



# Buildings and General Services

## Government Business Services

### Vermont Information Centers Division – FY 2017 Annual Report



## Program Summary

Vermont Information Centers Division (VICD) provides oversight and management of 17 State-owned facilities and two public-private partnerships.

VICD locations provide essential services that offer travelers restrooms, safety breaks and provide shelter during adverse weather conditions.

Each facility serves as Vermont's "billboards" by showcasing Vermont businesses, attractions, and events, while staff work to direct travelers off the highways and into Vermont's communities. Our centers are utilized by Vermont visitors and residents, which allow us to effectively promote both inside and outside Vermont.



## Program Summary

The motorist aide refreshment program offers free Green Mountain Coffee Roasters coffee to the traveling public. This program is self funded and maintained solely by donations.

The brochure program offers a marketing and distribution program for businesses, attractions, and events. There is a distribution fee associated with this program.

Vermont Information Centers Division provides free wifi service to the traveling public.

Operation of the facilities along the federal highway are subject to the regulations of the Federal Highway Administration.



## Program Summary

The Vermont Information Centers Division (VICD) provide travelers with

- Safety breaks and restrooms
- Local and regional travel and weather information
- Lodging reservations
- State-wide current event listings
- Access to information kiosks
- Overnight truck parking
- Displays of Vermont artisans
- Scheduled motorist aid refreshment breaks as fundraising opportunities for Vermont non-profit community organizations



# Authority

1992 Act 144, Section 49 transferred operation authority from VTTrans to ACCD

1999 Act 18, Section 39(3) authorized BGS to operate as state or private facilities.

1995, 3 VSA, Section 196, subsection 2476c created the brochure distribution special fund.

2003, Act 56, Section 59 created the motorist aid refreshment program.



# Mission

To provide travel information and safety break to travelers, to serve as Vermont's billboards to promote the "*Vermont Experience*" by marketing Vermont's businesses, attractions and events to the traveling public, and to provide wifi service.



# Goals

- To provide superior customer service that includes staff's welcoming attitude, and knowledge of the services available to the traveling public in Vermont's communities.
- To be open and available 365 days a year to allow safety breaks for travelers and to provide safe haven during inclement weather conditions.
- To provide clean facilities.
- To employ well-trained staff.
- To provide consistent oversight to ensure the visitor experiences the same level of service at each facility.
- Security Systems – contracted electronic monitoring of center openings and closings, employee panic buttons to address the remote locations and isolation of single-staff coverage.



## Recent Program Changes

- Lisa Sanchez is appointed Manager of the Vermont Information Centers Division
- Bevan Quinn is newly appointed supervisor in the Central and Southwest area visitor centers.
- Public-Private Partnership at Exit 7 off I-89 opened in September of 2016.





## FY 2018-2019 Action Plans

**Partners in promoting Vermont** – VICD is collaborating with the Department of Tourism & Marketing, the Agency of Commerce & Community Development and the Agency of Agriculture to promote the initiative to “Think Vermont” when thinking about a place to play, work, and live.

**Security Equipment/Cameras** -- Installation of network-wide replacement of security equipment and cameras in a Vermont Information Centers Division (VICD) locations. To replace equipment that is not functioning or is non-existent in some locations – to better protect travelers, the employees, and the staff.

## FY 2018-2019 Action Plans

### **VICD Marketing Programs**

- To combine the administration of both the Brochure program and the Ad Panel Sales program for tracking and billing efficiencies.
- To automate the processes.
- To provide added oversight of the process.

### **Statistics/Data Management**

- Develop software that could collect and accurately report daily visitor statistics.
- To enable a process that will be less time consuming.

# Marketing Vermont

The **Brochure Program** offers businesses, attractions, and events the opportunity to introduce their product to an estimated 9000 visitors each day. The revenue supports the program and other marketing endeavors. There were 499 registered brochures in FY 2017.

The **Advertising Panel** program is offered in seven VICD locations, displayed in high traffic areas. The rates are based on the location and the number of visitors. This program has garnered \$336,174 in revenue since FY 2012.

**Promotional Displays** are offered at no charge. This program welcomes displays of Vermont made furniture, food products, art work, photography, local crafts, etc. and product demonstrations.



