

Burlington Walk | Bike Council



*a Volunteer Advisory Group to the
City of Burlington's Dept of Public Works*

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listserv: burlingtonwalkbike@googlegroups.com

December 17, 2017

Mayor Miro Weinberger
DPW Director Chapin Spencer
Burlington City Hall
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear Miro and Chapin,

As you're both aware, members of the Burlington Walk-Bike Council have been disappointed and frustrated with the lack of progress this year on implementing the Walk-Bike Master Plan. We know that you share our frustration, and we understand that several intersecting factors have slowed or halted the work that was planned for 2017. We thank you sincerely for meeting with the walk/bike community both at the BWBC meeting on Thursday, October 26, and at the special meeting on Sunday, November 19. Regrettably, the walk-bike community has lost some faith this year that the comprehensive Walk-Bike Master Plan will ever make the leap from paper to street, but the meetings in October and November were helpful in beginning to rebuild such trust. It's clear that you are committed to making Burlington a truly walkable and bikeable city.

The following action items were discussed at the October and November meetings to ensure that 2018 is a dramatically more productive year for walk and bike infrastructure than was 2017:

- A significant list of interconnected infrastructure projects to be completed in the next year, including ones that didn't get done this year plus more.
- Grouping projects together into much larger contracts to make them more desirable for bidders. This will also result in a more continuous walk and bike network rather than a piecemeal approach.
- Public engagement during the winter on multiple projects at once, so that community members can attend one meeting for the walk-bike infrastructure affecting their neighborhood or an entire corridor, and so that projects are cleared for implementation come spring.

- Getting projects out to bid early and having them approved and contracted before spring so that the work can actually be done during the construction season.

We strongly suggest that you follow through on all of these action steps, some of which we know are already incorporated in your planning for 2018. Taken in combination, these steps will help us make faster progress towards meeting the goals of Burlington's Walk-Bike Master Plan. We also support Local Motion's request that you include them and the BWBC in your prioritization process for projects in 2018. In developing the plans for 2018 and for subsequent years, we strongly support use of a "rip-off-the-bandaid" approach, as discussed in our meetings, to build an entire network of walk and bike infrastructure in a very short timespan. This approach is transformative and limits the angst around change so that we can all arrive at the new normal of a city that is truly walkable and bikeable.

The Burlington Walk-Bike Council envisions a Burlington at a human scale, that's full of people rather than automobiles. A safe and continuous network of infrastructure for navigating the city both on foot and on bicycle is essential to this vision. The Walk-Bike Master Plan really will achieve this when it is implemented in its entirety. Now we need to expedite that implementation to realize the vision before our kids are grown. We ask you to redouble your efforts to make this a priority. Thank you for your commitment to a walkable and bikeable Burlington.

Sincerely,

The BWBC Steering Committee

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