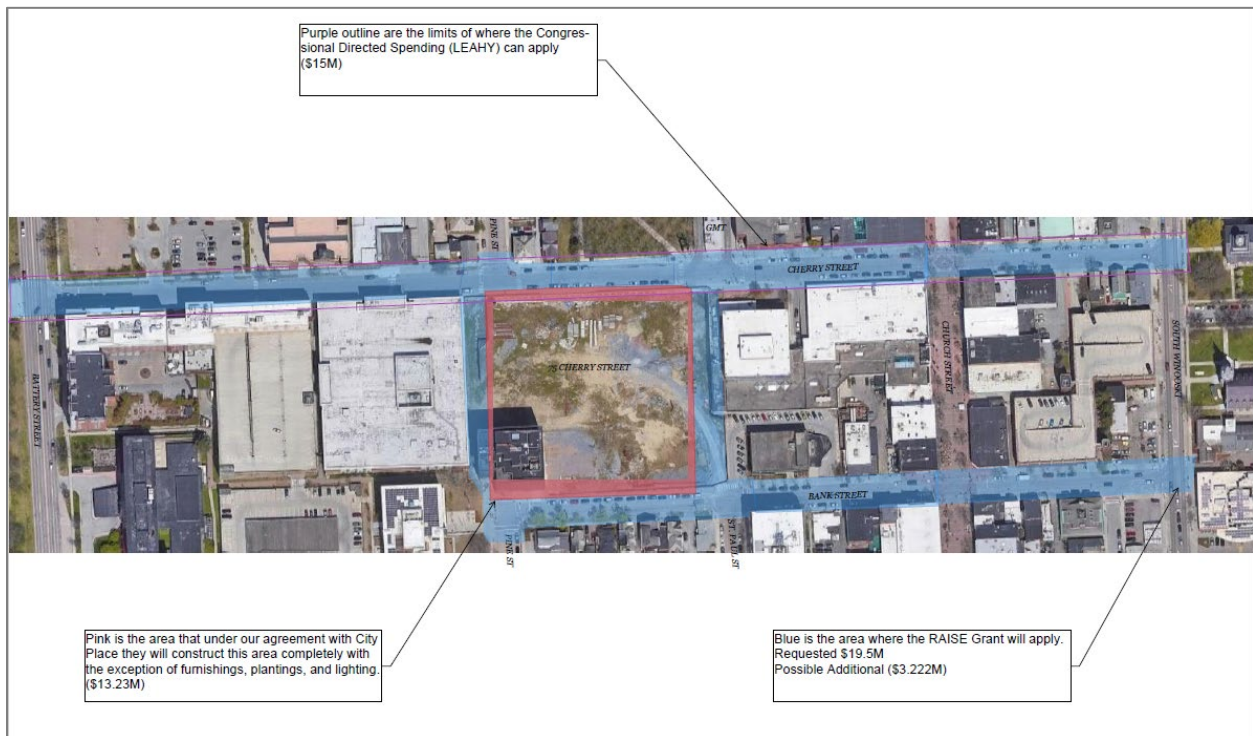


Figure 1: Project Funding

The city's plans for Cherry Street, Bank Street, Pine Street, and St Paul Street are prepared to 75% completion except for the easternmost block of Cherry Street and Bank Street, between Church Street and Winooski Avenue. Conceptual plans are prepared for these easternmost blocks and plan development will continue in 2023. Stantec was hired through a competitive selection process to prepare the construction plans to date, and the city will request that Stantec be re-hired to finish all design work.

Approvals and Permits

The design team and project managers have been preparing for the NEPA process throughout the project's design and community engagement steps. Using guidance from the Vermont Agency of Transportation under their programmatic agreement with the Federal Highway Administration, a

Categorical Exclusion (CE) is anticipated for Bank Street and Cherry Street reconstruction while an Environmental Assessment (EA) may be required for Pine Street and St Paul Street. The city will be interested in obtaining DOT approval to initiate the NEPA process prior to grant funds being obligated.

- A State stormwater permit is required for this project and has joint approval through July 6, 2027 with the CityPlace development. No other state or local permits are required, and permits are not anticipated for the easternmost blocks.
- This project will require federal review and approvals for NEPA. An October 2022 NEPA preparation memo summarizes the potential impacts considered under NEPA:
 - Lakes or Ponds – The location of this project is not near or adjacent to any bodies of water, therefore concerns for stream alternation or impact/proximity to wetlands does not exist. This also eliminates the concern for any Army Corps of Engineer or Coast Guard permits.
 - Water Quality – The project already has its State Stormwater Permit, issued September 2022, that is good until July 2027 for the planned new impervious surfaces. In addition, the project will be installing several other water quality best management practices.
 - Agricultural Land – The project is within the urban center of the City and will not disturb any new or locally important agricultural soils.
 - Threatened and Endangered Species and Habitat – State resource mapping indicates that there are no plants, animals, or other habitats within the project limits. Additionally, there are a minimal number of street trees within the corridor with potential for bat populations to roost.
 - Hazardous/Residual Waste Liabilities – In coordination with the CityPlace project, testing of soils was done in the surrounding areas with limited findings. Additionally, a Phase 1 environmental review of the reconstructed streets of Pine and St. Paul had no findings for Hazardous/Residual waste. There are some properties along the corridor where a dry cleaner previously existed and a location where a repair garage existed which have some known soils that will need to be managed and disposed of during construction. These known sites have already been discussed with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC). As the project progresses toward construction, a soil management plan will be completed and submitted to VTDEC for their review and approval.
 - Historical or Archaeological Resources (Section 106) – The project area as noted is bounded by areas where Urban Renewal removed dozens of homes and businesses and excavated and constructed new structures over the last 40-50 years. Within this undertaking, many of the area’s historical or archaeological resources were lost or destroyed. Only along the southern edge of the project limits, and easternmost block of Cherry Street, are the properties unchanged or unaffected by the Urban Renewal within the City. It is these areas where the greatest potential for any historical or archaeological impacts might exist. However, the limits of the project do not extend past the City’s ROW, and therefore there is a low risk for impacts to occur to properties along the street frontage. As for archeological impacts within these areas, the City’s entire ROW

- within the limits is fully developed or previously disturbed, resulting in little to no chance for the project having any archaeological findings or impacts.
- Section 4(f) Resources – The project area does not extend into any of the City’s parks.
 - Right of Way – The City already holds agreements to purchase the ROW necessary to complete the project. The land to be acquired for the project is lawn/green space from parcels adjacent to the project, or highway easement rights, and therefore does not impact any structures, businesses, or residential units. The City will progress with agreements with local privately-owned utilities that are in the ROW early in 2023. It is anticipated that these will be able to be completed at the time the project would go out to bid.
 - Public Participation Opportunity – The project has been to many City public meetings throughout the early design work, as well as a public information meeting where members of the community, business owners, stakeholders, and other City Officials have provided review and feedback of the project plans. For the NEPA process a warned Public Hearing would need to be held to provide an additional opportunity for public comment and participation with the project. This meeting could happen early in 2023.
 - Social & Economic Concerns – The project is part of several City plans including Great Streets Downtown Design Standards, planBTV Walk Bike, planBTV Downtown & Waterfront. Both during the development of these adopted documents, as well as other public participation for the project, varied members of the community have had the opportunity to be heard. Given the project stays within the ROW, the impacts to adjacent businesses is minimal to none.
 - Temporary Effects or Aesthetic Concerns – During construction of the project, the two existing streets will remain open to limited traffic, and open to pedestrian traffic. Construction in the downtown is held to standards to allow adjacent businesses to still keep their standard hours, all businesses and residents shall be accessible throughout construction.

