

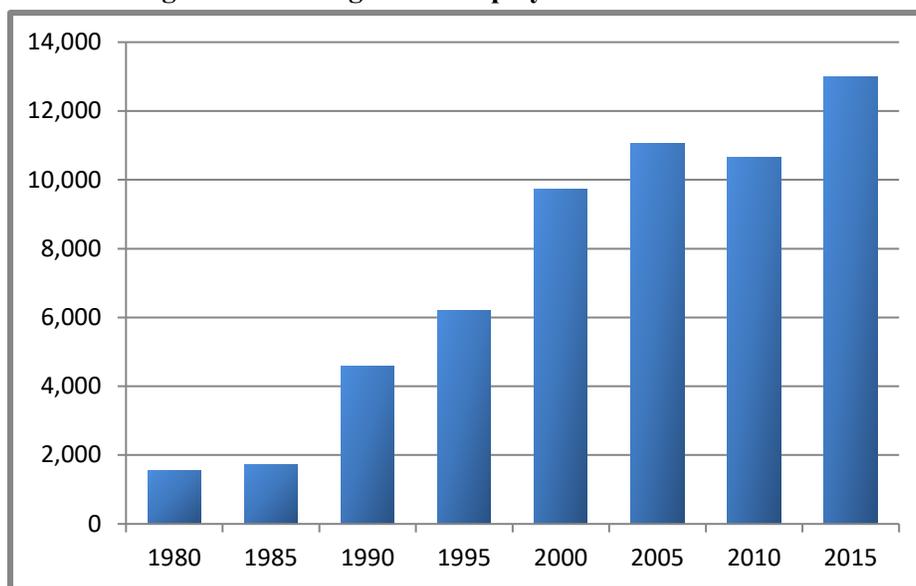
CHAPTER 7 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Williston’s vibrant and strong local economy has long been one of the defining characteristics of the town, and Williston today is a regionally important employment and commercial area. The town’s central location in Chittenden County, close proximity to the Burlington International Airport, and ready access to I-89 which runs through the heart of the town, have created a number of important location advantages for Williston for supporting varied economic activity. Previous town plans have discussed the town’s economic development goals primarily within its land use and transportation chapters. This marks the first-time economic development has been discussed separately

After decades of employment and business growth, Williston has become an essential part of the regional economy in Chittenden County. Over the past 25 years, the number of people employed in Williston has tripled, increasing from approximately 4,000 jobs in 1990 to over 12,000 jobs in 2015 (Figure 7.A). The town has a diverse economy composed of a mix of large and small businesses, non-profits and government agency offices; ranging from manufacturing, retail sales, to government services. The town is well known as a retail commercial hub, with Walmart and the collective stores of Maple Tree Place located in the Taft Corners area. However, retail sales employment has declined somewhat in recent years, and employment levels in this sector have yet to revisit levels seen prior to the recent recession in the late 2000s. In contrast, business and government services have become more and more prevalent in recent years (Table 7.A).

Williston is home to some of the largest and most well-known businesses in the state and region including Global Foundries (formerly IBM), Keurig Green Mountain Coffee, Walmart, S. D. Ireland, and Maple Tree Place. In addition, the town has a wide range of other businesses large and small. Williston continues to be one of the most important centers of retail trade in the region and state accounting for more taxable retail sales than any other community in the state.

