

Organization: Vermont Development Conference
Location: Hilton Waterfront Hotel – 60 Battery Street Burlington, Vermont
Date: November 14, 2017
Time: 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Presentation Takeaways

The Vermont Chamber of Commerce presented the Vermont Futures Project data at the Vermont Development Conference on the workforce challenges experienced by Vermont employers and showed the attendees that about 11,000 more people are needed in the workforce. The attendees engaged in the exercise of providing solutions to narrow this workforce supply gap.

Why Vermont?:

Attendees were asked “Why Vermont?” as they entered the room and were instructed to write their answers on post-it notes. When answering this question, attendees fell into three general categories: Quality of Life/Lifestyle, Family, and Natural Beauty.

Specific notes: It's not New York; Because the USA needs forward-thinking, socially-conscious leaders and entrepreneurs from a rural state. And to be a polar opposite of New Hampshire; Great place to raise children and recreate. Both my adult children decided to stay, so I don't want to leave!; Good schools, safe, family friendly; My kids; Family is here; My extended family lives here; Great place to raise kids. (How do we keep 'em??); Sense of community/family; Why not@ Wat better place to live (and have a family); It's everything I know and love; Vt is home; Native. Grew up here. Great place to live, work and play; Born here; The peace; Family, quality of life; Beautiful, quality of life; Quality of life; Quality of life, four seasons; Because VT is awesome. Beautiful, special and spectacular; Vermont provides connection to each other, to our land, to a way of life that sustains my soul; The mountains and outdoors; Natural beauty; Natural capital; Being outside; Beautiful environment, not much traffic and small yet sophisticated; Great place to live, beauty and not overcrowded; It's the perfect size petri dish to try new things; Quality of life and entrepreneurial spirit; If you have to ask... stay home elsewhere; Why Not?; Opportunity.

Workforce Discussion:

Attendees were asked what they believed are the things that Vermont needs to assist population/business growth in Vermont. Responses included:

1. Improving/showcasing access to the local food movement.
2. Increase housing.
3. Narrow the pay gap.
4. Increase employment opportunities, including for under employed.
5. Assist in repayment of student loans.
6. Increase cultural opportunities.

7. Tell the rest of the world about the safety and opportunities we have in Vermont.
8. Brand and tell the world about our energy achievements.
9. Improve quality of our public education.
10. Connect better with Montreal
11. Incentives for out of state employers
12. Share the story of the accessibility one has in this state to politicians and civic work.
13. Vermonters need to have a voice and impact change.