



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT
CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT &
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE
c/o Community & Economic Development Office
City Hall, Room 32 • 149 Church Street • Burlington, VT 05401
802-865-7144 VOX • 802-865-7024 FAX • www.burlingtonvt.gov/cedo

Councilor Zoraya Hightower, Chair, Ward 1

Councilor Sarah Carpenter, Ward 4

Councilor Joe Magee, Ward 3

CDNR Worksession Meeting

Monday, October 3rd, 2022

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

****Virtual meeting only****

Attend via Zoom by clicking the link below:

<https://zoom.us/j/94267365961>

Telephone: +1 929 205 6099

Meeting ID: 942 6736 5961

To participate in public forum please email Christine Curtis before or during the meeting: ccurtis@burlingtonvt.gov. Comments can also be made during the meeting by using the raise hand function or the chat function.

Draft Agenda

1. Approve agenda
2. Approve minutes: 9/13/22
3. Presentation and Discussion re: Update on Homelessness Initiatives – Sarah Russell, CEDO
4. Public Forum
5. Adjournment

The programs and services of the City of Burlington are accessible to people with disabilities.
For accessibility information, call 865-7144. For questions about the meeting,
contact Christine Curtis at ccurtis@burlingtonvt.gov



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Committee members: Chair Zoraya Hightower (ZH) Sarah Carpenter (SC), Joe Magee (JM)

City staff: Christine Curtis

Other Attendees: Sarah Russell, CEDO; Gail Rafferty

CDNR Worksession Meeting
Monday, October 3rd, 2022
5:00 – 6:00 PM
Virtual Zoom

Draft Minutes

Meeting Started at 5:05 PM

1. Approve agenda

MOTION by Councilor Magee, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, to approve the agenda

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

2. Approve minutes: 9/13/22

MOTION by Councilor Magee, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, to approve the minutes

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

3. Presentation and Discussion re: Update on Homelessness Initiatives – Sarah Russell, CEDO

- Full report can be found on CDNR webpage
- Sarah gave a brief overview of the full report – homeless individuals in Burlington has increased drastically
- Coordinated entry data covered in report

- Elmwood Ave shelter project – screening committee will be created to go through potential applicants of the shelter
- Housing development data in report – covers next 3 years – what housing is being developed, where and when, etc
- ZH would like to share this report with City Council
- JM asked about interactions with the State re: VERAP and if they will expand the unsheltered assistance program
 - Additional State funding coming, Sarah Russell does not have any specific updates
 - No new applications are being accepted by the State as of October 1st

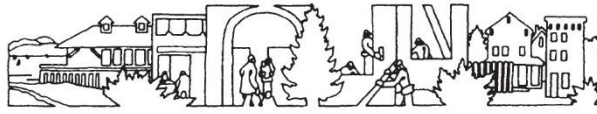
4. Public Forum

- Gail Rafferty asked about the Elmwood Ave shelters and an update on camping
 - Sarah Russell gave an update that it is being paved now and that shelter units are coming within the week, agreements are going into place for on-site services and outreach teams
 - Sarah stated that Parks and Rec enforces the City's camping policy and stated challenges include 70 campers currently in Burlington and there is nowhere else for them to go
- SC asked what can be done next – resources are too limited at the City level
 - Sarah stated that the City must follow the current camping ordinance – more transitional housing needed
 - Next three years: 41 new homeless dedicated units in Burlington but more housing is needed – quicker, short-term solutions needed as well
 - Specific data point around Phase 3 in report – case management services. 110 people are currently housing ready but there are no housing resource available to them
- Next CDNR meeting on October 25th (still tentative) to work on current camping policy/ordinance

5. Adjournment

MOTION by Chair Hightower to adjourn meeting at 5:40 PM.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.



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Initiatives To End Homelessness Status Report: October 2022

In December 2021, the City of Burlington pledged historic investment in Chittenden County's homelessness response to ensure the systems of accountability and response are adequately resourced. This commitment from the City enabled the following initiatives of the Mayor's Ten Point Action Plan to Fulfill the Promise of Housing as a Human Right to be implemented, directly impacting our community members without housing:

- Create a Special Assistant to End Homelessness position within the City's Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) to provide a single point of accountability for expanded community effort
- Strengthen through new investment Chittenden County's "Coordinated Entry" command center team that drives weekly progress towards functional zero with a comprehensive, real-time, by-name data effort
- Invest in approximately 30 shelter pods and related infrastructure to create a new low-barrier facility for 2022
- Support the creation of 78 new homes for formerly homeless residents (25 percent of the goal for new, permanently affordable housing) by partnering with affordable housing developers

In addition to a status report for the above initiatives, this report will also provide a general update on the current state of homelessness and the efforts of our community, including the City, toward solving this complex issue.