Experienced Project Managers

Burlington’s Department of Public Works (DPW) will manage this project. DPW has extensive institutional knowledge and project managers with decades of experience managing federally-funded design and construction projects.

Construction services will be secured through a competitive procurement process. Invitations to Bid will include Burlington’s Standard Contract Conditions for Federally Funded Projects. This provides transparency about the conditions that must be met, including but not limited to: fair employment practices, compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act, certification regarding debarment from Federal programs, procedures to comply with a Single Audit, compliance with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, compliance with the Flying America Act of 1974, compliance with the Civil Rights Act, Whistleblower Protection, and will include all requirements specific to USDOT projects.

Risk Management

The conceptual planning process and DPW’s recent experience reconstructing downtown streets have been instrumental in identifying potential risks to this project. The preferred alternative for the project design was chosen to satisfy the purpose and need for this project, as well as mitigate potential risks.

RISKS	MITIGATION
Construction noise in a mixed-use area	Ensure compliance with Burlington’s Noise Ordinance and ensure adequate, accessible notices are provided for any deviation.
Transportation network impacts	Develop and implement a comprehensive public outreach program to alert, inform, and mitigate construction impacts. Ensure consistent communication with Green Mountain Transit to minimize impacts to public transit service.
Hazardous/Residual waste	Proceed with Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC) review and approval of a soil management plan.

Schedule

The project schedule will meet RAISE requirements to obligate funding by June 2027.

Construction Tasks	Start	End	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
VEPC Approval for WTIF Substantial Change	Jan-23	Mar-23	■				
Design Completion Bank/Cherry	Mar-23	Feb-24	■	■			
Public Hearing	May-23	Jun-23	■				
Permitting NEPA	Mar-23	Sep-23	■	■			
Other Permitting	Completed						
ROW Temporary Construction Easements	Not anticipated						
Contractor Procurement	Jan-24	Mar-24		■			
Award	Jan-24	Mar-24		■			
Construction - Cherry Street	Apr-24	Dec-26		■	■	■	■
Construction - Pine Street	Apr-24	Dec-25		■	■	■	■
Construction - Bank Street	Jul-25	Dec-26			■	■	■
Construction - St. Paul Street	Apr-24	Dec-25		■	■	■	■
Workforce Development Tasks	Start	End	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Phase 1 Community Outreach	Jul-23	Oct-23	■	■			
Youth Skills Gap Study	Nov-23	Apr-24		■	■		
Workforce Training & Capacity Building	Jul-24	Dec-26			■	■	■
Data Collection & Reporting	Jul-23	Dec-27	■	■	■	■	■

PROJECT BUDGET TO RECONNECT DOWNTOWN BURLINGTON

This public-private partnership is a unique opportunity to leverage multiple funding sources and redress the harm created by the Champlain Street Urban Renewal project. The city has already been successful in securing funds for this project. Burlington voters approved the use of Tax Increment Financing for sections of Bank Street and Cherry Street. City Capital is contributing funds for sidewalk reconstruction. Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) from Senator Leahy was announced in December 2022 and will allocate \$12 million to Great Streets improvements on Cherry Street. Local matching funds toward that federal funding will add an additional \$3 million. This leaves \$19.5 million needed to complete the balance of the construction project.

The design and construction budget has been developed from a December 2022 engineer's estimate of costs from the 75% construction plans. Design has advanced to 75% construction drawings for all components of the project except the easternmost block of each Cherry Street and Bank Street. The streetscape elements and construction standards will still follow Great Streets standards, which made cost estimating for these two blocks easier to obtain. All previously incurred expenses were funded with 100% local dollars and are not reflected in the budget proposal described below.

Approximately 9% of the overall infrastructure budget will be used to complete the remaining design and NEPA permitting. The remaining 91% of the infrastructure budget will be used in the construction phase, which also includes administrative fees (\$191k), other engineering fees (\$761k), construction inspection (\$2.283m), and contingencies for cost overruns and inflation to 2026 prices (\$10.493m).

The Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) developed the workforce development budget for Towards a Safer Downtown Burlington (TSDB). CEDO has successfully created and managed two other workforce development programs (Registered Nurses and Construction). The TSDB budget was developed based on this recent experience and will be applied to the following activities over 5 years:

Community Outreach	\$7,000
Youth Skills Gap Study	\$40,000
Youth Workforce Training	\$360,000
Participant Stipends	\$168,000
Apprenticeships	\$30,000
High-risk Youth Training	\$360,000
Personal & Professional Development Training	\$23,000
Marketing, Transportation, and Childcare	\$10,000
Community Capacity Building	\$70,000
Data Collection and Reporting	\$60,000
Part-time Project Manager	\$180,000
Grant Administration and Project Oversight	\$156,000
Contingency (RAISE)	\$70,000

The city has applied for funding through the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission’s Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for a portion of the skills gap study that has independent utility. That effort will expand the skills gap study to assess the needs for transportation-related workforce development across all ages. Awards for UPWP funding will be announced in June 2023. A successful award will enable the city and the region to leverage RAISE and UPWP funding for a larger workforce development effort and stronger investment in the community.

The breakdown of project expenses by funding sources is as follows:

TABLE 1:	Design and Permitting	Construction Phase	Workforce Development	Total Funding by Type
RAISE	\$3,105,000	\$17,745,000	\$1,534,000	\$22,384,000
FEDERAL	\$1,080,000	\$10,920,000	\$0	\$12,000,000
Other Non-Federal	\$270,000	\$2,730,000	\$0	\$3,000,000
Total	\$4,455,000	\$31,395,000	\$1,534,000	\$37,384,000

Table 2:	Census Tract(s)	Project Costs per Census Tract
	10	\$37,384,000
		Total Project Cost: \$37,384,000

The \$3 million in Other Non-Federal funds identified in the project budget are a local match to the Congressional Directed Spending for the project. These funds are composed of City Capital, City Waterfront Tax Increment Finance (WTIF) Bond funds, and Sales Tax Reallocation. The City Capital commitment was approved in 2022. Burlington voters approved the WTIF bond for public improvements to the project in 2016, and, in January 2023, Burlington City Council approved the WTIF Substantial Change Request to the Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) for their approval to proceed to issue bonds for this project. More than one half of the sales tax reallocation has been approved through CEDO as it relates to 77 Pine Street. The terms of that reallocation assign the funds to Bank Street for capital infrastructure. The remaining tax reallocation is an active application that has a very high likelihood of approval, but documentation of the approval is not yet available.

