



BGRC Subcommittee Reports

August 26, 2025

BGRC Subcommittees: *First Ones for the Project*

1. External Communications (Phase I)

- To support our goal to make this a transparent process
- Such as Webpages, Facebook, Other Social Media, “newspaper”, Interactive etc.

2. Stakeholder Input

- To gain insights with those who work in the Town government structure today
- Such as focus groups, surveys or interviews with Town Employees, members of Committees and Boards

What You Will Be Asked To Do

Develop: *Strategy, Tactics, Timeframes, Deliverables and Resources Needed*

When: Present recommendations to BGRC at our August 26th Meeting

BGRC Stakeholder Input Subcommittee

- Corey Everett
- Betsey Hughes
- Jack Kelly

BGRC Stakeholder Input

- **Charge to Subcommittee:**

To develop: strategy, tactics, timeframes, deliverables, and resources needed in order to solicit feedback on the current functioning of Burlington's government to present back to the BGRC committee at the August 26th BGRC for discussion and approval.

- **Project Objective:**

To gain insights from a representative group of those actually involved in the functioning of Town Government as to what is working and not and potential ways to improve.

- **Strategy**

Conduct confidential one-on-one interviews with a representative sample of employees, committee members and Boards to gain an understanding of the perception of the current state and what potential changes could be made to improve the efficiency and efficacy of Burlington's government.

Process

- This will be the first of many input gathering projects but the only one focused on those who directly work with/for the Town Government. Other outreach efforts will focus on residents of Burlington.
- Using best practices and proven questions, create a survey and script for interviewer.
- Decide how many and who will conduct interviews.
- Communicate to Boards/Dept about the BGRC and that we will be interviewing people throughout the Town's government structure to get input from those who work in the Town either in a paid or a volunteer capacity.
- Select representative participants from list of Town Dept/Boards/Committees
 - Proposed criteria:
 - Elected
 - Appointed
 - Dept/board head
 - Dept/board member
 - Long service >5 Years
 - Shorter Service < 5 years
 - Recently retired

Process (Continued)

- Participation anonymous to all but interviewers
- Interview using a script
- Conduct trial interviews to test scripts, timing etc. Adjust questions as necessary.
- Conduct interviews. Interviewer to take notes and write them up for later consolidation.
- De-identify results, write up results organized by question not by person or board/dept
- Identify themes for final report
- Use themes to support the recommendations of the BGRC

*Stakehold Groups To Be Interviewed**

1. 3 Test Interviews
2. Dept of Health (1 employee)
3. Planning Dept (1 board member, 1 employee)
4. Board of Assessors (1 board member)
5. Town Meeting Rep : 1 long term (>10 years), 1 short term (<5 years)
6. Ways & Means Rep
7. Town Clerk
8. Rec Dept
9. Library
10. Information Technology
11. DPW
12. Police
13. Fire
14. COA
15. Economic Development
16. Conservation
17. School Department

19 interviews as listed

**(specific individuals TBD by subcommittee)*

Sample Script for Interviewers

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me today. As you may have heard a Government Review committee has been formed by the Select Board to quote “ensure an appropriate, effective and accountable organizational structure of Burlington Town government for its residents and constituents and to recommend to the Burlington Select Board and Town Meeting suggested format and possible changes.” To do this the town has engaged the services of the Collins Center to serve as consultants on this process and has appointed a committee of 11 members of the Burlington community to work on this project. The Committee will be looking at our current structure, bylaws and special acts and, develop a proposal to consolidate the important controlling language in one place through the development of a Charter to include those parts of our government where it makes sense to do so.

As the Committee undertakes this task it is clear that we need to hear the voice of those who are currently engaged with Town government either as an employee or a member of a Board or Committee. We feel that those who have hands on experience with the workings of our government will have the best insights as to what is working, or not, and their perspective on what might make things even better.

That is why I am talking to you. What is going to happen over the next hour or so is that I will ask you a series of questions which will be the same questions asked for all interviewees. If you don't think it applies to you just let me know and we will move on to the next. I may ask you clarifying questions to assure that I understand the points that you are making.

Before we start, I want to encourage you to be totally candid in your responses. It is important that we have an accurate picture of how things are working today. **I want to emphasize and assure you that your comments will be confidential.** We have not shared the list of who we will be interviewing with anyone outside of the interviewers. This session will not be taped but I will be taking notes.

Once we are through with the roughly 18 interviews the 4 interviewers, will aggregate the findings by topic... for example, all of the comments we hear about Communications will be in one section. We will not be referring to any specific department or person. Once we have the comments sorted, we will look for themes. It is those themes that will ultimately end up in our report to help inform our Committee's discussions. Do you have any questions before we start? Ok, let's jump in.

Sample Interview Questions

In interviewing these individuals, the Committee will follow a script that will include the following questions:

Board/Dept. Purpose:

- How long have you worked in Burlington?
- Could you describe your board's/dept. relationship to overall goal/mission of Burlington's Town Government?
- How does your board/dept interact with other board/depts in performing your tasks? What's working well/needs to improve?
- What about your board/dept's work makes you proud?

Communication:

- How does communication work:
 - within the board/dept,
 - through the Town hierarchy,
 - and in the community at-large?
- Are there areas where communication is particularly easy? If so, why? Conversely, are there areas where communication is particularly difficult? If so, why?
- Are there ways you think that communication could be improved? If so, how?

Sample Interview Questions (Continued)

Town Governance:

- What is working well with how Town government operates today?
- What is not working well with how Town government operates today?
- Is the Town government representative of the residents of Burlington?
- Is the Town government transparent to the residents of Burlington?
- Is the Town government accessible to the residents of Burlington?
- Is the Town government effective for the residents of Burlington?
- Is the Town government efficient?
- Is Town Meeting sensitive to the needs of your Board/Dept and is it timely in taking action?
- Is Town Meeting reasonably and appropriately functioning as the Town's legislative body?
- Are there provisions of the Town's bylaws that should be reviewed or reformed?

The Future:

- What emerging patterns, technologies or issues do you believe are important to investigate for Burlington's future?
- What are barriers to the success of your Board/Dept?
- What single change or action would you take to make Burlington's government better?

Proposed Timing

What	When Start (Date or Week Of)	When End	Comments
Finalize Plan	8/28		
Identify Interview Participants (Test and Otherwise)	w/o 9/1		
Conduct Test Interviews	w/o 9/8		Plan on one test interview per interviewer
Modify Interview Questions as needed	w/o 9/15		
TA send out notice to departments about the project	w/o 9/8		
Conduct Interviews	9/22	10/10	Interviewers will call to schedule interview times.
Consolidate results	10/13	10/24	Committee to Analyze Results
Identify Themes		10/29	
Create report to BGRC	10/29	11/11	Present at 1 st November GBRC Meeting

Resources Needed

- Volunteer to conduct interviews and help with data consolidation and report development.
- Town Administrator support to send out notice of stakeholder interview process to Town Departments about GBRC and the stakeholder interview process.