

From: Sarah Russell <srussell@burlingtonvt.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2025 8:16 AM EDT
To: Kelly Devine <director@bbavt.org>
CC: Erin Jacobsen <ejacobsen@burlingtonvt.gov>; Kara Alnasrawi <kalnasrawi@burlingtonvt.gov>
Subject: RE: CVOEO is Planning to Close the Community Resource Center in Burlington

Hi Kelly,

Service referrals include employment counseling, medical and mental health care, housing navigation, benefits and entitlement programs, and yes substance use treatment.

Moving the FNB lunches will not impact attendance at the CRC – mainly because it does not replace services and operates for roughly one hour of the day. Anyone from the community can access services at the CRC between 9am and 4pm daily. Again, if you have questions about the FNB lunches, you should reach out to the Mayor's Office. If BBA would like to engage in advocacy efforts for sustainable funding for CRC operations beyond 6/30/2025, please let me know.

Thank you,
Sarah

From: Kelly Devine <director@bbavt.org>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 5:00 PM
To: Sarah Russell <srussell@burlingtonvt.gov>
Subject: Re: CVOEO is Planning to Close the Community Resource Center in Burlington

[WARNING]: This email was sent from someone outside of the City of Burlington.

Sarah:

Can you help me understand what a referral to services is? Is it getting someone into treatment of some kind?

If we truly want to support businesses and help downtown a big step would be ending the daily lunch at the garage. I know the Mayor has spoken about ending it. If we want to have the CRC be successful in giving people a welcoming place to be in the daytime, ending the garage lunch which is exposed to the elements, provides no seating for people, provides no sanitation services, and provides no service support to those in need would be a great step forward.

Please let me know where we stand on this.

Kelly

On Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 6:29 PM Sarah Russell <srussell@burlingtonvt.gov> wrote:

Just heard from CVOEO- more than 450 referrals to services for CY24.

Sarah

Sarah K. Russell
Special Asst. to End Homelessness

City of Burlington
149 Church Street
Burlington VT

(802)829-6326 (text/call)

On Apr 4, 2025, at 1:39 PM, Sarah Russell <srussell@burlingtonvt.gov> wrote:

Hi Kelly,

Please see answers below in red. After reviewing, please let me know how/if you'd like to proceed.

Thank you,
Sarah

1 V.S.A. 317(c)(7)

From: Kelly Devine <director@bbavt.org>
Sent: Friday, April 4, 2025 12:39 PM
To: Sarah Russell <srussell@burlingtonvt.gov>
Cc: Kara Alnasrawi <kalnasrawi@burlingtonvt.gov>; Sam Donnelly <sdonnelly@bbavt.org>; Erin Jacobsen <ejacobsen@burlingtonvt.gov>; Al Gobeille <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: CVOEO is Planning to Close the Community Resource Center in Burlington

[WARNING]: This email was sent from someone outside of the City of Burlington.

Dear Sarah:

I have spoken with board members about whether we can support continued funding for this. Two important questions came up.

1) Is there any data to show that the CRC is successful in getting people to services, housed or to the treatment they need - some sort of key performance indicators? **The data report indicates the number of people served. While CRC staff are consistently enrolling guests in Coordinated Entry and providing connections to resources and services for guests, I do not have that data point at this time.**

2) Is there additional data from let's say a year to show how the service is being used? **The CRC has been utilized by thousands of people over the last year (evidenced from the two monthly reports I shared with you). The CRC serves as a meal site for people experiencing homelessness, connection to services and resources, and daytime space for people without a low-barrier place to go. Without this daytime shelter space, people will not have access to daytime accommodation, meals, services, and supplies to meet basic needs. Other than the data reports indicating attendance, I am unsure how to represent the gap this vital resource fills. CRC staff also conduct outreach in the afternoons to people on the streets, camping, and unsheltered folks throughout the county.**

#) Would the city be willing to end the lunch at the Marketplace Garage hosted by Food Not Cops and move those services to the CRC? As long as that program exists, it's challenging to make the argument that we are seeing a meaningful change in the number of community members requiring assistance in our downtown. **The FNC lunches are outside the scope of this request. If you have questions about this, I would encourage you to follow-up with the Mayor's Office. If operation of a low-barrier daytime shelter isn't something the BBA is willing to advocate for, please let me know, and we will seek alternative routes for advocacy. Advocacy isn't a negotiating chip. My goals for BBA outreach were:**

- Inform the BBA that this critical community resource was at risk of no longer existing
- Offer an avenue of support with advocacy, if BBA so desires
- Share data reports from CVOEO re. gap CRC services fill in our community for both people who are housed and people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness

Please let me know and I'm happy to continue to explore this with you.

Kelly

On Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 11:42 AM Sarah Russell <srussell@burlingtonvt.gov> wrote:

Hi Kelly,

Looping back to this and attaching the March CRC data for your review. Paul Dragon and I met with Sen Lyons re. FY26 funding and, while she was sympathetic and supportive, I left the conversation feeling slightly confused about next steps to ensure funding will be available for FY26 CRC operations. Please let me know if BBA is interested in advocacy and if I can provide support in any way.

Thank you,
Sarah

From: Sarah Russell
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 4:05 PM
To: Kelly Devine <director@bbavt.org>
Cc: Kara Alnasrawi <kalnasrawi@burlingtonvt.gov>; Sam Donnelly <sdonnelly@bbavt.org>
Subject: RE: CVOEO is Planning to Close the Community Resource Center in Burlington

Per Paul's email (below in the thread), CRC serves upwards of 200 each day. I have attached a data report from Feb. If, after reviewing, you have additional questions, please let me know.

