

Burlington Planning Commission

Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 6:30 PM

Remote & Virtual Meeting via Zoom

In person option available:

Bushor Conference Room (Room 102), 1st Floor of City Hall, 149 Church St.

To Join the Meeting on a Computer

Link: <https://zoom.us/j/97941883790?pwd=bGZBNzNyV1liL3p5NkhIL2dqUFIzdz09>

Passcode: 658929

To Join the Meeting on a Phone

Number: +1 646 931 3860 US Meeting ID: 979 4188 3790

1. Agenda

2. Public Forum

3. Chair's Report

4. Director's Report

5. ZA-26-03: TDM Exemptions for Affordable Housing

Subject	5.1. Staff to present on ZA-26-03: TDM Exemptions for Affordable Housing. This amendment originated from City Council Ordinance Committee, and has been referred to the Planning Commission for review and comment.
Meeting	March 10, 2026 - Planning Commission Agenda - Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 6:30 PM, Burlington Planning Commission
Category	5. ZA-26-03: TDM Exemptions for Affordable Housing
Department	Planning
Type	
Recommended Action	

6. Updates related to ZA-26-04: Inclusionary Zoning & Joint Committee

Subject	6.1. Staff will provide an update to Planning Commissioners about the status of ZA-26-04: Inclusionary Zoning and the related Joint Committee meeting schedule.
Meeting	March 10, 2026 - Planning Commission Agenda - Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 6:30 PM, Burlington Planning Commission
Category	6. Updates related to ZA-26-04: Inclusionary Zoning & Joint Committee

Department Planning

Type

Recommended Action

7. Planning Project Updates: New North End & Historic Preservation

8. planBTV 2050: Existing Conditions

Subject 8.1. Staff will present findings from Demographics, Housing, and Land Use sections of the draft planBTV 2050 Existing Conditions Analysis report. These sections of the report are included in this packet for Commission comment and discussion.

Meeting March 10, 2026 - Planning Commission Agenda - Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 6:30 PM, Burlington Planning Commission

Category 8. planBTV 2050: Existing Conditions

Department Planning

Type

Recommended Action

9. Commissioner Items

10. Adopt Minutes & Accept Communications

Subject 10.1. Commissioners to review and approve to adopt minutes and accept any communications.

Meeting March 10, 2026 - Planning Commission Agenda - Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 6:30 PM, Burlington Planning Commission

Category 10. Adopt Minutes & Accept Communications

Department Planning

Type

11. Adjournment

CITY OF BURLINGTON

ORDINANCE _____

Sponsor: Office of City Planning,

Public Hearing Dates: _____

First reading: _____

Referred to: _____

Rules suspended and placed in all

In the Year Two Thousand Twenty-Six

An Ordinance in Relation to

stages of passage:

CDO—TDM Exemptions for Affordable Housing
ZA-26-03

It is hereby Ordained by the City Council of the City of Burlington as follows:

1 That Appendix A, Comprehensive Development Ordinance of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Burlington be and
2 hereby is amended by amending Article 8, Parking; Part 1, General Requirements; Sec. 8.1.9-1, Maximum Off-Street
3 Parking Requirements; and Table 8.1.16-1, Transportation Demand Management Program Required; to clarify the
4 definition of affordable housing projects to include buildings within a Planned Unit Development, and to clarify
5 that Affordable Projects are only required to meet a subset of Transportation Demand Management requirements even
6 in the case of a Waiver of Maximum Parking Limitations applying TDM requirements to a project. As such, the
7 ordinance is amended to read as follows:

8 ***

9 ARTICLE 8: PARKING

10 ***

11 PART 1: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

12 ***

13 Sec. 8.1.9 Maximum On-Site Parking Spaces

14 The total number of off-street parking spaces provided in any parking district shall not be more than as
15 allowed in Table 8.1.9-1 below:

- (a) Where a use is not listed, the maximum parking requirements shall be determined by the
administrative officer based upon a determination that the use is substantially equivalent in use,
nature, and impact to a listed use.
(b) When the calculation yields a fractional number of maximum spaces, the number of spaces shall be
rounded to the nearest whole.

22 Table 8.1.9-1 Maximum Off-Street Parking Requirements—As written.

(a) Exemptions: The following shall not be included in the maximum number of allowable spaces
required by this section:

1. – 6. As written.

7. Waiver of Maximum Parking Limitations. Parking in excess of the maximum parking limitation
of this section, may be waived by the DRB pursuant to the following requirements:

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A. The applicant requesting the waiver shall also provide:

- (i) a peak demand parking study for two similar uses in the area; and,
- (ii) a TDM Plan pursuant to the requirements of Sec. 8.1.16, provided that Affordable Projects shall only be required to comply with Sections 8.1.16(c) 1 and 8.1.16(c) 4, as stated in Table 8.1.16-1.

B. As written.

Section 8.1.16 Transportation Demand Management

(a) Purpose: *As written.*

(b) Applicability:

- (1) A Transportation Demand Management Program shall be required for all projects in any Parking District involving any one or more of the following:

Project Type	Applicable Projects	Affordable Projects	Small Projects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of 10 or more dwelling units • A non-residential or Mixed Use development with a building footprint of eight thousand (8,000) sq.ft. or more; or the creation of fifteen thousand (15,000) sq.ft. or more of gross floor area 	Projects involving one or more “Applicable Projects” and that also contain at least 75% of dwelling units meeting or exceeding the affordability criteria of Article 9, Inclusionary & Replacement Housing, or housing rented to tenants receiving federal or state rental assistance <u>including buildings within a Planned Unit Development that meet or exceed the above criteria</u>	Creation of five (5) to nine (9) dwelling units
Applicable TDM Sections	All provisions of Sec. 8.1.16 (c)	Sec. 8.1.16 (c) 1. and Sec. 8.1.16 (c) 4. only	Sec. 8.1.16 (c) 3. b. only

For projects that were issued permits with TDM requirements prior to January 31, 2023, an administrative permit amendment may be requested to align the permit with the TDM requirements set forth herein.

- (c) Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program:** A TDM Program shall include each of the following elements at a minimum:

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(1) Outreach and Education:

- a. Designation of a Transportation Coordinator who directly, or indirectly through membership in a Transportation Management Association, shall be responsible for each of the following:
 - 1. Prepare and always make available to all residents and employees informational and educational materials regarding available TDM strategies and opportunities for increased use and participation;
 - 2. Preparation and dissemination of an annual travel survey of all residents and employees; and,
 - 3. Record-keeping and reporting to City upon request of all TDM activities offered and rates of participation (including parking utilization if applicable).

(2) TDM Strategies: In addition to compliance with the on-site Bicycle Parking requirements found in Article 8, Part 2, each TDM Program must incorporate TDM strategies to minimize the amount of parking demand associated with the project. At a minimum, a TDM Program shall select no less than two (2) of the following TDM strategies, which shall be selected and filed with the Administrative Officer on an annual basis: Article 8: Parking Article Last Updated: January 25, 2023 Comprehensive Development Ordinance p. 8-18 City of Burlington, VT

- a. Maintain an ongoing and active membership in a Transportation Management Association (TMA);
- b. Provide GMT Transit passes to all residents and employees at a minimum discount of 50%;
- c. Provide a free car share membership to all residents and employees;
- d. Provide a free bike share membership to all residents and employees;
- e. If not already provided through a TMA membership, provide residents and employees with a shuttle service, guaranteed ride home program, or ride to a nearby transit center.

(3) Parking Management: Where on-site or off-site parking is also made available:

- a. Conduct parking utilization studies at least annually for a period of 7 years from receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy;
- b. With the exception of permanently affordable housing units, the cost of parking shall be unbundled from all residential and nonresidential leases and deeds and made available at a market rate;
- c. Where parking spaces are made available to off-site users, parking spaces may be made available by a renewable lease, provided the term of any lease does not exceed one (1) year; and,
- d. Priority parking spaces: when on-site parking is provided, the following must be located in closest proximity to a primary building entrance and/or public street frontage:
 - 1. ADA Accessible spaces;
 - 2. Bicycles, scooters, and motorcycles spaces;

- 94 3. Car-share: where 1 space must be offered for projects with 20 or more residential
- 95 units, subject to an agreement with a car-share provider; and,
- 96 4. Carpool and/or Vanpool vehicles: where more than 20 spaces are available for non-
- 97 residential uses. In such cases, 5 spaces or 5% of the parking spaces on site, whichever
- 98 is less, must be reserved for carpool/vanpool use before 9:00 AM on weekdays.

99 (4) **TDM Agreement:** Each TDM Plan shall include a signed commitment to and
 100 acknowledgement of each of the following on a form provided by the Administrative Officer:

- 101 a. Commitment to ongoing implementation of the TDM requirements as set forth above;
- 102 Article 8: Parking Article Last Updated: January 25, 2023 Comprehensive Development
- 103 Ordinance p. 8-19 City of Burlington, VT
- 104 b. Acknowledgement that the project has no claim to the ongoing availability of nearby on-
- 105 street public parking, and that, as is the case with other on-street public parking, the City
- 106 retains the right to charge for, restrict or remove such on-street parking at any time;
- 107 c. Acknowledgement that failure to maintain transportation demand management as required
- 108 above is a violation of this ordinance, and understanding that, pursuant to Sec. 2.7.8 of this
- 109 ordinance, no zoning permit or certificate of occupancy may be granted until any such
- 110 violation has been remedied; and,
- 111 d. Commitment to notify any subsequent owners and tenants in writing of their obligations
- 112 under this section as part of any purchase and sale and/or lease agreements.

113 **Review and Enforcement:** The Administrative Officer shall be responsible for determining
 114 compliance with the TDM Program requirements as set forth above, and ongoing implementation
 115 shall be included as a condition of any discretionary or administrative permit required for
 116 development subject to the conditions of this Section.

117 Failure to maintain a TDM Program as required above shall be a violation of this ordinance, and
 118 pursuant to Sec. 2.7.8 of this ordinance no zoning permit or certificate of occupancy may be
 119 granted without a TDM Program in effect.

120 Guidelines regarding compliance with these TDM requirements shall be developed and provided
 121 to applicants by the Administrative Officer.

124 * Material stricken out deleted.

125 ** Material underlined added.

127 Planning/KS/ Ordinances 2026/ZA-26-03TDM Exemptions for Affordable Housing
 128 CDO Sections 8.1.9 and Table 8.1.16-1

130 CCOC 3/4/26

ZA-26-03

TDM Exemptions for

Affordable Housing

PLANNING COMMISSION

2026.03.10

TDM and Affordable Housing

Table 8.1.16-1 Transportation Demand Management Program Required

Project Type	Applicable Projects	Affordable Projects	Small Projects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of 10 or more dwelling units • A non-residential or Mixed Use development with a building footprint of eight thousand (8,000) sq.ft. or more; or the creation of fifteen thousand (15,000) sq.ft. or more of gross floor area 	<p>Projects involving one or more “Applicable Projects” and that also contain at least 75% of dwelling units meeting or exceeding the affordability criteria of Article 9, Inclusionary & Replacement Housing, or housing rented to tenants receiving federal or state rental assistance</p>	<p>Creation of five (5) to nine (9) dwelling units</p>
Applicable TDM Sections	All provisions of Sec. 8.1.16 (c)	Sec. 8.1.16 (c) 1. and Sec. 8.1.16 (c) 4. only	Sec. 8.1.16 (c) 3. b. only

TDM and Affordable Housing

- The Affordable Projects standards would apply to the CHT and Cathedral Square buildings at Cambrian Rise **if not for the Waiver of Maximum Parking Limitations** that was approved for the **entirety of the Planned Unit Development in April 2022.**

TDM and Affordable Housing

Topics to address in an amendment:

- Amend Sec. 8.1.9(c) 7 Waiver of Maximum Parking Limitations to state explicitly that Affordable Projects shall only comply with the education and outreach requirement (Sec. 8.1.16(c) 1) and TDM agreement (Sec. 8.1.16(c) 4)
- Clarify via explicit language that “Affordable Projects” within a Planned Unit Development shall only comply with the education and outreach requirement (Sec. 8.1.16(c) 1) and TDM agreement (Sec. 8.1.16(c) 4)

ZA-26-03

Amends Sec. 8.1.9-1, Maximum Off-Street Parking Requirements:

- A. The applicant requesting the waiver shall also provide:
- (i) a peak demand parking study for two similar uses in the area; and,
 - (ii) a TDM Plan pursuant to the requirements of Sec. 8.1.16, provided that Affordable Projects shall only be required to comply with Sections 8.1.16(c) 1 and 8.1.16(c) 4, as stated in Table 8.1.16-1.

ZA-26-03

Amends Table 8.1.16-1 Transportation Demand Management Program Required:

Project Type	Applicable Projects	Affordable Projects	Small Projects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of 10 or more dwelling units A non-residential or Mixed Use development with a building footprint of eight thousand (8,000) sq.ft. Or more; or the creation of fifteen thousand (15,000) sq.ft. Or more of gross floor area 	Projects involving one or more "Applicable Projects" and that also contain at least 75% of dwelling units meeting or exceeding the affordability criteria of Article 9, Inclusionary & Replacement Housing, or housing rented to tenants receiving federal or state rental assistance <u>including buildings within a Planned Unit Development that meet or exceed the above criteria</u>	Creation of five (5) to nine (9) dwelling units
Applicable TDM Sections	All provisions of Sec. 8.1.16 (c)	Sec. 8.1.16 (c) 1. and Sec. 8.1.16 (c) 4. only	Sec. 8.1.16 (c) 3. b. only



City of Burlington, VT
149 Church Street, 3rd Floor
Burlington, VT 05401
Phone: (802) 865-7194
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TO: Burlington City Council Ordinance Committee
FROM: Stella Jordan, Senior Planner
Charles Dillard, AICP, Director of City Planning
DATE: March 10, 2026
RE: Proposed ZA-26-03 TDM Exemptions for Affordable Housing

This memo is intended to provide an overview about the proposed changes included in ZA-26-03. This amendment originated with the City Council Ordinance Committee and has been forwarded to both the Planning Commission and the City Council for review and comments.

1. Overview

This amendment originated with the City Council Ordinance Committee, who sought to address challenges raised to them by affordable housing developers. Following a discussion with these developers at the February 6, 2026 City Council Ordinance Committee meeting, the Committee directed staff to draft ZA-26-03 to address the issues raised, which are outlined in Section 2 of this memo. By request, staff presented this memo and draft Amendment at the March 6, 2026 City Council Ordinance Committee, at which the Committee recommended referring the Amendment to the Planning Commission for review, while simultaneously referring the Amendment to City Council with the warning of a Public Hearing. The City Council Ordinance Committee is in strong support of advancing this amendment in a timely manner.

This Amendment proposes clarifying the definition of affordable housing projects and their obligations in relation to Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements. Specifically, this Amendment proposes including affordable buildings within a Planned Unit Development (PUD) in the definition of Affordable Projects when determining TDM requirement applicability, and further clarifying that Affordable Projects are only required to meet a subset of TDM requirements as provided in Article 8, Section 8.1.16 of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance, even in the case of a Waiver of Maximum Parking Limitations applying TDM requirements to a project or a PUD.

2. Background & Past Efforts

This Amendment addresses concerns raised by the developers of buildings that contain affordable housing within the Cambrian Rise PUD that compliance with full TDM requirements would represent an undue administrative and cost burden for the affordable buildings in particular. The TDM requirements in question were activated by a 2022 project-wide Maximum Parking Waiver and dwelling unit count increase amendment for the entire Cambrian Rise PUD.

