



Ordinance and Charter Change Joint Committee on Police Oversight - Tuesday, May 30, 2023, 6:30 PM, UPDATED: Front Conference Room at 645 Pine St. (Public Works Building)

When: May 30, 2023 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Topic: Ordinance and Charter Change Joint Committee Meeting

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1. Agenda

Subject	1.1. Motion to amend/adopt agenda
Meeting	May 30, 2023 - Ordinance and Charter Change Joint Committee on Police Oversight - Tuesday, May 30, 2023, 6:30 PM, UPDATED: Front Conference Room at 645 Pine St. (Public Works Building)
Category	1. Agenda
Type	
Recommended Action	

2. Adopt the Draft Minutes from May 23, 2023

Subject	2.1. Adopt the Draft Minutes from May 23, 2023
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Meeting May 30, 2023 - Ordinance and Charter Change Joint Committee on Police Oversight - Tuesday, May 30, 2023, 6:30 PM, UPDATED: Front Conference Room at 645 Pine St. (Public Works Building)

Category 2. Adopt the Draft Minutes from May 23, 2023

Type

Recommended Action

3. Public Forum

Subject 3.1. Verbal Comments

Meeting May 30, 2023 - Ordinance and Charter Change Joint Committee on Police Oversight - Tuesday, May 30, 2023, 6:30 PM, UPDATED: Front Conference Room at 645 Pine St. (Public Works Building)

Category 3. Public Forum

Type

4. Update from the Police Commission and Discussion

Subject 4.1. Update from the Police Commission and Discussion

Meeting May 30, 2023 - Ordinance and Charter Change Joint Committee on Police Oversight - Tuesday, May 30, 2023, 6:30 PM, UPDATED: Front Conference Room at 645 Pine St. (Public Works Building)

Category 4. Update from the Police Commission and Discussion

Type

Recommended Action

5. Discussion of Next Steps

Subject 5.1. Discussion of Outreach and Support

Meeting May 30, 2023 - Ordinance and Charter Change Joint Committee on Police Oversight - Tuesday, May 30, 2023, 6:30 PM, UPDATED: Front Conference Room at 645 Pine St. (Public Works Building)

Category 5. Discussion of Next Steps

Type

Recommended Action

6. Adjournment

Subject 6.1. Motion to adjourn

Meeting May 30, 2023 - Ordinance and Charter Change Joint Committee on Police Oversight - Tuesday, May 30, 2023, 6:30 PM, UPDATED: Front Conference Room at 645 Pine St. (Public Works Building)

Category 6. Adjournment

Type

Recommended Action

ORDINANCE and CHARTER CHANGE JOINT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 23, 2023

Fletcher Room in the Fletcher Free Library and Remote

DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present: Councilor Traverse (Ordinance Committee Chair), Gene Bergman (Charter Change Committee Chair), Councilor Hightower, Councilor Carpenter, Councilor Doherty

Staff Present: Kim Sturtevant (Acting City Attorney), Kerin Durfee (HR Director), Jordan Redell (Mayor's Chief of Staff)

Others in Attendance: Council President Paul, Councilor Grant, Lee Morigan, Amy Malinowski, Bruce Wilson, Dave Maher, Romeo Von Hermann, Keren Sita, Andy Blanchet

Meeting called to order at 5:34 PM.

1.0 Agenda

Motion to adopt/amend agenda

Motion to Adopt Agenda as is.

Motion by Councilor Carpenter, Seconded by Councilor Bergman

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

2.0 Adopt the Draft Minutes from May 4, 2023

Motion to Adopt Minutes as is.

Motion by Councilor Bergman, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

3.0 Review of Draft Proposals and Public Comment

Bergman: The Committee's charge is to look at the recently failed ballot initiative, the charter amendment proposed by the administration in December 2020, and the Council's 2021 resolution and ordinance proposal. Oversight involves both investigation and auditing according the NACOLE guidelines. All of the documents relating to investigations and review/auditing are available online on this meeting's agenda.

Traverse: We have a conflict with the Police Commission meeting tonight, but they will have input on our next meeting on the 30th. We have a lot to get into, but I think we can move to a general public comment.

Dave Maher: I have lived in the Burlington area for 50 years. I hope that any oversight initiatives do not hinder the police force. We had five homicides in Burlington last year. We also have skyrocketing drug overdoses. We need oversight that will help the police department handle these issues and any oversight process should have input from the department. I believe this will lead to better oversight and better policing.

Lee Morigan: I live in Ward 7. I think a new oversight system will improve public trust in the police department. The only discipline we hear about is for things that are bad enough to reach the public. It is important for the public to see disciplinary outcomes that they agree with. There has to be a balance between confidentiality for employees and allowing the public to know the disciplinary process.

Romeo Von Hermann: I live in Ward 8 and work for Green Mountain Transit. We interact almost daily with the police. We need an independent oversight body that won't be looking over their shoulder. This body needs access to sufficient information to make good choices. We also need to look at recruiting process so we have good officers.

Keren Sita: I hope that Jon Murad is in this for good reasons. I always said that Chief Del Pozo should have resigned before he did. We don't want people to be pursuing power for power's sake.

Andy Blanchet: Referencing the BPD flowcharts that are online, I think that the disciplinary structure should not be a funnel toward one or two people.

Carpenter: I am also looking at the disciplinary flowcharts. I think I need to understand better the internal affairs structure going forward.

Bergman: I would like the Police Commission to comment on the December 2020 memo. I am curious what the commission thinks on the documents we have posted and if they have any further reflections today.

Traverse: I know of two items on the Police Commission's agenda tonight. They will be choosing a few commissioners to come to our meetings going forward. We can relay to the Commission that we would like their thoughts on the Mayor's memo from 2020 and the proposed charter change.

Hightower: I don't think getting too into the weeds with the particular memos is necessary. I feel like we are looking for something between those two ideas and we can get more targeted feedback without looking too much at past documents.

Carpenter: I agree with Councilor Hightower. We should be looking forward rather than back. I believe we need a charter change and we should not get too into details until we have an agreement on the big picture.

Bergman: The Commission shouldn't go line by line, but rather look at the big concepts in the past initiatives and get their comments on them.

Hightower: I think we should get a list of decision points to work on before we start drafting anything. We need an outline to begin with. The faster we can create a list of decision points the faster we can get to substantive discussion. I would prefer if Ben and Gene can send some big points to the Commission before they attend the next meeting.

Bergman: I am hesitant to do that before we hear from them at least for the first time. I think after the first meeting, that would be appropriate.

Jordan Redell: I intended to bring a memo from the Mayor's Office to this meeting, but it is still forthcoming. The Mayor's position on a charge change has changed since the veto memo was put out last year. I hate to add one more document to the long list already, but I advise all the

Committee members to read a memo from City Attorney Eileen Blackwood on police oversight models.

Bergman: There were several versions of that memo that we looked at in Charter Change.

Melo Grant: We want to get the Commission's opinion on an oversight model. I know we have gone over these questions many times in the last few years, but this issue has not gone away. This oversight body is important to protect residents and we can't lose sight of that. I will read Attorney Blackwood's memo, but I am more interested in the models in places like New Haven, Connecticut.

4.0 Presentation from HR Director Kerin Durfee on City Discipline Procedures and Public Comment

Director Durfee's presentation is available in the CivicClerk meeting agenda and meeting files.

Carpenter: I know HR has staff that work with each department. Does HR have a staff person that helps manage police management issues?

Director Durfee: Yes. My staff handles low-level issues with their departments, but I manage police discipline myself. I have been the liaison with BPD and the Chief.

Bruce Wilson: I sit on the Human Right's Commission. Does BPD have a fair and impartial policing policy?

Jordan Redell: That is part of the Departmental Directives.

Bruce Wilson: I talk with police chiefs around the state and often FIP trainings are brief and online. I believe that these trainings should be done by someone that looks like me and or have the same experience.

Romeo Von Hermann: Is there a tiered process for complaints from the public? Or does this only apply to personnel?

Director Durfee: Complaints from the public have a specific process and there is an online portal for that.

Romeo Von Hermann: How does DEI training work in the City?

Director Durfee: The REIB Department handles the DEI trainings with the HR Department. The HR Department handles the onboarding portion.

Traverse: Is every discipline issue in the police department able to be grieved?

Director Durfee: Yes, but only if there is some issue under the bargaining contract.

Traverse: If BPD pursues an internal investigation, is HR part of that process?

Director Durfee: Yes, I am informed and consult on every mid to high level infraction. The Mayor expects the Chief to work with me on every BPD disciplinary process.

Bergman: I think we should codify this process in some way. Employees do not stay forever and it should be written down.

5.0 Review and Discussion of the CNA Report and Talitha Consultants and Public Comment

Councilor Hightower went through the executive summaries of the CNA report and Talitha report.

6.0 Any Other Committee Business

The next Joint Committee meeting is Tuesday, May 30th at 6:30 in Bushor Conference Room or remote.

7.0 Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn.

Motion by Council Bergman, Seconded by Councilor Traverse

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM.

DRAFT

CITY OF BURLINGTON

ORDINANCE _____

Sponsor: Public Safety Committee
Public Hearing Dates: _____

In the Year Two Thousand Twenty-Two

First reading: _____

Referred to: _____

Rules suspended and placed in all stages of passage: _____

Second reading: _____

Action: _____

Date: _____

Signed by Mayor: _____

Published: _____

Effective: _____

An Ordinance in Relation to

Police Oversight and Accountability: Authorities to Police Commission to alter the Police Disciplinary System

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

1 That the Code of Ordinances of the City of Burlington be and hereby is amended to include Chapter XX:
2 TITLE OF CHAPTER HERE, which shall read as follows:

3

4 Chapter XX Police Commission

5

ARTICLE I. IN GENERAL

6 XX-1.

7

8 (a) The general purpose of this chapter is to support principles of fair and impartial policing within the City of
9 Burlington Police Department by adopting a procedure that defines the role of the Burlington Police
10 Commission in providing community-based input in the following areas:

- 11 (1) the development of Department policies and procedures;
- 12 (2) review of citizen complaints involving the Department or its members; and
- 13 (3) the discipline process.

14

15 (b) Pursuant to Section 183 of the City Charter, the Board of Police Commissioners shall consist of seven (7)
16 legal voters of said city, to be appointed by the City Council with Mayor presiding to serve for three (3)
17 years and until their successors are appointed and qualified.

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20 ARTICLE II. POWERS AND DUTIES

21 XX-2

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23 To effectuate its purpose, the Police Commission shall, consistent with its authority under Section 184 of the
24 City Charter, review Police Department Policy and Directives as follows:

25

26 (a) At the behest of the Chief of Police or upon the Commission’s own initiative, the Commission shall
27 take up various Police Department Policies and Directives and review, evaluate, and audit these
28 Policies and Directives for their impact on police-community relations. The Commission may also

29 follow this same process in the development of new Policies or Directives for areas where there are no
30 existing Policies or Directives for the Department.

- 31
- 32 (b) From this review, the Commission shall propose recommended changes to the Policies and Directives
33 to the Chief of Police.
- 34
- 35 (c) The Chief of Police shall incorporate such changes, except where the changes would violate a state or
36 federal law, regulation, or standard; would violate a provision of the City's Collective Bargaining
37 Agreement with officers in the Department; would result in a significant deterioration of public safety;
38 impinge upon an important, clearly identified law enforcement practice; would create substantial
39 liability or exposure to liability for the City as confirmed by the City Attorney; or would make it
40 impossible or impracticable for the Department to follow an identified best practice that is followed by
41 either a majority of Vermont municipalities or a significant number of municipalities of the same size
42 as the City of Burlington.
- 43
- 44 (d) If the Chief of Police invokes an exception to a Policy or Directive recommendation to either reject the
45 recommendation or modify the recommendation substantially, the Chief shall report to the
46 Commission, in writing and in a timely manner, the specific exception and the extent to which the
47 Chief is declining the recommendation. The Chief shall not be obligated to communicate in writing if
48 the Chief accepts the Commission's recommendation in whole or substantial part.
- 49
- 50 (e) At the Commission's next regularly scheduled meeting following a letter from the Chief notifying the
51 Commission of a rejection or substantial modification to the Commission's recommendation, the
52 Commission shall review the letter and may either accept the Chief's response or appeal the rejection
53 or modification to the Mayor's Office. In this decision, the Commission may engage the Chief for
54 further clarification, but neither the Commission nor the Chief are obligated to such clarification if
55 either feels satisfied with their prior recommendation or response.
- 56
- 57 (f) An appeal to the Mayor shall consist of a letter from the Commission laying out the reasons for its
58 recommendation and understanding as to why the stated exemption does not apply. An appeal to the
59 Mayor must be supported by a two-thirds majority of the Commission. The Chief shall have up to 14
60 days to submit to the Mayor any response to the Commission's appeal.
- 61
- 62 (g) Upon receipt of an appeal, the Mayor may request a meeting with the Chief of Police and
63 representatives of the Commission, which may be more than one but shall not constitute a quorum for
64 public meeting purposes. Such meeting shall not be considered a meeting of the Police Commission
65 and shall not be subject to 1 V.S.A. § 312 but shall be considered a deliberative session intended to
66 inform the Mayor of the deliberative issues.
- 67
- 68 (h) The Mayor shall render a decision on the appeal in a timely manner. The Mayor's decision shall be
69 final and no further appeals or process shall follow.
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- 71 (i) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to restrict or limit the City Council's independent legislative
72 powers under Section 48 of the City Charter.
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XX-3

To effectuate its purpose, the Police Commission shall, consistent with its authority under Section 184 of the City Charter, compile and issue an annual report on citizen complaints and the disposition of such complaints, officer discipline, and other pertinent initiatives the Commissions deems noteworthy by the second meeting of the City Council in the month of November of each calendar year. Such report shall be drafted with assistance from the City Attorney to avoid the use of private or protected information to ensure that the report can be made public. The report shall not express opinions of Commission members on individual cases or pending or potential litigation involving the City. The report will be published to the members of the City Council, the Mayor and the Chief of Police, and representatives of the Commission and the Chief may present further information to the City Council at the Council’s invitation.

XX-4

To effectuate its purpose, the Police Commission shall, consistent with its authority under Section 184 of the City Charter review citizen complaints as follows:

- (a) A complaint by a member of the public, hereinafter referred to as “a citizen complaint,” concerning the Department or an employee of the Department may be filed either with the Department or directly with the Police Commission. Any citizen complaint filed with the Department shall be forwarded in a timely manner to the Chair of the Police Commission.
- (b) The purpose of the Commission’s review of a citizen complaint is to identify gaps in policy, practice, enforcement, and training where police department activities concern community standards and expectations. The review process under this Section is not a disciplinary process and should not be used as such.
- (c) The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Police Commission shall screen each citizen complaint and, if appropriate, present them to the Commission for review. The purpose of this initial screening shall be as follows:
 - (1) To eliminate any complaint that the Chair and Vice Chair agree does not present a valid, relevant, or current issue on which the Commission can reasonably review or investigate; and
 - (2) To screen out discipline or potential discipline issues against an individual officer and to forward those issues to the Chief of Police for disciplinary process consistent with the Chief’s disciplinary authority and the Commission’s role under XX-5.

If the Chair and Vice Chair refer a citizen complaint to the Chief of Police for discipline and also seek to refer the citizen complaint to the Commission, the Chair and Vice Chair shall stay referral of the

118 citizen complaint to the Commission until the discipline process, if any, is completed through any
119 grievance process involving the Commission.

120
121 (d) The Commission shall meet in executive session pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a)(1)(D) and/or 1 VSA
122 313(a)(4) to review all citizen complaints brought forward for review by the Chair and Vice Chair. The
123 Commission shall, by majority vote, direct the Chair to act on each complaint in one or more of the
124 following ways:

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126 (1) If the allegations do not appear to merit further investigation, the Chair shall close the review
127 and inform the complainant and the Chief of Police that the Commission has elected not to
128 review the complaint any further.

129
130 (2) If the Commission believes further information is necessary, it shall decide by a majority of the
131 Commission how to proceed as laid out in the next section. The Chair will inform the Chief of
132 Police of the Commission's decision.

133
134 (e) If the Commission votes to seek more information, it will also determine what kind of information is
135 necessary and shall be as specific as possible in its request to the Chief of Police. The Commission's
136 options are:

- 137 (1) A review and summary from the Chief of Police or designee in either oral or written form.
138 (2) A request for Departmental documents associated with the complaint, including, but not limited
139 to, officer reports, Departmental reports, and any other supporting documents.
140 (3) A request to view any camera footage associated with the complaint. or
141 (4) Any other specific information associated with the complaint.

142
143 (f) The Chief of Police shall comply with such a request for information in a timely manner, but shall be
144 under no obligation to provide any specific piece of requested information if any of the following are
145 true about the specific piece of information:

- 146
147 (1) Providing the information would violate a state or federal law;
148 (2) Providing the information would violate an active court order;
149 (3) Providing the information would violate an agreement with a state or federal law enforcement
150 agency or governmental information sharing service;
151 (4) Providing the information would violate or compromise a right of confidentiality held by a
152 third-party; or
153 (5) Providing the information would compromise an on-going case or investigation with the
154 understanding that once such danger ended, the information would be provided unless it would
155 violate another portion of this section.

156
157 Sharing information under this ordinance shall occur within the confines of an executive session
158 pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a)(1)(D) and/or 1 VSA 313(a)(4) and the Commission's oversight authority as
159 a part of the City pursuant to section 184 of the City Charter. It shall not constitute a waiver of any
160 right that the City may have to claim an exemption to public inspection and copying of the records
161 under the Vermont Public Records Act (1 V.S.A. § 317). Commission possession or review is pursuant
162 to the Department's primary possession under the Vermont Public Record Act.

- 163
164 (g) If the Commission votes by a majority to challenge any denial of access to the requested Departmental
165 information, the City Attorney shall review the withholding and stated basis and shall issue an attorney-
166 client opinion to both the Commission and the Chief as to whether the withholding conforms to this
167 ordinance.
168
169 (h) The Commission may elect by majority vote to pause a review of a complaint if a pending prosecution
170 or litigation prevent the Commission from receiving critical pieces of Departmental information that it
171 has requested. The Commission shall inform the complainant of the pause and its anticipated length.
172
173 (i) Commissioners shall not communicate with any complainant, witnesses, or other individuals associated
174 with a review, except as such individuals may provide information directly to the Commission during
175 a public meeting or executive session. Any communication necessary between the Commission or a
176 Commissioner and the complainant, witnesses, or other individuals associated with the review shall go
177 through Commission staff, the City Attorney, or conflict counsel.
178
179 (j) The Commission shall draft findings, conclusions, and recommendations from its review. The City
180 Attorney shall assist the Commission in the creation of this report. This report shall be transmitted to
181 the Mayor and to the Chief of Police. This report shall be treated as an attorney-client document and
182 attorney-work product as recognized in *Killington, Ltd. v.Lash*, 153 Vt. 628 (1990). The Commission
183 may allow a redacted version of any such report to become public without waiving the confidentiality
184 of the underlying report.
185
186 (k) The Commission shall not make any disciplinary recommendations for individual officers in such a
187 report, but the Commission may make recommendations regarding the development or revision of
188 Policy and Directive, enforcement of existing policy and standards, and the implementation of training
189 directed at any issue or concern found by the Commission. The Commission can also recommend
190 larger structural changes and request that the Mayor or City Council consider such changes through a
191 separate, formal communication. The Commission may also recommend that the Chief of Police
192 conduct an internal affairs investigation based on the Report. The Commission may also forward a
193 copy of the report to the Vermont Criminal Justice Council for review and potential investigation under
194 20 V.S.A. § 2403.
195
196 (l) The Chief of Police shall implement the recommendations of the report to the extent possible. If the
197 Chief does not, the Chief shall note the recommendations not being adopted and a short basis for why
198 they are not being implemented. Such notice shall be sent to the Commission and the Mayor's Office.
199 The Commission, by majority vote, may choose to respond to the Chief's decision. If the Mayor agrees
200 with the Commission, the Mayor may recommend the adoption to the Chief of Police or refer to the
201 City Council for further consideration or action.
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203 **XX-5**
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205 To effectuate its purpose, the Police Commission shall, consistent with its authority under Sections 184 and
206 190 of the City Charter provide community feedback to potential disciplinary matters and provide grievance
207 process to the Police Department as follows:

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- (a) The Chief of Police shall consult with the Police Commission prior to the imposition or non-imposition of discipline against an officer in the Department. The purpose of the consultation is for the Commission to provide any recommendations, input, or information to the Chief it deems necessary to express the Community’s values underlying the incident. This process shall be conducted orally during an executive session pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a)(4). At the discretion of the Chief, this consultation may or may not include a discussion of any proposed disciplinary actions.
- (b) To avoid a conflict with a subsequent grievance appeal as outlined in Section 190 of the City Charter, a pre-disciplinary consultation under this section shall not be addressed to the full Commission but a panel of no more than two Commissioners selected by the Chair who shall act as a consultation panel. Any Commissioner that participates in a consultation panel shall not participate in a subsequent grievance review and/or hearing arising from the particular discipline.
- (c) The Chief of Police shall consider and incorporate the recommendations, input, and information from the consultation panel of the Commission in a manner consistent with the Department rules, directives, and standards, State and National Police Standards and Training, Burlington ordinances, Vermont and federal law, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The Chief of Police’s decision shall be the final decision and shall control any discipline imposed on a Burlington Police Department employee, subject to the grievance procedure outlined in Sections 184 and 190 of the City Charter and any active Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- (d) If a Burlington Police Department Employee elects to grieve a discipline, the Commission shall hear the grievance in accord with Section 190 of the Burlington City Charter and any active Collective Bargaining Agreement. No Commissioner who participated in a consultation panel underlying the discipline being appealed shall sit in review of the grievance. A quorum for a grievance hearing shall constitute a simple majority of Commissioners who are not otherwise conflicted as defined in Section 133 of the Burlington City Charter from reviewing the grievance.

XX-6

Confidentiality of Records:

- (a) Professional standards of confidentiality with regard to the work of the Commission shall apply to all information presented to the Commission and to work product generated by the Commission or by the City Attorney or conflict counsel. The Commission shall comply with all Burlington ordinances, Vermont and Federal law, and shall maintain the confidentiality of any and all records and documents received by the Commission in the course of their duties.
- (b) The Commission shall, with the assistance of the City Attorney, draft a Code of Conduct and Ethics for the Commission. This code shall include rules for maintaining confidentiality; protocols for

- 252 handling confidential information; recusal; ethical standards for Commission members; and
253 procedures for executive sessions.
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- 255 (c) Anytime the Commission discusses a specific matter under review, an individual, or a pending
256 complaint, the Commission shall enter into an Executive Session in accordance with 1 V.S.A. §
257 313.
258
- 259 (d) A Commissioner, upon taking office, shall take an oath or pledge to uphold and abide by the
260 Commission's Code of Conduct and Ethics. If there is credible evidence that a Commissioner has
261 violated this oath and pledge, the Chair or Vice Chair of the Commission shall report to the
262 Mayor who may temporarily suspend the Commissioner pending a hearing and vote by the City
263 Council with Mayor presiding under Section 129 of the City Charter. A violation of the Code of
264 Conduct and Ethics shall constitute negligence or bad conduct regardless of the nature of the
265 breach, the intent of the breaching commissioner, or the impact of such a breach.

DRAFT

The following changes (deleted matter in strikeout and new matter underlined) have been petitioned by Burlington voters:

1. *“Shall the Charter of the City of Burlington, Acts of 1949, No. 298 as amended, be further amended to provide for an independent office with the power to investigate and an independent board with the power to hear and decide complaints and impose discipline regarding a police officer’s actions or inactions through the amendment of Article 64 Appointment of Police Officers, Section 189 and Article 65 Removal or Suspension, Section 190 as follows:*

189 Members of force to be retained as long as they remain competent.

The members of said regular police force now serving, or who shall hereafter be appointed thereto, shall, after the expiration of the one-year probationary period above provided, and so long as they shall remain competent, efficient and capable in the performance of their respective duties be retained as such, subject to the rules and regulations adopted under Section 184 of this Charter and provided that any member may be removed for cause as hereinafter provided. Any non-probationary member may be disciplined or removed if found to have become incompetent, inefficient or incapable from any cause, is or has been negligent or derelict in their official duty, is guilty of any misconduct in their private or official life, or for any other just cause.

ARTICLE 65. REMOVAL OR SUSPENSION INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY CONTROL BOARD

190 Chief may remove. Composition, jurisdiction, powers, and duties

- (a) ~~Whenever it shall appear to the chief that any member of said force has become incompetent, inefficient or incapable from any cause, or is or has been negligent or derelict in his or her official duty, or is guilty of any misconduct in his or her private or official life, or whenever any well-grounded complaints or charges to such effect are made in writing to the chief by a responsible person against such member, the chief may investigate and, after appropriate notice and hearing, dismiss such member from the force, order a reduction in rank, or suspend the member without pay for a specified time period in excess of 14 days. In connection with any possible dismissal, demotion, or suspension for more than 14 days, the chief’s notice to the member shall be given at least 48 hours prior to any hearing and shall include a description of the charge being considered. In connection therewith, the chief shall have the power to subpoena witnesses and to administer the oath to such witnesses. The board of police commissioners shall hear any appeal filed in a timely manner with respect to such actions of the police chief. The time of filing an appeal and the nature of the appellate process shall be as determined by such board of regulation. Following its consideration of any such appeal, the board may affirm, modify, or vacate the decision made by the police chief.~~

- (b) ~~Whenever it shall appear to the mayor that the chief has become incompetent, inefficient, or incapable from any cause, or has been negligent or derelict in his or her official duty, or is guilty of any misconduct in his or her private or official life, or whenever any well-grounded complaints or charges to such effect are made in writing to the mayor by a responsible person, the mayor may suspend the chief from duty pending a hearing thereon by the city council. The city council shall forth with notify the chief of the charges preferred by them, or of the complaints or charges presented by such responsible person in writing, and shall thereupon proceed to consider and investigate the same. It shall appoint a time and place for the hearing of such complaints and charges so made, shall give the chief reasonable notice of the same, not less than 48 hours, and the city council shall have the power to subpoena witnesses and to administer the oath to such witnesses.~~
- (c) ~~If, upon hearing, the city council shall find such complaints or charges to be well founded, it may dismiss the chief from the force, demote him or her in rank, or suspend him or her without pay for a period not to exceed 60 days. The procedures outlined in this section shall control in the event of any conflict with section 129 of this Charter as pertains to the removal of the chief.~~
- (d) ~~The chief may, without notice or hearing for any infraction, violation, or disobedience of any of the rules and regulations of the police department that may seem to the chief sufficient, suspend from duty without pay any member of the police force for a period not to exceed 14 days.~~

(a) Board Established.

A community police department control board consisting of no less than seven (7) members and no more than 9 members is established. The board shall be an independent department of the city. A quorum of the board shall be four (4) members, and when a quorum exists a valid majority is the majority of those present and voting. Members shall be entitled to fair compensation for their time spent working on the board through a stipend that shall be no less than that set by the city's livable wage ordinance in effect at the time.

(b) Board Members Term, Qualifications and Selection.

(1) Term. Board members shall serve a term of three (3) years and shall be eligible to serve for no more than three (3) terms. Notwithstanding this term, members shall serve until their replacement has been qualified and appointed.

(2) Diversity and Qualifications. This board is intended to serve the public and community interest and, in particular and consistent with its jurisdiction, allow for the real redress of harms to those persons who have been historically harmed by police misconduct and those who have been underserved by public safety systems.

(A) Diversity.

The Board shall have a diverse composition, and to the extent possible, have members that represent a diversity of age, race, socioeconomic status, gender, geographic residence, legal immigration status, and professional and lived experience. This shall, to the extent possible, include members who are Black, Indigenous, or other people of color, members who have lived experience with houselessness, mental health conditions, sex work, domestic violence, substance use disorder and/or arrest or conviction records, members who have experience working with an organization that supports Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color, and members who are affiliated with an organization in the field of civil rights, mental health, youth advocacy, LGBTQ advocacy or alcohol and other substance use. Individual members may represent more than one of the categories listed above.

(B) Qualifications.

(i) No member shall have ever been employed by a law enforcement agency. All previous employment and relevant relationships shall be disclosed at the earliest practicable time.

(ii) Members shall be residents of the city of Burlington, regardless of legal immigration status, at the time their board service begins. Members who move outside of the city may remain on the Board for the duration of their term, provided that they still reside in Chittenden County, but may not be reappointed if they reside outside the city at the end of their term.

(3) Selection. Annually, the City Council with Mayor Presiding will choose a set of seven community-based organizations that have an interest in civil rights, immigrant rights, disability rights/mental health, racial equity and social justice, and that also have an interest in the safety of the city and criminal justice reform. Three (3) organizations, to the extent possible, should be Black-led or majority Black membership. Each organization shall appoint a representative to an appointment committee. The committee shall appoint qualified persons to be members of the board. The Director of the Racial Equity Inclusion & Belonging Office, or their designee, and one City Councilor, appointed by the City Council President, shall also be on the appointment committee. This appointment committee shall be considered a public body that is subject to the Open Meeting Law and the Access to Public Records Act. The City Attorney shall convene the first meeting of the committee and shall act as committee staff. The committee shall make appointments based on a selection process that is open to the public with regard to applications, nominations, and selection.

(4) Initial Board. The initial board shall be selected so that no more than half of the members shall serve a three-year term, and the remainder shall serve a four-year term; thereafter, each member shall serve a three year term.

(5) Vacancies. Any vacancy during a term shall not be filled unless the membership of the board drops to five members. The process for filling the seat shall be the same as that for the appointment of members.

(c) Jurisdiction.

(1) Board investigations and adjudication of misconduct. The board has the jurisdiction to discipline or remove a member of the police force, including the chief, as it deems appropriate, including the right to order a reduction in rank or suspension without pay for a specified period, pursuant to section 189, this section, and all applicable rules and regulations related thereto. This jurisdiction includes the right to review and make findings on any incident or complaint against a police officer, including the chief, on complaints of excessive force, abuse of authority, unlawful arrests/stops/searches, other unlawful acts, discourtesy/disrespect, offensive language, theft, discrimination, or untruthfulness by police officers. Any other incident or complaint shall be heard at the discretion of the board. The board shall conduct investigations of alleged police misconduct into those complaints, and in those cases hold hearings and issue final decisions with regard to police officer discipline and removal pursuant to section 189. The procedures outlined in this section shall control in the event of any conflict with section 129 of this Charter as pertains to the removal of the chief.

(2) Department investigation and adjudication of complaints.

(A) In those cases that are not taken up by the board, the investigation shall be conducted by the police department. In such cases, the chief shall investigate and, after appropriate notice and hearing, may take disciplinary action, including but not limited to dismissal, reduction in rank, or suspension without pay for a specified time period. In connection with any possible dismissal, demotion, or suspension for more than 14 days, the chief's notice to the member shall be given at least 48 hours prior to any hearing and shall include a description of the charges being considered.

(B) The chief may, without notice or hearing for any infraction, violation, or disobedience of any of the rules and regulations of the police department that may seem to the chief sufficient, suspend from duty without pay any member of the police force for a period not to exceed 14 days.

(C) Any decision made by the department pursuant to (A) or (B) above shall be submitted to the board for review and approval. If the board disagrees with the department's decision, it shall vacate the decision and refer the complaint to the investigative office for processing in the same manner as complaints heard by the board.

(3) Administrative suspension. Pending any investigation, the chief, in their discretion, may suspend an officer from duty pending the applicable legal process. The board shall have such authority in the case of the chief, based on the nature of the alleged offense. This suspension may be with or without pay.

(4) Retention of records. Officer performance records and or investigatory/disciplinary records, being relevant to the adjudication of complaints shall be retained by the department for a period of seventy-five years, notwithstanding any record retention policy to the contrary.

(5) Hiring. The board shall also have input into the hiring of the police chief and the hiring criteria for police officers.

(d) Powers and Duties

The board shall have the following powers and duties:

(1) To establish rules and regulations for its operation, subject to approval by the city council;

(2) To meet and hold hearings. Disciplinary hearings held by the board at which evidence is taken shall be open to the public, unless otherwise limited by the rule of the board.

(3) To hire employees or consultants, including legal representation.

(4) To administer oaths and take the testimony of any person under oath in connection with the jurisdiction of the board.

(5) To issue subpoenas to compel testimony or access to or production of records, documents and other evidence or possible sources of evidence or the appearance of persons, provided that the subpoena is issued pursuant to an action under the jurisdiction of the board and there is reasonable cause to believe that those materials or the testimony of the person are material to the complaint. Subpoenas issued under this subdivision shall be accompanied with a notice that informs the person that the person has a right to contest the subpoena at a hearing before a quorum of the board, and subpoenas shall be enforced as provided in 3 V.S.A. §§ 809a and 809b.

(6) To discipline or remove a member of the police force, including the chief, and discipline may include a reduction in rank or suspension without pay for a specified period, pursuant to section 189, this section, and all applicable rules and regulations related thereto. Whenever it shall appear to the board that any member of said force has become incompetent, inefficient or incapable from any cause, or is or has been negligent or derelict in their official duty, or is guilty of any misconduct in their private or official life, or whenever any well-grounded complaints or charges to such effect are made in writing to the board by a responsible person against such member, the board may investigate and, after appropriate notice and hearing, dismiss such member from the force, order a reduction in rank, or suspend the member without pay for a specified time period that is deemed appropriate by the board. In connection with any possible dismissal, demotion, or suspension for more than 14 days, the board's notice to the member shall be given at least 48 hours prior to any hearing and shall include a description of the charges being considered. The board may, without notice or hearing for any infraction, violation, or disobedience of any of the rules and regulations of the police department that may seem to the board sufficient, suspend from duty without pay any member of the police force for a period not to exceed 14 days. Any and all appeals of a decision by the board, including whether or not just cause exists to warrant discipline and/or the punishment imposed, shall not be subject to grievance and arbitration but shall

be made on the record established by the board to the Vermont Superior Court pursuant to Rule 74 of the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure.

(7) To issue public reports on its work. The board shall issue quarterly reports that are publicly available in accessible formats on the number of complaints and the nature of the complaints. It shall also provide an annual report to the city council on all of its duties.

(8) To establish and maintain an investigative office.

(9) To attend and complete training sufficient to perform its duties.

(e) Investigative Office.

(1) If records are not provided or witnesses do not appear on request, the investigative office shall have the power to issue subpoenas to compel testimony or access to or production of records, documents and other evidence or possible sources of evidence or the appearance of persons, provided that the subpoena is issued pursuant to an action under the jurisdiction of the board and there is reasonable cause to believe that those materials or the testimony of the person are material to the complaint. Subpoenas issued under this subdivision shall be accompanied with a notice that informs the person that the person has a right to contest the subpoena at a hearing before a quorum of the board, and subpoenas shall be enforced as provided in 3 V.S.A. §§ 809a and 809b.

(2) The investigative office shall have, on request:

(A) Access to any and all records of the police department, subject to any legal limitations (e.g., expunged records) or legal confidentiality requirements;

(B) Full cooperation of the police department, its members, and relevant City staff (i.e., Human Resources, City Attorney, etc.);

(C) Unfettered access to police command and internal affairs personnel; and

(D) Access to all policies and data created or maintained by the police department.

(3) The investigative office shall have the authority to:

(A) Receive, investigate, and present to the board any complaint against a police officer. Once received, this process should be completed under normal circumstances within thirty days, but because the time required may vary from case to case based on the nature of the allegation(s) and the complexity of the investigation, if additional time is necessary to complete the investigation, the board may authorize an extension of up to sixty days;

(B) In any case that the investigative office or the board does not investigate, monitor any investigation being conducted by the police department with full access to interviews and any other pertinent materials;

(C) Be immediately notified so that an investigator may be sent to the scene of a police shooting or in-custody death;

(D) Be allowed to interview officers less than 48 hours after an incident where deadly force is used;

(E) Access crime scenes, subpoena witnesses and files; and

(F) Set penalties for and enforce against non-compliance with the lawful orders issued pursuant to the duties and powers of the office and board.

(G) Employ a director hired by and at the discretion of the board, and hire other staff or consultants as determined by its director and authorized by the city council, including independent legal counsel to advise the board.

(4) The investigative office shall:

(A) Have an appropriation adequate to conduct the work of the office;

(B) Issue public quarterly reports analyzing complaints, demographics of complainants, status and findings of investigations and actions taken as a result, as well as dispositions;

(C) Establish multiple in-person and online ways to submit, view and discuss complaints, including hearing from the chief or their designee or any other person with pertinent information and receiving recommendations deemed appropriate by that person;

(D) Provide complaint-related information and records to the public (without personally identifiable complainant information);

(E) Be housed in a separate location from the police department.

MEMORNDUM

To: Karen Paul, City Council President
Dan Richardson, City Attorney

From: Jabulani Gamache and Stephanie Seguino, Co-Chairs, Burlington Police Commission

Date: April 22, 2022

Re: Burlington Police Commission Comments on Draft Ordinance on Police Commission Authority

The Burlington Police Commission (BPC) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the draft ordinance on BPC authority, developed in response to the City's Resolution on "Police Oversight and Accountability Authorities to Police Commission to Alter the Police Disciplinary System" (adopted 10/18/21 and signed by the Mayor 11/23/21; hereafter the "Resolution").

The Commission's detailed comments are in red in the draft ordinance. In light of our review, the Commission recommends the draft ordinance be revised and requests that the revision be resubmitted to the Commission for review and additional comment.

In addition to our detailed comments, the Commission's general comments on this draft are:

1. The ordinance should not be so detailed as to curtail the necessary flexibility of the Commission to develop and revise its own processes and procedures. Rather, broad strokes of authority should be identified in the ordinance, leaving the details to be outlined in individual policies developed by the Commission itself within the parameters of its delegated authority.
2. As a global comment on the substance of the Ordinance, the Commission reminds all stakeholders that Vermont law as interpreted by our Supreme Court and as reflected in the Charter, "envisions a police department created by town government, the operations of which are directed by a chief, *but which is concurrently and ultimately subject to the authority of town government.*" Turnley v. Town of Vernon, 2012 VT 69, ¶ 18 (interpreting the balance of power, under 24 V.S.A. § 1931, between a police chief and the town's legislative body (emphasis added.)). The Burlington Charter §§ 3-184, 3-185, as currently written, also reflects concurrent authority shared between the City Council and the police chief. But consistent with Vermont statute, that concurrent authority is *ultimately* exercised by the City Council, which can in turn delegate its authority to the Commission. Specifically, Section 3-185 makes clear that the "direction and control of the entire police force" is vested in the chief of police "except as...otherwise provided" in the Charter. That exception is significant because the Charter also empowers the City Council to delegate what the Supreme Court characterized as its "ultimate" authority over police department operations to the Commission. Charter § 3-184 ("The Board of Police Commissioners *shall have such authority and responsibility relating to the management of the Police Department, its services, and facilities* as may be delegated from time to time by resolution of the City Council."). The ordinance must more fully reflect the law, under which ultimate authority over the operations of the police department reside with the City Council and, as delegated, with the Commission. Simply put, neither Vermont law nor the Charter support a notion that the chief's authority relating to the management of the Police Department, its services, and facilities, is superior to that of the Commission acting under delegation from the City Council.
3. The ordinance's insertion of the city attorney into the work of the Commission creates a conflict of interest in many circumstances, undermining the independence that is critical to the Commission's oversight role. The ordinance should reflect that the Commission, where necessary, relies on conflict counsel for guidance.
4. The ordinance should support transparency to the full extent permitted by the law.

5. The Resolution appropriates funds for the Commission’s work and expressly authorizes the Commission to “conduct investigations.” That authority is enough for the Commission to conduct investigations, although future appropriations from the City will be necessary to ensure that delegated authority can be exercised meaningfully by the Commission.
6. In numerous places, this ordinance interposes itself in ways that contradicts existing legislation. The City Council sets policy which it delegates to the Commission. In that regard, this ordinance does not include several key components of the Resolution that addresses the authority of the commission. These should be incorporated:
 - a. The Commission is given the authority to retain outside legal counsel to support independent review of complaints.
 - b. The Commission is given authority to investigate the chief or another appropriate authority and requires that any report of findings be returned to the commission.
 - c. The Commission may speak publicly about citizen complaints in accordance with personnel policies and confidentiality requirements.
 - d. The Commission is allocated a budget for legal services and investigations.
 - e. The Resolution mandates that, under the ordinance, the Commission “will have full and unfettered access to the Department’s documentation of the incident, including officer affidavits, all witness statements, other investigative documents, and all videos.” The Resolution, as well as best practices identified by NACOLE and other experts in the field, recognize that this level of Commission access is essential to the Commission’s fulfillment of its mission under the Charter and State law.
 - f. The Commission is fully and indefinitely authorized, under the Resolution and without need of further legislation such as the Ordinance, to initiate audits, reviews, and evaluations of policies, directives, or data in regard to discipline, racial disparities, or other Commission priorities. The Ordinance should recognize this authority verbatim, and must refrain from adding qualifications or restrictions on to it.

CITY OF BURLINGTON

ORDINANCE _____

Sponsor: Public Safety Committee
Public Hearing Dates: _____

In the Year Two Thousand Twenty-Two

First reading: _____

Referred to: _____

Rules suspended and placed in all stages of passage: _____

Second reading: _____

Action: _____

Date: _____

Signed by Mayor: _____

Published: _____

Effective: _____

An Ordinance in Relation to

Police Oversight and Accountability: Authorities to Police Commission to alter the Police Disciplinary System

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

1 That the Code of Ordinances of the City of Burlington be and hereby is amended to include Chapter XX:
2 TITLE OF CHAPTER HERE, which shall read as follows:

3

4 Chapter XX Police Commission

5

ARTICLE I. IN GENERAL

6 XX-1.

7

8 (a) The general purpose of this chapter is to support principles of fair and impartial policing within the City of
9 Burlington Police Department by adopting a procedure that defines the role of the Burlington Police
10 Commission in providing community-based input in the following areas:

- 11 (1) the development of Department policies and procedures;
- 12 (2) review of citizen complaints involving the Department or its members; and
- 13 (3) the discipline process.

14

15 This should be expanded to cover all complaints, including internal complaints—those filed by officers or
16 deputies within the overseen law enforcement agency—to provide law enforcement officers with a neutral
17 and independent outlet for reporting both officer misconduct and alleged retaliation for reporting
18 misconduct.

19

20
21 (b) Pursuant to Section 183 of the City Charter, the Board of Police Commissioners shall consist of seven (7)
22 legal voters of said city, to be appointed by the City Council with Mayor presiding to serve for three (3)
23 years and until their successors are appointed and qualified.

24

25

26 Terms should be staggered.

27

28

29

ARTICLE II. POWERS AND DUTIES

XX-2

30
31 To effectuate its purpose, the Police Commission shall, consistent with its authority under Section 184 of the
32 City Charter, review Police Department Policy and Directives as follows:
33

- 34 (a) At the behest of the Chief of Police or upon the Commission's own initiative, the Commission shall
35 take up various Police Department Policies and Directives and review, evaluate, and audit these
36 Policies and Directives for their impact on police-community relations and public safety. The
37 Commission may also follow this same process in the development of new Policies or Directives for
38 areas where there are no existing Policies or Directives for the Department.
39
40 (b) From this review, the Commission shall propose recommended changes to the Policies and Directives
41 to the Chief of Police.
42
43 (c) The Chief of Police shall incorporate such changes, except where the changes would violate a state or
44 federal law, regulation, or standard; would violate a provision of the City's Collective Bargaining
45 Agreement with officers in the Department; would result in a significant deterioration of public safety;
46 impinge upon an important, clearly identified law enforcement practice; would create substantial
47 liability or exposure to liability for the City as confirmed by the City Attorney; or would make it
48 impossible or impracticable for the Department to follow an identified best practice that is followed by
49 either a majority of Vermont municipalities or a significant number of municipalities of the same size
50 as the City of Burlington.
51

52 **Strike section (c). Per NACOLE, civilian oversight boards typically have no statutory mechanism that would**
53 **resolve a disagreement. Rather, the process is that the department can either accept or reject policy and**
54 **directive revision. However, the civilian oversight body's (i.e., the Commission's) recommendations are**
55 **made publicly, so the department would require a compelling reason not to accept and implement the**
56 **recommendations, just as the civilian oversight body would be required to produce compelling evidence,**
57 **analysis, and information on national best practices to make it more likely that recommendations are**
58 **adopted.**
59

60 **Further, the Commission's existing authority under the Charter 3-184 is broader than reflected here:**

61
62 **"The Board of Police Commissioners shall have such authority and responsibility relating to the**
63 **management of the Police Department, its services, and facilities as may be delegated from time to**
64 **time by resolution of the City Council. Said Board shall notify the Mayor and the Chief**
65 **Administrative Officer, in writing, of any and all changes, modifications, or additions to the rules and**
66 **regulations of the Department."**
67

68 **This language entitles the Mayor only to "notice" of changes, modifications, or additions. It neither gives the**
69 **Chief nor the Mayor discretion to reject or change them.**
70
71

- 72 (d) If the Chief of Police invokes an exception to a Policy or Directive recommendation to either reject the
73 recommendation or modify the recommendation substantially, the Chief shall report to the
74 Commission, in writing and in a timely manner, the specific exception and the extent to which the

75 Chief is declining the recommendation. The Chief shall not be obligated to communicate in writing if
76 the Chief accepts the Commission's recommendation in whole or substantial part.
77

78 While the Charter does not empower the chief to reject Commission recommendations, the Commission
79 acknowledges the value in setting a process under which it can receive and evaluate feedback from the Chief
80 on proposed changes or additions to existing policy before finalizing those changes. This language is a helpful
81 starting point for that advisory dialogue between the Chief and the Commission to precede the Commission's
82 exercise of its ultimate authority. Nonetheless, the draft should substitute "in a timely manner" with "15 days".
83 There should also be a process for the Chief to request an extension to that 15-day feedback window from the
84 Commission. This extension request to the Commission should be made public and should be accompanied by
85 an explanation from the Chief for the need for an extension.
86

- 87 (e) At the Commission's next regularly scheduled meeting following a letter from the Chief notifying the
88 Commission of a rejection or substantial modification to the Commission's recommendation, the
89 Commission shall review the letter and may either accept the Chief's response or appeal the rejection
90 or modification to the Mayor's Office. In this decision, the Commission may engage the Chief for
91 further clarification, but neither the Commission nor the Chief are obligated to such clarification if
92 either feels satisfied with their prior recommendation or response.
93

94 Delete section (e). The mechanism described to reconcile differences on policies is beyond what most
95 other oversight bodies have. As noted above, the best resolution mechanism is a high quality analysis
96 on the part of the Commission and a similarly detailed response from the chief.
97

- 98
99 (f) An appeal to the Mayor shall consist of a letter from the Commission laying out the reasons for its
100 recommendation and understanding as to why the stated exemption does not apply. An appeal to the
101 Mayor must be supported by a two-thirds majority of the Commission. The Chief shall have up to 14
102 days to submit to the Mayor any response to the Commission's appeal.
103

104 As per above, this section should be removed, or revised, based on review of other ordinances on this issue
105 and on the fact that it interposes the Mayor as final arbiter in a manner that is not consistent with the Charter's
106 division of authority. In any case, a simple majority would be sufficient since this is merely to request an
107 appeal.
108

- 109 (g) Upon receipt of an appeal, the Mayor may request a meeting with the Chief of Police and
110 representatives of the Commission, which may be more than one but shall not constitute a quorum for
111 public meeting purposes. Such meeting shall not be considered a meeting of the Police Commission
112 and shall not be subject to 1 V.S.A. § 312 but shall be considered a deliberative session intended to
113 inform the Mayor of the deliberative issues.
114

115 As per above, remove this section.
116

- 117 (h) The Mayor shall render a decision on the appeal in a timely manner. The Mayor's decision shall be
118 final and no further appeals or process shall follow.
119

As per above, remove this section.

- (i) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to restrict or limit the City Council’s independent legislative powers under Section 48 of the City Charter.

XX-3

To effectuate its purpose, the Police Commission shall, consistent with its authority under Section 184 of the City Charter, compile and issue an annual report on citizen complaints and the disposition of such complaints, officer discipline, and other pertinent initiatives the Commissions deems noteworthy by the second meeting of the City Council in the month of November of each calendar year. Such report shall be drafted with assistance from the City Attorney to avoid the use of private or protected information to ensure that the report can be made public. The report shall not express opinions of Commission members on individual cases or pending or potential litigation involving the City. The report will be published to the members of the City Council, the Mayor and the Chief of Police, and representatives of the Commission and the Chief may present further information to the City Council at the Council’s invitation.

Delete “in the month of November.” The Commission produces annual reports in July of each year as do other Burlington commissions. November therefore is out of synch. Further, this type of detail in the ordinance does not permit necessary flexibility in carrying out the Commission’s work.

As an official commission of the City of Burlington, the Commission is a “public agency” within the meaning of Vermont Public Records Act 1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320. The Commission understands that it has obligations to administer the law consistent with its stated policy that:

“It is the policy of this subchapter to provide for free and open examination of records consistent with Chapter I, Article 6 of the Vermont Constitution. Officers of government are trustees and servants of the people and it is in the public interest to enable any person to review and criticize their decisions even though such examination may cause inconvenience or embarrassment. All people, however, have a right to privacy in their personal and economic pursuits, which ought to be protected unless specific information is needed to review the action of a governmental officer. Consistent with these principles, the General Assembly hereby declares that certain public records shall be made available to any person as hereinafter provided. To that end, the provisions of this subchapter shall be liberally construed to implement this policy, and the burden of proof shall be on the public agency to sustain its action.”

Where that law creates exceptions to disclosure that affect the presentation of information called for in the annual report, the Commission understands that the law contains mechanisms to achieve the balance between the public’s right to know and personal privacy. See 1 V.S.A. § 318(e) (allowing for redaction of information that is exempt from public disclosure while other nonexempt information can be disclosed).

Consistent with the law’s requirements, the report has been and should continue to be a public record available for public inspection and copying. The city attorney should not be involved in the preparation of this report.

165 Complaint policy and the Vermont Public Records Act should guide the preparation of such reports as regards
166 confidentiality.

167
168

169 However, the ordinance should include language that chiefs must provide a written response as to why or why
170 not they agree/disagree with Commission findings on complaints, and those responses should become public
171 in annual reports. This is key to transparency, accountability, and the independent role of the commission.

172
173

174 **XX-4**

175
176

176 To effectuate its purpose, the Police Commission shall, consistent with its authority under Section 184 of the
177 City Charter review citizen complaints as follows:

178
179

- (a) A complaint by a member of the public, hereinafter referred to as “a citizen complaint,” concerning the
180 Department or an employee of the Department may be filed either with the Department or directly with
181 the Police Commission. Any citizen complaint filed with the Department shall be forwarded in a timely
182 manner to the Chair of the Police Commission.

183
184

Delete “by a member of the public, hereafter referred to as a citizen complaint” and “citizen” in last
185 sentence. Maintain current practice and policy in which all Commissioners receives complaints at the
186 same time as the BPD. Add language to provide a process by which the Commission receives transcript
187 of verbal complaints to the BPD within 3 days.

188
189

Accommodate possibility of co-chairs of commission.

190
191

- (b) The purpose of the Commission’s review of a citizen complaint is to identify gaps in policy, practice,
192 enforcement, and training where police department activities concern community standards and
193 expectations. The review process under this Section is not a disciplinary process and should not be
194 used as such.

195
196

This deviates from the current complaint policy which was authorized and sanctioned by the police
197 chief and then city attorney. The role of a review oversight body such as ours is to review disposition
198 of complaints as regards not only gaps in policy but also assessment of the extent to which policy was
199 adhered to. Therefore, the ordinance should reflect this role, with the Commission’s purpose being to
200 weigh in on disciplinary issues and in particular to identify cases in which policies were not followed.

201
202

- (c) The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Police Commission shall screen each citizen complaint and, if
203 appropriate, present them to the Commission for review. The purpose of this initial screening shall be
204 as follows:

205
206

- (1) To eliminate any complaint that the Chair and Vice Chair agree does not present a valid, relevant,
207 or current issue on which the Commission can reasonably review or investigate; and
208

- 209 (2) To screen out discipline or potential discipline issues against an individual officer and to forward
210 those issues to the Chief of Police for disciplinary process consistent with the Chief's disciplinary
211 authority and the Commission's role under XX-5.

212
213 The Commission should determine its own process for triage of complaints. The full commission receives all
214 complaints now and that should continue. It should be the collective decision of Commissioners on which
215 complaints to review or not. Delete (2). To exclude the commission from complaints that may have disciplinary
216 implications would essentially undermine and negate the role of the civilian oversight body.

217
218 If the Chair and Vice Chair refer a citizen complaint to the Chief of Police for discipline and also seek
219 to refer the citizen complaint to the Commission, the Chair and Vice Chair shall stay referral of the
220 citizen complaint to the Commission until the discipline process, if any, is completed through any
221 grievance process involving the Commission.

222
223
224
225 As per above, this should be struck.

- 226
227 (d) The Commission shall meet in executive session pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a)(1)(D) and/or 1 VSA
228 313(a)(4) to review all citizen complaints brought forward for review by the Chair and Vice Chair. The
229 Commission shall, by majority vote, direct the Chair to act on each complaint in one or more of the
230 following ways:
231 (1) If the allegations do not appear to merit further investigation, the Chair shall close the review
232 and inform the complainant and the Chief of Police that the Commission has elected not to
233 review the complaint any further.
234 (2) If the Commission believes further information is necessary, it shall decide by a majority of the
235 Commission how to proceed as laid out in the next section. The Chair will inform the Chief of
236 Police of the Commission's decision.

237
238 While it is useful to have the complaint process outlined in detail, the Commission is in the
239 process of revising that process based on our experience in the last two years and input from
240 NACOLE. Defining the process is the role of the commission and should not appear in an
241 ordinance since by so doing, it reduces the flexibility of the Commission to revise processes as
242 deemed necessary.

243
244 The current complaint policy should be followed in regards to assessing the level of the
245 complaint (low, medium or high) with the exception that the Commission determines the level
246 of the complaint rather than the chief. The goal of an independent civilian oversight body is to
247 promote transparency, accountability, and trust, the Commission's role should be able to
248 request an investigation of any complaint, and in particular those it deems high level. Most
249 oversight agencies do investigations of all complaints.

- 253 (e) If the Commission votes to seek more information, it will also determine what kind of information is
254 necessary and shall be as specific as possible in its request to the Chief of Police. The Commission's
255 options are:
- 256 (1) A review and summary from the Chief of Police or designee in either oral or written form.
 - 257 (2) A request for Departmental documents associated with the complaint, including, but not limited
258 to, officer reports, Departmental reports, and any other supporting documents.
 - 259 (3) A request to view any camera footage associated with the complaint. or
 - 260 (4) Any other specific information associated with the complaint.

261
262 This section should be revised to reflect the City Council resolution which gives the Commission unfettered
263 access to any information the BPD avails itself of in conducting investigations of complaints. The Commission
264 should have the opportunity to require an independent investigation if it sees fault with an investigation that
265 BPD conducted.

- 266
267 (f) The Chief of Police shall comply with such a request for information in a timely manner, but shall be
268 under no obligation to provide any specific piece of requested information if any of the following are
269 true about the specific piece of information:
- 270
271 (1) Providing the information would violate a state or federal law;
 - 272 (2) Providing the information would violate an active court order;
 - 273 (3) Providing the information would violate an agreement with a state or federal law enforcement
274 agency or governmental information sharing service;
 - 275 (4) Providing the information would violate or compromise a right of confidentiality held by a
276 third-party; or
 - 277 (5) Providing the information would compromise an on-going case or investigation with the
278 understanding that once such danger ended, the information would be provided unless it would
279 violate another portion of this section.

280
281 Sharing information under this ordinance shall occur within the confines of an executive session
282 pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a)(1)(D) and/or 1 VSA 313(a)(4) and the Commission's oversight authority as
283 a part of the City pursuant to section 184 of the City Charter. It shall not constitute a waiver of any
284 right that the City may have to claim an exemption to public inspection and copying of the records
285 under the Vermont Public Records Act (1 V.S.A. § 317). Commission possession or review is pursuant
286 to the Department's primary possession under the Vermont Public Record Act.

287
288 Replace "timely manner" with 10 days. The Commissioners have expressed an interest in moving
289 toward best practice as defined by NACOLE in which hearings are held in public session with
290 appropriate steps taken to protect confidentiality as required by policies and the BPOA contract. As
291 written this section is at odds with the goal of transparency and accountability and should be revised to
292 reflect best practices.

- 293
294 (g) If the Commission votes by a majority to challenge any denial of access to the requested Departmental
295 information, the City Attorney shall review the withholding and stated basis and shall issue an attorney-
296 client opinion to both the Commission and the Chief as to whether the withholding conforms to this
297 ordinance.

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The City Council resolution delineates the Commission shall have unfettered access to all information the BPD had when it made their disposition of the case. That should be reflected in this ordinance. The ordinance’s insertion of the city attorney into the work of the Commission creates a conflict of interest in many circumstances, undermining the independence that is critical to the Commission’s oversight role. The ordinance should reflect that the Commission, where necessary, relies on conflict counsel for guidance.

- (h) The Commission may elect by majority vote to pause a review of a complaint if a pending prosecution or litigation prevent the Commission from receiving critical pieces of Departmental information that it has requested. The Commission shall inform the complainant of the pause and its anticipated length.
- (i) Commissioners shall not communicate with any complainant, witnesses, or other individuals associated with a review, except as such individuals may provide information directly to the Commission during a public meeting or executive session. Any communication necessary between the Commission or a Commissioner and the complainant, witnesses, or other individuals associated with the review shall go through Commission staff, the City Attorney, or conflict counsel.

Section (i) should be deleted. The Commission’s practice is to communicate directly with complainants to: 1) acknowledge the complaint, 2) provide a copy of the complaint policy, and 3) provide updates on status of complaint. The language in (i) oversteps the role of an ordinance. Details on how complaints are handled should be in the complaint policy, not the ordinance. The ordinance’s insertion of the city attorney into the work of the Commission creates a conflict of interest in many circumstances, undermining the independence that is critical to the Commission’s oversight role.

These comments are consistent with NACOLE’s recommendations. According to NACOLE, the complaint process is more likely to be perceived as fair and transparent if complainants receive regular updates regarding their complaint and can obtain status updates at any time. Communicating with complainants by providing status updates throughout the process is one way that civilian oversight agencies can assure members of the public that they are handling their complaints seriously and actively.

Once a complaint has been adjudicated or after a disciplinary decision has been made, the civilian oversight agency should invite complainants to an in-person closeout meeting. Closeout meetings allow the oversight agency to describe the investigative process, explain how and why decisions were made, and demonstrate that the complaint was resolved neutrally and impartially. In turn, this promotes legitimacy and public confidence in the oversight process. Closeout meetings furthermore provide the oversight agency with an opportunity to collect information regarding how complainants feel about the complaint process as a whole. Once a complaint has been adjudicated or after a disciplinary decision has been made, the civilian oversight agency should invite complainants to an in-person closeout meeting.

More generally, it is the Commission that should lay out the complaint process in its policy—again, allowing for needed flexibility—rather than stipulating such details in an ordinance.

343
344 (j) The Commission shall draft findings, conclusions, and recommendations from its review. The City
345 Attorney shall assist the Commission in the creation of this report. This report shall be transmitted to
346 the Mayor and to the Chief of Police. This report shall be treated as an attorney-client document and
347 attorney-work product as recognized in *Killington, Ltd. v. Lash*, 153 Vt. 628 (1990). The Commission
348 may allow a redacted version of any such report to become public without waiving the confidentiality
349 of the underlying report.

350
351 The ordinance's insertion of the city attorney into the work of the Commission creates a conflict of
352 interest in many circumstances, undermining the independence that is critical to the Commission's
353 oversight role. Such reports should continue to be developed with input from conflict counsel only, who
354 shall provide guidance on redaction for purposes of making findings public.

355
356 (k) The Commission shall not make any disciplinary recommendations for individual officers in such a
357 report, but the Commission may make recommendations regarding the development or revision of
358 Policy and Directive, enforcement of existing policy and standards, and the implementation of training
359 directed at any issue or concern found by the Commission. The Commission can also recommend
360 larger structural changes and request that the Mayor or City Council consider such changes through a
361 separate, formal communication. The Commission may also recommend that the Chief of Police
362 conduct an internal affairs investigation based on the Report. The Commission may also forward a
363 copy of the report to the Vermont Criminal Justice Council for review and potential investigation under
364 20 V.S.A. § 2403.

365
366 The Commission should be able to recommend coaching for officers who are the subject of complaints
367 and should be able to provide feedback on proposed discipline.

368
369 Further, this sentence should be deleted "The Commission may also recommend that the Chief of Police
370 conduct an internal affairs investigation based on the Report." As written, this would require the
371 Commission to engage in decision-making on a complaint before an investigation is actually done. The
372 Commission needs as many facts as possible when determining next steps in and therefore, access to that
373 information, based on an investigation, should be available prior to issuing a report on a complaint.

374
375 (l) The Chief of Police shall implement the recommendations of the report to the extent possible. If the
376 Chief does not, the Chief shall note the recommendations not being adopted and a short basis for why
377 they are not being implemented. Such notice shall be sent to the Commission and the Mayor's Office.
378 The Commission, by majority vote, may choose to respond to the Chief's decision. If the Mayor agrees
379 with the Commission, the Mayor may recommend the adoption to the Chief of Police or refer to the
380 City Council for further consideration or action.

381
382 Delete "short" in the second line of section (l). If the chief disagrees in whole or in part with the Commission's
383 recommendations, he/she should submit a **written report** to the Commission within 15 days. Requiring a
384 majority vote for the commission to respond to the chief's decision goes beyond what should be in an
385 ordinance. This should be part of the Commission's complaint policy. Include a phrase that indicates the mayor
386 will inform the Commission of the reasons for his or her decision with regard to the adoption of the
387 Commission's findings.

388

389 This is also one of several examples of a section in the draft ordinance where the Chief's authority is unlawfully
390 elevated above that of the Commission, subject to arbitration by the Mayor. It is, therefore, inconsistent with
391 the Charter, as interpreted in light of the Supreme Court's recognition that state law establishes a system in
392 which "ultimate" authority over the direction of the police department rests with Town government, not with
393 the chief of police. *See Turnley v. Town of Vernon*, 2012 VT 69, ¶ 18. Under Burlington's City Charter, the
394 City Council "shall make rules for the government of the entire police force" and may, by resolution, delegate
395 that authority to the Commission. Charter § 3-184. The mayor's authority under the Charter is limited only to
396 receiving notice of the "changes, modifications, or additions to the rules and regulations of the Department"
397 made by the City Council or the Commission as the case may be. Id.

398

399

400 **XX-5**

401

402 To effectuate its purpose, the Police Commission shall, consistent with its authority under Sections 184 and
403 190 of the City Charter provide community feedback to potential disciplinary matters and provide grievance
404 process to the Police Department as follows:

405

406

407 The Commission requests a legal opinion on who can grieve – complainants as well as officers?

408

409

410 (a) The Chief of Police shall consult with the Police Commission prior to the imposition or non-imposition
411 of discipline against an officer in the Department. The purpose of the consultation is for the
412 Commission to provide any recommendations, input, or information to the Chief it deems necessary to
413 express the Community's values underlying the incident. This process shall be conducted orally during
414 an executive session pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a)(4). At the discretion of the Chief, this consultation may
415 or may not include a discussion of any proposed disciplinary actions.

416

417 The Commission will reserve further comment on those sections of the ordinance that deal with the
418 Commission's role in determining discipline until such time as it receives the requested opinion on the
419 question of who may access the appeal process.

420

421

422 (b) To avoid a conflict with a subsequent grievance appeal as outlined in Section 190 of the City Charter,
423 a pre-disciplinary consultation under this section shall not be addressed to the full Commission but a
424 panel of no more than two Commissioners selected by the Chair who shall act as a consultation panel.
425 Any Commissioner that participates in a consultation panel shall not participate in a subsequent
426 grievance review and/or hearing arising from the particular discipline.

427

428 This should be revised such that a 4-person consultation panel reviews discipline, with 3 Commissioners then
429 available to serve on a grievance panel.

430

431 (c) The Chief of Police shall consider and incorporate the recommendations, input, and information from
432 the consultation panel of the Commission in a manner consistent with the Department rules, directives,

433 and standards, State and National Police Standards and Training, Burlington ordinances, Vermont and
434 federal law, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The Chief of Police's decision shall be the final
435 decision and shall control any discipline imposed on a Burlington Police Department employee, subject
436 to the grievance procedure outlined in Sections 184 and 190 of the City Charter and any active
437 Collective Bargaining Agreement.

- 438
439
440
441 (d) If a Burlington Police Department Employee elects to grieve a discipline, the Commission shall hear
442 the grievance in accord with Section 190 of the Burlington City Charter and any active Collective
443 Bargaining Agreement. No Commissioner who participated in a consultation panel underlying the
444 discipline being appealed shall sit in review of the grievance. A quorum for a grievance hearing shall
445 constitute a simple majority of Commissioners who are not otherwise conflicted as defined in Section
446 133 of the Burlington City Charter from reviewing the grievance.

447
448 **XX-6**

449
450 **Confidentiality of Records:**

- 451
452 (a) Professional standards of confidentiality with regard to the work of the Commission shall apply to
453 all information presented to the Commission and to work product generated by the Commission or
454 by the City Attorney or conflict counsel. The Commission shall comply with all Burlington
455 ordinances, Vermont and Federal law, and shall maintain the confidentiality of any and all records
456 and documents received by the Commission in the course of their duties.
457
458 (b) The Commission shall, with the assistance of the City Attorney, draft a Code of Conduct and Ethics
459 for the Commission. This code shall include rules for maintaining confidentiality; protocols for
460 handling confidential information; recusal; ethical standards for Commission members; and
461 procedures for executive sessions.
462
463 (c) Anytime the Commission discusses a specific matter under review, an individual, or a pending
464 complaint, the Commission shall enter into an Executive Session in accordance with 1 V.S.A. §
465 313.
466
467 (d) A Commissioner, upon taking office, shall take an oath or pledge to uphold and abide by the
468 Commission's Code of Conduct and Ethics. If there is credible evidence that a Commissioner has
469 violated this oath and pledge, the Chair or Vice Chair of the Commission shall report to the
470 Mayor who may temporarily suspend the Commissioner pending a hearing and vote by the City
471 Council with Mayor presiding under Section 129 of the City Charter. A violation of the Code of
472 Conduct and Ethics shall constitute negligence or bad conduct regardless of the nature of the
473 breach, the intent of the breaching commissioner, or the impact of such a breach.
474

475 **The Commission has indicated it will develop a code of ethics. The draconian language on holding a hearing**
476 **if a person even inadvertently violates the code (such as by hitting reply to all on an email by mistake, thus**
477 **violating confidentiality) would deter people from being willing on the Commission. This portion of the**

478 ordinance should be struck, retaining only the first sentence of (d). The Commission questions whether such
479 language applies to any other Burlington commissions.
480
481

DRAFT

Resolution Relating to

POLICE OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
AUTHORITIES TO POLICE COMMISSION TO ALTER
THE POLICE DISCIPLINARY SYSTEM

RESOLUTION 7.09

Sponsor(s): Public Safety Committee

Introduced: 10/18/21

Referred to: _____

Action: amended; adopted

Date: 10/18/21

Signed by Mayor: 11/23/21

CITY OF BURLINGTON

In the year Two Thousand Twenty-one.....

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Burlington, as follows:

1 That WHEREAS, on June 29, 2020, the City Council adopted a resolution entitled “Racial Justice
2 Through Economic and Criminal Justice” that included a request that the Charter Change Committee propose
3 charter amendments that “authorize the Police Commission to approve by simple majority any disciplinary
4 decision, including a decision of non-discipline, the Police Chief wishes to implement in a use-of-force case,
5 with such approval including the right to impose a new and different discipline as the Commission deems
6 appropriate;”¹ and

7 WHEREAS, on Sept. 8, 2020, the City Council adopted a resolution entitled “Protesters and Public
8 Safety” that acknowledged “the need to change current policies regarding discipline and oversight of our
9 police” and requested “that the Charter Change Committee review options for who makes and reviews police
10 disciplinary decisions and report on the various options to the full Council in October;”² and

11 WHEREAS, the Charter Change Committee, along with many residents and local activist groups,
12 brought forward a civilian oversight charter change for inclusion on the March 2021 Town Meeting Day
13 ballot; and

14 WHEREAS, pursuant to the city charter, the Mayor vetoed the Council’s 7-5 vote to place that charter
15 change proposal for an Independent Community Control Board and Investigative Office to deal with police
16 discipline and policy, and that veto was sustained; and

17 WHEREAS, the City Council and the Administration, agree that the current charter’s provisions on
18 police discipline should be amended to better address complaints about police misconduct, disciplinary
19 decisions and the accountability of police officers, as well as Police Department policies and officers’ actions,
20 thereby helping to achieve the common goal of delivering the most professional and effective public safety
21 services possible; and

22 WHEREAS, the National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (“NACOLE”) -
23 website outlines “What are the steps a community should take in establishing effective police oversight” by
24 encouraging having ‘a core group of citizens who are sufficiently concerned about the issue...who seek out

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25 training, support and resources prior to establishing a formal planning or advisory committee,” and goes on to
26 recommend and support that communities “fram[e] the public discussion and invit[e] broad community input
27 emphasizing that the purpose is improving trust between police and the community by ensuring public
28 confidence in the agency through accountability and transparency” with the “end goal...to deliver the most
29 professional and effective police services possible in the community”³; and

30 WHEREAS, the National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (“NACOLE”) –
31 endorsed Guidebook states that is important to “establish a planning or advisory committee composed of
32 elected officials, legal advisors, police officials, police union representatives, and community advocates ‘to
33 effectively work together on “sources of resistance and issues of contention and begin to address the concerns
34 and neutralize the resistance”⁴; and

35 WHEREAS, research shows that effective civilian oversight can have important benefits:

- 36 • where citizens who interact with the police experience a safe space for expressing concerns,
37 feeling validated by the independent oversight, and holding the police department accountable
38 for officers’ behavior; and
- 39 • where police officers, leadership, and union representatives have found that oversight improves
40 their relationship with the community, strengthens the quality of the department’s
41 investigations of alleged misconduct, reassures the public that the process is fair and thorough,
42 and improves officer conduct; and
- 43 • where the community is safer because there is greater accountability and transparency⁵; and

44 WHEREAS, further, for an oversight model to be truly effective, it must be proactive, independent,
45 community driven, empowered, transparent, individualized, an investment in our community, and an iterative
46 process⁶; and

47 WHEREAS, the City Council and Administration agree that there is a need to revise the current
48 civilian oversight model and to build community trust, which must be addressed with both expediency and an
49 authentic collaborative effort--with all stakeholders at the table as colleagues in the planning and
50 implementation process; and

51 WHEREAS, it was NACOLE’s recommendation that the Police Commission be more community
52 engaged in interacting with and educating the public on policing and public safety; and

53 WHEREAS, the City Council, together with the Administration, recognizing that a charter change will
54 take time, from being placed on a ballot, to the legislative and administrative processes in Montpelier, as well

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55 as the unknown of what a charter change will look like at the end of this process, and that responsive action is
56 needed now, may delegate to the Police Commission, certain authority about management of the Police
57 Department through its authority in the City Charter, Article 62, Section 184—Same-powers and duties, which
58 states:

59 The city council shall make rules and regulations for the government of the entire police
60 force . . . the board of police commissioners shall have such authority and responsibility
61 relating to the management of the police department, its services, and facilities, as may be
62 delegated from time to time by resolution of the city council.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council requests that the City Attorney’s Office, as one
64 of its top priorities, draft by November 2021 an ordinance for a first reading that would delegate, to the extent
65 possible consistent within legal constraints, authority to manage complaints about police conduct to the Police
66 Commission to include language:

- 67 • codifying that the Commission will review all civilian complaints of alleged police misconduct. The
68 Commission will determine which complaints are low-, medium-, and high-level. In conducting
69 reviews, the Commission will have full and unfettered access to the Department’s documentation of
70 the incident triggering the complaint, including officer affidavits, all witness statements, other
71 investigative documents, and all videos. This information shall be forthcoming to the Commission
72 within 15 days of a formal complaint being filed; and
- 73 • giving the Commission the authority to retain independent legal counsel to support its review of
74 complaints; and
- 75 • giving the Commission the authority to request an investigation into an incident by the Chief of Police
76 or another appropriate authority and requiring that a report of any investigative findings be returned to
77 the Commission; and
- 78 • authorizing the Commission to have the ability to review incidents, determine if they will investigate a
79 complaint irrespective of the Chief or Department, and give input and make recommendations on
80 investigation results and remedies, including proposed discipline for officers. This would include
81 giving the Commission the authority to hire an independent investigator to conduct or review
82 allegations of serious conduct or harm; and
- 83 • giving the Commission the authority to issue a recommendation of remedy for a complaint, including a
84 recommendation to the Police Chief on discipline for an officer; requiring the Chief to consult with the

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85 Commission and, in the absence of agreement, issue a written memorandum detailing the reasons for
86 which the Chief disagrees with the Commission’s recommendation of remedy for a complaint within
87 15 days. Further resolution would then be led by the Mayor, the City Council’s Public Safety
88 Committee, and an independent third body, who will take testimony from both the Police Commission
89 and the Chief or other representative of the Department, in advance of delivering a written final
90 determination regarding the dispute; and

- 91 • tasking the Commission to issue an annual report on complaints, discipline, and other activities,
92 including the Commission’s recommendations as well as the final disposition of complaints; and
- 93 • the ordinance should contain language encouraging and supporting the ability of Burlington Police
94 Commission to speak publicly to citizen complaints in accordance with personnel policies and
95 confidentiality requirements; and

96 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council requests that said ordinance be referred to the
97 Ordinance Committee as its top priority for review and public input and be returned to the full Council for a
98 second reading no later than Monday, December 20, 2021; and

99 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Administration will introduce to the FY22 budget an
100 amendment authorizing up to \$25,000 from the unassigned fund balance for the Police Commission for the
101 Commission’s legal costs and to conduct independent investigations, if the Commission deems them
102 necessary; and

103 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council authorizes the Police Commission to initiate
104 audits, reviews, and evaluations of policies, directives, or data; in regard to discipline, racial disparities, or
105 other Commission priorities.

106 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council tasks the Charter Change Committee to**
107 **hold meetings, allowing for community and stakeholder input, with the question of moving disciplinary**
108 **authority from the Chief of Police to a body that is independent from the Burlington Police Department,**
109 **and that may include the Burlington Police Commission, and asks that language to do so be referred**
110 **back to the Council in time to allow the Council to place such a Charter change consideration on the**
111 **March 2022 ballot, if the Council so chooses**

112
113 ¹Resolution: Racial Justice through Economic and Criminal Justice, June 29, 2020, signed by the Mayor, July 13, 2020

114 ²Resolution: Protesters and Public Safety, September 8, 2020, signed by the Mayor, September 21, 2020

115 ³NACOLE website: <https://www.nacole.org>

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..... Clerk

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..... Mayor

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POLICE OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY AUTHORITIES TO
POLICE COMMISSION TO ALTER THE POLICE DISCIPLINARY
SYSTEM

- 116 ⁴ NACOLE, Brian Buchner, Liana Perez, Cameron McElhiney, Eduardo I. Diaz, ed. Guidebook for the Implementation of New and Revitalized
- 117 Police Oversight, 2016, pg 12
- 118 ⁵Peter Finn, "Citizen Review of Police: Approaches and Implementation," National Institute of Justice, March
- 119 2001. <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/184436.pdf>
- 120 ⁶NACOLE website: <https://www.nacole.org/>
- 121
- 122
- 123 *Amended; adopted LO 101821*

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Thomas Musinski, City Attorney's Office
Charter Change Committee

RESOLUTION RELATING TO

Police Oversight And Accountability Authorities To Police Commission To Alter The Police Disciplinary System

As Amended
Adopted by the City Council
October 18, 2021
[Signature] Clerk

Approved November 20, 2021
[Signature] Mayor
Vol. _____ Page _____

[Signature]
Attest
Lori Olberg
Licensing, Voting and Records Coordinator

* * * * *



Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

MEMORANDUM

To: City Council
From: Mayor Miro Weinberger
Date: November 15, 2021
Re: Signing statement regarding October 18, 2021 Resolution 7.09 Police Oversight and Accountability

The Council's October 18 Resolution: Police Oversight and Accountability, Authorities to Police Commission to Alter the Police Disciplinary System was a long and complex resolution with a number of unusual provisions and significant implications for our work together to strengthen public safety in this community. This statement 1) explains my decision to sign the resolution and 2) communicates my process requests moving forward. With committee meetings beginning this week, I respectfully ask Councilors to consider these requests if you share my interest in reaching a consensus, unlike the last time a Police Oversight resolution was considered by the Council last March.

Explanation of my approval of this resolution:

After careful review, I signed the October 18, 2021 Police Oversight and Accountability resolution because it is generally consistent with some of my long-held beliefs about our police oversight system, specifically:

- **Our Charter should be amended to add checks and balances to the isolated authority over discipline that the Chief of Police wields in our current system.** I believe it is critical that the Chief continue to have a leadership role in the disciplinary process but believe the current insulation of the Chief's disciplinary decisions from any other authorities is a byproduct of a long-gone era and not consistent with the public's expectations of police departments today. I believe my position is consistent with language starting on line 107 of the resolution that charges the Charter Change committee with engaging the public "with the question of moving disciplinary authority from the Chief of Police to a body that is independent from the Burlington Police Department" because, again, I do support shifting some of the near-absolute authority from the Chief. However, the Chief remains the day-to-day administrator of the police department, and I cannot support any resolution that removes so much of his authority that the Chief no longer has a leadership role in discipline or the executive tools necessary to effectively manage the department.
- **We should fully explore additional ways to appropriately strengthen our existing Police Commission's role in the disciplinary process.** Charter changes are a slow and uncertain process. I am supportive of the directional concept in the resolution that we should explore what further changes, beyond the significant strengthening of the Commission that has already been completed since 2015, can lawfully and effectively be implemented at this time. While we

may be nearing the limits of what can be done within the constraints of the Charter already, I do not object to reviewing this further.

My signing of this resolution should not be interpreted as the Administration's endorsement of all of the possible transfers of authority to the Police Commission as listed in the resolution (beginning on line 67). The resolution expressly acknowledges that "legal constraints" may limit the ability of the Council to make these delegations without a Charter Change. I am withholding my endorsement of any of these delegations until that legal review is completed and considered. Specifically, it is important to recognize that, per the charter, the Police Commission is part of the City of Burlington Corporate, and thus there are structural and significant legal limitations to the independence this resolution supports.

Process from here for a new ordinance and Charter Change regarding police oversight:

The process that Councilors pursued for the Charter Change that reached my desk last December was problematic in that the Police Department's command staff, and the Burlington Police Officer's Association, were provided no opportunity to give input into the drafting of the language, and the City Attorney's professional advice and concerns were largely ignored. The Police Chiefs, the police union, and the City Attorney are key stakeholders in the policies under consideration in this resolution and should be heard from throughout the deliberative process going forward for both the resolution's proposed new ordinance as well as the Charter Change it contemplates.

Agenda Item 6.03

Police Commissioners' Comments on Charter Change Committee Proposal for Civilian Oversight of Police

December 6, 2020

This document summarizes comments Police Commissioners made on the Charter Change proposal for civilian oversight at the December 3, 2020 Joint Committee meeting.

1. **Rather than create a new structure, the Police Commission (PC) already exists and could fulfill the responsibilities of a civilian oversight body instead of creating a new city department.**
 - a. The Police Commission has built expertise over time on policies and other policing issues, thus preparing it to take on a more substantive citizen oversight role on police disciplinary matters. Further, the Police Commission already performs many of the functions that are recommended for an oversight board (see Blackwood memo to City Charter Change Committee, Nov. 9, p. 14).
 - b. There seems to be a misconception that the Police Commission is internal to the police department as compared to the proposed Charter Change civilian oversight body. That is inaccurate. The Police Commission is in fact external to the Police Department, and reflects the perspective of the community, not the police.
 - c. Assigning responsibility for disciplinary input/decisions to the Police Commission would require a charter change in order to remove the Commission as the appeal body. In other municipalities, the city/town governing body makes decisions on discipline (usually, based on the recommendations of the police chief) and the appeal body is the judiciary, per rule 75. Burlington could shift to that model, whereby appeals would be heard by the judiciary, clearing the way for the Police Commission to be the oversight body on police misconduct and discipline.
2. **The proposed model of civilian oversight does not fit Burlington.** There are 3 broad types of civilian oversight models in the US: review, investigatory, and monitor.¹ The Charter Change Committee proposed an investigatory model, whereby the citizen oversight body hires a full-time paid professional staff to conduct investigations. However, this model has only been used in big cities which have large numbers of incidents to investigate, and where the civilian oversight body is comprised of trained professionals. The commissioners did not have the opportunity to discuss specific changes to this model in any detail at the December 3 meeting, but some suggestions and observations were made.
 - a. **The Charter Change Committee proposal would require a substantial duplication of efforts.** Given that the proposal says some complaints would be referred back to the Police Department for resolution, this implies the need for two investigative units—one internal to the police department and one assigned to the

¹ See City Attorney Blackwood's detailed memo to the Charter Change Committee (November 9, 2020) for an excellent and succinct description of the three models.

external civilian oversight board, were we to adopt the proposal investigatory model. This is a waste of resources for a small city with a limited number of cases to be reviewed each year.

- b. **We should choose a model that is built for a small community with a small number of complaints, similar to a review model.** Currently, Burlington Police Department receives about 28 actionable complaints a year and conducts 4-5 internal investigations. Repeated concerns about the mismatch of the scale of the proposed model to the needs of Burlington were expressed by various commissioners throughout the discussion.
 - c. As an example of a model for a city of a similar size as Burlington, **Farmington, NM proposed a model with a civilian oversight board, supported by a monitor** who reviews complaints, structures investigations, and sits in on interviews. An all-volunteer board with one paid person (the monitor) was proposed for this city. This model in some modified form may be a useful one for Burlington.
 - d. **We recommended that the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) review any revised proposal for citizen oversight so that we may obtain the benefit of their knowledge and experience working with cities and towns all over the country to develop models tailored to our own community's needs.** NACOLE is the premier institution in this country working to help implement civilian oversight bodies.² **The Joint Committee passed a motion that this should be done before a charter change proposal goes to a vote in the March elections.** The vote of the Joint Committee on this recommendation was 6-2, with the only Nay vote from the Police Commission being in error and intended to be a Yea vote.
 - e. **The draft Charter Change Committee proposal** we reviewed was a version of the Madison, WI model. An important distinction between their civilian oversight board and the proposed model for Burlington is that the Madison board makes recommendations but does not make the final decision on discipline. Their board has the responsibility of hiring and firing a monitor, who is a skilled professional, independent of the police department. The proposed Charter Change Committee model instead has the civilian oversight board making disciplinary decisions in isolation from the police department and rendering a final decision on discipline with no consultation.
3. **As currently written, this proposal provides no role for the police chief.** City Attorney Blackwood indicated that this is one of the only models she has seen that completely excludes the police chief. That should be remedied in any revised proposal.
 4. **The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the city and police union conflicts with this proposed charter change.** Currently, per the Burlington police CBA, officers in Burlington are disciplined or removed by the Chief with a right to appeal to the Police Commission. This CBA has a Precedence clause in Article XX that says the

² City Attorney Blackwood's November 9 memo to the Charter Change Committee discusses NACOLE and its work in detail.

CBA trumps anything in conflict with it unless agreed to in writing. Article XXII states that the CBA remains in effect until and unless a successor CBA is agreed to (with the current contract expiring in 2022). The proposed charter change cannot simply override the CBA without significant legal headwinds. If it were passed, it would likely be litigated. But even before that, the legislature is unlikely to approve this, especially if police unions organize to block this with testimony in the legislature. While the city attorney indicated that a charter change trumps other laws, it would be important to know if a charter change can trump a union contract. There is a great deal of legal ambiguity on this. Regardless, the legislature is likely to be very cautious about undermining the police union by passing this.

5. **Restrictions on eligibility should be modified.** We all agree on the original intention of a civilian oversight body that does not have built-in favoritism toward the police. The VT ACLU had recommended that only current police officers or someone who had been a police officer within the last 10 years be ineligible to serve on a civilian oversight body. The ineligibility restriction could be extended to spouses of law enforcement officers. It was suggested that in lieu of restrictions, applicants disclose potential conflicts of interest for the selection committee to consider.
6. **Representation on oversight body.** Many on the Joint Committee felt the types of representation required for a civilian oversight body should be modified to be less rigid on categories of skills and experience needed, along with fewer nominating organizations and fewer representative numbers for certain members. General concerns were raised about how cumbersome this process is for selecting members—especially when done annually.
7. **Change language from civilian control to civilian oversight.**
8. **Review and input from the Police Commission.** We acknowledge the disappointment some members of the community may feel that commissioners are offering substantive input only at this late stage of the process. Members of the Police Commission would have welcomed a formal opportunity to weigh in earlier on the development of this proposal on a civilian oversight body. Several members of the Joint Committee believed that the Police Commission and/or Joint Committee should have had a greater opportunity to weigh in on the charter change before it had already been sent to the City Council for a vote.



Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council
FROM: Mayor Miro Weinberger
DATE: December 7, 2020
RE: Police Oversight Charter Change

At tonight's meeting, the Council will deliberate on a proposal to change our City Charter to include a new model of oversight for the Burlington Police Department. This is an important discussion that I welcome. I am committed to forging a new consensus on policing in Burlington that has support from both the community and the police department, and achieving that will require structural reforms to our oversight models and processes for administering officer discipline.

Background: Recent changes have been made to disciplinary process

Our Administration has taken recent actions related to disciplinary decisions. First, during Chief Morrison's tenure as Acting Chief she codified into policy the practice begun several years ago that the Chief shall consult with the Police Commission in advance of major disciplinary decisions. Second, this fall, I [issued an Executive Order](#) requiring the Chief of Police to formally present to the Mayor and other senior officials all disciplinary decisions for use of force incidents that result in injury to an individual or raise significant public concern before the Chief issues the decision.

The Administration supports changing charter to check sole disciplinary authority of Chief

These recent steps are not enough. Members of the public have made clear that they want to see greater accountability from its elected officials for police disciplinary decisions, and I agree. Elected officials and Police Commissioners, who are ultimately held accountable for police conduct, should have the opportunity to meaningfully weigh in when problematic police conduct occurs.

Further, as I have stated repeatedly over the last year, I find the near-absolute authority over discipline granted to the Chief by our Charter to be problematic and a departure from our typical practice of having democratic checks and balances. In order to address this issue we will need a Charter Change.

Charter Change proposed by Councilor Freeman lacks current consensus

While Councilor Freeman and I have disagreed on numerous policing issues, I respect her deep commitment to public safety policy and can see that she and her colleagues have worked very hard and diligently on her proposed new language.

Unfortunately, it is clear from discussions at the Charter Change Committee and the Joint Committee meeting last week, and from yesterday's letter that we received from the Police Commission that there remain significant concerns and unanswered questions about the current proposal. The Administration shares many of the concerns expressed by the Commission, and I believe some Councilors have concerns as well.

While perhaps Councilor Freeman's proposal could reach the votes in needs for Council passage, it clearly currently lacks the consensus that would benefit its chances of ultimate success if it were to go on the Town Meeting Day ballot, reach the State Legislature, and get to the desk of the Governor. If the Charter Change does not pass all of those tests, we will have set back the opportunity to make changes to the problematic status quo for a full year.

Administration alternative offered in interest of securing consensus by key deadline

I have called a Special Meeting of the City Council for Monday, December 14 to give us an additional week for the City Council to initiate the Charter Change process by warning a public hearing on specific Charter Change language (to be clear: I have taken this step because we know the Charter Change For Building Decarbonization needs an additional week of work, and a meeting on that date gives the police discipline charter change additional time as well). If this step does not happen at the December 14 meeting we will lose the opportunity to initiate the charter change process for another year.

In the interest of moving us towards a Charter Change on police discipline that could garner broad consensus, the Administration is offering the attached Charter Change language. Our proposal would give the Police Commission and the Mayor the ability to have input on disciplinary decisions, and gives the Commission significant additional investigatory powers beyond what they have today, as well as ultimate decision making authority in disciplinary cases there this is strong Commission disagreement with the Chief. The proposed changes would:

- Formalize that the Police Commission will receive and review all civilian complaints of alleged police misconduct, and formalizes a role for the Police Commission in the discipline of Police Officers by requiring the Police Chief to consult with the Commission in advance of administering discipline.
- Task the Police Commission to issue a quarterly report on complaints, discipline, and other activities.
- Gives the Mayor the authority to review and give input on investigation results or proposed discipline.
- Gives the Police Commission the authority to hire an independent investigator to conduct or review allegations into alleged serious misconduct.
- Gives the Police Commission the authority to hold a hearing, make findings, and issue a final decision if a supermajority of the Commission continues to disagree with the Chief's findings and recommended discipline.

I would welcome and fully engage in a focused process between Councilors, stakeholders, and the Administration over the next week to review this proposal alongside the Councilor Freeman's proposal in an attempt to find common ground by next Monday's deadline.

DRAFT CHARTER CHANGES FROM ADMINISTRATION

December 3, 2020

ARTICLE 62. POLICE DEPARTMENT

183 Board of police commissioners; composition; terms.

The board of police commissioners shall consist of seven (7) legal voters of said city, to be appointed by the city council with mayor presiding to serve for three (3) years and until their successors are appointed and qualified. The composition of the commission should represent the diversity of Burlington's residents, particularly including members of groups who historically have been marginalized.

(Act No. M-18, § 2, approved 3-1-16)

184 Same-powers and duties.

(a) The city council shall make rules and regulations for the government of the entire police force and shall fix the qualifications of applicants for positions and service on said force and the chief of police shall furnish the city council with any information they may require concerning the finances of the police department. The chief of police shall be responsible for all expenditures made by the police department and no expenditures shall be made by the department except in conformity with the standards promulgated by the city council.

(b) The board of police commissioners shall receive and review all civilian complaints of alleged police misconduct, may review any other complaints against police officers that it deems in the public interest, and shall have a role in the discipline of officers as in section 189 of this Charter. The board shall have such other authority and responsibility relating to the management of the police department, its services and facilities, as may be delegated from time to time by resolution of the city council. Said board shall notify the mayor and the chief administrative officer, in writing, of any and all changes, modifications or additions to the rules and regulations of the department and shall issue quarterly reports on complaints, discipline, and other activities.

ARTICLE 63. CHIEF OF POLICE AND CAPTAIN

185 Officers of police force designated.

(a) The direction and control of the entire police force, except as herein otherwise provided, shall be vested in a police officer who shall be called the chief of police, and such other ranking police officers as the city council shall authorize, subject to the rules and regulations of the city council. The order of rank and succession within the police department shall be as designated by the city council by regulation.

(b) Except as herein otherwise provided, such officers shall have the powers and duties granted to police officers by Vermont law and assigned to them by regulations adopted under section 184 of this Charter.

ARTICLE 64. APPOINTMENT OF POLICE OFFICERS

186 Manner of filling vacancies.

Whenever a vacancy occurs in any other position, the chief may appoint a successor.

(Act No. M-14, § 4, approved 5-19-2004)

187 Force to be maintained; selection of members.

A regular police force for said city shall be maintained in the city. No applicant shall be deemed qualified for employment on said force until he or she has been approved by the chief of police. The process for determining the qualifications of and employing police officers shall fully comply with any criteria established by the board of police commissioners and the city's comprehensive personnel policy manual as the same may be amended from time to time.

(Act No. M-14, § 5, approved 5-19-2004)

188 Manner of appointment.

The chief shall, from time to time, as the needs of the city may require, appoint from the approved applicants. If the name of the applicant has been on the approved list for more than six months, the applicant shall take and pass a new examination by the board of medical examiners before being appointed.

(Act No. M-14, § 6, approved 5-19-2004)

189 Members of force to be retained as long as they remain competent.

The members of said regular police force now serving, or who shall hereafter be appointed thereto, shall, after the expiration of the one-year probationary period above provided, and so long as they shall remain competent, efficient and capable in the performance of their respective duties be retained as such, subject to the rules and regulations adopted under Section [184](#) of this Charter and provided that any member may be removed for cause as hereinafter provided.

ARTICLE 65. ~~REMOVAL OR SUSPENSION~~ DISCIPLINE OF POLICE OFFICERS

190 Chief may remove member for cause; hearing.

(a) Whenever it shall appear ~~to the chief~~ that any member of said force has become incompetent, inefficient or incapable from any cause, or is or has been negligent or derelict in his or her official duty, or is guilty of any misconduct in his or her private or official life, or whenever any well-grounded complaints or charges to such effect are made in writing to the chief or the board of police commissioners by a responsible person against such member, the chief may investigate and, after appropriate notice and hearing, dismiss such member from the force, order a reduction in rank, ~~or~~ suspend the member without pay for a specified time period ~~in excess of 14 days,~~ or take other appropriate disciplinary action. In connection with any possible dismissal, demotion, or suspension for more than 14 days, the chief's notice to the member shall be given at least 48 hours prior to any hearing and shall include a description of the charges being considered. In connection therewith, the chief shall have the power to subpoena

witnesses and to administer the oath to such witnesses. ~~The board of police commissioners shall hear any appeal filed in a timely manner with respect to such actions of the police chief. The time of filing an appeal and the nature of the appellate process shall be as determined by such board of regulation. Following its consideration of any such appeal, the board may affirm, modify, or vacate the decision made by the police chief.~~

(b) Before the chief takes any final action or closes any matter alleging that a police officer has been negligent or derelict in their duty or is guilty of any misconduct, the results of any investigation and any proposed response or discipline must be reviewed with the police commission, which may make recommendations to the chief. In addition, the mayor should have authority to review and give input on any investigation results or proposed response or discipline. In connection with any investigation of officer misconduct, the commission and the mayor should have access to all police department materials related to the investigation including tapes, transcripts, investigator's notes, witness statements, and other documents

(c) The board of police commissioners may hire an independent investigator to conduct or review any investigation into alleged serious misconduct, if by a majority vote it determines an independent investigation warranted. The results of that investigation would be shared with the chief who would provide the board with a proposed response, including any discipline of an officer.

(d) If after providing input to the chief on the department's proposed response in any allegation of serious misconduct and giving the chief a reasonable opportunity to amend the proposal, at least six members of the commission continue to disagree with the chief's proposal, the commission may hold a hearing, make findings, and issue a final decision, which will be considered a final agency action appealable to the Vermont Superior Court. In connection with any possible dismissal, demotion, or suspension for more than 14 days, the notice to the member shall be given at least 48 hours prior to any hearing and shall include a description of the charges being considered. In connection therewith, the board of police commissioners shall have the power to subpoena witnesses and to administer the oath to such witnesses. The hearing will include, at minimum, a right for the accused officer to cross-examine and present witnesses and to be represented by counsel.

(be) Whenever it shall appear to the mayor that the chief has become incompetent, inefficient, or incapable from any cause, or has been negligent or derelict in his or her official duty, or is guilty of any misconduct in his or her private or official life, or whenever any well-grounded complaints or charges to such effect are made in writing to the mayor by a responsible person, the mayor may suspend the chief from duty, the city council shall forth with notify the chief of the charges preferred by them, or of the complaints or charges presented by such responsible person in writing, and shall thereupon proceed to consider and investigate the same. It shall appoint a time and place for the hearing of such complaints and charges so made, shall give the chief reasonable notice of the same, not less than 48 hours, and the city council shall have the power to subpoena witnesses and to administer the oath to such witnesses.

(ef) If, upon hearing, the city council shall find such complaints or charges to be well founded, it may dismiss the chief from the force, demote him or her in rank, or suspend him or her without pay for a period not to exceed 60 days. The procedures outlined in this section shall control in the event of any conflict with section [129](#) of this Charter as pertains to the removal of the chief.

(dg) The chief may, without notice or hearing for any infraction, violation, or disobedience of any of the rules and regulations of the police department that may seem to the chief sufficient, suspend from duty without pay any member of the police force for a period not to exceed 14 days.

(Act No. M-14, § 7, approved 5-19-2004)



Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council
FROM: Mayor Miro Weinberger
DATE: December 31, 2020
RE: Veto of Charter Change re: Independent Community Control Board and Call for Collaboration and Progress

Pursuant to Article 18 – Section 46 of the Burlington City Charter, which authorizes the mayor to veto any action of the City Council, I am returning the “Independent Community Control Board To Oversee Investigation And Discipline Of Police Misconduct Charter Change” (“Charter Change”) passed at the Council’s December 14 meeting to you unsigned and providing you my written objections to it below.

I send you this communication while still desiring to find a route to come together and unite behind a proposal that will forge new consensus on this critical policing issue and represent meaningful racial justice for our BIPOC communities. As I detail below, I remain ready to meet with City Council President Max Tracy and other councilors to try to find common ground that would allow me to rescind this veto before you take final action on this matter Monday night.

If we cannot find consensus now and my veto is sustained, we must find other ways to make near term progress on the issue of police discipline and reforms that protect and build trust with the public, especially BIPOC communities. Therefore, this letter also includes a plan for implementing improvements to the police discipline system immediately, and bringing a Charter Change for the beginning of the 2022 session should my veto stand after Monday night.

Objections to the December 14 Charter Change Proposal

My overriding objection to the proposed charter change is that as written it will contribute to the dismantling of the Burlington Police Department and compromise the City’s ability to ensure public safety.

In the short-term, placing the Charter Change on the ballot is likely to accelerate the departures of sworn officers from the department. The department is already down 20% from its maximum staffing levels, perhaps the largest reductions of officers of any department in the country since the national protests of last summer. Putting the current divisive and controversial Charter Change on the ballot will give further fuel to this trend, and likely hasten the day in which the City will need to stop staffing an overnight shift and cut back on other basic public safety services that residents expect.

Over the medium and long-term, the proposed Charter Change, if adopted, will have even greater impacts on the City’s ability to field an effective police department. The current proposal will cause concerns for prospective police officers and department leaders, because the board appears designed to be hostile to police officers. An Oversight Board should be required to adjudicate discipline fairly and impartially, or hew to defined standards. Further, the removal of the

Chief of Police from having a role in all serious disciplinary decisions is unique within all the models we have reviewed, and its impacts on the operations of the department are unknown and a cause of deep concern.

A further serious problem of the Charter Change proposal is that it is so detailed that serious errors and unintended problems are likely, and they will be very difficult to react to or fix. As this Charter Change proposal was being developed, the City Attorney and City Councilors recommended that the authors draft critical, broad authorizing language, and leave important details to be set through ordinances in future City Council action. Instead, in a significant break from best practice, the Councilors who led this effort have included large amounts of detailed, new, untested language. As a result, if passed, errors and unintended problems arising out of that new language will be baked into the Charter, making them inherently challenging to respond to and address. Future evolutions and improvements of the new system that the City desires to make are also likely to require charter changes. This structured rigidity is likely to create festering problems and serious challenges for public safety in the years to come.

Finally, while I would not veto the proposal over this issue alone, it is also problematic that the proposal does nothing to increase the ability of the mayor to formally weigh in on major disciplinary matters, despite the concerns about this that I raised repeatedly for a year. After months of demonstrations, it is very clear that the public holds the mayor accountable for police disciplinary decisions. To meet this public expectation, the charter should allow some formal role for the mayor in the adjudication of these matters.

Offer to meet and withdraw this veto if common ground is found

I veto the Charter Change with great reluctance, because I agree that the current charter is problematic and there is urgency to amend it. I believe I was the first Burlington elected official to bring attention and concern, a year ago, to the near-absolute power of the Chief to impose discipline under our current system. Such monopoly of important authority is an aberration in our democratic system, it has contributed significantly to community distrust, and we are likely to face continued disputes over future disciplinary actions until this issue is addressed.

Further, it is clear that the Council and Administration agree on many key issues related to police discipline. As stated in my alternative December 7 charter change proposal, I support granting a community board the ability to conduct independent investigations into complaints, subpoena sensitive department information, and overrule the Chief when necessary on disciplinary decisions. While I believe we could achieve the reforms we need through our existing Police Commission system, I am willing to accept and support the Council's proposed framework of creating a new, independent board if my other concerns are met.

Given that we agree on many key issues, it is unfortunate that the Councilors leading this charter change have made no effort to work out our remaining differences and denied our requests to meet and discuss changes before passage of the Charter Change on December 14. I remain willing to meet and to work in good faith to find common ground before Monday's meeting. I made this willingness clear to President Max Tracy in a phone message earlier today and hope he will accept this invitation for collaboration.

An alternative plan that can progress immediately

If this final effort to find a consensus charter change now fails and the Council sustains my veto, the problems in our police discipline system will remain, and we must keep working on this issue with purpose and urgency. In such an event, I am committed to taking the following steps to implement

immediate improvements to our current system and continue momentum towards future structural changes:

- I will work with the City Council to bring forward a resolution soon that immediately delegates new disciplinary authority to the Police Commission, including the authority to conduct independent investigations. We do not need a charter change to delegate this authority to the citizen oversight board that exists today.
- I will also work with the City Council to bring forward soon a current year budget amendment granting the Police Commission a budget for conducting such independent investigations.
- Ultimately, we will still need a charter change on police discipline. As soon as possible, the Council and the Administration should appoint a new Special Committee of Councilors and Administration representatives that continues to work to find common ground on this issue. This committee should be tasked with hearing from both racial justice advocates and police officers who will serve under a new system, and returning with a consensus proposal by mid-2021.
- To ensure that this consensus proposal can be put to the voters and delivered to the legislature for the start of the 2022 session, I propose that we commit to a Special Election next fall (such a Special Election will also likely be necessary for TIF project bonding authority and perhaps other infrastructure bonding as well).
- One of the major short-comings of the Council's current charter change proposal is that it is unclear what standards the new board would attempt to hold officers accountable to. I propose that the Council and Administration act in January to address that short-coming by requesting that the Police Commission review the current departmental discipline standards and recommend new standards in advance of a Special Election next fall.
- While getting police discipline right is critical, we must expand our focus if we truly seek to secure different policing outcomes. I have requested that our Director of Police Transformation Kyle Dodson complete a review of our officer training and evaluation systems and issue recommendations to me and the City Council before the end of his six-month tenure. Further, Director Dodson has been exploring the creation of a process to forge reconciliation between the Burlington police and the BIPOC community, and I have asked him to conclude that work and issue recommendations before his tenure ends.



CITIZEN COMPLAINTS FLOW CHART

COMPLAINT RECEIVED;
INFORM COMMISSION

[Article 65 §190](#) of the Burlington City Charter vests disciplinary authority for members of the police department in the Chief of Police. When the Burlington Police Department receives a [citizen complaint](#) about an employee’s conduct, [Department Directive DD40](#) states the Chief of Police shall cause that complaint to be investigated as soon as practical. By [policy agreement](#), the Chief will report to the independent Burlington Police Commission on all complaints.

INJURY TO PERSON?
PUBLIC CONCERN?
INFORM MAYOR

According to [Mayoral Executive Order](#), when a police officer uses force that results in injury to any person or that raises significant public concern, the Chief of Police will formally review the situation with the Mayor and seek the Mayor’s concurrence with the Chief’s disciplinary determinations. The Chief must obtain the Mayor’s concurrence or other final recommendation before reviewing the case with the Police Commission and must share the Mayor’s views with the Commission.

SERIOUS COMPLAINT?
VERBAL BRIEF TO
COMMISSION

For higher-level complaints, such as those involving an allegation of excessive use of force, dishonesty, discrimination, harassment, or other serious misconduct; or for any lower- or mid-level complaint that results in discipline beyond a written reprimand; or for any other conduct for which suspension or termination is recommended, the Chief will provide the Police Commission with a full verbal briefing of the allegations, the Mayor’s views (if applicable), and the Chief’s recommended disposition of the case in executive session.

COMMISSION ASSESSES
CHIEF’S DISPOSITION

After receipt of the verbal briefing, the Police Commission may:

- accept the Chief’s report and recommended action in full or in part;
- request additional information;
- request that the Chief reconsider the action and/or make a recommendation to the Chief about the investigation, process, disposition, or other aspect of the matter, or
- postpone action to a later date, but no later than 14 days from the date of initial receipt of the report

CHIEF FINALIZES
DISPOSITION

The Chief may accept or reject the Police Commission’s recommendations, but must explain any rejection. If a majority of the Police Commission disagrees with the Chief’s decision, the Police Commission Chair shall report this to the Mayor.

20 VSA §2401?
CHIEF REPORTS TO VCJC

As per the Vermont Criminal Justice Council and [Vermont’s Act 56](#), if the conduct alleged in the complaint meets the definitions of Category A, Category B, or Category C conduct in [20 VSA §2401](#), the Chief will comply with the duty to report described in [20 VSA §2403](#).

USE OF FORCE (UOF) OCCURS

Does UOF involve person of color? Notify Mayor.

Is UOF [applicable to video release](#)? (i.e., does it involve death, serious bodily injury, OC / CEW / firearm / baton / LLIMs, public attention).

Officer writes UOF report in Benchmark. Officer uploads AXON.

UOF REVIEW

MONTHLY UOF REPORT

REDACTED VIDEO

UOF reviewer looks at officer's report to ensure it comports with [UOF directive](#) and current training

Deputy Chief Operations (DC Ops) reviews officer's written narrative

Redaction Specialist (RS) redacts video of applicable UOF

UOF reviewer returns report to officer with notes requesting clarifications

DC Ops flags for UOF supervisor review

Executive staff reviews

UOF reviewer forwards to UOF-trained-supervisor for approval -- OR -- flags potentially improper force for supervisor review

DC Ops writes summary narrative and breaks down statistics

RS adds DC Ops's narrative to redacted video as introductory title card for context

UOF supervisor reviews

DC Ops and exec ass't publish consolidated summary narrative as [monthly Use of Force Report](#)

RS posts month's videos to [BPD's YouTube channel](#), to coincide with exec ass't posting [monthly Use of Force Report](#)

UOF supervisor returns to UOF reviewer with notes for clarification

UOF supervisor flags for executive staff review or internal affairs

UOF supervisor forwards to DC Ops for finalization

Final approval by DC Ops or flagged for Chief of Police





FINAL REPORT

A FUNCTIONAL AND OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE BURLINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT



This document contains the best opinion of CNA at the time of issue.

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CNA acknowledges the support and assistance we received in conducting this study and completing this report, in particular from the Burlington Office of Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging; the Burlington Police Department (BPD); Mayor Miro Weinberger; members of the Burlington City Council; the City of Burlington; the Joint Committee; and other important community stakeholders. Their contributions, experiences, data, and resources were invaluable in conducting our assessment and compiling our findings and recommendations.

Executive Summary

The City of Burlington and the wider community have prioritized key areas of police reform, including reducing reliance on the Burlington Police Department (BPD) for the provision of some public safety services, and for responding to specific types of incidents that may be better suited for a non-law enforcement response. Furthermore, the City and community called for the review and enactment of sound policies, training, and procedures reflecting best practices with a commitment to community engagement that is focused on outreach, equity and building community trust.

