

Burton On Trent Place Consultation

Appendix F: Notes from Workshops

November 2024

This Appendix contains the notes from the four workshops run with different parts of the local community. Workshop #1 on 30th September – the others on 7th October 2024.

Notes compiled by Tilly Wheatley and Rob Fellman.

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Workshop #1: Community Sector

30th September 2024 - 1.30-4p,

Who

Sue – Youth for Christ

- Burton born and bred - Stapenhill
- Work with young people
- Husband thinks it's weird that I won't live anywhere else!

Nigel - Scouts

- Proud Brummie
- Moved here 1989 for work (Bass)
- I've been involved with the Scouts since I was 8 and am now District Chair
- Scout movement constantly changing – now runs from Squirrels at 4-18
- 9 groups in Burton

Isaac

- Codirector for Burton Pride

- Moved to Burton from Kettering and Warrington 18 months ago to live with my partner after visiting for 3.5 years

Outsider view

- Beer! Smells of beer
- We're in the middle (geographically) and figuratively
- Look up above the high street - see history. Walks across Washlands to the Library
- Small/medium town. Interesting history. Nice places because river runs through. Can get a train to Edinburgh or Plymouth.

What do you think young people would say about Burton?

- The best thing we've got for young people is the X38 bus to Derby
- Young people would say there's nothing here unless you go and find it
- Drug issues everywhere in Burton – different types

What's good about Burton?

- 20 pubs you can have a drink in, in a safe manner
- Merlin – largest archery retailer in Burton - Burton has the second largest archery club in Derbyshire
- If you were to list all the sports and activities – you'd be hard pressed not to find somewhere which does it
- We are an inclusive town so get a more diverse population - South Asian from railways – Eastern European more recently
- Burton is a Roman motorway station. Well connected, very easy to get out of to somewhere interesting
- 'Northern', friendly and hardworking
- Although I lived near to it all my life, until Covid I didn't fall in love with it
- Doesn't feel that big – go to town and you bump into someone you know
- Diverse mix of businesses here. Ambulances. Marmite
- Volunteer sector is strong. Covid was hard but we managed
- Lots of social and community offers for families – chance to try out lots of activities
- Good for going out rather than bringing them in
- Loads of good places to drink, eg. microbreweries
- Lots of good places to eat (from diverse community)
- Relatively cheap housing and also some nice bigger houses
- Diversity is bringing wider perspectives

Issues

- Burton people don't blow their own trumpets
- 3x world class archers (youth) not known about
- People from Burton don't tend to go out, so don't know what's the alternative
- Its split between different areas - on the Derbyshire/Staffordshire border. East and West Midlands. 2x Catholic Dioceses and 2x Anglican Dioceses
- When bridges break, we have to rearrange our entire lives around it moving around town
- 'Burton apathy' – low in aspiration (is it inward looking?)
- Lost the Breweries Trust as a good local funder and other support from Breweries' Charitable Arms
- It's growing fast - more housing – Staphenhill/Drako/Tatenhill (not just different ethnicities). Perimeter spreading very quickly

Burton is a place of places

- People in Rolston don't say they grew up in Burton, but Rolston
- Stapenhill and Winshill are across the river so it's easier to tell. Shobnall etc are attached to town so boundaries are less clear, but now have signs.
- Local Pride at a suburb level, not Burton
- 'Rural feel'? There're cows on the Washlands, there's a tractor driving through Stretton, but young people here don't see that, they never go out
- E.g. Scout groups – some seen as part of the town. Rest feel like individual places

What are the opportunities for promoting Burton?

- Talk about what unique stuff we had
- Talk about what happened (eg. sports success, 'sonic boom' – good example)
- Transport links or regular buses to attractions nearby?
- Co-ordinate volunteers and volunteer sector – support Staffordshire

Workshop #2: Culture, Heritage and Visitor Sector

Monday 7 October 2024, 9.30am to 12 noon

11 people attended

Activity #1 – Who are you, how long have you lived/worked in Burton, and what is your connection to the place?

