

Buildings and General Services

Government Business Services

Vermont Information Centers Division

FY 2018 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.

The facilities are owned by the VT Agency of Transportation (VTrans). 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 VTrans 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.

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 -- Replacement of network-wide 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 2019-2020 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 430 registered brochures in FY 2018.

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 \$410,698 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.



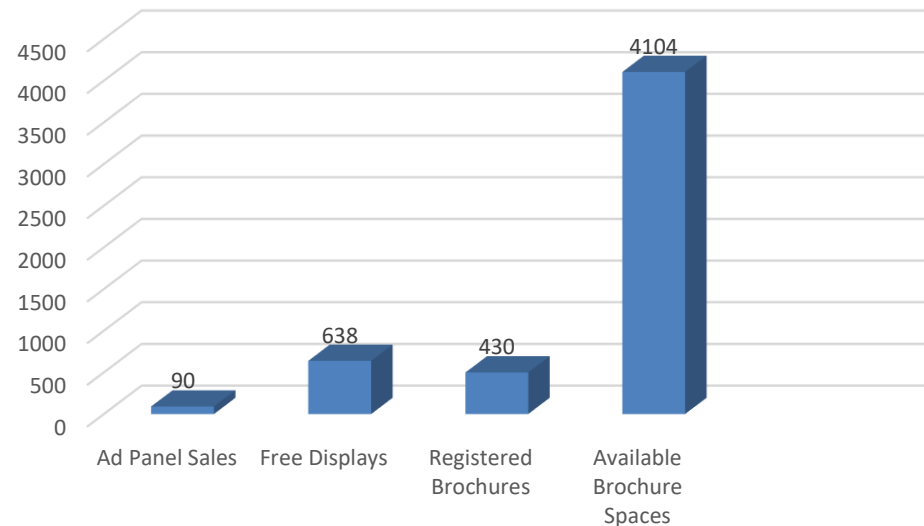
Marketing Vermont

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 seven sites – Bennington, Derby Line, Fair Haven, Guilford, Hartford, Randolph, and Sharon.

Promotional Displays – VICD hosted 638 free promotional displays across the entire network in FY 2018.

Number of Promotions - FY 2018



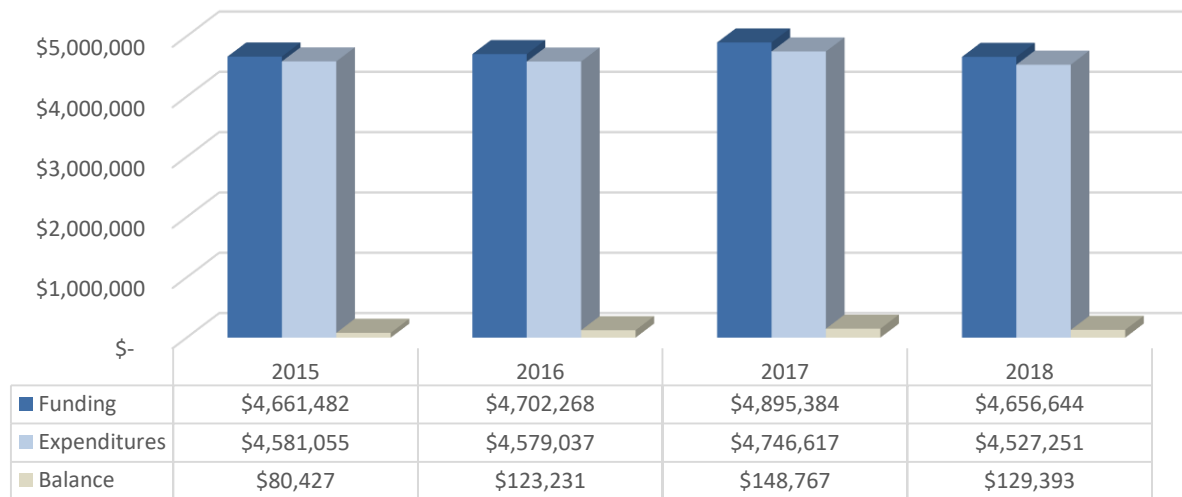
Performance Measurement Areas

- Visitor/traffic numbers and cost per visitor
- Percentage of days sites are open and available to the traveling public.
- 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.

