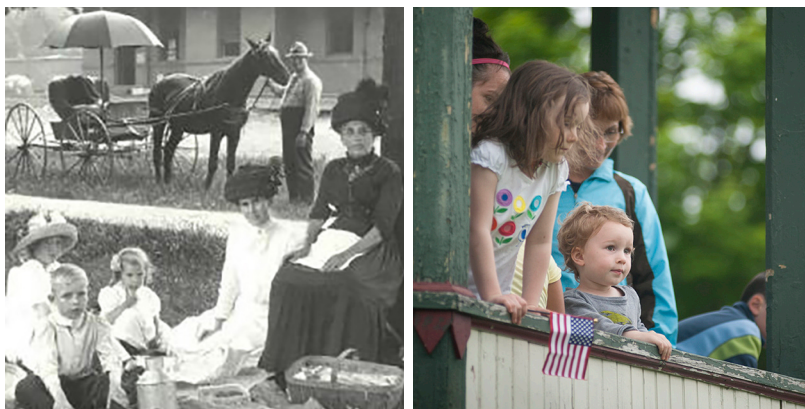


HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

A. Background

This chapter provides an historic perspective on demographic, social, and economic factors influencing change within the region. The data presented are intended to provide the framework necessary for analysis of future development goals. The principal sources used include data from the State of Vermont; U.S. Department of Commerce; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS); TRORC; and municipalities.



Royalton, 1915 | Source: Royalton Historical Society
South Royalton, 2015 | Source: First Light Studios

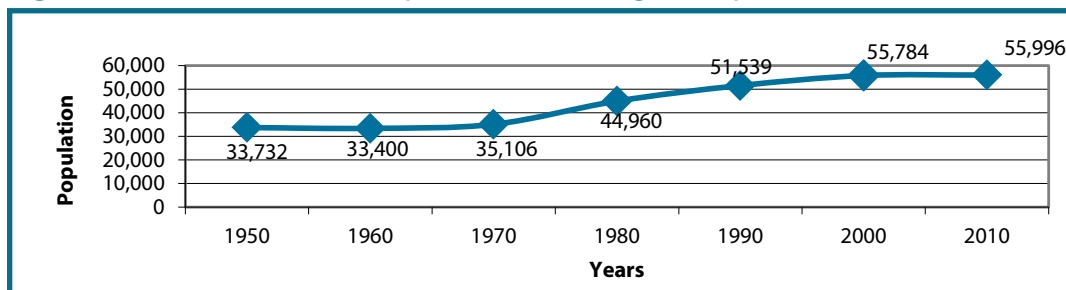
B. Population

Population and the rate of growth are major influences on overall development. Increases or decreases in population relate directly to the design and capacity of infrastructure. The density and overall distribution pattern of population, and population movements, affect the type of public facilities necessary to provide an adequate level of service. Public investments can be more effectively prioritized and implemented when population characteristics and trends are understood.

The population of the region in 2010 was 55,996, and in 2000 it was 55,784 (see

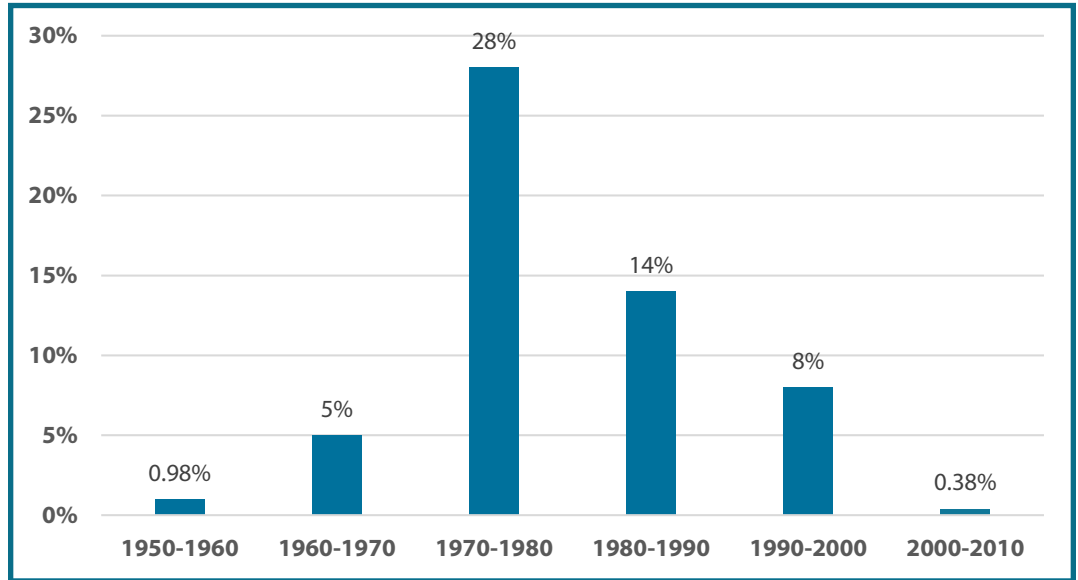
Figure 2-1); this means the region grew by 0.38% or 212 people between 2000 and 2010. However, this is at a much slower growth rate than in decades past (see Figure 2-2). While half of the region's towns saw a population increase, the other half saw population decreases (see Figure 2-3). Vermont's overall population increased by 2.6%, or by 16,123 people, to a total of 625,741. The towns experiencing the highest growth in the region were not the towns nearest the economic and employment centers (White River Junction, VT and Hanover and Lebanon, NH), as one would expect, but were some of the smaller outlying towns around them.

