

Liz Robert, CEO of Terry Precision Cycles

A Summary of Her Presentation to the Burlington Business Association

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On a roll

It's already happening, said Liz Robert, who followed Nick to the podium.

Robert, the former president of Vermont Teddy Bear, this year steered (as CEO) Terry Precision Cycles for Women from its Rochester, N.Y., home to Burlington.

"Why did I do this?" she asked. "Some people think I'm nuts. And to some extent they're right."

The cost of doing business in Burlington is significantly higher than in Rochester, she said — but she found the latter "depressing and stagnant."

So, despite the Queen City's higher home prices, [insurance](#) premiums and tax rates, its business climate and aesthetic charms won the day.

"This is the urban epicenter of everything Vermont stands for," Robert said.

Her unscripted praise built into a rallying cry:

- "There's a creative energy in Vermont that really runs high here — in part because there are passionate people here, people who like to engage in debate," she said.

"There's also tolerance and an independent mindset," she added. "They create a charge. This kind of project takes human, psychological, creative energy."

- "Moving to Burlington makes you work hard. You end up working more than just for the almighty buck. It makes you willing to defy the odds of taking a startup to success."

And what about the city's — and the state's — reputation for over-regulation?

"It's simply not true," Robert said. "The business community here has at its disposable a really well-oiled machine. The state of Vermont really stepped up to the plate to help us get here."

- She encouraged the audience to "resist the growing sense that governments are supposed to bail you out of everything."

"Rebuilding economies is about entrepreneurship," she continued. "It's about entrepreneurs taking the initiative and working with regulators. It's up to us. It's up to businesspeople like ourselves to step up to the plate to do the hard work."