Recognizing the urgent need for transparency, accountability, legitimacy, and procedural justice, the City of Burlington, through a competitive bid, selected CNA's Center for Justice Research and Innovation to complete a functional and operational assessment of the BPD. Specifically, the assessment focused on four key areas: BPD training and operations; racial and socioeconomic bias regarding police deployment; staffing and workload analysis; and specialized and alternative responses to policing.

CNA's analysis recognizes that BPD has made strides in these directions, particularly evidenced by a dramatic reduction in traffic stops in recent years, the hiring of a social worker, and the hiring of non-sworn community support officers (CSO) to respond to incidents not requiring sworn personnel (e.g., noise complaints, animal control, parking citations). Our analysis indicates the BPD would benefit from additional reforms.

In this Executive Summary, we present a summary of the findings of our assessment, a summary of the key recommendations offered to BPD and the City, and an overview of our approach to the assessment project. We encourage interested individuals to read the details in the body of this report, where they will find the complete enumeration of 149 recommendations, and detailed supporting evidence for our findings and recommendations. See Section 10 for the full list of recommendations.

Summary of Key Findings

1. Analysis of BPD traffic stop data indicates that potential racial disparities exist in citations for traffic violations, searches, and arrests. Black community members experience disparities in traffic stops; importantly, they experience disparities in stop outcomes, including ticketing and search decisions. Black community members experience disparities in use of force incidents. They experience disparities in traffic stops and are involved in use of force incidents more frequently than would be expected by Burlington demographics, and more frequently than would be expected based other measures of disparity.
2. BPD does not appear to demonstrate socioeconomic bias in relation to its deployment of police personnel in responses to calls for service. Patrol areas with larger volumes of calls for service experience higher personnel deployments and higher relative portions of arrests.

3. BPD's community engagement and outreach functions are under-resourced and should be significantly enhanced. For example, there does not currently appear to be a clear directive requiring BPD leadership to seek input from the Burlington public on the directives, goals, or objectives of the BPD and the development of its strategic plan. BPD understands the importance of community trust yet feels challenged by the need to balance proactive community engagement with its responsibility to respond professionally to calls for service. In order to fulfill its Creativity mission, BPD must address current inefficiencies in its patrol operation to allow room and resources for enhanced community engagement.
4. Key training topics such as procedural justice, implicit bias, fair and impartial policing, restorative justice, response to mental health calls, cultural competency, and de-escalation are either not covered, not required, or covered insufficiently during BPD's basic new officer training and annual in-service training.
5. BPD's current data collection, tracking, investigatory process, and its timeline for resolution of citizen complaints, use of force incidents, Internal Affairs investigations, and officer involved shootings are inadequate. Some language within BPD's complaint and disciplinary policies, along with union limitations, does not meet national standards for progressive discipline, repetitive misconduct, and timelines for how long complaints, discipline, and misconduct can stay on an officer's record.
6. Our interviews and observations revealed that BPD is experiencing declining morale. BPD members believe that the media portrayal of police nationwide is contributing to low morale within the department and creating mistrust within the community. Additionally, both BPD members and community stakeholders expressed frustration and concern about the lack of consensus in the community regarding the need for police services, and the appropriate types of services BPD should provide.
7. Considering the operational efficiencies recommended in this report, BPD requires between 72-75 sworn officers available for active duty to provide sufficient police services to the City. This does not account for the BPD sworn officers assigned to the Burlington International Airport (BIA) under the contract between the City and the BIA. These officers are negotiated annually, and while inappropriately negotiated into the BPOA contract, they are dedicated full time to the BIA and are unable to support BPD operations. Should the city and the BIA continue to annually contract for BPD officers assigned to BIA, these officers would be above the recommended headcount in this report.
8. In order to account for naturally occurring attrition, recruit training/onboarding etc., our analysis indicates this number should be adjusted upward by five officers, with an authorized headcount of 77-80 sworn, with 72-75 deployable at all times. To reiterate, this does not account for the present number of BPD officers deployed to BIA under the current annual contract between the City and the BIA. There are presently 7 officers and 1 Sergeant assigned to BIA.

Summary of Key Recommendations

1. Specific (lower level) calls for service (CFS) should be transitioned to Community Service Officers (CSOs), Community Service Liaisons (CSLs), or other municipal departments. This will free up time that can be dedicated to other essential police services including community engagement and outreach and community policing. BPD should dramatically enhance these functions.
2. BPD should adopt a 12-hour shift plan that uses six squads of officers to provide emergency response, citywide patrol coverage, and the capacity to provide services in a community policing approach. Serious consideration should be given to adopting this proposed twelve-hour schedule, aligning officer work schedules with the times and days when they are most likely needed. The patrol function could be adequately staffed with 51 sworn officers (1 deputy chief, 4 lieutenants, 6 sergeants, and 40 officers). Ideally, they should be deployed in the 12-hour shift schedule, with six squads (four main, and two overlap squads). This combination of personnel produces the most efficient combination of officer deployment and days off schedule. The BPOA contract should be renegotiated to permit changes in the current shift schedules.
3. BPD should implement a traffic stop data system that captures, in addition to the current information: reason for stop, stop start and end time, reason for each ticket and warning, passenger information, officer special assignment or task force assignment at the time of the stop, and an open comment field for officer explanations and brief description of the stop. Such a system does not currently exist at BPD. BDP reports that the department's record management system contains this information; however, this information was not provided to the assessment team.
4. BPD should consider the possibility that the disparities found are driven by bias (implicit or explicit) and proactively address potential bias in officers' behavior or department practices by implementation of training and review of practices.
5. BPD should investigate use of force incidents thoroughly, including review of body worn camera footage, to better understand the reason for observed disparities for Black community members. Similar to our recommendation for traffic stops, BPD should consider the possibility that these disparities are driven by bias (implicit or explicit) and proactively address potential bias in officers' behavior or department practices by implementation of training and review of practices.
6. BPD should prioritize the review (including community input), revision or development of relevant department policies, train on these policies as well as provide updated training for use of force. OIS Internal and Administrative investigations should be investigated the same way in every instance to eliminate the question of favoritism or bias. The policy should include direction on Conflict of Interest and prohibit friends or relatives from investigating another family member or a friend, and on confidentiality.
7. The City of Burlington should establish a community mental health advisory committee. At minimum, this advisory committee must have representation from BPD, community mental

health services, a person(s) with lived experience, and/or an advocacy group (e.g., NAMI) centrally involved.

Overview of assessment methodology and approach

Within the scope of CNA's contract, the assessment team reviewed BPD's policies, training, calls for service data, staffing, and operational practices including internal and external accountability. The team also assessed community¹ perceptions related to these functions, and conducted analysis with a specific focus on the following areas:

1. Racial bias
2. Socioeconomic bias
3. Specialized and alternative responses
4. De-escalation and crisis intervention
5. Citizen complaint process
6. Policies, training, and practices
7. Internal affairs policies and procedures (including disciplinary policies and procedures)
8. Traffic stops, search and seizure, and arrest
9. Police use of force
10. Staffing analysis

The CNA assessment team based its approach on several guiding principles, including the following: (1) an emphasis on research and evidence-based practices, including academic research, documented lessons learned, and best practices from the field; (2) multi-method assessment design, including interviews, policy and document review, and data analysis; and (3) a commitment to conducting comprehensive reviews and applying national best practices in police settings.

- Document review: the assessment team reviewed and summarized documents, identifying key elements that relate specifically to the assessment foci and addressing the scope of work elements outlined above. The assessment team focused on policies, procedures, and training plans related to several focus areas: fair and impartial policing, BPD staffing, use of force, crisis intervention, the complaint process, alternative approaches including community response and assistance, and community-oriented policing. The team also reviewed two officer involved shooting use of force incident reports², 12 randomly selected use of force files³, and 12 Bureau of Internal Affairs (BIA) cases⁴.
- Interviews: The assessment team conducted 24 semi-structured interviews with BPD personnel, City of Burlington officials, and community stakeholders. Interviews with BPD

¹ Although CNA often engages with communities through listening sessions or community surveys for projects like this, these efforts were completed separately by the Talitha Group and so are excluded from our work.

² BPD provided OIS data from 2015 to 2020. During this period, BPD had only two officer involved shooting incidents.

³ BPD provided use of force (UOF) data from 2015 to 2020. During this period, BPD had 1,326 use of force incidents.

⁴ BPD provided BIA data from 2017 to 2020. During this period, BPD had 28 BIA cases.

personnel included command staff, supervisors, line officers, and dispatch personnel. Using a BPD personnel list, the assessment team employed a stratified random sampling method to ensure interviewees were representative of the department.

- Quantitative analysis: quantitative data analysis focused on: arrests, traffic stops, use of force incidents, complaints, and staffing. We analyzed data from a period of five years—2016 to 2020—for most of the datasets. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we excluded certain data from 2020 so that it did not skew the analysis. For example, we chose to utilize 2019 data alone to assess a fully staffed BPD and the typical number of calls for service prior to both the pandemic and the 30 percent reduction in officers. This gave the assessment team a baseline from which to draw comparisons about current staffing levels in 2021. Additionally, we used 2019 data from the American Community Survey program conducted by the US Census Bureau⁵ to map economic and demographic factors (median household income and race/ethnicity) to BPD’s five patrol divisions.

This assessment will help BPD improve its efforts to apply best practices and enact sound policies and procedures related to police management, operations, interactions with the community, transparency, and trust building.

CNA designed this assessment to accomplish the following:

- Determine how the defined areas of focus are woven into BPD’s policies, training, and operational practices and assess their alignment with national best practices.
- Determine whether the members of the BPD incorporate the assessment areas of focus into their daily interactions with local community members with an emphasis on treating all community members with dignity, respect, and fairness.
- Provide actionable recommendations for reforms to eliminate any racial and implicit biases in policing deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices. The CNA assessment team’s recommendations are guided by evidence-based practices and will help BPD promote community engagement and inclusion, transparency, professionalism, and accountability.
- Determine whether the BPD is sufficiently and efficiently staffed to safely respond to calls for service.
- Determine specialized and alternative responses to support a diversion of calls for service that do not require responses from armed sworn officers.
- Develop a roadmap with priority ranked recommendations for the City of Burlington and the BPD to implement to improve the policy, training, and operational functions of the BPD.

Many of the findings and recommendations noted in this report are not unique to BPD because police agencies nationwide face similar challenges. Policing has reached a pivotal point in history, and the community’s role in contributing to public safety is becoming more apparent and vital. In its response to this assessment, BPD has the opportunity to provide leadership in the policing profession

⁵ <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs>

regarding how to constructively respond to the current challenges it faces. The findings and recommendations presented in this report are intended to inform these decisions.

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Introduction

The recent deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many other Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) individuals at the hands of police officers prompted an increase in demand across the nation for police reform. Subsequent public protests and rallies in Burlington resulted in a campaign by community activists that called for the City of Burlington, Vermont, (“the City”) and the Burlington Police Department (BPD) to improve overall operational procedures to align with best practices while dramatically enhancing community engagement and trust building. In addition, two of the fatal shootings by the BPD in the last 10 years involved people living with severe mental health conditions who were in crisis. As a result, community advocates identified reducing police interactions with persons in mental and behavioral health crises as a high priority.

This community campaign called for reducing reliance on the BPD for the provision of public safety and for responding to specific types of incidents that may be better suited for a non-law enforcement response. Furthermore, the City and community called for the review and enactment of sound policies, training, and procedures reflecting best practices with a strong commitment to community engagement that focuses on ensuring equity and building community trust.

Recognizing the urgent need for transparency, accountability, legitimacy, and procedural justice, the City of Burlington tasked a joint committee comprised of the City Council Public Safety Committee and the Burlington Police Commission (“Joint Committee”) to explore the reimagining of public safety that included a comprehensive assessment of BPD functions and operations. Further, on June 29, 2020, the City Council passed the Resolution Relating to Racial Justice through Economic and Criminal Justice (“the Resolution”), and reduced BPD staff by 30 percent. Among other things, the Resolution called for the following:

- “The City shall terminate the Memorandum of Understanding 60 between the Burlington School District and the Burlington Police Department by spring semester 2021, 61 ensuring that BPD officers not be used for wellness calls and ending the full-time use of BPD School 62 Resource Officers (SROs).”
- “Mandatory requirements to report use of force, stronger disciplinary measures and full transparency of disciplinary proceedings in police encounters involving brutal or excessive force...or in cases in which there was a failure to report use of force”
- “Diverse approaches to public safety through the use of social workers, addiction and recovery specialists, mental health professionals, and others prepared and trained to respond to conflict challenges in our community in a variety of ways rather than solely policing”

Ongoing work by community groups and local initiatives continue to compel BPD to make changes to align with evidence-based practices as well as national practices that have demonstrated positive outcomes.

Burlington, the most populous city in Vermont, has a population of nearly 43,000, which has remained largely consistent according to 2012–2020 census data. Burlington’s racial and ethnic diversity is reflected in the breakdown of its five most populous groups:⁶

- 85.7 percent White;
- 4.9 percent Black or African American;
- 0.4 percent Native American;
- 6.0 percent Asian; and
- 2.6 percent Hispanic or Latino.

The BPD is one of the largest police agencies in Vermont. Prior to the resolution, it was authorized for 105 sworn personnel and 36 non-sworn personnel. After the Resolution was signed on June 29, 2020, the BPD was reduced by 30 percent, with the BPD presently authorized for 74 uniformed officers.

Assessment areas of focus

The City of Burlington identified five areas of focus for the BPD assessment:

1. BPD training and operations.
2. Racial and socioeconomic bias analysis.
3. Staffing and workload analysis.
4. Specialized and alternative responses to policing.
5. Implementation roadmap.

The Joint Committee further described their expected “end goals” from this assessment as follows:

1. Develop a recommended list of BPD services.
2. Develop a recommendation for models to identify appropriate BPD staffing levels.
3. Develop a recommendation on policing alternatives to implement.
4. Create a transition plan for handing off next steps to community stakeholders and City staff.

The CNA assessment team utilized the Joint Committee’s areas of focus and its end goals to structure our functional and operational analysis and assessment of the BPD.

⁶ Due to rounding percentages do not equal to 100 percent.

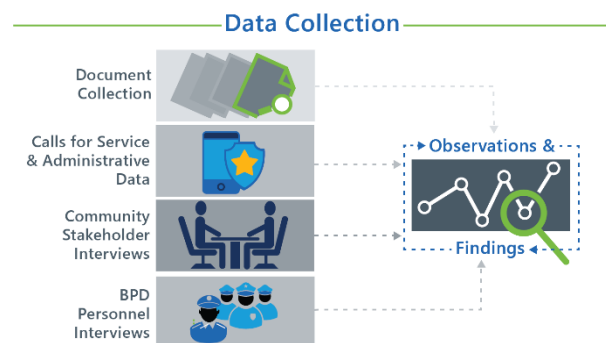
Goals and objectives

CNA designed this assessment to accomplish the following:

- Determine how the defined areas of focus are woven into BPD's policies, training, and operational practices and assess their alignment with national best practices.
- Determine whether the members of the BPD incorporate the areas of focus into their daily interactions with local community members with an emphasis on treating all community members with dignity, respect, and fairness.
- Provide actionable recommendations for reforms to eliminate any racial and implicit biases in policing deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices. The CNA assessment team's recommendations are guided by evidence-based practices and will help BPD promote community engagement and inclusion, transparency, professionalism, and accountability. Such recommendations must meet the following requirements:
 - Promote community engagement, transparency, professionalism, accountability, community inclusion, fairness, effectiveness, and public trust;
 - Be guided by evidence-based best practices and community expectations; and
 - Have the likelihood, given meaningful organizational support, to reduce or eliminate racial and implicit biases in policing deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices; and improving overall operational practices
- Determine whether the BPD is sufficiently and efficiently staffed to safely respond to calls for service.
- Determine specialized and alternative responses to support a diversion of calls for service that may not require responses from armed sworn officers.
- Develop a roadmap with priority ranked recommendations for the City of Burlington and the BPD to implement to improve the policy, training, and operational procedures of the BPD.

Methodology and approach

The CNA assessment team based its approach on several guiding principles, including the following: (1) evidence-based assistance with an emphasis on research, including academic research, documented lessons learned, and best practices from the field; (2) multi-method assessment design, including interviews, policy and document review, and data analysis; and (3) a commitment to conducting comprehensive reviews and applying national best practices in police settings.



When an analysis and assessment of law enforcement response is completed, it is always important to broaden the sources reviewed to ensure reliability in the overall assessment. Often, analysts focus on reviewing policies to inform training, and taken together, policies and training inform operations. Consequently, in this functional and operational assessment, as in other police assessments, we considered policies and directives; training plans and curriculum; administrative data on staffing and patrol deployment; calls for service, use of force incidents, complaints, arrest, and crime data; and Internal Affairs documents. These data together with BPD, City personnel, and community stakeholder interviews informed our analysis, findings, and recommendations focused on four prongs: (1) fair and impartial policing, (2) BPD staffing, and (3) alternative approaches to policing and (4) policy, training and operational practices

Document review

The BPD and the City of Burlington shared policy documents with the CNA assessment team to provide a better understanding of documented operational procedures and practices. The CNA assessment team reviewed the BPD operations manual, staffing structure, training plans, policies and procedures, and other documents that govern the areas of this assessment. Additionally, we reviewed department annual reports, department staffing information, call for service data, disciplinary records, the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and Community Service Officer (CSO) job descriptions and the Burlington Police Officer's Association (BPOA) union contract. We reviewed the following additional documents: the *Independent Community Control Board to Oversee Investigations and Discipline of Police Misconduct Charter Change*, the *Resolution Relating to Racial Justice through Economic and Criminal Justice*, the *Public Safety Continuity Plan* memo, and the "BPD Staffing PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE" presentation for the Burlington Police Commission. A full list of all BPD and City documents we reviewed is provided in Appendix A.

During this review, our team consulted information pertaining to national best practices, including *The Final Report on 21st Century Policing* (2015). In response to rising levels of distrust between police departments and local communities across the country, former president Barack Obama established the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing in 2014. The primary goal of the task force was to "examine ways of fostering strong, collaborative relationships between local law enforcement and the communities they protect and to make recommendations . . . on ways policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust" (*Final Report on 21st Century Policing*, 2015, 5). Our team also utilized national best practices on staffing analysis, alternative responses, and racial bias analysis based on validated methodologies, research, and operational practices.

To organize the document review, the CNA assessment team:

- Reviewed and summarized documents, identifying key elements that relate specifically to the assessment foci and addressing the scope of work elements outlined above. The assessment team focused on policies, procedures, and training plans related to several focus areas: fair and impartial policing, BPD staffing, use of force, crisis intervention, the complaint

process, alternative approaches including community response and assistance, and community-oriented policing.

- Reviewed two officer involved shooting use of force incident reports⁷, 12 randomly selected use of force files⁸, and 12 Bureau of Internal Affairs (BIA) cases⁹.

Interviews

The CNA assessment team conducted 24 semi-structured interviews with BPD personnel, City of Burlington officials, and community stakeholders. Interviews with BPD personnel included command staff, supervisors, line officers, and dispatch personnel. Using a personnel list, the assessment team employed a stratified random sampling method to ensure interviewees were representative of the department. We utilized an interview protocol to ensure fidelity and reduce bias.

We analyzed the interviews using NVivo, a qualitative analysis software package that enables thematic and formal content analysis (Saldana, 2016). We developed thematic codes using both deductive and inductive coding approaches. Using the deductive approach, we pulled themes focused on assessment objectives from the interview protocols. Once we generated the list of codes, we reviewed the themes and definitions prior to coding the interviews. Using the inductive approach, we coded emergent themes to sub themes as we analyzed interview transcripts in NVivo. If we found frequently referenced child nodes, we brought them out as parent nodes and added them to the list of interview themes.

Quantitative data

Our quantitative data analysis focused on several areas: arrests, traffic stops, use of force incidents, complaints, and staffing. We analyzed data from a period of five years—2016 to 2020—for most of the datasets. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we excluded certain data from 2020 so that it did not inappropriately skew the analysis. For example, we chose to utilize 2019 data alone to assess a fully staffed BPD and the typical number of calls for service prior to both the pandemic and the 30 percent reduction in officers. This gave the assessment team a baseline from which to draw comparisons about current staffing levels in 2021. Additionally, we used 2019 data from the American Community Survey program conducted by the US Census Bureau¹⁰ to map economic and demographic factors (median household income and race/ethnicity) to BPD's five patrol divisions (See section 6).

We conducted descriptive analysis of all datasets and supplemented that analysis with statistical comparison analysis when appropriate. The findings from our data analysis complemented our

⁷ BPD provided OIS data from 2015 to 2020. During this period, BPD had only two officer involved shooting incidents.

⁸ BPD provided use of force (UOF) data from 2015 to 2020. During this period, BPD had 1,326 use of force incidents.

⁹ BPD provided BIA data from 2017 to 2020. During this period, BPD had 28 BIA cases.

¹⁰ <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs>

review of the documents and the sentiments we heard from BPD personnel, City of Burlington officials, and community stakeholder interviews.

Overview of the report

This report contains nine sections:

- Section 1: Policies, training, and operations
- Section 2: BPD Internal Affairs and citizen's complaint processes
- Section 3: Police oversight
- Section 4: BPD's use of force and officer involved shooting incidents
- Section 5: Patrol operations, deployments, and traffic stops
- Section 6: Patrol operations by geographic area
- Section 7: Staffing and workload analysis
- Section 8: Specialized and alternative response
- Section 9: Community engagement
- Section 10: Implementation roadmap

In each section, we provide a summary of the overall themes we identified in our review, an overview of the data sources and analysis relevant to that topic, and the findings and actionable recommendations. The report also includes two appendices. Appendix A contains a complete list of the documents reviewed. Appendix B provides three alternative staffing recommendations in addition to the priority recommendation identified in the body of this report.

Section 1: Policies, Training, and Operations

In line with 21st century policing practices, police officers should receive up-to-date and effective training guided by best practices to prepare them to meet the responsibilities and challenges of their daily work. Often, analysis focus on reviewing policies that inform training, and taken together, policies and training inform operations.

The information presented in this section centers on the various policies and procedures related to BPD's training and operations. We begin with a brief overview of the topics. We then detail our findings and actionable recommendations.

Policies

In this section, we discuss our assessment of the various policies and documents related to BPD's operations for each listed area of focus below. The team also examined policies to determine whether they may inadvertently result in disparate outcomes among community members. In preparing findings and recommendations for this section, the assessment team reviewed policies and documents focused on four key areas:

1. Fair and impartial policing
2. Community response and assistance
3. Body-worn cameras
4. Burlington Police Officer's Association union contract

The full list of policies and documents reviewed is provided in Appendix A.

Findings and recommendations

Fair and impartial policing

Finding 1.1: Directive DD03 - Fair and Impartial Policing 2020 does not currently list cultural competency training in section VIII.

Recommendation 1.1: The BPD should consider adding cultural competency training to those listed in section VIII of directive DD03.

Finding 1.2: Section VI of directive DD03 - Fair and Impartial Policing 2020 provides a strong basis for reducing bias in law enforcement actions. In directive DD03 - Fair and Impartial Policing 2020, section IX.E, the policy states: "Supervisors will be alert for and respond to indications of potential biased policing."

Recommendation 1.2: Although it is encouraging that BPD includes the above language in its policy, the department should include examples for their officers of what these indicators may be.

Finding 1.3: Section 1.D of document DD40 - Quality Control, Internal Investigations & Discipline seems to indicate that minor complaints or transgressions need not be documented, nor do these incidents seem to require adjudication in a Citizen's Complaint Form.

Recommendation 1.3.1: BPD should revise this policy so that all complaints, even those immediately resolved with an explanation, are documented in the same complaint system. Such documentation ensures that BPD can accurately understand complainant demographics, complaint types, and adjudication outcomes, particularly in relation to disparities.

These incidents need not negatively affect an officer's record, but they should be documented for the purposes of recordkeeping, complete analysis of complaint activity, accountability to the community and to ensure BPD can identify officers who continually engage in minor transgressions to provide them with more stringent interventions if required.

Reporting of corruption and misconduct

Finding 1.4: In directive DD43 - Reporting Corruption and Misconduct, section IV.A, the policy states that employees must report "upon gaining sufficient evidence to believe corruption or misconduct has or is occurring."

The term "sufficient evidence" places the onus of investigation on the reporting employee when this should be the task of the internal investigative division. It also seems to discourage employees from reporting because they must weigh whether the evidence they have seen or heard is "sufficient."

Recommendation 1.4.1: BPD should rewrite this directive to set the standard to be "reasonable suspicion" to reduce the role of the reporting employee and leave the investigative task with the internal investigation division.

Finding 1.5: In directive DD43 - Reporting Corruption and Misconduct, section IV.A.1-4 details four possible reporting mechanisms but does not include an explanation of how or why an employee should choose between them (e.g., timing of the incident, availability of the method of reporting, severity of incidents, employee comfort level).

Recommendation 1.5.1: The BPD should add language to assist employees in understanding the choice between the four reporting mechanisms.

Use of force

Notably, the new Vermont State Use of Force policy(ies) will replace the BPD Use of Force policies when it becomes effective October 1st, 2021¹¹. Because this policy(ies) was not in effect at the CNA

¹¹https://vcjc.vermont.gov/sites/vcjc/files/documents/2021%20UOF%20statutes%20in%20Word_0.pdf

contract end date of September 30, 2021, findings and recommendations in this report are based on the current Use of Force policies in place by the BPD under this contract period.

Finding 1.6: Although the rules in directive DD01 - Law Enforcement Role & Authority, Ethics, Organizational Structure & Department Rules prohibit the use of excessive force, no specific rule imposes a duty for BPD employees to intervene or report excessive force they witness or learn about. This topic is covered under DD05 - Use of Force and should also be covered under DD01.

Recommendation 1.6.1: The BPD should include a specific rule in directive DD01 that requires department personnel to intervene or report excessive force when witnessed or learned about.

Recommendation 1.6.2: Consider employing Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (ABLE) training, aimed at creating a culture in which officers routinely intervene as necessary to prevent misconduct, avoid police mistakes, and promote officer health and wellness.

Finding 1.7: The policy DD05 - Use of Force, 6-30-2020 starts with a "sanctity of life" statement in the purpose and philosophy. It also includes clear language on "duty of care," "duty to intervene," and "duty to report."

Recommendation 1.7.1: The BPD should continue to use the above language, which reflects best practices for use of force policies. The statements on duty to care, duty to intervene, and duty to report should also be added to DD01- Law Enforcement Role & Authority, Ethics, Organizational Structure & Department Rules.

Finding 1.8: The policy DD05 - Use of Force, 6-30-2020 clearly enumerates where the use of canines falls on the use of force continuum.

Recommendation 1.8.1: The BPD should continue to follow the prescribed protocol for where the use of canines falls on the use of force continuum.

Finding 1.9: BPD prohibits "prolonged face-down prone restraint."

Recommendation 1.9.1: The BPD should rewrite this statement to replace "face-down prone" with "prone" only. The prone position refers to when someone is flat on their stomach or chest with the knees down. Someone can have their head or face up and still be in the prone position. The policy should also direct that as soon as wrist restrains are applied, the subject should immediately be moved to a sitting position and be closely monitored. In addition, this policy is documented only in the section on Excited Delirium, but it should be documented elsewhere, possibly in a dedicated section on prohibited use of force in DD05.02.

Finding 1.10: BPD policy does not provide guidance about how to manage resistance in interactions with people with disabilities, intoxication, or mental illness (DD05 - Diminished Capacity, Disability).

Recommendation 1.10.1: BPD should provide guidance in another use of force section, DD05.02, about how to respond to resistance in interactions with people who have disabilities, who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or who have mental health conditions. BPD should review examples

provided by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Law Enforcement Policy Center.¹² The Fayetteville, North Carolina, Police Department¹³ also has several policies we recommend the BPD to review as examples.

Finding 1.11: The use of batons on the use of force continuum is not clear in DD05 - Use of Force, 6-30-2020.

Recommendation 1.11.1: BPD should update the language in the above policy to more clearly outline where the use of a baton falls on the use of force continuum.

Finding 1.12: In directive DD05 - Use of Force, 6-30-2020, section IV, Prohibitions, BPD does not prohibit the use of lethal force when the officer does not have clear line of sight of the subject.

Recommendation 1.12.1: BPD should add a prohibition on the use of lethal force when the officer does not have a clear line of sight of the subject.

Finding 1.13: BPD does not currently have a separate reporting mechanism for the use of a firearm to kill a dangerous or seriously injured animal.

Recommendation 1.13.1: BPD should consider developing a separate reporting mechanism for the use of a firearm to kill a dangerous or seriously injured animal. Although reporting these incidents as use of force is inappropriate, they should be tracked in some system, particularly given longstanding community concerns about national reports of officer use of firearms against family pets.

Finding 1.14: Based on our interviews, we found that congruence is lacking between what the public thinks is a legitimate use of force and what the BPD believes and trains its officers to do regarding use of force.

The public has expressed an interest in BPD renewing policies and practices that require officers to disengage from a situation under certain circumstances (e.g., low-level crimes, nuisance situations, instances in which there is no threat to another person) to reduce the risk of escalation. In addition, some favor calling in non-police resources or not dispatching police at all to these situations.

Recommendation 1.14.1: BPD and the City of Burlington should create channels for Burlington community members to be involved in the review of its use of force policies so the community can understand why such use of force may be permitted and so the BPD can reconsider their policies and practices based on community input.

Finding 1.15: The Directive DD01 - Law Enforcement Role & Authority, Ethics, Organizational Structure & Department Rules requires BPD to produce a mission statement to guide department operations; however, BPD's current mission statement is not included in the directive.

¹² Visit the IACP Law Enforcement Policy Center here: <https://www.theiacp.org/policycenter>.

¹³ <https://www.fayettevillenc.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/18392/637625600215270000>

Recommendation 1.15.1: The BPD mission and values statement¹⁴ should be included in the directive.

Finding 1.16: Although the IACP Code of Ethics referenced in Directive DD01 - Law Enforcement Role & Authority, Ethics, Organizational Structure & Department Rules sets out important precepts, the IACP version adopted by BPD was written in 1991.

Recommendation 1.16.1: BPD should research available police codes of ethics to review alternative, more contemporary iterations of the IACP Code of Ethics. The IACP also has a suite of model policies¹⁵ that can be used as a frame and then built upon. The BPD's current version must be updated.

Quality control, internal investigation, and discipline

Finding 1.17: Directive DD40 - Quality Control, Internal Investigations & Discipline appears to be a boiler plate policy that may be part of a larger boiler plate policy manual that was written for departments of all sizes and does not address issues that may be specific to BPD Bureau of Internal Affairs (BIA). The policy was written or approved eight years ago, and much has changed in internal investigations, community and employee expectations, and discipline over that time.

Recommendation 1.17.1: BPD should completely rewrite this policy according to industry best standards, including eliminating the Office of Quality Control (it is unclear what that is) and replacing it with Internal Affairs (preferable) or Office of Professional Standards with specific direction that Internal Affairs takes in the complaints and assigns out according to specific guidelines. BIA must have specific investigators who are assigned only to that responsibility and does not use what appears to be general investigators (III.C.2) to investigate complaints. The present policy leaves too many options that allow officers to violate policy undetected, and it prevents the process from being transparent to BPD employees and the community.

Finding 1.18: Having the chief serve as the adjudicator and keeper of complaints puts him or her in a difficult position. With the process set up as it is, the chief determines whether an investigation should occur and then serves as the arbiter of the investigation. Additionally, this current policy is vague (III.C.1), and it appears that the Quality Control Unit can investigate a complaint only when directed by the chief (III.C.2), which makes it appear that the chief is the intake for complaints.

Recommendation 1.18.1: BPD should create a policy that directs specifically which complaints are to be handled by first line supervisors and which are to be referred to BIA.

Recommendation 1.18.2: BPD should consider instituting a Citizen Review Board to review internal and external investigations, rather than having the chief serve as the final authority on facts and discipline.

Recommendation 1.18.3: BPD should establish a specific Internal Affairs section that conducts investigations, as well as a BPD internal disciplinary review board that reviews cases and makes

¹⁴ The BPD mission and value statement can be accessed here: <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/Police>.

¹⁵ Visit IACP Law Enforcement Policy Center here: <https://www.theiacp.org/policycenter>.

written recommendations regarding discipline to the chief. This policy should provide the BPD internal disciplinary review board with guidelines to help determine the level of discipline to ensure consistency and fairness, and the personnel on the internal review board should change from case to case. The chief has the final decision to agree or disagree with the recommendation of the BPD internal review board and to increase or decrease the level of discipline, and his or her decision must be documented in writing. The department should establish a Citizen Review Board (CRB) to review cases, which requires a separate policy to ensure confidentiality and a consistent and fair review process. A CRB would provide another level of support to the chief for his or her decisions. Often police chiefs think a CRB takes power and responsibility from the chief, but it can also increase the credibility of the chief's decisions.

Finding 1.19: Section 1.E of document DD40 - Quality Control, Internal Investigations & Discipline places responsibility with the chief to determine whether an internal investigation is needed and to forward necessary information to initiate an investigation to the deputy chief.

Recommendation 1.19.1: BPD's commander¹⁶ of Internal Affairs should report directly to the chief of police.

Finding 1.20: Although directive DD01 - Law Enforcement Role & Authority, Ethics, Organizational Structure & Department Rules includes a rule that requires an employee to report any civil suit filed against them because of an act in the line of duty; however, there is no parallel rule requiring BPD employees to report any arrest or contact by outside law enforcement agencies while off duty.

Recommendation 1.20.1: In line with 21st century policing best practices, BPD should modify directive DD01 - Law Enforcement Role & Authority, Ethics, Organizational Structure & Department Rules to include a requirement for BPD employees to report any arrest or contact by outside law enforcement agencies while off duty. This requirement should be restated in the revised Internal Investigations directive, with reference to DD01.

Community response and assistance

INTERACTING WITH PERSON'S WITH DIMINISHED CAPACITIES

Finding 1.21: The language utilized in directive DD13.3 - Interacting with Persons with Diminished Capacities must be updated and revised to align with 21st century best practices.

"Person-first" language is considered a best practice for discussing mental health conditions and should be reflected throughout this directive. An example of person-first language is "a person living with a severe mental health condition," which starts with the word *person* and then refers to the condition. "Persons with diminished capacities" is also an example of person-first language; however, the term "diminished capacities" has negative connotations and should be re-considered. "Persons

¹⁶ While BPD utilizes different terms to reflect their command structure, we use the term "commander" as it is common police terminology, and BPD understands the rank at which commander refers.

with disabilities” or “recognizing and responding to persons in (mental health) crisis” would be an acceptable alternative.

This directive does cover certain best practices in interacting with a person experiencing a mental health crisis, which the BPD should be commended for; however, BPD should consider whether it may be appropriate to broaden best practices for these interactions in documents such as a directive or an accompanying standard operating procedure (SOP). These broadened best practices may include the following:

- Avoid shouting as well as giving multiple commands.
- When safe and appropriate, limit external stimuli by turning down police radio, avoiding lights and sirens, and reducing onlookers.
- Be truthful in communications (e.g., do not promise something you cannot deliver).
- Give choices whenever it is safe to do so, reinforce that officers are there to help, introduce yourself, and ask what name the person would like to be called.
- Call for clinician assistance when possible.
- Utilize time as a tactic to de-escalate, to call for specialized resources, and to develop a plan.
- Generally speaking, distance plus cover equals time, so give physical space whenever it is possible and safe to do so, and request backup officer cover (cover can also include physical barriers) to buy additional time to slow things down.
- Utilize community-based treatment instead of the criminal justice system whenever possible.

Recommendation 1.21.1: Review of revised policy should include partners with both professional and lived experience such as the Howard Center, Street Outreach, and NAMI.

A robust community engagement process with input into the revisions is essential for BPD’s policy for responding to persons living with severe mental health conditions. This engagement is essential not only for public transparency but also to ensure community resources align with the policy and that best practices, including language, are reflected. Ultimately, the final decision will lie with the police department because it has the internal police operational expertise as well as knowledge of how this policy fits with other department policies. Even so, active community engagement is an essential component of the policy review process and ultimately of building community trust.

Recommendation 1.21.2 Ensure policy reflects current department operations. For example, the policy indicates that street outreach personnel carry a police radio, and it describes the general expected function of the street outreach personnel.

Over time, as programs and resources change, attrition occurs, best practices evolve, and leadership changes, policies often end up no longer reflecting actual operational procedures. For this reason, it is critically important to not only review and (when appropriate) revise policies annually, but also to include officers and community members who have a stake in the revisions in the review process. For example, the research and development team in some police departments is in charge of

reviewing and revising policies, and all too often, these reviews are done in isolation—without including those who are actively involved in the operations of the directive. For this particular directive, the BPD social worker, the Howard Center, NAMI, a designated BPD officer heavily involved in behavioral health response, and additional key community stakeholders should be involved in this process. A community forum is also often helpful to gain community feedback.

Recommendation 1.21.3: As the City of Burlington and BPD work to develop and operationalize alternative responses both within and outside of the BPD, consideration should be given to the development of additional policies related to responding to persons in crisis (we discuss examples in the findings under the Specialized and Alternative Response Section of this report).

INTERACTING WITH PERSON'S WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Finding 1.22: BPD has a policy (DD13.01) for Interacting with Persons with Limited English Proficiency; however, the policy has not been updated since 2013.

Recommendation 1.22.1: The BPD should update this policy for grammar, spelling, and language best practices. Although including the community in most policy reviews is important to ensure public transparency, involving key community stakeholders in the review of this specific policy is of critical importance. Community stakeholders should include individuals and organizations representing this population who would have insight into best practice language and community resources.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Finding 1.23: This directive was written in 2013, and though the directive is overall well written, it has language that should be updated to reflect best practices. In addition, like DD 13.3, this policy should be reviewed with active community stakeholder involvement and with community feedback strongly considered.

Recommendation 1.23.1: Under officer response, “effective communication” should be expanded to include “professional and effective communication,” meaning treating people with dignity and respect.

Recommendation 1.23.2: IIC: Mental health referral is indicated in this directive but is covered under a separate directive: DD13.3 - Interacting with Persons with Diminished Capacities. Consideration should be given to integrating the two directives.

- The term “citizen” should be replaced with a term inclusive of all people, for example “community member” .
- “Persons with Diminished Capacities” should be changed to a less negative term, such as “Persons with Disabilities.”
- IIB: “Handling” should be changed to “responding to,” and “suffers” should be changed to “living with.” The phrase “officers should” is used throughout the directive, and when appropriate, this should be changed to “officers will.”
- IIE: “Dealing with” should be changed to “responding to.”

- IIE.b: Expand the best practice of describing to the person the activity the officer will be taking before doing it (this is a trauma informed practice) like custodial escort actions (e.g., handcuffing, transporting).

VICTIM SERVICES

Finding 1.24: Directive DD11 - Victim-Witness Assistance provides a contemporary overview of the importance of responding to victims and witnesses in a respectful way. There is a strong statement that BPD will not inquire about the immigration status of crime victims and witnesses, which is commendable.

Recommendation 1.24.1: BPD should continue its policy of responding to victims and witnesses in a respectful way and avoiding inquiries regarding the immigration status of crime victims and witnesses.

Recommendation 1.24.2: BPD should specify that the “safe and friendly location” available for providing statements will be physically separate from any location where a suspect or perpetrator may be located.

Finding 1.25: Directive DD11 - Victim-Witness Assistance advises that for emergencies, the Chittenden County Victim Advocate has a pager.

Recommendation 1.25.1: Since pagers are not the way most individuals are currently contacted after hours, BPD should update this reference as currently appropriate.

Finding 1.26: Directive DD11 - Victim-Witness Assistance outlines that a next of kin notification would be made by a supervisor, volunteer clergy member, or BPD (or City staff) official most adept at making such notifications.

Recommendation 1.26.1: BPD should consider whether individuals who receive special training on next of kin notifications should be the individuals doing so, with non-trained individuals assisting as appropriate.

Finding 1.27: Section IV.D of Directive DD03 does not currently specify what constitutes as a professional interpreter.

Recommendation 1.27.1: Though self-evident, BPD might consider adding language to section IV.D specifying that family members and particularly children do not constitute professional interpreters and should not be used as translators.

Finding 1.28: The policy does not refer to mandatory, optional, academy, and in-service training for officers regarding victim/witness contact.

Recommendation 1.28.1: If the above training is required, BPD should state this in directive DD11 - Victim-Witness Assistance. If not, BPD should include the mandatory, optional, academy, and in-service trainings available to officers regarding victims and witnesses.

Finding 1.29: Directive DD11 - Victim-Witness Assistance outlines the resources available for victims of crime in the Burlington community.

Recommendation 1.29.1: If the Victim's Advocate position maintained by the department (Section A) is different from the county Victim Advocate referred to in Section B, this should be more clearly articulated (e.g., that these are distinct resources); if they are the same, they should be explained clearly.

Finding 1.30: BPD provides a list of resources available to victims and witnesses of crimes in directive DD11.

Recommendation 1.30.1: Generally, the strength of this policy lies in the resources it lists that should be available to victims and witnesses. As for all policies, the accuracy of the resources listed should be updated and reviewed annually.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE

Finding 1.31: Directive DD21.02 - Domestic Violence by Law Enforcement Employees: Prevention & Early Warning Initiatives does not currently provide a clear picture of the due process rights of the subject BPD employee, while also providing support for the victim.

Recommendation 1.31.1: Although the policy satisfactorily addresses the situation in which the subject is a BPD employee, BPD should provide additional guidance for domestic violence situations when the alleged perpetrator and the victim are both employees of the police department.

Finding 1.32: BPD has a Domestic Violence Prevention Officer; however, the policy has not been updated since 2007.

Recommendation 1.32.1: The BPD should update the DD21.01 - Domestic Violence Response policy to describe the position and responsibilities.

Body-worn cameras

Finding 1.33 Directive DD14.1 - Body Worn Camera Systems does not clearly address supervisory review of BWC footage for administrative investigations, conduct audits, or policy compliance. Notably, the BPD reports that the BPOA prohibits this important function, as indicated in Section IX. A of DD14.1 "BWC recordings shall not be audited to monitor Officer or personnel performance without cause."

Recommendation 1.33.1 The BPD should more clearly outline the supervisory review process of BWC footage and should include a random review by the shift supervisor of a certain number of BWC incidents at the end of each shift or, at minimum, the end of each week. The BPOA must be negotiated to permit this important function. This is imperative for transparency, accountability, commendation and coaching.

Finding 1.34: Directive DD14.1 - Body Worn Camera Systems clearly addresses standard operations with cameras, including Bureau of Justice Assistance Body Worn Camera Toolkit best practices on activation, deactivation, tagging, use of force, etc.

Recommendation 1.34.1: The BPD should continue to follow the best practice operational procedures outlined in their directive and update the directive as new national best practices are

released, continually reviewing new best practices added to the Bureau of Justice Assistance Body Worn Camera Toolkit.

BPOA union contract

Finding 1.35: The current contractual requirement of a minimum of 10 detectives hampers the flexibility of the City in reimagining its public safety response.

Recommendation 1.35.1: The contractual detective minimum should be renegotiated between the BPD and the City of Burlington considering a minimum threshold of eight detectives.

Finding 1.36: The contractual language on discipline in document 20190201 BPOA contract 2018 to 2022 FINAL is inconsistent with industry standards.

The record retention time frames outlined in 20190201 BPOA contract 2018 to 2022 FINAL are too short and do not provide BPD the ability to retain documentation of these concerns for the purposes of progressive discipline or proactive intervention. The present BPOA union contract states that letters of reprimand and any other discipline short of suspension are maintained in personnel files for a maximum of one (1) year from the date of the event/conduct. Disciplinary actions resulting in a suspension are maintained in personnel files for a maximum of three (3) years from the date of the event/conduct.

Recommendation 1.36.1: The City should work with the BPD union to modify the retention periods so that discipline records are maintained for far longer periods, with a recommendation for the employment career of the officer.

Finding 1.37: According to the BPD union contract, all police officers automatically become senior police officers after three years of service and corporals after seven years of service.

Recommendation 1.37.1: The City should work with the BPD union to revise the promotion to senior police officer to five years of service.

Finding 1.38: According to the BPOA contract, Field Training Officers (FTOs) receive only \$15 per day extra for each day of FTO training, suggestive of an under appreciation of the important role played by FTOs.

FTOs are experienced officers who are paired with newly hired officers in probationary status for a period designated by the BPD prior to patrolling on their own. A sound vetting process for FTOs is important to shaping the way new officers interact with the community. The vetting process should be thorough, and the role should be incentivized appropriately. If it is only incentivized without a thorough vetting process, a culture of the “wrong” officers applying to be FTOs can be created. Consequently, both a thorough vetting process and compensation are important, along with an ongoing assessment of FTO evaluations to ensure FTOs do not continue in the role if their skills, disciplinary history, and evaluations do not support it.

Recommendation 1.38.1: The City of Burlington should work with BPD personnel to determine more appropriate compensation for FTO officers to ensure probationary officers are receiving high-quality and informed training, along with instituting regular evaluations of FTO performance.

Finding 1.39: According to the BPOA union contract, if an FTO is not available to provide training, the contract allows BPD to "delegate" the FTO function to officers with no FTO training.

Recommendation 1.39.1: The BPD should consider reviewing how many times the department has used the above delegation function assigning new officers with an officer who has had no FTO training. Based on the findings, the BPD should revise the protocol for providing training when an FTO is not available.

Finding 1.40: The BPOA union contract provides a wellness bonus for union member employees to reimburse off-duty activities intended to increase officer wellness. This provision is consistent with the Sixth Pillar of former president Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing recommendation to incentivize officer wellness.

Recommendation 1.40.1: The BPD should continue to offer a wellness bonus in their contract for BPOA member employees. Additionally, it would be insightful for the department to collect aggregated data to learn the degree to which members avail themselves of this contractual benefit, and to study its effectiveness.

Finding 1.41: Shift bids are conducted by strict seniority, resulting in little flexibility for BPD leadership to design shifts based on the best interests of the Department.

One potential restriction on shift bids is that officers cannot work the same shift more than four times consecutively. We have seen cases in which this system allows officers to "hide" from effective supervision by "shopping for sergeants." It also means all new officers can be on one shift, and it results in other consequences of a pure seniority shift bid system. Ideally, leadership should be able to more actively participate in how shifts are comprised, and the City should consider negotiating for the ability to design the shifts.

Additionally, throughout the interviews, BPD personnel shared concerns regarding the quality of officer candidates who may be attracted to the types of shift schedules currently offered.

Recommendation 1.41.1: The BPD should work to restructure their shift assignment process to one that more closely focusses on personnel needs. In addition, the BPOA contract should be renegotiated to increase efficiencies to the BPD, while allowing flexibility to meet the best interests of the department.

Training

Police leaders and stakeholders are responsible for providing the best possible training to their officers from pre-service academy training throughout an officer's career. In this section, we discuss our assessment of the various BPD policies and procedures for departmental training, both required by the police academy and during in-service training.

The State of Vermont academy training curricula is outside of the scope of this project, but because the training materials BPD provided were insufficient to make a thorough assessment, the assessment team did review two training curricula (mental health and use of force) required by the academy. Notably, the findings, and recommendations are based on the limited training documents provided to the assessment team by BPD. Consequently, our overall review and assessment of BPD training is limited.

Through our document review, we identified the following key findings:

- BPD has significant deficiencies in training.
- Key training topics recommended in the Final Report on 21st Century Policing (2015) are either not covered or covered insufficiently during basic officer training, in-service training, or both. Some of these topics include community policing and problem solving, bias awareness, situational decision-making, crisis intervention, procedural justice, impartial policing, mental health response, and cultural awareness.
- BPD officers understand the value of comprehensive training and would like more opportunities to participate in both in-house and external trainings.

For this assessment, we reviewed the “Rule 13 Compliance” for 2021, which is the training the State of Vermont requires annually for officers. These requirements include:

- First aid/cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- Firearms Qualification
- Conducted Electrical Weapons (taser) Training
- Fair and Impartial Policing (this is presently being updated by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council (VCJC))
- Use of Force Tactics (four hours that do not need to be consecutive)
- ARIDE certification (identification and assessment of drivers suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and evaluation of suspected drug impairment)

CNA reached out to VCJC but was unable to review the Fair and Impartial Policing curriculum. VCJC reported that they were redesigning the training and were unable to share it at this time.

Findings and recommendations

VCJS requires a total of 30 annual in-service training hours. We attempted to identify the total number of hours the required courses above accounted for through both the VCJC and the BPD, but we found no substantial answer. Use of Force was the only training that identified a requirement of four hours, yet the materials presented to us by the BPD did not appear sufficient to account for four hours.

To meet the established 30-hour requirement, officers choose from elective courses after the required courses, which is consistent with other police departments. CNA requested training records from the years 2015–2019 (due to COVID-19, we did not request 2020). BPD shared a spreadsheet

that included when the required and elective courses were offered, along with the officers who attended those trainings.

The *spell this out* (VCJC) did share their Use of Force and Mental Health Training materials. Notably, these training courses are part of the recruit training and are not offered to all officers post academy training. Although the overall content of both trainings was good, it was not particularly useful to this assessment other than to indicate that new recruits do enter police departments across Vermont, including BPD, with overall good training on these topics.

Further, the State of Vermont has a Team Two training (an eight-hour training that represents the rural state response to crisis intervention training), which is unique to Vermont and has been offered regionally across the state since 2013. One of those regional locations is Burlington. Yet in the nine years it has been offered, only 23 BPD officers have attended, with none in 2021, two in 2020, three in 2019, and three in 2018.

Team Two is provided through an annual grant with the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Public Safety. The grant provides eight regional trainings per year (just reduced to six due to funding). The northwest region of Vermont (including Burlington) gets two of these trainings (both when it was eight and now six). Training was conducted via Zoom in 2020. An average of 25 participants representing mental health and law enforcement organizations (e.g., sheriff's office, state police, local police department, mental health staff) attend per class.

The training is offered regionally so that local resources can be utilized, including a team of instructors from mental health crisis centers, emergency medical services (EMS), hospitals, dispatch, and NAMI. The training is almost all scenario based, with 1.5 hours of lecture. The training includes a presenter with lived experience.

Finding 1.42: Not unlike other police departments, BPD offers a significant amount of training covering police tactics regarding proper use of force and custodial escort. Although these are critically important trainings, they are often offered at the expense of de-escalation, communication, procedural justice, implicit bias, mental/behavioral health, crisis intervention, and trauma trainings. Nationally, a very low percent of calls for service end in use of force, yet most training tends to focus on use of force tactics. This should be reconsidered moving forward.

Some of the key trainings expected of 21st century policing were offered as electives, but only a limited number of officers attended (see Table 1).

Table 1. Example of officers attending elective trainings for 2018 and 2019

Training	Number of officers
Team Two mental response training offered in five regions in Vermont, including Burlington, 2018	3
Restorative Justice, 2018	2
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, 2018	10
Trauma Affected Child, 2019	2
Implicit Bias, 2019	4
Leadership Development for Supervisors, 2019	1
Crisis Negotiations, 2019	2

Recommendation 1.42.1: BPD should design a structured systematic curriculum with full lesson plans, learning objectives, goals and evaluations as well as training aides and visual materials such as PowerPoint slides and hands-on activities, among others.

Recommendation 1.42.2: BPD should review their training curriculum, structure, scheduling, and materials yearly to ensure trainings are meeting national best practices.

Recommendation 1.42.3: BPD should ensure that the quality of its implicit bias training courses align with national best practices and continue to provide these trainings during the basic officer training and annual in-service training. BPD should also ensure that the entire organization receives annual in-service training on implicit bias.

Recommendation 1.42.4: BPD should provide a comprehensive mental and behavioral health training course incorporating people with lived experience (e.g., those with autism, intellectual or developmental disabilities, or mental health conditions) and robust scenario-based training. Doing so will help officers become more familiar with the unique needs and individual considerations of people from these populations, which will better prepare them to respond to individuals in crisis. Scenario-based training will allow officers to practice the skills they have learned while receiving real-time feedback and evaluation.

Recommendation 1.42.5: Fair and Impartial Policing, De-escalation, Procedural Justice, and Implicit Bias should all be required trainings, and these principles should be integrated across all other training courses.

Recommendation 1.42.6: Provide the opportunity for community mental health advisory committee CMHAC (and, when appropriate, members of the community) to review and where appropriate observe non-police tactical training such as Fair and Impartial Policing, De-escalation, Procedural Justice, and Implicit Bias. Doing so promotes transparency and provides opportunities for public feedback.

Recommendation 1.42.7: The Use of Force training required by the State of Vermont and delivered by BPD should be formalized, with the BPD readily able to demonstrate how the required four hours are spent.

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Section 2: Citizen Complaints and Internal Affairs Investigations

The information presented in this section evaluates the various policies, procedures, and data related to BPD's citizen complaints and internal affairs investigations. We begin with a brief overview of the topics. We then detail our findings and actionable recommendations, intended to improve these processes within BPD and proactively address issues that may decrease police legitimacy.

Through our interviews, document review, and data analysis, the assessment team identified the following key findings:

- BPD collects little information about complaints and does not collect or document information about complainant demographics or the demographics of the target of the complaint.
- BPD lacks a consistent or clear process for internal affairs reviews of complaints.

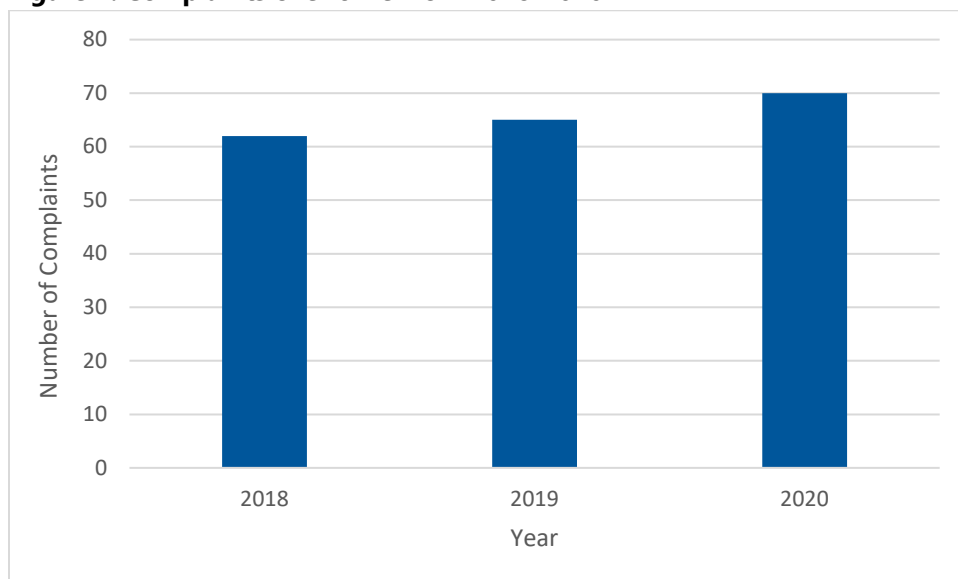
Citizen complaints

Utilization of the procedural justice model of policing, “which emphasizes transparency, explaining police actions, and responding to community concerns, has been identified as a strategy for decreasing the number of interactions in which civilians experience disrespectful treatment or the unjustified use of force” (Wood et al., 2020). Citizens desire a process through which their voices can be heard, particularly when their message involves police officer misconduct.

BPD provided the assessment team with information about complaints and commendations about BPD personnel from 2018 to 2020. BPD collects little information about complaints and does not collect or document information about complainant demographics or the demographics of the target of the complaint. In addition, complaints are captured in an Excel spreadsheet, a rudimentary form of holding important data. Here we present our analysis of the limited information included in the BPD complaints database.

BPD received a total of 197 complaints and commendations over the three-year period. As shown in Figure 1, complaints have increased slightly over time. During this period, BPD received six commendations, and the remaining 191 incidents were complaints. In the remainder of the analysis, we focus solely on complaints.

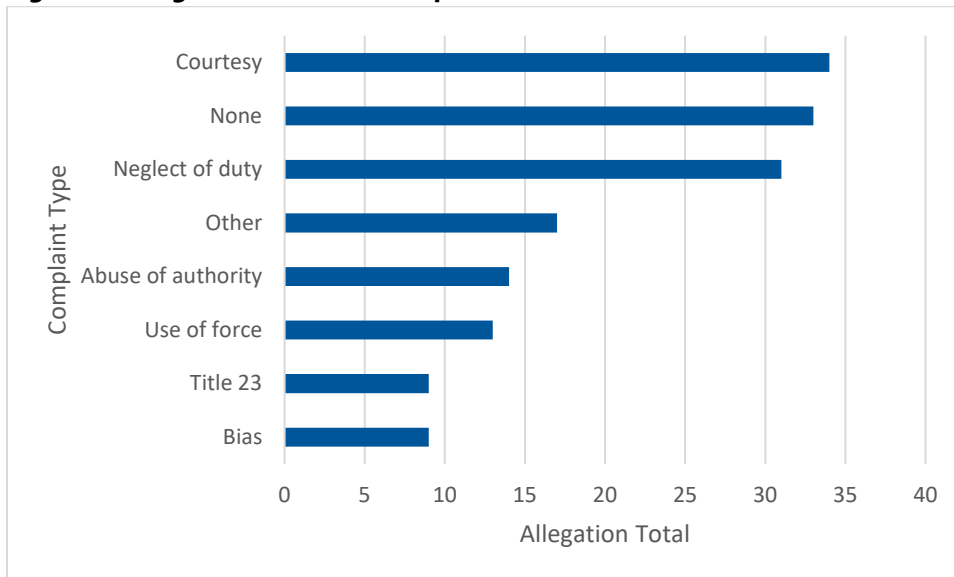
Figure 1. Complaints over time from 2018-2020



Note: It is unclear whether the COVID-19 global pandemic or the reduction in officers contributed to the increase in complaints in 2020.

Figure 2 displays the most common allegations made in complaints. Some complaints involve multiple allegations; for example, a complaint about a perceived racially motivated use of force incident would be coded as both use of force and bias. Complaints about courtesy are the most common, present in 34 of 191 complaints. The second most common (33 of 191 complaints) are complaints without a specific allegation. These include complaints that are not relevant to BPD (for example, a complainant dissatisfied with federal policies or complaints intended for another jurisdiction or agency), calls to the complaint line by individuals in mental health crisis (which are typically referred to appropriate agencies), and non-complaint information (suggestions for foot patrol deployment, requests for department memorabilia). BPD also uses another category to classify complaint allegations. Some of these complaints overlap those in the “none” category, though it is also used to classify complaints that cannot be investigated (e.g., thirdhand information).

Figure 2. Allegations made in complaints from 2018-2020



Note: Title 23 refers to motor vehicles.

Figure 3 shows complaint outcomes for all 191 complaints, and Figure 4 shows outcomes for complaints that BPD investigated and completed. The plurality of complaints resulted in an unfounded or exonerated outcome, with 23 percent of those with completed investigations resulting in a sustained outcome.

Figure 3. Complaint outcome from 2018-2019

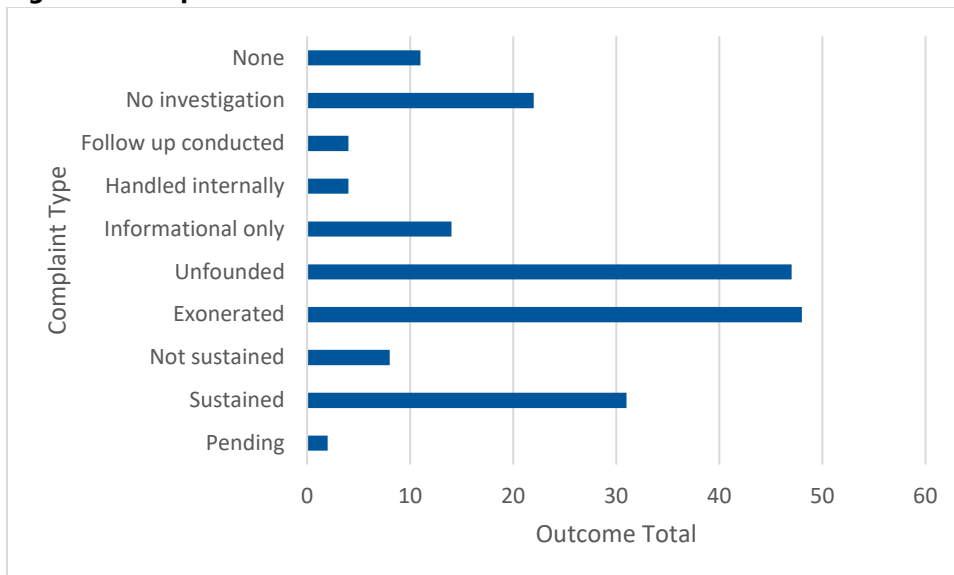
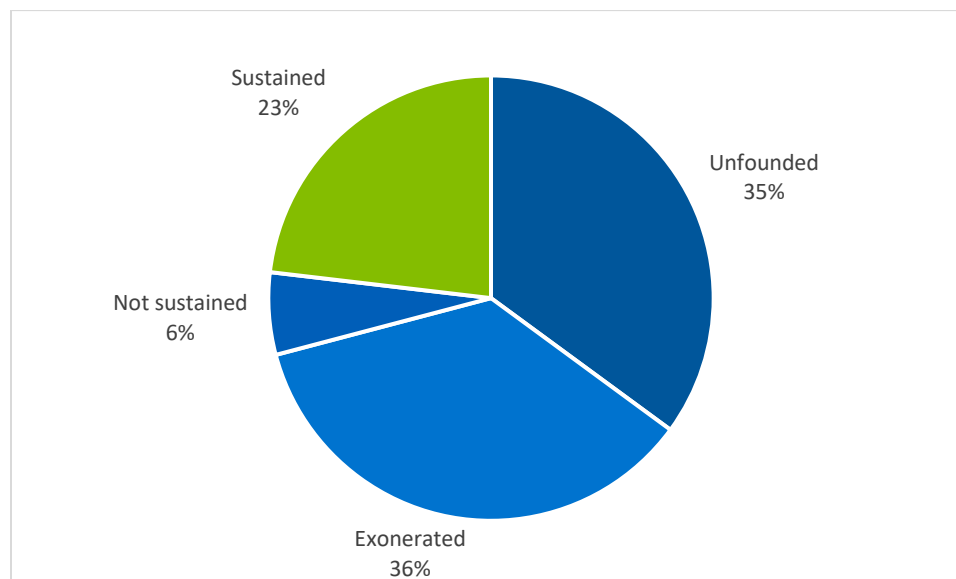


Figure 4. Complaint outcome for investigated and completed complaints from 2018-2020



Although a 23 percent sustained outcome is close to industry standards, it is important to understand for transparency how cases are unfounded or exonerated and what the difference is between Not Sustained, Exonerated, and Unfounded. Without such clarity, legitimate complaints might be hidden in these categories. Consequently, it is important to have detailed definitions of what constitutes each of these categories.

Findings and recommendations

Finding 2.1: BPD collects relatively little information about complaints and does not collect demographic information about the complainant or keep demographic data on the officer in the complaint data. BPD also collects both complaint outcome and discipline in a single data field.

Recommendation 2.1.1: BPD should develop or acquire a complaint tracking data system that includes, at a minimum, the following information about each complaint in separate, closed response data fields: complainant demographics, the demographics and personnel information (e.g., rank, tenure, role) of the target of the complaint, process-related dates (date received, date of incident, date reviewed by supervisor, date resolved), specific details of the accusation (e.g., associated policy), and the discipline directed (when applicable).

Recommendation 2.1.2: BPD should ensure that all data fields contain only a single variable (i.e., complaint outcome and associated discipline should be tracked in separate fields).

Finding 2.2: BPD currently classifies a relatively large number of complaints with no allegation or “other” allegation.

Recommendation 2.2.1 BPD should revisit its allegation categories to reduce or eliminate the “none” and “other” in the allegation field.

Recommendation 2.2.2: Citizen complaints should be separate from all other complaint processes.

Finding 2.3.1: The BPD website says that "minor" complaints may be investigated by on-duty supervisors; however, there is no clear definition of *minor*.

Finding 2.3.2: There is no clear distinction between citizen complaint, administrative review, or BIA investigation.

Recommendation 2.3.1: BPD should clarify its citizen complaint process and reference that process within the disciplinary policy. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Complaints will be accepted from any source, including by person, mail, email, BPD website, or telephone. Supervisors must make reasonable and diligent efforts to obtain a statement from any complaining party.
- Every complaining party will be referred to a supervisor, the Internal Affairs Bureau, or Human Resources (HR) so the complaint may be received.
- Without exception, every complaint that, if true, would constitute a violation of BPD policy must be thoroughly investigated and documented by an HR supervisor or senior official.
- When the complainant's address is known, the supervisor receiving the complaint will complete the complaint acknowledgement letter and mail it to the complainant. If the complaint was received electronically or telephonically, the supervisor may respond in that same manner and document the communication. A scanned copy of the acknowledgement letter should be attached to the electronic IACMS case file.
- Anonymous complaints will be accepted. The Internal Affairs Commander or his or her designee will review each anonymous complaint and determine the feasibility of further investigation.

Finding 2.4: Policy DD40 - Quality Control, Internal Investigations & Discipline does not identify other means for a citizen to file a complaint (via phone or online).

Recommendation 2.4.1: BPD should update directive DD40 - Quality Control, Internal Investigations & Discipline to identify additional means for citizens to file a complaint.

Finding 2.5: Burlington community members and related stakeholders expressed limited trust that the BPD would be transparent with case information and Body Worn Camera (BWC) footage after a critical incident.

Based on our interviews, BPD personnel appeared to be aware of this sentiment and agreed that some Burlington community members feel there is limited transparency regarding critical incidents. The BPD cited barriers to BWC footage release due to constraints of criminal investigations and guidelines by the city attorney.

Recommendation 2.5.1: BPD should prioritize the use of social media communication platforms for up-to-date information when critical incidents occur while providing ongoing real time updates. This improves community trust and transparency. As trust increases, community members will often share their own video which can, where appropriate, be shared with the community by the police department.

Recommendation 2.5.2: The Burlington city attorney should release public guidance around the constraints for releasing information during an ongoing investigation. Policy should be developed and publicly shared, and the release of information should be done in a consistent manner in every instance to avoid any bias. BPD and the City should also look into other agencies' processes for release of BWC footage (e.g., Las Vegas).

Internal affairs investigations

Although procedural justice is important for BPD's relationship with the community, internal procedural justice is equally important for maintaining internal employee relationships and trust (*Final Report on 21st Century Policing*, 2015). To evaluate BPD's internal procedural justice, the assessment team randomly selected 12 BIA cases to review between 2017 and 2020. During this period, BPD had 28 BIA cases. Notably, the BPOA union contract specifically states under 15.4 G: "Any information gained in the course of an employee's investigation is confidential and shall not be voluntarily released to any party outside the office of the Chief of Police, City Attorney, Human Resources Director, and the Department investigator." Additionally, there are also explicit restrictions in the City's Personnel Policy Manual (12.9) about how or whether some materials can be shared. Notably, several significant pieces of information were missing from the files reviewed, including the following:

- No reference to the timeline for conducting the investigation or what evidence was used or reviewed to sustain the use of force.
- No reference to the length of suspension levied.
- It was unclear whether a complaint had been filed or whether the incident was identified during a normal review of a use of force incident.
- No reference to whether or not there was a criminal offense by the officer.
- No reference to the outcome of the criminal investigation or any charges stemming from the investigation.

Notably, the findings and recommendations below are reflective of the limited information that was provided in the case files.

Findings and recommendations

Finding 2.6: The BPOA union contract restricts the information that can be shared with the public on internal investigations.

Recommendation 2.6.1: The City should consider transparency and trust issues with the community when negotiating the next contract to allow for the release of specific information concerning officer complaints, findings, and discipline while maintaining the confidentiality of the

investigation. Many cities allow for the release of overall complaint information and the disciplinary findings of officers, regardless of the stipulations in the union contract.

Finding 2.7: The CNA assessment team was unable to determine how long each investigation took to complete.

Recommendation 2.7.1: BPD should develop a policy that directs how BIA will conduct an investigation, who conducts the investigation, and the expected timeline for the investigation. Best practice allows for different timelines for investigation completion that are established for different levels of complaints. Additionally, the BIA policy may include lower levels of complaints for which investigations are conducted at the supervisor or lieutenant level. A clear policy is important for the officers of the department to ensure they will know what happens in the event of a complaint or an internal investigation of an officer involved shooting, serious use of force, or in-custody death.

Finding 2.8: Not all BIA cases cite a rules violation.

Recommendation 2.8.1: If a case does not cite a rules violation, the department likely believes that no rules violation exists. Best practice would be for the department to cite the department policies or rules that the officer followed to support his or her actions. Doing this allows the investigator to support whatever his or her investigative findings are.

A good internal investigation will normally provide detail into the rules or policies the officer did not follow, which allows the department to review the actual rule or policy to determine whether revision is needed or whether additional or updated training is needed for the officer or for the entire department.

Not following every rule or policy to the letter does not mean the officer is at fault, but it does indicate that additional training for the officer, additional training for the department, or a policy revision might be needed. Departments are sometimes reluctant to cite violations of policy for fear of civil action by the community member involved.

Finding 2.9: The seriousness of the violations are not described.

Recommendation 2.9.1: As in the previous recommendation, best practice requires that the violations of rules or policies be identified and explained. Not doing this sends the message to the department that policy violations are accepted if no criminal charges are brought against an officer. If a department does not recognize and address the seriousness of the policy violation, it inhibits policy revision to address the problem.

Recommendation 2.9.2: The internal/administrative investigator must be willing to recognize and enforce policy violations and be unafraid to make recommendations to rectify the problem.

Recommendation 2.9.3: Best practice would be to provide for an internal investigative process that details every step of the investigative process including exactly who in the department will conduct the investigation, officer conduct and care immediately following the incident, officer and witness interviews and statements, evidence and document collection, case file preparation and presentation, and recommendations for discipline and policy revision.

Finding 2.10: It is unclear which cases have been investigated by Internal Affairs.

Recommendation 2.10.1: Department policy should specify who conducts the internal/administrative investigation, including the investigator's position and the supervisor's position (not by name, but by position in the policy). Internal/administrative investigations should be investigated the same way in every instance to eliminate the question of favoritism or bias. The policy should include direction on conflicts of interest (e.g., prohibiting friends or relatives from investigating a family member or a friend) and confidentiality.

Finding 2.11: Members resigning prior to the completion of their case investigation appear to have their cases closed without final dispositions, allowing an officer to apply to another department because cases are not forwarded to the state.

Recommendation 2.11.1: Regardless of the employment status of the officer involved, the case should be investigated to its conclusion. If the officer resigns prior to providing a written statement or an interview, the investigation should continue to its conclusion. The investigation can and should continue without the participation of the officer involved. Having this policy in writing ensures that officers will not be surprised of the department's intention to continue the investigation.

Recommendation 2.11.2: The department should have a policy that states that the officer will not receive a recommendation from the department for a new position without his or her participation in the investigation. Further the policy should state that the department will notify the new employer of the officer's unwillingness to participate in the BIA investigation.

Section 3: Police Oversight

A police commission is a valuable method for harnessing community input and providing an additional level of transparency and accountability regarding law enforcement operations. In June of 2020, the City of Burlington released the *Resolution Relating to Racial Justice through Economic and Criminal Justice* to address what was cited as the systemic racism that continues to adversely affect BIPOC community members. As outlined in the resolution, a joint committee of the City Council Public Safety Committee and Police Commission was tasked with re-envisioning public safety to:

...include a full operational and functional assessment of the Burlington Police Department that interrogates who, what, where, and how the department polices and includes a review and analysis of the assessment with full community participation and input, followed by the implementation of a methodical transition to a public safety apparatus that delivers services aligned with the values and vision of the community. (Racial Justice Resolution, 2020)

Additionally, the resolution provided the guidance for police oversight, stating that the Police Commission shall:

- Be entrusted with access to all complaints about sworn officers;
- Be entrusted with and may ask for the collection of additional quarterly demographic-disaggregated data, such as data related to officer-community member encounters; and
- Must approve by simple majority any disciplinary decision, including a decision of non-discipline, that the Police Chief wishes to implement in a use of force case.

This section evaluates the relevant policies and procedures applicable to community member oversight of the BPD. We begin with a brief overview of the topics. We then detail our findings and actionable recommendations.

Through our interviews and document review, we identified the following key findings:

- The present police oversight structure does not have sufficient community member representation with authority beyond an advisory role.
- The authority of the Police Commission is not clearly outlined supporting the reach of their responsibilities.
- The BPD does not adequately require public engagement and input on directives, departmental goals and objectives, and the BPD strategic plan.

Findings and recommendations

Finding 3.1: The *Resolution Relating to Racial Justice through Economic and Criminal Justice* does not outline the staffing levels for investigators and support personnel.

Recommendation 3.1.1: The City of Burlington, in partnership with the BPD, should base the outline of staffing levels for investigators and support personnel on anticipated workloads.

Finding 3.2: The Charter Change calling for the Independent Community Control Board was vetoed in early 2021 by the Mayor and sustained by City Council members present during the Annual City Meeting in March 2021.

Recommendation 3.2.1: The City of Burlington, in partnership with the BPD, should consider revising this charter change to reflect a provision for investigations that warrant additional time. Although 30 days is acceptable as a requirement for most complaints, the policy should include a provision for additional time for issues such as contacting and interviewing complainants or witnesses and gathering additional evidence. The policy should specify that if additional time is needed for lower-level complaints, the investigator will make a request in writing to the IA commander who will approve or disapprove the request. If an extension is approved, designating the time allowed to the investigator should be required. Best practice is 30–45 days because it does not leave the employee or the complaint waiting for the results of the investigation. For the more serious Use of Force or Officer Involved Shooting/Officer Involved Death cases, much more time is required to adequately provide for a thorough investigation.

Recommendation 3.2.2: Every person who is assigned to Internal Affairs should be specifically trained in conducting internal investigations; there are several one- to two-week training schools that provide this training. Those assigned to Internal Affairs should be required to join the National Internal Affairs Investigators Association (NIAIA) and participate in professional training and yearly conferences.

Finding 3.3: Although input from affected employees is helpful in formulating goals and objectives and suggesting changes in directives, there is no apparent directive that requires Department leadership to seek input from Burlington’s public on formulating “goals and objectives” for directives.

Recommendation 3.3.1: Consistent with a key recommendation by former president Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, BPD should modify its directives to require public engagement and input on directives, departmental goals and objectives, and the development of any strategic plan.

Finding 3.4: Presently, the BPD chief has ultimate authority to accept or reject the Police Commission’s recommendations. It is critically important that there is a structure that gives greater authority, rather than the ability to advise, to the commission regarding the final disposition.

As outlined in the Burlington Police Commission Policy, ultimate authority to accept or reject the Police Commission’s recommendations lies with the chief of BPD. This point was mentioned during interviews and was expressed as a limiting factor to the Commission’s oversight role. Gaps in the oversight ability of the Police Commission can also be found in the BPD BWC policy since the document does not outline the process and ability for the Commission to review BWC footage.

Recommendation 3.4.1: The City of Burlington should formalize the authority of the Police Commission, which should be greater than an advisory role, and clearly outline the reach of their responsibilities. As protocol, all relevant supporting case file materials (BWC, Use of Force reports,

Interview statements etc.) should be reviewed by the police commission (or other community member oversight review board), which would be utilized to support the Chief's recommended disciplinary decision (or to make alternative recommendations to the Chief for consideration). Ultimately, it is customary that the Chief makes the final disciplinary decision, however, full review of all supporting case file documents is important to increase transparency and provide important information that supports (or negates) the Chief's recommendation and ultimate decision.

Finding 3.5: The BPD does not currently have a Public Information Officer (PIO).

Based on the assessment team's interviews with BPD personnel, department members are interested in adopting the PIO models outlined by other departments across the nation. As cited in the *Final Report on 21st Century Policing*, increased communication, as suggested by procedural justice practices, increases legitimacy and transparency between police departments and the communities they serve. A PIO will help bolster communication between the department and the Burlington community, increasing the department's legitimacy in the eyes of the public and strengthening their relationship.

Recommendation 3.5.1 The BPD should hire a PIO to develop a departmental communication policy, prioritize information sharing, bolster legitimacy, and build public trust.

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Section 4: Use of Force and Officer Involved Shootings

Building trust and legitimacy between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve should be the foundation for all BPD policies and procedures. As stated in the *Final Report on 21st Century Policing*:

If police are to carry out their responsibilities according to established policies, these policies must be reflective of community values and not lead to practices that result in disparate impacts on various segments of the community. They also need to be clearly articulated to the community and implemented transparently so police will have credibility with residents and the people can have faith that their guardians are always acting in their best interest. (*Final Report on 21st Century Policing* 2015, 19)

The information presented in this section centers on the various policies, procedures, and incident data related to BPD's use of force (UOF) incidents and officer involved shootings (OIS). The assessment team randomly selected and reviewed 12 UOF and two OIS files. We begin with a brief overview of the topics. We then detail our findings, analysis, and actionable recommendations. Section 4 is divided into the following two subsections: use of force and officer involved shootings

Through our interviews and document review, we identified the following key findings:

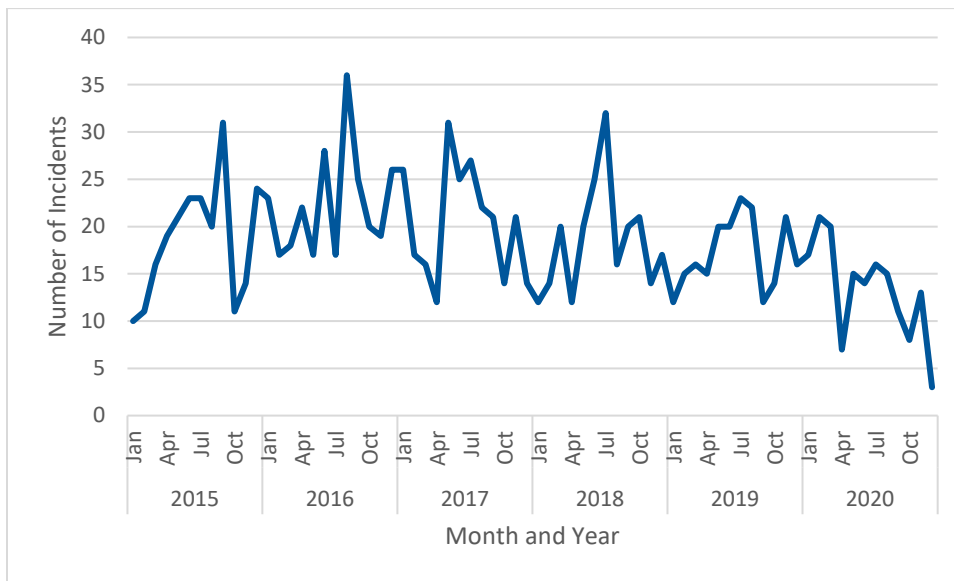
- The BPD has an overall use of force ratio of less than 1 percent of total incidents
- BPD's current data collection, tracking, investigatory process, and timeline regarding officer involved shootings is unclear. BPD should re-examine its procedures to promote transparency and accountability as well as align with national best practices.

Use of force

BPD provided use of force (UOF) data from 2015 to 2020. During this period, BPD had 1,326 use of force incidents. As seen in Figure 5, BPD's use of force incident counts have been relatively steady over time, though they were somewhat lower in 2020 (likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

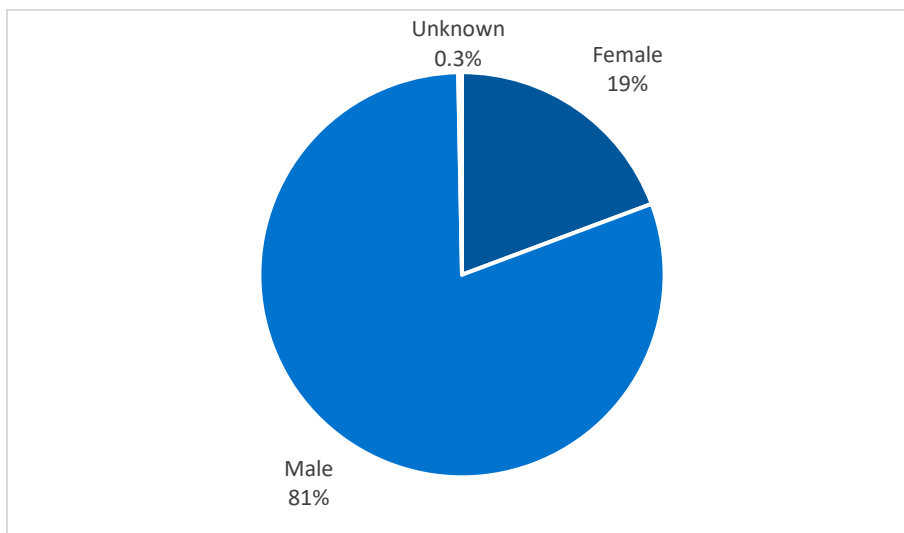
Findings and recommendations

Figure 5. Use of force incidents over time, 2015-2020



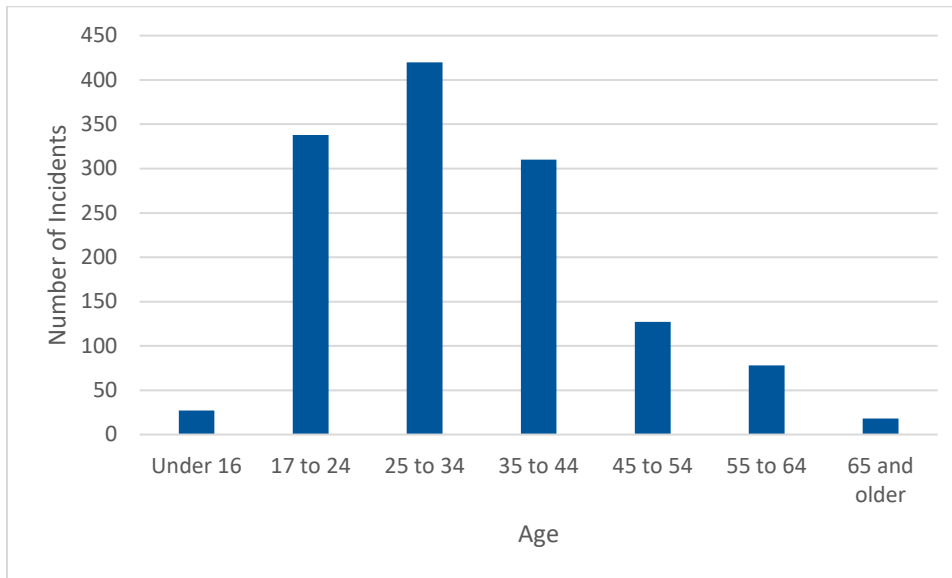
Most incidents involve male community members, as seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Use of force incidents by sex of involved community member from 2015-2020



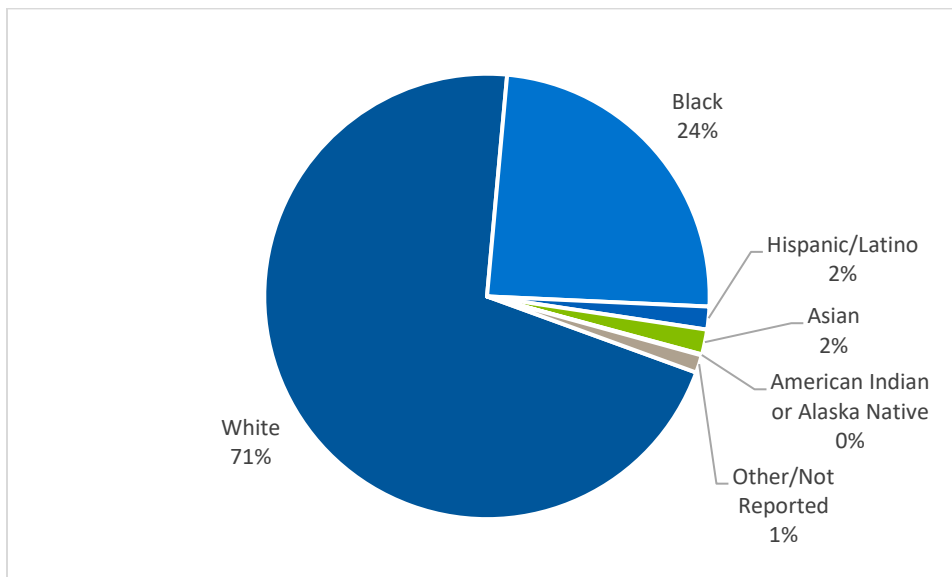
In Figure 7 we present a summary of use of force incidents by the age of the individual involved. Use of force incidents involved community members ranging in age from 7 years old to 82 years old, with most involving individuals between 17 and 44 years old.

Figure 7. Use of force incidents by age of involved community member from 2015-2020



In Figure 8, we describe the race of the community members involved in use of force incidents. At 24 percent of use of force incidents, Black community members are overrepresented compared to their presence in the Burlington population, which is 5.7 percent.

Figure 8. Use of force incidents by race of the involved community member from 2015-2020



Understanding racial disparities in law enforcement activity is difficult given the complexity of developing a baseline against which to compare the activity in question. Using Census Bureau population numbers will typically result in overestimates of disparity, since these numbers do not

account for differential rates of contact with police among different demographic groups. Using other law enforcement data sources as a baseline will typically underestimate disparity, since these data include known disparities by race due to systemic racism and bias in the criminal justice system. Specifically, the analysis presented in Figure 8, compared with Census population estimates, likely represents an overestimate of disparity in use of force. At the same time, the analysis below, using arrests as the baseline, likely underestimates disparity in use of force. Notably, research posits that if racial bias is causing officers to stop and search Black community members, for example, at a higher rate than their peers, then that alone will cause there to be a disproportionate number of Black community members arrested¹⁷.

One method for understanding disparities is a disproportionality index. This index is expressed as a compound ratio: the ratio of the percentage of police interactions with Black individuals that result in a particular outcome compared with the corresponding percentage for white individuals. This can be expressed with the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Use of force}_B / \text{Total interactions}_B}{\text{Use of force}_W / \text{Total interactions}_W}$$

This compound ratio provides a clear and compelling interpretation: it measures how much more likely police interactions with Black individuals are to result in use of force versus interactions with white individuals. The difficulty in calculating a disproportionality index for arrests is in selecting an appropriate baseline measure to use for “total interactions.” For use of force incidents, a commonly used baseline is arrests.

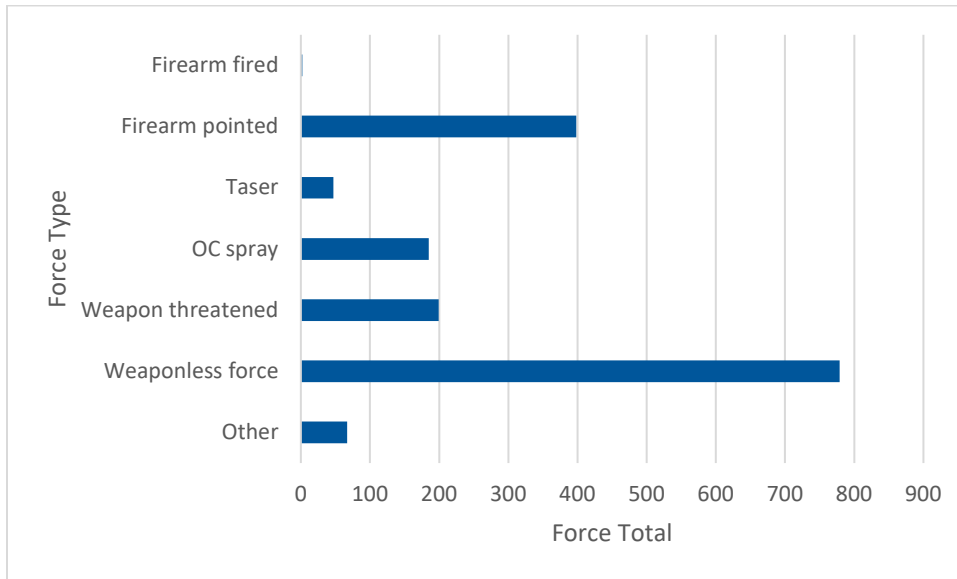
When using arrests as the baseline, the disproportionality index for Black people is 1.29. In other words, Black individuals are involved in use of force incidents 1.29 times more frequently than would be expected based on their involvement in arrests.

Information about BPD’s use of force incidents and arrests is available on Burlington’s Open Data Dashboard (<https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/police/data>), allowing the public to review these statistics and calculate the disproportionality index at any time for various time periods.

We next consider the types of force used. In Figure 9 we categorize the type of force from most severe to least severe. BPD does not distinguish between different types of force that do not involve lethal or less-than-lethal weapons, simply labeling all as “weaponless force,” which hampers a complete understanding of force use in the department. Weaponless force is the most used type of force, followed by the pointing of a firearm. Note that multiple types of force may be used in a single incident.

¹⁷ Brandon Tregle, Justin Nix & Geoffrey P. Alpert (2019) Disparity does not mean bias: making sense of observed racial disparities in fatal officer-involved shootings with multiple benchmarks, *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 42:1, 18-31.

Figure 9. Type of force used from 2015-2020



We next consider the highest level of force used in an incident by the race of the involved community member, using a scale from 1 to 7 based on the ranking noted above.¹⁸ (See Table 2). Black community members experience a higher level of force on average than white community members, and this difference is statistically significant (pairwise comparison of means, Bonferroni adjustment, $p=0.05$). Note that the number of incidents involving community members who are not white and not Black is very low, so those differences are not statistically significant.

Table 2. Highest level of force used from 2015-2020

Race	Highest level of force used
White	3.55
Black	4.02
Hispanic/Latino	3.65
Asian	4.04
American Indian or Alaska Native	6.00

Findings and recommendations

Finding 4.1: BPD currently groups all non-weapon uses of force into a single category, hampering a complete understanding of use of force incidents.

BPD’s current system for tracking use of force incidents does not distinguish between force types that do not involve weapons, instead grouping these all as “weaponless force.” However, the various

¹⁸ This analysis omits 53 incidents in which no specific type of force was indicated.

types of force that do not involve weapons vary considerably, ranging from restraint techniques, to open-hand control tactics, to close-hand strikes, to carotid restraint. Each of these tactics represents escalating levels of force, but BPD categorizes them all in the same group. This also is the type of force used most frequently by BPD.

Recommendation 4.1.1: BPD should break out “weaponless force” into multiple categories, based on best practices and peer agency review.

Finding 4.2: Black community members are involved in use of force incidents more frequently than would be predicted based on their proportion of Burlington’s population, or their involvement in arrest incidents. In addition, Black community members experience higher overall levels of force compared with white community members.

Using several metrics to understand disparities, Black community members are overrepresented in use of force incidents. They also experience higher levels of force, as measured by the highest level of force used in an incident.

Recommendation 4.2.1: BPD should investigate use of force incidents thoroughly, including reviewing BWC footage, to better understand the reason for these disparities for Black community members.

Recommendation 4.2.2: Similar to the recommendation for traffic stops, BPD should consider the possibility that these disparities are driven by bias (implicit or explicit) and proactively address potential bias in officers’ behavior or department practices by implementing training and reviewing BPD practices.

Finding 4.3: Although the UOF case narratives are not inconsistent with what the assessment team has seen produced by other police agencies, the UOF narratives could be improved.

Recommendation 4.3.1: To the degree that multiple responding officers write accounts of the same incident, there should be policy and training instructing officers to independently write their own accounts of a UOF incident.

Recommendation 4.3.2: The BPD should change its requirements regarding UOF narratives in the following ways:

- Ensure they include a precise description of the actions and statements of the subject that warranted the use of force.
- Ensure that efforts are made and documented to obtain a subject account of the incident and have an accountability system in place for this.
- Ensure that all officers who use force or witness force also write their own distinct reports and have an accountability system in place for this.
- Ensure that officers include in their reports any efforts at de-escalation, and if no such efforts were made, include an explanation for why this was not feasible. In addition, there should be fields identifying tangible de-escalation strategies included in the report and evaluated. Including tangible de-escalation strategies not only assists officers in understanding what is

meant by de-escalation, but also provides a guide for supervisors to utilize when reviewing BWC footage and coaching officers. If this is not in place, often the term “de-escalation” becomes a diluted “check-the-box” term. Tangible de-escalation strategies can include the following:

- Tone of voice (command vs. engagement)
 - Introduce yourself, and ask the subject what name they would like to be called
 - Physical stance (open vs. closed, authority vs. engagement)
 - Eye contact (remove sunglasses, etc.)
 - Turn down radio and siren whenever it is safe to do so to limit distractions
 - Reduce onlookers or individuals who may be escalating the situation whenever possible
 - Physically distance from the subject
 - Use cover to buy time (both officer cover and physical barriers)
 - Request specialized units whenever appropriate, including social work response
 - Request another on-scene officer to take over if there is no indication of de-escalation or engagement by the current officer in charge
- Ensure that officers include in their narrative any knowledge of a mental health component and whether or how that affected their response. The narrative should provide a searchable field that BPD can use to easily identify use of force incidents involving a mental health component. In addition, the narrative should capture attempts to call for a specialized response, obtain information on treatment providers, and learn whether there is a person the subject trusts (case manager, family member, etc.) who can be called to support them.
 - Describe or photograph any injury to the subject because of any use of force, and if there was no injury, articulate such in the narrative.

Finding 4.4: Based on the assessment team’s review, BPD lacks a clear review process when a UOF incident occurs.

The materials provided do not indicate the degree to which the report narratives are reviewed by a supervisor for completeness or whether force incidents are formally reviewed to ensure policy compliance, performance consistent with training, or tactical review. Several recent use of force incidents were deserving of examination and potential remediation as part of a force review process that is not evident from the narratives.

Recommendation 4.4.1: Policy should direct a review and approval process for all use of force incidents, which should include all the components identified above.

Officer involved shootings

CNA reviewed two officer involved shooting (OIS) files¹⁹. Both case files were very limited in information, lacking key facts that should be included in a full OIS investigative file. Because of this, the assessment team was able to review only the use of force incident reports in the absence of a full OIS investigative file.

Best practice is that two separate investigations must occur for every OIS: an internal/administrative investigation and a criminal investigation. This creates two separate files that address the OIS from two perspectives:

1. Were the officers' actions lawful according to state law?
2. Were all the officers following department policy?

The two investigations will not usually be intertwined, but if they are, the department can use the criminal investigation in its internal/administrative investigation, but the criminal investigation may not use any information from the internal/administrative investigation because the internal/administrative investigation is compelled. The only time the information from the internal/administrative investigation can be provided to the criminal side is if criminal behavior is discovered during the investigation. Usually the state police or another independent entity will conduct the criminal investigation. State law should be reflected in policy.

The internal/administrative investigative statements, exhibits, and investigator documentation should contain dates and times of entries for inclusion in the file. The administrative/internal investigation should contain a "master list" that includes every document, exhibit, or piece of evidence that is considered or reviewed as part of the investigative file. This checklist should include entry dates/times that coincide with the documents, exhibits, and evidence in the file.

Best practice is that an internal investigation into an OIS case is complete in around six months. Department policy can direct the timelines of investigations, and extensions can be granted but should be within a reasonable timeframe. Each internal/administrative investigation should include the investigator's summary detailing the incident, the investigation, and the conclusion/recommendations.

Findings and recommendations

Finding 4.5: None of the reports appeared to have been completed by the involved officers, which would provide a firsthand account of the event.

Recommendation 4.5.1: Written statements from every officer on the scene of an OIS should be required before leaving the shift during which it occurred. Every officer involved should be

¹⁹ BPD provided OIS data from 2015 to 2020. During this period, BPD had only two officer involved shooting incidents.

interviewed by BIA before leaving the shift during which it occurred; these interviews should be at minimum audio recorded and preferably video recorded.

Finding 4.6: There appears to be an excessive gap in time between the statements or reports being filed and the approval of the statements or reports. Both cases appeared to be reviewed and approved several months after the incidents.

Recommendation 4.6.1: The BIA policy should direct who will conduct the interviews and collect written statements. A BIA supervisor should review and approve all statements and interviews and recommend whether additional clarifying statements or interviews are required. The BIA commander should review and approve all statements and interviews. Reports are usually reviewed and acknowledged almost immediately, with direction for additional work if necessary, and then approved upon completed work.

Finding 4.7: In reviewing the limited information available surrounding each case, we found that the report lists various factors associated with the suspect's actions and the officer's response. Although the actions by both parties are detailed, there are several codes or scores to identify the level of force used. There is no apparent chart included in the files that translates the codes or scores associated with the reports. In addition, there is no reference to the de-escalation techniques utilized, nor to the types of injuries sustained to the suspect or officers.

Recommendation 4.7.1: Best practice is a definitive use of force policy with a use of force continuum. This continuum would be utilized to identify the level of force used. If this is associated with a code, as it appears to be with BPD, a corresponding chart that translates the code should be included.

Recommendation 4.7.2: In addition, tangible strategies for de-escalation should be assessed both in BWC footage and in required paperwork. For instance, one should assess verbal de-escalation vs. commands, the officer's tone of voice, the officer's body stance, whether the officer slowed things down, whether the officer created distance from the individual, whether the officer called for backup, and whether the officer used physical barriers to provide cover to buy more time. A common formula is that distance plus cover equals time, and time provides opportunities to slow things down, call in additional resources, and deploy more de-escalation strategies. This was not documented in either case.

Finding 4.8: BPD OIS narratives do not depict the seriousness of the suspect's injuries, describe what led to the OIS, or capture the type of call the officers were responding to.

Recommendation 4.8.1: Reports must include pertinent information supporting the OIS. For example, whether the suspect was armed (and if so, with what?), whether the suspect made moves that caused officers to fear for their lives or the lives of others, whether the officers had reliable information that the suspect had access to firearms, and whether other dangers were present. As a best practice, all officers on scene should provide statements and interviews that are then included in the investigative file. The shooting officer should not be the only officer providing information. Every officer on scene must be interviewed and must be given a timeline for providing a written statement.

Finding 4.9: Comparing the two cases with the associated policies, the reports do not give enough detail to determine whether BPD policies were followed.

Recommendation 4.9.1: The Department must develop new policies or update existing policies affected by OIS, including at minimum the following:

- Use of Force (including use of force review procedures)
- Officer Involved Shooting
- Officer Involved Death (including crashes, in-custody deaths, etc.)
- Internal Affairs (including how UOF, OIS, or officer involved crashes and criminal misconduct are administratively investigated)
- Responding to Individuals with Diminished Capacity (this should be renamed to something like “Recognizing and Responding to Individuals Experiencing a Mental or Behavioral Health Crisis” or other suggestions previously identified in this report.)
- Conflict of Interest (to ensure every investigation is conducted fairly)

Recommendation 4.9.2: BPD should prioritize the review (including community review), revision, or development of relevant department policies, train on these policies, and provide updated training for UOF.

Recommendation 4.9.3: OIS internal/administrative investigations should be investigated the same way in every instance to eliminate the question of favoritism or bias. The policy should include direction on conflicts of interest (friends or relatives investigating a family member or a friend) and confidentiality. There should be no question the IA will investigate every OIS.

Section 5: Patrol Operations, Deployments, and Traffic Stops

This section of the report discusses our assessment of patrol operations. This assessment included deployments for quality-of-life complaints, code violations, violence, and traffic stops. First, we discuss the data we reviewed and the subsequent analysis. We then discuss our findings and actionable recommendations.

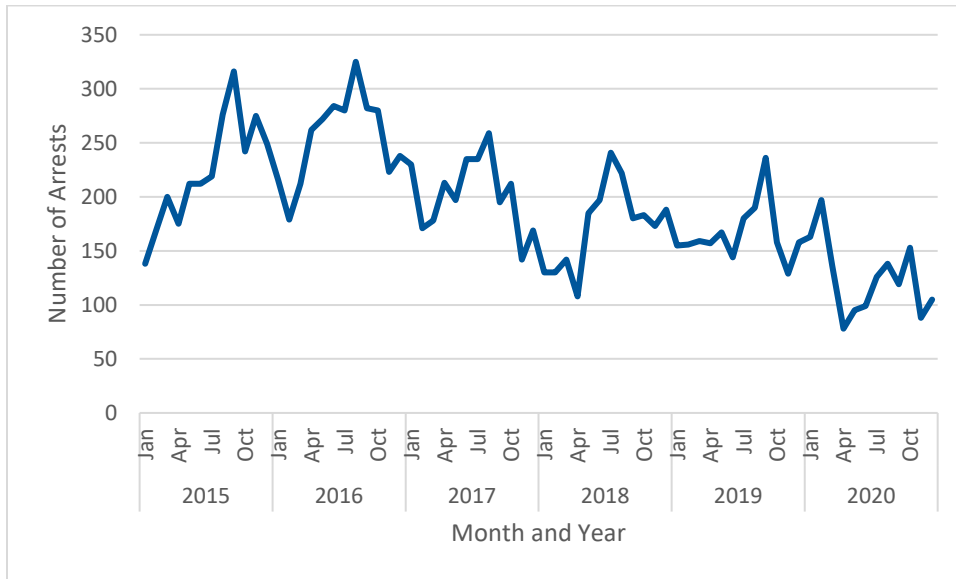
Through interviews, document review, and data analysis, the team identified the following key findings:

- Black community members are overrepresented in BPD's arrestees compared with their proportion in the Burlington population.
- BPD's traffic stop activity has decreased substantially over the past six years, and relatively few traffic stops are made monthly now.
- Black community members experience disparities in traffic stops, including being stopped relatively more frequently than would be predicted by the Burlington demographics. More importantly, they experience disparities in stop outcomes, including ticketing and search decisions.
- Black community members experience disparities in use of force incidents. They are involved in use of force incidents more frequently than would be expected by Burlington demographics as well as more frequently than would be expected based on Black community members' involvement in arrests. In addition, they experience higher levels of force.

Arrests

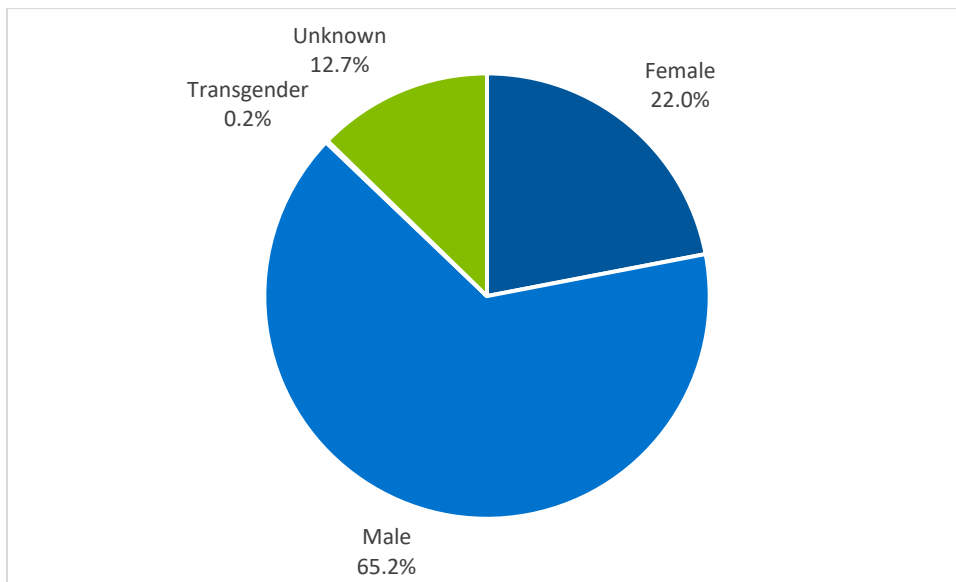
BPD provided arrest data for 2015 through 2020 for the assessment team to analyze. BPD conducted 13,737 arrests during that time period. As seen in Figure 10, arrests have decreased over time starting in 2018.

Figure 10. Arrests over time, 2015-2020



As seen in Figure 11, the majority of those involved in arrests are male.

Figure 11. Gender of arrestees from 2015-2020



For incidents for which the age of the arrestee is known, Figure 12 displays the frequency of arrestees by age. During this period, BPD arrested five individuals who were reported to be nine years old and an additional 404 individuals under the age of 16; in total, BPD arrested 718 individuals under the age of 18.

Figure 12. Age of arrestee from 2015-2020

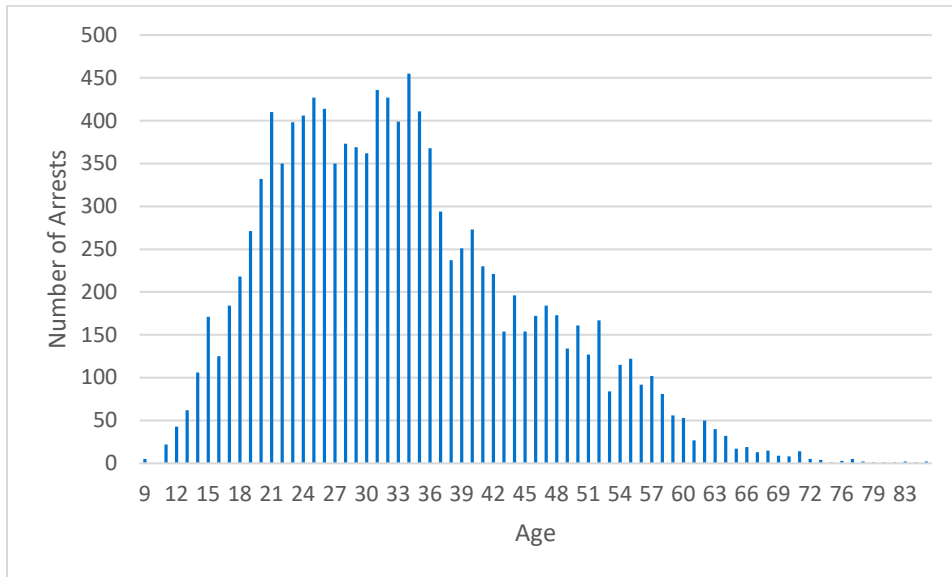
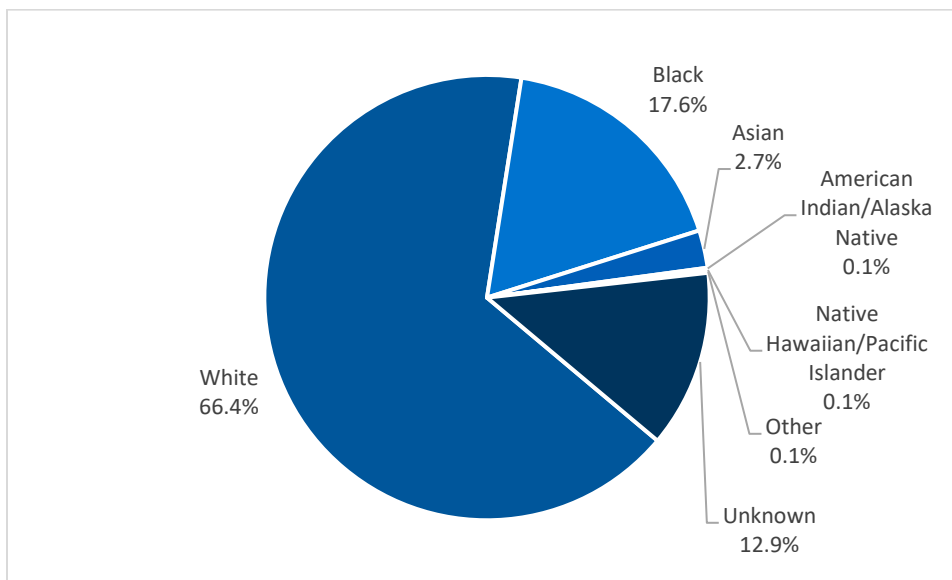


Figure 13 presents the race of the arrestees. Black community members make up 17.6 percent of arrestees, despite making up 5.7 percent of the Burlington population.

