



WORKFORCE & TALENT

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Vermont Futures Project has identified a need to annually increase the workforce by more than 10,000 people. We offer the following initial recommendations for private businesses, state government, non-profits, and individuals to adopt or engage with in an effort to close this workforce supply gap.

Job Demand Data – The Vermont Futures Project has sought state and regional employment demand data to inform workforce pipeline initiatives and regional recruitment efforts. With the release of the Vermont Department of Labor’s initial statewide data and the new *CTE Region Jobs Distribution and Concentration Report*, we are confident the information now exists to help make appropriate decisions to secure the workforce of the future.

Marketing Vermont – State government continues to invest in a targeted marketing campaign to attract and retain people to live and work in Vermont. The Vermont Futures Project continues to advocate for an annual appropriation of at least \$250,000 for this effort, consistent with the appropriations passed over the past three years.

Employers of Choice – The Vermont Futures Project will develop a statewide workplace engagement strategy and framework that small, mid-size and large employers can adopt to attract new workers and enhance retention of their existing workforce, with a focus on individuals nearing retirement. The primary goal will be to brand Vermont as a place where employers of all sizes strive to build a work environment where both employees and the business succeed.

Career and Technical Education – To expand the workforce supply, the Vermont Futures Project will investigate and recommend changes to the Career and Technical Education system. Such changes will aim to seek to make the system more accessible and provide improved pathways so more high school students can pursue post-graduation career opportunities. Special attention will be spent on researching alternative funding and governance models and integrated academic offerings.

Internships and More – To enhance the number of post-secondary students that stay in Vermont after graduation, the Vermont Futures Project will work to improve the internship-to-job conversion rates which are well below the national average. We will undertake a second research project to understand the factors that are impacting companies’ ability to convert interns to hires. Based on those findings we will make recommendations and/or create tools to improve this metric.

Incentives – In an effort to identify worthwhile methods to further attract new workers, the Vermont Futures Project will conduct a two-part research project on incentive programs. One component will seek to understand the ROI of programs organized in other jurisdictions while the other component will seek data on which incentives are most attractive to populations we seek to import. This will enable the Vermont Futures Project to make further recommendations on specific incentives to encourage people to live and work in Vermont.

Additionally, the Vermont Futures Project calls attention to work already being done by other organizations that address our workforce needs. They include:

- The **Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project** (vermonttpm.org) for their work on establishing workforce pipelines using supply chain methodologies to connect employers and educational programs;
- **The Permanent Fund** (permanentfund.org) given their advocacy for childcare to support working families and/or those seeking to join Vermont's workforce;
- **70x2025vt.org** (70x2025vt.org) for their efforts to improve educational outcomes and connect credentialing with job needs;
- The **State Workforce Development Board** (labor.vermont.gov/workforce-development-council) work to modernize and strengthen the state's collective workforce development system; and,
- Numerous regional efforts like the **RealRutland campaign** (realrutland.com), the **SeVEDS initiative** (seveds.com), and **Franklin County Workforce Investment Board's Workforce Summits**.

The Vermont Futures Project identified these recommendations after collecting hundreds of ideas through regional listening forums held across the state and then researching, evaluating, and projecting each idea's potential implementation and impact.

The goal of these recommendations is to grow Vermont's workforce from several populations, by:

- Attracting new workers to Vermont from out-of-state
- Enhancing workforce pipelines at the secondary and post-secondary levels,
- Extending employment tenure amongst our maturing workforce, and,
- Retaining our current workforce by improving workplaces and employee engagement.

With the publication of these recommendations, the Vermont Futures Project will now work with our partners to define implementation plans, roles, and specific work projects. We invite other organizations to get involved as we work on making these recommendations Vermont's new reality.

