APRIL 2025

CANADA

CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE LOOKING FORWARD

HIGHLIGHTS
2025–2034

ABOUT BUILDFORCE CANADA

Originally created in 2001 as the Construction Sector Council, BuildForce Canada is a national industry-led organization committed to working with the construction industry to provide information and resources to assist with its management of workforce requirements.

The mandate of BuildForce Canada is to provide accurate and timely labour market information (LMI) to advance the needs of the entire construction industry in order to develop a highly skilled labour force that will support the future needs of Canada's construction industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BuildForce Canada wishes to acknowledge the participation and input of the numerous industry volunteers for their dedication and contributions to the development of this annual forecast. Please see the appendix for a full list of the committee participants.

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NATIONAL

CANADA'S CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Employment in Canada's construction sector exceeded 1.6 million people in 2024. The industry is one of the greatest contributors to economic output in the country, accounting for 7% of Canada's total gross domestic product, and the employment of approximately one in every 13 working Canadians. What's more, the industry is driven by small businesses, with approximately 62% of industry firms classified as micro businesses consisting of fewer than five employees.

Labour Force Survey[1] data from Statistics Canada shows that construction employment has increased in almost every year since 2002, up just over 740,000 workers over this period. Employment growth has been especially strong in the post-pandemic years when a number of factors led to significant growth in activity in both residential and non-residential construction in almost every region of the country. These trends caused industry unemployment rates to significantly outpace growth in the labour force, leading to rates of 3% and below in the summer of 2022.

Labour markets have since trended back toward more traditional levels as growth in the labour force has generally been outpacing growth in employment. Through 2023, for example, unemployment in the construction sector averaged 5.3% monthly; through 2024, rates rose to an average of 5.6% monthly.

Notable within this trend has been growth in employment among two key cohorts: women and youth. Among those workers aged 15 to 24 years, and who are about the enter the labour force, employment grew by 19% over the 12-month period ending in December 2024. Among women as a whole, employment rose by 5.1% over the same period. Both increases compare favourably to the overall employment increase of 1.8% during this period, and speak to the effects of targeted programs developed by industry and governments to address ongoing labour force challenges.

[1] Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey captures the labour force status of all workers within the industry, including those in occupations outside the direct trades and occupations tracked by BuildForce Canada.

Employment, labour force, and unemployment figures published by Statistics Canada in the Labour Force Survey (reported above) is inclusive of all trades and occupations working in the construction industry, including administrative and other off-site occupations. BuildForce Canada's *2025–2034 Construction and Maintenance Looking Forward* scenario focuses on the 34 trades and occupations primarily involved in on-site activities. These trades and occupations account for approximately 75% of national construction employment as reported by the Labour Force Survey.

Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the share of total construction industry employment by province.

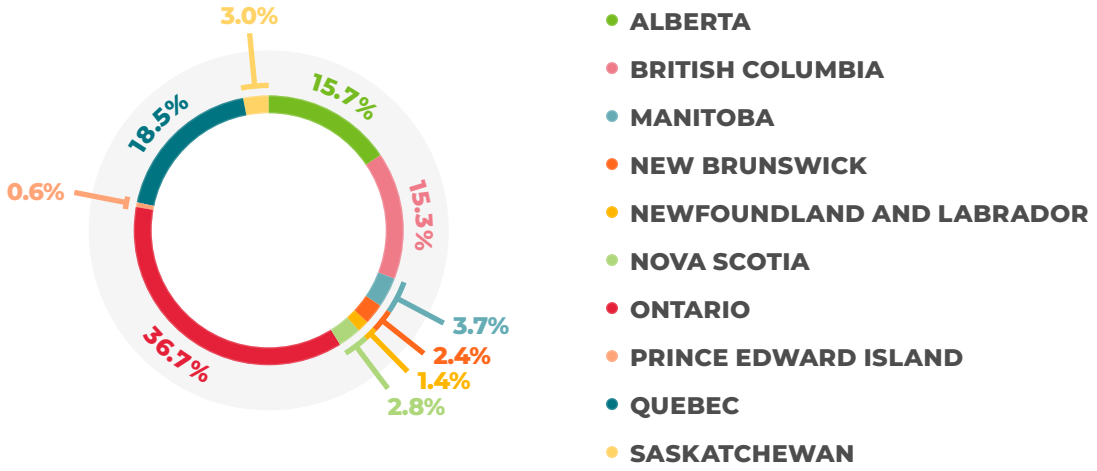
Total construction employment increased marginally in 2024. While employment in the residential sector was largely unchanged from 2023, employment in the non-residential sector rose by 2%. Construction activity in the residential sector has been held back over the past two years by elevated interest rates and concerns over affordability. As these pressures started to ease in 2024 with interest rate cuts through the year, demand for residential construction began to grow again.

Meanwhile, non-residential construction activity continued to increase as a large volume of projects across the engineering construction sector and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings was underway in every province. Rising levels of activity in these cases contributed to a further gain in employment.

These trends have had varying effects on provincial and regional labour markets. In most cases, labour pressures eased, particularly in those trades relating to new-housing construction – and in the construction for single-detached units in particular. This trend is unlikely to continue, however. As interest rate pressures and affordability concerns ease, demand for residential construction is projected to increase throughout the forecast period. Growth is initially strongest in demand for new-housing construction; later years see investment growth driven by residential renovations activity.

In the non-residential sector, labour market demands are unlikely to ease until the middle years of the forecast period, given the high volume of large projects underway in most regions of the country.

FIGURE 1:
SHARE OF TOTAL CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT BY PROVINCE, 2024*



* Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.

NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION FORECAST OVERVIEW (2025 TO 2034)

NOTE TO READER: *The investment trends and employment projections presented in this report were developed with industry input prior to the emergence of potential trade tensions between Canada and the United States. The forecast therefore does not take into account the possible application of tariffs on Canadian exports to and imports from the United States, nor does it account for any resulting changes in trading patterns between Canada and its other key trading partners.*

Overall construction investment levels increased modestly across the country in 2024. In general terms, this is an improvement over recent trends that have seen activity in residential construction in particular slow since reaching a peak in 2021. This trend has been generally offset by growth in non-residential construction, however.

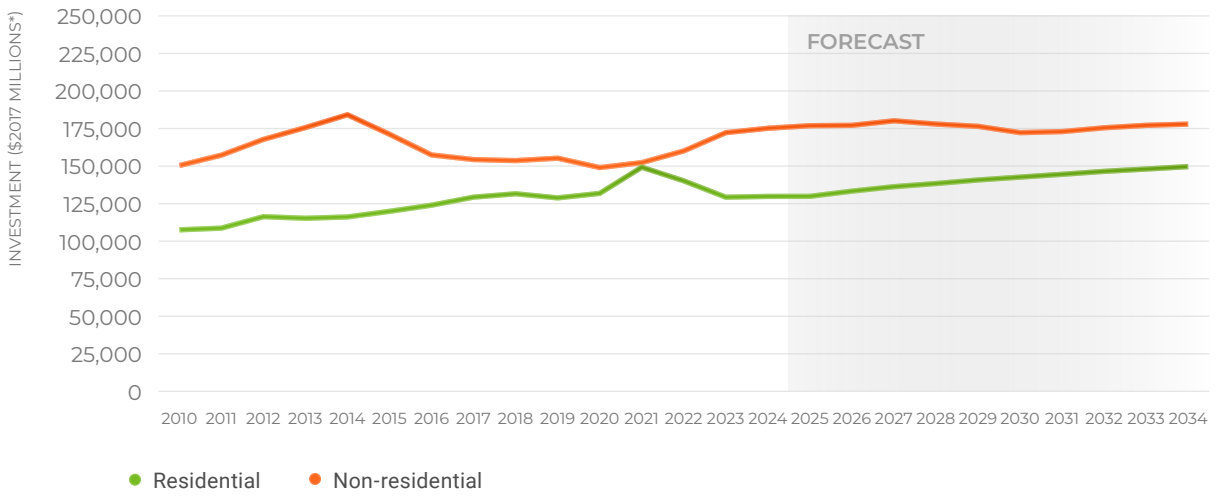
Both sectors reported growth in 2024. Investment in the residential sector experienced a very slight increase as a further contraction in the new housing sector was offset by a modest gain in comparatively more affordable residential renovations. Meanwhile, investment in the non-residential sector rose by a modest 2% in 2024, continuing a series of increases that began in 2021. The increase reported in 2024 was driven by growth in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings, as most provinces reported a significant volume of construction underway on projects across their respective healthcare and education sectors. Investment in engineering construction, on the other hand, contracted slightly (by less than 1%) as several major projects passed peak activity levels.

As Figure 2 shows, the outlook calls for both construction sectors to record growth to the end of the forecast period. The residential sector is projected to chart a steady series of increases from 2026 to 2034. Activity is driven initially by strong demand for new-housing construction – and for single-detached units in particular – as interest rate pressures ease, and pent-up demand brings consumers back to the market. Although later years see housing start growth slow, investment growth is projected to be driven by strong levels of activity in residential renovations. By the end of the decade, residential investment is expected to grow by 15% compared to 2024 levels.

Non-residential construction investment, meanwhile, is projected to ebb and flow across the forecast period, in line with the timing of current and proposed major projects. Levels have been increasing steadily since 2021, and are projected to rise to a forecast peak in 2027 with the culmination of works on projects across the engineering (such as transit projects in Ontario and British Columbia, and utility projects in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and British Columbia) and ICI buildings (such as healthcare and education projects across the country, and stronger growth in commercial building) construction sectors.

