

SECTION 2: STRATEGIC PLAN

energy planning

Barre City recognizes that energy is a critical building block for the health and well-being of our community and residents. To achieve our vision of a healthy future, Barre City needs access to reliable, affordable and clean sources of energy.

While energy is an issue with a global scope, many of our choices and decisions at the individual and community level affect how energy is consumed and generated. Actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions usually have other benefits. For example, strategies to reduce the number of vehicle miles driven will likely result in increased physical activity, better air quality, and fewer vehicle collisions as people drive less and increasingly walk, bike or take public transit for transportation.

As the cost of energy continues to rise and the effects of climate change are being felt, the need for effective planning and policies becomes more evident. Energy costs are consuming an ever-expanding portion of household, business and government budgets. Rising energy costs are especially problematic for low-income and fixed-income households.

The largest percentage of the energy used by households is for transportation, and there is a lot we can do at the local level to reduce that demand. Another significant percentage of energy use goes to heat and cool buildings, and again this is an area where city actions and policies can make a difference. Electricity is the third principal component of household energy use and our individual choices can greatly affect energy consumption in this sector.

key points

1. **Municipal Energy Use.** Barre City could realize multiple benefits through greater energy efficiency and conservation in municipal operations. Energy costs, which are anticipated to continue increasing, are a significant component of the city budget and reducing those costs would be a direct savings to taxpayers.
2. **Home Energy Use.** The energy used to heat, cool and power our homes accounts for about one-third of the energy consumed in Vermont. About 45% of that energy is provided by electricity, 45% comes from fossil fuels, and 10% is from renewable sources. Home energy can also account for a substantial portion of a household's budget, especially for low- and moderate-income households. Most homes in Barre City are not that energy-efficient and need weatherization and other efficiency improvements to make them healthier, more comfortable and more affordable places to live. Of particular concern are the many rental properties in the city where the tenant might pay separately for heat. Landlords have very little financial incentive to invest in efficiency upgrades for these buildings.
3. **Transportation Energy Use.** The transportation sector consumes another third of the energy used in Vermont and is also a major component of most household budgets. Virtually all the energy used in this sector is from fossil fuels, the price of which continues to fluctuate. Unlike

most places in Vermont, it is possible to live in Barre City without a car because our homes, shops, services, schools and employment are in close proximity and there is public transit service. Improving transit service, making the city a better place to walk and bike, and increasing the number of people living and working downtown, will further reduce the amount of energy used for and dollars spent on transportation by city residents.

4. **Commercial and Industrial Energy Use.** The final third of energy used in Vermont powers commercial and industrial activities. Around 65% of energy businesses use is from electricity, 35% is from fossil fuels and 5% is from renewable sources.

issues & challenges

Barre City has identified the following energy challenges and issues that need to be addressed to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. **City Codes and Regulations.** For many years, energy efficiency has been seen as a desirable goal and a laudable personal choice, but not something that should be mandated by government. As a result, the city has done little to require property owners or developers to increase the energy efficiency of the city's building stock.
2. **Age and Condition of Homes.** More than half of the homes in Barre City were built before 1940 and many need improvements to make them more energy efficient. A household that can afford to purchase a home in Barre City may not be able to afford further investment in substantial improvements to make the building energy efficient even though doing so would save them money over the long-term. The PACE district, if implemented, could provide a more affordable option for homeowners who want to make efficiency upgrades. There are also a number of programs available to assist income-eligible homeowners with weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades.
3. **Efficiency of Rental Housing.** If tenants pay for their own heat, there is little incentive for landlords to invest in energy efficiency improvements. This is particularly a concern when units are rented to low-income households who cannot afford to adequately heat their home. If households living in inefficient units qualify for home heating assistance, scarce public resources are being spent inefficiently. Given that the demand for home heating assistance is significantly greater than the availability of funding, improving the energy efficiency of these residences is a high priority.
4. **Efficiency of Municipal Facilities.** Energy audits have been completed at most municipal facilities and many improvements are needed to increase their efficiency, this includes City Hall, the BOR Facility and Auditorium, public works facilities, Barre Area Senior Center building, and others. Reducing the cost of operating these facilities could increase funding available for direct services, programs, projects and other improvements recommended throughout this plan. Over the long-term, it will also save taxpayers from ever-increasing energy bills.

