



CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE

July 29, 2019

TO: Burlington City Council

FROM: Church Street Marketplace District Commission

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE DISTRICT COMMISSION IS TO PROVIDE RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT LEADING TO AN ECONOMICALLY SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN WHICH IS VIBRANT, CLEAN AND SAFE, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FEE PAYERS COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND VISITORS.

RE: FY 19 HIGHLIGHTS – July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

Despite the demolition of three quarters of the Burlington Town Center, the closing of Macy's and controversial press regarding the redevelopment, CSM businesses recorded strong sales in 2018. Our businesses also reported that they are happy with the services provided to them by our department. We love our businesses and are honored to be of service to them.

We remain committed to creating a welcoming environment where visitors will shop, dine and explore the unique businesses in the downtown. CSM strives to provide a high level of service to all 100+ members of the district while balancing the evolving needs of our community. We are currently experiencing problems posed by rising anti-social behaviors including inebriated vagrants and aggressive panhandling which detracts from our core mission to provide a clean, safe, and fun atmosphere for all. While there is currently one vacant store front on the Marketplace, the property owner has confirmed the space will be leased soon.

FY 20 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Marketplace Commission did not raise the Common Area Fee for FY 21 – but instead will hold the fee (70% of our annual revenues) at \$2.87 per square foot. This is the fifth consecutive year of no increase to the common area fee.



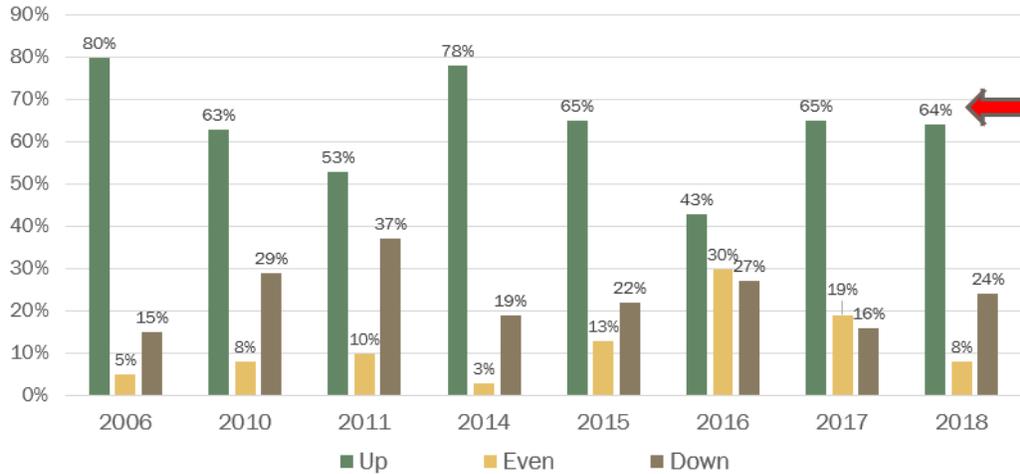
MAINTENANCE

CSM's Jim Daly, heads of CSM maintenance, received an award from RunVermont, for his on-going support of the Vermont City Marathon. At right, Michael Seaver, president of People's United Bank, presents the award to Jim Daly at the Double Tree Hotel on May 24th.

RETAIL SALES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE RATING

In our annual **Sales & Marketing Survey** of Church Street retailers, 64% reported sales up in 2018 versus 2017, making two consecutive years of increases.

Annual Retail Sales – Comparison to Previous Year



Responses were collected in the annual Retail Sales and Marketing Survey. The number of responses each year were as follows: 2014-42, 2015-23, 2016-34, and 2017-37. 2018-39. There are approximately 30 CSM restaurants and 70 stores.

Our annual Customer Service Survey gives our retail, service and food & beverage businesses a mechanism to rate our department’s functions and performance. Here’s how we were rated for Calendar Year 2018.

- MARKETING 4.14/5.0
- ADMINISTRATION 4.11/5.0
- MAINTENANCE 4.51/5.0
- SECURITY 3.73/5.0

Spotlight on new businesses

(Jan 2018-June 2019)



Free People
Opened: January 2018



FatFace
Opened: February 2018



Tribe Eyeworks
Opened: August 2018



Pokeworks
Opened: January 2019



Burlington Bagel Bakery
Opened: February 2019



Helly Hansen
Opened June, 2019

MARKETING & PROMOTION

Church Street was the place to be for a number of unique and lively events.