Investment slows into 2030 before growing in line with population demands and economic growth to the end of the forecast period. By 2034, investment is projected to increase just under 2% compared to 2024 levels.

FIGURE 2:
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT, CANADA



* $2017 millions indicates that the investment values are in year 2017 dollars (base year), that is, adjusted for inflation. This is used to calculate the real physical year-to-year change of the value of construction, factoring out growth (increase in value) due to increases in prices.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

EMPLOYMENT

Employment among the 34 trades and occupations tracked in the BuildForce Canada LMI model was estimated at above 1.21 million workers in 2024. That figure was a slight increase from the 1.18 million workers reported in 2023.

As Figure 3 shows, employment was virtually unchanged in residential construction between 2023 and 2024, while non-residential construction grew by 2% over the year. The outlook calls for both sectors to record growth to the end of the forecast period. In the residential sector, employment is expected to remain unchanged in 2025 before growing almost continuously to 2034. While employment relating to new-housing construction fluctuates across the forecast period, renovation and maintenance work report notable gains. These trends combine to elevate overall residential employment by 6% above 2024 levels by 2034.

Employment in the non-residential sector is projected to grow into 2027 as work ramps up on major projects across both the engineering construction and ICI buildings sector. Levels plateau into 2030 as engineering construction demands subside, and growth is driven by stronger levels of ICI building activity. The final years of the forecast see employment grow in response to overall population and economic growth. By the end of the forecast period, non-residential employment grows by just under 8% compared to 2024 levels, with notable increases in employment relating to ICI buildings (17%) and maintenance activity (12%) while engineering construction is mostly sustained at elevated levels.

FIGURE 3:
CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT GROWTH OUTLOOK, CANADA

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

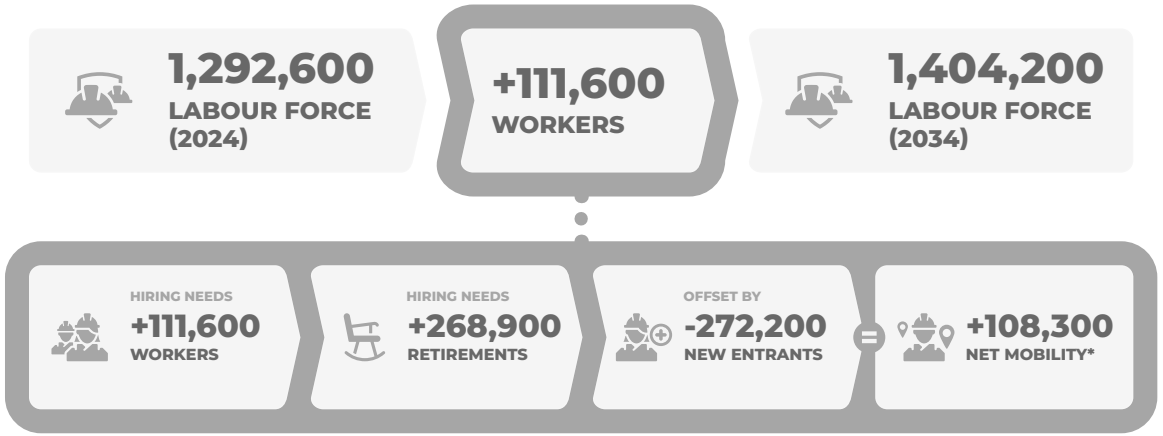
LABOUR FORCE

With construction employment anticipated to increase over the forecast period, the industry will have to address the challenge of labour force management. By 2034, almost 269,000 workers, or 21% of the 2024 labour force, are projected to retire. That figure is an average of between 26,000 and 27,000 workers annually, and comprises mostly workers from the baby boom generation who depart the sector with decades of work experience.

Growth in construction demands over the same period is projected to require the labour force to expand by 111,600 workers. When this demand growth is added to projected retirements, the industry's overall hiring requirement rises to 380,500 workers by 2034. Although the industry is projected to recruit approximately 272,200 new entrant workers under the age of 30 during this period to help offset some of this requirement, even at these heightened levels of recruitment, the industry is likely to be short 108,300 workers by 2034.

Figure 4 shows estimated changes in the construction labour force over the forecast period.

FIGURE 4:
CHANGES IN THE CONSTRUCTION LABOUR FORCE, CANADA



* Net mobility refers to the number of workers needed to be brought into the industry from other industries or other provinces to meet rising demands or the number of workers that exit the industry in downturns. Positive net mobility means that industry must attract workers, while negative net mobility arises from an excess supply of workers in the local construction labour force.

Note: Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to the totals indicated.

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

SECTOR INSIGHTS

RESIDENTIAL INVESTMENT

Residential construction investment levels peaked in 2021 as a combination of factors led to significant growth in demand for new housing in particular. These included historically low interest rates, and high levels of disposable consumer income accumulated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Renovation activity also rose to a peak in 2021 as a result of many of the same factors.

Levels have stepped down since. Rising interest rates and increasing concerns over housing affordability reduced consumers' appetites for new housing, and single-detached[2] units in particular. Meanwhile, elevated levels of household formations, caused by high levels of immigration, helped offset some of this decline with strong growth in the construction of more affordable multi-unit housing structures.

Investment levels declined in 2023 and remained relatively unchanged in 2024. This occurred as declines in investment in new-housing construction were offset by growth in residential renovations activity.

Despite decisions by the Bank of Canada to lower interest rates through 2024, the effects of these decisions are unlikely to make a significant effect on residential investments until 2026. This occurs in part due to a large volume of unsold housing inventory in some major metropolitan areas across the country.

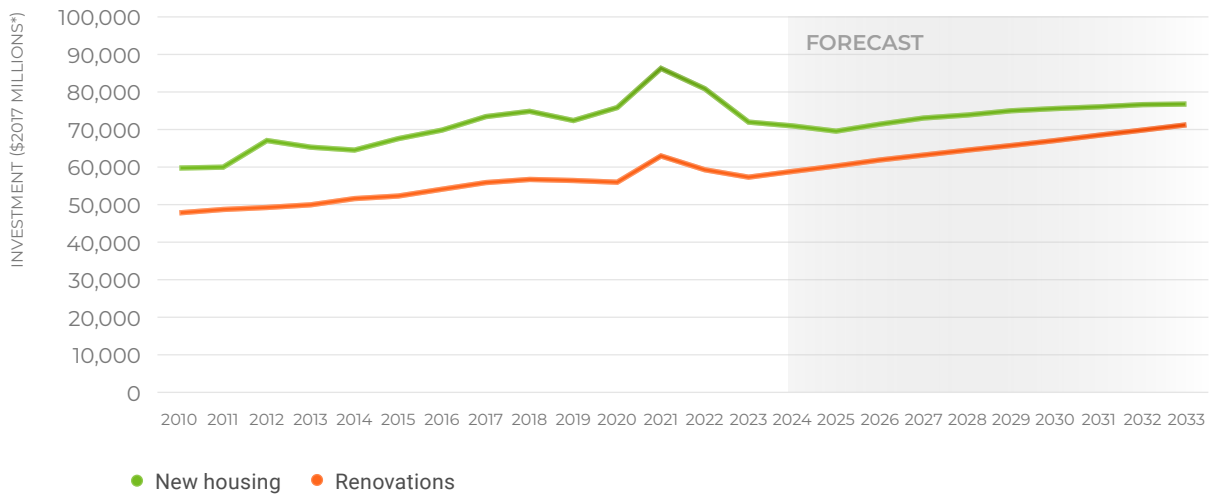
[2] **Single-detached (single)** refers to a building containing only one dwelling unit that is completely separated on all sides from any other dwelling or structure.

As Figure 5 shows, residential investment levels are projected to grow steadily between 2026 and 2034. For new-home construction, the strongest gains are for single-detached units where starts are projected to grow continuously across the forecast period and offset a much more muted outlook for the construction of multi-unit dwellings, which in some provinces is receding from peak levels of activity.

Meanwhile, investment in residential renovations records a series of increases across the forecast period, with growth strongest in the later years. This occurs due to a number of factors, including anticipated declines in interest rates which should improve household budgets and disposable incomes, robust labour market conditions in many parts of the country which should further improve household disposable incomes, the age of the housing stock in many parts of the country, consumer preferences to refit their homes to age in place, and the comparatively lower cost of renovating units compared to purchasing new builds.

It is important to note that analysis is based on existing trends and market forces and does not take into account aspirational public-sector initiatives to increase the housing supply. Direct government interventions such as tax incentives and subsidies are, however, factored into the forward analysis as they have a more immediate impact on prevailing market forces and consumer behaviour.