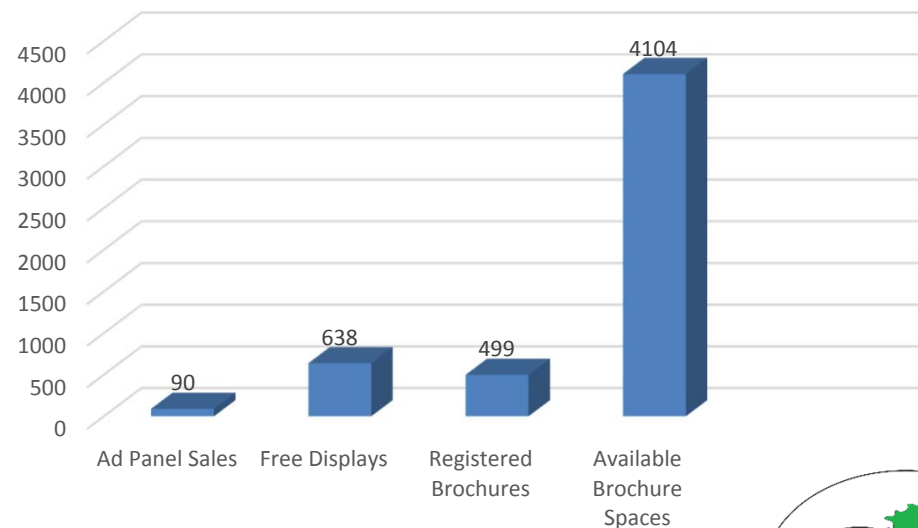
# Marketing Vermont

The **Brochure Program** offers 4104 brochure spaces across the entire VICD network. Brochure clients often take up multiple spaces.

The **Advertising Panel** program can accommodate 90 advertising panels in the seven sites that offer this opportunity – Bennington, Derby Line, Fair Haven, Guilford, Hartford, Randolph, and Sharon.

**Promotional Displays – VICD** hosted free promotional displays across the entire network in FY 2017.

Number of Promotions - FY 2017



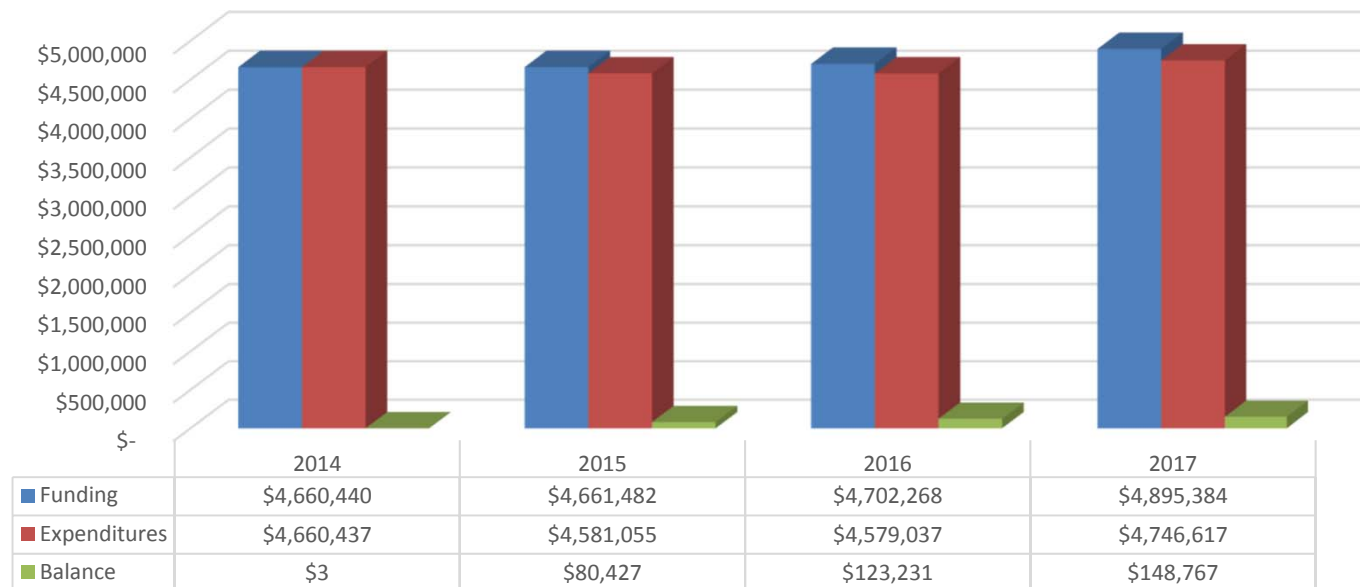
## Performance Measurement Areas

- Visitor/traffic numbers and cost per visitor
- Promotions – number of Vermont businesses promoted
- Program financial status
- Efforts to support the Governor's initiative to "Think Vermont"
- Properly maintained facilities and security equipment

