

Ward 6 NPA Meeting Agenda

Thursday, May 7, 2026

Location: Department of Public Works, 645 Pine Street

Or on zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/81027856568>

6:00 Community Dinner – join us for great (free!) food and a chance to connect with your neighbors

6:30 Call to Order,

- Introductions
- Announcements
- Steering Committee Membership

6:45 Department of Public Works, Summer Construction Plans (Chapin Spencer, Robert Goulding)

7:00 350.org on McNeil Generating Plant (Pike Porter, Nik Persampieri)

7:30 Parallel Justice Commission and Burlington Police Department (Hannah Brislin, Deputy Chief Young)

8:00 City Council Report (Buddy Singh and Becca Brown McKnight, invited)

8:15 Adjourn



DPW: 2026 CONSTRUCTION

Our Mission is to steward Burlington's infrastructure and environment by delivering efficient, effective, and equitable public services.

Chapin Spencer, Director

Cspencer@burlingtonvt.gov/802-863-9094

Robert Goulding, Public Information Manager

RGoulding@burlingtonvt.gov/802-881-2278

THE TWO BIG PROJECTS



Main Street & the Champlain Parkway are both anticipated to wrap up in early summer.

Both projects are on-time, and on-budget.

These projects are unlocking the potential for additional housing & commerce while providing enhanced infrastructure for residents



CHAMPLAIN PARKWAY

- 25MPH road
- Connects South End with Downtown
- Stormwater improvements
- Pedestrian enhancements: signals, shorter crossings, new sidewalks



WHAT'S LEFT TO DO

(tentative schedules below)

Pine Street

- Roadway sign installation
- Signal activation (week of May 4)
- Pavement (Main Street) and sidewalk repairs (misc. along Pine) (upcoming weeks)
- General clean up

Champlain Parkway

- Overhead sign structure installation (continues)
- Roadway sign installation (starting next week, continuing)
- Final wearing course of pavement onto I-189 and the ramps
- Pavement markings and line striping installation
- Traffic signal modification intersection of Home Avenue at the Champlain Parkway
- Full Parkway opening logistics (early Summer)
 - Signal timing adjustments for final condition along Champlain Parkway

MAIN STREET

- A welcoming gateway into Vermont's Queen City
- Wider sidewalks for pedestrians & commerce
- More trees & gardens
- Enhanced lighting
- Abandonment of ravine sewer