Under the current CDO regulations regarding Waivers of Maximum Parking Limitations (Sec. 8.1.8 (a) 7. A.), the Cambrian Rise project must submit a project-wide TDM Plan consistent with TDM regulations (Sec. 8.1.16) wherein all buildings in the PUD are subject to the full suite of applicable TDM Program requirements. The developers of the affordable buildings for Cambrian Rise sought an amendment to the project's current TDM plan (which was submitted with the 2022 project amendment) to exempt these buildings from elements of the existing TDM plan and separate them from the rest of the Cambrian Rise project with respect to the implementation of Outreach and Education strategies and TDM strategies. The Development Review Board reviewed this request on December 16, 2025, finding that the affordable buildings in question were part of the overall Cambrian Rise project (providing much of its required inclusionary housing) and benefit from the project-wide maximum parking waiver; that the CDO's definition of Affordable Projects in Section 8.1.16 does not apply to affordable

buildings within a PUD that are fulfilling a project’s inclusionary housing requirements; and that a project-wide TDM plan must be inclusive of the entire development.

The Cambrian Rise project’s existing TDM plan comprises four elements, as required by Section 8.1.16: Outreach and Education (which is being undertaken by the Cambrian Rise property manager in partnership with CATMA), TDM Strategies (in partnership with CATMA), Parking Management, and a TDM Agreement (fulfilled by the TDM plan). The exemption sought for affordable buildings, which this Amendment in effect provides by clarifying that the definition of Affordable Projects includes affordable buildings within a PUD and that these buildings may also be exempted from project-wide TDM requirements imposed by a maximum parking waiver, limits TDM requirements to Outreach and Education and a TDM Agreement only.

The City Council Ordinance Committee discussed the possibility of an amendment to address this topic and heard from affordable housing developers about the project and TDM requirements in question on February 6, 2026. Staff from the Office of City Planning also provided context at this meeting about the existing CDO requirements, and shared information about two relevant forthcoming amendments: a larger TDM amendment that is currently being drafted to comprehensively update Burlington’s TDM requirements, which will also include updated requirements and strategies related to affordable housing projects; and a larger Inclusionary Zoning amendment that will update and modernize the City’s inclusionary housing development requirements. Committee members elected to advance ZA-26-03 as a standalone amendment prior to these larger updates, specifically to address the concerns outlined above. These broader efforts were also discussed at the March 6, 2026 Ordinance Committee meeting, at which the Committee reviewed the draft Amendment and recommended its referral to both the Planning Commission for review and the City Council with a Public Hearing warned. During the March 6 discussion Committee members expressed strong support for moving this Amendment forward in a timely manner, and at least one member expressed that this Amendment clarifies the original intent of the existing TDM ordinance.

4. Proposed Amendment: ZA-26-03

a) Amendment Type

Text Amendment	Map Amendment	Text & Map Amendment
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b) Purpose Statement

The proposed change in ZA-26-03 aims to clarify definitions of affordable housing projects in relation to TDM requirements.

c) Proposed Amendment

1. Amendments to Article 8: Parking

- Amends Sec. 8.1.8 (a) 7. A. (ii) to clarify that Affordable Projects as defined in Table. 8.1.16-1 are only required to comply with two applicable sections of TDM requirements when a Waiver of Maximum Parking Limitations is applied to a project.
- Amends Sec. 8.1.16 (b) Table 8.1.16-1 to clarify that the definition of Affordable Projects includes buildings within a Planned Unit Development that meet or exceed provided criteria.

d) Relationship to planBTV

This following discussion of conformance with the goals and policies of planBTV is prepared in accordance with the provisions of 24 V.S.A. §4441(c).

Theme:	Dynamic	Distinctive	Inclusive	Connected
Land Use:	Conserve	Sustain	Grow	

Compatibility with Proposed Future Land Use & Density

The proposed amendment aligns with the land use and density policies outlined in planBTV. Its purpose is to support affordable housing development by balancing economic challenges and mobility needs. This change reflects the intent of the “Inclusive” theme, which prioritizes providing and promoting affordable housing choices and accessible transportation and mobility options for all residents.

Impact on Safe & Affordable Housing

This amendment reduces administrative and cost burdens that TDM requirements may impose on affordable housing development. By providing for the exemption of some TDM requirements for affordable buildings within a PUD that are providing required inclusionary housing for a project, this amendment may encourage more PUDs to separate their required inclusionary dwelling units into standalone affordable buildings rather than incorporating them into buildings that also contain market-rate units, resulting in increasing segregation of affordable housing from market-rate housing.

Planned Community Facilities

This amendment has no direct impact on planned community facilities.

h) Process Overview

The following chart summarizes the current stage in the zoning amendment process, and identifies any recommended actions:

Planning Commission Process					
Draft Amendment prepared by Staff 3/4/26	Presentation to & discussion by Commission: 3/10/26	Approve for Public Hearing	Public Hearing	Approved & forwarded to Council	
City Council Process					
First Read & Referral to Ordinance Committee	Ordinance Committee discussion 2/6/26, 3/6/26	Ordinance Committee recommend	Second Read	Public Hearing	Council Approval & Adoption

*Discussed by the Planning Commission Ordinance Committee

Burlington in 2025: Assessment of Existing Conditions

The City of Burlington has experienced significant change since the adoption of its last comprehensive plan update in 2019, although many of the goals and themes in [planBTV](#) remain salient. Of particular note are the impacts of COVID-19 on population, employment, housing, and travel patterns, many of which have endured through 2025 and shaped current needs and challenges in Burlington. A deepened crisis of housing availability and affordability has burdened residents across income levels and contributed to a growing population of unhoused people. People experiencing homelessness, mental health, and substance abuse challenges have become a central component of public and political discourse, as residents and business owners increasingly cite public safety as a major concern. Environmental trends and issues driven by climate change have also continued to intensify.

Burlington is now planning for ambitious housing growth in the coming decades to comply with new state policies and regional targets, requiring a rethinking of the City’s land use and transportation priorities. At the same time, the City must balance critical climate resilience and environmental protection priorities, foster economic opportunities that complement growth needs and mitigate federal funding uncertainties, and collaborate with an extremely engaged constituency, ensuring Burlington remains a vibrant and welcoming place where people want and are able to live, work, learn, and recreate.

This assessment provides an overview of existing conditions in Burlington, with a particular focus on significant changes and emerging areas of concern since 2019. The first four main sections of this assessment correspond to conditions relating to each of the four plan elements that will comprise the unified planBTV: 2050 Comprehensive Plan.

The data included and referenced in this assessment is listed by section in a Data Reference appendix.

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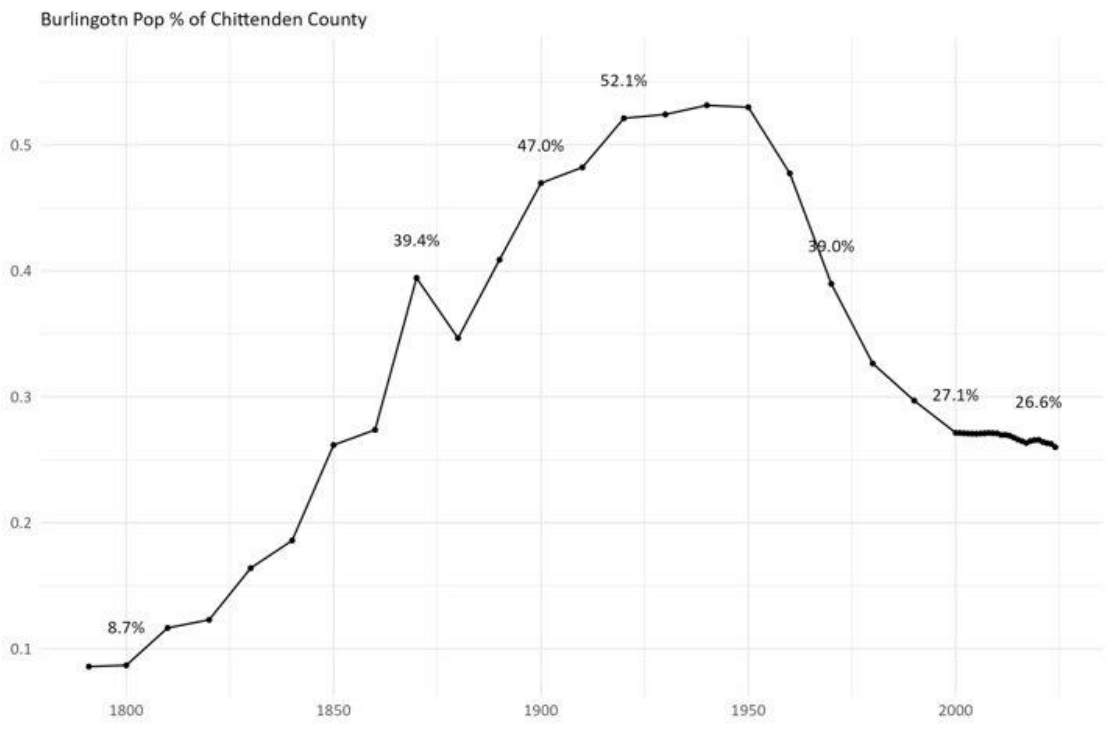
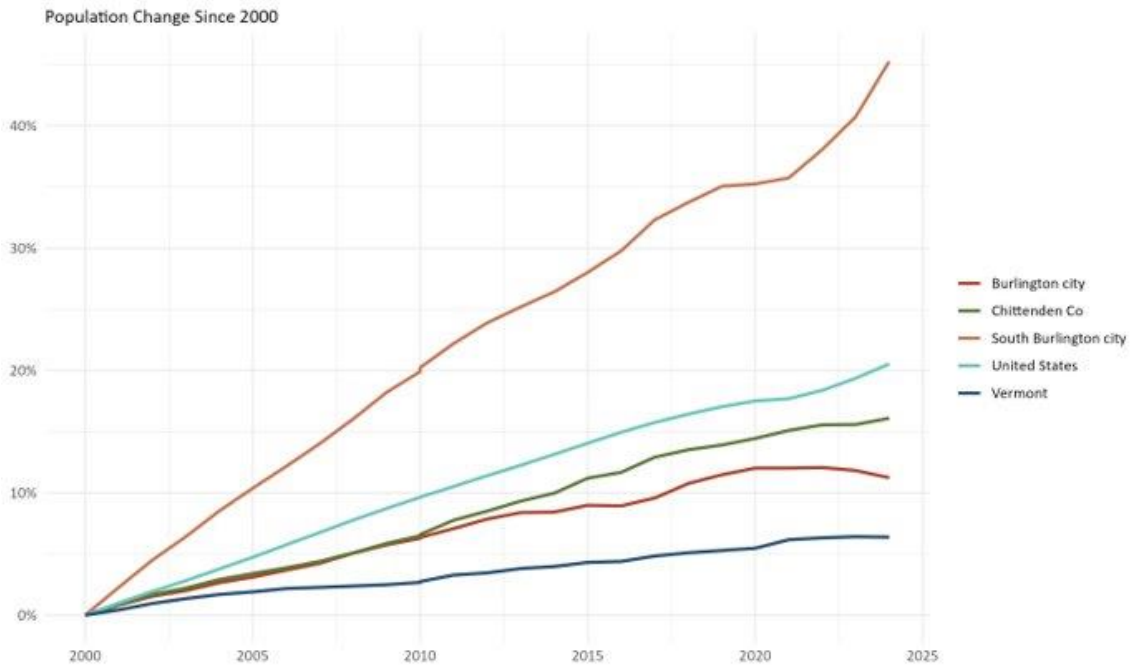
1 Municipal Plan Elements Assessment

1.1 Demographics

Population

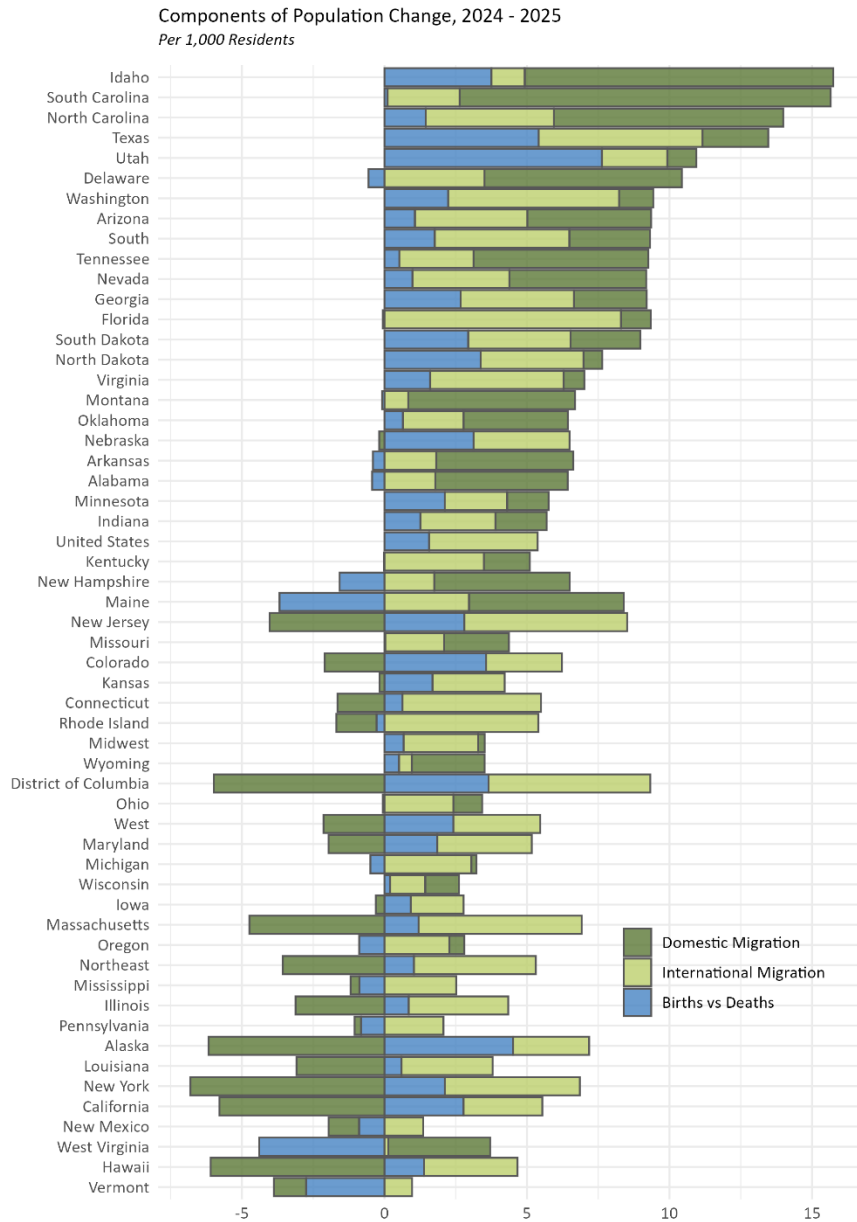
Burlington is a small city of 44,743. Its population has grown slightly since 2000—up 4.7% from 2010, but down 0.7% from 2020. Burlington’s growth over the past 25 years is approximately in line with other small cities and slower than the US as a whole. Compared to other municipalities in Chittenden County, however, Burlington is growing much more slowly.