strengths & opportunities

Barre City has already taken action on energy issues, and there remain many strengths and opportunities we can build upon to continue those efforts as we strive to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. **Tax Stabilization.** Barre City offers tax stabilization to both residential and non-residential property owners who make significant investments in their buildings, including energy efficiency improvements.
2. **PACE District.** Barre City voters approved a PACE District in 2012, but the city has not fully implemented the program. The PACE program is intended to help homeowners make energy improvements by providing loans that will be paid off by the participating property owner through a special assessment tax over a period of up to 20 years. Non-participating property owners will have no obligation to pay for any of the costs of the PACE district.
3. **Density.** People living and working in Barre City can be less dependent on personal vehicles and can choose more energy-efficient means of transportation (public transit, walking, biking) because of the city's higher density and the proximity of homes to employment and services as compared to surrounding rural towns.
4. **Availability of Services and Resources.** Barre City hosts a number of organizations and businesses that provide energy efficiency services and resources to the community. The Barre City Energy Committee has been working diligently on energy savings awareness, from workshops throughout the fall and winter, and participating in Efficiency Vermont's Button-Up series for the public. And, Efficiency Vermont has assigned a region coordinator to the City for various forms of assistance.
5. **Municipal Energy Savings.** Barre City has completed energy audits for a number of municipal facilities and plans to schedule the recommended improvements. The city has not completed installation of new boilers at Alumni Hall based on results from a blower test; and new high efficiency boilers have been replaced at City Hall. And, all streetlights were inventoried and LED lighting is installed in them.
6. **Vermont Energy Codes.** The Vermont Public Service Department created the Residential Building Energy Code, and the Commercial Building Energy Code in March of 2015, that requires new construction, as well as modifications to buildings, to meet certain codes, and file a certificate with the municipality stating codes were met.

goals & strategies

Barre City has established the following energy goals and strategies in order to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. **For Barre City government, businesses and residents to have a reduced dependence on nonrenewable and imported energy sources, while continuing to have access to reliable and affordable energy sources.**

- A. Practice and incorporate energy conservation and use of renewable energy within city operations.
 - A-1. Continue to implement the recommendations of the energy audits of city-owned buildings.
 - A-2. Explore opportunities to generate renewable power at city-owned facilities and sites.
 - A-3. Consider the lifecycle cost (purchase + operation) of city vehicles when making purchasing and replacement decisions.
 - A-4. Consider alternative fuel vehicles when making purchase and replacement decisions for city vehicles.
 - A-5. Make energy efficiency one of the decision-making criteria within a comprehensive capital improvement program.
 - A-6. Reduce the amount of energy consumed and tax dollars spent on street lighting, while continuing to maintain the light levels needed for public and traffic safety.
 - B. Promote increased use of alternative fuel vehicles, public transit use, ride sharing, bicycling and walking to reduce energy consumed for transportation.
 - B-1. Continue incorporating electric vehicle charging stations into planned improvements to city-owned parking lots and facilities.
 - B-2. Develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan as recommended in the Transportation chapter of this plan.
 - B-3. Increase the number of public transit stops and routes in Barre City as recommended in the Transportation chapter of this plan.
 - B-4. Consider establishing an incentive program for city employees who regularly carpool, take public transit, walk or bike to work.
 - C. Promote the transportation energy savings associated with locating homes and businesses in Barre City – a compact, high-density, walkable urban center with public transit service – as compared to outlying rural towns.
 - C-1. Increase awareness and requirements of the state Residential and Commercial energy codes when zoning and building permits are applied for.
 - D. Support mixed-use development, which reduces energy consumed for transportation, by providing housing in close proximity to services and employment.
- 2. For new buildings in Barre City to be highly energy efficient and for improvements to be made to increase the energy efficiency, and lower the operating costs, of our existing building stock.**

- A. Increase awareness and use of the city’s tax stabilization programs as a means to encourage both commercial/industrial and residential building owners to make energy efficiency improvements.
 - C. Implement the voter-approved Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program in Barre City.
 - D. Explore the feasibility of providing district heating in downtown Barre City.
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next steps

Barre City should pursue the following actions in order to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. Continue the support of the Barre City Energy Committee (BCEC) to coordinate the city’s energy planning, efficiency, conservation and generation efforts.

