

# Office of the Mayor



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Bernard Sanders  
Mayor

Thank You Burlington  
By Mayor Bernard Sanders

To the People of Burlington:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for allowing me to be your mayor for the last eight years. Together, sometimes against extraordinary obstacles, I believe we have made some significant changes which have improved the quality of life of our citizens.

I am proud that democracy is alive and well in our city, and that voter turnout and citizen participation has increased; that we are rebuilding our antiquated sewer system and streets and sidewalks; that we've begun recycling our wastes and are developing plans for a new, environmentally-sound landfill; that we've been innovative and successful in building and retaining affordable housing and caring for the homeless; that we have created thousands of new jobs--many of them under local ownership; that we've run the City in a tight, cost-effective manner, and have led the State in breaking our dependence upon the regressive and unfair property tax; that we've begun to open up the Waterfront to the people with a beautiful bicycle path, a new Community Boathouse, and more park space; that we've created a Burlington Women's Council which has developed a number of innovative programs; that we've started a new child care center and developed excellent programs for the kids; that we began "Operation Snowshovel" and other fine programs for

the elderly; that we've significantly upgraded some of our older and more neglected neighborhoods; that our park system today is in excellent condition; that we've created a cost-effective and efficient Public Works Department; that we're in the process of developing strong guidelines to prevent unwanted growth; that we have established Sister City programs with Nicaragua and the Soviet Union which allow us to work for a more peaceful world; that we now have an active and exciting public access TV channel keeping us informed about local issues; that our Police Department has been expanded and upgraded; that our Fire Department is in the process of receiving the best fire-fighting equipment available; and that we have greatly expanded the cultural activities that the City provided to the people.

I am proud of the work done by our City employees, because nothing of importance could have been accomplished without their help. I am thankful to the City Commissioners and the Board of Aldermen for their long hours of volunteer service. I am deeply grateful to the members of my administration who have, for eight years, worked long and hard for the people of Burlington under a harsh and demanding boss who rarely gave them the thanks and appreciation they deserved. I am honored to have been one of the leaders of the Progressive Coalition-- the only third-party movement in the United States that has successfully taken on and defeated the major political parties. Clearly, without the active political support of the hundreds of members of the Progressive Coalition, those of us in government would never have had the opportunity to hold office and push forward the progressive agenda.

Lastly, and most importantly, I want to thank the citizens of

Burlington for their support, for their patience, for their tolerance of new ideas, for their willingness to move in a different direction than any other city in the country.

When I gave my first Inaugural address in 1981, I expressed the hope that one small city, in one small state, could have an impact on our nation in terms of creating a more peaceful and just society. I think that, to a small degree, we have accomplished that, and I will be forever grateful that you, the people of Burlington, have allowed me the opportunity to play a role in that process. Thank you.