



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT
CITY COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY & UTILITIES COMMITTEE

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Councilor Jack Hanson, Chair, *East District*
Councilor Jane Stromberg, *Ward 8*
Councilor Mark Barlow, *North District*

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Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee of the City Council

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 5:00 PM

Due to current physical distancing measures, this meeting will be held virtually.

To view the meeting:

1. Join via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84506047643>
2. Call in for audio-only – Phone number: 312-626-6799 and Webinar ID: 845 0604 7643

To participate in public comment:

1. You must either join the meeting via the Zoom link above (strongly encouraged) or by calling via the call-in information above.
2. If signed in via Zoom, please use the “Raise Your Hand” feature. This will alert DPW staff that you wish to speak and will automatically add you to the queue. When it's your turn to speak, your name will be called and you will be unmuted.
3. If you are calling in, please press *9 which will alert DPW staff that you wish to speak. When it's your turn to speak, your phone # will be called out and you will be unmuted.
4. If you encounter any difficulties when attempting to speak, please email DPWCommunications@burlingtonvt.gov.

–DRAFT AGENDA–

1. **Agenda**
2. **Public Forum**
3. **Pedestrian Safety**
 - 60 Minute Duration
 - Information
4. **Councilors' Update**
5. **Director's Report**
6. **Next Meeting**
7. **Adjourn**

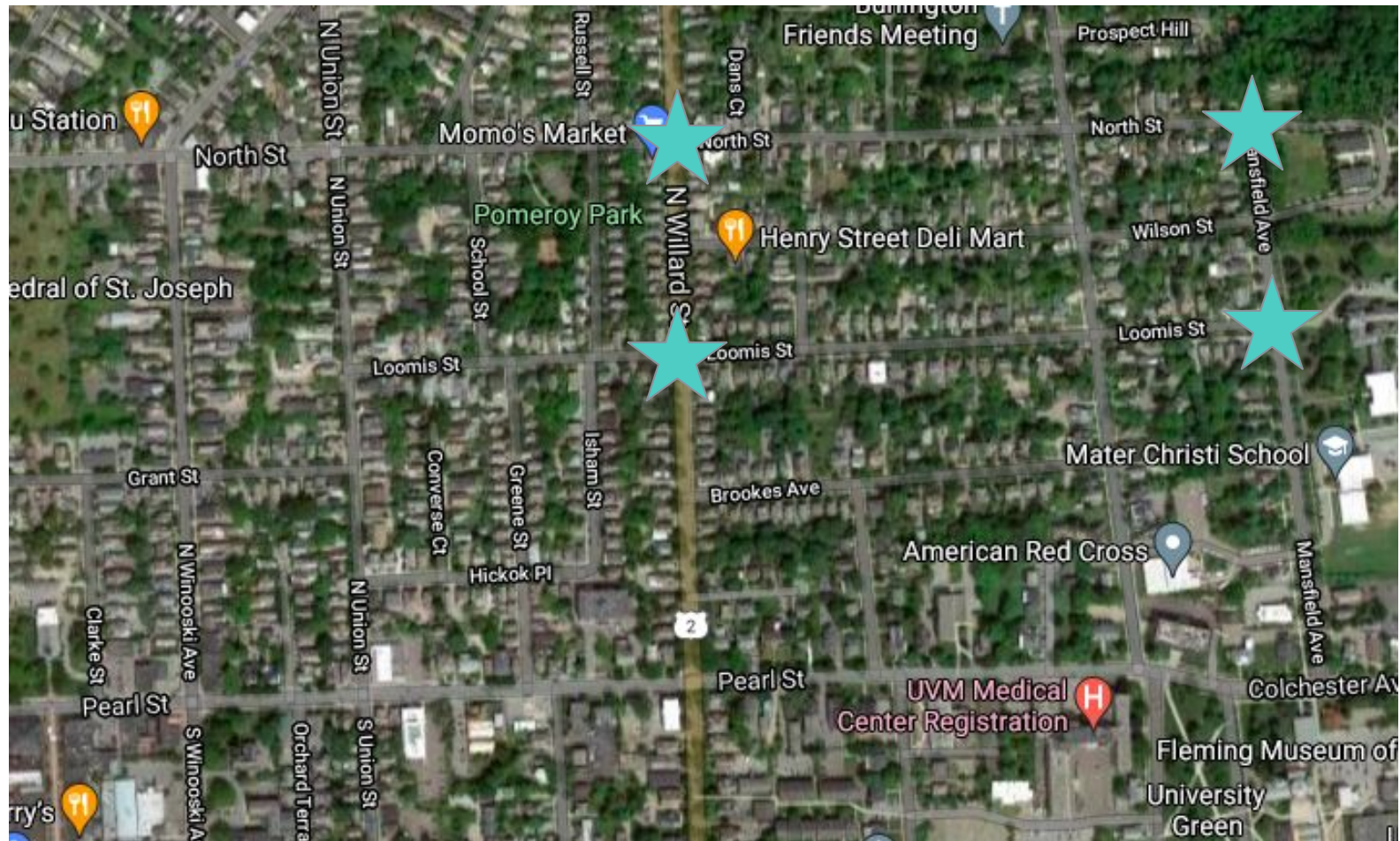
Pedestrian Safety at Intersections with Stop Signs