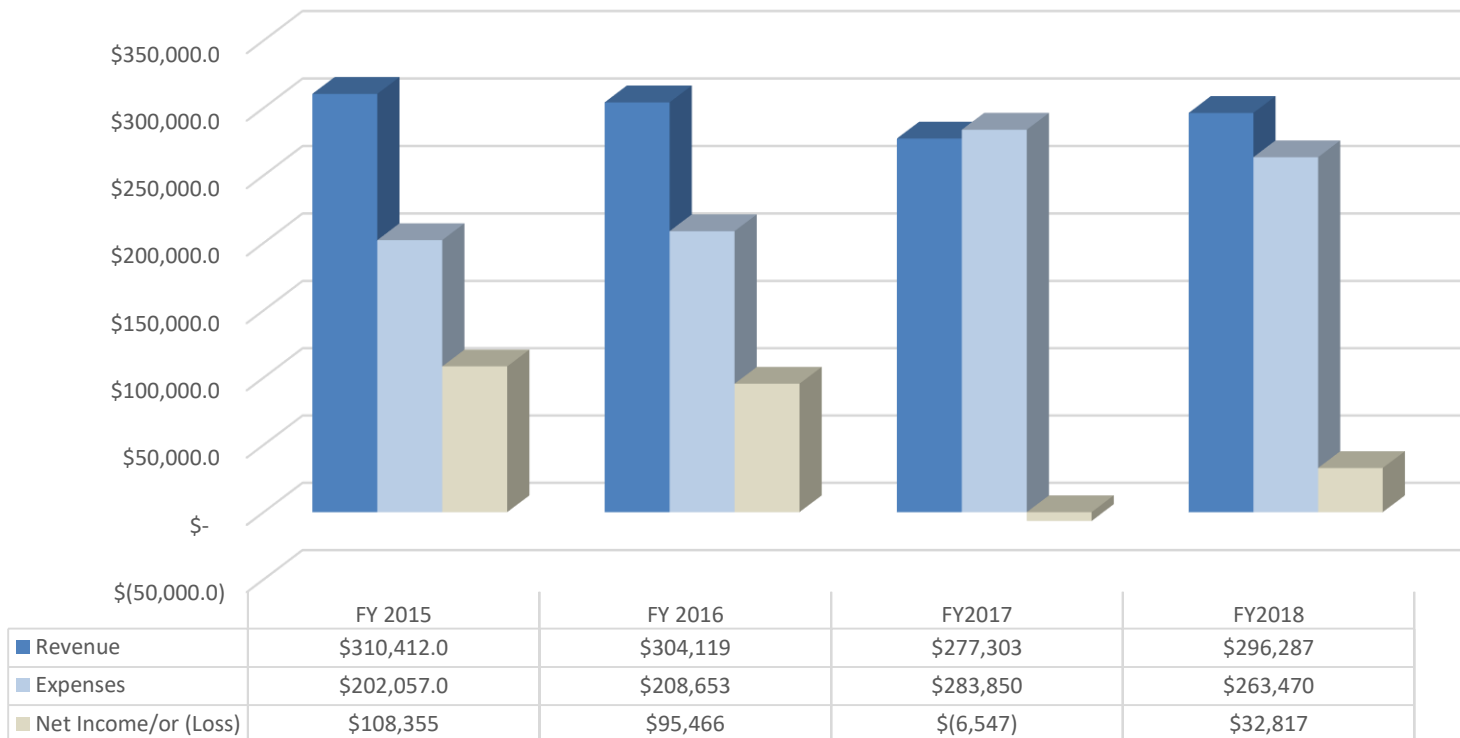
VICD Funding & Expenditures
 FY 2015 - FY 2018