FIGURE 5:
RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT, CANADA



* $2017 millions indicates that the investment values are in year 2017 dollars (base year), that is, adjusted for inflation. This is used to calculate the real physical year-to-year change of the value of construction, factoring out growth (increase in value) due to increases in prices.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

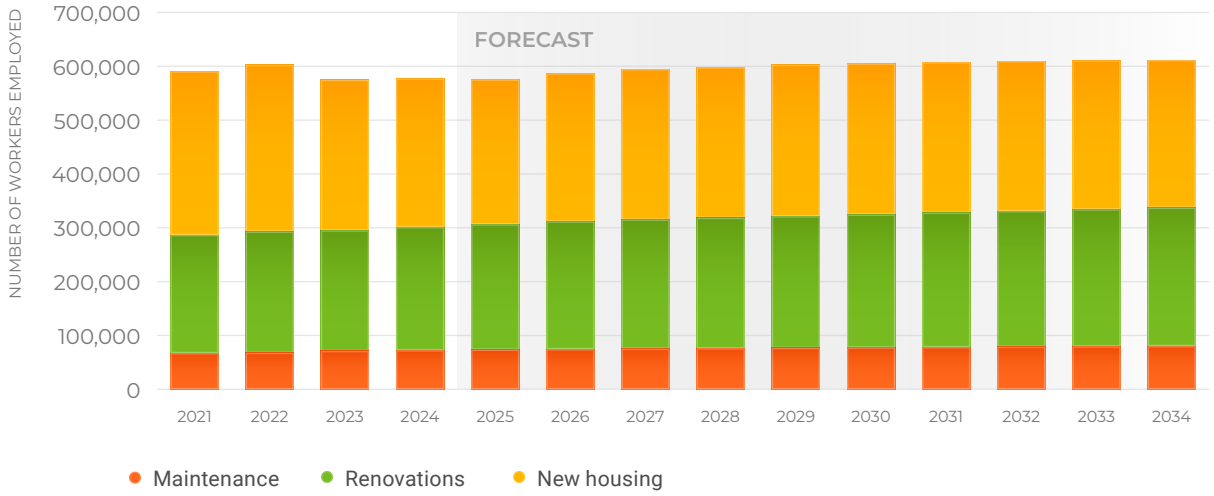
RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT

Employment in the residential construction sector reached a recent peak level of more than 602,000 workers in 2022 as the industry responded to the massive demand for new housing during the early part of the decade. Employment levels stepped down in 2023 as demand slowed in the sector.

Employment levels were largely unchanged in 2024 and are expected to remain stable in 2025 before experiencing moderate growth in 2026 (+2%). Thereafter, and to the end of the forecast period, employment experiences a series of modest increases. Initially, growth occurs across all sectors of residential construction; later years see employment relating to new housing slowing, while growth continues in residential renovations and maintenance activities. See Figure 6.

By 2034, residential employment is projected to have increased by 6% above 2024 levels. Increases are greatest in renovations (13%) and maintenance (11%) employment, while new-housing-related employment is largely unchanged.

FIGURE 6:
RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT GROWTH OUTLOOK, CANADA



SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

Table 1 shows the anticipated changes in residential employment by province across three periods: the short term (2025–2027), the medium term (2028–2030), and the long term (2031–2034).

TABLE 1:
CHANGES IN RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT, BY PROVINCE

SECTOR	% CHANGE 2025–2027	% CHANGE 2028–2030	% CHANGE 2031–2034
Canada	3%	2%	1%
Newfoundland and Labrador	5%	0%	-10%
Nova Scotia	6%	2%	2%
New Brunswick	-5%	0%	5%
Prince Edward Island	16%	11%	-13%
Quebec	0%	-4%	0%
Ontario	4%	7%	2%
Manitoba	10%	1%	-2%
Saskatchewan	7%	10%	2%
Alberta	5%	-5%	1%
British Columbia	0%	-2%	3%

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

BUILDFORCE CANADA

RESIDENTIAL LABOUR FORCE

The residential construction labour force is projected to increase by as many as 51,500 workers to meet growing demands over the forecast period. When added to the estimated 135,800 workers, or 22% of the 2024 labour force, who are projected to retire over the forecast period, the industry could face hiring requirements of 187,300 workers.

Historical recruitment levels suggest the industry is projected to add 119,700 new entrants under the age of 30 from local recruitment efforts, but unless anticipated recruitment is increased, the sector may be short as many as 67,600 workers by 2034.

Figure 7 shows the anticipated labour force changes in the residential sector over the forecast period.

FIGURE 7:
CHANGES IN THE RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION LABOUR FORCE, CANADA

* Net mobility refers to the number of workers needed to be brought into the industry from other industries or other provinces to meet rising demands or the number of workers that exit the industry in downturns. Positive net mobility means that industry must attract workers, while negative net mobility arises from an excess supply of workers in the local construction labour force.

Note: Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to the totals indicated.

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

NON-RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT

Non-residential construction investment levels enter the forecast period on an upward trend that began in 2021. Two factors have driven this growth, the first being investments in infrastructure by the municipal, provincial, and federal governments to stimulate the economy in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The second is related to significant levels of population growth tied to increased immigration between 2022 and 2024. After recording a jump of nearly 8% in 2023, investment levels rose by a more modest 2% in 2024.

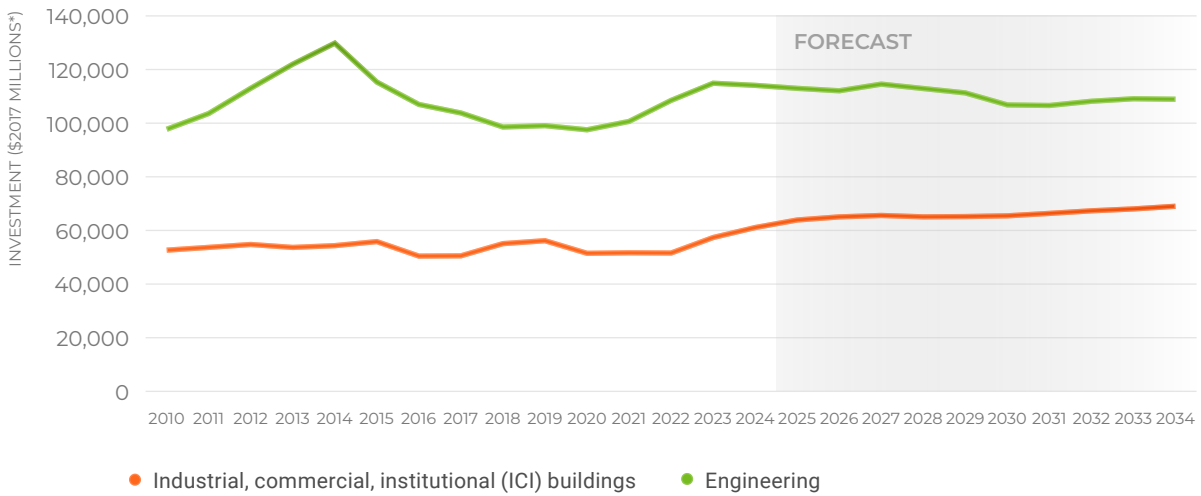
Levels are projected to continue to rise to a peak in 2027 and are then mostly sustained to 2029 before receding as some tracked major projects end. Driving these fluctuations are the timing of tracked major projects in both the engineering construction sector and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings. Renewed growth in the final years of the forecast period is driven more by overall population and economic growth. See Figure 8.

Engineering construction has been supported in recent years by liquefied natural gas projects, major mining projects, a series of transit projects, utility projects such as power generation and water and wastewater infrastructure, and roads, highways, and bridges projects in Ontario, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Saskatchewan. Levels begin to recede after 2027, with many projects passing peak activity periods, or concluding. Even with these declines, levels remain above historical norms.

ICI building activity levels, meanwhile, have trended up in all provinces recently, driven by significant investments in institutional and government sector projects, and healthcare and education projects in particular. Also adding to recent growth has been renewed growth in the manufacturing sector across many regions of the country, including major electric vehicle battery plants and auto retooling projects in Ontario and proposed major hydrogen facilities in Atlantic Canada. As many of these projects conclude or pass peak activity periods in the middle forecast years, investment levels plateau. Long-term growth is expected as steady population growth drives demand for commercial buildings to support an expanding service sector.

Of note is the major role played by the federal government in renewing its built assets across the country, and in the National Capital Region in particular. Its investment outlook calls for significant expenditures on key properties in the region, including throughout the Parliamentary Precinct.

FIGURE 8:
NON-RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT, CANADA



* $2017 millions indicates that the investment values are in year 2017 dollars (base year), that is, adjusted for inflation. This is used to calculate the real physical year-to-year change of the value of construction, factoring out growth (increase in value) due to increases in prices.

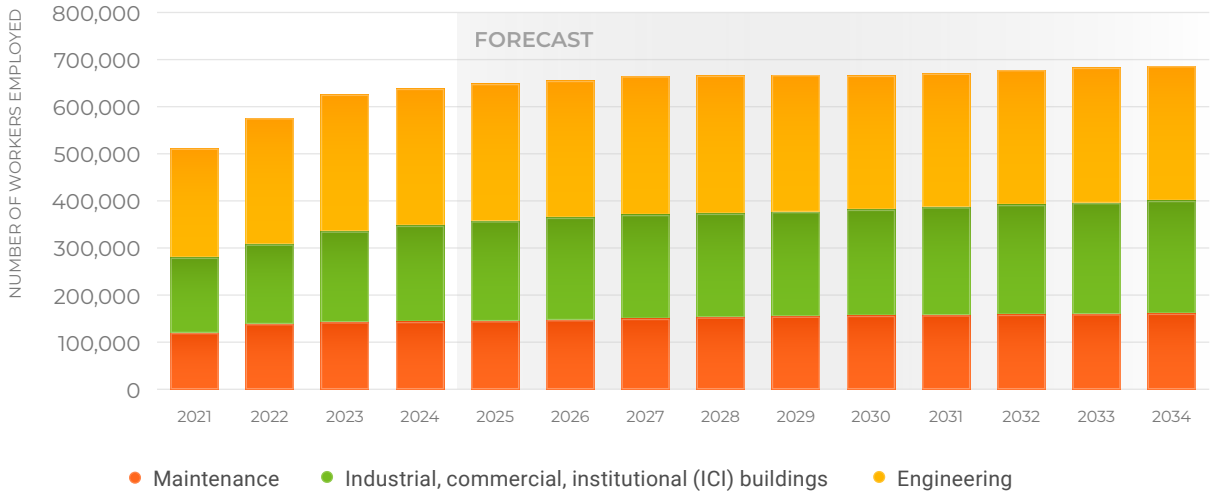
SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

NON-RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT

Non-residential construction employment has increased significantly since 2020, driven by strong growth across the engineering construction sector and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings. Growth has moderated since 2023, with employment increasing by 2% in 2024. A series of similar increases are anticipated throughout the forecast period, with employment increasing just under 8% by 2034 from 2024 levels. Employment relating to ICI buildings (17%) and non-residential maintenance (12%) are the principal drivers, whereas engineering construction employment contracts modestly (-2%) across the decade.

