

Economic Opportunities Profile



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Photography supplied by: The Town of Sylvan Lake

How to use this document: This document has been created to provide easy access to data in a centralized location and includes key indicators for Sylvan Lake's investment sectors, labour force, demographics, livability, and economic development.

About the Data: Please note that every effort has been made to use the most current data available. The major sources of information for this document are:

- The 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021 Census from Statistics Canada.
- Manifold SuperDemographics data is from 2025 Manifold Data Mining Inc.

The most recent Census was conducted in May 2021.

SuperDemographics 2025 is the most up to date estimation of population characteristics, based on mathematical models that draw from various data sources.



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Snapshot of Sylvan Lake

Sylvan Lake is a vibrant lakeside community with a high quality of living that respects the environment, provides diverse economic opportunities, and values efficient, inclusive and transparent government.

Discover Sylvan Lake's Potential

The town of Sylvan Lake is situated on the southeast edge of Sylvan Lake, a 15-kilometre-long freshwater lake in Red Deer County.

Over time, Sylvan Lake has become a favourite year-round vacationing spot for families from both Edmonton and Calgary. The lake is a popular destination for tourists from around Alberta, with over 1.5 million visitors each year.

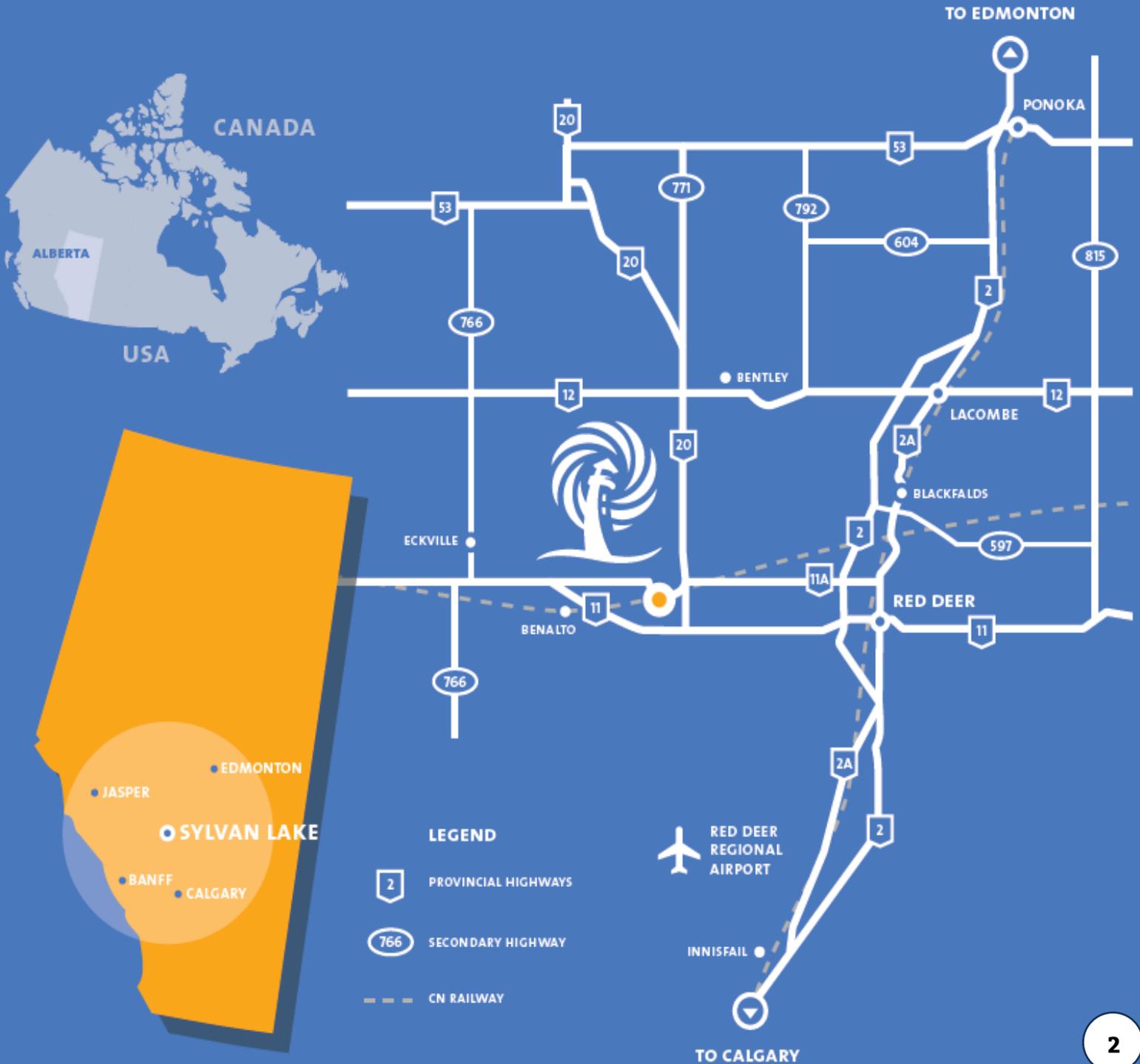
Sylvan Lake is more than just a picturesque destination; it's a thriving community that combines lakeside charm with vibrant economic opportunities. Located in the heart of Alberta, Sylvan Lake features a pro-business environment and a highly skilled workforce. The quality of life here is unmatched in the Calgary-Edmonton Corridor. Whether you're looking to invest, grow your business, or enjoy lakeside living, Sylvan Lake is ready to welcome you.