# Operation Revenue/Expenses

The Vermont Information Centers Division (VICD) operation is funded through the Transportation Fund (86%) and the General Fund (14%). In collaboration with the Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), "system preservation (SEP) funds" have been identified for the preservation of the network of VTrans-owned facilities.

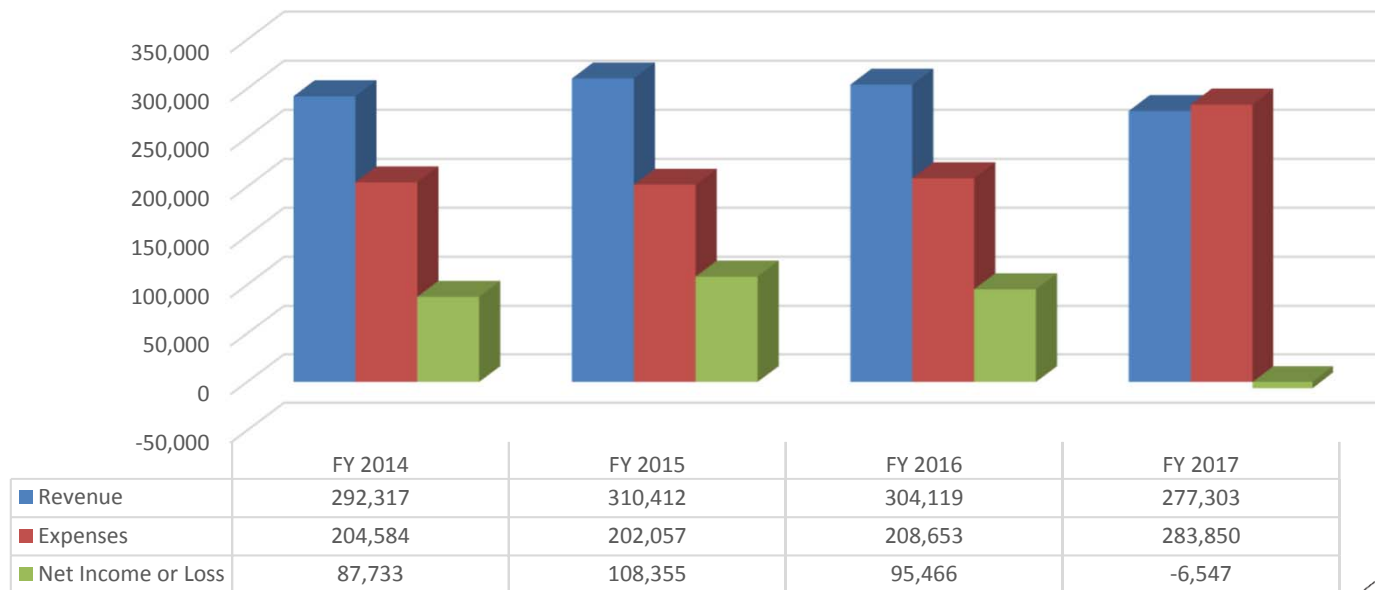
VICD Funding & Expenditures FY 2014-FY 2017



## Brochure Program - Revenue/Expenses

The Vermont Information Centers Division's Brochure Program registered brochures for 499 businesses, attractions, etc. This fund is used to support the Division's marketing program – to promote Vermont to the traveling public.