Figure 2-1: Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee (TRO) Region Population, 1950-2010



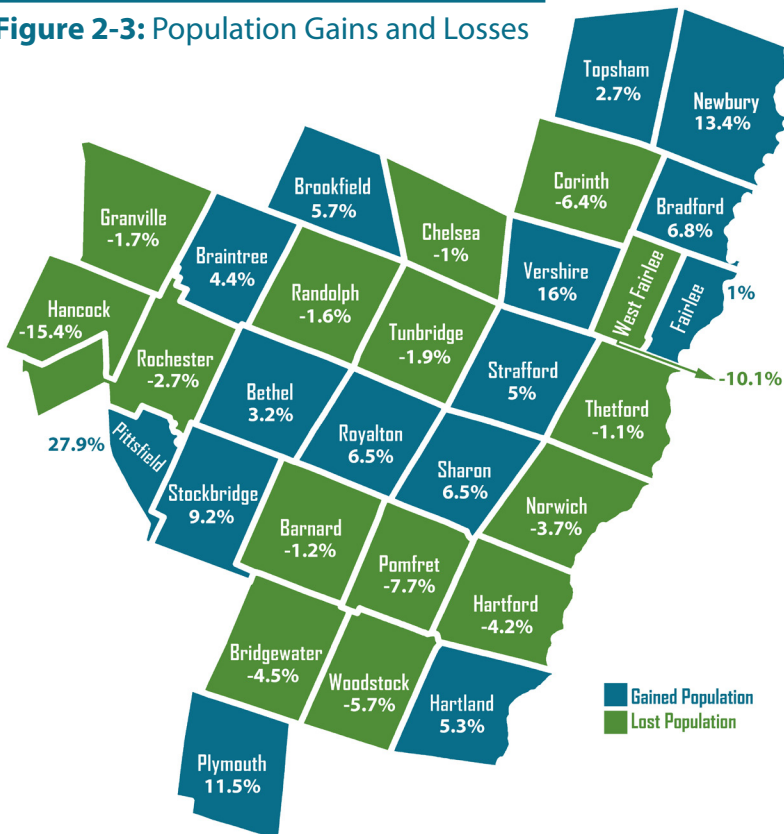
Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2-2: Population Change in TRO Region



Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2-3: Population Gains and Losses



Source: U.S. Census

This may indicate that cost of land and housing affordability is pushing workers further from the traditional centers of population and commerce to towns where affordable housing and land are available. Some of the communities that experienced increases in population are close to major roads (Bethel, Royalton, Sharon, Stockbridge, Bradford, and Newbury).

The second-home market influences regional growth as well: access to interstates, a beautiful working landscape, and a variety of natural and recreational assets is attractive as a destination for second-home development. Other factors influencing rates of population growth are the perceived quality of school systems, the relative property tax burden for comparable housing, land values in outlying towns, and the market value for single-family housing.