Figure 13. Race of arrestees from 2015-2020



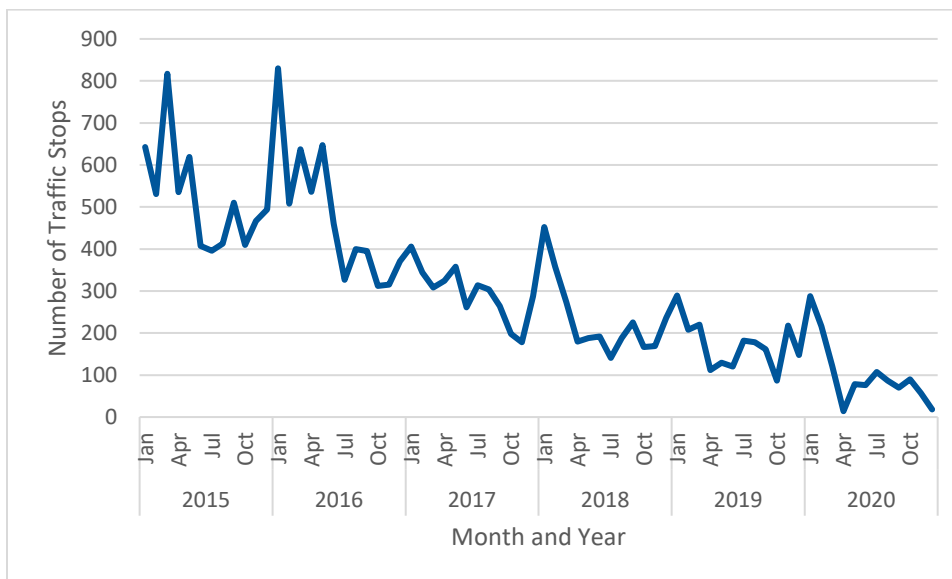
Traffic stops

BPD provided traffic stops data for 2015 through 2020 for the assessment team to analyze. BPD collects information about driver race, sex, and age, and it documents the outcome from the stop

including the number of warnings and tickets issued, whether a search was conducted, and, if so, whether contraband was recovered²⁰.

BPD completed 21,570 traffic stops over the six-year period. As seen in Figure 14, the number of traffic stops dramatically decreased over that period, averaging 520 per month in 2015 but only 171 and 102 stops per month in 2019 and 2020, respectively (an 80 percent reduction over six years). Many agencies nationally experienced downturns in police activity in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, but this trend in Burlington began well before that period.

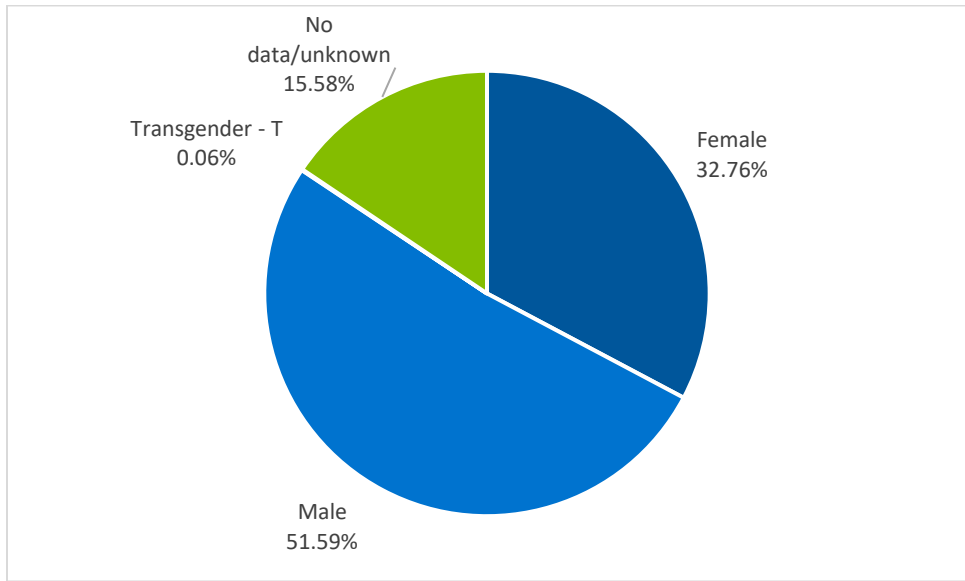
Figure 14. Traffic stops over time, 2015-2020



Most stops were of male drivers (52 percent), 33 percent were of female drivers, and in 16 percent the sex of the driver was unknown, as seen in Figure 15.

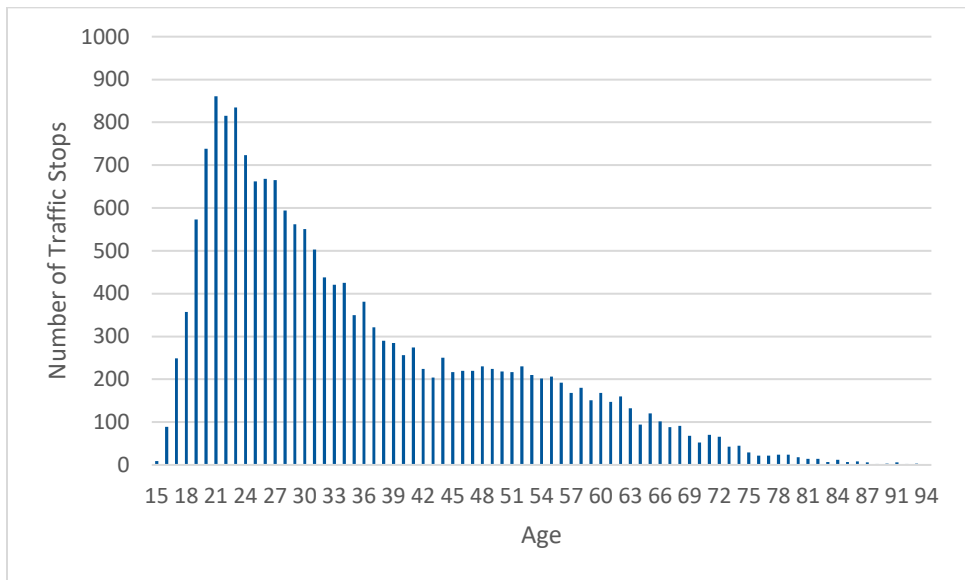
²⁰ BPD suggests that breaking this data down by year, rather than as a 5-year block, would indicate no disparity issues with traffic stops. BPD suggests that the 5-year block of data does not capture the significant progress that has been made during that time period. While this is possible, CNA was unable to confirm this statement as it would require new analysis beyond the resources of the current contract.

Figure 15. Traffic stops by sex of driver from 2015-2020



We found 18,328 traffic stops with valid age entries. Figure 16 displays the distribution of the ages of the drivers. Most stops were of drivers in their 20s and 30s.

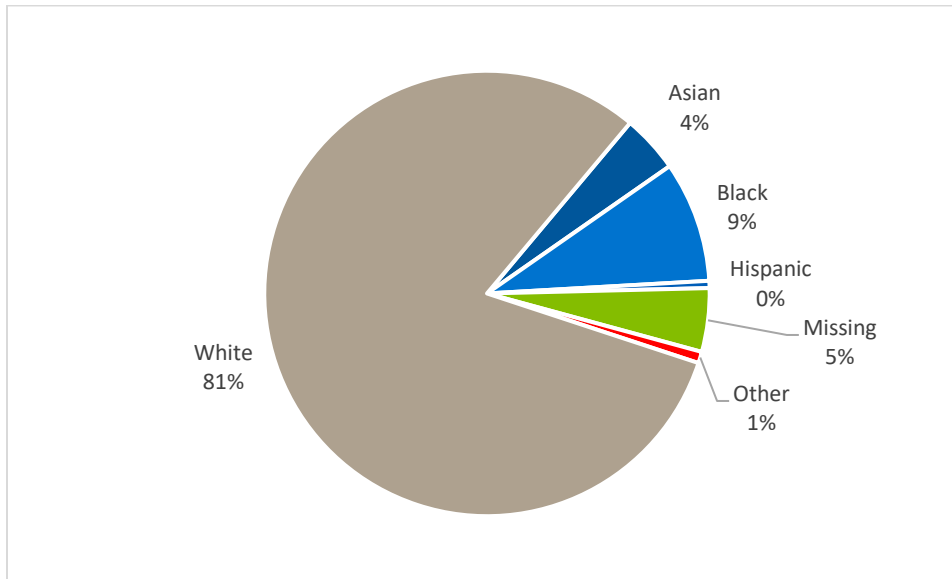
Figure 16. Traffic stops by age of driver from 2015-2020



In Figure 17, we present the traffic stops by the race of the driver. White drivers comprise the majority of traffic stops made by BPD at 81 percent, while they are 85 percent of the Burlington population per 2019 Census estimates.²¹ Black drivers make up 9 percent of traffic stops while they are 5.7 percent of Burlington’s population.

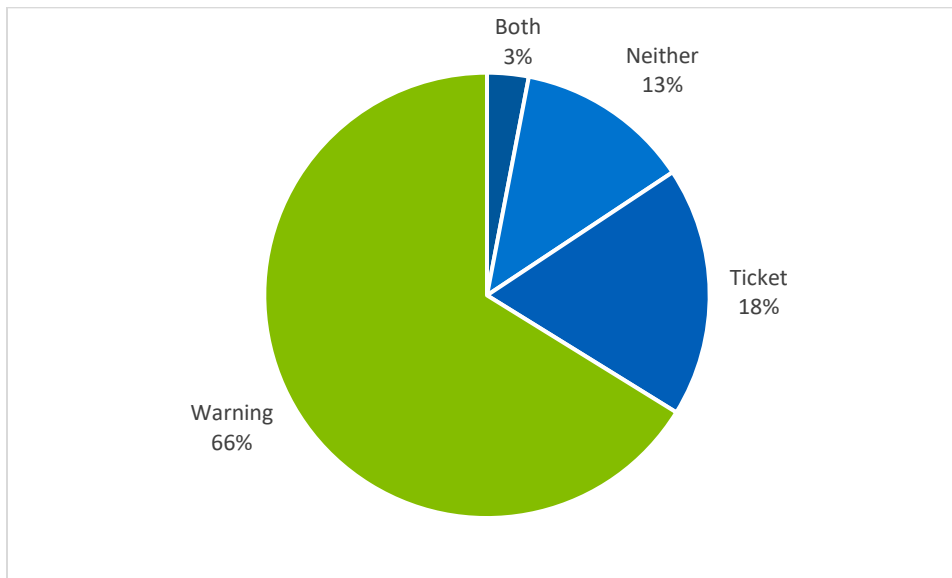
²¹ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/burlingtoncityvermont>

Figure 17. Traffic stops by race of driver from 2015-2020



As seen in Figure 18, most of BPD's traffic stops end in a warning, and relatively fewer (21 percent) involve a ticket.

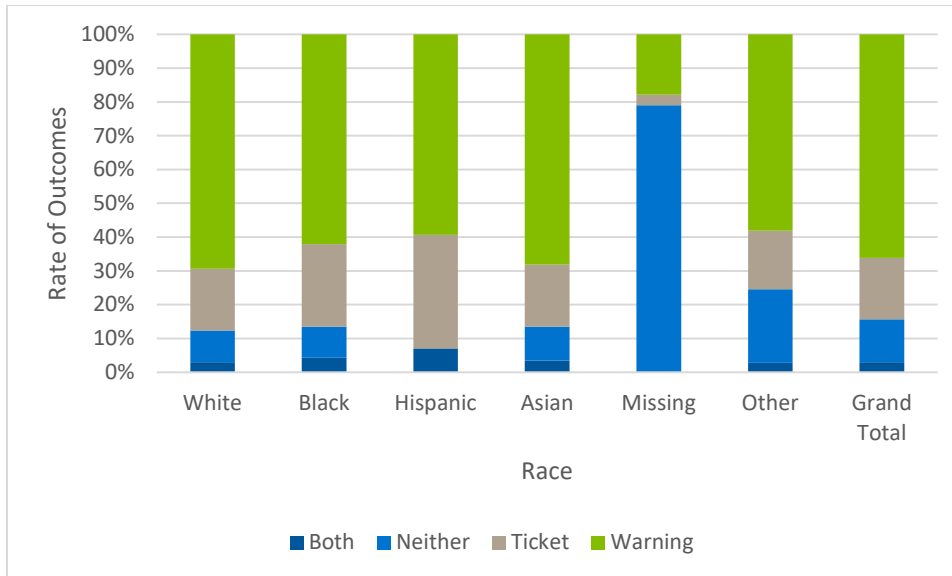
Figure 18. Traffic stop outcomes from 2015-2020



In Figure 19, we break out the possible stop outcomes by the race of the involved driver. As seen in this chart, although the rate of tickets is similar for white and Asian drivers, both Black and Hispanic drivers experience a higher rate of ticketing at 24 percent and 34 percent, respectively, compared with the overall average of 18 percent. Only 113 stops involved Hispanic drivers, so caution should be taken in drawing conclusions from this difference. To assess the difference in the ticketing rate for Black drivers, we compared the relative proportion of tickets issued to Black drivers to those issued to white drivers using a chi-square test of homogeneity. This test confirms that the ticketing rate for Black drivers is statistically significantly higher than that for white drivers (Pearson chi-

square=57.8731, $p < 0.001$). This result is consistent when comparing Black drivers to all other drivers.

Figure 19. Traffic stop outcomes, by race from 2015-2020



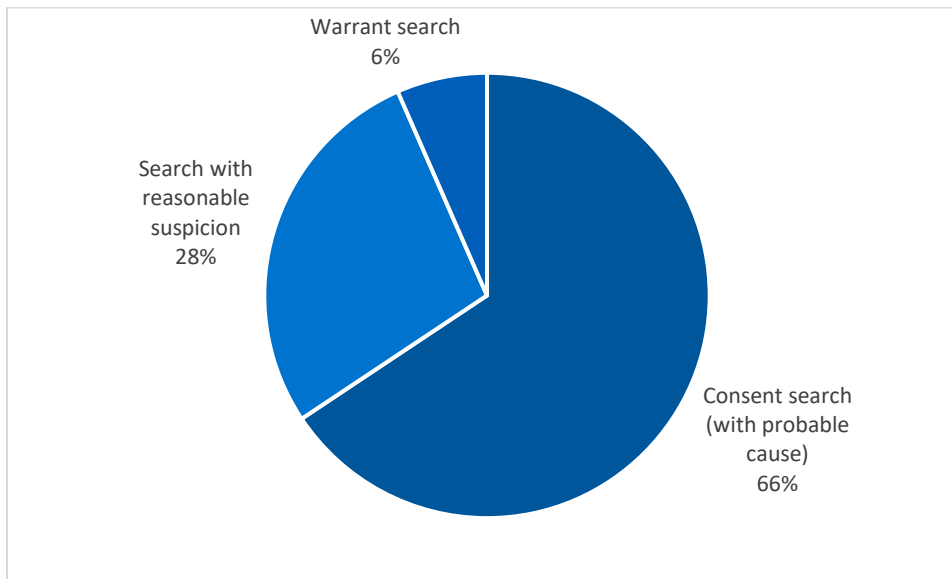
To further understand potential racial disparities in traffic stop outcomes, we also considered the number of tickets or warnings issued during a stop by the race of the involved driver. In Table 3, we present the average number of citations for stops involving at least one citation, and similarly for warnings. As seen in the overall total, BPD personnel are more likely to issue multiple tickets than they are multiple warnings. The number of tickets per stop range from 1 to 16, and the number of warnings from 1 to 5. The observed differences in the number of tickets issued to Black or Hispanic drivers compared with white drivers is not statistically significant (pairwise comparison of means, Bonferroni adjustment, $p=0.05$). The difference observed in the average number of warnings is statistically significant for the comparison between Black and white drivers (pairwise comparison of means, Bonferroni adjustment, $p=0.05$).

Table 3. Number of tickets or citations by race of driver from 2015-2020

Race	Average number of tickets	Average number of warnings
White	1.15	1.01
Black	1.16	1.02
Hispanic	1.39	1.01
Asian	1.12	1.01
No race data reported	1.09	1.02
Other	1.19	1.01
Grand Total	1.16	1.01

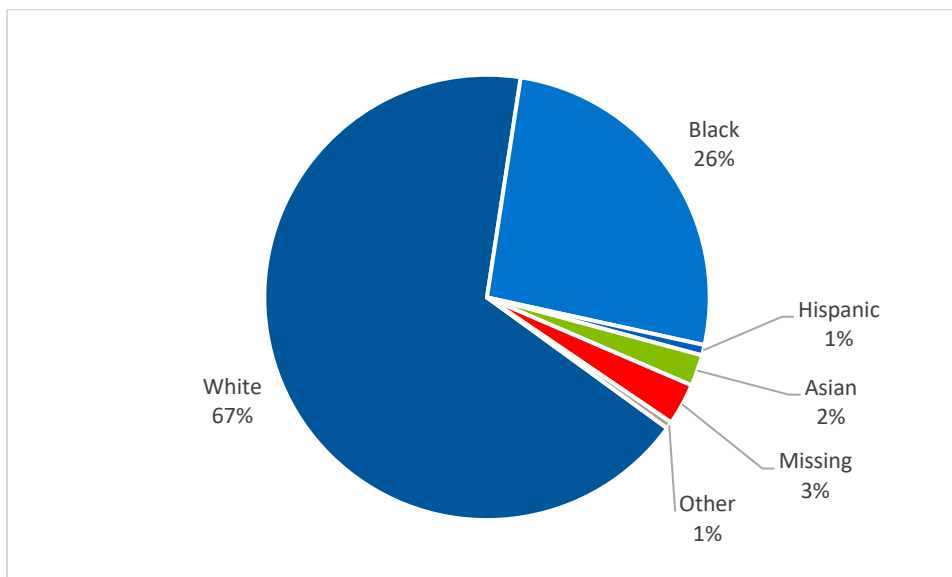
Searches are relatively rare among BPD's traffic stops, occurring in only 396 stops. Of those searches, the majority are consent searches, as seen in Figure 20.

Figure 20. Search by type from 2015-2020



When considering the race of searched drivers, Black community members are considerably overrepresented compared to their proportion of the population (5.7 percent) or of overall traffic stops (9 percent), as seen in Figure 21. This difference persists even when considering only consent searches, in which Black drivers make up 25 percent of those searches. Black community members are even more overrepresented in reasonable suspicion searches, making up 32 percent of those searches.

Figure 21. Searches by race from 2015-2020



We further considered the relative proportion of contraband seizure during searches. As seen in Table 4, seizure rates are relatively lower for Black drivers than for white drivers. However, this difference is not statistically significant (chi-square test of homogeneity, Pearson chi-square=7.8773, p=0.163).

Table 4. Seizures during searches from 2015-2020

Race	Seizure	No seizure
White	76.4%	23.6%
Black	69.9%	30.1%
Hispanic	66.7%	33.3%
Asian	77.8%	22.2%
Missing	66.7%	33.3%
Other	0.0%	100.0%

Findings and recommendations

Finding 5.1: BPD would benefit from a more robust traffic stop data system, with additional fields included to allow for more substantive analysis of traffic stop activity and disparities in traffic stops.

BPD collects relatively little information about each individual traffic stop that takes place. Although they track basic information such as the date and time, demographics of the driver, count of citations and warnings, and violation category, additional variables would allow for more robust analysis of traffic stop activity. In addition, the current system includes numerous entries with “NA” values entered for the included variables, but no explanation for that missing data. The use of a standard system with closed entry options and more details about each stop would benefit the agency in understanding their patterns in traffic stop activity as well as examining disparities in traffic stops.

Recommendation 5.1.1: BPD should implement a traffic stop data system that captures, in addition to the current information, the following:

- Reason for stop
- Stop start and end time
- Reason for each ticket and warning
- Passenger information
- Officer special assignment or task force
- Open comment field for officer explanations and brief description of the stop

BDP reports that the department’s record management system contains this information; however, this information was not provided to the assessment team.

Finding 5.2: BPD traffic stops exhibit disparities for Black community members according to several measures.

Black community members are stopped more frequently than their proportion in the Burlington population would suggest, they experience higher rates of ticketing than other community members, and they are targeted for searches more frequently.

Recommendation 5.2.1: BPD should conduct further analysis and review BWC footage to understand these disparities in traffic stop rates and outcomes and address them to reduce disparities.

Recommendation 5.2.2: BPD should consider the possibility that these disparities are driven by bias (implicit or explicit) and proactively address potential bias in officers' behavior or department practices by implementing training and reviewing BPD practices.

Section 6: Patrol Operations by Geographic Area

The information presented in this section discusses our assessment of BPD patrol operations. First, the assessment team discusses the data we reviewed and our subsequent analysis. We then detail our findings, analysis, and recommendations.

Through our interviews and data analysis, we identified the following key findings:

- BPD does not appear to have socioeconomic bias in relation to calls for service, since areas with larger volumes of calls experience higher relative portions of arrest.
- The highest volume of calls for service occurs in Downtown, which is the City’s business, retail, and tourism area.
- The relative proportion of force used to total incidents in all areas is less than 1 percent.

Five general areas of Burlington are designated for police patrol assignment: New North End, Old North End, Hill Section/University, Downtown, and South End. We conducted our analysis first by using incident latitude and longitude for mapping. We spatially joined each data point with the policing area in which the incident occurred, calculating the number of incidents recorded in each patrol area.

Socioeconomic data was obtained from the US Census Bureau’s five-year American Community Survey (ACS) included 2019 Median Household Income and 2019 demographic statistics. The ACS separates out demographic data by race using the following categories: White, Black, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, and Other. From these categories, we calculated the percentage of each population within each patrol area. Of note, the ACS data is available only down to the census block group level; however, the Burlington patrol area boundaries cut across block groups. To account for the fact that population is not evenly distributed across a block group, we identified the population distribution at the census block level to achieve a more granular level of detail, and we used it to summarize the socioeconomic data more accurately (see Table 5).

Table 5. Burlington demographic data by area for 2019

	Downtown	New North	Old North End	South End	University Hill
Median Household Income	\$36,630.00	\$69,029.00	\$39,909.00	\$66,191.00	\$35,566.00
Total Number of Residents	2,259	9,601	6,891	13,154	10,769
Race/Ethnicity					
White	86.37%	85.42%	75.13%	89.12%	85.74%
Black	6.82%	5.28%	10.20%	2.18%	7.20%
Hispanic	2.88%	3.21%	3.89%	2.42%	3.34%
Asian	3.45%	5.83%	10.70%	5.52%	3.34%
American Indian	0.49%	0.03%	0.01%	0.36%	0.04%
Other	-	0.23%	0.07%	0.40%	0.34%

Findings and recommendations:

We calculated percentages of mental health calls for service, arrests, and use of force incidents of the total calls for service from 2015–2020 in order to present an overall description of patrol and operations (Table 6). Notably, incidents that occurred at the airport are not included in this analysis because it is not considered a geographic area; this is consistent with analysis conducted in the BPD annual reports.

Table 6. Percentage of total mental health, arrest, and UOF incidents by geographic area, 2015-2020

	Total Incidents	% Mental Health	% Arrest	% UOF
Downtown	57,875	28.12%	40.12%	39.80%
New North End	18,819	8.94%	8.58%	7.64%
Old North End	43,710	30.02%	22.54%	26.08%
South End	27,550	17.73%	12.05%	10.56%
University	35,531	15.19%	16.70%	15.92%

The highest percentage of arrest and use of force incidents occurs in the Downtown area, likely because the area has a higher volume of calls for service; the highest percentage of mental health calls occurs in Old North End, but this percentage is only slightly higher than Downtown calls.

Downtown has the largest volume of incidents and is in one of the lower median income neighborhoods, but it also has a lower number of residents. Downtown is an area that increases in population at specific times of day due to local business and tourism, likely resulting in a greater volume of people coming and going.

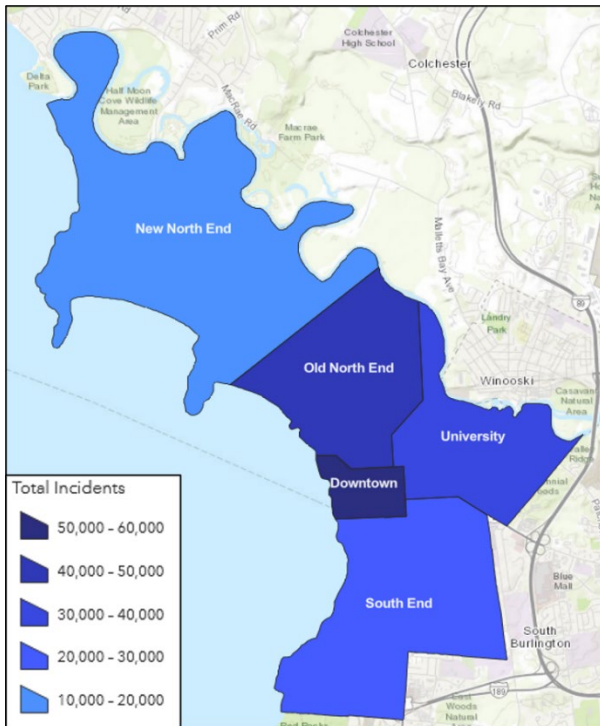
However, because the percentages are functions of the volumes of calls received, we also calculated the relative proportion of mental health calls, arrests, and use of force incidents to the total number of calls for service for each patrol area. As shown in Table 7 and Figure 22, the relative proportion of force used to total incidents in all areas is 1 percent. The New North area has a lower relative proportion of arrests (5.37 percent) and use of force, and it has a higher median income, a lower number of patrol officers assigned, and the lowest number of calls for service and mental health calls. The highest percentage of mental health calls occurs in Downtown (28.12 percent) and Old North End (30.02 percent), which have the two lowest median household incomes and the highest volume of calls for service. Further, Downtown has a slightly higher relative proportion of arrests (8.07 percent) to total incidents compared to all other areas.

Table 7. Relative proportions of mental health calls, arrests, and use of force incidents by area, 2015–2020

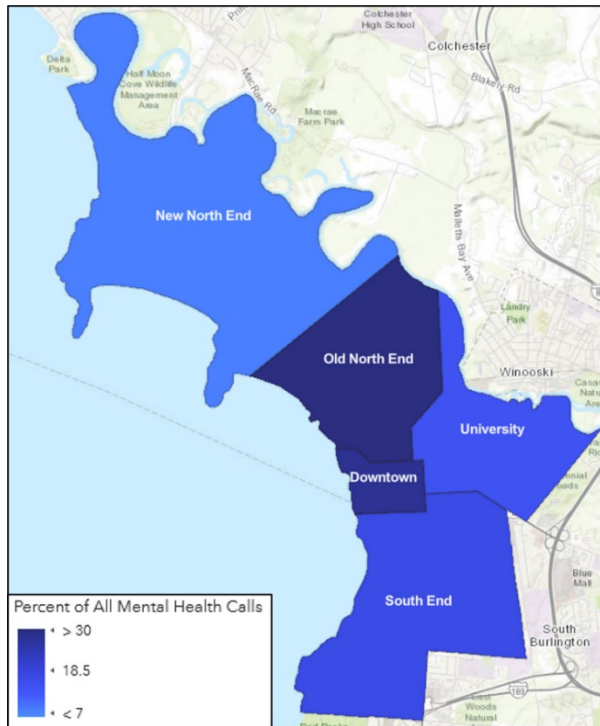
	Incidents	Mental Health	Arrest	UOF
Downtown	57,875	2.36%	8.07%	0.87%
New North End	18,819	2.31%	5.31%	0.52%
Old North End	43,710	3.34%	6.00%	0.76%
South End	27,550	3.13%	5.09%	0.49%
University	35,531	2.08%	5.47%	0.57%

Figure 22. Patrol Operations by Area, 2015-2020

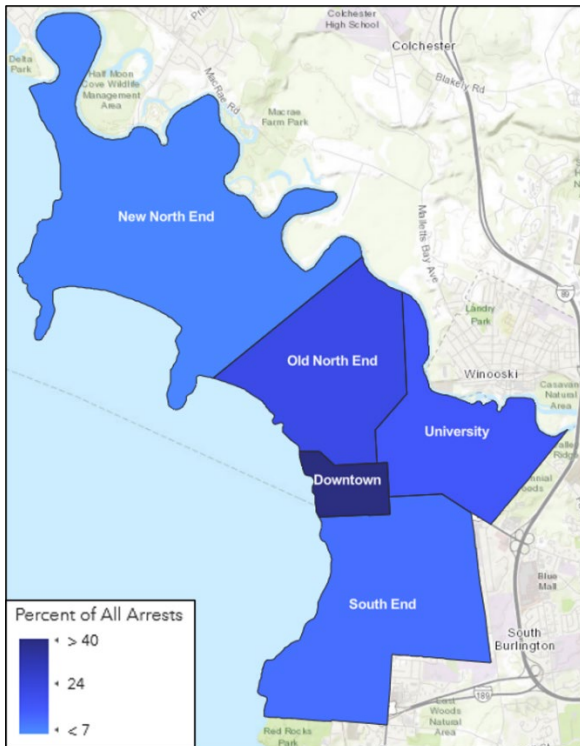
Total calls for service



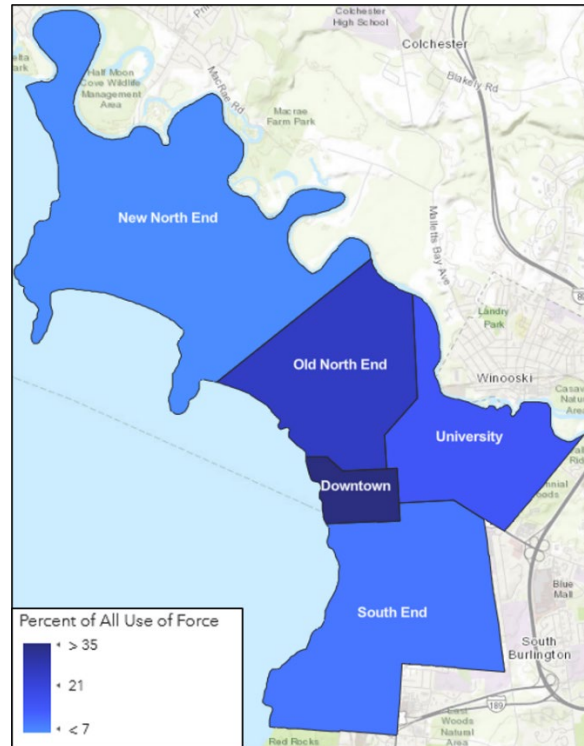
Mental health calls for service



Arrest



Use of Force



As shown in Table 8, the higher numbers of patrol officers assigned to Downtown (8) and University (8) which have lower median household income but also higher volumes of calls for service in 2019.

Table 8. 2019 Relative portion of incidents to residents

	Incidents	Residents	Proportion
New North End	2,305	9,601	24.01%
Old North End	5,323	6,891	77.25%
University Hill Section	4,674	10,769	43.40%
Downtown	8,658	2,259	383.27%
South End	3,815	13,154	29.00%
Total Incidents	183,485		

Findings and recommendations

Findings 6.1: BPD does not appear to have socioeconomic bias in relation to calls for service and deployment of patrol officers. Areas with higher volumes of calls experience higher relative portions of arrests and are assigned slightly more patrol officers.

Recommendation 6.1.1: Continue to adjust patrol assignments and determine resource allocation for mental health response services by areas based on volume of call and relative proportion of mental health calls for each area.

Recommendation 6.1.2: Develop a deeper socioeconomic bias analysis by area that includes a review of type of incidents, response times, demographic data of officers, victims, and suspects; as well as community feedback. Given the budget and time for the assessment, we were only able to produce results of a descriptive nature and only with certain elements (e.g., arrest, mental health calls, and use of force).

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Section 7: Staffing and Workload Analysis

The Joint Committee identified their end goals for the contract for this assessment as follows:

1. Develop a recommended list of BPD services
2. Develop a recommendation regarding policing alternatives to implement
3. Develop a recommendation for models to identify appropriate staffing levels
4. Create a transition plan for handing off next steps to community stakeholders and the City

Understanding staffing and workload analysis for BPD is necessary to reach all four of these end goals. As a result, a significant portion of the report is dedicated to staffing and workload analysis.

Further, one of the most important priorities communicated by key stakeholders and the public was an interest and expectation that alternative responses to policing be recommended. In order to adequately understand the types and volume of calls for service that could potentially be shifted to non-police response, one must understand the following: historical staffing patterns at BPD, the breadth of types of calls BPD responds to (assisting in the development of recommendations on which types of calls BPD should maintain ownership of), the volume of calls for service compared to staffing levels (which also helps to indicate the peak days and hours alternative non-law enforcement models should potentially be scheduled), and the implications of the union contract on staffing and budget—both of which affect a potential reallocation to non-police positions and services.

Finally, the political tension around the reduction of the BPD by 30 percent in 2021 is exceptionally high and was raised in the majority of interviews with BPD personnel, City personnel, and community stakeholders.

The information presented in this section discusses our assessment of BPD staffing and workload. First, the assessment team discusses the data we reviewed and the subsequent analysis. We then detail our findings and actionable recommendations and highlight the best option for BPD moving forward.²²

Through our document review and data analysis, we identified the following key findings:

- BPD is presently understaffed for its volume of calls for service and relies on an inefficient staffing model.
- There is widespread concern from community organizations, the City, and BPD personnel about whether the decision to reduce the BPD staff by 30 percent was made based on reliable data and expert analysis. Additionally, many expressed concern that the reduction occurred without other alternatives to policing in place to absorb the reduction.
- There are several shift schedule options available to BPD that are more efficient; however, it is recommended that the patrol function could be adequately staffed with 51 sworn officers assigned to patrol (1 deputy chief, 4 lieutenants, 6 sergeants, and 40 officers), with an overall

²² Additional staffing options, though not the most recommended, can be found in Appendix B.

department size of 72-75 sworn. Ideally, patrol officers should be deployed in a 12-hour shift schedule with six squads (four main and two overlap squads). This combination of personnel produces the most efficient combination of officer deployment and days off schedule.

NOTE: In order to account for naturally occurring attrition, largely the gap between training and onboarding new officers while other officers leave the department, our analysis indicates this number should be adjusted upward by five officers, with an authorized headcount of 77-80 sworn, with 72-75 deployable at all times. The Burlington International Airport (BIA) and the City's annual negotiations on BPD officers dedicated to BIA should be a distinct operational decision with dedicated officers negotiated annually based on the contract. Since these officers are full time at the airport, they are not factored into BPD patrol staffing recommendations, nor the overall sworn department size in this report. There are presently 7 officers and 1 Sergeant deployed to BIA. These officers would need to be added to the sworn headcount to continue to provide this contracted service.

Sworn-Deployable (Actual)	Authorized (Accounts for Gaps due to Attrition and Training/Onboarding)	Subtotal Actual + Authorized Gap (Without BIA)	BIA Optional	Total with BIA
72	5	77	4	81
75	5	80	8	88

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the reduction in officers mandated in 2021, we decided to utilize 2019 data alone to assess a fully staffed BPD, as well as a typical number of calls for service (CFS) prior to both the pandemic and the 30 percent reduction in officers. This gave the assessment team a good baseline from which to draw comparisons about current staffing levels in 2021. To complete the staffing and workload analysis, the assessment team reviewed the following 2019 data:

- 2019 CFS. This is important to a reliable assessment of officers assigned related to volume of calls for service in the area by day and time.
- BPD provided personnel assignments for officers on patrol for the months of February and July 2019. The department provided this information at 15-minute increments during the day. These months were considered representative of the slowest and busiest monthly periods from a CFS perspective and therefore useful to model workload demands.
- Officers' assignments were provided whether the CFS originated from the public, through 911, or was a police-initiated incident such as a traffic stop or foot patrol.

ANALYSIS

The Rule of 60

Determining the appropriate staffing allocation for a police department starts with the patrol function. The first step is to determine the number of police officers required to handle the service demands made by the public from 911 CFS and other police-initiated activities.

The fundamental question is, How many officers are needed to provide police services to the community? It is a complex one. In general, the answer lies in developing an understanding of the workload demands placed on the officers on patrol, and then balancing these demands with the need to have “discretionary time” for these officers on patrol (for breaks, meals, and other duties), and then balancing all of that with other service demands.

Essentially, discretionary time on patrol is an important function and is generally the amount of time available each shift when officers are not committed to handling incoming CFS and other workload demands from the public; rather, this time is dedicated to the officer’s discretion to participate in community engagement activities as well as address problems in the community, such as crime, traffic, disorder, or other priorities identified by the community, and to be available in the event of emergencies. When there is no discretionary time, officers are entirely committed to service demands, do not get the important opportunity to address other community problems that do not arise through 911, and are not available in times of serious emergency. For example, if the BPD was interested in requiring officers to attend community meetings to engage with the public, high levels of demand from 911 would inhibit officer attendance at such events. A lack of discretionary time indicates a department is understaffed. Conversely, when there is too much discretionary time, officers are idle. This is an indication that the department is overstaffed.

Staffing decisions, particularly for patrol, must be based on actual workload. Once the actual workload is determined, the amount of discretionary time is determined, and then staffing decisions can be made consistent with the department’s policing philosophy and the community’s ability to fund it. With this in mind, it is necessary to look at workload to understand the effect of this style of policing in the context of community demand.

To apply an objective standard for police staffing, we apply what is known as the “Rule of 60.” This rule has two parts. The first part states that 60 percent of the sworn officers in a department should be dedicated to the patrol function (patrol staffing), and the second part states that no more than 60 percent of their time should be committed to calls for service. This commitment of 60 percent of their time is referred to as the patrol workload saturation index.

The Rule of 60 is not a hard-and-fast rule, but rather a starting point for discussion on patrol deployment. Resource allocation decisions must be made from a policy and managerial perspective through which costs and benefits of competing demands are considered. The saturation index indicates the percentage of time dedicated by police officers to public demands for service and administrative duties related to their jobs. Effective patrol deployment would exist at amounts where the saturation index was less than 60.

This Rule of 60 for patrol deployment does *not* mean the remaining 40 percent of time is downtime or break time. It reflects the extent that a patrol officer’s time is saturated by calls for service. The time when police personnel are not responding to calls should be committed to management-directed operations. This is a more focused use of time and can include supervised allocation of patrol officer activities toward proactive enforcement, crime prevention, community policing, and community safety initiatives. It will also provide ready and available resources in the event of a large-scale emergency.

From an organizational standpoint, it is important to have uniformed patrol resources available at all times of the day to deal with important functions such as proactive enforcement, community policing, and emergency response. Patrol is generally the most visible and available resource in policing, and the ability to harness this resource is critical for successful operations.

From an officer's standpoint, once a certain level of CFS activity is reached, the officer's focus shifts to a CFS-based reactionary mode. Once a threshold is reached, the patrol officer's mindset begins to shift from one that looks for ways to respond to crime and quality-of-life conditions in the community to one that continually prepares for the next call. After saturation, officers cease proactive policing and engage in a reactionary style of policing. Their outlook becomes, *why act proactively when my actions are only going to be interrupted by a call?* Any uncommitted time is spent waiting for the next call. Based on the accumulated experience of many experts who have conducted staffing analysis, 60 percent of time spent responding to calls for service is believed to be the saturation threshold based on the accumulated experience of many experts who have conducted numerous staffing analysis.

APPLICATION OF "RULE OF 60" – PART 1

According to the BPD personnel data provided for 2019, patrol was staffed by 62 sworn police officers (1 deputy chief, 4 lieutenants, 7 sergeants, and 50 police officers). These 62 of the 96 sworn officers represent 64.2 percent of the sworn officers in the BPD. Accordingly, the department is about where it should be with the ratio of sworn officers dedicated to the patrol function in 2019.

During the average workday in 2019 (not counting the one day each week when the shifts are doubled) the BPD assigned eight officers each to the Day and Evening Shifts, five officers to the Midnight Shift, and four officers to the Swing Shift. These could be considered the acceptable staffing levels that covered patrol and handled service demands from the community in 2019 when the department was considered fully staffed.

Establishing this baseline figure based upon the historical levels and putting it into context with workload demand permits a discussion about alternatives to that model, which involve both modifications to the patrol staffing plan and alternatives to handling community service demands.

Taken on its face, however, this part of the Rule of 60 also must be considered when examining the operational elements of the department when staffing recommendations are taken into consideration. The data presented here indicate that the BPD could consider short-term and long-term plans to rebalance the personnel allocation among units in the department.

APPLICATION OF RULE OF 60 – PART 2

The second part of the Rule of 60 examines workload and discretionary time and suggests that no more than 60 percent of time should be committed to calls for service. In other words, we suggest that no more than 60 percent of available patrol officer time be spent responding to the service demands of the community, and the remaining 40 percent of time be discretionary time.

Again, it is our opinion, and it is nationally best practice, that patrol staffing is optimally deployed when the saturation index (SI) is in the 60 percent range. A SI greater than 60 percent indicates that the patrol staffing is largely reactive and overburdened with CFS and workload demands. A SI of somewhat less than 60 percent indicates that patrol staffing is optimally staffed. SI levels much lower than 60 percent, however, indicate patrol resources that are underutilized, and signals an opportunity for a reduction in patrol resources or reallocation of police personnel.

The following figures represent workload, staffing, and the “saturation” of patrol resources in the BPD during February and July in 2019. These months represent the busiest and slowest time of the year for workload, consistent with national averages of winter vs. summer months. In addition, these months are further disaggregated to explore workload during the weekdays and weekends, where CFS nationally also differ. Therefore, these four distinct periods permit us to develop an understanding of the service demands faced by the patrol function in the department.

To develop these models, the assessment team obtained all the CFS responded to by the BPD in 2019. In total, there were 96,265 CFS provided for analysis. In addition, the officers’ assignment was provided and whether the CFS originated from the public through 911 or was a police-initiated incident such as a traffic stop or foot patrol.

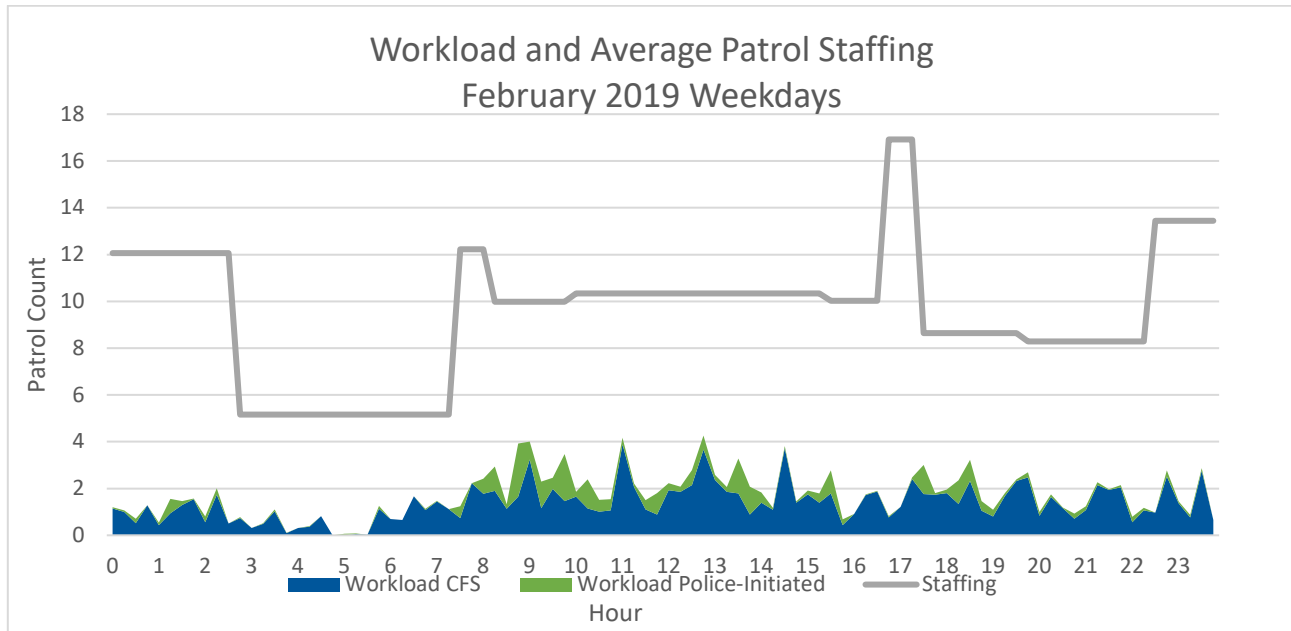
The data were sorted to identify only CFS responded to in February and July, and then sorted further to identify weekday and weekend calls. Once the CFS were disaggregated, CFS responded to by officers on patrol were identified.²³

With these CFS responded to by patrol officers identified and categorized in the appropriate time, the dispatch-time (the time first assigned to an officer on patrol) was subtracted from the clear-time (the time when the CFS ended) to calculate the total time required to handle that CFS. This is identified as the *total service time*. Service time was then grouped into 15-minute increments and then averaged across the time category in question.

In addition to the workload, the computer aided dispatch (CAD) system—which is utilized by dispatchers, call takers, and 911 operators to prioritize and record incident calls—identifies the status and location of responders in the field and effectively dispatch responder personnel and collects data on the number of officers assigned to patrol during these same periods. Ideally, the actual number of officers present for duty and assigned to patrol would be calculated in those same 15-minute increments used for calculating workload. Unfortunately, the BPD was not able to retrieve actual staffing information for the period we studied. Instead of using actual staffing data, we relied on the number of officers scheduled to be assigned to patrol during those time periods, adjusted by the BPD “availability factor.” This “availability factor” is calculated by the BPD based on the amount of leave time provided to officers per the Burlington Police Officer Agreement (BPOA), which is the union Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Consequently, actual staffing scheduled would be reduced by 13.7 percent each day. In other words, officers are entitled to contractually guaranteed time off throughout the year. Because they use this time off for vacation and other leave, staffing levels on patrol would naturally be reduced. Therefore, this would result in only 86.3 percent of the officers being available for work on any given day. The BPD applied the “availability factor” to the different combinations of the number of officers available based upon the various shift assignments. This was then further separated by weekday and weekend, and then CNA used the average number of officers available, adjusted by the availability factor, for each 15-minute increment throughout the weekdays and weekends.

²³ CFS handled by personnel assigned to the airport, DSB, SRO, CUSI, DEA, CAO, Recruitment, and outreach were excluded from the workload and staffing analyses. Because officers are specifically assigned to these details, they are not available to respond to CFS.

Figure 23. Workload and average staffing on February 2019 weekdays



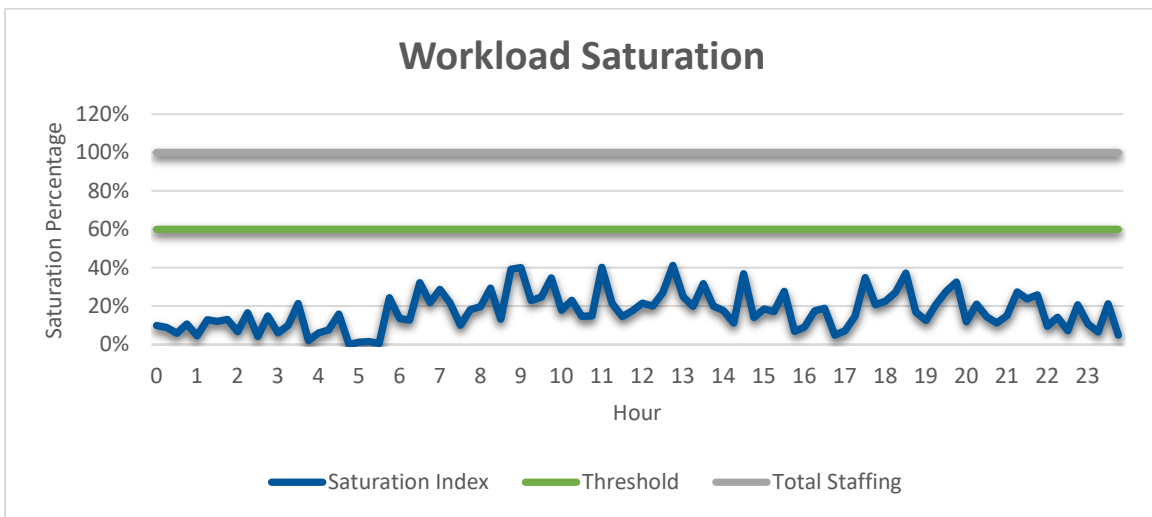
The blue shaded area illustrated in Figure 23 represents the average amount of time dedicated to CFS received from the public and responded to by patrol officers in the BPD. Inspection of Figure 23 illustrates that CFS volume is very low in the early morning hours and rises in the morning and stays relatively constant throughout the day until it abates after midnight into the morning.

The green shaded area illustrated in Figure 23 represents self-initiated work performed by officers throughout the day. These types of assignments could include incidents where the officers happen upon them before the member of the public calls 911, or other calls they initiate themselves, such as traffic stops, or pedestrian stops, or serving subpoena or warrants.

The gray line at the top of the panel in Figure 23 represents the average patrol staffing during weekdays in February. The line peaks at 16.92 officers on average assigned to patrol between 4:30 p.m. (1630 in military time) and 5:15 p.m. (1715) when both the Day and Evening Shifts are present for duty to ensure a good transition from one shift officer to the next. This is customary nationally. The line’s low points are between 2:45 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. when only the Midnight Shift is present for duty. The other peaks represent times during the day during which, because of the structure of the shift schedule, more than one shift is working at the same time. Inspection of Figure 23 indicates that there is always enough officers on patrol to meet workload demands.

To put this workload into context, we converted the amount of work performed into a percentage of the number of officers available to perform it. This ratio or work-to-officers is the saturation index discussed above. Figure 24 illustrates this for the period of February weekdays in 2019.

Figure 24. Workload saturation index February 2019 weekdays



Again, the gray line in Figure 24 above represents the total staff available during this period. The green line represents the 60 percent threshold. This is the point that would indicate whether workload is too high for the patrol function. The blue line in Figure 24 is the saturation index or the percentage of work compared to the number of officers available. The saturation index in February 2019 ranges from a low of 0 percent at 5:00 a.m. (no work performed during this time during any weekdays in this month) to a high of 41.2 percent at 12:45 p.m. In addition, the conclusion can be drawn that there were ample resources available on patrol during this period to handle the workload.

Figure 25. Workload and average staffing on February 2019 weekends

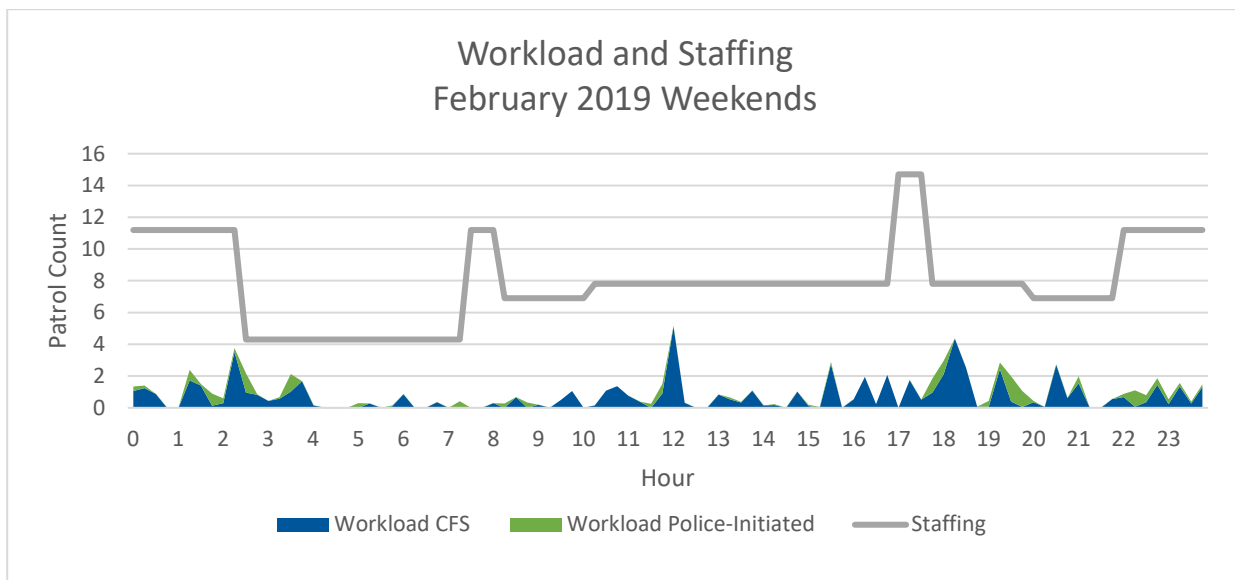
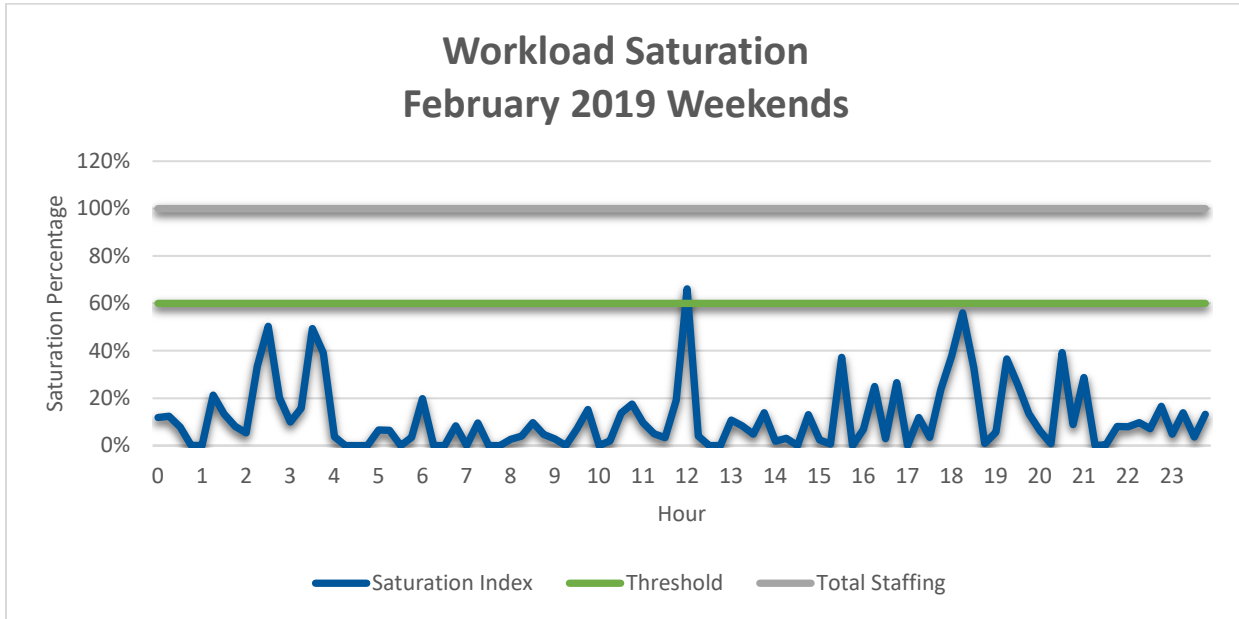


Figure 26. Workload saturation index February 2019 weekends



Figures 25 and 26 illustrate the workload, staffing, and saturation index for February 2019 weekends. Again, it appears that the BPD has ample resources assigned to patrol, generally higher than needed. There is one brief period at 12:00 p.m. that the 60 percent threshold is breached, but throughout the rest of the day workload demands appear manageable. In other words, in 2019, based upon the fully staffed department as per historical standards, and applying the workload levels from community-initiated and police-initiated CFS, the BPD had sufficient resources on patrol to meet these service demands.

Figure 27. Workload and average staffing on July 2019 weekdays

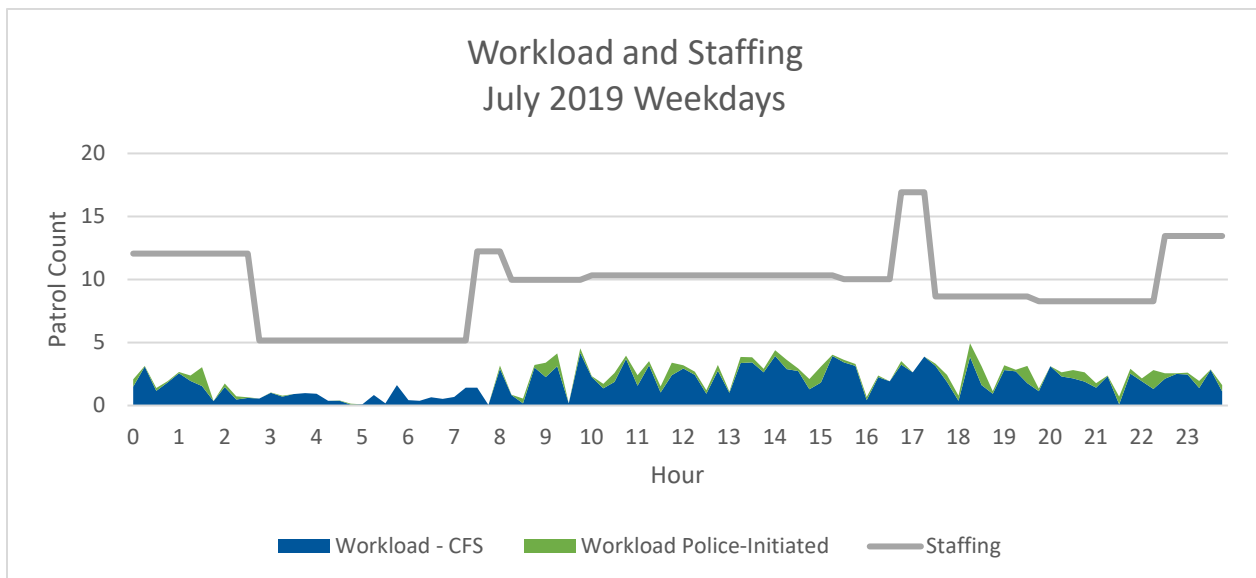
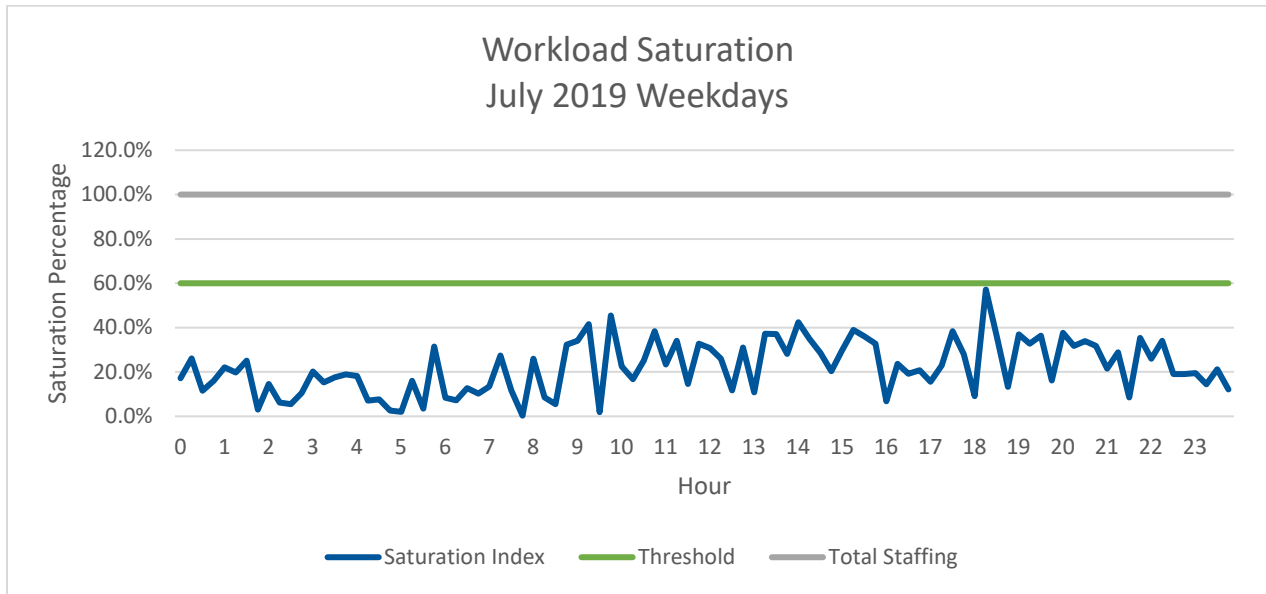


Figure 28. Workload saturation index July 2019 weekdays

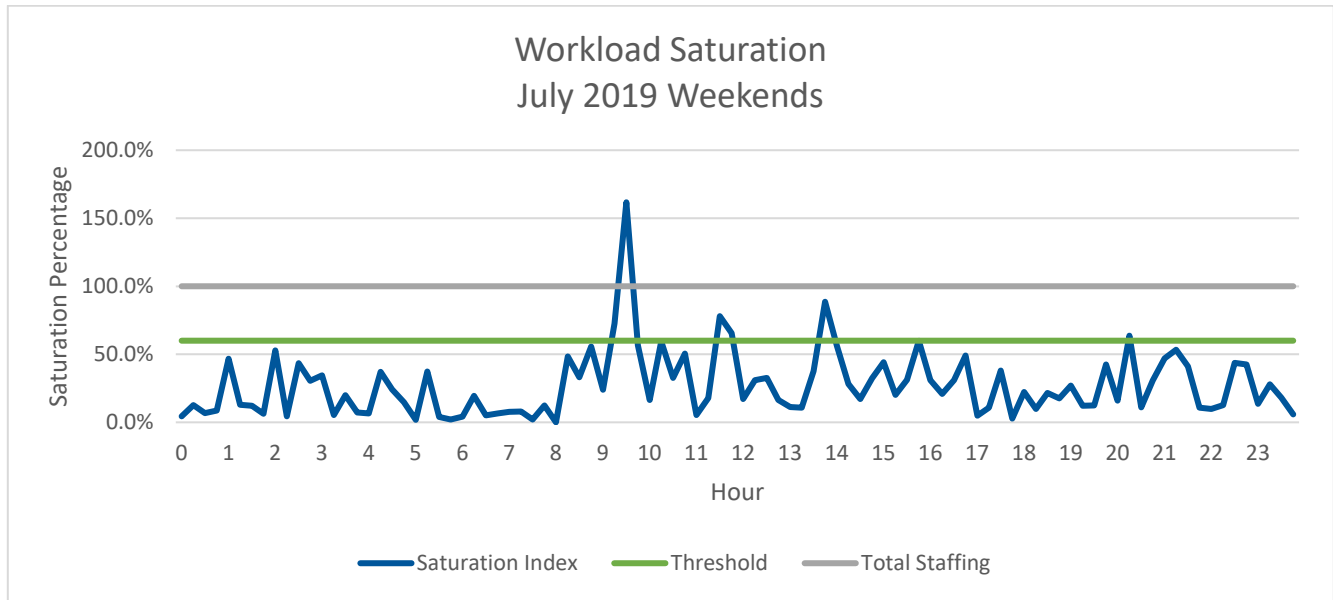


The workload in July 2019 weekdays (Figures 27 and 28) is clearly greater than February. The 60 percent threshold is breached once at 6:15 p.m. However, it appears that although busier than in February, the BPD has ample patrol officers assigned to meet the workload demands.

Figure 29. Workload and average staffing on July 2019 weekends



Figure 30. Workload saturation index July 2019 weekends



Figures 29 and 30 illustrate the workload during July 2019 weekends. July weekends present a different situation. It appears here that workload is particularly stressful during the time between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. In addition, the weekend saturation index breaches the threshold in numerous places, and it also appears to be elevated into the early morning hours. This would lead to the conclusion that the BPD might benefit from additional patrol resources during these critical times during the summer weekends. Because this assessment and analysis utilized 2019 staffing levels, it is not surprising, and perhaps justified if CFS data in July 2021 are consistent with July 2019 data, that the “alarm bells” currently being rung by BPD are appropriate given higher summer CFS, paired with the reduction in staffing by 30 percent, along with the stated attrition that is occurring in the department and without alternative response programs presently in place to “pick up” the CFS that do not necessarily require police response. This was also consistent with what the assessment team heard from many stakeholder interviews.

Table 9. Summary of workload and deployment from 2019

	Winter Weekdays	Winter Weekends	Summer Weekdays	Summer Weekends
Avg. Deployment	9.5	7.9	9.5	7.9
Avg. Workload:	1.7	0.9	2.13	2.1
Avg. % Deployed (SI):	18%	12%	22%	27%
Peak SI:	41%	66%	67%	162%
Peak SI Time:	12:15 p.m.	12:00 p.m.	6:15 p.m.	9:30 a.m.

The information presented above can be used in estimating the appropriate level of staffing for patrol. This is determined by examining shift schedules within the context of the service demands illustrated above. The main conclusion is that the patrol function in the BPD has more than enough resources to

meet workload demands. The critical threshold is only breached in isolated circumstances, and the average saturation indexes are all well below areas of concern during all periods studied.

SCHEDULE AND STAFFING

Taking into consideration the demand for police services and the concept of saturation index, appropriate levels of patrol staffing can be determined. The optimal level of patrol staffing will lead to the modeling of patrol schedules and thereby act as the foundation for the staffing of the entire department.

The BPD’s main patrol force works four 10-hour shifts, as dictated by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) union contract (Day, Swing, Evening, and Midnight). Officers work the same shifts, they do not rotate from day to night, and each shift has two “sides”—a “Left-Side” or “Team A,” and a “Right-Side” or “Team B.” Officers assigned to patrol have steady days off, either Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday or Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The Teams overlap on several days during the week depending upon shift, known as the “double day,” when BPD has double the officers on duty. This is part of the overall efficiency concern which will be addressed in the recommended staffing models.

According to the CBA, officers on patrol select their shift assignment every four months in a bid system based on seniority. These “tour” assignments (Side or Team) rotate every other month. The workdays switch on the first Sunday of every month, so officers get weekends off every other month, with steady days off. Three squads are assigned to each of the shifts per side/team, and on any given day, two squads are assigned to work and the other is off. Under this current model, Monday is the day when patrol resources are doubled and both Teams A and B are scheduled to work. The doubling of officers on Mondays potentially has numerous benefits including providing additional patrol coverage, time for officers to be away in training, saturation patrol in hot spots, etc., but it also creates significant efficiency issues. These important functions can all be accomplished with surplus resources. Table 10 presents the combination of personnel assignments for patrol

Table 10. 2019 Patrol strength by shift

	Lt.	Sgt.	CPL/PO	Total
Days (0730x1730)	2	2	15	19
Swing (1200x2200)		1		1
Evening (1645x0245)	1	2	16	19
Midnight (2215x0815)		2	10	12
Total	3	7	41	61

Under both the 2019 operations and the current operational realities post the 30 percent reduction, the current two-side system should be discontinued. Patrol personnel need to be reassigned to distribute assignments more evenly during the day and stagger the days off to reflect crime, disorder, and calls for service demands.

Findings and recommendations

Finding 7.1: The BPD’s current work schedule is very inefficient. The two-phase, four-shift system in current use was functional under full-employment conditions, but the overlapping shifts and “double days” produce substantial inefficiencies in staffing. The current staffing model should be abandoned and replaced with a working schedule that is responsive to the calls-for-service demands, crime complaints, and conditions of neighborhood disorder.

In addition, memorializing the patrol work schedule into the CBA makes it even more inflexible. There are other, more efficient patrol shift models that rely on a 10-hour work shift, and consideration should be given to exploring these opportunities as well as other shift conventions, such as 12-hour tours (which is the assessment team’s priority recommendation).

Recommendation 7.1.1: It is recommended that the patrol function could be adequately staffed with 51 sworn officers (1 deputy chief, 4 lieutenants, 6 sergeants, and 40 officers). Ideally, they should be deployed in a 12-hour shift schedule, with six squads (four main and two overlap squads). This combination of personnel produces the most efficient combination of officer deployment and days off schedule.

Finding 7.2: The current shift schedule for patrol is inefficient, and the BPD should take steps to change it. It is understood that the current CBA does not contemplate unilateral changes to the shift plan; however, it is recommended that the City of Burlington and the BPD strongly consider adopting this plan through negotiations with the BPOA at the next earliest opportunity.

Recommendation 7.2.1: Instead of the current shift schedule, the assessment team recommends the BPD adopt a 12-hour shift plan that uses six squads of officers to provide emergency response, citywide patrol coverage, and the capacity to provide services in a community policing approach. Serious consideration should be given to adopting this proposed 12-hour schedule, aligning officer work schedules with the times and days when they are most likely needed.

The remainder of the report delineates the recommended staffing option of the 12-hour shift schedule staffed with 51 sworn officers assigned to patrol that the BPD should strongly consider. In Appendix B, three additional models are identified for secondary consideration.

12-hour shift schedule option for BPD

Patrol modifications

To address the liabilities presented by the structure of the current patrol schedule, the BPD could explore one or more modifications to the schedule. Some are easier to implement than others, and some of the adjustments cannot be made unilaterally but must be collectively bargained with the police union. All the modifications presented below will ensure that the BPD continues to meet demand, while becoming more efficient, the outcome of which can be used to assess the level of reduction that has been deployed as well as alternative policing models.

Change the shift plan

The available literature on shift length provides no definitive conclusions on an appropriate shift length. A recent study published by the Police Foundation examined 8-hour, 10-hour, and 12-hour shifts and found positive and negative characteristics associated with all three options.²⁴ The length of the shift is secondary to the application of that shift to meet service demands.

It is understood that the CBA memorializes the work schedules and that any modification to the schedule could only be accomplished with negotiations between the City and the union. The below discussion presents the best possible option for the BPD that could improve operations if there was an interest in exploring a schedule change. As indicated, Appendix B provides additional illustrations of different work schedules that would also be improvements over the current schedule in place.

Drawing on the information from the data analysis, it is possible to construct a patrol work schedule that meets the demand for police services. The table below lists the demand for police services in terms of total workload during weekends and weekdays in February and July. These workload demands are listed in the left portion of the table and are presented for each hour of the day. At midnight during the week in February, total workload demand for police service in Burlington was on average 1.07 police-hours. In other words, through community member initiated CFS and self-initiated activities by BPD officers, 1.07 hours of time were expended at that hour. Inspection of the table indicates that demand for services, or total workload, decreases as the night progresses and hits a low point around 5:00 a.m. The workload then increases during the day. The adjacent columns represent workload demands for weekends in February and weekdays and weekends in July. Workload patterns are slightly different on weekends and in July, but the general pattern appears in each column.

To staff appropriately, consideration should be given to peak workload at each individual hour during the day. The column labeled "Peak Workload" represents the highest workload observed during that hour in any one of the four periods (weekends/weekdays in February/July). Looking at the 12:00 a.m. hour, the peak workload was 2.13 police-hours. The "Peak Workload" column, therefore, is constructed by selecting the highest workload figure during each of the 24-hour time periods in the table.

The column labeled "60% Threshold" represents the number of police officers required to maintain staffing levels at the 60 percent saturation index for that given hour. Thus, with 2.13 hours of workload, 3.55 police officers are required to meet that workload while maintaining the 60 percent saturation threshold ($2.13/60 \text{ percent} = 3.55$). The same calculation is made for each of the 24-hour periods, and the result is the number of police officers that are required to be available to meet peak workload and maintain the 60 percent saturation threshold based on the 2019 data analyzed.

The right most column labeled "needed" reflects the number of officers needed to meet peak demand during the selected time periods. Since the BPD cannot assign a fractional number of officers to work (4.1 for example), the availability factor is rounded up to the next whole number, therefore 4.1 becomes 5, and so on. This adjustment makes both mathematical and operational sense. The reality of staffing is that more than just personal leave time reduces the number of officers available for patrol. Sick time,

²⁴ Karen L. Amendola et al., *The Shift Length Experiment: What We Know about 8-, 10-, and 12-hour Shifts in Policing* (Washington, DC: Police Foundation, 2012).

court, special events, and a myriad of other responsibilities take personnel away from their primary patrol assignments. On a typical shift, it might be common that 25 percent of the officers assigned will be unavailable for patrol because of another competing responsibility. Therefore, rounding up to the next whole number can account for these unforeseen absences and give the department a more realistic approach to deploying officers.

Table 11. Peak Workload Staffing Model—2019 February/July

Hour	Feb Weekday	Feb Weekends	July Weekday	July Weekend	Peak Workload	60% Threshold	Availability Factor (86.3%)	Needed
0	1.07	0.90	2.13	0.91	2.13	3.55	4.1	5
1	1.29	1.20	2.11	2.19	2.19	3.65	4.2	5
2	1.02	1.85	0.92	2.40	2.40	4.00	4.6	5
3	0.51	1.23	0.93	0.72	1.23	2.05	2.4	3
4	0.38	0.04	0.46	0.89	0.89	1.48	1.7	2
5	0.36	0.18	0.68	0.49	0.68	1.13	1.3	2
6	1.04	0.30	0.50	0.38	1.04	1.73	2.0	2
7	1.52	0.10	0.89	0.57	1.52	2.53	2.9	3
8	2.65	0.39	1.95	2.37	2.65	4.42	5.1	6
9	3.06	0.43	3.06	5.43	5.43	9.05	10.5	11
10	1.83	0.65	2.65	3.06	3.06	5.10	5.9	6
11	2.42	0.73	2.71	3.25	3.25	5.42	6.3	7
12	2.84	1.37	2.57	1.90	2.84	4.73	5.5	6
13	2.50	0.74	2.93	2.89	2.93	4.88	5.7	6
14	2.07	0.35	3.27	2.61	3.27	5.45	6.3	7
15	1.79	0.78	3.51	3.03	3.51	5.85	6.8	7
16	1.35	1.20	2.13	2.57	2.57	4.28	5.0	5
17	2.13	1.03	3.07	2.03	3.07	5.12	5.9	6
18	2.25	2.49	2.50	1.40	2.50	4.17	4.8	5
19	2.00	1.58	2.62	1.84	2.62	4.37	5.1	6
20	1.22	0.95	2.79	2.10	2.79	4.65	5.4	6
21	1.91	0.64	1.95	2.63	2.63	4.38	5.1	6
22	1.43	1.16	2.52	3.04	3.04	5.07	5.9	6
23	1.46	1.00	2.26	1.84	2.26	3.77	4.4	5

Using the same calculation for each hour of the day results in a 24-hour staffing distribution. As shown in the table, required staffing for peak workload ranges from a high of 11 officers to a low of 2 officers citywide. The table also shows that the staffing requirements are not uniform; they fluctuate throughout the day.

The challenge of managing patrol operations is to ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet demand through appropriate staffing and scheduling. The fixed nature of the staffing combined with the variable nature of workload demands will naturally create periods of personnel surplus and shortage throughout the day. The goal is to minimize these surpluses and shortages and create a work schedule that reduces the variance between demand and supply.

In an ideal world, the BPD would be able to carve out the right number of people working at the precise hour to meet both supply and demand. Unfortunately, the rigid nature of the deployment schedule makes this impossible in every police department. Thus, the perfect state can only be approximated by creating the “best fit” of patrol staffing and workload demand. The best fit occurs when the variation between workload demand and police officer supply is the lowest. This best fit is created by modeling or manipulating various combinations of officers and 10-hour blocks to reduce the variance between supply and demand to its lowest possible level.

To arrive at the most optimal shift plan, it is useful to compare the proposed shift with the 2019 model. To do that we employ some simple mathematical tools to explore the total difference between the number of officers needed with the number of officers deployed under each plan. In addition, we examine the variance of these differentials. In a perfect system, the deviations would all be zeros, and demand would be met perfectly by appropriate staffing. Since this is impossible to achieve, the best possible option is adding up the deviations over the 24-hour day resulting in the surplus/deficit of staff on patrol. The term “variance” is simply a calculation that portrays the amount of variability in the deviation between demand and supply, or workload and staffing. The best fit seeks to minimize the variability to the greatest extent possible. Large differences between workload and available staff would indicate a poor fit, and this would be captured by the level of variance.

No schedule is perfect, and the sample schedule provided is no exception. Although it is a better fit operationally to meet demands, there are disadvantages to this model. First, officers and supervisors are not assigned as a single unit. Currently, the BPD shifts have a strict unity of command in which officers in each shift are subordinate to and report to just one supervisor. Among the many advantages of this structure are that it improves supervision and provides consistent leadership. The sample plan lacks this strict unity of command; patrol officers would be supervised by a different sergeant depending on the day of the week. In addition, though both plans offer steady four days of work followed by three days off each week, the current plan in the BPD offers most officers at least part of the weekend off. The sample plan features evenly distributed regular days off and would require many officers to have steady weekdays for an extended period. Furthermore, currently the BPD can reassign entire shifts of officers to receive training or deploy to crime and disorder conditions in the community. This is a very valuable resource, but only occurs during the one day each week when the shift days overlap (and to a limited extent during the daily shift overlaps). The proposed schedule would restrict the department’s ability to do this redeployment. The sample plan does call for large blocks of overlapping shifts each day; however, the BPD could capitalize on these overlaps each day (and at multiple times during the day) to conduct training, proactive community engagement, and specialized enforcement. In its totality, however, the patrol schedule currently in place in the BPD is inefficient and should be changed as soon as practical.

12-HOUR SHIFT WITH A COMMUNITY RESPONSE TEAM

The shift model with considerable potential features six 12-hour shifts. There are four main patrol shifts primarily responsible for responding to CFS. Layered on top of these four shifts would be community response teams (CRT). These teams would work the same rotation of days off and be assigned to overlap the patrol teams during the times when workload demands are highest. Personnel assigned to the CRT would also be responsible for conducting proactive enforcement, engaging in long-term problem solving, and acting as a primary resource to the community. On a day-to-day basis, the

CRT would interact with the organized communities in these neighborhoods (civic, business, school parent teacher organizations, etc.), work on their long-term issues, and be available as a team to conduct enforcement operations directed at crime, disorder, and traffic. Should BPD move forward with hiring the CSL positions, this would also be an ideal place to pair a CSL with a CRT for specialized response to community social service needs.

Below is an example of how the patrol division might be organized under this model:

Table 12. Six, 12-hour shift configuration

Squad	Shift	Lt.	Sgt.	PO	Total
A	0600X1800	1	1	8	10
B	1800X0600	1	1	8	10
C	0600X1800	1	1	8	10
D	1800X0600	1	1	8	10
CRT-1	1200x2400		1	4	5
CRT-2	1200x2400		1	4	5
		4	6	40	50

Note: With the DC position, the total equates to 51.

For all the 12-hour shifts, we recommend a rotation that limits the number of consecutive days worked and provides for every other weekend off for the personnel working it. Days off under this plan would rotate on a biweekly basis. Each squad would have an alternating rotation of two- and three-day combinations. The below rotation is commonly known as the “Pitman” schedule. The four squads work opposite each other. Two share the same work hours, and the other two share the same day-off rotation. The rotation permits each squad to have every other weekend off. This schedule calls for seven 12-hour shifts over the two-week period. This will result in 84 work hours. This will require the BPD to fund the extra hours each period or require officers to use the overage number of hours of time each period. The logistics of the 84-hour period would need to be determined by the department.

Table 13. Rotation – days off – 12-hour shift

	Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Shift	Sqd	M	T	W	H	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	H	F	Sa	Su
6X18	A	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	OFF
18X6	B	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	OFF
6x18	C	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	ON
18X6	D	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	ON
12x24	CRT	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	OFF
12x24	CRT	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	ON

Under this model, the lieutenants could be tasked with the overall responsibility of carrying out the strategic plan of the department and use their resources to prioritize proactive community engagement including youth engagement, reduce crime, improve traffic safety, and execute strategy supporting alternative responses to policing by serving as a liaison between BPD, community stakeholders, 911 call center personnel, etc., and leading the response to

community problems. Considering that many problems are unique to day and night, the temporal assignment of responsibility, as opposed to geographic or spatial, might make more sense for the BPD. The daytime shifts could focus on traffic, daytime burglaries, park conditions, etc., and the nighttime teams could focus on disorderly bars and clubs, car theft, DUI enforcement, etc. Each shift would have an operational plan, and the lieutenants would be responsible for executing that plan and using the experience and authority to marshal departmental resources to achieve the goals of that plan.

Table 14. Staffing deviations and variance,

Hours	Needed	2019	12-Hour with CRT
0	5	8	2
1	5	8	2
2	5	6	2
3	3	2	4
4	2	3	5
5	2	3	5
6	2	3	5
7	3	6	4
8	6	4	1
9	11	-1	-1
10	6	4	4
11	7	3	3
12	6	4	4
13	6	4	4
14	7	3	3
15	7	1	3
16	5	7	5
17	6	4	4
18	5	3	5
19	6	2	4
20	6	2	4
21	6	2	1
22	6	6	1
23	5	8	2
	TOTAL	87	73
	DEVIATION		
	VARIANCE	5.25	2.57

The table above compares the current shift with the CNA recommended shift. The table shows that the shift plan from 2019 is the least efficient option for patrol staffing. The 12-hour shift with the CRT is more efficient than the current plan. It has both lower personnel surplus and variance. This means it meets service demands the most efficiently with the most appropriate number of officers assigned at the right times. Strong consideration should be given to adopting this shift plan.

OVERALL STAFFING RECOMMENDATION

With the *patrol* allocation estimated to require 51 sworn officers (assigned to the duty of patrol) our analysis can now revisit Part 1 of the Rule of 60 and make a projection for overall sworn staffing (patrol and chain of command) for the BPD.

According to the allocation in 2019, patrol made up 64.6 percent of the entire number of sworn officers (which is in accordance with the 60 percent rule). Maintaining that ratio and applying it to the recommended patrol strength of 51 officers would result in a total sworn department headcount of 79 officers (51/64.6 percent, rounded to the next whole number). However, based on our recommendation to not factor BIA officers into the overall staffing headcount (they are not available to support operations), this has been adjusted resulting in a total recommended headcount of 72-75 deployable officers. See Table 16 and 17. This would mean that for an appropriate balanced allocation for the BPD, there would be 51 sworn officers assigned to patrol and a recommended 21-24 8sworn officers assigned to administrative and investigative functions in the department. The discussion now turns to an appropriate deployment of those non-patrol personnel.

Administration and investigations

The first order of business is to understand the current deployment of personnel in non-patrol functions. The table below illustrates where other sworn personnel are assigned. With this understanding, the next step is to ensure that ample personnel are assigned to ensure core/essential services are identified, ensure they are staffed appropriately, and then evaluate other beneficial services that might require staffing.

Table 15. Historical (96 Sworn) administrative and investigative personnel allocation, 2019

	Chief	DC	Lt	Sgt	Det/PO	Total
Executive Command	1					1
Community Affairs Officer					1	1
Burlington International Airport				1	7	8
School Resource Officer					2	2
Emergency Response Officer					1	1
Administrative Service		1				1
Administrative			1		1	2
Detective Services Bureau			1			1
General Detective				1	9	10
Street Crime				1	2	3
Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations				1	2	3
Domestic Violence Prevention Officer					1	1
	1	1	2	4	26	34

The table shows that one chief, one deputy chief, two lieutenants, four sergeants, and twenty-six detectives/officers were assigned to investigative and administrative positions in the department.

Core/essential services

Case detectives – Criminal investigations

It is essential that the BPD have adequate personnel to handle criminal investigations. Under the historic staffing model, this function would be staffed with one sergeant and nine detectives. Hard and fast benchmarks for investigative staffing do not currently exist nationally. One murder investigation could occupy the time of several detectives for months, but on the other hand, one detective could handle hundreds of theft cases in a similar period. The International Association of Chiefs of Police, however, suggests that a detective caseload between 120 and 180 cases per year (10 to 15 per month) is manageable. Other sources suggest that departments should staff one detective for every 300 UCR Part I Index Crimes²⁵ recorded every year (Burlington recorded 1,110 property crimes and 210 violent crimes in 2019). Although the caseloads of the nine detectives are unknown currently, the BPD has more than enough resources to manage follow-up criminal investigations. Just applying the 300 UCR Part I Index Crime standard would indicate that the BPD might be able to handle criminal investigations with as little as five detectives. However, the discussion below recommends the elimination of other specialized investigatory positions. Although the specialized position is recommended for elimination, the need to conduct those investigations will still be necessary. Instead of a specialized unit or position, it is recommended that these functions be rolled back into the responsibilities of general case detectives.

Recommendation 7.3.1: One sergeant and eight detectives (down from one sergeant and nine detectives)

Proactive enforcement – Crime suppression

In addition to reactive case investigations, police departments must have the capacity to engage in long-term proactive investigations targeted at high-risk people and problematic locations. Departments have a variety of different names and approaches to this function: Special Response Teams, Special Operations Units, Street Crime Unit, Crime Suppression Unit, Gang Squads, etc. The bottom line is that every police department must have the capacity to address conditions in the community without being tied to responding to CFS from the public or handling investigations into past crimes. In the BPD, it appears that this function is handled by the one sergeant and three officers assigned to the Street Crimes Unit. Although an on-site assessment and interviews with Street Crimes Unit personnel was not conducted, it is likely that with only four personnel assigned to this function, the unit struggles to execute proactive operations. This personnel complement would be considered a bare minimum, and an absolute necessity for the BPD.

Recommendation 7.4.1: One sergeant and three police officers (same current personnel)

Intelligence – Crime analysis and intelligence

According to the BPD organizational chart, there does not appear to be a specific unit or person tasked with the responsibility for gathering, developing, processing, and disseminating criminal intelligence and crime analysis. From a mission perspective, the BPD should deploy a crime analyst or criminal

²⁵ The FBI Uniform Crime Report program defines Part I Index crimes as Murder and Non-Negligent Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny Theft, Auto Theft, and Arson

intelligence officer. This position should target hot spots and prolific offenders. Developing intelligence from data and from the community may not be the responsibility of one investigator in the BPD. The BPD could designate one member of the department as the Criminal Intelligence Officer (CIO). The sergeant in charge of the Street Crimes Unit (SCU) could be tasked with this responsibility. In addition, the BPD should staff at least one full-time non-sworn crime analyst who would work under the CIO and process the information and intelligence in the department. The CIO would work with the crime analyst to understand patterns and trends and work to develop intelligence information from confidential informants and other community sources to identify criminal offenders.

The CIO could be responsible for preparing strategic crime analyses and trend reports, monitoring and tracking high-propensity offenders, developing, and managing crime prevention programs, securing search warrants, training department personnel, making community and media presentations, exchanging crime information with surrounding agencies, and initiating proactive crime-solving strategies.

Recommendation 7.5.1: One non-sworn analyst and one cross-designated sergeant (SCU) as CIO (new positions).

Professional standards

The amount of administrative effort required to sustain operations is considerable in both scope and breadth. Recruitment, training, discipline, personnel management, physical plant, vehicles, information technology, and budgets all require sound management, which requires an appropriate allocation of sworn and non-sworn personnel. The BPD organizational chart indicates that the department has a well-developed cadre of non-sworn staff in this area. Nonetheless, many internal functions and professional standards internal to police management require sworn personnel as well. Under historical standards, the BPD could be considered “lean” in the allocation of sworn personnel in this area. Besides the Chief of Police, the BPD assigned one deputy chief, one lieutenant, and two officers (community affairs and recruitment) in this area. This seems to be a bare minimum and an appropriate allocation even under conditions of reduced staffing.

Recommendation 7.6.1: One chief, one deputy chief, one lieutenant, one sergeant, and two police officers (added one sergeant position)

Non-essential services that add value to the BPD

In addition to providing the core services described above, most police departments in the US identify other opportunities over and above core service delivery where they can provide value to the community. These services often contribute to improving public safety in the community, and often they are services that the community deems important and tasks the police department with providing. Consequently, police departments can by default engage in “mission creep” where they embrace the responsibilities that other social service agencies should be providing but either do not or cannot, and so they become the responsibility of the police. Calls involving mental and behavioral health conditions and housing insecurity are examples of this.

To staff a police department properly, an assessment needs to be done to allocate personnel to both essential (must have) and value-added (nice to have) services. The following discussion addresses the value-added service/units in operation in the BPD.

Domestic violence prevention officer

In the 1970s and early '80s, the police approached domestic violence as a private matter and were reticent, in general, to get involved. This led to unnecessary victimization of abused spouses and domestic partners.

Clearly, domestic violence is in the mandate of the police. Reports of domestic abuse should be responded to professionally and pursued rigorously by the BPD. To add value to their efforts in this area, the BPD assigned one sworn officer to provide another layer of quality control as it relates to domestic violence investigations.

In the BPD, domestic violence (DV) cases requiring follow-up investigation are assigned to the Domestic Violence Prevention Officer (DVPO). The DVPO conducts the follow-up or subsequent arrests and provides more protection for victims, more thorough investigations, and prosecutions, as well as consistency in response to DV incidents. The DVPO works closely with the BPD Domestic Violence Victims' Advocate, providing a seamless approach to domestic violence prosecutions and an emphasis on reducing domestic violence recidivism. Every victim of domestic violence in Burlington, regardless of their need or domestic situation, has a dedicated advocate in the Burlington Police Department.

This is an excellent service provided to the members of the Burlington community, but not essential considering Burlington's recent reduction in sworn officers. Because there is already a domestic violence victims' advocate assigned to these cases, the follow-up, advocacy, and social intervention services appear to be coordinated. One can argue that a trained, trauma informed approach by responding law enforcement to DV incidents is crucial, but it is important to consider whether it is essential given Burlington's focus on non-police response to certain kinds of CFS. The follow-up investigations, as well as the patrol response, could easily be collateral duties of detectives already assigned to the Detective Services Bureau and Uniformed Services Bureau. Added trauma and DV training could support a cross trained function of existing patrol and detectives. Creating a specialized position and assigning a dedicated sworn officer to these duties is redundant. Furthermore, for an agency facing a 30 percent reduction in sworn personnel, this position should be the first one diffused within the other operational elements of the department to preserve effective core service delivery.

Recommendation 7.7.1: Eliminate the position and reassign responsibilities to a detective in the DSB.

Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations

The Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations (CUSI²⁶) is a multi-agency task force that exists to provide criminal investigation services in response to reports of sexual assault, other serious sexual offenses, and serious child abuse and neglect. The team consists of investigators from agencies around the county, comprised of police detectives, a Department of Children and Family (DCF) investigator, a State's Attorney, a Victim's Advocate, and a Director for the Children's Advocacy Center.

Providing a robust police response to sexual assault and serious child abuse is an extremely important role of the police. These are generally complex, sensitive, and specialized cases that should only be responded to by an experienced investigator.

²⁶ <https://cusi-vt.org/about-cusi/>

According to the FBI Uniformed Crime Reports, in 2019 there were 41 incidents of rape in Burlington.²⁷ Each of these events were catastrophic for the victims and required a robust response by the police. According to these same data provided by the FBI, only 27 percent (11 out of 41) of these cases were cleared by arrest.²⁸

These data suggest that the caseload per investigator in 2019 was low (20.5 cases per detective or less than one every other week), and that the clearance rate is also low. Although investigations of sexual assault are generally associated with low clearance rates, the clearance rate for police departments in the Northeast for rape is approximately 33.4 percent, which is higher than the CUSI.²⁹

Again, the work this unit performs is undoubtedly invaluable to the survivors of these assaults. The BPD and the broader Chittenden County community should be commended for staffing this multiagency team. In the context of a reduced police department, however, consideration should be given to diffusing the responsibility of response to these incidents to other operational elements in the department, adding sensitivity training, or reducing the staffing levels below the current allocation.

Recommendation 7.8.1: Lower staffing to one detective investigator and transfer other sworn personnel back to the BPD operations.

NOTE: While CNA's recommendations do not change, BPD notes that the number of personnel BPD contributes to CUSI is determined by the percentage of CUSI's caseload that comes from Burlington and if BPD fails to make that contribution, the City must pay a monetary penalty equivalent to the staffing. CNA is unable to confirm this, but if accurate, this may be worth discussion between the parties.

Emergency Response Officer (ERO)

The BPD assigned one sworn officer as an Emergency Response Officer. The ERO responded to a wide range of calls for service in which people needed rescue, including but not limited to barricaded people, people threatening to jump off bridges or buildings, people in emotional distress, and people in hostage situations. Additionally, the ERO was responsible for participating in operational deployments such as searches for missing people or suspects, search warrant executions, large-scale public events, incidents of significant disorder, or incidents where such disorder may occur, and major disasters.

This position existed in 2019 but was eliminated as the department reduced headcount. There is an opportunity here to fill this position again, however, with an enhanced set of duties and responsibilities.

In his January 22, 2021, memorandum to the Burlington City Council, Chief Jon Murad proposed staffing a new position called the Community Service Liaison (CSL). This position is for a non-sworn community member that would serve a social-work function and not a law enforcement one. The CSL will focus on high-frequency utilizers of first responder services and other vulnerable populations, including people experiencing housing insecurity, people with mental and behavioral health conditions, and dependent persons including children, youth, and people over 65 who have health conditions associated with aging.

²⁷ The FBI UCR categorized rape in 2019 under the "expanded definition" to include non-consensual sexual acts, sodomy, and sexual assault with an object.

²⁸ <https://crime-data-explorer.app.cloud.gov/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend>

²⁹ <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2018/crime-in-the-u.s.-2018/tables/table-26>

Although covered under the alternative responses to policing section of this report, it is important to consider that specialized response is necessary both inside and outside the police department. There will always be calls that come into 911 that do require police response and having a non-sworn specialized response (like a CSL) along with a specially trained officer can be a model worth consideration.

Undoubtedly, the BPD is called to respond to situations when other agencies either fail or are not available to respond to the persons in need. Adding non-sworn personnel to the police department to make up for the shortcomings of other social service agencies, except in certain circumstances, can be unfair to the police and inconsistent with the police mission. Lacking housing, for example, is not a crime and generally does not deserve a police response unless a crime is also involved.

Non-sworn positions with a social service function has some strengths as shown across the country, but it can also reinforce that social service needs are “police issues” and remove the burden of responsibility on social service organizations tasked with serving persons in need. Naturally, the police might have a tangential role in many of these issues, which is why there are a lot of creative, successful, and important programs and training that have developed in recent years, but communities cannot lose sight of the onus of responsibility, with non-sworn professionally trained in their treatment and response.

The BPD already has one social worker position in the department, which appears from CNA interviews to be a valued position. Having one coordinator (Sergeant or higher) in the department to be the liaison between the BPD and other social service agencies, however, could be beneficial and add value to the overall police operation. A liaison role with other agencies can be an important function, along with providing important training to officers, guidance on difficult calls, follow up with individuals needing connection to social services (and ensuring connection to services occurs), and help to navigate barriers to service; the liaison can also serve a crucial role on an interagency community stakeholder committee. Here, a ranking officer with the authority to direct resources inside the BPD could be very effective. A non-sworn or ERO position should be staffed with at least a sergeant. In addition to the duties described above, the ERO sergeant could develop policy, conduct training, and supervise police responses in these areas.

If a sworn ERO position remains, the role becomes more prominent in the BPD because the responsibility becomes vested in a ranking officer. The enhanced organizational role, therefore, both enhances the BPD response and commitment while shifting the social service response to a trained social service worker.

Recommendation 7.9.1: Staff the ERO position with a sergeant or above, and, if deemed useful to the BPD and community, utilize a CSL non-sworn position to support the social service function.

Community Affairs Officer

The BPD assigned one sworn officer as a Community Affairs Officer (CAO). The CAO reported directly to the chief and was the “point-person” between the BPD and the organized community in Burlington. In general, a CAO is an integral position that can provide access and attention to the myriad community groups seeking assistance from the department. Providing a liaison to the community adds value, but again, is not essential to police operations.

Recommendation 7.10.1: Eliminate this position³⁰

Burlington International Airport

The BPD provides police coverage to the Burlington International Airport (BIA). According to the organizational chart, this responsibility is assigned to one sergeant and seven police officers who provide 24-hour coverage. Inspection of the CFS data from 2019 indicates that there were more than 5,500 calls assigned to units at BIA. This is not an insignificant amount of service demands but is substantially lower than other areas in the community.

Section 10.9.H of the CBA stipulates staffing at the airport and mandates that all “police work” requested at BIA is the responsibility of the BPD. The same section of the CBA stipulates that sworn staffing at BIA should be no less than four full-time assignments.

Upon discussion with BIA, the following considerations should be given:

- The BIA negotiates a contract annually with the BPD for 24-hour officer coverage. The 2022 negotiated contract, per the Mayor, is budgeted to pay the City \$1,079,650 in FY’22 with the intent of effectively covering all of the costs, including indirect costs, that the City/BPD incurs as a result of the current staffing arrangement.
- This contract can be put out to bid annually, but the BIA contact reports he does not believe it has been (and if so, it pre-dates his tenure).
- BIA would be in violation of TSA and FFA requirements if they cannot fulfill the requirement to have sworn officers with both arrest powers and the ability to carry and use a firearm.
- BIA is federally required to have (1) officer per screening checkpoint (they have 3 screening checkpoints-- 2 for passengers and 1 for baggage). BIA has been granted approval to allow officers to not be stationed at the checkpoints, as long as they are on site at BIA.
- BIA or federal guidelines have no requirement on officer’s shift schedule. Shift schedules can change (however this would need to be negotiated as a part of the CBA).
- BIA is not in Burlington, so BPD officers deployed to patrol would not be able to respond to the BIA in a timely fashion.
- There is no requirement that the contract needs to be with BPD, as any sworn officer with arrest and firearm privileges can be utilized. Surrounding departments would be eligible for the contract if needed or appropriate. CNA is not recommending that BPD discontinue providing officer coverage at BIA, we are instead saying that they should not be factored into the overall staffing headcount since they are dedicated to BIA (not available to support BPD operations) and annually negotiated between the City and the BIA.
- With the present BPD 10-hour shift schedule, BPD has 1 SGT and 7 officers deployed to BIA. There are typically two officers on site at one time, and when checkpoints are closed, it decreases to 1 officer.

³⁰ Notably, Chief Murad reports the position has been eliminated.

- According to BIA, BPD could perhaps reduce officers from 8 down to 7 or 6 if necessary with the current 10-hour shift schedule, but that would be the bare minimum. This does not account for a possible reduction in officers under a more efficient shift schedule.

Finding 7.11: The BIA contract is not mandated to be with BPD, rather it can involve any department with sworn officers with arrest and firearm privileges. The current shift schedule under the CBA precludes a more efficient shift schedule for BPD, as recommended in this report. The CBA stipulates no less than (4) full time officers assigned to BIA (and has 8). In summary, the CBA is the wrong place to codify staffing agreements between the City and BIA. Should the City and the BPD continue to adhere to the current staffing at BIA of one sergeant and seven officers, then appropriate staffing accommodations to the CNA recommended model would be required. [Since BPD officers assigned to BIA are dedicated to BIA and not supporting BPD operations and they are negotiated annually between the BIA and the City, these officers are not included in the recommended staffing model\(s\).](#)

Recommendation 7.11.1: Because the BIA contract is not mandated to be with BPD, the provisions of the CBA should be re-negotiated. Re-negotiations of the CBA should include removing requirements that BPD have no less than (4) full time assignments to BIA. The BIA and City's annual negotiations on BIA officers should be a distinct operational decision with dedicated officers negotiated annually based on the contract. Since these officers are full time at the airport, they should not be factored into BPD patrol staffing recommendations. In addition, shift schedules for BPD should be renegotiated to a more efficient schedule as defined in the recommended staffing model. Should the City and the BIA continue their contract, this schedule would provide additional opportunities for a possible reduction in officers deployed to BIA while still meeting TSA and FFA requirements. Finally, annual negotiations should be made between the City and the BIA, but not defined under a CBA.

Community Service Officer (CSO)

Also recommended in the memorandum to the City Council, the Chief recommended increasing the number of Community Service Officers (CSO) assigned to the department. According to the memorandum:

The CSO is an unarmed, non-sworn position (i.e., the CSO is not a law-enforcement officer and does not have arrest powers). The CSO performs a variety of field work in support of basic police operations: animal control, subpoena service, materiel transport, traffic control, fingerprints, VIN checks, scene control at large incidents, and parking enforcement and towing.

CSOs have been used successfully around the US to support patrol operations in the very manner identified by the chief. There is a wide variety of non-emergency tasks performed every day by police officers that could easily be performed by non-sworn members of the department. The chief should be commended for making this recommendation.

However, it might be worthwhile to first ask a threshold question. If the goal is to hire personnel to handle non-emergency, presumably non-police related tasks, perhaps the question should be, why are these tasks the responsibility of the police department in the first place? In other words, if police officers should not be handling these issues and they can be reassigned to non-police personnel, it may be worth

considering whether there is another agency that should be assigned these functions, and employing the role of the CSO, rather than the BPD.

Take animal control, for example. In 2019, CSOs responded to 676 “animal problems.” Why are “animal problems” the responsibility of the police department? In some communities, there is an animal control department that operates under the umbrella of the City and not the police department. These incidents and the many others the chief identified in his memo that could be handled by the CSO could be handled by another non-emergency agency. The next largest CFS handled by CSOs in 2019 was “found/lost property” with 450 responses. These 450 incidents represent only 40 percent of all the 1,122 CFS for “lost property” handled by the BPD. Given the volume of CFS in this area (more than 5 CFS per day), perhaps the City should consider another department, rather than the BPD, to respond to it.

Nonetheless, the City has budgeted, we believe, 10 CSO positions for the BPD. Personnel in these roles will provide a valuable service responding to non-emergency CFS and handling administrative matters. To the greatest extent possible, if they remain with the BPD, these new CSOs should be embedded in the patrol squads and work side by side with police officers under the supervision of the squad sergeants. CSOs could also assist with criminal investigations (retrieving video, processing evidence and case files, etc.) as well as other operational elements in the department. It should also be recognized, however, that a CSO is not a police officer and that hiring additional individuals in the CSO position does not equate to a commensurate reduction in personnel in police officer positions. The CSO can support, not replace, police officers. As the CSO relieves the burden of handling non-emergency, non-police CFS, police officers will be freed up to perform more mission-relevant functions including community engagement, crime prevention, and public safety. Part of mission relevant functions includes necessary time for increased training that the department should be requiring (Impartial policing, implicit bias, crisis intervention, de-escalation etc.).

Service demands

To appropriately staff a police department to meet the service demands of a community, it is important to identify those demands in the first place. As mentioned above, there are core services that must be provided as well as value-added services that improve public safety. There are also a wide variety of services that the police provide that are not in the police mandate and only exist there because of a failure elsewhere, or because the police are always readily available to respond to community problems. The sections discussing the CSL and CSO positions highlight this issue and call to mind that important threshold question: What *should* be the duties and responsibilities of the police in your community?

The City Council mandated a reduction in police staffing. A reduction in staffing implies a reduction in services. It appears that the Council correctly identified that there were more police resources than needed in Burlington and that it was in the community’s best interest to reduce the level of these resources. This also requires a shift in responsibility for the things that the police were accustomed to handling and even perhaps a cessation of some of those things altogether. This next section discusses the opportunities in this area.

On May 24, 2021, the BPD issued a “Priority Response Plan.” The plan illustrated the CFS classification system used in Burlington. The BPD has Priority-1 (high priority), Priority-2 (middle priority), and Priority-3 (low priority) types of CFS. Priority-1 CFS involve reports of crimes in progress and other serious police emergencies, and Priority-3 CFS are those types of CFS that are non-emergency, possibly

not police-related but accepted by the police for a response. The plan calls for Priority-3 CFS to be “stacked” (delayed or deferred) and will not receive a response unless resources allow. This is an excellent approach to managing CFS service demands, and the chief should be commended for this approach.

In general, the BPD should take a very aggressive approach to managing CFS responses given the current staffing reduction. Priority-3 CFS should be “stacked” and perhaps not answered at all. This would not only preserve scarce police resources, but also free up officer time to be responsive to community problems not related to CFS as well as remain available to respond quickly to actual police emergencies.

When examining options for the department’s direction, the City and the department face the mandate of either (a) continue to police the community as they did in 2019, or (b) take steps to restructure how to respond to demand, and still promote community safety. Considering that resources have been significantly reduced, it is essential that the community stakeholders examine service demands placed on the department and decide how to take the steps necessary to be responsive to public demand. The recommendations offered regarding operations, if implemented, will permit the BPD to continue meeting service demands and run the agency more efficiently.

According to the BPD Annual Report, the overall number of incidents responded to by the department has decreased approximately 37 percent from 37,300 incidents in 2015 to 23,600 incidents in 2020. Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions contributed to some of the decrease last year, but incidents had been falling steadily since 2015. Although overall incidents are decreasing, the number of responses to Priority-1 CFS has remained relatively stable. The overall decrease, therefore, was driven by fewer car stops and foot patrols, with 4,838 fewer car stops and 2,859 fewer foot patrols. The reasons behind these reductions are unclear. In some respects, it is good that the officers are responding to fewer incidents (likely non-emergency incidents), but on the other hand, steep drops in traffic enforcement and foot patrols may not necessarily be a positive development. The following discussion looks at broad categories of CFS and suggests that the BPD evaluate their role in these activities to determine whether continued response is warranted, and if so, under what conditions they should respond.

Alarm reduction program

False alarms are a source of inefficiency for police operations. The alarm industry is a strong advocate of developing ordinances and procedures to address police response to false alarms and will work closely with any agency exploring this issue. The 98 percent of alarm calls that are false are caused by user error, and this can be addressed by alarm management programs. During the study period, the BPD responded to almost 966 alarm calls. The response to the overwhelming majority of these calls is undoubtedly unnecessary and an inefficient use of police resources.

Ordinance 5.02 of Chapter 21 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Burlington articulates the regulations related to alarm systems. The Code requires a \$60 annual permit fee as well as penalties for false alarms. There is no charge for the first or second false alarm within any calendar year. The penalty for the third false alarm is \$70. The penalty is \$100 for the fourth, and \$150 for the fifth or subsequent ones.