This local match for CDS breaks downs as follows:

City Capital	\$200,000	These funds have been secured and approved for use as local match. Documentation is provided within Funding Commitments.
City WTIF	\$2,000,000	Bonding for these funds is actively being pursued and will be received by June 30, 2023. Documentation is provided within Funding Commitments.
Sales Tax Reallocation	\$800,000	The adjacent public-private project partnership is applying for this program which will afford the City up to \$800,000 over

		two years to be used towards the project. Documentation of the \$480,052 commitment is provided within Funding Commitments.
--	--	---

The City will access other WTIF funds should the Sales Tax reallocation not be received. The contingency amount within the project budget is planned to be provided by RAISE, but WTIF funding is one source that could be used to cover project costs that exceed the budget as described and are ineligible for federal funding.



Memorandum

To: Laura Wheelock
Nicole Losch
Elizabeth Ross
City of Burlington

Date: February 27, 2023

Project #: 58630.03

From: Karen Sentoff, VHB

Re: RAISE Grant Benefit Cost Analysis
Bank / Cherry / Pine / St. Paul Public Improvements Project

The following memorandum describes the assumptions, calculations, and results of the Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) which was completed in support of the City of Burlington's grant application to the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant program. The Grant would support a project to reconnect the downtown grid by reestablishing segments of Pine and St. Paul Streets as well as improvements to Cherry and Bank Streets.

Benefits

The primary monetary benefits associated with the project are attributable to improved safety, reduced travel times, property value increases, and improved quality of pedestrian journey. These four types of benefits are described in this memo. All benefits are assumed to begin at Year 0 in 2023 and take full effect in 2027, after construction is complete. Benefit calculations were done in 2021 dollars and were then discounted at rates of 3% and 7% to obtain the present value given the future value benefits. This discounting calculation was performed using the following formula which was obtained from the USDOT Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance Document¹.

$$PV = \frac{FV}{(1 + i)^t}$$

Where:

PV = Present discounted value

FV = Future value of payment in real dollars

i = Real discount rate (3% or 7%)

t = Years in future for payment (t = 0 in 2023)

Safety Benefits

Safety benefits related to predicted crash reductions have been quantified using existing crash data from the past five years available (2017-2021) and the application of Crash Modification Factors (CMFs) and USDOT recommended monetary values for crashes by severity. The CMF values used in these calculations came from the CMF Clearinghouse². It is noted that there are countermeasures proposed for the improvements along Cherry, Bank, St. Paul, and Pine Streets that are likely to have safety benefits, but do not yet have CMFs to apply in this analysis. Of note, curb extensions like those proposed for this project are currently being reviewed to develop CMFs for future

¹ *Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs*. Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation. 2022.

² <http://www.cmfclearinghouse.org/>

applications. Curbless streets, like proposed on Bank Street, also fall into this category of countermeasures with safety benefits yet to be quantified. The Crash Modification Factors that were available and used for this analysis are described below. The CMFs were used to calculate an annual benefit of \$93,859 per year.

Install Raised Pedestrian Crosswalks – CMF 0.7

This crash modification factor is applicable to all crashes occurring in locations where raised pedestrian crosswalks will be installed. For this project, the applicable locations are:

- Bank and Pine Street Intersection
- Bank and St. Paul Street Intersection
- Cherry and Pine Street Intersection
- Cherry and St. Paul Street Intersection

In the past five years of crash data, there were 16 crashes at these intersections, or 3.2 crashes per year total. After applying the CMF, this number was reduced such that 0.96 crashes were avoided per year. This reduction corresponds to a monetary value of \$4,608 per year.

Bicycle Boulevard – CMF 0.37

This crash modification factor is related to the development of Cherry and Bank Street as bicycle routes through downtown. The definition of bicycle boulevard is expansive, and here is a shared street with sharrows or super sharrows installed. For this project, this CMF is applicable to crashes involving bicycles along Cherry or Bank Street. These segments had a combined total of 3 bike crashes between 2017 and 2021, or 0.6 crashes per year. After applying the CMF, there is an expected reduction of 0.38 crashes per year, 0.26 of which result in injury. By applying the proper monetary value to the crashes, this reduction corresponds to a benefit of \$78,170 per year.

Midblock Crossing – CMF 0.82

This crash modification factor is related to the installation of a midblock crossing and applies to crashes involving pedestrians. For this project, the CMF would be applicable to crashes along the segment of Cherry Street between Battery and Pine. There was 1 injury crash on this segment, or 0.2 injury crashes annually. After applying the CMF, there is an expected reduction of 0.04 injury crashes per year, which translates to a monetary benefit of \$11,081 per year.

Travel Time Savings Benefit

This project is anticipated to have a net positive effect on travel times in downtown Burlington. This is due to the reconnection of the city grid along two north-south corridors, Pine Street and St. Paul Street. Without these north-south connectors, there is a half-mile gap in north-south connecting streets within the street grid network. The alternatives to these connections are further afield along Battery Street, Winooski Avenue, Union Street, and Willard Street. Reestablishing the through connections is anticipated to save, at the least, a minute of travel time for every vehicle traversing north-south along the two new connections. This does not account for the reduction in demand on other north-south corridors, alleviating some of the existing congestion along these routes. Using the anticipated PM peak hour volumes on these connector roadways from a traffic study for a nearby development and a k-factor of 10%, the estimated AADT for the one-block segments was estimated at 2,610 vehicles per day for Pine Street and 2,440

vehicles per day for St. Paul Street. At a one-minute travel time savings per vehicle, there was a total of 84.2 hours of travel time saved per day with the connector roadways constructed.

Additional assumptions were made and are listed as follows. All sources for these assumptions can be found in the unlocked Excel spreadsheet which has been submitted with this document.

- Average Vehicle Occupancy Rate is 1.67 and only applicable to in-vehicle travel³
- These travel times are representative of approximately 260 days per year (i.e. weekdays, non-holidays)
- 7.3% of vehicles in the network are heavy commercial vehicles⁴
- In-Vehicle Travel Time Cost per hour is \$17.00³
- Commercial Vehicle Travel Cost per hour is \$31.90³

Using these travel times and network assumptions, the calculated total yearly travel time savings is \$626,875.