**Brochure Fund - Revenue & Expenses  
FY 2014 - FY 2017**

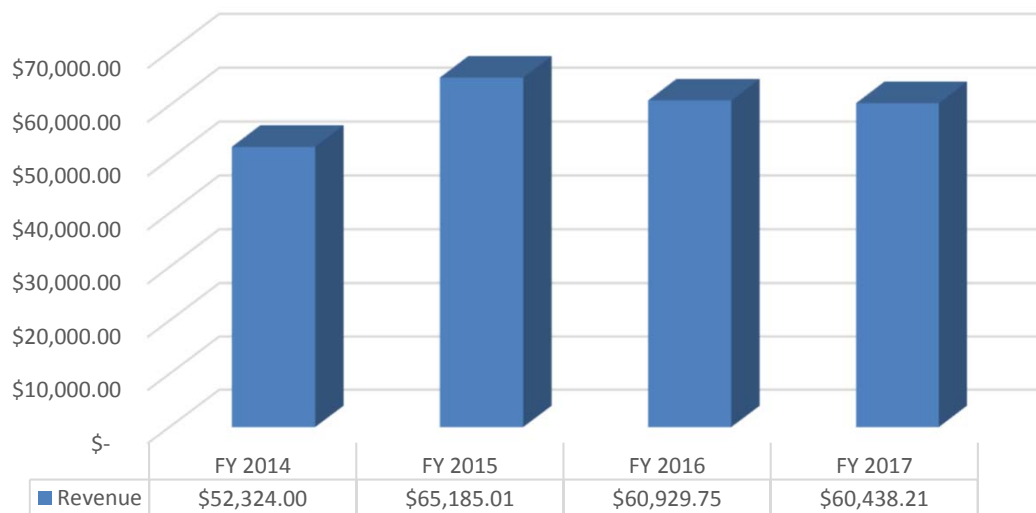


# Advertising Panel Program - Revenue

The Advertising Panel Sales program offers businesses the opportunity to display promotional panels in seven VICD locations.

The Panels are displayed at  
 Bennington  
 Derby  
 Fair Haven  
 Guilford  
 Hartford  
 Randolph  
 Sharon

Advertising Panel Sales Revenue  
 FY 2014 - FY 2017

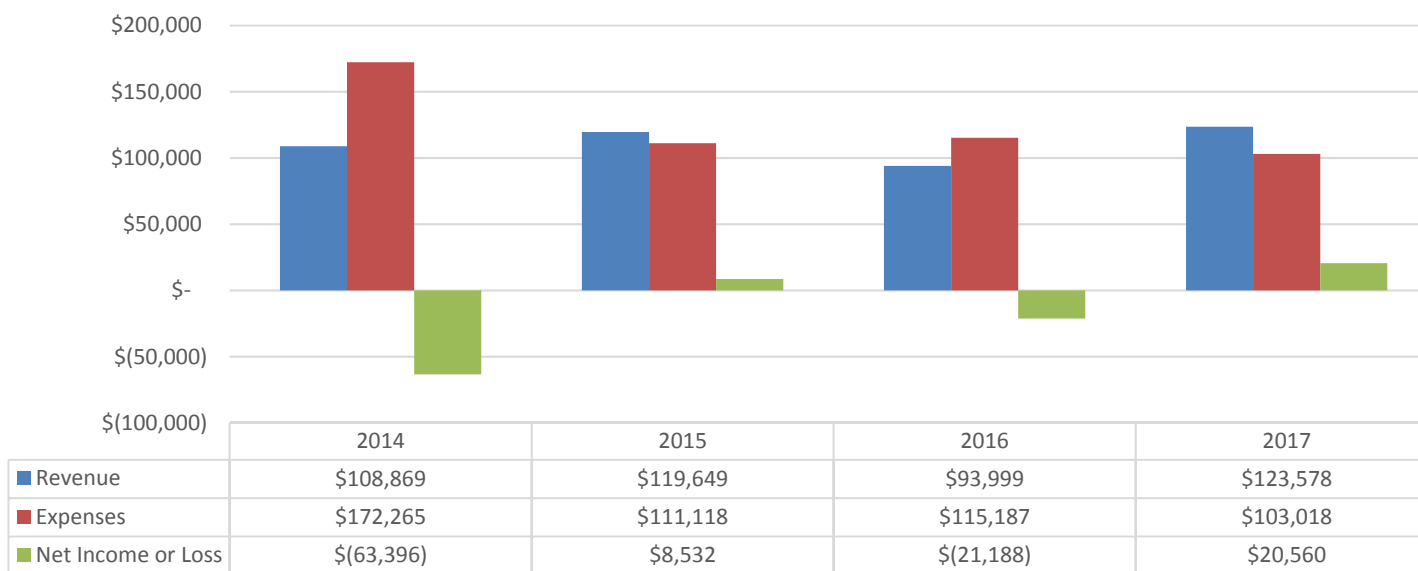




## Coffee Fund Program

The Vermont Information Centers Division offers free Green Mountain Coffee Roasters coffee at 12 of the 17 VICD locations. The coffee is offered to promote a safety break for the travelers. Donations help to support the program.