(Miles)

Presented by:
Sustainable
Transportation
Vermont





Full Stop

Car stopped moving for some amount of time

Rolling Stop

Car slowed down while approaching stop sign

No Stop

Did not slow down while approaching stop sign

Key Statistics

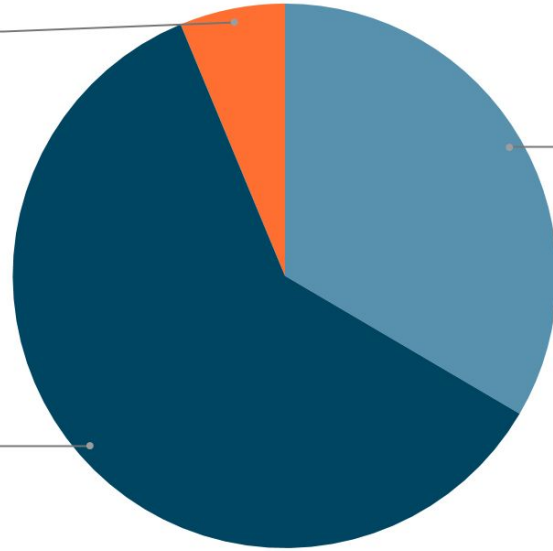
- Over 7 hours of data collected at 5+ intersections
- More than 2200 cars
- 402 pedestrians
- 103 cyclists

Burlington Stop Sign Behavior

No Stop
6.3%

Rolling Stop
60.3%

Full Stop
33.5%



Observations

- Cars stopping for conflict
- Significant number of pedestrians
 - Abundance of cars
- Lack of respect for cyclists and pedestrians



Potential Solutions

- signs warning of fine for not stopping
- pedestrian props
- raised crosswalks
- crosswalk art