Property Value Benefits

The benefit of increasing property values adjacent to the project corridor was quantified. Although the surrounding Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts demonstrate property value benefits associated with the transportation projects that have been pursued over the years, the property value benefits in this case were based on the redevelopment of the parcel at the center of the project area. The City Place parcel has a land valuation of approximately \$10 million and is anticipated to be redeveloped in the coming years at an incremental valuation of at least \$90 million. This one-time property value benefit was applied in the model year 2025, consistent with the anticipated schedule for the development project. At a 7% discount, this would result in an added value of \$78,609,486 to the Grand List for the City and the Waterfront TIF district.

Pedestrian Journey Quality Benefits

Improved quality of pedestrian experience through the new and/or expanded pedestrian infrastructure is an expected benefit to the project. The portion of the project reconnecting St. Paul Street and Pine Street anticipates installation of at least 6' sidewalks on both sides of the street along the one-block segments, amounting to a total 12' width of new sidewalk for each of the new city blocks. In addition, the Cherry Street and Bank Street conceptual plans increase the sidewalk zone generally to 8.5' and 8' widths, respectively. This additional sidewalk width is just one component of the width dedicated to activation space, amenities, and greenbelt along these corridors, which will all contribute to the quality of the pedestrian environment and journey. Although the full length of sidewalk along these two corridors will benefit from these improvements, it was assumed that the length of the narrowest sidewalk segments in the existing condition would benefit most and thus be monetized for the purposes of this calculation. Therefore a 350' segment on Bank Street with sidewalks of less than 6' in the existing condition and a 1000' segment on Cherry Street with sidewalks

³ *Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs*. Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation. 2023.

⁴ Average of heavy vehicles from data collection at three Vermont Agency of Transportation Count Stations (27742, D096, and D171) with data available at [VTrans Transportation Data Management System](#).

of less than 6' in the existing condition were assumed to benefit from a 2' sidewalk width expansion for the purposes of this valuation.

The benefit per mile walked was calculated using the recommended per person-mile walked value of \$0.11 per foot of expanded sidewalk width⁵.

$$\textit{Benefit per Mile Walked} = \textit{Sidewalk Value per Foot of Added Width} \times \textit{Additional Width}$$

This value per mile walked was then multiplied by the length of sidewalk expansion and the number of daily users.

$$\textit{Benefit to Users on First Block} = \textit{\# of Daily Users} \times \textit{Block Length} \times \textit{Value per Mile Walked}$$

Assumptions regarding the average daily pedestrian trips on each of these facilities was derived from other sources, as indicated below.

- Average daily pedestrian trips along Pine Street and St. Paul Street were assumed to total 50% of the average daily pedestrian trips along the Bank Street Extension path, or 79 pedestrian trips. The path is the next closest connecting pedestrian facility. Count data informing the average daily pedestrian trips for the path were gathered via the Vermont Bike and Pedestrian Count Data portal⁶. Once the city grid is reconnected, there will likely be more diverted north-south pedestrian trips from other adjacent facilities (i.e. Church Street, Battery Street, Winooski Avenue) that will utilize these new city blocks to make more direct connections to key pedestrian destinations (e.g. Downtown Transit Center), making this a conservatively low estimate of pedestrian trips for these segments.
- For the segment of Bank Street with sidewalk expansion, the average daily pedestrian trips were similarly assumed to be 50% of the counts on the Bank Street Extension path as the segment is a key connection to the path.
- The segment of Cherry Street that will benefit most from sidewalk expansion was assumed to have 136 average daily pedestrian trips. This figure was based on the count data for east-west crossing movements available for the peak periods of 7AM to 9AM and 4PM to 6PM at the eastern terminus of the corridor in 2014 (i.e. Cherry Street and Winooski Avenue intersection turning movement count)⁷. It was assumed that half of the peak period counts represented the daily average pedestrian trips along the entire corridor at the eastern end, representing a conservatively low estimate of daily pedestrian activity.

Within the urban context of the grid sidewalk network, it was assumed that the average daily pedestrian trips above represented an average daily figure to apply year-round and therefore the figures were annualized by 365 days per year. These assumptions are further detailed in the unlocked Excel spreadsheet which has been submitted with this document.

⁵ *Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs*. Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation. 2023.

⁶ Vermont Bike and Pedestrian Count Data Portal available at <https://www.uvm.edu/~transctr/research/VTransBPPortal/index.html>

⁷ Turning movement count data with east-west pedestrian crossings available at Vermont Agency of Transportation Count Station (Location ID 30403604) with data available at [VTrans Transportation Data Management System](#).

Using these pedestrian journey quality and network assumptions, the calculated total yearly savings is \$7,500.

Costs

Capital Costs

For the Cherry, Bank, Pine and St. Paul Street improvement projects, capital costs included:

- Construction
- Engineering Design and Permitting
- Construction Administration and Project Inspection
- Contingencies
- Inflation

Construction costs were calculated using Standard Pay Items and Unit Costs and applied to the calculated quantities in the Preliminary Plans. The construction cost also accounted for other funding mechanisms including congressionally directed spending, Waterfront TIF district funds, and other matching funds. The total capital cost requested for the project is \$19,500,000 which will be spent between 2023 and 2026.

As with the benefit values, the costs were assumed to begin in 2023 at Year 0 and would be incurred through 2026. The costs were discounted using both 3% and 7% discount rates.

Operation & Maintenance Costs

Operation and maintenance costs were estimated from previous Public Works budgets and the City's maintenance guidelines. Standard costs include plowing, regular restriping, drainage maintenance, sign replacements, and pavement or concrete repairs. At a target operating and maintenance budget of approximately \$2.5 million for streets and \$1.5 million for sidewalks per year, the annual per mile operating and maintenance costs were calculated at approximately \$26,000 per mile for city streets and \$11,800 per mile of sidewalk. Given the project totals around 0.75 miles of street and 1.5 miles of sidewalk, the annual maintenance costs for the project were estimated at \$20,000 for project streets and \$17,500 for project sidewalks. It was assumed that the maintenance costs would be incurred following construction, so it was estimated that maintenance costs would apply starting in 2027 when the construction is fully complete. Total Operation and Maintenance Costs over the life of the project were calculated to be \$750,000.

Benefit Cost Analysis Summary

The BCA is summarized using two different factors, the Net Present Value (NPV) and the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR). The NPV is the difference between the costs and benefits whereas the BCR is the ratio of benefits to costs, with benefits being in the numerator and costs in the denominator. The table below outlines the total benefits, costs, NPV, and BCR. This table shows that using the 7% discount rate, the NPV is \$67,314,918 and the BCR is 4.8.

