



City Council - Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee

Tuesday, May 26, 2026, 5:30 PM,

Join in Person: Front Conference Room, 645 Pine St. Burlington, VT 05401

Join via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/84603122855>

To call into the meeting, including to speak during public comment:

Phone: 312-626-6799, Webinar ID: 846 0312 2855

1. Agenda

1.1. Motion to adopt/amend

2. Adopt Minutes

2.1. Minutes of 4/28/26

3. Public Forum

4. Deliberative Agenda

4.1. GMT Updates: Route 1/Route 11 Downtown Routing - 15 Min

4.2. Unaccepted Streets Briefing - 40 Min

4.3. Champlain Parkway - Post Construction Monitoring - 30 min

5. Director's Report

6. Councilor Items

7. Next Meeting

7.1. Tentative, 6/23/26, 5:30PM

8. Adjournment



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT

CITY COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY & UTILITIES COMMITTEE

c/o Department of Public Works
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Councilor Mark Barlow, Chair, *North District*
Councilor Gene Bergman, *Ward 2*
Councilor Becca McKnight, *Ward 6*
Councilor Marek Broderick, *Ward 8*

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Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee of the City Council

Tuesday, April 28, 2026 – 5:30 PM

--DRAFT MINUTES--

See video for full meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r87gFTzsnXg>

Councilors absent: None

Councilors present: Chair Barlow, Councilor Bergman, Councilor Broderick, and Councilor McKnight

Chair Barlow calls the meeting to order at 5:34 pm

1. Agenda

Councilor Bergman moves to adopt the agenda as posted.

Councilor McKnight seconds.

All in favor, Unanimous approval

2. Minutes of 3/24/26

Councilor Bergman moves to adopt the minutes.

Councilor McKnight seconds.

All in favor, Unanimous approval

3. Public Forum

Nick Persampier – Ward 3 – Talked about Thermal Energy System Carbon Impact Fee Ordinance that was passed in 2023 – looking for documentation. B.E.D. reports Greenhouse gas submissions down 17 percent in 2025 - asking for how calculation was figured.

Stu Lindsay - Ward 5 – Walk to Shop - goal to get people to walk. Goal to log a million steps in the month of May. Pedestrian scrambles workshop.

Sharon Bushor (Zoom) – Glad more steps taken for the pedestrian. Solid Waste Generation Tax – Charge every house – affordability concern.

4. Deliberative Agenda

4.1 Burlington Walk/Bike Council & City Council Collaboration Framework

Phillip Peterson, Senior Transportation Planner DPW & Gordon Dragoun Walk/Bike Council presented information.

Councilor McKnight wants to make sure that we are set up for success. Have info online on DPW Website. Like to have a spot on the agenda periodically. **Councilor Broderick** - make sure its successful and use email lists to keep people up to date. Supports this. **Councilor Bergman** – thinks this is a good step. scheduling is important. Supports this. **Chair Barlow** very supportive, over communication is better. How many people are part of the Walk/bike council now?

All generated minutes w/ slight staff revisions: The group discussed plans to establish regular meetings between the Walk Bike Council and neighborhood representatives. DPW expressed support for the initiative, suggesting they start with existing communication infrastructure like MPAs and steering committees rather than formalizing processes immediately. The conversation ended with a motion to refer the proposal to City Council for information, with plans to draft a memo outlining the initiative's goals and securing Council President's support for agenda placement.

Councilor McKnight made a motion to refer this to the City Council agenda. **Councilor Bergman** seconds. **Councilor Bergman** amends to have a revised memo from WalkBike council.

All in favor, Unanimous approval

4.2 VT 127 SUP Connection Study

Bryan Davis Senior Transportation Planner, CCRPC & Maddy Suender, Associate Engineer presented information.

Councilor Bergman stated it is a pain to get from the homestead to North Ave. what would be the estimated construction time? **Councilor McKnight** - most people are not using this as a commuter path – exciting but what happens next, how do we build it? **Councilor Broderick** – on the script. **Chair Barlow** - this is my neighborhood, welcomes the improvement.