Current Snapshot Data:

Utilizing a system called Coordinated Entry (CES), our community is able to track the number of households without housing. This data also allows us to track the number of households housed on a monthly basis. The most current data report is below:

Outcome	Sub-Population	Data Point	Notes
Homeless	Total	675	Households
	Total	889	People
	Chronic	247	Chronic definition: homeless for minimum of 12 consecutive months or; four episodes of homelessness within the last three years that add up to 12 months and; documented disability
	Families	65	One or two parent household with at least one minor child residing in the household
	Veterans	25	
	Youth	56	Youth: Young adult aged 18-24 years old

	Adults	282	Single and coupled adults, not falling into above sub-pops
Housed	May	22	
	June	19	
	July	22	
	August	30	
	September	15	(preliminary)

The data we collect through CES also helps our community track households' progress toward housing goals. In Chittenden County, we use a system called *Phases of Case Management*. This system, developed about five years ago, outlines four distinct sections of work services providers' conduct with each household. A household will be considered "housing ready" once they have completed Phases One, Two, and Three and their name will be moved to the referral queue to enable access to housing placements (public and private housing providers and owners) and housing resources (Section 8, Family Supportive Housing, etc.). The *Phases* are defined (in brief) below:

- Phase One: Documentation and identification gathering; completing housing applications to determine eligibility and barriers to housing
- Phase Two: Overcoming housing barriers and exploring housing history; ensuring appropriate referrals are made for additional services (mental health, medical, substance use, justice-involved, etc.)
- Phase Three: Determining appropriate (and desired) housing placement; referral to unit and/or subsidy
- Phase Four: Housing placement and building the retention plan; if housing navigator is unable to continue to serve the household post 90-day placement, referral to housing retention service (if necessary)

Utilizing the *Phases* enables cross-agency consistency in service provision and ensures that all households receive the same services and access to the same resources, regardless of which agency they access support from. We use data to track progress toward housing for all households in CES. The most current progress data is below and indicates the number of households who are housing ready and waiting for housing resource (unit, subsidy) to become available:

Outcome	Sub-Population	Data Point	Notes
Phase Three	Total	110	
	Chronic	35	
	Families	24	
	Veterans	4	
	Youth	10	
	Single Individuals	37	Could also include couples; with or without disability; these households do not meet the definition of chronic

Coordinated Entry System Investment

As mentioned above, as part of the Mayor's Action Plan, the City made an investment to increase the capacity for CES. Utilizing ARPA funds, CES staffing increased from 1FTE to 2.5FTE enabling administrative support and creation of an outreach component. The goal of this investment was to

ensure our community could achieve quality data and ensure all households within Chittenden County were able to access CES. This investment has yielded the following outcomes:

- Chittenden County has quality data for all households experiencing homelessness
- Inclusion of an outreach component resulted in 112 new households' entry into CES
- Administrative support ensures all assessments conducted (on paper) are entered into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS; community/statewide shared database)
- Development of MOUs with private housing providers to increase homeless unit capacity
- Updates to CES policies and procedures to reflect current practice

CES is not without challenges. In the Spring of 2022, our database administrator, Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) began the planned process of a shift to a new database. The migration of data began in late March and was not complete until early June. During this migration, we lost our ability to pull the custom reports we once had access to. One of the data points that was lost (and most crucial) was measuring *inflow* and *outflow* by sub-population. It's important to note that we did not *lose* data, just our ability to pull the data and ICA is working to build this custom report in the new system.

As we work on increasing our awareness of data, Built for Zero, an initiative of Community Solutions, has provided coaching and connection to communities across the country grappling with some of the same challenges facing Chittenden County. We have joined their *Last Mile Cohort* which gives us to opportunity to work with and learn from communities who have ended homelessness for certain sub-populations (Veterans and Chronic).