Table 1: Benefit Cost Analysis Summary

Benefit Description	Benefit Value (7% Discount Rate)	Benefit Value (3% Discount Rate)
Travel Time Savings	\$5,421,134	\$8,534,901
Safety Benefit	\$811,682	\$1,277,893
Property Value Benefit	\$78,609,486	\$84,833,632
Pedestrian Journey Quality	\$64,862	\$102,118
Total Project Benefits	\$84,907,164	\$94,748,543
Costs	Cost Value (7% Discount Rate)	Cost Value (3% Discount Rate)
Total Costs	\$17,592,246	\$18,987,942
Total Project Costs	\$17,592,246	\$18,987,942
Net Present Value	\$67,314,918	\$75,760,602
Benefit Cost Ratio	4.8	5.0

Capital Project Request Form

(For New Projects & Existing Projects Requiring Budget Adjustments)

Form Completed By:			
Today's Date:			
Funds Requested			
Date Funds Needed:			
Project Title:			
Department/ Staff Involved:			
Total Project Cost:		Level of Urgency:	

Brief Project Description.

--

500 characters max

Is there a requirement to complete this project (i.e.: legal mandate or local, state, or federal agreement)? (Provide a reference (link, etc.) and explain how the project meets the requirement.)

--

1000 characters max

Does the project address a gap in outcomes/services based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, accessibility, age, or income? (Consider how well the project closes gaps in outcomes, and how residents affected were engaged.)

2000 characters max

Does the project create an immediate or long-term health or safety benefit?

1000 characters max

What is the condition of the asset? (Consider where it is at in its lifespan, and determine if funding this now minimizes long-term costs.)

1000 characters max

Will investment in the project increase tax revenue, reduce costs to the City, or leverage other funds? (Provide dollar amounts.)

1000 characters max

Will the project improve air or water quality, or reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

1000 characters max

Is this project the most cost-effective solution? Is it coordinated with other projects to increase impact? Is the problem clearly defined and does the project successfully solve it? Are there other solutions that might solve the problem in a more creative/cost-effective way?

2000 characters max

Reviews & Recommendations/Approvals

	Review Date:	Recommendation/Approval:
Capital Committee:		
Mayor's Office:		



OFFICE OF THE CLERK/TREASURER
City of Burlington

City Hall, Room 20, 149 Church Street, Burlington, VT 05401 Voice (802)865-7000
 Fax (802) 865-7014
 Deaf/Hard of Hearing 711

DECLARATION OF ELECTION RESULTS
QUESTIONS ON THE BALLOTS
SPECIAL CITY ELECTION – NOVEMBER 8, 2016

I, Amy J. Bovee, Presiding Officer for the November 8, 2016 Special City Election for the City of Burlington, Vermont do hereby declare the following results for the Public Questions on the Ballot of the Special City Election held November 8, 2016:

Question 1. Approval of General Obligation Bonds for City Capital Plan Projects

	<i>VOTES</i>	<i>% of VOTES</i>
YES	12,976	75.96%
NO	4,106	24.04%
TOTAL VOTES	17,082	100.00%
RESULT	APPROVED	2/3 Majority Required

Question 2. Authority to Issue Revenue Bonds for Water System Improvements

	<i>VOTES</i>	<i>% of VOTES</i>
YES	15,206	88.08%
NO	2,058	11.92%
TOTAL VOTES	17,264	100.00%
RESULT	APPROVED	Simple Majority Required

Question 3. Adoption of ZA 16-14

	<i>VOTES</i>	<i>% of VOTES</i>
YES	9,093	53.84%
NO	7,797	46.16%
TOTAL VOTES	16,890	100.00%
RESULT	APPROVED	Simple Majority Required

**DECLARATION OF ELECTION RESULTS
 QUESTIONS ON THE BALLOT
 SPECIAL CITY ELECTION – NOVEMBER 8, 2016 (continued)**

Question 4. Pledging the Credit of the City to Secure Indebtedness for Public Improvements Within the Waterfront TIF District

	<i>VOTES</i>	<i>% of VOTES</i>
YES	10,124	58.45%
NO	7,198	41.55%
TOTAL VOTES	17,322	100.00%
RESULT	APPROVED	Simple Majority Required

Question 5. Proposed Charter Change Regarding Powers of the City Council

	<i>VOTES</i>	<i>% of VOTES</i>
YES	11,999	73.36%
NO	4,357	26.64%
TOTAL VOTES	16,356	100.00%
RESULT	APPROVED	Simple Majority Required

Question 6. Bike Path Relocation

	<i>VOTES</i>	<i>% of VOTES</i>
YES	8,538	50.41%
NO	8,399	49.59%
TOTAL VOTES	16,937	100.00%
RESULT	APPROVED	Simple Majority Required

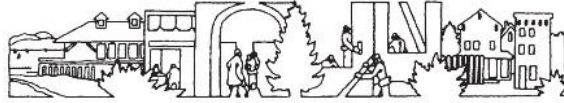


 Amy J. Bovee

Presiding Officer – November 8, 2016 Special City Election

11/16/16

 Date



COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

149 CHURCH STREET • ROOM 32 • CITY HALL • BURLINGTON, VT 05401
(802) 865-7144 • (802) 865-7024 (FAX)
www.burlingtonvt.gov/cedo

To: City Council
From: Brian Pine, CEDO Director
David G. White, White + Burke Real Estate Advisors
Date: January 19, 2023
Re: Waterfront TIF District – Application to VEPC for financing of public improvements associated with CityPlace Burlington

At your January 23, 2023 meeting, the City Council is asked to approve the following Motion:

To approve the City’s proposed substantial change request to VEPC for its Waterfront TIF District and authorize City Council President Karen Paul and Chief Administrative Officer Katherine Schad to submit the attached formal request letter.

The proposed submission to VEPC and its attachments have been posted for your review. This memo and the attached cash flow summary are intended to bring you up to date relative to the planned application to the Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) for approval to proceed to issue bonds to help pay for public improvements associated with CityPlace.

To be clear, there is nothing significantly different in this application than what the City Council has reviewed and approved in the past. Nonetheless, the name of the process of applying to VEPC is “Substantial Change Request” (SCR). The overall project terms remain consistent with what the City Council approved this past November in the ARDA 2.0.

This memo is intended to provide the Council and the public with background information and a brief overview of the matter in order to inform your consideration of the proposed Motion.

The purpose of the VEPC SCR in this case is to: 1) verify the City has met the legislatively mandated minimum \$50 million construction contract with a completion guarantee; and 2) review and verify the financial viability of the district.

The legislation that authorized the extension of the Waterfront Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district for the three properties on which the former Burlington Town Center and LL Bean buildings sat previously (or sit today as the case may be) requires that before the City issue any TIF bonding for the public improvements associated with the redevelopment of these three properties, the City to provide to VEPC with construction contracts for the private development totaling not less than \$50 million along

with a construction completion guarantee. We have the construction contract, have a partial guarantee, and expect the full guarantee within a few days. VEPC must also review the financial viability of the TIF district. This memo addresses that question of financial viability.

Under the direction of Mayor Weinberger, the City administration and outside consultants have been diligently working to prepare the necessary application materials for the March 30th VEPC meeting. The deadline for this submission is February 3, 2023. This application is required in order to meet the legislative deadline for the City to issue the TIF bond by June 30, 2023 or the City will lose the opportunity use TIF financing for this project.