1. Jo Maker
2. Monica Holton
3. Rev. Simon Archer
4. Elaine Pritchard
5. Jim Ellington
6. Marguerite Harrison
7. Tania Yvie Kerr
8. Simon Whale
9. Marie Sleigh
10. Shelley Pattison
11. Jenny Proctor

Time in Burton

- 10 Years
- 20 Years
- 30 Years
- Since '67, now living in London but comes back regularly (so, 57 Years on-and-off)
- 60 Years
- Lifelong (Dad was a brewer)
- Lifelong
- Lives out of county (Dudley)
- Lives on the county border

Activity #2 – A guest is visiting Burton; suggest a 24-hour itinerary, split into AM, PM and evening. Where will you take them to show off Burton?

AM

- Breakfast walk, Barton Marina. Melbourne Village
- Walk round the Washlands with the dog
- Catch bus into town, look around shopping centres and go to the LGBT-friendly coffee shop
- National Memorial Arboretum.
- Walk in National Forest (former mining / industrial areas). Lunch in town
- Book day spa at Hoar Cross
- National Memorial Arboretum, willow weaving workshop + exhibition
- Breakfast in the Market Place, walk around the Washlands across to Stapenhill Gardens.
- Town centre walk, support local traders
- A walk around the Washlands
- Walk into Burton along the Washlands and the river. Look at the bits of old Burton bridge in Stapenhill Hollows

PM

- Town: Heritage, churches, abbey, brewing sites. Fan Zone at a Burton Albion football match
- Lunch at burger van, and have a banter with them as also LGBT friendly
- Lunch @ the café at the arboretum. Afternoon, take them to the arboretum. Barton Marina
- Visit the Deer Park
- Washlands, Branston Leas, Drakelow
- Walk to a local café for lunch
- Lunch at Winery, history of Abbey and Monks / Brewing Heritage and Clay Mills Pumping Station
- Early dinner @ alphabet café
- Lunch – Winery 'Abbey', then Clay Mills pump house
- Walk along the Ferry Bridge into town for lunch. Datties van if it's a Friday
- Drive to National Memorial Arboretum, or use the trains

Evening

- 'Craft' beers + a curry
- Taxi to visit the Winery
- Pubs in the evening
- Brewhouse / the Dial / Winery / the Tower Brewery

- Visit the Winery
- Trip out, possibly by car to a local heritage site of their choice
- Pub Riverside? (Live in centre)
- Evening meal at Isabels / The Dial / The Winery
- Performance @ Brewhouse
- Coopers [Tavern] or The Brewery
- Brewing pub, fish n chips, pub crawl / Brewhouse Theatre

Activity #3 – What bits would you avoid? What issues does Burton have?

Top 3

- 1 – Youth activity [lack of]
- 2/3 – Lost buzz
- 2/3 – Disrepair

The Rest

- Transport
- Lost history
- No heritage focus
- Housing
- Traffic + roads
- Ghost town? [see 'lost buzz' & 'disrepair']
- Pigeon-holing [see 'disparate']
- Disparate
- Andressey Passage [uninviting/unsafe]

Activity #4 – What is up-and-coming in Burton, or a secret 'hipster' tip you'd recommend?

- Malt Shovel + Formula Cherry Orchard
- Medieval wall
- Upstairs at Trinity Canal Towpath
- Caribbean seasoning [founded in Burton]
- Motorbike Café [new]
- Pillboxes

Activity #5 – What do outsiders say about Burton?

- Bass [company] Beer
- Horninglow Mile [pub crawl]
- A38
- Good water
- Between Birmingham and Derby
- Albion [football club]
- Deprivation
- Frazer Clarke [boxer] & Nathan Dawe [DJ]
- Friendly

Activity #6 – In a hypothetical situation, Burton is about to be entirely flooded... What object do you save to best represent Burton?

- 1920s model railway
- Church registers
- Windrush plaque
- Victorian toilet
- Memorial book
- Badger's Wood
- Spooner's Shield [represents creativity]
- Brewer's recipe books
- Trees, wellies + spades
- Flood markers
- Archive photos

Activity #7 – What comparisons and/or competitors does Burton have?

Comparisons

- Huntingdon
- Stratford-on-Avon [aspirational]

Competitors

- Tamworth
- Derby

[Both of the above listed as having/being: 'shopping, gardens, LGBT-friendly, organised']

- Lichfield

- Nottingham

[Both of the above listed as having better markets and more independent shops]

- Ashby de la Zouch
- Birmingham

[Both of the above listed for better cultural activity, and being more culturally diverse]

Activity #8 – Are there any unheard voices in Burton, that should be here today?

