

LABOUR MARKET REVIEW

Spring 2020

20 Years in the Bow Valley

A look back through 20 years of Labour Market Reviews offers a timely summary of the highs and lows in the Bow Valley labour market including:

- steady increase in tourism
- low unemployment rates
- high cost of living & lack of affordable housing
- impacts of world events on the local labour market

2000-2005 Impact of world events on tourism industry

World events such as 9/11, SARS, and the Iraq War lead to fewer tourists. The Bow Valley sees an occupancy rate downturn of 11%.

Post 9/11, local businesses and Travel Alberta promote the area as a “safe” tourist destination. In 2005, the tourism industry in Alberta gets a \$24 million boost to increase national and international markets.

The Canmore Community Housing Corporation is established to address the accommodation problem.

2006-2010 Construction booms then busts

The construction industry booms and continues to grow over the next several years. 317 building and development permits are issued in Canmore and 23 in Banff during 2005.

In 2007, the Canmore Economic Development Authority releases a report on the businesses registered in Canmore - 25% are directly related to tourism and hospitality and it speaks of the need for future economic diversification.

It is a job seekers’ market in the Bow Valley as it is in the rest of the province of Alberta in 2007. Alberta leads the way with the lowest unemployment rate at 3.8%.

The Banff YWCA completes its \$3.5 million housing project in 2008. The 42 units provide subsidized housing to entry level workers and staff accommodation to local businesses.

Banff braces for a large drop in tourism due to the global financial crisis and local businesses scramble to adjust to the impending slowdown.

2009 is not an easy ride for Bow Valley employers. The fall of large and small companies solidifies the fact that no business is immune to financial turmoil. From the receivership of Three Sisters Mountain Village to the closure of smaller retail operations, the economic downturn has varying effects on businesses of all sizes.



2011-2015 Tourism rebounds

The Banff Region’s unemployment rate, historically lower than the provincial rate, was 2.7% in July 2011 compared to 4.9% in July 2010.

Summer 2012 tourism numbers point to an industry rebound from the economic downturn. From April to September, Parks Canada statistics show a 2.3% increase in the number of visitors through the park gates compared to the same period last year.

Commuting between Banff and Canmore becomes much easier in late 2012 with the launch of an inter-community bus service, Roam Transit.

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BOW VALLEY LABOUR MARKET REVIEW

Labour Market Trends

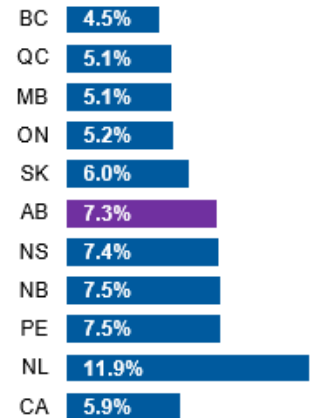
Unemployment Rates Alberta's economy continues to be hindered by a lack of oil pipeline capacity. The provincial unemployment rate for January 2020 was 7.3% - up slightly from 7% at this time last year. The Banff-Jasper-Rocky Mountain House region showed a rate of 6.5%, up from 4.8% in January 2019.

Occupational Demand The Job Resource Centre received 1,721 job orders (for a total of 4,170 positions) from 316 Bow Valley employers between August 2019 and January 2020. Job orders increased by 14% compared to last year, while the number of employers using the service to advertise jobs decreased by 7%.

Staff Housing Of all jobs posted at the Job Resource Centre, 45% were advertised with staff housing, slightly down from one year earlier. More jobs in Banff (48%) came with staff housing than in Canmore (25%).

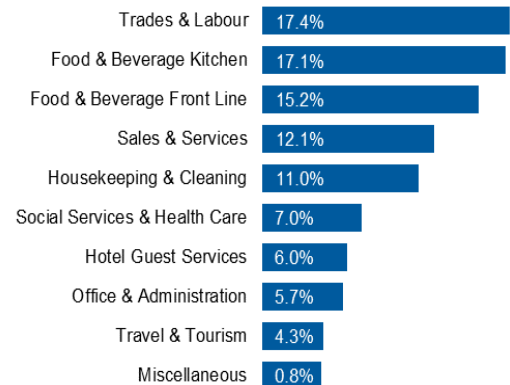
Average Starting Wages The average starting wage in the Bow Valley was \$18.77 per hour during this six month period, a 3% increase over last year's average of \$18.23.

Unemployment Rates Jan 2020



Between Aug 2019 and Jan 2020 the Job Resource Centre served 13,470 job seekers and posted 1,511 jobs. The graph above is a monthly comparison between these two variables.

Occupational Demand Aug 2019 - Jan 2020



BOW VALLEY AVERAGE WAGES

	NUMBER OF JOB ORDERS	AVERAGE WAGE Aug 19- Jan 20	AVERAGE WAGE Aug 18 - Jan 19
Food & Beverage Front Line (servers, hosts, bus persons, delivery drivers)	262	\$16.06	\$15.47
Food & Beverage Kitchen (cooks, dishwashers, kitchen helpers)	295	\$17.60	\$16.99
Hotel Guest Services (front desk agents, night auditors, bellhops, hotel security)	103	\$16.56	\$16.15
Housekeeping & Cleaning (room attendants/housepersons, laundry, cleaning)	190	\$17.25	\$16.32
Miscellaneous (fitness instructors, pet groomers)	71	\$21.27	\$20.70
Office & Administration (clerical, reception, data entry, computer support)	98	\$23.30	\$21.39
Sales & Services (grocery, retail, hairstyling, esthetics, marketing)	208	\$17.02	\$16.68
Social Services & Health Care (social workers, caregivers, massage therapists)	120	\$21.53	\$20.05
Trades & Labour (apprentices, hotel maintenance, labourers, landscaping)	300	\$21.42	\$20.87
Travel & Tourism (park interpreters, guides, tour operators, bus/van/taxi drivers)	74	\$21.28	\$22.33
Total Job Orders	1,721		

*Based on job orders placed with the Job Resource Centre in Banff and Canmore between August 1, 2019 and January 31, 2020

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Employers and residents feel the effects of low rental vacancy rates in Canmore in 2014, which at 0%, are among the lowest in the country. A perfect storm of factors is at play in Canmore. With its popularity as a tourist destination growing, businesses need more seasonal employees. But staff accommodations are limited and there are few purpose-built rental units available.