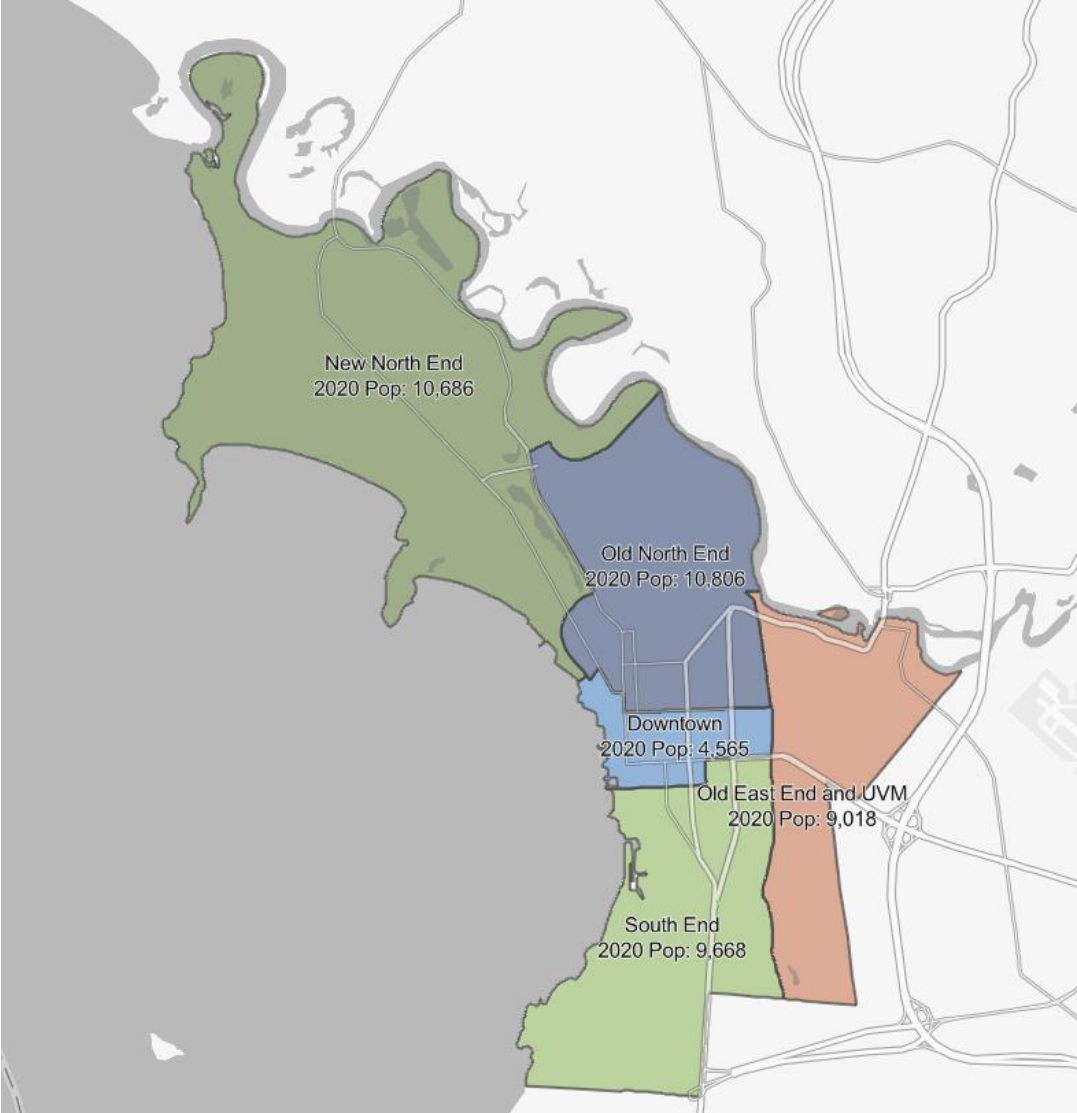


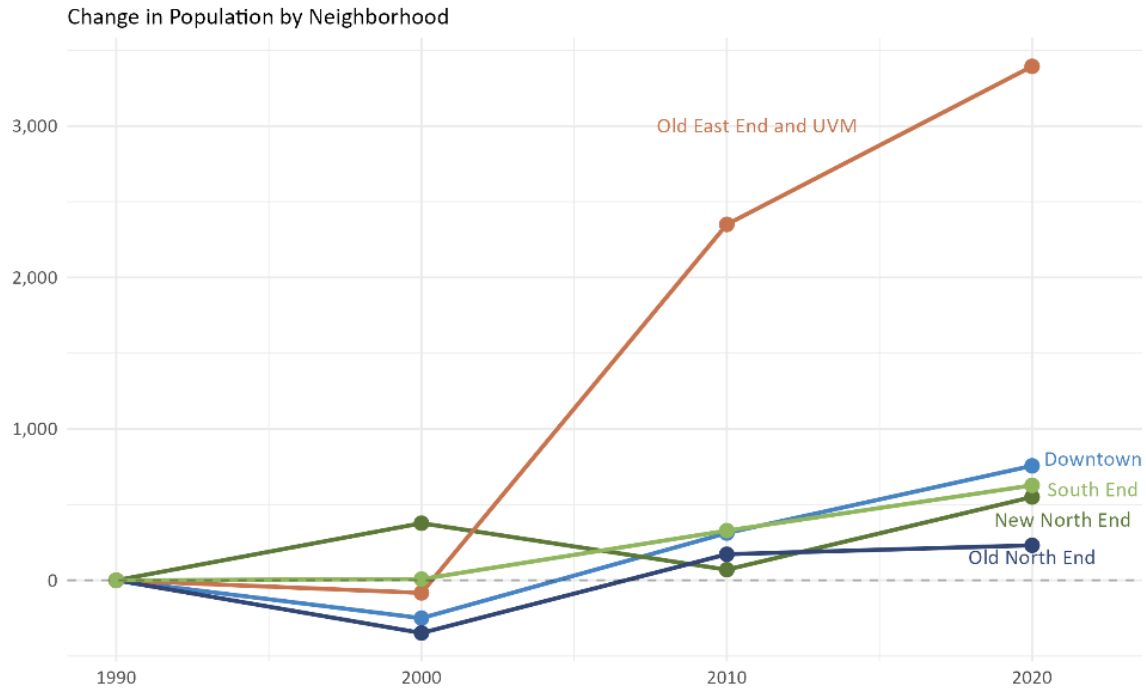
Statewide, Vermont’s population is declining. According to 2025 Census state population estimates, Vermont is the only state in the country that experienced a net loss in domestic migration as well as a decline in internal population growth between 2024 and 2025, although the state did see a small amount of positive international migration. While Vermont’s neighbors also saw domestic out-migration (MA and NY) or death rates

exceeding birth rates (NH and ME) over the past year, Vermont is unique in having experienced both trends.



The City’s population is relatively evenly distributed throughout five main neighborhoods, with the exception of the downtown neighborhood which is geographically much smaller. Between 2010 and 2020, the New North End, South End, and Downtown neighborhoods experienced moderate growth. The Old North End neighborhood population remained relatively flat. Between 2000 and 2020, the East End (Old East End and UVM) saw the highest growth rates, adding more than 3000 residents during that 20-year period.

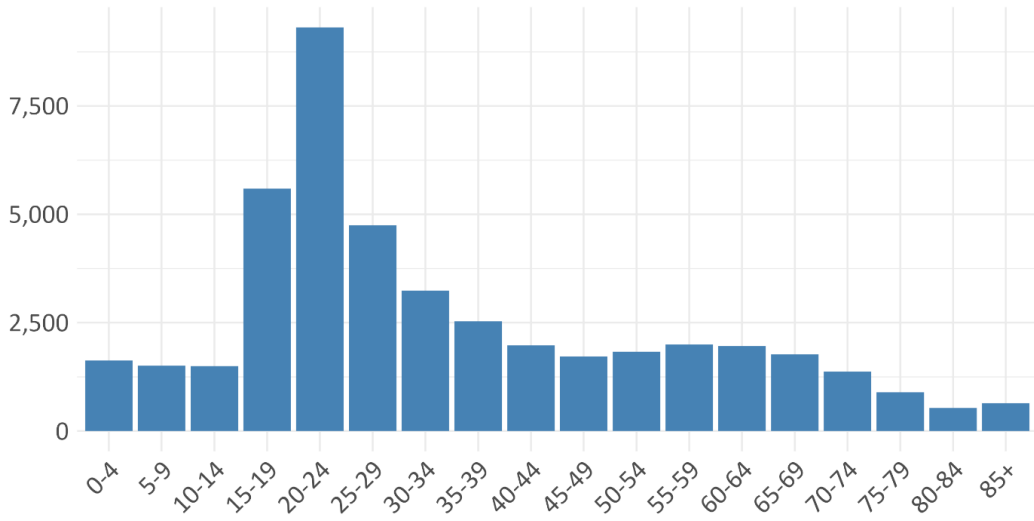




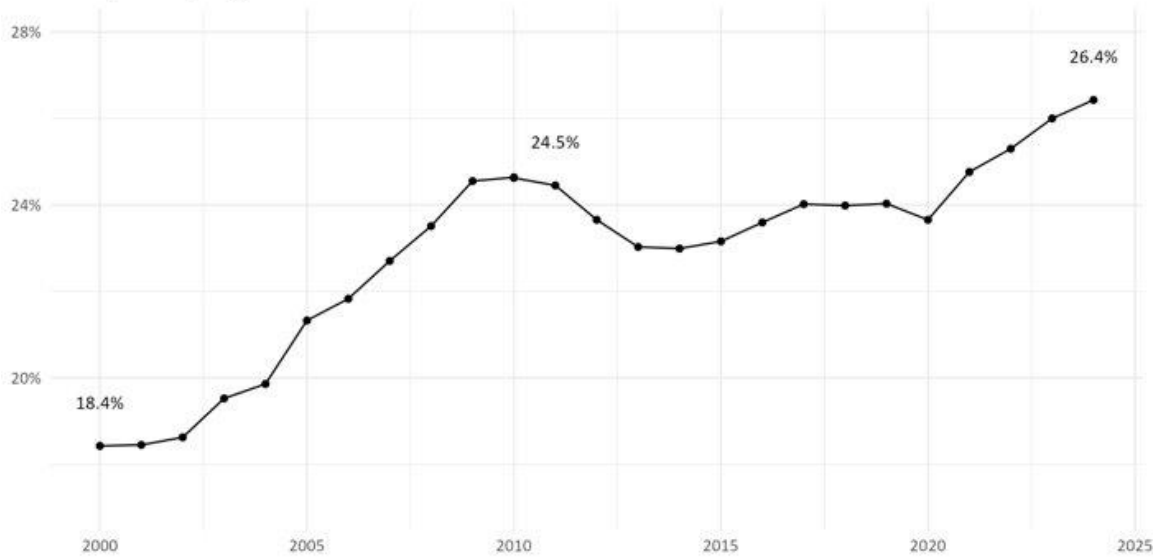
Age

Burlington is a young city (median age 27.8) compared to both the state and country, primarily due to the large student population. As undergraduate enrollment at UVM has risen to 11,595—an 11% increase—since 2010 (while remaining relatively flat at Champlain College), the student population has grown to 26.4% of the Burlington population. Excluding students, a rough estimate of Burlington’s median age is between 35-39, slightly younger than the statewide median of around 43. However, the city is also getting older. There are more older people, over the age of 65, living in Burlington—a 31% increase since 2010—while the number of children has remained the about same and birth rates have declined.

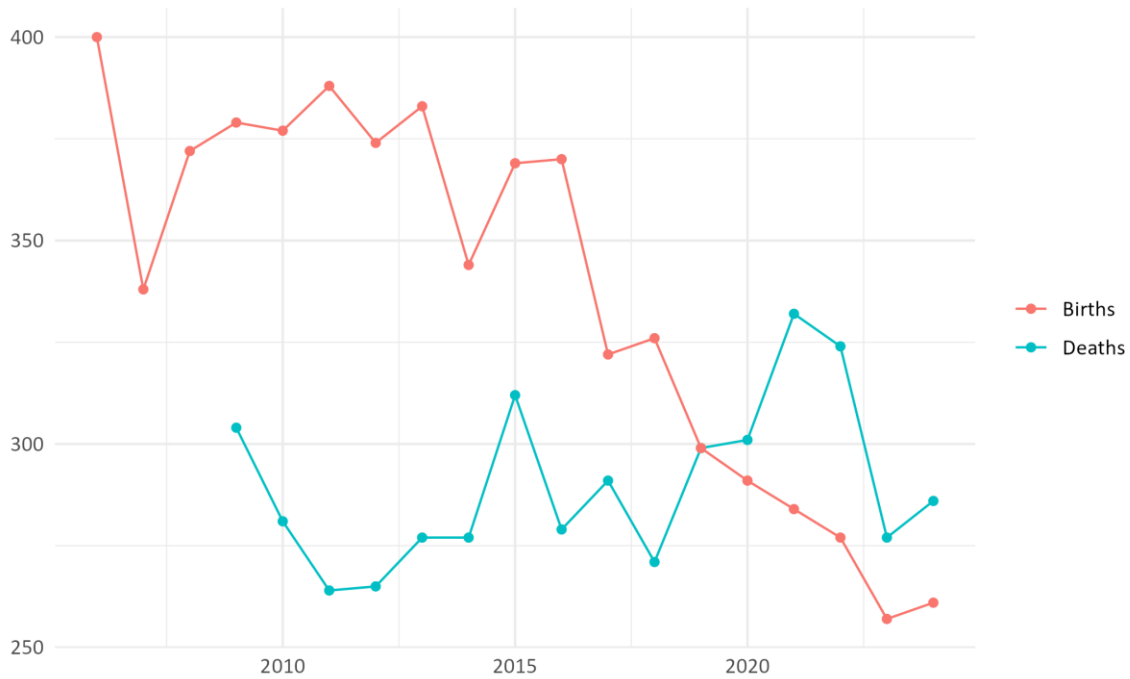
Burlington, VT Population by Age Group (2020)



UVM Undergraduate Enrollment
As a % of the Burlington population



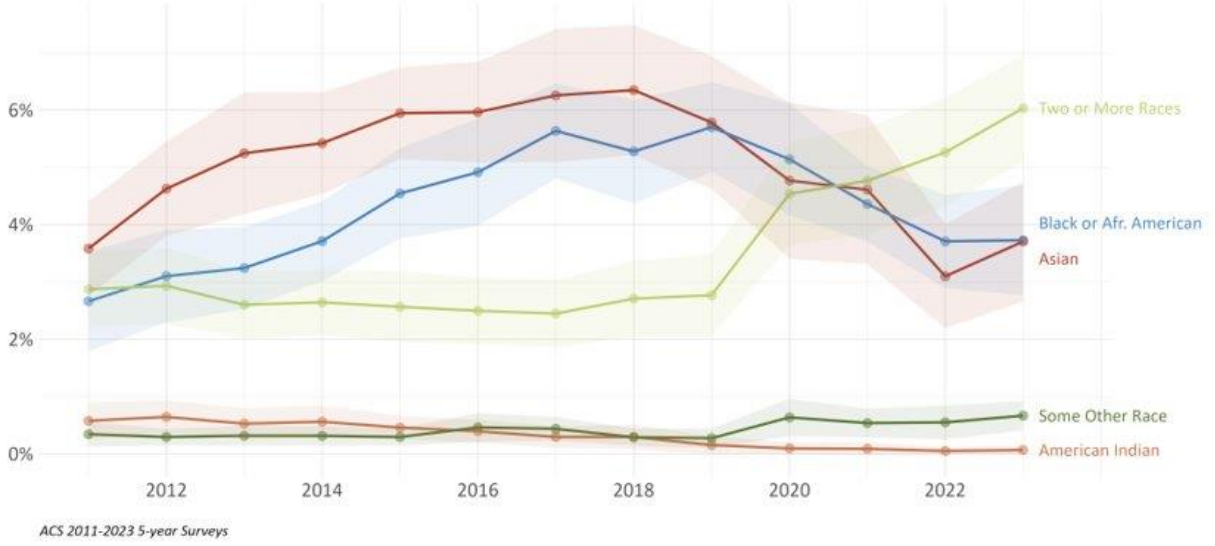
Births and Deaths by Year
 Burlington VT