In recent months, the planned Waterfront TIF bonding has become even more impactful than previously anticipated. It will leverage at least \$12 million in federal funds and potentially an additional \$10 million from a pending federal grant application. As you may know, one of Senator Leahy's final acts before retirement was to secure a Congressionally Directed Spending award (aka "earmark") of \$12 million for reconstruction to Great Streets standards of the entire length of Cherry Street from Battery Street to South Winooski Avenue.

The City has also applied for a federal "Reconnecting Communities" grant from the US Department of Transportation. This funding is uniquely suited to the area of Burlington that was most impacted by the 1960's-era Urban Renewal project. It is the first-ever Federal program dedicated to reconnecting communities that were previously cut off from economic opportunities by transportation infrastructure projects. Funding supports capital construction grants to restore community connectivity through the replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure facilities (i.e., replacing streets closed due to Urban Renewal).

We have not yet been notified of a decision on this application but expect to hear within the next month or so. We estimate using approximately \$10 million of this grant toward the costs of reconnecting Pine and St. Paul streets and rebuilding Bank Street, all to Great Streets standards.

The proposed TIF bond will provide most of the matching funds for these two grants. The upshot of this means the benefit of TIF will be magnified by not only reconnecting St. Paul and Pine Streets as originally envisioned but also by leveraging at least \$12 million and potentially \$22 million in federal funds for investing in our downtown. This will enable rebuilding considerably more public infrastructure than originally expected. These investments will enhance the vibrancy and resiliency of our downtown for generations to come.

Regarding the application to VEPC, the enclosed table shows the projected cash flow for the remaining life of the Waterfront TIF district. As you review this, please note that these projections are subject to further refinement before we provide the final version in the submittal that is due to VEPC on February 3, 2023.

As background, the local owners City Place Partners (CPP), who took control of the project in May 2022, expect total development costs for Phase 1 which is currently under construction to be approximately \$165 million. City Assessor, John Vickery, estimates that upon completion, the assessed value of Phase 1 will be approximately \$120 million. This assumes the south building is sold as condominiums, the north building is primarily student housing, and the west building is affordable housing developed and owned by Champlain Housing Trust and Evernorth. We estimate Phase 2, consisting of development on the remaining portion of the old mall plus the former LL Bean building, will have an assessed value of approximately \$60 million.

The City Council, VEPC, and voters previously authorized bonding and related costs up to \$21,830,000. Of this, \$801,000 of bonds have already been issued, and \$814,380 in Related Costs spent. We also expect \$1,373,758 in future Related Costs between now and FY 2036. This leaves up to \$18,840,000 available for bonding. Our financial model indicates that a \$16 million bond (assuming at least a \$1.0 million bond premium) will be sufficient to pay the costs which are obligated in the development agreement and provide the matching funds for the two federal grants. Bond premiums are what investors are willing to pay above the par amount of a bond in order to get the desired interest rate. Municipal bonds are tax-exempt so investors are often willing to pay premiums on this type of bond. We currently expect to recommend a bond of \$16 million to the City Council in a few months when a final decision must be made. However, to be conservative the cash flow assumes the larger, \$18,840,000 bond.

The enclosed cash flow should be read left to right with the first column indicating the fiscal year of each row. The second column is the projected TIF fund revenue for each year, with a beginning fund balance as of 7/1/22 of \$3,593,352. The third column, labeled “other annual revenue” shows two payments CPP is obligated to make under the terms of the development agreement to cover interest costs for the bond during the period before the project receives its certificate of occupancy and hits the tax rolls. The fourth column adds the prior two together to show the total available TIF revenue for each fiscal year. The next column shows the projected debt service (existing plus projected for the new bond) for each year. The “Related Costs” column shows expenses associated with managing the public improvement projects, negotiating with the developer, administering the TIF district, and similar work.

The final column shows cumulative fund balance projected at the end of each fiscal year. With the inclusion of Phase 2, we estimate a positive balance in the TIF fund every year even with the maximum \$18,840,000 bond. In the event Phase 2 is significantly delayed or cancelled, the maximum \$18,840,000 bond is likely not supportable. Assuming a \$16 million bond there may be a few years (FY 2026 through FY 2030) when the TIF fund is thin, but still expected to remain positive. If there are deficits for a few years, they are expected to be modest and well within what the City can manage until such time as the TIF fund can repay the City. Regardless, in either scenario the projections show the TIF fund will fully pay for itself over the life of the TIF district.

Finally, the City has a couple significant safety nets. First, the life of the original Waterfront TIF district (outside of the three extended properties) will expire at the end of FY 2025. This will provide a windfall of over \$750,000 per year in municipal taxes that until then are going into the TIF fund, but afterwards will be available for other uses. In the unlikely event that the amount of increment is insufficient to cover the bond payments or Related Costs, the City could elect to use part of the windfall to help defray TIF district costs (including debt service). Similarly, when the life of the extended TIF district expires at the end of FY 2035, it is projected to provide another windfall to City coffers of \$750,000 or so per year if only Phase 1 is built and about \$1,500,000 per year assuming both Phases are built, as we expect. These funds, too, could be used to help pay any final costs or any final debt service, if necessary.

Under the legislative authorization, the bond must be issued before June 30, 2023. After the City Council approves the application to VEPC and presumably VEPC in turn approves it, neither action commits the City to issuing the bond at a specific amount. Of course, the maximum bond amount (plus Related Costs) still pertains. The City Council will have an opportunity to review final numbers and make a final decision on the bond amount before it is issued.

Burlington Waterfront TIF District Substantial Change Request Narrative

February 2023

Introduction

Following years of delays, construction is underway for CityPlace!

Foundations are being poured and sub-surface utilities installed. It's great to see cranes, cement trucks, and especially construction workers active on site.

In less than nine months since the local partners of CityPlace took full control of the project enormous progress has been made – both by them and by the city. As will be explained, use of TIF bonding will leverage at least \$12 million in federal grant funds and hopefully as much as \$22 million to rebuild public infrastructure in the immediate vicinity of CityPlace, allowing considerably more to be accomplished than TIF alone could do, yet it can't be done without TIF.

Together, the public improvements and Phase 1 of the private aspects of this transformative project will:

- Enable reconnection of the north and south sides of downtown that were cut off from each other by construction of the old mall during the urban renewal era.
- Rebuild all of Cherry Street from Battery to South Winooski Avenue.
- Full or partial reconstruction of up to two blocks of Bank Street.
- Provide over 400 housing units, including 80+ subsidized affordable units to be constructed and owed by Champlain Housing Trust and Evernorth..
- Create 400+ parking spaces.
- Offer over 40,000 sq ft of new street-level retail space, plus a roof top restaurant.
- Provide a co-working office space and a community room, as well as roof-top public observation deck.