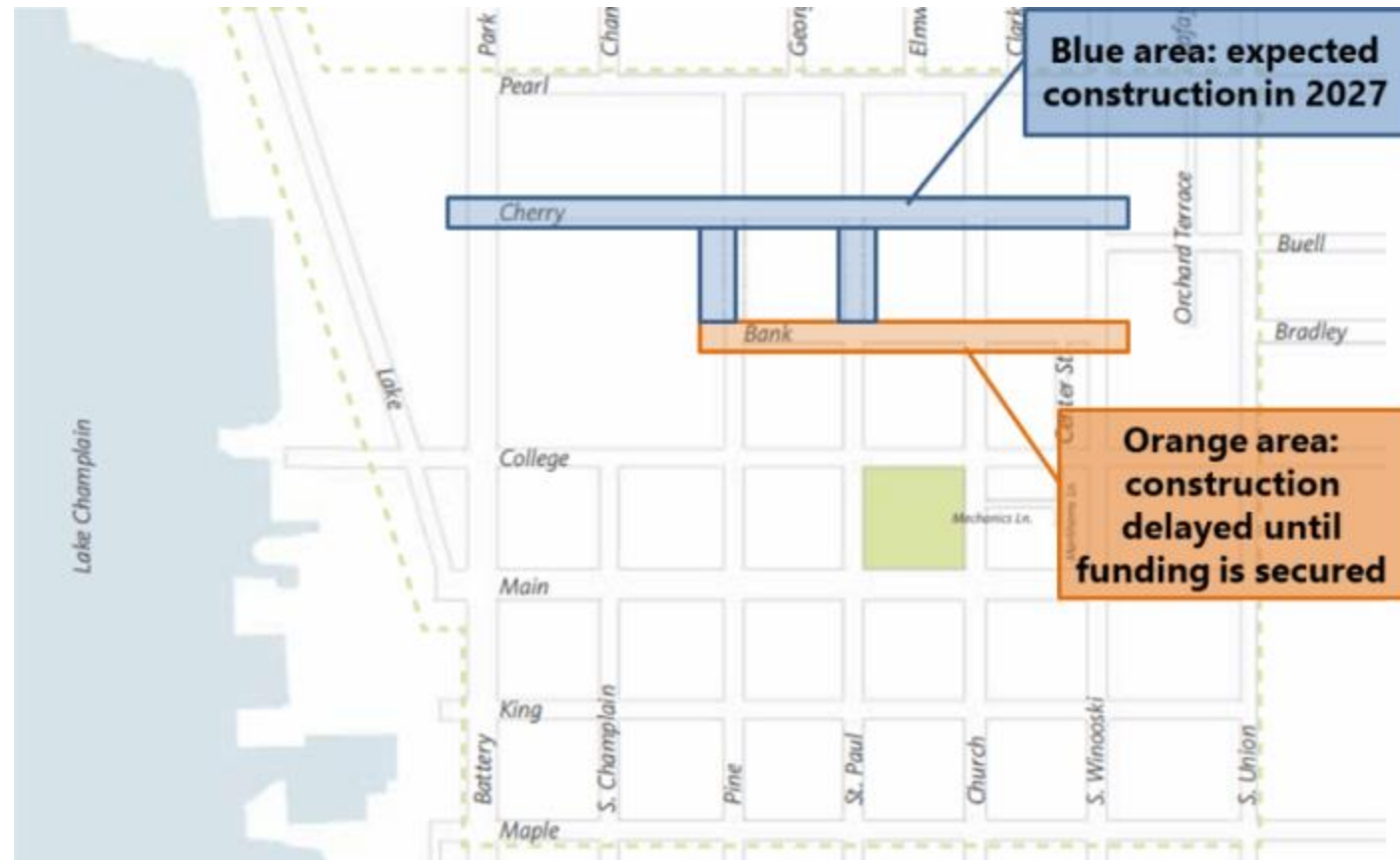


WHAT'S LEFT TO DO

- Sidewalks
- Signals
- Tree plantings
- Paving
- Public Art

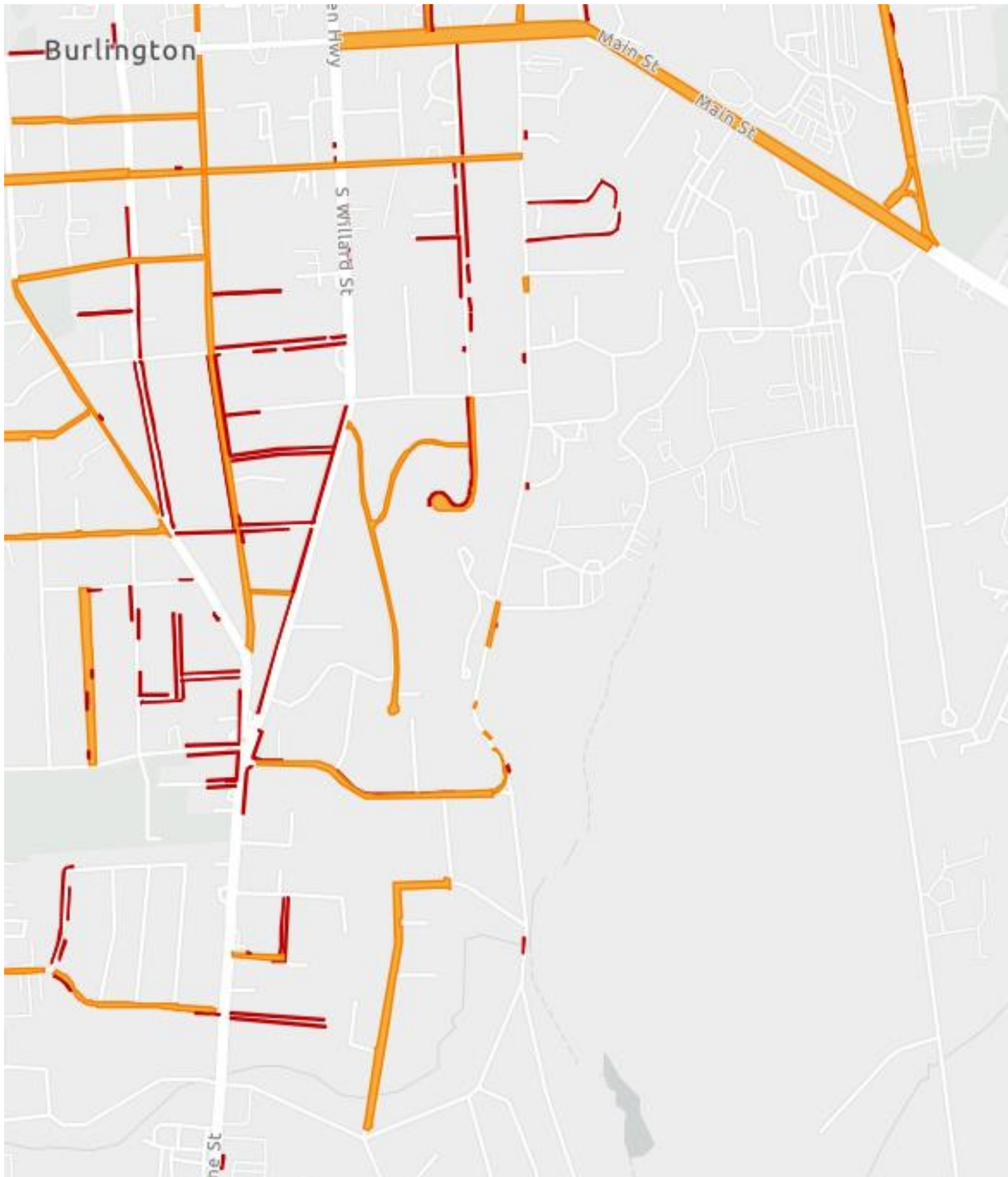


CHERRY ST



Near final design

Construction could start in 2027, though may begin later



Ward 6 Work Since 2017

- *Paving in orange
- *Sidewalk in red



SIDEWALKS

The season has started!

\$1.65M contract + additional work with in-house crew

3.1 miles planned overall – hitting our annual target

Contract largely funded by 2025 Town Meeting Day





SIDEWALKS

- Developed using the City's 2021 citywide sidewalk inventory,
- Prioritizes based on utilization, location, and sidewalk condition. Utilization refers to both the expected level of use and the types of users.
- Location considers the sidewalk's proximity to schools, neighborhood activity centers, employment centers, etc.
- In addition, staff review resident requests, perform field inspections, and coordinate sidewalk improvements with other City projects.
- This information is combined and considered to create a work plan that makes sense for effective mobilization of a contractor

SIDEWALKS**

Street	Limits
N Willard St	Archibald St - North St (East Side)
Wildwood Dr	All*
Woodlawn Rd	All*
N Willard St	North St - Henry St (East Side)
Holly Ln	East Side
St Paul St	Crosswalk enhancement
North/Blodgett	New crosswalk
Pearl/George	Crosswalk enhancement
Union/Bradley	New crosswalk

**Short run segments not all included, but does include W6

adjacent Sidewalk and bumpout on St Paul St in front of Decker

Towers to improve pedestrian safety and drainage at the existing

crosswalk

PAVING



Asphalt plants are open!

\$1.7M contract + remaining work from CY 25

Total ~3.5 miles planned for the year

Largely funded by 2025 TMD Bond

Larger workplan being developed for 2027-2030

PAVING



BACKGROUND

- Street network consists of over 96 miles of streets.
- Classified as Primary/Arterial, Secondary/Collector and Tertiary/Residential.
- Each street type has different anticipated lifespan generally based on average daily traffic volumes.
- In order to keep pace with the anticipated lifespan of the Burlington Street network, minimum target is 4 miles/year.

PRIORITIZATION

- There are a number of factors DPW Staff consider when selecting streets to pave and patch.
- Funding, street condition, street type/traffic volume, nearby projects and resident requests

HEADWINDS

While this year we had our most competitive bid environment in awhile, inflation & fuel prices have eaten into available construction funding

PAVING*



<u>Street</u>	<u>Limits</u>	<u>Length (miles)</u>
Colchester Avenue	S. Prospect-Latham Ct	~0.46
Cumberland Road	Entire Street	~0.30
Greene Street	Loomis St-Hickok Pl	~0.11
Park Street	North St-Sherman St	~0.17
Summer Street	Entire Street	~0.05
Saratoga Avenue	Entire Street	~0.35
Rivermount Terrace	Entire Street	~0.30
Bennington Court	Entire Street	~0.05
Scarff Avenue	Shelburne St-Wells St	~0.10
Depot Street	Entire Street	~0.21

Remaining 2025 contract streets

College	Union - Willard
Pearl	Battery - Winooski

*Includes patches on lower North Ave, Lake St, Archibald St, Intervale Rd



WATER WORKS!

Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades

- Stage 0 remains on target for completion this summer/fall. This is a major first step to begin comprehensive upgrades funded by 2025 TMD bond
- Screening & grit equipment being installed at all 3 plants

Water main improvement project

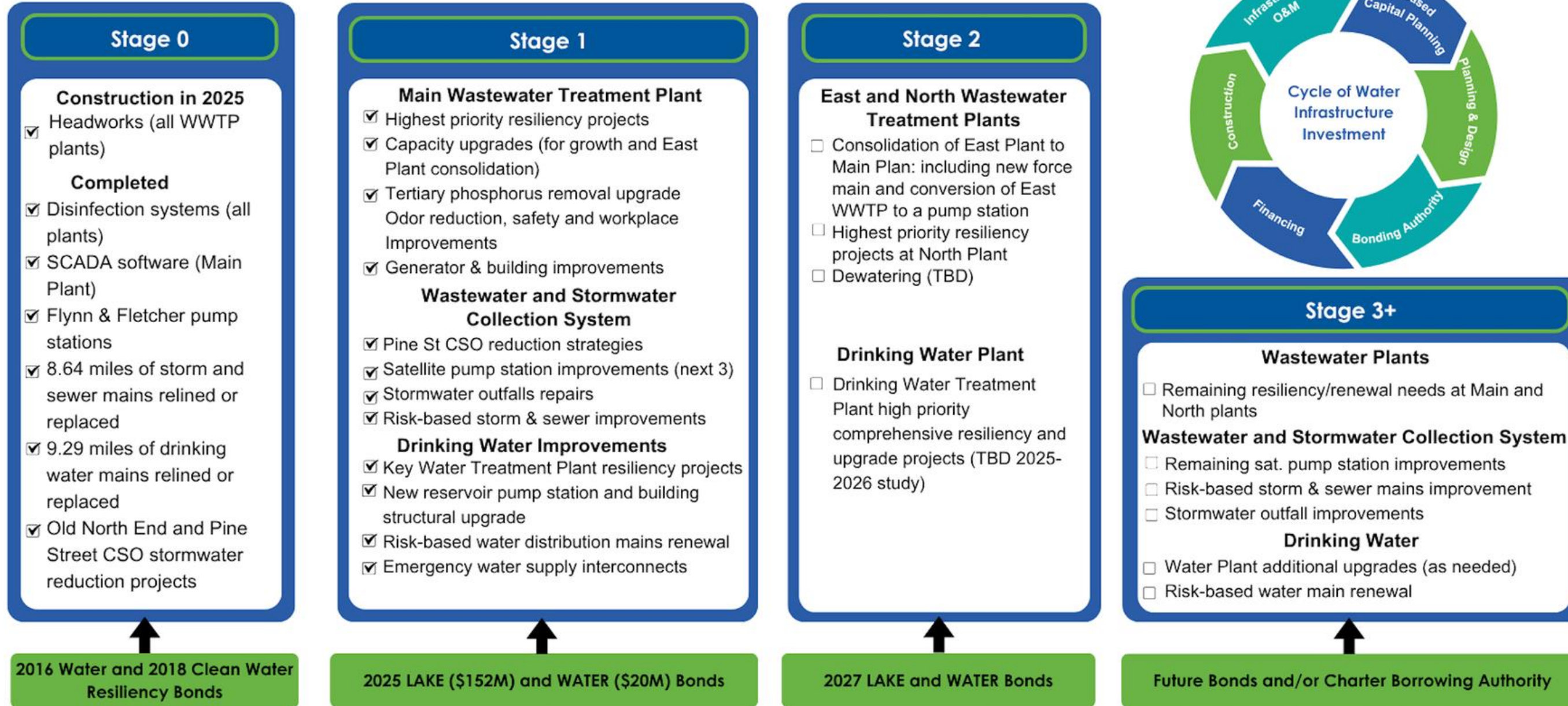
- Includes: Pine St (from S Crest to Home Ave), Summit St (Maple to Main), and all of Bennington Court (coordinated with paving)

Manhattan Ave Stormwater Outfall: late summer/early fall

Water Resources

Sustainable Infrastructure Plan: The 2025 LAKE & WATER bonds

How does this phase of investment fit in with the overall plan?



WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR WATER:



ABOUT US | OUR PROGRAMS | OUR PRIORITIES | RESEARCH | NEWS | EVENTS | RESOURCES |



BLUE Stormwater Program

What is BLUE? Lake Champlain Sea Grant is part of BLUE BTV, a residential green stormwater infrastructure incentive program in Burlington, Vermont. BLUE evaluators educate and collaborate with residents to identify opportunities for stormwater mitigation, affect behavioral changes, and establish stewardship principles to protect our waters from cyanobacteria blooms.

Green Stormwater Infrastructure

<https://seagrant.w3.uvm.edu/blue/>

<https://vt.adopt-a-drain.org/>

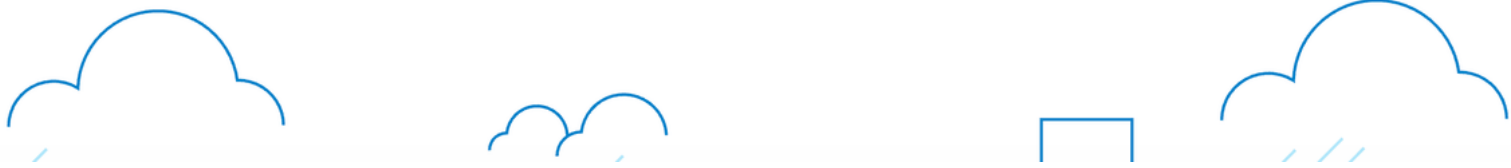
[How to Adopt A Storm Drain](#) | [Drain Clearing Tips](#) | [Track Impact](#)



We protect our water

Sweep up! Rake up! Pick up!

Adopt a Drain



STAY INFORMED STAY IN TOUCH

Maintenance Requests



See Click Fix:
burlingtonvt.gov/dpw

Construction Impacts



- Front Porch Forum
- Signage
- VT-Alert:
[burlingtonvt.gov/
construction](http://burlingtonvt.gov/construction)

Customer Service



802-863-9094

[dpw-pinecustomerservice
@burlingtonvt.gov](mailto:dpw-pinecustomerservice@burlingtonvt.gov)



THANK YOU

Burlington's McNeil Plant: A CASE FOR CLOSURE

A presentation to Burlington's NPAs
By 350 Vermont's Chittenden Node & Stop VT Biomass



SPRING 2026



Bill McKibben

@billmckibben



Burning wood for electricity is a bad idea--the science has changed a lot since Burlington started doing it decades ago. It makes sense to phase it out, not incentivize it



vtdigger.org

Nick Persampieri: Burlington, please vote no on Question ...

The city draws a false contrast between fossil fuels and renewables. Some renewables, such as solar, wind and ...

11:07 AM · Mar 6, 2023 · **7,786** Views

18 Retweets **10** Quotes **57** Likes **1** Bookmark

McNeil Plant Basics

- Commenced operation **June 1984**
- Located in **Burlington's Intervale**
- **Burns wood** to generate electricity
- 50 MW (**largest electricity generator in Vermont**)
- Jointly owned by Burlington Electric Department (BED) (operator and 50% owner), Green Mountain Power (31%) and Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (19%)
- Provides **32-45% of BEDs total power supply** (FY 2015-2023).

The Case Against McNeil Plant

- **Largest stationary source of greenhouse gas emissions in VT**
- **Harmful to health** - particulate matter and other pollutants which leads to or exacerbates health conditions
- **Negative impact on forest ecosystems** and the benefits they provide.
- It **costs a lot**- the power it produces is expensive.
- It's **old** and **inefficient**

McNeil's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

“Burning wood to generate electricity emits more carbon dioxide per kilowatt-hour generated than fossil fuels- even coal, the most carbon intensive fuel.”

-John Sterman, William Moomaw, Juliette N. Rooney-Varga & Lori Siegel, Does wood bioenergy help or harm the climate?, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Vol 78, No. 3 (2022) 130.

McNeil emitted 316,405 tons of CO₂ in 2025 (EPA). It also emits lesser amounts of the greenhouse gases methane and nitrous oxide. Fossil-fuel powered equipment and vehicles used to pull wood feedstock from the forests and transport it to the plant emits additional greenhouse gases.