Figure 7.A – Long Term Employment Trend in Williston



Source: Vermont Department of Labor

Figures 7.B and 7.C – Business Establishments and Employment

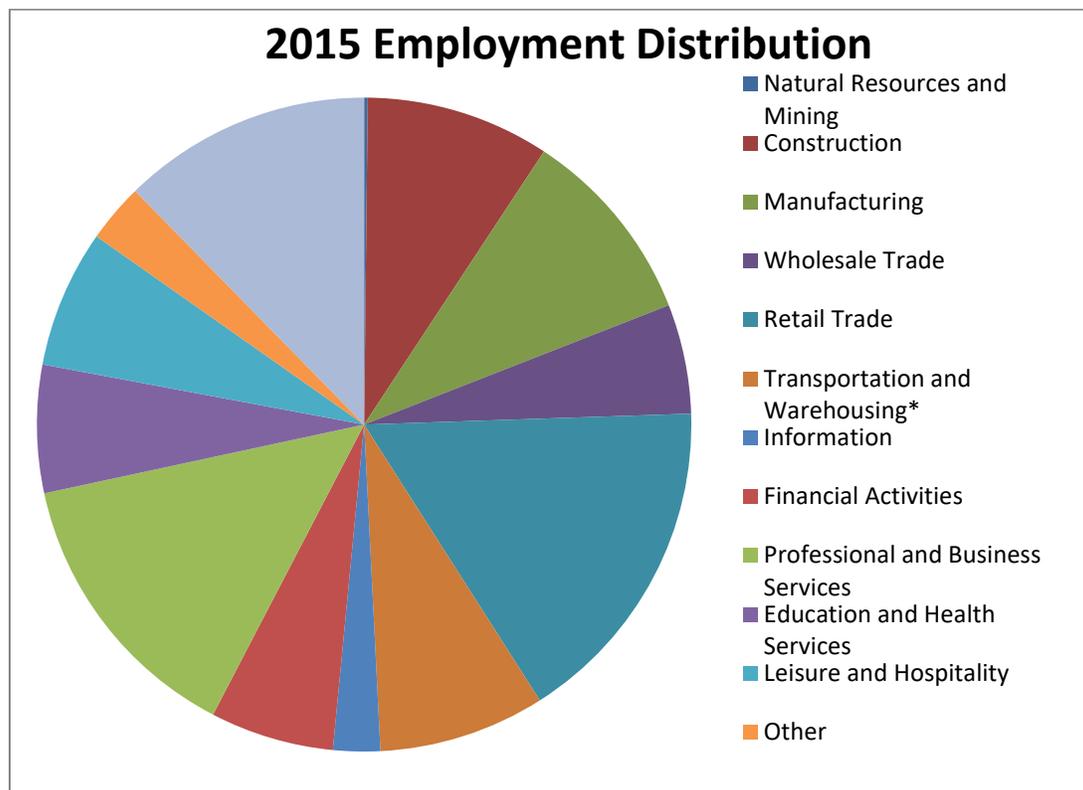
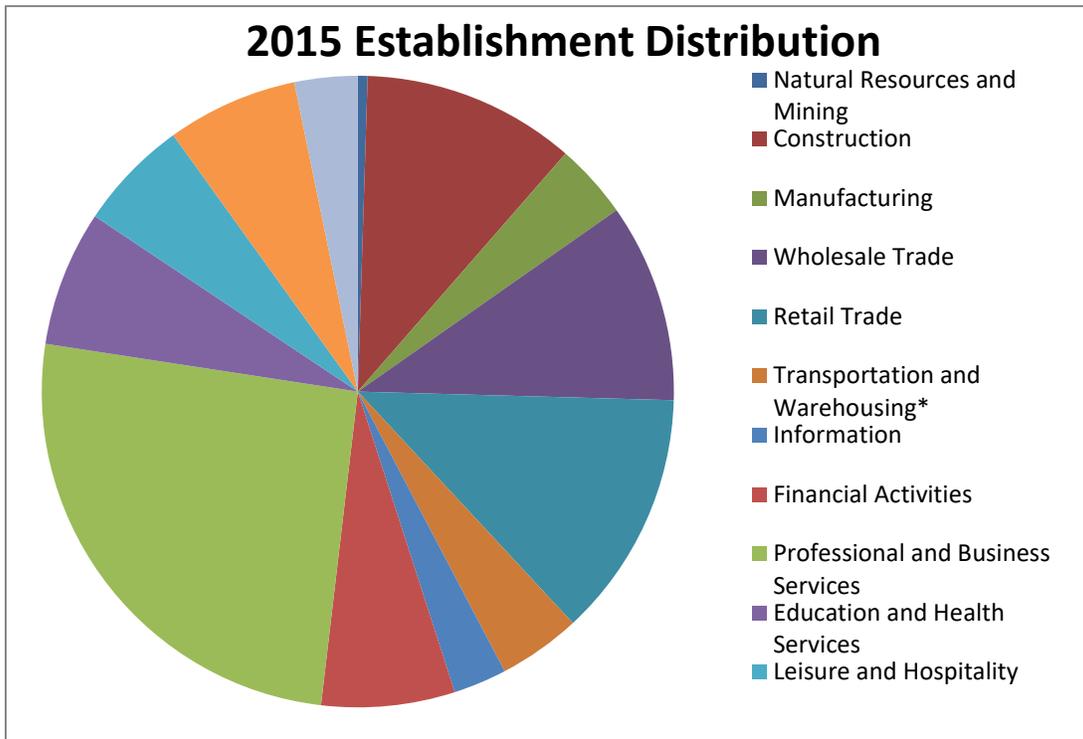
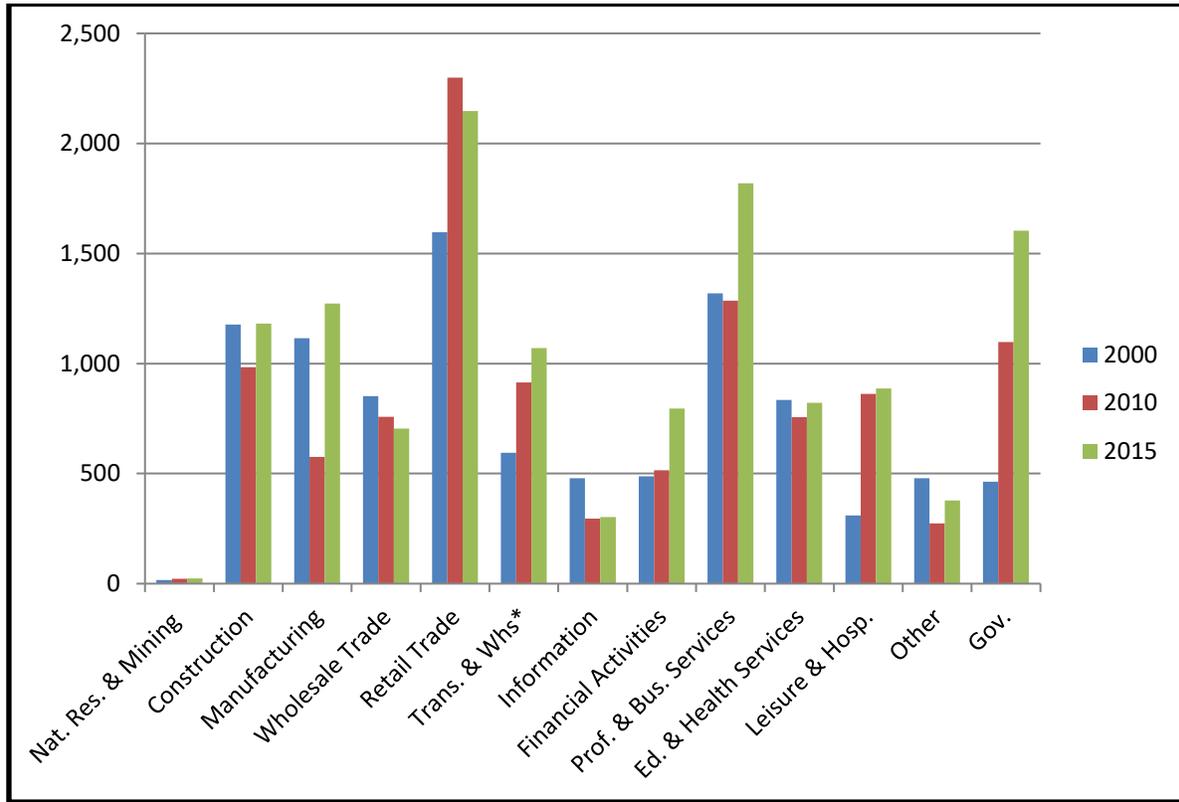