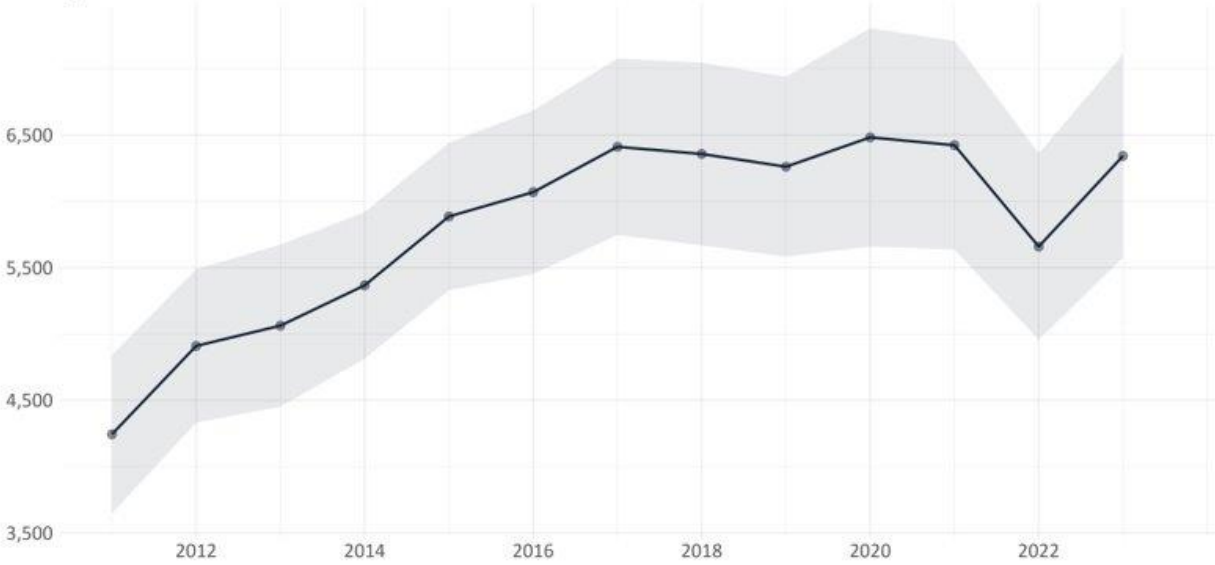
Race and Ethnicity

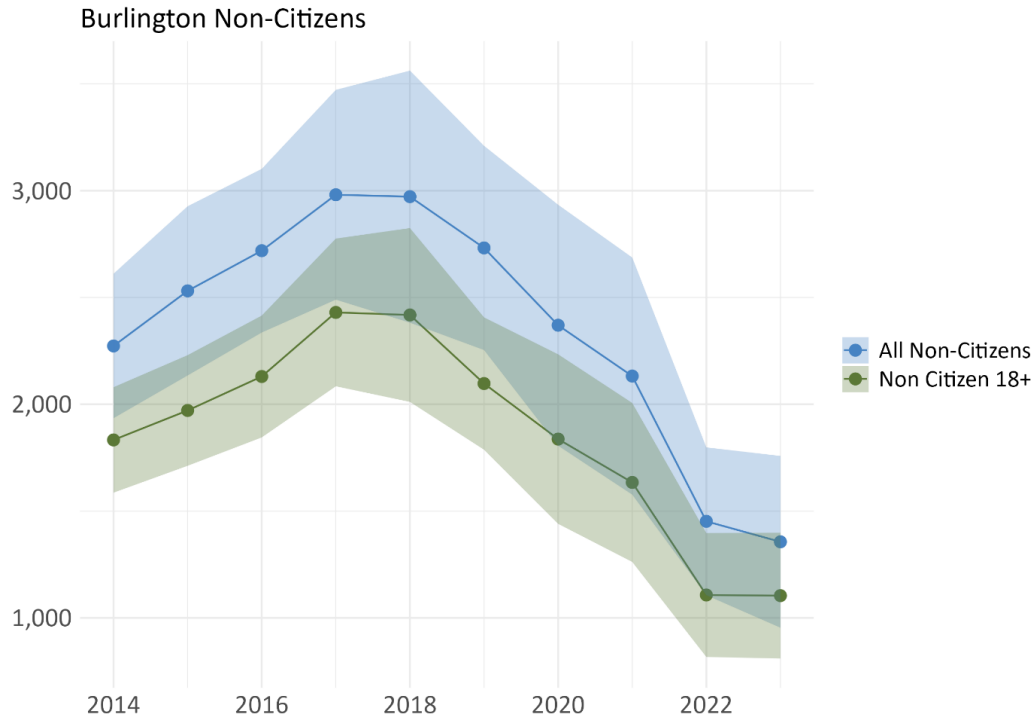
While the city of Burlington has become slightly more diverse since 2010, it remains overwhelmingly white (at currently 82% of the population, down 5% since 2010). The most notable change has been in the number of people who identify with two or more races (6.2%), which more than doubled between 2010 and 2020. This shift is due in part to actual demographic change, as well as the Census Bureau's improved question design and processing of responses, which made it easier for people to identify with multiple racial backgrounds. Burlington saw a peak in the number of non-U.S. citizens residing in the City in 2017 and 2018, potentially due to increased immigration during these years, with a subsequent decline.

Burlington Population, by Race, 2011-2023



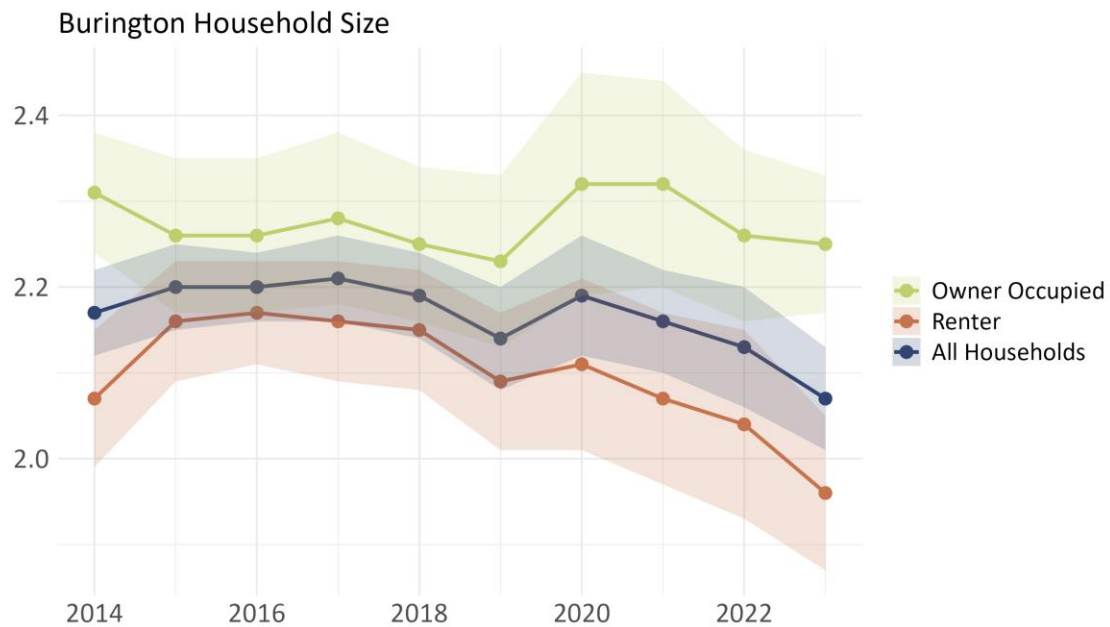
Burlington BIPOC Population, 2011-2023
5 year ACS Estimates





As estimated by the ACS, 5 year survey ending in year plotted.
Tables: B05001 & B05003

Burlington’s average household size has slightly decreased over the past decade, despite a small increase in 2020. Owner-occupied households have seen the least decrease and remain larger on average than renter households.



ACS 5 year survey, Table B25010

1.3 Natural Resources and Physical Conditions

Burlington is a city rich in natural resources, from its 12 miles of Lake Champlain shoreline to its abundant protected and conserved natural areas and open space comprising nearly half of the City’s land area. These natural areas include both public and private open spaces, protected habitats, natural communities (6 major forest and wetland types), agriculture, natural resources, and geological features. They provide critical ecosystem services, bolster Burlington's resilience to climate change and extreme weather events, and provide access to recreational and agricultural opportunities for residents.

Recognizing the resources and value this land provides, the 2019 Comprehensive Plan identified these parts of the community as areas the City plans to conserve in the long term. Much of Burlington’s open space and buffer zones around natural areas are already protected under special districts or overlays in the Comprehensive Development Ordinance. However, Burlington also faces many competing land use challenges and needs that must be balanced with conservation.



Burlington's new [Open Space Plan](#) discusses the City's ecological assets, conditions, threats, and opportunities in more detail, and recommends better conserving, managing, and connecting natural resources. In particular, the Open Space Plan recommends that *planBTV: 2050* explore strategies for land acquisition for conservation, improve multimodal access to the Intervale and non-vehicular access to nature experiences throughout the city in general, and plan to address environmental, public safety, and accessibility issues related to the presence of people experiencing homelessness sheltering in City-owned open spaces. However, Burlington's recent and short-term financial outlook is not conducive to supporting extensive land acquisition for conservation, and the City faces many other competing demands for land use and investment, including to address the housing crisis.

Burlington's natural resources are also vulnerable to flooding, natural hazards, and pollution (see the Flood Resilience and Hazard Mitigation sections of this assessment for more detail). A particular concern is stormwater and impervious surface runoff, which impact Burlington's coastal waters and waterfront ecology as well as the health of other wetland and floodplain areas; most of the City's stormwater drains directly into the lake or into the Winooski River. In Lake Champlain, average phosphorus levels and concentrations of salts have increased each year since 2020, mostly related to runoff from roadways, other impervious surfaces, and other developed and agricultural lands throughout the region ([BTVStat](#)).

1.8 Housing

Housing is one of the most pressing concerns for Burlington today, as the City faces a crisis of both availability and affordability. Growing local housing needs have far outpaced new development, compounding challenges across income levels and contributing to increasing economic vulnerability and a growing population of residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Burlington has taken many steps to address the housing crisis over the past several years, including development ordinance updates (discussed further in the land use section of this assessment), affordable housing partnerships, and other initiatives undertaken through the previous administration's housing action plan. Costs (for land, materials, labor, and regulatory compliance) remain a key barrier to housing development in Burlington, however, and the City's and the region's ambitious new housing goals only intensify the existing crisis. The current administration recently released a three-pillared [housing strategy](#) to address this crisis that prioritizes reforming Burlington's outdated Inclusionary Zoning regulations and the Housing Trust Fund; unlocking the potential of recent zoning reforms through the Neighborhood Code to encourage neighborhood-scale

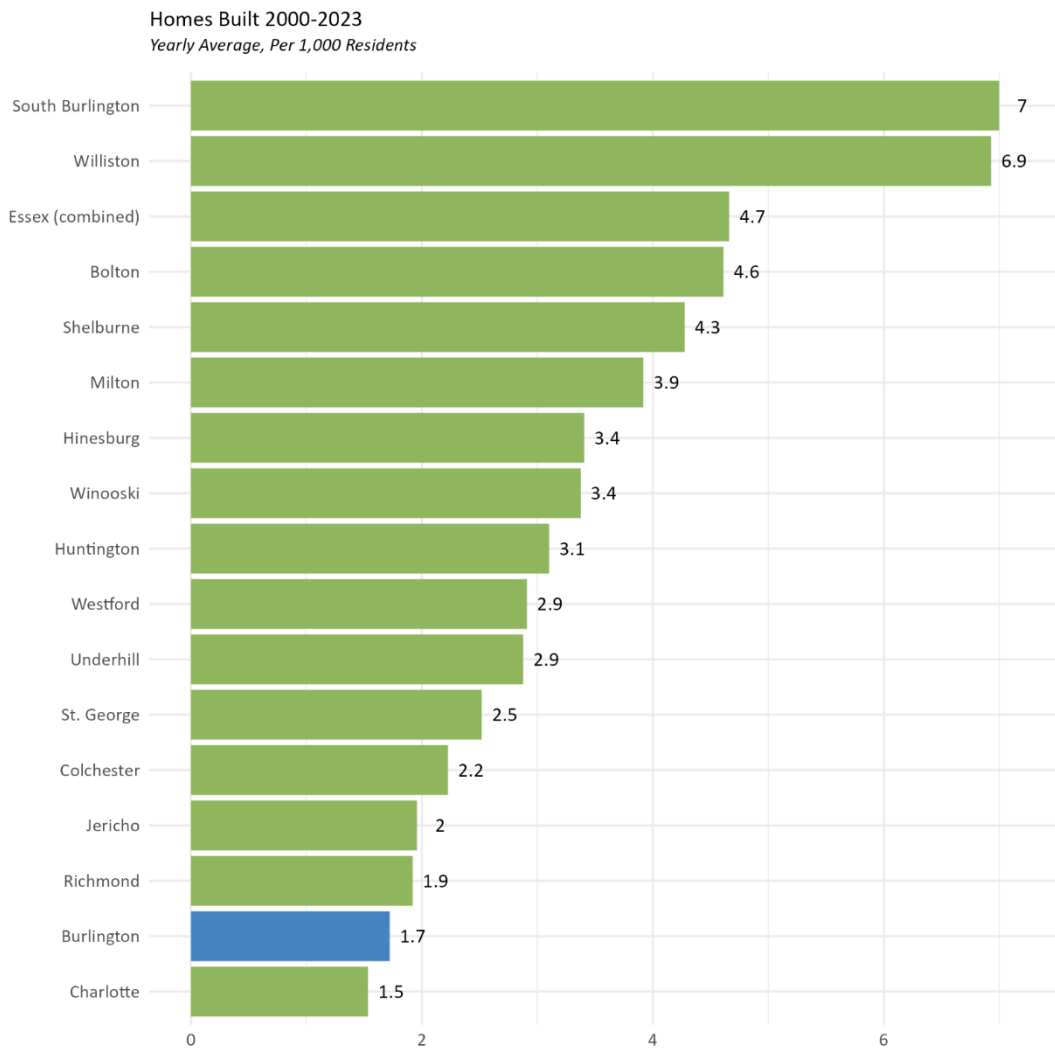
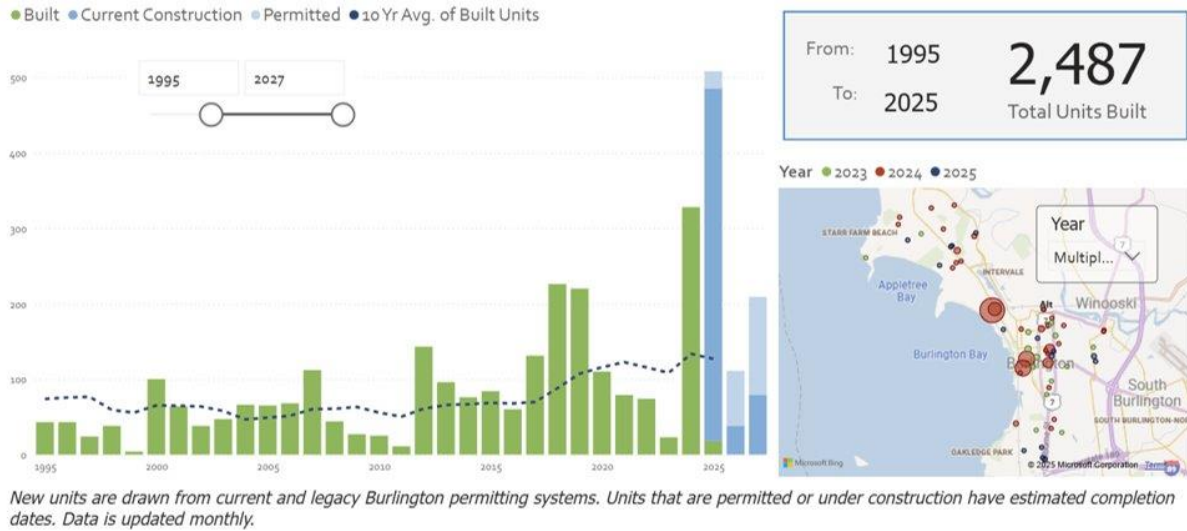
infill development (see more about Neighborhood Code in the Land Use section of this assessment); and leveraging public-private partnerships and City land and assets.