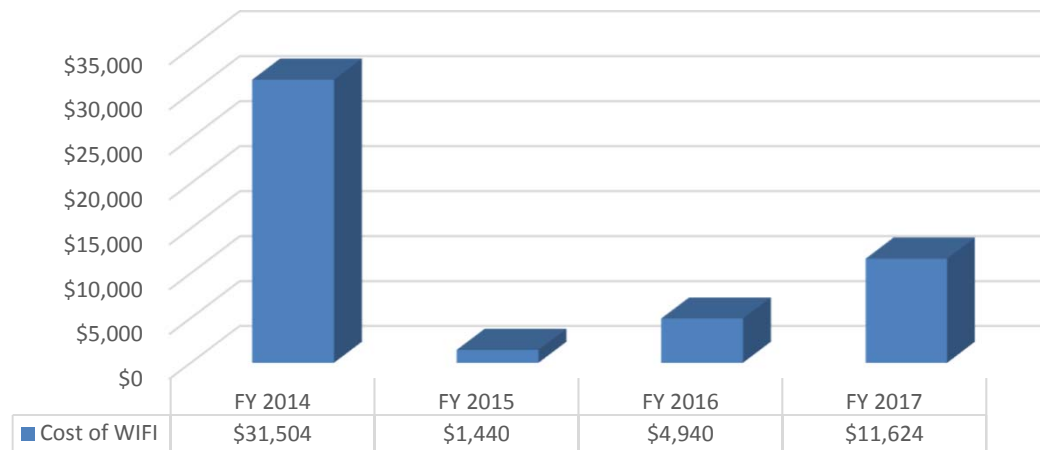
**Coffee Fund - FY 2014 - FY 2017**  
**Revenue/Expenses/Net Income or Loss**



## WIFI Services - Revenue/Expenses

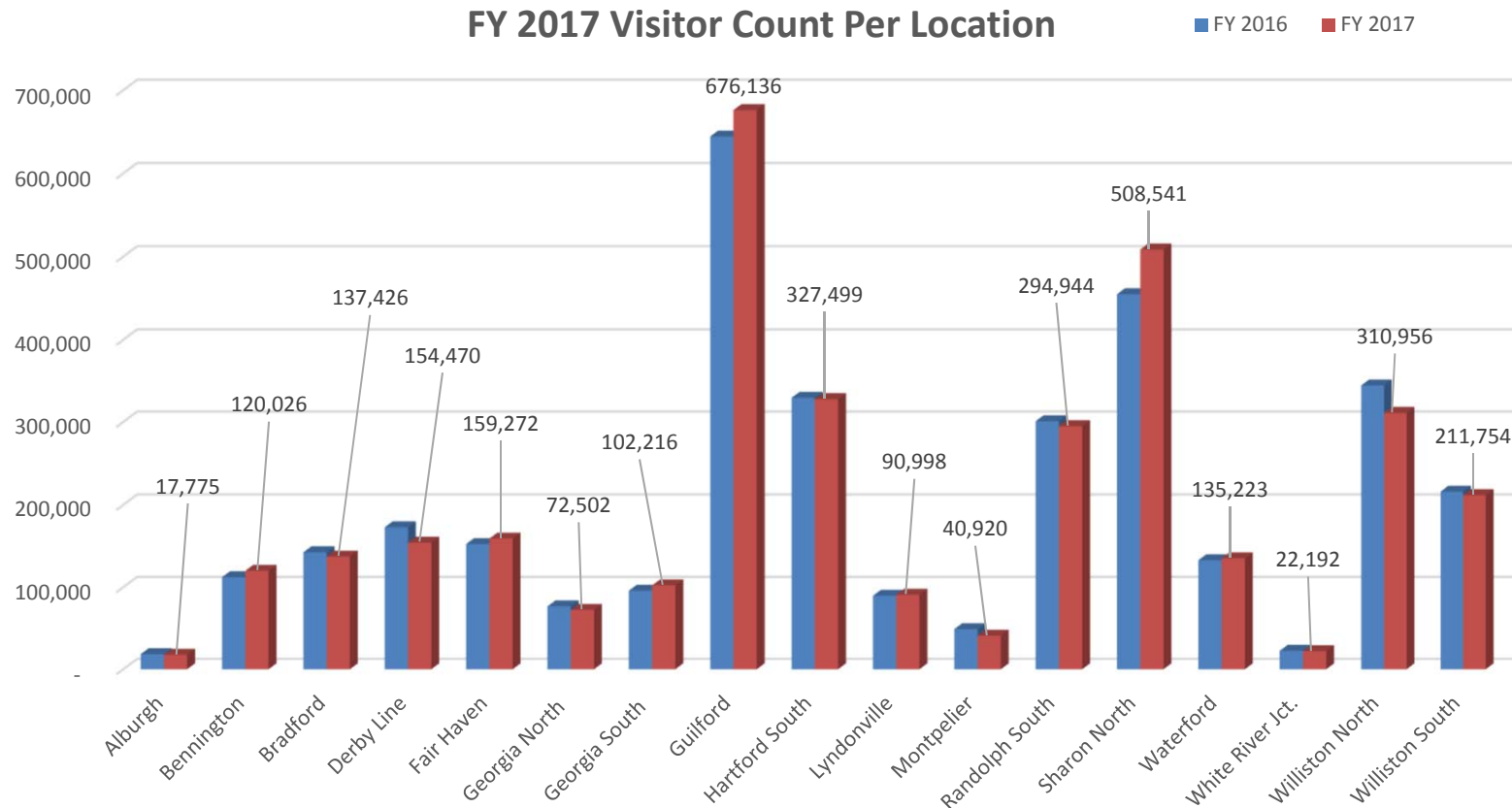
A contract for WIFI services provides free wireless internet access to the traveling public. Free WIFI is currently available in all 17 VICD facilities. VICD has paid all costs since the service became free in 2007.

