



Great
MoveFantastic Score

75 = U.S. average
90+ = Exceptional

RELOCATION INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Burlington

Vermont

-
- May 2026

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SECTION 1

Snapshot Vitals

Burlington operates as Vermont's cultural and economic anchor, a college town that grew into something more complex without losing its progressive identity. The University of Vermont shapes much of the city's rhythm, but this isn't just another campus community. Young professionals stick around after graduation, drawn by the outdoor recreation and liberal politics, while retirees relocate here for the intellectual energy and Lake Champlain access. Median home prices hit \$507,000 while household incomes average \$71,000, creating a squeeze that pushes many residents toward rentals or the surrounding suburbs.

Burlington was once the third largest lumber market in the world, and old industrial buildings along the waterfront now house artists and tech startups. Downtown stays walkable and manageable, even as growth pressure builds. The political climate skews heavily liberal, making this a comfortable landing spot for relocators fleeing more conservative regions. Air quality stays excellent, and the unemployment rate reflects both economic stability and the reality of limited job diversity in a smaller market.

44,675

Population

\$71,109

Median Household Income

2.2%

Unemployment

\$506,784

Median Home

\$2,500/mo

2BR Rent

12% above avg

Cost of Living

▼ vs. national average

Blue

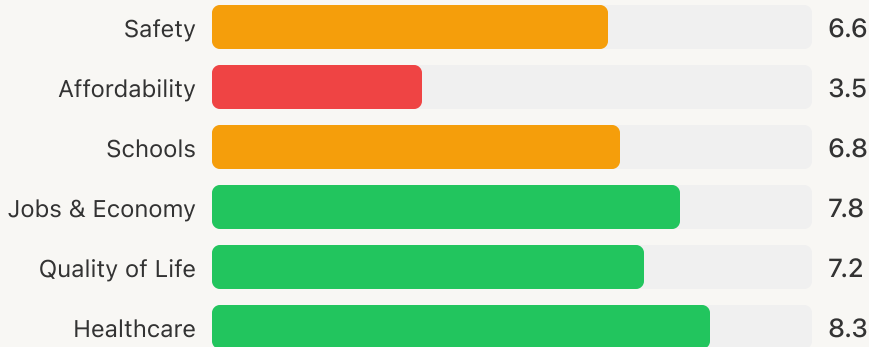
Political Lean

Did You Know?

Burlington was once the third largest lumber market in the world, and in 1808, the world's first lake-going steamboat was built here.

Burlington, Vermont at a Glance

Category breakdown (0–10 each) — Mixed. Real strengths but meaningful concerns. Neighborhood selection matters.



SECTION 2

Safety

Violent Crime	2.7/1k residents (US avg: 4.0)
Property Crime	25.3/1k residents (US avg: 20.0)
Crime Trend	improving
FEMA Zone Detail	Zone X (minimal-risk: Areas of minimal flood hazard)
Disaster Risks	Flood (Moderate)
Air Quality Notes	Air quality is generally good with AQI around 44
Safest Areas	South End, Champlain School area, Chipman Hill

Burlington feels safer than most cities its size, and the numbers back up that impression. The crime profile skews heavily toward property offenses rather than violent encounters, which changes how you think about day-to-day precautions. Most property crime here follows predictable college town patterns: bikes disappearing from campus areas, car break-ins near popular nightlife spots, and the occasional package theft in apartment complexes. Flood risk stays minimal despite Lake Champlain's proximity, though moderate flooding can occur during heavy spring runoff seasons. Air quality rarely becomes a concern, staying well within healthy ranges year-round.

Neighborhood Research

Check Burlington Police Department's crime mapping tool for block-level data when evaluating specific addresses. Campus-adjacent areas see more minor incidents during the academic year.

Spring Flood Awareness

Research any property's flood history before signing leases near the Winooski River or Lake Champlain shoreline. Even minimal-risk zones can see occasional water issues during heavy snowmelt.