- Artists
- Guys at the Pub
- FSB & Chambers
- Market
- Women's Collective
- Diverse Groups
- Teachers
- [An honourable mention that the Draymen and breweries are no longer investing in local infrastructure, such as schools, the Ferry Bridge etc. They are 'missing' more broadly from the local discourse and development]

Workshop #3: Diverse Communities

Monday 7 October 2024, 1.30pm to 4pm

Activity #1 – Who are you, how long have you lived/worked in Burton, and what is your connection to the place?

6 people attended

1. Omid Jafari
2. Faisal Mehmood Abbasi
3. Muhammad Zeeshan
4. Shehbaz Yousaf Izibi
5. Rubena Kahwar
6. +1 [no name or details given]

Time in Burton

- 10 Years
- 15 Years
- 20 Years
- 20 Years
- 37 Years
- 54 Years (Lifelong)

Activity #2 – A guest is visiting Burton; suggest a 24-hour itinerary, split into AM, PM and evening. Where will you take them to show off Burton?

AM

- Gym
- Gym
- Coffee at Café Zen
- Café Zen for Breakfast

PM

- Walking
- Riverside walks
- Shopping in the Town Centre

Evening

- Park walks
- Takeaway

- Shisha Bar [Burton's first]

[NOTE: this groups suggested that many of their communities spend time/money in Derby and Birmingham, and regularly go there for days out. They highlighted a lack of a 'complex' (such as Derbion in Derby), and more family-friendly restaurants. They also suggested that more Asian events could reverse that flow, and encourage friends from Derby etc. to come to Burton...]

Activity #3 – What bits would you avoid? What issues does Burton have?

Top 3

7. Accommodating cultures
1. Traffic
2. N/A

The Rest

Related to 'Accommodating cultures' above:

- Hospitals [staff training for cultural differences]
- Services [such as languages and understanding of religious calendars etc]
- Venues / Events – a Burton Mela? Asian Music events? [Also suggestions around venues being able to retain Burton residents for weddings etc, that would otherwise travel away to find culturally-specific, or more culturally 'open' venues]
- Catering at events
- Takeaways and restaurants [advertising Halal / Kosher options etc]

Activity #4 – What is up-and-coming in Burton, or a secret 'hipster' tip you'd recommend?

- Cinema [a note that this could also be more inclusive with world movies etc]
- Mexican Restaurant [new]
- Parks

Activity #5 – What do outsiders say about Burton?

- Peaceful
- Safe [they agreed that crime exists but not at scale. A statement of note was "Small city, small problems: that's why we stay!"]

Activity #6 – In a hypothetical situation, Burton is about to be entirely flooded... What object do you save to best represent Burton?

- Register for a community fund
- The smell of malt!

Activity #7 – What comparisons and/or competitors does Burton have?

Comparisons

- Mosley
- Coalville
- Lichfield

Competitors

- Derby
- Birmingham

Activity #8 – Are there any unheard voices in Burton, that should be here today?

- Elders [particularly from diverse communities]
- Young voice [particularly the young Asian population]

Workshop #4: Community Sector

Monday 7 October 2024, 5pm to 7.30pm

4 attendees

Activity #1 – Who are you, how long have you lived/worked in Burton, and what is your connection to the place?

- Kay Bentley
- John Anderson
- Emma Coleman
- Chris Beech

Time in Burton

- 37 Years
- Granddaughter of a cooper
- Grandfather was a local miner, so [participant] came back from South Wales

Activity #2 – A guest is visiting Burton; suggest a 24-hour itinerary, split into AM, PM and Evening. Where will you take them to show off Burton?

AM

- Town centre; although some broken and worn, some lovely historical buildings
- Sung Eucharist, St Modwen's
- Breakfast & walk (Washlands / Canal / Tatenhill / Jackson Bank)
- Walk dogs down the canal path (newly refurbished)

PM

- Canal walk and cruise Shobnall to Barton
- Boat on the River Trent
- Lunch at the Winery, St George's [England football training facility], Barton Marina
- Go to Barton Marina

Evening

- Sunset over Trent Valley
- The Dial (food), or Repton/Willington, Tollgate at Staunton Harold. Music / Performances?
- Meal the the Winery
- Abbey, now the Winery

- [Note from the group that the Winery reflects heritage + quality + is special; something that feels different to the rest of Burton]
- [Note that Burton used to be referred to as 'at the doorstep of the Peak District' but seems to have lost this status, possibly due to split from South Derbyshire into East Staffs]

Activity #3 – What bits would you avoid? What issues does Burton have?