We did not obtain information about the amount of penalties received by the City pursuant to this fee schedule; however, it is worth noting that there were still over 900 alarms CFS in 2019.

Even considering the ordinance in Burlington, the City and the BPD could be even more aggressive with false alarms. Namely, the fee structure articulated in section 5.02 may be too lenient. A \$70 fine may be a small price to pay for a faulty alarm, and homeowners and businesses might consider this an acceptable cost.

The police response to alarms is not an insignificant expense to the community. Typical response protocol calls for a minimum of two officers to respond to alarms. If each officer spends 15 minutes handling these kinds of CFS, this will result in over 450 hours of time committed to handling them.

On the one hand, it is good that the BPD has an aggressive fine schedule in place; however, more could be done to minimize or eliminate these responses in the first place. This would not only recoup some expense borne by the community, but more importantly, free up officer time on patrol to address other things that are more important than responding to a homeowner's faulty alarm. Think about what 2,000 hours of community service by BPD officers could do to build trust in the community.

In addition, some communities in the US impose high fees of over \$1,000 or more for repeated false alarms. At that level, there is a strong incentive to ensure that an alarm is working properly. This can save hundreds of hours of wasted time spent on these types of CFS. Similarly, the BPD should analyze the data on false alarm activations. Undoubtedly, with a greater level of analysis, patterns and trends will emerge. The BPD could identify problematic locations and/or alarm installation companies that are generating many false alarms and work with them to reduce or eliminate future occurrences. Analysis of the data could reveal certain companies that have a poor record of installation. High frequency alarm violators could be identified and visited by sworn personnel to identify reasons behind the false alarms. Consideration should be given though to whether or not increasing these fines would affect communities of color disproportionately.

Lastly, some communities are enacting a double-call verification protocol. Under such a program, an alarm CFS is verified by the 911 dispatcher with the alarm company before an officer is dispatched to respond. Also, the City should consider making greater use of the data it collects on the false alarms already recorded.

Automobile accidents

Automobile accidents are another category of call for which the response by a sworn officer is often questionable. In 2019 the BPD responded to more than 800 "property damage only" motor vehicle accidents. Arguably, most of these calls were administrative in nature and did not necessarily warrant the response of a sworn police officer. This is the type of CFS that could be handled by a CSO, or just not handled at all. Motorists could simply be directed to exchange information and report the accident to the state by the dispatcher if they call 911.

Consideration should be given to modifying the approach to vehicle traffic accidents in Burlington. The BPD, similar to the alarm reduction program, should take a more aggressive stance towards responding to property damage only accidents. Adopting a more aggressive stance towards minor traffic accidents

will minimize the number of accidents dispatched to patrol officers.

According to Vermont law, if a motorist is involved in a motor vehicle accident in which a person is injured, or there is property damage more than \$3,000, the motorist must report the accident to the state. Police departments across the state have interpreted this regulation as a mandate to respond to every traffic crash and prepare a report. This results in numerous hours spent by patrol officers responding to and documenting traffic crashes.

This approach is not an efficient use of patrol officer time, and it is likely that only a limited number of vehicle crashes require a police response. When a motor vehicle is disabled or blocking the roadway, or there is a dispute between motorists, or one motorist is intoxicated, or other criminal activity is alleged, a police response is required. When the crash is routine and none of those factors are present, the motorist should be advised to prepare the required Vermont forms and submit them to the stat; no response by the police is necessary.

In general, therefore, consideration should be given to modifying the approach to vehicle traffic accidents in Burlington. The BPD, similar to the alarm reduction program, should take a more aggressive stance towards responding to property damage only accidents.

Traffic enforcement

Traffic safety is one part of the core mission of any police department. Similarly, complaints about traffic are generally the most frequent kind of complaint that the police receive from the public. Therefore, ensuring safe traffic conditions and reducing traffic crashes and injuries from those crashes are important responsibilities for the police.

During the period studied, the BPD conducted almost 2,000 traffic stops in 2019. The BPD Annual Report indicated that traffic enforcement decreased in 2020 to only 1,220 traffic stops, and these figures are even lower from the high of over 6,000 traffic stops in 2015. This is a substantial amount of activity, in both sheer numbers and in context of total work and signifies a very robust approach to traffic enforcement. It is not clear, however, if this enforcement is contributing to any improvement in overall traffic safety in the community.

It is recommended that patrol officers in the BPD discontinue making routine traffic stops. Instead, the BPD should leverage traffic crash data to focus enforcement efforts to the locations deemed most prone to accidents, and towards drivers deemed to be at the highest risk of causing them. Routine, or random, motor vehicle stops should be discontinued. Without any direction about where to focus, or for what types of violations, officers are left to conduct this enforcement as their shift permits. It is this type of unfocused traffic enforcement that should be discontinued.

In general, an effective traffic safety program is one that embraces the “Three E’s” of Enforcement, Education, and Engineering, with a specific focus on driving down the number of crashes and injuries from these crashes, while improving overall traffic safety and quality of life in Burlington. From an enforcement perspective, the BPD appears to be doing a good job with the level of traffic stops per year. However, a more focused approach could be taken, minimizing officer discretion by targeting at-risk drivers and at-risk locations, ultimately minimizing opportunities for bias.

Under this approach, traffic safety would become part of the strategic approach of the entire department. Patrol officers would need the traffic intelligence to focus their enforcement activities. The City traffic engineer would need to be engaged to assess roadway sections to possibly improve their design or change signage to improve safety. And perhaps most important, at-risk drivers need to be identified and engaged through both targeted enforcement and education. Conducting traffic safety education courses in the schools would be a good community engagement tool. In addition, traffic safety could be a good opportunity for BPD personnel to engage the organized community by attending meetings to deliver traffic safety information.

Best practices in American policing indicate that by working in collaboration with stakeholders in the community, a dialogue can begin, and a critical evaluation of appropriate responses to these types of calls can be started. With community input and approval, a decision can be made about the necessity of a police response to these types of CFS. If the community maintains that a police response is necessary, then the funds need to be committed to ensure sufficient police personnel are available. Good government and efficient management, however, require that scarce resources be committed only when and where they are necessary, and this is an area that is ripe for evaluation.

OVERALL DEPARTMENT STAFFING

Considering the patrol staffing workload discussion and the Rule of 60, along with the discussion about personnel assigned to essential services and value-added services, it is possible to give a data informed recommendation about the appropriate size of the police department. Integrating all these findings leads to an estimate of between 72 and 75 sworn officers. Even if specific CFS are transitioned to CSOs or other municipal departments, the freed-up time should be dedicated to other essential police services including community engagement and community policing. Patrol should be staffed with 51 sworn officers (1 deputy chief, 4 lieutenants, 6 sergeants, and 40 police officers). Ideally, they should be deployed in a six squad, 12-hour shift schedule. The combination of a modified shift plan in collaboration with a robust examination of CFS with an eye towards reduction in BPD response to CFS not requiring police response should position the City and the BPD to provide more balanced operations which take into consideration police and non-police response.

The CNA recommended staffing model represented by the figures in Table 16 for the low end of recommendations of 72 sworn officers and the figures in Table 17 for the high end of 75 sworn officers. It is important to point out that the department staffing levels recommended in this report relate to “actual” staffing levels. It is understood that there is regularly a difference between the “actual” number of officers working and the “authorized/budgeted” level of staffing. Typically, there are less officers actually working than budgeted due to hiring and budget logistics. Essentially, during the on-boarding process when officers are screened and undergoing training, other officers leave the department. This creates the gap between the authorized/budgeted personnel strength and the actual number of officers working. CNA recognizes this disparity and recommends that the BPD strive to maintain the “actual” staffing levels recommended in this report. The BPD experience in this area suggests that the difference between “authorized” and “actual” staffing averages five officers throughout the year. Therefore, the “actual” staffing figures identified in tables 16 and 17 should be increased by five officers. This would put the “authorized/budgeted” personnel staffing levels between 77 and 80 officers. Using these levels as targets would ensure that the BPD is properly staffed according to the recommendations in the tables below.

Table 16. Recommended BPD table of organization – 72 total sworn

	Chief	DC	Lt	Sgt	Det/PO	Total
Executive	1					1
ERO				1		1
Operations		1				1
0600x1800			2	2	16	20
1800x0600			2	2	16	20
1200x2400				2	8	10
Admin Serv		1	1	1	1	4
DSB			1			1
Gen Det				1	8	9
Street Crime				1	3	4
CUSI					1	1
	1	2	6	9	53	72

Table 17. BPD table of organization – 75 total sworn

	Chief	DC	Lt	Sgt	Det/PO	Total
Executive	1					1
ERO				1		1
Operations		1				1
0600x1800			2	2	16	20
1800x0600			2	2	16	20
1200x2400				2	8	10
Admin Serv		1	1	1	1	4
DSB			1			1
Gen Det				1	8	9
Street Crime				1	3	4
CUSI				1	2	3
DVPO					1	1
	1	2	6	11	55	75

NOTE: The Burlington International Airport (BIA) and City's annual negotiations on BPD officers dedicated to BIA should be a distinct operational decision with dedicated officers negotiated annually based on the contract. Since these officers are full time at the airport, they are not factored into BPD patrol staffing recommendations, nor the overall sworn department size in this report.

Sworn-Deployable (Actual)	Authorized (Accounts for Gaps due to Attrition and Training/Onboarding)	Subtotal Actual + Authorized Gap (Without BIA)	BIA Optional	Total with BIA
72	5	77	4	81
75	5	80	8	88

Perspectives on reduction of BPD staff

In addition to the recommendations included in this staffing analysis section, the assessment team believes it is important to share themes that arose regarding the reduction in sworn officers because of the resolution relating to *Racial Justice through Economic and Criminal Justice* from interviews and review of documents.

Finding 7.12.1: The majority of interviewees, both inside and outside of the BPD, did not agree with the reduction in sworn officers, and specifically the process in which it occurred, because of the resolution relating to *Racial Justice through Economic and Criminal Justice*.

Although many interviewees agreed that there is widespread interest to reallocate funds to address community and public safety issues more adequately, the consensus was that there was an inadequate plan in place to appropriately guide the reduction in sworn officers in coordination with the diversion of these police calls for service to other resources. Consequently, the BPD is still responsible for answering the same number of calls for service with significantly reduced personnel. The pace of the reduction, without alternative resources, negatively affected the workloads of BPD officers.

Finding 7.12.2: The reduction in sworn officers as a result of the resolution relating to *Racial Justice through Economic and Criminal Justice* has negatively affected BPD officer morale.

BPD officers are transferring to other police departments or retiring earlier than anticipated in part due to the workload and increased hours that have arisen due to the pace and process of the reduction in sworn personnel. In addition, there is concern that the current work environment will affect recruitment of the best officer candidates once the hiring freeze has been removed.

Community stakeholders interview respondents also expressed concern that police use of force or misconduct may increase because there are fewer officers responding to the same number of tasks.

Recommendation 7.12.1: Strong consideration should be given to the staffing model recommended in this report, and the City of Burlington, with input from BPD, key stakeholders, and community members, must re-envision the mission of BPD and provide a clear description of their expected roles and responsibilities. The reduced staffing, along with continued attrition without a recruitment strategy, is a concern.

Finding 7.13: BPD's further suggestion in the BPD Assessment Review Presentation to the Police Commission to divert some calls for service to non-sworn Community Service Officers (CSO) and Community Service Liaisons (CSL) provides an option for restructuring service within the police department.

Recommendation 7.13.1: The recommended staffing model in this assessment provides the best opportunity not only for efficiency, but also for the inclusion of CSO and CSL positions that have already been funded. There are additional models included in the Specialized and Alternative Response section of this report that should also be considered.

Section 8: Specialized and Alternative Responses

Individuals with mental health conditions are 16 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement, making up 25 percent of all fatal law enforcement interactions. Increasingly, police departments and communities around the country are demanding change. People affected by serious mental health conditions are more likely to be seen as violent and are less likely to have financial means to hire legal representation and bring injustice into the public eye. Consequently, people living with serious mental health conditions are killed at higher rates compared to others. BPD's most recent fatal shootings have involved individuals with serious mental health conditions.

Despite media coverage, only 3–5 percent of violent acts are attributed to people with serious mental health conditions.³¹ In fact, people with serious mental health conditions are more likely to be victims of violent crime. Additionally, nationally, it is estimated that about 21 percent of officers' time is spent responding to persons in behavioral health crisis.³² Consequently, reducing interactions between police and persons in serious mental health crisis is the single most practical and immediate strategy communities can engage in to improve outcomes.

In response to this growing nationwide concern, a robust suite of creative and successful programs has sprouted, represented in rural, urban, and suburban communities. Just because one program is successful in one location does not mean it will be right for another. However, programs are scalable, and if something is working well in a large city, an urban or a suburban community, it can often be adapted and scaled to other communities.

Through our interviews, we identified the following key findings:

- There is consensus across BPD, Burlington City officials, and Burlington community stakeholders that the scope of BPD's work should be refined.
- Officers do not feel they are the most qualified to respond to mental health calls for service and are interested in additional services to take on this responsibility. A co-responder model was lifted up as an example of a specialized response for calls that are identified as high risk and may require a soft uniformed officer with a clinician to ensure the safety of all parties.
- Community stakeholders indicated an interest in trained clinicians who can respond in real time. Stakeholders also indicated an interest in the crisis intervention model—having officers

³¹ <https://dworakpeck.usc.edu/news/15-mental-health-facts-you-should-know>

³² <https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/press-releases/new-national-survey-reveals-the-immense-costs-borne-by-law-enforcement-in-responding-to-and-transporting-people-with-mental-illness>

specially trained in mental health and substance use response with a goal of de-escalation and diversion from the criminal justice system.

- Community stakeholders also suggested having downtown ambassadors that are a “boots on the ground” resource, who are unarmed, and have a basic awareness of de-escalation strategies and services that are available in the community to facilitate a warm hand off.
- There was an interest in refining the scope of the BPD, with their role being refined to response to higher level crime calls, and the rest diverted to either clinicians within the department or to relevant external stakeholders.

The information presented in this section highlights necessary components for the City to implement a robust, successful community-wide approach to recognizing and responding to individuals in crisis. Additionally, we provide specific specialized and alternative models for the City of Burlington to adapt. Section 8 is divided into the following subsections:

- Foundations to support specialized and alternative responses
 - Ecosystem approach
 - Community mental health advisory committee
- Elements to support specialized and alternative responses
 - Policies
 - Training
 - Assess de-escalation
- Alternative response and system integration models to consider
 - 24/7/365 Law enforcement drop-off centers
 - Telecommunications: 911 call takers and dispatch
- Data recommendations for consideration
- Public education campaign

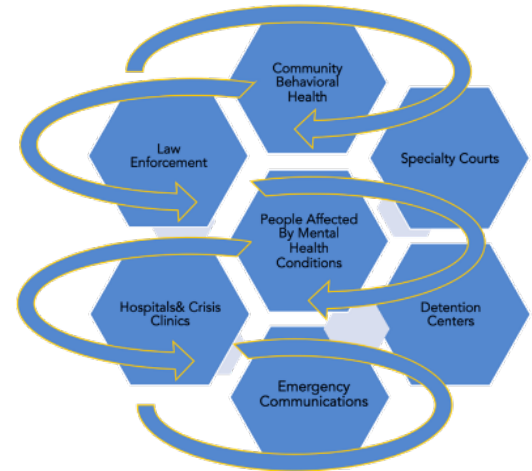
We first address the foundation of successful reform to specialized and alternative responses, which is the utilization of an ecosystem approach and the development of a community mental health advisory committee. Then, we delineate specific policies and trainings to incorporate to support successful reform, followed by alternative response integration models and other support services for the City to consider. We conclude with a section on recommendations for data collection and a public education campaign.

Foundation for specialized and alternative responses

Ecosystem approach

Unlike some other police reforms, mental and behavioral health reform requires an ecosystem approach, meaning one cannot look at individual organizations independent of their intersection with

other organizations. Police reform requires strong partnerships with community-based mental health systems, hospital emergency departments, housing supports, jail-based services, emergency communications, court systems, etc. To be successful, an operational system requires a deep assessment of how crucial entities work in concert with one another to create a successful, (or unsuccessful) system to respond to, and care for, people in crisis. Too often communities create barriers by operating in silos—with turf wars, trust issues, an unwillingness to share data or resources, an unwillingness to own organization system failures, and sometimes a desire to claim single-entity ownership for success. These barriers prevent successful innovation.



Through this lens of ecosystem, successful change requires multiple entities working together, sharing data and resources, owning mistakes, and offering transparency in system barriers and their roles in it—with a commitment to put egos aside and focus on ways to collectively address real issues. Some of these issues can be quite complex (HIPPA, State Legislation, Union, etc.). But with solution-focused leaders up and down the chain of command in law enforcement, advocates for reform including people with lived experience and professionals providing services on the ground and up through executive leadership, change is possible. It may be required to change state legislation to address a barrier.

There is no one “right answer” to where Burlington starts its reform efforts. As law enforcement assessments are completed around the country, and as the community ecosystem changes, it can be useful to approach the framework through a policy, training, operational, and accountability lens. For example, polices inform training, which taken together support operational practice. Accountability, internally and to the public, is essential to maintaining reforms as well as public trust. Each of these elements are fluid and should be continuously audited and evaluated.

Community mental health advisory committee

Our assessment team recommends Burlington implement a Community Mental Health Advisory Committee (CMHAC). A CMHAC is a multidisciplinary team that serves as a foundation to innovation and successful community response to persons in crisis. The CMHAC should openly share data/information, explore alternative approaches to law enforcement response, identify gaps in service, and be deliberate on how best to respond to them. The CMHAC should meet monthly and is a critical foundation to any successful community program.

At *minimum*, participants should include representative(s) from:

- Police department(s)—in departments that have a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program, this representative is often the CIT coordinator. CIT will be discussed in greater detail later in this section. BPD does not have a CIT program, so another key BPD personnel, with skills, interest, and leadership in mental/behavioral health innovation will need to be identified.
- Community Mental Health—usually the emergency services director
- Sheriff’s office—usually either the mental health director and/or a deputy assigned to the mental health pod or to booking

- Jail—usually the jail administrator and/or the unit commander that assists with involuntary commitments
- Hospital ERs—usually the psychiatric nurse or psychiatric case manager
- Judiciary—usually the judge who oversees the probate court docket (mental health docket)
- Advocacy groups like National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- Telecommunications
- Fire/EMS

This critically important advisory committee should always include cross-discipline collaboration, including both on the ground expertise and high enough rank/executive leadership to make and implement decisions. The advisory group should be small enough to encourage rich dialogue and data sharing, but large enough to include at least one committed designee from each key stakeholder entity.

A functional, outcome oriented advisory committee must be able to put egos aside, with full transparency, engagement, and trust building, including shared decisions, data collection, and analysis to identify gaps in the overall system, while working collectively to find solutions including informing program expansion. Beyond strengthening specialized police training and response, this group can also make recommendations on jail diversion programs, specialty court collaboration, intensive case management teams for justice involved individuals, and other non-police based alternative response programs for people in crisis.

Many states and communities have both a County and State Steering Committee, with the county steering committee made up of entities like those listed above, and a state steering committee made up of a designee from each participating county across the state. This may be a good model for Vermont, considering the size of the state, which elevates regional considerations with things like training resources, telecommunication call centers, and jails.

Recommendation 8.1.1: Key stakeholders in Burlington should be identified, and a Community Mental Health Advisory Committee formed. At minimum, this advisory committee must have BPD, community mental health, and a peer (person with lived experience) and/or advocacy group (e.g., NAMI) centrally involved. Identifying key stakeholders from the above list would be a more robust approach. These stakeholders should be high enough up the ladder to implement recommendations yet fluent with “on the ground” processes and barriers.

Recommendation 8.1.2: Evaluate the formation of a statewide steering committee to develop regional use of budget and resources. For instance, in order for calls to be diverted from police response, the call center for the state will need to be centrally involved prior to sending a 911 call to the local dispatch center in Burlington.

Elements to support specialized and alternative responses

Policies

All police departments should have policies directing interactions with individuals with mental and behavioral health conditions, individuals with intellectual disabilities, and individuals needing special

accommodations for physical limitations (hearing impaired, visually impaired, etc.). BPD has such policies; however, there are revisions that should be made to reflect best practices.

Unfortunately, often these policies are not updated regularly to reflect best practices, including best practice language, and to ensure they accurately reflect training and operational practice. This is the case with BPD as well. Community resources change, transition in department leadership occurs, and there can be a disconnect between departments responsible for policy review and those actually providing program leadership; consequently, policy updates often get lost.

In a healthy community ecosystem, policies should be co-developed and co-reviewed by key partners and especially by community mental health center partners and persons with lived experience. Ultimately the final decision on police policy rests with the BPD, often because, like any organization, there can be internal practices and legal considerations that influence how officers will be directed by policy to respond, but good policy should reflect best practice language, integrate well with partner policy and operational practice, and should be heavily informed by lived experience. When the community discussion with the police department is fully inclusive and transparent, internal reasons for not making some community driven recommended changes to policy can make sense to the community once they have context for why. However, the community should continue to push publicly for reform if the policy changes do not adequately reflect community input and best practices.

These entities should ensure policies integrate well with other department policies, as well as telecommunicator policies and Fire/EMS policies. Policies should be reviewed annually and updated as needed based on training, operational changes, best practices, and community input.

Recommendation 8.2.1: Utilize the CMHAC to review policies; specifically related to recognizing and responding to persons with mental or behavioral health conditions.

Recommendation 8.2.2: Provide a robust community forum for transparency and input into the policy review. Policies should be reviewed annually. Once emerging alternative response programs are solidified in Burlington, revisions should occur again. The community advisory committee is a good place to assign annual review and revisions and include a public review process.

Recommendation 8.2.3: Ensure a coordinated approach with policy review to include telecommunications and FIRE/EMS.

Training

SCENARIO-BASED TRAINING

Nationally, with only a very small percentage of police calls for service ending in use of force, departments often have a heavy imbalance of training focused on proper use of force, tiered levels of force, defensive tactics, firearms training, taser, active shooter and custodial escort techniques (handcuffs, leg irons etc.). This is consistent in Burlington, with less than 1 percent of calls for service ending in use of force. Although the aforementioned training is important, it is often at the expense of equal or greater amount of training on a range of de-escalation practices and tactics and crisis intervention training. Verbal de-escalation and strategies that support reducing the need for force should be of paramount importance and should be reflected in training priorities. Strategies like tone of voice, physical stance, using time as a tactic, use of physical barriers, distance, cover, verbal/non-verbal

communication strategies are measurable tactics that should be integrated into scenario-based training at all levels, reinforced, audited, evaluated, and included in policy, training, and operational compliance.

It is important to consider how many hours are dedicated to scenario-based training, which is essential. Scenarios involving people in mental or behavioral health crisis should also be integrated. In responding to a person in mental health crisis, slowing things down and using distance, cover, body language, community resources, and softer interpersonal communication buys time to de-escalate and gain additional resources as needed. All scenario *evaluations* should include not just the officer's response but also how it affects the public.

As previously noted in Section 1, BPD has a significant need to revise training protocols and practices to meet national best practices.

Recommendation 8.3.1: Prioritize sufficiency of scenario-based training (SBT), particularly for de-escalation strategies and responding to individuals in crisis. Ensure that evaluations are written for each officer, and as part of the evaluation, consider not just the officer's response, but also how the outcome affects the public.

Recommendation 8.3.2: BPD should research and connect with other like police departments who have incorporated scenario-based training to develop training materials, evaluations, reports, and creative alternative response models. It is important to remember that programs can be scaled up and down, with modifications to fit the needs of Burlington.

Recommendation 8.3.3: Curriculum development should be prioritized for all BPD training, with lesson plans, visual aids, scenario-based training, and evaluations readily available for review and revision.

CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM (CIT)

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training³³ was developed in 1988 in Memphis, Tennessee, after a fatal shooting involving a person in mental health crisis. The training became a gold standard model and included a 40-hour training taught in one week by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals. Training matrices are consistent across the nation covering a wide range of topics. A successful CIT program must include community partnerships, with local law enforcement, community behavioral health and people with lived experience and advocates the key to success.

Under the traditional CIT model, officers volunteer to be certified through the 40-hour training and are considered a voluntary, specialized response. CIT officers would apply to become certified, demonstrating the right skills and interest to be considered a specialized officer. In a true CIT model, an application process would be developed with disciplinary history checked and the department CIT coordinator would consult with the officer's supervisor to ensure a good fit. It is generally recommended that 20-25 percent of patrol is certified, and efforts are made to mirror the percent of CIT officer assigned to an area/shift to reflect the percent of CFS involving a mental health condition in that area/shift. CIT

³³ For more information on CIT, visit: <https://www.citinternational.org/>

officers often wear CIT pins on their lapels so they can be identified by community members as CIT certified and would be prioritized for dispatch to calls involving a person in crisis.

Since 1988, communities and police departments have recognized the exceptional training that CIT provides, and many communities are moving to a mandated rather than voluntary model. In this model, some communities are mandating the training at the end of recruit academy, some after field training, or after two+ years on the job, others choosing methods that meet their community and department needs.

There are pros and cons to each of these methods, and it is important for any community to educate itself and decide what is the best fit. It is important to remember that CIT is not just a training, it requires an ecosystem collaborative approach to be successful.

A “train all” model can become diluted if not done carefully. This negates the specialized nature of CIT officers and allows officers who may *not* be a good fit to be called to respond without the personality or skill set required. This can be dangerous. It is highly recommended in a mandated model that there is a “bumped up” specialized team of voluntary CIT certified officers who receive advanced training, are vetted for their interest and skill set, and would respond to higher level calls for service involving a mental health component. This voluntary cadre of officers can also make up a specialized unit (behavioral health units) and are central to expansion efforts including Mobile Crisis Response Teams, follow-up teams, high-frequency utilizer initiatives, housing insecurity outreach, co-responders, etc. (see the Portland, Houston, Los Angeles, and San Diego Police Department models). These bumped up specialized officers would wear CIT pins (not mandated officers) and would be prioritized for dispatch.

This model elevates all officers to receive critically important, in-depth training, with important exposure to community-based resources, yet still maintains the specialized nature of voluntary CIT officers with the skill set and interest to be prioritized for response.

It is also important to remember that any training, and especially mental and behavioral health training for law enforcement, cannot be a “one and done” training. *All training models should include refresher training.* Annual refresher training is recommended, typically accomplished with annual in-service, but certainly should occur no less than every 2-3 years. Refresher training is critically important to practice skills in scenario-based training, to keep abreast of changing community resources and programs, refresh best practices on identifying common signs and symptoms of persons living with severe mental health conditions and how best to interact with and use tactics that support de-escalation and diversion from the criminal justice system whenever possible.

Because of the nature of CIT training, which requires diverse community-based experts to deliver the curriculum, constraints on outside resources will need to be addressed. In a state as small as Vermont, a traditional CIT program could be challenging. However, a state steering committee would likely be extremely useful to consider a hybrid approach for achieving statewide collaboration of an exceptional training, with a regional break out for the critically important part of the CIT program, focused on specific resources each community has. Vermont’s “Team Two” training does a good job with providing the scenario-based training, but with only 1.5 hours dedicated to lecture, it is missing key information that is covered in a 40-hour CIT training.

A collaborative approach, rather than siloed efforts to meet individual community needs is recommended. Some communities have been successful pooling resources and combining law enforcement from jails, courts, and outside police departments along with key behavioral health experts, co-response teams etc. into one program. Although there may be distinctions among the needs of different law enforcement agencies, including stronger emphasis in some areas (for example, youth mental health for SROs, scenarios specific to jail-based settings), there are successful ways to accomplish this. Telecommunications would also be useful to include in this type of training/community approach.

Recommendation 8.4.1: Utilize a statewide steering community to assess what is already operational in terms of mental health training in other communities in Vermont, and then begin discussions regarding how pooled resources and a training strategy may be adapted to fit the needs of Burlington (and the rest of the state). The roadmap of a CIT training and program could be utilized as a guide.

Recommendation 8.4.2: Initiating dialogue with surrounding communities who are currently implementing or researching CIT, such as Montpelier and Hartford.

As recommended in Section 1, BPD should consult with the Team Two Statewide trainer/coordinator (Kristin Chandler, J. D.) to leverage her important knowledge of efforts underway in other parts of the state.

Recommendation 8.4.3: All BPD Sergeants should train in crisis intervention or another equivalent mental and behavioral health training. BPD should consider mandating all Sergeants and any newly promoted Commanders be trained, with annual refreshers as well as being prioritized for additional regional training. With attrition and promotion, this will build capacity and a culture of understanding the importance of reform efforts.

Mandating Field Training Officer (FTO) certification (officers who are paired with new officers in a mentor type role) should also be strongly considered, as new officers coming into the field can be unduly influenced by FTOs who do not have the training or context of a CIT program and/or mental health specialized response.

Recommendation 8.4.4: Prioritize Sergeants, Commanders and FTOs to be certified in CIT, or another advanced mental health training along with attendance at regional trainings on specialized mental health response, de-escalation, crisis negotiations, etc. Vermont's TEAM TWO training should be a requirement for all chain of command, including the Chief, and FTOs. The leadership training provided by the BPD and the State of Vermont should also be required for all chain of command.

TRAINING MODELS

There are a minimum of four training areas that should be included in any training model: 1. new recruit orientation, 2. annual in-service for all officers, 3. voluntary specialized model, and 4. mandated, with bumped up voluntary, specialized model.

New recruit orientation and annual Inservice: One Mind Campaign

BPD should consider the IACP One Mind Campaign,³⁴ utilizing the Mental Health First Aid for Law Enforcement as a mandated training for all officers. Once all officers have completed the training, consider adding it to the recruit orientation requirement.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) for law enforcement is an 8-hour course endorsed not only by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) “One Mind Campaign” but is also a good overall educational tool to orient officers to signs and symptoms of mental health conditions, and responses that are often different from traditional police training.

The One Mind Campaign calls for communities to:

- Establish a clearly defined and sustainable partnership with one or more community health organizations.
- Develop and implement a model policy addressing law enforcement response to people in mental health crisis and/or with mental health conditions.
- Train and certify 100 percent of sworn officers (and selected non-sworn staff, such as dispatchers) in mental health awareness courses by:
 - Providing Mental Health First Aid training (or equivalent) to 100 percent of officers (and selected non-sworn staff); and,
 - Providing CIT or equivalent crisis response training to a minimum of 20 percent of sworn officers (and selected non-sworn staff).

Recommendation 8.5.1: In recruit orientation, annual in-service, and refresher training, it is recommended whenever possible for communities to include a site visit to key community resources like drop off center(s); scenario-based training on best practices for de-escalating and interacting with people in mental health crisis; incorporate video scenarios from across the country; and expand on de-escalation strategies including Time, Cover, Distance, Tone, Stance, etc. These topics can all be easily repurposed from existing training content if your department has CIT or from requesting such from communities with strong CIT programs in place.

Recommendation 8.5.2: In light of COVID-19, there has been a significant increase in e-learning training on topics, including mental health. There is often a per officer charge, and with some contracts, buys access to hundreds of trainings. The size of Burlington may make this a good solution to consider.

Each of these training options are pre-packaged options, which would require limited effort on the BPD and community to develop any new training curriculum.

Listed below is an example of both a voluntary and a mandated mental health training model. These are best practice examples, which would likely need to be adapted to BPD.

³⁴ More information on the One Mind Campaign can be found here: <https://www.theiacp.org/projects/one-mind-campaign>

Voluntary, specialized response model

The premise of this model is that all officers have a strong foundation of mental health training, but then a voluntary cadre of officers is selected (who volunteer) to be considered specialized response.

1. ALL officers (mandated) complete a three-day intensive mental health training that covers some of the essential topics typically contained in a 40-hour CIT course, plus Scenario Based Training (SBT) and Site Visit(s). This serves as a foundational training for all officers. This could be adapted through a statewide collaborative as previously referenced. Or, for a more immediate launch, the Mental Health First Aid for Law Enforcement could serve as the mandated training for all officers. This would give BPD a foundation of important information, and a significant improvement from what currently exists for all officers.
2. Next, develop a process for identifying appropriate voluntary specialized officers (Consider a Notice of Job Opportunity—NOJO—which includes an application, interview, review of disciplinary history, supervisor recommendation etc.).
3. Seek a Goal of 20-25 percent across areas /shifts, but most importantly based on the percent of Calls for Service for individuals in mental health crisis across areas/shifts. The percent of mental health calls for service in each area and shift should roughly equate to the percent of certified CIT officers in that area and shift.
4. Prioritize these specialized officers certified in 40-hour CIT or other equivalent advanced training for response to mental health calls for service (this requires coordination with dispatch).
5. As a community, or state, develop an Advanced Training (Youth, Veteran etc.) to continue to strengthen specialized training for CIT certified or specialized response officers.
6. Prioritize these officers for national advanced level training (ex: annual CIT International conference)
7. Identify a “CIT Area Level” Position(s), who is the primary point person for CIT/Mental Health Responses in their area. They will be responsible for Roll Call Trainings on relevant topics, educating the area on any Alternative Response Pilot programs the community may have, share data on Mental Health CFS in their area , be a point person for High Frequency Utilizer notification, a liaison with community partners etc.
8. Prioritize Research of National Models to continue best practices.

Although this is one example of a voluntary, specialized model, this can be adapted to a city like Burlington. Because the number of patrol officers on shift in Burlington is relatively small, it may not be feasible to identify a small cadre of specialized officers, because they may be more likely to be on other calls for service when a mental health call comes in and would not be available for specialized dispatch.

Recommendation 8.6.1: BPD should mandate all officers receive a higher standard of training, rather than having a full patrol based specialized response. In this case, Burlington will want to focus its specialized response on alternative responses to traditional policing, which we will discuss in further detail. However, it is critically important for Burlington and the BPD to understand that there will *always* be a segment of mental health calls that will require police response. Consequently, having well-trained officers, and strong community resources is an important component to have. As we all know, things can go poorly on a call in a matter of minutes. That is not

always preventable. But the more training, resources, alternatives to police response and specialized police response, the better the likelihood of a positive outcome.

Mandated model

Burlington should consider mandating the 40-hour CIT (or equivalent), offering the 40-hour CIT course one to two years after field training as opposed to extending academy, so officers can bring with them appropriate street experience. Or, if there are capacity issues, consider offering a shortened, for example 20-hour, brief CIT training covering the most important topics, with the full 40-hour training as capacity allows. There will need to be a strategy developed for how to prioritize veteran officers and not just new officers.

1. It is useful in a mandated model for communities to broaden their pool of trainers to increase capacity while not burning presenters out. Many community experts in topics such as veterans' affairs, autism, developmental and intellectual disabilities, PTSD, mental health, and substance use are eager to assist with this important community program.
2. Implement steps 2-8 for the "bumped up" cadre of voluntary, specialized officers, an essential component of a mandated model.
3. Ensure annual refresher (or at minimum every 2-3 years) for all officers, and with additional advanced training for specialized officers.

Recommendation 8.7.1: The City of Burlington and the BPD (through the stakeholder advisory committee) should conduct a thorough assessment of the ecosystem of Burlington and the State of Vermont, which will be required to develop a roadmap for training and specialized response (mandated and voluntary).

Recommendation 8.7.2: Ensure the training roadmap includes mandated training for all officers, refresher training, annual in-service, and specialized advanced level training. This will be essential for bringing BPD into 21st century practice related to recognizing and responding to mental and behavioral health calls for service, while keeping skills refreshed moving forward.

Recommendation 8.7.3: Ensure timelines are established for the required training, accounting for training current officers, while planning ahead for new officers hired.

Recommendation 8.7.4: If there is no budget allocated to CIT (or equivalent) training, consider allocating funds. If it is not possible, organizations involved in CIT or equivalent training could consider sharing budget allocations, either direct line-item contributions, and/or donations (space, food, CIT pins/resources, a designated coordinator etc.). This has been successful in many communities when budget is a barrier. Burlington should strongly consider this.

Assess de-escalation

As noted in section 1, as with many police departments, BPD's required response to resistance and use of force documentation, along with body worn camera review does not include a tangible assessment of "de-escalation" strategies implemented. As indicated previously, measuring whether time, space, tone, cover, stance, asking open ended questions versus commands, calling for specialized units etc. are

important to evaluate. There are tangible ways to assess use of de-escalation strategies, which reinforces to officers what the department means when they are prioritizing “de-escalation.” Otherwise, the word becomes diluted, and the response is often seen as a “check box.”

Recommendation 8.8.1: BPD should also consider a requirement for Sergeants to audit BWC footage after or during each shift, including those that were identified as having a mental health component. This is important not only for overall accountability, commendation, and coaching, but also to assess de-escalation skills utilized, and resources accessed. Require Sergeants to review a reasonable number of random BWC from their shifts daily or weekly, utilizing those reviews to provide feedback to officers. These reviews should have a written protocol, indicating when the review occurred, and findings (positive or areas for improvement) and should be communicated with patrol officers. Random review should include calls that were identified as having a mental health component. This is important not only for overall accountability, commendation, and coaching, but also to assess de-escalation skills utilized, and resources accessed

Recommendation 8.8.2: Incorporate defining de-escalation into all use of force documentation.

Alternative response and system integration models to consider

It is estimated that between a quarter and a third of 911 calls are considered low-priority or non-urgent calls, not requiring armed law enforcement response. The staffing analysis section of this report goes into detail regarding BPD specific calls that meet this standard. Some of these calls include trespassing, noise complaints, animal control, minor traffic accidents, loitering, and non-urgent medical needs including mental health. Law enforcement response including lights, sirens, uniforms, commands, guns, and arrests often serve to escalate these situations, and in some cases, add trauma.

In response, a wide array of alternative responses, inside and outside of police departments, have developed in recent years. Some of them will be identified below for Burlington’s consideration.

As with training, the scope of this project did not permit an extensive assessment of the Burlington ecosystem. Consequently, options that have been successful in other communities will be identified, with the ultimate decision about what makes the most sense for BPD and Burlington left to key stakeholders and advisory committee members.

There are several key considerations a City should consider when developing alternative response models:

- A clear line of supervisory chain of command is essential for all personnel (clinicians/case managers, Paramedics etc.). This is often determined by agency policy but needs to be well coordinated.
- Consideration should be given to where clinicians, case managers (specialized teams) are housed (e.g., within the police department, within a Mental Health Center, or another location). Often housing clinicians inside Police Headquarters, or at police area offices allows rapport to be built

with officers and allows an ongoing opportunity to promote the program to officers, increasing utilization of it. Other times, a more neutral location can be useful.

- Alternative uniforms and vehicles should be strongly considered. Stigma is exacerbated when marked police vehicles and regular police uniforms show up on scenes where someone is calling for help due to a mental health crisis. Not only are people embarrassed to have a police car in front of their homes, but uniformed police can also escalate a situation with someone in behavioral health crisis. A “softer” approach through non-traditional uniforms and vehicles is a good approach to consider.
- The job description, selection and hiring of the co-responder/alternative response positions should be carefully and thoughtfully considered and should be co-developed and co-interviewed between the participating organizations and community stakeholders. It is imperative that participating organizations agree that the person(s) is a good match for the role.
- Consider internal versus external clinical hires. It is a steep learning curve just to learn the services, agency protocols, and accessibility guidelines within the organization you work for, let alone attempt to do it as a part of a new pilot program that needs to be successful early on. If officers see that clinicians do not know where to take someone, what paperwork will need to be completed to access those services, who to call in the organization etc., officers will often give up on the use of it. This is difficult to rebound from, as a result. Typically, seasoned clinicians are hired internally, who already have strong familiarity with the organization operations.
- A data analyst should be considered, either internal, or externally contracted- typically with a local University for a more robust analysis of data.
- SAMHSA’s Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM), and the Sequential Intercept Model are good resources and training for communities to help identify gaps in community systems. Burlington should consider utilizing this resource.
- CIT or equivalent mental health training and specialized programs should be highlighted on the police department, mental health center, and partner organizations’ websites. When absent, it is often an indication of both how CIT may be viewed by the department or partnering organizations, and sometimes the overall disjointedness of the program itself. When CIT and Alternative responses becomes an embedded community program, as intended, it should be identified on the website like any other specialized response.

Recommendation 8.9.1: Determine if a jail-based diversion and care coordination program would be a useful part of a robust diversion from the criminal justice system strategic plan.

Embed community mental health center case manager(s) inside the jail to crosscheck the daily jail booking report with the client database at the community mental health center. This allows for identification of active clients who are booked into the jail, for what crimes, how long they are in jail and at what cost to the City. These basic data points help inform areas for diversion, rapid communication with jail mental health staff regarding medications the individual is on for continuity of care inside the jail, assists with coordinating a warm handoff at release from the jail to either a family member, friend, partner, their assigned case manager etc., and also identifies high frequency utilizers to connect with justice involved case management teams for proactive

outreach. We understand from stakeholder interviews that Burlington has a regional detention center, but there would still be useful opportunities for this type of program to be assessed.

These same case managers can also be assigned to the mental health or other court dockets for continuity between jail, judges, attorney's, psychiatric services, and client case managers.

Recommendation 8.9.2: Determine if a court liaison would be a useful part of a robust diversion from the criminal justice system strategic plan.

Develop justice involved case management team(s) who have the role of proactively serving the high frequency utilizers of law enforcement and first responder calls and jail bookings. Proactive engagement with high-risk individuals can successfully reduce law enforcement calls in the first place. This team(s) can be a combination of professionals including a case manager team, a case manager and a clinician team, a case manager, and a peer (person with lived experience) team etc. The success of these paired professionals should be evaluated on an ongoing basis, autocorrecting as needed.

Recommendation 8.9.3: Determine if a justice involved case management team(s) would be a useful part of a robust diversion from the criminal justice response plan.

Recommendation 8.9.4: Determine if a clinician embedded in telecommunications would be a useful part of a robust diversion from the criminal justice response plan.

Embed a clinician(s) inside telecommunications (community facing) to divert non-urgent 911 calls from law enforcement response at all, while also utilizing a warm hand off as necessary to a resource line, community mental health hotline or mobile crisis response. The assessment team understands that Vermont has a regional telecommunications center that takes all incoming 911 calls, which are then transferred to local call centers for dispatch. It will be important for Burlington and the State of Vermont to assess whether it makes the most sense to prioritize efforts in the state call center, the local call center, or some combination.

Recommendation 8.9.5: Consider dedicated co-response team(s) made up of a combination of paramedic, clinician, BPD specialized officer with a soft, (non-traditional) police uniform and peer/person with lived experience. These teams often present opportunities to move away from law enforcement focused response and law enforcement transport (criminalizing mental health conditions), and toward a medical response providing an unmarked vehicle with locked seat belt restraints instead of handcuffs when transport is necessary. Paramedics can assist with medication delivery when needed (as permitted by law), while a soft uniformed specialized officer can be on site if back up is needed. These teams can respond in real time and/or provide proactive services to high-risk individuals, including persons experiencing homelessness or who may need emergency hospitalization.

Recommendation 8.9.6: Consider a traditional co-responder model (clinician riding out with an officer or deputy)-This is a similar model as the above but is a clinician: specialized police officer team who will respond in real time to 911 calls for service when law enforcement response is required. This model is often useful as a police based specialized response.

Recommendation 8.9.7: Determine if a mobile crisis response team(s) would be a useful part of a robust diversion from law enforcement response plan.

A non-law enforcement response (mobile crisis response teams) typically formed by community mental health centers to respond to calls not requiring police response. Response times (as quickly as possible) are important to consider. These mobile crisis response teams can sometimes also be successfully utilized for police call outs by officers on scene of a call not requiring law enforcement response. These teams tend to be staffed by community mental health center professionals and can be dispatched by the call center, by families calling in directly, or from police who are already on scene. Timely response is the key factor in overall success of these programs.

24/7/365 Law enforcement drop-off centers

Successful diversion from a criminal justice response typically requires a 24/7/365 drop off center for law enforcement. The turnaround time for officers to drop off and return to duty is essential. There should be a brief standardized report that captures important data, and an officer should be in and out within 15 minutes. It is always nice to have coffee and small snacks available for officers as well! Making it an “officer friendly” environment helps improve utilization.

If it is quicker to book someone into jail than to bring them to the crisis center, the system is not as functional as it could be. And, if the crisis center has too many restrictions (officers must go somewhere else if the individual is using alcohol or drugs, or talking about suicide etc.), it will not be used effectively. Law enforcement should be able to drop individuals off (with reasonable limitations) and crisis center staff be responsible for arrangements for transport elsewhere if needed.

A robust 24/7/365 drop off center for law enforcement (that typically can also be accessed by individuals and families themselves) is essential and should be funded and supported (see San Antonio Restoration Center, Phoenix (Connections AZ; Community Bridges; and RI International)). There are creative adaptations that can be made in smaller communities by adding staff and resources to existing 24/7/365 centers (hospitals, urgent care, Fire/EMS, etc.). Some communities have been successful utilizing space outside of the jail which also promotes easy jail diversion.

It is important to note here some of the repeated themes found in interviews with Burlington stakeholders which tie back to inadequate safety net resources and organization silos. These are barriers that must be addressed for a successful reduction in police services to individuals in mental or behavioral health crisis in Burlington. For instance:

- Identifying who is presumably responsible for social service needs, resulting in pushing responsibility off to other entities, was a consistent theme. Due to barriers with access to service issues, it was reported that social service organizations often end up telling people to “call the police.” Because the police are a 24/7 operation, and most social service organizations are not, all too often, people are directed to call the police by the social service organizations themselves.
- Shelter(s) in Burlington often turn away individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol who are experiencing homelessness, which results in the BPD getting called instead.
- There is a heavy leaning in Burlington with social services requiring “referrals” rather than having a “live” option for access to services (e.g., walk in crisis clinic).

- It was reported that “First Call” has minimal mobile services, resulting in barriers with timely access to necessary services. This all too often ends up with default police response.
- There was a consistent theme about barriers to relevant data sharing by the Howard Center to BPD who are on-scene or interacting with high frequency utilizers of police services. This is a common barrier nationally, and an important one to resolve. Some communities have utilized MOUs to address this. In addition, though HIPPA is a very important legal consideration protecting confidentiality, and should always be taken seriously, federal law permits the sharing of relevant confidential information with first responders when there is a safety concern. If law enforcement has been called for a 911 service, social service agencies should consider how sharing of relevant information can lead to a better outcome for everyone. All too often social service organizations accept blanket, restrictive interpretations of HIPPA, rather than seek proactive solutions that protect the individual in crisis, yet also support effective resolution when first responders are on scene.

Recommendation 8.10.1: Social service providers in the City of Burlington should submit clear scopes of their work and related budgetary needs to address staffing, and additional resources required to be more responsive to “live” needs. This should be considered as part of the specialized police based and alternative response models.

Recommendation 8.10.2: Due to the size of Burlington, creative ways should be sought to identify a crisis receiving center. Some smaller communities like Burlington will utilize an existing 24/7/365 operation, like a local hospital or urgent care, and add mental health personnel (e.g., Howard Center) and people with lived experience, who have access to local mental health center charts. This serves as a “one stop shop” for law enforcement drop-off with onsite opening of charts and connection to necessary services. It should be the responsibility of the crisis center to stabilize and ensure connection to necessary services. The 24-hour nature of this type of resource is essential. Back up medical care is also often beneficial.

Telecommunications: 911 call takers and dispatch

All too often, telecommunications and Fire/EMS can get forgotten in the overall ecosystem of a successful community program. They are both critical partners.

Telecommunications personnel are often the first point of triage. Many communities have CIT or equivalent mental health training for telecommunications staff. This is a critical component of a robust program, since they are the individuals identifying the calls, and gathering the critical information necessary for officer (or alternative) response.

Recommendation 8.11.1: Develop Telecommunication Specific CIT (e.g., 8 hours or up to 3 days) or include Telecommunications in 40-hour CIT (or equivalent).

Through interviews and review of call for service data, the identification of an individual experiencing a mental health crisis is ambiguous.

Recommendation 8.11.2

- Establish clear criteria for telecommunications personnel to identify the call for co-response and non-law enforcement response, and ensure there is regular, robust, ongoing training for them. A coordinated effort between the CIT coordinator and telecommunications to cross train on CIT efforts should also be encouraged. Both need to have thorough awareness of the program, and why it is critically important to have a streamlined approach.
- Establish call codes that best capture overall CFS that involve a mental health component. Some departments limit call codes to things like “suicidal” or “mental health” (see next recommendation for additional detail). It is important to develop a strategy for identifying a way to uniformly track incoming calls that involve a mental health component. Although this will not always be perfect, since many calls have overlapping characteristics, there should be a designation that triggers an automated set of triage questions at call intake. It is recommended that telecommunications have designated pop-ups in their digital system capable of asking basic triage questions that can then be transmitted over the air and via Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) to responding officers. For example, known mental health condition (given by caller); behaviors present; weapon present (including type); triggers that can escalate behavior etc.
- In addition, many communities have a designation (e.g., alpha character z) that is added to any call, regardless of how it was dispatched, that officers can close out the call to indicate it involved a mental health component. For instance, if an officer is dispatched to a domestic call, but once on scene, it clearly involved a mental health component, the call can be closed out adding the alpha character z to the formal call code. This then allows data to be pulled to reflect calls more accurately with a mental health component. Although CFS involving “trespassing,” “person down,” etc. are important call codes to monitor, these do not always involve and may not be appropriate to include in data collection for calls with a mental health component.
- Embed a community-facing social worker to divert non-emergency calls. These positions can be instrumental in functions like connecting individuals to community-based services, requesting mobile crisis outreach, providing a “warm hand off” to another hotline, or just talking with someone while they calm down.
- Telecommunications personnel should have a shift roster of CIT/specialized officers or non-sworn personnel on duty, to ensure there is an automated way to prioritize dispatch of mental health calls for service to CIT trained officers/non-sworn. This should be part of an overall robust strategy.

As previously indicated, these best practices will need to be adapted to the nature of Vermont’s statewide call center, and regional dispatchers.

Data recommendations

Reliable data is essential to inform next steps and overall success or areas for improvement for BPD. It is imperative that data collection and analysis be coordinated at all levels, including with partnering organizations, to inform program assessment and strategic

planning, while also reducing silos when implementing and sustaining specialized and alternative approaches. Data reporting should be shared with the mental health advisory committee regularly.

Recommendations 8.12.1: Based on the assessment team interviews of BPD personnel and review of calls for service data, we recommend:

Police Department CIT/Mental Health Reports: Calls that are closed out as calls involving a mental health component should require a CIT (Mental Health) report be completed. The CIT report should include such information as name, address, mental health condition (if given by the person themselves or a family member on scene); characteristics indicating a mental health condition (talking to themselves or others, hearing things that you do not hear, rapid speech, depressive characteristics, odd behavior etc.); whether a weapon was involved, and if so, what type (knife, other object, gun etc.); use of force and type of force; disposition of the call, including: resolved in community, referred to community based services; transport to services (voluntary or involuntary); arrest (city ordinance, misdemeanor, felony), referral to alternative response team. These data reports should be routed through the CIT coordinator and his/her team to track trends on these calls, including high frequency utilizers that can be referred to additional alternative response.

In addition, key foundational data for communities to track include:

- Data indicating overall calls for service, of those, number of calls for service involving a mental health component (e.g., alpha character z), of those, how many were responded to by a CIT certified officer (primary or back up officer response), of those, disposition of the call.
- Percent of CFS that involve a mental health component by area and shift.
- Time from arrival on scene to close out of call (this is good to monitor distinctions -if any- for CIT calls vs non-CIT calls).
- Percent use of force and types for CIT and Non-CIT officers.

To measure overall department wide buy-in and culture, BPD should annually report

- Number/Percentage of active sworn officers trained in CIT (or equivalent).
- Number/Percentage of active SGT's Sergeants trained in CIT.
- Number/Percentage of active Commanders trained in CIT.
- Number/Percentage of active FTOs trained in CIT.

Community Mental Health Center data should include:

- Number of persons dropped off at the crisis center by law enforcement
- Circumstances for drop off (e.g., intoxication, mental health crisis, insufficient housing, trespassing)
- Time for police "turnaround"—drop off to back on the street
- Number of persons "turned away" from law enforcement drop off and why
- Length of Stay for person in crisis

- Linkage to Services at discharge, and what services
- Involuntary Commitment yes/no
- If not brought to the drop off center, would the person have been arrested and for what charge? (This should be included in the law enforcement drop off paperwork)

Mobile crises call outs (inside and outside of law enforcement response):

- Number of persons outreached
- Who requested the outreach
- Time from request to arrival on scene
- Time on scene
- Disposition

Although data can sometimes appear overwhelming when communities are just starting programs, it is important to remember that communities should just start somewhere, capturing basic data the community believes to be a priority. Once initial data is collected, it will inform next steps for data collection.

Public education campaign

The community should be educated regarding CIT or other mental health initiatives, how to request a certified CIT officer and other alternative approaches to persons in behavioral health crisis. They should be able to identify the officer by the CIT pin they wear on their uniform, or the soft uniform of specialized response.

Specialized program liaisons should consider attending community meetings, carrying resource cards to give to families, promoting the programs on website and community policing initiatives, along with other efforts to actively promote the program. There are many opportunities to educate the community; however, a cohesive CIT and alternative response program needs to be developed before extensive community education.

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Section 9: Community Engagement

The focus of policing has moved from being reactive to being proactive through the relationships developed and sustained throughout the community. In accomplishing this goal, police leaders and line officers must think differently, perhaps creatively, regarding their relationship to the community and in employing community policing principles. In today's environment, there is a great deal of attention on trust, legitimacy, and procedural justice. Law enforcement agencies accomplish these goals through targeted community service and explicit engagement with the community.

This section discusses our assessment of community service and respective engagement with the community. Although this was not part of the initial review, these topics were raised by various stakeholders we talked with in the course of this project.

Through our interviews the assessment team determined the following key findings:

- The BPD does not participate in the same community outreach and engagement activities as they once did prior to the staff reduction and COVID-19.
- Various community members and BPD personnel expressed an interest to set up a reoccurring opportunity to engage in conversations that enable all involved parties to be seen, heard, and understood.
- There are no current efforts to support targeted engagement with refugee populations.

Finding 9.1: Prior to COVID-19, the BPD coordinated various community events such as Creemee with a Cop, community barbecues, foot patrols on Church Street, the Community Academy, Canine Demo's for kids. A theme developed in our interviews suggesting that the reduction in sworn officers while responding to the same number of calls for service does not leave BPD the capacity to engage in this type of crucial community engagement.

Recommendation 9.1.1: Community policing strategies, including some of the engagement activities identified above, allow for positive relationship building to occur between the BPD and the community it serves. These proactive engagement activities encourage one-to-one relationship building, and a more personal experience of understanding what the community is struggling with, and how the BPD can more positively respond.

Recommendation 9.1.2: Community policing should be embedded within BPD culture and at the forefront of all daily operations and community interactions. BPD should consider re-defining what community-oriented policing means and embed this within policy, training, and operational accountability. Members of the BPD should engage directly with members of the community and local stakeholders to ensure that the BPD is addressing the problems of concern to the local community. Community policing should "combine a focus on intervention and prevention through problem solving with building collaborative partnerships between enforcement agencies and schools, social services, and other stakeholders" (*Final Report on 21st Century Policing 2015, 41*).

Recommendation 9.1.3: The BPD should work with Burlington community members to set up a reoccurring opportunity to engage in conversations that enable all involved parties to be seen, heard,

and understood. Consideration should be given to recruiting, outreach, shared agenda development, participatory meeting formats etc.

Finding 9.2: The BPD does not currently conduct targeted community outreach to traditionally marginalized and underserved populations. There was frustration among community organization representatives interviewed that they have to request this sort of engagement rather than BPD prioritizing it on its own.

Recommendation 9.2.1: When adopting its new Strategic Plan, the BPD should consider looking at the community engagement strategies of other similarly situated departments such as the Winooski, and Montpelier, Vermont, Police Departments. As indicated throughout these recommendations, an adequate staffing model must support this kind of proactive engagement.

Finding 9.3: The City of Burlington does not currently have systems in place to help explain Burlington's public safety model to the refugee population.

Burlington is in the unique position of being a location for resettled refugee populations. Refugees coming from Nepal or Somalia may have come from cultures where public safety is often seen as corrupt and harmful to communities. There are cultural hurdles that need to be overcome in order to ensure all community members are aware of the public safety resources in Burlington, and that they are seen as a guardian and not warrior resource.

Recommendation 9.3.1: The BPD and related public safety partners should pioneer programs that conduct outreach to the Burlington refugee population to increase refugees' trust in public safety. Staffing must support this type of community engagement.

Section 10: Implementation Roadmap

The table below provides the list of recommendations given by the assessment team. Each recommendation is designated priority 1, priority 2, or priority 3. Priority 1 recommendations are those the City of Burlington and BPD should allocate resources to immediately, to apply best practices and enact sound policies and procedures related to police management, operations, interactions with the community, transparency, and community trust.

Section	Recommendation No.	Recommendation	Priority
Section 1: Policies, Training, and Operations	1.1.1	The BPD should consider adding cultural competency training to those listed in section VIII of directive DD03.	1
	1.2.1	Although it is encouraging that BPD includes the above language in its policy, the department should include examples for their officers of what these indicators may be.	1
	1.3.1	BPD should revise this policy so that all complaints, even those immediately resolved with an explanation, are documented in the same complaint system. Such documentation ensures that BPD can accurately understand complainant demographics, complaint types, and adjudication outcomes, particularly in relation to disparities. These incidents need not negatively affect an officer's record, but they should be documented for the purposes of recordkeeping, complete analysis of complaint activity, and accountability to the community and to ensure BPD can identify officers who continually engage in minor transgressions and provide them with more stringent interventions if required.	1
	1.4.1	BPD should rewrite this directive to set the standard to be "reasonable suspicion" to reduce the role of the reporting employee and leave the investigative task with the internal investigation division.	1
	1.5.1	The BPD should add language to assist employees in understanding the choice between the four reporting mechanisms.	1
	1.6.1	The BPD should include a specific rule in directive DD01 that requires department personnel to intervene or report excessive force when witnessed or learned about.	1

1.6.2	Consider employing Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (ABLE) training, aimed at creating a culture in which officers routinely intervene as necessary to prevent misconduct, avoid police mistakes, and promote officer health and wellness.	1
1.7.1	The BPD should continue to use the above language, which reflects best practices for use of force policies. The statements on duty to care, duty to intervene, and duty to report should also be added to DD01- Law Enforcement Role & Authority, Ethics, Organizational Structure & Department Rules.	1
1.8.1	The BPD should continue to follow the prescribed protocol for where the use of canines falls on the use of force continuum.	1
1.9.1	The BPD should rewrite this statement to replace “face-down prone” with “prone” only. The prone position refers to when someone is flat on their stomach or chest with the knees down. Someone can have their head or face up and still be in the prone position. The policy should also direct that as soon as wrist restrains are applied, the subject should immediately be moved to a sitting position and be closely monitored. In addition, this policy is documented only in the section on Excited Delirium, but it should be documented elsewhere, possibly in a dedicated section on prohibited use of force in DD05.02.	1
1.10.1	BPD should provide guidance in another use of force section, DD05.02, about how to respond to resistance in interactions with people who have disabilities, who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or who have mental health conditions. BPD should review examples provided by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Law Enforcement Policy Center. The Fayetteville, North Carolina, Police Department also has several policies we recommend the BPD to review as examples.	1
1.11.1	BPD should update the language in the above policy to more clearly outline where the use of a baton falls on the use of force continuum.	1

1.12.1	BPD should add a prohibition on the use of lethal force when the officer does not have a clear line of sight of the subject.	1
1.13.1	BPD should consider developing a separate reporting mechanism for the use of a firearm to kill a dangerous or seriously injured animal. Although reporting these incidents as use of force is inappropriate, they should be tracked in some system, particularly given longstanding community concerns about national reports of officer use of firearms against family pets.	2
1.14.1	BPD and the City of Burlington should create channels for Burlington community members to be involved in the review of its use of force policies so the community can understand why such use of force may be permitted and so the BPD can reconsider their policies and practices based on community input.	1
1.15.1	The BPD mission and values statement should be included in the directive.	1
1.16.1	BPD should research available police codes of ethics to review alternative, more contemporary iterations of the IACP Code of Ethics. The IACP also has a suite of model policies ³⁵ that can be used as a frame and then built upon. The BPD's current version must be updated.	1
1.17.1	BPD should completely rewrite this policy according to industry best standards, including eliminating the Office of Quality Control (it is unclear what that is) and replacing it with Internal Affairs (preferable) or Office of Professional Standards with specific direction that Internal Affairs takes in the complaints and assigns out according to specific guidelines. Internal Affairs must have specific investigators who are assigned only to that responsibility and not use what appears to be general investigators (III.C.2) to investigate complaints. The present policy leaves too many options that allow officers to violate policy	1

³⁵ Visit IACP Law Enforcement Policy Center here: <https://www.theiacp.org/policycenter>.

		undetected, and it prevents the process from being transparent to BPD employees and the community.	
1.18.1		BPD should create a policy that directs specifically which complaints are to be handled by first line supervisors and which are to be referred to BIA.	1
1.18.2		BPD should consider instituting a Citizen Review Board to review internal and external investigations, rather than having the chief serve as the final authority on facts and discipline.	2
1.19.3		BPD should establish a specific Internal Affairs section that conducts investigations, as well as an internal disciplinary review board that reviews cases and makes written recommendations regarding discipline to the chief. This policy should provide the disciplinary review board with guidelines to help determine the level of discipline to ensure consistency and fairness, and the personnel on the internal review board should change from case to case. The chief has the final decision to agree or disagree with the recommendation of the internal review board and to increase or decrease the level of discipline, and his or her decision must be documented in writing. The department should establish a Citizen Review Board (CRB) to review cases, which requires a separate policy to ensure confidentiality. A CRB would provide another level of support to the chief for his or her decisions. Often police chiefs think a CRB takes power and responsibility from the chief, but it can also increase the credibility of the chief's decisions.	1
1.19.1		BPD's commander of Internal Affairs should report directly to the chief of police.	2
1.20.1		In line with 21st century policing best practices, BPD should modify directive DD01 - Law Enforcement Role & Authority, Ethics, Organizational Structure & Department Rules to include a requirement for BPD employees to report any arrest or contact by outside law enforcement agencies while off duty. This requirement should be restated in the revised Internal Investigations directive, with reference to DD01.	1

1.21.1	Review of revised policy should include partners with both professional and lived experience such as the Howard Center, Street Outreach, and NAMI.		1
1.21.2	Ensure policy reflects current department operations. For example, the policy indicates that street outreach personnel carry a police radio, and it describes the general expected function of the street outreach personnel.		1
1.21.3	As the City of Burlington and BPD work to develop and operationalize alternative responses both within and outside of the BPD, consideration should be given to the development of additional policies related to responding to persons in crisis (we discuss examples in the following findings).		1
1.22.1	The BPD should update this policy for grammar, spelling, and language best practices. Although including the community in most policy reviews is important to ensure public transparency, involving key community stakeholders in the review of this specific policy is of critical importance. Community stakeholders should include individuals and organizations representing this population who would have insight into best practice language and community resources.		1
1.23.1	Under officer response, "effective communication" should be expanded to include "professional and effective communication," meaning treating people with dignity and respect.		1
1.23.2	IIC: Mental health referral is indicated in this directive but is covered under a separate directive: DD13.3 - Interacting with Persons with Diminished Capacities. Consideration should be given to integrating the two directives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The term "citizen" should be replaced with a term inclusive of all people, for example "community member". 		1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Persons with Diminished Capacities” should be changed to a less negative term, such as “Persons with Disabilities.” • IIB: “Handling” should be changed to “responding to,” and “suffers” should be changed to “living with.” The phrase “officers should” is used throughout the directive, and when appropriate, this should be changed to “officers will.” • IIE: “Dealing with” should be changed to “responding to.” • IIE.b: Expand the best practice of describing to the person the activity the officer will be doing before doing it (this is a trauma informed practice) to custodial escort actions (e.g., handcuffing, transporting). 	
1.24.1	BPD should continue its policy of responding to victims and witnesses in a respectful way and avoiding inquiries regarding the immigration status of crime victims and witnesses.	1
1.24.2	BPD should specify that the “safe and friendly location” available for providing statements will be physically separate from any location where a suspect or perpetrator may be located.	1
1.25.1	Since pagers are not the way most individuals are currently contacted after hours, BPD should update this reference as currently appropriate.	1
1.26.1	BPD should consider whether individuals who receive special training on next of kin notifications should be the individuals doing so, with non-trained individuals assisting as appropriate.	2
1.27.1	Though self-evident, BPD might consider adding language to section IV.D specifying that family members and particularly children do not constitute professional interpreters and should not be used as translators.	1
1.28.1	If the above training is required, BPD should state this in directive DD11 - Victim-Witness Assistance. If not,	1

		BPD should include the mandatory, optional, academy, and in-service trainings available to officers regarding victims and witnesses.	
1.29.1		If the Victim's Advocate position maintained by the department (Section A) is different from the county Victim Advocate referred to in Section B, this should be more clearly articulated (e.g., that these are distinct resources); if they are the same, they should be explained clearly.	1
1.30.1		Generally, the strength of this policy lies in the resources it lists that should be available to victims and witnesses. As for all policies, the accuracy of the resources listed should be updated and reviewed annually.	1
1.31.1		Although the policy satisfactorily addresses the situation in which the subject is a BPD employee, BPD should provide additional guidance for domestic violence situations when the alleged perpetrator and the victim are both employees of the police department.	1
1.32.1		The BPD should update the DD21.01 - Domestic Violence Response policy to describe the position and responsibilities.	1
1.33.1		The BPD should more clearly outline the supervisory review process of BWC footage and should include a random review by the shift supervisor of a certain number of BWC incidents at the end of each shift or, at minimum, the end of each week.	1
1.34.1		The BPD should continue to follow the best practice operational procedures outlined in their directive and update the directive as new national best practices are released, continually reviewing new best practices added to the Bureau of Justice Assistance Body Worn Camera Toolkit.	1
1.35.1		The contractual detective minimum should be renegotiated between the BPD and the City of Burlington considering a minimum threshold of eight detectives.	2

1.36.1	The City should work with the BPD union to modify the retention periods so that discipline records are maintained for far longer periods, with a recommendation for the employment career of the officer.	1
1.37.1	The City should work with the BPD union to revise the promotion to senior police officer to five years.	2
1.38.1	The City of Burlington should work with BPD personnel to determine more appropriate compensation for FTO officers to ensure probationary officers are receiving high-quality and informed training, along with instituting regular evaluations of FTO performance.	1
1.39.1	The BPD should consider reviewing how many times the department has used the above delegation function assigning new officers with an officer who has had no FTO training. Based on the findings, the BPD should revise the protocol for providing training when an FTO is not available.	1
1.40.1	The BPD should continue to offer a wellness bonus in their contract for BPOA member employees. Additionally, it would be insightful for the department to collect aggregated data to learn the degree to which members avail themselves of this contractual benefit, and to study its effectiveness.	1
1.41.1	The BPD should work to restructure their shift assignment process to one that more closely focusses on personnel needs.	1
1.42.1	BPD should design a structured systematic curriculum with full lesson plans, learning objectives, and goals as well as training aides and visual materials such as PowerPoint slides and hands-on activities, among others.	1
1.42.2	BPD should review their training curriculum, structure, scheduling, and materials yearly to ensure trainings are meeting national best practices.	1
1.42.3	BPD should ensure that the quality of its implicit bias training courses align with national best practices and continue to provide these trainings during the basic officer training and annual in-service training. BPD	1

		should also ensure that the entire organization receives annual in-service training on implicit bias.	
	1.42.4	BPD should provide a comprehensive mental and behavioral health training course incorporating people with lived experience (e.g., those with autism, intellectual or developmental disabilities, or mental health conditions) and robust scenario-based training. Doing so will help officers become more familiar with the unique needs and individual considerations of people from these populations, which will better prepare them to respond to individuals in crisis. Scenario-based training will allow officers to practice the skills they have learned while receiving real-time feedback and evaluation.	1
	1.42.5	Fair and Impartial Policing, De-escalation, Procedural Justice, and Implicit Bias should all be required trainings, and these principles should be integrated across all other training courses.	1
	1.42.6	Provide the opportunity for community mental health advisory committee CMHAC (and, when appropriate, members of the community) to review and/or observe non-police tactical training such as Fair and Impartial Policing, De-escalation, Procedural Justice, and Implicit Bias. Doing so promotes transparency and provides opportunities for public feedback.	2
	1.42.7	The Use of Force training required by the State of Vermont and delivered by BPD should be formalized, with the BPD readily able to demonstrate how the required four hours are spent.	1
Section 2: Citizen Complaints and Internal Affairs Investigations	2.1.1	BPD should develop or acquire a complaint tracking data system that includes, at a minimum, the following information about each complaint in separate, closed response data fields: complainant demographics, the demographics and personnel information (e.g., rank, tenure, role) of the target of the complaint, process-related dates (date received, date of incident, date reviewed by supervisor, date resolved), specific details of the accusation (e.g., associated policy), and the discipline directed (when applicable).	2

2.1.2	BPD should ensure that all data fields contain only a single variable (i.e., complaint outcome and associated discipline should be tracked in separate fields).	2
2.2.1	BPD should revisit its allegation categories to reduce or eliminate the “none” and “other” in the allegation field.	1
2.2.2	Citizen complaints should be separate from all other complaint processes.	1
2.3.1	<p>BPD should clarify its citizen complaint process and reference that process within the disciplinary policy. Consideration should be given to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints will be accepted from any source, including by person, mail, email, BPD website, or telephone. Supervisors must make reasonable and diligent efforts to obtain a statement from any complaining party. • Every complaining party will be referred to a supervisor, the Internal Affairs Bureau, or Human Resources (HR) so the complaint may be received. • Without exception, every complaint that, if true, would constitute a violation of BPD policy must be thoroughly investigated and documented by an HR supervisor or senior official. • When the complainant’s address is known, the supervisor receiving the complaint will complete the complaint acknowledgement letter and mail it to the complainant. If the complaint was received electronically or telephonically, the supervisor may respond in that same manner and document the communication. A scanned copy of the acknowledgement letter should be attached to the electronic IACMS case file. • Anonymous complaints will be accepted. The Internal Affairs Commander or his or her designee will review each anonymous 	1

		complaint and determine the feasibility of further investigation.	
2.4.1		BPD should update directive DD40 - Quality Control, Internal Investigations & Discipline to identify additional means for citizens to file a complaint.	1
2.5.1		BPD should prioritize the use of communication platforms in everyday operations so that when critical incidents occur, community trust in information sharing has already been built.	2
2.5.2		The Burlington city attorney should release public guidance around the constraints for releasing information during an ongoing investigation.	2
2.6.1		The City should consider transparency and trust issues with the community when negotiating the next contract to allow for the release of specific information concerning officer complaints, findings, and discipline while maintaining the confidentiality of the investigation. Many cities allow for the release of overall complaint information and the disciplinary findings of officers, regardless of the stipulations in the union contract.	2
2.7.1		BPD should develop a policy that directs how BIA will conduct an investigation, who conducts the investigation, and the expected timeline for the investigation. Best practice allows for different timelines for investigation completion that are established for different levels of complaints. Additionally, the BIA policy may include lower levels of complaints for which investigations are conducted at the supervisor or lieutenant level. A clear policy is important for the officers of the department to ensure they will know what happens in the event of a complaint or an internal investigation of an officer involved shooting, serious use of force, or in-custody death.	2
2.8.1		If a case does not cite a rules violation, the department likely believes that no rules violation exists. Best practice would be for the department to cite the	2

	<p>department policies or rules that the officer followed to support his or her actions. Doing this allows the investigator to support whatever his or her investigative findings are.</p> <p>A good internal investigation will normally provide detail into the rules or policies the officer did not follow, which allows the department to review the actual rule or policy to determine whether revision is needed or whether additional or updated training is needed for the officer or for the entire department.</p> <p>Not following every rule or policy to the letter does not mean the officer is at fault, but it does indicate that additional training for the officer, additional training for the department, or a policy revision might be needed. Departments are sometimes reluctant to cite violations of policy for fear of civil action by the community member involved.</p>	
2.9.1	As in the previous recommendation, best practice requires that the violations of rules or policies be identified and explained. Not doing this sends the message to the department that policy violations are accepted if no criminal charges are brought against an officer. If a department does not recognize and address the seriousness of the policy violation, it inhibits policy revision to address the problem.	3
2.9.2	The internal/administrative investigator must be willing to recognize and enforce policy violations and be unafraid to make recommendations to rectify the problem.	1
2.9.3	Best practice would be to provide for an internal investigative process that details every step of the investigative process including exactly who in the department will conduct the investigation, officer conduct and care immediately following the incident, officer and witness interviews and statements, evidence and document collection, case file preparation and presentation, and recommendations for discipline and policy revision.	1

	2.10.1	Department policy should specify who conducts the internal/administrative investigation, including the investigator's position and the supervisor's position (not by name, but by position in the policy). Internal/administrative investigations should be investigated the same way in every instance to eliminate the question of favoritism or bias. The policy should include direction on conflicts of interest (e.g., prohibiting friends or relatives from investigating a family member or a friend) and confidentiality.	1
	2.11.1	Regardless of the employment status of the officer involved, the case should be investigated to its conclusion. If the officer resigns prior to providing a written statement or an interview, the investigation should continue to its conclusion. The investigation can and should continue without the participation of the officer involved. Having this policy in writing ensures that officers will not be surprised of the department's intention to continue the investigation.	2
	2.11.2	The department should have a policy that states that the officer will not receive a recommendation from the department for a new position without his or her participation in the investigation. Further the policy should state that the department will notify the new employer of the officer's unwillingness to participate in the BIA investigation.	3
Section 3: Police Oversight			3
	3.1.1	The charter change document should provide a rationalization for the lengthy retention of investigations or lessen the length of time for retention.	1
	3.2.1	The City of Burlington, in partnership with the BPD, should base the outline of staffing levels for investigators and support personnel on anticipated workloads.	1
	3.3.1	The City of Burlington, in partnership with the BPD, should consider revising this charter change to reflect a provision for investigations that warrant additional time. Although 30 days is acceptable as a requirement	1

		for most complaints, the policy should include a provision for additional time for issues such as contacting and interviewing complainants or witnesses and gathering additional evidence. The policy should specify that if additional time is needed for lower-level complaints, the investigator will make a request in writing to the IA commander who will approve or disapprove the request. If an extension is approved, designating the time allowed to the investigator should be required. Best practice is 30–45 days because it does not leave the employee or the complaint waiting for the results of the investigation. For the more serious Use of Force or Officer Involved Shooting/Officer Involved Death cases, much more time is required to adequately provide for a thorough investigation.	
	3.3.2	Every person who is assigned to Internal Affairs should be specifically trained in conducting internal investigations; there are several one- to two-week training schools that provide this training. Those assigned to Internal Affairs should be required to join the National Internal Affairs Investigators Association (NIAIA) and participate in professional training and yearly conferences.	1
	3.4.1	Consistent with a key recommendation by former president Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, BPD should modify its directives to require public engagement and input on directives, departmental goals and objectives, and the development of any strategic plan.	2
	3.5.1	The City of Burlington should formalize the authority of the Police Commission, which should be greater than just an advisory role, and clearly outline the reach of their responsibilities.	2
	3.6.1	The BPD should hire a PIO to develop a departmental communication policy, prioritize information sharing, bolster legitimacy, and build public trust.	2
Section 4: Use of Force and Officer	4.1.1	BPD should break out “weaponless force” into multiple categories, based on best practices and peer agency review.	2

Involved Shootings	4.2.1	BPD should investigate use of force incidents thoroughly, including reviewing BWC footage, to better understand the reason for these disparities for Black community members.	1
	4.2.2	Similar to the recommendation for traffic stops, BPD should consider the possibility that these disparities are driven by bias (implicit or explicit) and proactively address potential bias in officers' behavior or department practices by implementing training and reviewing BPD practices.	1
	4.3.1	To the degree that multiple responding officers write accounts of the same incident, there should be policy and training instructing officers to independently write their own accounts of a UOF incident.	2
	4.3.2	<p>The BPD should change its requirements regarding UOF narratives in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure they include a precise description of the actions and statements of the subject that warranted the use of force. • Ensure that efforts are made and documented to obtain a subject account of the incident and have an accountability system in place for this. • Ensure that all officers who use force or witness force also write their own distinct reports and have an accountability system in place for this. • Ensure that officers include in their reports any efforts at de-escalation, and if no such efforts were made, include an explanation for why this was not feasible. In addition, there should be fields identifying tangible de-escalation strategies included in the report and evaluated. Including tangible de-escalation strategies not only assists officers in understanding what is meant by de-escalation, but also provides a guide for supervisors to utilize when reviewing BWC footage and coaching officers. If this is not in place, often the term "de-escalation" 	1

		<p>becomes a diluted “check-the-box” term. Tangible de-escalation strategies include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tone of voice (command vs. engagement) ○ Introduce yourself, and ask the subject what name they would like to be called ○ Physical stance (open vs. closed, authority vs. engagement) ○ Eye contact (remove sunglasses, etc.) ○ Turn down radio and siren whenever it is safe to do so to limit distractions ○ Reduce onlookers or individuals who may be escalating the situation whenever possible ○ Physically distance from the subject ○ Use cover to buy time (both officer cover and physical barriers) ○ Request specialized units whenever it makes sense, including social work response ○ Request another on-scene officer to take over if there is no indication of de-escalation or engagement by the current officer in charge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that officers include in their narrative any knowledge of a mental health component and whether or how that affected their response. The narrative should provide a searchable field that BPD can use to easily identify use of force incidents involving a mental health component. In addition, the narrative should capture attempts to call for a specialized response, obtain information on treatment providers, and learn whether there is a person the subject trusts (case manager, 	
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	<p>family member, etc.) who can be called to support them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe or photograph any injury to the subject because of any use of force, and if there was no injury, articulate such in the narrative. 	
4.4.1	Policy should direct a review and approval process for all use of force incidents, which should include all the components identified above.	1
4.5.1	Written statements from every officer on the scene of an OIS should be required before leaving the shift during which it occurred. Every officer involved should be interviewed by BIA before leaving the shift during which it occurred; these interviews should be at minimum audio recorded and preferably video recorded.	1
4.6.1	The BIA policy should direct who will conduct the interviews and collect written statements. A BIA supervisor should review and approve all statements and interviews and recommend whether additional clarifying statements or interviews are required. The BIA commander should review and approve all statements and interviews. Reports are usually reviewed and acknowledged almost immediately, with direction for additional work if necessary, and then approved upon completed work.	1
4.7.1	Best practice is a definitive use of force policy with a use of force continuum. This continuum would be utilized to identify the level of force used. If this is associated with a code, as it appears to be with BPD, a corresponding chart that translates the code should be included.	1
4.7.2	In addition, tangible strategies for de-escalation should be assessed both in BWC footage and in required paperwork. For instance, one should assess verbal de-escalation vs. commands, the officer's tone of voice, the officer's body stance, whether the officer slowed things down, whether the officer created	2

	<p>distance from the individual, whether the officer called for backup, and whether the officer used physical barriers to provide cover to buy more time. A common formula is that distance plus cover equals time, and time provides opportunities to slow things down, call in additional resources, and deploy more de-escalation strategies. This was not documented in either case.</p>	
4.8.1	<p>Reports must include pertinent information supporting the OIS. For example, whether the suspect was armed (and if so, with what?), whether the suspect made moves that caused officers to fear for their lives or the lives of others, whether the officers had reliable information that the suspect had access to firearms, and whether other dangers were present. As a best practice, all officers on scene should provide statements and interviews that are then included in the investigative file. The shooting officer should not be the only officer providing information. Every officer on scene must be interviewed and must be given a timeline for providing a written statement.</p>	2
4.9.1	<p>The Department must develop new policies or update existing policies affected by OIS, including at minimum the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Force (including use of force review procedures) • Officer Involved Shooting • Officer Involved Death (including crashes, in-custody deaths, etc.) • Internal Affairs (including how UOF, OIS, or officer involved crashes and criminal misconduct are administratively investigated) • Responding to Individuals with Diminished Capacity (this should be renamed something like “Recognizing and Responding to Individuals Experiencing a Mental or Behavioral Health Crisis”) 	1

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict of Interest (to ensure every investigation is conducted fairly) 	
	4.9.2	BPD should prioritize the review (including community review), revision, or development of relevant department policies, train on these policies, and provide updated training for UOF.	1
	4.9.3	OIS internal/administrative investigations should be investigated the same way in every instance to eliminate the question of favoritism or bias. The policy should include direction on conflicts of interest (friends or relatives investigating a family member or a friend) and confidentiality. There should be no question the IA will investigate every OIS.	1
Section 5: Patrol Operations, Deployments, and Traffic Stops	5.1.1	<p>BPD should implement a traffic stop data system that captures, in addition to the current information, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reason for stop Stop start and end time Reason for each ticket and warning Passenger information Officer special assignment or task force Open comment field for officer explanations and brief description of the stop <p>BDP reports that the department’s record management system contains this information; however, this information was not provided to the assessment team.</p>	2
	5.2.1	BPD should conduct further analysis and review BWC footage to understand these disparities in traffic stop rates and outcomes and address them to reduce disparities.	1
	5.2.2	BPD should consider the possibility that these disparities are driven by bias (implicit or explicit) and proactively address potential bias in officers’ behavior or department practices by implementing training and reviewing BPD practices.	2

Section 6: Patrol Operations by Geographic Area	6.1.1	Continue to adjust patrol assignments and determine resource allocation for mental health response services by areas based on volume of call and relative proportion of mental health calls for each area.	1
	6.1.2	Develop a deeper socioeconomic bias analysis by area that includes a review of type of incidents, response times, demographic data of officers, victims, and suspects, as well as community feedback. Given the budget and time for the assessment, we were only able to produce results of a descriptive nature and only with certain elements (e.g., arrest, mental health calls, and use of force).	2
Section 7: Staffing and Workload Analysis	7.1.1	It is recommended that the patrol function could be adequately staffed with 51 sworn officers (1 deputy chief, 4 lieutenants, 6 sergeants, and 40 officers). Ideally, they should be deployed in a 12-hour shift schedule, with six squads (four main and two overlap squads). This combination of personnel produces the most efficient combination of officer deployment and days off schedule.	1
	7.2.1	Instead of the current shift schedule, the assessment team recommends the BPD adopt a 12-hour shift plan that uses six squads of officers to provide emergency response, citywide patrol coverage, and the capacity to provide services in a community policing approach. Serious consideration should be given to adopting this proposed 12-hour schedule, aligning officer work schedules with the times and days when they are most likely needed.	1
	7.3.1	Case detectives- Criminal investigations: One sergeant and eight detectives (down from one sergeant and nine detectives)	2
	7.4.1	Proactive enforcement- Crime suppression: One sergeant and three police officers (same current personnel)	1
	7.5.1	Intelligence- Crime analysis and intelligence: One non-sworn analyst and one cross-designated sergeant (SCU) as CIO (new positions).	3

7.6.1	Professional standards: One chief, one deputy chief, one lieutenant, one sergeant, and two police officers (added one sergeant position)	3
7.7.1	Domestic violence prevention officer: Eliminate the position and reassign responsibilities to a detective in the DSB.	2
7.8.1	Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations: Lower staffing to one detective investigator and transfer other sworn personnel back to the BPD operations.	2
7.9.1	Staff the ERO position with a sergeant or above, and, if deemed useful to the BPD and community, utilize a CSL non-sworn position to support the social service function.	1
7.10.1	Community Affairs Officer: Eliminate this position. Notably, Chief Murad reports the position has been eliminated	3
7.11.1	Because the BIA contract is not mandated to be with BPD, the provisions of the CBA should be re-negotiated. Re-negotiations of the CBA should include removing requirements that BPD have no less than (4) full time assignments to BIA. The BIA and City's annual negotiations on BIA officers should be a distinct operational decision with dedicated officers negotiated annually based on the contract. Since these officers are full time at the airport, they should not be factored into BPD staffing recommendations. In addition, shift schedules for BPD should be renegotiated to a more efficient schedule as defined in the recommended staffing model. Should the City and the BIA continue their contract, this schedule would provide additional opportunities for a possible reduction in officers deployed to BIA while still meeting TSA and FFA requirements. Finally, annual negotiations should be made between the City and the BIA, but not defined under a CBA. .	3
7.12.1	Strong consideration should be given to the staffing model recommended in this report, and the City of Burlington, with input from BPD, key stakeholders, and community members, must re-envision the mission of BPD and provide a clear description of their	1

		expected roles and responsibilities. The reduced staffing, along with continued attrition without a recruitment strategy, is a concern.	
	7.13.1	The recommended staffing model in this assessment provides the best opportunity not only for efficiency, but also for the inclusion of CSO and CSL positions that have already been funded. There are additional models included in the Specialized and Alternative Response section of this report that should also be considered.	1
Section 8: Specialized and Alternative Responses	8.1.1	Key stakeholders in Burlington should be identified, and a Community Mental Health Advisory Committee formed. At minimum, this advisory committee must have BPD, community mental health, and a PEER (person with lived experience) and/or advocacy group (e.g., NAMI) centrally involved. Identifying key stakeholders from the above list would be a more robust approach. These stakeholders should be high enough up the ladder to implement recommendations yet fluent with “on the ground” processes and barriers.	1
	8.2.1	Evaluate the formation of a statewide steering committee to develop regional use of budget and resources. For instance, in order for calls to be diverted from police response, the call center for the state will need to be centrally involved prior to sending a 911 call to the local dispatch center in Burlington.	2
	8.3.1	Utilize the CMHAC to review policies; specifically related to recognizing and responding to persons with mental or behavioral health conditions.	1
	8.3.2	Provide a robust community forum for transparency and input into the policy review. Policies should be reviewed annually. Once emerging alternative response programs are solidified in Burlington, revisions should occur again. The community advisory committee is a good place to assign annual review and revisions and include a public review process.	1

8.3.3	Ensure a coordinated approach with policy review to include telecommunications and FIRE/EMS.	1
8.4.1	Prioritize sufficiency of scenario-based training (SBT), particularly for de-escalation strategies and responding to individuals in crisis. Ensure that evaluations are written for each officer, and as part of the evaluation, consider not just the officer's response, but also how the outcome affects the public.	1
8.4.2	BPD should research and connect with other like police departments who have incorporated scenario-based training to develop training materials, evaluations, reports, and creative alternative response models. It is important to remember that programs can be scaled up and down, with modifications to fit the needs of Burlington.	2
8.4.3	Curriculum development should be prioritized for all BPD training, with lesson plans, visual aids, scenario-based training, and evaluations readily available for review and revision.	1
8.5.1	Utilize a statewide steering community to assess what is already operational in terms of mental health training in other communities in Vermont, and then begin discussions regarding how pooled resources and a training strategy may be adapted to fit the needs of Burlington (and the rest of the state). The roadmap of a CIT training and program could be utilized as a guide.	2
8.5.2	Initiating dialogue with surrounding communities who are currently implementing or researching CIT, such as Montpelier and Hartford. As recommended in Section 1, BPD should consult with the Team Two Statewide trainer/coordinator (Kristin Chandler, J. D.) to leverage her important knowledge of efforts underway in other parts of the state.	1
8.5.3	All BPD Sergeants should train in crisis intervention or another equivalent mental and behavioral health training. BPD should consider mandating all Sergeants and any newly promoted Commanders be trained, with annual refreshers as well as being prioritized for	2

		<p>additional regional training. With attrition and promotion, this will build capacity and a culture of understanding the importance of reform efforts.</p> <p>Mandating Field Training Officer (FTO) certification (officers who are paired with new officers in a mentor type role) should also be strongly considered, as new officers coming into the field can be unduly influenced by FTOs who do not have the training or context of a CIT program and/or mental health specialized response.</p>	
	8.5.4	<p>Prioritize Sergeants, Commanders and FTOs to be certified in CIT, or another advanced mental health training along with attendance at regional trainings on specialized mental health response, de-escalation, crisis negotiations, etc. Vermont’s TEAM TWO training should be a requirement for all chain of command, including the Chief, and FTOs. The leadership training provided by the BPD and the State of Vermont should also be required for all chain of command.</p>	2
	8.6.1	<p>In recruit orientation, annual in-service, and refresher training, it is recommended whenever possible for communities to include a site visit to key community resources like drop off center(s); scenario-based training on best practices for de-escalating and interacting with people in mental health crisis; incorporate video scenarios from across the country; and expand on de-escalation strategies including Time, Cover, Distance, Tone, Stance, etc. These topics can all be easily re-purposed from existing training content if your department has CIT or from requesting such from communities with strong CIT programs in place.</p>	1
	8.6.2	<p>In light of COVID-19, there has been a significant increase in e-learning training on topics, including mental health. There is often a per officer charge, and with some contracts, buys access to hundreds of trainings. The size of Burlington may make this a good solution to consider.</p>	1

	Each of these training options are pre-packaged options, which would require limited effort on the BPD and community to develop training curriculum.	
8.7.1	BPD should mandate all officers receive a higher standard of training, rather than having a full patrol based specialized response. In this case, Burlington will want to focus its specialized response on alternative responses to traditional policing, which we will discuss in further detail. However, it is critically important for Burlington and the BPD to understand that there will <i>always</i> be a segment of mental health calls that will require police response. Consequently, having well-trained officers, and strong community resources is an important component to have. As we all know, things can go poorly on a call in a matter of minutes. That is not always preventable. But the more training, resources, alternatives to police response and specialized police response, the better the likelihood of a positive outcome.	1
8.8.1	The City of Burlington and the BPD (through the stakeholder advisory committee) should conduct a thorough assessment of the ecosystem of Burlington and the State of Vermont, which will be required to develop a roadmap for training and specialized response (mandated and voluntary).	2
8.8.2	Ensure the training roadmap includes mandated training for all officers, refresher training, annual in-service, and specialized advanced level training. This will be essential for bringing BPD into 21st century practice related to recognizing and responding to mental and behavioral health calls for service, while keeping skills refreshed moving forward.	2
8.8.3	Ensure timelines are established for the required training, accounting for training current officers, while planning ahead for new officers hired.	2
8.8.4	If there is no budget allocated to CIT (or equivalent) training, consider allocating funds. If it is not possible, organizations involved in CIT or equivalent training could consider sharing budget allocations, either	2

		direct line-item contributions, and/or donations (space, food, CIT pins/resources, a designated coordinator etc.). This has been successful in many communities when budget is a barrier. Burlington should strongly consider this.	
	8.9.1	BPD should also consider a requirement for Sergeants to audit BWC footage after or during each shift, including those that were identified as having a mental health component. This is important not only for overall accountability, commendation, and coaching, but also to assess de-escalation skills utilized, and resources accessed. Require Sergeants to review a reasonable number of random BWC from their shifts daily or weekly, utilizing those reviews to provide feedback to officers. These reviews should have a written protocol, indicating when the review occurred, and findings (positive or areas for improvement) and should be communicated with patrol officers.	1
	8.9.2	Incorporate defining de-escalation into all use of force documentation.	1
	8.10.1	Determine if a jail-based diversion and care coordination program would be a useful part of a robust diversion from the criminal justice system strategic plan. Embed community mental health center case manager(s) inside the jail to crosscheck the daily jail booking report with the client database at the community mental health center. This allows for identification of active clients who are booked into the jail, for what crimes, how long they are in jail and at what cost to the City. These basic data points help inform areas for diversion, rapid communication with jail mental health staff regarding medications the individual is on for continuity of care inside the jail, assists with coordinating a warm handoff at release from the jail to either a family member, friend, partner, their assigned case manager etc., and also identifies high frequency utilizers to connect with	3

	<p>justice involved case management teams for proactive outreach. We understand from stakeholder interviews that Burlington has a regional detention center, but there would still be useful opportunities for this type of program to be assessed.</p> <p>These same case managers can also be assigned to the mental health or other court dockets for continuity between jail, judges, attorney's, psychiatric services, and client case managers.</p>	
8.10.2	<p>Determine if a court liaison would be a useful part of a robust diversion from the criminal justice system strategic plan.</p> <p>Develop justice involved case management team(s) who have the role of proactively serving the high frequency utilizers of law enforcement and first responder calls and jail bookings. Proactive engagement with high-risk individuals can successfully reduce law enforcement calls in the first place. This team(s) can be a combination of professionals including a case manager team, a case manager and a clinician team, a case manager, and a PEER (person with lived experience) team etc. The success of these paired professionals should be evaluated on an ongoing basis, autocorrecting as needed.</p>	3
8.10.3	<p>Determine if a justice involved case management team(s) would be a useful part of a robust diversion from the criminal justice response plan.</p>	2
8.10.4	<p>Determine if a clinician embedded in telecommunications would be a useful part of a robust diversion from the criminal justice response plan.</p> <p>Embed a clinician(s) inside telecommunications (community facing) to divert non-urgent 911 calls from law enforcement response at all, while also utilizing a warm hand off as necessary to a resource line, community mental health hotline or mobile crisis response. The assessment team understands that</p>	2

		Vermont has a regional telecommunications center that takes all incoming 911 calls, which are then transferred to local call centers for dispatch. It will be important for Burlington and the State of Vermont to assess whether it makes the most sense to prioritize efforts in the state call center, the local call center, or some combination.	
	8.10.5	Consider dedicated co-response team(s) made up of a combination of paramedic, clinician, BPD specialized officer with a soft, (non-traditional) police uniform and PEER/person with lived experience. These teams often present opportunities to move away from law enforcement focused response and law enforcement transport (criminalizing mental health conditions), and toward a medical response providing an unmarked vehicle with locked seat belt restraints instead of handcuffs when transport is necessary. Paramedics can assist with medication delivery when needed (as permitted by law), while a soft uniformed specialized officer can be on site if back up is needed. These teams can respond in real time and/or provide proactive services to high-risk individuals, including persons experiencing homelessness or who may need emergency hospitalization.	2
	8.10.6	Consider a traditional co-responder model (clinician riding out with an officer or deputy)-This is a similar model as the above but is a clinician: specialized police officer team who will respond in real time to 911 calls for service when law enforcement response is required. This model is often useful as a police based specialized response.	2
	8.10.7	Determine if a mobile crisis response team(s) would be a useful part of a robust diversion from law enforcement response plan. A non-law enforcement response (mobile crisis response teams) typically formed by community mental health centers to respond to calls not requiring police response. Response times (as quickly as possible) are important to consider. These mobile	2

	<p>crisis response teams can sometimes also be successfully utilized for police call outs by officers on scene of a call not requiring law enforcement response. These teams tend to be staffed by community mental health center professionals and can be dispatched by the call center, by families calling in directly, or from police who are already on scene.</p>	
8.11.1	<p>Social service providers in the City of Burlington should submit clear scopes of their work and related budgetary needs to address staffing, and additional resources required to be more responsive to “live” needs. This should be considered as part of the specialized police based and alternative response models.</p>	2
8.11.2	<p>Due to the size of Burlington, creative ways should be sought to identify a crisis receiving center. Some smaller communities like Burlington will utilize an existing 24/7/365 operation, like a local hospital or urgent care, and add mental health personnel (e.g., Howard Center) and people with lived experience, who have access to local mental health center charts. This serves as a “one stop shop” for law enforcement drop-off with onsite opening of charts and connection to necessary services. It should be the responsibility of the crisis center to stabilize and ensure connection to necessary services. The 24-hour nature of this type of resource is essential. Back up medical care is also often beneficial.</p>	2
8.12.1	<p>Develop Telecommunication Specific CIT (e.g., 8 hours or up to 3 days) or include Telecommunications in 40-hour CIT (or equivalent).</p>	2
8.12.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish clear criteria for telecommunications personnel to identify the call for co-response and non-law enforcement response, and ensure there is regular, robust, ongoing training for them. A coordinated effort between the CIT coordinator and telecommunications to cross train on CIT efforts should also be 	2

		<p>encouraged. Both need to have thorough awareness of the program, and why it is critically important to have a streamlined approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish call codes that best capture overall CFS that involve a mental health component. Some departments limit call codes to things like “suicidal” or “mental health” (see next recommendation for additional detail). It is important to develop a strategy for identifying a way to uniformly track incoming calls that involve a mental health component. Although this will not always be perfect, since many calls have overlapping characteristics, there should be a designation that triggers an automated set of triage questions at call intake. It is recommended that telecommunications have designated pop-ups in their digital system capable of asking basic triage questions that can then be transmitted over the air and via Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) to responding officers. For example, known mental health condition (given by caller); behaviors present; weapon present (including type); triggers that can escalate behavior etc.• In addition, many communities have a designation (e.g., alpha character z) that is added to any call, regardless of how it was dispatched, that officers can close out the call to indicate it involved a mental health component. For instance, if an officer is dispatched to a domestic call, but once on scene, it clearly involved a mental health component, the call can be closed out adding the alpha character z to the formal call code. This then allows data to be pulled to reflect calls more accurately with a mental health component. Although CFS involving “trespassing,” “person down,” etc. are important call codes to monitor, these do not	
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		<p>always involve and may not be appropriate to include in data collection for calls with a mental health component.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed a community-facing social worker to divert non-emergency calls. These positions can be instrumental in functions like connecting individuals to community-based services, requesting mobile crisis outreach, providing a “warm hand off” to another hotline, or just talking with someone while they calm down. • Telecommunications personnel should have a shift roster of CIT/specialized officers or non-sworn personnel on duty, to ensure there is an automated way to prioritize dispatch of mental health calls for service to CIT trained officers/non-worn. This should be part of an overall robust strategy. 	
8.13.1		<p>Based on the assessment team interviews of BPD personnel and review of calls for service data, we recommend:</p> <p>Police Department CIT/Mental Health Reports:</p> <p>Calls that are closed out as calls involving a mental health component should require a CIT (Mental Health) report be completed. The CIT report should include such information as name, address, mental health condition (if given by the person themselves or a family member on scene); characteristics indicating a mental health condition (talking to themselves or others, hearing things that you do not hear, rapid speech, depressive characteristics, odd behavior etc.); whether a weapon was involved, and if so, what type (knife, other object, gun etc.); use of force and type of force; disposition of the call, including: resolved in community, referred to community based services; transport to services (voluntary or involuntary); arrest (city ordinance, misdemeanor, felony), referral to alternative response team. These data reports should be routed through the CIT coordinator and his/her team to track trends on these calls, including high</p>	2

		<p>frequency utilizers that can be referred to additional alternative response. Reports should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data indicating overall calls for service, of those, number of calls for service involving a mental health component (e.g., alpha character z), of those, how many were responded to by a CIT certified officer (primary or assist)?, of those, disposition. • Percent of CFS that involve a mental health component by area and shift. • Time from arrival on scene to close out of call (this is good to monitor distinctions -if any- for CIT calls vs non-CIT calls). • Percent use of force and types for CIT and Non-CIT officers. <p>To measure overall department wide buy-in and culture, BPD should annually report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number/Percentage of active sworn officers trained in CIT (or equivalent). • Number/Percentage of active SGT's Sergeants trained in CIT. • Number/Percentage of active Commanders trained in CIT. • Number/Percentage of active FTOs trained in CIT. <p>Community Mental Health Center data should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of persons dropped off at the crisis center by law enforcement • Circumstances for drop off (e.g., intoxication, mental health crisis, insufficient housing, trespassing) • Time for police "turnaround"—drop off to back on the street • Number of persons "turned away" from law enforcement drop off and why 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of Stay for person in crisis • Linkage to Services at discharge, and what services • Involuntary Commitment? • If not brought to the drop off center, would the person have been arrested and for what charge? (This should be included in the law enforcement drop off paperwork) <p>Mobile crises call outs (inside and outside of law enforcement response):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of persons outreached • Who requested the outreach? • Time from request to arrival on scene • Time on scene • Disposition <p>Although data can sometimes appear overwhelming when communities are just starting programs, it is important to remember that communities should just start somewhere, capturing basic data the community believes to be a priority. Once initial data is collected, it will inform next steps for data collection.</p>	
Section 9: Community Engagement	9.1.1	Community policing strategies, including some of the engagement activities identified above, allow for positive relationship building to occur between the BPD and the community it serves. These proactive engagement activities encourage one-to-one relationship building, and a more personal experience of understanding what the community is struggling with, and how the BPD can more positively respond.	2
	9.1.2	Community policing should be embedded within BPD culture and at the forefront of all daily operations and community interactions. BPD should consider re-defining what community-oriented policing means and embed this within policy, training, and operational	2

		<p>accountability. Members of the BPD should engage directly with members of the community and local stakeholders to ensure that the BPD is addressing the problems of concern to the local community. Community policing should “combine a focus on intervention and prevention through problem solving with building collaborative partnerships between enforcement agencies and schools, social services, and other stakeholders” (<i>Final Report on 21st Century Policing 2015, 41</i>).</p>	
9.1.3		<p>The BPD should work with Burlington community members to set up a reoccurring opportunity to engage in conversations that enable all involved parties to be seen, heard, and understood. Consideration should be given to recruiting, outreach, shared agenda development, participatory meeting formats etc.</p>	2
9.2.1		<p>When adopting its new Strategic Plan, the BPD should consider looking at the community engagement strategies of other similarly situated departments such as the Winooski, and Montpelier, Vermont, Police Departments. As indicated throughout these recommendations, an adequate staffing model must support this kind of proactive engagement.</p>	3
9.3.1		<p>The BPD and related public safety partners should pioneer programs that conduct outreach to the Burlington refugee population to increase refugees’ trust in public safety. Staffing must support this type of community engagement.</p>	1

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Conclusion

In Burlington, the public has concerns about racial bias, unnecessary use of force, and a lack of transparency in BPD police practices. In addition, there are concerns about the process and outcomes of the 30 percent reduction in sworn officers called for in the *Resolution Related to Racial Justice through Economic and Criminal Justice* adopted by the Burlington City Council on June 29, 2020. Finally, there is overarching support for diverting calls for service that may not require sworn officer response to alternative entities that may be better suited to respond.

The assessment team is encouraged by BPD's commitment to improve and its willingness to address these findings and recommendations. BPD's continued engagement and collaboration with the City and the community will be critical to ensuring the successful implementation and sustainability of these improvements. In our stakeholder interviews, we found that a subset of the community, the City, and the BPD is in conflict, and unresolved issues of accountability, transparency, and political tension must be addressed.

The CNA assessment team offered numerous findings with associated recommendations for improvement. We based these findings on extensive document review, data analysis, and interviews with members of the BPD, the City, and the local community.

Many of the findings and recommendations noted in this report are not unique to the BPD and reflect challenges that many police agencies across the country current face. Policing has reached a pivotal point, and the role of the community in ensuring public safety is becoming more apparent and vital.

BPD has made progress over the last several years, indicated by the hiring of a social worker and community service officers (with additional recruitment presently occurring) as well as recruitment efforts for community service liaisons (CSL) to respond to calls for service that may be better suited for non-sworn police officers. In addition, traffic stops and arrests have steadily declined.

However, improvements must continue to be made, most notably the following:

- Revising many of BPD's policies
- Developing a robust training curriculum that includes 21st century training topics
- Addressing racial bias in traffic stops, searches, and seizures, ticketing and use of force disparities
- Establishing more formal and transparent procedures that support the BIA's investigative policies and practices, BPD's use of force and citizen complaint investigations, and BPD's disciplinary processes
- Establishing a Citizen Review Board that has greater authority than simply advising
- Revising BPD staffing and shift changes
- Revising practices surrounding recognizing and responding to persons in crisis
- Reviewing and revising the BPOA to address inappropriate and inefficient practices that contribute to community mistrust

We believe that this report provides an assessment of observations and data analysis that will advance the necessary civic discussions and decisions required to improve not only the BPD but also the climate of tension in the City. It is imperative that the focus of healing not be unilaterally directed at the BPD; rather, it should include the broader city ecosystem that contributes to the current divide. Maintaining this priority will be essential in developing a better department to promote public safety and an overall healthy ecosystem necessary to improve trust and quality of life services to Burlingtonians.

Appendix A: Documents

- DD43 - Reporting Corruption and Misconduct
- DD05 - Use of Force, 6-30-2020
- DD03 - Fair and Impartial Policing 2020
- DD40 - Quality Control, Internal Investigations & Discipline
- 20200916 - Discipline Overview for Charter Change Committee
- Citizen Complaint Process & Form
- DD13.03 - Interacting with Persons with Diminished Capacities
- DD13.01 - Interacting with Persons with Limited English Proficiency
- DD13.02 - Interacting with Persons with Disabilities
- DD11 - Victim-Witness Assistance
- DD21.01 - Domestic Violence Response
- DD21.02 - Domestic Violence by Law Enforcement Employees-Prevention & Early Warning Initiatives
- DD11 - Victim-Witness Assistance
- DD14.2 - Digital_Imaging_ Audio and video (other than BWCs)
- DD14.1 - Body Worn Camera Systems
- 20210112 STAFFING for POLICE COMMISSION_0
- 20190201 BPOA contract 2018 to 2022 FINAL signed
- DD01 - Law Enforcement Role & Authority, Ethics, Organizational Structure & Department Rules
- 20210122 PUBLIC SAFETY CONTINUITY PLAN memo for City Council
- Community Support Liaison Job description
- Independent Community Control Board to Oversee Investigation and Discipline of Police Misconduct Charter Change

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Appendix B: Alternative Shift Schedules

As discussed, the current patrol shift plan used by the BPD is not efficient. The overlaps and “double days” produce too much wasted time. Several other shift plans would be more efficient and require only minimum adjustments to the current model. We offer **three** such plans for comparison. These plans rely on the current patrol staffing and deploy those personnel in comparison with the 2019 peak workload model.

Below, we provide a sample 10-hour work plan that exists in numerous police departments across the country. This plan uses four shifts, and it schedules the overlaps during times when police resources are needed the most. In this example, 40 officers are scheduled on four shifts with start times that are different than those currently in use in the BPD. Since 10 is not a factor of 24, there will always be overlap among the shifts. The number of overlapped hours depends upon the number of shifts used. Historically, the BPD relied on four shifts to staff patrol, which resulted in 16 hours of overlap. However, these hours were used in a way that created inefficiencies. When the swing shift was essentially eliminated because of mandated staffing reductions, the department adopted a three-shift model, which resulted in six hours of overlap. This model created a surplus of personnel mostly in the late evening hours and did not match service demands as effectively as possible.

The most efficient deployment using the 10-hour shift requires a minimum of four shifts. The start and end times of these shifts can be adjusted to meet demands. In the example provided here, the four shifts are as follows: 0600x1600 (6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), 1000x2000 (10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.), 1600x0200 (4:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.), and 2000x0600 (8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.). These four combinations are beneficial because (1) they ensure more officers are on patrol during the times they are needed the most, (2) they reduce the number of officers when they are needed the least, and (3) they smooth out the overlaps to avoid the natural tendency of officers to come off patrol when the next shift arrives. Undoubtedly, this is occurring during the 75-minute overlap between the midnight-day and day-evening shifts.