All generated minutes w/ slight staff revisions: The meeting focused on discussing safety improvements for the 127 corridor, with DPW presenting options and funding opportunities, including a \$5 million VTRANS bike peg grant program. The group discussed potential construction impacts and traffic disruptions, with DPW suggesting that traffic could be managed in phases to minimize disruption. The meeting focused on discussing the 127 path connection to North Avenue, with Brian Davis presenting a project overview and alternatives. The team reviewed public engagement efforts, including advisory committee meetings and surveys that gathered feedback from over 150 participants. The discussion covered safety concerns, maintenance issues, and opportunities to improve path separation and accessibility. The presentation detailed crash data showing 56 crashes over a 5-year period with no fatalities or injuries, and outlined Alternative 1 which involves reallocating space on the existing bridge by reducing lanes to 11 feet and creating a 14-foot path. The conversation ended with a unanimous decision to refer the proposal back to the City Council for approval, with a recommendation to proceed with the project.

Councilor Bergman makes the motion that this be referred back to the council for the approval indicated in this memo with TEUC recommending it. **Councilor McKnight** seconds.

All in favor, Unanimous approval

4.3 SWGT Policy Options (Who pays the SWGT in FY 27)

Lee Perry, Assistant Director of Maintenance & Chapin Spencer, DPW Director presented information.

Councilor McKnight - Offer Option D- why are we not charging everyone? Sliding volume scale? Where does composting fit in? **Councilor Bergman** – Memo is confusing. How would different plans relate to different populations? Make sure we are caring about income sensitivity. **Councilor Broderick** Agrees it should be affordable. What would option C look like? **Chair Barlow** where would the 1.45 be assessed? Tax bill?

AI generated minutes w/ slight staff revisions: The Transportation, Energy, and Utilities Committee discussed solid waste generation tax policy options, focusing on whether the city should implement flow control for residential recycling collection and whether all residents should pay for base solid waste services through a solid waste generation tax. The committee reviewed three options: maintaining the current structure limited to recycling service recipients, implementing flow control with expanded services, or implementing a two-tiered system with a base fee for all residents receiving trash service. While committee members expressed support for expanding the tax to all residents as a fair approach given the broader scope of services funded by the tax, they requested more detailed information about different population segments and impacts before making a final decision.

4.4 Cherry Street Condemnation Request

Laura Wheelock Assistant Director of Technical Services & City Engineer & Corey Mims DPW Senior Engineer presented information.

Councilor Bergman - all but one is for temporary construction easements? **Chair Barlow** - same process as Winooski Bridge?

AI generated minutes w/ slight staff revisions: The committee also approved moving forward with the Cherry Street/Bank Street Reconnection Project condemnation process, with plans to seek City Council approval at the May 11th meeting to meet federal funding deadlines.

Councilor Bergman moves to approve the requested motion and to send this back to the Council for the May 11th City Council meeting. **Councilor McKnight** seconds.

All in favor, Unanimous approval

5. Director's Report

Director Spencer spoke about:

- Fully underway with construction season
- Engineering successfully advancing the completion of the Champlain Parkway & Great Streets Main St
- Underway with paving program

6. Councilor Items

None.

7. Next Meeting

May 26, 2026, 5:30 pm at 645 Pine St.

8. Adjournment

Chair Barlow adjourns meeting at 7:53 pm.



Memo

Date: May 26th, 2026

To: Transportation, Energy, and Utilities Committee (TEUC)

From: Chapin Spencer, Director of Public Works
Laura Wheelock, PE, City Engineer/Division Director – Technical Services
Phillip Peterson, PE, Senior Transportation Engineer & Planner
Calvin Wuthrich, Associate Public Works Engineer

CC: Darren Springer, Director, Burlington Electric Department
Chief Curtin, Burlington Fire Department
Megan Moir, Division Director – Water Resources

Subject: Unaccepted/Private Streets in Burlington

Summary:

DPW is providing TEUC with an update on the **draft phasing and prioritization framework** for evaluating unaccepted and private streets. This effort responds to longstanding uncertainty around street ownership, maintenance responsibility, capital improvements, and the pathway toward potential acceptance. The framework is intentionally high-level and will continue to evolve as additional data is collected, particularly through coordination with Water Resources, Burlington Electric Department (BED), and ongoing land records research.