Top 3

3. Lack of connectivity [similar sentiments to 'disparate' and 'pigeon-holing' mentioned in previous groups]
4. Traffic flow
5. Litter in public spaces [relates to general sense of dilapidation/care]

The Rest

- Lack of "sticky-ness" [people go elsewhere for things, rather than spending time here]
- [A note that Barton has a younger middle-class nightlife, and draws people away from Burton's centre]

Activity #4 – What is up-and-coming in Burton, or a secret 'hipster' tip you'd recommend?

- William Bass House [would benefit from development]
- Marmite factory?
- River
- Geek Retreat [game café]

Activity #5 – What do outsiders say about Burton?

- Could be seen as 'centre of the National Forest' (on a line from Ashby across), to some. A potential marketing angle!
- Know the Ferry Bridge, the main icon.
- 76 Club, historical music venue, destination

Activity #6 – "In a hypothetical situation, Burton is about to be entirely flooded... What object do you save to best represent Burton?"

- Ferry Bridge
- Jar of marmite
- Bass House staircase
- Cooper statue

Activity #7 – What comparisons and/or competitors does Burton have?

Comparisons

- Swadlincote
- Ashby de la Zouch

Competitors

- Lichfield
- Derby
- London

Activity #8 – Are there any unheard voices in Burton, that should be here today?

[Not asked]

Survey in lieu of workshops

As an alternative way to provide feedback for those unable to make the in-person workshops, we offered an online survey based on the same question areas covered in the workshops.

Who

9 people completed the survey in lieu of attending the in-person workshops.

What would you say is the best thing about Burton?

- The people
- Close to countryside
- The mixture of past and present in terms of building structures. I believe that more needs to be done to embrace the past and present as well as the future of style/character within the town.
- It's history and historical buildings, beautiful architecture especially the Town Hall
- The vibrant arts scene
- Its unique brewing heritage
- The history and heritage.
- The green corridor of the Trent, flanked by Scalpcliffe semi-natural ancient woodland, mirrored by the T&M canal, similarly flanked by Oaks Wood.
- Central location

What makes Burton different from other places you've lived in or visited?

- Less shabby
- The people are mostly friendly

- The people how friendly they are and welcoming. Further to this would also say that there is more to offer in other places compared to Burton or at least that is the perception. When people talk about Burton all they mention is shopping.
- It's a great mixture of pubs, shops and history. The river is great but currently under-utilized
- It's history and heritage as a brewing town, the washlands, gardens and Brewhouse.
- Its heritage, the people, its central location, access varied green spaces, the national forest, the waterways and the Brewers - Burton Football club - we always enjoy visiting the Pirelli stadium.
- It's a place that doesn't seem to recognise/celebrate its positives. We've never managed to capitalise on our assets.
- A long and varied history from the Abbey, alabaster carving and textiles to brewing.
- Unique industrial heritage

If you were showing around someone visiting Burton, where would you take them - and why?

- The library. You can get all the information you need from here.
- National Forest because it's beautiful
- Sinai Park House, as its the oldest structure in Burton and is steeped in history that needs to be further expressed around Burton and should be celebrated in the town. Market Hall and express the changes that have occurred on the site from Burton Abbey to the college. I would also show them around the old brewery sites explaining the history of brewing within the town. In addition the old Magistrates court, reason being it was modelled on the Old Bailey. Then would show them around the Coopers square shopping centre and show them the nod to [the] past with the Cooper statue.
- NMA then malt shovel, lots of pubs, Town Hall is it was open, Brewhouse and Con. Club
- Washlands and Staphenhill Gardens to show off the green and blue spaces, some of the independent coffee spots which are lovely - Alphabet for example, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, always something lovely to see and the churches for the architecture.
- For a walk along the river and canal, and around the marketplace and some of older parts of the town centre then to the winery for lunch! Would be nice to show them some of the brewing heritage, so would have taken them to the brewing centre if it was still open.
- The Washlands. The lovely buildings on High Street. The Brewhouse. The Town Hall.
- Possibly Sinai House, for the views, as well as the history.
- The pubs, because they capture the spirit of Burton more than anything else

What's Burton's best kept secret?