The Carbon Neutrality Myth

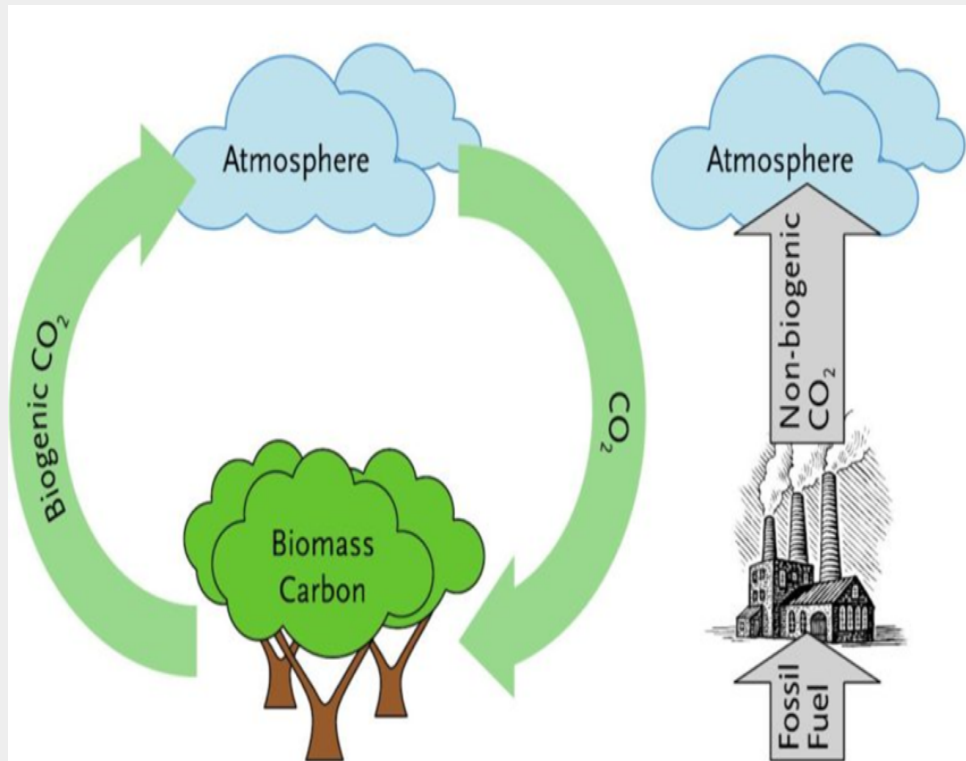
BED claims that McNeil is carbon neutral because BED engages in sustainable forestry and the carbon dioxide emissions from its stack are re-sequestered by trees as they regrow.

This is a myth. When trees are burned the carbon dioxide is released immediately creating a carbon debt which takes decades to centuries to eliminate through tree regrowth.

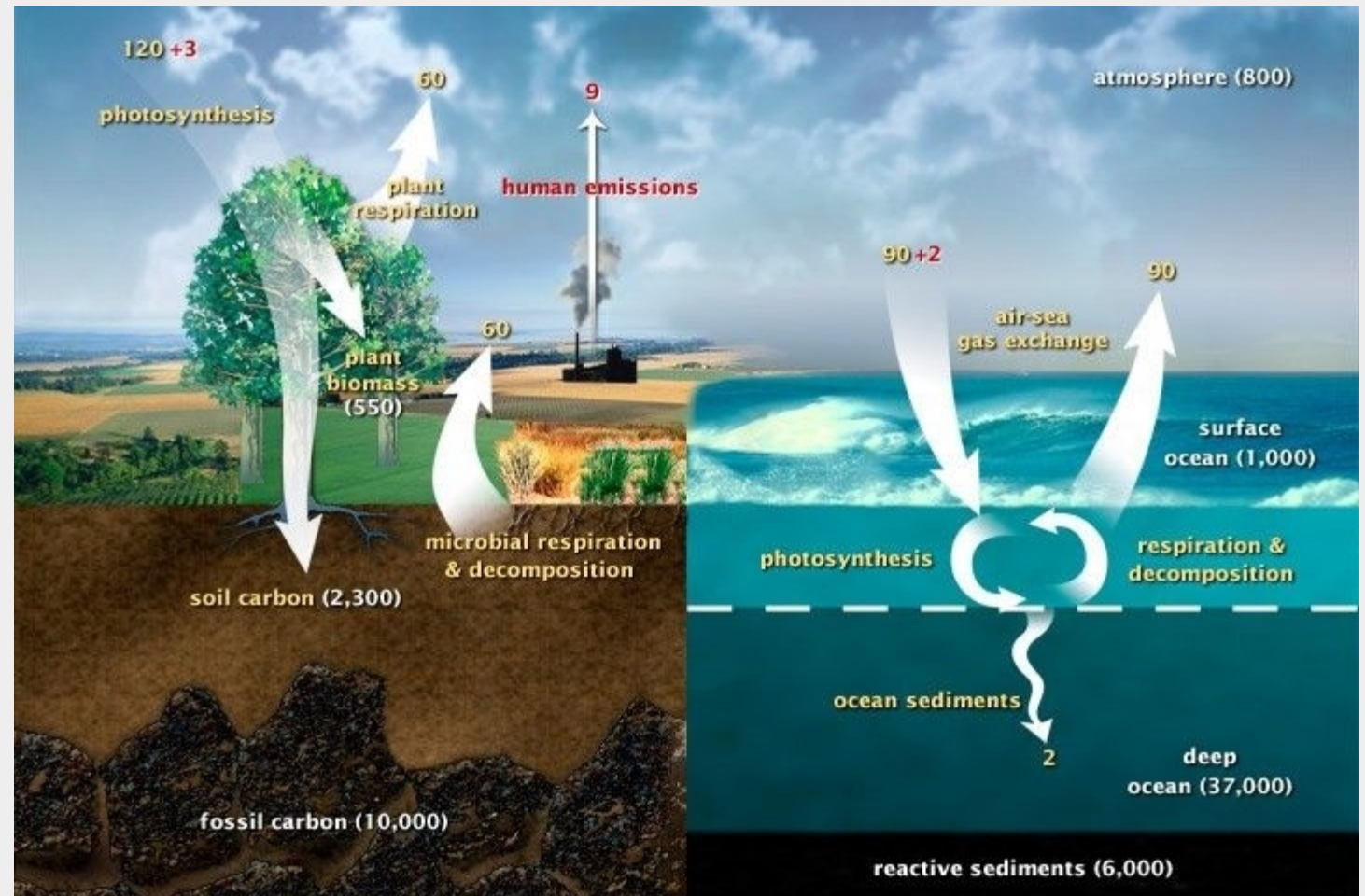
Also, regrowth is uncertain. Harvested areas may be converted to other land uses or trees may succumb to insects, disease or drought.