1. Four 10-hour shifts, sides A and B

This first model uses 40 police officers deployed in the same way they are now with two sides and four shifts, but with adjusted start times for the shifts. The day-off rotation would remain the same. Although this model is NOT recommended, we offer it for comparison with the current approach.

The table below illustrates a schedule that features four 10-hour shifts. This schedule relies on the current patrol allocation of four lieutenants, six sergeants, and forty officers. Under this plan, the number of officers assigned per shift varies. This model doubles the number of officers assigned from 1000 hours until 0200 hours (10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.). This doubled period can be changed to suit the needs of the department and may be adjusted for winter and summer deployment as workload changes during the year. The squads (teams of officers on duty at the same time) that have single coverage during some part of the day are staffed with additional officers in order to provide coverage.

Appendix table 1. 10-hour shift configuration

	Lt.	Sgt.	PO	Total
1000x2000	1	1	8	10
2000x0600	1	2	12	15
0600x1600	1	2	12	15
1600x0200	1	1	8	10
	4	6	40	50

Half of the officers would be assigned evenly to each side, and they would be deployed in the following manner:

Appendix table 2. 10-hour shift configuration

Hour	1000x2000	2000x0600	0600x1600	1600x0200	Total
12 a.m.		6 ³⁶		4	10
1 a.m.		6		4	10
2 a.m.		6			6
3 a.m.		6			6
4 a.m.		6			6
5 a.m.		6			6
6 a.m.			6		6
7 a.m.			6		6
8 a.m.			6		6
9 a.m.			6		6
10 a.m.	4		6		10
11 a.m.	4		6		10
12 p.m.	4		6		10
1 p.m.	4		6		10
2 p.m.	4		6		10
3 p.m.	4		6		10
4 p.m.	4			4	8
5 p.m.	4			4	8
6 p.m.	4			4	8
7 p.m.				4	8
8 p.m.		6		4	10
9 p.m.		6		4	10
10 p.m.		6		4	10
11 p.m.		6		4	10

The table above shows that teams of four to six officers report for duty at multiple occasions throughout the day. From 1000 hours all the way until 0200 hours (10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.), two teams are assigned at the same time, which results in eight to ten officers being assigned to patrol during these times. Each squad has additional officers assigned to account for regular days off, sick days, vacation days, etc. The table below reports the staffing deviations for this shift schedule.

³⁶ Does not include supervisors

Appendix table 3. Staffing deviation, 2019

Hours	2019 Staffing	Needed	Deviation	Option-1 Staffing	Needed	Deviation
0	13	5	8	10	5	5
1	13	5	8	10	5	5
2	11	5	6	6	5	1
3	5	3	2	6	3	3
4	5	2	3	6	2	4
5	5	2	3	6	2	4
6	5	2	3	6	2	4
7	9	3	6	6	3	3
8	10	6	4	6	6	0
9	10	11	-1	6	11	-5
10	10	6	4	10	6	4
11	10	7	3	10	7	3
12	10	6	4	10	6	4
13	10	6	4	10	6	4
14	10	7	3	10	7	3
15	8	7	1	10	7	3
16	12	5	7	8	5	3
17	10	6	4	8	6	2
18	8	5	3	8	5	3
19	8	6	2	8	6	2
20	8	6	2	10	6	4
21	8	6	2	10	6	4
22	12	6	6	10	6	4
23	13	5	8	10	5	5
		TOTAL	87		67	
		DEVIATION				
		VARIANCE	5.25		4.36	

2. 10-Hour Shift, Fixed Days Off

This shift schedule calls for a substantial departure from the current schedule in use. This schedule eliminates the “sides” and the “double day,” adds a fourth shift from 1000x2000 (10:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.) hours, and staggers days off throughout the week for police officers. The staffing plan presented below utilizes 42 officers to provide a balanced illustration and can be adapted to fit a 40-officer plan. We recommend that the “overlap” day be eliminated and that a new patrol shift rotation be developed. The three tables that follow illustrate shift staffing, shift rotation with days on and off, total deployment by hour and shift, and staffing deviations comparing Option 1 and Option 2 for the proposed four-shift alignment.

This schedule requires four lieutenants, six sergeants, and forty-two corporals or police officers for deployment. Under this proposed rotation, officers have fixed days off and work four 10-hour days each week. The number of officers assigned per shift is four for the 1000x2000 (10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) and the 1600x0200 (4:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.) shifts, and eight for the 0600x1600 (6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) and the 2000x0600 (8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.) shifts. Using the fixed day-off rotation means that 12 officers are deployed when they are needed the most, and 8 officers are assigned when they are needed the least—from 0200 to 1000 (2:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.) hours. This rotation is flexible, and personnel can be added or subtracted from each shift pursuant to the needs of the department. Furthermore, the fixed days off as presented can be modified to account for any sustained operational commitment such as the airport or other special events. The days off, start times, and personnel levels in the shift rotation presented in the tables can all be modified to meet the needs of the department.

Appendix table 4. Option 2 patrol staffing

Shift	Lt.	Sgt.	CPL/PO	Total
0600x1600	1	2	14	17
1000x2000	1	1	7	9
1600x0200	1	1	7	9
2000x0600	1	2	14	17
	4	6	42	52

Appendix table 5. Shift rotation – days on and days off

1000X2000								
# of officers	Days off	M	T	W	H	F	Sa	Su
1	FSS	1	1	1	1			
1	SSM		1	1	1	1		
1	SMT			1	1	1	1	
1	MTW				1	1	1	1
1	TWH	1				1	1	1
1	WHF	1	1				1	1
1	HFS	1	1	1				1
Officers assigned:		4	4	4	4	4	4	4

2000X0600								
# of officers	Days off	M	T	W	H	F	Sa	Su
2	FSS	2	2	2	2			
2	SSM		2	2	2	2		
2	SMT			2	2	2	2	
2	MTW				2	2	2	2
2	TWH	2				2	2	2
2	WHF	2	2				2	2
2	HFS	2	2	2				2
Officers assigned:		8	8	8	8	8	8	8

0600X1600								
# of officers	Days off	M	T	W	H	F	Sa	Su
2	FSS	2	2	2	2			
2	SSM		2	2	2	2		
2	SMT			2	2	2	2	
2	MTW				2	2	2	2
2	TWH	2				2	2	2
2	WHF	2	2				2	2
2	HFS	2	2	2				2
Officers on duty:		8	8	8	8	8	8	8

1600x0200								
# of officers	Days off	M	T	W	H	F	Sa	Su
1	FSS	1	1	1	1			
1	SSM		1	1	1	1		
1	SMT			1	1	1	1	
1	MTW				1	1	1	1
1	TWH	1				1	1	1
1	WHF	1	1				1	1
1	HFS	1	1	1				1
Officers assigned:		4	4	4	4	4	4	4

This approach realigns existing officers and deploys them at appropriate times. More officers are assigned when demand for service is high, and fewer are assigned when service demand declines. Once again, we emphasize that the structure of this schedule and the days-off rotation is flexible and can be modified to fit the needs of the department. The large number of officers available during peak times, and who can be directed at crime, traffic, and community issues in their areas, can have an enormous effect on the quality of life in the community. There are also enough officers assigned during peak times to allow many of them to take training days, vacation days, etc., without negatively affecting staffing and patrol coverage.

We did not factor days off for lieutenants and sergeants into the above shift plan; it is for police officers only. Ranking officers would evaluate their days off on a week-to-week basis in order to ensure that there is appropriate coverage.

In addition, patrol management responsibilities for lieutenants would change from Side A or B to shift. For example, the lieutenant assigned under 0600x1600 would be responsible for half of the day (0700x1900 for instance), and the other lieutenant would be responsible for the other half of the day. The lieutenants would be given the authority to adjust their work schedule as the needs of their shift dictate, and their schedules could change numerous times throughout the year.

Although this shift plan offers the advantage of assigning more officers during peak times, it does feature disadvantages as well. Under this shift plan, supervisors and officers have different days off. Officers' days off are staggered, meaning they work with different people on different days. And supervisors' days off could change from week to week, resulting in different supervisors being present depending upon the schedule. This undermines the principle of unity of command in which every subordinate reports to only one supervisor. The shift plan envisions several supervisors to subordinate relationships. This could have the unintended effects of miscommunication and a lack of continuity in direction and focus. It is impossible to estimate the outcomes of this issue, but it is an important factor that must be considered when evaluating the benefit of this option.

3. 12-hour shifts

Another possibility for the BPD is to implement a 12-hour shift rotation. Police departments all around the country implement this shift length successfully. The major advantage of this schedule is that it maximizes the amount of resources that are available at any time during the day. At a minimum, 25 percent of the patrol force is working at all hours of the day. Another advantage is that the patrol squads are on duty at the same time as their supervisors, and they always work together as a squad. Officers, therefore, have the same supervisor every day, and they work with the same officers every day. This establishes unity of command and a high degree of esprit de corps within the squad. This shift rotation has disadvantages as well. With the patrol force divided equally into four squads, the same number of personnel are assigned to work every hour throughout the day. When the workload fluctuates throughout the day, the level of personnel assigned remains the same. This shift model requires four lieutenants, four sergeants, and forty police officers deployed in squads as illustrated in the table below.

Below is an illustration of the shift schedule:

Appendix table 6. 2-hour shift configuration

Squad	Shift	Lt.	Sgt.	PO	Total ³⁷
A	0600X1800	1			12
	6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.		1	10	
B	1800X0600	1			12
	6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.		1	10	
C	0600X1800	1			12
	6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.		1	10	
D	1800X0600	1			12
	6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.		1	10	
		4	4	40	48

Any of the three options presented above would be more efficient than the BPD's current shift schedule. The table below presents all of the shift alternatives discussed in the report and reports on the staffing deviations and variance:

Appendix table 7. Staffing deviations and variance, 2019

Hour	Needed	2019	Modified 10 Hour	10-Hour Staggered Days Off	Four 12- Hour	Six 12- Hour with CRT
0	5	8	5	5	4	2
1	5	8	5	5	4	2
2	5	6	1	5	4	2
3	3	2	3	3	6	4
4	2	3	4	4	7	5
5	2	3	4	4	7	5
6	2	3	4	4	7	5
7	3	6	3	3	6	4
8	6	4	0	0	3	1
9	11	-1	-5	-5	-2	-1
10	6	4	4	4	3	4
11	7	3	3	3	2	3
12	6	4	4	4	3	4
13	6	4	4	4	3	4

³⁷ Lieutenants are carried in Squads A and B for illustration purposes. The flexible nature of their days off would permit them to be working with either squad during the shift.

14	7	3	3	3	2	3
15	7	1	3	3	2	3
16	5	7	3	4	4	5
17	6	4	2	3	3	4
18	5	3	3	4	4	5
19	6	2	2	3	3	4
20	6	2	4	4	3	4
21	6	2	4	4	3	1
22	6	6	4	4	3	1
23	5	8	5	5	4	2
	TOTAL DEVIATION	94	72	84	79	75
	VARIANCE	5.25	4.36	4.64	3.88	2.57



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Public Safety Transformation: Comprehensive Report on Public Discourse Analysis and Recommendations for the City of Burlington, VT

An inquiry into the Question of How to Build a Healthy and Safe Community and To Identify Potential Partners

Date: July 2, 2021

Prepared by: Talitha Consults LLC

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Executive Summary

In the wake of racial justice uprisings across the nation, many public-serving institutions are grappling with the question, what is the most effective way to measure a community's safety needs? Burlington is no exception.

Under the guidance of Burlington's Public Safety Joint Committee, Talitha Consults (Talitha), a community planning firm based in Washington State, designed and implemented a multifaceted public inquiry process to understand the needs, values and visions of Burlington community members on how to build a safer and healthier city and what institutions are needed to reach that goal.

This is a comprehensive report that outlines:

- elements of the entire process and their corresponding outputs
- research overview & implementation
- six key takeaways and four recommendations

This process took over six months to execute. Amidst unprecedented limitations set by COVID-19 physical distancing protocols, Talitha and the City's Project Manager designed and implemented multifaceted community outreach and engagement strategies coupled with innovative tools to increase public participation in Burlington's Public Safety deliberations. The team facilitated virtual city-wide town halls, neighborhood meetings, stakeholder workshops and launched an online public engagement survey. We provided interpreter services and translated event flyers into the six most spoken languages in Burlington.

A significant number of community members participated in the online public safety survey. As it often happens with public surveys, consultants did not receive a response that could be considered as a representative sample of the City of Burlington. Black, People of Color, young people, lower wage earners and vulnerable populations are grossly underrepresented in the final survey data.

Using quantitative data from the survey and over 200 pages of inputs gathered from the community, Talitha used Grounded Research Theory to guide the data analysis portion of the project. Drawn from these community voices, we developed six key takeaways which are:

- #1: To take a comprehensive look at all the key findings from the entire engagement process.
- #2: Responding to Mental Health Emergencies and Providing Mental Health Support Services
- #3: Understanding individuals' fears
- #4: Improve BPD's current public input process through improved community relations and diversified and fully functional communication channels
- #5: The desire to belong and be free from fear resonated across the community.
- #6: Community members hold diverse and disparate views on WHO can be trusted, 1) to respond to emergency; and 2) the level of satisfaction with BPD

We conclude our report with four recommendations for the Joint Committee to consider for implementation:

Recommendation 1: Implement an integrated public safety response system for crises involving mental illness, homelessness and addiction.

Recommendation 2: Launch and sustain partnership and collaboration with EMS providers, Fire Department and Community Members.

Recommendation 3: BPD must improve existing communication channels and strive for greater community participation in Public Safety planning.

Recommendation 4: Train and prepare for Holistic Public Safety Response.

These recommendations require different time, resource and capacity commitments but most are immediately actionable.

I. Introduction

On January 19, 2021, Burlington’s Public Safety Joint Committee (Joint Committee) comprised of members from the city council’s Public Safety Committee and the Police Commission selected Talitha Consults (Talitha)—community planning consulting firm based in Washington State— as a consultant to begin an inquiry into the question of how to build a healthy and safe community and what institutions the city needs to reach that goal. This report outlines an overview of the scope of work; key learnings gleaned from a series of community engagement and followed by Talitha’s insights and recommendations.

II. Overview of the Public Inquiry Process

A. Multifaceted Community Engagement and Outreach Approach: Virtual Workshops with Key Stakeholders, Virtual Meetings a Smaller Neighborhood Meetings and Two City-wide Town halls and Open Public Meetings

Joint Committee approved public inquiry process and work plan designed by Talitha on February 1, 2021. Figure 1 depicts a graphic summary of the process. The entire process took over six months to execute from the start to the submission of this final report.

Throughout the six-month long process, Talitha in partnership with the city’s designated Project Manager *intentionally* and *proactively* reached out to key stakeholders in the community, other city departments and public-school officials. In the initial phase of the project, the Joint Committee identified key stakeholders in the Burlington area for Talitha’s outreach. The Joint Committee Chair, Councilor Zoraya Hightower, sent out invitations to stakeholders from the community. These collective outreach efforts provided multiple opportunities for Talitha to facilitate meaningful community

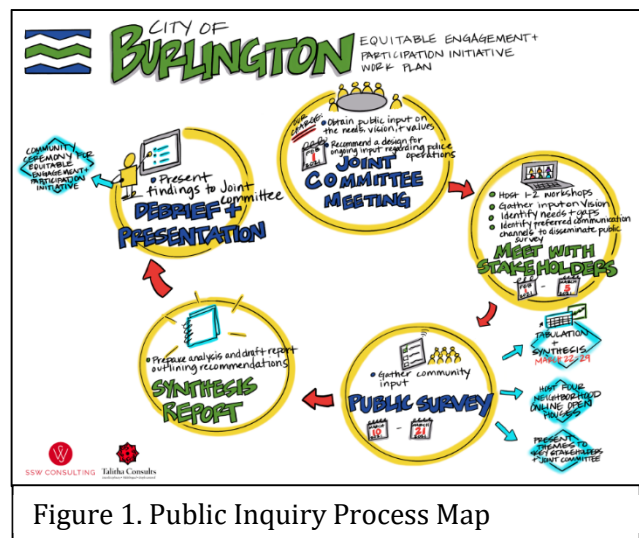


Figure 1. Public Inquiry Process Map

conversations among residents and stakeholders from diverse backgrounds that pertained to their needs, values, and visions for safer and healthier Burlington. The engagement activities included:

- Two (2) workshops with stakeholders from the community identified by the Joint Committee
(See Appendix A for a list of community organizations/individuals who attended)
- Two (2) city-wide town halls - estimated total attendance around 65 people*
- Two (2) engagements with two separate Neighborhood Planning Associations (NPA) – around 75 people in combined total
- Two (2) meetings with NPA coordinators and a public-school school board member
- Eight (8) Joint Committee meetings (all meetings were open to the public)
- Eight (10) weekly project meetings where Mark Hughes from Racial Justice Alliance was present in most meetings (anyone is welcome to attend)
- Email updates from Talitha to community members who had agreed to be on their email list
- One (1) online Public Safety Community Survey opened for 20 days

* for both virtual town halls, multiple participants shared a single computer screen. This number is based on the number of participants shown in Zoom. The actual number of participants may be slightly higher.

On March 15, 2021, Talitha presented preliminary findings from the two stakeholder workshops to the Joint Committee. Table 1 depicts notable core themes around what a safer and healthier community meant to the workshop participants and for various communities they serve.

#	Themes	Frequency
1	Differentiated response to 911 calls	8
2	Eradicating Structural Racism	7
3	Eradicating Systemic Social Inequity	12
4	Eradication of Racial Inequity in Public Health & Safety	12
5	Freedom from fear of ...	11
6	Healthier interaction & relationship with BPD	20
7	More investments in these areas	25
8	Proactive response to sustainability and climate action	2
9	Social Determinants of Health	25
10	Being understood, accepted and having agency (a sense of belonging)	26

Table 1 – Core Themese from Community Stakeholders

To review the presentation in its entirety, go to: <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/sites/default/files/Talitha%20Consults%20Presentation.pdf>

In the following weeks, Talitha continued to inquire, synthesize and analyze public input gathered from other engagement events including smaller listening sessions at NPAs and two city-wide town halls.

Throughout the project, the consultants and the city’s Project Manager were very intentional about offering interpreter services. We leveraged neighborhood and local connections as well as social media outreach to spread the word about the two city-wide town halls. All the flyers about the town halls were translated into five languages –Somali, Swahili, Lingala, Burmese, and Karen. Live-interpretation in Somali, Swahili, French, Burmese and Lingala were available at *both* town halls. In partnership with Spifio, Talitha also offered AI-aided simultaneous translation service at the town hall hosted on April 27, 2021. Additionally, Talitha used the live visual aid application Mural when facilitating community conversations to accommodate neuro-diversity and communications styles so that everyone could see, hear, and meaningfully participate -see image to the right. In late April, Talitha and MIG presented a draft of the public safety survey at a Joint Committee meeting where consultants gathered feedback from committee members and the public.

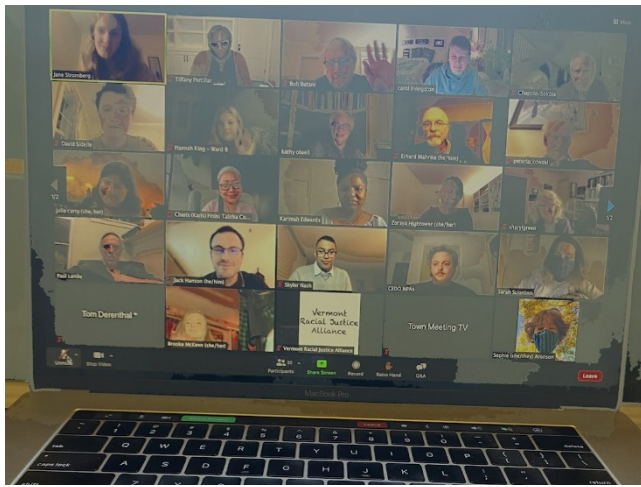


Image 1: Screenshot Image of a virtual community engagement event

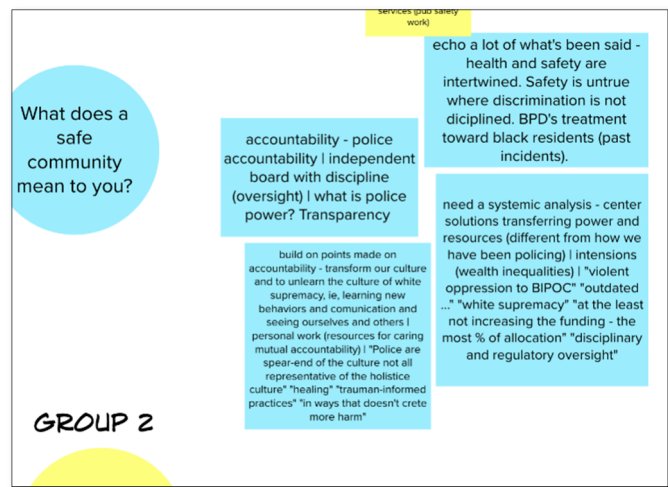


Image 2: Example of Mural App Usage for Virtual Meeting

B. Online Public Safety Survey

Key learnings from prior community engagement events informed and shaped the next phase in the process which was the design of Public Safety Survey. While the survey is a key component of this process, it was one piece of a series of community engagement efforts which included small group listening sessions at two NPA meetings, two stakeholder workshops, and two city-wide town halls.

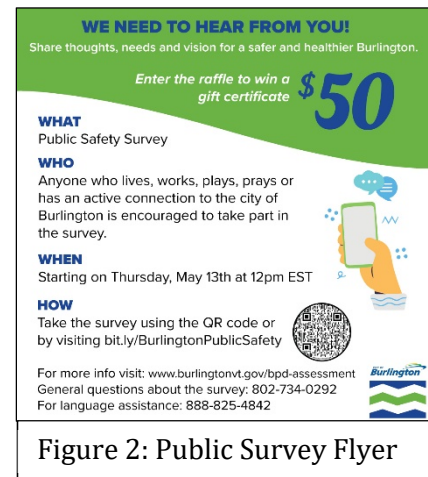
i. Survey Development

Under the guidance of the Public Safety Joint Committee, key staff members from the City's Racial Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (REIB), and community stake holders, Talitha launched the public safety survey on May 14, 2021. The survey was open for a total of (20) days and closed on June 3, 2021. Figure 2 depicts a flyer that was used for promotion. The actual survey was digital/online with the capability for respondents to pin locations on a map of Burlington. The survey was divided into four six setions:

1. My Visions for Safer & Healthier Burlington
2. Personal Experiences & Current Needs with Public Safety
3. Transportation Safety
4. Emergency Responses
5. Burlington Police Department
6. About You (Survey Respondent)

The first three sections comprised of nineteen (19) questions. 10 out of the 19 questions had an optional second part because respondents were able to provide longer follow-up explanations in a text box. The fourth section of the survey allowed respondents to provide their demographic information if they desired. Many questions were framed as "check all that apply" for answers. None of the survey questions were mandatory, meaning respondents could skip questions and still submit their survey responses.

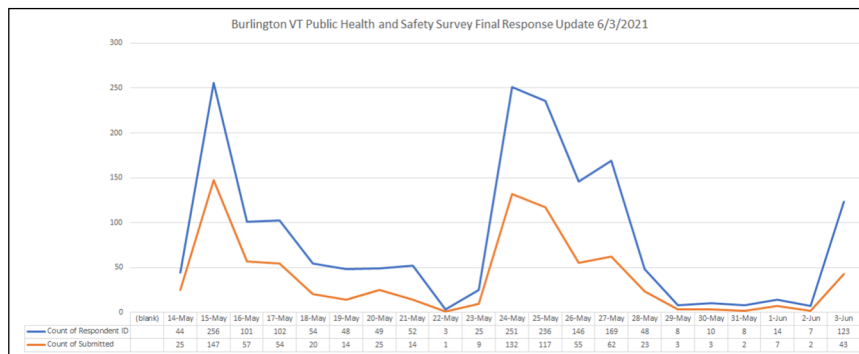
Readers can view the content of the survey in Appendix B: Public Safety Survey (Paper Version). However, readers should be aware that the functionality of the paper version is



different than the digital survey that was actually used. The paper version lacks interactive capability. For example, the digital survey utilized sliding bars, specifically for questions that involved rating survey respondents' preferences, perceptions, and satisfactions. The following weblink was created by the City to serve as a landing page for the public safety survey. The intention was for the public to learn more about the survey and relevant updates: <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/bpd-assessment>

ii. Survey Participation Tracking and Outcomes

The final count of survey responses at the close-out date was 1,754. The chart below shows the daily break-down of survey participation numbers. Of the total responses, 815 respondents actively engaged and completed the survey. In other words, these respondents went through every question and hit done at the end of the survey. These participants are represented with an orange line in the graph below. The purple line represents respondents who went through the entire the survey but did not hit done at the end of the survey but closed the window. Their responses were still saved. Given the range of response and types, we can safely say that between 815 and 1,754 people were involved in answering the survey questions. The spikes in the early phase of the survey correlate to communication sent to key stakeholders and community-based organization in Burlington by Talitha. Members of the Joint Committee also sent out communication to their neighbors and constituents. The spike at the tail-end of the survey correlates to a three-day long social media advertisement placed through Facebook and Instagram, specifically targeting users in the City of Burlington, ages 16 and older.



Graph 1: Public Safety Final Survey Participation Update

iii. Outreach and engagement to promote survey participation from diverse backgrounds

Talitha acknowledges that this project is directly connected to the history and context that led to the adoption of Resolution 5.12. Thus, from the beginning, the project team intentionally employed outreach, engagement, and communication strategies that would reach historically underrepresented and marginalized population within the city. We repeatedly heard from the community that voices from Black, individuals and families experiencing homelessness, those who earn lower wages, LGBTQ, high school and college-age people and New Americans have been historically underrepresented in public policy and decision-making processes. Moreover, recognizing that including voices from these populations is imperative to the Joint Committee to ensure a wholistic approach to a safer and healthier Burlington, Talitha intentionally reached out to trusted community leaders and messengers who have strong ties to these populations. Moreover, the city's Project Manager met with leaders and members from local community non-profits, as well as individuals from specific cultural groups. Collectively and separately, the Talitha team and the city's Project Manager tried to involve Black and People of Color-led organizations in the process and provided frequent updates either by email or phone. A few days after the public safety survey was launched,

Charis M. Hnin, Principal of Talitha, agreed to an interview by a local TV-anchor, Erin Brown from WCAX-E, to promote the public survey.

iv. Accommodation for connectivity hardship and language access

Talitha is mindful that not everyone has equal access to digital connectivity. Thus, Talitha and MIG provided a paper version of the survey. Staff from REIB offered to mail or hand-deliver paper copies to community members. Talitha sent communications to community members and stakeholders about the availability of the paper survey. However, REIB did not receive any requests. Talitha also offered language assistance in case someone might want to take the survey in a language other than English, however, we did not receive any requests.

For Talitha's presentation for the online public safety survey findings:

<http://go.boarddocs.com/vt/burlingtonvt/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=C47LHD4D204C>

III. Research Overview:

Talitha acknowledges that responses to the public safety survey do not reflect the voices and interests of all community members, particularly marginalized and historically underrepresented populations. As it is often the case with public surveys, researchers for this process also faced significant limitations to gain survey responses that are representative of the city's demographic diversity. Nonetheless, the responses submitted do reflect a range of opinions from residents, businesses, and various stakeholders in Burlington.

Consultants thematically coded the public responses guided by a grounded theory method. The grounded theory method is a way of analyzing qualitative data; it entails collecting and processing information in such a way that the data itself reveals key themes (Charmaz, 2014). It is a nuanced and iterative process which enables one to condense large quantities of data and notice recurrent themes.

Research Questions:

Presented below are the three research questions around which we aligned our data analysis process:

- 1. What does a safe and healthy community mean to you?**
- 2. What might be the top 3 most important actions in the effort to make a safer and healthier community?**
- 3. As it pertains to the Burlington Police Department, is the current public input process in the form of comments, suggestions, and concerns easy to access and understand?**

Using these research questions as guides, we analyzed all quantitative and qualitative responses. For qualitative analysis, we uploaded all survey responses to a software called ATLAS.ti to analyze what core themes emerge and to what extent these themes are repeated in the comprehensive and segmented narratives. The following sections highlight key takeaways which are shaped and guided by core themes drawn from public input as they pertain to what it means to build a safer and healthier Burlington from the respondents' perspectives. Public input incorporated in the following sections are drawn from various engagement events and activities outlined in Section II (A) – multifaceted community engagement and outreach.

IV. KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Key Takeaway #1: To take a comprehensive look at *all* the key findings from the entire engagement process.

Talitha executed the scope of work in a multifaceted fashion. We used a myriad of outreach and engagement tools and strategies to enquire people's needs, visions and values for a safer and healthier Burlington. Therefore, it is important that readers of this report are cognizant that this report encompasses voices and visions captured from the entire engagement events and activities. If one only looks at key learnings/findings from a portion of the entire process – for instance, if one only looks at key findings from a city-wide town hall or if one only looks at the online public survey results, one might run the risk of not seeing potential shared meanings and values in the public discourse that is largely disparate.

To understand the output of this process equitably and comprehensively, consultants highly encourage readers to be mindful of the following factors –

- to pay attention to key learnings/findings gleaned from all forms of community engagement. Section II (A) outlines diversified community engagement activities, events and tools in which Talitha, the city's Project Manager and community partners employed for this process in the last six months.
- to note the similarities as well as striking and subtle differences between different community members who participated— those who participated in the virtual city-wide town halls and smaller listening sessions versus those who took the online public safety survey
- to be mindful that some engagement activities took more time and commitment than others. For instance, community members who attended city-wide town halls or engaged through smaller meetings gave at least 45 to 90 minutes of their time to share their input and listen to their fellow event attendees. On the other hand, the online public survey took between 10 to 15 minutes to complete, and it was an anonymous survey. Readers need to be mindful of different community engagement tools and how they brought unique reach to the process.
- Talitha worries that the inputs from the online survey respondents might dominate over the inputs from community members who participated in community meetings just because the number of survey respondents are much larger. From our perspective as facilitators, community conversations by means of city-wide town halls, stakeholder workshops and smaller neighborhood meetings were much richer and deeper. Thus, we included our notes from these virtual events.

Key Takeaway #2: Responding to Mental Health Emergencies and Providing Mental Health Support Services

The second key takeaway is drawn from survey respondents' answers to this open-ended question, *"When I envision a healthier and safer community my vision includes..."*. Respondents provided abundant input to this question. Collectively, their answers filled up over forty pages, single-spaced. Using ATLAS.ti, Talitha sorted respondents' answers into various themes. The three themes listed below emerged as the top three (3) strongest sentiments:

Core theme 1: Areas where respondents want to see more intentional investments
Core theme 2: Healthier interaction with the Burlington Police Department (BPD)
Core theme 3: Address public safety and health issues through the framework of social determinants of health

Core Theme 1: Areas where respondents want to see more intentional investments

The level of sentiment for this theme appears to be the strongest as it is repeated 334 times in the aggregated data (G=334), specific to this question. The sentiment levels for Themes 2 and 3 are comparable with 124 and 117 repetitions for Themes 2 and 3, respectively. To better understand which specific area(s) survey respondents desire to see more intentional investments, we further analyzed their answers by assigning subcategories and sorting them into similar and/or associated groups. Descriptions for each subcategory can be found in the text boxes in Diagram 1. The letter G in Diagram 1 stands for *Groundedness* which represents how frequently each subcategory is repeated in a data set.

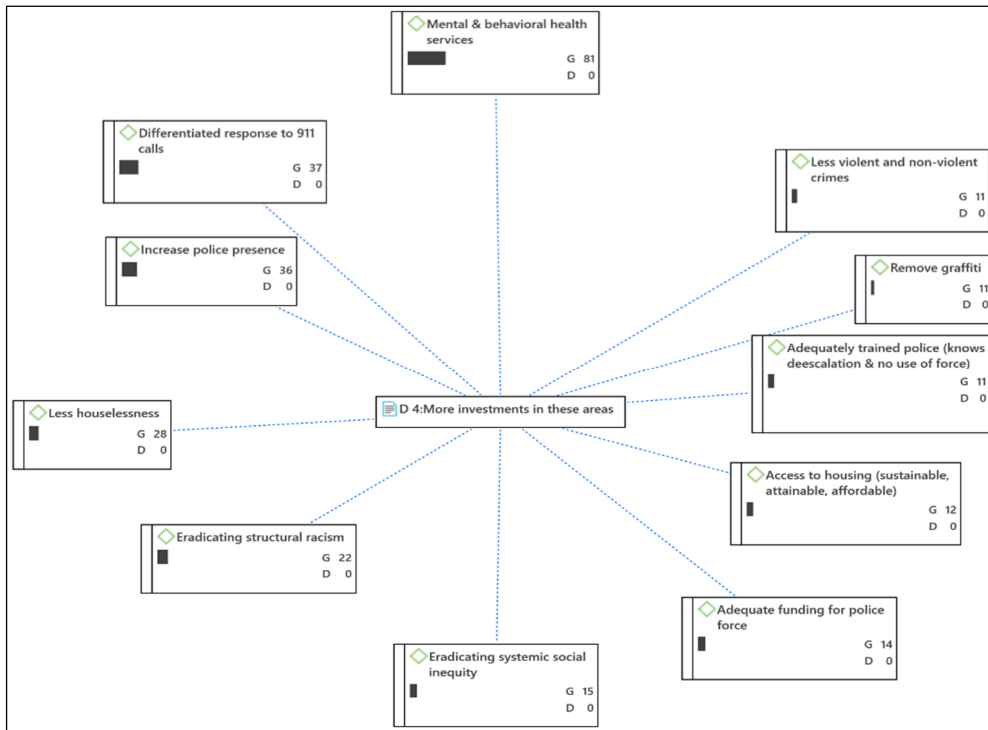


Diagram 1: Subcategories for Core Theme 1

Mental & behavioral health services category is the most repeated in the aggregate data (G=81), thus, it is the top investment area survey respondents identified. It is two-and-a-quarter (2.25) times higher than the next level of subcategory. The second tier in the category includes **Differentiated response to 911 calls** (G=37) followed by the desire for **Increased police presence** (G=36). In the third tier is **Less houselessness**, which pertains to issues of housing in the city (G=28), closely followed by **Eradication of structural racism** (G=22).

We want to further emphasize that the interest to invest in **Mental & behavioral health services** emerged again as the top selection for responses to survey question #8, which asked respondents to identify *where* and *what* type of public safety investment and improvements they wanted to see. Question 8 sounds similar to question 5, however, it inquires answers from the respondents in a quantitative fashion while asking them to differentiate their suggestions into two categories: physical improvement versus social/behavioral improvement. Thus, this survey question, in the digital platform, asked respondents to identify where they want to see public safety improvements –physical infrastructure such sidewalks and streetlights– as well as social/behavioral programs

investments such as providing human and social services. These questions were asked after each pin was dropped on a digital map; thus, the totals are the total "responses" not people or respondents.

As shown in Diagram 2, Mental Health Emergencies is the most selected response across respondent types. This key indicator further illuminates that there is a significantly desire among survey respondents **to see the city prioritizes addressing public safety by ways of responding to mental health emergencies and invest in increased mental health support services.**

Q 8: More public safety investments to address these issues

- Top response across the board was **Mental Health Emergencies**
- Residents (more likely):
 - Sidewalk
 - Speeding
 - Vandalism
 - Housing affordability
- Business owners (more likely):
 - Public urination/defecation
 - Vandalism
 - Housing affordability

	Grand Total
Behavioral / Social:	
Mental Health Emergencies	27%
Overdose	10%
Theft	10%
Public urination and defecation	10%
School Safety	8%
DUI (driving under the influence of intoxicants)	8%
Shoplifting	8%
Sexual Assault	7%
Police Brutality	7%
Assault	6%
Total Responses	100%
Physical:	
Sanitary concerns at housing encampments	32%
Housing affordability	25%
Vandalism	19%
Speeding (vehicles & bikes)	19%
Disasters	5%
Total Responses	100%
Other:	
Please clarify:	17%

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Diagram 2: Mental Health Emergencies as the top behavioral/social priority

Question 4 of the survey asks:

What three actions would you recommend as most important in the effort to make Burlington a safer and healthier community? (Check your top three choices)

- Healthier relationships between Burlington Police Department and the Burlington community**
- Easier access to community services for those in need of service**
- Better training for first responders (i.e., bias awareness, mental/behavioral health or crisis response, trauma informed care, de-escalation)**
- A community-led oversight committee to increase accountability and transparency in policing**
- An improved way to provide public input regarding policing**
- Context and culturally relevant community-policing model for Burlington**

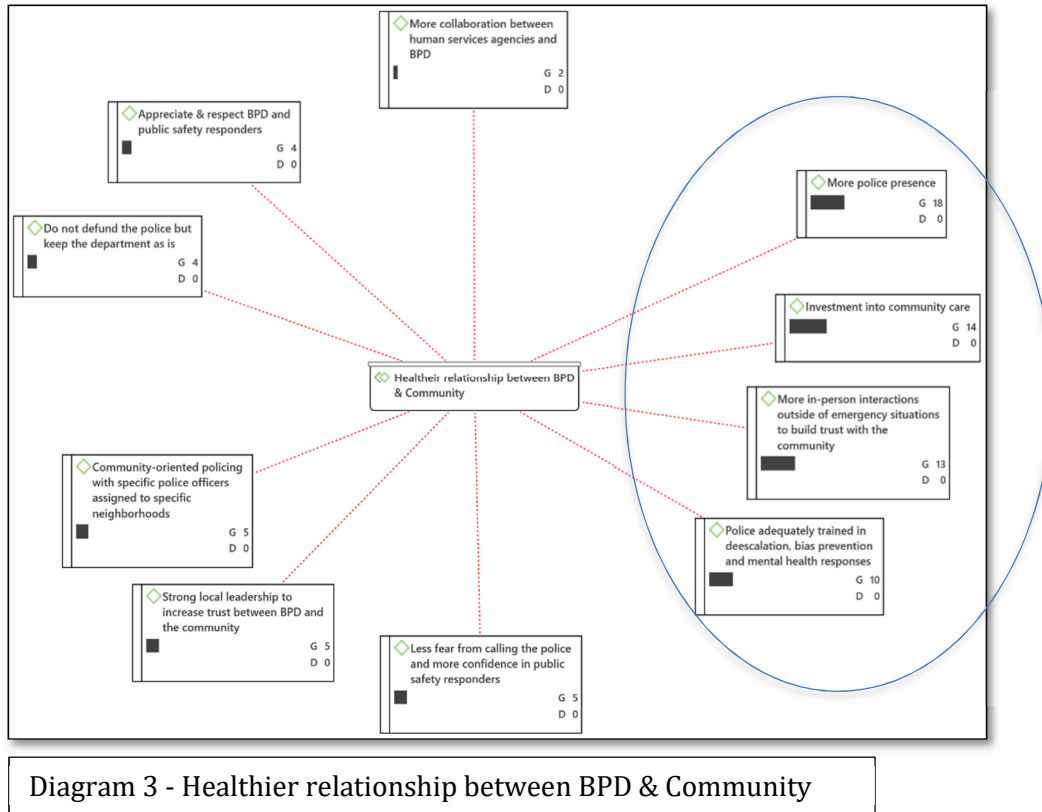
Other specific action(s): _____

As demonstrated in Chart 1 below, the top three selections are: better training for first responders (64%), easier access to community service for those in need of service (58%) and healthier relationships between BPD & Community (52%).



Chart 1: Actions survey respondents would recommend as the top 3 most important in the effort to make Burlington a safer and healthier community

Further analysis on what respondents meant by building “healthier relationships between BPD and community” not only highlights that survey respondents define “healthier relationships” differently but also shows that **their definitions often contradict**. While some expressed the need for more police presence as a determining factor to improve police and community relationships, many expressed the need to invest in community care, more in-person interactions between police and community members outside of emergency situations and having adequately trained police as important factors to build healthier police and community relationships. Diagram 3 depicts this analysis as well as the number of times these meanings are repeated in this specific data set.



These are a few public comments:

“There is a gap between police and the community right now. Residents believes police are cold and have no wish to connect. Police believe residents don’t understand what they experience every day. It’s a no-win situation. Policy commitments that set clear expectations on accountability – and when – as well as transparency – and when – is important”

“Building trust with residents is huge!! I would like to talk with the police and not feel intimidated or that I am bothering them with my concerns. Corruption and abuse it should be dealt with and not covered up. Open communication and oversight can prevent abuses of power by those who think they are above the law. BPD should lead by example”

“I want a respectful relationship between BPD and BTV. I’ve experienced BPD assumptions and prejudgments. One “ran my name”, learned how off base he was but issued me a court date for false info anyway (of which he didn’t file) This sergeant couldn’t believe he was wrong and couldn’t accept I was truthful”

Core theme 3: the city to address public safety and health issues through the framework of social determinants of health

A significant number of community stakeholders and residents who participated in workshops and city-wide town hall repeatedly expressed the need to address public safety not only by reducing crime rates against people or property but also by addressing poverty and houselessness in the city. This sentiment is also visible among the survey respondents. As shown in Chart 1, survey respondents chose, “easier access to community services for those in need” as one of the top three actions (58%) needed to improve public safety in Burlington. We further analyzed written comments from survey respondents and verbal comments from community members who had



participated in other engagement events, to shed a light on what types of community service they hope to see more of in Burlington. Our analysis shows that the types of services these community members want are similar to the social determinants that lead to a healthy community: access to housing/ safe living environment, access to health care, social and community connection, economic stability, access to education. Diagram 4 shows which core these themes overlap across different community engagement events.

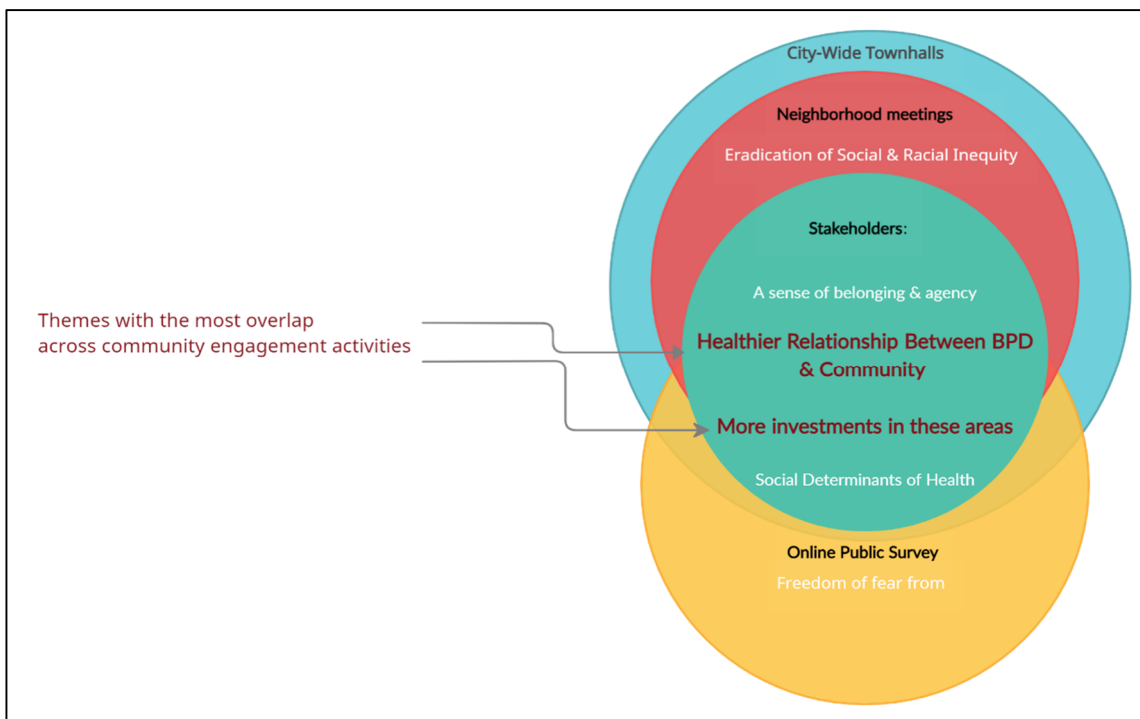


Diagram 4: Overlapping Core Themes Across Various Community Engagement Events & Activities

Key Takeaway 3: Understanding individuals' fears

One of the three guiding research questions seeks to understand the top 3 most important actions for the city to implement in the effort to make a safer and healthier community. Among 982 survey responses, 68% chose better trainings for first responders (i.e., bias awareness, mental/behavioral or crisis response, trauma-informed care, de-escalation), 58% chose healthier interaction with BPD and 52% chose healthier relationship for BPD and community, as shown in Chart 1.

Community members who participated in other engagement events such as the city-wide town halls, smaller neighborhood meetings and key stakeholder workshops, also identified these three action steps *except* for these community members, they also chose, creating and sustaining an environment in which **one is being understood, accepted, and have a sense of agency as one of the top actions**. The following quotations are voices of the community members who participated in one or more of the virtual community conversations which Talitha facilitated,

“Freedom of fear from the unfamiliar and the 'other’”
 “Everyone has a chance to be themselves”
 “Freedom of fear from retaliation when speaking up against people with power”
 “No police brutalities - esp toward BIPOC”
 “Not labeling those on the margins (people with visible and invisible disability)”
 “Everyone’s identity is not taken into consideration”

In the public survey, people are more likely to speak openly and at times used foul language to express their thoughts on what is not going well with public safety in Burlington, perhaps the anonymity of the survey might have contributed to these behaviors. For some survey respondents, public safety investment means investing in the Burlington Police Department. Additionally, those individuals who are ambivalent or resistant to make changes within BPD, they expressed their opinions by writing in their ideas in this section as a top priority to make a safer and healthier Burlington. It is important to note that, a few individuals who want to defund the police also wrote in their answers in this section. Among 30% of respondents who wrote in their answers for this question, out of 982 respondents (N=982), many holds opposing perspectives on whether changes need to happen within BPD.

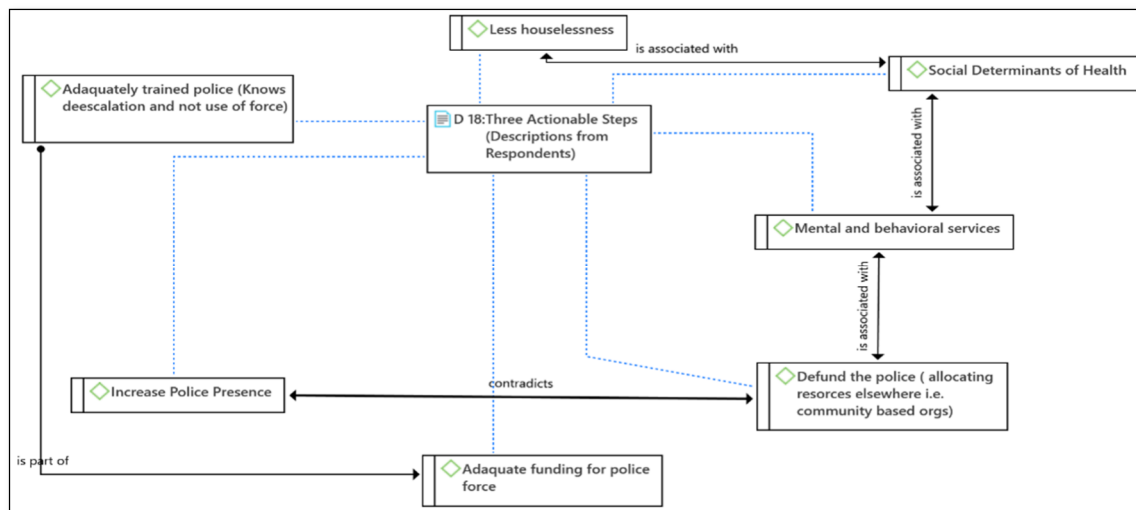


Diagram 5: Top 3 Actions (Survey Question #4: network-analysis of write-in answers)

Below are some quotations from the survey respondents who wrote in their answers:

“Getting youth basic needs like food, housing, a warm place to be, mental health resources, case management, social supports, material and basic needs, crisis support, and other essential resources”
“ Food insecurity – offering food assistance to households who may not qualify or have capacity to access federal programs”
“Focus training on crisis assessment, immediate management, and back-up resource access for mental health or other non-law enforcement intervention/assistance if needed”

Key Takeaway 4: Improve BPD’s current public input process through improved community relations and diversified and fully functional communication channels

The last research question assesses whether survey respondents’ found BPD’s current public input process in the form of comments, suggestions or concerns is easy to understand and access. Out of 443 responses (N=443), about 80% of respondents chose less than 8 on a sliding scale of zero (0) to ten (10) zero being not at all accurate and ten being completely accurate for the statement that states, “As it pertains to the Burlington Police Department, the current public input process in the forms of comments, suggestions or concerns is easy to understand and access”.

Furthermore, community members and stakeholders in Burlington who engaged through virtual community engagement events also expressed their concerns about BPD’s lack of follow-through. As to *how* BPD could improve the public input process, their suggestions coalesced around two main topics:

- i. **to improve existing communication channels and to diversity outreach and engagement with community members from *all* neighborhoods**
- ii. **to build relationship based on a mutual trust with diverse community members, especially with Black, People of Color and New Americans**

A few community members express that BPD can partner with residents and community organizations for increased public education for non-emergency and emergency responses and resources. A few commented:

“for starters, the department can inform everyone as to how we can give feedback in the first place. My spouse and I have no clue.”

“work with community orgs”

“where to call for non-911 situations”

Additionally, many community members commented that providing timely responses and follow-up messages to non-emergency complaints and incident reports could help improve BPRD’s public relations and perception. As such a community member note,

“...an important part of a good comment system is being able to see what actions resulted and why”

Lastly, some community members want BPD to improve and diversity existing communication channels. The following comments highlight the issues they have observed:

“see-fix-click (app)”

“make it very easy for people to post comments/suggestions/concerns publicly (on some kind of

webpage) or privately (via email or phone), as they prefer, with the ability to remain anonymous on all options. Follow-through”

“I just went to the police dept website. Its totally not clear where to provide feedback. There should be a whole forum where people can provide feedback, other people can see it and vote and comment on it, and then police can review monthly and report on the top 3 action items of the month based on these comments

“Fix inactive links on BPD websites... [the see-fix-click app, for example]”

Community members expressed that BPD needs to create more opportunities in which people and the police can safely interact and build understanding. For some, *posture of the BPD matters* which means many wants BPD to listen more than speak. As such, a few members shared,

“need to set up reliable points of public dialogue. I see DPW and Park at NPA meetings, but almost never police”

“public forums”

“it is good that the police commission posts their meeting on front porch forum. But their minutes and agendas are hard to find”

“have walking patrols and have a politician go on a patrol with them especially the city’s diversity officer”

During a virtual community engagement, a few members emphasized the lack of unity among City Council and expressed their desire to see coordinated communication and cooperation between the Chief, Mayor and other city leaders. Also, for the leaders across the board to jointly offer regularly scheduled public service announcement about BPD.

“Leadership matters, the mayor and City Council need to stop attacking each other. There needs to be more understanding of the disproportionate impact to different wards”.

Key Takeaway 5: The desire to belong and be free from fear resonated across the community.

To be understood, accepted, and have agency (a sense of belonging) is one of the core themes that emerged from virtual community engagements with stakeholders and community members. Diagram 6 shows direct quotations from the public to highlight their visions for more inclusive and equitable community where everyone can belong.

**Code 10: Understood, Accepted, and Have Agency
(a sense of belonging)**

“Allow space to vulnerable people. This can be applied to any circumstance. People in crisis should be allowed to experience vulnerability and have the support to move through it.”

“Vermont is overwhelmingly white.”

“I feel safe because of my multiracial identity”

“People with mental health issues are seen as ‘unsafe’ people.”

“Individuals experiencing homelessness experience isolation also with mental health issues – feeling less safe...this group is no monolithic. They are individuals so it [what is needed] depends”

“Working with formerly incarcerated people. The state is looking at new prison construction and that doesn’t make me feel safe, that the state is investing money in further incarceration.”

“There are disproportionate impacts on marginalized people. Structures in the city need to be addressed. Democratic processes need to be inclusive. Systems and structures that engage people are the same ones that keep people safe and healthy.”

“Everyone has a chance to be themselves.”

“Kids feel safe and able to be themselves when they are at school”

“They struggle with resources and being understood, being labeled crazy. “

“Exclusion is making people feel unsafe (and it is unhealthy when everyone’s identity is not taken into

Diagram 6 – Quotations to demonstrate community’s desire for a sense of belonging

Although “a sense of belonging” does not emerge as a notable theme among the public survey responses, “freedom from fear of” is the fourth notable theme (G=64) that surfaced in this group, see Diagram 5. Further analysis also reveals that ***all community members share the desire to be free from one form of fear or another***. Social tensions arise when members hold different assumptions and beliefs on *who & what* might attribute to their sense of fear and *who* they think is able to help alleviate their fears.

Numerous members in Burlington reported perceived threat from individuals who are living on the streets of Burlington and for most of these individuals BPD is a trust-worthy entity who can curb potential harm which people living on the street might cause or have allegedly caused. At the same time, many community members believe that providing increased human and housing/shelter services can lessen the numbers of individuals living on the streets of Burlington and many of these members worry that the city is criminalizing the poor.

While there are strong interests for more law enforcement and crime prevention in downtown area, specifically on Church Street, many expressed their fear of armed police in general. Some noted that Black, People of Color, the poor, the marginalized, and the unstably housed are being policed more than other demographic groups.

Given these contentious views and competing interests, policy and decision-makers should maintain a nuanced understanding of *who, what and why people* experience different forms of fear so they consider of what intervention measures would promote a greater sense of understanding among community members from diverse socioeconomic, racial, and cultural backgrounds. Rather than minimizing or generalizing the fears and the cries of the people, policies and decision makers need to mend the bonds that might have been broken in the

process of transforming public safety in Burlington. To do so, the city leaders must start by ***naming the fears and wounds*** of the community – this process is a part of healing. Equally important in the community healing process is to ask, ***what would replace the community's fears and wounds?***

The good news is that the city has already initiated some elements of this healing process by hiring a consultant to facilitate community dialogues and listening sessions for a safer and healthier Burlington. Talitha recommends that the city continues to facilitate these community dialogues on an ongoing basis while bearing in mind that targeted and diversified outreach methods *are imperative* to hear the diversity of voices that exist in Burlington, especially to include populations who are historically underrepresented and marginalized in these dialogues. Doing so would shed light on the fact that *all* people have safety needs, hopes, fears, and aspirations. Subsequently, this could help members of the community to see ***their shared humanity***, also known as the Spirit of Ubuntu in Zulu which is an African language.

Diagram 7 illustrates *who* and *what* types of fear community members have alleged experiencing. These answers are taken from the write-in portion of the online safety survey. The higher the number that is next to the letter G, the stronger the sentiment.

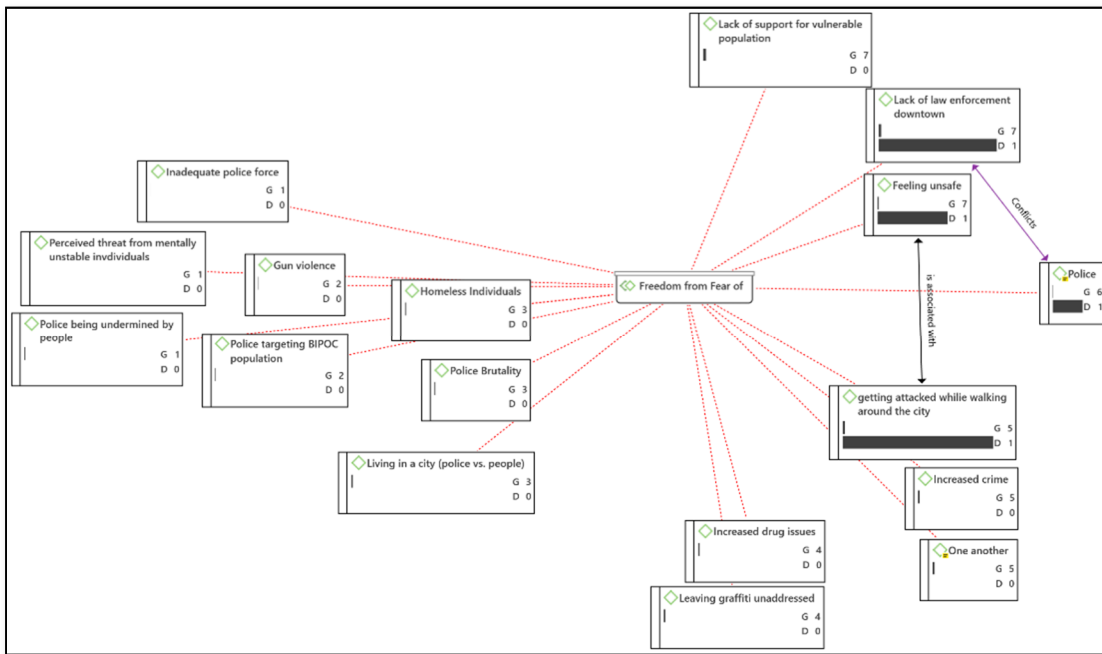


Diagram 7 – Members Naming Their Fears

While the dialogue analysis of stakeholders and community members who participated in virtual community meetings reveals a low level of satisfaction with the current public safety and health systems, most of the online survey respondents expressed a higher level of satisfaction, specifically with entities who are primarily responsible for emergency response in Burlington – namely the Police Department and the first responders. Chart 2 illustrates survey responder’s satisfaction level with 911 response.

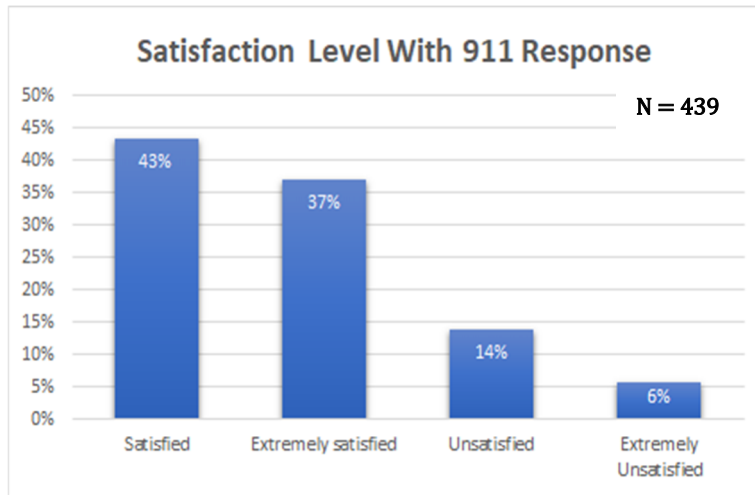


Chart 2: Satisfaction Level with 911 Response

When asked, “who would you trust to assist with emergency situations?”, survey respondents identified Emergency Medical Service (EMS) 59% as their top selection; the second choice and third is tied between Fire Department and Friends or Family (46%) and the fourth choice is Police Officer (42%). Answers are set as “select all that applies”, thus, readers will see more than 100% represented in Chart 3. Further analysis and disaggregation of data reveals that individuals whose primarily language is *not* English are more likely to call 911.

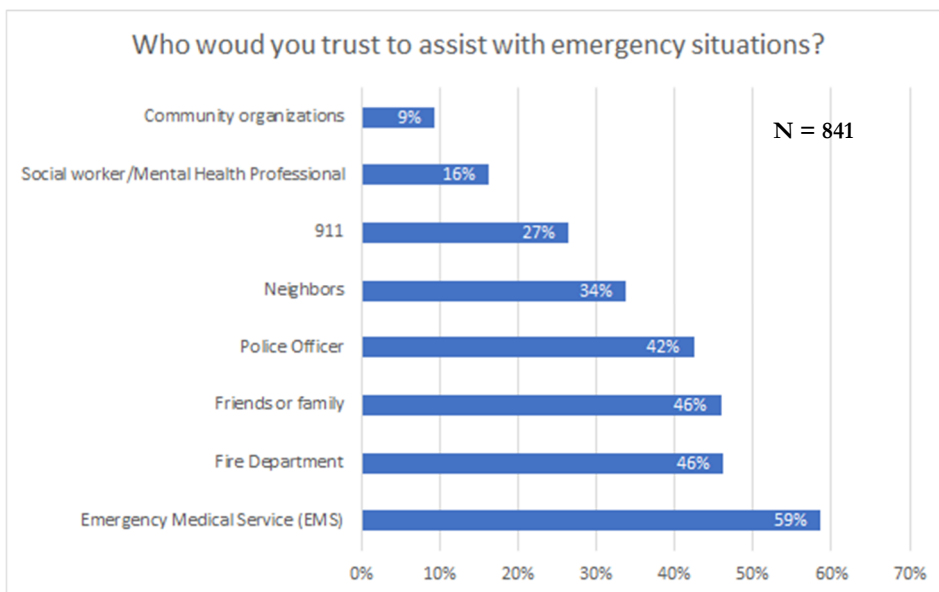


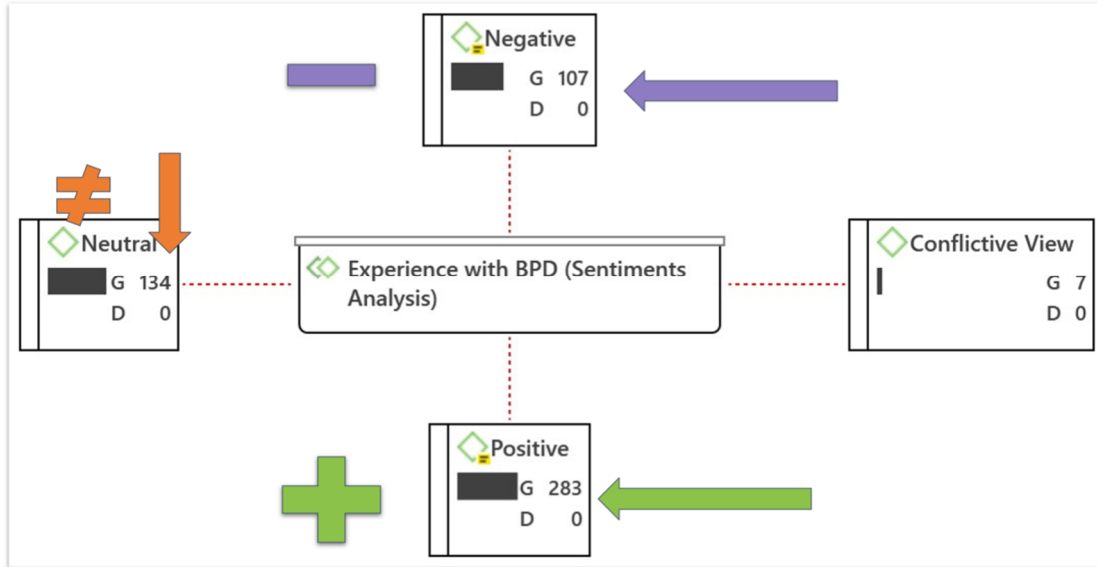
Chart 3: Who do people trust to assist with emergency situations?

Furthermore, we asked survey respondents to write-in organizations they would trust to respond in case of emergency. The top five most frequently mentioned organizations are: 1) Howard Center; 2) Spectrum; 3) Mutual Aid Groups; 4) Food Shelf and 5) Safe Discovery.

ii. Level of satisfaction with the Burlington Police Department:

We asked survey respondents how often they have had experiences with BPD. Respondents submitted their answers using with a sliding scale assessment tool where zero (0) being never and ten (10) being frequently. About 73% of the respondents have had some level of experiences with BPD (N=680). Out of these respondents most people rated their experiences with BPD favorably. Diagram 9 is a sentiment analysis drawn from write-in answers for an open-ended question, “Please share your experience with Burlington Police Department”. It is important to note that this finding is based on analyzing qualitative data (i.e., write-in answers) but not based on quantitative data, thus, cross tabulating sentiments with respondents’ demographic data is not a desirable research method because this method opens up greater opportunities for research bias and ungrounded assumptions.

Q 16 (b): Please share your experience with Burlington Police Department

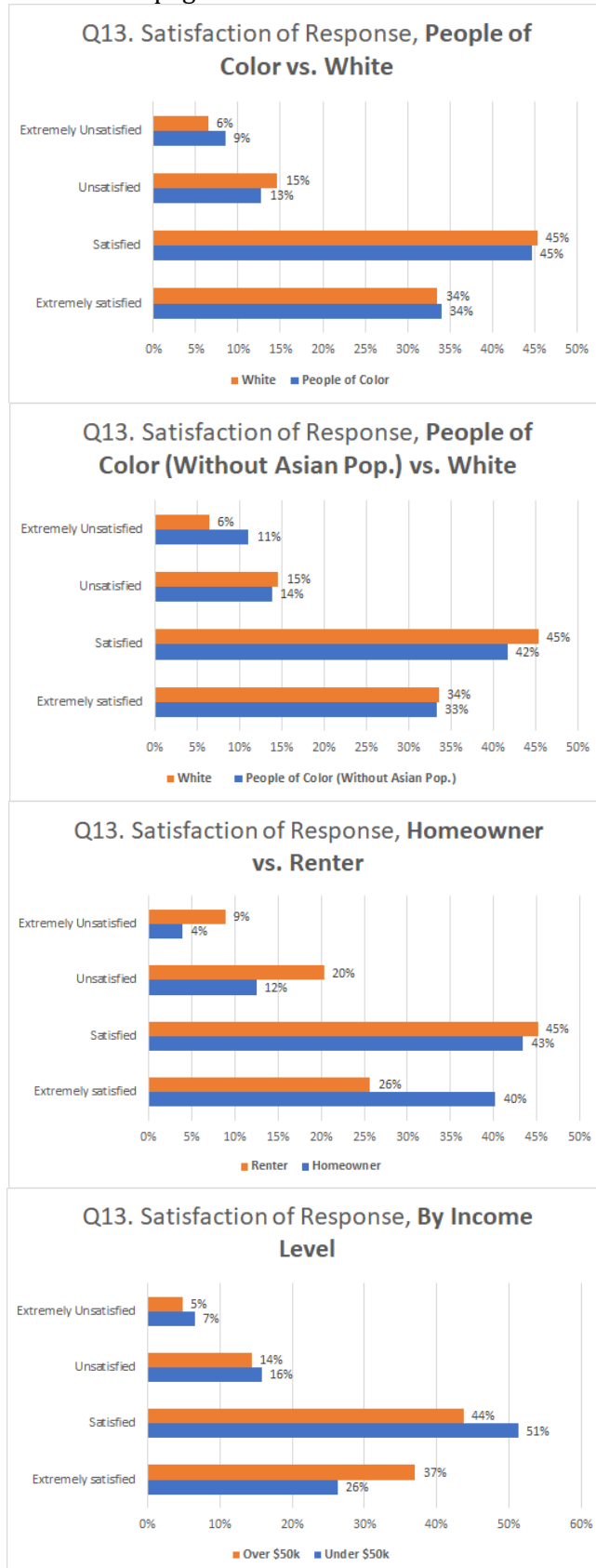


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Diagram 9 – Sentiment Analysis for Experience with Burlington Police Department

The disaggregated charts on this page show the level of satisfaction with 911 responses.



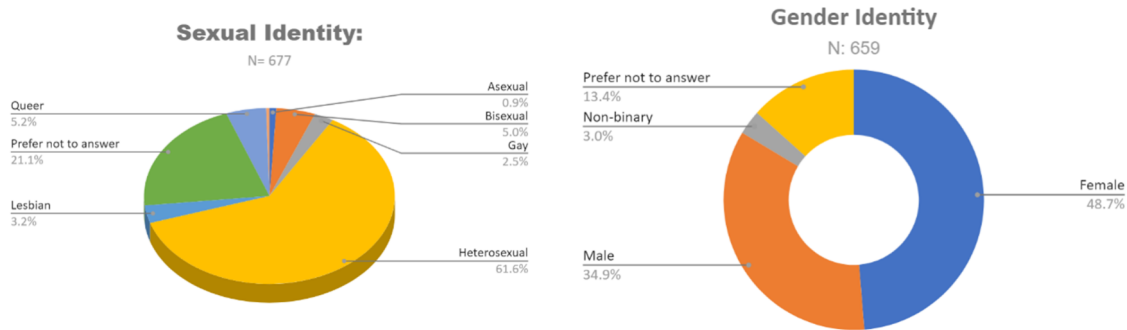
Charts 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d – Disaggregated Data for Satisfaction of 911Response

iii. Demographic Data of Online Survey Respondents:

Talitha is impressed to receive over 1,700 survey responses with 815 people who completed the entire survey (reference Section II (B): *Survey Participation Tracking and Outcomes*, for more details). The following section shows information about the respondents based on the demographic data respondents provided in the survey. Readers must be mindful that none of these demographic questions were mandatory, and some were check all that apply.

Some notable demographic data for survey respondents are White (71%), have undergraduate degree or higher (81%), with incomes \$75,000 and above (81%), and are homeowners (55%). **Although over 1,700 of people took the survey, voices from historically underrepresented and marginalized populations—Black, People of Color, individuals, and families experiencing homelessness, those who earn lower wages, LGBTQ, young people (18-24), people with disabilities and New Americans— are underrepresented.** Given this context, readers, policy and decision makers should not interpret this data as a representative data of the city. We want to remind readers to take a comprehensive look at all the key findings involved in this entire process. Talitha also provided disaggregated data of survey responses so that the Joint Committee can see how different demographic groups responded.





V. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The overarching charge given to the Talitha team by Burlington’s Public Safety Joint Committee states, “To begin an inquiry into the question of how to build a healthy and safe community and what institutions we need to reach that goal.” While keeping this charge as a guide and keeping lessons and findings drawn from public input process as our grounding, we recommend three actionable items to the Joint Committee as it pertains to building a safer and healthier Burlington:

Recommendation 1: Implement an integrated public safety response system for crises involving mental illness, homelessness and addiction.

Recommendation 2: Launch and sustain partnership and collaboration with EMS providers, Fire Department and Community Members.

Recommendation 3: BPD must improve existing communication channels and strive for greater community participation in Public Safety planning.

Recommendation 4: Train and prepare for Holistic Public Safety Response.

Recommendation 1: Implement an integrated public safety response system for crises involving mental illness, homelessness and addiction.

Talitha recommends that the Joint Committee consider developing a community-based public safety system to provide mental health first response for crises involving mental illness, homelessness, and addiction. Our discourse analysis from various community meetings and quantitative survey results has shown that responding to mental health emergencies and providing additional mental health services is the number one top-priority that the city should address to improve Burlington’s public safety.

One example of this type of public safety system has been around for over 30 years in the city of Eugene, OR. Known as CAHOOTS among the locals, it stands for Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets. It is administered by White Bird Clinic, a Federally Qualified Health Center that receives funds from the HRSA Health Center Program to provide primary care services in underserved areas. White Bird Clinic describes CAHOOTS as follows:

What is CAHOOTS?

31 years ago the City of Eugene, Oregon developed an innovative community-based public safety system to provide mental health first response for crises involving mental illness, homelessness, and addiction. White Bird Clinic launched CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) as a community policing initiative in 1989.

The CAHOOTS model has been in the spotlight recently as our nation struggles to reimagine public safety. The program mobilizes two-person teams consisting of a medic (a nurse, paramedic, or EMT) and a crisis worker who has substantial training and experience in the mental health field. The CAHOOTS teams deal with a wide range of mental health-related crises, including conflict resolution, welfare checks, substance abuse, suicide threats, and more, relying on trauma-informed de-escalation and harm reduction techniques. CAHOOTS staff are not law enforcement officers and do not carry weapons; their training and experience are the tools they use to ensure a non-violent resolution of crisis situations. They also handle non-emergency medical issues, avoiding costly ambulance transport and emergency room treatment.

Source: <https://whitebirdclinic.org/cahoots/>



Image 3: Sample Flyers from Cahoots

Talitha recommends that the Joint Committee consider sending a cohort of front-line staff, police, administrators, and first responders to take a study tour to Eugene, OR, to learn about the benefits, limitations, and challenges associated with this public safety system. Eugene is also grappling with social tensions arising from an increasing rate of homelessness and the number of people living on the streets. It would be helpful for the study group to have an eyewitness account of the program implementation and converse with community members who are not affiliated with running the system (interview various people on the streets). Perhaps the Joint Committee could start the process by filling out an [online initial consultation form](#).

Recommended action:

- Learn more about CAHOOTS.

Recommended timeframe for implementation:

- Within 2 months: Fill out online initial consultation form.
- The next 2-6 months: In person study tour of CAHOOTS.

Recommendation 2: Launch and sustain partnership and collaboration with EMS providers, Fire Department and Community Members.

Talitha recommends for the city to strengthen partnerships with stakeholders, especially those who respond to emergency and non-emergency calls— namely EMS and Fire Department. Diagram 2 shows these responders as the most trusted organizations to assist with emergency situations. Here is a list of questions the Committee should consider:

- *How often* do the police, fire, and EMS providers in Burlington review, assess, and evaluate incidents *together*? *With whom* law enforcement officials review the data matters because collaboration often encourages innovation.
- Who should be responsible to ensure that interagency collaboration is taking place? If this collaboration is not taking place what obstacles are preventing it?
- Who should be responsible to inform the public about public safety concerns that are new, old, and emerging?
- What is preventing these players from trying innovative approaches in the public safety apparatus?

It is also important to note that “Friends or Families” are among the most trusted groups for survey respondents to call in case of emergency. Therefore, it would be beneficial for BPD to strengthen connections and partnerships with residents, businesses, and stakeholders in the community specifically to co-create and disseminate crime prevention or emergency response resources. [The latest brochure](#) that informs about reporting crime is dated 2010.

Additionally, Talitha recommends BPD to strengthen partnership with youth and young adult serving agencies. The objective should be to increase understanding between public safety officials (*not just the Police*) and youth and young adults. Consider the following questions:

- If the model for Community Service Officers is no longer available, then what system is replacing it?
- Is there an assessment plan to gauge benefits and challenges with the new system?

Alternative ways to address heightened concerns with non-violent crimes, crimes against properties, and vehicles speeding: Diagram 2 shows a higher rate of *concerns with non-violent crimes, crimes against properties, and vehicles speeding* among survey respondents. Talitha encourages the Joint Committee to consider this question:

- What are the alternative ways to address these concerns that might not require a response from an armed police officer?

Many cities around the world have incorporated low-cost traffic calming features to slow vehicle speeds. Additionally, cities like Berkeley, CA and Federal Way, WA are increasingly using traffic cameras at traffic stops to reduce police role in traffic stops and to reduce potential biases police might bring to the process.

Additionally, Burlington should continue to invest and partner with local artists and designers to fill public-owned walls in the city with art that is reflective and inclusive of the city’s peoples and cultures. Offer incentives for private property owners who might want to partner in this program. This approach can help promote local art and maintain positive curb appeal of property. See Appendix - Resources for examples mentioned in this section.

Recommended action:

- Action 2a: Encourage or mandate collaborative incident reviews including police, EMS, and the Fire Department.
- Action 2b: Strengthen partnership between BPD and youth and young adult serving agencies.
- Action 2c: Learn and assess integration traffic calming features.
- Action 2d: Learn and assess the use of traffic cameras within the city-limits.
- Action 2e: Strengthen partnership with community artists and designers.

Recommended timeframe for implementation:

- Action 2a: Ongoing
- Action 2b: Ongoing
- Action 2c: The next 6-9 months
- Action 2d: Within 1-2 months
- Action 2e: Ongoing

Recommendation 3: BPD needs to improve existing communication channels and strive for greater community participation in Public Safety planning

Here are a few actions the City of Burlington and BPD can immediately take to improve the existing communication channels:

1. Add content to this City of Burlington web page titled “Updates on Police Transformation” to keep the public informed:
<https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/policetransformation>
2. Fix website links that are not functional.
3. Update communications and publications for the public and translate them into the six most spoken languages in Burlington.
4. Update and disseminate the emergency resource guide which was last updated in 2010.

These actions can be implemented immediately with minimal cost. It is important to note that 79% of survey respondents believe that transparency and accountability is necessary to meaningful police transformation. Even among the survey respondents who disagree, they still want a police force who can relate to their needs and want to build trusting relationships. As such a few of these individuals noted:

“with so much unrest and strong opinion about what isn't working, it's clear more can be done to enhance transparency, improve relationships and trust, and allow for meaningful accountability. At the same time, I am very resistant to polarizing slogans and voices saying ‘Defund the police’ because I do not think this recognizes the complexity...”

Talitha also recommends that BPD assess its current community outreach and engagement methods and strategies through Sherry Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation framework. Developed during the Civil Rights era in the 1960s, this evidence-based assessment tool is popular among community development professionals to assess community outreach and engagement plans through the lens of power dynamics and distribution—“how empowered public institutions and officials deny power to citizens, and how levels of citizen agency, control, and power can be increased” (Organizing Engagement.Org).

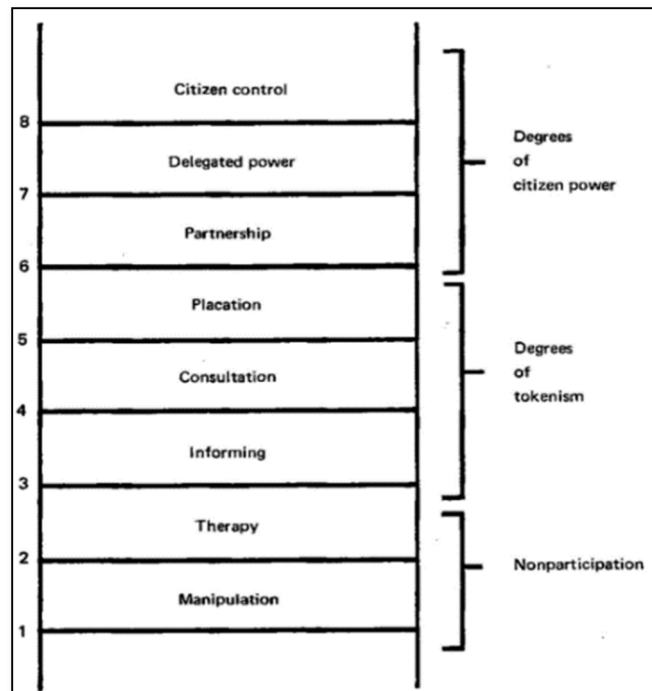


Diagram 10: Ladder of Citizenship Participation

For more info: <https://organizingengagement.org/models/ladder-of-citizen-participation/>

Recommendation 4: Train & Prepare for Holistic Public Safety Response

For the final recommendation, Talitha calls to attention the elements in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. While some disagree with why and how these needs are stacked, they needs themselves are commonly shared across humanity.

In that light, Talitha commends that the Joint Committee directed us to start this public inquiry process with community members and stakeholders who have been steadfast in addressing the needs of Burlingtonians in a holistic manner, especially the populations who are underrepresented from other public safety discussions.

When it comes to addressing the public safety needs of a community holistically, there is no quick fix. Through a framework that acknowledges complex human needs and guided by the principle of social justice and racial equity, Talitha recommends the Joint Committee to:

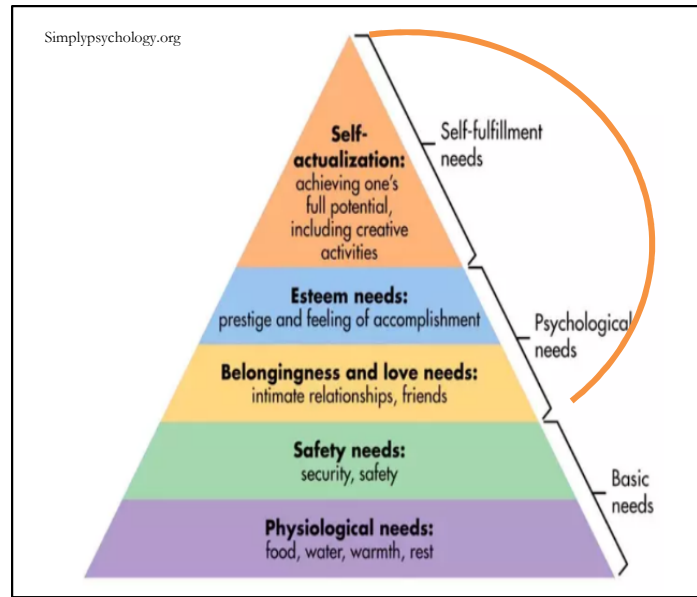


Figure 3: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

1. Formalize an accountability measure in which the entire workforce who is a part of public safety system to go take trauma-informed response, bias awareness, social justice and racial equity trainings.
 - a. Recurring trainings with knowledge and practice assessment are more likely to be effective.
 - b. Facilitate the formation of a Community of Practice where training participants can exchange ideas and offer support and accountability to each other as they grow toward embodying what they learn.
2. Intentionally invest in grassroots resident leaders, programs, and agencies, as well as informal groups who promote Burlingtonians' needs for belonging and love, esteem and self-actualization/fulfillment – the top sections where the orange line arches over in Figure 3.

Lastly, the Joint Committee should ensure service and partnership with the community are institutional values and key professional standards expected from each public safety employee.

6 Key Takeaways
3 Actionable Steps
&
1 Burlington

You Got This!

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Resources

Resources:

- o Traffic calming features: <https://www.transportation.gov/mission/health/Traffic-Calming-to-Slow-Vehicle-Speeds>
- o City of Berkeley (Reducing Police Role in Traffic Stops)
<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/what-seattle-can-learn-from-berkeley-about-reducing-police-role-in-traffic-stops/>
- o City of Federal Way Police Department, WA | <https://www.cityoffederalway.com/police>
Red-light traffic-cam year-to-year report:
<https://www.cityoffederalway.com/sites/default/files/Documents/Department/PD/2020%20RLE%20Annual%20Report%20-%20%20B.%20Schulz%2001-13-21.pdf>
- o CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets)
<https://whitebirdclinic.org/services/cahoots/cahoots-in-the-news/>
- o Media coverage about CAHOOTS
<https://www.mentalhealthportland.org/all-about-cahoots/>
- o City of Eugene Police Department
<https://www.eugene-or.gov/4423/Police>

Appendix B: Public Safety Survey (Paper Version)

CITY OF BURLINGTON PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY SURVEY

WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!

As part of an adopted citywide initiative, the Public Safety Committee and Police Commission's Joint Committee is working with the consulting firm Talitha Consults to gather the community's thoughts on the needs, values, and vision for building a safe and healthy Burlington and how to meet that goal. By taking this survey, you will help design an ongoing way for Burlington community members to provide public comments on public safety and the plan for next steps.

Make your voice heard and enter to win one of the ten \$50 gift cards. Details at the end of the survey. Expect to spend about 15 minutes to complete these questions.

General questions about this survey: 802-734-0292
For language assistance with the survey: 888-825-4842



Facilitated by:



Talitha Consults
Interdisciplinary • Multilingual • People-centered

1. Hello, I am (select all that apply)

- Resident
- Business owner
- Student in Burlington School District
- Student in colleges or universities located in Burlington
- A representative of a community-based organization that serves Burlington residents
- Employee of a Burlington-based business

2. Please write in the nearest intersection to where you:

Live

Work or own a business

3. The following options(s) best describe me: (select all that apply)

- Homeowner
- Renter
- In transition (includes houselessness, living in temporary housing, couch surfing)
- Operates a business that is based in Burlington but does not have a physical space (for example: a remote office)
- Operates a business with a physical location in Burlington (for example: store, hotel, bank, office, restaurant)
- Prefer not to answer

Other description of me:

PAGE 1 OF 7

I. My Visions for Safer and Healthier Burlington

For the following questions there is no right or wrong answer. Your answers will help us prioritize how to make our city better by sharing your vision for a healthier and safer city.

4. What three actions would you recommend as most important in the effort to make Burlington a safer and healthier community? (Check your top three choices)

- Healthier relationships between Burlington Police Department and the Burlington community
- Easier access to community services for those in need of service
- Better training for first responders (i.e., bias awareness, mental/behavioral health or crisis response, trauma informed care, de-escalation)
- A community-led oversight committee to increase accountability and transparency in policing
- An improved way to provide public input regarding policing
- Context and culturally relevant community-policing model for Burlington

Other specific action(s)

5. When I envision a healthier and safer community, my vision includes:

II: Personal Experiences & Current Needs with Public Safety

How accurately do the following statements reflect your experience? Mark the numbered box in the position you feel best reflects your experience.

6. I feel safe in my community and neighborhood DURING THE DAY

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all accurate Completely accurate

I chose the answer above because:

7. I feel safe in my community and neighborhood AT NIGHT

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all accurate Completely accurate

I chose the answer above because:

II: Personal Experiences & Current Needs with Public Safety

8. I want to see more public safety investment in these areas of the city.
In the boxes below describe WHERE and WHAT improvements should be made. These could be physical, program or service improvements.

Common concerns Talitha has heard from public forums in Burlington are:

- Mental Health Emergencies
- Shoplifting
- Speeding (vehicles & bikes)
- DUI (driving under the influence of intoxicants)
- Public urination and defecation
- Sanitary concerns at housing encampments
- Theft
- School Safety
- Natural Disasters
- Vandalism
- Police Brutality
- Assault
- Sexual Assault
- Overdose
- Housing affordability

III. Transportation Safety

9. For day-to-day activities (work, school, play and pray) my primary mode of transportation is: (Check one)

- to drive my own vehicle
- to use public transit
- to share a ride (Uber/Lyft, Carpool, Carshare)
- to bike
- to walk
- Multimodal (a mix of options, clarify below)

Other primary mode of transportation or mix of modes:

How accurately do the following statements reflect your experience? Mark the numbered box in the position you feel best reflects your experience.

10. I feel safe to use the primary mode of transportation indicated above in my community and neighborhood DURING THE DAY.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all accurate					Completely accurate					

11. I feel safe to use the primary mode of transportation indicated above in my community and neighborhood AT NIGHT.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all accurate					Completely accurate					

IV: Emergency Response

12. Have you ever called 911?

- Yes
- No

13. If YES, how satisfied were you with the response(s) to this (these) experiences?

- Extremely Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Extremely Unsatisfied

Please share why you chose the response above:

14. How likely are you to call 911?

- Extremely Likely
- Likely
- Unlikely
- Extremely Unlikely

Please share why you chose the response above:

15. Who would you trust the most to assist you if you needed emergency help? (check your top three)

- Neighbors
- Community organizations
- Friends or family
- Fire Department
- Emergency Medical Service (EMS)
- Police Officer
- Social worker/Mental Health Professional
- 911

What organization(s) or people do you rely on to help keep your community safe?

V. Burlington Police Department

Mark the numbered box in the position you feel best reflects your experience.

16. I have had experiences with Burlington Police Department:

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Never											Frequently

Please share your experience with Burlington Police Department and if/how it could have been improved:

18. I think greater police accountability and transparency are necessary for meaningful police reform.

- Agree
- Disagree

I chose the answer above because:

17. As it pertains to the Burlington Police Department, the current public input process in the form of comments, suggestions or concerns is easy to understand and access.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all accurate Completely accurate

What can the Burlington Police Department do to improve methods of receiving comments, suggestions or concerns from the public?

19. I have experienced barrier(s) to participating in City Committee involvement (Public Meetings, Neighborhood Planning Associations, Community Police Academy, Burlington Community Justice Center, Neighborhood Watch Program)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all accurate Completely accurate

Please describe any barriers you have experienced:

VI. About You

Your response to the following questions helps us understand who we have reached in the community.

Although the categories listed below may not represent your full identity or use the language you prefer, for the purpose of this survey, please indicate which option(s) best describe you.

I am:

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- Over 75
- I prefer not to answer

20. Which of the following most accurately describes your racial/ethnic identity. (If you are of a multi-racial/multi-ethnic/multi-cultural identity, please select all that apply)

- Alaskan Native
- First Nation/American Indian/Indigenous
- Asian or Asian American or South Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino/a or Chicano/a
- Middle Eastern/North African
- Pacific Islander
- White/European American
- Prefer not to answer

If you prefer to self-describe your racial/ethnic identity, please do so here:

21. Which choice below most accurately describes your sexual identity?

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Heterosexual
- Lesbian
- Queer
- Questioning
- Prefer not to answer

If you prefer to self-describe your sexual identity, please do so here:

22. My gender identity is:

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to answer

If you prefer to self-describe your gender identity, please do so here:

23. Highest level of education?

- Some K-12
- High school diploma
- Some college or university
- Community college or trade school diploma/degree
- Undergraduate degree
- Some graduate school
- Masters degree or higher

29. My yearly household income is:

- Less than \$30,000
- \$30,000-\$50,000
- \$50,000-\$75,000
- \$75,000-\$90,000
- \$90,000 and above
- I do not know
- Prefer not to answer

24. Do you have a condition or disability that influences learning, working, communication or living activities?

- Yes
- No

30. How many people are in your household including yourself?

Number of people _____

If you prefer to self-describe any ability differences or conditions, do so here:

Return this survey by

DATE

25. In my household, we speak:

- English as a primary language
- Language(s) other than English (please specify below)

You will be given information about how to enter the drawing for gift cards.

Primary or additional languages spoken in my household:

Thank you for your responses!

28. I feel my family and I are reflected in the City's communications:

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Completely disagree					Completely agree					

DATA ENTRY

Small Meeting with NPA 1 & 8 on April 27, 2021

What does a healthy community mean to you?

- 1) A place that promotes mental health and destigmatizes mental health issues
- 2) Members are taking care of each other (centering members who are marginalized by systemic barriers)
- 3) Material, emotional, and spiritual needs are met. No need to fight each other for survival and security.
- 4) As a teacher, all of us are educators and learners of one other another and each other's cultures. WHO we are and HOW our public services (public safety) operate.
- 5) Ways of engaging each other (food not bombs): serving food and eating together in solidarity, not charity. Open streets, where streets are closed down (like North Street). "What real fun it was to be able to engage with each other." Engagement is equitable and initiatives are equitable and accessible.
- 6) One component is safe, affordable and stable housing: places that feel comfortable and like home.
- 7) Healthy and safe environment (clean air, soil, healthy lake and outdoor spaces and environmental health).
- 8) Part of a health community is one that engages in community care and opportunities for voices to be heard and needs to be met: equitable access and opportunities and resources.

What does a safe community mean to you?

- 1) Accountability. Police accountability: an independent board with discipline. What is police power? We need transparency.
- 2) Transform our culture and to unlearn the culture of white supremacy, ie learning new behaviors and communication and seeing ourselves and others. Personal work (resources for caring and mutual accountability). "Police are the spearhead of the culture not all representative of the whole culture." Healing with trauma informed practices in ways that don't create more harm.
- 3) Health and safety are intertwined. Safety is untrue where discrimination is not disciplined. BPD's treatment toward black residents (past incidents) must be addressed.
- 4) Need a systemic analysis: center solutions and transfer of power and resources. Reform policing and address wealth inequities. Address violent

oppression of BIPOC, white supremacy and at least stop increasing police funding. Invest in disciplinary and regulatory oversight of the police.

- 5) Residents with refugee and immigrant backgrounds feel like they belong and are not shunned because of their language and cultural differences. They belong and their voices matter.
- 6) Where a young black man who goes out with a friend on a Friday night doesn't have to worry about being beat by the police and end up with a brain injury or possibly dead – as it happened in the City of Burlington. These are real things. As a father of a young African American man, my child is targeted by the police...parents do not have to worry about their child being targeted by the police due to the color of their skin.
- 7) Without being seen as a target or threat, parents can sleep in peace knowing their children are safe.
- 8) Proactive (not waiting for there to be a crisis). Work on addressing underlying system rather than responding punitively after a crisis.
- 9) Most of the faces at this meeting are white. In a safe community, faces that are not white feel safe speaking up. Empathy – all women could walk around and not feel vulnerable. Where all kinds of people have representation and we will hear each other and be respectful.
- 10) Speaking for another neighbor – where pedestrians can cross the street without getting hit by a car and having a near-death experience and then have the driver get out of the car and yell at them.
- 11) Resources: safe usage sites for people with substance abuse issues.

City-Wide Town Hall on March 30, 2021

What does a healthy community mean to you?

GROUP 1:

- There has been a lack of empathy. A sense of empathy is needed by police and members of the community. ex. use of force. Let's not just look at low statistics. Look at the people who are impacted. ex. community members who have never been profiled may not understand the impact to their lives and the relationship of trust with public safety
- We know and trust our neighbors. We work with our neighbors to resolve problems.
- Bidirectional Relationship of trust between the people who are supposed to keep the community safe and community members. Shared power - can talk about problems equally
- Accountability is needed for a healthy relationship with public safety

GROUP 2:

- Grows from open and transparent government; decisions are made openly then the richness of the community comes into play as decisions are implemented
- Place mazlo chart - basic human needs are met - safety, liberation for walking down the street and knowing you won't be hurt
- Change is not driven by fear
- Place where we understand structural forces that cause barriers (meaning, language, race, class, education)| public process is very difficult - digital equity (wifi access)| those with limited resources are not penalized | currently in Burlington you can't work minimum wage job and support family and have access to healthcare | unhoused assigning blame to them
- Community where the support is present at birth, deserved, (child care, trauma informed care to address adverse childhood experiences) when needed. During times of crisis when needed (trials and tribulation) | support by the professionals to give the support needed
- People are able to be best selves (best - their healthiest and most helpful selves) high level of trust and relationships | material equity .. similar material structural elements | less hierarchy (actors in mind - economic systems - human actors but there is no one person | people in position of power
- Place where everyone has a home, income and health care and child care

What Does a Safe Community Mean to You?

Group 1:

- Inclusion is important. Those who are most impacted should be included in this conversation. Police force should reflect the new American community. Goes back to empathy.
- Address the impact of systemic disparities such as economics and social status (race, gender, income, etc)

Group 2:

- Safer - one in which police are held accountable to serve people when their actions are not honorable then they are held accountable. Who is truly serving our own city or enacting their own traumas on other people. Police misconduct often (told) their job is very stressful ...need mechanism for accountability. Safer step is to have accountability.

- Where those with power work to benefit those with less power | power discrepancies are no longer part of the system | situations come to mind (city government) not listening to their constituents and not working to alleviate all voices
- Focused on uplifting .. for all | not to punish ... not based on race, try to bring out the best from all of us. Doesn't seek to punish people. Restorative justice. Punishments - prison system and incarceration does not solve crimes committed - understand social conditions | after prison (perpetuated dire social conditions)

What is Burlington Doing Well in Terms of Public Safety?

- Burlington, The Community, is doing a good job of adapting to the lack of systemic support. ^^ Burlington the City, should be following the lead of its citizens to provide a safer and healthier COLLECTIVE community
- Addressing the issue by taking a look at the reality in meetings like this
- Residents of Burlington are volunteering their time, energy and skills in networks of support - mutual aid to meet basic needs, cop-watching to document and intervene in police misconduct, mental health support
- Limiting numbers of armed police officers and investing in independent community based social workers
- Rather than lead, the political class is playing distant catch-up
- Yes to more community based social workers
- Residents are learning not to call the police every time they have a problem or complaint or are bothered by something. Many of these calls don't require police.
- There is something good in the police department and we need to build on that (I've seen police interacting and getting to know people, treating residents with empathy)
- Joint Commission meeting to look at community issues.
- Doesn't feel like the city is working "so hard to enact change as a whole"
- The community members have established incredible mutual aid networks to support each other, and divert calls away from the police.
- Police walk in areas and not just staying in cars

Where Does Burlington Need to Improve in Terms of Public Safety?

- I would like City Councilours to stop repeating white supremacist talking points when it comes to policing, public safety, and BIPOC.

- I would like to see the Mayor separate his connections with out of town business owners as well.
- People with power have direct access to police
- Activists are not being treated the same way as people who have power and influence
- I think one of the places we could really improve is in providing well funded alternatives to the police. Huge fractions of our city budget gets put into the Burlington police, despite the majority of calls to 911 not demanding an armed response. For example, like someone just mentioned, mental health response does NOT need people with guns.
- Abolition of Burlington Police Department and redistribution of funds that currently go to BPD into actual support systems - organizations for housing, universal health care, reparations for BIPOC, public education, and more
- Decriminalization of substance addiction
- Mental health services that don't immediately involve cops
- Activists are not being treated the same way as people who have power and influence
- People with power have direct access to police
- Council needs to, at least, censure the Mayor for his racist urban policy over his nine year tenure
- I would like the city to fire abusive police officers immediately after they abuse community members
- City Council was unresponsive and it felt like they were unwilling to hear voices of concerned and impacted community members.
- Do not add additional police to force
- City Council was unresponsive and it felt like they were unwilling to hear voices of concerned and impacted community members.
- I want to see community control of police in addition to other checks to the power currently within city leadership (mayor)
- Emphasized lack of unity among City Council. Leadership matters, the mayor and City Council need to stop attacking each other. There needs to be more understanding of the disproportionate impact to different wards
- Former police chief del Pozo and Miro Weinberger tried to get the death of Douglas Kilburn (who was killed by a BPD officer) to not be ruled as a homicide.
- Need to stop over policing BIPOC communities
- I would also like to see a complete police disband and citizens and counselors would vote on the new standards and requirements to be a public safety official. Cops will then be able to apply to a community control board under stricter requirements. Also defund the police department and use that money for reparations that are paid directly to BIPOC.

City-Wide Town Hall on April 27, 2021

What does safe community mean to you?

- community education around what organizations / resources to contact if you don't need the police or don't call the police (through 911). It would be good for the public to understand whatever the new system is. Ideally, it would be great if there is one number to call to understand who to connect to (mental health or other resources)
- being able to call for support from professional / someone well-equipped to deal with whatever emergency, knowing that calling for people of authority does not involve guns. In the current system -> police with guns will show up and that doesn't make me feel safe. Alternatively, a triage system - if it is fire, fire department and/or EMT (police not having guns is also a step. For mental emergencies, mental health professionals should respond to that. Create differentiated 911 call
- Neighbors knowing each other - saying hello talking to each other ; not afraid of being friendly to each other
- Neighbors/Case Managers - looking out and paying attention to each other
- Everyone in the community feels safe, are not afraid to walk, drive, be within their community. This must be true for everyone not just those who are white
- feeling safe to ask for help
- Efforts to get at the root cause of the problems that could make people feel unsafe. Root causes I was thinking about include drug addiction and homelessness in BVT. Root causes that link to the behaviors. Tackle these issues (depends on the problems) if lack of resources is the root cause of shop lifting then we need to figure out social problems for that person to survive. If it's drug addiction then what would it take to combat drug addiction (more investment in social programs). The issues that make us feel unsafe are a reflection of the community's problems not just those of the individual.
- people can trust their leaders
- no one is hungry homeless or without an education, feel safe calling 911, healthcare
- if there's trouble, it should be dealt with by unarmed helpers, need not be licensed health care professionals, but people trained in de-escalation, etc.
- value people over property and profits
- Not jumping to the conclusion that an unusual situation is a dangerous one, community doesn't jump to fear-based reaction

- all ages are encouraged to interact with one another, ppl feel safe asking for/receiving a neighbor for help, also with unarmed help
- that's investing in social services and programs, instead of investing in arming police department
- mutual respect between police and people

What does healthy community mean to you?

- There are those social problems but there are mundane day to day issues - how do you handle those speeding issues (bike) one almost struck a baby stroller yesterday. You can't ignore those root causes but we also have immediate issues that need to be dealt with quickly.
- I came here as an interpreter - I think for me a safer community is where diversity is really celebrated, for example, I immigrated to the USA 6 years ago - but I observe that people are afraid still within themselves. They celebrate, they welcome and they preach about diversity..... where people judge each other not from what they look like but what they do. embracing diversity not just celebrating on the surface.
- Church Street Market Place - Clean, safe and fun and welcoming to EVERYONE. Employees (especially, females) do not feel safe. I hear from a lot of folks who work on Church street. "They" welcome the police - just have presence on the street. We deal with a lot of things on the street that are quality of life issues (speeding bicycles, skateboards, shoplifting, musicians that need to be licensed loudly and bothering people). Who enforces quality of life issues to ensure a clean, safe and fun environment?
- police departments that are supportive of "progressive" police
- mutual respect, understanding of one another's humanity
- police could live within the community that they are responsible for
- where everyone is cared for and respected
- non-judgemental access to equal health care, all facilities treat everyone with dignity and respect
- healthy community is one with informed...
- neighborly check ins, while also respecting privacy
- fully funded mental health services
- public outdoor spaces
- restorative justice over punitive
- housing for all
- meaningful youth employment
- a community and police that aren't driven by fear

What is Burlington doing well in terms of public safety?

- there are some things that BPD do very well - one of the things is a victim advocate that works at BPD (she is amazing - name mentioned). This is not an officer position but have training to be an officer. Not all police departments have that kind of outreach person. There is a lot to be said for the public to have an advocate within the system. This staff is effective because of her connection and professionalism - specialized DV officer - very very few communities in VT have this. It has been on the chopping block because of funding cuts - I'm hoping that this position doesn't get cut because DV rates are rising. This position is an officer position - specially assigned to this area. BVT made some great strides in this area - Com Pol (such as getting to people in assigned communities, ice cream for kids and ways to get to know community). Getting to know - DV officer is one of those positions. Officers really know their community and live in them.
- missed opportunity to lose SRO - for building relationships, when you have the right SROs, they become the connection - they will help navigate issues - SROs playing intervention roles. students who did graffiti - SRO steered some youth in other directions. Some of the SRO had the right background to steer youth away from the criminal justice system. For some who have traumatic experiences with people in uniform - SRO can be allies to them. So, I feel that it is a mixed bag to take out SRO. What is the right SRO - background is super important. Burlington HS - dual degree. De-escalation techniques - adolescents - how their brain works and how to have a conversation and not be adversarial. Individuals who educate themselves to be the right resource to be in the school setting.
- Mutual aid is fantastic and necessary because city social programs are not sufficient - city needs to look at this. Instead of checking off diversity boxes, we have to genuinely embrace and see each other as human beings and cultivate all culture \ This effort needs to come from the leadership - in an ideal situation - mutual aid is a beautiful thing - coming from all levels - It should be encouraged by the Mayor and there should be a commitment to that and a budget behind it.
- following the death of a family member - what is the process for what we should do? - For us, a variety of police were in our house and they stayed with us until the personnel arrived - I just found that very supportive that they were there and let me know what I needed to know in terms of next steps. A few officers touched base with me to make sure that I had support I needed
- there is a community - a vast network of community programs for lower income community, friends in terms of showing solidarity and advocating for the social programs and networks they need. Next to none income folks. More info: a group of individuals (residents) | not run by a city or nonprofit

- SRO out of school was a great thing to happen - in terms of public safety, how folks are treated in the city - some hotels in the areas are housing individuals experiencing homelessness - that has been a solution to have temporary housing. If folks are choosing not to stay at the hotel then that is a precarious situation - I'm worried for folks who are living in tents - it appears they are not allowed to exist. It is well and good that BPD is having ice cream socials with some folks but they are also perpetuating violence for low income individuals and people of color. Expectations & accountability of the police need to improve and police need to police themselves.
- taking care of each other, mutual aid groups that have been serving community (for example food not bombs, direct aid)
- multiple fantastic youth organizations
- in regards to pandemic, doing well with ppe, testing, gardening support
- people showing up for each other
- mentoring programs, mutuality between mentors/mentees
- school district removing officers from schools
- street outreach
- school resource officers bringing sense of safety
- Everybody Eats program, supporting individuals as well as restaurants
- community justice center (alternative to courts)
- Burlington - problems solvers when we want to be
- we can reprioritize if we want to

Where does Burlington need to improve in terms of public safety?

- in the fall, there was an effort to create an independent board of people who live in BVT - they would be in charge of investigating any sort of misconduct. Police would have committed and determined discipline. This effort was not moved forward but vetoed by the Mayor - this would have been a good alternative. Right now the police chief is in charge of overseeing and it is the Chief's department. For some residents, BPD police are friendly and useful resources but that does not represent everybody's experience.
- root causes of the behaviors - also unruly behaviors that escalate during that day with the amount of alcohol, public intoxication, urination and sexual harassment of women as you pass by | BVT can not figure out a way to help these people get out immediate need to eliminate these behaviors and we really need to look at root causes - both of these issues right. These people, referring to white males - I've spoken to the police, howard mental health, many of them have a place to live and many of them a way of life. Out there in the open it's for everyone to see .

- "control" not just "oversight," which is just watching, but authority needs to be given for real accountability
- clarity around the police commission, giving real authority (giving "teeth") to some kind of accountability body
- building trust through having accountability that is transparent and can be seen
- trust is lacking, need to improve/build trust
- finding better ways to support those with substance issues, homelessness, many of things police respond to should have more appropriate responders
- we're lacking accountability and transparency around police department
- community control of police, specifically charter change resolution
- more participation from larger community, continuing this conversation, including others, more outreach
- need to address issues around lack of basic needs
- accountability for certain actions done by officer
- top priority: community control over police discipline
- real conversations, actual open conversations
- improved training, bias training that includes history of policing and much more
- police department seems dismissive of data and problematic officers
- public safety by consent, not by force
- having resources that match the needs of the community (911 etc routing to appropriate resources, mental health, etc)
- problems with police department, overpoliced, many use of force incidents where officers not held accountable
- having community oversight of police
- officers trained in/closer to community, if they're trained for x weeks and have to leave their homes then that decreases those who have access to go through the training
- better responsiveness between police and community
- Address needs surrounding trauma, need to improve how to address, include resources in police training on implicit bias, addressing trauma on all sides (those who witness, experience, serve those with trauma)
- reallocation of funds to social services, housing, healthcare
- community control of police, to oversee issues of officer discipline
- processes to hold police accountable
- effective accountability, removal of barriers that prevent addressing the actual issues within police department
- improved communication between police and community
- making it so lawsuits don't prevent honest discussion from police department

- police live in the communities they serve, not having militarized presence that is disconnected from community
- policing by consent
- rooting police in the community, through housing, relationships, community connections
- more social workers, community caregivers, instead of armed officers
- less armed officers
- not having armed officers respond to mental health crises
- think up some different systems for public safety
- divesting from police department and reinvesting in social services
- having appropriate responses for substance issues and mental health issues
- addressing fears of diversification
- improved training and accountability for police
- more roles, such as parking enforcement etc that take roles so we don't have as many armed uniformed officers

Priorities

- ensure everyone has access to all the housing, food, physical and mental health services they require
- In the next 2 years I would like to see full abolition of the police, more support systems for the most marginalized. reparations for BIPOC
- it is our choice as a community what the function of the police should be. if we decide there are situations that are emergencies that should have other agencies instead of police we can make those changes to laws and policies (for example: I have used 911 for medics emergency and police did not come)
- when 911 is called - add a point | I'm a lawyer - just to be aware that there are laws out there that go beyond the state of vermont. there is a liability for the BPD for not responding. Individuals can not say - I called 911 but I don't want police to respond. BPD can get sued especially when they are violating their obligation.
- Better coordination with community services | two buckets being separate ... mental health and police are working together | I don't know how mental health professionals feel safe to go out at 3AM. VT did try something similar - a good step in the right direction.
- Issues regarding youth and SRO - we need to re-envision youth safety. Significant underinvestment in non academic programming | ART - I think many people want to hold on to SRO because of school shootings - there needs to be much investment for mental health services. Who do you think needs to be involved in youth safety? - students themselves, school boards and groups like this.