Thank you,
Sarah

From: Kelly Devine <director@bbavt.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 3:09 PM
To: Sarah Russell <srussell@burlingtonvt.gov>
Cc: Kara Alnasrawi <kalnasrawi@burlingtonvt.gov>; Sam Donnelly <sdonnelly@bbavt.org>
Subject: Re: CVOEO is Planning to Close the Community Resource Center in Burlington

[WARNING]: This email was sent from someone outside of the City of Burlington.

Hello Sarah;

I appreciate your letting me know and do want to take a look at this.

I agree that lack of a CRC could be detrimental to downtown, but would like to learn more. Do you have any data on its services?

I can provide detailed questions if that helps.

Thx
Kelly Devine
Executive Director
Burlington Business Assoc.

www.bbavt.org

802-863-1175

On Mar 26, 2025, at 12:41, Sarah Russell <srussell@burlingtonvt.gov> wrote:

Hi Kelly,

I wanted to reach out to you to ensure you were aware that the funding for the Community Resource Center is not in the proposed FY26 AHS budget.

Paul and I are meeting with Senator Lyons, chair of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee next week.

I realize not having a low-barrier daytime shelter could have a significant impact on downtown businesses so I wanted to make sure you were aware of this- and see if you or others within the BBA have any interest in engaging in some advocacy around this.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or would like to talk further.

Thank you,
Sarah

From: Sarah Russell
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 1:47 PM
To: Paul Dragon <pdragon@cvoeo.org>
Cc: Jenney Samuelson <Jenney.Samuelson@vermont.gov>; Kristin McClure <Kristin.McClure@vermont.gov>; Commissioner Chris Winters <chris.winters@vermont.gov>; lily.sojourner@vermont.gov; vlyons@leg.state.vt.us; Theresa Wood <twood@leg.state.vt.us>; Emma Mulvaney-Stanak <emulvaneystanak@burlingtonvt.gov>; Joe Magee <jmagee@burlingtonvt.gov>; Kerri.Duquette-Hoffman <Kerri.Duquette-Hoffman@vermont.gov>; Erin Jacobsen <ejacobsen@burlingtonvt.gov>; Karina McNamara <karina.mcnamara@icalliances.org>
Subject: Re: CVOEO is Planning to Close the Community Resource Center in Burlington

Thank you, Paul.

I've incorporated advocacy for continued CRC funding into all of my talking points, locally and statewide over the last few months.

This is a vital resource for not just Burlington but for the entire county.

I request that the other recipients of this email consider how we can ensure ongoing funding for the CRC. They see upwards of 200 people per day and provide the only low-barrier daytime shelter for Burlington (and Chitt Cty).

I appreciate that CVOEO must support staff retention at this time, with alternative positions. It's unfortunate but a supportive measure to preserve the talented and empathetic staff members.

The City has provided ARPA funds (fully expended) and served as a pass-through for Leahy CDS funding. We have maxed local resources for the CRC.

I advocate strongly for continued State funding for the CRC, on behalf of the City of Burlington and the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance. We cannot lose this critical resource for our most vulnerable community members.

Thank you,
Sarah

Sarah K. Russell
Special Asst. to End Homelessness

City of Burlington
149 Church Street
Burlington VT

(802)829-6326 (text/call)

On Mar 21, 2025, at 1:17 PM, Paul Dragon <pdragon@cvoeo.org> wrote:

[WARNING]: This email was sent from someone outside of the City of Burlington.

Hi everyone,

I hope you are having a great day. I do need to send this as a reminder that CVOEO will need to close the Community Resource Center (CRC) on July 1st. I believe this is the largest outreach / day shelter site in the state for people experiencing homelessness. We saw 3,177 unique individuals over the past 12 months and had 32,233 visits. Over 50 % are unsheltered and over 80% have a disability. There are large disparities for disability, race, and age. The budget is \$545,000 and CVOEO provided an additional \$250,000 from our own fundraising for daily hot meals, essential needs, and groceries to go. We are letting you know of this impending closure because of the potential impact on the Burlington community and Chittenden County as a whole. The site at 228 is a regional facility as determined by the state (ACCD). We have been completely transparent with our valued team at the CRC and our CRC Coordinator has just taken another leadership role here at CVOEO. We are beginning to find our other team members positions here at CVOEO as they arise.

We have been advocating for continued funding since July 2024 and talked about the challenges of hosting this site year by year with no assurances of funding. This is no way to run an organization or work to support our team who has done everything for our community. We had hoped the CRC was going to be in the governor's budget. We have appreciated the responsiveness of the DMH staff who have visited the site, yet we have heard nothing from DMH higher leadership. We will need to let the public know in May about the planned closure and wanted to let you know in advance. Our hope is to do some limited case management at the site and perhaps provide sandwiches to go. It will no longer be a day shelter.

We have deeply appreciated our partnership with State and will continue to partner however we cannot keep this site open without committed funding and value our staff too much not to help them with other positions here at CVOEO or elsewhere.

Thank you for all you do and have a great weekend.

Paul
<image002.png>

Paul Dragon
he/him/his
Executive Director

<image001.png>
Black Lives Matter
Respect the earth

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255 South Champlain Street
Burlington, VT 05401
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Email: pdragon@cvoeo.org
cvoeo.org

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