



Community Development Department Memo

To: City of Burlington, Planning Commission

From: Brad Johnson, Community Development Director

Date: November 13, 2025

Subject: 2026 Work Plan

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Summary

Burlington Comprehensive Plan Policy (BCPP) 9.3.5.3 requires the Planning Commission and Community Development Department to work together to develop and adopt a work plan on an annual basis. The purpose of the work plan is to identify City priorities, maintain consistent policy direction, and ensure the Community Development Department's workload is consistent with available staffing and financial resources. The purpose of this memo is to outline existing or ongoing obligations, and solicit input from the Planning Commission on potential work plan additions.

The proposed 2026 work plan includes work carried over from the 2025 work plan, including completing the City's GMA mandated comprehensive plan update, and adopting level of service standards and revised impact fees for City's Fire and EMS services. The 2026 work plan also includes ongoing work carried out by the Community Development Department including regional coordination, planning support for other city departments, and preparing annual code amendments. Finally, a number of additional projects have been proposed by the Mayor or City Administrator.

When considered together with the Community Development Department's anticipated permit review workload, the proposed 2026 work plan will fully allocate the department's resources. Consistent with the BCPP 9.3.5.4 the City will not be accepting annual review docket proposals until the mandatory comprehensive plan update has been completed. The City may resume accepting annual review docket proposals in 2027 after the completion of the periodic plan update.

Proposed 2026 Work Plan

1. Carried over from 2025 Work Plan.

- a. Comprehensive Plan Update. Under the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) the City is required to complete a comprehensive plan update by December 30, 2025. While most of the required work has been completed, it is anticipated that final document preparation, editing, and final adoption hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council will continue into early 2026.
- b. Fire and EMS level of service and impact fee study. This project was included in the 2025 Work Plan as the department's fourth highest priority. The department has published an "Request for Proposals" (RFP), selected a firm to assist with this project, and is in the process of negotiating a contract. No other work is completed. This project is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2026.
- c. Cascade subarea plan. This project was listed as the department's fifth highest priority in the 2025 Work Plan. The project involves creating a subarea plan for the former Cascade Mall property. The current property owner does not appear to have immediate redevelopment plans. That being the case, the Community Development Department recommends a limited scope for this project. The subarea plan would likely include development thresholds triggering compliance with the subarea plan, basic land use and development policies, and a framework for preparing more detailed plans at a later date if a major redevelopment is proposed.

2. Ongoing annual work.

- a. Monitoring. Numerous comprehensive plan policies call for monitoring trends and progress towards goals. Monitoring topics include, but are not limited to transportation, energy consumption, and housing.
- b. Minor code updates. Each year the code is updated to address errors, confusing language, and organization.
- c. Planning support. The Community Development Department provides planning support to other City departments including parks, public works, and administration. Support includes assistance with capital project design and permitting, policy analysis, and research.
- d. Annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): The CIP is a six-year plan that includes a list of capital projects and the funding sources used to pay for projects. By law, the CIP must be updated annually in advance of the City's budget process.

3. **Requests from Mayor or City Administrator.**

- a. Fairhaven streetscape plan. This project would involve public outreach and consideration of various streetscape improvements or changes to street sections. The project could include consideration of landscaping, sidewalks and pedestrian amenities, parking, signage, and public art.
 - b. Facilities evaluation. The recently completed energy efficiency audit revealed that the City does not have a comprehensive inventory of buildings and facilities and lacks a repair and replacement schedule for buildings and building systems such as HVAC, roofing, lighting, etc. The proposed facilities evaluation would involve retaining an architectural consultant to assess the condition of the city's buildings and facilities and prepare a long-term capital repair and replacement schedule.
 - c. System development charges. System development charges are fees levied for sewer and stormwater connections associated with new development. System development charges pay for a proportionate share of city-wide infrastructure needs. The City Administrator has requested that the Community Development department evaluate current system development charges to determine if they are up-to-date and accurately reflect the impact of development on sewer and stormwater systems.
4. **Planning Commission and department proposals.** Planning Commission members are encouraged to propose additional work plan items for consideration. Following the Planning Commission's meeting on November 19, 2025, the Community Development Department will evaluate the full list of proposed projects. After considering available staff time and financial resources a prioritization list will be developed for the Planning Commission to consider at their next meeting on December 17 , 2025.