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 2015 - FY 2018

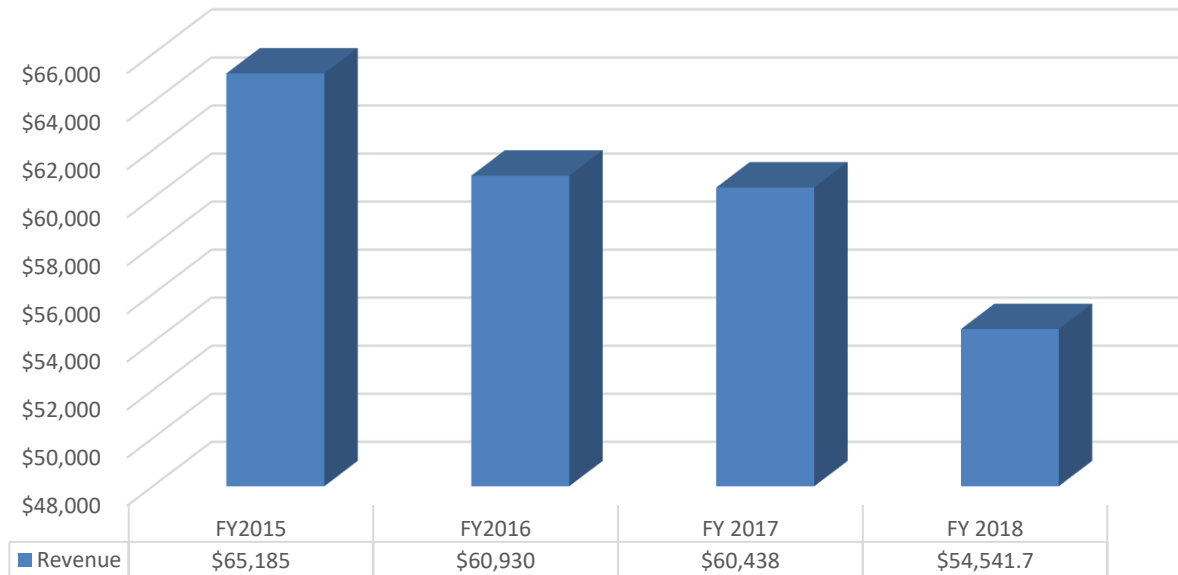


Advertising Panel Program - Revenue

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

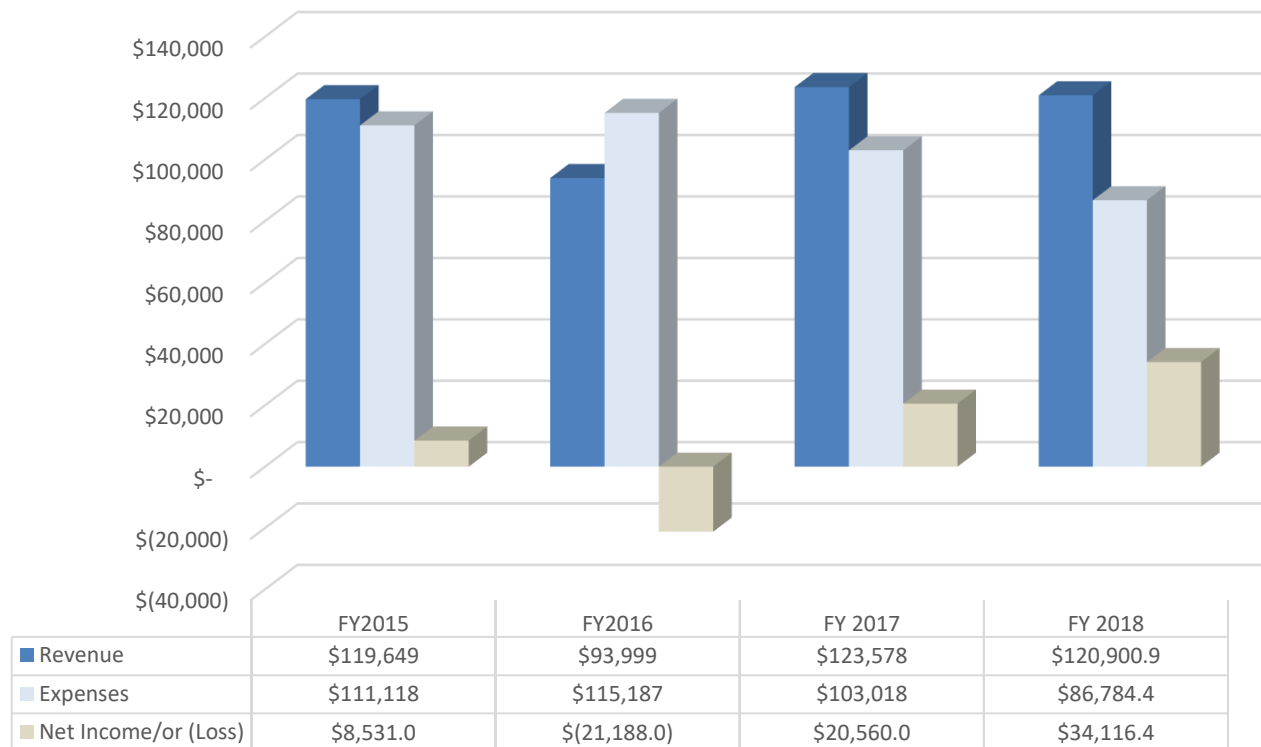
Advertising Panel Program - Revenue
FY 2015 - FY 2018



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.