Status: Ongoing.

Timing: Ongoing.

Partners: BCEC, City Manager, City Council

Notes: One of the main tasks of the city’s energy committee is and has been to increase residents’ awareness of the technical assistance and funding already available through Efficiency Vermont and other programs to audit, weatherize and otherwise improve the energy efficiency of homes and buildings in the city.

2. Schedule and continue to complete energy efficiency upgrades to city-owned buildings.

Status: Energy audits have been completed at most city-owned buildings. The recommended energy efficiency upgrades need to be prioritized and scheduled.

Timing: Schedule completed in 2013 with projects underway in subsequent years.

Partners: City Manager, City Council

Notes: Energy efficiency upgrades to city facilities should be incorporated into the comprehensive Capital Improvement Program recommended in the Utilities chapter of this plan.

3. Consider implementing the voter-approved Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program.

Status: City voters approved creation of a PACE District in 2012.

Timing: 2022

Partners: City Manager, City Council, BCEC

Notes: Following 2011 legislative changes, the Vermont Department of Financial Regulation issued updated guidelines for PACE Districts in April 2012 that address many of the uncertainties associated with and questions raised by the Federal Housing Finance Agency about this program. Efficiency Vermont is now able to administer a PACE program on behalf of a municipality with the associated fee borne by program participants.

4. Adopt energy-efficiency standards for rental units, particularly those that do not include heat as part of the rent.

Status: No action taken to date.

Timing: 2023

Partners: BCEC, Fire Department, City Planner, City Manager, City Council, Capstone Community Action Council

Notes: City of Burlington’s Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards Ordinance is an example of such an ordinance. This task could be incorporated into the broader revisions to the minimum housing code recommended in the Housing chapter.

benchmarks

Barre City should measure progress towards achieving our vision for a healthy future against the following benchmarks:

1. **Per capita electricity consumption in Barre City.** Energy conservation reduces air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the pollution associated with production and transport of energy sources like oil and coal. *Source: Vermont Energy Action Network Dashboard*

In 2010: Approximately 3,400 kWh
In 2019: approximately 4,230 kWh
Target for 2022: 3,200 kWh

2. **City government annual energy consumption.** Many municipal operations are energy-intensive and municipal facilities are inefficient. Energy costs are rising and are expected to continue to increase for the foreseeable future. The city could realize significant long-term savings by acting now to reduce energy consumption. *Source: Vermont Energy Action Network Dashboard*

In 2010: Unknown
In 2018: 2,215,778 kWh
Target for 2025: 20% reduction from 2018

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND AMENITIES

planning for community services & amenities

Barre City understands that community services and amenities are necessary to maintain the health and well-being of our neighborhoods and residents. Demand for community services and amenities and the level of civic engagement is greatly affected by our city's demographics such as the age, income, health and education of city residents. To achieve our vision for a healthy future, Barre City needs to provide the community services and amenities that foster an attractive quality of life without placing an excessive burden on taxpayers.

Protecting public health, safety and welfare is a basic role of government. The City of Barre fulfills that role through the provision of public services like police, fire, EMS, road maintenance, code enforcement and emergency/disaster response. Residents also look to city government to directly provide or contribute funding for services that enrich our daily lives such as parks and recreation programs, schools and educational opportunities, library, arts, cultural and historical amenities, and social and human services. City government also has a responsibility to keep residents well informed about community issues, invite all residents to participate and express their views, and make decisions that affect all of our lives in an open and transparent way.

