

## **Garden Street Project Purpose and Need Statement**

**Adopted by the South Burlington Planning Commission 10-14-2014**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Garden Street project is to: support South Burlington's new, sustainable, livable downtown; promote economic development in City Center; create comfortable and attractive public spaces that establish a distinctive identity; improve transportation network connectivity; and enhance multi-modal travel and safety. The Garden Street Project includes a new street and intersection improvements on Williston Road (US Route 2) at Midas/White and Hinesburg Road (VT Route 116)/Patchen Road.

### **Need**

- 1) **Develop supporting infrastructure for City Center – South Burlington's new downtown.** The construction of Garden Street and associated infrastructure (including green infrastructure) improvements is needed to allow development of and economic investment in South Burlington's City Center - a future mixed-use downtown district. Currently the area lacks a street network sufficient to support development and redevelopment of City Center area parcels.
- 2) **Create comfortable and attractive public spaces and a distinctive identity for City Center.** City Center is envisioned to be a distinctive, highly livable and attractive downtown. Decorative lighting, landscaping, gathering spaces, public art, integrated and attractive stormwater treatment and other public amenities are needed to create a high quality public space that promotes economic development and attracts residents, businesses and visitors.
- 3) **Improve transportation network connectivity and circulation.** City Center is an important regional commercial center but lacks a robust network (grid) to distribute trips. The lack of an interconnected street network and connecting pedestrian/bicycle facilities in this area contributes to congestion along the adjacent Williston Road and Dorset Street corridors, particularly in the peak hour. Greater network connectivity would improve access to City Center and the many destinations and activities along and across Dorset Street and Williston Road. Intersection modifications will need to ensure adequate capacity across all current and future modes.
- 4) **Enhance multi-modal travel in City Center and South Burlington.** There is a need to create safe connections that encourage multi-modal travel choices. Improvements should support current and future transit operations. City Center is planned to be a dense, walkable and bikeable mixed-use district, but existing roadways are unattractive, uncomfortable and unappealing to pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders. The new street and existing street segments, should incorporate shade trees, amenities and roadway geometry to signal drivers to "slow down". The intersection of Midas/White with Williston Road has an awkward geometry and has no multi-modal functionality to cross Williston Road. Additionally, these intersections are characterized by significant traffic volumes and high numbers of crashes which compound the general uninviting atmosphere for biking and walking.