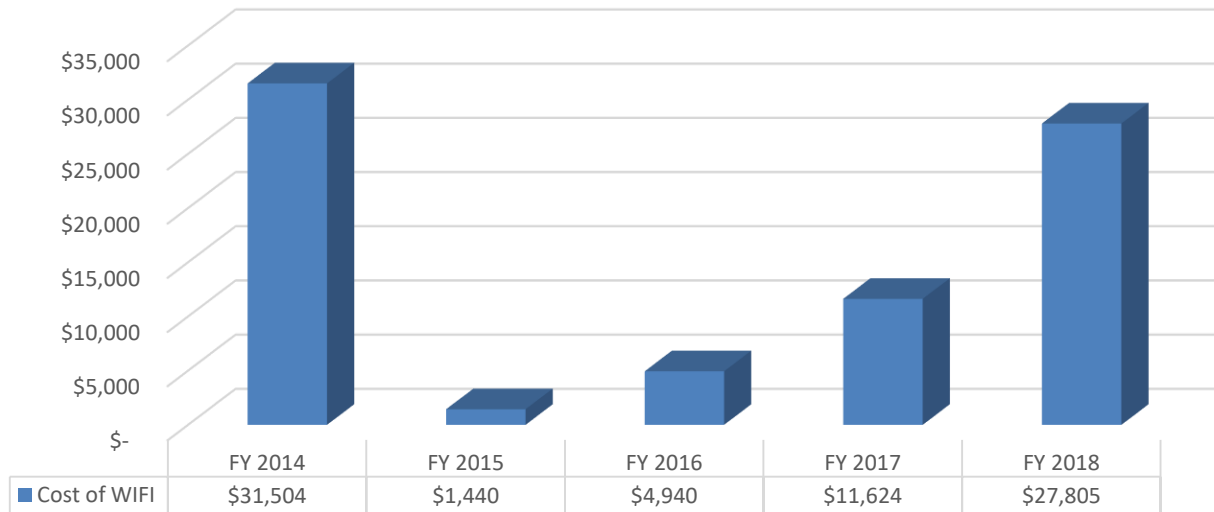
Coffee Fund Program -- FY 2015 thru FY 2018



WiFi Services - Expenses

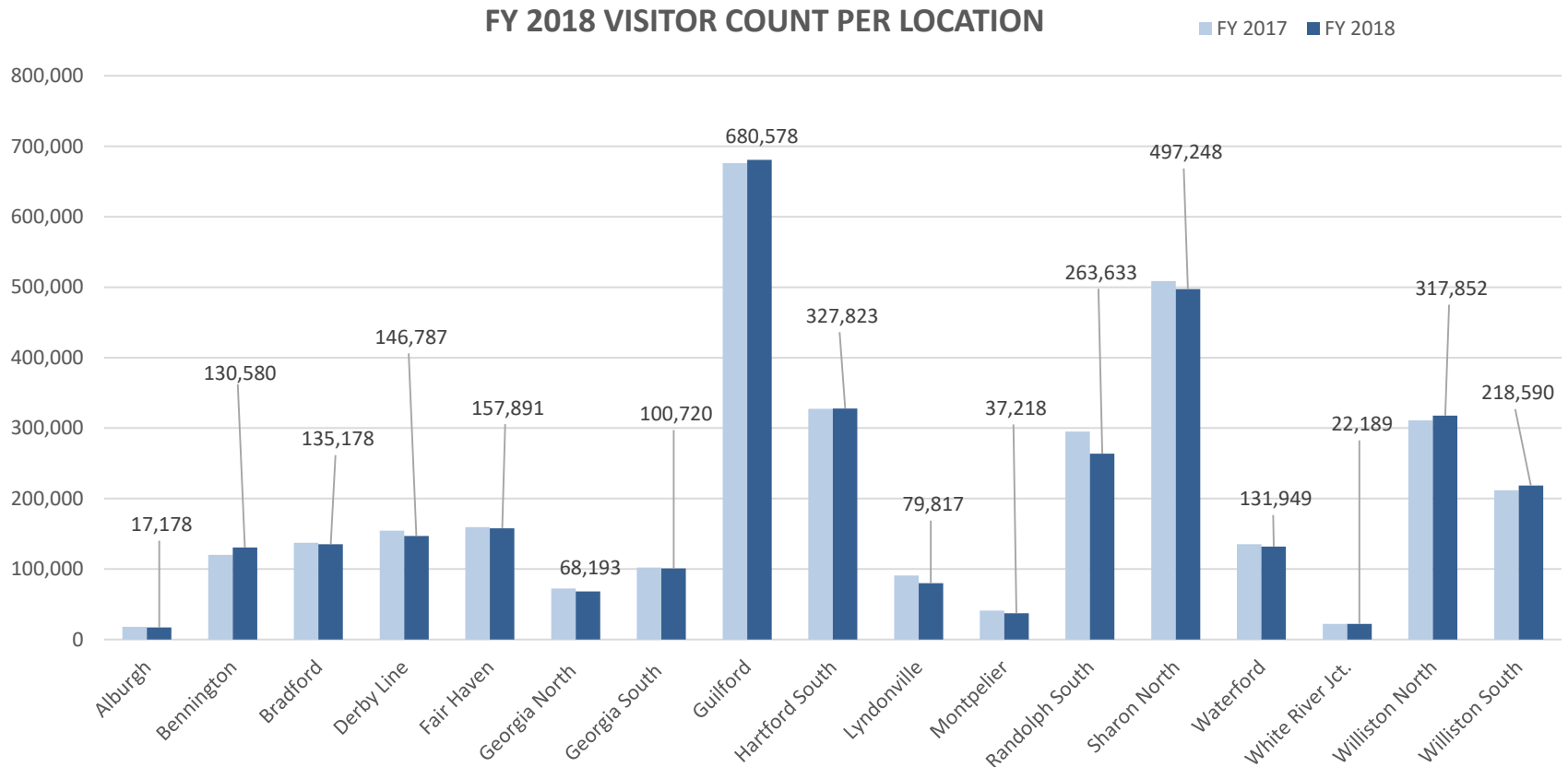
A contract for WiFi services provides free wireless internet access to the traveling public. Free WiFi is currently available in all 17 VICD facilities. VICD has paid all costs since the service became free in 2007.