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 4 (text-box answers)

What three actions would you recommend as most important in the effort to make Burlington a safer and healthier community? (OTHER)

Other specific action(s)
More meetings between police and community groups to encourage dialogue and trust
Start removing non-police duties from police. Traffic enforcement, mental health crisis response, and quality of life calls can all be handled by something other than armed police officers. Also disarm cops walking the beat.
This list is insufficient to permit communication of many priorities and preselects the responses
It was really hard to choose 3... the accountability focused community-led oversight committee is my 4th choice. All of these are, to my mind, equally important
Supporting police and first responders with services they may need including mental health support and that their departments are funded well enough so they have enough staff to do their jobs safely.
a healthy respect for what the police do and ensure good training for them.
Are you for real with the above options as choices? How about this option: more police officers in vehicles and on foot and get the homeless people and the people using drugs off the streets and out of the parks. These are the specific actions I want.
I kind of feel all of the above are important so it was tough to pick three. But I definitely don't think BPD is "the enemy" even though at the same time we have a BLM flag outside of our house.
Active law enforcement
An end to demonization of police officers
Reallocate exorbitant police funds to community programs as per the City Council recommendations (why are we saying this over and over?)
Police Academy for public so they understand what the police are up against each day
Community-based solutions and mutual aid networks
Not more training for first responders, EMT's and Firefighters do their job just fine helping and saving people. The police department needs more training.
Lower taxes
None of the above
Stop pussyfooting around and lock up them that need locking up.
Hire more police
Focus on safety; bring back police patrols; enforce against loitering, panhandling, public drinking , public drug used, disorderly conduct
All these questions are biased against Police

more police. do not defund the police, instead add people to the police force that can help with these issues
The police are among the greatest part of the city and this survey is not constructive to their profession
Arrest and prosecute people who break the law. Stop allowing vagrants to loiter everywhere (especially the drunk and stoned). Clean up the graffiti and prosecute anyone that does it in the future.
elimination of qualified immunity
These all seem somewhat one sided and do nothing to suggest there is any community involvement needed here. The police I have interacted with at work (in the Emergency Deoartment) have been incredibly respectful and thoughtful towards people who have often been rude, threatening, and downright scary. Training, however, is always welcome
More interaction with youth 16-22 thru some type of community events like cook outs,softball games ECT.
Call it like you see it policing!! If you resist , try to flee , go for yourcar or any other dumbass reaction ! Then you deserve what your black ass gets
Patrols like used to happen before Miro took office. At night before Miro, a police car would drive up the street at least twice per night which helped prevent parking and noise issues. Now everything is complaint based. I'm tried of complaining. I want proactive enforcement.
Since money was diverted from the police department for social programs, implement mental health service, homeless services, addiction services NOW (not years down the road).
Community that supports the police
More police officers. Support for current officer workforce who have done excellent work. Identify rolls forced onto police by community and find better fit (embedded mental healthier workers, social services, civil processing experts, conflict negotiators). These are all dedicated positions that are not law enforcement
This survey is apparently biased towards policing issues- when there are much more pressing matters. Homeless issues, the Camp on Sears Lane, is a health and safety concern to all. Sewage treatment as well.
Restoring funding to the police department at previous levels. More de-escalation training for officers. Focus on more concrete goals for improving our city/the administrations own goals instead of reactively instituting measures that might look good or appease activists, but don't actually help, like diversity committees.
#2 Stop pointing out our differences and focus on our similarities.
#3 the police department is not the enemy of a safer/healthier Burlington.
Increase armed police foot patrols in O.N.E. and downtown
SROs in schools be reinstated.
Fear based training needs to be removed from police training. Also I strongly believe that a two year degree at the very least should be required for all police.
Support police officers with opportunities to debrief and learn from challenging encounters. Zero tolerance for officers who refuse to be open to improvement/growth.
Social services personnel to help with the many mentally deranged homeless on Church

st and in City hall park. It's tough to enjoy either when there are people drinking alcohol, screaming and wandering around half clothed
2-Support police, recognizing the stress they are under and help them cope with this so they realize how it can affect decision making
3-Weed out poor actors rather than stigmatize the police as a group-demoralizing public service as a group has been very detrimental for the community.
these options are not high on my list. they seem like appeasement of complaints, not fresh and helpful ideas.
Demilitarizing the police and reallocating significant funding to other departments and services
defunding BPD & reallocating that money to the community
Active police presence in the community. Foot patrol in active areas.
We need to remove the response to people in mental health crisis from the responsibility of police - more along the lines of the CAHOOTS model in Oregon.
Reimagine public safety outside of police.
I come from Los Angeles where there is a heartbreaking mental health crisis, leading to the majority of homeless. I hope the same won't drive homelessness in Burlington.
Why are all the questions about policing? There are many other factors that influence the health and safety of Burlington. Affordable housing, emergency call buttons/phones, more lighting, more action against open drug and alcohol use, etc. let's all be opened minded to what would make Burlington healthy and safe...it's not just a policing issue.
Support police dept, don't let our city sink to the chaos erupting in other cities led by marxist revolutionary ideologies . Set up safe zones away from residential, business, schools for the homeless and addicted .
Directing people to pick three implies three changes are necessary to begin with. You failed to provide the option of "no change is necessary."
None of these! Police officers need to have the autonomy of making decisions, without fear of being labeled. Then the officers will feel more comfortable protecting the community
Problem: Ineffective policing
Solution: Bike police, footpolice, get out of their cars
Replace first-responders with skilled community-member/citizen response corps
A properly staffed police department run by law enforcement professionals.
None of the above. This stuff just costs \$ and doesn't produce tangible results. Classic lefty move... create a task force for a good idea to die.
I'll make this very simple. Minimum standard of a CJ Bachelors + cognitive/personality testing = professional law enforcement.
Burlington police should be a community service, not a militia. Progress has been made in the last nine months. The idea is to help Burlingtonians and deescalate: community more than authority.
defund the police
every gov official stop using 'public safety' as a synonym for police
Increased funding for police
The choices provided are limited and seem political in nature.
I would feel safer in Burlington if police decisions were made by professionals based on

data, not community committees and public opinions
Address the high cost of renting so that people can live without as much working class anxiety. I work in our schools and am on the verge of being priced out of the city with 2 jobs. This is abhorrent
Do something about the homeless - accept the current efforts are not working for them or for
Increasing the numbers in the police force, increasing the penalties for committing crime
Relieve the city council of their duties
Defund BPD and reallocate funds to social services
Not let junkies run ramped ;stop harboring homeless at my dime;police aren't the problem shit people with no respect are
Restore respect for BPD
Community outreach for the homeless population
More police officers and more social workers as well as fair distribution of the laws
In regards to health, the pallid living conditions landlords can subjugate their tenants to is embarrassing for a city like Burlington and should immediately be an issue this commission should consider. Health and safety inspectors exist for restaurants, why not for rental units. There are no current actions by the city made to remediate health
Less dependence on input from radical elements in Burlington
Stop lawlessness and trust police to do their jobs.
Policing with training for gang affiliation. Public education regarding mental illness (suicide by cop), proper behavior during traffic stops (very dangerous for officers), and importance of community policing and cooperation.
Not having antifa and black lives matter you're taking up the streets and blocking roads and making it so police can't do their jobs
For the community to accept that individuals need to be held accountable table for their actions. For Burlington leadership to stop using the police as a scapegoat
A better state/municipal delineation of enforcement and courts (needs legislative co-ordination/charter change)
I thought this survey was about creating a HEALTHIER community? There are no options on this one focused on health. It's all about policing.
stop thhraging the police we need them they need to have weapons they need to be respected they need to be paid more and we need to vet them well when they are hired..really tired of the porgressives and btw I am not old ..just sick of the destructon of American society and structure..
Stop reacting to the vocal minority and let the police do their job. BPD does get work and does not receive the praise they deserve.
Increasing the number of police officers and not funding the community interaction personnel
Return of morality and laws for offenses
More attention and care for those suffering mental health issues.
Definitely should not reduce the police department
crack down on criminal activity around burlington. issue criminal penalties for people that are repeat offenders. also get rid of sarah george. she makes the community less safe by letting violent criminals free.

How about you let the police continue doing the great job they were doing until the crazies took over and started destroying our city's police department.
More police.
Note: first responders (above) include police + all of this to move us toward more unweaponized first responders - police officers read the book My Gandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending our Hearts and Bodies written by Resmaa Menakem 2017
None of the above! This city has gone to shit. Let police do their job! If you break the law, you deserve everything you get!
Increase the Police Department Budget. Don't give city council a raise
Those are loaded responses not relevant to real problems concerning safety in Burlington. We need more police and we need real jail time for criminals after they are apprehended, charged and found guilty. No more "restorative justice". We need more police and more funding.
community policing - police on the streets and in neighborhoods.
More attention to quality of life issues by both the community, and all forms of government.
More evening and night police patrols
More funding for the Police Department to increase training and overall staffing. Training should include all aspects of policing, not just mental health.
None - obey the law.
Remove homeless presence on the streets - it's a blight
The mayor has lost his credibility by trying to remove a BIPOC woman from leading the reform process and paying a personal friend \$75,000 to write a superficial plagiarized report about the police department. Ideally he would completely recuse himself from the selection of the next chief, which should be appointed directly by the community.
Stricter and better enforced building codes, even for existing structures; there is zero excuse for rental units to still have lead paint.
Since 4 these 6 options refer to community/police interaction... I'd say the #1 way I see for Burlington to become a healthier and safer community would be for our police to consistently enforce the laws and regulations as written. Certain members of our community know that BPD too often lets things go. Respect has been lost, on all sides.
None of these. Biased options. Do better. This is awful. So disappointing.
More support for BPD Arrest lawbreakers
Most community needs do not require a police response. Drastically reduce the amount of police activity by aggressive funding of viable alternatives (mental health crisis response teams, etc.) and phase out police funding over time.
more carefully selected police officers
These questions are biased. You have designed questions to appeal to a certain result. Get a real police chief. Pay your cops more to attract quality people. Do not replace police with social workers. I do not come downtown as often because it is not safe - even in the afternoon. Parking garage is unsafe.
More police
Enforcing illegal dumping rules, holding the publicly intoxicated accountable,
Police and city council WORK TOGETHER

less trash. less noise caused by disruptive neighbors. safer living (crime due to addiction)
I believe that the goal for the community regarding police should be to work towards not needing police anymore. This can be achieved by reducing interactions between police and public by limiting calls for which police are required to respond and delegating these tasks and their respective funds to other professionals.
1) Enforcement of public safety and quality of life ordinances including fines for fires on beaches. 2) More outreach to get those currently without a place to live into a better situation including occupational training and mental healthcare.
These are basically outcomes rather than actions. I expect we already have a context and culturally relevant model, just not a good enough one. I would hope we can transform the police commission to be that community-led committee - we don't need more hard-to-fill board and committee positions.
more police, less graffiti
Harm reduction implementation, such as biohazard boxes and easy 24 hour access public restrooms.
Not pay \$300,000 to cop you're firing. Is this a joke?
stop knee-jerk reactions by city council RE funding. Invest in a long-term community based policing policy similar to Obama's 21st Century policing guide.
Clear lines of escalation for residents facing a variety of quality-of-life issues.
Support staff for BPD to help alleviate the burden of dealing with health-related problems like mental health and substance abuse disorder.
Stop using police to respond to non-violent mental health crises or other situations that do not need a person with a gun.
Year-round low barrier shelters
Better partnerships between BPD and drug counseling/ mental health workers.
I'd also like to see funding for the police restored.
More traffic enforcement. Drunk drivers, fatigued/low energy drivers and distracted drivers all put the public at great risk. And it's not just North Ave. As a bicycle commuter I'm very concerned about Main Street and my safety biking past UVM. More enforcement and police presence needed badly.
Bton ask BPD restructure, invest in alt services, akin 2 HC's Street Outreach. Jun: CC vote 4 hire freeze. Jan: BPD say mid shift at risk, ICAT use, etc. Safe day/eve shift noted (post-avail factor) as 6 o's/1 sup, mid 4 o's/1 sup. Nightwatch, 2 o's/1 sup, fielding T3 calls offered as (at risk) alt. Try 3 o's/1 sup all? calls. Test 4 day/eve reduct
Increased respect and support for our hard working police officers; Increased police presence and allow them to curb graffiti and other destruction of our city.
Please focus on simple changes, don't get drawn into the political unrest of the nation. We've had some horrible incidences of bad response by police (Meli brothers was horrific and should have been resolved by now). I believe that to be an exception, not the norm.
clean up crime and homelessness
I would encourage police to be members of the community they serve, getting to know individual members, participating. See Resmaa Menakem's My Grandmother's Hands, pp. 277 - 285.
All my interactions as a Latin woman have been nothing but extraordinary.

Communication and respect have been shown to me. BPD does a fantastic job servicing our community.
Improve training, mental Health counseling, insurance benefits, and pay rate increases for our existing police officers
Police that Do Their Jobs, and NOT insite Violence on Citizens, especially the BIPOC in our community.
I don't think police should be the first responders to most situations that they currently are. We need to allocate funds to more mental health organizations, etc that can send trained first responders to deal with community members calls instead.
Streamline and clarify boundaries/scope of police work and oversight. Define exactly what police do. Identify areas where police are/have historically been responding "outside of their lane"
mental health agency crisis response
Better recruitment processes from diverse communities. Mandated body cams. Drastically limit qualified immunity
I could only choose 3 above, but I support easier access and increased community services. Some entity needs to replace the organization that had been provided by Ben and April.
Community trainings regarding what police are actually responsible for, more transparent explanations of police interactions (without a political agenda), less demonization of the police force based on explicit biases with no base in fact or circumstance
Fully staff and fund BPD
services that will take
Better resources for officers to include staffing, training and equipment.
Recognition that police officers have had hundreds of hours of basic training, hundreds of hours of ongoing training, and that sometimes violence happens...therefore a strict prosecution of violent crime, and perhaps a more restorative approach to non-violent crimes only, would actually make the community safer.
Better training for the community about the role and function of the police.
Our police in Burlington already receive the most and the best training of any agency in the region. Our police need to be supported and not punished for things that are not issues in other places.
criminals held accountable and not being let go
Rid the City Council of Progressive majority
None of the above. How about not defunding the police, keeping drugs off the streets, and holding people accountable for their actions?
None of the above...policy reform to reflect facts not feelings
Return police staffing to pre-2020 levels
Officers should be given training in all aspects of policing, not just buzzwords like de-escalation and bias awareness. BPD officers already attend numerous de-escalation trainings every year and bias trainings.
I am content with policing at this time. I do miss the community policing policy followed years ago by Chief Ennis and would like to see more of that - for example, foot patrols on Church Street.
Increased staffing for Burlington Police so they can both respond to calls for service in a

timely way and do proactive community policing to build relationships in the community like they used to do.
providing a number for mental health services (811 or similar maybe) and a significant number of on duty mental health responders. in addition, PAY these people, and pay EMS better.
Remove police officers who have acted aggressively against black and/or disabled people-Stop protecting racist cops!
better training for police officers and staff, as well as first responders. But it's officers we see in the news, not so much the first responders.
Lawsuits against BPD should come out of their pension plan, not out of general taxpayer funds.
Defunding of the police
A proposal was brought to BPD several years ago regarding co-responder policing in plain clothes with MH professionals actively engaging in crisis situations, this should be revisited. Need a focus on de-escalation and how to decrease fear in minorities (or engage without creating more fear/escalating)
The public should be made aware that what has occurred over the past year has not been factually based. The Police Department has been damaged in a number of ways. This has placed the Police, victims of crime, suspects and the community as a whole at greater risk. Decisions for the city ought to be made via sound decision making, not activism.
Clean up the homeless camps. Sears Lane, for example.
Substantially increase enforcement of motorized vehicle traffic regulations. Battery Street is a special problem - somewhere between a drag strip and a Mad Max movie. Noise from combustion engine vehicles - especially those with after-market customized exhaust amplification modifications, are a disaster here as well as elsewhere in the city.
Divert response to non-violent crime/situations to social service professionals
reallocate police funding to other first responder agencies that can better deal with mental health, addiction and other factors without resorting to violence
deprioritization of police in first response
Less oversight of everything else
Focus training on crisis assessment, immediate management, and back-up resource access for mental health or other non-law enforcement intervention/assistance if needed
A restorative justice approach to policing, perhaps in collaboration with the National Center on Restorative Justice at Vermont Law School/UVM
Fund the police adequately.
Hire more police officers
Police need to respond to College students who are extremely noisy especially on weekends but also during the week. They leave beer cans and garbage all over the place. They don't seem to respect their neighbors
Police are the KEY to a civil & SAFE society - something all American citizens are guaranteed & entitled to. Cutting your law enforcement presence & staff was DANGEROUS & IRRESPONSIBLE.
More speed traps on Shelburne road to slow traffic.
Make people get off unemployment and work. No masks for vaccinated citizens. Get kids back to school full time.
I want a respectful relationship between BPD and BTV. I've experienced BPD

assumptions and prejudgments. One “ran my name,” learned how off base he was but issued me a court date for false info anyway (of which he didn’t file) This Sargent couldn’t he believe he was wrong and couldn’t accept I was truthful.
An adequate police staff, they are understaffed.
Your questions are directed at the police dept as they were the community problem when there are greater problems like drug addiction. People are breaking into cars and stealing items to support the addiction.
Improved public feedback loops
implement rent control, stop over-developing/over populating the city
Enforcement of Laws
less criminals, mentally ill homeless people, and people who don't speak English who frequently break the law either knowingly or unknowingly
increase the number of officers. no longer feel safe!!
More affordable housing for middle income, better community enforcement of noise violations, better access to mental health services for those in need
1. Integrated mental and behavioral health for first responder and civilian populations. 2. Civic engagement across demographic categories
Increase police force levels. Zero tolerance for property crimes.
Bringing the police force to full strength while filling openings with more women, more people of color, and more officers who speak Spanish.
Given that gun shots were fired this weekend on Isham Street - more jail time. And, no amount of training can improve crisis response if the same individuals are (a) unable to receive treatment for mental health disorders due to lack of adequate funding, (b) are unwilling to receive treatment, or (c) the Courts are unwilling to compel treatment.
All these options are very much leading. To get unbiased responses, why didn't you include a range of potential actions. E.g., a) hire more minority police officers but also b) don't cut the police force (we need a functioning police force) and c) more sponsored community - police events to increase trust. Etc.
A CULTURALLY RELEVANT COMMUNITY POLICING MODEL FOR BURLINGTON! POLICE HAVE NO PLACE IN THIS CITY, OR ANY CITY, ANYWHERE - “POLICE” ARE AN OUTMODED AND OUTPACED(!) SYSTEM OF POWER WITHOUT ANY BASIS IN REAL-WORLD APPLICATIONS OR PRACTICAL FUNCTIONALITY. “POLICE” MERELY EXIST AS EXCRUCIATING PLACEHOLDERS BETWEEN THE VITAL FUNCTIONS OF A CITY
non-police traffic enforcement
Adequate funding for the police department and not continue with the cuts the City Council passed in June 2020 till a detailed study is conducted in regards to what those staffing numbers would mean to the public.
Need more police.
Hardball police tactics to keep the bastards in line
do something about all the homeless people
I think that the policy should be driven by residents and not mass demonstrations of outside constituencies with their pre defined agendas.
To clean up Church Street and City Hall Park. These two spaces are the backbone to a friendly city. They are being run down and over populated by the homeless shredding people. It scares visitors and residents away. It is feeling unsafe. The graffiti gives a feeling of Burlington as being run down, unkept and unsafe.

Restor the cuts to the BPD and hire more officers. I do not believe any of the options you give above will make the city safer and I think they are all from one perspective. For example, the last thing we need is community oversight over the police force.
More police oversight, bigger staff
better and easier coordination of services for those in need- food, safety, mental health, medical and dental assistance, transportation vouchers, computer access with tutors, job application assistance, housing application assistance, substance abuse counseling, and a place for people to tell thier stories. ALL under the same roof- or at least sam
Involving more business community in efforts
Conduct research on policing reforms before making changes. City council should work with police to understand how to achieve better outcomes. Allow the police department to determine the require staffing to achieve outcomes. An under staffed department is likely to result in more conflict.
Public access to information on police incidents
Fewer student houses; more families
Community policing, officers getting to know specific communities to build trust & respect
Unscramble police radio frequencies. Cities like Boston and Chicago do not scramble but when BPD became militarized BPD went secret squirrel and cut off contact with the public in numerous ways.
Professional law enforcement input to whatever public input is made. We're in danger of the inmates running the asylum as things stand. And more of a security buy-in by UVM. Please.
Better support for BPD
We offer a restorative approach for citizen offenders; could this approach be used with police as well when they offend or perceive to have offended?
In the process of looking at policing, make sure other public service sectors are also scrutinized for how they are sharing responsibility. Don't overfocus on police and put all the burden on policing. Avoid scapegoating.
None of this is a primary concern. Things like guarded bike lanes, better traffic management, and better signaling is far more important for overall public health.
Defunding police departments and funding social services
give police social worker assistance for non criminal calls. Find a way for police to be in conversation with community, and not on different sides.
I have a toddler and take her Battery Park nearly everyday because it's our closest playground. However I have become weary of highly intoxicated people (heroin/alcohol) who congregate there, monopolizing spaces, and leaving behind trash and waste. I'm empathetic to individuals suffering from substance dependency and abuse, but it's rampant.
Public safety for citizens
A campaign to inform the community about how much the police are actually trained- more so than any mental health responder I can think of.
All community members have to take ownership and responsibility for community safety and well being. Addressing any of the social ills (e.g. domestic violence) or needs of our neighbors can be achieved by all of our engagement. Law enforcement is just one part of it. We have to stop using police to do what we are uncomfortable to do.

I don't like the way the "Easier access" choice is phrased. I would say "community service providers (personnel) who respond to those in need of social and mental health services instead of law enforcement officials."
Enforce light laws for bicyclists/boarders, etc
Readily accessible information about the police union.
And end to "defund the police"/ "ACAB" rhetoric. Extremism only makes everybody defensive and conversation shuts down.
1. A City council and mayor that understands the role of ALL policing 2. Hiring a new chef who does not cower to the city council and Mayor. 3. A visible and full time presence of city police WALKING downtown, enforcing all the laws of Church st - from no smoking to no skateboards or bikes to making merchants feel safe once again.
Can I answer none of the above? All answers seem to presuppose that the problem is with those providing services/response. I think a second cause of the problem is that Burlington has a lot of people whose conduct causes a lot of contact with first responders of all type
Officers walking the streets in troubled neighborhoods to develop rapport and trust with the people they are serving.
context and culturally relevant community policing model for BTV
No new funding to police department. Cut officers in half at least. Bulk up funding to Pathways, CHCB, Steps Domestic Violence, Pride Center, NAACP, AALV, COTS & other DIRECT service providers. Create paid community leadership positions within marginalized communities who would not work w/police but w/providers 2 provide appropriate interventions
de-escalation training
Balanced review board consisting of police representative, govt and community. in that order. Final decisions by?
Add some traffic lights in some intersection that are more inclined to cause car collision
More social workers working at BPD
Continue to have adequate number of police officers to ensure safety of residents .
Hire more officers
I think you do those three the rest will follow
Invest in anti poverty programs like ACTUALLY affordable housing, child care, direct aid to poor people. This will prevent crime. Police can't prevent crime, they can only investigate it after it's happened.
Raising wages, economic equity, worker unions, funding for support services and anti poverty measures (housing, education, healthcare incl mental healthcare, youth programs), removing discipline and investigation authority from police department into an independent board, limiting the powers of the BPD union contract
Better & increased funding for Police Dept
reallocating funds from the police budget to help fund transformative measures that move BTV toward social, economic, and racial equity.
I think the police are doing fine, leave them alone. Stop bitching.
Increase number of officers
I don't perceive a problem, other than the fact that we need more police for safety. The

phrasing of these question implies that there is a problem, that is only true for certain people who are making a mountain out of a molehill. you need a question that says 'do you percieve a problem....'.
a city council who understands what policing is. Stop bowing down to the vocal minority
be tougher on crime, enforce the law, broken windows approach / full fund the police and restore officer levels
regular check ins to see what is working and what needs to be changed
Getting rid of the heroine addicts
Raise the morale of the City Police Department by looking at all the good they do and have done for the past 48 years that I have been a resident here!
Question, can you distribute the calls to others ,such as State Police, Sheriff's, FSU. When a call comes through it should trigger an alert. Emergency call, dispatch would ask what's your Emergency? Criminal activity for example: reach out to the State Police and possibly FSU. Local police, : burglary, traffic issues, domestic, mental health
Sufficient staffing of BPD officers to ensure adequate response to emergencies and the safety of the community.
Reduce homelessness. Control crime.
Better neighborhood watch systems
Enforcing existing behavior norms for public spaces in downtown Burlington. For example, currently there are numerous instances of smoking pot, drinking alcohol and playing loud rap music in the new City Hall park. We need some non-police government personnel to address this. I do not feel comfortable bringing children into these spaces.
I'd like to see no further drastic changes of any sort be made prior to the actual implementation of the resources that will take the place of the proposed change.
First, redefine and limit the scope of police. Armed officers are not needed or appropriate for many duties. Second, rework the curriculum at the police academy, including how to determine when use-of-force is the only path. Third, update the candidate selection criteria. Those quick to fear do not good officers make.
people need to stop bitching about every little thing. Police are good. We need the police.
training for the community
I don't know enough about these matters currently nor about the implications in any reasonable detail of "healthier, better trained, context and culturally relevant model". Of course these are admirable goals, but so are better and equitable health care, education and lower taxes. So, it's priority setting.
These questions are extremely leading. We need realistic, non-ideologue driven solutions. The over-reach by the city council and their extremely rigid ideology is the biggest threat to making Burlington a healthy and safer community.
Lower taxes, less government spending
A strong police force to protect the community 24 hrs a day
Actually respond and not be told to take care of it yourself. "If they don't leave call back and maybe we can send someone" is not an answer.
None of that, it's all garbage
Hold people accountable for their actions,, regardless of race.
Hire more police. Clean up the homeless.
prosecute the offenders

Stop encouraging criminal behavior and cultivate an environment where law abiding citizens are safe walking down the sidewalk.
A redefining of policing - what are the needs the police are attempting to meet and how are they being supported to do that? What are the other needs they are not tasked or able to meet and how are those being met?
straight up disband the police force excuse my language but the song 'fuck the police' by NWA was made for a very good reason thats still very relevant today. no one ever made a song called f the fire department
Fully fund police.
Have a police force that has enough resources to provide reliable public safety to include enough police officers.
I think it would be good if City Council didn't make a drastic change (like cutting the police by 30%) based on public pressure and emotion. We should study the issue and then respond instead of being reactive. It has serious consequences to safety (citizens and police). It has truly made everyone less safe who lives, works, visits this city.
disability education
Let police officers enforce the law. They do a great job when given the proper staffing and resources.
Also more officers, downtown is getting scary after dark
Stop shrinking the BPD and don't let the City Council make decisions based on their values. Have make decisions on science and data.
Help us to feel we are not alone, that the vagrants and others that are just not generally trustworthy are no longer calling the shots.
More cops
More non-police first responders and law enforcement. For instance, health inspectors are non police law enforcement. This should be true for traffic enforcement, investigators, responders to mental health crises, and everything other than a violent crime in progress.
More foot patrols in Church St/Downtown area with authority/ability to deal with troublemakers
And Hire more officers
Believe issue with police is important too though think needs to part of an overall citywide reformation on how handle crisis situations with Professional-Public Committee(plus agencies) oversight
Designated Mental Health agencies are not able to meet the need for folks affected by Mental Illness in our community. Agency of Human Services at the State level should assist municipal governments more as many issues affecting us in Burlington are not city level issues.
Easier access to services and improved public input are good options. The public-police relationship is justifiably unhealthy due to police and police union actions
Increased availability to social services for those in mental health, substance use disorder and other non-violent situations
decrease police involvement in low-level offenses or non-criminal conduct (e.g., mental health crises); restrict "consent" searches
People who live in Burlington need to feel in control of the police and know they have the power to hold them accountable.

I am not sure why the option of not reducing the police force is not on here. I am very concerned about them having to pick and choose due to lack of staff and the safety of officers in the overnight hours. When smaller calls that could curb criminals from escalating are potentially having to be ignored, you set the stage for increased crime.
I want BPD fire Corey Campbell and Joseph Corrow.
More support for our amazing police force whom are doing a fantastic job during these difficulty times
Get rid of 5 Prog. city councilors
Police focus on crime prevention and investigation, with more support from social services to address mental/behavioral health and addiction.
Prioritization of BPD resources that reflect the crime that actually occurs (homelessness, bike theft, speeding) and less focus on what rarely occurs (gang related shooting involving mass casualties)
A city with a clear vision of what makes a great community and a way to encourage people to support that vision.
They are doing a great Job !
More human resources in combination of conventional law enforcement and community safety patrol.
More active prosecution of vandals and offenders.
Fully staff police force
Unit of police officers who work in the community without weapons like Ithaca NY is doing
More police on staff to bring back neighborhood patrolling
More police presence in the community via real police officers on patrol on foot and plain clothes police officers in areas around town where assaults and graffiti most often occur.
Improved hiring practices

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 6 (text-box answers)

I feel safe in my community and neighborhood DURING THE DAY

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 7 (text-box answers)
I feel safe in my community and neighborhood AT NIGHT
i feel perfectly safe walking around burlington, and police presence has nothing to do with that safety.
I feeler safer in my home address versus downtown church street area (work address)
I live in a very safe neighborhood. When I walk around along at night I feel most frightened to run into skunks. I've lived in other neighborhoods in Burlington that haven't felt as safe as mine.
Extremely low incidence of violence
see above. My neighborhood is well lit, and even the few homeless who are living in local support situations are polite and considerate.

there have been multiple break-ins and vandalism in my neighborhood reported in FPF
It depends on where I am and what I'm doing.
I'm not out late at night; but when leaving the theater (before pandemic) I was never afraid to go to my car alone in parking garage.
As a woman I will no longer walk alone to my car at night in the downtown area after dark.
I do not feel safe downtown
I am a woman, and depending on where I am, I'd be a little more wary of being alone at night. Really public areas like Church St. are fine, but walking home alone--even to a "nice neighborhood" in Burlington, always has me quicken my step and stay really alert. Nothing has ever happened to me, but I have known an acquaintances who was assaulted right in town near her home. It was years ago now, but I always remember that when I'm walking home. And she was in her late 50's as I am now. So it can happen to anyone.
See above
I'm female
That's when the bad stuff seems to happen
I'm a woman living alone. I never feel safe, and more cops makes it worse knowing the pervasive culture of violence, misogyny and racism
After dark things seem less safe for a woman on the street alone
More of the same crimes, adding vandalism and theft
ANEW place moving to Champlain Inn has resulted in distributive, disorderly, and unpredictable people being present in what was once a quiet and safe neighborhood.
I am a woman and have been taught to fear the night
Numerous night time crimes occurring regularly
Crimes are not always taken to court
I feel even less safe at night. The Police department has become reactive and is no longer proactive because of the city council
My experiences living in Burlington for 16 years.
People set off fireworks, animals in our home are upset by it, we're all agitated, I'm not sure if gunfire, fearful that someone is killing wildlife.
I carry
crime rate increases after dark
See above
The nearby homeless camp is resulting in more shady characters and burglaries. There a few police around at night. It is not safe for women and children.
See above - only worse
crime that goes unprotected and unsolved
The homeless use church street as there living room and I don't feel the people are save
A New Place shelter on Shelburne Road has introduced an increase in crime and people wandering the streets at night
same as above
There have been several burglaries in our neighborhood and a noticeable rise in property crime. The police department needs to take a "broken windows" approach to

<p>policing. When we let the small property crimes happen, it leads to more crime and unsafe neighborhoods.</p>
<p>I feel safe in my neighborhood, good people live here. Low crime and drug use. I do not feel safe anywhere else in Burlington.</p>
<p>Again, i am aware of my area and know my neighborhood well</p>
<p>The police department has lost officers, and while my spouse and I don't support the level of officer staffing as high as it was before, we also fully support, deserve and expect 24/7 police coverage in a city the size of Burlington.</p>
<p>Because police forces have been minimized and we are no longer well covered in the EMERGENCY department at night in case of emergency</p>
<p>More patrols needed in old north end and areas where college kids live.</p>
<p>Cause i will fight back and end your ass if you mess with me</p>
<p>Night-time car break ins are the biggest crime.</p>
<p>residential neighborhood with students active at night. Same as above</p>
<p>I often walk down north street at night or through battery park and it's generally completely safe</p>
<p>same as above</p>
<p>It's terrifying to have to walk somewhere at night -- even to my car. There are groups of usually men in their 20-30s that truly make me feel afraid. Often they yell over rude things at me, a couple of times one or two of them have followed me.</p>
<p>car break ins and reduced policing</p>
<p>I had my windows smashed at my business at Christmas and didn't find out until the dad after because there were no patrols.</p>
<p>Police promptly respond to emergencies and are available to discuss concerns and options.</p>
<p>See above</p>
<p>My neighbors are very kind</p>
<p>There have been numerous instances with sketchy characters around.</p>
<p>same</p>
<p>I do not feel comfortable walking alone at night, but I am comfortable walking with others</p>
<p>Would like the police department to partner with UVM police and give them jurisdiction over students in neighborhoods</p>
<p>My spouse was just sexually assaulted by a stranger at night not too far from our home</p>
<p>I feel mostly comfortable at night</p>
<p>There is no deterrent to crime and crowds along lady in Appletree Bay Beach at night we have had furniture taken from the property near the beach people sitting on our decks lots of noise at night especially weekends and when school is out. It's all disturbing especially from 12 to 3 in the morning but there's an element of unknown and the fact that there's no patrol despite crowds, fires, and noise. It seems sometimes this is almost like the after hours party location after Church Street closes down.</p>
<p>Frequent melees in Callahan park in the late evening.</p>
<p>There is an extremely low crime rate in this city.</p>
<p>I'm a little bit scared of the dark</p>

i'm a white person not at risk of harassment from the police
I am a privileged white male
When it's dark out and the shoppers and commuters are on the way home all that's left are people out looking for things to do when they can't be seen.
Random violence is rare in Burlington and I'm a white male
All of the above reasons that happen during the day and add I'm a single female.
Crime
Lack of serious crime
Same as answer above
I worked part time at downtown church where homeless left needles and defecated in bushes around church
There are fewer police during these hours
because you defunded the police and they can't appropriate respond with the people and tools they need. Officers are afraid to take the aggressive steps they need to protect people.
My cars have been rifled thru many times, DUH they come on recycle nights, hello Police are you listening?
I'm female and know better
I show up in the world with race and cisgender privilege
Lots of creepy men, lots of drug activity
Was assaulted recently mist outside my apartment building.
Rising crime and defunded police
Gets worse
Sometimes I notice nefarious characters acting in bad faith downtown
Too quiet, not enough police presence, obvious drug dealing
drunk frat boys and UVM athletes are out there raping and destroying property
My car has been broken into at night
Police have stopped patrolling at night
folks are out and feel emboldened to commit crimes at night.
I know multiple women that have been assaulted at night in the ONE
I know who is on the street in Burlington. The man who held up a gas station and fired a shot last winter recently gained access to a UVM dorm and terrorized students. He's but one of many such people on the loose here.
I don't feel safe in the City, specifically Church Street and parts of the old north end.
I have had a lot of good experiences at all times of day throughout Burlington.
The increase in homelessness
I'm a white male. I have nothing to fear simply for being born with white skin and a penis. That's not okay that people who differ from that have different experiences.
drug gangs and whores
I do not see police patrolling at night anymore
Theft is rampant and the current policies of defunding police are making it worse and not able to be controlled. It is becoming more justified by this the policy makers to break and enter or just steal if it's "needed".
I am a white person and I am not targeted by the Burlington police department
less safe as a woman at night

Of the homeless population downtown
Depending
I feel completely safe.
Violence in Burlington seems low
Near some unsafer areas of town.
Undermanned police force
Crimes happen more frequently in the evening, which need a higher police response.
Drunk and homeless wandering around town
Because you cut the funding to the police they are at less than half staff you keep letting illegal aliens and door stay in putting them above American people
I believe police staffing drops overnight, leaving fewer officers patrolling.
High visibility
I happen to live in a wealthy neighborhood where nothing bad happens
Living and working near church street doesn't feel safe at night. Too many bars, too many fights, too much suffering.
Burlington is safe and the police are doing an awesome job.
As a woman, I'm never really safe alone at night.
More drug stuff at night; very loud gatherings nightly less than a block away
As a female, I do not like to be out alone at night. I also live on a street where there are shady characters and drug deals happening at an apartment complex on the other end of the street, even though it is a family neighborhood.
I am safe in my community and neighborhood at all times.
I do not live in fear because God protects me
There is often theft issues in my area where homes are broken into.
The NNE suffers from lack of attention when the downtown requires a greater police presence.
Oakledge Park is a huge gathering with no police patrolling
I am a large male who is trained in mma and i carry a gun. i would feel much less safe if i were a smaller male or a female. it would be much less safe if BPD stopped foot patrolling after 2am.
The news says we hardly have enough police to respond at night.
Police officers are 2 minutes away
Just beginning to go out again at night after the Covid cautions for over a year. I don't go out at night by myself after 10 pm usually in any case but would feel safe being out late with my partner or a friend.
I feel very safe
The criminals run amuck because they pull the race card and get off Scott free.
Darkness feels scarier
Too many drug dealers. Too many assaults and shoutings. Lack of police since defunding has started. We use to see them all the time. Now we never see them.
Police were defunded and had staffing reduced. Shootings and burglaries are regularly occurring.
there are some parts of the ONE that i would not want to walk around in by myself at night but my area is generally safe

poor lighting, few people out, break-ins in parking lot
Drunk college kids are mostly harmless
Feeling less safe as the number of officers is reduced
I am a woman - never going to be a 10 at night
Again, my demographics make me safe.
Social change has decreased staffing at the Police Department. This has also decreased morale at the Department which is visible through the decrease in proactive policing. In turn, I feel safety of the city has decreased.
Connector brings occasional crimes - fireworks, fires.
Safe street.
As a frequent pedestrian on Burlington streets, the interaction with traffic is worrisome, especially the non-functional crosswalk signals before 6:00 AM. The flashing yellow light is ineffective -- it gets no response from the vast majority of drivers even with a reflective vest-clad pedestrian in the crosswalk.
I'm unsure because I don't go out late at night
People are out walking around drunk or high and there is no control. My husband was shoulder checked and cursed at by some random guy just walking down the sidewalk. Last summer when the protests were going on, we were trying to drive home and came upon a few men who were chasing down another man, who man, who was bleeding and tried to get into our car
We are a city with a vibrant, wonderful, diverse nightlife.
Have had house broken into at night while away for the weekend, and also concerned about cutting back police resources at night will have negative effect
It's only at night that burglary, rape and vandalism have occurred where we have been living.
I'm a white cis-gender male... I can hide my sexuality, I can hide my religion.
Neighborhood and strong police department
It's Burlington I am a rational human being.
I used to feel comfortable downtown at night but now I avoid it
Car breaks are common on the street at night. Noise from Oakledge Park is often extremely loud. Evening gatherings extend way past closing with loud music. Campfires are lit on the beach and on the rocks near overhanging trees. Fireworks are set off frequently, very late at night and in the wee hours of the morning. Cars race in and out of the parking lot with squealing brakes and tires and slamming car doors. Shouting , foul language, screams, etc are common at all hours.
I almost always feel safe at home or out in Burlington. Compared to where I grew up, Burlington has few issues that affect my safety.
I understand how people communicate at different times of the day and know when to make space from people who maybe having challenges in a system which is not equally accessible.
I do not feel safe due to all the riots and protesters that are allowed to harass people and to violate the law by camping in the parks.
I live in a good part of town and I'm a thirty year old middle class white man (i.e. least likely to experience violence).
at night there have been break-ins, noise, and intoxication with damage/destruction of property

I can go for a walk at night in my neighborhood and not be scared.
Still seems safe, just darker!
Lack of Police patrols due to budget cuts made by the city council without a plan in place to address these shortfalls in staffing.
Occasional hooliganism on North Ave, but nothing that's ever really concerning
See above
People could be hiding somewhere I can't see because it's dark. Less people around if I need help.
Hard to see people lurking around and let's face it, most criminals aren't doing their deeds during the daylight hours.
I do not feel safe with the Burlington Police force constantly patrolling.
I never see any police anymore
too many drunk people in my neighborhood at night
I feel relatively safe and still feel the comfort of my privilege, but I do still worry about my safety and the safety of others when police are nearby.
The opposite above. Roving shitfaced students in groups scare me the most
I am privileged to live and work in a well-lit and central area of Burlington.
Consistent speeding and red light running in Shelburne Road, motorcycles racing on Shelburne Rd at night, the behavior that I have seen and heard around A New Place, and the behavior at the homeless encampment on Sears La. These make me want to move my family and company from Burlington.
There's usually nobody around anywhere
I usually feel safe, even at night
Same as above
bad actors are now emboldened in Burlington
Lot of public intoxication that leads to being verbally harassed or being followed. I've also witnessed drunk driving too many times in Burlington.
It's been very rare for me to feel uncomfortable/scared in BTV, and any issues I've been encountered with have been people in mental health crises, which data show VERY RARELY represent an actual threat to others
I'm a white woman. As a woman my guard is more elevated at night, but I recognize my whiteness makes me safer in most spaces.
I do not spend time in Burlington neighborhoods at night outside of Church Street.
same as above and also thefts from porches and cars
I know my neighbors and feel safe in that connection with them
Donwtown is not safe. Little is done to help lower crime.
I am weary in most places at night.
same as above.
Public drunkenness and guns are a lethal mix.
Not enough policing!!!
I live in the Old North End and frequently see police cars near apartments in the area. Additionally, some areas of the community are not well lit.
Aggressive street-level behaviour, verbal harassment, public intoxication are common experiences
Not applicable

Same as above
The streets are somewhat less orderly there is more substance use in the evenings
No particular reason
I haven't felt unsafe.
situations that feel unsafe are a bit more common at night with more alcohol involved
I have witnessed drunken behaviors which can turn into fighting and sexual harassment
Again, I feel safe in my home because I know that I can call the police if I need help. I also don't walk alone down certain streets. This question is amorphous. Location matters.
Mentally ill people suffering homelessness physically threatening others downtown.
I actually feel safer at night. There are less people snooping around it seems, and the drunks have passed out
I think it's somewhat safe here at night, but there's no safe place at night in this country. Night time is dangerous.
Thrice I've been yelled at from cars when returning home (only once during the day).
Generally safe, but always lock car & doors due to occasional car breaking.
I would not go to Burlington at night unless I'm in a group of 3 or more people.
I think to feel more safe we need to have more properly trained officers.
Same as above
too many vagrants
I have felt less safe in recent years...not sure why. Perhaps aging. I usually feel safe enough to walk the 4 blocks home from the center of town.
I am a white privileged male
BPD does not have enough staff to service the current needs in our community.
I live in a small community in Colchester off the beaten path. Nothing ever happens here.
As a woman, there are places where I do not feel safe at night.
I live in a neighborhood filled with families that are all welcoming and friendly
Same as above.
I know a lot of our neighbors and they tend to be engaged and considerate. I am a white man as well, and recognize that this tends to lend a significant sense of safety to my daily existence.
Same as above, plus I know that our city is incredibly low in violent crime statistics, and I am a cis white man incredibly privileged against any risk of violence
Again- the Police are throwing a Temper Tantrum saying they don't have the resources for night patrol due to the Police Reforms we need.
Depends upon how late at night. Females, especially alone, must always be vigilant.
Same as above
There are areas in my neighborhood that are unsafe, so I avoid them, I also never see police presence, either foot patrol or cars, even when it would be helpful.
We have relatively frequent uninvited visitors to our space. Our cars are rifled through for easily grabbable valuables and spare change. These are pretty low-level annoyances we can deal with. Our neighbor across the street was involved in a federal drug bust, but within a few months was back in the home and continuing business as

usual. A person in that same home was shot, leading to a car chase through the neighborhood. These are situations that feel more significant and potentially avoidable with more proactive monitoring of known large-scale drug dealers.
Streets aren't well lit
I worry a bit for my adult children because they are black. Otoh As a financially secure white woman I feel very safe.
I'm retired now, but I have been followed home from the clinic where I worked and on occasion grabbed at (I am a woman).
The street where I work is not well lit.
There is some vandalism at night
Too many people out late doing bad things
I live in a pretty quiet neighborhood and generally don't feel much of a threat at night. However, as mentioned above, there have been a few incidents that have left me a little uneasy at times.
Same answer as #6
I don't live in the city
See above response.
I feel that Burlington is a generally unsafe place
BPD presence and response times
People are more likely to be drunk, high, or "letting loose" at night, less under the norms and constrains of daytime society.
Violent crime seems to be on the rise here and you rarely see police anymore.
Same as above.
again officers surround and harrass me day or night. makes it hard to leave the house
Known drug house in close proximity to where I live
there are signs of mental health issues and drug issues in a homeless encampment near me. Separate from the homeless community, my female roommate has been followed home when she leaves her night shift on two occasions to a point where she decided to drive back to her place of work for safety rather than leave her car to enter our house.
I am a queer, AFAB person
I have been harassed by cis white men a lot
Because I don't live in Burlington
I'm concerned about crime levels in this area--mostly break-ins and home invasions.
I do
I used to but crime is up and Officer numbers have decreased. I dont get that math??
I very rarely come to Burlington after dark.
I no longer feel safe walking to my vehicle from my place of work at night.
I know that Burlington is a safe city, but also know that some dangerous crimes happen at night.
Low crime, safe environment, trusted population.
My agency does not respond to emergency situations at night without the police and so with their decreased staffing, they are less likely to be available to respond.
I feel that after dark is an inherently more vulnerable time as a woman in particular

People are out & about quite a bit, porch lights on.
I still feel very safe almost all the time at night, I am slightly more apprehensive at night, but not because of any personal experiences
I bike up King St. on the way home from work, and there's a group of men that live on the North East corner of Church and King who enjoy harassing the passerby, so that's a little sus, and one time someone threw a full water bottle at me while I was walking dogs.
There's nothing you can do about mental or physical violence that you witness, even if you finally give into calling the police, for physical violence only, they come and say "stop", leave and then the people fighting continue to fight. It's almost like they will only respond to things if people are already murdered instead of trying to help solve intense conflict before it gets to that extreme..
I feel safe in public areas, I do not feel as safe on small side streets
I live in a college neighborhood. Because I am also a college student I feel some level of connection with my neighbors even if I don't know them. However, as a woman, I always feel unsafe at night because men and sexual assault.
i trust my neighbors and my fellow community members
I am a woman and you just never know.
I am a large white male who has lived in far rougher areas.
I've been racially profiled by BPD when walking outside at night.
same answer
We live near Leddy park and sometimes there is questionable activity over there.
I am a white woman living in an affluent part of the city. The police are rarely around here.
As a female, I will say I have never felt fully comfortable at night as there are too many areas where it is easily to discreetly hurt someone at night. Burlington also often over responds to situations with too many officers instead of just one or two (see other local police forces who do not deploy 6-8 to a small scale situation)
I don't feel unsafe in my neighborhood, but know that people roam around breaking into cars and the like. I wouldn't go walking at night. I do attend events, meals down town but always am on guard.
I don't leave my immediate neighborhood at night by myself.
I am white
I almost always feel safe but a recent spate of shootings have begun to concern me
As a female I do not like to walk home from downtown alone at night.
I am self sufficient.
The increase in robberies and public mental health crises impact my sense of safety
The place I feel the least safe is church street at night because of men coming home from the bar. I feel safe elsewhere.
When dining or attending events at night in Burlington.
I am a Black woman
Same as #6.
I am white male
At home I feel safe, but not out in public alone
Well, I haven't really been out at night for the last year! I generally feel safe, but again, err on the side of overcautious.

never had any problems
I am probably perfectly safe at night, but I've been socialized to think it's unsafe for me to go out after dark. That said, I do have a big scary dog who would protect me if anything were to happen
some car break-ins in my neighborhood.
I can walk around safely at night in my neighborhood
Because I feel safe in Burlington at all times
see above
I'm inherently more nervous at night
As a female, walking alone at night, I always feel a little more anxious than during the day.
Police harassment of community members and poverty-based crime.
See above.
See above.
In the dark it's hard to have any sense of another person's intentions
Less police coverage lately
I generally feel unconstrained in my activities by safety concerns but am more cautious at night.
There have been multiple reports of break-ins and car vandalism at night in my part of town.
I'm not leery at night but my family thinks I should be
I don't feel very safe because of the police. Anyone with social skills more advanced than mine, most people, can accuse me of a crime and the police, seeing them as a victim, will, in one way or another, hurt me.
See above.
I feel very safe at night.
I am female, 64 years old. How safe I feel walking downtown or to restaurants in Old North End varies depending on other people out & whether I am alone or with someone else.
Police Cuts
1 renter across the street died of drug OD and her replacement has abusive boyfriends in and out. They fight at all hours. Also, cars are consistently broken into and bikes missing from garages in my neighborhood.
Some times there are people acting in a way I think I should be cautious.
I've lived in my home for almost 20 years. I believe I know the pros and cons of my neighbors and can plan accordingly. But it's different if this question is about walking around the neighborhood...
Same as above
I do not fear physical harm but I do fear loss of personal property.
I feel safe in my home but we hear gunshots sometimes possibly from Oakledge Park.
I don't feel threatened.
I'm rarely out late, but when I am, I always feel safe here.
I do live in a safe neighborhood where we look out for each other.
Again, no problems, although my previous experiences elsewhere lead me to be more wary of evenings/nights

See above
It's pretty safe but people are always posting on front porch forum about people going through their cars or they cars getting keyed.
always lock all doors, live-in son, know the neighbors
Same as above.
There are not enough police seen on streets
Its a small neighborhood and someone could hear me if I screamed?
Same as for during the day
only the central downtown area is well lit; vehicle and pedestrian traffic is less; fair number of drunk, drugged, and impaired people wandering about at night
I am a woman, always cautious regardless of where I am
It's Burlington, and I felt safe at night in Philadelphia.
There have been a few worring incidents which make me question the overall safety.
I have history of being raped and I am always cautious when walking at night and careful to lock all my windows and doors when I'm alone in the house. I have trained in model mugging and Aikido.
As a woman, I always feel more wary at night.
See above but worse at night
I am a woman. If I feel 100% safe, i'm in trouble. But I feel like we have a safer place to be than most!
The crime took place at night
NOT ENOUGH OFFICERS TO KEEP US SAFE!!!
I am a female and feel more anxious when I am alone in the dark.
Concerned about homeless people
I do not walk around downtown alone at night
Not a 10 because I'm a woman and no where is safe at night
I'm white.
Less police at night which s when things happen around here. Car breaking etc.
The shortage of police officers
I just feel safe.
I am fortunate to live in an area where there has been little crime beyond car break-ins. That being said if someone is hell bent on getting something or someone there is actually little that one can do beyond locks on the doors and windows or being able to defend against. Again, the use of night time and the dark as a fear inducing factor and to conceal movement is. just a fact.
I've never had a problem walking alone at night
I am white. I don't have to be scared of the police.
People are more vulnerable at night because it's dark and there are fewer people around to get help from.
Cars have been vandalized on my street
Only thing here at night are taggers and drunk college students
I don't feel safe the police have been restrained and downsized
There has been some vandalism over the past 9 years I have lived in this house, but not much.
Same as above

I feel relatively safe but there are more people in the evening who are not necessarily from the community or dealing drugs.
Corner of King & So. Winooski --- not comfortable alone.
I feel safe in my community and neighborhood.
Lots of theft, homeless folks, and other questionable folks on the street. Empty home next door where homeless + others gather
With the police staffing cuts, this number has gone down from where it was prior to June 2020.
Most crimes on strangers happen at night
same as above
its mostly property crimes and petty theft
No patrols in NNE at night
Less police mean more crime.
Church Street and City Hall park need police to enforce the rules. I have not seen one police officer in City Hall Park since it opened. People peeing, drug deals going on, skateboarders, bicycling, pot smoking, homeless,
I feel slightly less safe and more aware at night because The nighttime is just a little more unsettled time of day.
I look male and "white"
Incidents of gun fire nearby.
Houses & cars have been broken into in our neighborhood.
Generally, I feel pretty safe but I don't go walking at night because lighting on some streets is not that great.
My street is safe and both police station and fire station are close.
I would not feel safe walking around town at night without a companion or my dog
Same as above.
Not walking downtown, but, yes, walking around my neighborhood.
My neighborhood is mostly families with kids and older people
In my neighborhood yes, but downtown there's always risk for a woman
Just generally less safe as a woman
No police presence and night. Large fields across the street. Close proximity to bike path.
Night time is more vulnerable for females.
People rooming streets at night, noise violence, not enough responders/officers.
I am fortunate to live in an area with low crime rates and a strong community that supports one another.
I am a woman and can easily be victimized
Same as above
I am involved in this community and trust it's inhabitants. And I am white woman and thus do not have to fear the police.
There is a house in my neighborhood that often has domestic disputes and there is evidence of a drug problem there and clearly the folks living in the house are suffering.
When I go out alone, I feel nervous, and if I'm home alone I lock my downstairs windows, even when it's really hot (and I don't have air conditioning). If I'm home alone all night I keep pepper spray and my phone by my bed. My car had been

rummaged through at night and a neighbor had someone come into their apartment, so I do worry a little.
Same as above plus my neighbors watch out for each other.
People get rowdy at night and you never know, needless to say- I lock my doors at night.
I live in an affluent neighborhood, but feel completely safe walking these streets and along the bike path after dark alone. We aren't experiencing muggings here.
Almost as safe at night, so far.
I know my neighbors, historic peacefulness
I mostly feel safe at night but I maintain awareness while out and about
I dont go out much at night.
Student behavior in WARD 1 and adjacent neighborhoods threatens every aspect of the quality of life in the neighborhood that homeowners have invested so much in building.
I don't go out a lot at night, but when I do, I don't feel as safe as during the day.
Feeling less safe in the dark is instinctive; I feel the same way in deep wilderness. My greater fear is potential sexual assault of my young adult daughter and other people at night upon leaving downtown on foot.
Because I've lived here for four years and feel that I understand my street and neighborhood
Traffic and noise and illegal activities after dusk at Oakledge Park spill into our neighborhood. Drinking parties and illegal fires and diving at Rock Point are hard to prevent and represent risk to those involved as well as to the forest.
There are a lot of people wandering around Burlington at night
thefts from cars and property, night time activities at a nearby park
I am unsure about the availability of immediate help if something happens
I try to avoid being out by myself after dark because of possible attacks that could occur. I have my family and closest friends access my GPS tracker so they know I'm safe.
I am a six foot tall, male, combat veteran. I am safe.
Same as above
I don't live in Burlington so I feel safe in my own town. I would not at all feel safe if I lived in Burlington.
Again, I live in an area of low crime, but never feel safe on my own at night.
same as above
I have never experienced anything specific that would cause me to feel unsafe in my community and neighborhood at night; I have often walked/biked around alone at night. However, I am a female, and the state of our society at large is such that I will likely never feel bulletproof.
I don't worry so much about other people, but have a great fear of tripping on these wretched sidewalks.
Its never been a better time to be a drug dealer or thief downtown. You would have to work HARD to get arrested here.
there are very low rates of violent crime in my neighborhood, although there seem to be regular reports of petty crime and the police show up fairly often at Anew Place
aware, intelligent neighbors

I feel that way completely.
There is a lot of petty crime and almost nightly a notice that something was stolen from someone's yard, shed, garage, etc.
Same as above
noise from parties and downtown bar crowds can be unnerving
See above. Also mentally ill residents routinely walk by my apartment door crying or yelling paranoid stuff and nobody helps these poor people cuz our mental health system is shit, and we don't do preventative problem solving; we wait til there's a crisis, then clean up the mess.
At night, I have been uncomfortable walking alone
I walk to and from work - and walk through some zones that make me a bit more uncomfortable when late at night
It is generally quiet
I think more drunk people are out at night and sometimes they can be irrational. But overall I feel safe.
I live in a very busy highly travelled part of town.
There are so few people out. I am a woman and scared to walk alone. I work at 3 am and frequently there are drunk men loitering around my area of work. It scares me to walk from my car to the door alone.
I'm very vigilant when out at night
I'm a woman. I'm never 100% safe at night
Because of the numerous break-ins to cars and apartments around me, I wonder who's out there at night.
Frat boys
My neighborhood feels safe.
Same as above- also a lot of car break ins
As above
I take reasonable precautions if I go out alone at night.
there are plenty of people around who generally seem to be aware and considerate
I feel that the crime rate is relatively low for the population of Burlington as compared to other places that I have lived.
I would like police officers to be available when there are parties/unsafe people on the beach(i tried to talk to some people once about their illegal bonfire and was assaulted)
Mostly feel as safe at night, but I'm more careful and avoid obviously dangerous situations.
I do not feel threatened by any risk of crime during the night
I am privileged, I am male, I am known to my neighbors
There are a lot of people out and about and I'm not as comfortable having my windows open all night like I used to.
No one lives around me
I don't usually venture out at night.
The police and neighbors are violent to Black folks and that makes me unsafe
I have never experienced a situation where I didn't feel safe, but I recognize I am often at home and my living situation feels very safe.

Less police, more crime happening at night (shootings, break-ins, etc.)
Burlington is safe in most areas, but crime tends to happen at night.
my experience supports it.
#6 is more prominent at night.
I occasionally worry when I'm walking alone at night, though nothing bad has happened to me.
I can call police or fire dept.and have it in 5 minutes.
As a woman I never quite feel safe at night anywhere, and here I worry about serial abusers (from UVM and in the community) intoxicated and wandering the streets at night, especially on the weekends. It's a huge problem.
Same as above.
I don't choose to walk alone in my neighborhood at night partly because I would feel more vulnerable and less safe.
Over half of the women in burlington I know own something that while they walk alone they carry in fear of beating raped or kidnapped. That's ok not ok! Dont force women to change, let's teach people to not be bad.
Same as above
Night time allows folks to do things they would do during the day for fear of being seen.
Cut backs in Police funding
I walk my dog in the dark at night. I have never felt afraid.
I feel pretty safe if I'm with people, but less so walking or running alone at night - for the same reasons outlined above. I also worry about leaving my porch door open at night even though I'm on the second floor - partly bc I know break-ins and peeping toms aren't unheard of in BTV, and partly bc I listen to too many true crime podcasts.
same people generally acknowledge and care for each other
Again, there are a lot of people out and about during the nighttime hours as well. I also carry pepper spray and have a "text when home" policy with my friends.
There is not enough enforcement
My former colleague Laura Winterbottom was killed here. As a woman, I always feel at risk
not positive, but i believe between 3-6 AM we have not police?
I have had my car broken into while it was parked in the driveway behind my house. Some of the residents in buildings on my street have late night arguments that include violent, profane language. It often sounds like drugs and/or alcohol is involved. Most often it appears to be between men and women and sounds like domestic abuse. A couple of times, police swat teams have been in the neighborhood searching for someone.
I wouldn't walk alone at night
In my neighborhood it is true, that's why I do not live in the old north end.
I feel somewhat less safe at night because I am a woman.
The drunk students can be intimidating.
For the most part I feel safe. But I lock my car at night and I do not think I could be out alone past dark because I am a young female. More police would not change that sense of fear though.

Most of the bad things that happen here are at night when police coverage is limited. More so now even.
Bike path traffic comes from all over. Someone w through my car a few years ago. Bike stollen. Someone recently found getting out of our unused
a few issues here and there and lighting can be poorer
Drop in PD staffing
People take advantage of others more in the dark.
I generally feel safe.
There is a lot of crime in these old north end streets at night. I haven't felt safe walking the streets at night in several years.
I feel the prevalence of guns and other weapons presents a danger
I'm a white male but really drunk people can make anyone nervous
I feel fairly safe at night, but I know that is because I'm guy. Many of my female friends are concerned about their safety at night, I've been frequently asked to walk them home because of this.
Because Marsha and Benjie are NUTS.
Street lamps are awful. Not enough, very spread apart
Too much traffic on Shelburne road, even at night.
Police response time has severely diminished at night (and may be entirely gone soon) and has placed myself and many fellow night shift workers in grave fear of their safety.
I am typically not out at night. I am a woman, I certainly would not walk or bike at night anywhere.
I don't feel safe
More concerned about night time issues including homeless sleeping on my porch at night
Occasionally, as a woman, when I am alone I don't feel safe
I am white and live in a community where I know my neighbors
Darkness encourages bad behavior.
People drive really fast at night, and there tend to be more drunken fights in the area
I am a femme and never feel truly safe at night anywhere. Burlington is no exception.
I'm female.
I don't have the same level of comfort due to decreased visibility and the potential for criminal activity
My street is pretty quiet
I feel very safe from intentional physical violence, but when riding my bike or walking, I sometimes feel unsafe due to cars moving at high speeds and drivers being distracted.
somewhat concerned in parts of the city although I'm rarely out at night
I mostly present as a white male.
not enough police
I'm chickenshit afraid of the dark and listen to too many true crime podcasts
Visual acuity is limited in the dark; some sidewalks are pretty uneven and some street crossing areas seem to dark.
The city council has chosen to take away police
Thefts in the community.

I feel safe to leave my home alone, unarmed day or night. I have never witnessed violence in my community
I am not often in the neighborhood at night so cannot answer.
No problems in my area
I feel Pine Street at night and Burlington are not safe areas in general.
No
Experiences with street harassment/toxic masculinity
I'm not in Burlington much at night or late at night but students experience sexual assault alarmingly often
Police will not respond when called
College guys yell at me when I walk my dog at night. The way they hollar makes me nervous about sexual assault.
I have had a few negative experiences and it can be very deserted at night.
Crime rate rising
Drug and alcohol problems at 230 Saint Paul
lots of dogs living in homes around us
There aren't enough officers available
Same
Burlington has become scary at night.
Because there are insane people, drug addicts and rapists all over the place and no police
I am a woman and know people who have been harassed/ attacked at night.
i feel safe but if 12 is doing this survey cmon and arrest shaun from across the street this dude is gonna kill someone if he has a bad day
Same as above.
At night it's a quiet area
Not in Burlington at night, and avoid it when I can.
the amount of guns and prejudice in the community makes me feel unsafe, and the high cost of living creates tension within households and among neighbors.
There are visibly drunk and high people allowed to wander the streets and the city does nothing about it.
After dark the streets seem sketchy, doesn't seem like there is anyone around to help of something happens.
I carry and conceal when not at work.
Are you kidding? Im surprised when we call 911 we don't get a IM SORRY THIS NUMBER IS NO LONGER IN SERVICE.
Alarm system, quiet neighborhood...
Same
there is definitely more crime occurring at night
Same as above.
I have had trouble at night especially after the bars close
I was assaulted last summer two blocks from my house. I called the police. They came. I told them where the suspect lived. Nothing was done about it. As far as I know.
It's not safe to walk in Burlington anymore

I don't spend a lot of time out at night, but I don't feel like my neighbors would be as likely to help if they aren't able to see/hear me because windows and doors are closed.
White Male of Privilege, Have trust in the world and the police as most officers are outstanding public servants
Threatening police presence
Not enough street lights. Sometimes not enough people on the street in areas that are really dark at night.
Recent minor break-ins and theft, but generally very safe
Same as above.
As a woman, I do live with a greater risk of experiencing sexual assault, and that risk feels marginally increased in isolated areas at night.
Have lived here 40 years and always feel safe as a white male
The street lights provide plenty of light, and my neighbors are good at retaining control of their dogs.
men
same
there is is just more drug dealing and theft happing during the night
same as above
We know how to look our for each other and protect each other.
The reduction in the police force has been very concerning. Jon Murad has voiced repeatedly his concern for this department and the safety of the community/officers and yet these force reductions still stand. When the police force is reduced in the overnight hours in a party, college town with bars open until 2am, that is a recipe for disaster and large crowd violence where our officers and innocent people would potentially not be safe. Mental health is an issue but we simply do not have the kind of mental health resources available for the extent of our mental health issues in this state. ER's should not be backed up with no place for people in mental health crisis to go. The answer can not be reducing the number of officers. Training them in all the bias issues yes. Disciplining officers who react poorly needs to be addressed that is true. To say the majority of the police force is the problem, getting rid of them is the answer is not. Getting rid of bad apples is, retraining is.
same answer
I am engaged with my community and neighbors. I know there are people who care about me and value my safety. I am not a member of a minority group and therefore have the privilege to walk without fear.
My answer is the same as above.
Burlington and VT in general remains incredibly safe compared to larger metropolitan areas. Anyone claiming otherwise is really fostering a fear mindset
only a slight decrease from daytime because darkness can bring more opportunity for harm, otherwise i feel fine.
because i do not
we've been having some petty crime in our neighborhood after dark
Streets well lit, cars drive slower at night
Burlington's downtown feels scary these days. You can turn any corner and stumble upon people who are intoxicated.

I get harassed.
I have chosen routes home at night that avoid potentially dangerous places.
Street is too dark and there have been some thefts even when folks are home
Same as above.
Burlington is not in an overall healthy posture at this moment. The lack of visible public safety presence, and belief the limited resources will be in a triage mode as calls escalate, raises possibility that of greater personal risk.
I am out at night and feel sfe
As a woman I'm sometimes fearful to be out alone at night. We have a drug and mental health epidemic and I fear that even people who would normally pose no risk to me are forced to make terrible choices due to addiction or other illness.
I do not always feel safe at night as a woman.
Trespassing and theft
With the lack of patrols and the uptick of break-ins it isn't safer
There ia no or little police presence outside police headquarters. I walk past the police headquarters parking lot many times and the lot is always packed with police vehicles. Why are they there instead of patrolling the neighborhoods. Why does an out-of-control party of 400+ people in thew Old North End occur in the middle of the night without the police anywhere around until they are called to leave police headquartes?
I'm white
I am familiar with my neighborhood and believe that people are kind.
Drunks and drug users and being female

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 7 (text-box answers)

I feel safe in my community and neighborhood AT NIGHT

i feel perfectly safe walking around burlington, and police presence has nothing to do with that safety.
I feeler safer in my home address versus downtown church street area (work address)
I live in a very safe neighborhood. When I walk around along at night I feel most frightened to run into skunks. I've lived in other neighborhoods in Burlington that haven't felt as safe as mine.
Extremely low incidence of violence
see above. My neighborhood is well lit, and even the few homeless who are living in local support situations are polite and considerate.
there have been multiple break-ins and vandalism in my neighborhood reported in FPF
It depends on where I am and what I'm doing.
I'm not out late at night; but when leaving the theater (before pandemic) I was never afraid to go to my car alone in parking garage.

As a woman I will no longer walk alone to my car at night in the downtown area after dark.
I do not feel safe downtown
I am a woman, and depending on where I am, I'd be a little more wary of being alone at night. Really public areas like Church St. are fine, but walking home alone--even to a "nice neighborhood" in Burlington, always has me quicken my step and stay really alert. Nothing has ever happened to me, but I have known an acquaintances who was assaulted right in town near her home. It was years ago now, but I always remember that when I'm walking home. And she was in her late 50's as I am now. So it can happen to anyone.
See above
I'm female
That's when the bad stuff seems to happen
I'm a woman living alone. I never feel safe, and more cops makes it worse knowing the pervasive culture of violence, misogyny and racism
After dark things seem less safe for a woman on the street alone
More of the same crimes, adding vandalism and theft
ANEW place moving to Champlain Inn has resulted in distributive, disorderly, and unpredictable people being present in what was once a quiet and safe neighborhood.
I am a woman and have been taught to fear the night
Numerous night time crimes occurring regularly
Crimes are not always taken to court
I feel even less safe at night. The Police department has become reactive and is no longer proactive because of the city council
My experiences living in Burlington for 16 years.
People set off fireworks, animals in our home are upset by it, we're all agitated, I'm not sure if gunfire, fearful that someone is killing wildlife.
I carry
crime rate increases after dark
See above
The nearby homeless camp is resulting in more shady characters and burglaries. There a few police around at night. It is not safe for women and children.
See above - only worse
crime that goes unprotected and unsolved
The homeless use church street as there living room and I don't feel the people are save
A New Place shelter on Shelburne Road has introduced an increase in crime and people wandering the streets at night
same as above
There have been several burglaries in our neighborhood and a noticeable rise in property crime. The police department needs to take a "broken windows" approach to policing. When we let the small property crimes happen, it leads to more crime and unsafe neighborhoods.

I feel safe in my neighborhood, good people live here. Low crime and drug use. I do not feel safe anywhere else in Burlington.
Again, i am aware of my area and know my neighborhood well
The police department has lost officers, and while my spouse and I don't support the level of officer staffing as high as it was before, we also fully support, deserve and expect 24/7 police coverage in a city the size of Burlington.
Because police forces have been minimized and we are no longer well covered in the EMERGENCY department at night in case of emergency
More patrols needed in old north end and areas where college kids live.
Cause i will fight back and end your ass if you mess with me
Night-time car break ins are the biggest crime.
residential neighborhood with students active at night. Same as above
I often walk down north street at night or through battery park and it's generally completely safe
same as above
It's terrifying to have to walk somewhere at night -- even to my car. There are groups of usually men in their 20-30s that truly make me feel afraid. Often they yell over rude things at me, a couple of times one or two of them have followed me.
car break ins and reduced policing
I had my windows smashed at my business at Christmas and didn't find out until the dad after because there were no patrols.
Police promptly respond to emergencies and are available to discuss concerns and options.
See above
My neighbors are very kind
There have been numerous instances with sketchy characters around.
same
I do not feel comfortable walking alone at night, but I am comfortable walking with others
Would like the police department to partner with UVM police and give them jurisdiction over students in neighborhoods
My spouse was just sexually assaulted by a stranger at night not too far from our home
I feel mostly comfortable at night
There is no deterrent to crime and crowds along lady in Appletree Bay Beach at night we have had furniture taken from the property near the beach people sitting on our decks lots of noise at night especially weekends and when school is out. It's all disturbing especially from 12 to 3 in the morning but there's an element of unknown and the fact that there's no patrol despite crowds, fires, and noise. It seems sometimes this is almost like the after hours party location after Church Street closes down.
Frequent melees in Callahan park in the late evening.
There is an extremely low crime rate in this city.
I'm a little bit scared of the dark
i'm a white person not at risk of harassment from the police

I am a privileged white male
When it's dark out and the shoppers and commuters are on the way home all that's left are people out looking for things to do when they can't be seen.
Random violence is rare in Burlington and I'm a white male
All of the above reasons that happen during the day and add I'm a single female.
Crime
Lack of serious crime
Same as answer above
I worked part time at downtown church where homeless left needles and defecated in bushes around church
There are fewer police during these hours
because you defunded the police and they can't appropriate respond with the people and tools they need. Officers are afraid to take the aggressive steps they need to protect people.
My cars have been rifled thru many times, DUH they come on recycle nights, hello Police are you listening?
I'm female and know better
I show up in the world with race and cisgender privilege
Lots of creepy men, lots of drug activity
Was assaulted recently mist outside my apartment building.
Rising crime and defunded police
Gets worse
Sometimes I notice nefarious characters acting in bad faith downtown
Too quiet, not enough police presence, obvious drug dealing
drunk frat boys and UVM athletes are out there raping and destroying property
My car has been broken into at jight
Police have stopped patrolling at night
folks are out and feel emboldened to commit crimes at night.
I know multiple women that have been assaulted at night in the ONE
I know who is on the street in burlington. The man who held up a gas station and fired a shot last winter recently gained access to a UVM dorm and terrorized students. He's but one of many such people on the loose here.
I don't feel safe in the City, specifically Church Street and parts of the old north end.
I have had a lot of good experiences at all times of day throughout Burlington.
The increase in homelessness
I'm a white male. I have nothing to fear simply for being born with white skin and a pe is. That's not okay that people who differ from that have different experiences.
drug gangs and whores
I do not see police patrolling at night anymore

Theft is rampant and the current policies of defunding police are marking it worse and not able to be controlled. It is becoming more justified by this the policy makers to break and enter or just steal if it's "needed".
I am a white person and I am not targeted by the Burlington police department
less safe as a woman at night
Of the homeless population downtown
Depending
I feel completely safe.
Violence in Burlington seems low
Near some unsafer areas of town.
Undermanned police force
Crimes happen more frequently in the evening, which need a higher police response.
Drunk and homeless wandering around town
Because you cut the funding to the police they are at less than half staff you keep letting illegal aliens and door stay in putting them above American people
I believe police staffing drops overnight, leaving fewer officers patrolling.
High visibility
I happen to live in a wealthy neighborhood where nothing bad happens
Living and working near church street doesn't feel safe at night. Too many bars, too many fights, too much suffering.
Burlington is safe and the police are doing an awesome job.
As a woman, I'm never really safe alone at night.
More drug stuff at night; very loud gatherings nightly less than a block away
As a female, I do not like to be out alone at night. I also live on a street where there are shady characters and drug deals happening at an apartment complex on the other end of the street, even though it is a family neighborhood.
I am safe in my community and neighborhood at all times.
I do not live in fear because God protects me
There is often theft issues in my area where homes are broken into.
The NNE suffers from lack of attention when the downtown requires a greater police presence.
Oakledge Park is a huge gathering with no police patrolling
I am a large male who is trained in mma and i carry a gun. i would feel much less safe if i were a smaller male or a female. it would be much less safe if BPD stopped foot patrolling after 2am.
The news says we hardly have enough police to respond at night.
Police officers are 2 minutes away

Just beginning to go out again at night after the Covid cautions for over a year. I don't go out at night by myself after 10 pm usually in any case but would feel safe being out late with my partner or a friend.

I feel very safe

The criminals run amuck because they pull the race card and get off Scott free.

Darkness feels scarier

Too many drug dealers. Too many assaults and shoutings. Lack of police since defunding has started. We use to see them all the time. Now we never see them.

Police were defunded and had staffing reduced. Shootings and burglaries are regularly occurring.

there are some parts of the ONE that i would not want to walk around in by myself at night but my area is generally safe

poor lighting, few people out, break-ins in parking lot

Drunk college kids are mostly harmless

Feeling less safe as the number of officers is reduced

I am a woman - never going to be a 10 at night

Again, my demographics make me safe.

Social change has decreased staffing at the Police Department. This has also decreased morale at the Department which is visible through the decrease in proactive policing. In turn, I feel safety of the city has decreased.

Connector brings occasional crimes - fireworks, fires.

Safe street.

As a frequent pedestrian on Burlington streets, the interaction with traffic is worrisome, especially the non-functional crosswalk signals before 6:00 AM. The flashing yellow light is ineffective -- it gets no response from the vast majority of drivers even with a reflective vest-clad pedestrian in the crosswalk.

I'm unsure because I don't go out late at night

People are out walking around drunk or high and there is no control. My husband was shoulder checked and cursed at by some random guy just walking down the sidewalk. Last summer when the protests were going on, we were trying to drive home and came upon a few men who were chasing down another man, who man, who was bleeding and tried to get into our car

We are a city with a vibrant, wonderful, diverse nightlife.

Have had house broken into at night while away for the weekend, and also concerned about cutting back police resources at night will have negative effect

It's only at night that burglary, rape and vandalism have occurred where we have been living.

I'm a white cis-gender male... I can hide my sexuality, I can hide my religion.

Neighborhood and strong police department

It's Burlington I am a rational human being.

I used to feel comfortable downtown at night but now I avoid it

Car breaks are common on the street at night. Noise from Oakledge Park is often extremely loud. Evening gatherings extend way past closing with loud music. Campfires are lit on the beach and on the rocks near overhanging trees. Fireworks are set off frequently, very late at night and in the wee hours of the morning. Cars race in and out of the parking lot with squealing brakes and tires and slamming car doors. Shouting , foul language, screams, etc are common at all hours.
I almost always feel safe at home or out in Burlington. Compared to where I grew up, Burlington has few issues that affect my safety.
I understand how people communicate at different times of the day and know when to make space from people who maybe having challenges in a system which is not equally accessible.
I do not feel safe due to all the riots and protesters that are allowed to harass people and to violate the law by camping in the parks.
I live in a good part of town and I'm a thirty year old middle class white man (i.e. least likely to experience violence).
at night there have been break-ins, noise, and intoxication with damage/destruction of property
I can go for a walk at night in my neighborhood and not be scared.
Still seems safe, just darker!
Lack of Police patrols due to budget cuts made by the city council without a plan in place to address these shortfalls in staffing.
Occasional hooliganism on North Ave, but nothing that's ever really concerning
See above
People could be hiding somewhere I can't see because it's dark. Less people around if I need help.
Hard to see people lurking around and let's face it, most criminals aren't doing their deeds during the daylight hours.
I do not feel safe with the Burlington Police force constantly patrolling.
I never see any police anymore
too many drunk people in my neighborhood at night
I feel relatively safe and still feel the comfort of my privilege, but I do still worry about my safety and the safety of others when police are nearby.
The opposite above. Roving shitfaced students in groups scare me the most
I am privileged to live and work in a well-lit and central area of Burlington.
Consistent speeding and red light running in Shelburne Road, motorcycles racing on Shelburne Rd at night, the behavior that I have seen and heard around A New Place, and the behavior at the homeless encampment on Sears La. Theae make me want to move my family and company from Burlington.
There's usually nobody around anywhere
I usually feel safe, even at night
Same as above
bad actors are now emboldened in Burlington

Lot of public intoxication that leads to being verbally harassed or being followed. I've also witnessed drunk driving too many times in Burlington.
It's been very rare for me to feel uncomfortable/scared in BTV, and any issues I've been encountered with have been people in mental health crises, which data show VERY RARELY represent an actual threat to others
I'm a white woman. As a woman my guard is more elevated at night, but I recognize my whiteness makes me safer in most spaces.
I do not spend time in Burlington neighborhoods at night outside of Church Street.
same as above and also thefts from porches and cars
I know my neighbors and feel safe in that connection with them
Downtown is not safe. Little is done to help lower crime.
I am weary in most places at night.
same as above.
Public drunkenness and guns are a lethal mix.
Not enough policing!!!
I live in the Old North End and frequently see police cars near apartments in the area. Additionally, some areas of the community are not well lit.
Aggressive street-level behaviour, verbal harassment, public intoxication are common experiences
Not applicable
Same as above
The streets are somewhat less orderly there is more substance use in the evenings
No particular reason
I haven't felt unsafe.
situations that feel unsafe are a bit more common at night with more alcohol involved
I have witnessed drunken behaviors which can turn into fighting and sexual harassment
Again, I feel safe in my home because I know that I can call the police if I need help. I also don't walk alone down certain streets. This question is amorphous. Location matters.
Mentally ill people suffering homelessness physically threatening others downtown.
I actually feel safer at night. There are less people snooping around it seems, and the drunks have passed out
I think it's somewhat safe here at night, but there's no safe place at night in this country. Night time is dangerous.
Thrice I've been yelled at from cars when returning home (only once during the day).
Generally safe, but always lock car & doors due to occasional car breaking.
I would not go to Burlington at night unless I'm in a group of 3 or more people.
I think to feel more safe we need to have more properly trained officers.
Same as above

too many vagrants
I have felt less safe in recent years...not sure why. Perhaps aging. I usually feel safe enough to walk the 4 blocks home from the center of town.
I am a white privileged male
BPD does not have enough staff to service the current needs in our community.
I live in a small community in Colchester off the beaten path. Nothing ever happens here.
As a woman, there are places where I do not feel safe at night.
I live in a neighborhood filled with families that are all welcoming and friendly
Same as above.
I know a lot of our neighbors and they tend to be engaged and considerate. I am a white man as well, and recognize that this tends to lend a significant sense of safety to my daily existence.
Same as above, plus I know that our city is incredibly low in violent crime statistics, and I am a cis white man incredibly privileged against any risk of violence
Again- the Police are throwing a Temper Tantrum saying they don't have the resources for night patrol due to the Police Reforms we need.
Depends upon how late at night. Females, especially alone, must always be vigilant.
Same as above
There are areas in my neighborhood that are unsafe, so I avoid them, I also never see police presence, either foot patrol or cars, even when it would be helpful.
We have relatively frequent uninvited visitors to our space. Our cars are rifled through for easily grabbable valuables and spare change. These are pretty low-level annoyances we can deal with. Our neighbor across the street was involved in a federal drug bust, but within a few months was back in the home and continuing business as usual. A person in that same home was shot, leading to a car chase through the neighborhood. These are situations that feel more significant and potentially avoidable with more proactive monitoring of known large-scale drug dealers.
Streets aren't well lit
I worry a bit for my adult children because they are black. Otoh As a financially secure white woman I feel very safe.
I'm retired now, but I have been followed home from the clinic where I worked and on occasion grabbed at (I am a woman).
The street where I work is not well lit.
There is some vandalism at night
Too many people out late doing bad things
I live in a pretty quiet neighborhood and generally don't feel much of a threat at night. However, as mentioned above, there have been a few incidents that have left me a little uneasy at times.
Same answer as #6
I don't live in the city

See above response.
I feel that Burlington is a generally unsafe place
BPD presence and response times
People are more likely to be drunk, high, or "letting loose" at night, less under the norms and constraints of daytime society.
Violent crime seems to be on the rise here and you rarely see police anymore.
Same as above.
again officers surround and harrass me day or night. makes it hard to leave the house
Known drug house in close proximity to where I live
there are signs of mental health issues and drug issues in a homeless encampment near me. Separate from the homeless community, my female roommate has been followed home when she leaves her night shift on two occasions to a point where she decided to drive back to her place of work for safety rather than leave her car to enter our house.
I am a queer, AFAB person
I have been harassed by cis white men a lot
Because I don't live in Burlington
I'm concerned about crime levels in this area--mostly break-ins and home invasions.
I do
I used to but crime is up and Officer numbers have decreased. I dont get that math??
I very rarely come to Burlington after dark.
I no longer feel safe walking to my vehicle from my place of work at night.
I know that Burlington is a safe city, but also know that some dangerous crimes happen at night.
Low crime, safe environment, trusted population.
My agency does not respond to emergency situations at night without the police and so with their decreased staffing, they are less likely to be available to respond.
I feel that after dark is an inherently more vulnerable time as a woman in particular
People are out & about quite a bit, porch lights on.
I still feel very safe almost all the time at night, I am slightly more apprehensive at night, but not because of any personal experiences
I bike up King St. on the way home from work, and there's a group of men that live on the North East corner of Church and King who enjoy harassing the passerby, so that's a little sus, and one time someone threw a full water bottle at me while I was walking dogs.
There's nothing you can do about mental or physical violence that you witness, even if you finally give into calling the police, for physical violence only, they come and say "stop", leave and then the people fighting continue to fight. It's almost like they will only respond to things if people are already murdered instead of trying to help solve intense conflict before it gets to that extreme..

I feel safe in public areas, I do not feel as safe on small side streets
I live in a college neighborhood. Because I am also a college student I feel some level of connection with my neighbors even if I don't know them. However, as a woman, I always feel unsafe at night because men and sexual assault.
i trust my neighbors and my fellow community members
I am a woman and you just never know.
I am a large white male who has lived in far rougher areas.
I've been racially profiled by BPD when walking outside at night.
same answer
We live near Leddy park and sometimes there is questionable activity over there.
I am a white woman living in an affluent part of the city. The police are rarely around here.
As a female, I will say I have never felt fully comfortable at night as there are too many areas where it is easily to discreetly hurt someone at night. Burlington also often over responds to situations with too many officers instead of just one or two (see other local police forces who do not deploy 6-8 to a small scale situation)
I don't feel unsafe in my neighborhood, but know that people roam around breaking into cars and the like. I wouldn't go walking at night. I do attend events, meals down town but always am on guard.
I don't leave my immediate neighborhood at night by myself.
I am white
I almost always feel safe but a recent spate of shootings have begun to concern me
As a female I do not like to walk home from downtown alone at night.
I am self sufficient.
The increase in robberies and public mental health crises impact my sense of safety
The place I feel the least safe is church street at night because of men coming home from the bar. I feel safe elsewhere.
When dining or attending events at night in Burlington.
I am a Black woman
Same as #6.
I am white male
At home I feel safe, but not out in public alone
Well, I haven't really been out at night for the last year! I generally feel safe, but again, err on the side of overcautious.
never had any problems
I am probably perfectly safe at night, but I've been socialized to think it's unsafe for me to go out after dark. That said, I do have a big scary dog who would protect me if anything were to happen
some car break-ins in my neighborhood.
I can walk around safely at night in my neighborhood
Because I feel safe in Burlington at all times

see above
I'm inherently more nervous at night
As a female, walking alone at night, I always feel a little more anxious than during the day.
Police harassment of community members and poverty-based crime.
See above.
See above.
In the dark it's hard to have any sense of another person's intentions
Less police coverage lately
I generally feel unconstrained in my activities by safety concerns but am more cautious at night.
There have been multiple reports of break-ins and car vandalism at night in my part of town.
I'm not leery at night but my family thinks I should be
I don't feel very safe because of the police. Anyone with social skills more advanced than mine, most people, can accuse me of a crime and the police, seeing them as a victim, will, in one way or another, hurt me.
See above.
I feel very safe at night.
I am female, 64 years old. How safe I feel walking downtown or to restaurants in Old North End varies depending on other people out & whether I am alone or with someone else.
Police Cuts
1 renter across the street died of drug OD and her replacement has abusive boyfriends in and out. They fight at all hours. Also, cars are consistently broken into and bikes missing from garages in my neighborhood.
Some times there are people acting in a way I think I should be cautious.
I've lived in my home for almost 20 years. I believe I know the pros and cons of my neighbors and can plan accordingly. But it's different if this question is about walking around the neighborhood...
Same as above
I do not fear physical harm but I do fear loss of personal property.
I feel safe in my home but we hear gunshots sometimes possibly from Oakledge Park.
I don't feel threatened.
I'm rarely out late, but when I am, I always feel safe here.
I do live in a safe neighborhood where we look out for each other.
Again, no problems, although my previous experiences elsewhere lead me to be more wary of evenings/nights
See above
It's pretty safe but people are always posting on front porch forum about people going through their cars or they cars getting keyed.
always lock all doors, live-in son, know the neighbors

Same as above.
There are not enough police seen on streets
Its a small neighborhood and someone could hear me if I screamed?
Same as for during the day
only the central downtown area is well lit; vehicle and pedestrian traffic is less; fair number of drunk, drugged, and impaired people wandering about at night
I am a woman, alwyas cautious regardless of where I am
It's Burlington, and I felt safe at night in Philadelphia.
There have been a few worring incidents which make me question the overall safety.
I have history of being raped and I am always cautious when walking at night and careful to lock all my windows and doors when I'm alone in the house. I have trained in model mugging and Aikido.
As a woman, I always feel more wary at night.
See above but worse at night
I am a woman. If I feel 100% safe, i'm in trouble. But I feel like we have a safer place to be than most!
The crime took place at night
NOT ENOUGH OFFICERS TO KEEP US SAFE!!!
I am a female and feel more anxious when I am alone in the dark.
Concerned about homeless people
I do not walk around downtown alone at night
Not a 10 because I'm a woman and no where is safe at night
I'm white.
Less police at night which s when things happen around here. Car breaking etc.
The shortage of police officers
I just feel safe.
I am fortunate to live in an area where there has been little crime beyond car break-ins. That being said if someone is hell bent on getting something or someone there is actually little that one can do beyond locks on the doors and windows or being able to defend against. Again, the use of night time and the dark as a fear inducing factor and to conceal movement is. just a fact.
I've never had a problem walking alone at night
I am white. I don't have to be scared of the police.
People are more vulnerable at night because it's dark and there are fewer people around to get help from.
Cars have been vandalized on my street
Only thing here at night are taggers and drunk college students
I don't feel safe the police have been restrained and downsized
There has been some vandalism over the past 9 years I have lived in this house, but not much.
Same as above

I feel relatively safe but there are more people in the evening who are not necessarily from the community or dealing drugs.
Corner of King & So. Winooski --- not comfortable alone.
I feel safe in my community and neighborhood.
Lots of theft, homeless folks, and other questionable folks on the street. Empty home next door where homeless + others gather
With the police staffing cuts, this number has gone down from where it was prior to June 2020.
Most crimes on strangers happen at night
same as above
its mostly property crimes and petty theft
No patrols in NNE at night
Less police mean more crime.
Church Street and City Hall park need police to enforce the rules. I have not seen one police officer in City Hall Park since it opened. People peeing, drug deals going on, skateboarders, bicycling, pot smoking, homeless,
I feel slightly less safe and more aware at night because The nighttime is just a little more unsettled time of day.
I look male and "white"
Incidents of gun fire nearby.
Houses & cars have been broken into in our neighborhood.
Generally, I feel pretty safe but I don't go walking at night because lighting on some streets is not that great.
My street is safe and both police station and fire station are close.
I would not feel safe walking around town at night without a companion or my dog
Same as above.
Not walking downtown, but, yes, walking around my neighborhood.
My neighborhood is mostly families with kids and older people
In my neighborhood yes, but downtown there's always risk for a woman
Just generally less safe as a woman
No police presence and night. Large fields across the street. Close proximity to bike path.
Night time is more vulnerable for females.
People roaming streets at night, noise violence, not enough responders/officers.
I am fortunate to live in an area with low crime rates and a strong community that supports one another.
I am a woman and can easily be victimized
Same as above
I am involved in this community and trust it's inhabitants. And I am white woman and thus do not have to fear the police.

There is a house in my neighborhood that often has domestic disputes and there is evidence of a drug problem there and clearly the folks living in the house are suffering.
When I go out alone, I feel nervous, and if I'm home alone I lock my downstairs windows, even when it's really hot (and I don't have air conditioning). If I'm home alone all night I keep pepper spray and my phone by my bed. My car had been rummaged through at night and a neighbor had someone come into their apartment, so I do worry a little.
Same as above plus my neighbors watch out for each other.
People get rowdy at night and you never know, needless to say- I lock my doors at night.
I live in an affluent neighborhood, but feel completely safe walking these streets and along the bike path after dark alone. We aren't experiencing muggings here.
Almost as safe at night, so far.
I know my neighbors, historic peacefulness
I mostly feel safe at night but I maintain awareness while out and about
I dont go out much at night.
Student behavior in WARD 1 and adjacent neighborhoods threatens every aspect of the quality of life in the neighborhood that homeowners have invested so much in building.
I don't go out a lot at night, but when I do, I don't feel as safe as during the day.
Feeling less safe in the dark is instinctive; I feel the same way in deep wilderness. My greater fear is potential sexual assault of my young adult daughter and other people at night upon leaving downtown on foot.
Because I've lived here for four years and feel that I understand my street and neighborhood
Traffic and noise and illegal activities after dusk at Oakledge Park spill into our neighborhood. Drinking parties and illegal fires and diving at Rock Point are hard to prevent and represent risk to those involved as well as to the forest.
There are a lot of people wandering around Burlington at night
thefts from cars and property, night time activities at a nearby park
I am unsure about the availability of immediate help if something happens
I try to avoid being out by myself after dark because of possible attacks that could occur. I have my family and closest friends access my GPS tracker so they know I'm safe.
I am a six foot tall, male, combat veteran. I am safe.
Same as above
I don't live in Burlington so I feel safe in my own town. I would not at all feel safe if I lived in Burlington.
Again, I live in an area of low crime, but never feel safe on my own at night.
same as above
I have never experienced anything specific that would cause me to feel unsafe in my community and neighborhood at night; I have often walked/biked around alone at night. However, I am a female, and the state of our society at large is such that I will likely never feel bulletproof.

I don't worry so much about other people, but have a great fear of tripping on these wretched sidewalks.
Its never been a bette time to be a drug dealer or thief downtown. You would have to work HARD to get arrested here.
there are very low rates of violent crime in my neighborhood, although there seem to be regular reports of petty crime and the police show up fairly often at Anew Place
aware, intelligent neighbors
I feel that way completely.
There is a lot of petty crime and almost nightly a notice that something was stolen from someone's yard, shed, garage, etc.
Same as above
noise from parties and downtown bar crowds can be unnerving
See above. Also mentally ill residents rountinely walk by my apartment door crying or yelling paranoid stuff and nobody helps these poor people cuz our mental health system is shit, and we don't do preventative problem solving; we wait til there's a crisis, then clean up the mess.
At night, I have been uncomfortable walking alone
I walk to and from work - and walk through some zones that make me a bit more uncomfortable when late at night
It is generally quiet
I think more drunk people are out at night and sometimes they can be irrational. But overall I feel safe.
I live in a very busy highly travelled part of town.
There are so few people out. I am a woman and scared to walk alone. I work at 3 am and frequently there are drunk men loitering around my area of work. It scares me to walk from my car to the door alone.
I'm very vigilant when out at night
I'm a woman. I'm never 100% safe at night
Because of the numerous break-ins to cars and apartments around me, I wonder who's out there at night.
Frat boys
My neighborhood feels safe.
Same as above- also a lot of car break ins
As above
I take reasonable precautions if I go out alone at night.
there are plenty of people around who generally seem to be aware and considerate
I feel that the crime rate is relatively low for the population of Burlington as compared to other places that I have lived.
I would like police officers to be available when there are partiers/unsafe people on the beach(i tried to talk to some people once about their illegal bonfire and was assaulted)
Mostly feel as safe at night, but I'm more careful and avoid obviously dangerous situations.
I do not feel threatened by any risk of crime during the night
I am privileged, I am male, I am known to my neighbors

There are a lot of people out and about and Im not as comfortable having my windows open all night like I used to.
No one lives around me
I don't usually venture out at night.
The police and neighbors are violent to Black folks and that makes me unsafe
I have never experienced a situation where I didn't feel safe, but I recognize I am often at home and my living situation feels very safe.
Less police, more crime happening at night (shootings, break-ins, etc.)
Burlington is safe in most areas, but crime tends to happen at night.
my experience supports it.
#6 is more prominent at night.
I occasionally worry when I'm walking alone at night, though nothing bad has happened to me.
I can call police or fire dept.and have it in 5 minutes.
As a woman I never quite feel safe at night anywhere, and here I worry about serial abusers (from UVM and in the community) intoxicated and wandering the streets at night, especially on the weekends. It's a huge problem.
Same as above.
I don't choose to walk alone in my neighborhood at night partly because I would feel more vulnerable and less safe.
Over half of the women in burlington I know own something that while they walk alone they carry in fear of beating raped or kidnapped. That's ok not ok! Dont force women to change, let's teach people to not be bad.
Same as above
Night time allows folks to do things they would do during the day for fear of being seen.
Cut backs in Police funding
I walk my dog in the dark at night. I have never felt afraid.
I feel pretty safe if I'm with people, but less so walking or running alone at night - for the same reasons outlined above. I also worry about leaving my porch door open at night even though I'm on the second floor - partly bc I know break-ins and peeping toms aren't unheard of in BTV, and partly bc I listen to too many true crime podcasts.
same people generally acknowledge and care for each other
Again, there are a lot of people out and about during the nighttime hours as well. I also carry pepper spray and have a "text when home" policy with my friends.
There is not enough enforcement
My former colleague Laura Winterbottom was killed here. As a woman, I always feel at risk not positive, but i believe between 3-6 AM we have not police?
I have had my car broken into while it was parked in the driveway behind my house. Some of the residents in buildings on my street have late night arguments that include violent, profane language. It often sounds like drugs and/or alcohol is involved. Most often it appears to be between men and women and sounds like domestic abuse. A couple of times, police

swat teams have been in the neighborhood searching for someone.
I wouldn't walk alone at night
In my neighborhood it is true, that's why I do not live in the old north end.
I feel somewhat less safe at night because I am a woman.
The drunk students can be intimidating.
For the most part I feel safe. But I lock my car at night and I do not think I could be out alone past dark because I am a young female. More police would not change that sense of fear though.
Most of the bad things that happen here are at night when police coverage is limited. More so now even.
Bike path traffic comes from all over. Someone w through my car a few years ago. Bike stollen. Someone recently found getting out of our unused
a few issues here and there and lighting can be poorer
Drop in PD staffing
People take advantage of others more in the dark.
I generally feel safe.
There is a lot of crime in these old north end streets at night. I haven't felt safe walking the streets at night in several years.
I feel the prevalence of guns and other weapons presents a danger
I'm a white male but really drunk people can make anyone nervous
I feel fairly safe at night, but I know that is because I'm guy. Many of my female friends are concerned about their safety at night, I've been frequently asked to walk them home because of this.
Because Marsha and Benjie are NUTS.
Street lamps are awful. Not enough, very spread apart
Too much traffic on Shelburne road, even at night.
Police response time has severely diminished at night (and may be entirely gone soon) and has placed myself and many fellow night shift workers in grave fear of their safety.
I am typically not out at night. I am a woman, I certainly would not walk or bike at night anywhere.
I don't feel safe
More concerned about night time issues including homeless sleeping on my porch at night
Occasionally, as a woman, when I am alone I don't feel safe
I am white and live in a community where I know my neighbors
Darkness encourages bad behavior.
People drive really fast at night, and there tend to be more drunken fights in the area
I am a femme and never feel truly safe at night anywhere. Burlington is no exception.
I'm female.
I don't have the same level of comfort due to decreased visibility and the potential for criminal activity
My street is pretty quiet
I feel very safe from intentional physical violence, but when riding my bike or walking, I sometimes feel unsafe due to cars moving at high speeds and drivers being distracted.
somewhat concerned in parts of the city although I'm rarely out at night

I mostly present as a white male.
not enough police
I'm chickenshit afraid of the dark and listen to too many true crime podcasts
Visual acuity is limited in the dark; some sidewalks are pretty uneven and some street crossing areas seem to dark.
The city council has chosen to take away police
Thefts in the community.
I feel safe to leave my home alone, unarmed day or night. I have never witnessed violence in my community
I am not often in the neighborhood at night so cannot answer.
No problems in my area
I feel Pine Street at night and Burlington are not safe areas in general.
No
Experiences with street harassment/toxic masculinity
I'm not in Burlington much at night or late at night but students experience sexual assault alarmingly often
Police will not respond when called
College guys yell at me when I walk my dog at night. The way they hollar makes me nervous about sexual assault.
I have had a few negative experiences and it can be very deserted at night.
Crime rate rising
Drug and alcohol problems at 230 Saint Paul
lots of dogs living in homes around us
There aren't enough officers available
Same
Burlington has become scary at night.
Because there are insane people, drug addicts and rapists all over the place and no police
I am a woman and know people who have been harassed/ attacked at night.
i feel safe but if 12 is doing this survey cmon and arrest shaun from across the street this dude is gonna kill someone if he has a bad day
Same as above.
At night it's a quiet area
Not in Burlington at night, and avoid it when I can.
the amount of guns and prejudice in the community makes me feel unsafe, and the high cost of living creates tension within households and among neighbors.
There are visibly drunk and high people allowed to wander the streets and the city does nothing about it.
After dark the streets seem sketchy, doesn't seem like there is anyone around to help of something happens.
I carry and conceal when not at work.
Are you kidding? Im surprised when we call 911 we don't get a IM SORRY THIS NUMBER IS NO LONGER IN SERVICE.
Alarm system, quiet neighborhood...

Same
there is definitely more crime occurring at night
Same as above.
I have had trouble at night especially after the bars close
I was assaulted last summer two blocks from my house. I called the police. They came. I told them where the suspect lived. Nothing was done about it. As far as I know.
It's not safe to walk in Burlington anymore
I don't spend a lot of time out at night, but I don't feel like my neighbors would be as likely to help if they aren't able to see/hear me because windows and doors are closed.
White Male of Privilege, Have trust in the world and the police as most officers are outstanding public servants
Threatening police presence
Not enough street lights. Sometimes not enough people on the street in areas that are really dark at night.
Recent minor break-ins and theft, but generally very safe
Same as above.
As a woman, I do live with a greater risk of experiencing sexual assault, and that risk feels marginally increased in isolated areas at night.
Have lived here 40 years and always feel safe as a white male
The street lights provide plenty of light, and my neighbors are good at retaining control of their dogs.
men
same
there is is just more drug dealing and theft happing during the night
same as above
We know how to look our for each other and protect each other.
The reduction in the police force has been very concerning. Jon Murad has voiced repeatedly his concern for this department and the safety of the community/officers and yet these force reductions still stand. When the police force is reduced in the overnight hours in a party, college town with bars open until 2am, that is a recipe for disaster and large crowd violence where our officers and innocent people would potentially not be safe. Mental health is an issue but we simply do not have the kind of mental health resources available for the extent of our mental health issues in this state. ER's should not be backed up with no place for people in mental health crisis to go. The answer can not be reducing the number of officers. Training them in all the bias issues yes. Disciplining officers who react poorly needs to be addressed that is true. To say the majority of the police force is the problem, getting rid of them is the answer is not. Getting rid of bad apples is, retraining is.
same answer
I am engaged with my community and neighbors. I know there are people who care about me and value my safety. I am not a member of a minority group and therefore have the privilege to walk without fear.
My answer is the same as above.
Burlington and VT in general remains incredibly safe compared to larger metropolitan areas. Anyone claiming otherwise is really fostering a fear mindset
only a slight decrease from daytime because darkness can bring more opportunity for harm,

otherwise i feel fine.
because i do not
we've been having some petty crime in our neighborhood after dark
Streets well lit, cars drive slower at night
Burlington's downtown feels scary these days. You can turn any corner and stumble upon people who are intoxicated.
I get harassed.
I have chosen routes home at night that avoid potentially dangerous places.
Street is too dark and there have been some thefts even when folks are home
Same as above.
Burlington is not in an overall healthy posture at this moment. The lack of visible public safety presence, and belief the limited resources will be in a triage mode as calls escalate, raises possibility that of greater personal risk.
I am out at night and feel sfe
As a woman I'm sometimes fearful to be out alone at night. We have a drug and mental health epidemic and I fear that even people who would normally pose no risk to me are forced to make terrible choices due to addiction or other illness.
I do not always feel safe at night as a woman.
Trespassing and theft
With the lack of patrols and the uptick of break-ins it isn't safer
There ia no or little police presence outside police headquarters. I walk past the police headquarters parking lot many times and the lot is always packed with police vehicles. Why are they there instead of patrolling the neighborhoods. Why does an out-of-control party of 400+ people in thew Old North End occur in the middle of the night without the police anywhere around until they are called to leave police headquartes?
I'm white
I am familiar with my neighborhood and believe that people are kind.
Drunks and drug users and being female

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 15 (text-box answers)

What organization(s) or people do you rely on to help keep your community safe?

CVOEO, CEDO, Pride Center, Howard Center, CHCB, UVMMC, homeless organizations, Champlain Housing Trust, VT Afterschool, King Street Center, etc.
my neighbors.
First Responders
Police and fire department.
Police, Howard Community Services, King Street Youth

Interfaith community, fire department, ambulance
Because I feel I can trust the system, I'd be likely to dial 911 in a general emergency and trust them to triage and send the right people. If I knew I needed First Call specifically though, I'd call them because I happen to know that program and Howard Center. I'd pretty much trust anyone on this list to help me if I needed something.
My neighbors
police department, fire dept., neighbors
Unfortunately, the police
BFD is great - very helpful and responsive. The police do not keep the Community safe due to their unwillingness to intervene with children.
Police
Police Fire EMS
Law enforcement, fire department and EMS
It depends what the emergency is.
The police
Police
Myself, the Police, and the fire department.
Not many. Police are reactive so it's not as if they are preventing issues. With mental health services, they at least have contact with the sector of our community that needs their services and are more proactive.
FD, PD, EMS, Howard mental
Health (although they mostly keep individuals safe)
Ourselves and police
neighbors are vigilant
Police Department
Certainly not the police they don't do shit. I don't think I've ever seen the police on walking patrol along north street. There's also zero night patrol when the majority of petty theft and drug crimes are taking place. What do they even do? Sit in their cruisers and look busy.
I've purchased a pistol and sought out extensive training to protect myself and my neighbors. My concealed carry firearm is the last opportunity I feel I have for safety
The authorities for serious situations/emergencies. Neighbors and friends for problems that don't require medical help or have uncertainty about safety involved.
This is a stupid question because it depends on the type of emergency. We are not going to our neighbors if the house is on fire.
My self.
These are the people who I trust but they no
Longer respond
Police and fire depts.
My armed neighbors and the EMS

Police, fire, and community.
Police and fire departments
Police and fire department
Police.
I don't other organizations other than Police, fire and ems. They are, for the most part, all going to be great.
We do need police but they need to be better than what we have now, choosing between police and social workers is a false choice
Neighbors
We need more social workers and mental health professionals that can respond to emergencies.
all public service employees
The police
All first responders.
Howard Center is beyond worthless and more often than not refuses to come out when I request help to the point where I do not call them anymore. Instead, I call Burlington PD
NONE
Cops not Bombs, CopWatch, SafeSpace Anti-Violence Program at Pride Center of VT, transformative justice/community accountability practitioners and mutual aid orgs
Police and community at large
police department
I'm a social worker and I think the idea of making us go on calls is stupid. You will not find anyone who will. Those who do are probably sick fucks who get off on human misery (like cops!)
Neighbors and City.
PD
The organizations marked above
police, fire ems
Question 15 is ridiculous. What is the emergency? I'm not going to call the police if I'm having a heart attach. I'm not calling EMS if my car gets stolen. 911 isn't a response. I'm not going to call Mental Health Profesionalns if my house is on fire. Its an entity that emergencies get reported through.
Police
Nobody, you are on your own in Dodge City Vermont
911 should have all of the above options available on call, determine with caller what type/level of response is appropriate. I trust each entity on list, but if a fire I would want Fire Dept there, if an accident resulting in bodily harm, I would want EMS. If a mugging, rape, or home invasion, I would want police and a social worker.
Police department

Mutual aid groups
Self first, but what kind of emergency
People I can trust
I don't
This question is poorly written. You call 911 to get to the police and fire/EMTs. I also want to rely on the state attorney to actually prosecute dangerous criminals, but Sarah George has a history of not wanting to do that. That does not make me feel safe. No amount of community/neighbors/friends and family/social workers can help that.
Friends and coworkers
Because this is their job
Fire department and ER, first call crisis and pathways support line, street outreach, maybe the two or three cops who aren't assholes
Those choices above
The police don't pick up the phone for non-emergencies. Even if they do, they often don't show up or come hours later.
Police
PD and FD
Myself - it's everyone's job to be good members of our community and help others in need.
Neighbors, police
Police and neighbors
We rely on a depleted police force
i just listed them
MY POLICE DEPARTMENT. WHY IS THIS EVEN A QUESTION????? DOESN'T IT EVEN HAVE SOCIAL WORKERS WORKING IN IT ALREADY???
Police officer, Fire Department
Why else do we hire, train, and fund these resources? Can your neighbor catch a burglar, investigate a suspicious death, or stop a domestic assault? Can a social worker stabilize a car crash victim and rush her to the hospital? Can a community organization put out a fire? It's ridiculous that we're even having this conversation.
mostly ourselves
Neighbors, family
First responders, medical professionals, services provided by calling 911.
The Police Department
Those above and friends and neighbors.
911, ems
community - neighbors and friends. police, fire, rescue.
Police, fire, howard street team
what kind of emergency? Police or medical
CVOEO, BPD, BFD

Police Department
Police.
Police
The strong network of friends and neighbors who look out for each other.
Police, Fire, EMS are the core to safety and security
FoodNotBombs, FoodNotCops, Battery Park movement comrades, Prog organizers
The community itself.
Neighborhood, police, fire departments
The Police.
Police and fire
Public safety. Fire, Police, Ambulance
BPD and BFD primarily. Also, I try to be part of the solutions in this community.
Howard Center.
This question is not well designed maybe in order to generate data that fits a certain agenda. Who you call would depend on the type of emergency eg a medical emergency, EMS would be called, a potentially violent situation, the police or 911 would be called. A social worker could be part of the response team which would include a police officer.
Police, fire, emt services
police, fire (including EMS),
front porch forum, neighbors, dog walkers, skateboarders
so far EMS and fire. Close neighbors - we watch out for each other.
I rely on my housemates, friends, community members I have met, and any social workers/mental health professionals.
police and community
Police, fire, EMT, UVM medical center.
My cohousing community.
This question is really shitty; "emergency" can encompass so much and each situation calls for a specific solution.
This question entirely depends on the emergency. Could be 211, 911, Police, Fire, Howard Center, Neighbors, EMS,...
State Police, armed citizens
EMTs and First Call are the only people that come to mind.
Fire department, police department, 911
The police and Fire Dept.
First Call. Spectrum Youth and Family Services. Turning Point Centry. STEPS.
BPD,BFD, EMS, Howard Center Street Outreach, parks patrol (seasonal). I do not find the "activist" groups to be helpful at all in assisting with emergency help.