John Sterman, et al.; EU Bioenergy, Bioenergy Accelerates Climate Change,
<https://www.eubioenergy.com/the-5-issues/it-accelerates-climate-change/>

BED Theory : "Closed Loop" Carbon Cycle



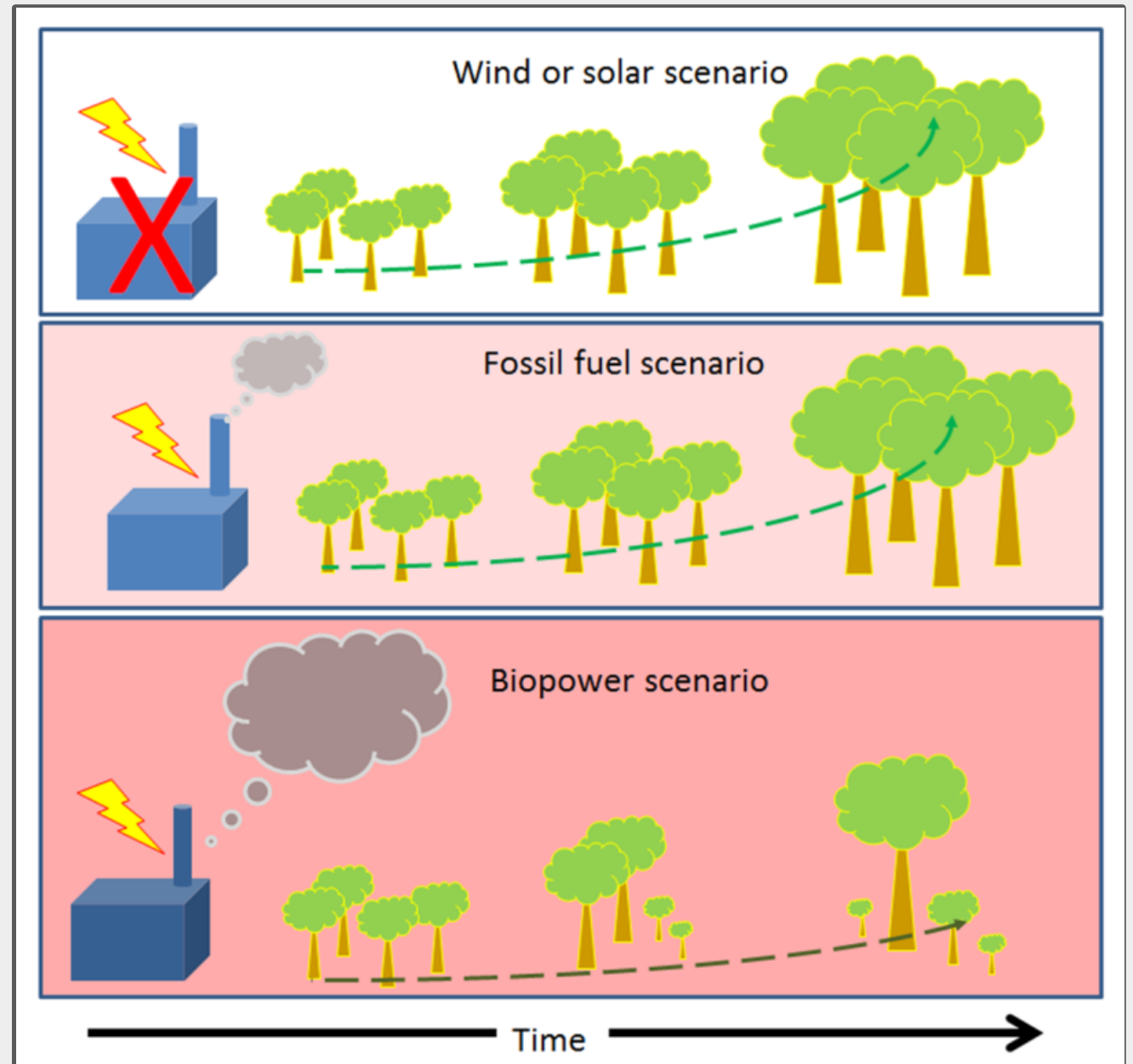
NASA carbon cycle model



Reality:

Wood burning power plants emit more CO₂ per unit energy and also degrade the forest carbon sink.

The result is higher atmospheric CO₂ concentrations.



Ecological Harm

- Burlington Electric claims: “McNeil’s wood supply is primarily 88.4% in-woods chips/residues such as the tops and limbs left over from higher-value wood products, with an additional 9.7% from sawmill residue and 1.6% from waste-wood yard wood.”
(Bold added)


- *McNeil, Climate and Forestry, BED website.*

- The reality: McNeil’s burns “Whole Tree Chips,” which include chips generated by cutting down and chipping whole trees.

-PUC Dkt. No. 4450, Certificate of Public Good for McNeil, 9/14/81 § 87; 6/22/83 Order Amending Certificate of Public Good.

- **The plant burns 400,000 tons of woodchips per year**

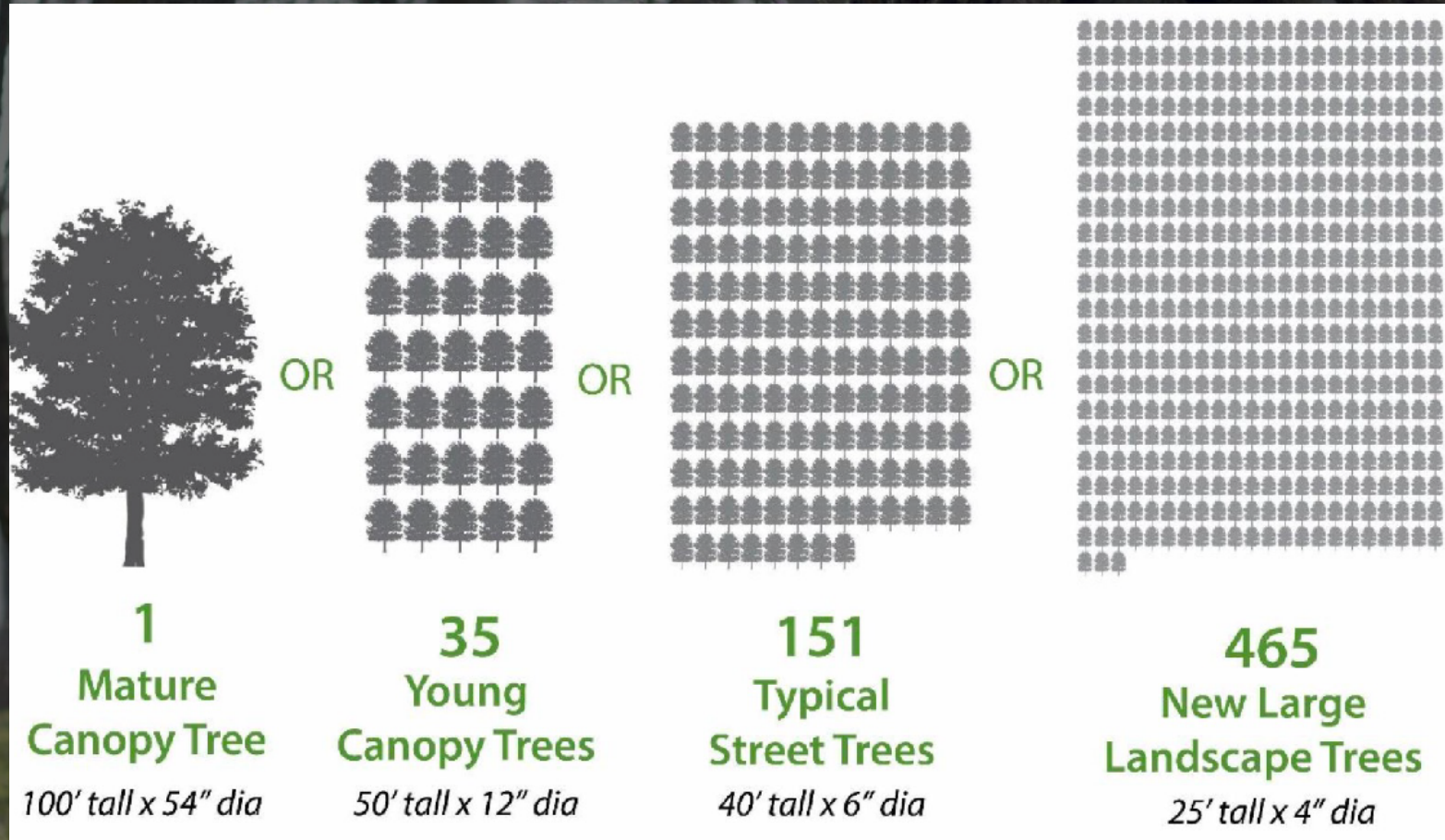
-*April 29, 2022 VEIC Summary Memorandum.*