Figure 7.D – Employment by Sector, 2000 - 2015



Source: Vermont Department of Labor, Economic and Labor Market Information

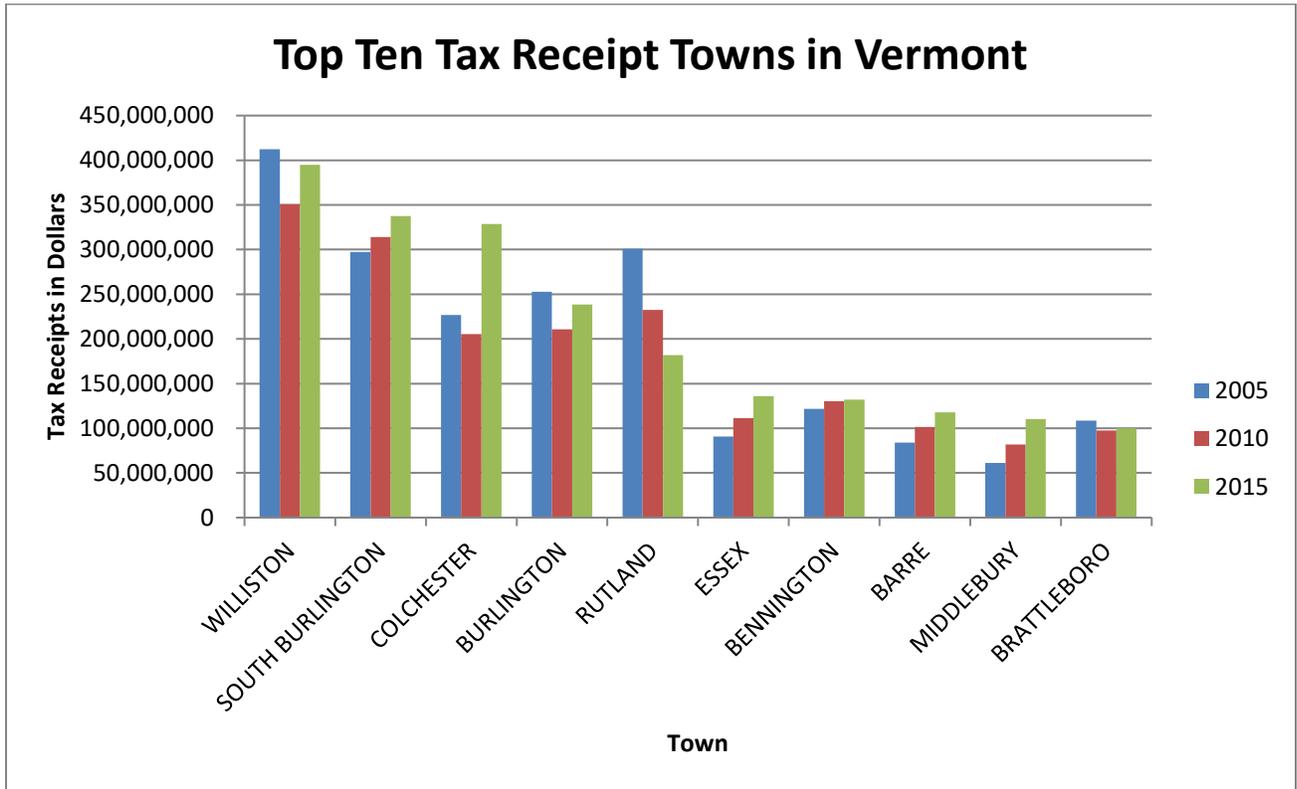
Table 7.A – Employment by Sector 2000-2015

Employment by Sector, 2000-2015								
	Establishments				Employment			
	2000	2010	2015	% Change	2000	2010	2015	% Change
Natural Resources and Mining	3	5	4	33.3%	17	22	23	35.3%
Construction	75	86	88	17.3%	1,178	984	1,182	0.3%
Manufacturing	30	32	31	3.3%	1,115	576	1,273	14.2%
Wholesale Trade	67	88	82	22.4%	852	758	704	-17.4%
Retail Trade	96	106	102	6.3%	1,596	2,299	2,147	34.5%
Transportation and Warehousing*	25	33	34	36.0%	594	914	1,070	80.1%
Information	15	20	22	46.7%	479	296	302	-37.0%
Financial Activities	42	53	55	31.0%	488	515	795	62.9%
Professional and Business Services	117	160	206	76.1%	1,319	1,286	1,819	37.9%
Education and Health Services	53	50	56	5.7%	834	756	822	-1.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	23	40	46	100.0%	310	862	886	185.8%
Other	64	54	54	-15.6%	479	273	378	-21.1%
Government	20	20	26	30.0%	463	1,098	1,604	246.4%
TOTAL	630	747	806	27.9%	9,724	10,639	13,005	33.7%

Source: Vermont Department of Labor, Economic & Labor Market Information

* Between 10-20 positions in this category were kept confidential in 2000

Figure 7.E – Top Ten State Sales Tax Receipt Towns, 2005-2015



Commuting Patterns

Williston, like the county as a whole, imports a large portion of its labor force. According to the U.S. Census, there were over 11,500 people commuting into Williston on a regular basis for employment in 2013, while only 850 of the town’s workforce lived in Williston. This illustrates the importance supporting vigorous efforts to increase the supply of housing in Williston, especially workforce housing. Because of this influx of workers into town, Williston’s daytime population is almost twice the size of its resident population (Figure 7.B)