Figure 9 shows anticipated non-residential employment changes over the forecast period.

FIGURE 9:
NON-RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT GROWTH OUTLOOK, CANADA



SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

Table 2 shows the anticipated changes in non-residential employment by province across three periods: the short term (2025–2027), the medium term (2028–2030), and the long term (2031–2034).

TABLE 2:
CHANGES IN NON-RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT, BY PROVINCE

SECTOR	% CHANGE 2025–2027	% CHANGE 2028–2030	% CHANGE 2031–2034
Canada	4%	0%	3%
Newfoundland and Labrador	18%	13%	-9%
Nova Scotia	4%	0%	6%
New Brunswick	1%	4%	1%
Prince Edward Island	-7%	-5%	3%
Quebec	-2%	-3%	4%
Ontario	7%	0%	2%
Manitoba	12%	4%	8%
Saskatchewan	-1%	1%	-4%
Alberta	1%	3%	5%
British Columbia	7%	-1%	3%

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

NON-RESIDENTIAL LABOUR FORCE

The projected increase in employment demands across the forecast period should require the national non-residential construction labour force to grow by 60,100 workers by 2034. Over the same period, the industry is estimated to lose as many as 133,000 workers, or 20% of the 2024 labour force, to retirement. These trends combine to bring the industry's hiring requirements to 193,100 workers.

Based on historical trends, and supplemented by the industry's ongoing career-marketing efforts, the industry is projected to recruit as many as 152,500 workers under the age of 30. However, without additional recruitment efforts, the industry may be short as many as 40,600 workers by 2034.

Figure 10 shows the anticipated labour force changes in the non-residential sector over the forecast period.

Addressing peak demands through interprovincial mobility may be challenging. With many provinces reporting higher or sustained levels of construction activity, in the non-residential sector in particular, there may not be strong incentives for workers to relocate. Competition for workers is projected to be most intense in British Columbia and Ontario, where many major projects are planned and underway, and where labour markets are already tight. Seasonal demands relating to industrial shutdown/turnaround maintenance work in Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick may exacerbate these short-term pressures further.

FIGURE 10:
CHANGES IN THE NON-RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION LABOUR FORCE, CANADA

* Net mobility refers to the number of workers needed to be brought into the industry from other industries or other provinces to meet rising demands or the number of workers that exit the industry in downturns. Positive net mobility means that industry must attract workers, while negative net mobility arises from an excess supply of workers in the local construction labour force.

Note: Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to the totals indicated.

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

PROVINCIAL INSIGHTS

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Construction activity in Newfoundland and Labrador saw modest growth in 2024 as the province's residential and non-residential sectors experienced investment increases.

As interest rate pressures eased, housing starts rose significantly. Consumers returned to the new-housing market and builders responded to pent-up demands created by previously elevated levels of household formations. Meanwhile, various projects underway in the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings sector and in the engineering construction sector helped drive non-residential construction investment levels higher.

The outlook calls for growth in both the residential and non-residential sectors, although growth in the former is projected to be more muted than in the latter. The outlook for residential construction calls for investment in new-housing construction to rise by nearly 26% to 2029 compared to 2024 levels before slowing to the end of the decade. Steady growth in residential renovations helps offset this trend, and drives total residential investment values 3% higher than 2024 levels by 2034.

Activity in the non-residential sector, meanwhile, is projected to record growth of 63% between 2025 and 2032. The increase is driven initially by a series of projects in both the engineering-construction and in the ICI buildings sector, including a proposed major hydrogen project. After a slight pause in 2029 with the conclusion of the hydrogen project, engineering-construction investment rises in 2030 driven by increased activity on the proposed Bay du Nord offshore oil development project.

These trends require the provincial construction labour force to grow by 2,200 workers by 2034. The expected retirement of a further 6,100 workers over the forecast period (29% of the 2024 labour force) creates an overall hiring requirement of 8,300 workers.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Prince Edward Island also reported growth in both its residential and non-residential construction sectors in 2024.

The former saw growth in housing starts as interest rates stabilized and builders responded to high levels of demand created by strong levels of immigration. The latter recorded another year of increases on the strength of growth in ICI building construction.

The outlook calls for construction activity in the residential and non-residential sectors to diverge to the end of the forecast period.

Residential construction is expected to see significant growth into 2030, as high levels of demand for all unit types help to increase investment by 36% over this period. Later years see growth slow notably. Renovation activity, too, is projected to see strong growth to the end of the decade.

Non-residential construction activity, meanwhile, is projected to step down from its recent 2024 peak while remaining well above historical levels. Investment in ICI buildings construction is forecast to slow into 2030 as work concludes on tracked major projects. Investment in engineering construction is expected to rise to a peak in 2026 with the timing of major projects before also slowing into 2029 as work concludes.

The provincial construction labour force is expected to increase by 80 workers by 2034. The expected retirement of a further 1,680 workers (22% of the 2024 labour force) creates an overall hiring requirement of 1,760 workers.

NOVA SCOTIA

Construction activity in Nova Scotia reported another gain in 2024, with residential investment levels elevated by growth in new-housing and renovation activity, and non-residential investment propelled by strong levels of activity in both engineering construction and in the construction of ICI buildings.

The residential construction sector in Nova Scotia, and in the Halifax Regional Municipality in particular, is contending with high levels of demand and immediate shortages of workers that are leading, in some cases, to project delays or even cancellations.

Residential activity is anticipated to continue to grow into 2025 and then is sustained into 2027 before increasing steadily to the end of the decade. Initially, growth is driven by the new housing component. Later years see growth propelled by investments in residential renovations.

Non-residential construction investment levels, meanwhile, are projected to ebb and flow across the forecast period, in line with the timing of major projects. Investment recedes into 2026 as work passes peak activity levels on several healthcare projects, and as key engineering construction projects, including several wind farm and roadwork projects, wind down or conclude.

Investment rises to a peak in 2028 as core construction work starts on several key engineering-construction projects, including the EverWind hydrogen project. This growth is not sustained, however, as investment recedes into 2030 as these projects conclude. Later years see moderate investment growth tied to overall economic and population growth.

Nova Scotia's construction labour force is estimated to increase by 6,600 workers by 2034 to keep pace with growth. The projected retirement of some 8,400 workers, or 23% of the 2024 labour force, combines to create total hiring requirements of 15,000 workers by 2034.

NEW BRUNSWICK

Construction investment levels rose in New Brunswick in 2024, as the residential sector was driven by growth in both new-home construction and renovation work, while the non-residential construction sector saw growth in both engineering construction and the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings.

The BuildForce Canada outlook calls for both sectors to report growth, but chart differing paths. The residential construction sector comes into the forecast period at an elevated level. Although demand for new housing construction slows into 2029, demand for residential renovations rises across the forecast period, and surpasses new-housing construction as the key investment driver by 2026.

Meanwhile, activity in the non-residential sector is projected to moderate into 2026 as work passes peak activity on a large number of projects. Investment then rises significantly between 2027 and 2031 as increased activity at the Mactaquac Life Achievement Project combines with ongoing work at the proposed Irving Pulp & Paper NextGen capital improvement project.

These factors combine to create an estimated total hiring requirement of 8,400 workers by 2034. This figure includes some 1,900 workers estimated to keep pace with growth and a further 6,500, or 20% of the 2024 labour force, who are projected to exit the industry due to retirement.

QUEBEC

Construction activity reported gains in Quebec in 2024. Residential construction activity benefitted from easing interest rate pressures to see investment rise in both new-housing construction and residential renovations. The non-residential sector, meanwhile, experienced more modest increases in both engineering construction and in the construction of ICI buildings.

The outlook for the province sees investment levels stabilize in both the residential and non-residential sectors.

In the residential sector, housing starts are projected to decline across the forecast period, with contractions greatest among multi-unit dwellings. This trend is offset by steady growth in residential renovation activity that is driven by several factors including a need to restore the province's aging housing stock and as home buyers purchasing older homes invest in upgrades to the home to customize it to their preferences.

Investment in the non-residential sector is projected to remain elevated over the near term before generally trending downward into the early 2030s as work is completed or passes peak on several major utility, transit, healthcare, and education sector projects. Although activity ebbs and flows in line with major projects, overall investment remains elevated across the forecast period.