A photograph of a forest with a large pile of logs in the foreground. The text is overlaid on the image.

This impairs forest ecosystems and erodes important benefits forests provide, including flood protection, & has a destructive impact on forest ecology and wildlife.

Carbon Rock Stars: Large, Older Trees & Forests

How many oak trees does it take to store 8 tons of carbon?





Human Health

McNeil emits **particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, volatile organic compounds, including benzene and formaldehyde, and other pollutants which are known to be harmful to human health.**

McNeil releases these pollutants in proximity to racially diverse, low and middle-income neighborhoods of Burlington's Old North End and Winooski, whose residents face greater environmental risks than residents of other areas.

Expense



- BED Financial statements show that McNeil has generated losses for 8 of the last 10 fiscal years (2016-2025) totaling more than \$34 million over the 10-year period. (*This figure includes depreciation, but does not include interest.*)
- As 50% owner, BED bears 50% of these losses.
- The average real-time price for wholesale power in New England in 2024 was **\$39.50 per megawatt-hour**. www.iso-ne.com/about/key-stats.
- Wholesale prices were forecast to **increase to \$55/MWH in 2025**. *U.S. Energy Information Administration.*
- **The net cost of generating power from McNeil was \$96.42/MWH in fiscal year 2025 and \$98.70/MWH in fiscal year 2024.** *McNeil Joint Owners Operating Committee Materials.*

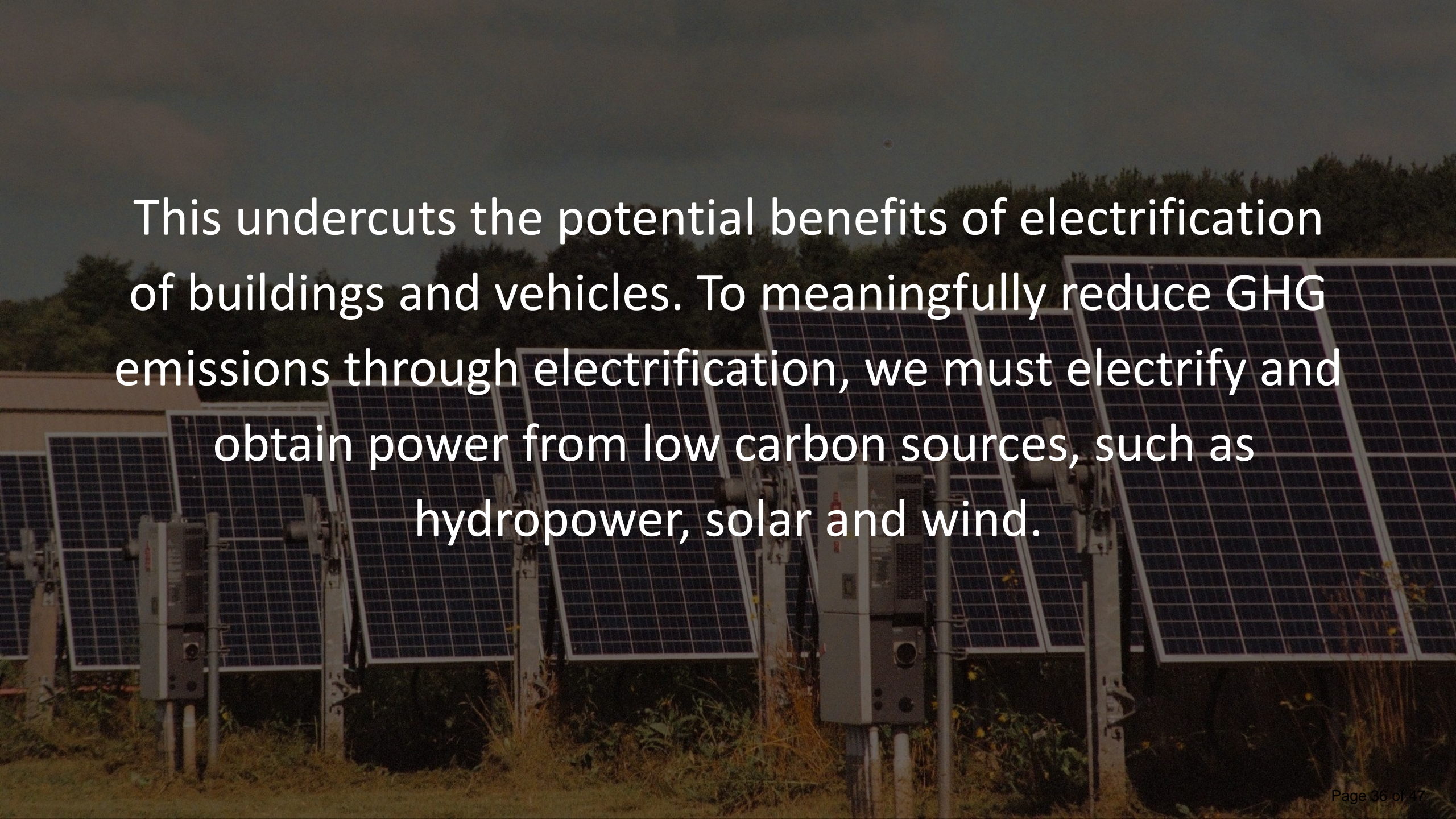
Age & Efficiency of the Plant

- The plant is **26% efficient**. (*April 29, 2022 VEIC Summary Memorandum*)
- It **runs only about 50-60% of the time**, and is frequently off-line for planned maintenance, repairs due to operational problems, or because of market prices.
- BED has invested in capital improvements to extend operation of the 42-year-old plant beyond its anticipated useful life.
- In 2023, BED obtained City Council approval to move forward with District Energy Project which would depend on McNeil.
- Additional capital expenditures are planned or under consideration.
- **BED has planned all of these major expenditures without evaluating whether the plant should continue to operate or whether alternative sources of power would be more effective.**

Flawed Policies

BED has directed the course of Burlington's overall climate policy, leading to flawed policies.