Category	Name	Description	Effectiveness	Difficulty
Safety	Stripe fewer centerlines	Stop striping centerlines on streets except for those that absolutely need them, and even then, maybe just stripe them at intersections or where there are turning lanes. This generally yields a speed reduction of 7 MPH.	High	Low
Safety	Increase budget for sidewalks/prioritize replacement along high-volume routes	We have made great progress on replacing sidewalks around the city, but there are still many places where there are lifted or crumbling panels, and terrible ponding in the winter that make the sidewalks basically impassable. Many sections of sidewalk in the neighborhoods off of North Ave have been replaced while long segments on North Ave itself are in terrible shape and are ponds or ice rinks during the winter. We should prioritize higher-volume routes first.	High	Medium
Safety	Traffic Signal Audit	Conduct a citywide audit of signalized intersections and recommend a selection of signals to be converted to four-way stops. - Philly removed about 500 traffic signals decades ago. Overall crashes reduced by 24%, Severe injury crashes dropped 62.5%, and severe pedestrian injury crashes dropped 68% - Stop signs calm traffic and give people walking priority, traffic lights make drivers go faster and subjugate people walking to beg buttons and countdown timers. - Examples of possible locations: (basically, every intersection that isn't totally lopsided with more traffic in one direction should be evaluated) - College and Willard (which, btw, is a traffic signal with no pedestrian signal at all, on a high-volume walking route) - North St/North Winooski - Main and Church - Main and St. Paul - Main and Pine - Battery and King - Battery and Maple - Pearl and Church - Pearl and Willard	High	Medium
Safety	Evaluate high-volume pedestrian crossings at signalized intersections for sufficient LPI length	- Where it isn't appropriate to convert to all-way stop, evaluate signal timing to ensure a <i>comfortable</i> length LPI - Example of where this is needed: Battery and Main	Medium	Low
Safety	Pursue a road diet on Battery St.	- Roads with multiple lanes in each direction are extremely dangerous for people walking. Higher speeds, longer crossing distances, more conflict points. Battery St. is likely our worst offender right now, and is also terribly inefficient and annoying to drive on, but Main St. is bad too—lots of unnecessary width. Road diets do NOT reduce capacity. It's been studied over and over again, we've done it multiple times with great success. What are we waiting for on Battery? - A dieted Battery would likely handle more cars at lower speeds because there's less spacing between each vehicle	Medium	High
Safety	Make the citywide speed truly citywide	We have some streets (North Ave., for example) that have speed limits above the 35 MPH posted speed. Let's have a true 25 MPH limit on city streets.	Medium	Low
Safety	Convert one-way streets back to two-way	One-way streets are very dangerous for people walking. Let's take a hard look at converting our one-ways back to two-ways. This will improve network function (especially on Battery/Park/127), reduce congestion and emergency response times, calm traffic, and make streets safer for people walking.	Medium	High
Experiential	Transit improvements	Almost everyone who takes the bus also walks. Encourage the City to take responsibility for transit infrastructure by maintaining bus stops, (especially plowing in the winter), improving stop amenities, and better incorporating transit into infrastructure planning.	High	Low

Category	Name	Description	Effectiveness	Difficulty
Experiential	Zoning Reform	- Reform zoning and development restrictions that make it hard for Burlington to densify. Let's make every part of Burlington a 15 minute (or less) City. People will walk more if there are useful destinations within walking distance. - Will also make us a financially healthier community—currently 2% of our land area (downtown) generates 22% of our taxes. What this means is that our less-dense areas likely subsidize our denser areas. This has obvious equity implications, but also negative impacts on walkability, bikeability, employment access, and financial stability. - Euclidean Zoning was developed to separate residential uses from factories that were creating a public health crisis because of their pollution. The main pollution we have now is from vehicles, not from factories, and that pollution is largely because we are still operating with Euclidean Zoning.	High	High
Institutional	Institutionalize the walk/bike council	- Reform the Burlington Walk/Bike Council to make it an official City committee with appointments. It should have a clear edict to review and advise on DPW workplans, projects, and budgets, as well as development proposals, ordinances that impact walk/bike, and more.	High	Low
Institutional	Increase staff capacity for walk/bike/bus	- Create a new Walk/Bike Program city staff position to coordinate walk/bike programming and be a liaison with the walk/bike community, as well as staff for the more formal walk/bike council	Medium	Medium
Institutional	Repeal "jaywalking" ordinances	Nationally, jaywalking ordinances have been used as a pretext for police to harass people of color. People walking have a right to use the street, and as we've seen during Covid or during the winter, sometimes that means walking in the street even when there is a sidewalk. These laws shift responsibility for road safety onto vulnerable users, when in reality drivers of motor vehicles need to be held responsible. Our jaywalking ordinances: 20-143 Walking on roadway Where sidewalks are provided it shall be unlawful for any pedestrian to walk along or upon an adjacent roadway. Where sidewalks are not provided any pedestrian walking along or upon a highway shall, when practicable, walk only on the left side of the roadway or its shoulder facing traffic which may approach from the opposite direction. 20-137 Manner of crossing street No pedestrian shall cross a roadway at any point other than by a route at right angles to the curb or by the shortest route to the opposite curb except in a crosswalk. 20-136 Pedestrian-control signal Whenever special pedestrian-control signals exhibiting the term "Walk" or "Wait" or "Don't Walk" are in place such signals shall indicate as follows: (a) Walk: Pedestrians facing such signal may proceed across the roadway in the direction of the signal and shall be given the right-of-way by drivers of all vehicles. (b) Wait or Don't Walk: No pedestrian shall start to cross the roadway in the direction of such signal, but any pedestrian who has partially completed his crossing on the "Walk" signal shall proceed to a sidewalk or safety zone while the "Wait" or "Don't Walk" signal is showing.	High (esp. considering equity)	Low