- Sinai House
- The amount of homeless people
- In my opinion it is Sinai Park House, people don't know where it is or what happened there or even how ancient the site is that is occupied by the building.

- The beauty of the Town Hall
- Brewhouse.
- Its walks and open spaces - Stapenhill Gardens, the Washlands, Oaks Wood.
- The pure delight of a bacon splash.
- The National Forest, I feel we are missing a big trick by not engaging more.
- The Washlands and Bass Meadow

Please tell us a bit about yourself - postcode, how long have you lived in Burton (no personal information required)

- DE13 OAG 12 years
- DE15 9AR 4 years
- DE11, OJH, I don't live in Burton but work within the town. I am a freelance historical researcher, who studied archaeology at University of York. I want to aid in expressing the history of my local area which includes Burton as the majority of people just think of the breweries and nothing else, when Burton has more to offer unless the council carry on demolishing the history of the town.
- DE13 9JU, on and off since 1978 but I moved back permanently in 2004 so 20 years
- I've lived in Rolleston as a child, then Stretton, then Stapenhill, now I'm closer to Ashby but still own a Burton Business. DE14 1EN. I stay for the community, and shared vision for the future.
- ST14 8UU (Don't live in Burton but visit regularly for work, leisure and kids football)
- DE13 8LE. I was born in Burton, but I lived away from the town from around 1994 to 2008. During this time, I lived in Derby, Birmingham, Taunton and Bristol.
- DE14 3NA, I moved here just over 40 years ago. Now retired.
- High Street long-term resident

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

- There is a lot of potential in Burton but nobody seems to be able to make a decision about what to do to improve the town.
- Children's Centre is great. ESBC are useless.
- I would love for the town of Burton to embrace change without destroying the character of the town or story of how Burton came to be
- I've always been an advocate for using culture as a catalyst for change. More support for cultural endeavours would be very useful. Look at Sonic Boom Festival and the positivity surrounding that. And the trails of course! Let's support those further to push those changes.
- I also think those with power have to be much more open to listening to local opinions. Even (or maybe especially) those voices that are quieter.

- Traffic in town centre is often very heavy and slow, which is a bit outputting when visiting. Hate the traffic system to get off the retail park where Sports Direct is. Maybe better public transport links would help ease the traffic? There are large areas of retail space that are unoccupied (Station St).
- I'm just so pleased that there are people working to make Burton into what it deserves to be. I wrote an article for the Mid-Trent and Mercia magazine last year about sense of place in Burton. You might be interested so I'll paste it below (apologies that the hashtag table hasn't pasted well and that the references won't seem to copy through so you can't see where I've got the data from):

A Sense of Place

In March this year, an article titled 'Where Tourists Seldom Tread' appeared in the Guardian newspaper. It talked of England's 'boom towns that have become bust towns.' A section about Burton-Upon-Trent described how the town once exported beer across the world, with a logo so famous that it appeared in artwork such as Manet's 1882 painting 'A Bar at the Folies-Bergère'. The article goes on to describe how Burton has failed to capitalise on its unique heritage.

In the same month, East Staffordshire Borough Council launched the Burton upon Trent Place Story. The strategy aimed to highlight what makes Burton special and provide 'opportunities for the development and promotion of both town and area' in order to 'attract people to live in and visit the area'. Reading the Guardian article and the literature and accounts of the official Burton story 'launch meeting', one word stands out: place. But what does place actually mean?

In geographical terms, a place is a space with some form of meaning attached. This means that all towns and cities, indeed all settlements, are places. All places are therefore important, but the challenge for decision makers is how to interpret and communicate Burton's place meaning in a way that differentiates the town from any other. In other words, how to make Burton a recognisable and marketable place. The process of placemaking in Burton needs to capitalise on the town's assets and potential. The council's literature suggests that these assets include the brewing heritage, green and blue spaces, a sporting pedigree, and a geographical location that makes the town the nation's heartland.

So, how can Burton go about this process of place rebranding and placemaking? The answer to this may lie with an analysis of the experiences of other places. There are many small towns that don't fare as well as Burton, but if the town is to achieve its goal of attracting people to visit the area, we must look to the success stories and work out what is achievable.