**Cost of Free WiFi Service
 FY 2014 - FY 2018**



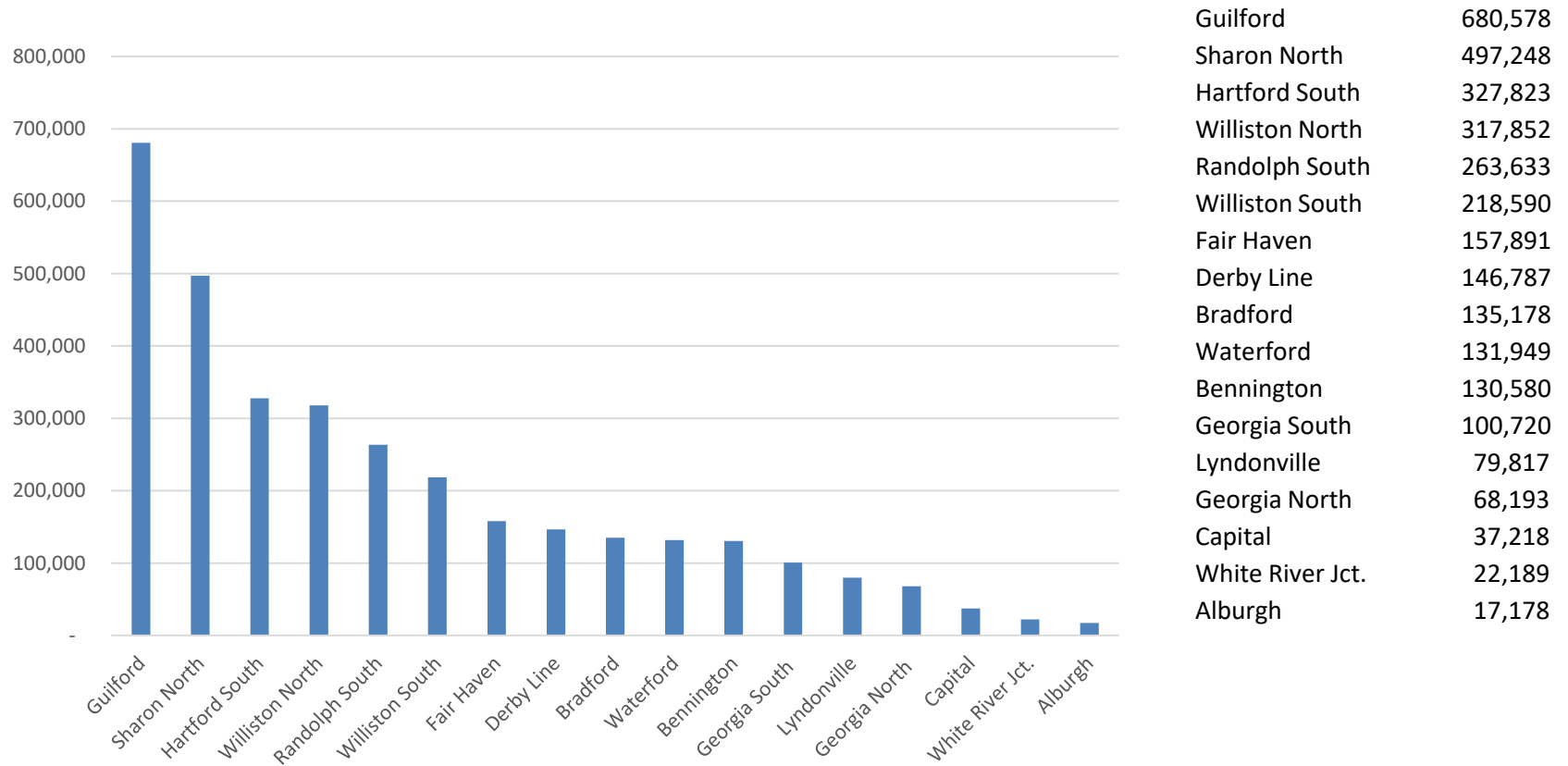
Annual Visitor Count – FY 2018

VICD hosted a total of 3,333,424 Visitors in FY 2018



FY 2018 Visitor Statistics

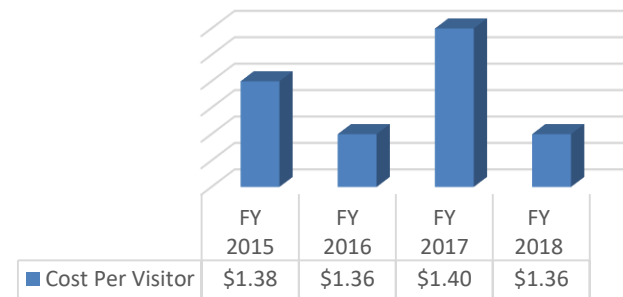
Total Visitors: 3,333,424