The goal of this phase is to:

- Establish a **clear, flexible structure for sequencing work**
- Communicate **how streets are being prioritized**
- Outline the **decision-making pathway from research to potential Council action**

No formal action is requested at this time.

Background: Draft Phasing Framework:

DPW will be categorizing streets into four groupings to create a **balanced and manageable workload over time**:

- **Documentation/Ownership Review**
 - Streets that are generally part of condominium developments and/or homeowners' associations, where the right-of-way is likely privately owned and maintained through a homeowner's association or similar private arrangement. DPW Staff will address these streets separately and look to confirm their status as private.
- **Phase 1 - Near-Term Implementation**
 - Streets with lower infrastructure acceptance risk that have been built and maintained in a way that matches the general character of City-owned streets.
- **Phase 2 - Intermediate Priority**
 - Streets requiring additional coordination, more detailed record review, or moderate infrastructure acceptance risk.
- **Phase 3 & Beyond - Long-Term / Complex**
 - Streets with unclear ownership, significant legal or physical challenges, or where acceptance may ultimately not be feasible without significant infrastructure investment or additional policy direction.

This categorization is preliminary and expected to change as DPW gathers new information about individual streets and receives feedback from City Council, the TEUC, and residents. As research progresses, streets may move between categories. Phase designation does not correspond to a specific construction year or timeline, nor does it imply that work will be completed within a single year. Inclusion in a given category does not guarantee acceptance but rather reflects when a street is expected to advance through evaluation.

Key Considerations Affecting Recommended Phasing:

- **Roadway Surface Material & Condition**
 - Streets that are not currently paved require less maintenance over time to maintain their current condition. Once paved street begins to fail, patching and other street maintenance generally will not effectively maintain a street's current condition over time. Additionally, any required upgrades to buried infrastructure are generally more cost and labor-intensive within the right-of-way of a paved street, when compared to an unpaved street.
- **Public Utility Considerations**
 - Many areas of the City lack existing inventory data; these data gaps will need to be addressed prior to any final recommendations for street acceptance, and doing so may be time and resource intensive. The cost implications of water resources infrastructure acceptance are likely to be significant. That said, the rate payers on these streets do pay the same rates as the rest of the rate payers but do not receive the same level of service.
 - There are several additional stormwater implications related to adopting new roads that include but are not limited to the following cases. First, adopting private roads may lead to

the Water Resources Division inheriting outfalls that extend well beyond the public right-of-way. Secondly, new City-owned impervious surfaces would increase the City's phosphorus reduction targets. Additionally, private roads are currently considered billable impervious surfaces, while public roads are not. As roads are accepted into the public right-of-way, the stormwater program will lose revenue and stormwater rates will need to be increased for all stormwater rate payers to offset the loss. This does not include the additional rate increases that would be necessary to steward the additional stormwater assets.

- Constructability
 - Streets will be assessed not just on their current condition but on the feasibility of making any necessary changes to infrastructure on the street. Key factors include but are not limited to the proximity of houses to the roadway, steep slopes adjacent to the roadway, and utility constraints.
- Achieving a Balanced Workload
 - The intent is to maintain a steady, achievable pace of work across the span of implementation efforts rather than overloading a single phase.
- Street Length & Number of Properties
 - The length of a given street and the number of property owners along the street will significantly affect the staff time required to conduct research on property histories, assess existing infrastructure, and complete any designs. Staff will look to phase the street assessment work such that street lengths are varied within the same phase.
- Projected Impacts of Street Acceptance on the Broader Community
 - There may be some cases where acceptance of a given street provides a significant benefit to the broader community, such as enhancing connectivity, or providing a utility-related benefit beyond the scope of the street itself. Staff will consider these more expansive impacts within the street assessment process.