SECTION 3

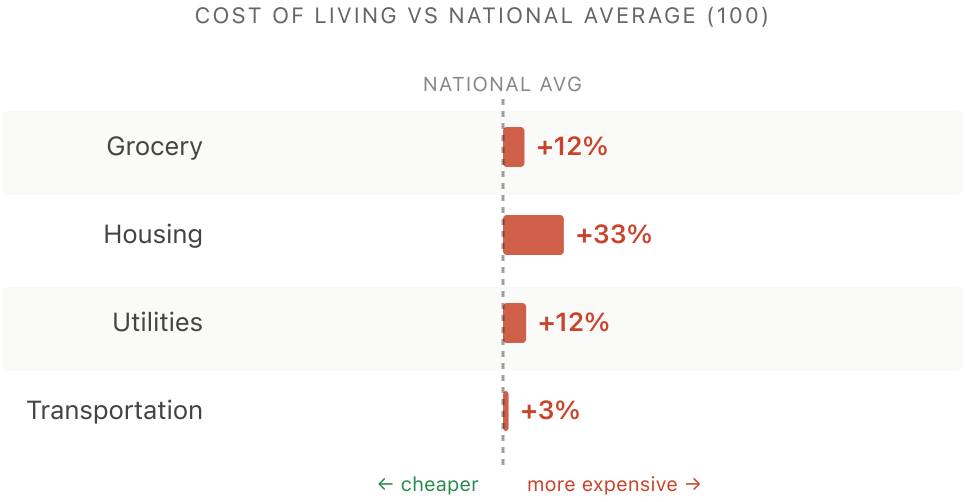
Cost of Living & Housing

1BR Rent (apartments & houses)	\$1,930/mo
2BR Rent (apartments & houses)	\$2,500/mo
3BR Rent (apartments & houses)	\$2,600/mo
Groceries	111.5 (12% above US avg)
Utilities	112.4 (12% above US avg)
Housing	132.6 (33% above US avg)
Transportation	103 (3% above US avg)

State Income Tax	8.75%
Sales Tax	7%
Property Tax Rate	1.98%
Home Price Trend	Slightly declining from February
Avg Days on Market	7 days

The cost of living index sits at 112.4 (100 = U.S. average), driven mainly by housing costs that reach 132.6 on the index. Groceries and utilities track above national averages, but transportation costs stay reasonable since most necessities cluster within a compact area. Housing dominates your budget, though the market has cooled slightly with homes moving quickly. The rental market splits between overpriced student-oriented units near UVM and better values in residential neighborhoods. Vermont's tax structure hits you three ways: income tax caps at 8.75%, sales tax reaches 7%, and property tax runs 1.98%. Energy costs spike in winter, requiring budget planning for seasonal utility increases.

- Student housing inflates rental prices near campus areas significantly.
- Local food and craft beer cost more, but the quality justifies the premium for most residents.



1.98%
Property Tax

7%
City Sales Tax

41% above avg
Misc. Expenses

▼ annual rate

Vermont Tax Reality

Triple tax hit with income, sales, and property taxes all above national averages. Budget accordingly.

Housing Market Timing

Market has softened from peak. Homes sell quickly but prices have declined slightly since February.

Winter Budget Bump

Heating costs surge during long Vermont winters. Factor seasonal utility spikes into annual planning.

SECTION 4

Schools

District Rating

7/10

Top Elementary Schools

Champlain School (8/10), Sustainability Academy At Lawrence Barnes (7/10), Edmunds Elementary School (7/10), C. P. Smith School (6/10)

Top High Schools

Burlington Senior High School (7/10)

Nearby Colleges

Champlain College (2 miles), University of Vermont (2 miles), Saint Michael's College (4 miles), Clinton Community College (15 miles), SUNY College at Plattsburgh (18 miles), Johnson State College (30 miles)

Burlington schools deliver solid performance without being spectacular, reflecting a district that's competent but not elite. The public system centers around Burlington High School, which serves as the main college prep pipeline for most families. The elementary options show some variation, with Champlain School leading the pack and the Sustainability Academy drawing environmentally minded families. Private school culture isn't dominant here the way it is in wealthier suburbs. Most families

stick with public schools, partly because the nearby college presence creates an educated community that supports the district.

The University of Vermont and Champlain College sitting right in town means plenty of professors' kids attend public schools, which helps maintain academic standards. Youth sports lean heavily toward hockey and skiing. Soccer and baseball have solid rec league infrastructure, though families serious about elite travel teams often look toward programs in the Boston corridor. The outdoor culture here means kids grow up comfortable with winter sports that other regions treat as luxury activities.