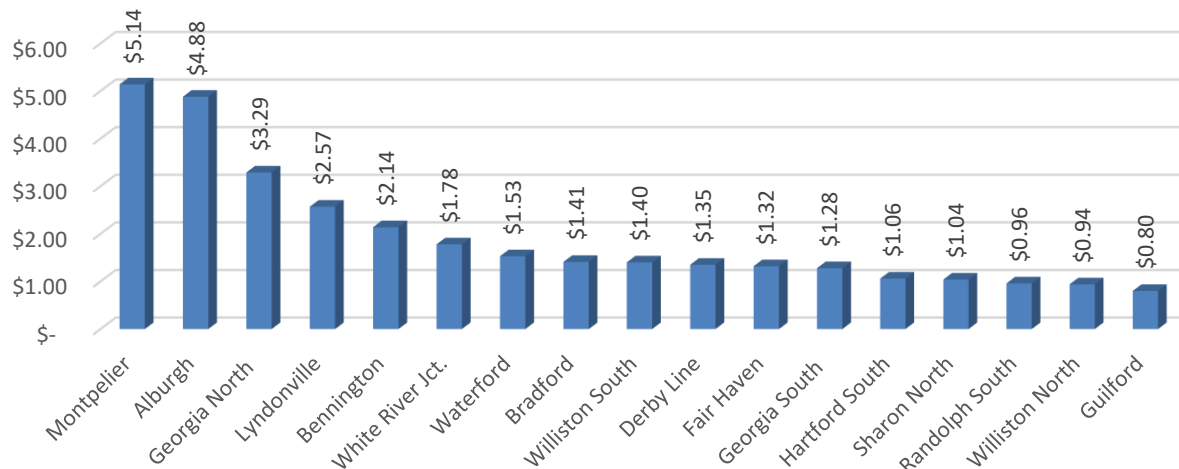
Cost Per Visitor – FY 2015-FY 2018

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

Cost Per Visitor FY 2015 - FY 2018



FY 2018 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

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