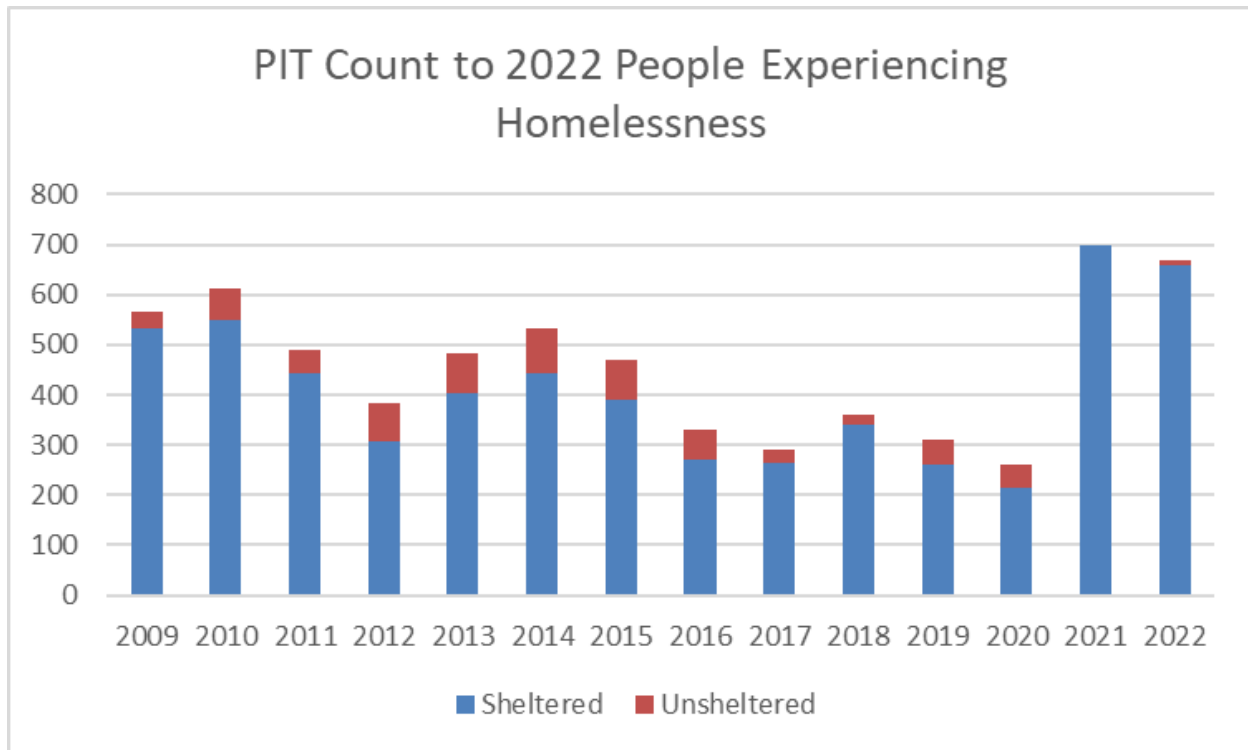
There are many ways we can use data to assess the efficacy of our system. In the future we hope to use data in the following ways:

- Digging deeper into timelines
 - Are there sub-populations that tend to have greater length of homelessness?
 - Are there particular pieces of our work that could be more efficient?
- Using data to identify and respond to disparities
 - How does a households race or ability to speak English impact length of homelessness?
 - How can we create equity in our system to respond to disparities?
 - How can we use data to ensure or efforts are yielding success?
- Identifying "hang-ups"
 - Are there pieces within the *Phases* that seem to take a great deal of time and effort?
 - How can we create improvement projects to decrease the amount of time it takes a household to move through the *Phases*?

Unsheltered Population

Like communities across the county, Chittenden County participates in the Point in Time (PIT) Count. We use this report as a baseline and, while it has been criticized for undercounting the number of people experiencing houselessness, it is a fairly accurate indicator of the unsheltered population. Data from the PIT Count indicates a reduction of unsheltered households until 2019; as a result of the pandemic there was no unsheltered count, in 2021. It's important to note that during that year all households were able to utilize the Emergency Hotel/Motel Program through AHS Economic Services.

Year	Sheltered	Unsheltered
2009	533	32
2010	550	63
2011	442	47
2012	307	77
2013	404	79
2014	442	90
2015	389	82
2016	270	62
2017	263	28
2018	342	17
2019	261	48
2020	216	45
2021	700	0
2022	658	10



Statewide, we saw larger numbers of households experiencing homelessness. However, because ESD relaxed the eligibility requirements for the Emergency Hotel/Motel Program, more people who may have been housing insecure but did not meet the HUD definition of homelessness, were able to access resources previously unavailable. The pandemic provided an opportunity for us to understand, possibly for the first time, just how many households were impacted by housing insecurity.