Phase 2 of the private project is planned to include:

- 140 room boutique hotel with restaurant and function space.
- 20,000 square feet of retail and services uses.
- A promenade hallway leading from Church Street to the new section of St. Paul Street.
- Approximately 100 units of housing with at least 15 of those being affordable units.
- Approximately 250 parking spaces.

Project Update

Since the City came before you with an update in late 2019 tremendous progress has been made, including:

- All pending lawsuits have been resolved.
- The city now owns the rights of way for reconnecting Pine and St. Paul Streets.
- Agreements have been signed with three abutting property owners for other easements required to complete the street reconnections.
- A Zoning Permit was issued March 8, 2021 for Phase 1 of CityPlace.
- 100% construction plans for the Public Improvements and Additional Public Improvements have been completed.
- Local partners, City Place Partners (CPP) acquired full ownership of “Phase 1” of CityPlace, located on parcel 044-4-033-000. “Phase 2” is located on the remaining portion of the old mall (parcel 044-4-004-000) and the former LL Bean building (parcel 044-4-004-001).
- A second Amended and Restated Development Agreement (ARDA 2.0) has been executed between the City and the new owner partnership, CPP.
- A stormwater agreement has been executed between the City and CPP for shared stormwater facilities.
- An agreement has been reached for Champlain Housing Trust to finance, construct and own the west building as 80+ units of affordable housing.
- Construction commenced on the foundation and podium for CityPlace in November 2022.

Legislative and VEPC History

The Burlington Waterfront Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district was created in 1996 before the state-wide education property tax was created. The TIF rules at the time were very different than today. Originally the TIF district was entirely west of Battery Street. In 2010 it was expanded to include an area from Battery Street to Church Street, generally between Bank Street and Cherry Street, encompassing what today includes the Marriot Hotel, Hotel Vermont, and the former Burlington Town Center (BTC).

Under the original TIF district, the City was authorized to retain 100% of both education and municipal tax increment. When the district expanded, it was authorized to retain only 75% of the education increment for the expansion area, except for two properties – the Marriot Hotel and Hotel Vermont, from which it retains 100% of the education increment.

Act 80 of the 2013 legislative session (with amendment by Act 174 of 2014) required that all TIF Districts be subject to Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) oversight. This included Districts which were created before 2006 and not previously subject to VEPC oversight. The City of Burlington, whose Waterfront TIF District was created in 1996, therefore, pursuant to Section 605 of Rule # 15-P04 AKA the “TIF Rule” (adopted May 6, 2015, in accordance with the Vermont Administrative Procedures Act), as per requirements of ACT 80, submitted a

District Reconciliation to VEPC in December 2015. The District Reconciliation served as the basis for performance indicators and potential Substantial Change requests for the District.

That District Reconciliation was amended in 2016 after the City of Burlington sought and received a legislative change to its debt incurrence and debt retention timelines for a portion of the District in order to support redevelopment of BTC, a property located on three parcels within the District. In its 2016 session, the legislature enacted the City's requested changes in Section 9a of Act 134 (Miscellaneous Tax Bill), which in turn thereby amended the timelines which had been established by Section 18 of Act 80 of the 2013 legislative session. That legislation served, in essence, as a legislative approval of a Substantial Change request, and the City filed its Amended Waterfront TIF Reconciliation in order to document that change to the District.

Act 134 authorized the City to extend the period to incur indebtedness for the three BTC properties to June 30, 2021, an additional eighteen months beyond the December 31, 2019 deadline set for the entire district by Act 80 in 2013. The City then received voter approval to bond for up to \$21.83 million dollars in public improvements in support of the BTC project at the Special City Meeting held on November 8, 2016. A Development Agreement between the City and BTC was executed on October 26, 2017.

In late 2019 the City filed a Substantial Change request pursuant to Section 1003.3.3 of Rule # 15 because the BTC project, now known as CityPlace Burlington ("CPB"), had been revised in scope and was under a new construction schedule. VEPC reviewed that request at a meeting on December 19, 2019. The board decided to table consideration of the request until the City could provide more information.

In 2020 the legislature through Act 175 extended the period to incur indebtedness to June 30, 2022. The following year the legislature through Act 73 extended the debt incurrence period to June 30, 2023.

In May 2021, the City and the owner entered into an Amended and Restated Development Agreement. On November 9, 2022 the City and the new local partners, City Place Partners, entered into a second Amended and Restated Development Agreement ("ARDA 2.0"), which replaced the May 2021 agreement.

Present Substantial Change Application

The series of legislative authorizations that extend the debt incurrence period require that before issuing debt the City must provide to VEPC:

- Executed construction contract of not less than \$50 million.
- Completion guarantee by the owner.

This present application for substantial change fulfills those requirements and seeks formal authorization to issue the approved debt.

CityPlace Phase 1

Since CPP assumed full ownership of Phase 1 of CityPlace in May 2021, it has been a whirlwind of activity and accomplishments. In less than nine months they've taken a stalled project and brought it to construction. Yet there is still much to be done and some important decisions yet to be made.

Significantly, the previous managing partner had not begun any construction plans for the buildings. With 700,000 square feet to be built, including a garage and three buildings, the plans are necessarily extremely complex. Preparing those takes time. Upon taking control of the project, the new local partners immediately instructed the architects, Freeman French Freeman, (FFF) to commence. Beginning only in June 2022, by Mid-October FFF had preliminary plans for the entire project and construction plans for the foundation. The city building permit for the foundation was promptly issued and construction began in November 2022.

Because of the prior controlling partner's delays in commencing final design plans, CPP does not yet have construction plans or contracts for the entire project. With completion of the foundation plans, FFF turned its attention to completing construction plans for the garage and three buildings. Each of these will be bid separately as plans are ready. These are expected to go out to bid in series as they are ready with the final plan set scheduled to go out to bid in March. Final construction contracts are expected for the various project elements in April to May 2023 timeframe.

Another complicating factor is caused by Champlain Housing Trust's financing. CHT's building is dependent on assembling a package of various grants, tax credit allocations, and similar governmental funding. For months CHT has been in regular communication with the various funding sources and all indications are they will be awarded the necessary funding. But, applying for and decision-making on those programs follow their own schedules and can't be accelerated. CHT can't enter binding construction contracts until those awards are official.

Consequently, at the time of this application we do not have and cannot have all the construction contracts for Phase 1 that will ultimately be in place. We expect to have most before issuing any bond. As part of this application, we are submitting a construction contract with completion guarantee that exceeds the \$50 million minimum required by the legislation authorizing the extension of the TIF for the three subject properties.

The City plans to issue TIF bonds based on the contracts in place at the time of the issuance and any others it has good reason to expect will be in place within a reasonable period. This is especially so in the case of CHT, if their necessary funding awards are expected.