Figure 7.G – Flow of Workers to and from Williston

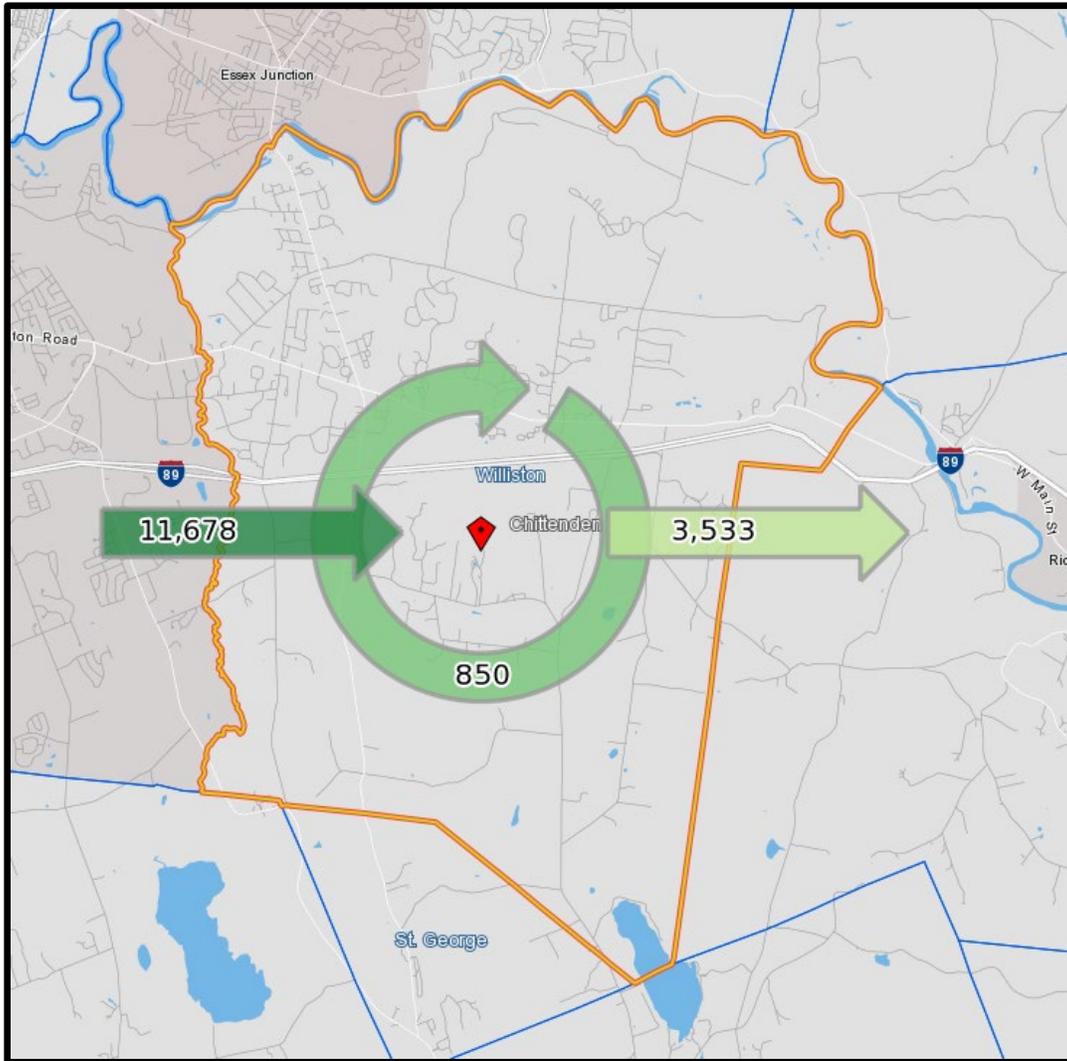


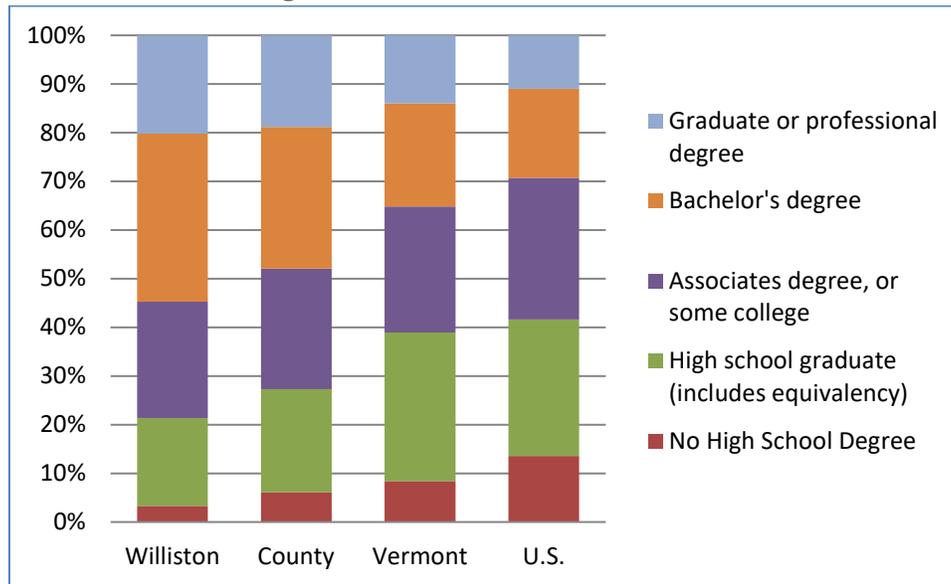
Table 7.B - Williston Estimated Daytime Population, 2013

Resident Population	9,014
Workers Commuting to Williston	+ 11,687
Williston Residents Commuting to Other Locals	-3,533
Net Daytime Population	17,168

Educational Attainment

A strong economy relies upon many factors, including having an educated and trained workforce available to fill the needs of area employers. Williston's population boasts a very highly level of educational attainment by almost any standards, in a highly educated region. Recent estimates indicate that over 95% of Williston's population over age 25 has graduated from high school, and over 50% have a college degree or greater, levels well above the national and state-wide averages (Figure 7.H).

Figure 7. H - Educational Attainment



Source: American Community Survey (2014)

Objectives

7.1 – Implement the Town's Land Use Plan – Chapter 3 Land Use identifies several land use objectives aimed at supporting the town's economic development. These include:

3.1 Taft Corners and Growth Center. Williston has emerged as a regional center of commerce, business, and employment. The town accounts for more retail sales than any other municipality in Vermont. This objective provides a basis for the town's continuing efforts to build a design-conscious, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use town center in the area of Taft Corners.

3.3 Industrial Lands. This objective maintaining the supply of industrially zoned land also calls for changes and refinement in the standards applied to uses of industrial lands to address the needs of an evolving economy.

7.2 – Implement the Town's Transportation Plan – Chapter 6 Transportation discusses the important role that the transportation network and services in Williston play in supporting the town's local and regional economy