According to recent reports from outreach workers, the number of unsheltered households has increased from near-zero at the height of the pandemic to at least 70 households currently within Burlington's city-limits; another 10-15 households are reported to be unsheltered outside Burlington.

In response to the increase of unsheltered households, the City has adopted a more coordinated approach to respond to camping in Parks and City-owned land. For the last four months a group of City employees representing DPW, BPRW, CSL Team, City Attorney's Office, and CEDO met weekly to understand the challenges related to camping in the City and develop consistent, compassionate, and equitable response strategies. This group has diligently and empathetically dug into some of the most difficult situations with humility and collaboration; culminating with a tour of the Urban Reserve, in which the Mayor joined. Staff from DPW and BPRW were there to share their experiences, struggles, and bright spots of success.

Over the last few months this Camps group has developed a standardized assessment, which follows the areas of consideration within the current Encampment/Camping Ordinance. This tool ensures that camps can be assessed in terms of priority, location, safety, vulnerability, and impact on surrounding areas. While this assessment tool is still in draft form, BPRW Urban Park Rangers are testing the validity and accuracy currently. With support from the City Attorney's Office, a decision tree was developed that guides City staff in determining the most appropriate response for camps.

The weekly meetings with this group also serve as a touch point to understand the how the stress of camp response impacts direct service staff. One of the most powerful anecdotes was from a Park Ranger who reported how many times and how many hours he spent relocating one camp from multiple locations. The statements heard continuously are rooted in the human experience of enforcing camp removal- both for the campers and for City staff. In addition staff has highlighted the acknowledged trauma of camp removal among those experiencing houselessness. At a time when every industry has been impacted by decreased staff retention rates, it begs the question of how camp removal impacts morale. This experience within Burlington reflects the findings of recent HUD funded research on ["Exploring Homelessness Among People Living in Encampments and Associated Costs"](#).

An additional issue related to people unsheltered is the instance of sleeping in cars, busses, and campers. Without safe parking for people living in vehicles, households are required (per City ordinance) to move their vehicle every three days. While DPW has not proactively enforced this ordinance, they must respond when members of the community file complaints about parked vehicles. There are models for safe parking projects from various communities across the country and we hope to begin exploring the feasibility of providing safe parking as an option in Burlington.

Finally the City has made a concerted effort to coordinate the outreach teams across the community. Outreach workers from Howard Center (Street and Community programs), CVOEO CORA Team, Safe Harbor/CHCB, Turning Point, Community Resource Center, BPD CSL Team, CES Program, and others join together monthly to discuss trends and observations from the field. This cross-agency coordination allows for information sharing, collaboration, and identification of rising challenges and needs for additional training. In response to the most recent meeting, CEDO has arranged a meeting for direct service workers to discuss changes to the ESD Transitional Housing Program and VERAP.

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance

CEDO serves as both the Collaborative Applicant for Chittenden County Continuum of Care (CoC) grants and co-Chair of the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA). Additionally, CEDO serves as co-Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee and Data/PIT Committee and is a member of the CES and Housing Retention Committees. With support from CEDO, the CCHA has contracted with a consultant to endeavor development of the five-year strategic plan to implement sustainable leadership and ensure activities are aligned with the mission: To ensure homelessness is rare and brief in Chittenden County.

During the last six months, the CCHA has developed MOUs with private and public housing providers to enable access to additional housing units dedicated to serve households within CES. The partnership with private housing providers is a promising initiative and one we hope will yield new and diverse housing opportunities.

The City also works to support the ongoing professional development and consistency of service provision, supporting our community partners with staffing retention, and spearheading cross-sector collaboration. We are currently working to provide trainings in the area of trauma-informed care, racial trauma, and vicarious/secondary trauma for housing service providers. In addition, we hope to provide professional development to leadership/management staff to develop trauma-informed organizations with a goal of attracting and retaining quality employees to serve the houseless population.

Finally, the CCHA created a new committee dedicated to housing retention and homeless prevention. We recognize that to ensure homelessness is rare and brief, in addition to developing systems for people who are without housing (*outflow*), we also need to address the *inflow* to the system. Housing insecurity leads to loss of housing; it is a crucial component to solving this complex problem. The work of this committee is initially focused on (1) homeless prevention system access (ensuring equity of access to housing resources) and (2) resource mapping (inventory of various prevention interventions and understanding eligibility criteria for each).