Table 2-1: Population Change by Town 1950 - 2010

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Actual Change '50 - '10	Percentage of Change '50 - '10
Barnard	439	435	569	790	872	958	947	508	115.72%
Bethel	1,534	1,356	1,347	1,715	1,866	1,968	2,030	496	32.33%
Bradford	1,551	1,619	1,627	2,191	2,522	2,619	2,797	1,246	80.34%
Braintree	626	536	751	1,065	1,174	1,194	1,246	620	99.04%
Bridgewater	903	776	783	867	895	980	936	33	3.65%
Brookfield	792	597	606	959	1,089	1,222	1,292	500	63.13%
Chelsea	1,025	957	983	1,091	1,166	1,250	1,238	213	20.78%
Corinth	786	775	683	904	1,244	1,461	1,367	581	73.92%
Fairlee	571	569	604	770	883	967	977	406	71.10%
Granville	213	215	255	288	309	303	298	85	39.91%
Hancock	391	323	283	334	340	382	323	-68	-17.39%
Hartford	5,827	6,355	6,477	7,963	9,404	10,385	9,952	4,125	70.79%
Hartland	1,559	1,592	1,806	2,396	2,988	3,223	3,393	1,834	117.64%
Newbury	1,667	1,452	1,440	1,699	1,985	1,955	2,216	549	32.93%
Norwich	1,532	1,790	1,966	2,398	3,093	3,544	3,414	1,882	122.85%
Pittsfield	225	254	249	396	389	427	546	321	142.67%
Plymouth	348	308	283	405	440	555	619	271	77.87%
Pomfret	586	600	620	856	874	979	904	318	54.27%
Randolph	3,499	3,414	3,882	4,689	4,764	4,853	4,778	1,279	36.55%
Rochester	937	879	884	1,054	1,181	1,171	1,139	202	21.56%
Royalton	1,331	1,388	1,399	2,100	2,389	2,603	2,773	1,442	108.34%
Sharon	470	485	541	828	1,211	1,411	1,502	1,032	219.57%
Stockbridge	427	392	389	508	618	674	736	309	72.37%
Strafford	680	548	536	731	902	1,045	1,098	418	61.47%
Thetford	1,046	1,049	1,422	2,188	2,438	2,617	2,588	1,542	147.42%
Topsham	733	638	686	767	944	1,142	1,173	440	60.03%
Tunbridge	774	743	791	925	1,154	1,309	1,284	510	65.89%
Vershire	284	236	299	442	560	629	730	446	157.04%
W. Fairlee	363	333	337	427	633	726	652	289	79.61%
Woodstock	2,613	2,786	2,608	3,214	3,212	3,232	3,048	435	16.65%
Region	33,732	33,400	35,106	44,960	51,539	55,784	55,996	22,264	66.00%

Source: U.S. Census

Poverty Status of Population

The U.S. Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty (see Table 2-2). If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The poverty threshold, or poverty line, is the minimum level of cash resources (income, Social Security Benefits, interest, dividends, pension or other retirement income) that are adequate to meet basic needs. The official measure uses three times the cost of minimum food diet in 1963 in today's prices. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U).

The percent of people living in poverty in the region are similar to the poverty numbers for the State of Vermont, but there are towns where the poverty numbers exceed the regional or statewide averages (see Table 2-3). The Town of Bethel's poverty rates exceeded the state and regional numbers. The Town of Bradford's poverty rates exceeded the state and regional numbers in every category. The Town of Strafford's numbers are just the opposite, Strafford has low poverty rates for all groups. The towns of Corinth, West Fairlee, Vershire, Royalton, and Rochester have the region's highest rates of poverty among persons aged 65 years old or older.

The towns of Vershire, Topsham, Chelsea, Barnard, West Fairlee and Newbury have the region's highest rates of poverty

Table 2-2: Poverty Thresholds in 2015 by Size of Family and Number of Related Children Under 18

Size of family unit	Weighted average poverty thresholds	Related children under 18 years								
		None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight or more
One person (unrelated individual)	12,082									
Under 65 years	12,331	12,331								
65 years and over	11,367	11,367								
Two people	15,391									
Householder under 65 years	15,952	15,871	16,337							
Householder 65 years and over	14,342	14,326	16,275							
Three people	18,871	18,540	19,078	19,096						
Four people	24,257	24,447	24,847	24,036	24,120					
Five people	28,741	29,482	29,911	28,995	28,286	27,853				
Six people	32,542	33,909	34,044	33,342	32,670	31,670	31,078			
Seven people	36,998	39,017	39,260	38,421	37,835	36,745	35,473	34,077		
Eight people	41,029	43,637	44,023	43,230	42,536	41,551	40,300	38,999	38,668	
Nine people or more	49,177	52,493	52,747	52,046	51,457	50,490	49,159	47,956	47,658	45,822

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2-3: Poverty Status by Town - 2015

	% of Families with Children Living in Poverty	% of Female Householders Living in Poverty	% of Individuals Living in Poverty	% of Elderly Living in Poverty (65 years old & over)
Barnard	26.2%	14.3%	10.2%	3.9%
Bethel	17.5%	18.1%	13.9%	8.6%
Bradford	17.6%	37.0%	15.7%	9.3%
Braintree	9.2%	17.9%	9.6%	9.8%
Bridgewater	17.5%	0.0%	11.3%	8.6%
Brookfield	8.8%	41.7%	8.1%	7.0%
Chelsea	30.0%	27.4%	17.2%	9.8%
Corinth	17.3%	12.5%	16.7%	14.2%
Fairlee	13.1%	15.7%	10.8%	3.4%
Granville	18.2%	0.0%	14.8%	3.0%
Hancock	10.2%	25.0%	13.7%	6.6%
Hartford	9.7%	25.0%	8.9%	12.1%
Hartland	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	10.2%
Newbury	30.7%	41.6%	19.7%	6.9%
Norwich	20.0%	80.0%	6.1%	5.8%
Pittsfield	16.0%	36.6%	7.8%	8.7%
Plymouth	8.8%	0.0%	10.9%	1.5%
Pomfret	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%
Randolph	22.7%	35.9%	13.1%	7.5%
Rochester	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%	13.2%
Royalton	8.9%	26.4%	23.9%	13.8%
Sharon	13.2%	15.4%	10.3%	3.0%
Stockbridge	15.4%	41.7%	12.0%	10.3%
Strafford	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	1.4%
Thetford	12.2%	16.4%	9.0%	5.5%
Topsham	21.9%	40.7%	12.3%	12.3%
Tunbridge	1.6%	6.9%	5.8%	8.2%
Vershire	20.5%	77.8%	14.7%	13.6%
West Fairlee	20.2%	50.0%	19.0%	13.0%
Woodstock	6.2%	11.3%	4.6%	4.3%
Region	13.8%	23.8%	11.3%	7.9%
Vermont	13.2%	28.6%	11.5%	7.2%