Growth

Over the past decade the number of housing units in Burlington has grown by 8%, or about 1,300 units city wide. Compared to other cities and towns in Chittenden County, Burlington is building new housing much more slowly. However, housing targets set over the past two years by the state (via Act 47/the HOME Act and Act 181) recommend that Burlington double its historic rate of housing production to alleviate the current housing crisis.

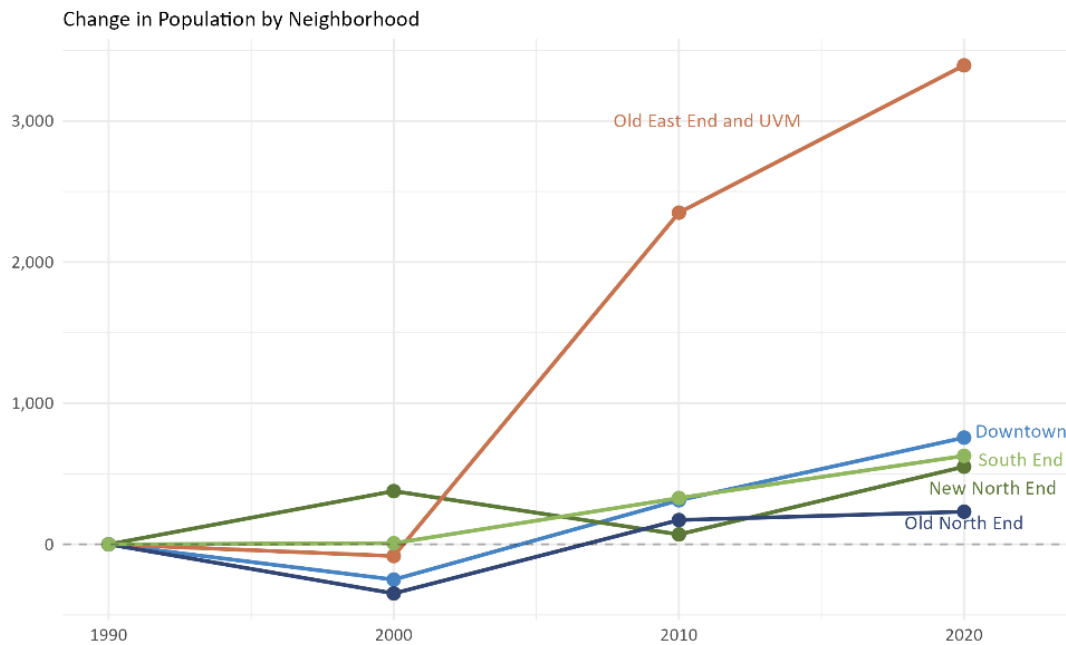
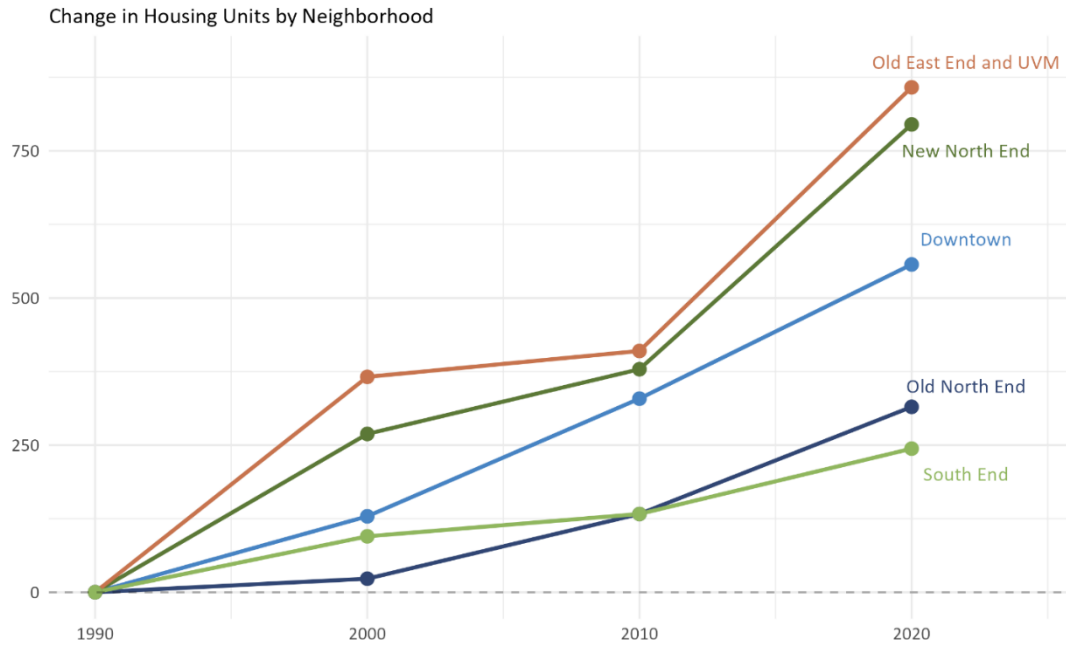
According to [regional targets distributed by CCRPC](#) (revised in September of 2025) and the state’s requirement to include mid-range housing targets in local comprehensive plans, Burlington must add nearly 2,000 new housing units by 2030 and nearly 7,000 by 2050, increasing the City’s total number of housing units by at least 38% over the next 25 years.

Municipality	Existing Housing Units (2023)*	2030 Housing Target			2050 Housing Target					
		Low	Mid	High	Low	Low %	Mid	Mid %	High	High %
		BOLTON	550	27	33	39	59	11%	118	21%
BUEL'S GORE	12	1	1	1	1	11%	3	21%	4	32%
BURLINGTON	18,245	1,614	1,972	2,330	3,490	19%	6,986	38%	10,482	57%
CHARLOTTE	1,643	82	100	118	176	11%	353	21%	530	32%
COLCHESTER	7,673	295	450	544	639	8%	1,593	21%	2,447	32%
ESSEX	4,889	567	687	803	1,226	25%	2,432	50%	3,614	74%
ESSEX JUNCTION	4,955	707	864	1,021	1,529	31%	3,062	62%	4,594	93%
HINESBURG	2,071	157	181	204	339	16%	640	31%	918	44%
HUNTINGTON	876	43	53	63	94	11%	188	21%	282	32%
JERICO	2,014	121	126	148	262	13%	448	22%	668	33%
MILTON	4,515	310	354	439	671	15%	1,255	28%	1,974	44%
RICHMOND	1,729	96	102	120	207	12%	360	21%	539	31%
SHELBURNE	3,529	357	436	503	771	22%	1,545	44%	2,263	64%
SOUTH BURLINGTON	9,921	1,752	2,141	2,529	3,788	38%	7,583	76%	11,378	115%
ST. GEORGE	314	16	19	22	34	11%	67	21%	101	32%
UNDERHILL	1,313	65	80	94	141	11%	282	21%	423	32%
WESTFORD	899	45	55	64	96	11%	193	21%	290	32%
WILLISTON	4,725	738	892	1,052	1,596	34%	3,161	67%	4,733	100%
WINOOSKI	3,665	307	375	443	663	18%	1,327	36%	1,991	54%
County Total	73,538	7,301	8,919	10,537	15,783	21%	31,595	43%	47,407	64%



While housing units have been built across the city, with the Old East End/UVM and New North End neighborhoods seeing the highest rates of growth, Burlington’s population

growth has been highly concentrated in the area encompassing the Old East End, Hill Section, and UVM campus. Much of this growth is likely due to the increase in UVM's undergraduate enrollment over the last two decades.



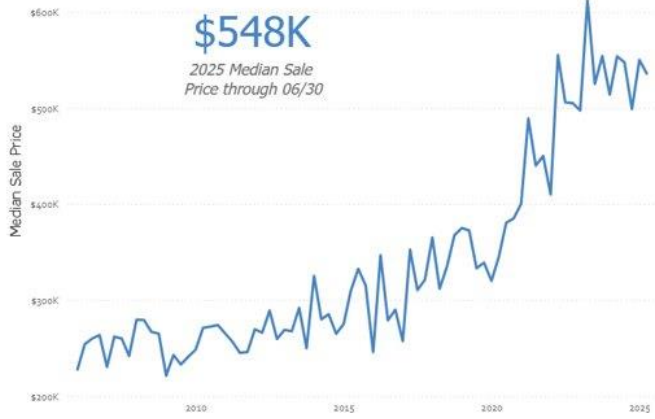
Cost

The median price for a house or condo in Burlington (\$515,000) is more than double the cost in 2010; adjusting for inflation, prices have grown 41%. Rents have also increased,

although different data sources paint slightly different pictures about average costs and rates of increase, making it difficult to accurately assess trends. For example, Zillow data show a slowing in growth over the past two years while Allen, Brooks, and Minor data show continued increases. Across these data sources, however, rental prices for all unit sizes have increased by more than 50% in the last decade.

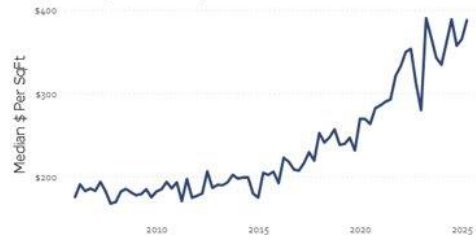
Vacancy rates in Burlington are low, and track closely with the regional average for Chittenden County. Vermont's average rental vacancy rate is one of the country's lowest and has been below the range considered to be a healthy market (3-5%) for several years. In Chittenden County and Burlington, although still lower than national and northeast averages and under the healthy market range, vacancy rates have been trending more positively in the past few years.

Single Family Median Price by Quarter

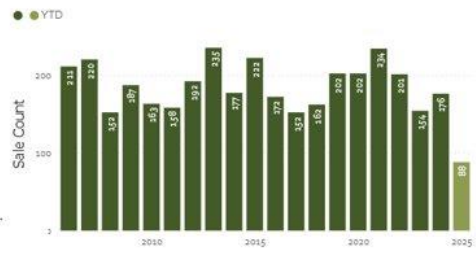


Data Source: City Property Data, Valid or Undetermined sales. Price per Square Foot based on total finished area. Updated through June 30, 2025