Neighbors, local businesses and their patrons
as above - and friends, family
Most of the ones listed above
It depends on the situation. Calling a mental health professional may be appropriate in some situations, as would calling friends or family.
Burlington Police Department
Street Outreach
Fire Department
Family, howard center
fire, ems, police
BPD and BFD
The Howard Street Team seems to do a good job preventing situations from getting dangerous. Those questionable low-level, unsociable situations are the most common ones I see downtown and in the ONE, rather than crimes, injuries, or fires.
Police without question!
Mental health services in this area are terrible. You wait forever and there is no follow up. Some if the most egregious criminal cases locally are connected to failures in mental healthcare in our area. My neighbors next door are great for non-emergencies, but as someone with few close connections and no family here, I rely on police and fireman.
This question doesn't make any sense at all.
911 is who I would call in medical emergencies. I rely on community service providers (anti-violence orgs, Howard, First Call, Turning Point, Safe Harbor, etc.) for human service emergencies. I rely on my friends, family and neighbors as my support system to hopefully prevent the need for escalation to other providers.
Neighbors
Burlington Cohousing where I live
Burlington Police Department
my community members, health care workers, fire dept.
the community of A.A, community organizations that can help people meet their needs so that safety is not a concern
Mainly neighbors and friends.
Fire Department; Friends and Neighbors; Police;
COP WATCH !! The Black Perspective ! Vermont Human Rights Commission ! Racial Justice Alliance !
Will NOT call the Police unless ABSOLUTELY Necessary, right now they're USELESS in protecting the Citizens of this Community.
All the above depending upon the situation.
Mutual Aid groups! BTV CopWatch / Food Not Bombs / ONEMA / etc
Burlington Police Department

I rely on the police and community members
friends up the block
This question is a little too vague/confusing: 911->police/fire/ems response. So I might call 911, but I'd rely on response by PD/FD/EMS. I would rely on First Call, Street Outreach, etc. in a mental health crisis. I might turn to neighbors, friends, fam, but in emergency situations I'd want to be able to trust response by First Responders!
First Call/Street Outreach/Howard Center; Pathways; 211/CVOEO
The Police, neighbors
Police
The police department
BPD, BFD (police officers and firefighters)
Police, fire, EMS
The Burlington Police.
Burlington Police and Burlington Fire
Fire, EMS, & Police
Friends, BTV Copwatch
Copwatch
Mutual aid
Food not bombs
Police
The police department
It depends what the emergency is- if it s a fire, then I would depend on the fire department. If its a death in the family then I would depend on my family and friends. If I had something stolen or a crime was being committed, I would depend on 911and the Police-
BPD, BFD, Neighbors
Police, fire department, ems, mental health agencies
All emergency response (fire/police/EMS) agencies, Howard Center, any other 24/7 service
Networks of community members and mutual aid networks
orgs like Food not Bombs helping feed and help people indiscriminately do a lot more to keep a community safe than any police officer could. the main issue with police is the lack of accountability, fix this with individual "malpractice" insurance for cops, so the lawsuit money doesn't come from our fucking taxes when they kill someone.
There need to be more options because technically even the 3 I selected can't deal with a lot of situations I've seen.
mutual aid, copwatch
Mutual aid groups, neighbors, friends
Food not bombs and cop watch btv
Each other

Community organizations like Pathways VT, police and fire
I think we need to be able to rely on our neighbors for day-to-day safety and community. When there is a mental health issue, it should be mental health professionals responding. If there is a medical problem, it should be EMS responding.
EMS - not necessarily corresponding with the fire department - otherwise I would say police
this would depend on the emergency (call Fire Dept for fire, etc.)
Police
all of the three checked. I think social workers and mental health professionals are wonderful adjuncts to the other emergency providers but I could only choose 3 so I was thinking of crime, fire and medical emergency.
Howard Center Spectrum COTS
The preventive work of the Howard Center and other mental health agencies is essential, but not always effective in a crisis. Relationships and connection makes the community safer.
Friends
Police
I feel very safe. Only called 911 once as previously explained.
First neighborhoods, then police and medical/MH first responders
neighbors
mutual aid organizations
Howard Center. Our neighbors.
Police, Fire, EMS, and neighbors.
Programs working to improve the lives of struggling people.
No one. Not a soul. Bupkis. I feel safer in New York City on a subway at 4 am.
Which agency needs to respond depends on the nature of the emergency: Fire Department for a fire; EMS for an urgent health situation (stroke, heart attack); Social worker or Mental Health Professional for domestic situations & for people in mental health crisis or drug crisis
Friends, neighbors, police
Police, Fire, Ems
Neighborhood association
Neighbors
Much will depend on what the need is. This question is too vague.
Neighbors
Police
Neighbors, friends
Howard Center, COTS, Spectrem, mutual aid groups.

family
Police and community services
AA, Al Anon, schools, childcare centers, COTS, Champlain Housing Authority, the Lake, The Food Co-op, developing relationships with neighbors,
Above and neighbors
case workers mostly, though it seems they don't do that great of a job
Friends and neighbors, policing
Police department
Fire department and police department
Police Department
Police, Fire Department and EMS.
emergency means 1. life threatening or 2. someone else is in danger of harm. In any emergency I would want to dial 911 and have that emergency dispatched with appropriate services, fire, ambulance, police.
Emergency services protect and defend life and peoperty. It is up to the citizens within the communities to be vigilant about their own safety as much as that is possible.
I think the police keep our community safe. Also, having engaged citizens/ communities that are brought together by things like front porch forum. Probably religious organizations too.
Citizens who believe in constitutional carry primarily, then federal law enforcement, and then local cops
My second amendment rights!
Fire and police
I guess cops, but they don't even catch the speeders. I have had people go around me, in a school zone, on a double yellow line and then get in front of me and slam on their brakes. I feel safer driving here than other places I have lived, but mainly because there are less people - not because there aren't crazy jerks driving fast with impunity.
Friends and neighbors
police
BPD; BFD
Neighbors
EVERY OPTION OTHER THAN POLICE
Family room
The Burlington Police Department, EMS and the Burlington Fire Department.
The above
Police
The police but they are no where to be found in City Hall park and on church street enforcing the rules.

Police
Fire Department
Police.
Neighbors
Howard Ctr.
It depends on what the issue might be. Howard Street outreach teams when I am at work.
Police, Fire Department, neighbors
BPD
police, fire department, Howard Center
Generally speaking I trust the police to keep me safe and come to my aid as needed. Friends and neighbors phone numbers are listed first as emergency contacts, with obvious reasons to call 911 in the event of an immediate emergency; health or safety related.
Police, EMS
Obviously (or not to whoever made this survey) it depends on the type of emergency!
Police, Fire Department
Neighborhood acquaintances, fire department, EMS, schools
Friends, chosen family, and the network of people who branch out from them.
First responders & police
Howard Center first call, neighbors
BPD and BFD
Howard Center; Community Health Center; UVM Medical Center
EMS, Police, Social Workers, Fire Department
It entirely depends on the nature of the incident, threat, violation
Fire, police and ambulance
Owner-occupier homeowners, followed by BPD and BFD.
Police & Fire departments
see above
That's a ridiculous ranking as it's limited to three: the only thing I would rank lower than others are community organizations (in an emergency, different from a crisis).
citizens practicing courtesy and respect and treating others with dignity
same as above
Primarily, myself. But also the police department.
Neighbors mostly
Fire Department have always been professional and courteous in my experience.
Police officers. I also believe in the collaboration between police and mental health workers which I believe Burlington Police has been doing extremely well for nearly 2 decades.

Police, Fire, Public Works, Pathways VT
CVOEO, Spectrum Youth & Family Services, elementary schools (if/when they don't call the cops on kids)
In my own small bubble, I rely on my roommates/friends. In emergency or escalated situations, I rely on trained professionals to handle what they're trained to handle (fire dept, police, social workers, EMTs).
City Council
NO ONE in this administration
BPD. We have to rely on Anew Place, who manages the low barrier shelter in our neighborhood.
police, neighbors
Community members
Any of these depending on the emergency and accessibility
neighbors, police
Burlington Police Department and neighbors
I make sure I know my neighbors, and keep close friendships with people who might be able to help me out of a tight spot.
police dept, howard mental health and all their programs
The community justice center!
Fire department, 911.
Police Officers and Dept/Social workers
My neighbors and family
I am not sure what organizations I can truly rely on to keep myself, my friends, neighbors safe.
Police/Fire, Food Bank, Howard Center, Spectrum, Community Health Centers, City of Burlington, Burlington School District
Same as above and mental health services
Police/fire/ambulance
Although,when someone drove into my house my neighbors chased him down (with their guns drawn!)
I have almost never used emergency services personally. When I have, my family has taken me to urgent care, or I've called VGS or the fire department to come check out a gas leak, or called my friend who lived around the corner to help me help a neighbor who had fallen and was calling for help.
My parents, Burlington Copwatch, and Foos Not Bombs
Police and fire dept
Police and fire dept.
We have tried to use Howard Center for a neighbor who has been in a state of constant dysregulation, but they are hard to find, rarely available. There need to be more mental health resources in our community. She does not police- she needs mental health treatment.

Howard Center, Anew place
Friends and sometimes mutual aid networks
HowardCenter
People in the community
911
Police, EMS, Mental Health Pro.
I know that many people work on this, and I appreciate their efforts
family or neighbors.
All three of the above
Police dept, fire dept, EMS
Depends on the emergency. I don't generally trust the police or feel safe around them. I have called on neighbors, community organizations, and mental health care professionals as well as the options I checked off.
because they're not preteens straight out of the womb telling me how to live my life.
I would check off the fire department as well if I could. I admire Howard Center's partnership with BPD, but I feel (
from experience) that the police still have the ultimate say in what happens during those calls. Howard Center responders should have the say when it comes to non-criminal calls.
My family, police, fire, EMS,
My neighbors, the police, the Howard Center, DCF, my friends and family
Depends on the emergency...
Depend on police and fire to keep community safe
Police
Police Department
Mostly community organizations and social workers.
First Responders, family and neighbors
None. Not sure what exactly the police do for our community in day-to-day. Genuinely could not name one thing they do for me.
The people trained to assist in those situations.
FPP
Police
police and Fire Departments
My local Police Department, myself and my dogs
Fire department, ems, the Howard center
All of the above
Friends and online community groups
Police and public service
in the short term - the judicial system

in the long term - the school and university systems.
Police
My neighbors. I wish I had more access or knew of numbers to call that weren't the police or 911. I know the information exists and is out there but it should be as well known or more well known than 911.
Neighbors
Police, primarily. Neighbors also.
Regular conversations with neighbors.
I don't have family or friends local, but depends on what the situation is that was contributing to safety issue - if violent/criminal I would call police, if suspicious/worried about drug/MH, I'd call MH organization/worker. If it couldn't wait or was both or I wasn't sure, I'd call 911.
Police, fire department, EMTs
Same as everyone plus Pride Center of VT for LGBTQA issues
We feel like we are under siege due to the activity along St. Paul. We appear to have no help from anyone.
Neighbors that notice routines and will call police during conflict.
Neighbors, friends and family, my therapist, Outright Vermont, Feeding chittenden, Pathways of Vermont.
police
Police and fire departments
It depends on the situation.
the fire department is pretty chill. my friends and neighbors do a good job making sure our corners of our community are in good shape
911 would call the appropriate help
Public safety
PCVT, Mercy Connections
Myself.
People who have their needs met are much less likely to commit crimes
Howard Center, BPD, Safe Recovery, Food Shelf
Not the police. Never again the police.
The police!
I would have no choice but to call 911
Neighbors, friends, city councilor.
Police, EMS, Fire, Mental Health, Medical, Neighborhood Watch, etc. Must be a collaborative effort.
Police, Fire, EMS.
Personal connections
church

Neighbors, community mutual aid groups, groups pushing for more police accountability: that is what is most likely to increase overall safety in our community: when people can truly trust the police to help keep them safe, but people cannot and do not trust them in their current format of having very limited accountability for their actions.
Neighbors
My neighbors, my usual USPS mail carrier, the fire department
friends and family; neighbors; EMS; fire dept
Police
first call
We have a wonderful assortment of community organizations that help people in need. The list is long.
food not bombs, copwatch
Cop Watch Burlington, Food Not Bombs, Battery Park Movement, People's Kitchen
The Women's Justice & Freedom Initiative, Burlington Community Justice Center, and mutual aid groups
Our normal public services - police, fire, and medical. I've had no personal issues with our public services.
Neighbors, emergency services (fire, police) community organizations
friends/neighbors
Local Motion
SASH Nurses and SASH coordinators
Neighbors and friends, Front Porch Forum
Police, Fire Dept. or EMS
Front door forum
All of the above. Street outreach. Community non-profit service providers. Our own resources to secure our facilities and people.
Howard, Pathways, COTS, Spectrum
The Police Dept.
the Fire Dept.
Police and fire
Just people! Pals! Bystanders looking out for one another. Howard Center, 211 number, Pathways

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 16 (text-box answers)

Please share your experience with Burlington Police Department and if/how it

could have been improved:

I have always been impressed with professionalism of the BPD officers I have met
paying traffic tickets
Have had positive interactions
I've appreciated them blocking traffic for us during marches and protests. I've been concerned with the force they've used against Black and Brown neighbors in videos I've seen.
In general my experience with police officers as a person of color have been extremely good. Officers have been professional, polite and reasonable
I sought information when designing a class (which may eliminate my anonymity). They were very polite and very helpful.
Officers need to have empathy for citizens and stop being so harsh and aggressive towards all of us, but especially people of color. My experiences with BPD:
1. Car accident
2. Difficulty with a law-breaking tenant
3. Reporting a person carrying a gun and threatening people
In all cases, officers were unhelpful, rude, and refused to listen. They were defensive and disrespectful and treated me as if I was bothering them.
It would be great if people having a mental health crisis could get help from mental health professionals and not rely on police, who don't really have the tools to help us.
Very satisfactory. Officer was polite and addressed my problem.
Routine business. Very helpful.
I was stopped for traffic violation. Also had a meeting with Asst Chief once. Both times were favorable.
A+ service, no complaint and I can't imagine not having their assistance or why anything would need to be improved.
My only direct experience has been in work-related meetings -- for example as part of the Chittenden County Opioid Alliance, or in other community issue work where BPD has been a partner. And my experiences in those cases were fairly positive.
All positive
As a white person, all of my experiences with the police where POC were also present, were terrifying and the police profiled the POC. I've also witnessed police violently assaulting a drunk college student for being flip
I attended a police academy and it was very good. I'm not sure how you would improve it. More of the public needs to understand the police dept because I believe the news may not always report accurately - they may have a point of view they want to pass on
petty theft and noise complains

Over the years I have had many experiences with police at my previous work positions as part of my job dealing with inebriates. They were very professional and helpful in that capacity. Otherwise, not really many neutral or positive experiences
All experiences are related to working at Howard Center. Police are now unwilling to respond to children engaging in assaultive or destructive behavior, which places people in danger. If the goal of police is to protect and serve, they are doing neither in these situations.
The best
Officers have always been polite and professional
Positive experiences.
Helpful, Cooperative, friendly
Not responsive to community needs
I called them when I found a college student using drugs behind my elderly neighbors home.
Depends on why you need them
I don't have much cause for interaction with the police.
The people who answer the phone at the police department -- and the officers we've talked with by phone --- have been, without exception, very rude and unpleasant to deal with in the 10 years we've lived in the city. They are a creepy disincentive to call the police department. That completely erodes public trust and our support of the police department in general.
If disruptive noise complaints were taken more seriously when they're happening multiple times a night multiple day a week for months on end. I had to start getting confrontational with the police to get them to take the situation seriously AND tell them violence was likely if they failed to address the situation. Thankfully this was several years ago.
Great.
Faster response to noise complaints
Outstanding
They respond frequently to the emergency department and have seen many patient interactions, often with very difficult patients. Overall, they are respectful and kind. As with any profession, there is a range and there can be burnout, but the general feeling is that they do their job quite well
I have called bpd over the years and they do a great job.
Stop hiring sissies that bend to the public .
Many years ago they helped me find and recover a missing object that was of great personal value to my daughter

Mostly just noise complaints and when the driveway is blocked by cars. The blocked driveway problem is extremely inefficient - police come out, take pictures, write it up, call a tow truck, wait for tow truck, ... can take 45 minutes. Would be nice if super basic things like this were outsourced to the tow companies directly. They can take pictures and fill out forms too. Let the police and expensive city employees focus on higher value add work.

Respectful

An officer came by to deliver news of a relatives death. He was very professional.

I've seen them respond to 911 calls related to drug use in my neighborhood. They were fine.

They have been compassionate and understanding when I've called. They understand there is a burgeoning problem in the city with the rising crime and restrictions put on them that prevents them from being effective law enforcement

I was downtown with my daughter and there was a group of intoxicated people blocking the sidewalk, drinking and cat calling so my daughter and I had cross the street. I mentioned it to the police standing on church street. They ignored my concerns and did nothing. It was super frustrating.

-Called when I noticed a woman collapse on the sidewalk at night who was unconscious.

-Called when a client overdosed on heroin (lots of people arrived but none of the EMT's

-They contacted me when there were reports of someone trying to open my windows (maybe citing the person instead of saying they couldn't do anything because outside my house is public property,)

-10 years ago I was sexually assaulted and CUSI investigated and prosecuted the case (they were extremely helpful)

they have been ok

Yes- with my businesses. They have also in the past responded to my home when a stalker from Church St showed up at my home at 4am.

I had an issue with a parking ticket and a car accident. The officers I worked with were professional and helpful. My children also interacted with school resource officers. We spoke highly of their interactions.

I've rallied in support of our police. Helped with special events.

Some nut job was starting to getting aggressive on random people downtown. Cops got in his face and quieted him down. He was clearly intimidating tourists on Church Street. Grateful cops intervened before the crowd intervened.

to date, my interactions with PBD have been fine.

My experiences has always been positive though I have friends and family who can't say the same.

As a young married person my car was vandalized, it took 12 hours for a response and then the officer asked me for names of people who hated me and my boyfriend. I explained that I worked at a nonprofit and my husband worked at a small company and that perhaps it was just random vandalism due to being cabbage night.

My interactions with SROs have been amazing and the actions of SROs in our schools have been amazing.

It was helpful in a domestic abuse situation

Wide gamut of experiences. Some good, some not. They don't seem to take reports of theft seriously.

I have had outstanding experiences with the Burlington Police department. Thankfully I have only had to call them twice and both times the officers who responded were kind, understanding and extremely competent. I acknowledge however that I am privileged by the colour or my skin and socioeconomic status and that not all my fellow Burlingtonians enjoy the same level of assurance when needing to access police services.

They were excellent.

I've worked with BPD over the years as a community partner and the way they have talked about the people in their systems is disgraceful.

I've met with several of the Chiefs over the last 5 years- they are all responsive and open to new ideas

I've met with DRE's who are very committed to self knowledge accumulation and the art of proper testing And training

Would like more foot patrols.

Simple parking enforcement and hellos on the street.

Nice folks.

Of course this country has a big problem with god awful bad apple officers here and there, but I've only had pleasant encounters with BPD.

The police have mostly left me alone but they have certainly never helped me. See my experience calling 911 in the previous section

I worked with a youth organization and in my interactions with police they were consistently unprofessional, unhelpful and disinterested.

They are people doing a challenging job and working to keep our community safe. If I had a question about a policing issue and asked they gave me an answer and seemed to sympathize with me about my concern.

Police were called on my son who refused to go to his room. I feel like in these cases the BPD could have said that this was not an issue to respond to rather than showing up and forcing him to comply. I've also provided some training to police on how to respond to youth in MH crisis or with disabilities and found them largely disinterested in learning

I called on a drunk driver. The dispatcher said they would respond. No follow up

They showed up when called and did what was needed. Stop making Burlington a hostile work place for the police.

Polite, helpful and professional.

I work for a Community Based org. I've learned over time that working with police has been difficult, issues aren't taken seriously, I've encountered anti-trans and LGBTQ+ language, and community members who experience violence or harm rarely choose to interact with police. If I'm not turning to police and the majority of people who experience violence are not turning to police, it's time to invest in other forms of public safety.

Ive worked at bars for years downtown so ive had to interact with the police on countless occasions

I have been arrested a couple times in Burlington. Both times I complied with the officers requests and was treated fine. If you get caught, don't be foolish and get mouthy or try to resist...that is what gets people in more trouble or inadvertently hurt.

No improvement necessary. They are a great asset that has been unfairly and unjustly criminalized to appease self righteous and virtue signaling progressives.

They mean well but need to be provided more autonomy and confidence in their decision making.

Teenage boys= police interaction, skateboarding, hanging out, loitering etc. Police go hang out at Cumberland Farms on the first of the month, If I as a sales rep can pick out the drug dealers, so can the police, stop waiting for the big bust with the pictures and go after the low level scum headed north on I91.

Some nice folks work there, but BPD is inconsistent in how its officers respond, profile, assume, and have no humility or willingness to change. Why no openness to changing? Why is BPD's approach so power-over, "us vs. Burlington" rather than power-with, "us in collaboration with the needs of Burlingtonians."

being less pro-active and more reactive. i.e. not out looking for trouble with citizens but always there if they need help

Dispatcher made fun of the fact I was reporting a suspicious person in my neighborhood who appeared to be looking for opportunities to steal. I was leaving my house and was concerned he would see that and take advantage of the situation. I watched him and called the police and immediately identified myself and provided her with a description, and she made fun of my concern and I never saw where he went, no officer drove by. Damned if you call, damned if you don't.

Just the one recent assault which was handled well...have had bicycles stolen and reported them to police but they apparently do notging in this regard.

Minor accident and they were very helpful!!

They were great

They hired a person with a degree in petting ponies for the sake of diversity. Meritocracy is the only standard in law enforcement and health care. Stop jamming this crap down

everyone's throats.

In college, at the age of 20, I was given a ticket for drinking a beer on a friend's porch. This is an absolute waste of resources and does nothing to protect the community in any way. Stop wasting tax revenue.

Generally limited but respectful.

Repeated calls to report drug deals. Everytime, they seem bothered I called because I don't have immediate evidence.

It has been fine

OK

A bottle smashed on my car. Police officer told me that I should move out of Burlington because it is a crappy town and stuff like this happens all the time. Not sure what was worse- the bottle, or the cop who made it clear that he didn't like Burlington.

Burlington is a professional police department. I have been incarcerated and beaten by police in my life in other places , people in Burlington have no idea how good they have it, these cops are not racist at all.

i got pulled over years ago for not signalling a left turn, even though i was in a turn lane with a turn signal.

i had a person of color in my car that officier could see when they decided to pull me over. they seem surprised to see a white driver. seemed suspicious.

an officier helped my childs friend at school when a classmate called 911 because he "was acting strange" he was autistic and of color and the officer was very nice and took him and a couple of friends to his therapist.

The few times I've ever run into them

Or have seen them responding to a situation they have been pleasant and seemed like they were trying to d-escalate the whatever the situation was

Officers have been polite and respectful to me. I feel safer when I see a visible police presence.

500 characters isn't enough. In short, stop making politically popular decisions based on emotional responses. Stop sending police to incidents they aren't trained for and expecting them to perform better than people actually trained in that field.

I haven't had much other than friendly officers in our neighborhood.

My experience with BPD has always been very positive. Officers have been kind and helpful

They are rude to citizens

<p>Mostly positive. Exceptions -- (1) officer called me after 11pm to follow up on a stolen purse I had reported days earlier. (2) officer dressed in black clothing (not uniform I was familiar with) following up on a dog bite, parked his truck facing out my driveway in such a way that I could not see markings, showed no ID or badge, and wanted to come in the house. Good experience -- house security alarm went off in night and police were there in minutes, surrounding our house with bright lights.</p>
<p>I was injured and almost killed by a drunk driver and my wife was almost killed and they didn't even note it in the police report that I was involved until I called asking what was going on as I wanted to ensure that justice was served to the perpetrator.</p>
<p>I have witnessed police instigating/escalating situations at demonstrations by the community. They could have not been present, they should not be first responders for crises.</p>
<p>I have found the officers to be professional, polite, and helpful.</p>
<p>BPD officers. once detained my son and tried to get him to admit to stealing a bike (which he hadn't done). Another time 3 BPD officers entered my house without a warrant or permission to accost my other son who had come home drunk from a party with a friend as a minor. Totally disrespectful & disproportionate response</p>
<p>Well when it was negative I played a part but the actions have been mostly positive</p>
<p>one time we ever called, the police officer was courteous and helpful</p>
<p>It was horrible, I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy. Not to say they don't do good work, just that mu single interaction with them was life altering and traumatic</p>
<p>None recently, but in the past it was timely</p>
<p>These folks are some of the most professional, compassionate, and competent people I've ever worked with. They are good at their jobs and can point anyone toward resources that can better assist the person. The hang up comes from the limitations of the other available resources.</p>
<p>I have had great experiences with them (returned stolen bike)</p>
<p>Extremely helpful</p>
<p>I've dealt with them on numerous occasions</p>
<p>I don't like cops at all so even a positive experience is tainted by the fact they could kill me and get away with it</p>
<p>I've called for community safety response like when someone was huffing outside of worked and were in distress, that type of thing. My son has struggled with his mental health and I've called when he has been escalated or ran away. I ended up sending him to residential treatment where he is doing great. We couldn't get any help in VT.</p>
<p>They are awesome.</p>
<p>Used to work on Pine Street with vulnerable populations. When there were threats of violence, or someone clearly in crisis, we would call and maybe they'd show up less than half the time. I don't think they take calls too seriously.</p>

I have had mostly positive experiences with the Burlington Police Department. Occasionally, it did not feel as if they took me seriously, however.
never had a bad experience I like the police and wish youd quit cutting them, being light on crime ..letting crimes go..I like my police miss the old days when police were respected more I know I am the only pwrson in this city that supports them and I am not some old white guy btw..I hate how we hace trashed the polce and keep cutting them next they want to take the weapons from them..this is all crazy to me
Almost every interaction I have had with BPD, at least in the last 15 years, has been positive.
When needed they were responsive and professional
Most of my interactions in the past 14 months has been supporting them during the intense police hatred. I brought cookies and gave the dept 90- \$10 gift cards to Dunkin Donuts. Have lawn sign supporting them.
The only area that I have found any negativity is when I have gone to the Dept. with a question or concern, most officers talk like they are annoyed and that I am bothering them. They could be a bit more friendly at the office
Although I have no need as a rule to call the BPD, I would not hesitate to do so.
Very courteous and helpful in the past. Now they have disappeared.
they are great. couldn't ask for a better police force. as long as you aren't causing trouble you should have no reason to fear the BPD
They were awesome. The old chief was smart and really innovative. What happened to him is a disgrace on this city.
Professional, ready to help
Have called 9/11 to report a crime; have been pulled over for driving (I was at fault); have seen them handle people in distress in public; have seen them address noise complaints; have seen them at events like the marathon and July 3rd and the Christmas Tree lighting. Some of them could smile more.
see previous writing + effort was made to not be coercive or violent and to try and de-escalate the situation - but the police presence actually escalated the trauma for the perpetrator and all of us until the perpetrator was taken out screaming and strapped down to a stretcher and rolled into a waiting ambulance. Also realized it was a traumatizing situation for the police. Asked myself if things would have been more aggressive or even violent if the perpetrator had been Black. Big worry.
I long worked with the Police employees as part of my work. I have known many personally.
I have only had positive experiences with the BPD. I would attribute this to the fact that I DON'T BREAK THE LAW!!!!
My direct experiences have been positive or neutral

There are individuals around me who have needed help from the police. The situation was handled as well as it could have been at the time.
They have always been polite and professional
Respectful. Courteous. Wish they were paid more for the incredible job they do. The department needs more officers and more funding.
i have had very few run ins with them in mostly casual situations
Occasional interaction in emergency and other situations. Quick, professional, concerned and competent. Need more police on the streets.
Any time I have had to call the police while working security they have handled it calmly and efficiently
I have seen them respond a few times to incidents in my area and they seemed to handle themselves in a professional manner.
No improvement needed
burglaries and community safety meeting related to burglaries. Good experience. On line reporting not so much.
Frustrating that, when I lived downtown, they could not do more about the urination and defecation on my house, but they were pleasant and courteous.
Police have been very helpful and courteous
Overall excellent and professional. The recent decrease in funding and staffing has affected morale in a way which decreases proactive policing.
Officers answered calls about people breaking into cars on the street, about noise, building, fireworks, cars and other vehicles driving on the Connector.
Police are trained to use deadly force. Most of their work doesn't require it. Divert that work to other, unarmed public servants.
The few times I've had police interactions officers have been mostly responsive and professional. A couple times it seemed like they didn't want to be bothered
Contrary to popular (and distorted media coverage), BPD officers respond competently to over 50,000 incidents a year. We never hear about them because they are all addressed professionally.
Watching the footage of them brutalizing and murdering people for no reason has been very traumatizing. Making the department shrink to 70 was a hugely important first step but we need to get that number down to a few dozen at most who are waiting for violent emergencies while we fund peacemakers and mental health professionals to truly handle the rest of what our city needs.
Very professional and respectful. Could be improved if the community would not treat them as adversaries.
I have had very few interactions with the police anywhere, and none of them have been negative.
Police antagonizing us as we protested for Black Lives Matter, occupied Battery Park,

stopped traffic.

Supportive and positive

In Town: Fender bender, my fault. The officer was polite and professional. Positive experience, nothing to improve.

At Airport: Feels overstaffed and that they just stand there doing nothing all day. Whether or not they are being effective, them "just standing there" is poor imaging.

Initial was fine. Later a neighbor had information but there was no follow-up

Only brief coversational interactions at a public event or once when someone came to our door to ask about a neighborhood incident.

Almost always good experiences. Could be improved with more personnel available all shifts to respond to issues (not that I want to pay for more personnel, as a taxpayer). For the community as a whole, I believe BPD could use better training on how to interact in stressful situations. But by the same token, we need our community to understand that when BPD arrives, they are there to deal with whatever issues are in play in the manner they best see fit.

When they yelled at a man who clearly needed medical attention, I would have preferred that they actually centered his needs instead of trying to removed him from my driveway. He needed food, water, medical care, and a place to sleep. Instead he got yelled at and was forced to wander the streets. I would also prefer if the police didn't look like a swat team or someone at war while they walk the streets. Lose the guns and bullet proof vests, you don't need them.

Negative, biased against those with emotional and physical disabilities.

While working at retail and restaurant/bar locations on Church St, the BPD were a welcome community member. They always helped ensure everyone's safety, especially late night.

Some have been a little rude and some have been great and easy to deal with

They are very busy. When I have found them to be courteous and professional.

Public events - wish they didn't keep a police face on and were friendlier. It is okay to smile.

I have had so few. When a man showed up in my front yard, bleeding and asked for help, we called 911. The response was inhumane. We were asked to move away from the man more than once. We had been standing with him until the police arrived. The officer just didn't seem to have a good read on the situation.

I have witnessed members of the Burlington Police Department (BPD) give citations to community members during peaceful protests. I have seen the BPD harass unhoused individuals and BIPOC. The BPD either should be abolished or completely gutted to prevent these situations. Most or all officers should be replaced with social workers or mental

health professionals.

They do nothing about noise complaints, speeding, graffiti. Maybe someone else should.

they calm the neighbors when they are noisy and drunk. They investigate breakins that happen in the neighborhood.

I have been lucky to hav relatively few direct experiences with BPD and several of them have been neutral fine instances, others have been unpleasant but not unsafe. I have seen them interact with others in the community in very different ways than they treat me as a white middle-income person. I've seen BPD officers being very rude aggressive and intimidating to people a number of times.

Availability for someone to answer a noise violation call while the noise was being violated.

I believe the police department leadership is doing a good job of providing public safety.

A recent mental health crisis with a neighbor got police involved. They were slow in responding, but professional in what they did. Unfortunately they were very limited in what they could accomplish, and told us neighbors that they were very limited in what they can do, and would not come another time to do it again, which was get the person into the hospital, and then before a judge who offered restorative justice as an alternative. That's slow but we have hopes that things will get better.

Responded to a call about some kids trying to break into a building in Leddy park and they were very helpful and friendly.

I was pulled over, not told why I had been pulled over, and then told they were suspicious that I didn't own my car. I gave all my information and showed my current loan on the car in my name. Unprofessional.

Police came when a disoriented woman found herself on my porch. Police knew her and were very kind to her and helped her home. I have on multiple occasions seen police help folks in need at the library.

all always good; friends on the force

I've only been involved during my previously explained experience and for speeding once. Otherwise I never see them.

Had my apartment broken into many years ago in college. The police came and filled out a report but didn't seem to give a crap, and provided no resources for next steps. They never followed up as far as I know. A second experience was being written up for underage drinking (again many years ago...and obviously my own fault), but they were very aggressive in the response - 5 police cars with fully armed cops showed up to a small house party, and busted in without a warrant.

Any interaction I've ever had has been pleasant, no problems. I am an older white woman, so easy for me to say. I also don't commit crimes and I respect other people's points of view and their property.
Needed a report
You guys find my stolen bikes yet?
I have had police officers assist me in college when someone was following me home that was making me uncomfortable.
Generally very positive. They are always professional. Its frustrating when you report something but BPD is not able/willing to write a citation or address the issue because they know that it will not be prosecuted... often happens in the case of public intoxication and urination.
I think BPD is exceptionally professional and courteous when engaging in situations. They are also as hands-off as much as possible (i.e. protests, traffic issues). It makes no sense that dispatch asks if I would like to meet with an officer. When I've said yes to this, they addressed a neighborhood issue then came directly to my house therefore revealing the source of the grievance. Follow-up is good, but not like that. I once restrained a B&E in my yard and it took police 15 mins to arrive.
Work related - positive though there were times when words used and patience might have been improved
I had to call when my home was burglarized and I had to call to have a car towed which blocked my driveway.
I have found police officers to be professional, friendly, and effective.
Interaction on a professional level as BPD services some of the work we provide as a non-profit entity
Not great with the section 8 housing next door
I have called the police several time over many years to help with disorderly of aggressive behavior on the street near my business the have usually responded promptly and handled the situation professionally. I have not seen much room for improvement.
Interaction at work when dealing with mental illness. They could have been less macho
All good
Police documented an attempted break-in with the person's belongings left on site. Police searched for a murder suspect who fled through my back yard. Police interviewed me about a nearby shooting. These were all mundane and calm info collecting situations, and they were fine. I wasn't directly involved when police entered an apt on Elmwood knowing the person had a gun and the police shot and killed him and bullets went next door. That was very close and seemed reckless, and avoidable.

<p>We have called upon police to help with theft, as well as drunk and disorderly conduct. We also have security cameras on our building which can assist in law enforcement. They are always appreciative for the help.</p>
<p>I have many interactions. I've seen them interact with aggressive people on Church St with grace and restraint. I've called them for help with possible vandalism and disoriented people. They respond quickly and if I have any criticism, it's that they once avoided taking action sooner when someone kept coming back to our building and trying to gain entry. It seemed like they really wanted to give him every opportunity to turn it around. He came three times.</p>
<p>Officers I've interacted with have been professional. One helped defuse a tense situation caused by a harassing troublemaker at a Pride event.</p>
<p>Too bureaucratic. Inefficient.</p>
<p>I've needed help on occasion when drug addicts or mentally ill people are presenting security issues. They are consistently responsive and professional. They communicated well when our building had a bomb threat. They are prepared, organized, and well trained. These are real people with families doing work that puts them at serious risk. I'm embarrassed by how poorly our community members and community leaders treat them. Morale is probably at an all time low. Are they as engaged?</p>
<p>I have made noise complaints for extreme noise in our neighborhood, it takes a long time for them to respond and they never give tickets so the problem still exists year after year</p>
<p>Very professional, friendly, well trained individual officers. Again, I'm white and middle class so that would affect my perception/experiences.</p>
<p>I've found that Police at the protests I have attended have been respectful. In the one incident of my house break in, it would've felt better if my POC renter had been treated with more respect, and the officer who responded to me could have shown some concern.</p>
<p>As a white male, I have found their services good</p>
<p>I see them on Church Street, and they have always been friendly to my child and took time to listen and answer any questions he might have.</p>
<p>Personally, I've always had respectful interactions with the police, even when getting a ticket. I appreciate their service. However, my husband is a criminal defense lawyer and he talks about how the police lie often. It's really sad and disheartening that an honorable service like policing can be debased, even if with good intentions.</p>
<p>I have worked with them and gone to them with concerns and have always had a great response from them.</p>
<p>There was someone knocking on the window of our house on Peru St.. 911 brought a police officer, but the person took off and did not bother us again.</p>
<p>See answer (above) re: missing grandchild; Recently, a member of our condo association was experiencing a mental health crisis that impacted all residents. Police were slow and reluctant to respond. Involvement of mental health clinicians would have been helpful.</p>

<p>You asked for it ! Last year a 2 time Major Felon illegally inhabited the apartment below us, cooking and Selling Meth from that apartment. Repeated Calls to BPD resulted in Numerous dealings with Multiple cars to this property. BPD Flagged this Building as Dangerous for this issue. What was the result you ask ? The 2 time Felon for Meth Manufacturing and Sales Was TRESPASSED for Illegally Occupying the Apartment- NOT ARRESTED for the Manufacturing & Sales of Meth they KNEW was happening.</p>
<p>During the 80ies I had a professional relationship with the BPD. During the 90ies & 00ies, I sat on boards with the BPD chief & S. Burl chief. Also sat on statewide boards with public safety professionals. All positive.</p>
<p>it is 50/50 responsive and dismissive,</p>
<p>Positive experiences include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - community/neighborhood foot patrols with focus on proactive relationship building, positive interactions with community members as well as consistent presence
<p>I have only had positive experiences with the Burlington Police Department. I have no suggestions for improvement.</p>
<p>explained previously</p>
<p>I have had two excellent interactions: one when I missed a stop sign, the other when I called for an accident report. Both officers were women.</p>
<p>Overall my experience with BPD has been positive, respectful, professional. I have witnessed officers respond very effectively and appropriately with victims of domestic violence and in mental health crises. I am also aware that some of my friends and colleagues have experienced less professional interactions especially with their family members who are Black and/or People of Color. Other than being pulled over for a few "extra" traffic stops, I have not experienced this with my own kids.</p>
<p>I have had some experience with the police department intervening or supporting with mental health interventions/emergencies (I work in social work). Sometimes they were very helpful and skillful in their responses. Other times they did not have much support to provide or were limited in their abilities and/or willingness to help. My only personal experience with the local police department was unsatisfactory because they were unhelpful and dismissive of my issue.</p>
<p>Once.A male & female police officer responded to a call that we were playing our music too loudly. It was a crank call. We didn't even have our radio on. The male officer was dismissive & somewhat belligerent. The female officer was courteous & I felt she was being apologetic for the bullishness behavior of her male colleague.</p>
<p>It was a pleasant experience. I don't believe it should be improved</p>
<p>My experience could have been improved if there were more officers available to respond, had they not been arbitrarily defunded</p>
<p>Friendly, hard working, well trained police officers</p>

<p>They are very professional, despite being painted as villains in the community. It's a shame that people with an agenda have destroyed their capabilities.</p>
<p>I have called them for violence and bad things I have witnessed and they have solved those problems.</p>
<p>Always professional and helpful.</p>
<p>Responded to assault taking place in my driveway. Would like to see personnel restored so they can do their jobs safely and get drug dealers off the streets and out of our neighborhood.</p>
<p>They are aggressive, racist liars. They need to be held accountable not protected by the institution and miro. The institution needs appropriate non violent training, as well as anti racist training</p>
<p>I've had several different experiences with the BPD. I've always found them to be fair and under control.</p>
<p>Sensitivity towards people who are down on their luck or have mental health issues</p>
<p>Prior to working in the city I had multiple experiences with Burlington Police. They were cordial and helpful.</p>
<p>I have dealt with some Officers who were rude and I have had some incredible interactions with Officers on the street. It depends who the Officer is.</p>
<p>Less arrogance.</p>
<p>Excellent response, very professional</p>
<p>I've had few experiences with BPD, they have been helpful and professional.</p>
<p>Police departments are living entities, they are always capable of improvement. Continuous training is necessary.</p>
<p>I often request assistance from BPD during the course of my work for my own safety and sometimes safety of others. Overall, I am happy with their assistance, they have been responsive and helpful. The officers care about the community and want people to be safe. Since the number of officers has been decreased, it has been more difficult to get needed assistance, and things have had to wait that should not. Also, it would be better if school resource officers were reinstated.</p>
<p>I have regular contact with the police through work. The police are professional, skilled, and responsive. The experiences would consistently be improved if they had enough officers to safely respond to situations and that includes having the time to do so, which will only be improved with better staffing.</p>
<p>Generally, my experiences have been positive. I have witnessed support for persons in acute Mental Health Crisis and under the influence of substances. I have worked with the DV officers and community outreach staff and have been very impressed. I worry that if we don't actively try to support the "good cops" with the right mindset, they might leave feeling unappreciated and we will be further behind. have to find a way to lift them up while reforming problems in the system they didn't creat</p>

Within the past 18 months

Armed (but not uniformed) officer lurking in my backyard early AM, apparently spying on neighbor. When challenged, refused to identify himself or leave the property.

Armed office in vehicle chased two young boys into my yard, later knocked on door to question us. Fairly polite.

Officer knocked on front door seeking info about shooting incident in neighborhood

My experience has been a good one as I work here.

When I have engaged in activism for causes relating to justice and human rights, the police have used intimidation tactics. This makes sense because police protect property and the interests of the government and the wealthy which is frequently the side of injustice.

utter refusal to hold officers accountable for brutal, unnecessary violence in multiple cases.

I haven't called on them in the last year, perhaps things have changed.

The police don't solve anything. Literally. They have yet to actually de-escalate physical violence. I don't know what the police do. I don't know what there job is. I don't know what the point of having police is. They don't stop rape, they don't stop physical violence. If they do, then I have yet to witness or hear of it. Police give people tickets, which funds infrastructure maybe? I don't know. I don't think they care.

Some officers are ill equipped to handle mental health crises.

I work closely with Burlington Police to coordinate for Child Safety responses. They are important parts of that team and necessary for safety. I believe communication between departments could be improved with better understanding and clarity of roles in those high emotional situations.

My experiences have been via public forums in response to the Battery Park protests last year. I found BPD's attitude to be dismissive. I do not believe it could have been improved because I believe that attitude is hardwired into the system of policing.

Having lived and worked in Burlington for my entire life, I have known many of the people that work there. I have never had an interaction that has been questionable.

Some situations were handled and others I saw no outcome

BPD has circled around me when I've been walking out at night. I believe they were profiling me because I'm Black.

My home was broken into during the day and the police responded quickly and were helpful.

They have been in the schools and I see them often in the city. I also served on the safety task force for the school district so interacted with the PD on that level. I do not feel safe around the police and I am a white woman.

Engaged with around town primarily and with a few mental health situations I have witnessed.

See also previous answers. Some experiences have been good. Others involving family members not living with me less so: more fraught, officers trying to do things they didn't actually have the right to do.
Most if not all of my experiences have been friendly, helpful and beneficial
As colleagues. I've always like the BPD. Occasionally there is an officer who is lacking training but my experiences in the last couple of decades are largely positive. I think providing training in understanding trauma and what trauma based responses look like would go a long way to help officers respond appropriately.
Top notch - Tier 1 Police Department. This community is truly blessed to have such world class Police Department.
The BPD have responded to crises at different agencies I have worked at. As police responses go, I would say that they are excellently trained in dealing with mental health crisis and generally deescalate the situation.
I know the current Acting Chief Jon Murad.
Providing information about an altercation we observed downtown.
Dealt with a detective many years ago when my house was broken into. It was completely fine.
House alarm accidentally went off. Police arrived I apologized. Police very friendly and understanding.
I almost never interact with the police, but when I have I find them very scary. It would be easier for me to trust them if they weren't bristling with weapons, and if they had a better reputation around their treatment of BIPOC and people struggling with addiction
my son was introuble
Had crisis during COVID-19: Cellphone carrier suddenly and without notice cut off all my phone access while I was trying to get assistance (from the cellphone carrier) after being hacked. I'm a retired senior, live alone, have health conditions, am fairly new to VT and have no family here, and have no Lan line if emergency help needed. BPD referred me to the AG, then to Howard Center when I called back (police abrupt, impatient, unconcerned). I had to buy a new cellphone, as AG respons delayed.
on the few occasions I have had experience with the police it has been fine and appropriate. This includes school safety officers, patrol officers, 911 response, traffic problems
I had a positive experience after a neighbor tried to harass me.
some experiences have been fine, police officers listening and trying to understand situation, relating as humans. Other experiences of intimidation and harassment
Pulled over once for brake light malfunction. Courteous and professional.
Some officers could have been nicer but they're overworked

<p>I have had good experiences and less good experiences with the police. When I called about helping a homeless person, I got a great response from a caring officer. When I have called about the fireworks that go off in my neighborhood during July, November election, New Year's, there is no response despite these fireworks being very dangerous - they aren't little firecrackers. The Fire Chief even sends warnings on FPF about fireworks every year, but then there is no enforcement mechanism.</p>
<p>Very positive experience - they were respectful to my family and also to the individual who was causing an issue for us. They arrived promptly and took care of the situation professionally.</p>
<p>They are very professional. They need more funding and more officers, not less.</p>
<p>I called the non- 911 when an impaired driver drove up our driveway, across the greenbelt and nearly into a utility pole. They came, located the individual, and took care of the situation.</p>
<p>I watched two police officers politely talk to a man who was loitering in the Hanafords shopping center on North Avenue. I was impressed by their professionalism. The man who seemed disoriented eventually went with the officers. I don't know where. I assume a social service agency. I have not had any problems with police. I just wish they would stop loud late drunken parties that the college kids have.</p>
<p>I didn't find them to be fair. They didn't discover the truth.</p>
<p>I just want them to be allowed by City of Burlington to do their job which is keep people safe. There has been at least one overdose death in the apartment next to us. This is the ultimate failure of government.</p>
<p>I think I called once about possible identify theft and I don't think anything came of it. Maybe crimes like that could be a totally separate division if they are not already.</p>
<p>I called re: a violent fight across the street and I called when a drone was peeping in my window. In both instances I was completely satisfied. A neighbor called the BPD re a car break-in at 2 am a year or more ago and the officer showed up with the canine who barked non-stop for about an hour. Not sending the canine unit would be preferable.</p>
<p>They have always been great when I have needed them. It would be nice to process reports in an easier way.</p>
<p>In getting special events permitting annually for 10 years: It went well being able to work with the same Lt. for 3 years. We developed a rapport which was the exception. There's a lot of turnover/relationships can't be established.</p>
<p>Many years ago, an elderly neighbor called 911, fearing a prowler. Police came quickly and were very reassuring</p>
<p>My experiences have all been good. They are very professional.</p>
<p>one time, I suspected a theft. Officer was helpful.</p>
<p>My experience has been great. I treat them with the respect they deserve and I get the same respect back. It really is that simple. I don't blame the police for something I DID</p>

WRONG.

I volunteer at the library and park in the staff lot. my battery died and I got help from one of the firefighters. he was kind and friendly

Pulled over once in 23 years. For an expired inspection sticker. I'm a white male so they "warned" me and let me go on my way.

BPD has been fine with my interactions with them.

quick response to medic alert system, professional, tho non- threatening.. no complaints

I have had only good experiences with the BPD. I am a relatively comfortable white man with good social skills. I do not think it could be improved with the possible exception of better follow up after I was burglarized.

They do a great job with very limited resources

I asked for BPD help once in response to someone with a mental health problem and police officers informed me that unless the individual was committing crimes they couldn't do much.

an improvement in listening skills and empathy is sorely needed; not so quick to judge and dismiss

Over the years, they have become very militarized with bulletproof armor and weapons. They do not feel approachable.

Lately, I have had very little connection with the police. In the past - over 20 years ago we had some things stolen and we reported it to the police. I live near the Police Station and it really can be noisy when they turn on their sirens. And the cars go extremely fast, which can be scary. I also had a police officer recently call me an idiot in a open letter because I had some suggestions about de-escalating drunkin situations. Not great public relations and spoke directly to my point.

It was fine. They came out when a loose dog was scaring me and my son. Another time I spoke with them after some of my property was stolen. Not much they could really do there

concern about drug dealer in neighborhood

I reported an impaired driver who had broken down in the road, and the police officer who arrived on the scene was very thorough and professional.

They told the press we were uncooperative in their investigation of the shooting. They never followed up with my husband. Never even asked to speak to me. No follow up on catching the shooter.

they were excellent. maybe not spread so thin.

At all times they are professional and want to help to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors

When my anonymity was not maintained, I mentioned it at a public safety meeting. The officer directly addressed me, apologized and shortly thereafter more police were on the beat making productive connections with the community.
I was satisfied
Car break in, noise violation next door, followed by suspicious individual who tried to follow me into a key card access building, stranger who tried to enter my car. It was a fine experience, they were very friendly, concerned for the well being of the likely mentally ill individuals involved.
Ticketing, parking passes and, noise complaints
Have never been impressed with how BPD interacts with members of the community. They don't meet people where they are and their presence always escalates a situation.
It went well. No improvement needed
I have interacted with one or two really good officers, but the few other officers who have come to the old north end seem to think it is a 'bad neighborhood,' or are just unaware or insensitive to who lives here, sometimes multiple cars showing up and also a pretty heavy military feeling to their presence.
The police responded right away and we're very polite. I couldn't be happier.
At neighbors when home alarm went off, three officers came into backyard investigating home invasion
I am very pleased. I got scammed on-line and an officer came over and assisted us very competently
I had a good experience.
Been fine, but infrequent and usually in an administrative capacity such as for fingerprinting or a VIN check
I have had several non confrontational experiences with the police. They are created to follow protocols and procedures without putting too much thought into a situation. There are rules for everything that ultimately keep THEM safe.
Found a wallet. They came to my workplace to pick it up, which was convenient.
Received a suspicious item in the mail. They came and got it, satisfactory.
I had 2 checks counterfeited from my checkbook. They took my info and said they would assign a detective but nothing ever came of it. More communication would have been appreciated.
I reported suspicious behavior in my neighborhood. They took the info and said they would send a squad car. I got flustered because I didn't have answers to
Much better when del Pozo was chief, now command is dominated by "woke" political lackies. Experienced rank and file are usually in tune with tackling the criminal element
My experience have been fair.
Extremely satisfying, resolved my issue ,prof and caring

I called 3 times. Once when my car was broken into. The officer was nice enough, but implied it was partially my fault since my locked car with the windows up was in a dark spot someone could take advantage of (tell the landlord that, not me). 2nd time was after a pumpkin was thrown at my door and cracked it. They recorded it as a car break-in (so, super helpful), and the 3rd was after I heard a man outside threatening a woman. They had already sent a car since others had called.

Again, I appreciate the individuals and the humans behind the badge, but typically I encounter an energy of power over and not power with. I'm deeply fearful of them when they are present and feel most unsafe in my community when they are present.

Experiences were mostly OK

I assisted a friend with obtaining a TRO and the police officer we spoke with was very helpful and considerate.

What exactly is meant by "experiences"? We used to interact frequently with our community officer, who was a frequent presence in our neighborhood. We don't see her anymore, ever since the city council decided to "defund the police."

I called for assistance with a individual who was sleeping nightly on my doorstep- it was interior hallway of an apartment building. I was 25 and wasn't comfortable addressing the situation myself. I could hear the conversation. The police officers were extraordinarily kind in their interaction with this individual. Roll forward 25+ years, a festival on Church St, families with kids, a young man agitated, screaming, stopping traffic. Approached an officer, he shrugged and walked away.

Unremarkable.

parking ticket.

They were good about calling next day and giving information

THEY ONCE ILLEGALLY REFUSED A COURIER SERVICE

Stopped for bike rack obstructing license plate

Quicker response time for noise complaints

The BPD acted in a respectful, responsible way.

Simple stuff in passing.

When my nabor was shot by police (justified), more training with mental health could of changed outcome.

all good they are stressedout by the politics of this city

Good, though limited experience.

Our cars get broken into about once every two years. Reporting them is a total waste of time because the cops don't/can't do anything about it.

They are doing less around town, city hall park and church street to keep it safe. It's very rare I see a police officer. I see drug dealers, pot smoking, homeless on every bench, etc. This is the Mecca of our small city. We can't let it get run down. This needs police presence. I've lived here 7 years and I have seen it going down hill. Residents and store owners are

feeling frustrated and the graffiti doesn't help with our image.

without the unnecessarily overwhelming show of force

Very kind and listened well.

I have called BPD in the night to respond to noise at nearby Schmanska Park. They have come within the hour - which is fine, given more pressing calls they need to respond to.

The majority of my experiences go back a few years when I was struggling on almost a daily basis with self-harm behaviors stemming from severe mental health challenges. For the most part, BPD response was compassionate and fair. There were a few officers who didn't hide their annoyance and exasperation which was conveyed by statements like "Here we go again" and "When are you going to cut this crap out?" There has been improvement due to increased de-escalation training.

See above

I have had great experiences with BPD. My kids love getting stickers from them.

I have called for service a few times. Once for a fight among teens in the neighborhood and other times to report suspicious activity. Officers responded in a reasonable amount of time relative to the nature of the call and were professional.

Officers were very respectful and helpful

Victim of a couple burglaries - years ago. No complaints.

Our dog bit someone, and I reported it - extremely kind and compassionate with me.

Pulled over by an officer - went to court to contest it - four other women there - pulled over by same officer. One woman was black and he had made her get out of her car and asked her who owned it. He did not show up, so all of our tickets were dropped - he has since been fired for other reasons. Upsetting to hear about black woman's experience.

My experience as a fifty year old white women in her home was fine

I reported a derelict house with obvious drug activity and a strange smell emanating from it. The officers seemed very nonchalant about it and I didn't think anything would be followed up on.

My experience is exclusive to visiting with policy officers during NPA meetings, and providing safety detail during major community events (marathon, festivals, etc.)

Only in a professional capacity.

at the july 4th fireworks celnrayton a few years ago, there were cops armed with military assault rifles. what the fuck is that? i contacted the bpd after to complain about such an unnecessary and irresponsible militarized police presence and was told it was for my safety, bullshit, that is making citizens feel like they live in a war zone.
Not much experience, and what I have had was fine.
I just see them in passing, NOT impressed with some videos I have seen about them policing downtown in some situations
I have been robbed.
More police officers, unarmed police officers for calls from #3 category- noise violence, vandalism, atd.
Reporting stolen bicycle, and lost property it was easy to do, but never recovered. But that was not unexpected.
Very professional & courteous but they are losing experienced officers, we need to find a way to keep the good ones who have experience
Dispatcher was extremely rude and condescending when I asked for an officer to be sent to an abandoned home in my neighborhood whose door was left open in the winter.
Officer who helped me during an ice storm car accident in 2014 was very kind and helpful
My experiences have been good, both as a resident and when I worked at COTS.
Car accident involving my partner's parked car. BPD was helpful in that instance and thoroughly mapped out the scene and went over options with us. Not sure that it could have been improved.
Home burglarized, long wait for response
Few I have had were excellent, no issues or need for improvement
I was taken in after drinking too much and was released the next day to a friend. Had a very good experience given that I was in the drunk tank!
I have not had issues with Police. In my experiences, other disrespectful, intoxicated or drugged individuals created any tensions.
Domestic abuse, more training why is it domestic abuse and not assault? Who cares if it happens at home or is inflicted by a partner, physical abuse is assault.
BPD generally responsive, explain options, resources
noise complaints - speed of response varies, theft - helpful in understanding what we could do, lost dog - didn't help find dog until 3rd day, didn't review reports carefully to try and match our dog with report
I called in regards to noise and there was a response at the time.
I had a bike stolen and complained about gunfire inside the city during bird season.

I believe every BPD Officer strives to be appropriately responsive to what they perceive to be serious situations.

They appear not to care much, if anything, about quality of life issues, minor crime, vandalism, noise etc. Go to NPA's and listen, not just spout out statistical gobble-di-gook. And what about traffic enforcement, including by bicyclists.

No improvement necessary. They did an excellent job de-escalating and were very professional.

Courteous and professional.

I have not had many experiences with Burlington Police, but nearly all the officers I interacted with demonstrated more compassion and understanding in a crisis than some of the staff at Howard Center and First Call.

-Public: witnessing public interactions and those of my own have all been fine, respectful, and helpful.

-Schools: while SROs don't belong in our schools, all interactions I witnessed have been positive and/or pro-active. Police and guns should not be in schools other than in an emergency or for safety training.

-My home- A SWAT team surrounded our house a year or so ago when a wrong address was given to 911. It was terrifying and I wonder about the outcome had I/we been BiPOC and not so careful

Conversation about how to address illegal activities and gatherings on private property. Hard to find solution to how to enforce laws that are broken on private land--fires, illegal use of property, etc. Complex and beyond resources of police personnel. In addition, remote location. Not sure how to improve.

Generally good

Minimal experience, experiences have been neutral or positive. No suggestions on improvement.

I know them to be very concerned and caring group of people. I understand that their culture is

They have all been positive. No issues.

I have been ticketed 3 times in the King St garage in the 2 months I have been working at Champlain Housing Trust. I have a parking pass taped in my windshield. IF they looked they would see it clearly. Waste of time, energy and resources writing the ticket which could be better spent in community engagement , crime prevention, drug deal interception, education anything more productive than wasting energy and my tax dollars. BPD is no different than any other US PD.

Every experience has demonstrated the high degree of professionalism of the police in Burlington especially when compared to other police agencies

I have used the Burlington Police frequently to assist me in my work and my personal life and I always get positive experiences.

<p>My experience with BPD is only in relation to them working to maintain a relationship with the business I work for in an effort to stop theft.</p>
<p>Issue was with mentally ill, violent, threatening neighbor who was well-known to police. While for the most part, officers were responsive and helpful, there was a bit too much buddy-buddy with the guy, considering that he repeatedly disrupted my life and in the end directly threatened my life.</p>
<p>experience with police at condo because of neighbor's dangerous behavior. Can't remember outcome, except that neighbor was eventually evicted. Police came into Neighborhood Planning Meeting with his gun and ammunition on him. It was uncomfortable and intimidating.</p>
<p>The police have abused many friends and family members of mine. we need to fire everyone and start form scratch with a new system entirely. They should not have guns.</p>
<p>Personal experiences have been more than positive and I will commend officers on their great work. As service providers they do great job at what they do. As a professional collaborator BPD can defiantly open up more, come to the table with less baggage and in collaborative spirit. At this point reliance is on a will of individual officers, rather than the department as a whole, to actively engage with community partners.</p>
<p>When I was in college a Burlington police officer harassed me as I was walking down a street at night and claimed he knew I was drunk based on "how I was speaking" even though I explained that I have a low voice and had not been drinking. He breathalyzed me which revealed that I was in fact sober and then he did not apologize but berated me for being out at night.</p>
<p>I had a personal experience with the BPD in the late 1980s when my house in the ONE was broken into and they were completely unhelpful. I've had experience from a distance when they've come to my street multiple times in the last 5 years because one or two neighbors were being sought by them or were involved in something sketchy. One neighbor was arrested once and returned to his home a few days later. He is/was a petty drug dealer. Nothing really came of those incidences.</p>
<p>My only experience with the BPD is as a teacher interacting with the [former] School Resource Officer. I have had positive experiences with SROs in the BSD, though I support the move to reallocate these resources. I have never interacted with the BPD otherwise.</p>
<p>Back about 2009, a neighbor and I used to call in drug buys, and the apparent lack of response got us madder and madder. Finally someone came and asked us to be patient, that they were well aware. A few weeks later a huge bust went down, and we've never had that problem since.</p>
<p>I am a white woman and have mostly possirive ibteractions</p>
<p>When I've questioned police in over action to black community members the police were defensive.</p>

years ago this was a model of community involved policing. Now the police are scared to do ANYTHING and overwhelmed and understaffed even if they wanted to.
They have been responsive and professional.
house break-in while we were out; wonderful response by police. Also, mentally unstable person in neighborhood leafletting cars, rapid police response.
A car rammed a parked car outside my window. I called 911 to inform the police it had happened. The policeman was kind and thorough.
Once (the suicide call) was enough. The least they could have done was a) explain why they couldn't remove their guns b) spoken in a tone that at least suggested they were pretending to care whether I lived or died
The BPD has arrived when our building alarm has gone off. They have always been very professional.
Called to report vandalism in my neighborhood and they responded by sending an officer immediately. I was able to speak with the officer and provide more information to assist in their search.
Most of my interactions have been with SRO's. They have largely been good experiences.
I have only had positive experiences with the BPD. I believe that the services the department offers could improve with more officers.
Less cops, 0 guns
The police department responded quickly and acted professionally to the need.
When I had to call the Police because of things that were going on the street, they were quick to come and took care of the matter.
Very limited except seeing officers in stores.
My interactions with the BPD have been unremarkable, but I do think that all police officers should have an undergraduate education, and ongoing training about empathy.
I'm a social worker in mental health and substance abuse so have often had
There are numerous instances when the police should not have responded at all, and should have sent a social worker instead.
My interactions with BPD have been infrequent, tangential, and neutral if not positive.
I called the BPD to ask for help with unloading a revolver that had belonged to my late husband. The BPD sent over a woman officer who was kind, courteous, and efficient.
Car accident and school resource officer are the only real encounters I've had.
With help with difficult people in the past

Recent interactions have been positive. A team of officers came to assist a gentlemen who was hallucinating and somewhat distressed on our street, and they were kind, professional, and respectful.

Many years ago (25) was very unhappy with Officer Mike Schirling's response to indecent exposure/lewd and lascivious in sight of kids on a daycare playground down on Lake Street. Was written off as a "he couldn't help himself" moment and has always really bothered me.

See above comment

Being pulled over for a traffic stop. Police officers were polite and court in explaining why I was pulled over .

When my daughter went to hospital the police came and stayed with the kids.

When somone drove into my house(twice) they came. When someone drove into the woods they came. (we get a lot of 2 am drunks)

When my neighbors dog attacked my cat we used a community resource officer.

We' ve called them for suspicious activity(gunshots) in the woods.

We've never had a problem and I'm grateful for their presence

My personal experiences with BPD have been neutral. I've only ever called them when I thought others were in physical danger around me. This has happened often in the last 7 years living here, in central Old North End locations and my walk to work through the Macy's pedestrian path.

I have seen them at times during protests. They have often forced our traffic blockades to open, leaving our groups vulnerable to malicious and speeding drivers.

Positive expirence when needed help.

They need more people. Now enough of a presence at night

My interactions have been fine

Called them about a theft of flowers, unfortunately there wasn't much they could do about it.

I have witnessed police harassing young men of color several times. Not impressed. The only incident I witnessed in which police were necessary or relevant was when that man murdered his wife in the middle hyde street. (Which also was a failing of the mental health system)

Free Creemees are nice

I have observed BPD out in the community on many, many occasions.

As described above, they have been positive. I acknowledge I have always been the one asking for help, not the perpetrator.

I was a victim of domestic abuse. Although officers always showed up, there were times I felt like it was an inconvenience and that I was doing something wrong by asking for assistance. Some officers were amazing, some not so much

Management of parades and protests, response to call about domestic violence at neighbor's place; all responses good in my experience.
Rare occurrences of asking for help. The requests were met.
They did there job in a professional manner.
My car was hit at a four way intersection in BTV. The fire department/EMTs and a police officer came to the scene within minutes. They were very professional and yet empathetic. The police officer even came to my home to return my car's registration after he got the necessary info from the other driver so that I could go directly to UVMCC.
I worked with them for many years thru my job.
I have called about a stray dog living in the bushes on the bike path. They didn't respond q.uickly
I have interacted with police during car accidents, emergency response in home (natural death), or during public events (traffic calming). All were professional and positive experiences.
I have had a few interactions with burlington police, never as a "subject." I have also witnessed their interactions with others. My direct experiences with them were pretty neutral, but tinged with the overall energy of policing/police culture. I have witnessed BTV police harass, provoke/escalate, mock, assault other people. I honestly dont think there is any way to reform police culture, or which the BPD is part, bc it is rotten at its roots.
It would be better if they weren't cops
I have had 911 called on me in BTV before. I drank too much and made concerning statements to a friend then fell asleep. The police came into my apartment, into my room, with their boots on, stepping on the clothes on my floor. Woke me up so abruptly and acted irritated with me when I was confused and disoriented. Instead of listening to me, they laughed to eachother as the Howard Center worker spoke with me. The ;police were so inappropriate. I will never call 911 unless absolutely necessary.
Excellent force
My work required frequent interactions with BPD.
i just see them driving through periodically. That makes me feel safe knowing they are around.
I have had multiple interactions with the BPD: At my home, through school w/resource officers, in my neighborhood (I live one block away from the station) and at my place of work. All of the interactions have been professional and respectful. This may seem like a little thing but it actually effects me quite a bit; I wish the police were friendlier when I see them casually in the neighborhood. They feel removed, slow to smile or make eye contact. Rarely does an officer say hello first.
My experience was good. Noise complaints; robbery; runaway kid
Rarely, they jailed a young woman I knew years ago for owing 25 dollars to court. Her young baby was taken out in winter night..... kind of ridiculous way for police to work their

job.
The few times I have had contact with the police, they have been very respectful and professional
The police are very trustworthy, but they haven't helped with student noise and behavior complaints.
I have lived here my whole life and known many BPD officers. Most of them have been hard working family oriented individuals. One thing they could probably do is screen them better for aggressive tendencies. Good cops hate bad cops as much as we do. As they say it only takes 1 bad apple.
I have dealt with the child victims unit (unsure of the correct name) and they were excellent. Helped me with services for my child and myself.
Mainly traffic related issues.
My store was robbed. The police came but the criminal got away. Shoplifters are not prosecuted but that is a criminal justice system problem not a law enforcement problem.
All experiences have been positive and quick response
Have had to call on numerous occasions mostly because cars are parked encroaching on my driveway. Over the years I have had a few problems and have always found the police to be prompt, courteous, and very helpful when they have responded to my call.
I gave Marsha Callahan and Benjie Frederick's, lease termination papers. If you actually read this I need her out by July 12, 2021. She's told me she won't leave willingly. 1896 1/2 North Ave.
Always great at their job, under difficult conditions
As stated before, I frequently require assistance from police as an overnight security guard. Police have intervened in cases of assaults, trespassing, rapes, and threats to the safety of me and my coworkers. BPD was extremely reliable in the past, but now we have grown concerned about the response time and the lack of service in some scenarios.
Positive interactions
Rarely but contact as to graffiti and one break in many years ago
During protests I have attended they have been fine, and they have helped in the neighbor where I work and been good with the kids in my classroom.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Robbery at our house years ago. No follow-up from officers. Officers seemed disinterested. 2. My car was hit. I saw the person do it. I confronted her. She drove away. I called the police with description of the car and license number. No appropriate follow-up 3. I called to report a racially motivated incident. The dispatcher would not pass me on to an officer. She yelled at me and said I had no proof the incident was racially motivated! There is more but no room.

Recently 2 officers were outside my home. Neighbors observed and indigent man standing in my back yard then front yard and called 911. The man was a stranger to me. I responded to the flashing blue lights. The 2 officers gently got the man to move on. He has not returned. I was favorably impressed with the behavior of the officers. As a footnote everyone was "white" I don't know how this might have gone if a BIPOC person was involved and I am concerned about that.

Only brief and when absolutely necessary, once for a safety report against harassment. There was no followup on that report, even though the person had threatened to kill me.

All of my experiences (as a white woman of privilege) have been fine.

They responded appropriately. No issues.

I've had mostly excellent experiences with the Burlington Police Department.

The experiences I have personally had with officers has been "fine". I am a white person.

fine. no problems. that's what happens when you comply!

not enough experience to form an opinion

My experiences have all been good. Experiences have been just assistance with day-to-day matters. Based on reported information both nationally and locally, I hope we are working effectively to reduce bias and unfairness in any and all security matters. I also hope that we will remain darn aggressive in demanding honesty and transparency in all public service activities and from all public employees. Celebrating and expanding kindness between the public and our public officers is terrific.

They need to do more about speeding on the roads that they know are an issue. There basically is no traffic policing in Burlington from what I can see. Cars going 60 on 25mph streets constantly, all day. I have never seen one person stopped for speeding. Not one.

Family mental health crises. They have improved considerably compared to 10 years ago. It could improve further with community mental health infrastructure such as a mental health urgent care, and more mental health training for officers including mental health first aid, CIT training, and other trainings. Also, more officers, not less, and also more Street Outreach.

I have been pulled over by BPD twice. Neither were for moving violations, but for expired inspection or registration. Officers were polite both times, but I felt that being ticketed was unnecessary.

More consistency in response - sometimes really helpful and other times not helpful (not able to do much/intervene or support). Seems at times officer dependent and I wonder if a part of this is training?

None really

I called the non-emergency number last summer b/c there was a drunk guy at North beach harassing patrons. They timely arrived and took the guy away. Experience was perfect

My only interactions have been at UVM in non emergency situations. I'm middle aged, white, and an employee so I'm fine. BIPOC students report a lot of troubling incidents however
never really had a memorable interaction
When/if they arrive, they talk to us like we are the bad guys. We are not.
The police are not the problem the city council is
I moved out of Burlington because of the crime situation and defunding the police. Good luck Burlington you need it
Every encounter I've had with the police has been handled respectfully and professionally. Except parking dept. They are like talking to a wall
Always positive.
Redundant question. I've just answered this.
I work at the Baird School, and we have needed to call BPD for escalated students on rare occasions. From what I remember, the officers looked more to our administrators for how to handle the situations.
professional top notch
I don't interact with the police
For the most part they have been positive. Fewer interactions in the most recent years. Ultimately, there has not been much they have been able to do connected to drug dealing concerns in the past. They have been able to show up in some instances of altercations or disorderly situations.
The police department has been great. They are professional and good to the community despite the City trying to remove them.
Minor traffic offense, they were very professional.
I have seen them confront homeless people for loitering, an action which serves only punish the poor, the disabled, and victims of abuse for the community's failure to provide adequate housing. Decriminalize loitering, house the homeless, and provide harm reduction options for drug users.
Once, a friend of mine called 911 on an intruder to her husband's home, and the police came to ask my friend to leave. De-escalation training and some thorough interviews would have solved this.
Only had 1 experience and it went well, I called 911 due to someone having a health emergency
The officers that have assisted me with issues have been professional and patient.
The Burlington Police Department is an excellent police force. BPD officers are courteous and go above and beyond to serve their community.
Fantastic. Their professional judgement on using resources such as the Howard Center Street Outreach team.

great for the first 10 years - Terrible for the last 5 years...and just getting worse.
Was robbed: did not help at all Frequently see them harassing the homeless Frequently see them heavily armed and armored to "keep the peace" on church street. Maybe look for the people dressed for war. (It is the police)
I have engaged with BPD in past jobs in restorative justice, I have been a witness in cases/interviewed by BPD investigators/officers. These have been by and large good experiences where I was treated respectfully and my questions answered.
BPD is always there when they're not needed, like on church street harassing innocent homeless people, and they're never there when they are needed, like when an actual crime happens. I think it might be better if we just didn't have them around at all.
Quicker response time!??
Mostly 100% professional Some unprofessional. I've seen escalation behaviors from some officers.
No two officer will give the same answer.
I have called to deal with my neighbors and have had a mixed response. Sometimes they are helpful and sometimes they don't come fast enough or their presence ends the situation but the same behavior happens another day/night. It would be helpful to be able to call someone who could help them maintain a change in behavior.
No issue and interaction was fine.
No issues
I have had positive experiences with the BPD; in schools, in town, on the road at a traffic stop, and responding to accidents, vandalism.
Officers better trained, less threatening overall presence
Trust
I was in a car accident and assisted by a police officer. He was helpful and even assisted me with changing my tire.
Very little interaction. I have never spoken to an officer, even though I walk everywhere. My only interaction was to report a break-in. I called and got someone on the phone, but was directed to fill out a long online form. Really? You can't just take the info on the phone?
I've called 911 for a mental health emergency for a friend, and that is about the extent of my experience first-hand with police.
In general, there is an attitude that people living in the Old North End should expect and accept unlawful behavior. I've actually been told "what do you expect, you live in the Old North End" by BPD officers
Pleasant and efficient
called when a driver needed medical assistance; BPD and ambulance arrived quickly and were professional and courteous

I like seeing police and would like to see more police
not great - untrustworthy behavior, lack of kindness
I am white so I get a pass and they never bother me, but my Black neighbors are terrified of them. You should ask the leaders of the BIPOC community to lead the process to select the chief and give them a direct voice in picking a leader who will work for them and meet their needs. They are the ones with the most to gain or lose and the rest of us are just enjoying our privilege.
Not recent.
I witnessed BPD beat a homeless person to unconsciousness, leaving a pool of blood on the sidewalk. They told the person that his crime was stealing food from a restaurant dumpster. I think BPD should never have been called. I think those officers should be fired. I think food and housing should be free and accessible to anyone, no questions asked. When I try to speak to members of BPD, they will not even look my in the eye.
BPD treats me with suspicion. Even though I am white, my economic status leaves me as an undesirable. None of my interactions feel safe or comfortable. Never has the presence of BPD made the situation better.
I had frequent interactions with them, as an officer was always in Burlington High School while I was attending. I have also run into them when they occupy the end of Church Street on the weekend. They are unnecessarily standoffish and attempt to always maintain an air of intimidation.
I've interfaced with BPD at events such as Creemee with a Cop or with BSD food distribution. Always a pleasant conversation.
We had property stolen. We tracked it down because the cops did not want to. I was then told I should go retrieve it myself. Are you kidding?
Professional, respectful and responsive.
1. Someone was trying to cut trees on my property without my consent- I was told no officers were available on a non holiday Tuesday at 10 AM 2. Fight in front of my house- officers came quickly and separated men but didn't detain anyone. Police then left and fight resumed.
They have always been great. Doing the best they can considering thé many challenges.
Horrible. Hopefully I will never interact with Police agin in my life.
My experiences were good - couldn't be improved. But I'm white and of sound mental state.
One incident which involved a domestic dispute could have been handled a bit more professionally. One party was not being honest (female) and the other party (male) had a hearing impairment. I was trying to assist the person with a hearing impairment and was told to leave the room (which I did). I was also involved in a car accident at a different time and the officer was very helpful and kind.
add more people

I have been pulled over once or twice, for relatively minor, what I considered to be bogus reasons.
Have not been subjected to law enforcement actions directed at me or our business, other than to receive support for any issues that have arisen over time. Have maintained respect for BPD, its role, and its overall record of service to the community.
I have called several times for fire and noise on the beach
I was on the police commission & interacted with police in that role, was a victim advocate and interacted with BPD in that role. I've trained BPD officers, and also had them respond to incidents in our neighborhood and met them at events in the neighborhood. Overall, I've met a handful of compassionate professionals in the department, and I've met some BPD officers who seem to epitomize the worst stereotypes of militaristic, uncaring and callous cops who assumed my neighbors were "lowlifes."
Excellent. But we need a better prosecutor who will actually file charges.
I called 911 only one time when a friend needed to be brought to the hospital. In another instance when there was a guy who might be having a mental health episode in a public park and throwing a sharp knife at trees near people I called the police departments regular line and explained that I thought it could be mental health related so they would approach him in that manner.
experience minor only
Unhelpful for work-related, non emergency situations
I was helped by an off-duty police officer when i had an accident. He was helpful, polite, efficient and got me the help I needed.
Better communication

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 17 (text-box answers)

What can the Burlington Police Department do to improve methods of receiving comments, suggestions or concerns from the public?

Hold more meetings with neighborhoods and community organizations to share projects, current problems, hear neighborhood concerns
I am never sure who, what, when to contact for a non-emergency concern
Perhaps something like the see-click-fix app

Make it anonymous, or routed through a third party (ombuds office for example) so that *everyone* will feel safe and heard. Then make the comments and etc. the basis of regular reports so that the public knows what is going on from the perspective of all constituencies, not just the whites.

Demonstrate that they take them seriously by making concrete changes in their actions--- be held accountable to the City Council, Mayor, and citizens.

There are lots of ways to give comments about policing in this city.

Transparency.

I think the police have been unduly criticized and blamed unnecessarily. Realize they're not perfect; can always use more training etc. but to defund them and put citizens in charge of oversight is the wrong way to go.

monthly or quarterly radio call-in program; develop a cell phone app that makes it easy to provide quick and timely feedback on a police encounter

I have not used the system (again, a privilege, I know) -- so I cannot comment on their method for getting feedback/input from the public.

Make it more accessible, and available

not sure

really hard to communicate

Keep Police in our schools more monies for our Police higher salary and training

Make the current input process better known. I did not know it existed.

I'm prove surveys like this to better reflect the full range of opinions about Burlington. Police aren't the problem. Progressive politics that are centered around guilt and handwringing- rather than immediate public safety is the problem

Have enough officers to protect and serve residents

The police department is doing a great job. It's the city council that needs their heads examined. The council is causing this city to be over run with drugs and crime. The city should put a greater emphasis on being tough on the quality of life crimes like vandalism, public vagrancy, and drugs.

Hold more listening session---out of their overmilitarized uniforms. The last thing I want to do is tell someone how much they need to do to get better at what they do while they are wearing a gun.

For starters, the department can inform everyone as to how we can give feedback in the first place. My spouse and I have no clue.

Actively support the formation of community based standards and oversight. Enforcement of laws on a population without the populations input and consent is tantamount to forceful occupation.

Community meetings public events

Get the opiates off our streets by any means necessary

I have no idea where to send comments. I don't see anything on the BPD website. That's where I would go to offer comments, suggestions, etc.

I just went to the police dept website. Its totally not clear where to provide feedback. There should be a whole forum where people can provide feedback, other people can see it and vote and comment on it, and then the police can review monthly, prioritize, and report on the top 3 action items of the month based on those comments.

No suggestions. I haven't had a reason to contact them.

I would like to see less complaints through the media.

I don't see the police out and about anywhere but church street. Walk the damn streets. Engage the community.

STOP LISTENING TO THEM! Be police again!! All these molly-coddled, namby-pamby, whiny groups have gutted the moral and effectiveness of the police department

Just listens

Comment and complaint email address.

Hold Police Commission meetings in Contois Auditorium.

More officers on the street, letting the public know they are approachable.

The BPD does not need adjust to receiving comments. Some of the public sure needs to adjust and be more respectful.

I think the present process of publicly beating up the police (without suggesting it can't be deserved) leads to police who care less about what the public thinks of them. Just as police, as a whole, are racist labeling them the enemy will ensure they are always the enemy.

We ask police to do an inhuman job but act humanly.

Stop listening to the outrage mob. Some of these people are not even permanent residents who come here to go to UVM. These vocal individuals with too much time on their hands drown out other people's concerns. Plus, the namecalling such as the "racist" or "bigot" for those with differing opinions such as supporting the police need to be shut down. We are not children; stop being offended by what others have to say.

More training and standards that are up-to-date, and not based from 30+ years ago.

I am actually not sure how one would submit a public suggestion/concern. Perhaps publicizing an easy way to access (QR code?) through local and social media would help?

Very little. Public attitude needs to be adjusted

I don't have any faith that the comments collected have any impact on officer training or employment. Create a system of real outcomes and consequences and be transparent with the process. I know the union puts a lot of effort into fighting these processes, but that's what it would take.

Transparency, training, accountability
Be subjected to actual citizen oversight
Other than the survey how else would public comments or concerns be distributed Any method is better than inhabiting Battery St., Park and degrading all the police for the actions of a very few or for the actions of police in other communities that may not be so relevant for our communities of color at least to the same degree-if our communities that feel disempowered have a way to speak and be heard perhaps protest would be less required
Host a forum.
It's going to be hard. Although there is much confusion and some bad folks in law enforcement, countrywide, young people and progressives in BTV scream at and accuse entire departments of terrible misdeeds without proof or investigation. I'd say listen with a smile and keep doing what they are doing. The Mayor and Governor will tell them if action and reform is needed.
Submit to a civilian oversight board that has governing power over the department. The police cannot be trusted to police themselves.
Start from scratch, disband the union
Ignore the calls of reactionary protests. Get out on patrol. Walk the street. Engage with the public and make the presence of law known
Allow for more of true citizen oversight, an ombudsman who works on behalf of the community and not police to handle complaints and follow up to resolve.
Have a designated spot on their website.
Have a third party accountability committee to help police process and address community comments.
Voluntarily give up the power to investigate their own officers and work to establish an independent review board with the power to fire officers and mandate settlements be taken from police pensions instead of taxpayers wallets
FYI. This seems like a bias survey...you are 100% steering the narrative.
Have walking patrols and a politician go on patrol with them especially the city diversity official
No improvement needed
Why is this survey written in a way that assumes there is anything wrong with the police department? This is a very biased survey!
Get out of your car walk the neighborhoods.
Humility, open and transparent town hall forums, dissolve the too-powerful police union, have a citizen oversight board with power to create equitable change.
walk more
Not even aware there's a process...
Hiring consultants is a sure indication of making sure not her is done...thing of the Dodson

work!
I think they are doing a good job.
We have one?
Use See Click Fix as a way to report on issues and policing.
Use a community liason
Much of the negative input is asinine.
Retire and become citizens.
be more involved in the community and make comments welcome. perhaps have a liason that facilitates recieving feedback and giving it to leadership. Have a way for people to also give good reports and thank individual officers when they do good things, because it happens alot. but noone knows.
Stop dressing in military gear, and stop being rude to the average citizen
Ask for them.
I have not tried to suggest comments.
Commission an external audit including the Mayor's (lack of) oversight and steps to address ongoing concerns
Open forums,
Anyone can call in and make a complaint, walk into the building to speak with someone, or do it online. That's completely adequate.
I don't have experience with this process so I am not in a position to offer suggestions to improve it.
I have no idea what the current process is.
The police are doing an excellent job.
Stop making fake Twitter accounts for starters. Miro isn't as transparent as he wants us to believe.
I'm unaware of an avenue for sharing suggestions or concerns with the BPD as of this time.
1- be open and receptive of feedback 2- more training on appropriate communication skills with all people 3- to remember they are in place to help the community and not be puffed up with pride and attitude
First they need more police on patrol so they can respond
ive never tried but i assume its not too hard to have your concerns or suggestions heard. i would write to 7days. have my comments or concerns broadcasted. from the local media it seems to me that the police force here cares too much about what the public thinks of them.
Stop listening to socialists.
Not familiar with methods...
They have an online form for complaints and commendations. They need to share more

about what they do on a daily basis.
Field our concerns to appropriate supporting professionals in the community - lots better networking and access among all safety - including mental health - professionals.
Not familiar with the current practice.
Nothing
This survey seems helpful.
Allow anonymous input like this. The BLM activists will target, dox and try and cancel anyone who speaks out in support of the police. The intimidation from these violent, leftist activists causes regular citizens to be afraid to publicly support the police.
Hold annual meetings with the public maybe
seems as if they have many options for communicating.
I am not familiar with the process
Easy to access web based I input (I am sure they already have something like that)
Improve on line forms.
Haven't left a comment, so am unsure.
Have a designated Public Information Officer or Officers which can focus on relationships between the police department, media, and public.
Please make an urgent, but not emergency number where a person will answer and send the complaint to an officer or someone with authority and intent to solve the problem now.
Transparency
Structure the police department to make it directly answerable to the public. Police conduct review should be public and officers should serve only with the consent of the public.
Unsure - I'm not very familiar with existing methods
We live close to the police station. Last summer they endured significant verbal abuse almost daily/nightly. It was sad to see everyone getting abused because a few of them had acted badly. I feel like the public is free to express themselves wherever and however they choose to.
The process of public comment is easy to understand. But based on my viewing of police commission meetings, local groups will send out mass emails for people to call in with scripted messages. We rarely hear from real Burlingtonions....
We should be able to make complaints online using the internet, even anonymously. Burlington police should be required to give every person they have contact with a card that explains how to make a complaint and where to go online to make it.
I don't have the first clue as to what the existing methods are, so I have nothing to go on.
Hire a full-time ombudsperson whose office is outside and away from the police. True accountability.
I have never had a complaint to make but I do not know who I would go to if I did.

Not sure. Quite frankly I don't see a problem
Simplify the process.
I'm going to give this a lower rating as our community is in a time of transition. At this time, I don't feel we have a clear path to get our feedback to the most appropriate people.
Have comments and concerns go to a non-police, community oversight board who has actually power over the structure and function of the Burlington Police Department.
I would like to have the present dept phased out and a new civilian run office organize new and healthy ways of community protection.
I have not tried to offer public input so I can't comment
I think that the responsibility at this point is with the city. The city's Progressive agenda is stifling the Police department. I am so tired of this - it is obvious and insidious. The City if Burlington needs to allow the police department to participate and engage.
Not familiar with the process
More importantly, what do they do with these comments, suggestions or concerns?
While I suppose the receiving method is fine, I have little faith that the department will ever act on public comment.
Listen, first and foremost. Not pick and choose which laws or ordinances they are going to enforce. Try to de-escalate neighbor disputes...not ignore them allowing them to continue flaring up.
The public has been very vocal about changes that should occur with the BPD to make Burlington a safer place, such as the implementation of a community oversight board. However, these concerns were virtually ignored by city officials. In the future, there should be options for members of the public to propose charter changes and ordinances.
Given that I don't know what the current methods are, it would seem feedback may be unwelcome or not widely and honestly solicited.
only some people have a voice right now...those who yell the loudest or have lived here the least amount of time. Those of us with different opinions are voiceless. There's not much oxygen for calm, mature, rational comments, suggestions, or concerns.
There should be an independent board for oversight and control of the police who is a liaison between the community and the police. There should be easy to find and access feedback forms on the city website. The feed back should have the option of being anonymous.
I don't know enough about the process to comment responsibly about improvements, but I do think that police should have civilian oversight which has the power to discipline and affect policies of the department.
Talk to EVERYONE. Learn about the people you're supposed to protect, their communities, their culture, EVERYTHING. Purge the folks on your payroll who aren't receptive to change or listening.

I don't even know how you can send comments to BPD but I assume through their website. I think it would be important for those comments to go to an outside source where there's an in person and public meeting with these comments.
I've never tried providing comment - I didn't even know it was possible. So perhaps improve community awareness that comments, suggestions, concerns etc. can be provided?
Public forums. Community conversations. Trust building. Informal opportunities to get to know and learn from one another.
I do not know what the process is, making it more easily known would improve the method.
The cops seem genuinely uninterested in the feedback of the community they serve, particularly the interim chief.
Maybe try to actually do something about them.
Continue to become more accessible to minorities. I am a Caucasian female and I don't think my feelings toward the police are the same as others. I have always had a positive experience with the police.
listen carefully, have a transparent process with independent civilian oversight
Follow a public engagement plan similar to that conducted by the DPW.
neighborhood outreach
Can't think of anything at this time.
I don't know
Outside of attending city meetings I am not aware of any formal method of communicating with the police department other than simply calling or visiting the station.
Do not defund the police. We need greater presence.
Well, I didn't know there was one. In the current environment, it could be broadly advertised, but it's probably more constructive to come through an organized survey like this than all of us lobbing comments whenever we feel like it. Anyway, an important part of a good comment system is being able to see what action resulted and why.
No one seems willing to reach out to the business community for input. This seems shocking to me as it appears that no one wants our opinion yet we see the need for law enforcement and public safety every day.
I fault Burlington's anti-police attitude for this situation.
I don't know what the complaint system is. I would say, please, please, please, do not allow the police commission to discuss in detail personnel matters and ongoing criminal cases in open session. The discussion of the January incident in open session was a disservice to the officers and to the youth who is being investigated. It is also a legal liability.
Improve how they deliver their i Douro the community

How about making a survey that makes sense in English. Question 17 isn't even a sentence. How can it be accurate or not? It makes no sense at all. This survey is really poorly crafted. The results to questions like this will be beyond meaningless.

Not sure

Create a booth in neighborhoods manned by police officers to create a link between the community they serve and protect and the BPD.

A small number of politically motivated activists have distorted issues & resulted in city council decisions that do not reflect or serve the majority of Burlington non-student residents.

Their website has places to receive this info. Maybe young people would use an App. Maybe more PR is needed to promote ways to use the systems already in place. I have never felt the BPD is unreachable.

Should have an independent body so when grievances come to them about BPD, BPD isn't self grading. I would also hope restorative justice/practices could be used in this body.

BPD is very approachable.

I think it's easy (and often necessary) to develop a hard shell to protect yourself from the things police have to deal with. They see the worst of humanity (but also, perhaps, the best at times). Perhaps it's less about what they can do to improve communication, but rather how can the community offer their support? More involvement by community members in police work, or more counseling services, or work to change police culture might be more effective.

Have a police oversight committee who will have more authority than the police commission who is constrained by dept rules.

Not sure!

Need to set up reliable points of public dialogue. I see DPW and Parks and Rec at NPA meetings almost monthly, but almost never the police.

My primary experience with BPD has been with listening in to police commission meetings. In general I found the officers taking part in the meeting to be somewhat defensive and dismissive of concerns raised by citizens.

Actually listen! Do not blow off community feedback as "having an agenda" or spread misinformation (as we saw with the BPD police union Twitter account this past summer). This inherently reduces trust in the feedback process.

The System overall need Improvement. They need to be TRUTHFUL to the Public about the Laws in Burlington, work WITH the community in resolving Issues. DEESCALATE situations with EVERYONE, including our BIPOC communities.

#1 BPD cannot be understaffed, overworked and under trained. I've benefited from participating in the "Ride Along" program on a Friday night. Police have a very complex job. Much of the public input is uninformed. But understanding mental health issues, issues of poverty and culture is also complex. The dialogue and training needs occur between those

two sectors to improve outcomes.
Not send out blatantly false propaganda. Actually allow for ALL public comments during zoom forums to be heard
a more transparent process about how information is processed and responded to in their system.
Be seen more on the streets - especially Church Street!
I'm unsure what the current process is.
Del Pozo was not a good role model. It appears that the police are defensive and threatened by public comments. I observe this from afar, not from personal experience.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More transparency in decision-making, policies and practices so people are more aware and feel more comfortable providing feedback 2. website: have a suggestion/feedback button on front page, make it simple - show that you WANT feedback 3. same on social media. Post regularly from Chief and invite pvt message feedback. 4. host regular neighborhood discussion forums. Be open and receptive, not defensive. 5. Partner with community org's to host discussions/forums. e.g. MH forum w/ Howard Ctr
we need more say in how cops are trained
It seems that there are easy enough ways to get comments/suggestions/concerns to the Police Department, but it does not seem as if there are many effective ways to have comments, suggestions, or concerns actually heard or addressed seriously.
Hired a Information Officer who's job it would be to share information with the public.
There needs to be more information/access to surveys and input processes for those who may have difficulty using modern technology.
There are many ways do this already, nothing more seems needed.
Nothing
I am not familiar with the process. I googled "Burlington VT Police Public Input" and the first link is dead. The second link is the right one and appears reasonably easy to use, but the first link should be deleted.
Ignore all the people screaming at them and just do their jobs
I have no idea.
This is not an issue of how BPD can do better. There is a select group that always clogs the airways spouting the same message over and over. It is generally about 100 to 300 people that constantly call in. This needs to change. This city is made up of over 40000 residents.

I think we need to improve and inform the public on what Police Officers do. How can we (a community member) make comments or suggestions when we don't really know what they do.
No knowledge.
If possible, perhaps those in command would be open to meeting with people who have complaints.
It's clear on their website how to leave anonymous information and their phone number is readily accessible.
I like the idea of a mixed oversight board where community members of diverse experience including current and former police staff participate so all perspectives are available.
I don't think that it can easily be achieved right now due to covid, but perhaps after covid there could be face to face meetings with calm discussions of how to improve and also maybe hearing from them what it is that they do. If the covid situation doesn't improve, maybe one on one video discussions. If there's no time with actual officers maybe some kind of middle person.
Community oversight board for BPD
I have never attempted to submit a comment, suggestion, or concern.
accept community oversight and control of the police
have a citizen advisory board with powers to make changes.
Create a community oversight board
Increase awareness and transparency of process. Actually hold officers accountable
not sure I am aware of the methods
My experience with the BPD has shown me that they are in denial that there are any problems at all. They are not open to feedback at this point. This is very sad, because if they could be vulnerable and open just a little bit, I think we could collectively build a healthier model for the city. I don't think this will change anytime soon, they are not mentally able to process constructive feedback because they are operating in an oppressive system.
Be more open to feedback and find ways to better address minorities (thinking of recent incident where BIPOC young adult was tazed- he was obviously fearful most likely due to his race) and mental health issues
Be more transparent about what comments they do receive and what the public is most concerned about.
Create a forum with the public, i.e. the "Cops and Community" conversations created by Kyle Dodson
At the moment, you can call in, leave messages on social media, you can approach an Officer in person, you can seek to speak with a supervisor you can leave complaints on the department web sight. The Police Department is doing a lot to ensure they can hear from he public.

I have not attended and Special Police Commission meetings. I do not feel I can accurately answer.
Jon Murad would be a great Chief if you let him focus on community policing training. He is a gem we should not lose. He's brilliant and creative. He should be supported!!
I haven't tried to give input so can't say.
make it very easy for people to post comments/suggestions/concerns publicly (on some kind of webpage) or privately (via email or phone), as they prefer, with the ability to remain anonymous on all options. Follow up accordingly -- in public for public comments and in private for private ones -- until the issue is resolved.
They seem pretty receptive to me.
Front Porch Forum is where I've seen info. about giving BPD and police issue input except for mail-in survey I received awhile back.
Be more transparent and act like they want the input
Get an actual chief leader instead of temps. Make sure he's not friends with the mayor
I have no knowledge about the process.
I really don't know.
I think they can do some better PR to help the public better understand all of the good work they are doing. I also think it's important that the current interim chief becomes the permanent chief so there is some stability. The turnover in chiefs has been a major issue.
It's not what BPD can do. The city council needs to allow the police chief to run the dept. If they don't trust the chief to do the job right, then replace them. Police need to managed without politics involved.
Make the non-911 phone numbers easier to find.
If there was a community board, I would feel more comfortable
I don't know! But it should be a moderated/ mediated experience if it is going to be like a meeting or a Zoom call so its not just a free for all of complaints.
More outreach
I'm not sure, I've never tried to make a comment or suggestion.
I am not familiar with this.
I have no suggestions for improvement
For the public to ENGAGE with officers and NOT blame officers for stupid things people do. OUR police are very professional and will assist anyone with their problems. COOPERATION is key when dealing with the police. The police are NOT the problem.
really don't know - I have never tried to contact the police
Not sure. See Click Fix is completely ineffective in regards to the Code Compliance office.
Difficult to understand city council relationships with BPD, they seem determined to make the police's jobs more difficult, instead of supporting this essential role in community safety...

Have more police stations for the public to visit police and let me be more involved in each neighborhood
Lol Miro vetoes stuff the public votes on regarding policing so get him out
Maybe advertise or inform in more ways about the process of how the public can give feedback
Create an independent citizen oversight board.
reach out on Front Porch Forum, engage with the community in positive ways
Communication and outreach
I'm not aware of anything about this. If the BPD is looking for input they can note it regularly on Front Porch Forum.
Hosting public forums in a casual atmosphere? I think the community day they host is AMAZING, however, it could have a business component/option for feedback (or maybe I missed it?).
Abolish the police
I never see any officers Downtown walking anymore. I wish they were more visible
I am unaware of the public input process. It would be good to know what comes of comments.
I think they are very responsive and helpful. I like their input on Front Porch Forum and that could be utilized more.
Unsure
They have to WANT the input. This wee box is too small to fully discuss this question.
Care about community safety more than your pensions.
Keep SRO in our schools.
Not sure. Meet the neighbors. Introduce themselves. Be unarmed.
I'm not sure.
I have no idea what system is already in place for receiving comments, suggestions, or concerns, so I cannot make recommendations to "improve it." (This is a biased question, by the way.)
Not sure
Send texts!
I don't know
I THINK THERE ARE A "FEW" GOOD APPLES WHO CAN BE RELOCATED AND THE REST SHOULD LABOR FOR THEIR PAYCHECK
randomly selected citizen assembly

<p>It feels in Burlington that if you do not agree with police reform that was voted on in June 2020 and reducing staffing issues, you are shamed and attacked. This environment has made it hard to speak up and to share any options that may not line up with the City Council in June 2020. While discussions need to be had regarding public safety, I fear that many Burlington residents are not speaking up that don't agree with the decisions that were made by the City Council.</p>
<p>Don't really care about how they communicate.</p>
<p>get rid of at least 6 city councilmembers</p>
<p>Seems like the process is weighted toward those who want to voice opposition and devote substantial time to that effort. Hard to justify participating at length just to say that the experience has been positive.</p>
<p>I'm not sure but they need to be seen. I think they need to be out and about on the streets so we feel safe and we actually see them downtown on church street and in City Hall Park. That's where visitors go.</p>
<p>1) _seek_ input; 2) accept input; 3) listen to input; 4) work to _understand_ input; 5) act on input. Instead, what we see from Burl. Police, is knee-jerk and defensive.</p>
<p>I do not think it is so much a matter of the Police Dept. I think it is more a matter of the City Council, which is completely biased and incompetent, controlling public input, attacking the police, and only being interested in hearing one side of the story (their side).</p>
<p>Improve transparency and accessibility for communications between police and the public</p>
<p>A more formalized process; a stronger police commission; more use of NPAs to discuss concerns & challenges of enforcement.</p>
<p>As it becomes more Covid safe for group gatherings, resume having BPD hosted community events.</p>
<p>Not sure</p>
<p>I've never looked into making comments.</p>
<p>They need to be more responsive to the needs of people of color.</p>
<p>Act like they care when you report a public safety issue (I.e. drug dealing)</p>
<p>Not sure</p>
<p>not sure, but if you want public input people have to know they will actually be listened to, and we have to know who is in charge</p>
<p>I have no idea what the current process is. They are a division of the city. If I have a problem with the police presumably I bring it up with my city councilor/city council/mayor's office.</p>
<p>Building trust in the community. That way they can get better support.</p>
<p>Receive enough financial support from city council to do their job. Have community partners who work with them not against them</p>

Constant reminders of how to do this. Regular Front Porch Forum postings. Social media postings. Reminder posters.
I have no idea what the process is, so I can't comment.
Unsure, but I was not aware that there was a way to leave feedback.
Access seems limited to people who have stable internet access. Mailers and a text messaging system would allow for more people, likely the folks we need input from, to engage with the feedback option.
Keep asking community members for feedback
Divest from policing and invest in public services that keep people safe
Listen to the public who are invested in the City, not just itinerant fly-by-nighters.
I don't know much about the public input process (except I did hear about the summer's overly long meetings). Perhaps various methods of input could be regularly publicized on Front Porch Forum, etc.
Solicit feedback. Provide via email and via mail the process for this to happen. Have a police advisory board or similar entity hold meetings IN the communities and not just at City hall. Elicit feedback from our New Americans and BiPOC residents.
Make it clear what kinds of information they want and be proactive in reaching out to get it--like this survey. At present, I would not know to whom I should turn.
I don't have a good suggestion; not sure I completely understand the current process enough to make meaningful suggestions
This survey's wording is biased. I think the public needs to improve its method of communication.
Have reoccurring town halls for the public to interact and ask questions. Have more educational programs with local schools to introduce and explain what the police's goals are to the younger community.
Be more polite and approachable. I called non emergency number last week for a client in crisis and receptionist/intake sounded gruff and rude, like she was being bothered. She is a public service and should be mindful of her attitude. Some of the staff are very approachable. I have known Detective Ehrlich from many years ago. He was always approachable. Not so many today. Del Pozo scandal didn't help PR and the latest plagerism writing is pretty bad as well. Clean it up.
There should be a method to receive comments both in person and online
I think that the only people who are giving comments, concerns, and suggestions is a very small population who are comfortable speaking out and I believe there is a much larger population who support BPD who don't know how to speak up and share that because they are afraid to be ostracized and publicly shamed.
There needs to be an unbiased party evaluating the comments.

I appreciate the Police Commission announcing their meetings in Front Porch Forum. Difficult to find their minutes and agendas.
Take the comments and concerns seriously. Actually listen to the comments.
Cultural shift has to take place internally to show up to the community tables in a genuine and collaborative ways and stop disappearing when things get rough. I wonder if we do need to hire chief who is not part of the law enforcement world but someone who actually knows how to vision and execute fundamental overhaul of the department. We might need a visionary and a manager not enforcer.
I don't think the BPD receiving comments/suggestions or concerns from the public is an activity that will make any difference.
n/a - I have never engaged with the current public input process.
Be tasked and supported by this or the next administration to do their job - with pride and dignity. They are as scared as we are.
I would like to see more community engagement events. One concern I have is that only the loudest voices will be heard.
Embrace an oversight committee to review any incidents while on or off shift and give the committee authority to punish police for unprofessional behavior.
Publicize process
I don't really know. There seems to be a hostile relationship right now. I think that must be fixed before the way comments are received can be fixed.
It has never come up for me
Invite a random sample of residents to meet for breakfast, lunch or right after work.
have the chief do public announcements; work with Mayor and together make sure communications are clear to people.
Act like they actually want citizen feedback. Nobody who's had a bad experience with a cop wants to go to a BBQ with them....Seriously? That is the most ill-thought out PR move ever! Hold town halls at different times of the day in different locations/over Zoom where ppl can voice concerns directly to officers.
I do not know a lot about the process.
I am not familiar with the current process.
How is this getting to the vulnerable populations? Are there translated versions for the community?
Pay people to do it, offer a variety of ways of doing it including over the phone, market directly to people where they live, like in the section 8 housing neighborhoods, laundromats, panhandlers on church street, etc
expand awareness around Click-Fix program and online reporting of incidents
Not sure, I've never made suggestions to them before.
I haven't interacted with the Burlington Police in this way.

This question is a 2 way street requiring multiple, objective and sensitive people.
Make sure to reach out to every community member to seek input regardless their race not only base themselves on white people who are the people that yes will follow up because they have all the means to follow up they understand the language and have more access to resources you have to reach out to other communities too go where the communities are all voices need to be heard and there's a way for that. Language shouldn't be a barrier. Interpreters exist and Burlington is for all not onlywhite
I'm not sure. The department that I call most recently at the BPD is that animal control and they never return my phone calls
There should be a body of oversight over BPD that has actual power. Concerns from the community should be taken seriously and acted upon. There needs to be more social workers trained to respond to people in crisis who should respond in any instance where this is best instead of police. Police unions need to have less power. Protecting police officers from any kind of consequences from their crimes, from injuring and killing citizens--this needs to stop.
Creative and prolific messaging about how the public can accessing the input process
Be more transparent about where complaints will go and how they will be handled. Also, guaranteeing that complaints can have some impact on an officer and an officer will be held accountable for actions.
Pull off surveys in shopping plazas, parks, and libraries and businesses.
Civilain oversight and accountability. The mayor needs to relinquish control and give it to an independent body.
Have a civilian oversight board
BPD should not manage complaints, these should be exclusively managed by a fully funded, independent board of community members.
I am not familiar with the process.
No comments since I never had to deal with the Police
My experience has been good, so don't know what to suggest.
The options for who to contact in an emergency is based on current resources. It should include potential resources that could be developed like a mental health crisis response capacity like CAHOOTS.
Continue the walking patrols and interface with citizens in this manner.Stay impartial and follow the laws.
I'm really not sure.
Maybe actually fire the officers that assault people??? Crazy thought I know
There are many folks that believe the police are doing a good job. But those that don't respect and/or ignore police directives are the first to bitch. I find if you follow the law you won't have bad interaction with the police.

I don't know anything about this.
I'm not sure. Maybe multiple and regular public forums to educate the public of procedures and collect input?
I'm not sure about mechanics of this so I can't really comment.
Actively market and make available both digital and drop-box comment platforms, have someone trained in customer support be designated as a person who can be called with feedback.
Abolish themselves
Nothing, keep on being cops. Leave them alone and realize people who are giving their input have never worn the badge.
Actually listen. Like, every officer should be able to listen to the members of our community.
Current behavior is excellent
Offer opening listening sessions with a commitment to just listen.
no need to improve.
Not sure. I like this process a lot. Maybe do this kind of survey more often? Be friendlier and receptive to a neighborhood chat? I think it would be beneficial to know our police officers better.
Act maturely.
Hire more police officers and allow them to do their jobs rather than act as social workers. Hire social workers and mental health professionals to work with the police to handle mental health issues.
Do more than put issues on the ballot. There should be frequent public forums with the police commission board. I was on the library commission board and every meeting had a section for community input.
It should be a publicly accessible forum admined by a group of public and law enforcement.
Maybe use social media.
more methods of communication for better access
I have asked them to protest against the terrible accusations that have been made against them and they politely tell me that they can't do that as they work for the city.
make it a more transparent and uniform process with follow up
Facebook?
More community policing and interactions between officers and the community, establishing real relationships so people can feel comfortable engaging with law enforcement.
Never we need more officers day and night in this city, people riding bikes need to go through an approved course for the safety of all people and mode of transportation
Pay attention to them and act on them.