Elmwood Community Emergency Shelter

As the community is aware, the City has identified Champlain Housing Trust (CHT) as operating partner for the Elmwood Shelter. It is critical (and time sensitive) to develop policies and procedures to ensure consistent, supportive, and safe operation of the Shelter. In the coming weeks, we will work with CHT to develop policies in the following areas:

- Screening and eligibility
- Intake and shelter unit assignment
- Behavioral guidelines and management
- Grievance procedure
- Involuntary discharge
- Communications (internal and external)

Contract development is in the final stage with CHT and we will begin to sub-contract for various site management needs (trash, snow removal, cleaning, linens, etc.). CHT will hold the contract for onsite security and while the City will contract for above site needs, CHT will provide the management of these contracts in their role as operating partner. MOUs have been executed with CVOEO's CORA Team, Turning Point Center of Chittenden County, and CHCB for onsite support services. We are also exploring agreements with Vermont Criminal Justice Reform (substance use-related services) and Joseph's House

(basic needs). The City will contract with CVOEO to provide site-based housing navigation and service coordination.

The City has secured partial funding from AHS Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and will work to identify additional funding in the coming months to ensure ongoing operation of the Shelter. Soon, the City will begin development of a community group comprised of guests of the Elmwood Shelter and members of the surrounding neighborhood to identify challenges, successes, and opportunities for engagement.

The decision was made to continue operation of the Community Resource Center (CRC) at CVOEO's Feeding Chittenden location to avoid influx of people to the Elmwood Shelter site. The City is working with CVOEO and CHT to consider options for expansion of the current building to accommodate the large number of visitors to the CRC. The City provides operational funding for the CRC through ARPA funds and more recently a Leahy Congressional Directed Spending grant. The CRC continues to provide access to warm or cool daytime shelter, food and essential supplies, and homelessness, housing and other services. The CRC regularly serves more than 100 people per day.

While the Elmwood Shelter will not fill the entire gap for our unsheltered population, it will increase (much needed) capacity for low-barrier shelter in Chittenden County. The Shelter will also prove as a safe guard this winter and supplement the lacking motel capacity during adverse weather conditions in the coming months.

Housing Development

It is impossible to tackle the problem of homelessness without addressing the severely lacking availability of affordable housing. This coupled with record-low vacancy rates results in very little housing stock and drives rents to an unaffordable rate. With the inflow of ARPA funds to the State and City, we are beginning to see some new affordable housing development, leading to an increase in dedicated homeless units as developers must adhere to a minimum 15% set-aside for applicants referred through CES. It has become increasingly difficult to develop new affordable housing in the City however, there are plans for new units both within Burlington and more broadly Chittenden County. A new program, funded by State ARPA grants provides financial support (\$30-50,000 per units) for landlords to perform improvements to their rental properties. The Vermont Housing Improvement Program is managed by the State of Vermont Housing and Community Development department and is managed locally by CHT. The goal of this program is to expand and improve the rental market in addition to allocating units to those experiencing homelessness. Landlords who take advantage of this program must accept new tenants through the local CES. This has yielded 5 new homeless-dedicated units and the potential for an additional 20 units within the next six months.

New housing development in Burlington and Chittenden County, including required homeless-dedicated units, are below:

Development	2022	2023	2024	2025	Homeless	Developer	Town
Bay Ridge New Construction and Rehab			68		20	CHT	Shelburne
Recovery Housing		32			32	CHT	Colchester
Zephyr Place	38	34			38	CHT	Williston

Ho-Hum Conversion		20			20	CHT	So. Burlington
10 th Cavalry Apartments			65		15	CHT	Colchester
Post Apartments/VFW Redevelopment			38		8	CHT	Burlington
City Place West				85	15	CHT	Burlington
Fort Apartments	65				13	CHT	Colchester
Stuart Avenue		36			6	CHT	Colchester
O'Brian Farms		94			20	Summit Properties	So. Burlington
Main Street Family Housing		16			16	COTS	Burlington
Dover Place	43				6	Dover Place LLC	So. Burlington
Pine Place	12				2	Nedde	Burlington
Kelley's Field 2			24		4	Cathedral Square	Hinesburg
VT Housing Improvement Program	5					Private property owners	Burlington
Total	158	232	195	85	215		
Total Homeless Units by Year- Chitt County	41	112	47	15	215		
Total Homeless Units by Year- Burlington	7	16	8	15	41		

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Russell, Special Assistant to End Homelessness October 2022