Cost of Free WIFI Service  
FY 2014 - FY 2017



## Annual Visitor Count – FY 2017

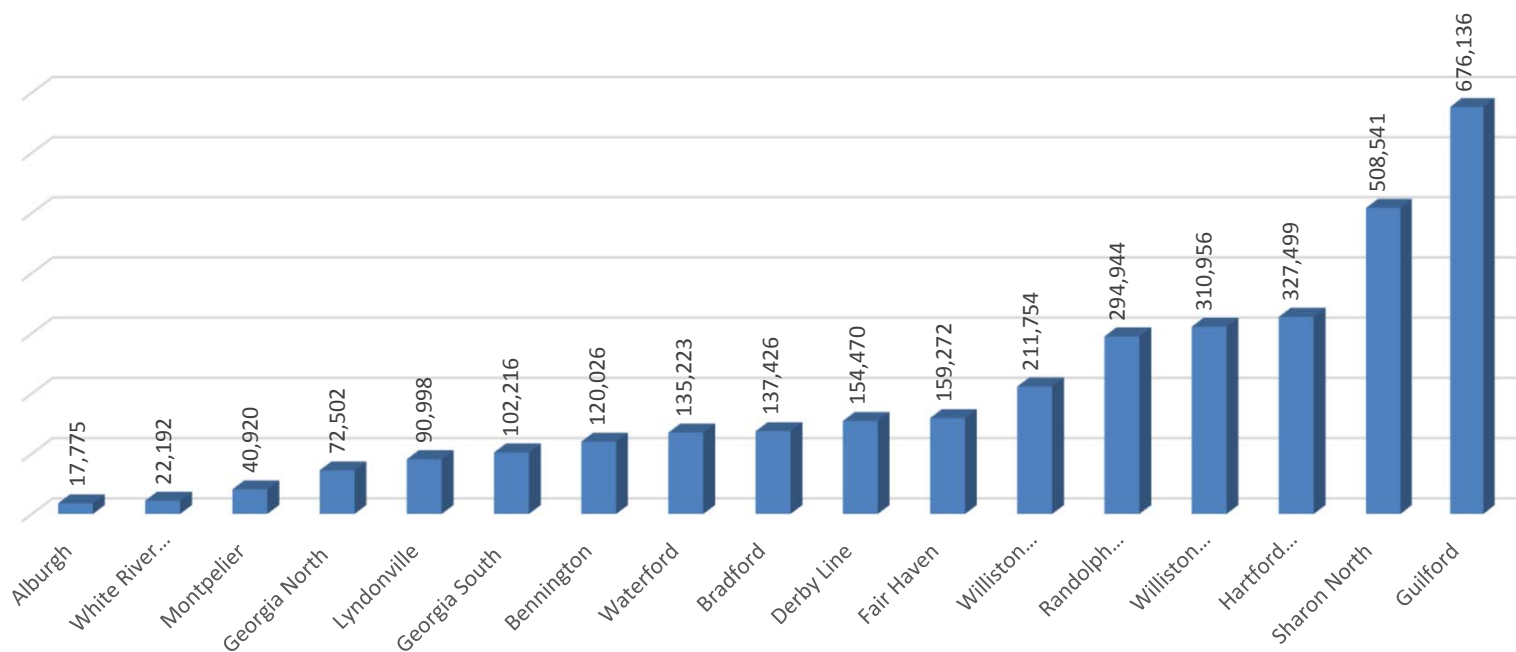
**VICD hosted a total of 3,382,850 Visitors in FY 2017**