In the event not all contracts are in place but there is substantial confidence that they will be shortly, to meet the 6/30/23 bonding deadline the City may elect to issue the bond based on the assumption they will be. In such an event, until such time the firm contracts are in place the City may hold in escrow any bond proceeds that exceed what can be supported by the projected value of what is under contract. In the event something goes awry and less than expected goes under contract the City will use the escrowed funds to repay the excess debt.

Phase 2

Phase 2 of CityPlace consists of what today is the remaining portion of the old mall with frontage on Church Street plus the former LL Bean Building on Cherry Street. Currently this remains under ownership of BTC with the local partners having a minority interest.

In summer 2022 BTC submitted a zoning application for redevelopment. While the application was subsequently withdrawn, plans are underway to resubmit revised plans in the next few months. The plan is to proceed through permitting by fall of this year and commence demolition over the winter with construction beginning in late spring 2024. The project is expected to be complete by Fall of 2026.

Construction Cost

CPP has provided detailed cost estimates for Phase 1. Given that the three owner-members of CPP are all highly experienced construction contractors, CPP and the City have a high degree of confidence in the cost estimates.

In summary, the Phase 1 construction values are:

West Building (CHT)	\$ 28,700,000
North Building	\$ 76,000,000
South Building	\$ 42,000,000
Parking Garage	\$ 15,000,000
Rooftop Restaurant	\$ 3,000,000
Retail	\$ 12,000,000
Community & co-working spaces	\$ <u>5,000,000</u>
Total Construction	\$181,700,000
Soft Costs	\$ <u>8,000,000</u>
Total Development Costs	\$189,700,000

Construction estimates are not yet ready for Phase 2. Nevertheless, construction costs can be expected to exceed \$80 million.

Federal Grants

In recent months the planned Waterfront TIF bonding has become more powerful. It will leverage at least \$12 million in federal funds and potentially over \$22 million. One of Senator Leahy's final acts before retirement was to obtain Congressionally Directed Spending (aka "earmark") of \$12 million for reconstruction to Great Streets standards of the entire length of Cherry Street from Battery Street to South Winooski Avenue. The city has also applied for a

federal “Reconnecting Communities” grant. We have not yet heard a decision on this but expect to within the next month or so. We estimate using approximately \$10 million of this grant toward the costs of reconnecting Pine and St. Paul streets and rebuilding Bank Street, all to Great Streets standards. The proposed TIF bond will provide most of the matching funds for these two grants. The upshot of this means the benefit of TIF will be magnified by not only reconnecting St. Paul and Pine Streets as originally envisioned but also by leveraging at least \$12 million and potentially \$22 million in federal funds for the city. This will enable rebuilding considerably more than would otherwise be possible with TIF alone.

The existing approvals for the Waterfront TIF district include reconstruction of Cherry Street from Battery to Church Street. The Leahy earmark adds the block of Cherry St between Church and South Winooski Avenue. No TIF funds will be used for this additional block.

TIF Budget

The approved uses for TIF funds under the \$21,830,000 maximum include acquisition and construction of two new city blocks of public right-of-way (St. Paul between Cherry and Bank Streets) as well as street improvements conforming to the City’s Great Streets initiative for six additional city blocks (Cherry Street from Battery Street to Church Street as well as Bank Street between Pine Street and Church Street). Eligible costs include ROW acquisition, site preparation expenses, construction, design & engineering, other associated soft costs, and Related Costs.

As approved in 2016, the developer CPP, will construct most or all the public improvements in the city ROWs immediately abutting their development site. The city will purchase those improvements at cost from CPP. CPP will be required to document all costs to the city’s satisfaction. The city will construct the street improvements on Cherry and Bank Streets where they do not abut CityPlace. The city may also elect to assume construction responsibility to construct some of the street improvements abutting CityPlace if that is necessary to meet federal guidelines for matching funds.

To accomplish the reconnection of Pine and St. Paul Streets, required obtaining easements or rights of way from three abutting properties: 77 Pine, 100 Bank, and 150 Bank, the costs of which are also TIF eligible.

We’ve attached an exhibit showing the City’s overall budget (not including related costs), totaling \$40,922,000. Of this only \$16,000,000 is expected to be paid for by TIF bonding. The majority is expected to come from other sources, primarily the two grants.

In the event the Reconnecting Communities grant is not awarded, the city may increase its TIF borrowing to the maximum \$18,840,000 to enable it to construct some of the street improvements otherwise would have been paid for by the grant.



State of Vermont [phone] 802-828-3540
Division of Community Planning & Revitalization
Deane C. Davis Building, 6th Floor
One National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
www.accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/preservation/

*Agency of Commerce and
Community Development*

July 28, 2021

City of Burlington
Attn: Brian Pine, Director, Community & Economic Development Office
Burlington City Hall
149 Church Street, Room 32
Burlington, VT 05401

RE: Sales Tax Reallocation Award

Dear Brian Pine,

The letter confirms that on July 26, 2021, the City of Burlington, Vermont, was allocated \$480,052.00 in reallocated state sales taxes to support infrastructure improvements associated with the construction of the redevelopment project at 79 Pine Street. This award was allocated under the authority granted to the Vermont Downtown Board under 32 V.S.A. Chapter 151.

The reallocated sale tax amount is made based on representations made in the application that the qualified development project and municipal project will meet or exceed the amounts indicated and that the project otherwise meets the requirements of the program. If the actual construction expenditures are less than indicated in the budget, the award must be reduced accordingly. You have three years from the date of award (until July 26, 2024) to complete your project.

If you have any questions regarding this award or the process going forward, please contact Caitlin Corkins at caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov or by calling 802-828-3047.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Caitlin".

Caitlin Corkins, Tax Credits & Grants Coordinator
Department of Housing and Community Development



Erik Brown Brotz
Chair, Burlington Walk-Bike Council
44 Catherine St.
Burlington, VT, 05401

Feb. 26, 2023

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing as the Chair of the Burlington Walk-Bike Council. We are an advisory council to the City of Burlington regarding infrastructure improvements and policy changes for bicycling and walking. Reconnecting downtown Burlington is a transformative project that will rebuild blocks of Pine and St Paul Streets that were removed from the street network during mid-century Urban Renewal, and rebuild and reconnect Cherry and Bank Streets to meet the modern needs of the community. This work will directly support substantial redevelopment and opportunities for Burlingtonians.

Reconnecting Burlington's downtown core is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reconstruct the heart of Vermont's economic engine and provide new opportunities for the next generation of Burlington residents and visitors. The new streets will be places for community and sustainability, and will improve mobility and connectivity in the core of downtown. Public-private partnerships and federal funding will reduce the burden on local taxpayers. Residents will have new opportunities for economic advancement, affordable housing, and better quality of life.

The Burlington Walk-Bike Council strongly supports the request for this unique investment in Burlington's sustainability, quality of life, and strong local economy.

Sincerely,

Erik Brown Brotz
Chair, Burlington Walk-Bike Council