- Multiple colleges within walking distance create a university town atmosphere that benefits all local schools.
- Winter sports dominate youth athletics more than in most northeastern cities.

TOP RATED SCHOOLS

Champlain School
GreatSchools: **8/10**

Sustainability Academy
At Lawrence Barnes
GreatSchools: **7/10**

Edmunds Elementary
School
GreatSchools: **7/10**

C. P. Smith School
GreatSchools: **6/10**

Burlington Senior High School
GreatSchools: **7/10**

College Town Advantage

Having UVM and Champlain College in your backyard means exceptional resources for high school students interested in early college programs, internships, and academic competitions.

Winter Sports Reality

Budget for ski equipment and lessons if you have kids. Hockey and alpine skiing aren't optional extras here; they're part of growing up in Vermont.

SECTION 5

Neighborhoods at a Glance

Burlington's neighborhoods vary mainly in housing age and proximity to downtown rather than income or demographics. The city's compact footprint means you're never more than a few minutes from downtown, but each area has distinct characteristics. The South End houses former industrial buildings converted to artists' studios and tech startups, while residential streets mix working families with young professionals who bike to work downtown. Saturday mornings bring farmers market energy, and you'll hear multiple languages in this diverse area. Chipman Hill features tree-lined streets with older homes and long-term residents. Evening walks reveal front porch conversations and families who have lived in the neighborhood for decades.

South End Trending

Artistic hub with galleries, breweries, and creative energy

Best for: Artists, young professionals, craft beer enthusiasts

Crime: low

upscale

Chipman Hill

Family-friendly neighborhood with proximity to schools and parks

Best for: Families with children, professionals seeking quiet residential area

Crime: low

moderate

Best First Landing Spot

Start in the South End if you're under 40 and want walkable access to downtown energy. The rental stock turns over more frequently, and you'll get a genuine feel for Burlington's creative side.

Parking Reality

Even residential neighborhoods require parking permits near downtown. Factor this into your housing search, especially for older apartment buildings.

SECTION 6

Jobs & Economy

Unemployment

2.2%

Top Employers

University of Vermont Medical Center (Healthcare), University of Vermont (Education), Champlain College (Education)

Key Industries

Healthcare, Education, Technology, Manufacturing

The job market here runs on healthcare and higher education, which means stability but limited diversity. University of Vermont Medical Center anchors the healthcare sector, while UVM and Champlain College drive the education economy. This creates a reliable base but narrows your options if you're not in those fields. Remote workers find Burlington surprisingly well-suited as a base. The city attracts tech talent who want small-city living with decent internet infrastructure. The lifestyle trade-off works for many professionals who can work anywhere.

Manufacturing maintains a presence here, but don't expect the same opportunities you'd find in larger metros. The technology sector exists but remains small. Your best bet for career growth is healthcare, education, or bringing your own remote role. The low unemployment reflects a tight market where good jobs get snapped up quickly.

- The university calendar affects hiring cycles across many industries.
- Healthcare jobs range from clinical roles to research positions.
- Small business opportunities exist in tourism and local services.

TOP INDUSTRIES

Healthcare

Education

Technology

Manufacturing

Limited Industry Depth

Outside healthcare and education, career advancement options are thin. Plan accordingly if you're in finance, law, or corporate roles.

Remote Work Advantage

Burlington works well as a remote work base with good quality of life. Verify internet speeds for your specific neighborhood before committing.

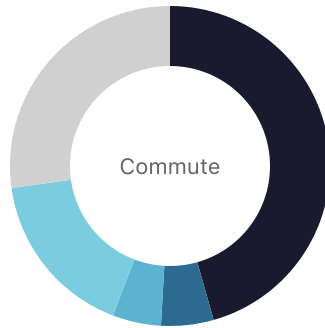
SECTION 7

Getting Around

Walk Score	59/100
Transit Score	36/100
Bike Score	72/100
Avg Commute	23 min
Nearest Airport(s)	Burlington International Airport (BTV, 3 miles)
Highways	I-89 runs north-south through the region, connecting to Montreal and Boston
How People Commute	drive alone: 46%, public transit: 5%, bike: 5%, walk: 17%, other: 27%
Public Transit	Local bus service operates with \$2.00 single fare and \$50 monthly pass

You'll want a car here, but you won't spend your life in it. Local bus service operates with limited frequency and reduced weekend schedules. Bus routes cover the basics, connecting downtown to the university and major neighborhoods. Walking works well if you live downtown or in the Hill Section, where errands cluster within a few blocks. Flying means Burlington International, which punches above its weight for a small city airport. The airport's proximity makes up for its limited route map.