Become aligned with the community in a desire to make positive change.
More community policing
I really don't understand or know what the police reform process is. IMO, cutting police without identifying alternatives is unproductive. What can BPD do? First, define a new scope for police operations... what will police handle and what will be handed off to others, e.g. the Howard Center. Second, since discretion is fundamental to policing, develop policies around discretion. Third, implement bias avoidance techniques Forth. develop and deploy a measurement of success.
I'm not aware of a system to communicate with BPD
I don't think there is an issue collecting concerns. It's their absolute unwillingness to address them. Burlington's station's response to defunding and taking responsibility for racist policing was to threaten to fire "its most diverse staff". A police station should be directly answering the calls to its community, not threatening them.
REfund the police
The BPD website says the complaints process is prompt & open. I can't find where to view information about complaints BPD receives, however. I found Commendations as an agenda item in recent Police Commission meetings, but not Complaints. If the public can't easily review information about complaints against the department, then transparency & accountability are lacking.
It is difficult to give meaningful comment that might ever result in action. It is frustrating to speak and they say "thank you" and then just go on with other business, as if you didn't have anything that might be useful.
Be more transparent
I don't know many ways that BPD has actually embraced comment or suggestions from the public in a way that doesn't feel reactive or defensive.
Listen to the Black women/femmes who are leaders in their communities!
never seen or heard of any methods.
Send us mail and emails, posters around neighborhoods.
Advertise options such as these surveys online and in physical spaces where people commonly gather: stores, library, etc. Create a permanent website and/or phone line dedicated to allowing the public a forum for providing feedback on the BPD whenever they need or want to.
Quicker responses to emails and comments
not sure
It's the public that needs to change.
I haven't inputted comments/concerns to BPD so don't know the process. For me, it feels more like they need to be open to it. With the calls for change, it has felt like BPD on the whole has been more defensive than receptive to public concerns.

they can improve their listening skills and set examples for their peers by doing the right thing and find a new career that doesn't require you to be a bad person and to do bad things. we camped out in front the police station for a month and y'all didn't do shit
Be there for the people, patrol downtown on foot and communicate with the people. Let Burlingtonians know that you are part of the Community and there to help.
Listen to protesters
If someone is hospitalized or requests the police to take items to create safety in their home, it would be good for police to hold items longer than 30 days.
Nothing. They're doing a great job.
They almost listen to much and let out of state privilege's make decisions.
Be allowed to do their job and be respected by their bosses in City Hall for doing it.
How are people who are often targeted by police, like the homeless and people with mental illness or disability being asked their opinions?
Have option for ongoing feedback easily accessible to all = website?
Actually listen.
They don't pay attention to anything
Would like to see more interactive conversations / meetings with the community with both parties respectful of each others thoughts and opinions. I don't support reducing the size of the police force because I believe it will result in more crime. Would prefer more education/training to ensure fair and equal response to all in our community
More PR
Suggestion box: Old fashioned physical and digital on line in multiple languages
Actually do something with all the input you get
It should be posted in more areas & with more organizations. Not just on the Police department's website. When the meetings are held in person again the should not be held at the police department which is not welcoming to the public & may not be considered a "safe" space for some.
The below questions are both required on the Citizen Complaint form. There should be more clarity in defining what these means and implications for selection.
Would you be willing to meet in person to discuss this incident? *
Would you consider mediation as a way to resolve this incident? *

First off, BPD would need to actually treat these comments as a priority. The response of the Department to last summer's prolonged protests shows that the Department is not willing to take into account the feedback from concerned residents. The way that comments are received is meaningless if the Department just disregards them, pays them lip service, or otherwise dismisses them. We need a Community Control of Policing board to actually make community feedback meaningful. Anything else is useless.

more police to talk to and to give input through the city website.

This is the first platform I have seen and this is a good one if it can get out to all the public in Burlington. It is important that the community is heard and often I think the city council does their thing and there is a lot of eye rolling or complaining but people do not know an easy way to have their voices heard. This reduction in the force is dangerous and will lead Burlington down a path of destruction. We need the officers AND improved mental health AND bias training and discipline.

They should listen to the generous comments the public has provided for years. They should fire Joseph Corrow and Corey Campbell

Make complaints accessible to all members of the community. Allow the community to register complaints to a party that is not the police department. How can we trust police to report on themselves? An external body is necessary. More people would come forward when the process is easier and demonstrates greater accountability.

Be completely transparent about the methods of receiving comments. This should not be a one-off situation where BPD listens to community input this one time. There should be formal procedures set in place around this with several options available for submitting information

It seems clear they don't want input from the public. They want to continue the status quo.

I've never tried to use the current process so i cannot speak to its efficacy

get rid of Max Tracy

I'm not knowledgeable about this process, I can't make any helpful comments here.

Listen

they do a good job now

Not all people use computers the same way - I would just ensure that there are different methods for people to provide input.

An ombudsman role is appropriate. But also vital that trained officers are allowed to lawfully perform their primary functions without being tugged and pulled.

Do follow up calls to talk with people who have called them. How do they feel about response.

Civilian advisory or oversight board

This type of survey is a good way. Probably have a number to call like the 211 & 411 numbers that can be called for information.

Actually heed them

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 18 (text-box answers)

I think greater police accountability and transparency are necessary for meaningful police reform. I choose the answer above because:

I think accountability is part of it, but it's also a distraction from the main issue. Seeing cops doing bad stuff isn't actually preventing them from doing it in most cases, it's just shining a light on something not being fixed. We have to take tasks away from police and give them to ppl better equipped to handle them.

Can't fix what you don't know

I think accountability and transparency should be the cornerstone of all public service

We have a problem in the US, and it is reflected in the attitude of even the Burlington PD: cops have somehow forgotten that their job is to serve and protect - and that applies to EVERYONE. Instead we get the demands for "respect" and subservience. I would not feel safe even speaking to a cop on the beat, they seem so puffed up with guns & etc.

Letting the police "self-police" does not work. Having police account only to the Mayor is a failed strategy==as we have seen in many occasions.

This question assumes there isn't accountability and transparency and is non-specific. Obviously there's always room for improvement, but it seems like the purpose of the question is to get everyone to hit "agree"

Both are important. I feel as though this question is written poorly. There are more factors than that, it is not binary, and the writers of this survey should know better than that.

police reform is a big word with lots of interpretations.

let's not go overboard here. use common sense and good judgement.

I disagree that we need any police reform. I think some of this is liberal nonsense and driven by bias against police officers who take their lives in their hands when they put on their uniform I also think that the people seeking reform have their own personal agenda.

Training is nearly meaningless without accompanying accountability, transparency, sanctions, and rewards for police conduct

With so much unrest and strong opinion about what isn't working, it's clear more can be done to enhance transparency, improve relationships and trust, and allow for meaningful accountability. At the same time, I am very resistant to polarizing slogans and voices saying "Defund the police" because I do not think this recognizes the complexity in t

I think these are about right now. We need to focus on hiring and training and retaining a force that reflects the community it is serving.
I don't think reform will address the systemic issues in our community. It's time for a reset and restructure
The current manner in which internal accountability is conducted lacks in integrity and a means of justice.
If only to make the public realize what an important job they do.
violence toward people of color
Citizens need quality Police not defunding
I believe the department is already transparent and the city council idea of reform will damage Burlington for a long time. The Burlington I grew up in and once loved is gone and will never be back.
I believe that our city's Department is professional in this regard.
The above selection is general, not specific to any particular police department.
Accountability, transparency, and training are what is needed to address systemic racism, not reducing police.
I think political accountability toward a safe community is more necessary
Transparency is good
with no accountability there is no vehicle for change
The police aren't the problem. The problem are city councilors that don't think the law should be enforced. I'd like to see a few of the city council members arrested for endangering the citizens of Burlington.
Any person needs to accountable for the their actions and choices
It's like the catholic church's response to sexual assault. The "we'll handle it internally" crap has got to go.
Greater transparency and accountability can increase public trust in, and support of, the police department.
Qualified immunity creates a system that encourages abuses of authority and allows for the minimization of training for police while making abused individuals feel they have little recourse. Law enforcement should require SIGNIFICANT training, on par with bachelors degrees, and police should be disallowed from misleading individuals on their rights
Residents should understand what police do and appreciate it
I agree TO A POINT. Like with any job, people feel they understand it, but do not work the job and do not understand it without the training and daily interactions. Egregious things, yes. But overall, no. Find a good leader who understands the job.
Police should be heldAccountable but the public needs to understand they have very difficult job and often have only seconds to make decisions regarding use of force or life saving responses.

Because the cops dont need libtard fuckheads messing with their policies

More transparency is always better than less.

That statement is true for everything in govt

People have no idea what the police face every day.

My concern is others are making comments behind the safety of a computer who have never faced the instant decisions police are required to make on a daily basis.

Are all decisions correct? Of course not, but the vast majority are justified.

thats the job

I think there is plenty of accountability and transparency. Sometimes policing is analogous to making sausage - we want the results, but the process can be difficult to watch.

There has to be a way to dismiss or re-train the few officers who use excessive force, escalate instead of de-escalate, act on racist sentiments, or have anger/mental health issues that impact their work.

You can't fix problems if you don't know what they are.

The police have a history of protecting their own and this has allowed a few bad officers to cast a negative shadow on all officers.

I chose Disagree because your question fails to address the public's responsibility in the relationship.

Because the unknown is always scary

It's fine. Only idiotic, short-sighted, half-educated, parochialistic tribalists, ignorant flatlanders, and income-motivated lawyers think there's a problem with the Burlington police department.

Because of events over the last few years.

People think otherwise?

But, I think we need to provide an environment where we attract police officers. Currently I have no idea how we would attract them as the atmosphere feels so toxic and I do not agree with having fewer police officers as I feel our society is not in a place where we can all be kind to each other.

I feel like there is transparency.

Mob rule is bad when it takes over logical talking points. Of course, accountability is good, but leaving it to the mob is bad. Life happens and people make mistakes.

Accountability is essential - it is a way we can help one another learn to self regulate.

There are a few examples of police behaving inappropriately

Nobody I know trusts the cops, and I don't either.

There have been so many half hearted attempts at reform in the past 20 years and nothing has changed. Clearly it will take outside oversight and transparency. The police cannot police themselves.

Transparency is almost always beneficial to improving systems. The more the public knows, the better they can understand the nuances of police work

because that is the definition of police reform.
The police need to be subject to civilian oversight and control
Its a fact
The job is something that most people can't fathom. They don't have to think about an interaction turning into the event that could end there life. It feels good to make the authority figure the bad guy when you can't take responsibility for your own actions.
Too much is now being left to the police to reform themselves and not be truly accountable to how those reforms are put in place and enforced. For decades, they have resisted opening up the police department to listening to the community's true concerns.
The serve and are paid by the public like other jobs so it should be transparent
Police don't need to be accountable to the public at large. Police accountability rests with elected officials as outlined in the City Charter. Needed disciplining of individual officers should remain within the police hierarchy and overseen when necessary by city officials.
There is plenty of police accountability. The accountability of criminals is the issue.
Public Safety is a public issue. Police have yet to be able to reform on their own. They must do this in partnership and under the supervision of informed community members.
I think all police departments should be better, but I think we are in a trend of placing blame on all societal problems on police. This will lead to frustration, exhaustion, efficiency, and recruiting / retention issues among police.
You cannot have an effective police force without a relationship with the community. Bpd does not in its current form provide any meaningful service to vulnerable people. This model must not be allowed to continue failing our community
Why do we need reform? How about people be accountable for their actions and not look to blame the people that are keeping others safe.
Police protect and serve
They do not want accountability. They want revenge. Burlington is the most transparent department in this state
If you want to have more oversight of the police department, go be a police officer, then apply to be the chief. Why does the community need to know everything the police department is working on? Do we know everything every other city service is working on? The PD work with very sensitive issues that the community doesn't need to know about.
Yes, and... police reform is not the answer. We need to completely redefine public safety and community accountability so that punishment is not the default assumption of who deserves protection and who deserves punishment, and why and how the police do their jobs.
Police she be more connected to there community as they are part of that community

I've experienced police to be no different than anybody else, some are in the wrong field, some are not...policing is no place for attitudes, decisions made by judgments, and being a hypocrit.
People do not have a clue what officers deal with day in and day out. brutality is never acceptable, but their job is hard.
They already have systems in place to address these things
Open these jerk offs to litigation and this crap stops tomorrow.
They are essentially a state funded mafia that can conveniently ignore laws when it serves their interests.
We have had too many unnecessary escalations and police killings in the City of Burlington.
I feel like Burlington policing is pretty transparent but am in support of accountability and transparency
I think the Dept. needs to evolve and consistent accountability would be a step forward.
these types of 'accountability' games have been used again and again and haven't led to real change.
Because you leftists take it too far
i think the police need more training and more officers so they can be out in the community and not work so much overtime. we need to be hiring balanced mentally healthy officers and give them support to stay that way. if the city keeps demonizing the police and cutting them back, only people that will want to be police in burlington will be bad
I think that all officers should wear body cams at all times and they should all have training on mental health awareness so they are better prepared to assist people in distress.
I think most people including police officers would agree with that
Police don't make people commit crime. Reducing recidivism is a better approach.
I do not believe reform is needed for burlington police
Why put students, anti police, and satanists in charge? why, really?
Policing reflect com values. Com sets guidelines for appropriate police response. Example, high speed chase? Shooting unarmed people? Transparency include background of officers applying, hiring of chief open, and hire local so candidates are known. Review of training, and adjudication of complaints public. No blanket immunity. Public report calls.
Because the have enough accountably already. Just more government.
It is unfair given the way the media is at the moment, it makes it impossible to treat the police officers fairly.
The police are accountable to no one but themselves and they have the power and privilege to end or drastically alter people's lives.
I haven't found this to be as issue.
I think the Mayor is not interested in serious reform of BPD

People can stop being shitbags anytime
I do not think our local police department had meny untill staffing levels were cut and our city leaders started to cut, our Police and hurt moral
I agree, but good hiring practices, governmental oversight, effective training, and rationalization and prioritization on activities is also critical
There is a big need for mental health response vs a violent one.
I don't think the police department needs meaningful reform
Sure, transparency and accountability are huge. That comes with community support of the police. As Jon Stewart said, you can support police and still hold them to a higher degree of accountability; those things are not mutually exclusive.
Police should be held accountable for their actions like everyone else.
Doing a good job with difficult issues
I agree a police accountability needs to be more upfront but eliminating half the staff defending them they need more training not less people when you put less cops out there they get more stressed out more stuff happens when they have to handle five people to the one person that is not enough people on staff staff
But stop trying to crucify the police
In a democracy, the adults living in a community set the rules for all, especially and above all for their employees who serve at their will
It's self evident cops shouldn't be able to do whatever they want
It's abundantly clear we are in a national crisis in regards to the need for police reform.
The police are a functional part of our community and deserve to do their jobs
Police are human people. They need to be held accountable for breaking laws and trust, just like the rest of us. And they are too trigger happy
Accountability and transparency are always the answer for reform!
in some cases of course there are bad cops and they need to be tried and removed so of course accountabiltiy is important but this town has most its moral compass so whats the point in even trying aything anymore the progs a;ways get their way anyhow/
BPD does a fine job. Support them.
They are doing a good job. Too many people are being hypocritical of the PD.
I do not think the city council should have the soul right to make decisions about changes in the BPD. I think any major changes should be done by Burlington voters as far as the issues are related to the community.
More endgame to of the police with the community in a friendly way. Let people see them not "on guard" as they are when working- the
I am disturbed by the conversation and actions of some community members to seemingly wish to micro-manage the police department. Constant criticism is not the way to begin a

civil conversation to bring about perceived changes.

Better training fine. Citizen oversight no.

i think all police should have body cameras. not just for the publics safety but for the officers safety. i also don't think we should have a police union. or any public sector unions for that matter;

We had a great police department and all I saw this summer were nutcases trying to destroy it. We really didn't need much change, just a few improvements.

i agree that greater police accountability and transparency are necessary for meaningful police reform.

You're forcing an answer. Transparency and accountability aren't the same thing. Transparency is good and needed; accountability is, too, but not like the oversight proposed by the City Council.

Appreciate the electronic record keeping and body camera mandates. I believe that knowing you are being witnessed and will be held accountable is important. And so is police-well-being - see My Gandmother's Hands.

If people would follow rules and listen when told to do something, no one would have an issue with the men and women of our police gory who work tirelessly to protect the law-abiding, hard-working, tax-paying citizens.

Lack of accountability and/or transparency is a significant problem in any organization, but especially an organization that is responsible for the safety of its citizens.

Policemen and women have a lot of power, and they deserve to use it responsibly.

The city council has no idea what kind of damage they have done to the city. Burlington will never be the same. I will be glad when I'm able to leave and live somewhere peaceful where law enforcement is respected and appreciated.

Burlington police are extremely accountable and transparent. Anyone who has read the detail that goes into a written police report will see how seriously and carefully they document interactions with the public.

It leads to citizens trusting the police more, so less injury and death

In general, I would agree but in BTV I disagree. Seems they are doing a good job. People are condemning a whole dept by people who seem to have little understanding of demands of job and for a few incidents out of the hundreds they respond to each year. If you don't want a police reaction to a mental health crisis, call social worker/dr/Howard etc

Everyone should be held accountable for their actions

I think that there are already enough rules and regulations with police departments now. We just need police chiefs and police supervisors to do their jobs.

Accountability is always important

I haven't had enough interaction to define.

Need transparency for sure. Seems like we mostly have it, so when we don't it really sticks out.

Burlington has a very high level of accountability

We need to first understand how the police department operates and what policies are in place. We also need to clearly identify what the issues are. It is my belief the root of the issues which have led to this survey is the lack of understanding in how a police department operates.

Criminals not police create the problems. Educate the people who commit crimes and who live in places where crime is high how to stop breaking the law, and the penalties and problems they create for themselves when they commit a crime.

I believe in transparency

Police officers should be accountable to the public and hiring and firing issues should be a public decision.

Citizens have to understand what police do and why they take certain actions, and police have to be trusted by citizens to be effective

BPD is actually already extremely accountable and transparent and is head and shoulders above the national norm. For example, did you know the details of *every* use of force incident is read to the police commission in their meeting... in public.....

The only way the mayor can have any credibility is if this process is completely transparent from the beginning. We need to know the names of everyone who applied, everyone who was interviewed, and everyone who was selected as a finalist and why. Then the community should directly select the next chief. At the very minimum, a complete transparency.

The current system has accountability and checks/balances.

Accountability and transparency are always necessary whether or not reform is being considered. So far, almost all the "evidence" I have seen of bad policing in Burlington I have seen has been ridiculously free of facts. Maybe a lack of accountability and transparency has resulted in very few facts being available for consideration, but maybe not

Out of the 3 cops who murdered and maimed Burlingtonians in the past few years, only 1 stepped down - Jason Bellavance, after getting a \$300,000 exit package.

Joseph Corrow and Cory Campbell still need to go.

Increased oversight and accountability is never a bad thing. In any job. Period. If you feel it is, you need to reevaluate why you're reacting that way. As a healthcare worker, oversight and accountability are how myself and my coworkers succeed. I could never imagine advocating against the ability to know where I need to improve.

I think all public depts should have accountability and transparency

Accountability and transparency are always important - the former more so than the latter. However, I do question the need for meaningful police reform in Burlington - it feels like a case of people pretending to be a victim so that they can pat themselves on the back for racing to the rescue.

I'm uncomfortable with what I hear. It sounds like the local consultant report was so generic because it became clear to him that anything positive about the police department was unacceptable

No one is above the law.

In order to have a better functioning police department, we need to put a lot of effort into real accountability for both the police and the public. Both sides at times act poorly.

The police currently live above the law which dangerous and inappropriate. They can do and get away with whatever they want and they know it, which is wildly dangerous considering they literally walk around our city with loaded weapons.

The present policing system has failed and can't be fixed.

The police have been doing a great job despite the constant harassment and disgusting behavior they have received from some people and the media.

Accountability and transparency are necessary but NOT sufficient. The only way to truly reduce police violence is to change the culture of policing and to drastically reduce the amount of money and power that police forces wield.

Transparency in particular does not deter police officers from committing acts of violence. We have seen this.

There has been what appears to be unjustified violence in certain cases of police officer response

A trick question. The City is the problem. The greater community outside of Burlington sees this and so do people visiting from other states. The City needs to get some perspective. too much before was hidden and officers protected officers

How can it be otherwise?

Police unions and contract negotiations make disciplining officers and understanding incidences of violence difficult. Furthermore, Burlington has a well-documented history of over-redacting public records, leaving news organizations and the public in the dark.

Police, even in Burlington, are able to commit crimes and abuses of their power that are virtually nonpunishable

If the community doesn't feel safe because of a particular officer then they have failed their duty and there is no reason for them to stay in their position.

We don't always get reports of what's going on in our own neighborhoods or when crimes are committed (especially in the BPD itself).

Policing is inherently racist. The BPD has been found to use force at disproportionately higher rates against BIPOC. The city is not safe with the BPD.

accountability and transparency are necessary everywhere, not just in policing, and should be the norm.

It's a leading question that speaks to the biased nature of this survey.

This is an obvious yes. Police operate outside of the law regularly and rarely face serious or appropriate if any consequences or accountability. They use this power to terrorize the vulnerable and marginalized in communities with impunity. There needs to be proactive transparency, and more power by an outside body to investigate and discipline.

I truly believe it to be important.

I believe that Burlington has strong police accountability and transparency, particularly relative to other parts of the United States.

Nothing will change if police are not held accountable for their actions. Police should be held to a HIGHER standard than the average constituent, and qualified immunity is the opposite of that.

I tend to trust police officers. But the fact that a Burlington Police officer bear a man to death and Mayor Weinburger defended him is very disturbing.

Experience here and around the country shows that police are not able to effectively police themselves. They must have civilian oversight with real power.

This is true but the root causes to police behavior and societal problems should be addressed first and foremost. People wouldn't turn to illegal drugs if legal ones weren't so addictive and accessible. People wouldn't be scared of the police if they didn't have guns

The past has been an embarrassment with the chief and then the assistant chief. Their actions on social media- making the dept less trustworthy. In ability to "police" their own employees when they acted inappropriately

A police force that is not accountable for its actions is a danger to the community/ies that it is meant to protect

One can never have enough transparency and accountability. They lead to trust.

reform? from what? to what?

Police have little to no accountability for their disregard for human rights. How are we supposed to respect and trust these people if they are getting away with causing so much pain in the community?

No one should be able to get away with things other people can't get away with.

I think the current mayor is not at all transparent and is protective of both himself and the police department when there have been problems

Cops get away with too much, e.g. qualified immunity, the number who are [not] convicted of murder, the disproportionate harm to BIPOC members of society and our community.

Allows people to trust First Responders.

yes, with in reason. The public needs to trust in the system. That being said the BPD cannot be governed by mob rule of activist organizations that are hellbent on its destruction.

In my experience, the police department has been very resistant to meaningful reform, disregarding community efforts at stronger independent oversight.

There is a gap between police and the community right now. Residents believe police are cold and have no wish to connect. Police believe residents don't understand what they experience every day. It's a no win situation. Policy commitments that set clear expectations on accountability - and when - as well as transparency - and when - is important.

Accountability and transparency are necessary for any type of reform.

Police are accountable and there are systems in place that provide transparency, but there could be improvement.

Sure but really we need fewer police and more mental health workers

I am largely satisfied with the level of police accountability and transparency. The type of reform I am interested in is training. I would like to see a force that is so confident with their physical and communication skills that they almost never feel the need to draw a weapon(baton, taser or pistol)

As the side with the power, who generally claims killing people without due process was reasonable, there needs to be a very high bar and standards, and proof that those are being met. Society gives police a lot of leeway and it appears that's gone too far, so police need to make the change to restore trust.

In my opinion the BPD is doing an excellence job despite an effort by a small group to vilify them

I think it is important to have transparency about serious complaints that are upheld. I don't agree with accountability according to a moving target of community standards. That's volatile. Policy needs to be tied to the academy training officers receive. If we have expectations and punishment guidelines, they need to be clear and reasonable.

In light of the events of 2020 both nationally and here in VT, police reform is obviously needed

Officers are servants of the community. If there is no mechanism to remove officers who kill and maim due to H.R. technicalities, there is CLEARLY A PROBLEM. That you even ask this is beyond insulting considering recent history.

We need better performance. I blame the union and bureaucratic waste.

Just hire better people. Hire more women and people of color. Hire less ex military. Police and military have different objectives. Hire people who want to live here, in Burlington.

I also think that the community has to be fair with the police dept.

Transparency is the only way to get feedback. No one person or group can see everything about themselves or what they do. It's a gift to be able to gain knowledge you'd have otherwise missed.

Body cams are good. Training is good. I don't think the public or even the City Council members are trained to supervise or discipline officers. Stop treating police like they are all criminals. They have to make tough calls instantly. There are a few bad people in any job and our good officers need more respect and credit for their service.

it is always effective/better to communicate and be transparent
Because I value transparency as a form of building trust.
I saw the video of police force used in two cases, and felt there was unnecessary reactivity that the police dept. did not own up to because "it was within their policy guidelines". When there is force, I would like more transparency and accountability...from the Mayor, too.
BIPOC people still have problems with the police here in Burlington
I truly believe BDP is very workable and goes above and beyond to be sensitive to our community's needs.
Because of the stress and difficulty of the job, the police needs support from the community. They need to feel like they aren't alone, that they have help, respect, compassion, and limits. Everyone needs to know where the limit is. No one is an island, and people can get lost if they don't feel like they are part of a full community.
answered above
more team work and accountability= less competitive independent work where conflict can happen. More training and collaboration with other community members to address harm
I think every police department needs a lot more accountability. The police unions have way too much power over our communities and the contracts need to be developed and overseen by citizens.
I am extremely concerned about the police killing of 3 separate individuals experiencing mental health crises, and the police brutalization of several people of color --in just the past several years.
We have little to zero accountability or transparency right now. An improvement in that regard is needed and beyond due.
The overall actions of the Police across this Country has been called into question since the Trump Presidency. The outright Racism instilled in our Police Officers from the inception of their Training is Deplorable. Transparency it public Protection !
My real answer is, "It depends." I want a BPD that is well staffed, paid, trained and working closely with cultural organizations and health and human services.
I don't think the police should police themselves. It creates a highly inequitable dynamic in communities and creates too much fear
I would like to see the union's involvement
The police brotherhood, where cops don't rat on cops, creates a dangerous culture. It punishes police to do the right thing and gives confidence to cops who like to take their power too far.
It's also worth looking at the origin of police and why we have this system in place. Is it working for the world today? Is it harmful?
I have seen the videos of black folks being killed by police for no reason.

The current city administration has not been noted for its transparency. All the covering up of Del Pozo's anonymous emails and harassment of opponents and the police shooting of mentally ill man -- maybe more than one. Because of the national scene, with police killing black citizens, we are understandably looking closely at our own police force

Police are public servants; their work is often not visible to public, dept's are insular, they are not held sufficiently accountable for actions - which leads to public mistrust. We deserve a PD that is open, and forthcoming, and a community board that provides accountability - is informed of all complaints, requires adequate response fr. Chief.

I feel the city covers up or tries to keep all the information from us

There is no reason for local police departments to have to mask, hide, or withhold information aside from high-risk or confidential investigations. As with any public service, they should be held to high standards and should have to disclose any significant events.

I think this is true throughout the country. Civilians also need to be made aware of all the terrible aspects of policing in our society these days & the toll it takes on the police.

The majority of NATIONAL level police involvements do not result in any sort of violent or disparate end. The police are the most accountable profession in the City, and still get the short end of the stick. Greater politician accountability is needed, especially when those individuals use their office to promote an agenda against police

The police are held accountable and they are as transparent as they can be

I know that anyone can go to their building, call their phone, tweet about them, go to their facebook page, and report things to them through their webpage. If anything I think they lack transparency in terms of actual crime numbers and incidents that the press has access to and/or what the press is willing to report on

Accountability should be by people who have experience in real public safety, not activists with agendas. The transparency exists if you are willing to see it.

I think the police department is extremely transparent when it can be. People don't understand labor law, public records law or other factors that can hinder when things can and can't be released. Again, uninformed people making demands based on emotion and not facts.

Burlington Police is already pretty transparent.

policing country-wide shows clear statistical bias towards poor and minority individuals. I think the balance of power and the compensation setups are outdated and do not encourage police to truly act as fair guardians of a community. Accountability is a first step towards change.

THE Police have emended power over civilians and it is important to better equalize the power

Because there is no factual evidence to support such insanity and this nonsense has been largely endured over feelings and popular national bias towards law enforcement.

I don't know.

It just makes sense
The police are currently held accountable and are transparent. There are certain things that cannot be disclosed either because it would endanger an ongoing investigation or it is a privacy issue.
These are loaded phrases for concepts that I don't understand.
I would like to see a better relationship between the community and police.
Only through transparency can the public learn to trust. However, the public must also be willing to understand that they have not been taught and trained as a police officer has and they are not privy to the information that a police officer may have had at the moment of a certain event.
This question is asked based on the assumption that I believe "meaningful police reform" is necessary. The question is biased.
Without Transparency there can be no trust, without trust there can be no positive change and partnership.
We have no way of knowing which officers are safe for us to deal with and which we should avoid at all costs. We know that there are dangerous/overly violent officers on the force, but because we can't see complaints & their resolution, we choose to not engage with police unless forced to by them.
The accountability must include independent investigatory and disciplinary power. Transparency is meaningless if nothing can be done with the information that is revealed because of the transparency because of a lack of power. Police cannot oversee themselves.
individual insurance policies for police (similar to malpractice insurance for doctors) so that the state/PD doesn't have an incentive to hide misconduct. The PD will pay a monthly premium for insurance for each officer, if an officer can't stop abusing people, their insurance would go up, and in theory the PD would have to let them go.
Actual accountability and transparency could solve a lot. Being able to stop an officer from killing someone innocent or know what they are doing so they can't cover up an unjustified use of force would help start the beginning of a better society.
So many clients report having negative interactions.
If BPD can't admit that they have racist and violent officers, then they'll never appropriately punish them (the known offenders and those whose names weren't plastered around town all of fall 2020). This is that stage in the healing process where the hurt person needs to recognize that they need to heal ... AKA BPD needs to accept they have issues
Obviously accountability and transparency are necessary, but reform of the police is not feasible. defund and move toward abolition
But I think it goes across the board. If police are accountable, so should be EMT, Fire, Drs, therapists, etc... Should everyone be wearing body cams? Mics?
Because Burlington police have gotten away with too many harmful and negligent things. This has eroded public trust as has been demonstrated frequently this year

It is true and there seems to be only the semblance of accountability now.

I don't believe there is accountability right now. It seems that police can do whatever they want.

many in especially the BIPOC community feel that is lacking and accountability and transparency are critical in any institution

They need actual oversight, also the phrasing of this question assumes I want reform. This is basically a push poll.

I agree with this, but it is only part of the solution. The entire system of policing needs to be broken down and rebuilt it a way that prioritizes humanity. The current system will not improve just based on increased accountability.

I suspect some but not all of our police are fair and just. I would guess a few are racist or are in fear of some populations in our city

This is true nationally, it should be true here too. We are not the same as other places in the severity of circumstances but I believe we can and should always strive to do better.

But I think this in general and not specifically about the BPD. I think police unions have protected people who shouldn't continue to work.

Police are the most highly vetted members of our society. Their work is scrutinized to a degree that is not present in other professions. The recent outcry for "Police Reform" is an act of political activism, not of sound governance for Burlington. Our community has become yet another victim of information warfare being played on the U.S.

Police are made for the community, not vice versa.

I think the current Acting Chief would be totally accountable if listened to and given support. He's what every city needs to transform their policing and community service models!!!

Police departments shouldn't behave like military organizations.

More accountability WITHOUT cutting police force.

Generally I do not believe the police enforce traffic laws. They specifically do not actively patrol or monitor Battery Street or North Avenue. It's like the wild west out there especially on weekends.

It's obvious that a significant segment of the public doesn't trust BPD. Accountability and transparency are critical to making all members of our community feel safe (except, of course, for the criminals).

Black people seem to be brutalized more often.

absolutely, but also I don't think reform is sufficient.

Police power is predicated on an internal system of review which allows for the perpetuation of bias and "tribal" protection. The police serve the community not themselves, thus, the community should be heavily involved in oversight.

talking does not necessarily help problems. Respect is a 2 way street. Parents need to teach their children right from wrong

I trust the people who put themselves in danger to protect the community.
Transparency #1, Training #2, Accountability #3, and Consistency #4
It's true. When you are accountable to no one, you will do bad things.
Greater accountability and transparency are a dire need.
Those who did wrong were punished. We should look into the city employees (mayor) for similar actions. He covered up the knowledge and encourage the former police chief to commit wrong acts but hasn't been held accountable.
I don't know.
Based on the events of the past few years, it's clear that my positive experience with the police is not universal. No matter how well the police (or anyone) do their job, there are always going to be times when things go wrong. It's important for these to be recognized and, to the extent possible, mitigated (and avoided) in the future).
I think there is a lot of transparency. The main thing that needs to change in my opinion is the body cameras should be always on. But they already exist, that's just a minor tweak.
I don't really have an opinion on this.
They need to end the encryption on the radio system so we can monitor what they're up to.
Transparency for sure, or at least an explanation of reasons why things have to be confidential. Accountability is hard because these jobs are not all that high paying so people should be accountable but not completely thrown under the bus and cancelled if they make mistakes - I mean, of course, it all depends on the situation and so on...
We do not need a militarized police force in Burlington. We need first responders and police who can help people in crisis without escalating a situation to more violence
Every professional needs accountability and transparency.
Not all police are bad. There are bad apples in every industry.
Events of 2020 gave evidence of low accountability and transparency
I think the police currently use a process that is transparent and accountable
Every profession needs to be accountable.
Police should be better integrated in the community, but they should also be focused on violent/serious crimes rather than other issues such as mental health that can be better addressed by other agencies.
The Police dept already has a citizen board that over sees what they do. Unless one has been in law enforcement and have done that job putting their life on the line EVERYDAY then they should have NO SAY in regards on how things are supposed to operate.
again - no direct experience with the police
Police should be responsible for their actions. Qualified Immunity should not apply.
Transparency in all city government is much needed, especially the Mayor's office.

what kind of reform? They do a great job!!!
I think the vast majority of police are ethical and caring people. I also think they deal with a difficult population. I think the willingness to say to fellow officers - nope, I understand you were in tough situation and you may an unfortunate choice and we need to be honest about this is really important.
Police are doing their job
Its true
Unless there is accountability then improvements don't tend to be made and also makes it easy for corruption to take place
I believe the BPD has acted with impunity and little to no accountability.
the police are quick to judge and dismiss and have poor listening and empathy skills
Historically and currently, there is a lack of accountability and transparency.
Not everyone is treated well by police
Police are supposed to serve and protect - while this is often the case, there has been a culture of impunity especially for marginalized members of our community. Bad behavior has not been addressed, and good has not been rewarded.
All civil servants need to be accountable and transparent especially those that carry weapons.
Citizens have a right to know and We see in police actions the injustices in our current systems butPolice seem unwilling to recognize the consequences of the citizen deaths they cause, and that citizen perceptions can be accurate; and that they have an extraordinary power in society and need to be less militaristic. Providing more info would help.
I don't think it's the police that are the issues. I think it's the social programs that are supposed to be helping people that are failing.
It is not specifically about the burlington police, but policing in general to make the community feel respected
I actually believe greater accountability and transparency are always best ways forward for any team/organization positive change(s).
Abolish the police
Our model of policing needs thorough reimagining with policing as one part of a more comprehensive and less volatile version of community safety
people that are clueless as to what they do, should not be making policy decisions.
I believe that Law enforcement is a tough job and that overall from my experience the officers are doing a commendable job
The instances where police brutality affected Burlington individuals were exacerbated in the public by the fact that officers were not immediately made accountable.
Transparency is better for everyone!
Because armed forces need to be held to the highest standards

The police as an institution have no incentive to reform themselves. A committee of diverse citizens would help hold the police accountable.

I feel they are transparent.

Come on , it's my opinion.

I think the police are doing just fine.

I am in the middle because the community also needs to be accountable and transparent. Bullying begets bullying. Last summer a small group of people, most of whom lived out of state or out of Burlington pushed for their agenda - not necessarily the agenda of Burlingtonians.

Union is to able to protect bad behavior. Pensions should be the source of payments for findings against officers, not the municipalities they work for

Accountability with the correct training and aid from the professional community support services who should be available 24/7 to help prevent a bad result. N/A

There is not currently any meaningful accountability or transparency. An institution with the power to inflict violence requires both of these things.

I chose my answer because I figure "agree" is the easy answer. I don't know enough about current levels of accountability and transparency, and what it would look like to have improvements.

We need to hold criminals accountable, not cops.

Again. People need to hold themselves accountable.

We have a vocal group in the city who are tearing apart our force. They have zero knowledge of what they are doing and consequences of their actions

This is a start. I think you need to back it up much further and fundamentally adapt the training and premis of policing and the idea of it.

Transparency is generally a good idea.

I support the police but that doesn't mean all police do the right thing. There are some who should not be an officer of the law.

Of course accountability and transparency are necessary. By putting "greater" in the question -- and by allowing only two black-or-white responses, -- you have pushed respondents toward the answer you are hoping to get. And what "measures" are you hoping for me to comment on in this space?

The challenge is that demands for "greater" accountability and transparency can be used as a cudgel. Each incident that occurs on the national level heightens aggrievement at the local level. Just as we want incompetent doctors removed from the medical field, I would like to see police unions be at the frontline of removing incompetent officers.

If reform is wanted then those two things need to happen. I don't disagree with the statement. I don't know, however, if reform is needed.

Yes to greater police accountability. But also yes to not pre-judging and stereotyping police. When accountability is a problem, it's often because of unions (which those who are most in

favor for reform aren't willing to admit).
This is always true!
DEFUND THE POLICE
Police can feel above the law. Are trained in a very aggressive response.
Yes, but not the way that the City Council envisioned in June 2020.
In general people should be somewhat accountable.
it can always be better may I add this is the most ridiculous survey in history
Process needs to improve for bad behaving officers to be held accountable, which will avoid good officers from being grouped with the bad.
There has to be a balance between letting cops do a very difficult job and armchair quarterbacking their every move.
I feel like the current policies in place need time to see their impacts.
I think the police feel their hands are tied. I have talked to a few about crime and graffiti and when I ask, do you know who is doing it? their answer is, yes, we know, nothing gets done in the courts, they get out so we can't do much. That's not a good answer!
Slightly agree
I hear from bipoc that they don't feel safe and that needs to change
It is so sad that this question even needs to be asked. this is glaringly obvious.
Without question, we need more transparency as to discipline and conduct, and more accountability in the sense of ensuring appropriate action is taken (if appropriate).
We've struggled in our city with police/community interactions that have been seriously flawed, dangerous, & disrespectful. We need much clearer delineation of responsibilities & roles responding to the wide variety of incidents.
Trust and openness is the basis for any successful relationship.
Transparency and communication are essential for a better community understanding of the realities of policing. Accountability should be relevant and meaningful and be based on reliable and well-established standards, guidelines, and training.
I am a Democrat and I feel like we are so lucky to have so many thoughtful police officers at BPD.
Policing is a critical component of community wellness. Whether it is by armed police or service officers there needs to be oversight and accountability to keep the public trust.
They don't seem to want to clean their own house.
Police behave badly because they are almost never held accountable.

With the caveat that there has to be a defined structure for what police reform means or what you hoped for before you can even hope for transparency and accountability.
there is no transparency or accountability right now. the mayor refused to allow the voters to even decide whether we wanted more oversight. look how del pozo was handled- he left only after public scandal required it. o
I think it's self explanatory.
not really sure
I agree more accountability is needed, but I feel to see how capping the number officers and micromanaging budgets achieve that end?
There needs to be reform. The current model doesn't work the best, but reducing police officers is not an answer, if there is not a working plan in place.
Current policies have been demonstrably inadequate in explaining decisions made to the public.
Police officers are currently accountable only to the Chief of Police with no public access to information, no review of internal decisions
I'm not sure
The current system allows police to inappropriately use force and intimidation.
The inpugnity with which I have seen officers flout traffic laws is unbelievable. Incidents of violence and brutality are even worse.
Police have a lot of power and are entrusted with tremendous responsibility. This combination can lead to abuses if accountability and transparency are not paramount.
We need to trust the folks that are supposed to provide help and protection and know that they have our best interests at heart.
Since scrambled radio frequencies, police have been acting without oversight or checks and balances, BPD does not provide what I expect, log of weekly calls. Please compare to police logs in Shelburne or Hinesburg.
There is a severe lack of trust in the police department due to historical lack of accountability along with a culture of power and and brutality.
the general public does not need to know everything all the time, even though they think they should
Any government entity funded by tax dollars should be accountable and transparent!
Without transparency people are not held accountable.
Accountability extends to the Mayor's Office, and City Offices
there have been reasons to doubt - trust has been broken too frequently
I trust that most officers are acting in the best interest of the community but if there is more accountability and transparency then it should deter the few officers who may have bad habits.
We all need to be accountable for our actions-no one is above that

Without accountability there can be no trust. A police force not trusted by the community becomes no more than a militarized occupying force.
I agree.
I think there is adequate accountability and transparency. I believe there needs to be more training.
Transparency _should_ yield understanding and from understanding improvements can be made.
There needs to be more fairness in police encounters with people of color, and accountability and transparency are needed to ensure that.
I believe the acting police chief communicates well with the public and the community. The city council needs to reflect all of Burlington, not just their own agenda, to effectively partner with the police for meaningful change. So far, they have hampered public safety
Oversight is necessary and should be welcomed.
I think that the concern should be reframed so it starts with "the community should be clear about its expectations for a police force and supportive of providing what is needed to meet those expectations."
The police have been held MORE than accountable.
Police have a lot of authority, and some individuals can misuse it. Perspectives other than those from within an organization can afford discussion and possible change.
I think accountability and transparency are necessary for ALL public service roles. Police officers work with people in some of the worst situations the person will face, and have a disproportionate level of power compared to most private citizens and should be overseen as such.
I think all governmental organizations should have accountability and transparency.
There is corruption, sexism, racism, and hate in all facets of human behavior, especially within institutions that hold immense power - the power of life and death. After everything that has unfolded with the deaths of unarmed individuals at the hands of police and questionable biases and practices, it's understandable to seek more transparency.
Building trust with residents is huge!! I would like to talk with police and not feel intimidated or that I am bothering them with my concerns. Corruption and abuse it should be dealt with and not covered up. Open communication and oversight can prevent abuses of power by those who think they are above the law. BPD should lead by example.
The police are already very transparent. It seems the Burlington Police have been sharing data with the public for many years
I know that people have been injured and some killed in interactions with police, and there has been little or no accountability.
Truth and honesty are necessary in all interactions
Greater is a wrong word. I would say genuine and transparent but not to be defined by BD

I don't trust that police departments hold their officers accountable for misconduct.
I think this statement is only true if the culture of law enforcement is transformed. Accountability and transparency must be in service to something - we need to define the culture of policing we want to see, describe the outcomes we want, and develop the metrics and data that we will use to measure success.
I think that greater police accountability and transparency are important to building bridges and establishing trust amongst stakeholders in the community. Communication, understanding, and trust are foundational elements for any healthy relationship.
This is a democracy that should be equal for everyone.
Because transparency leads to greater safety and change,
We DO have some bad apples. But a snake rots from the head. The last chief made good progress and made mistakes - and when he did - the mayor threw him under the bus...but then we learn the Mayor was Driving the bus.
Accountability is essential in any system. More accountability would help to balance out the power of Police unions, which often seek to shield officers from consequences of their actions.
As much as I dislike the public protests, there seems to be too much "cover" for police misbehavior
History has shown that police can take advantage of their power and transparency can help mitigate that.
I am not aware that Burlington has a problem with policing.
I don't think the police should be the sole decision makers of appropriate conduct and punishment. There are very few industries that get to police themselves. There needs to be checks and balances to police power.
Accountability is a problem. It should be a policy goal to go the year without an officer upholstering their gun. Alternatives must be found to contain potential violence with no or low injury. The public needs to accept some responsibility for this too.
Agree but I'm not sure reducing police is the answer either
I think they are transparent
Douglas Kilbourne's death, Bellavance buyout, reducing force by 30% thru attrition cuz the mayor thinks it make him look good but literally doing nothing else about people's concerns, hiring a police transformation expert who plagiarizes his report, Mayor covering for Del Pozo, kicking Ms. Green off the police oversight study, then reversing course
Greater accountability and transparency help build trust and with trust comes better communication and understanding about expectations.
concentrated power is not community minded. Everyone needs to be held accountable. I would love to see an oversight committee that is well balanced and represents the fullness of our community.
Everyone should be held accountable by law.

Police need to be more accountable and transparent.
I think accountability and transparency are key values for any organization.
It shows that they are held to the same standards that we are
Several incidences in the past 2 years indicate some officers have pushed back against reform - gotta wonder why. Plus a few instances of what appeared to be unnecessary violence/escalation of the situation. And statistics that show people of color being stopped (while driving) at a disproportionate rate.
Everyone in Burlington ,doesn't have to know everything the police is doing all the time
Our police have a very difficult job and guidance, education and continuing education is much needed. Cooperative steps will help our police.
Increasing gap between trust and anti-police attitudes
Police need to be able to do their jobs to protect us and themselves without being second guessed.
Police reform is long overdue, but I do not hold the police solely responsible for what has happened. I think police cameras help, we also need major gun control legislation passed, better educated police officers, less poverty and less likelihood that folks fall into poverty. Major social reform is required in addition to "police accountability."
I have my doubts about whether police reform actually works. It didn't work in Minneapolis. It was the most "reformed" police department in the country prior to George Floyd's murder.
Accountability and transparency are foundational to building trust.
We live in a time of opportunity to bring greater racial and cultural justice to our community. We all need to be up to the challenge. We also live in a time of national danger around untruths, political division, and severe economic inequality that yields anger, resentment and fear. Our police have to be on the side of truth.
I have a hard time with the binary aspect of this question. I think there's more to it than what is stated.
Many in our community have had very negative experiences. While I have not, I want other people to feel safe and able to live without fear.
Police have been shown to be biased in their responses
I believe the BTV is making attempts to be accountable and transparent in the past few months.
To a point, there needs to be some level of transparency where some things are held back
I have not had any issues
I believe police as a group and individually are given a lot of power, from being armed to their employment contracts to the social deference and extra authority they're given, and that's a perfect recipe for an us vs. them mentality. That must be countered with the kind of restrictions and discipline common to any other profession.

Police accountability is the only way to make sure that police are not allowed to kill with impunity. By holding officers accountable, it shows them that they can't act as though they are above the law and free from any punishment - thus, preventing incidents of brutality due to actual punishment.

Transparency is always desired.

They need funding though to get the resources and training needed.

Police can't police themselves. Politicians don't have a spine.

You can't self-regulate and self-govern without external input

Investigation and discipline of misconduct should be exclusively managed by an independent board of community members. The police should not police themselves anymore. This is essential for community safety.

Public statements from the Mayor and BPD still seem to emphasize a defensive stance, not one of fundamental reform. I understand the police have a very challenging job, but I don't think things will change until the City commits to reallocating more resources to addressing mental health issues and training/responding to 911 calls differently.

I feel that some officers abuse power.

Police have power, so they need realize they will be accountable with major consequences for abuse.

the history police have with the community requires greater transparency and collaboration with community members.

This is never-ending work in general. Specifically, officers who hurt people should be held to account, and citizens should know how/why specific discipline measures were or were not taken.

They don't need having to look over their shoulders all of the time and have too many CHIEFS TELLING THEM WHAT TO DO! strong leadership is what is needed and accountability for their actions!

The police serve us and our taxes pay their salaries, not the other way around.

Police brutality is an issue everywhere right now.

Greater police accountability and transparency would seem to bolster community support of the police.

I'm more leaning toward both agree and disagree with this question. Yes there should be accountability but the police should also be able to take action when folks don't follow their directives.

I believe that institutional racism is imbedded in the police in spite of claims of denial.

I think this will allow for more public trust given the current climate.

As noted, I don't think policing can be reformed because it is rotten at its roots. For now, we definitely need greater accountability and transparency, and community oversight. But the goal should be reimagining public safety and transitioning to new models/mechanisms.

Data shows bias in our police force.
they should be abolished
I think they are fine.
My personal experience (as a graduate student/full time mental health worker/respectful resident), the experiences of others, and the overall attitude of so many officers feeling they are invincible.
We are destroying our police department
Accountability needs to increase. I believe the police unions are a negative influence on the ability to reform the police.
There needs to be de-escalation
By and large, the police are very transparent. Isolated incidents happen. We are making a mountain out of a molehill. I sure as heck don't want a social worker showing up at my house when i call 911. We have it so good here, but everybody whines.
This is a tough one because I do think that they are things that the public should not know, especially when it comes to human resource concerns. I am not in favor of a citizen oversight committee that gets involved with disciplinary action. On the other side, police do need to be held to the same standards of the law.
Accountability and transparency are always good things
It helps to build a better community where everyone is included.
Because they should not waste community money and time on trifling matters.
If you're going to make changes, you have to know what's going on before and after!
Police cannot police themselves
It is true.
BPD must accept the detriment of their actions for any change to be made. Meaningless reparations in lieu of firing perpetrators is not acceptable. BE RECEPTIVE OF BIPOC COMMUNITIES. IF YOU CARE ABOUT THE CITY AS A WHOLE, TAKE ACTION
Mandatory body cams . Never off always on. Controlled by dispatch or some other priority figure for bathroom breaks.
I agree in general to any police department. I have always been satisfied with the BPD.
The system is clearly broken. The police need support but people need to feel safe through their police and with their police. Not everyone feels this way due to a large variety of biases that are not just race or ethnicity based. Lots of work to do.
I think accountability is important for any organization. Transparency is situational. It isn't always feasible to let the criminals know what is being investigated.
There doesn't need to be police reform

When a department is not broken, I don't believe it needs fixing unless they themselves feel it does. I worked as a social worker in Burlington and found it necessary to have an officer with me when I needed to make a house call in most recent years. Earlier, in 70's, 80's, 90's, I visited homes, not recently too dangerous need an officer to accomp

I think the police should be expected to uphold community standards in dealing with all members of the public and public process should be open and questions of behavior honestly answered in a timely manner

Police need to be held

Because there's always room for improvement. Your drawing doesn't like my "dinosaur email. Alleycat4vt@juno.com Guess juno is not heard of anymore

We need more police not less

Transparency and clear expectations for accountability are necessary to regain community trust, however this must be established in a way that takes into the account the effect it has on officers and public safety, as well. For example, discipline should not necessarily be handled by a committee whose members have no law enforcement experience.

We ask police to become involved in too many types of situations. We need more focus on how to deal with mental illness; not sure if it's training police to handle these situations or embedding more mental health specialist or both. It's a very complicated issue!!!

Police need to be accountable to public to be effective

There have been problems in the past that have been pushed under the rug because the police look out for each other with Miro's help. There needs to be a governing body that is separate.

We need transparency to shine a bright light on bias both explicit and implicit.

We have evidence that the police think they are above the law, even in cases where they illegally take someone's life. This cannot continue. There are still known abusers and killers in bpd who need to be fired for their brutality.

I prefer abolition to reform, as reform has never truly worked in any scenario.

I have two choices and "disagree" is not the accurate one.

Organizations are not good at self-criticism and self discipline.

The BPD Police Commission exists and to suggest that a City our size should have a police oversight committee that is fully training in law enforcement practices, criminal law, and labor law is very unrealistic. And to continue to pursue such an unrealistic goal, will just further the community/police divide fueled by the Burlington City Council.

There is more to police success than crime statistics and legally justifiable actions. It gets back to your questions earlier in this survey, Do people feel safe, Do people feel they've been treated fairly. Do people tend to agree with policed actions.

accountability and transparency are important at all levels of government

Accountability is step 1.

Without transparency there cannot be accountability. If there is no accountability, then the "bad apples" drawn to the machismo & power of a badge will thrive, & inevitably spoil the whole barrel. It is so obvious that it shouldn't need saying.

Agree in terms of seeking appropriate accountability and meaningful transparency for all public information and practice, including policing.

Accountability and transparency is important. Cutting the police by 30% is not going to help anything or anyone!

The police need greater accountability, but so do the city councilors. A few of the the city councilors break the laws of that body with impunity. They don't care. There is little transparency. There is little fairness. Their is, however, a lot of grandstanding and secret mechanizations behind the scenes to manipulate the public forums etc.

I think the approach should be collaborative, finding improvements working together with the community.

The police work hard to serve us as a community, and as an integral part of this community, they deserve to be trusted. This trust can only be held through transparency, candor, and openness.

There does not appear to be transparency and trust that the changes to reform are done thoughtfully and with enough accountability/ review from impartial parties.

I agree with this ONLY if it is people with law enforcement experience who holding police accountable

POLICE BRUTALITY ESP RACIST IS AN EPIDEMIC AND IT WON'T FIX ITSELF

Accountability is required in my job. Should be everywhere.

I think police should be held to higher standards than regular citizens. They need admit when they have messed up and be more collaborative with mental health providers.

Transparency and communication are empowering for people

If a cop breaks the law, then they should be held accountable. They are there to uphold the law, not be above it

if held to a higher bar folks will act properly

People are looking for revenge not accountability

Everything government related should have accountability and transparency. The government works for the people

They're already accountable and existing measures work

If folks feel like they can get away with things they will usually push the limit. BPD has already shown leniency towards its own.

Because they are given a great deal of power

This is true in all human relationships and probably more so in situations of power dynamics.

if these dudes dont get held accountable they wont change

Accountability & transparency are necessary for all, not just Police

Police brutality is rampant in america, and police are seldom held to the same standards as civilians.

community is upset, but what ever happened to the plagiarize 75K & why wasn't there accountability for that? what message does that send? Why aren't there police officers with visible disabilities on the force?

They're doing a great job. The city council needs to get out of BPD's way and let them enforce the law in our community.

Police actions in other parts of the country are not the same in VT. I trust our police.

Who would Not agree with that statement?

Police should be held to a higher standard than the general population rather than a lower one.

I think the public would feel better if the internal review process was more transparent.

What are cops without accountability? They're just the biggest gang with the most guns.

We need to see what is going on with our officers in terms of how they interact with the public especially with minorities to insure fair treatment for all out residents

I think this is true overall but I don't really know how I feel about the Burlington Police.

Police are already accountable and transparent.

Individual prejudice is not the major issue. 400 years of systemic racism is the core issue. Bad cops' actions are a symptom of our country's problems. Police should improve of course, but all sectors of government and businesses and individuals should.

They have too much unchecked power and dont take responsibility for mistakes

BPD is closed off & guarded when it comes to the public. It frequently seems like the are hiding something.

It is so obvious that what we have been doing is NOT working! If it were, we wouldn't be going through this current survey process! Police MUST know that people are watching and holding them accountable for their actions. And BIPOC residents deserve to feel as safe as white residents, which simply is not possible without major changes in oversight

For too long police have operated as if they are above the law and do not fear any consequences for their behavior.

A municipal organization that protects its members from public scrutiny can only be as trustworthy as its least trustworthy member.

police have extraordinary power and discretion, but seem to think they do not have to answer to the community. Misconduct records, body cam footage, etc. should be public w/o cost or unnecessary redaction

I like to know whats going on with our officers and city, but I don't think they need to be micro managed by the city and or community

black lives matter

The community needs to be able to appoint neighbors who hold police accountable, and we need to know about everything the police do.

When there is nothing to hide, it builds trust in the community. When the community sees bad cops being held accountable that is important. However there is a level of protection that needs to occur for the officer and the dept because people can be violent and lash out. The department should be able to handle those issues with support from the state there is currently next to no accountability.

How else can we know police are making meaningful changes without transparency into the work?

Accountability and transparency are the bare minimum. Time and time again we see that the system of policing is outdated. I feel reform will just lead us down the same path and we will have this same conversation in a year or two. We need to not reform the police, but instead create communities that have the tools to take care of each other.

Without civilian oversight there will not be accountability and transparency.

It makes logical sense - accountability help raise the level.

Police officers are people whose biases are directly linked to their sense of ego and self and that is why it is dangerous

Del Pozo was a joke

true for any public organization, not just police!

The police should not be held accountable for solving or responding to all societal ills.

Prioritization about issues is more important than transparency.

We can't improve things unless we know what we are improving and where we are now

I still believe that the majority of our police force does a great job. Burlington went through a period in the 80's/90's that brought an influx of serious crimes that VT wasn't prepared to handle. As the state becomes more diverse we need to adapt and take this into account.

How are changes supposed to happen if we can't see them happen & have input?

We need to stop the qualified immunity situation.

Some police forces in our country have not been accountable. They need to be reformed. BPD has not been perfect, but has been on the whole served by women and men of honorable intent and character.

The police cannot police themselves.

We are living in a period when we have all become more aware of injustices and lack of transparency.

For years I worked on the police commission to try to take small steps to bring accountability and transparency for the community into the department. Our attempts were repeatedly stymied & we were told it just wasn't possible due to contract issues. I watched my neighbors become increasingly exasperated and distrustful of the department.

There is a lot of transparency already. We need politicians who understand psychology and behavior.

Police should have to be held accountable for their actions. We all have to in life. Why should they be exempt? Better accountability and transparency can prevent other police departments from hiring former police with bad records.

Because accountability and transparency are the best way to go in any circumstance.

accountability and transparency are necessary in everything

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 19 (text-box answers)

Please describe any barriers you have experienced (to participating in City Committee involvement).

My NPA is very insular, though we've tried to increase accessibility. The NNE still runs as an old boys' club.

I haven't but I can imagine there being some with childcare or work conflicts

I've not tried, so this should be a NA for me.

Parents of small children (especially SINGLE parents) cannot participate in evening meetings. Period. NPAs are dominated by the same few people over and over. Need a better process for broader and more meaningful participation.

Most people can't wait hours to have their say at public meetings. I didn't know we had a Neighborhood Watch. There are certainly lots of different ways to have input though and you don't mention them.

I have not experienced barriers but have not attempted to engage too much in these conversations. I am deeply engaged with community issues at work and am partnering with other community organizations all day long, so to be honest -- while I know I SHOULD-- I don't often find the time to add this engagement to the time I have in my personal life, when I have both teens and an aging parent to take care of.

Schedule

Difficult to find the meetings been stream and hard to find transcripts on line

The protesters have dominated public input sessions through organized call ins of hundreds of people to public input sessions. This has stifled the opportunity for regular unorganized community members to participate and chastised those with opposing viewpoints.

I have an extremely busy schedule. Being able to use online tools to provide input when it's convenient for me is way better than holding a planning meeting at 5 o'clock on a Tuesday every other month or some other traditional method. Only the people with the time and who are vocal are then heard. We want to hear from as many people as possible so we need more tools to do that.

It seems like the same people are always called upon. Also so people have speaking limits while others are allowed to talk as long as they want. The meetings should be held in a more equitable way so all people have a voice

I have tried speaking up at city council

Meetings but they have their agenda and only want to hear from those people who agree with them

The public shaming and adult bullies make it difficult to express an opinion just because your opinion is different. Too much input from advocates and bullies and not enough from ordinary citizens.

The "woke" council members that think their ideas are morally superior and any other idea is some kind of right-wing, fascist talking point. If this idea continues, one should look in the mirror to see who the real fascist is; the ones calling them names and dismissing alternative viewpoints are. Discussion and open discourse without being dismissive is important; not your personal agenda.

First, the public meetings are never at a time when I am able to attend, and frankly often the people who run those meetings have their own agenda. It's not welcoming. Again, the community police academy takes a bunch of time that I don't have to do something unpaid.

Difficult to attend with children; only the views of the loud and opinionated are heard.

I have a job

Not at all

I have to work around 60 hours a week to afford to live

Burlington loves it's meetings...

I haven't been invited to anything

I have a job and cannot attend meetings / etc that happen during the day. I also imagine that many of these improvement in initiatives require significant political and time commitment, which I simply don't have as a working person.

Max Tracy kicked me to the bottom of the list when discussing the police because he incorrectly assumed my race and placed BIPOC people ahead of me. This kept me from participating in community discussions with city council.

The city council seems to have made up their mind about what "issues" there are in the city. It then seeks to confirm their ignorant and bias beliefs instead of truly understanding if there is a problem to being with (hints this survey's bias toward law enforcement).

If you think the PD has a race problem, look at the other city departments. Where are the other BIPOC people in the FD, public works, electric department, schools, etc? If the city did a better job of diversifying all the other city services, maybe the PD would naturally look more diverse. You can't TEACH diversity. Stop trying to read about it. Diversity comes by having diverse people with opinions that look different from yours at ALL levels in the city...from the bottom, up. IF the PD is so racist, where did they learn it from? Fellow Burlingtonians?

The whole city has a race issue, stop blaming the PD for YOUR lack of diversity and understanding. As a black man, I NEVER plan to raise a family in this city or state

I refuse to be filmed at public meetings, so I have no voice.

Until COVID access was limited

I haven't experienced barriers, but I know that the way the Burlington Community Justice Center is structured - and why/how people are referred to what is considered restorative justice but is really an arm of punitive justice - means that people are considered problems to fix rather than us looking at the conditions where harm happens, why people cause harm and what else would help them meet their needs, and how to center people who experience harm so that victims can have their needs met without any police involvement. (The Parallel Justice Program is somewhat effective, but needs separation from BPD and a greater reach to marginalized communities.)

I have never participated...

Zoom has helped, but prior many city boards and commissions meet where no public transit is available. Hybrid In the future would be good.

I hve seen and heard that based on bias of the city council people hvent been able to voice their pro police opinion.

Didn't know any of these existed. They are just like whatever the hell you are trying to put together now. Reactions that make people feel good in the moment.

Not aware of any barriers

Schedules do not fit my schedule.

The Mayor and gov people run 'public input' meetings at 11 Am, 5 PM, or other such times in a deliberate attempt to limit the participants to people with the free time to lounge around in the middle of the day or get off work early.

I'm white so City Council don't treat me equally to other members of the community. During public forum I'm pushed to the back of the queue because of my skin color and have been denied the opportunity to speak.

The only thing keeping me from participating is my own time!

Disability
I haven't experienced barriers to participating but I have experienced my voice being silenced when I do participate.
Sometimes meetings are at inconvenient times, but you can't please everyone. I suppose one barrier would be a certain group of people overtaking public forums to read a scripted response FOR HOURS ON END, which results in nothing being able to be accomplished by other speakers and the meeting folks alike.
Childcare is a huge barrier; why are meetings during the day when everyone works; how is anyone supposed to know when meetings happen or participate without a TV or internet access or a place to sleep at night?
Working full time I don't have the energy and time to take on additional stuff.
Meetings announced late. I often find out about them after they were held.
I'm not aware of these options.
I written to the city council many times about issues with no good response- the city council seems to think they are 100% in control of the city and really are not interested in other's opinions.
Until the pandemic is over and we can hold regular meetings in congregate settings I think there will be a problem. Live streaming of meetings used to be very helpful for greater understanding.
Have called into Max Tracy and put way at the end of the line because our concerns do not matter.
i tried to speak at the pride event for the trans community and i was told to sit down and shut up because i was a "white cis male"
We had a very accessible police department.
There are no barriers for anyone in this city.
Prioritizing certain groups during meetings. unable to add comment.
Have felt that decisions already made and discussions just to placate residents, not to change anything planned: road changes, lighting, sidewalks, trees, bike lanes, electric scooters, etc.
Public forums with any meetings have proven to be merely a space to voice thoughts, and not a space for change.
Public meetings are taken over by leftist radical groups who then dictate public policy. Disgusted, really want to move away immediately.
Never tried to participate
These are intimidating environments for the people who are most vulnerable.
I don't have barriers. Folks with limited English or internet access may face greater barriers.

n/a
I work nights (and days, flex schedule and multiple jobs). City Council meetings, NPA meetings, I'm not usually able to attend.
In this respect yes - secret meetings occurring by city council members is embarrassing.
While most of the time I find it easy to participate, I thought the recent police input meetings weren't very accessible. I stopped looking for them as it seemed like a small number of people dominated them.
I have not experienced barriers.
bike lanes on North Avenue. Q&A time was slanted toward bikers. False information was given to citizens along with slanted statistics.
Some meetings are at late hours and do not allow for all people interested to speak.
Just because I haven't experienced barriers does not mean they do not exist.
certain groups organize and threaten those of us (I am a senior citizen) who have differing opinions. I'm not a racist if I disagree.
As a white male I have not noticed serious barriers to my participation. The problem is more about the minimal impact these things have. I have been very active at times, but NPA's, etc., have minimal impact on what happens. Not always a productive use of energy.
When the city council was hearing from folks about the police funding by the city the president of the council allowed voices of color to go first (commendable given the circumstances) HOWEVER, he let people from outside of Burlington speak before residents. My partner, friends and I were so turned off and sick of waiting (hours) that we just left the call. It felt very much like our voices were not important.
Lack of information distribution. Do you folks even know what year we're in? No one uses newspapers anymore.
The quality of City Communications is a huge barrier. It often ends up politicized, by whichever Party is trying to make a point. Board Docs sucks (it's good for the committees but opaque to citizens). The City Web page is not easy to navigate and is not kept current (for example, the REIB page has no content beyond staffing!). I knew this survey was coming but couldn't find it - it rode in on the tail of the Mayor's Police Search survey. And they are "Neighborhood Planning Assemblies".
I have never tried to participate in committee involvement.
Not enough prior notice. Sometimes it seems that the only people who know about meetings, are people with an agenda.
My NPA (Wards 2/3) has been hijacked by activists to suit their own agenda. I do not feel represented by that organization as a resident. Otherwise, I feel as though the City of Burlington goes above and beyond when it comes to soliciting public feedback. It's almost to a fault. As a result of doing so, just one person and slow down a project that has been in the planning stages for years. It consequently slows down neighborhood projects or

initiatives dramatically.

Being willing to express public opinions in contrast with the current prevailing public sentiment

As a middle class white male, who is fit and reasonably attractive to boot, I have all kinds of privilege in access and public meetings.

The current city council has given the anti-police effort an outsized voice in this discussion.

Having public forum reorganized by Max left me waiting four hours to participate on at least two occasions. I had work the next morning, but didn't speak until after 12am. I also resented that other speakers were allowed to criticize and dismiss me for my skin color. I sometimes felt unwelcome in public forum. I wish that the meetings had clear guidelines that were upheld across the board.

I've shared my opinions, experiences and thoughts at my Ward's NPA.

Before COVID, I was under the assumption that many meetings were only accessible in person. Now many meetings are accessible to me because of their online format; it is my hope that this accessibility remains.

None.

I have reached out to BPD and always got my questions answered in a timely manner.

I'm a working parent with a working partner. I don't have an ounce of extra time

Misinformation on city website about date & time of city meeting I was interested in.

Timing (being placed during the middle of a typical M-F work day), child care access, a lack of trust that taking part will have any effect whatsoever.

I was one of the Key Organizers to getting Just Cause Evictions passed in March on town meeting day, and voting for Progressive Candidates to that ran for seats, and offices. During the process in which that was done, we have been Illegally Harassed by our For Profit Landlord Bissonette Properties for our Political Beliefs, and Housing Reform Charter Changes. They have used other Tenants in our building to Aggressively Harass us. Slam doors while we try to sleep, spray Chemicals outside our Windows by running fans to trigger asthma attacks, fill our Uninsulated Apartment with so much second hand Drug and Cigarette smoke it has made us Physically ill, and promote Stalking by the other Tenants to perform these actions. All to prevent us from attending Meetings to push for reforms, and try to force us out of this Apartment for reporting Code Violations.

I can't say I have encountered barriers (other than being mocked by the mayor once at a planning commission meeting), but I haven't put myself out there. So I don't know if my rating should be counted.

CJC and NPA's are accessible and avenues for participation
Need more day time and week end public input meetings some of us work nights
I have not tried to participate in many City Committee meetings, so this is difficult to rank. I think that the advertising/recruitment for them is inconsistent though, and could be targeted (whether consciously or unconsciously) in a way that creates committees that lack diversity and promote only likeminded participation.
The primary barrier I've experienced is the lack of response to people's problems in the NNE. Our representatives don't follow up on people's problems & of course neither does the city..
If I don't express agreement with the City Council or other progressive agents of the city, I find that my voice is silenced at future meetings when my name is available to see
When City Council was holding it's nightly meetings to berate the Police Dept., anyone with something positive to say couldn't get through to speak. Only the individuals who agreed with the naysayers were allowed to speak, night after night. It was hardly the voice of the community.
Not accessible for evening workers
None
Once again a small group of people are given preference because they yell the loudest and city "leadership" (I.E city council) place their voices above everyone else because the majority of city council has similar beliefs. They do not allow others to speak.
Tyesha Greene is the most biased person I have met especially against the police department. That's a barrier- having her be in charge of "Equity" when she blatantly speaks out against an entire organization.
No experience.
The only barrier for me is there are not enough hours in the day. I would like to participate more but it's not that easy as a full time worker and parent.
I have not bothered to participate in these types of meetings because of City Council's prioritizing BIPOC voices over other voices which strikes me discriminatory.
It is extremely difficult to keep track of what is happening in city and ward politics. The city website is difficult to navigate and there is a major lack of information accessibility. There needs to be a massive increase in community outreach and continual education.
Additionally, online meetings are a barrier to many
I would literally be down to become a cop if you fucks were accountable. The fact that if I were to become a police officer, i would likely be fired and ostracized if I were to report another officers misconduct disgusts me. Their insular, Us vs. Them, "Blue lives Matter" bullshit just turns normal people into the enemy for them.
Covid is my largest barrier recently before covid it was just getting to know the community and what it offers, I'm new to Vermont.
never attempted to participate

Not having a well known process
Encouraged further support with MH professionals many years ago.
The community is being intimidated into compliance by activists and the progressive left. Multiple community members have told me how scared they are to speak up about what is happening within their city. The mobs of people arriving at personal homes in the night, and seeing city employees being doxed, has led to the community as a whole being too scared to speak up. The Police are not the issue here, senseless and reckless activism are the route issue here. The baseless anti Police themes in media and social media are a driving force behind the current situation. The only barriers I have in being active in my own community is the mob that is now imposing its will on our community.
no experience
There is a very vocal minority that refuse to even allow dissenting opinions to be aired in public. There is no real debate in this City. There is only political bullying.
my barriers are primarily apathy and shyness, and feeling like I don't have enough information to engage in a meaningful or useful way.
Screw the City Council- they don't believe in transparency or accountability.
No attempt at City Committee involvement and unaware of how to become more involved
meetings are sometimes scheduled during work hours
Completely accurate! If you don't agree with the Progressives, they don't want to hear your opinion! The Mayor is not quite as bad, but he wants to inform you about why his opinion is better than yours. Look to the North Ave bike test project as proof. It was a done deal before there was any community input at all.
I don't like zoom.
There are only so many hours in the day. After working 8 hours the last thing I want to do is sit through a meeting. I elect city officials so they will get paid to govern.
I would be more likely to participate on Zoom now that we have experienced that during the pandemic. Having kids its hard to go out to a meeting at dinner time but meeting from home is pretty convenient and makes it more likely for me to participate.
Everyone has this past year
Now that the kids are out of the house I have time to participate.
These meetings are dominated by the same activists. They have a common agenda and just repeat prepared statements whenever they can. The general public is not an organized entity and they are shut out from making comments and giving input. Good people are afraid of retribution from speaking their thoughts.
I have had ZERO barriers to anything involved with city government. ALL meeting have been public and advertised as such. ALL city employees that I have dealt with have been very helpful in answering my questions. I wish people in the stores were just as helpful when you need assistance.

Probably lack of interest, because nothing ever seems to get done, except form a committee, then never learn the outcome. Feel city council for most part, incompetent..
I know where these resources are if I need them or want to be involved
Having a baby
None
Perhaps only knowledge of when and where meetings take place
In the past I was busy most evenings. The barriers now are just my own lack of engagement and I'm engaged in other ways,
I'm a single mom, no sitter
I think I just feel intimidated by some of the super angry folks who engage in these spaces; it's hard for a quieter voice to enter the space when the same people show up, without consequences/strong mediation, to push their platforms forward. In this new digital world, there might be better ways to gather feedback. Like this one! This survey is incredible.
The time the meeting was scheduled and my own availability.
Meetings are usually scheduled during the early evening, mealtime.
When I have not attended meetings it is because 1. they are at a time when I want to eat dinner. This doesn't mean meetings need to change, but just a recognition that the 40 hour work week isn't always conducive to participation for those of us who are more easily tired or less ambitious. Also, city council public forum is intimidating - except during the pandemic when you can literally show up unseen.
Time and knowledge of when/where but mostly time. Often during bedtime routine for children or meetings for work
N/A
Folks running the meetings do not follow the rules. Not staying in topic, letting some several minutes and others none at all. Most of the time the topics are all 1 sided.
Hostile environment to anyone not a part of the fringe but aggressive group trying to take over
I haven't been to one - sometimes I find out about them after the fact, and sometimes I am not sure whether I can just dial in to listen or what. In the past I hadn't participated because I often worked overtime. Now I could look into it more.
The only "barriers" I have experienced are too many participants in NPA meetings who are ready and willing to shout down comments and opinions that are different than their own.
Not applicable as I haven't sought out involvement.
It is easy to forget or miss notices for community events.
As stated in the previous response, it has become that if you do not agree with how the City Council addressed police reform you are shamed and/or attacked. This has created an environment where many residents of Burlington do not want to share their disagreement with how the police reform is being addressed in Burlington.

Police defensiveness, and reflexive self-protection, above all else.
I have no idea when groups meet, of even who they are.
I have not participated in the forums described above.
never really sure what the "powers in charge: ever do with public input.
N/a
I haven't tried to participate in these things because I find them so stressful so I can't say if I would experience barriers or not
Public meetings are full of jargon that is hard to understand.
City council meetings are poorly run & do not allow for meaningful comment.
Meeting times for public comment—please add morning and afternoon options for working public/taxpayers
taxpayers
Lack of information, mostly.
The only barrier is the willingness of officialdom to listen respectfully.
Generally, I don't have a clear picture about how all of the above are designed to work together. Unclear expectations.
Hard (sometimes impossible) to participate in Zoom meetings
I disagree with many of the stances held by my peers, and they are particularly vehement in their stance that their solutions are the only solutions. It makes it hard to find the energy to get involved. Zealotry pushes away moderates.
time, access
Closed minded, very opinionated people
I have been able to comment to the Police Commission, but have difficulty getting info on what they did if I can't attend a meeting on line.
Time it takes place
Some of these activities are artificial, lack depth and lack representation of voice not heard. This is not only reflected with BPD's oversight but City as a whole. In many instances these exist to check a box and show on the paper that we have them. However, the impact is fairly low and more of a lip service.
n/a - I have not sought to engage in these ways
Back during Occupy my wife and I attended Police Commission meetings, and became concerned about barriers to their powers. I fully support the efforts of Councilor Freeman to remove them.
My barriers are my own time.
Just occasional NPA meetings. I was part of the community mediation programs in Syracuse, NY

I stopped going cuz it felt like my opinion didn't matter, and if the police committee that Mark Hughes used to be on felt disempowered, who's gonna listen to a disabled white person, if the 2 Black men on the committee were ignored?
N/A
n/a
meetings are at odd hours in inconvenient places. mostly my reluctance to travel downtown at night.
Usually I don't know about it or my schedule is off
Time is my greatest barrier. I often work evenings and that is when many of the meetings are held.
I grew up in this area and Burlingtonians have always practiced social closure. This is not a welcoming community, just one that presents itself as such
An option to attend virtually should always be available.
Timing.
Little time for public input
Have received notices about ways to participate , but due to my schedule have not had the time as of yet.
Public meetings (like the ones I've just read that there have been so many of) are not well advertised,especially for those of us without a social media presence. So the comments are so skewed
No barriers other than these could be better advertised.
It is very hard to find the links to meetings on the city council website and figure out how to access them. Furthermore, the meetings are not advertised at all and most people are unaware that they happen. Finally, there have been many attempts by both community members and counselors, such as Counselor Shannon, to limit public comment and make it harder for community members to express their needs.
Always warned meeting and accessible.
I don't know
I have not, but I have participated in City Council meetings where the "sides" were very adversarial. I would like to see more City Leadership/BPD and reform advocates working together.
No experience with this
Barriers mostly have to do with the time and energy it requires to participate. Other things (work, family, etc) tend to take priority.
Attend NPA meetings.
none
most barriers I've experienced are probably a lack of info/awareness of things. I have become more involved and follow local orgs, city councilors, and activist groups and it's mainly through those sources that I have at least gained exposure to some committee

activity.
i can't handle liberals and progressives, they make me angry, so i choose not to go.
I work long hours especially with COVID-19
None
N/A I am not involved in any of those
I don't participate now due to Zooming and social media. People are way to immature and willing to be hostile in response to differing opinions.
most recently zoom mtgs are not accessible to me
When you submit your your input on this topic to city council, they sort it by your race, regardless of any other factors that may have an effect on your public safety needs.
Not a resident of the City of Burlington
Just not feeling heard when so many of us speak up at public meetings
None
City council members are non responsive to complaints and issues raised.
I have not personally experienced this, but I've heard that quite a bit of the community has faced technological barrier created through Covid since everything is on Zoom and community members without that technology can't simply walk into a local meeting at City Hall or elsewhere.
There is so much going on, its hard to keep track of it all.
unaware of these systems
The role, scope, & potential for real impact / ROI that would result from investing time & energy in these is unclear & difficult to get a sense of. Could there be a localized civics primer/orientation for ppl who aren't already local politics wonks?
Why only these choices.
None. Just frustration in wondering whether mental health needs will be addressed.
Process is long and requires excess time and resources.
I have not.
Advertising of such meetings and resources is hardly widespread or timely enough to be reliable or effective. For example: posting on the BPD page FB means the post gets limited visibilty and may not be seen until the day of the meeting or days after the meeting has occured and that is only if one has followed the BPD FB page. Otherwise, that announcement never gets seen.
Time from work and resources
So-called activists make it impossible to respond or share ideas in a constructive way. If it doesn't appease them, it could possible lead to threats for sharing any opinion in a meeting

city council screws you
I participate some much earlier in my experience here. Then life (kids, work, other interests) happened and I have not chosen to be as involved. Time and interest have been the biggest obstacles on my part.
I'm a winoski resident, I have an unusual schedule, pandemic lockdown, and I dont have a computer.
Max Tracy suppressed opposing viewpoints during summer meetings
I know nothing about all of this. Barriers I often find on social media needing to register with my email to an event, but then I get multiple emails, so i would suggest to have link available without needing to send email.
I have participated in the VT Victim Assistance Academy and am a former staffer of the Burlington CJC - my only barrier for the other forms of participation was the perceived time commitment.
We can participate. You don't listen.
Disability Access and Support
I have Internet and can choose how to spend my time.
Location of meetings. Police Commission meetings held at the pics station itself are not a safe space.
Hosts of my local NPA have not communicated well, in the form of not responding to my email with questions about next steps in how to participate in the Talitha town halls when the Zoom NPA meeting abruptly ended before this could be explained, and also not communicating well when I was scheduled to present at an NPA a few years ago, and removing me from the schedule due to their miscommunication.
My involvement is limited by other commitments
The timing is often awkward, and they could be better publicized.
I would love to voice my opinions, but am worried about retaliation because I work with the public and deal with the homeless and drug problem every day
They are just shows without real meaning.
I have not attempted to attend. I live outside of burlington but have been encouraging residents to attend.
the systems are intentionally difficult to engage with
Almost all participation requires internet access and free time. People without the economic security to have those things cannot meaningfully engage with the city. It is as though Burlington devalues them.
This information is not widely broadcasted. People that already have social capital have access to these opportunities and not people who have been historically marginalized. I had no idea a few of these actions were even available and I am heavily connected in the community

There are gatekeepers to these groups at all political party levels...
I was invited to speak on behalf of our church at an NPA meeting to invite the neighborhood to a Trunk or Treat event. I received feedback my presence was very much unwelcomed by some of the members. This has prohibited me from participating further.
Tracy runs the council like Hitler
none
I haven't always participated but it is because of my own shortcomings...
I do not feel barriers to participation. I only have concerns about pre-judgment of any participant based on his or her role identity in the eyes of others. One should be able to offer insights and ideas on the merits of those insights and ideas. That applies to all.
Never any barriers to me
I've found most accessible for me, but I have a lot of privilege. It would be great if more civic meetings happened in the community, at or alongside events where community members were already gathering, instead of in the city department building conference rooms (not talking about COVID times). Zoom meetings have been more accessible and might be easier for me to attend post-pandemic when I won't have already spent ALL DAY on zoom.
police opponents 'stack the deck'
Unaware of opportunities, lack of time
I have experienced none because I am no longer able to participate in Committees. But when I could, I never met barriers.
Just timing and the jargon of everything that feels exclusive and hierarchical.

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 20

Which of the following most accurately describes your racial/ethnic identity?

Asian or Asian American or South Asian	20
First Nation/American Indian/Indigenous	17
Alaskan Native	0
Pacific Islander	1
White European Americans	617
Hispanic or Latino/a or Chicano/a	21
Black or African American	22

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 20 (text-box answers)

If you prefer to self-describe your racial/ethnic identity, please do so here:

How dare you ask my race, that's so racist.

I would just add that while I'm half Latina and am bilingual, I am White and do not have an accent. I therefore have the privileges accorded to White women in our culture.

American and Vermonter

I can't believe you are asking my race. STOP. We are all part of the human race. Stop putting people in special buckets. It creates division. Point out our similarities.

How does this help or assist in the survey?

Universal generic human, just like you

A resident of Burlington race should make no difference

Identification by culture is racist and separates our country

Prefer not to be targeted.

Why does it matter?

We who are not leftist atheist are canceled in Burlington. No one in this state represents us at any level.

What Difference does it make

Ethnically Jewish

Human

I self describe as a human being. People are equal.

We are Indian, French, and Irish. Better portion is Indian.

I identify as a mother of two black children

Human I believe that labling pepole by the color of thier skin is a way for people in power to keep us fighting each other

American Indian/Irish American

I am just an American like all of my neighbors.

Mixed breed

Mixed race. Why on earth to you lump together Asian and South Asian here????

Just a human being

Multi cultural.

Immigrated from Quebec.
Welsh
There is no scientific basis for the concept of race, in humans.
I identify as Polish American because that was the community in which I was raised (I'm part Polish)
My family includes other races.
white American. my 4 generation background is "all over the world."
Human being
why does my ethnicity matter? Why cant you just answer a survey without telling you my ethnicity?
European American
I feel like my answers will not be counted because I am older and white.
immigrant from Canada
Jewish
human
white
Wife and children are of Armenian ancestry.
I am a Caucasian French American

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 21 (text-box answers)

If you prefer to self-describe your sexual identity, please do so here:

Go fuck your freak identity bs
Why?? What difference does it make? Let's get out of this rut we're in and start building unity not more division. We need a We Are One campaign.
I am of the 'none of your fucking business' sexual identity.
How does this help or assist in the survey?
Idk maybe pan? I'm attracted to what I'm attracted to.
this is stupid, people can think whatever they want about themselves, but I have the full right to see them any way I want
I describe myself as a man because I'm a man
Why is this relevant?
strait

Again why does it matter? It's personal
This question is insane, immoral. There are only persons, it's all personal - persons with a homosexual inclination that they choose to act out. There are no lesbians, gays, queers or anything else. We are all persons. Your labeling and favoring people according to their disorders is immoral and irrational.
What difference does it make
This is hardly anyone elses business
Totally immaterial to the questions on this survey. But the Progs want to know!
What difference does it make?
Straight
Does this question really matter?
PS. I'm also disabled, which you don't ask about.
Human
straight as a ruler.
I think my sexuality is irrelevant to my responses.
gay, pansexual
Male married to female.

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 22 (text-box answers)

If you prefer to self-describe your gender identity, please do so here:

Freak fuckin trannys are maggot
I hate gender questions but I get why you ask
See above. Shame for even asking. It's really not your business and has no bearing on community building.
Every one is binary, even the insane confused conflicted binary humans, it is fantasy to think otherwise, stop the coddling of insanity, tell it like it is
Trans
Can we get a transgender option here?! I'm trans.
Androgynous
Totally immaterial to the questions on this survey. But the Progs want to know!
TRANS UMBRELLA

non-binary woman
Just slightly to the left of womanhood. Like a woman but just a bit off
Human
I bone chicks without dicks.
I'm gender nonconforming and have incidents related to that in public places frequently

Online Public Safety Survey - Question 25 (text-box answers)

Primary or additional languages spoken in my household:

French
Spanish
The language of Love and respect.
Wolof, Francais
learn a real language, stop wasting my time
French & English
With each other and people in our community
Bosnian, German
Spanish
also speak other languages besides English
German
Spanish
Spanish
Spanish
French
German
Portuguese
French
Greek
Nepali
French
Italian
maaymaay
Portugese
Spanish
Spanish

Resolution Relating to

RESOLUTION 6.03

MARCH 2, 2021 ANNUAL CITY MEETING—
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY CONTROL BOARD TO
OVERSEE INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINE OF
POLICE MISCONDUCT CHARTER CHANGE

Sponsor(s): Charter Change
Committee
Introduced: 12/14/20
Referred to: _____
Action: amended; adopted
Date: 12/14/20
Signed by Mayor: _____

CITY OF BURLINGTON

In the year Two Thousand Twenty

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Burlington, as follows:

1 That WHEREAS, on June 29, 2020, the City Council adopted a resolution entitled “Racial Justice Through
2 Economic and Criminal Justice” that included a request that the Charter Change Committee propose charter
3 amendments that “authorize the Police Commission to approve by simple majority any disciplinary decision,
4 including a decision of non-discipline, the Police Chief wishes to implement in a use-of-force case, with such
5 approval including the right to impose a new and different discipline as the Commission deems appropriate;”
6 and

7 WHEREAS, on Sept. 21, 2020, the City Council adopted a resolution entitled “Protesters and Public
8 Safety” that acknowledged “the need to change current policies regarding discipline and oversight of our
9 police” and requested “that the Charter Change Committee review options for who makes and reviews police
10 disciplinary decisions and report on the various options to the full Council in October;” and

11 WHEREAS, the Charter Change Committee reported back to the Council at its November 9, 2020
12 meeting with a memorandum prepared by the City Attorney outlining possible options; and

13 WHEREAS, at that meeting, the Council voted to encourage the Charter Change Committee to
14 continue its work through December 3 and to refer the issue to the Joint Committee of the Police Commission
15 and Public Safety Committee to work with the consultant to provide committee and public input; and

16 WHEREAS, after several meetings to review potential charter change language, on November 25,
17 2020, the Charter Change Committee voted 2-1 to refer the following charter change language to the City
18 Council to be placed on the ballot for the March 2, 2021 Annual City Meeting and to refer it to the Joint
19 Committee of the Police Commission and Public Safety Committee for its review;

20 WHEREAS, the joint committee, city councilors, and the public continue to comment on the language
21 and offer suggestions consistent with the proposal referred by the Charter Change Committee that are reflected
22 in the following language:

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the following question be placed on the ballot of the
24 Annual City Meeting to be held on March 2, 2021:

* * * * *

ORIGINAL

DISTRIBUTION:

I hereby certify that this resolution has been sent to the following department(s) on

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Adopted by the City Council

....., 20.....

..... Clerk

Approved....., 20.....

..... Mayor

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MARCH 2, 2021 ANNUAL CITY MEETING—
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY CONTROL BOARD TO OVERSEE
INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT
CHARTER CHANGE

25 *“Shall the Charter of the City of Burlington, Acts of 1949, No. 298 as amended, be further amended to*
26 *provide for an independent office with the power to investigate and an independent board with the power to*
27 *hear and decide complaints and impose discipline regarding a police officer’s actions or inactions through*
28 *the amendment of Article 64 Appointment of Police Officers, Section 189 and Article 65 Removal or*
29 *Suspension, Section 190 as follows:*

30
31 **189 Member of force to be retained as long as they remain competent.**

32
33 The members of said regular police force now serving, or who shall hereafter be appointed thereto, shall, after
34 the expiration of the one-year probationary period above provided, and so long as they shall remain
35 competent, efficient and capable in the performance of their respective duties be retained as such, subject to
36 the rules and regulations adopted under Section 184 of this Charter and provided that any member may be
37 removed for cause as hereinafter provided. Any non-probationary member may be disciplined or removed if
38 found to have become incompetent, inefficient or incapable from any cause, is or has been negligent or
39 derelict in their official duty, is guilty of any misconduct in their private or official life, or for any other just
40 cause.

41
42 **ARTICLE 65. INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY [~~OVERSIGHT~~] CONTROL BOARD**

43
44 **190 [~~Chief may remove.~~] Composition, jurisdiction, powers, and duties.**

45
46 [~~(a) Whenever it shall appear to the chief that any member of said force has become incompetent, inefficient~~
47 ~~or incapable from any cause, or is or has been negligent or derelict in his or her official duty, or is guilty of~~
48 ~~any misconduct in his or her private or official life, or whenever any well-grounded complaints or charges to~~
49 ~~such effect are made in writing to the chief by a responsible person against such member, the chief may~~
50 ~~investigate and, after appropriate notice an hearing, dismiss such member from the force, order a reduction in~~
51 ~~rank, or suspend the member without pay for a specified time period in excess of 14 days. In connection with~~
52 ~~any possible dismissal, demotion, or suspension for more than 14 days, the chief’s notice to the member shall~~
53 ~~be given at least 48 hours prior to any hearing and shall include a description of the charge being considered.~~
54 ~~In connection therewith, the chief shall have the power to subpoena witnesses and to administer the oath to~~
55 ~~such witnesses. The board of police commissioners shall hear any appeal filed in a timely manner with respect~~
56 ~~to such actions of the police chief. The time of filing an appeal and the nature of the appellate process shall be~~
57 ~~as determined by such board of regulation. Following its consideration of any such appeal, the board may~~
58 ~~affirm, modify, or vacate the decision made by the chief of police.~~

59 ~~↳~~
60 ~~(b) Whenever it shall appear to the mayor that the chief has become incompetent, inefficient, or incapable~~
61 ~~from any cause, or has been negligent or derelict in his or her official duty, or is guilty of any misconduct in~~
62 ~~his or her private or official life, or whenever any well-grounded complaints or charges to such effect are made~~

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MARCH 2, 2021 ANNUAL CITY MEETING—
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY CONTROL BOARD TO OVERSEE
INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT
CHARTER CHANGE

63 in writing to the mayor by a responsible person, the mayor may suspend the chief from duty pending a hearing
64 thereon by the city council. The city council shall forth with notify the chief of the charges preferred by them,
65 or of the complaints or charges presented by such responsible person in writing, and shall thereupon proceed
66 to consider and investigate the same. It shall appoint a time and place for the hearing of such complaints and
67 charges so made, shall give the chief reasonable notice of the same, not less than 48 hours, and the city council
68 shall have the power to subpoena witnesses and to administer the oath to such witnesses.

69
70 (e) If, upon hearing, the city council shall find such complaints or charges to be well founded, it may dismiss
71 the chief from the force, demote him or her in rank, or suspend him or her without pay for a period not to
72 exceed 60 days. The procedures outlined in this section shall control in the event of any conflict with
73 section 129 of this Charter as pertains to the removal of the chief.

74
75 (d) ~~The chief may, without notice or hearing for any infraction, violation, or disobedience of any of the rules
76 and regulations of the police department that may seem to the chief sufficient, suspend from duty without pay
77 any member of the police force for a period not to exceed 14 days.]~~

78
79 **(a) Board Established.**

80
81 A community police department control board consisting of seven (7) members is established. The board shall
82 be an independent department of the city. A quorum of the board shall be four (4) members, and when a
83 quorum exists, a valid majority is the majority of those present and voting. Members shall be entitled to the
84 same compensation as is provided to City Councilors under this charter.

85
86 **(b) Board Members Term, Qualifications and Selection.**

87
88 (1) Term. Board members shall serve a term of three (3) years and shall be eligible to serve for no more than
89 three (3) terms.

90
91 (2) Diversity. The board shall have a diverse composition, and to the extent possible, have members that
92 represent a diversity of age, socioeconomic status, gender, geographic residence, immigration status, and
93 professional and lived experience. To the extent possible, at least two (2) of the members shall be Black or
94 Indigenous. At least two (2) of the members shall have lived experience with houselessness, mental health
95 conditions, domestic violence, substance use disorder and/or arrest or conviction records. At least two (2) of
96 the members shall have experience working with an organization that supports Black, Indigenous, or other
97 people of color, and at least two (2) members shall be affiliated with an organization in the field of civil rights,
98 mental health, youth advocacy, LGBTQ advocacy or alcohol and other substance use. Individual members
99 may represent more than one of the categories listed above.~~(2) Diversity. The board shall have a diverse~~
100 composition, and to the extent possible, have members that represent a diversity of age,

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MARCH 2, 2021 ANNUAL CITY MEETING—
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY CONTROL BOARD TO OVERSEE
INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT
CHARTER CHANGE

~~socioeconomic status, gender, geographic residence, immigration status, and professional and lived experience. At least three (3) of the members shall be Black or Indigenous. At least three (3) of the members shall have lived experience with houselessness, mental health conditions, domestic violence, substance use disorder and/or arrest or conviction records. At least three (3) of the members shall have experience working with an organization that supports Black, Indigenous, or other people of color, and at least two (2) members shall be affiliated with an organization in the field of civil rights, mental health, youth advocacy, LGBTQ advocacy or alcohol and other substance use. Individual members may represent more than one of the categories listed above.~~

(3) Qualifications.

~~(A) No member shall have ever been employed by a law enforcement agency, or be a family member of current or former law enforcement agency employees. Family member shall, for purposes of this provision, mean an individual's spouse, domestic partner, partner to a civil union or any of the following: parent, child, stepchild, sibling, sibling of a parent, child of a sibling, parent-in-law, sibling-in-law, child-in-law, stepparent, stepsibling, or half-sibling, whether by marriage, lineal descent or adoption. Furthermore, no member shall be a person residing in a household with a law enforcement officer and the relationship to law enforcement shall be disclosed to the nominating body at the earliest practicable time.~~ (A) ~~No member shall have ever been employed by a law enforcement agency, or be a family member of current or former law enforcement agency employees. Family member shall, for purposes of this provision, mean an individual's spouse, domestic partner, partner to a civil union or any of the following: parent, child, stepchild, sibling, sibling of a parent, child of a sibling, grandparent, grandchild, parent-in-law, sibling in law, child in law, stepparent, stepsibling, half sibling, or first cousin, whether by marriage, lineal descent or adoption. Furthermore, no member shall be a person residing in a household with a law enforcement officer.~~

~~(B) Members shall be residents of the city of Burlington, regardless of legal immigration status, at the time their board service begins. Members who move outside of the city may remain on the Board for the duration of their term, provided that they still reside in Chittenden County, but may not be reappointed if they reside outside the city at the end of their term.~~

~~(4) Selection. Annually, the City Council with Mayor Presiding will choose a set of seven community-based organizations that have an interest in civil rights, immigrant rights, disability rights/mental health, racial equity and social justice, and that also have an interest in the safety of the city and criminal justice reform. Three (3) organizations, to the extent possible, should be Black-led and majority Black membership. Each organization shall nominate a representative to the City Council with Mayor Presiding which shall appoint qualified persons to be members of the board. The City Attorney shall convene the first meeting of the committee and shall act as committee staff.~~ (4) ~~Selection. Annually, the City Council with Mayor Presiding will choose a set~~

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MARCH 2, 2021 ANNUAL CITY MEETING—
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INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT
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~~of seven community-based organizations that have an interest in civil rights, immigrant rights, disability rights/mental health, racial equity and social justice, and that also have an interest in the safety of the city and criminal justice reform. Three (3) organizations, to the extent possible, should be Black-led and majority Black membership. Each organization shall appoint a representative to an appointment committee which shall appoint qualified persons to be members of the board. This appointment committee shall be considered a public body that is subject to the Open Meeting Law and the Access to Public Records Act. The City Attorney shall convene the first meeting of the committee and shall act as committee staff.~~

(5) Initial Board. The initial board shall be selected so that two members serve a two year term, three members serve a three-year term, and two members serve a four-year term; thereafter, each member shall serve a three-year term.

(6) Vacancies. Any vacancy during a term shall be filled by the same selection process as held for that member's seat initially and the term of the individual elected to fill an unexpired term shall end at the end of the original term of the person being replaced.

(c) Jurisdiction.

(1) (A) Board investigation and adjudication of complaints. The board has the jurisdiction to review and make findings on any complaint against a police officer, including the chief, on complaints of excessive force, abuse of authority, unlawful arrest/stop/searches, other unlawful acts, discourtesy/disrespect, offensive language, theft, discrimination, or untruthfulness by police officers. Any other complaint shall be heard at the discretion of the board. The board shall conduct investigations of alleged police misconduct into those complaints, and in those cases hold hearings and issue final decisions with regard to police officer discipline and removal pursuant to section 189.

B) Such jurisdiction provided in (A) shall not remove the authority of the mayor to suspend the chief from duty pending a hearing thereon by the city council whenever it shall appear to the mayor that the chief has become incompetent, inefficient, or incapable from any cause, or has been otherwise negligent or derelict in their official duty, or is guilty of any other misconduct than that listed above in (A) in their private or official life. Such jurisdiction stated above shall also not remove the authority of the city council to schedule a hearing whenever any well-grounded complaints or charges to such effect are made in writing to the mayor by a responsible person. In these circumstances, the city council shall forth-with notify the chief of the charges presented to them, or of the complaints or charges presented by such responsible person in writing, and shall thereupon proceed to consider and investigate the same. It shall appoint a time and place for the hearing of such complaints and charges so made, shall give the chief reasonable notice of the same, not less than 48 hours, and the city council shall have the power to subpoena witnesses and to administer the oath to such witnesses. If, upon hearing, the city

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MARCH 2, 2021 ANNUAL CITY MEETING—
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY CONTROL BOARD TO OVERSEE
INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT
CHARTER CHANGE

177 council shall find such complaints or charges to be well founded, it may dismiss the chief from the
178 force, demote them in rank, or suspend them without pay for a period not to exceed 60 days. The
179 procedures outlined in this section shall control in the event of any conflict with section 129 of this
180 Charter as pertains to the removal of the chief.”

181
182 (2) Department investigation and adjudication of complaints.

183
184 (A) In those cases that are not taken up by the board, the investigation shall be conducted by the police
185 department. In such cases, the chief shall investigate and, after appropriate notice and hearing, may take
186 disciplinary action, including but not limited to dismissal, reduction in rank, or suspension without pay for
187 a specified time period. In connection with any possible dismissal, demotion, or suspension for more than
188 14 days, the chief’s notice to the member shall be given at least 48 hours prior to any hearing and shall
189 include a description of the charges being considered.

190
191 (B) The chief may, without notice or hearing for any infraction, violation, or disobedience of any of the
192 rules and regulations of the police department that may seem to the chief sufficient, suspend from duty
193 without pay any member of the police force for a period not to exceed 14 days.

194
195 (C) Any decision made by the department pursuant to (A) or (B) above shall be submitted to the board for
196 review and approval. If the board disagrees with the department’s decision, it shall vacate the decision and
197 refer the complaint to the investigative office for processing in the same manner as complaints heard by
198 the board.

199
200 (3) Administrative suspension. Pending any investigation, the chief, in their discretion, may suspend an officer
201 from duty pending the applicable legal process. The board shall have such authority in the case of the chief,
202 based on the nature of the alleged offense. This suspension may be with or without pay.

203
204 (4) Retention of records. Officer performance records and or investigatory/disciplinary records, being relevant
205 to the adjudication of complaints shall be retained by the department for a period of seventy-five years,
206 notwithstanding any record retention policy to the contrary.

207
208 (5) Hiring. The board shall also have input into the hiring of the police chief and the creation of hiring criteria
209 for police officers.

210
211 (d) Powers and Duties.

212
213 The board shall have the following powers and duties:
214

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MARCH 2, 2021 ANNUAL CITY MEETING—
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY CONTROL BOARD TO OVERSEE
INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT
CHARTER CHANGE

- 215 (1) To establish rules and regulations for its operation, subject to approval by the city council;
216
- 217 (2) To meet and hold hearings.
218
- 219 (3) To hire employees or consultants, including legal representation.
220
- 221 (4) To administer oaths and take the testimony of any person under oath in connection with the jurisdiction of
222 the board.
223
- 224 (5) To issue subpoenas to compel testimony or access to or production of records, documents and other
225 evidence or possible sources of evidence or the appearance of persons, provided that the subpoena is issued
226 pursuant to an action under the jurisdiction of the board and there is reasonable cause to believe that those
227 materials or the testimony of the person are material to the complaint. Subpoenas issued under this subdivision
228 shall be accompanied with a notice that informs the person that the person has a right to contest the subpoena
229 at a hearing before a quorum of the board, and subpoenas shall be enforced as provided in 3 V.S.A. §§ 809a
230 and 809b.
231
- 232 (6) To discipline or remove a member of the police force, including the chief, and discipline may include a
233 reduction in rank or suspension without pay for a specified period, pursuant to section 189, this section, and all
234 applicable rules and regulations related thereto. Whenever it shall appear to the board that any member of said
235 force has become incompetent, inefficient or incapable from any cause, or is or has been negligent or derelict
236 in their official duty, or is guilty of any misconduct in their private or official life, or whenever any well-
237 grounded complaints or charges to such effect are made in writing to the board by a responsible person against
238 such member, the board may investigate and, after appropriate notice and hearing, dismiss such member from
239 the force, order a reduction in rank, or suspend the member without pay for a specified time period. In
240 connection with any possible dismissal, demotion, or suspension for more than 14 days, the board's notice to
241 the member shall be given at least 48 hours prior to any hearing and shall include a description of the charges
242 being considered. The board may, without notice or hearing for any infraction, violation, or disobedience of
243 any of the rules and regulations of the police department that may seem to the board sufficient, suspend from
244 duty without pay any member of the police force for a period not to exceed 14 days.
245
- 246 (7) To issue public reports on its work. The board shall issue quarterly reports that are publicly available in
247 accessible formats on the number of complaints and the nature of the complaints. It shall also provide an
248 annual report to the city council on all of its duties.
249
- 250 (8) To establish and maintain an investigative office.
251
- 252 (9) To attend and complete training sufficient to perform its duties.

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253

254

(e) Investigative Office.

255

256

(1) If records are not provided or witnesses do not appear on request, the investigative office shall have the power to issue subpoenas to compel testimony or access to or production of records, documents and other evidence or possible sources of evidence or the appearance of persons, provided that the subpoena is issued pursuant to an action under the jurisdiction of the board and there is reasonable cause to believe that those materials or the testimony of the person are material to the complaint. Subpoenas issued under this subdivision shall be accompanied with a notice that informs the person that the person has a right to contest the subpoena at a hearing before a quorum of the board, and subpoenas shall be enforced as provided in 3 V.S.A. §§ 809a and 809b.

257

258

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260

261

262

263

264

265

(2) The investigative office shall have, on request:

266

267

(A) Access to any and all records of the police department, subject to any legal limitations (e.g., expunged records) or legal confidentiality requirements;

268

269

270

(B) Full cooperation of the police department, its members, and relevant City staff (i.e., Human Resources, City Attorney, etc.);

271

272

273

(C) Unfettered access to police command and internal affairs personnel; and

274

275

(D) Access to all policies and data created or maintained by the police department.

276

277

(3) The investigative office shall have the authority to:

278

279

(A) Receive, investigate, and present to the board any complaint against a police officer. Once received, this process should be completed under normal circumstances within thirty days, but because the time required may vary from case to case based on the nature of the allegation(s) and the complexity of the investigation, if additional time is necessary to complete the investigation, the board may authorize an extension of up to sixty days;

280

281

282

283

284

285

(B) In any case that the investigative officer or the board does not investigate, monitor any investigation being conducted by the police department with full access to interviews and any other pertinent materials;

286

287

288

(C) Be immediately notified so that an investigator may be sent to the scene of a police shooting or in-custody death;

289

290

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MARCH 2, 2021 ANNUAL CITY MEETING—
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY CONTROL BOARD TO OVERSEE
INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT
CHARTER CHANGE

291 (D) Be allowed to interview officers less than 48 hours after an incident where deadly force is used;

292

293 (E) Access crime scenes, subpoena witnesses and files; and

294

295 (F) Set penalties for and enforce against non-compliance with the lawful orders issued pursuant to the
296 duties and powers of the office and board.

297

298 (G) Employ a director hired by and at the discretion of the board, and hire other staff or consultants as
299 determined by its director and authorized by the city council, including independent legal counsel to advise
300 the office and the board.”

301

302 (4) The investigative office shall:

303

304 ~~“(A) Have an appropriation adequate to conduct the work of the office;(A) Have a director who is hired by~~
305 ~~the board, other staff or consultants as determined by its director and authorized by the city council,~~
306 ~~including independent legal counsel to advise the board, and an appropriation adequate to conduct the~~
307 ~~work of the office;~~

308

309 (B) Issue public quarterly reports analyzing complaints, demographics of complainants, status and findings
310 of investigations and actions taken as a result, as well as dispositions;

311

312 (C) Establish multiple in-person and online ways to submit, view and discuss complaints;

313

314 (D) Provide complaint-related information and records to the public (without personally identifiable
315 complainant information);

316

317 (E) Be housed in a separate location from the police department.

318

319 (F) Hear from the chief or their designee as part of an investigation by the office and receive any
320 recommendation the chief deems appropriate related thereto.

321

322 (5) In all cases being investigated under this section, the board has the discretion to control the officer’s access
323 to all records, including video files collected by body worn cameras consistent with the requirements of due
324 process and any underlying prosecution.?”

325

326 AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in accordance with 17 V.S.A. Sec. 2645, the City Clerk
327 shall notice public hearings on the above-proposed amendments of the Burlington City Charter to be voted on
328 at the March 2, 2021 Annual City Meeting.

* * * * *

ORIGINAL

RESOLUTION RELATING TO

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MARCH 2, 2021 ANNUAL CITY MEETING—
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY CONTROL BOARD TO OVERSEE
INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT
CHARTER CHANGE

329

330

331 **Material added.

332 **Material ~~stricken out~~ and in brackets deleted.

333

334

335

336

337

lb/EBBlackwood/Resolutions 2020/Charter Change - Independent Community Control Board to Oversee Police Investigation & Discipline of
Misconduct (3-02-21 Annual City Meeting)

338

12/1/20 amended: adopted LO 12/14/20

339

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I hereby certify that this resolution has been sent to the following department(s) on City Attorney's Office, Linda Blanchard

RESOLUTION RELATING TO

March 2, 2021 Annual City Meeting--Independent Community Control Board To Oversee Investigation And Discipline Of Police Misconduct Charter Change

Amended
Adopted by the City Council
December 14, 2020

[Signature] Clerk

Approved....., 20.....

..... Mayor

Vol. Page

[Signature]
Lori Olberg
Licensing, Voting and Records Coordinator

* * * * *