key points

1. **Cost of City Government.** The cost of running city government has been increasing above the rate of inflation. Such growth in our municipal budget cannot be sustained without corresponding growth in the city's tax base. Yet, we are unlikely to be successful in our economic development and revitalization efforts, which are necessary to expand the tax base, if we cannot provide the municipal services needed to support growth. Keeping the cost of city government at a reasonable level while taking the steps needed to improve municipal facilities and services is a critical challenge for Barre City.
2. **Demographics.** Barre City has a disproportionately high number of residents who rely on various community services as compared to surrounding towns. This includes seniors, people with disabilities, people without permanent housing, released offenders, refugees/immigrants and others. The resulting higher demand is a particular concern for those services that are primarily funded by local taxpayers - police, EMS and schools. Barre City also has a more transient population than most Vermont communities with people moving in and out of the city, and moving from place-to-place within the city, which creates further challenges to providing community services, communicating with city residents and fostering civic engagement.
3. **Public Safety.** Despite perceptions to the contrary, Barre City is generally a safe community. The city's crime rate is similar to other urban communities in Vermont like Brattleboro, Montpelier, Newport and St. Johnsbury, and is lower than the crime rate in Burlington, Rutland and Winooski. According to the 2010 Vermont Crime Report, 80% of reported crimes were against property, primarily theft and vandalism.

4. **Police Department.** Barre City has a municipal police department that included 18 full-time and 12 part-time officers and seven dispatchers in 2018. The police are managed by a Police Chief. The department's operating budget in FY2018 was almost \$2.3 million, which included \$1.6 million in salaries and \$365,000 in overtime pay. The Barre City Police Department responded to about 10,471 calls in FY2018.
5. **Fire and EMS.** Barre City has a municipal fire and emergency medical service (EMS) department consisting of 18 full-time responders and approximately 20 part-time personnel. The department's operating budget in FY 2018 was \$1.8 million, which included \$1.16 million in salaries and \$271,000 in overtime. The department responded to 528 fire calls and 1,990 EMS calls in FY2018.
6. **Recreation.** Barre City has a municipal Recreation Department, which is responsible for the operation of the city's parks and recreation facilities, and for offering a variety of year-round recreation programs for residents of all ages. The department's operating budget in FY 2018 was \$90,000 with an additional \$208,000 spent operating the BOR Facility. The city's Facilities Department and the Cemeteries and Parks Department maintain the recreation areas and parks. As a result of contributions from the Semprebon Fund, a number of playgrounds throughout the city have been upgraded with new equipment and other improvements in recent years.
7. **Library.** The Aldrich Public Library sits in a prominent downtown location across from City Hall Park. While an independent nonprofit organization, Aldrich Library relies upon the city and town for a significant portion of its annual operating budget. The city appropriated \$207,000 for the library in FY2018. Between the City and the Town members, 88,659 books and materials were checked out, 441 programs were offered, and computer usage total was 48,217 times.
8. **History and Culture.** Barre City has a wealth of historic and cultural assets that express our community's unique heritage. There are two National Register Historic Districts in the city, as well as a number of individually listed sites and buildings. Our downtown is home to a number of culture and arts institutions including the Barre City Opera House, Studio Place Arts and the Vermont History Center. Throughout our community are reminders of our granite heritage including the impressive granite monuments in parks and cemeteries, the Old Socialist Labor Party Hall and the Vermont Granite Museum.
9. **Schools.** Barre City has an elementary and middle school, which serves students from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Enrollment in 2018 averaged 880 students. City students in grades 9 through 12 attend Spaulding High School along with students from Barre Town. Total high school enrollment in 2018 averaged 740 students. The Barre Technical Center, co-located with Spaulding High School, offers hands-on career training programs for high school students and adults from throughout Washington County.
10. **Childcare.** There were six (6) licensed daycare centers/programs and sixteen (16) registered home daycare providers located in Barre City in June of 2019; The licensed daycare providers were reporting fewer than 10 vacancies out of a total capacity for 207 children; while the home daycare providers could have accommodated less than 20 additional children, out of 152 in total. Parents in Barre City seeking a childcare provider or related assistance can contact Child Care Support Services at the Family Center, go to <http://www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us/>.