HOW PEOPLE GET TO WORK



Drive 46% Transit 5% Bike 5%
Walk 17% Other 27%

23 min

Avg Commute

59

Walk Score

▼ out of 100

36

Transit Score

▼ out of 100

72

Bike Score

▲ out of 100

NEAREST AIRPORTS

BTV

Burlington International Airport

3 mi away

Airport Strategy

Book early for direct flights to avoid premium pricing. The Montreal airport offers more international options but adds border crossing time to your journey.

SECTION 8

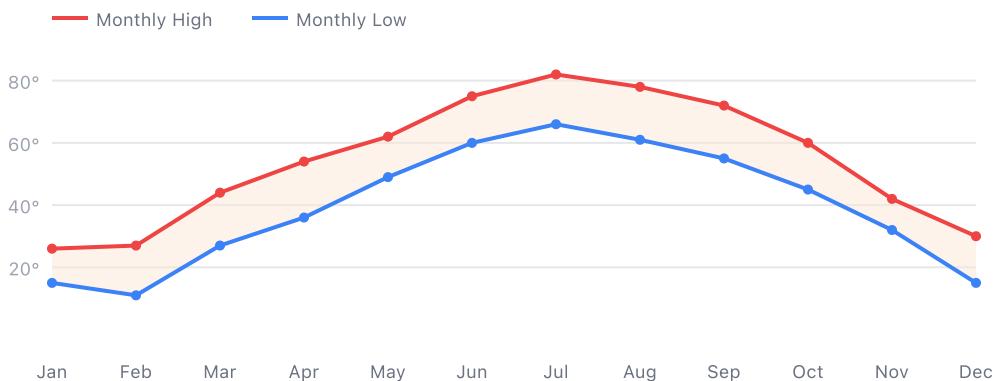
Weather & Climate

Average July high: 82°F. Average January low: 15°F. Annual precipitation: 36 inches. Sunny days per year: 148. Snow days per year: 14. Days above 90°F per year: 7.

Vermont winter arrives early and stays late, with the first serious snow often hitting before Thanksgiving and lingering into April. January lows average 15°F, creating harsh conditions that require serious cold weather preparation. Summer brings relief with July highs reaching 82°F, though the season runs shorter than newcomers expect. The growing season runs just long enough to make you forget about the heating bills, with temperatures occasionally reaching the low 90s. Most summer evenings still call for a light jacket.

Seasonal depression affects many residents during the long stretch between December and March. The lack of consistent sunshine with only 148 sunny days per year combined with the extended cold creates challenges that take adjustment. Spring feels like a genuine rebirth when it finally arrives, though it often takes its time getting here.

MONTHLY TEMPERATURE RANGE (°F)



Winter Preparation Essentials

Block heater for your car, quality snow boots, and a good ice scraper. Layer your clothing rather than relying on one heavy coat.

Best Moving Season

Late spring through early fall offers the most pleasant conditions. Avoid moving during peak winter months if possible.

Seasonal Mood Impact

Consider light therapy or vitamin D supplements during winter months. Many locals swear by staying active outdoors year-round.

SECTION 9

Healthcare

Major hospital systems: UVM Health Network (University of Vermont Medical Center, Central Vermont Medical Center). Level 1 trauma center: available locally. Full range of medical specialists available through UVM Medical Center. Golisano Children's Hospital provides comprehensive pediatric care.

Burlington offers comprehensive healthcare through the University of Vermont Medical Center and affiliated providers. Finding a primary care doctor accepting new patients can take several weeks, particularly if you want someone affiliated with the university system. Specialist care covers most conditions without leaving the area, though appointment waits stretch longer than you'd find in major metro areas. The university medical connection brings research-level expertise to a smaller city, but also creates capacity constraints when students return each fall. Most residents develop relationships with providers early and stick with them. Pediatric services through the children's hospital eliminate the anxiety many smaller cities create for families with complex medical needs. Mental health services, however, reflect Vermont's statewide provider shortage.