Source: U.S. Census, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

among families with children. The towns of Norwich, Vershire, West Fairlee, Topsham, Stockbridge, and Newbury have the region's highest rates of poverty among female householders, with "no husband present" as the ACS specifies. With state and regional female householder poverty rates at 28.6% and 23.8% respectively, these six towns have exceptionally high rates of poverty among single, female parents of children.

Poverty rates for "individuals" gives an overall view of poverty in a town, the highs or lows of selected groups' poverty rates are combined into one general measure of poverty. The poverty rate for individuals in Vermont was 11.5%, the region's poverty rate for individuals was 11.3%. Towns with the highest poverty rates for individuals were: Chelsea, Royalton, Bradford, Newbury, and West Fairlee.

The following towns have elevated proportions of people living in poverty for at least one of the four selected groups: Bethel, Bradford, Bridgewater, Chelsea, Fairlee, Granville, Newbury, Plymouth, Royalton, Strafford, Topsham, and Vershire. The towns of Bradford and Vershire had high poverty rates for three of the four groups, and Bridgewater and Topsham had highs for two of the four groups.

Many of the towns with the highest poverty rates also have the highest percentages of household that pay more than 30% of their income on housing, which is considered unaffordable by HUD standards.

Income of Population

The region's median household income ranged from a high of \$99,663 in Norwich, to a low of \$34,882 in Royalton. From 2010 to 2015 (see Table 2-4), Vermont's median household income grew by 6.4% while the region's median household income grew by 42.8%; however, in terms of real dollars, the region's median family income was still \$9,007 lower than that of the State.

Age of Population

Between 2000 and 2010 the region's population grew at 0.38% and the State grew at a rate of 2.6%. The State saw a slight increase in the size of the child-aged population over the decade, but the region saw a slight decrease. In 2010, the population of persons aged 19 years and younger constituted roughly 20.7% of the State and regional populations, but the region had a lower population of young adults (aged 20 to 24) than did the State, 5% for the region and 7% for the state. The region had a larger proportion of elderly persons (aged 65 years and over) than did the State, 16% for the region and 15% for the State. The region's growth was most driven by the in migration of people aged forty-five through seventy.

Future Population Projections

Future population projections are functions of two components; an estimate of natural changes in population that considers births and deaths, and estimates of migration. In 2013, the Vermont Department of Aging and Independent Living contracted with Vermont Agency of

Table 2-4: Median Household Income by Town

	2010	2015
Barnard	\$69,063	\$57,969
Bethel	\$47,853	\$54,500
Bradford	\$46,029	\$48,598
Braintree	\$42,667	\$49,375
Bridgewater	\$42,045	\$65,655
Brookfield	\$35,592	\$56,339
Chelsea	\$41,957	\$52,841
Corinth	\$51,667	\$56,042
Fairlee	\$54,628	\$65,885
Granville	\$53,000	\$50,417
Hancock	\$32,500	\$47,679
Hartland	\$34,877	\$57,383
Hartford	\$50,417	\$56,927
Newbury	\$62,212	\$45,428
Norwich	\$86,458	\$99,663
Pittsfield	\$63,000	\$66,250
Plymouth	\$58,333	\$51,500
Pomfret	\$63,750	\$74,474
Randolph	\$49,226	\$51,612
Rochester	\$43,631	\$50,577
Royalton	\$34,968	\$34,882
Sharon	\$49,000	\$60,109
Stockbridge	\$47,404	\$46,875
Strafford	\$53,152	\$71,250
Thetford	\$69,667	\$69,815
Topsham	\$46,111	\$54,063
Tunbridge	\$53,393	\$55,625
Vershire	\$47,045	\$50,735
West Fairlee	\$50,227	\$50,054
Woodstock	\$75,000	\$75,188
Region	\$32,340	\$46,169
Vermont	\$51,841	\$55,176

Source: U.S. Census, 2006-2010 and 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Commerce and Community Development to produce population projections in Vermont for the state, counties, and municipalities that were based on the 2010 Census and would project growth to 2030 (see Table 2-5). Projections were based on the assumption that economic conditions throughout Vermont would remain stable.

