

Williston Strategic Plan

Goal: Facilitate the immediate and long term expansion of programs and space at the Williston campus.

Strategies:

- Utilize existing classroom space for Radiography.
- End hair salon lease to facilitate Dental Therapy
 - Consider Para-medicine for a portion of this space.
- Update the 2012 “Master plan” for Williston and obtain cost estimates.
- Prepare for a capital campaign for Williston expansion.
- Provide temporary solutions for parking.
- Research additional opportunities for expansion by leasing/acquiring properties adjacent to the Williston campus.

Metrics:

- Lease additional parking fall 2018.
- Demolish buildings for parking and build new parking as soon as practical.
- Prepare the 128 room in the 100 building for radiography summer 2019.
- Prepare the “hair salon space” for dental therapy spring semester 2020 for summer 2020 start.
- Complete master plan update summer 2019

Background:

Vermont Tech acquired the Williston Campus in 2003. We had offered programs for IBM in one or more of the buildings prior to acquisition.

The original programs in Williston included:

- Business AS
- Nursing: Practical Nursing Certificate, AS in Nursing
- Electrical Engineering Technology AE
- Dental Hygiene: AS

Total enrollment in 2003 was approximately 100 -200 FTE

Current State

Over the years we have added a number of programs including:

- Professional Pilot (in conjunction with the Vermont Flight Academy at Burlington Airport)
- Computer Software Engineering, Computer Engineering Technology, Computer Information Technology. AAS, BS, MS
- Electromechanical Engineering Technology BS
- Electrical Engineering Technology AS

- Respiratory Therapy AS
- Paramedicine Certificate

Enrollment has grown to approximately 500 FTE. In addition to the degree programs, plumbing and electrical apprenticeship programs are taught in the evenings on the Williston campus.

Facilities:

The working campus consists of five buildings we own and operate. (See [attached map](#)) Four buildings (buildings 100, 200, 300 and 400) are one-story former commercial buildings that form a “circle” and house our classrooms, offices, library and labs. The fifth building (700) is three stories and houses our dorm rooms, a fitness center, and part of the Continuing Education and Workforce Development office, which contains a classroom, and space we currently lease to a hair salon.

There are two other commercial buildings we own and have rented to private businesses. They are not shown on the map. One single-story, wood frame building (known as the “neck and back” building) is now vacant, used for storage and, presently, employee parking. The other single-story, wooden frame building houses the Vermont Sandwich Company, which will be relocating in fall 2018. Neither building is useful for renovation and are slated for demolition at some point. We have terminated the lease with the Sandwich Company due in part to the condition of the building and required renovations to bring the building to code. Also, we are working with the Town of Williston, which seeks to add a new road connecting Helena Drive with the mall across the street. That will involve “taking” some of the land we own and is part of the Sandwich Company parking area. These negotiations are ongoing, but we hope to reach an agreement prior to the end of 2019.

There are two additional single-story, wood frame buildings located on land we own and lease to external parties. They house private sector business (Rack Warehouse and Creative Sound). We have a right of first refusal to purchase these buildings.

Almost at capacity:

We have reached 98% of capacity for classroom space during any academic year. That includes weekdays and evenings. We utilize classrooms in the evenings for apprenticeship training. We are hosting a new NVU Master’s program on the campus on weekends.

We have reached 100% capacity of office space available. This can be mitigated to some degree by sharing faculty offices, but we have no capacity to add additional office or classroom space.

We have 30 dorm rooms in the 700 building or “Williston Hall” (#5 on the map). We have filled the dorms for the past several years. Currently these rooms are housing 47 students, some in triples. We have not had to lease additional rooms/apartments for the past two years, as we did three years ago.

We have exceeded our parking capacity for the first time this year. Employees park in the “neck and back building” parking lot and will utilize the Sandwich Company parking when that tenant leaves. We are negotiating to lease additional parking spots at a nearby vacant restaurant until we can demolish the “neck and back” and Sandwich Company buildings to improve that land for parking.

Short Term Opportunities: (Less than two years, minimal capital out-of-pocket except grants)

Parking: We have a parking “crisis” during the day on the campus now. It will lessen some with attrition, but we know the situation will become worse when we add programs.

We have initiated discussions to lease additional parking spots at a nearby vacant restaurant. This is accessible to campus via a crosswalk on Rte. 2A, so it should alleviate certain immediate pressures.

We need to demolish the “neck and back” and sandwich shop buildings, then prepare the space for more parking and provide access in to either Helena drive or the campus “loop” parking area. This needs to be done either spring or summer 2019. We do not have capital funds budgeted for this, so this may bump another capital project currently on the list.

We have two new programs we are adding to the Williston Campus:

AS Radiography: We have yet to go through the Policy 102 process for this program. We are in the process of hiring a program director to facilitate the process. This is an Associates of Science program Champlain College has ended and we want to restart. We currently have tremendous interest in this program.