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Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee of the City Council

–DRAFT MINUTES–

Call to order at 5:02

1. Agenda

Councilor Stromberg moved to approve agenda as amended. Seconded by Councilor Barlow.
All in favor passed unanimously.

2. Public Forum

Chair Jack Hanson- to frame the conversation:

What should the City do to improve pedestrian safety?

What's working what isn't?

What's working elsewhere that we should try here?

What would make Burlington more pedestrian safe for you or your business?

Director Chapin Spencer, DPW: Tonight is a chance for staff to hear comments from the public. We are excited to focus on pedestrian safety especially over the past few years with various pedestrian specific projects. Every project developed now has an aspect of ped safety consideration. Burlington has large percentage of ped mode of travel and DPW wants to provide that mode safely and effectively.

Wade Labrecque, BPD – Public safety includes ped safety. BPD does this through education rather than enforcement. Here to listen and hear people's observations and thoughts.

Director David White, Planning and Zoning– Here to listen and see where we can help.

Faith Ingulfsrud, Walk Bike Council – Perception that Walk Bike Council is more oriented to biking but we are recommitting to focusing on walkability. We need to keep a strong focus on making it easy and pleasant to walk everywhere. Helps equity. The Walk Bike Council is a City subcommittee that functions with the support of DPW staff. Conducts meeting under open meeting law. Formed to help further recommendations of Plan BTV Walk Bike. Strictly advisory. There is a member from each ward currently. Anyone can be a member. Conversations to restructure to have liaisons follow each City Dept. to be a voice for walking and biking in decision making. Open to being most effective and in process of restructuring. Focus on helping with implementing priority recommendations of walk bike plan for ped improvements. Recommendations come from a core group of people who walk long distances daily. Can share this.

Jonathon Weber, Local Motion – Complete Streets Program Manager, Burlington based, Local Motion, a statewide advocate for complete streets, walking and biking. Jeff Spec, nationally recognized city planner and advocate for walkability, visited 2 years ago. Can provide a link for his presentation. Author of

Walkable City Rule. See Supporting Doc – Walk Recommendations for TEUC – for recommendations on walkability.

Nathan Greenstein and Zoe Kennedy, UVM Students – See presentation.

NG – In WY college town opposite results were observed for type of stops seen.

JH – opens to public comment.

RJ Lalumiere – question for Zoe and Nathan - was this a speed or stop bar compliance study?

NG – Stop bar compliance. Speed was only distinction between no stop or rolling stop, i.e. yield vs stop condition. Obscuring crosswalk counted as no stop.

RJL – Surprised 0mph stop was so high.

RJL – Recommendations: Maintenance of sidewalk. Promoting SCF. Sidewalk grinding. Plow bus stops. Put ramps at each of them to the actual bus from the sidewalk (over green belt). No right on red. Fix drainage. Implement Walk Bike Plan. Get rid of ped buttons – have signal give ped light no matter what. 20mph residential speed. Benches, water fountains, toilets to make walking long distances more comfortable.