- These call for reducing fossil fuel use rather than reducing GHG emissions from all sources (such as the McNeil Plant).
- The Net Zero Energy Roadmap defines “net zero,” as eliminating fossil fuel use in the heating and ground transportation sectors, yet calls for pursuit of the District Energy Project, which would perpetuate McNeil’s massive GHG emissions to produce electricity.
- The Carbon Pollution Impact Fee is applied to heating systems powered by fossil fuels but not to “renewable” systems and fuels with significant greenhouse gas emissions.

A photograph of a solar farm. In the foreground, there are several rows of solar panels mounted on metal frames. The panels are tilted towards the sun. In the background, there are more solar panels and some trees. The sky is clear and blue. The overall scene is a typical solar farm installation.

This undercuts the potential benefits of electrification of buildings and vehicles. To meaningfully reduce GHG emissions through electrification, we must electrify and obtain power from low carbon sources, such as hydropower, solar and wind.

Our Vision:



Advocate!

Burlington City Government Should:

- Place responsibility for development of the city climate policy in a city department or official independent of BED.
- Develop a plan to close the McNeil Plant, preferably by June 2028. The plan should include measures for a just transition to other employment for affected employees, a plan to keep electric rates stable, and ensure adequate energy for future needs.

Actions We Can Take

- **Connect with our city councilors** (email, phone calls, in person conversations).
- Write to Mayor Mulvaney-Stanak.
- **Attend a city council meeting** and speak during public comment.
- NPAs to consider a resolution to send to City Council on this issue.
- **Attend Electric Commission meetings** and speak during public comment.
- **Get involved** with VT 350.org or Stop VT Biomass.

Questions
Comments
Discussion



Public Safety and Support

Community Discussion on Public Safety
in Burlington

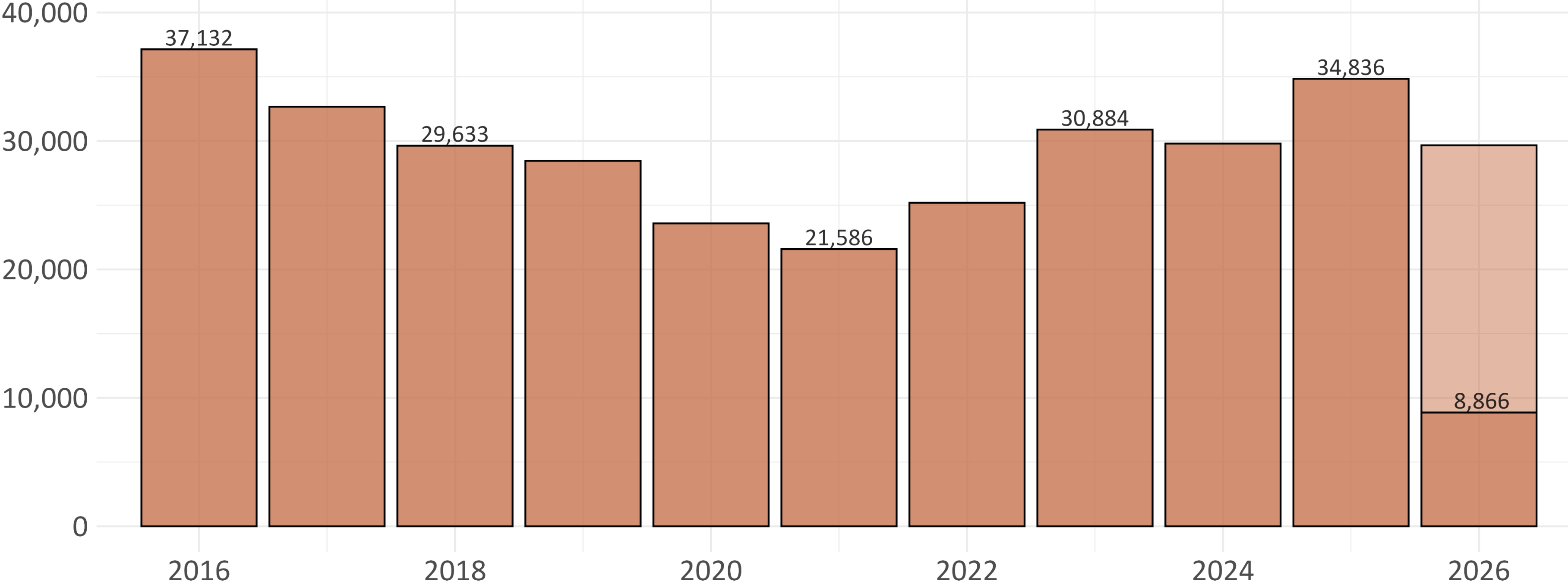
With:

