



## COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

149 CHURCH STREET • ROOM 32 • CITY HALL • BURLINGTON, VT 05401

(802) 865-7144 • (802) 865-7024 (FAX)

[www.burlingtonvt.gov/cedo](http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/cedo)

July 23, 2013

Burlington Planning Commission  
149 Church St.  
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

Please accept this letter as a request for a zoning amendment to expand industrial uses in the following zones: Downtown, Downtown Transition, Neighborhood Mixed Use, and Neighborhood Activity Centers. Industrial uses are being more and more integrated into the community. For example, the group of "Makers" in Burlington hope to provide a small-scale manufacturing facility that would be open to the community for classes and equipment rental that would allow people to do welding, woodworking, fiber arts, robotics, 3D printing, electrical fabrication, and a host of other activities. A food processing facility would be similarly community-driven, offering classes, training, and preparation space for startup businesses. CEDO talks with business owners weekly who are very much in need of a commercial kitchen space, and there is nothing that can meet that need in Burlington. As such, they take their businesses elsewhere or pay for rental kitchen space outside of our community.

Two locations that have come up as good potential spaces for these uses include the old cinema space at the Ethan Allen Shopping Center in the New North End, and Memorial Auditorium in the downtown. Both spaces have between 4,000 and 7,000 square feet of space available, making them ideal for small-scale industrial uses. It is our observation that the two enterprise zones in the city are not adequate to meet the demands for this type of use, and we believe these zones should be expanded. We want to be clear that the use of Memorial Auditorium in this capacity would be temporary, until such time as the city has a plan for the building. For now, it would allow us to turn a building that costs \$150,000 a year to manage into a revenue-generating asset that would bring vitality to the community.

Situating these hubs of creative energy in the midst of the community rather than relegating them to the outskirts would have a great benefit to the community and business owners, while increasing the city's revenue. People want to stay in Burlington with these types of businesses, but as the current development ordinance is structured, they are finding it hard to do so. We understand that there might be concerns about various nuisances arising from industrial use, so we believe that making these uses Conditional Uses would allow the Commission a great deal of control over these activities in the future.

We look forward to discussing this issue with you, and thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Peter Owens, CEDO

Jesse Bridges, Parks and Recreation