Tony Redington – 20 mph in City in residential and mixed use areas. In Quebec standard speed is even lower. Pedestrian ordinances do not give peds priority except where there is a marked crosswalk. All way stops and roundabouts are safer than signals for peds. Drivers tend to use stop signs as yield signs. 20 intersections in Burlington are high crash locations. All of these are signalized except for N Union and North Street that is all way stop. At these 20 locations, 2 fatal injuries at marked crosswalks occurred. 9,000 roundabouts in US and Canada with very few deaths. Ped attention is important, also supports ramps at buses.

Lea Terhune – Great chance for input. Hard to get cars to not be prioritized as they have been. Southern Connector will negatively impact Maple/King area. Burlington will create signalized intersection and increase traffic and speed here. Not enough attention paid to peds and cyclists. Pine St Coalition has looked at other alternatives. TEUC should hold a forum like this for Champlain Parkway; environmental racism and justice is issue with the project.

JH – Communication from Ward 1 ped advocate, Jared Wood: Convert red brick crosswalks to standard painted crosswalks. Moving stop bars at crosswalks further back from crosswalk. Having a standing committee for ped stakeholders to work on these issues. Separate Walk Bike Council to talk about issues individually.

RJL – Vermont law states you must yield for someone who has physically entered the roadway vs yielding for someone who looks like they will enter crosswalk. VT law does not work for peds as it should since they are vulnerable and slowest mode.

TR – Car and ped injuries are happening constantly. All way stops allow all users to be alert and aware.

Zoe Kennedy – Ped safety can be achieved by slower cars and less cars. Speed enforcement could help. Speed bumps, raised crosswalks, etc.

JW – There are > 25 mph speed limits in the City that can be easily reduced to 25 mph.

RJL – Design speed match legal speed limit. Automated photo enforcements, could be state issues with implementing this. Lowering remaining >25 mph zones.

TR – Roadway design speed is important. North ave has vehicles speeding.

Councilor Jane Stromberg – feels impacts of unsafe ped conditions. Thankful for insight and comments shared today.

Councilor Mark Barlow – Thankful for comments. NNE resident. Received notes about traffic calming from constituents and would like to hear more about how that is planned. North Ave speed radar sign was up recently, what is reasoning and data behind impacts they have on speed?

CS – Nicole can speak to traffic calming. Some of the work is proactive but we do have a customer driven program.

Nicole Losch, Senior Transportation Planner – Traffic Calming was recently updated for the first time since development in late 90s. Changes to note are – streamlined program, easier to initiate request, open platform for anyone who contacts DPW to get in queue for initial evaluation, more data driven by speed, truck volume, and crash reports. At this point it is request driven. These projects are relatively expensive and we can only do so many so we are trying to prioritize streets with greatest safety issues. Info is online at <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/dpw/TrafficCalming>. The City can also initiate traffic calming as needed through things like Great Streets, ONE greenway, etc.

CS – Two radar speed signs placed at citizen request. Used frequently on streets in the queue for traffic calming that have yet to get treatments.

NL – Limited info that we can get from speed data collected. Anecdotal data shows speeds reduced.

JH – Traffic calming is based on request and then prioritized on data?

CS – Correct, previously first-in first-out but now need based

JW – How are speed signs programed for when they flash based on speeding, what are thresholds for speed to cause flashing vs solid number display?

CS- Will follow up on that.

JH – Not academic but a matter of public safety and the climate crisis. We don't want to wait until there is a fatality but prevent it before it happens with meetings like this to lead to policy changes from staff or committee members. Email DPWCommunications@burlingtonvt.gov to get on warned meeting group. Open to ideas for special meeting topics, reach out to committee member.

3. Pedestrian Safety

- 60 Minute Duration
- Information

4. Adjourn

Councilor Stromberg moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Councilor Barlow.

All in favor passed unanimously.

Adjourned at 6:32 PM.