Falling loonie spurs increase in US visitors in 2015. As the Canadian dollar hits an 11-year low and Alberta's economy feels the impact of diminished oil and commodity prices, Alberta's main tourist destinations are booming.

2016-2020 Managing the crowds

Thanks to record numbers of visitors to Banff National Park, jobs in the Bow Valley's tourism industry are abundant throughout the summer of 2016. This is in stark contrast to other parts of the province where the unemployment rate in July reaches the highest level in over 20 years at 8.6% due to the oil crisis.

Canmore local transit kicks off in November 2016 and the Bow Valley Chamber of Commerce opens in early 2017.

By 2017, the living wage in Canmore is the highest in Alberta and Canmore's Affordable Service Program commences—similar to the Banff Access Card program started in 2015.

Ti'nu Affordable Housing opens its 131-unit apartment complex in the town of Banff in 2018. The development will alleviate some of the housing pressures on the community which has a 0% vacancy rate.

In October 2018, Alberta has the highest minimum wage in Canada at \$15 per hour. This higher wage could attract young Canadian job seekers to the Bow Valley to work during the summer.


Employers have better staffing levels in 2019 than the previous two summers because of improvements to recruitment and retention. Visitors to Banff National Park in the first half of 2019 exceed the same period's 2018 levels by 4.2%.

Banff residents struggle to maintain quality of life with the growing tourism economy. Banff National Park is one of the most popular tourism hotspots in Canada; however, it continues to struggle to find ways to manage the influx of people during the summer season. The concept of over-tourism is happening around the world, where residents feel their hometowns are disappearing beneath heavy crowds and traffic congestion.

COVID strikes... In a matter of days all sectors of the Bow Valley are hit hard. International and domestic travel is mostly banned. Nearly all businesses and services have closed indefinitely, laying off thousands of employees. The future economic effects of the pandemic are unknown.

"Rather than recovering to what we were, it's an opportunity for discussions and planning on what we want to be as a tourism destination"

Mayor Karen Sorensen *RMO April 30, 2020*



REMOTE SERVICES

- printing
- career exploration
- local labour market info
- job search and resumé webinars
- job posting service & HR guidance

FREE SERVICES BY PHONE, EMAIL & VIDEO CALL

Renting a Home

AVERAGE RENTAL RATES*	BANFF	CANMORE
1 Bedroom	\$1,390	\$1,502
2 Bedroom	\$2,080	\$2,028
3 Bedroom	\$2,475	\$2,954
Studio/Bachelor	\$1,018	\$1,222
Roommate/Shared	\$ 954	\$ 843

**Based on listings in local media between August 2019 and January 2020. Banff data sourced from Kijiji and Bow Valley Home Finder on Facebook. Canmore data collected by Canmore Community Housing Corporation.*

CAREER EXPLORATION

JOBS

RESUMÉS

Development News

Banff

The \$23.8 million Ti'nu affordable housing development is full and there's a lot of people on our waiting list – 80 in total. Banff's 2014 community housing strategy highlighted the shortfall of available and affordable rental housing as one of Banff's most pressing issues. From 2013-17, there were essentially no vacant rental properties. The vacancy rate hit 1.1 per cent last year. *(RMO October 7, 2019)*

Banff close to reaching commercial build-out. A new 175-room hotel at 600 Banff Avenue to replace Banff Caribou Properties' aging Swiss Village Hotel once it's demolished was approved last week and is arguably the last new hotel that will be built in Banff. *(RMO August 22, 2019)*



Hawks Bend, Canmore

Canmore

Hawks Bend perpetually affordable housing development sees official grand opening and is fully sold out. For local residents now living in the units, the development has given them a chance to stay in the community they love. Primarily targeted at families, this project adds 49 units to CCHC's portfolio. *(RMO October 3, 2019)*

Canmore rental costs increase 71 percent since 2016 according to research conducted by CCHC for 2019 rental rates compared to the Bow Valley Housing Needs Study from 2010-2016. The housing needs study highlighted how unaffordable it was to be a renter in Canmore even three years ago when it was noted 29 percent of renters in Canmore were paying 30 percent or more of their pre-tax income on rent. *(RMO August 2, 2019)*

Bow Valley

Eliminated summer employment program a surprise for students. The STEP program is no longer being funded after the 2019 program is all paid out. The annual budget for the program was \$10 million and it employed approximately 3,000 students, with a \$7 per hour subsidy for the employers. *(cbc.ca October 28, 2019)*

About the Job Resource Centre

The Job Resource Centre is a leading, Banff and Canmore based career and employment service. Our mandate is to help people find jobs and new careers and assist employers with hiring and retaining workers. Services are available in English and French and are *free of charge*.

Services for Job Seekers and Career Changers: job search support, professional resumé writing assistance, a job board with local opportunities, career coaching, student advice, training information, access to computers, fax machines, scanner, telephones and a resource area.

Services for Employers: job posting service, employee referrals, hiring fairs, workshops, HR guidance, labour market information and an interview room for employer use.

CANMORE

710 10 St. 403.678.6601

the **JOB**
RESOURCE
CENTRE

BANFF

314 Marten St. 403.760.3311