Evaluation & Decision-Making Framework:

DPW is developing a clear, repeatable process to move each street from initial research through potential Council action. The approach is grounded in legal status, technical conditions, and cost, with final decisions guided by City Council policy direction.

The attached flow chart (See Attachment-1) is intended to provide a high-level overview of the proposed street-by-street evaluation framework. The process is designed to guide streets through initial land records research, infrastructure review, utility coordination, feasibility assessment, and policy direction prior to any potential Council action. The framework is intentionally flexible and is intended to support informed decision-making, recognizing that some streets may ultimately advance toward acceptance while others may be confirmed as private based on legal, technical, financial, or policy considerations.

1. Initial Research

- a. Land records review and ownership verification
 - i. Clarify ownership for many streets
 - ii. Identify previously undocumented acceptances or dedications
 - iii. Reduce uncertainty before advancing recommendations
- b. High-level assessment of existing conditions and known infrastructure
- c. Identification of preliminary constraints and data gaps
- d. This phase requires City resources, including staff time and, in some cases, funding for supporting technical work

2. Initial Condition Assessments (as needed)

- a. Survey work
- b. Subsurface utility verification
- c. Potholing and exploratory excavation
- d. Camera inspection of underground utilities
- e. These activities require dedicated funding and may involve consultants or specialized services. They are necessary to reduce uncertainty and inform subsequent decision-making.

3. Preliminary Cost & Feasibility (High-Level)

- a. Order-of-magnitude cost estimates based on available data
- b. Identification of major design, legal, and utility constraints
- c. Integration of field findings and infrastructure information
- d. Refinement of feasibility based on observed conditions

4. Policy Direction Checkpoint (TEUC / Council)

- a. DPW Staff will present recommendations to the TEUC and City Council based on the research and technical analyses listed above in order to prepare the TEUC and City Council to make informed decisions in determining an approach for each street.
- b. At this stage, the TEUC and City Council determine whether pursuing potential acceptance aligns with City priorities. This step is informed by legal status, technical analysis provided by DPW staff, and associated early-stage investigation costs.

5. If Advancing Toward Acceptance

- a. Detailed design and cost development
- b. Identification of required upgrades to meet City standards
- c. Coordination with utilities and abutting property owners
- d. Capital planning for construction and long-term maintenance obligations

6. Council Action

- a. Formal decision on street acceptance or confirmation of private status
- b. Establishment of long-term ownership and maintenance responsibility

It is important to note that if City Council accepts a given street into the City right-of-way, the timeline for any capital improvements to infrastructure on that street will be dependent on available funding for capital improvements and will not be immediate.

Ongoing Work:

- DPW Staff has begun initial land records review.
- DPW Staff has completed initial surface-level condition assessments on many of the private & unaccepted streets in the City and has begun review of street characteristics and key constraints.
- DPW Water Resources has begun performing a desktop assessment of potable water infrastructure, sewer and stormwater collection system infrastructure, and stormwater permitting considerations for all private and unaccepted streets.
- Infrastructure data quality is a critical driver of cost estimating and construction feasibility, particularly where water, sewer, stormwater, or BED infrastructure may not meet current City standards or where no formal infrastructure exists. DPW Technical Services has begun coordination with DPW Water Resources and BED in order to help identify system constraints, upgrade needs, and long-term implications of potential street acceptance. In many cases, utility conditions will impact acceptance timing and may determine whether acceptance is feasible.

Taxation & Ownership Clarification:

There is often confusion about how street ownership status relates to property taxes and maintenance responsibilities. To clarify:

- Property taxes are assessed regardless of whether a street is public, private, or unaccepted
- Street ownership and maintenance responsibility are separate from tax obligations
- In Burlington, there are existing private streets where property owners are part of a homeowners' association (HOA) and contribute additional fees for ongoing street maintenance, while still paying full property taxes

Attachments:

1. Street Evaluation Flow Chart

Private & Unaccepted Streets Evaluation Framework

Prepared for the Transportation, Energy & Utilities Committee (TEUC) May 26, 2026