- In June 2018, we hosted an evening “pit stop” for the **Great Race**, a cross country road race of 500 drivers and 120 antique autos. The community came out in force to stroll the Marketplace and view antique autos parked up and down the Street.
- With the **Vermont Abenaki Tribe and Chief Don Stevens**, we held our first “Wajadin,” a one day celebration of Abenaki art and culture in July 2018, now a permanent event on Church Street. Our next event is September 14, 2019
- We hosted outdoor tennis on our top block featuring **King Street** kids and top ranked **USTA** players, Dennis Kudla and Noah Rubin.
- **2019 Holiday Events** included a **Santa Experience at CityPlace** (with public restroom). Free photos with Santa Claus every Wednesday-Sunday inside CityPlace Burlington. Toy Drive for Lund and Pet Photo Night for Humane Society of Chittenden County
- Black Friday, **Small Business Saturday**; Holiday Window Contest; Day of Giving, 12 Days of Church Street, Free miniature horse rides and free train rides; live reindeer from Vermont Reindeer Farm
- **Sidewalk Sale** and our **Trick or Treat Street** event sponsored by Northfield Savings.
- In partnership with BBA, DPW and CEDO, our four organizations executed a \$50K holiday advertising campaign, a free parking program for employees and a ParkMobile promotion for shoppers – funded by **Brookfield Development**.
- With **Magic Hat Brewing Co.**, we delighted and entertained thousands of children and adults with a day-long celebration on Church Street including outdoor performances. We raised \$3,700 for **Howard Center Street Outreach Team**.
- With retailers and the support of **Nicole Ravlin of JunaPR**, we led a comprehensive process with retailers to develop a year-long retail promotion plan.
- Invested staff time and \$3,000 of the CSM marketing budget to support two “merchant-driven” events, **First Friday/Shop Local** and **Mother of All Sales**.
- Produced two **Shop & Sip** events with 30 retailers, raising close to \$7,000 for Street Outreach Program.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Celebrated National Foster Care Month with **Lund Family Center** and **Department of Children & Families**. 15 stores displayed photos of Vermont young people available for adoption.
- Co-sponsored two events with our friend Patrick Brown of the **Greater Burlington Multicultural Resource Center**: 2019 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration in February, and the 2019 Diversity Conference in April.
- In partnership with the **Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)** we gave our collection box campaign a facelift: The new “**Positive Change**” campaign was unveiled on May 3 in advance of the 30th Annual COTS Walk. With our two new collection boxes on Church Street sporting bright colors and new graphics, we believe the ‘Positive Change’ program will increase awareness about homelessness in our community and raise more funds for COTS.

A new “Text-to-Donate” gives people the option to text their donation via their mobile phone (Text “COTS” to 41444). Participating downtown businesses will hang window clings with the text-to-donate information and offer pamphlets at their register to encourage customers to help spread the word.

The campaign was originally launched in 2013, and featured Lake Champlain’s famous monster “Champ” and his sister “Champette.” In the past six years, over \$17,000 was collected for COTS to help people facing the crisis of homelessness in Vermont.



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

In the fall of 2019, we will welcome our newest sponsors, **Smugglers’ Notch** and **Sugarbush**, who will launch a Ski Local / Shop Local campaign. We’ve joined forces with our friends at **STAR 92** to generate more corporate sponsorships for Church Street; our first success story is a sponsorship from **Automaster** for our 2019 Sidewalk Sale. Our thanks to long-time sponsors **Xfinity** and **Northfield Savings Bank**.

SAFETY & SECURITY

A safe downtown is critical to maintaining downtown Burlington as a place where people want to live, work, shop, dine, and play. Safety is always the highest priority. How are we doing? We do not have control over the number of incidents that occur in the downtown, but it is important to us that we continue to track BPD data to better understand what is going on in our downtown.

We continue to build relationships, share information, and develop strategies for improving downtown safety through our weekly Safety & Security meetings and trainings for downtown stores. We also continue to partner with the downtown lieutenant and officers to ensure we are prepared to manage major events. Here are some highlights of our year’s work:

