



Partners working together to cultivate an attractive and thriving downtown

## Economic Vitality Committee Profile Sheet

**Team Leaders: Barb Bakshis, Michelle Peterson and Brad Lois**

**Objective:** The Economic Vitality Committee is charged with researching and recommending the data and means to convey the value of investing and/or operating a business in the City of Burlington. The Committee is responsible to obtain feedback from property and business owners via a survey tool that may include questions pertaining to the need for additional building improvement programs, financial resources and additional technical assistance. It is expected that the Committee’s work will be used to update existing and create new City marketing materials. The Committee will also provide recommendations on the distribution of marketing materials throughout the greater Burlington area and region.

<b>Economic Vitality</b>	Survey property owners to identify improvement needs and challenges.
	Create marketing materials to promote local, state and federal incentives to facilitate new businesses and/or property improvements. Create landing page on city website with links from partner sites featuring business recruitment tools.
	Meet with brokers/developers/real estate professionals to communicate goals and resources.
	Develop programs to support renovation/development of new and existing housing units to address demand challenges.
	Create capital improvement plan for downtown projects. Identify timing and funding sources.

**Goals:** The Strategic Plan (see excerpt from Plan above) identified several possible goals along with a schedule of implementation for the Economic Vitality Committee, which includes the following:  
(Completion dates in bold)

1. Survey property owners to identify improvement needs and challenges. **(Report survey results by Quarter 2 – 2017)**
2. Create marketing materials to promote local, state and federal incentives to facilitate new businesses and/or property improvements. Work with City staff to create landing page on city website with links from partner sites featuring business recruitment tools. **(Recommendations provided by Quarter 3 – 2017)**
3. Meet with brokers/developers/real estate professionals to communicate goals and resources. **(Begin Quarter 3 – 2017)**
4. Identify new programs to support renovation/development of new and existing housing units to address demand challenges. **(Recommendation to City by Quarter 2 – 2018 for 2019 budget)**
5. Create capital improvement plan for downtown projects. Identify timing and funding sources. **(Start process in Quarter 4 – 2018; deliver recommendations to City by Quarter 2 – 2019 for 2020 budget)**

## Action Items:

- Survey property owners
  1. Determine target audience and compile contact information
  2. Compile questions to determine if property owners are familiar with existing programs; identify the property improvement needs and seek information on assistance needed.
  3. Compile survey results and report out to the City.
  
- Create marketing materials to promote local, state and federal incentives to facilitate new businesses and/or property improvements
  1. Develop a potential map of key sites with property owners and assessed values.
  2. Identify marketing materials that should be developed to summarize local and regional/state resources (i.e. City's Façade Grant and loan programs, Racine County Matching Grant, Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE), Historic Tax Credits).
  3. Create marketing plan with sites, opportunities, and financial incentives. Consider targeting specific groupings of properties and/or a limited time 'double dollars' program to encourage numerous projects during a single time period to maximize impact.
  
- Develop programs to support renovation/development of new and existing housing units to address demand challenges.
  1. Utilize survey results to determine needs and challenges for downtown property owners.
  2. Secure funding to complete a housing market analysis for downtown.
  3. Revisit historic preservation ordinance/zoning to accommodate necessary improvements and work with City staff on any recommended amendments.
  4. Utilize financial resource marketing materials to create programs not already in place to support renovation/development
  5. Encourage conversion/renovation of vacant or underutilized upper floors into units attractive to local market and/or office space.
  6. Meet with individual property owners to introduce new programs.
  
- Create capital improvement plan for downtown projects. Identify timing and funding sources
  1. Create a maintenance and replacement checklist for public spaces. Create a budget for these improvements.
  2. Assess current maintenance codes/ordinances and revise where needed.
  3. Establish a beautification committee – master gardeners, etc.
  4. Purchase a street sweeper or other capital improvements necessary to improve public/community spaces. Assess funding sources such as: BID, donations and City funds.
  
- Meet with brokers/developers/real estate professionals to communicate goals and resources
  1. Conduct outreach meetings with developers and brokers to provide relevant materials, communicate desired recruitment targets, priorities and resources; compile feedback from these meetings and report out to the City.

## How is success measured?

- Completion of downtown property owner survey.
- Completion of a landing website page with resources for downtown revitalization and development.
- A marketing package is in place for real estate professionals, property owners and businesses.
- Completion of updated, Burlington-branded community profile available for distribution.
- Identification of priority redevelopment sites and resources identified to affect positive change.

- Meetings undertaken with real estate professionals with regular communications provided to the City.
- New programs are created, possibly a Business Incentive Policy, to provide support, incentives and other resources to enhance business opportunities and beautification efforts downtown.
- Building vacancies are reduced and downtown appearance is improved.

**What resources/support is needed to ensure success?**

- Partner with the City and RCEDC to assist in plan development, material review, data compilation, provide examples, etc.
- Work with local financial institutions and State organizations for information on financial assistance opportunities.
- Work with area realtors and Realtor Associations for feedback on needs of the community, financial assistance opportunities, and market data.
- Other support needed?