

Williston is lit up for Christmas, and according to Williston City Commissioner Brad Bekkedahl, the community has several reasons to celebrate. Boosting the quality of life in town are several holiday themed events and exhibits such as the Holiday Lights Drive and the 45-foot tall community Christmas Tree light display the 45-foot evergreen is located at the corner of 26th Street and 2nd Avenue West.

Bekkedahl also represents Williston in the North Dakota State Senate. He said this week the community's theme, "Williston is still open for business" is evident downtown. The Main Street reconstruction has boosted business. "Merchants are happy," he said, "Traffic has picked up, and more people are working downtown and shopping downtown. We're confident business will continue to grow."

Bekkedahl said more good news comes from the oil activity in the region. As the rig count rises over 40, that means more people working in the area. He noted the call for more fracking crews helps boost optimism in the community.

As the State Senator prepares for the 2017 Legislative Session, he said he is confident the city's designation as a "hub city" will help assure state support for ongoing projects. He said the one of the most important projects for which the state has made a \$60 million commitment is the new \$250 million airport. Bekkedahl said he has not yet talked to Governor Burgum, but he's confident that the money in the Dalrymple budget for Williston will be preserved in the Burgum budget.