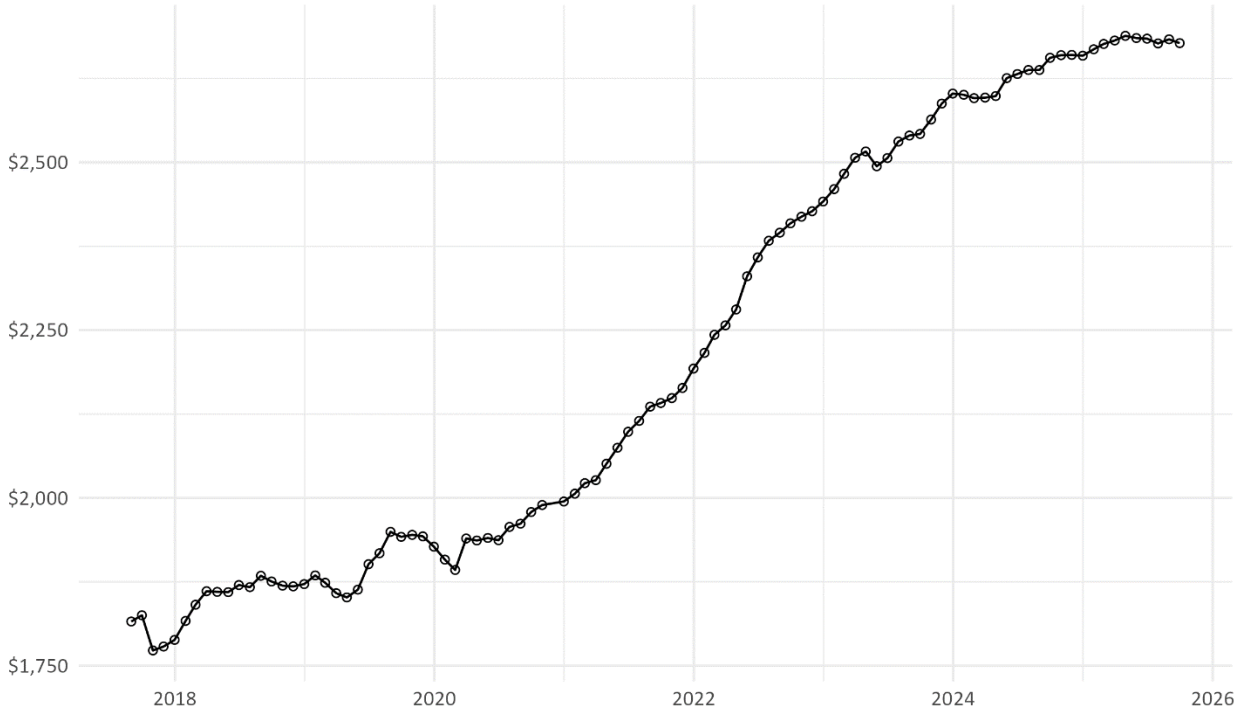
Single Family Price Per SqFt



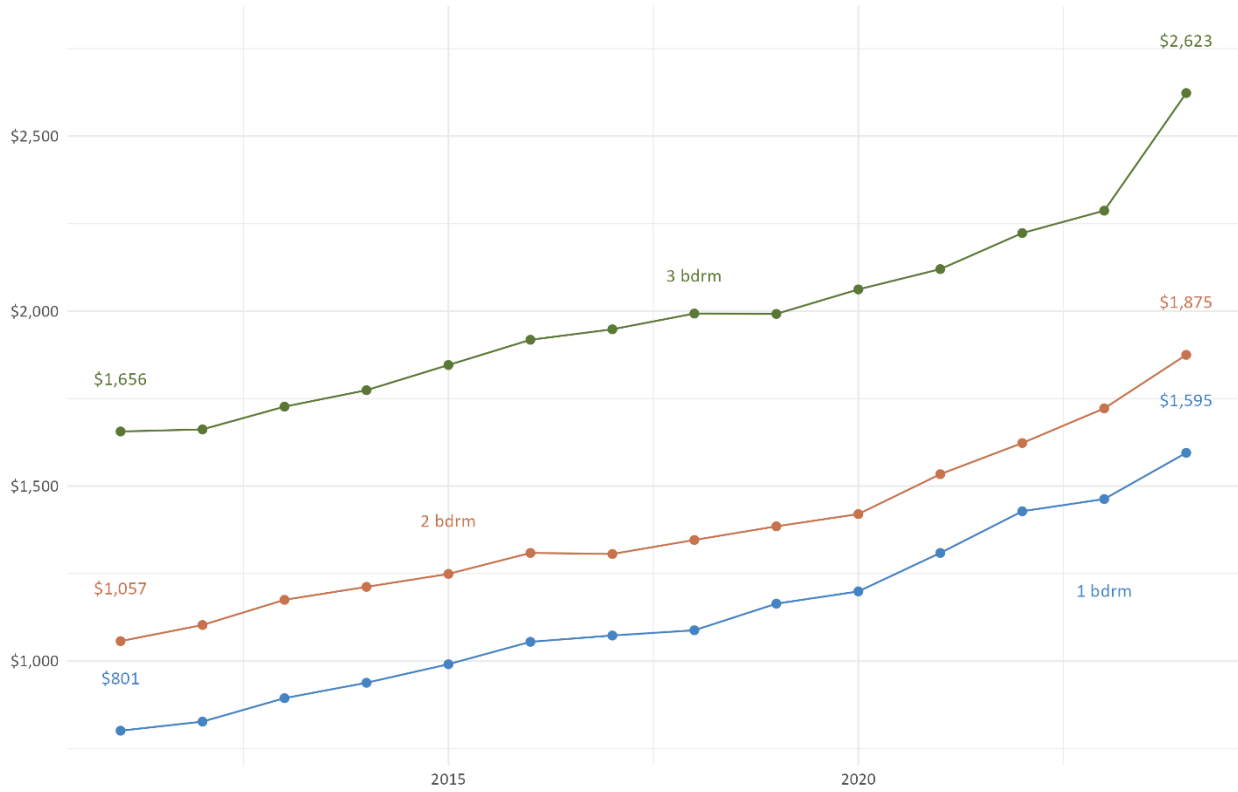
Number of Sales



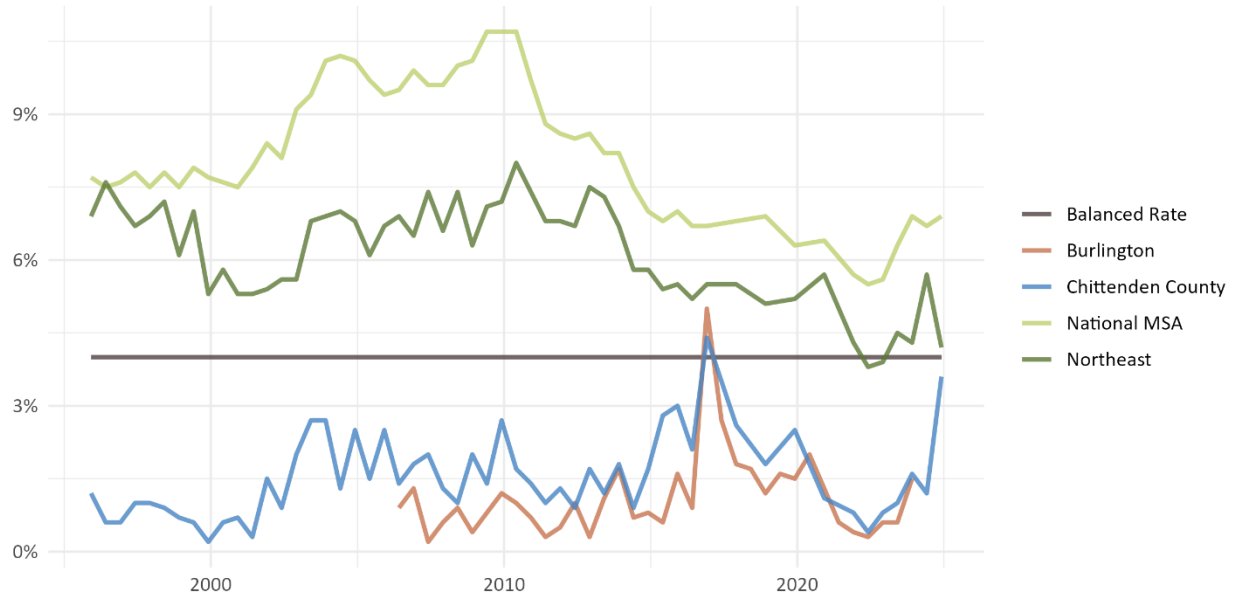
Zillow Observed Rent Index: Burlington, VT



Average Rent by Bedrooms
 Source: Allen, Brooks and Minor



Vacancy Rate

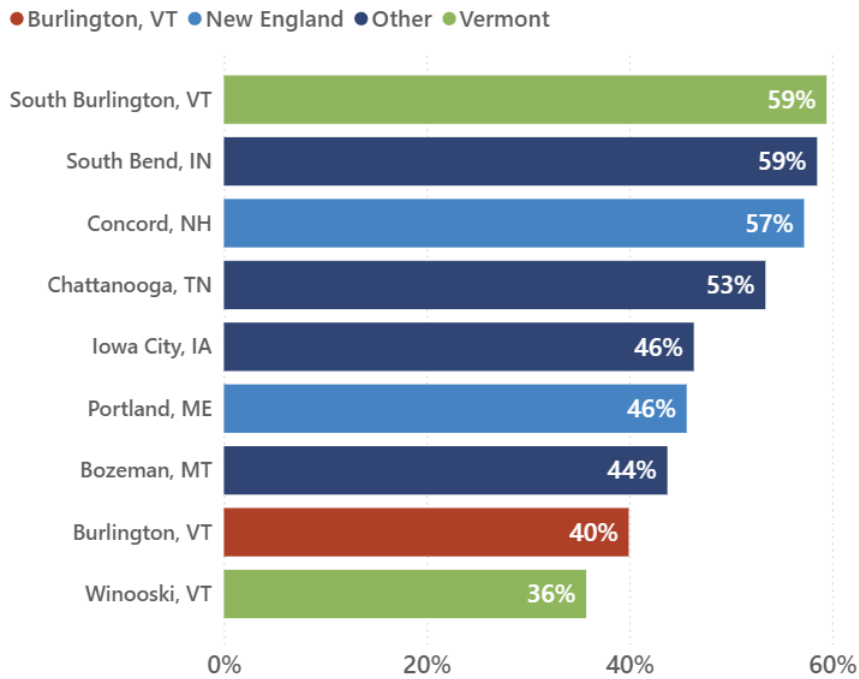


Source: Allen, Brooks & Minor, Housing Vacancy Survey

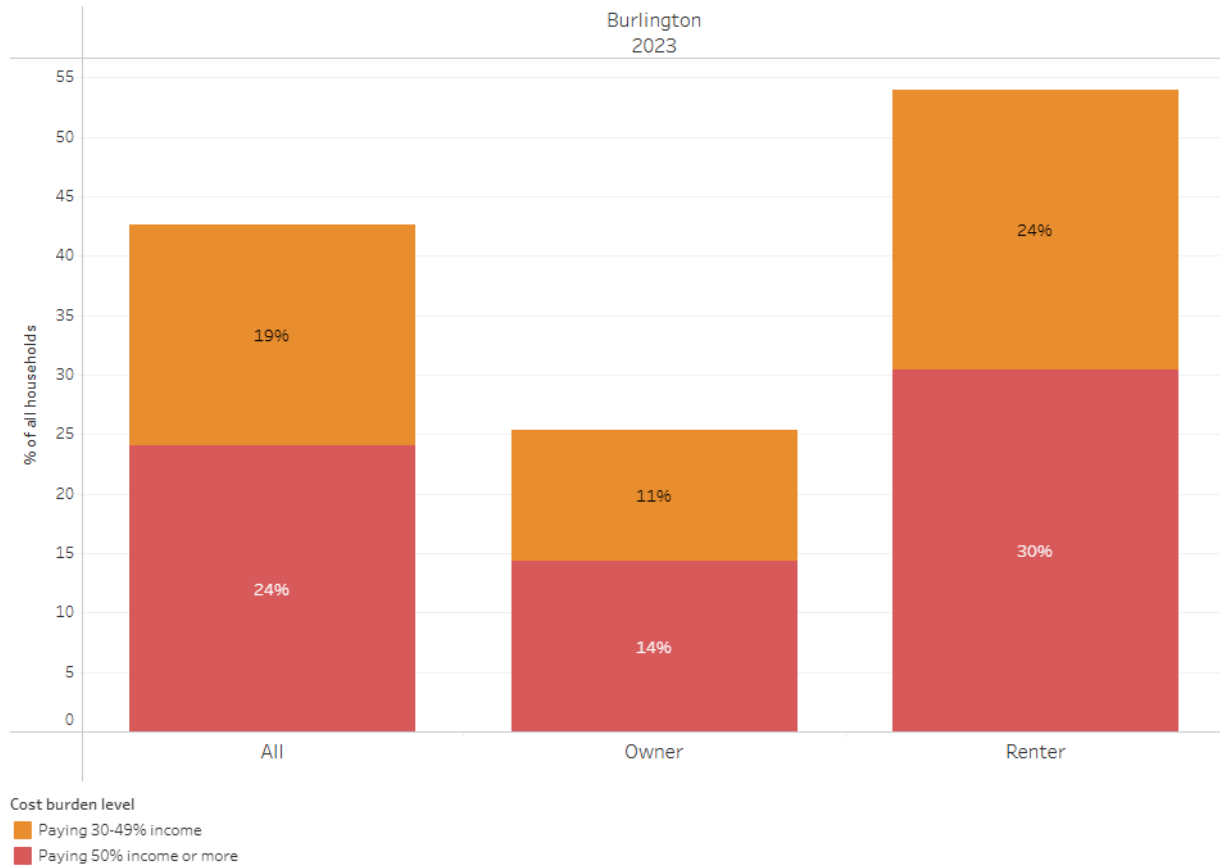
40% of Burlington’s population resides in owner-occupied housing, with 60% renting. Burlington's has a slightly larger share of renters than other small cities but is fairly

comparable overall. In 2023, the [Vermont Housing Finance Agency](#) estimated that 43% of all Burlington households were cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened, spending more than 30% or 50%, respectively, of their incomes on rent. This issue is much more acute for renters than homeowners, with over half of Burlington’s renter households considered cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened.

Percent of Population in Owner-Occupied Housing



2017-2022 Year American Community Survey (ACS), [Table B25003: Tenure](#), Table B25007: Tenure by Age c



1.11 Land Use

Current Land Use

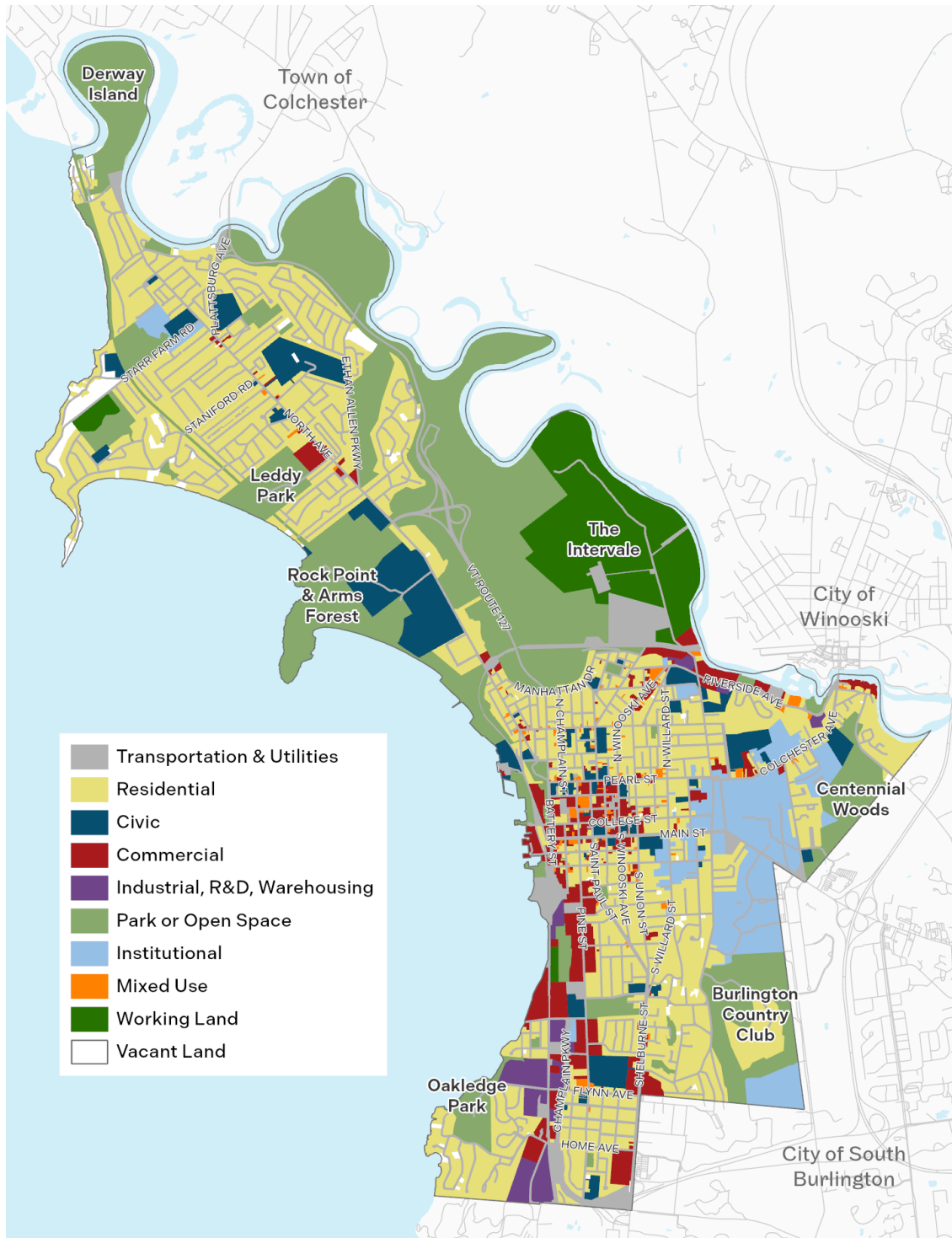
Burlington’s total land area is 6,457 acres, or 10.3 square miles. Lake Champlain and the Winooski river comprise the majority of the City’s boundary. The City’s land is covered by a wide range of uses, including substantial open space and natural areas, as well as large educational and medical institutions; about one third of the City’s land is tax-exempt, including land owned by the public, educational and religious institutions, and nonprofits. 37% of Burlington’s land area is residential (of all types).