11. **Seniors.** Barre City has a large population of seniors and is a regional provider of senior housing with approximately 200 units. About 16% of Washington County residents age 74 or older live in Barre City and those residents account for 11% of the city's total population. There are a number of organizations based in the city and neighboring communities that provide services to seniors. There is a Senior Center based in the E.F. Wall Complex on S. Main Street.
12. **Healthcare.** Barre City residents can access a range of healthcare services within the city and neighboring communities including Central Vermont Medical Center (CVMC), the People's Health and Wellness Clinic and Central Vermont Home Health & Hospice, as well as a number of private healthcare practitioners.

issues & challenges

Barre City has identified the following challenges and issues that need to be addressed to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. **Cost of City Government.** In FY 2018, Barre City's general fund budget was \$11.5 million, nearly \$8.7 million of which was raised through taxes. Barre City has not significantly expanded city services and has had to cut some programs completely in an effort to curb increases. Providing the same level of city services and facilities is simply becoming more expensive each year, and as described elsewhere in this plan there are needs and demands for improved community services, facilities and amenities in Barre City that will be difficult to fund with the current tax base and economic climate.
2. **Schools.** Barre City's school system faces a number of challenges related to the community's demographics including high poverty rates, a more transient population with students moving in and out of the district, and high rates of special needs students. Like others around Vermont, our school system struggles to contain the cost of education while providing necessary services.
3. **Emergency Planning and Hazard Mitigation.** The floods that struck the city and state in 2015 and 2017 provided ample evidence of the critical need for city government, businesses and residents to be prepared for natural disasters. The city became more disaster resistant by implementing and completing the hazard mitigation work around the Harrington Avenue area, and continues to be cognizant of the risk and consequences of potential disasters, and mitigate potential hazards in order to protect life and property.
4. **Recreation Programs and Facilities.** The Recreation Department devotes a substantial percentage of its staff time to administrative activities that include all aspects of scheduling, contracting and invoicing for use of the Alumni Hall and the BOR Facility. Without additional staffing for the department, there is limited ability to expand recreation programming. The department sees a need for better communication with city residents to increase awareness of recreation facilities and programs, and for more residents to help with improving neighborhood parks and running recreation programs. The department also believes that there are a significant number of children that would like to participate in the summer youth program based at Rotary Park and the use of the City pool, but who do not have a way to get there. Transportation to the park would enable more of the children who could benefit the most from the structured activities, educational opportunities and meal program to participate.

5. **Childcare.** Barre City residents and workers face the same childcare issues faced by families across the state – finding convenient, affordable, quality childcare. It is an ongoing challenge to attract and retain qualified personnel and programs in the childcare industry while keeping the cost of care affordable for working parents. The vacancy rates among childcare providers in the city is consistently low. The Family Center’s Child Care Support Services works to overcome this challenge by offering assistance to both parents and providers.
6. **Senior Transportation.** Older residents compose a large segment of Barre City residents who do not drive. GMTA helps to meet the transit needs of these residents by providing bus service from the senior housing complexes in Barre City to shopping and healthcare destinations on a daily basis. Other social service agencies and organizations provide transportation services to seniors as well. However, there remains a need for improved transportation options for older city residents who do not or would prefer not to drive. A local “Senior Bus” could meet some of those needs and transport seniors to social events and activities in the city and around the region. Currently, the Barre Area Senior Center contracts with a tour bus company when it organizes trips. With access to a local bus, the center would be able to schedule more activities for its members.
7. **Special Needs Population.** Barre City provides housing for a significant population of people under the supervision of the state Department of Corrections (parolees and furlougees) and under the care of Washington County Mental Health. The region’s primary homeless shelter is located in Barre City, as well as a large percentage of the region’s most affordable housing. Having a disproportionately large special needs population living in the city is placing a strain on public services - the police, EMS, school system, etc. - and increasing costs for all city taxpayers. The city is strongly advocating for regional and state actions that would more equitably share the cost and responsibility of housing and caring for residents with special needs, rather than placing most of the burden on just a few municipalities around the state.
8. **Information Technology and Telecommunications.** Barre City government could benefit from improved information technology and telecommunications. This would require both upgrades to physical infrastructure and equipment, as well as training and time for city staff - all of which are currently lacking.