With overall construction employment projected to recede across the forecast period, Quebec's construction labour force may contract by as many as 6,100 workers by 2034. The projected retirement of 49,900 workers, or 21% of the 2024 labour force, translates into overall hiring requirements to 43,800 workers.

ONTARIO

Construction investment levels in Ontario pulled back slightly in 2024.

Residential construction activity continued the downward trend that began after the sector reached peak investment levels in 2021. Activity continues to be constrained by affordability concerns, elevated interest rates, and in the Greater Toronto Area, excess supply among high-rise apartment buildings. These trends caused housing starts to contract again in 2024, while investment in residential renovations was mostly unchanged.

Activity in the non-residential construction sector, on the other hand, continues to trend upward. Engineering construction activity was strengthened by a wide range of transit, mining, and nuclear power projects, as well as elevated levels of construction on roads, highways, and bridges. The industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings construction sector continues to be led by major healthcare, education, government building refurbishments, and industrial projects.

The BuildForce Canada outlook scenario for Ontario calls for overall investment levels to advance over the decade.

After slowing again in 2025, residential construction investment is projected to rise slowly across the forecast period. Pent-up demand, easing interest rates, and a growing population help drive these gains. The outlook in the non-residential sector calls for activity to rise to a peak in 2027, driven by a wide range of ongoing and new major projects. Investment slows into 2030 before being sustained at an elevated level to the end of the decade.

To keep pace with this growth, the provincial construction sector is projected to expand its labour force by 63,800 workers by 2034. When that figure is coupled with the projected retirement of 90,300 workers, or 19% of the 2024 labour force, the industry could face a hiring requirement of 154,100 workers. Although that figure should be partially offset by the projected recruitment of 102,200 new entrant workers under the age of 30, a potential shortfall of 51,900 workers is forecast.

The following sections provide region-specific outlook highlights and labour market conditions for Ontario's five regions: Eastern, Northern, Central, Greater Toronto Area, and Southwestern.

EASTERN ONTARIO

Construction in Eastern Ontario[3] has been driven in recent years by historically high levels of residential construction activity, and strong growth in the non-residential sector.

This trend has changed somewhat in recent years. Activity in the residential sector, which peaked in 2022, has stepped down as interest rates rose and as consumer confidence waned. Activity in the non-residential sector, on the other hand, continues to be driven by a long list of major projects underway across both the engineering construction sector and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings.

The outlook calls for both sectors to record growth to the end of the forecast period. The residential sector is projected to see investment levels increase in 2025 and in each year to 2034 with renewed growth in new housing activity.

Activity in the non-residential sector is projected to rise to an historic peak in 2027 with elevated levels of work in the engineering construction sector and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings. Investment moderates from this elevated level into 2032 before growth again resumes with demands created by population growth.

Given these trends, Eastern Ontario's construction industry must address a projected hiring requirement of 22,400 workers by 2034, much of which is created by the estimated retirement of 13,100 workers, or 20% of the 2024 labour force. Even with the projected recruitment of 14,400 new entrant workers under the age of 30 from the local population, the industry could still face a potential hiring shortfall of 8,000 workers.

NORTHERN ONTARIO

Construction activity in Northern Ontario[4] has been generally trending downward since 2022, with contractions in the local residential sector offsetting moderate levels of growth in the non-residential sector.

Investment in both sectors declined in 2024. Housing starts for the entire region have receded from the recent peak of 1,350 units in 2021. Rising interest rates were largely to blame, with pronounced declines in the Northeast and Sudbury economic regions offsetting growth in Thunder Bay.

Non-residential investment levels also stepped down, as work passed peak activity periods on major mining and utilities projects. Offsetting this trend somewhat were elevated levels of activity in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings, and in particular ongoing work on a correctional complex in Thunder Bay.

The outlook for the 2025 to 2034 period sees investment in both components contract from 2024 levels, but with a series of fluctuations. Residential investment levels are projected to increase into 2025 and 2026 as interest rate pressures ease. Later years see investment – and housing starts – decline as population growth slows.

Non-residential construction activity is projected to fluctuate across the forecast period, in line with the timing of major projects. Engineering construction contracts initially with the conclusion of major mining and transmission projects, but remains elevated with others planned. ICI buildings construction is projected to increase in 2025 and remain elevated into 2030 with ongoing work on major government and institutional projects, including a healthcare project in Moose Factory and a major correctional facility in Thunder Bay.

Construction employment in the residential sector is projected to contract by 10% across the entire region, while employment in the non-residential sector is projected to rise to a peak of 9% above 2024 levels by 2028 before moderating to the end of the decade.

Although projected overall employment is mostly unchanged by 2034, the region's construction sector must replace a large number of retiring workers across the forecast period. Approximately 5,200 workers are expected to exit the industry due to retirement during the 10-year forecast period, which equates to 19% of the 2024 labour force.

[3] **Eastern Ontario** includes the economic regions of both Ottawa and Kingston-Pembroke, including the census metropolitan areas of Ottawa and Kingston. Cities include Cornwall, Brockville, Belleville, and Petawawa.

[4] **Northern Ontario** includes the economic regions of the Northeast and Northwest as defined by Statistics Canada, including the census metropolitan areas of Thunder Bay and Sudbury. Cities include Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, Kirkland Lake, Dryden, Kenora, and Fort Frances.

CENTRAL ONTARIO

Ontario's Central region[5] has seen activity in its residential and non-residential sectors chart different paths in recent years.

Residential construction activity reached a peak in 2021. High levels of in-migration to the region combined with low interest rates to bring investment in new housing in particular to an elevated level. Activity has stepped down since. Although regional population growth remains high, residential construction has slowed with rising interest rates and softening consumer demand.

Non-residential construction activity has been generally rising since 2016 and experienced another year of growth in 2024. Activity is being driven by a large volume of projects in both engineering construction and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings, with the latter benefitting from high levels of activity on major healthcare projects as well as several industrial projects.

The outlook calls for the residential sector to return to growth after 2025, increasing steadily to the end of the forecast period. Both single-detached and multi-unit starts are projected to increase into 2031; later years see growth driven by residential renovations. Activity in the non-residential sector is projected to rise to a peak in 2027 as work begins on several projects in Hamilton, including a proposed light rail project, and supplements already ongoing work on several healthcare and industrial projects. Growth subsides to the end of the forecast period, with modest fluctuations in line with the timing of major projects.

The industry could face a projected hiring requirement of 39,300 workers over the forecast period, including the need to replace 18,600 workers who are estimated to exit the industry due to retirement.

GREATER TORONTO AREA

Construction activity in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)[6] recorded a modest increase in 2024. The market continues to be dominated by ongoing work on major projects across both the engineering construction sector and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings.

Investment levels contracted again in the region's residential sector. The ongoing pressure of elevated interest rates continues to impact the new housing construction sector, with housing starts contracting notably in 2024.

The outlook scenario for the GTA calls for a further decline in residential construction activity in 2025 as the region contends with ongoing affordability issues and with excess supply levels among high-rise condominiums. Thereafter, and to the end of the decade, the sector sees successive increases. This occurs as interest rates stabilize and new housing again returns to growth.

The outlook for the non-residential sector calls for investment levels to fluctuate into 2029 with the timing of major projects. Growth is driven initially by ongoing work on healthcare, transit, and utility projects. Later years see growth driven by elevated levels of activity in ICI buildings.

Employment in both components is projected to increase across the forecast period, with the residential sector growing continuously after 2025 to 2034, and increasing by 14% above 2024 levels. The non-residential sector sees employment grow by 10% over the decade.

In addition to keeping pace with elevated construction demands, estimated at 26,700 workers, the GTA's construction sector will need to contend with the replacement of 40,400 workers who are projected to exit the industry through retirement in the next 10 years. That figure equates to roughly 22% of the 2024 labour force. Combined, these factors create an estimated hiring requirement of 67,100 workers by 2034. Even with the projected recruitment of 37,000 new entrant workers under the age of 30 from the local population, the industry could still face a potential hiring shortfall of 30,100 workers.

[5] **Central Ontario** includes the economic regions of Muskoka-Kawarthas, Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie, and Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula as defined by Statistics Canada, which includes the census metropolitan areas (CMAs) of St. Catharines-Niagara, Hamilton, and Kitchener-Waterloo. The region includes such cities as Peterborough, Orangeville, Guelph, Barrie, and Brantford.

[6] The **Greater Toronto Area (GTA)** includes the municipalities of Ajax, Aurora, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Brampton, Brock, Caledon, Clarington, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Georgina Island, Halton Hills, King, Markham, Milton, Mississauga, Newmarket, Oakville, Oshawa, Pickering, Richmond Hill, Scugog, Toronto, Uxbridge, Vaughan, Whitby, and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Activity in Southwestern Ontario's[7] construction industry peaked in 2021, but has remained elevated since due to strong growth in the non-residential sector.

Both the residential and non-residential sectors reported growth in 2024. As interest rate pressures began to ease, the residential sector saw an increase in new housing activity. The non-residential sector reported another year of strong growth as activity continued on such major projects as the Gordie Howe International Bridge, the Bruce Power nuclear refurbishment, and several automotive-sector projects including the NextStar Energy electric battery facility.

The outlook for the 2025 to 2034 period calls for construction growth to be driven by the region's residential sector. Investment levels are anticipated to grow in every year of the forecast period, with gains greatest in new housing, and in single-detached units in particular. Meanwhile, investment in the non-residential sector fluctuates with the timing of major projects.