Burlington’s [Open Space Plan](#) (2025) outlines the City’s abundant natural resources and land dedicated to open space and recreation, habitat conservation, agriculture, and natural community resources—collectively covering nearly half of all land area. Much of this land use is also critical to Burlington’s climate resilience, as the City faces increasing flooding and stormwater management demands.

Because of Burlington’s geographic boundaries, open and recreational land area, and mature residential settlement, only a small portion of mostly residential of land is considered “vacant.” However, much of Burlington’s existing residential and commercial

land use could accommodate infill and higher density development. Burlington’s recently adopted (2024) [Neighborhood Code](#) provided a new comprehensive zoning framework aimed at enabling more “missing middle” housing types across the City to allow for higher density and encourage more neighborhood-scale multifamily development.

Other examples of recent plans and actions addressing land use and residential growth include [planBTV: NNE](#) (currently being finalized), where areas of the New North End—including City owned land—have already been identified as having a higher propensity for gentle infill or redevelopment to support new neighborhood-scale housing as well as multimodal connectivity, community amenities, and commerce. In the South End, the City recently created a new 80-acre zoning overlay district (the South End Innovation District) within the existing Enterprise-Light Manufacturing district to allow for residential development, paving the way for the District’s first [planned redevelopment](#) of approximately 13 acres of underutilized land owned by the City, Champlain College, and a local company (Ride Your Bike, LLC) into a new sustainable, walkable, mixed-income neighborhood with more than 1,000 new homes.



Zoning Amendments

Burlington’s zoning is regulated by the [Comprehensive Development Ordinance \(CDO\)](#), and all of Burlington’s zoning districts and overlays may be viewed on an interactive [Zoning Map](#). The City has made several notable amendments to the CDO over the past decade, while other proposed zoning code changes have not been approved; these changes and

proposals are discussed below. Following the adoption of planBTV: 2050, Burlington plans to undertake a comprehensive rewrite of the CDO.

BTV Neighborhood Code

Similar to other cities across the US, Burlington has recently reformed its historically restrictive residential zoning standards in the CDO to enable more neighborhood-scale housing types citywide. The “Neighborhood Code”, which refers to the three amendment packages that facilitated this reform, have made the following key changes to the City’s Residential Zoning Standards:

- Modified and streamlined residential zoning districts and boundaries to more closely align with existing neighborhood development patterns.
- Created the Residential Corridor (RC) district, which allows greater flexibility for housing types and intensity along transportation corridors identified in the City’s 2019 Comprehensive Plan. *The 2019 Comprehensive Plan did not directly call for the Residential Corridor District, but it was established based on feedback received during the Neighborhood Code’s extensive public engagement process. Both residents and policymakers are interested in expanding this district, but Planning staff recommend waiting to make any additional changes until after planBTV 2050’s completion.*
- Replaced traditional density standards with massing standards, including the number of units per building, updated lot coverage, standardization of rear setbacks, maximum building footprints, and building height.
- Allowed two free-standing structures in the Residential – Low and Residential – Medium districts with up to four units per building. Essentially, all residential parcels are entitled up to eight units, pending ability to comply with dimensional standards (setback, lot coverage, etc.).
- Allowed for Neighborhood Commercial Uses (such as cafes, bars, laundromats, small groceries, etc.) to be permitted in the Residential Corridor district.
- Established standards for specific project types and uses in Residential Districts, including Rowhouses and Pocket Neighborhoods.
- Created more flexibility for Planned Unit Developments to support larger neighborhood-scale multi-family infill on larger sites within residential areas.

A report outlining the rationale for the Neighborhood Code is [available online](#), and includes a brief history of Burlington’s Residential Zoning.

South End Innovation District

The South End Innovation District Overlay, adopted in July 2023, is intended to facilitate the redevelopment of a core area of the South End neighborhood's Enterprise-Light Manufacturing (E-LM) district. The vision for this overlay is based in [planBTV: South End](#) and calls for transforming the area's surface parking lots and contaminated and underutilized sites into an accessible, mixed-use hub of economic activity that draws on both the South End's legacy of manufacturing and arts as well as its burgeoning office and innovation sector. The overlay enables the creation of a wide range of commercial uses, while prioritizing those arts, manufacturing, and office uses that define the character of the South End today. It also permits the creation of new housing. The overlay includes provisions for the scale and massing of new buildings to guide the redevelopment of large sites, and seeks to create an accessible and sustainable urban district.

The SEID overlay covers roughly 14 vacant underutilized parcels on the west side of Pine Street between Howard Street and Sears Lane, including the City-owned 68 Sears Lane parcel.

Following the adoption of the SEID, the City entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the owners of land neighboring City-owned property located at 68 Sears Lane. The purpose of the MOU is to facilitate a conceptual design and development framework for the coordinated redevelopment of the parcels by applying the proposed regulations of SEID, resulting in a vibrant, sustainable, and accessible mixed-use neighborhood in the heart of the district. The MOU outlines a collaborative and efficient planning process for multiple independently owned sites, with the goal of informing a potential Development Agreement in the future. The City-owned parcel considered in the MOU is the undeveloped land at 68 Sears Lane. The other parties to the MOU, are [Champlain College](#), the owner of 175 Lakeside Avenue, and Ride Your Bike, LLC, the owner of 125 Lakeside Avenue. (Ride Your Bike, LLC refers to the same developer as the nearby [Hula Lakeside](#)).

This development is currently known by its working name – SECORD (South End Coordinated Redevelopment). Ride Your Bike, LLC has partnered with New York-based developer Jonathon Rose Companies to develop the project's first phase, the application for which has been submitted. This phase includes 204 units and non-residential ground floor uses in two connected single-loaded exterior corridor buildings constructed of mass timber. The project has received substantial financial support from the City and State. A second component of phase 1 is in design right now and will include approximately 50 affordable homes of various sizes, along with a ground floor childcare facility. Phase 2 will likely commence via a procurement process in late 2026 and will likely include all or a portion of the City's property at 68 Sears Lane.

Inclusionary Zoning

The City of Burlington has had a mandatory inclusionary zoning ordinance since the 1990s, which can be found in [Article 9](#) of the CDO. Updates to this policy are managed by the Planning Office, as a zoning amendment, in collaboration with CEDO and DPI. CEDO acts as the program administrator for initial certification and ongoing monitoring. The IZ ordinance was most recently updated in 2023, with a more substantial reform adopted in 2019.

Since mid-2023, CEDO & Planning have been discussing a packet of amendments that relate to the current construction cost challenges in our market and elsewhere, and ways to provide some flexibility without undermining the overall purpose/intent of the ordinance. The goals of the of the upcoming IZ amendment are as follows:

- Modernize Inclusionary Zoning in acknowledgement of current, seemingly structural challenges in development and construction;
- Reform Payment-in-Lieu to help bolster the Housing Trust Fund; and,
- Support the City's broad housing strategy to create affordable homes in neighborhoods, public-private partnerships and on city-owned land.

The amendment will go before a joint committee of the Planning Commission and City Council Ordinance Committee beginning in March, with anticipated adoption in late summer.

Institution Amendments

Over the last few years, there have been a few zoning amendments that proposed to address the friction that exists between the Institutions' off-campus student populations and the City's chronic housing shortage. The 2019 Comprehensive Plan identified the institutions' campuses and the major thoroughfares that function as the city's eastern gateways as special growth areas. planBTV also stated that these areas are an essential focus for the growth of the institutions within their campuses, particularly to create new and additional housing options for students.

The Burlington Comprehensive Development Ordinance (CDO) includes five Institutional Core Campus Overlay Districts, which apply to sub-areas of the Institutional zoning district. These overlay districts are intended to provide for growth within the core of the institutions' campuses, by allowing an increased development intensity than would typically be found in the underlying zoning district and providing transitions between sections of campus and the surrounding neighborhoods.

University of Vermont Trinity Campus (Timed Out)

As part of the former mayoral administration’s 2021 “10 Point Housing Plan”, a major zoning amendment was proposed to facilitate “opening new on-campus University of Vermont student housing opportunities by rezoning the former Trinity Campus to reduce UVM’s pressure on the housing market.”

Reviewing the applicability of the Trinity Campus overlay zoning district for this part of UVM’s campus has been discussed periodically in recent years. The 2019 Comprehensive Plan identified this area of campus as being important to help “better balance on-campus housing opportunities between the north and south of the core academic areas of campus.”

The UVM Trinity Campus (ICC-UVMT) overlay zone applies to a parcel on UVM’s campus along Colchester Avenue on the north side of the intersection of Colchester and East Avenues. The parcel is currently home to a number of UVM residence halls such as McCauley and Mercy Halls, as well as other uses for the institution. UVM intended to create additional graduate and undergraduate beds in the vicinity of these existing residence halls, and had identified a number of limitations under the current ICC-UVMT overlay zone.

The requested zoning changes included allowing buildings within the existing Colchester Avenue Buffer, and increasing allowable height and lot coverage. In reviewing the existing ICC-UVMT standards, staff identified four additional areas to update: density limits, allowance for non-residential uses, major impact threshold, and context on campus planning within this area of campus. The amendment addressed both UVM and the department’s recommended changes. Though this amendment was approved and referred to the City Council by the Planning Commission in December 2023, it was tabled by the Council.

University of Vermont MOU-related requests

A 2023 process to update a housing and land use MOU between the City and the University of Vermont failed as both parties were unable to agree to proposed terms related to sharing of housing and enrollment data, along with commitments to rezone portions of the UVM campus to facilitate additional student housing and academic facilities. As both UVM and the City are under new administrations, negotiations regarding this MOU will begin in late February, 2026. The 2023 MOU called for UVM to share data on enrollment growth projections, as well as make commitments to build additional student housing on campus. For its part, the City was asked to commit to a zoning amendment process to allow for greater intensity development on two UVM-owned parcels. The 2025 amendment will likely include similar requests from both the City and UVM, along with additional topics related

to transportation, parks and other community facilities. The MOU is distinct from a separate agreement on a Fee for Service that UVM pays to the City for accessing municipal services (e.g. fire, police, parks, etc).

Champlain College Bed Counts

This amendment, requested by Champlain College, eliminated Maximum Residential Beds standards in Section 4.5.2(g) 4 of the CDO in order to facilitate on-campus residential conversion and the development of additional housing for Champlain college students. Following discussion and a public hearing by the Planning Commission, this amendment was adopted by the City Council in March 2025.

Urban Reserve

The Urban Reserve is a 45-acre parcel currently regulated by a unique zoning district intended to temporarily preserve the area and, “reserve the right of future generations to determine the most appropriate combination of development and conservation that should occur at the site through a comprehensive and participatory planning process.” The Community Sailing Center, a non-profit dedicated to access, education and recreation on Lake Champlain, has proposed an amendment to the Urban Reserve zoning district to allow for small boat storage to be an allowed use. The amendment has not been drafted, as there are numerous non-zoning barriers to the proposal. As of February, 2026, the City is committed to assisting the CSC with identifying an area for this use, but has not yet committed to a zoning amendment.

Maximum Parking & TDM

The purpose of this amendment was to replace minimum on-site parking requirements with maximum on-site parking limits and establish tiers for transportation demand management requirements citywide. The amendment also addressed a number of related standards that pertain to the provision and maintenance of parking for specific uses and situations. The amendment was adopted by City Council and became effective February 2023.

Emergency Shelters **(Timed Out)**

Burlington adopted emergency shelter standards into its Comprehensive Development Ordinance (CDO) in December 2017. The standards included a definition, permitted and conditional use designations in the use table, and special use criteria. In July 2023, Act 47 (otherwise known as the HOME Act) was passed into law. Among other things, the act established standards for emergency shelters that came into effect on September 1, 2023. The statutory standards include a new definition of emergency shelter and add emergency shelters to the list of uses subject to limited municipal review under 24 VSA, Sec. 4413.

This section substantially limits municipal zoning review of emergency shelters and renders moot much of the City’s CDO standards pertaining to them. A zoning amendment was proposed in 2025 that would have brought Burlington into compliance with Act 47, but allowing, as-of-right, emergency shelters in at least one district. The amendment also proposed to make the use conditionally allowed in other districts. Ultimately, the state legislature determined that additional work was needed and thus the amendment stalled until it officially timed out. However, state law preempts any local restrictions on emergency shelters.

Following the adoption of Act 47, the Office of City Planning worked with the Planning Commission and City Council Ordinance Committee to craft an amendment to the City’s CDO, aligning emergency shelter provisions with state law.

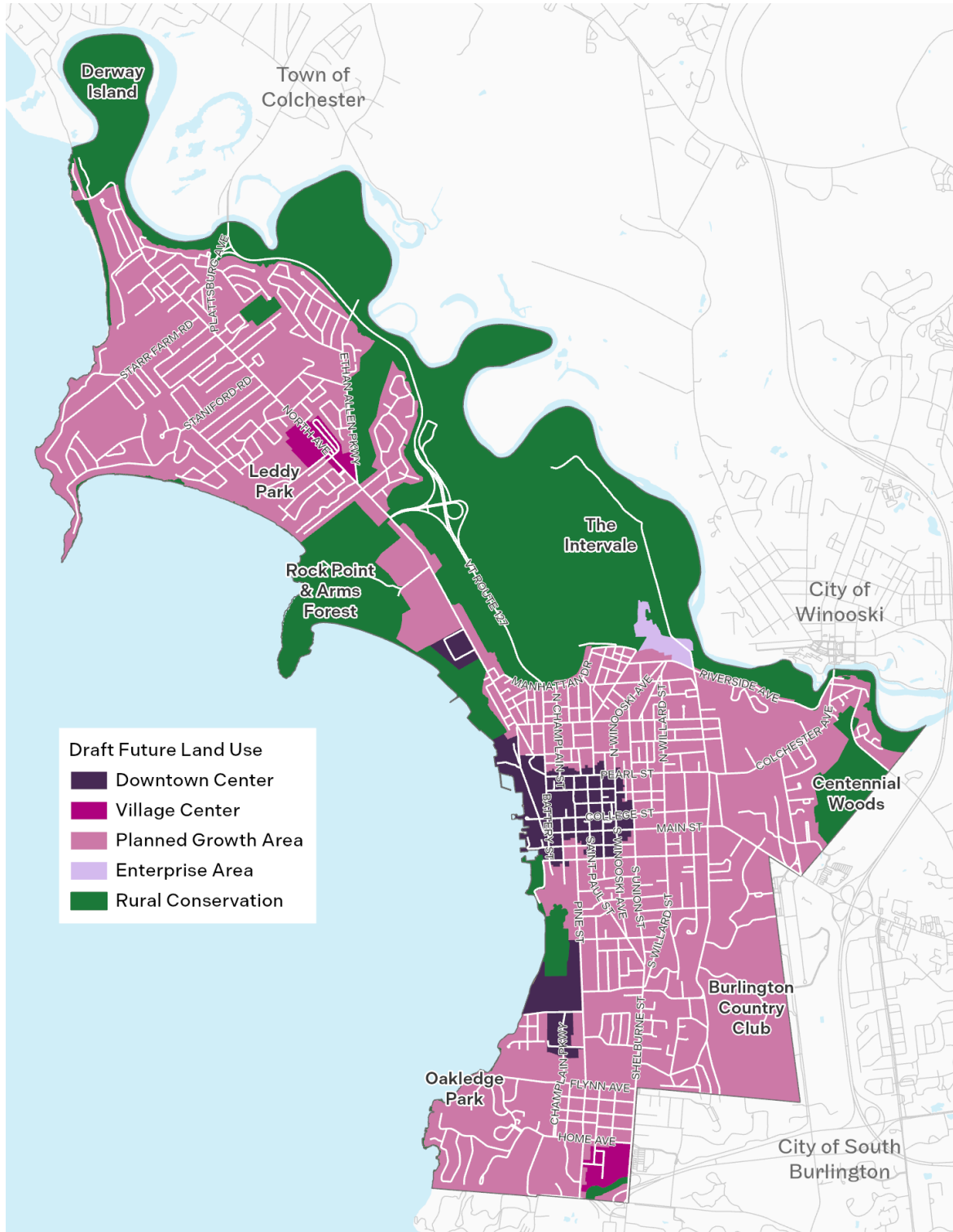
Additional Relevant Amendments:

Performing Arts Centers

This minor amendment increased the allowable footprint of Performing Arts Centers in a portion of the Enterprise-Light Manufacturing District and was made at the request of Higher Ground, a South Burlington-based music venue that intends to relocate to Burlington.