6.2.1 Public Transportation. Most of the town's centers of economic activity have some access to public transportation, especially in the Taft Corners area, along Williston Road and Industrial Avenue. The town continues to support the provision and expansion of public

transportation services in Williston, especially in those parts of town with high employment levels.

6.2.2 Transportation Improvements: state. This goal details a range of state provided transportation improvements to the town's arterial roads including I-89 (Exit 12), Williston Road and VT 2A. The town will continue to work diligently with VTrans to see these improvements get implemented.

6.2.3 Transportation Improvements: Town. Included in this goal is the expansion of the town's grid street network in the Taft Corners area, and

6.2.4 Freight: The Town of Williston will continue to consider freight movement in its planning, public investment, and development review decisions.

7.3 – Continue to Maintain Available Wastewater Treatment Capacity. Chapter 8 discusses a range of local government services supplied by the town, including some forms of essential public infrastructure. This includes municipal water and sewerage service. Historically, having a supply of additional wastewater treatment capacity for new or expanding businesses in Williston has been a challenge. This has been less so recently as the town has added capacity, but it remains an important ingredient in supporting a healthy local economy.

7.4 – Support Additional Affordable Housing. Objective 5.2 Housing Opportunities calls for the town to use its residential growth management system to encourage the provision of a range of housing choices, including choices among different locations and densities of dwellings, and housing that is affordable for residents and the workforce. The town will also explore other means of promoting the provision of more diverse, more affordable housing.

7.5 – Support the Development of VTC. Vermont Technical College in Williston is an important resource for training and educating a technologically sophisticated workforce. Objective 10.3 calls for supporting the efforts by VTC to expand and evolve their Williston Campus.