Primary Care Strategy

Call practices in August before students return. University-affiliated doctors often have the longest waits but best specialist connections.

Emergency Preparedness

Save the non-emergency urgent care locations. Emergency department waits can extend during ski season and student health crises.

SECTION 10

Things to Do

Parks and outdoor recreation: Lake Champlain waterfront parks, Burlington Bike Path, numerous hiking trails in nearby Green Mountains. Renowned craft beer scene with numerous breweries, farm-to-table restaurants,

and the famous Burlington Farmers' Market. Vibrant arts scene with galleries, theaters, live music venues, and cultural events throughout the year. Annual events: Discover Jazz Festival, Vermont Brewers Festival, Festival of Fools, Vermont City Marathon, South End Art Hop, Grand Point North Festival, Green Mountain Book Festival, Vermont International Film Festival, Vermont Cheesemakers Festival.

Burlington offers exceptional recreation and cultural activities for a city of 45,000. The craft beer scene features numerous breweries, and farm-to-table restaurants source from local producers. You'll find yourself at the waterfront constantly; the bike path and lakefront parks are the city's living room. The arts scene stays busy year-round, though you'll drive to Boston or Montreal for bigger shows. Local music venues book solid acts, and the gallery scene connects well with the broader creative community. Festival season runs deep from spring through fall, including the Discover Jazz Festival, Vermont Brewers Festival, and monthly South End Art Hop events. Outdoor access includes the Green Mountains starting at the city limits, and Lake Champlain offers waterfront recreation. Weekend activities include hiking trails, farmers markets, brewery tours, and seasonal festivals.

Free Weekend Essential

The Burlington Bike Path runs for miles along Lake Champlain and connects multiple parks. It's the closest thing to a universal Burlington experience.

Winter Entertainment Gap

The festival circuit goes quiet from December through March. Indoor venues carry the cultural load, but the energy definitely shifts during the cold months.

SECTION 11

What's It Actually Like

Burlington combines small-town Vermont charm with progressive urban amenities, creating a unique atmosphere where college students, young professionals, and longtime residents coexist in a community that values sustainability, creativity, and outdoor recreation.

Burlington combines university town energy with progressive activism and outdoor recreation culture. The University of Vermont brings 13,000 students and faculty into a city of 45,000, creating a blend of academic idealism and environmental politics, while Lake Champlain stretches toward the Adirondacks, making downtown feel less landlocked than most inland cities. The community mixes professors, tech workers, artists, and environmental activists who interact regularly at farmers markets, town meetings, and local businesses. Conversations drift from local zoning issues to global climate policy, reflecting residents' engagement with both immediate and broader concerns.

Community involvement runs high, with residents expected to participate in local politics and environmental initiatives. This isn't a place where you blend into anonymity. Your barista knows your order, your neighbors know your dog's name, and local politics feel genuinely local.

What locals love

Lake Champlain waterfront access with genuine mountain views. Progressive community that actually votes and volunteers. Four-season outdoor recreation within city limits.

What locals complain about

Housing inventory so tight that decent rentals disappear within hours. Property taxes that make homeownership feel punitive. Downtown parking that requires strategy and patience. Winter snow removal that can trap you for days. Entertainment options that max out after your first year here.

The unwritten rules

Choose the local hardware store over Home Depot, even when it's inconvenient. Layer clothing religiously because lake weather changes by the hour. Compost, recycle, and bike when possible or face gentle but persistent social pressure. Lean into winter activities rather than hibernating through them. Know your city councilors by name and show up to town meetings.

The thing everyone gets wrong

Burlington isn't a sleepy college town where students disappear into dorms. Technology companies operate alongside manufacturing businesses, the restaurant scene includes farm-to-table establishments and craft breweries, and the arts community operates year-round with professional-level venues and events.

New Resident Checklist

Register online or at town clerk's office. Utility providers: Green Mountain Power for electricity, Vermont Gas for natural gas. Community groups: Lake Champlain Chamber, Generator Makerspace, Community Sailing Center. Driver's license transfer: required within 60 days of establishing residency. Vehicle inspection: Required. State minimum wage: \$13.67/hour. Cannabis: Recreational legal. Right-to-work state: No. State income tax: Yes.