Sharon, Vershire and Thetford had the three highest rates of growth over the past sixty years (see Table 2-1) and they are also projected to continue experiencing high growth rates in 2030.

Looking at the towns that experienced moderate or slow growth over the past sixty years, the town of Stockbridge is projected to be the fastest growing town from 2020 - 2030. Vershire, Bethel, Plymouth, Pittsfield Royalton, and Sharon are projected to grow faster than the regional, county and state averages; the remaining towns will experience growth near the regional and state averages. Finally, the projections indicate that nine towns: Chelsea, Corinth, Granville, Hancock, Randolph, Thetford, Tunbridge, West Fairlee, and Woodstock will lose population as they approach 2030.

Planning Implications

Despite the fact that local incomes don't keep pace with escalating real estate costs, people are still drawn to this region of Vermont for its rural landscape, the varying seasons, superior environment and independent character. Towns that offer affordable housing and easy access to major roads and public transit will continue to gain population.

Table 2-5: Population Projections 2010 - 2030

Town	Census 2010	% Change			
		2020	2030	2010-20	2020-30
Barnard	947	994	1,018	5.0	2.4
Bethel	2,030	2,151	2,223	6.0	3.3
Bradford	2,797	2,907	2,950	3.9	1.5
Braintree	1,246	1,273	1,277	2.2	0.3
Bridgewater	936	965	977	3.1	1.2
Brookfield	1,292	1,363	1,395	5.5	2.3
Chelsea	1,238	1,252	1,245	1.1	-0.6
Corinth	1,367	1,377	1,363	0.7	-1.0
Fairlee	977	1,001	1,005	2.5	0.4
Granville	298	286	273	-4.0	-4.5
Hancock	323	300	279	-7.1	-7.0
Hartford	9,952	10,302	10,457	3.5	1.5
Hartland	3,393	3,653	3,815	7.7	4.4
Newbury	2,216	2,342	2,408	5.7	2.8
Norwich	3,414	3,579	3,661	4.8	2.3
Pittsfield	546	630	677	15.4	7.5
Plymouth	619	715	782	15.5	9.4
Pomfret	904	923	928	2.1	0.5
Randolph	4,778	4,745	4,666	-0.7	-1.7
Rochester	1,139	1,155	1,158	1.4	0.3
Royalton	2,773	3,011	3,163	8.6	5.0
Sharon	1,502	1,659	1,761	10.5	6.1
Stockbridge	736	809	958	9.9	18.4
Strafford	1,098	1,164	1,195	6.0	2.7
Thetford	2,588	2,611	2,592	0.9	-0.7
Topsham	1,173	1,245	1,277	6.1	2.6
Tunbridge	1,284	1,309	1,308	1.9	-0.1
Vershire	730	807	855	10.5	5.9
West Fairlee	652	640	623	-1.8	-2.7
Woodstock	3,048	3,055	3,040	0.2	-0.5
Region	55,996	58,223	59,329	4.0	1.9
Orange County	28,936	29,813	30,056	3.0	0.8
Windsor County	56,670	59,057	60,328	4.2	2.2
Vermont	625,741	653,575	670,073	4.4	2.5

Source: VT Department of Aging and Independent Living; analysis by VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development, 2013

Towns within thirty minutes of the primary service and employment centers (e.g. Rutland, Montpelier/Barre, and White River Junction/Hanover/Lebanon) may experience higher growth than towns that are beyond that commuting distance, or towns that are closer to the employment centers but have prohibitive costs of living. Accordingly, the transportation facilities connecting new growth areas to service and employment centers will carry higher volumes of traffic.

C. Economy

Current Economy and Jobs

The ACS indicates that 42.7% of the regional workforce, (people who live in the region but may or may not work in it), were employed in occupations classified as “Management, Professional, or Related Occupations” (see Table 2-6). Growth was also seen in “Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations.” “Service Occupations,” “Sales and Office Occupations,” and “Natural resources, Construction & Maintenance Occupations saw job losses between 2010 and 2015. The occupational profiles of the region and state are nearly identical.

Salary Classification and Work Patterns

The proportions of employment in private sector, public sector, and self-employed endeavors in the Region is nearly identical from 2010 to 2015, with a drop in unpaid family workers in 2015 (see Table 2-7). The State has a higher percentage of private sector employment (78%) than the region; the region has a higher proportion of self-employment than does the state (11.4%).