## Visitor Count By Site - FY 2017

**VICD hosted a total of 3,382,850 Visitors in FY 2017.**

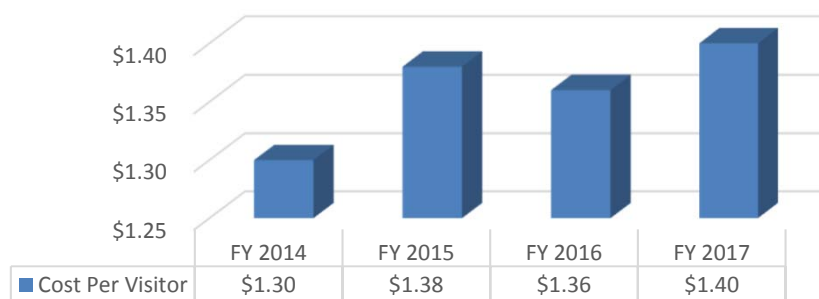
**FY 2017 Visitor Count -Site Comparison**



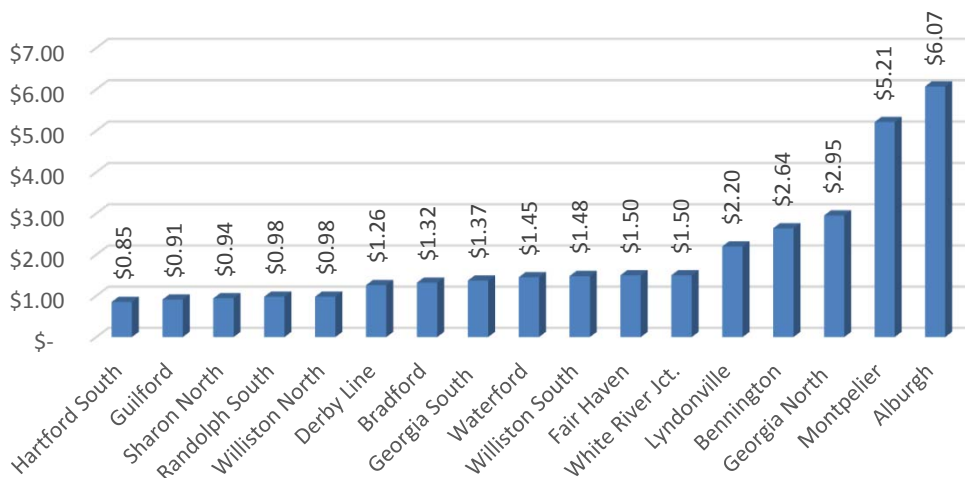
# Cost Per Visitor – FY 2014-FY 2017

**The Vermont Information Centers Division (VICD) strives to maintain an average visitor-to-expense ratio of \$1.25.**

Cost Per Visitor FY 2014 - FY 2017



FY 2017 Cost Per Visitor Per Facility





17 Information/Welcome Centers

4 Sites Closed February 2009

3 Supervisory Districts

29 Classified Employees

33 Temporary Employees

23 Chamber Employees

Hours of Operation Vary

Predominantly single-layer staffing

318 Miles of Interstate Highway

Transportation/General Fund Program (86% TF/14% GF)

**Division Website:** [http://bgs.vermont.gov/information\\_centers](http://bgs.vermont.gov/information_centers)

1 Public-Private Partnership at Exit 7 of I-89 in Berlin

1 Public-Private Partnership at Exit 19 of I-91 in Waits River