Your first priority is establishing Vermont residency through the DMV and voter registration, both straightforward processes that locals navigate without much drama. The DMV deadline gives you breathing room, and most residents find the process efficient compared to larger states. Utility setup with Green Mountain Power happens quickly, though you'll want to schedule this before your move-in date during winter months. The Community Sailing Center and Generator Makerspace serve as natural entry points for newcomers looking to connect, while the Lake Champlain Chamber runs networking events that locals actually attend.

Vermont's cannabis laws are among the most permissive in New England, and the absence of right-to-work protections reflects the state's union-friendly stance. The vehicle inspection requirement catches some transplants off guard, so factor this into your first-month timeline along with the standard address changes.

- Town clerk offices handle voter registration and often serve as informal information hubs for newcomers.
- Winter utility bills run significantly higher than most transplants expect, regardless of your previous cold-weather experience.
- Local Facebook groups and Front Porch Forum provide neighborhood-level information that official city resources miss.

DMV Strategy

Bring multiple proof-of-residency documents. A lease alone may not suffice, so grab a utility bill or bank statement with your Vermont address.

Community Integration

Generator Makerspace offers the fastest route to meeting like-minded residents. The Community Sailing Center runs beginner programs that locals use as social mixers.

Winter Preparation

Schedule utility connections before December if possible. Green Mountain Power gets backlogged during peak moving season, and you don't want to wait for heat.

Vehicle Inspection Reality

Book your inspection early in the process. Popular shops fill up, and you'll need this completed for registration updates.

SECTION 13

The Bottom Line

"Burlington combines strong progressive politics, craft breweries and festivals, brutal housing costs, and winter that separates the committed from the curious."

Best For

- Remote workers with stable income who prioritize quality of life over career networking
- Healthcare professionals seeking work-life balance in a progressive community
- Outdoorsy families comfortable with premium housing costs for year-round recreation access
- Early retirees drawn to intellectual energy and civic engagement
- Graduate students and academics who want to stay connected to university life long-term

Think Twice If

- You're climbing corporate ladders in finance, law, or business consulting
- Housing costs above \$2,000/month for decent rentals make you uncomfortable
- You need diverse nightlife and entertainment options to feel satisfied
- Seasonal depression hits you hard and you can't embrace winter activities
- You prefer anonymity and minimal community involvement in daily life

Your First Weekend

1. Saturday morning at the Burlington Farmers Market in City Hall Park, then walk the entire Burlington Bike Path to understand how locals use the waterfront.
2. Happy hour at Foam Brewers in the South End, followed by dinner at Hen of the Wood to gauge the local food scene quality.
3. Sunday afternoon exploring the Intervale trails and visiting the shops on Pine Street to see how residential neighborhoods flow into downtown.

You're paying a premium to live in a city with strong progressive politics, excellent outdoor recreation access, and a community that prioritizes environmental sustainability. The housing math will hurt, especially if you're not bringing serious savings or a remote income, but the quality of life here justifies the expense for people who value community engagement over career advancement. This isn't a stepping-stone city, it's a destination for people who want small-city intimacy with craft breweries, festivals, and Lake Champlain waterfront access. Come prepared for winter, both financially and mentally, and don't expect rapid career growth unless you're in healthcare or education. The people who thrive here commit to year-round living and find fulfillment in community involvement rather than endless upward mobility.

SECTION 14

Resources

Planning your move to Burlington, Vermont? These resources can help.

[DMV](#)

Transfer your license within 60 days of establishing residency

[Voter Registration](#)

Register to vote in your new state

[State Tax Agency](#)

Progressive income tax, top rate 8.75%.

[State Parks](#)

Explore parks, trails, and recreation areas

Hunting & Fishing Licenses

Apply for hunting and fishing permits

Unemployment Services

File claims or find workforce resources

SNAP Benefits

Apply for food assistance

Medicaid

Apply for state healthcare coverage

Child Care Assistance

Subsidized child care programs

Concealed Carry Permits

Firearm permit information and application

Homeschool Laws

Requirements for home education in this state

State Police (Non-Emergency)

(802) 244-8727

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Data current as of May 2026

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