Table 2-6: Regional Occupations, 2010 and 2015

	Management, Professional and Related Occupations	Service Occupations	Sales and Office Occupations	Natural resources, Construction, & Maintenance Occupations	Production, Transportation & Material Moving Occupations
2015	42.7%	15.4%	20.1%	11.6%	10.2%
2010	41.7%	15.8%	22.4%	11.5%	8.6%

Source: U.S. Census, 2006-2010 and 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 2-7: Regional Salary Classification 2015

	Private Wage and Salary Workers	Government Workers	Self-employed workers in their own business, not incorporated	Unpaid Family Workers
2015	75.3%	13.9%	11.4%	0.2%
2010	73.2%	13.3%	13.1%	0.4%

Source: U.S. Census, 2006-2010 and 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Some portion of the jobs in the region are held by people who don't live within it. This region houses the employees of other regions' businesses as well. For instance, the region's top two major employers (see Table 2-8), Dartmouth College and Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, are located outside the region. Randolph is home to at least five of the region's major employers.

Gender and the Labor Force

Women in the region constituted 49% of the workforce in 2015, the same as Vermont. Norwich has the highest percentage of women in the work force, while Plymouth has the lowest.

Mode of Travel and Travel Time to Work

Seventy-five percent of the region's workforce drives a single-occupancy vehicle to work (see Table 2-9). This is the same as the statewide percentage. The region has a longer, average commuting-time than the State. The mean travel-time-to-work for the State was 22.5 minutes; it was 26.8 minutes for the region. The longest commutes occurred in the towns that grew the fastest over the past five years. The region's travel times may be comparable to those of the state or nation, but they are increasing at a faster rate than those of the state or nation.

Table 2-8: Major Employers Located In or Near the Region

Employers with 1,000 or more employees:	
Dartmouth College	Hanover, NH
Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center	Lebanon, NH
Hypertherm	Lebanon, NH
Employers with 500-999 employees:	
Killington/Pico Mountaint Resort	Killington, VT
Veterans Administration Hospital	Hartford, VT
Employers with 250 - 499 employees:	
G.W. Plastics, Inc.	Bethel, VT
Hartford School District	Hartford, VT
Simon Pearce (US), Inc.	Quechee, VT
King Arthur Flour Company	Norwich & Hartford, VT
State of Vermont	throughout Region
Vermont Castings, Inc.	Bethel, VT
Woodstock Resort Corp	Woodstock, VT
Mt. Ascutney Hospital & Health Center	Windsor, VT
Gifford Medical Center	Randolph, VT
Vermont Technical College	Randolph, VT
Employers with 100 - 249 employees:	
Copeland Furniture	Bradford, VT
DuBois & King, Inc.	Randolph, VT
Town of Hartford	Hartford, VT
Mascoma Savings Bank	throughout Region
Oxbow Union High School District #30	Bradford, VT
Pompanoosuc Mills Corporation	Thetford, VT
Randolph Town School District	Randolph, VT
Quechee Lakes Landowners Association	Quechee, VT
U.S. 1st & 2nd Class Post Offices	throughout Region
Vermont Law School	Royalton, VT
Visiting Nurses Alliance of VT & NH	throughout Region
Woodstock Union High School District	Woodstock, VT

Source: Vermont Business Magazine, November 2016, King Arthur Flour Company, and TRORC Board and Staff

Planning Implications

If population projections for the region hold true, the number of people entering the work force will increase. The number of jobs available above the natural growth of the work force will affect future population of the area and housing. If few jobs are created, workers will be forced to migrate elsewhere. Rapid job formation, exceeding natural growth in the Upper Valley Area will result in a net in-migration of people into the region. This area is generally defined as communities drawing primarily on Lebanon, White River Junction, and Hanover for primary services.

Cooperation and coordination among neighboring employment centers is essential to secure the proper balance between population and employment. Evaluation of and improvements to transportation systems and facilities should be a part of this inter-regional effort. As noted earlier, a sizable portion of the resident work force commutes to communities outside of the region.

The natural work force changes (job entries versus attrition rates) can more than likely be accommodated in the future without undue hardship on public services as the rate of change would be relatively slow. However, the advent of new industries, service facilities, or business expansions located in area employment centers could place growth pressures on surrounding towns and the State to provide services. Demands for rehabilitation or improvements to public infrastructure necessary to accommodate or plan for increased economic activity are likely to be

the result. The adequacy or sufficiency of existing transportation facilities could be impacted.

Vermont, hence the region, is not an isolated economy. It competes with neighboring states, the rest of the nation, and, increasingly, with the world. This competition will have an impact upon the region's competitive position. The creation of new jobs will, for example, be driven by the quality of the work force and the relative position of industry and commerce in compensation and benefit packages.