Employment is projected to rise in both sectors across the forecast period. By 2034, residential sector employment is projected to be 11% higher than 2024 levels, while non-residential sector employment increases only 4% during the same period.

The combination of these growth pressures and the anticipated retirement of 13,700 workers, or 19% of the 2024 labour force, by 2034 creates an estimated hiring requirement of 19,200 workers for the region.

[7] **Southwestern Ontario** includes the economic regions of London, Windsor-Sarnia and Stratford-Bruce Peninsula as defined by Statistics Canada, including the census metropolitan areas of London and Windsor. Cities include Chatham, Ingersoll, Sarnia, Stratford, Goderich, and Owen Sound.

MANITOBA

Overall construction investment recorded a slight gain in Manitoba in 2024, as growth in the province's non-residential sector outweighed a slight contraction in its residential sector.

Investment levels in the former have charted a strong upward curve since 2022, and were sustained by strong levels of investment in both the engineering construction sector and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings. Meanwhile, investment in the residential sector contracted for the third year in a row as interest rate pressures dampened demand for new housing.

The outlook calls for investment levels in both sectors to increase steadily across the forecast period. Activity in the residential sector is expected to benefit from lowering interest rates and positive population growth. The non-residential sector, meanwhile, is expected to benefit from growth in both components. Utilities projects and works on roads, highways, and bridges drive growth in engineering construction, while growth in ICI buildings construction is driven across all three sub-components.

These factors combine to elevate employment across the forecast period. Residential construction employment rises by 9% above 2024 levels. Non-residential construction employment ends the decade almost 26% higher than 2024 levels.

In addition to meeting the labour demands created by such growth, the construction industry must remain focused on replacing the estimated 9,800 workers, or 21% of the 2024 labour force, who are projected to leave the industry due to retirement across the forecast period. Combined, total hiring requirements are estimated at 19,400 workers by 2034.

SASKATCHEWAN

Both sectors of Saskatchewan's construction industry reported growth in 2024, as the residential sector saw modest growth in new housing activity, while the non-residential sector benefitted from increased activity in both engineering construction and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings.

Residential construction activity in the province has experienced competing influences in recent years. Population growth rates increased dramatically between 2022 and 2024, with an influx of both permanent and non-permanent international migrants. This trend helped to drive demand for new-home construction and particularly starts for multi-unit dwellings. Meanwhile, the effects of rising interest rates curbed consumer spending habits – and spending on residential construction in particular. These factors combined to increase residential-sector investment by just over 3% in 2024.

The province's non-residential sector saw investment growth of more than 7% in 2024 that was driven by ongoing activity on major resource and utilities projects, and on projects across the healthcare, education, and manufacturing sectors.

The BuildForce Canada outlook calls for construction employment to grow across the forecast period, as a gain of 20% in the residential sector more than offsets a modest contraction of just under 4% in the non-residential sector.

These contrasting demands, coupled with the expected retirement of some 9,000 workers, combine to create a hiring requirement of 10,700 workers over the forecast period. While the local industry is projected to recruit as many as 9,300 new-entrant workers from under the age of 30 over this period, absent significant changes, the provincial labour force could face a shortfall of as many as 1,400 workers by 2034.

ALBERTA

Construction activity in Alberta recorded a positive year in 2024, with growth reported in the province's residential and non-residential construction sectors.

Although activity in residential construction has been constrained by high interest rates and rising construction costs elsewhere in the country, investment levels in Alberta's residential sector grew across all three segments: new housing, renovations, and residential maintenance. Meanwhile, activity in the non-residential sector was driven by growth in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings.

The BuildForce Canada outlook calls for employment to grow in both sectors across the forecast period. The residential sector is propelled by strong short-term growth as anticipation of lower interest rates further spurs growth in new-housing construction. Later years see this growth slow and be replaced by strong demand for residential renovations and maintenance.

Non-residential activity, meanwhile, is projected to stabilize through the near term as work on several major engineering-construction projects passes peak activity levels or concludes. This trend is mostly offset by further increased levels of construction of ICI buildings. In later years, growth is driven by strong gains in the construction of ICI buildings.

Rising construction demands and projected retirements are expected to create hiring requirements of 59,000 workers by 2034. Although the industry is projected to add 43,600 new-entrant workers under the age of 30 over this period, unless this figure increases, the provincial labour force may be short as many as 15,400 workers by 2034.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

British Columbia's construction sector saw a modest overall contraction in 2024 as growth in the residential sector was not enough to offset a decline in non-residential activity.

Residential construction activity has stepped down from the recent peak reported in 2021. Interest rates and rising home prices slowed investment in 2022 and 2023. The sector saw growth in 2024 as an increase in residential renovations offset a slowdown in new-housing construction.

The non-residential sector, meanwhile, stepped down from the recent peak recorded in 2023 as work concluded on several major projects, including pipelines and highways, while other tracked projects passed peak levels.

The outlook scenario for British Columbia calls for a modest increase in residential activity to offset a small contraction in non-residential activity.

The former sees contractions in new housing activity through to 2031 as population growth slows and as housing affordability and land limitations influence growth in the Greater Vancouver Area in particular. These contractions, however, are offset by growth in renovation investment, which occurs in response to these cost concerns, as well as changing consumer preferences.

Investment levels in the non-residential sector are projected to ebb and flow through the forecast's short-term period, in line with high levels of industrial, commercial, and institutional construction and with the timing of work on major engineering construction projects. Growth moderates into 2031 as projects pass peak periods and end.

As construction demands rise across the forecast period, British Columbia's construction labour force is projected to increase by 16,300 workers by 2034 to keep pace with growth. The expected retirement of some 43,800 workers, or 23% of the 2024 labour force, over the forecast period adds to demand pressures. Combined, total hiring requirements are estimated at 60,100 by 2034.

LOWER MAINLAND

The Lower Mainland[8] construction market, which accounts for 57% of the province's construction employment, reported a small overall gain in construction activity in 2024. Growth in the region's non-residential sector offset a slight decline in the residential sector.

The outlook calls for investment levels in both sectors to contract modestly to the end of the decade. Residential construction activity is expected to cycle lower into 2028 as population growth slows.

Investment in non-residential construction is projected to stabilize across the near-term, given a stable volume of major projects underway in both the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings and engineering construction sectors. Activity moderates across the ICI sector before ramping up in later years. Engineering construction activity, meanwhile, ebbs and flows with the timing of major projects, but levels remain elevated to the end of the forecast period.

Following these trends, employment in both sectors is expected to diverge across the forecast period. Residential employment is projected to contract by 11% compared to 2024 levels, while employment in the non-residential sector ends the decade 6% above 2024 levels.

Over the same period, as many as 22,600 workers are expected to exit the region's labour force through retirement. This, combined with an anticipated contraction of 1,800 workers due to slower construction growth, leaves the region with an estimated overall hiring requirement of 20,800 workers.

[8] The **Lower Mainland** region is defined by the economic regions of Greater Vancouver, Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast, Squamish, and Lillooet.

VANCOUVER ISLAND

Construction in the Vancouver Island region[9] stepped down in 2024. A contraction in both new housing construction and in renovations drove residential investment levels down by just under 6%. Offsetting this loss somewhat was a modest increase in non-residential construction investment.

The outlook calls for investment in both residential and non-residential construction to increase across the forecast period, although growth in both is stronger in the later forecast years.

Residential construction activity is expected to post growth in 2025 and 2026 and then trend lower through the remainder of the 2020s as housing starts decline in line with weaker population growth. The later years of the forecast see investment in new housing return to growth with a recovery in demand for single-detached units. Meanwhile, investment in residential renovations is projected to rise continuously.

Non-residential construction activity is expected to record incremental gains into 2027. This occurs with ongoing work on several major projects in both the engineering-construction sector and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings. Levels step down between 2028 and 2030 with the completion of some of the ongoing work on healthcare and education projects, and with the conclusion of seismic work on the John Hart Dam.

Construction employment in the region is expected to increase across the forecast period, with growth exclusive to the non-residential component (9%). Employment in the residential sector is virtually unchanged from 2024 levels by 2034.

Over the same period, the region will have to contend with the replacement of an estimated 7,400 workers who are expected to exit the industry due to retirement. When combined with growth, total hiring requirements are estimated at 9,300 by 2034.

[9] The Vancouver Island & Coast Economic Region includes a number of regional districts, including the Capital Region, Cowichan Valley, Nanaimo, Alberni-Clayoquot, Strathcona, Comox Valley, Powell River, Mount Waddington, and Central Coast.

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE LABOUR FORCE

Construction employment has increased almost every year since 2002, adding just over 740,000 workers over this period. Employment saw further growth in 2024, as a modest increase in the non-residential sector offset a relatively unchanged level in residential employment.

Notable recently has been growth in employment among two key cohorts: women and youth. Among those workers aged 15 to 24 years, and who are about the enter the labour force, employment grew by 19% over the 12-month period ending in December 2024. Among women as a whole, employment rose by 5.1% over the same period. Both increases compare favourably to the overall employment increase of 1.8% during this period, and speak to the effects of targeted programs developed by industry and governments to address ongoing labour force challenges.

Efforts to augment recruiting among these groups will be increasingly important over the forecast period, particularly as Canada's population ages. These demographic shifts should contribute to tighter labour markets, as labour force participation by older workers is much lower than that of their younger counterparts.