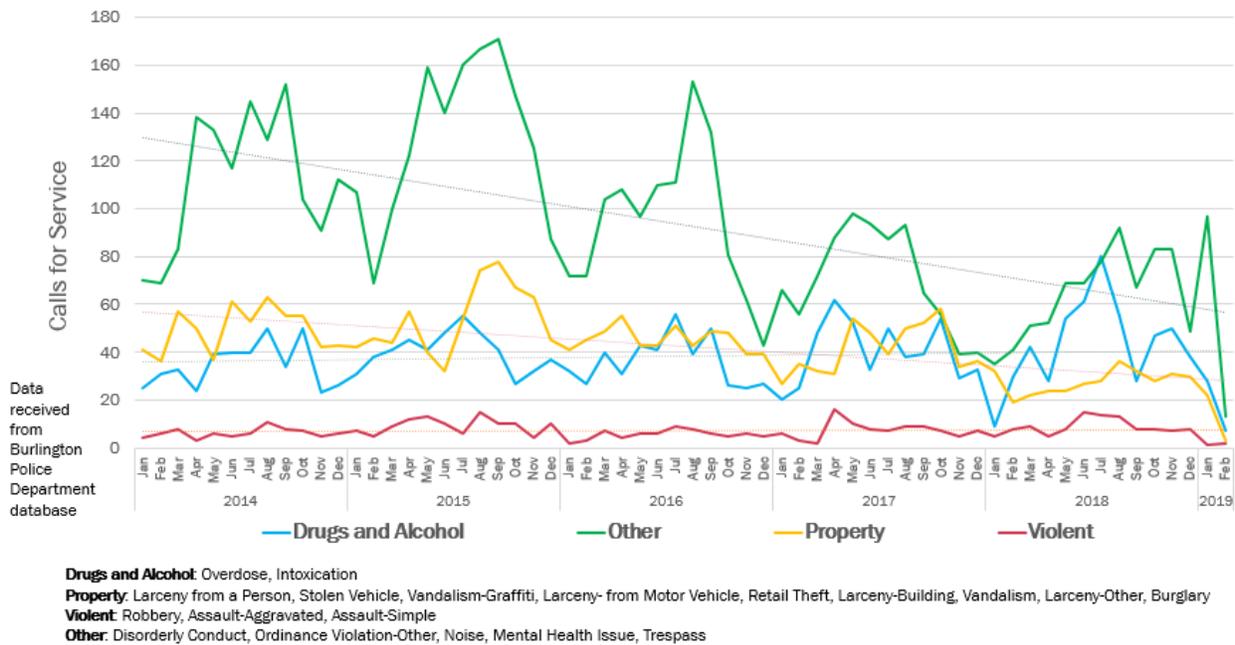
- Facilitated regular weekly Safety & Security meetings (Thursdays at 11 AM) in the CSM office, bringing public, private and non-profit stakeholders together to discuss and address safety and security issues and trends. Thanks to our partners at **Howard Center Street Outreach Program, Burlington Police, Outdoor Gear Exchange, City Market, Fletcher Free Library, CityPlace Burlington, LL Bean, BBA** and many more, for their commitment to our downtown’s safety and security.
- In partnership with **Outdoor Gear Exchange**, we co-hosted a February community policing /loss prevention training meeting, attended by 50 retailers. CSM held two more meetings on Thursday, May 30
- Training and orientation program for the 2018 and 2019 Parks Patrol teams.
- More than 30 businesses participating in two safety and security meetings held May 31, 2019. CSM staff, Burlington Police, Street Outreach and downtown loss prevention managers helped to lead discussions. Topics included: Review of

POSITIVE CHANGE PROGRAM; how to talk to customers about people who appear homeless or distressed; who to call and

when; how to write a private trespass; how and when to call BPD dispatch.

Crime in the downtown is trending down in all three categories: quality of life violations, property crime and violent crime – although there was a spike in July, 2018 for calls for service related to drugs and alcohol. In spite of the downward trend, our merchants and restaurateurs continue to hear concerns from their customers about the anti-social behaviors they witness whenever they come downtown. The Marketplace Commission would like to see the city take some action to help stem the rising anti-social behaviors we see on the street.

Calls for Service in Downtown D-Area (Jan. 2014 –Jan 2019)



Also, this data does not give a realistic picture of shoplifting in our downtown. The reduction in shoplifting is due partly to the departure of Macy’s and demolition of Burlington Town Center, which were the #1 and #2 locations for BPD calls for retail theft. Retail theft continues to be an issue in the downtown. The state’s current law for shoplifting sets the bar at \$900 worth of goods stolen in a single spree for a felony charge. With consequences low to non-existent for misdemeanors (thefts below \$900), our retailers have shifted to using the private trespass to address this challenge – and we don’t have data on the number of private trespasses being issued.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We have been excited to see continuous growth in engagement across our social media accounts.

Maintaining effective social media accounts is critical to promoting Church Street Marketplace businesses and events, engaging the community, and branding the Marketplace as a whole. We recently developed a Social Media Marketing Policy with recommendations by Nicole Ravlin from JunaPR. Our policy is based on best practices by channel and with an eye towards maintaining growth and keeping the audience engaged.

CSM Social Media Presence

Top Engaging Instagram Posts:



Likes: 2,800
Impressions: 23,822
Comments: 35
Shares: 88



Likes: 1,500
Impressions: 22,607
Comments: 970
Shares: 33



Likes: 2,100
Impressions: 20,622
Comments: 14
Shares: 88

We continue to gather feedback from CSM stakeholders to understand the strengths and challenges of having a business on Church Street. We remain committed to creating a welcoming environment where visitors will shop, dine and explore the unique businesses in the downtown. CSM strives to provide a high level of service to all 100+ members of the district while balancing the evolving needs of our community.

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