The program can be located in an existing room in the 100 building. We have obtained all useful equipment from Champlain College. We hope to start this program in the fall of 2019. Renovation in the short term is relatively low-cost. However, long term, we are expected to have a fully operational radiography lab, with a fully charged x-ray lab. That will be a larger expense. We expect to pursue grants to facilitate that. We will have approximately three years from the start of the program to have the fully prepped lab.

MS Dental Therapy: We will be locating Dental Therapy in part of the space we currently lease to the hair salon in the 700 building. We have grant funds to assist with the fit-up and we have significant grant funds for both equipment purchases and the first four years of operations.

The fit-up involves additional dental chairs and all that entails: water, air, electrical, etc. to construct a fully functional dental office. There is also a need for additional larger classroom and office space.

This work must be completed by summer of 2020, when the dental therapy program will commence. We may be able to use existing dental space that summer, as we do not offer

dental hygiene in the summer. But new space must be ready by the time we start the fall 2020 dental hygiene classes.

Other Possible Programs:

In addition to the known new programs for Williston. We are or will be investigating additional new programs including:

- Aviation Management
- Aviation Airframe Power Plant
- Fire Science
- Sonography
- Architecture
- BS Healthcare Management
- Additional Continuing Education programs:
 - Business, Leadership, BS completion.

Additional Williston needs:

As programs and use of the campus grows, so will have the need for full-time Public Safety as well as some sort of dining hall/food court operation on the campus.

We presently have part-time Public Safety staff at Williston from 6pm to 11pm Monday through Friday and Saturdays from 8pm to midnight. There is no day time coverage, nor coverage on Sundays. We have work-study students or staff that provide weekend access to the classes hosted there, but that will have to change in the short term.

Longer Term Opportunities:

As we consider the longer term, there are additional programs that could be duplicated in Williston adding to enrollment potential. Some would require smaller investment. Most will require substantial investment in the millions of dollars.

With Minor Capital Investment:

New or moved program possibilities:

The following programs have potential for duplication at Williston. Presently these programs are offered in Randolph and would require a significant capital investment. We should duplicate them in partnership with the private or public sectors to provide lab or direct experience opportunities. These would require relatively “minor” capital investments of \$1-\$1.5 million dollars. We have not done a lot of investigation into these program possibilities other than to know there is interest. So, we are not prepared to move forward at this time.

- Fire Science: In partnership with local fire departments.
- Vet Tech: In partnership with local veterinarians and humane societies.
- Diesel, auto, transportation (This may require a major investment).

With Major Capital:

Growing the campus beyond the Short-Term Opportunities outlined above will require minor to major capital investment. Ultimately, that capital investment WILL be required. But this investment is not something Vermont Tech can do on its own. We do not have the capital reserves to undertake such investment.

Expansion will be required to accommodate existing and potential new or duplicated programs at Williston. As noted above, we are at capacity on classroom, office and lab space in Williston after we have started Dental Therapy and Radiography.

Land: The “neck and back” and Sandwich Company buildings are located on approximately 1.2 acres. We anticipate when the Town of Williston completes their road improvement project, that site may be 1.1 or 1 acre, approximately. This site fronts on US Route 2 and is a highly valuable parcel for commercial development.

This parcel may present an opportunity for a public/private partnership with a developer to build a new building with commercial on the first floor and office/classroom on a second and potentially housing/dorm space on a third floor. This has not been explored to any significant extent but would seem possible.

2012 study: A 2012 study done by Northern Architects speaks to the possibility of demolishing the 100, 200 and 400 buildings on the Williston campus, one at a time, and constructing a new 3 or 4-story building, with ground floor parking, for classroom, office and dorm space. Cost estimates do not exist at this time but are needed as we move forward.

Each new building could be between 8,000-10,000 sq. ft. per floor for new building space of 20,000 to 30,000 square feet and parking of 10,000 sq. ft.

Alternatively, the Creative Sound and Ski Rack buildings may present a less disruptive, less costly solution for a number of years. However, a long-term strategy will involve the demolition and new construction of buildings on the campus.

How to fund:

Vermont Tech will have to undergo a substantial capital campaign to undertake these longer-term investments. We believe there are opportunities to do this in Chittenden County. Public/private partnerships, a capital campaign, and perhaps some debt supported by increased enrollment could be the solution. We must work closely with the Chancellor and Board of Trustees as we pursue these options.

This expansion could be another public/private partnership, but we are not sure leasing long-term is the best strategy. Those options would have to be explored.

We do not see State funding as the likely solution to a Williston expansion. We could be wrong, but if State support could be available, it may be better to use that in Randolph Center for other parts of the College Master Plan we are developing.

Financial:

Short term:

- Parking: lease \$ 1,300/month, 6 months
- Parking: new parking lot on the land we own \$40,000 estimate, one time
- Public Safety staffing \$200,000 per year, ongoing.
(Estimate)

Long term:

- Purchase of adjacent buildings and renovation \$2 million
- Demolition and new construction At least \$200 per square foot.
Or \$6 million to \$10 million for one building.

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