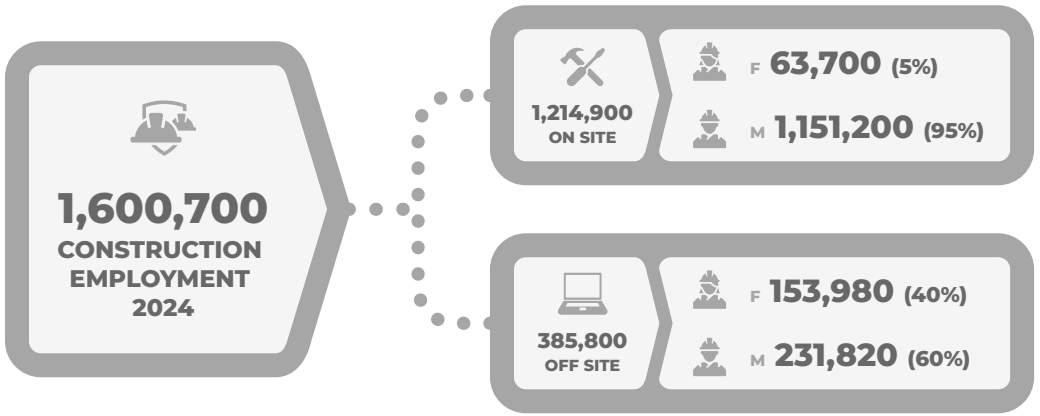
LABOUR FORCE DIVERSIFICATION

UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS OF WORKERS

Due in part to lower fertility rates and smaller family sizes in Canada for more than three decades, the share of younger Canadians available to enter the labour force has been in decline for several years. As the baby boom generation of workers continues retiring throughout the decade, the competition for younger workers could be intense. To help mitigate the impact of this shift in demographics, the construction industry must diversify its recruitment. Specifically, it must increase recruitment of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in the current construction labour force, including women, Indigenous People, and immigrants to Canada by raising awareness and working with settlement organizations to promote career opportunities to individuals new to the country.

In 2024, there were approximately 217,680 women employed in Canada's construction industry, of which 29% worked on site, directly on construction projects, while the remaining 71% worked off site, primarily in administrative and management-related occupations. Of the 1,214,900 tradespeople employed in the industry, women made up 5% (see Figure 11).

FIGURE 11:
DETAILED CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER, CANADA, 2024

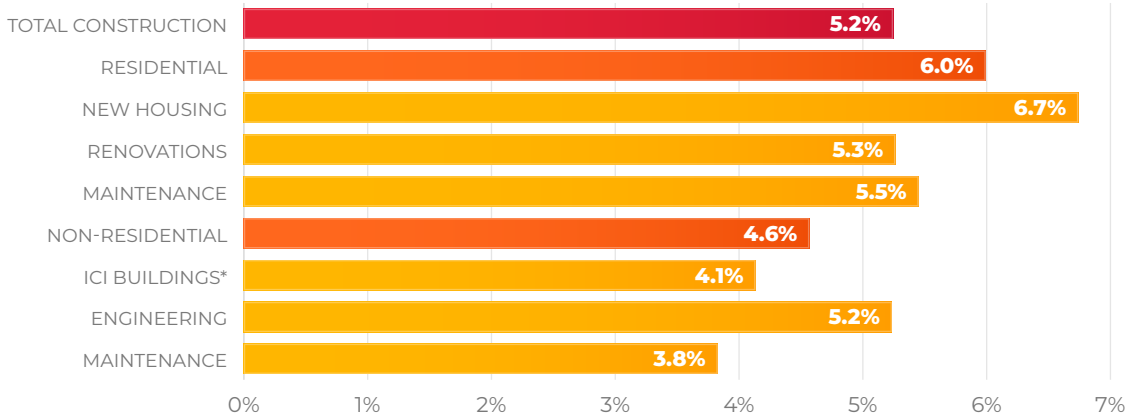


SOURCE: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey and 2021 Census of the Population.

The estimated 63,700 tradeswomen in Canada are represented across all sectors of construction however, women account for a higher share of total tradespeople (6.0%) in residential construction.

Across sectors, new housing construction has the highest representation of women, accounting for approximately 7% of the workforce (see Figure 12). The top five trades and occupations in which women tend to be employed are trade helpers and labourers (20% of all tradeswomen), construction managers (17%), contractors and supervisors (9%), painters and decorators (9%), and home building and renovation managers (7%).

FIGURE 12:
WOMEN'S SHARE OF TOTAL DIRECT TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS (ON SITE), CANADA



* industrial, commercial, institutional

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey and 2021 Census of the Population.

The Indigenous population is the fastest growing population in Canada and therefore presents recruitment opportunities for Canada's construction industry. In 2023, Indigenous People accounted for 5.2% of Canada's construction labour force, which is a slight increase from the share of 4.4% observed in 2014. This share is notably higher than the share of Indigenous People represented in the overall labour force (see Table 3). As the Indigenous population continues to expand, recruitment and retention efforts will need to be dedicated to increasing the industry's share of the population into the labour force.

TABLE 3:
REPRESENTATION OF INDIGENOUS POPULATION IN THE CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE, CANADA

INDUSTRY	INDIGENOUS	NON-INDIGENOUS	TOTAL	INDIGENOUS SHARE OF TOTAL WORKFORCE, %
Construction				
2014	65,300	1,433,000	1,498,300	4.4%
2023	86,300	1,584,100	1,670,400	5.2%
All Industries				
2014	580,700	18,533,500	19,114,200	3.0%
2023	822,400	20,473,900	21,296,300	3.9%

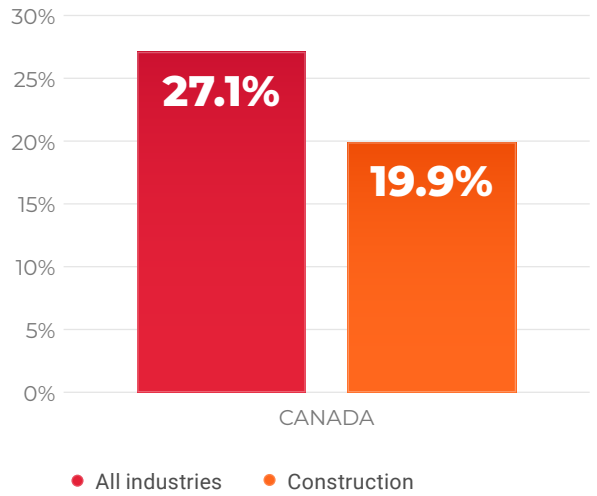
SOURCE: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Data Request 2023

Canada's construction industry may also leverage newcomers (immigrants) over the forecast period to meet labour requirements. Due to the declining natural rates of population growth, immigrants are the primary source of labour force growth in Canada.

Immigrants have been playing an increasingly important role in replenishing the workforce, with the share of immigrants in the workforce increasing from 21.9% in 2014 to 27.1% in 2023. Canada has been successful in attracting and integrating immigrants into the labour force; however, immigrants remain underrepresented in the construction industry. The construction labour force share of immigrants was 19.9% in 2023, which is notably lower than the share in the overall labour force. (See Figure 13).[10]

Based on historical settlement patterns (and factoring in new targets for immigration), Canada is expected to welcome almost 4.4 million new immigrants between 2025 and 2034. As these individuals make up an increasing share of the country's core working-age population, additional recruitment efforts will be required to ensure the construction industry recruits its share of newcomers into the labour force.

FIGURE 13:
SHARE (%) OF NEWCOMERS IN THE CONSTRUCTION LABOUR FORCE, 2023, CANADA



[10] Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Data Request 2023.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0083-01 Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, annual

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The 2025–2034 BuildForce Canada *Construction and Maintenance Looking Forward* forecast sees construction activity across Canada's residential and non-residential sectors chart growth through to 2034.

Although investment levels in the residential construction sector have stepped down over the past two years from the recent peak reported in 2021, the outlook calls for the sector to return to growth in 2026 and through to the end of the forecast period. Initially, demand is driven by a return to growth in new-home construction, and in single-detached dwellings in particular. This occurs as interest rate pressures ease and consumer concerns over affordability are relieved slightly. Later years see slowing growth in new housing offset by strong demand for residential renovations. This occurs given the relative affordability of this activity compared to new-home purchasing, and due to the fact that older Canadians may choose to remain in their homes as they age.

Non-residential construction activity, meanwhile, has been increasing notably since 2020, and is projected to rise to a forecast peak in 2027 with ongoing work on major projects across almost all regions of the country. On the engineering construction side, these include liquefied natural gas projects, major mining projects, a series of transit projects, utility projects such as power generation and water and wastewater infrastructure, and roads, highways, and bridges projects in Ontario, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Saskatchewan. In the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings, key drivers include high levels of investment in institutional and government buildings construction across the country.

Non-residential construction investment levels slow into 2030 as work on many of these projects either conclude or pass peak activity levels. The final years of the forecast see modest increases that are driven by economic growth and in response to population demands.

Meeting peak periods of activity is projected to be challenged by limited provincial mobility. Many provinces are already experiencing high or sustained levels of construction activity, giving workers no strong incentives to relocate in the near term. Labour market challenges are complicated by the retirement of an estimated 268,900 workers, or 21% of the 2024 labour force. This represents a significant loss of skills and experience that is unmatched by new workers entering the labour force.

The task of attracting new workers to construction may become further complicated, as other industries face similar challenges related to replacing an aging labour force. Meeting near- and long-term demand requirements will require a combination of industry strategies that include increased recruitment and training of youth, looking to traditionally under-represented groups, such as women, Indigenous People, and newcomers to Canada, or to other industries to augment the available pool of local workers.