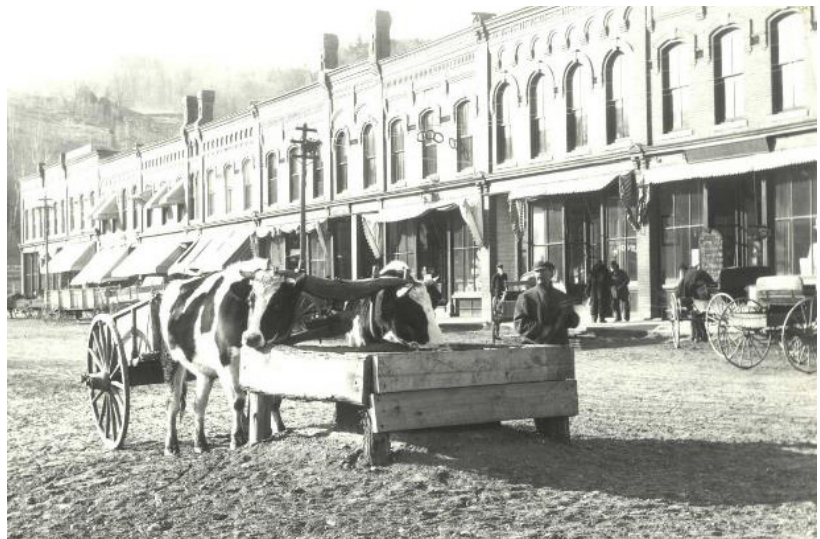
The type and rate of growth will be affected by economic policies and programs enacted by the State and its comparative advantages/disadvantages with other areas. Factors likely to influence economic change are:

1. Competitive tax structures and the overall tax climate for businesses and corporations;
2. Advancement of a statewide transportation system based upon solid planning and implementation;
3. Competitive energy costs and availability to accommodate economic development expansion;
4. Strength of marketing the benefits of job creation and private sector investment in the region or the state;
5. Comparative costs stringency and predictability of the regulatory permit process;
6. Extent of investment into telecommunication systems to bring rural areas of the region into the electronic workplace making it

possible to access worldwide data and markets; and

7. Work force competency and education.

Travel and tourism is an increasing business enterprise in Vermont and as well as the region. There are numerous reasons for this, including the region's close proximity to major population centers in the Northeast, the wide and diverse range of amenities and interests available to satisfy the tourist, and the area's varied and unique historic, cultural and natural resources. The sensitivity of planners toward innovative transportation and implementation programs to retain these special values will positively impact the long-term quality of the tourism and the recreation industry.



Oxen on Chelsea Street in South Royalton 1915
| Source: Royalton Historical Society

Table 2-9: 2015 Commuting to Work - Mode of Transportation by Town

	Workers 16 years and over	Car, Truck, Van (drove alone)	Car, Truck, Van (car- pooled)	Public Transport (and taxis)	Walked	Other Means of Transport	Worked at Home	Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)
Barnard	387	301	10	0	23	18	35	32.6
Bethel	1,069	757	160	19	35	0	98	25.7
Bradford	1,249	842	186	8	98	51	64	24.9
Braintree	661	468	72	17	18	21	65	24.8
Bridgewater	461	352	43	0	14	4	48	29.9
Brookfield	662	489	74	4	26	22	47	31.7
Chelsea	624	470	50	0	36	0	68	28
Corinth	664	538	45	3	17	8	53	40.7
Fairlee	599	457	41	0	41	2	58	22.9
Granville	169	135	12	0	3	1	18	30.4
Hancock	168	116	31	0	7	1	13	29.7
Hartford	5,152	3,946	711	54	76	35	330	17.6
Hartland	1,779	1,408	231	0	10	0	130	22.8
Newbury	971	783	59	14	37	8	70	27
Norwich	1,717	1,253	134	43	63	60	164	19.7
Pittsfield	302	275	9	0	18	0	0	23.4
Plymouth	233	169	26	0	6	0	32	22.2
Pomfret	474	372	38	3	21	4	36	23.3
Randolph	2,384	1,741	213	29	217	40	144	23.8
Rochester	533	396	53	6	33	17	28	26.7
Royalton	1,165	874	129	6	124	0	32	25.7
Sharon	766	614	69	7	33	4	39	25.9
Stockbridge	366	315	17	0	2	2	30	24.1
Strafford	604	473	62	0	9	4	56	27.1
Thetford	1,496	1,158	122	0	16	12	188	24.2
Topsham	612	491	79	0	3	7	32	31.8
Tunbridge	714	578	85	0	7	3	41	35.4
Vershire	348	239	45	8	32	2	22	30.8
West Fairlee	373	289	23	0	18	0	43	29.6
Woodstock	1,645	1,180	62	0	163	11	229	22.9
Regional Totals	28,347	21,479	2,891	221	1,206	337	2,213	26.8
Regional Percent		75.3%	10.1%	0.8%	4.2%	1.2%	7.8%	26.8
Vermont Percent		75.3%	9.4%	1.2%	5.8%	1.6%	6.7%	22.5

Source: U.S. Census, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

D. Cultural Traditions, Land Use and Transportation: 1760 to the Present

In most environments, land has been put to use in a succession of stages, depending upon its resources and location. Each of these changes has connected the region to the state more extensively, as well as to the larger New England region.