Deputy Chief Jon Young

Victim Service Specialist Hannah Brislin



BPD Incidents, 2016 - 2026

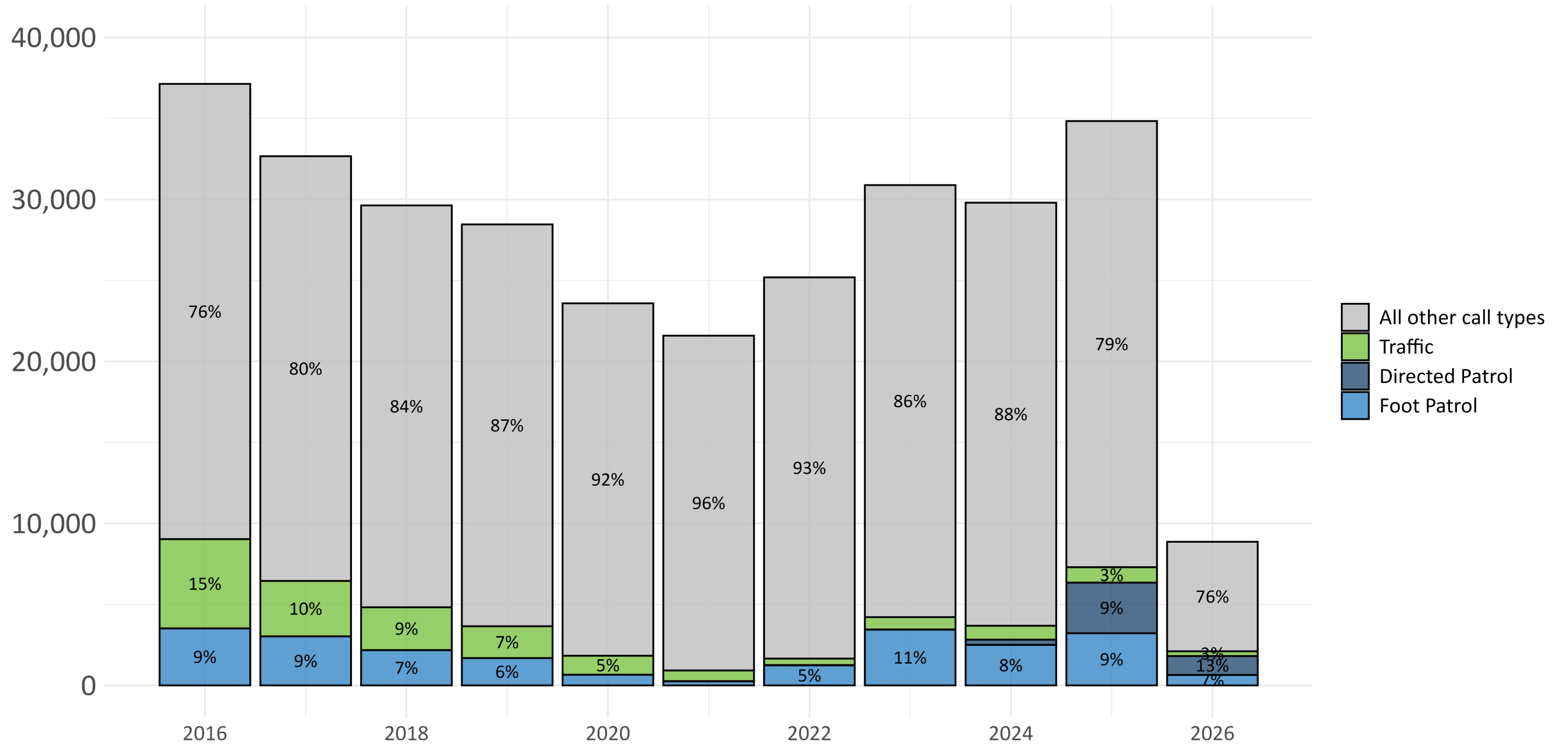


Actual Projected

Projections based on 30% of past years' incidents having occurred by May 4th.

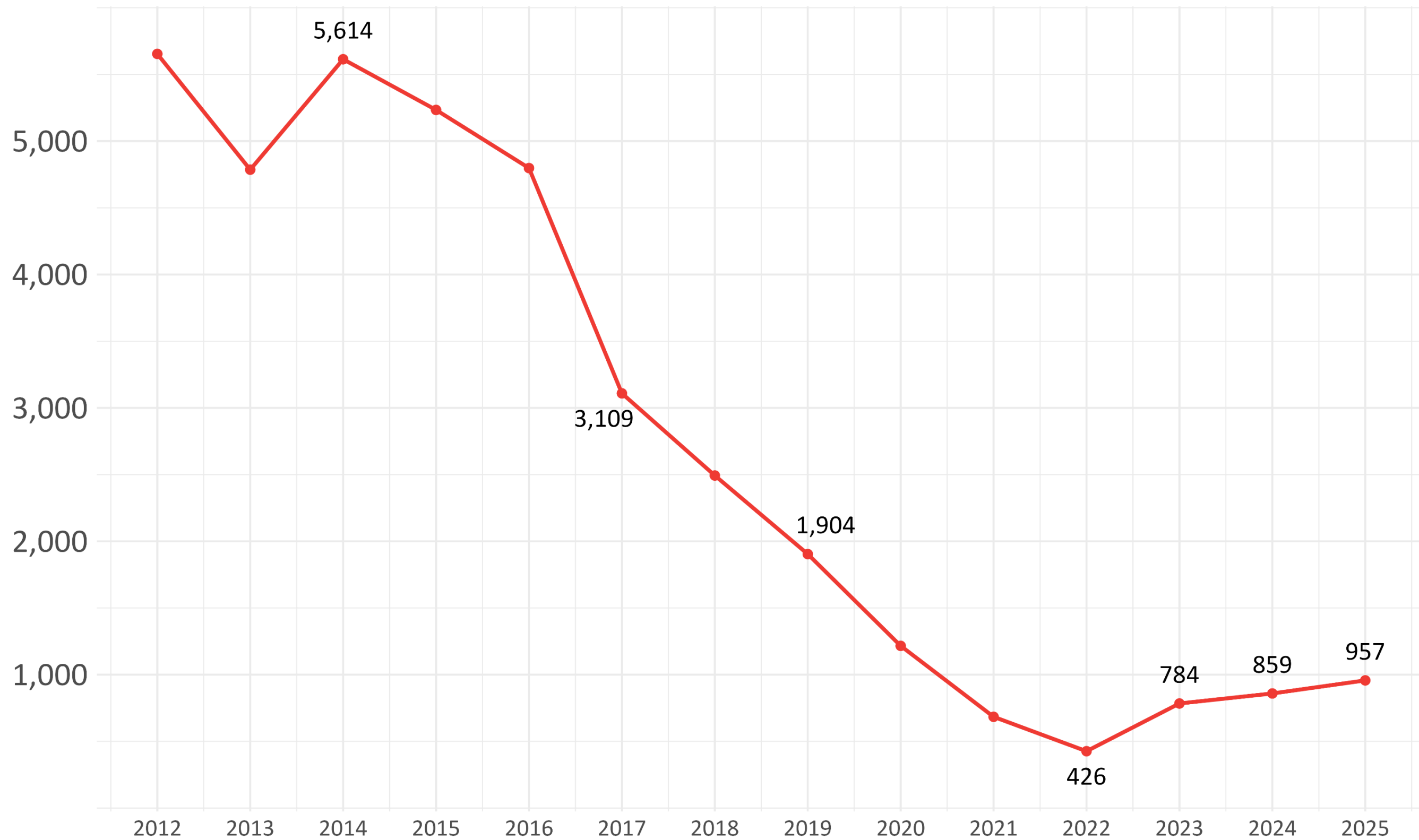
Data 1/1/2016 - 5/4/2026

BPD Discretionary Incidents, 2016 - 2026



Data 1/1/2016 - 5/4/2026

Discretionary Traffic Stops, 2012 - 2025



Data
1/1/2012 -
12/31/2025

Victim Services at the BCJC

Parallel Justice Program

- Emotional support/Care Planning
- Safety planning
- Systems advocacy
- Resource coordination/referrals
- Limited financial assistance
- Direct and Self Referrals without reporting to police

Conflict Assistance Program

- Empowers community members in talking through conflict and establishing their own solutions
- 1:1 conflict coaching
- Restorative dialogues
- Workshops
- Mediation

Victim Services in Restorative Justice

- Impact statement support
- Liason support in restorative process
- Systems advocacy
- Facilitation support for restorative process



Parallel Justice Program

What do we do?

- Emotional support
- Information about criminal justice system
- Safety and care planning
- Systems advocacy & accompaniment
- Referrals
- Interpreter services
- Financial assistance



How do we do it?

- We are here to support you regardless of law enforcement responses and court proceedings
- Validation for what happened, opportunities for support and community driven response
- Restorative Justice approach
 - How were you impacted, and what do you need to make things right?



TALK TO US:

Deputy Chief Jon Young:
jyoung@bpdvt.org

Victim Services Specialist:
Hannah Brislin:
(802) 557-7232
Hbrislin@burlingtonvt.gov

The key to a healthy community is our relationships to one other.