The industry scenario-based approach developed by BuildForce Canada to assess future labour market conditions provides a powerful planning tool for industry, government, and other stakeholders to better track labour market conditions and identify potential pressure points. The anticipated labour market conditions reflect current industry expectations of population growth and the timing of major projects. Any changes to these assumptions present risks and potentially alter anticipated market conditions.

ABOUT THE BUILDFORCE CANADA LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM

BuildForce Canada's labour market information (LMI) system uses the most advanced and detailed industry model available in Canada to produce a forecast scenario that reflects current and future labour demand and supply information for the residential and non-residential construction sectors, by province.

Updated annually, the system is calibrated to the latest information on global, national, and provincial economic conditions derived from various data sources including Statistics Canada, Canadian financial institutions, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and federal and provincial budget plans. Key factors driving the outlook scenario include: economic environment measures such as real GDP growth, inflation, interest rates, exchange rates, commodity prices, and international trading partner trends, and population growth and demographic trends.

Unique to the BuildForce system is the integration of a major projects inventory. This is developed in partnership with provincial LMI committees – networks of industry stakeholders that include labour groups, construction associations, owners, and federal/provincial government departments – and identifies key projects that may distort construction investment trends and market conditions.

Information on economics, demographics, and major projects are combined into a dynamic, multi-sector and multi-factor macroeconomic model to generate a 10-year labour market outlook scenario for the residential and non-residential construction sectors in each Canadian province.

The system incorporates coefficients derived from Statistics Canada's input-output tables to determine industry demands and proprietary coefficients developed by BuildForce Canada to translate residential and non-residential investment data into labour demands for the 34 most common on-site trades and occupations in the construction sector. These account for 75% of the total construction labour force.

For labour supply, the system utilizes Statistics Canada's 2021 Census of Population as a starting point. That data is adjusted to reflect current public-policy and demand factors, and is further refined through consultation with the provincial LMI committees to produce measures of provincial economic and population growth, employment growth, retirements, new entrants to the labour force, and interprovincial and international migration patterns.

Provincial residential and non-residential labour market conditions, by trade and occupation, are assessed based on changes in supply and demand and summarized in the form of tables. For each year, conditions are ranked from a low of 1 (in which excess labour supply is apparent, and there is a risk of losing workers to other markets) to a high of 5 (in which there is excess demand, competition is intense, and recruiting extends beyond local labour markets). Ranks are calculated based on annual employment growth, natural or normal unemployment rates, and changes in supply (i.e., retirements, new entrants, and mobility requirements to meet demands).

Rankings for some trades or occupations may be suppressed in some provinces and regions due to the small size of the workforce (i.e., fewer than 100 workers) and limited statistical reliability when assessing labour market conditions at the sector level. Some trades are also excluded because they typically do not work in the sector being assessed (e.g., boilermakers and millwrights typically do not work in residential construction, nor do homebuilding and renovation managers work in non-residential construction).

Finally, to further improve the robustness of the system, BuildForce Canada's outlook scenario is validated by provincial LMI committees.

APPENDIX: COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS

The production of *Construction and Maintenance Looking Forward 2025–2034* would not have been possible without valuable input from the following organizations:

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

- Canada's Building Trades Unions
- Canadian Construction Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association – Newfoundland and Labrador
- Construction Labour Relations Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Heavy Civil Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Finance
- Newfoundland & Labrador Hydro
- Newfoundland and Labrador Immigration, Population Growth and Skills
- Service Canada
- Trades NL

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

- Canada's Building Trades Unions
- Canadian Construction Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association – Prince Edward Island
- Construction Association of Prince Edward Island
- Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- PEI Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association
- Prince Edward Island Department of Finance
- Prince Edward Island Workforce, Advanced Learning and Population
- Service Canada – Atlantic

NOVA SCOTIA

- Atlantic Home Building and Renovation Sector Council
- Canada's Building Trades Unions
- Canadian Construction Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association – Nova Scotia
- Construction Association of Nova Scotia
- Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- Merit Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia Construction Labour Relations Association Limited
- Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council
- Nova Scotia Department of Finance
- Nova Scotia Road Builders Association
- Service Canada - Atlantic Region

NEW BRUNSWICK

- Canada's Building Trades Unions
- Canadian Construction Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association of New Brunswick
- Construction Association of New Brunswick
- Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- Irving Oil
- Moncton Northeast Construction Association and Mechanical Contractors Association of New Brunswick
- New Brunswick Building Trades Council
- New Brunswick Finance and Treasury Board
- New Brunswick Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour
- New Brunswick Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association
- Saint John Construction Association
- Service Canada – New Brunswick

QUEBEC

- Not applicable

ONTARIO

- Bruce Power
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- Canada's Building Trades Unions
- Canadian Construction Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association
- Central Ontario Building Trades
- CLAC
- Construction Association of Thunder Bay
- Construction Employers Coordinating Council of Ontario
- Construction Labour Relations Association of Ontario
- Council of Ontario Construction Associations
- Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec Building Trades Council
- Electrical Power Systems Construction Association
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Essex and Kent Building Trades Council
- General Contractors' Association of Toronto
- General Presidents' Maintenance Committee for Canada
- Grand Valley Construction Association
- Hamilton-Brantford Building & Construction Trades Council
- Hamilton-Halton Construction Association
- Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- Hydro One
- IBEW Local 303
- Infrastructure Ontario
- Ironworkers Local 759
- J-AAR Excavating/AAROC Aggregates
- Kingston Construction Association
- Ledcor Group
- LiUNA Ontario Provincial District Council
- London and District Construction Association
- Mechanical Contractors Association of Ontario
- Millwright Regional Council of Ontario
- Niagara Construction Association
- Niagara-Haldimand Building and Construction Trades Council
- Northeastern Ontario Construction Association
- Ontario Construction Secretariat
- Ontario Formwork Association
- Ontario General Contractors Association
- Ontario Home Builders' Association
- Ontario Masonry Contractors' Association
- Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities
- Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
- Public Services and Procurement Canada
- RESCON
- Sarnia Construction Association
- Sarnia-Lambton Building & Construction Trades Council
- Sault Ste. Marie Construction Association
- Service Canada
- Sheet Metal Workers Local 47
- Ontario Power Generation
- Ontario Road Builders' Association
- Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association
- Ottawa Construction Association
- Progressive Contractors Association of Canada
- Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario
- Toronto Construction Association
- UA Local 71

- UA Local 527
- UA Local 628
- UA Local 800
- Waterloo, Wellington, Dufferin and Grey Building Trades Council
- Windsor Construction Association
- Workforce Planning for Sudbury & Manitoulin

MANITOBA

- Apprenticeship Manitoba
- Canada's Building Trades Unions
- Canadian Construction Association
- Canadian Home Builders Association
- Construction Association of Rural Manitoba
- Construction Labour Relations Association of Manitoba
- Housing, Infrastructures and Communities Canada
- Manitoba Building Trades
- Manitoba Construction Sector Council
- Manitoba Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation
- Manitoba Finance
- Manitoba Heavy Construction Association
- Manitoba Home Builders' Association
- Manitoba Hydro
- Mechanical Contractors Association of Manitoba
- Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba
- Northern Manitoba Sector Council
- Service Canada
- Winnipeg Construction Association

SASKATCHEWAN

- Canada's Building Trades Unions
- Canadian Construction Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association – Regina
- Canadian Home Builders' Association – Saskatoon
- CLAC
- Construction Associations of Saskatchewan
- Construction Labour Relations Association of Saskatchewan
- Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan
- Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission
- Saskatchewan Building Trades
- Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Finance
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Immigration and Career Training
- Saskatchewan Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement
- Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency
- Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association
- SaskPower
- Service Canada – Saskatchewan
- Women in Trades and Technology

ALBERTA

- Alberta Advanced Education
- Alberta Construction Association
- Alberta Council of Turnaround Industry Maintenance Stakeholders
- Alberta Jobs, Economy and Trade
- Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association
- Association of Maintenance Contractors of Canada
- Building Trades of Alberta
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- Canada's Building Trades Unions
- Canadian Construction Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association – Alberta
- Cenovus Energy
- CLAC
- Construction Labour Relations – Alberta
- Enbridge Inc.
- Energy Safety Canada
- Fluor Canada Ltd.
- Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- National Construction Council
- OpenCircle
- PCL Constructors Inc.
- Progressive Contractors Association of Canada
- Regional Oil Sands Operating Alliance
- Service Canada
- Shell Canada
- Suncor Energy Inc.
- Syncrude Canada Ltd.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

- BC Building Trades
- BC Hydro
- BC Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
- BC Regional Council of Carpenters
- BC Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association
- BC Transportation Investment Corporation
- British Columbia Construction Association
- British Columbia Insulation Contractors Association
- Canada's Building Trades Unions
- Canadian Construction Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association
- Canadian Home Builders' Association – British Columbia
- CLAC
- Construction Foundation of British Columbia
- Construction Labour Relations Association of BC
- Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- Industry Training Authority
- LNG Canada
- Mechanical Contractors Association of BC
- National Construction Council
- Northern Regional Construction Association
- PCL Constructors Inc.
- Progressive Contractors Association of Canada
- Roofing Contractors Association of British Columbia
- Service Canada – BC
- Southern Interior Construction Association
- Vancouver Island Construction Association
- Vancouver Regional Construction Association

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