The settlement of the region, which has become the dominant land use pattern we experience today, began after the 1760s, following the end of the French and Indian War. Immigration into the region came largely from southern New England and continued into the early 1800s. With the opening of private turnpikes, military roads, and bridges, young people seeking new opportunities in farming fled to the Connecticut River Valley towns. In the early 1800s, the region's population reached an all-time high.

While transportation improvements were being advanced in the region, others were being made outside the region. The result was a transportation system that had an economic impact. It enabled locally grown produce and raw materials to reach outside markets. This pattern continues to this day.

With the improvements to transportation to the west, including the famous Erie Canal, Vermont's farmers lost some of their goods market to New York and Ohio. Additionally, improved access to other areas set the stage for westward migration out of the region, a movement that continued into the early part of the

20th century. Much has been written about the drift of the region's farmers to the west. Not all of the region's residents chose to leave the area however. Many sought an enterprise in sheep farming, putting to use the rocky uplands. The sheep industry flourished with Orange and Windsor counties being one of the leading production areas in the 1850s.

Like the earlier years, transportation improvements were major factors setting off the decline in the sheep industry. Improved access to growing competition in the west, combined with comparatively higher annual costs for sheep farming in the region, made Vermont less competitive. The sheep era did, however, bring in the woolen industry. This was the first major move of employment toward non-agricultural pursuits. The number of mills increased dramatically. Factories began to emerge, as most towns in the region give evidence to today, with dams and mills situated on major rivers.

The sheep industry flourished with Orange and Windsor counties being one of the leading production areas in the 1850s.

Concurrently came the emergence of the railroad as an attractive alternative to the fragmented system of roads and trails. Low population and few industries along the rail lines limited the ability of the railroads to operate successfully at first. To be successful, railroads had to rely on additional traffic from out of state. Formed in the 1840s, the Central Vermont Railroad extended lines through the White River Valley to be followed shortly thereafter by

the Connecticut and Passumpsic River line (currently the Boston and Maine) along the eastern side of the region. Following the development of these and other main lines throughout the region and Vermont during the late 1870s, a number of short rail lines emerged. These included the White River Railroad, a twenty mile line extending from Bethel to Rochester, the Woodstock Railroad, a fifteen mile line extending from White River Junction to Woodstock, and the Montpelier and Wells River Railroad, extending from Wells River and New Hampshire to Montpelier. All of these lines reflected the need to transport goods, raw materials and people to and from some of the interior communities located away from major rail centers and lines. By the middle of this century these lines fell into financial decline, and were eventually discontinued and liquidated.

Railroads need to be recognized as key factors for the development and maturity of the State's tourism and recreation business today, a vital and growing part of the region's economy.

Railroads can be credited as a contributor to the economic development of the region. Railroads need to be recognized as key factors for the development and maturity of the State's tourism and recreation business today, a vital and growing part of the region's economy. The implications resulting from rail line development heavily influence the land use patterns and cultural values of our villages and countryside today. Also, it should come as no revelation that most of the region's

primary highways follow closely the course of existing or former railroad lines.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the region entered into an evolution of yet another transportation network imposed upon the landscape - the superhighway. Interstates 91 and 89 were completed throughout the region and Vermont. The interstate system can be credited as the first national highway system planned by the federal government.

The four lane interstate system bypassed most of the region's villages and tended to siphon off traffic from the older parallel truck roads such as Routes 5, 12, and 14, spelling economic hardships for some of the so-called business routes. Some gas stations closed and motor courts lost the traffic necessary to keep operating. Ownership changes and replacements for older uses resulted.

The region has thirteen interchange areas on I-91 and I-89. Some of these interchange areas have proven to be prime targets for roadside commercial development. Since land access to other points along the Interstates has been prohibited, land around the interchanges has become sought after and highly valuable. Oil companies, national franchised restaurants, and motels have begun to emerge on the landscape around these areas. While not yet prevalent within this region, the interchange area throughout Vermont is becoming somewhat a center for certain uses historically held to be within the town center. These include retail shops in large

complexes, such as shopping centers, automobile service and sales, trucking terminals, and other non-residential vehicular oriented uses. For the region, the core of the retail marketplace still remains within village centers and along roads leading to and from them. In some cases, such as in Bethel, Randolph, and Bradford, some downtown area merchants have felt that they have become an economic casualty of major road building and the development that has followed. Now the same source of funding that built or rebuilt major highways (the federal government), is being used to resuscitate life into these areas, (i.e., sidewalks, bikeways, road improvements, historic preservation, and parking areas).

The identity of the region today is a composite of its landscape, people, institutions, and history. All these factors contribute to its character. The case has been made in numerous forums that Vermont, hence the region, exhibits some of the finest landscapes and environments in the United States and elsewhere. The region's rural character and traditions are heavily influenced by its pattern of development and the sense of community that comes from people living and working here. When looked at over time, this pattern of settlement and its scale have worked for the sociological, psychological, and aesthetic benefit of the region.