Future Land Use

As mentioned in the Housing section of this assessment, Burlington is also planning for compliance with new state housing policies and planning frameworks, including via a [Draft Future Land Use \(FLU\) Map](#) developed in coordination with CCRPC and intended to help plan for growth and enable more efficient housing development via regulatory designations that are compatible with state regulations. Much of Burlington’s existing non-conservation land is designated as Planned Growth Area in the FLU map, enabling continued development in existing mixed-use neighborhoods and adjacent land that already has supportive planning, zoning, and infrastructure. The downtown area and South End Innovation District are designated Downtown Centers, with the highest existing and enabled mix of uses.



1.12 Regional Context

Burlington is Vermont's largest city and plays a critical role as an economic and cultural hub for Chittenden County, which is also the state's most populous county. As such, the City's challenges and opportunities, particularly with regard to the housing crisis, are deeply intertwined with regional economic and demographic trends and the broader state and federal forces impacting Chittenden County. Vermont has been experiencing long-term housing supply and affordability issues related to slow rates of new development, seasonal homeownership, and an aging population, among other factors. These issues were exacerbated by a significant influx of new residents during and after the pandemic, contributing to price increases causing severe household cost burdens as well as a large increase in the number of Vermonters experiencing homelessness (more details on this statewide and regional context, as well as data sources, can be found in [Appendix 1](#) to the 2025-29 VT Housing Needs Assessment).

In Chittenden County and in Burlington, these trends are felt acutely; the county contains 31% of the state's rental housing stock with the majority of Burlington residents renting homes, and in 2025 nearly a third of the state's total estimated population of people experiencing homelessness were located in Chittenden County, many in Burlington where services and resources are concentrated. More detail on the City's housing trends and homelessness crisis can also be found in the Housing and Public Health sections of this assessment, respectively. As these issues are not limited to Burlington and are driven by broader forces, strategies and solutions require tools and resources both within and beyond the City and region.

Another key challenge impacting Burlington and Chittenden County and requiring regional and inter-municipal collaboration is public transit. Green Mountain Transit (GMT), the region's transit agency, has faced acute funding challenges over the past several years leading to substantial service reductions. A lack of funding and insufficient or unreliable transit service poses a significant threat to the advancement of Burlington's and the region's ambitious housing goals, as well as climate resilience, emissions, economic development, and access and connectivity objectives. In 2025, GMT, in collaboration with the State and several other Vermont transit agencies, began a process to shed its non-urban routes, which is intended to bring financial security to the agency. However, GMT continues to face structural challenges related to federal funding inconsistencies and will likely continue to face budget shortages and service reductions. More information about public transit can be found in the Transportation Conditions appendix of this assessment.

Municipal planning in neighboring cities and towns

Chittenden County residents and visitors experience life across and beyond municipal boundaries; Burlington is impacted by plans and projects being developed in neighboring cities and towns, and vice versa. Over a third of people working in Burlington reside in a different municipality, and 60% of Chittenden County residents report working and residing in different towns per [VHFA analysis](#). Ongoing coordination between Burlington and its three neighbors, South Burlington, Winooski, and Colchester on mobility and other border topics is essential. Coordination between the region's four cities, Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski, and Essex Junction is also particularly important as the region prepares to meet its 2050 housing targets (discussed further in the Housing and Land Use sections of this assessment), as these cities will need to collectively develop the majority of the region's new housing. These four cities are also currently collaborating with CCRPC on a project to assess and address barriers to the development of infill housing.

Two of Burlington's neighbors, Winooski and Colchester, are updating their municipal plans on the same timeline as Burlington. This offers opportunities to find areas of overlap and collaboration, particularly along municipal borders and through public engagement. Housing availability and affordability are expected to be key topics for engagement in all three cities.

The Winooski River forms the border between Burlington and Winooski, with the Main Street Bridge forming the primary connection between the two cities (from downtown Winooski to Burlington's Old East End). The 1929 bridge carries approximately 25,000 vehicles per day and is nearing the end of its service life. In addition to addressing the poor condition of the bridge, the state's [planned reconstruction project](#) will address broader traffic safety concerns and add pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Public engagement to date has highlighted resident concerns in both cities about impacts to traffic, access for people walking and biking, and to nearby residences and businesses associated with the construction project, which is expected to begin in 2027.

Additional engagement conducted by Winooski during other planning efforts and in preparation for their Comprehensive Plan update has also highlighted broader public support for improved walking and biking connections between the two cities, particularly to connect open and recreational spaces on both sides of the river. [Winooski's 2024 Walk Bike Plan](#) identified a walking/biking connection between Memorial Park in Winooski and Burlington's Intervale Center as a priority project and recommended a scoping study to explore possibilities.

The Winooski River also forms the border between Burlington and Colchester, in Burlington's New North End and with North Avenue serving as a primary connector

between the communities. Engagement in the New North End and the development of planBTV: NNE found that many Colchester residents utilize the commercial corridor and amenities along North Avenue for routine shopping trips and other needs. Colchester's planned housing development in early stages of their Comprehensive Plan update is more limited than Burlington and surrounding cities, as the town currently lacks wastewater and utilities to enable more development in many of its neighborhoods, including those that abut Burlington. Even so, housing remains a major issue for Colchester and will be central to their upcoming planning process.

South Burlington and Burlington share a long border and significant connective infrastructure, including busy travel corridors (primarily Route 2/Main St and Route 7/Shelburne Road). The completion of the [Champlain Parkway](#) in summer 2026 will open additional multimodal connections between the cities and to important destinations in each, including Oakledge and Red Rocks parks, and is expected to expand access and reduce congestion in Burlington's South End. Other mobility-focused projects the two cities are collaborating on include traffic signal coordination on Shelburne Road and around Queen City Park Road, and a scoping study for the entire Main Street corridor from Burlington into South Burlington, including the continued planning of a pending active transportation connection over I-89. This study is underway, led by Burlington and CCRPC, and will identify several complementary preferred alternatives for various sections of the corridor.

In terms of land use, South Burlington's most recent [Comprehensive Plan](#) update, adopted in early 2024, focuses strongly on climate resilience as a guiding principle. As this plan is implemented and additional planning related to state housing targets and future land use planning proceeds, South Burlington has been encouraging dense development of its City Center area as well as infill along the Routes 2 and 7 corridors and throughout the city, including via updates to its zoning code. South Burlington's planned land use and housing development priorities are generally compatible with Burlington's, and the cities continue to coordinate on infill development strategies and other topics.

[Regional planning impacting Burlington](#)

CCRPC is also in the process of developing the 2026 ECOS Regional Plan, with a [draft](#) recently submitted for preliminary review. A key component of this plan focuses on developing future land use maps and housing targets as required by State Acts 47 and 181, supporting Burlington and other Chittenden County municipalities in comprehensive planning to meet state housing targets. Recently updated targets by municipality from CCRPC are referenced in the Housing section of this assessment. CCRPC also forecasts

the county's 2050 population to grow by 14% from 2015 levels, with a 25% increase in households and a 35% increase in employment during the same time period.

Burlington Planning Commission

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Burlington, VT 05401

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Andy Montroll, Chair
Michael Gaughan, Vice Chair
Alexander Friend
Erhard Mahnke
Erin Malone
Ryan Nick
Julia Randall

Burlington Planning Commission

Tuesday, February 10, 2026, 6:30 P.M.

Hybrid Meeting via Zoom and in City Hall's Bushor Conference Room

Draft Minutes

Commissioners Present:

- Andy Montroll
- Erhard Mahnke
- Ryan Nick
- Alexander Friend
- Michael Gaughan
- Erin Malone
- Julia Randall

City Staff Present:

- Charles Dillard, Director
- Sarah Morgan, Principal Planner
- Stella Jordan, Senior Planner

Public Attendance: Mindy Watts, Kylee Pierce, Kate McCarthy, Taylor Newton, Sharon Bushor

1. Agenda

Call to Order: 6:30pm

Changes to Agenda: Addition of slides (posted) related to Item 5, planBTV 2050; and a memo (posted) related to Item 7, 2026 Meeting Schedule.

2. Public Forum

Sharon Bushor:

Discussed the proposed Joint Committee meeting format for the Inclusionary Zoning Amendment, noting this may eliminate some public input opportunities and stressing the importance of providing clarity on the process, timeline, and public input opportunities. Discussed the Scope of Work for planBTV 2050 (posted), expressing support for the emphasis on climate resilience, concern for language about the need for change, and concern for metrics related to land use and land value that may not adequately account for environmental protection needs. Suggested that taxpayers should be included in the list of planBTV stakeholders to engage, and that the City and consultants take engagement seriously.

3. Chair's Report

A. Montroll shared an update on the joint meeting of the Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Design Advisory Board, and Conservation Board on February 3.

4. Director's Report

- C. Dillard shared additional details about the February 3 joint meeting, noting that this meeting is held annually as an opportunity for the DRB, DAB, and Conservation Board to hear about the work of the Office of City Planning and the Planning Commission. He shared several topics discussed: planBTV: New North End; Inclusionary Zoning and other amendments; the Office of City Planning's general work plan; and strategies to develop

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housing on city-owned land, as well as how the Comprehensive Plan will integrate sustainability and conservation priorities.

- C. Dillard noted that consultants working on planBTV 2050 were in Burlington the week of February 9 for a site visit to meet with City staff and tour the City.

5. planBTV 2050: Consultant Introductions & Q+A

Mindy Watts and Kylee Pierce from Interface Studio presented an overview of the planBTV 2050 consultant team, project structure and timeline, key priorities for the unified planning process, and public engagement strategies. [See recording for full discussion](#) (Timestamp 00:12:24).

Discussion Notes:

- J. Randall, M. Watts, and C. Dillard discussed the scenario planning process. M. Watts and C. Dillard described plans for engaging the community to explore different growth and development scenarios and develop a preferred vision, then test that vision against external trends and future uncertainties. M. Gaughan noted that the Planning Commission can play an important role in developing and testing scenarios.
- E. Mahnke discussed Burlington's housing crisis and strong legacy of affordable housing work, and asked about Interface's experience working with municipalities on housing issues. M. Watts shared several examples from Interface's work in other cities on affordable housing strategies and with challenges related to homelessness.
- A. Montroll discussed the Planning Commission's role and oversight in developing planBTV 2050. He encouraged frequent updates, collaboration, and Commission discussions throughout the planning process.

6. CCRPC: Preapplication Review of 2026 ECOS Regional Plan by Land Use

Review Board

K. McCarthy and T. Newton from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) presented feedback CCRPC received from the state Land Use Review Board (LURB) on the draft 2026 ECOS Plan Future Land Use (FLU) Map and discussed possible changes to the FLU Map and the process for LURB review. [See recording for full discussion](#) (Timestamp 00:41:10).

Discussion Notes:

- M. Gaughan expressed frustration about some of the LURB's feedback, discussing the review process with K. McCarthy and T. Newton. T. Newton noted that this process is new and complex, but has helped CCRPC gain valuable insight about the type of evidence the LURB is looking for to demonstrate the land uses that RPCs and municipalities are planning for.
- J. Randall discussed transition and infill designations, suggesting that these are not suited to Burlington's land use. She and T. Newton discussed Winooski's FLU Map, which centers growth downtown as well as along corridors extending out of the downtown core.
- K. McCarthy, J. Randall and C. Dillard discussed Burlington's previous planning for future land use.
- E. Mahnke discussed downtown designations and inquired about Act 250 exemptions tied to different tiers of planned growth designation. T. Newton clarified Tier 1A Act 250 exemption eligibility for land use designations and discussed the 3 Steps within the Center designations, which each confer different benefits for development. M. Gaughan discussed some of the financial benefits.
- J. Randall, E. Mahnke, and K. McCarthy discussed benefits and limitations related to the different Tiers and Steps, options available to municipalities regarding LURB recommendations, and the LURB's final decision-making process.
- Commissioners discussed the LURB's recommendations about Cambrian Rise, indicating a general preference for changing the FLU designation as recommended.

- Commissioners and C. Dillard discussed the South End FLU designation and one of the LURB’s recommended options for the South End, which involves connecting the South End to Downtown as one planned Downtown Center. E. Mahnke expressed concern about potential displacement of the artist community in the South End under development pressures. M. Gaughan discussed the financial, programmatic, and development benefits a Step 3 designation could confer, the need to support the SECORD project and maximize opportunities for appropriate density, and highlighted the distinction between the FLU designation and the existing local zoning regulations. Commissioners discussed what a connection could look like.
- Commissioners and T. Newton discussed updating the designation of the proposed Village Center on Shelburne Road to a Planned Growth Area to address LURB comments.
- Commissioners, staff, and K. McCarthy discussed LURB comments about the Planned Growth Area in the New North End near the mouth of the Winooski River, which is surrounded by conservation land. There was not unanimous agreement among Commissioners about how to designate this area.
- E. Mahnke suggested staff engage the South End Arts and Businesses Association (SEABA) regarding the planned Downtown Center connection.

7. 2026 Meeting Schedule

Staff and Commissioners discussed the schedule of Planning Commission meetings throughout CY 2026, including potential rescheduling needs and priority topics. [See recording for full discussion](#) (Timestamp 01:48:00).

Discussion Notes:

- Commissioners and staff discussed undertaking a joint committee process with the City Council Ordinance Committee to develop the Inclusionary Zoning amendment.

8. Commissioner Items

A. Montroll:	Noted that the next Planning Commission meeting is on February 24.
E. Malone:	Asked about how the ModGov restructuring process is going for the Office of City Planning, and about the CEDO Director’s role as Interim Chief of Staff.
E. Mahnke:	Asked about the planBTV Project Advisory Committee, and the possibility of the Planning Commission designating an alternate representative to the PAC.
E. Malone:	Requested an update on Za-26-02 Downtown Fences.

9. Adopt Minutes and Accept Communications

Action: Review and approve the January 13, 2025 Planning Commission meeting minutes and review and accept any communications

Motion by: E. Mahnke

Seconded by: R. Nick

Vote: Unanimous

Notes or Corrections: N/A

10. Adjournment

Action: Motion to Adjourn

Time of Adjournment: 8:40 pm

Motion by: R. Nick

Seconded by: E. Mahnke

Vote: Unanimous