strengths & opportunities

Barre City has already acted to improve the city’s community services and amenities, and there remain many strengths and opportunities we can build upon to continue those efforts as we strive to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. **Neighborhood Parks.** There are city parks and playgrounds located in all parts of the city, and nearly all residents live within walking distance of a city park or playground. The city has many residents, including seniors and families with children, who are of limited means or have limited transportation access, and neighborhood parks provide them with recreation opportunities that they would otherwise not be able to afford or to reach. For all residents, Barre City’s neighborhood parks are an important contributor to quality of life, and serve as community focal points and gathering places.

2. **Playground Improvements.** The Mathewson Playground upgraded its equipment and surface in 2018. Continuous upgrades and maintenance to our parks and playgrounds will be even greater assets for the neighborhoods and the city as a whole. Wobby Memorial Park, next to the Public Safety Building, is a model for what could be done at other parks around the city. The park is intended to provide north end residents with similar experience to what south end residents have at Rotary Park.
3. **Summer Bike Patrol.** The “Bumblebees” bike patrol is a successful example of an alternative approach to providing community services. The bike patrol is staffed by young adults, typically college students, and operates during the summer months to supplement police patrols. Although the “Bees” were cut from the budget in FY2018, the Police Chief is ever hopeful to be able to bring them back.
4. **Community Facilities.** The Civic Center (Auditorium and Alumni Hall) and the BOR Facility serve a critical role as community gathering places. The Civic Center has been equipped with a back-up generator and it is used as a Red Cross Certified Shelter during storms and disasters. The floods of 2011 and 2015 highlighted the value of these structures to the city when hundreds of residents needed emergency shelter. These facilities provide a venue for large community events.
5. **Inspection Program.** The city has expanded and improved the building inspection program in order to more effectively identify and address deficiencies in rental housing. Improving the housing stock will help reverse negative perceptions about the city, increase property values and rental income, and attract a more socioeconomically balanced population to live in the city.
6. **Emergency Preparedness.** The city has improved its preparedness for emergencies and disasters. Our shelters are now certified by the Red Cross and Public Safety Department personnel continue regular emergency response training.
7. **Nonprofit Partners.** There are numerous nonprofit organizations based or working in Barre City that can help the city carry out the actions identified in this plan, including but not limited to: Downstreet Housing, Capstone Community Action, ReSOURCE, and Washington County Mental Health.

goals & strategies

Barre City has established the following goals and strategies for community services and amenities in order to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. **For Barre City’s government and partner organizations to provide community services and amenities, which are affordable to taxpayers, use tax dollars as efficiently as possible, enrich quality of life in the city and region, help attract new residents to the city, and support economic revitalization and growth.**
 - A. Provide police, fire and emergency medical services in a cost-effective manner.
 - A-1. Continue to replace police, fire and EMS vehicles on a planned schedule to avoid the need to purchase multiple vehicles in any given year and the associated budget increases.

B. Take action to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to life and property from, and be prepared to respond to, emergencies and disasters.

B-1. Continue to improve, and regularly maintain, the city's stormwater infrastructure.

B-2. Increase public awareness of potential hazards in Barre City, and educate residents about how to better prepare for emergencies and adequately insure their property.

B-3. Improve communication before, during and after emergencies or disasters among various response personnel, between response agencies and city government, and between city government and residents.

B-4. Test, and improve as needed, the ability of emergency response services and critical community facilities to function during emergencies or disasters.

B-5. Comply with National Flood Insurance Program requirements and provide ongoing training NFIP training to city officials and staff.

B-6. Work with Barre Town and the state to keep the East Barre Dam in good condition and the spillway clear of debris.

C. Provide recreational opportunities within the financial constraints of the city and participating organizations.

C-1. Continue to improve Rotary Park and make it a destination for city residents as well as residents of surrounding communities.

C-3. Ensure that the baseball field now called Cornerstone Field gets finished with the renovations so that the baseball youth of our community can utilize it fully.