Stratford-Upon-Avon is a slightly more populous town that arguably has similarities with Burton. It has a rich history and heritage, and a strong connection to green and blue spaces, with tourists flocking to the banks of the river Avon on a summer's day. Stratford has a clear place identity and as such it attracts around 6 million tourists a year. In comparison, Burton attracted half of that number of visitors pre-pandemic and will presumably attract fewer going forward with the loss of the National Brewery Museum. Burton has attractive open spaces, the potential for capitalising on the brewing heritage and attractions such as St Georges Park National Football Centre on the doorstep. These

assets, along with the development opportunity that has arisen on the riverside at site of the former Bargates shopping centre brings clear potential.

Another interesting parallel can be drawn with the town of Taunton, which is slightly less populous than Burton. According to Visit Britain statistics tourism spending in Taunton Deane (which includes Taunton and nearby Wellington) between 2017 and 2019 was around £40 million. The same document states that tourism spending in the whole of East Staffordshire for the same time period was £29 million. Taunton boasts surprisingly similar attractions to Burton; it has a rich cider-making heritage, historic architecture, a Brewhouse performing arts theatre and access to the Blackdown Hills and the Quantock Hills. In comparison, Burton has a rich brewing heritage, equally historic architecture, its own Brewhouse and access to Cannock Chase and the National Forest.

I recognise that these comparisons are superficial, maybe even subjective. But they do give food for thought. What do other towns do that Burton could learn from? One thing that successful tourist towns seem to do well is create a sense of place. Having lived in other parts of the country for many years, I have viewed Burton from both an insider's and outsider's perspective. One thing I do know is that Burtonians have a strong sense of place. Insiders in Burton know the best place to buy a 'splash', or what it means to 'mash' tea. We have a unique physical geography that allowed our ancestors to brew and export the world's finest ales. We feel ownership over Marmite, which in itself has gone through transformational rebranding in recent years. Visitors to Burton often comment on the weird smell, which was also mentioned in the Guardian article as "adding further aromas to the town's addictive atmosphere". If you live here, the town just smells of home and you don't really notice it. But this is part of our heritage and part of what makes Burton an interesting place to visit. But how do we communicate and capitalise on Burton's arguably-quirky sense of place?

ESBC council's tourism plan gives hope for the future. The plan explains how the target market for future tourism in the area is aimed at 'outdoor enthusiasts', 'entertainment lovers' and 'family trips'. These seem sensible suggestions as East Staffordshire has attractions to suit each type of visitor. The strategy involves developing a new brand identity and website and producing promotional digital material. In the age of mass digital media where recent studies have shown that around 90% of tourists search for places to visit online, this is important; real-world places and digital places are now inextricably linked. The table below shows a hashtag analysis of #stratforduponavon #taunton and #burtonupontrent over a 7-day period. For those unfamiliar with hashtags, they can be added to social media posts (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc) to allow others to search for content. The table illustrates something quite important: for this 7-day period, Burton's online presence was almost non-existent. Where the town was mentioned, key words were associated with golf and nails, implying a successful online presence from perhaps two local companies.

	Audience reach	Twitter mentions	Key words
#stratforduponavon	774.3K	175	Theatre Ceramics art Merry Mice (books)

#taunton	741.1K	201	Talking Taunton Bristol Cheddar Holiday camp
#burtonupontrent	44.6K	24	Toptracer DP golf Nail design

Hashtag analysis of three towns, generated using <https://app.brandmentions.com> on 28th March 2023

Burton is unlikely to ever generate the same levels of tourism as places such as Bath or York, and perhaps this wouldn't be desirable to the townspeople anyway. However, if we can effectively communicate Burton's unique sense of place and provide good quality attractions, the benefits of increasing tourism could be felt throughout the town.

- I am happy to take this survey, as I love Burton, but feel it does not make the most of its tourist potential.
- Burton has a lot to offer in all ways; industrial heritage, architecture, historical significance, community diversity, creative and artistic depth and perfect geographical placement. Investment in independent businesses, recommissioning empty premises, repurposing disused buildings for tourism-related commercial purposes would be great to see continued. Encourage visitors and spending, to make Burton's businesses thrive.