C-2. Maintain existing and plan for additional neighborhood parks as needed so that all city residents will live within walking distance of a city park or playground.

C-3. Encourage the development of private and non-profit recreation opportunities to supplement existing public recreation opportunities.

C-4. Encourage the surrounding communities to participate in cooperative efforts for joint recreation activities and facility usage.

C-5. Monitor neighborhood demographics and park usage on an on-going basis to ensure that neighborhood parks and playgrounds are meeting the needs of nearby residents.

C-6. Strive to provide parks and playgrounds that meet the needs of neighborhood residents, and modify park design or amenities as neighborhood demographics and recreational needs change.

2. For Barre City's unique heritage, historic resources and cultural assets to be preserved, celebrated, and contribute to our community's physical, economic and social revitalization.

- A. Enhance Barre City’s appeal to residents and visitors by rehabilitating and showcasing our historic buildings and landmarks, and promoting our unique granite industry heritage and role in labor history.
 - A-1. Create a strong identity around granite-related history and attractions by increasing the visibility of these resources, improving the coordination between destinations, and integrating them more effectively into the existing regional tourism promotion system.
- B. Expand and promote Barre City’s arts, cultural and entertainment offerings to make our community a more vibrant and attractive destination for residents and visitors.
 - B-1. Expand downtown festivals, events, and coordinated cultural and historic programs to bring residents and visitors downtown throughout the year.
 - B-2. Increase and improve promotion of cultural and historic events and resources at the Aldrich Library, Vermont History Center, Barre City Opera House, Old Socialist Labor Party Hall, Studio Place Arts, and the Vermont Granite Museum.
- C. Increase awareness of our heritage, historic resources and cultural assets.
 - C-1. Develop a coordinated system of directional and informational signs and a more coordinated on-line presence so residents and visitors can easily find and learn more about significant historic sites and buildings in the city.
 - C-2. Install more public art and historic exhibits around the city.
 - C-3. Improve promotion and distribution of the downtown and cemetery walking tours.

3. For Barre City residents to be well-informed, active citizens.

- A. Disseminate information about city government in a timely and convenient manner.
 - A-1. Maintain the user-friendly city website that is kept up-to-date with information about all aspects of city government and civic affairs.
 - A-2. Require that all city boards, committees and departments post meeting schedules, meeting minutes, policies, regulations, plans, studies and other public information on the city website in a timely manner.
 - A-3. Ensure social media connected with city accounts is kept up to date with information pertinent to its design.

next steps

Barre City should pursue the following actions in order to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

- 1. Prepare and adopt a Capital Improvement Program, which would incorporate the capital improvements needed to city buildings and facilities into a municipal capital planning and budgeting process that would include all city departments/services.**

Status: A capital equipment plan was developed in 2013.

Timing: 2022

Partners: City Finance Director, City Manager, City Planner, Planning Commission, Public Works Director, City Department Heads, City Council

Notes: The city could apply for a Municipal Planning Grant to prepare a Capital Improvement Program.

- 2. Enroll in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System.**

Status: Not started yet.

Timing: 2021

Partners: City Manager, City Planner, Fire Department, City Council

Notes: The National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum federal requirements. As a result, flood insurance premium rates are discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk.

- 3. Develop and adopt a citywide Parks and Recreation Plan.**

Status: No action to date

Timing: 2022

Partners: Recreation Director, City Planner, Planning Commission, City Council

Notes: This action could be coordinated with development of the Open Space Plan and/or Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

benchmarks

Barre City should measure progress towards achieving our vision for a healthy future against the following benchmarks:

- 1. Percentage of dwellings located within 1/4 mile of a city park.** Parks provide measurable health benefits, from providing direct contact with nature and a cleaner environment, to opportunities for physical activity and social interaction.

In 2010: 70%

In 2018: 70%
Target for 2025: 72%

2. **Number of violent crimes in Barre City.** Experiencing and fearing crime is associated with negative health effects, a decreased sense of well-being, and a lower quality of life. *Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer.*

In 2010: 71
In 2018: 70
Target for 2023: 65