Rapid Growth & Diverse Strengths

Sylvan Lake is one of Alberta's fastest-growing communities, with a population increase of 13.4% over the past five years—among the highest in the province. This rapid growth supports a forward-looking economy built on strengths in tourism, professional services, and manufacturing. The town is a hub for professional services in energy, construction, and engineering, supported by a resilient small business ecosystem and proactive economic development strategies. Its manufacturing sector is expanding, offering opportunities in construction materials and precision manufacturing, backed by access to regional training institutions. With a scenic lakeside location, vibrant downtown, and growing infrastructure, Sylvan Lake continues to attract investors, entrepreneurs, and families seeking a dynamic place to live, work, and grow.

Location

The town of Sylvan Lake is centrally located along QEII, between Calgary and Edmonton. The town is just 18 km west of Red Deer, the third largest city in Alberta, with access to major highways, rail lines and airports, connecting it with national and international markets. The town has easy access to an immediate trading area of over 313,000 people and because of its close proximity to the QEII highway, is positioned to access a market of over 2.7 million.



Central Alberta Advantage

Where businesses prosper and communities thrive.

Central Alberta is home to a diverse and growing economy with a highly skilled workforce across a range of industries. With expertise in oil and gas, agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare, the region's talent pool brings technical proficiency, adaptability, and a strong work ethic.

The region offers a strong foundation for investors focused on stability, innovation, and success. This robust economic landscape draws businesses, supports job creation, and fosters steady population growth.

Central Alberta offers strategic access to both domestic and international markets. Situated on the CANAMEX corridor and served by two continental rail lines, goods move easily to major ports. With TransCanada highways, Calgary's intermodal facilities, and proximity to airports in Red Deer, Calgary, and Edmonton, Central Alberta offers unmatched connectivity for maximized trade opportunities.

Expanding interprovincial trade is unlocking new market opportunities for Alberta businesses, allowing local producers, service providers, and manufacturers to reach broader customer bases across Canada. By reducing trade barriers and streamlining regulations between provinces, businesses can scale more efficiently, diversify revenue streams, and strengthen supply chains. This increased access fosters innovation, competitiveness, and long-term economic resilience, positioning central Alberta as a strategic hub for growth beyond Alberta's borders.



Why Invest in Sylvan Lake

A survey of local businesses noted the following strengths and opportunities for doing business in Sylvan Lake:

Strengths

- Strong local business network willing to support each other.
- Welcoming resident community that supports and values local small businesses.
- Supportive municipal government that promotes a business-first attitude.
- Incredibly high quality of life.
- The lake offers unparalleled natural beauty.
- Sylvan Lake's proximity to Red Deer is appealing as it opens new avenues to revenue generation without having as high of a cost of living.
- Over 80% of businesses surveyed rated their employees as either excellent or good.
- Sylvan Lake's downtown is seen as safe, clean, and walkable.

Opportunities

- Increasing number of annual development permits means business is growing rapidly in Sylvan Lake.
- Continued development of lakeshore/main street hubs.
- A majority of local businesses believed they were primed for expansion, showcasing the immense opportunity in Sylvan Lake.
- Increasing the support services elderly residents rely on to support this growing demographic.
- Building on the success of the lake as a tourist draw by growing night-time activities for visitors.
- Continuing to grow the arts and culture scene, especially along main street downtown.

Value Proposition

- Lower cost of living in a more rural setting with easy access to a large urban centre.
- Central location between Calgary and Edmonton along the CANAMEX Corridor.
- Supportive municipal government.
- Skilled labour pool within the town and across Central Alberta.
- Strong quality of life for business owners and employees.
- Collaborative, supportive business community.





Investing in Sylvan Lake's Future

Sylvan Lake is investment-ready, offering opportunities in retail, industrial, and waterfront redevelopment.

Recreation, Infrastructure, and Revitalization

The Town of Sylvan Lake is making bold, strategic investments to enhance quality of life, support economic growth, and position the community for long-term success. From major recreational developments to infrastructure upgrades and downtown revitalization, these initiatives reflect Sylvan Lake's commitment to building a vibrant, resilient, and future-ready town.

At the heart of these investments is **Pogadl Park**, a multi-phase, 80-acre recreation and sports complex that began development in 2016. Originally sparked by a generous 20-acre land donation, the Town expanded the site through additional land purchases and reserve contributions. With an estimated total investment of \$33.9 million, Pogadl Park is transforming Sylvan Lake's southwest into a regional destination for sports, leisure, and tourism. Completed amenities include baseball diamonds, soccer and football fields, a splash park, playground, and the Co-operators Play Zone. In 2024, the Town opened a new campground and began construction on a tournament house. Phase 4, approved in 2025, will add a synthetic turf field, four pickleball courts, two grass soccer fields, and a large parking lot near Gulls Stadium. This phase alone represents a \$7.4 million investment, with construction scheduled for 2026.

Beyond recreation, Sylvan Lake is investing heavily in **core infrastructure** to support its rapid population growth and economic diversification. Key priorities include upgrades to water reservoirs, stormwater systems, and regional wastewater pipelines. These improvements are essential for maintaining service reliability, supporting new development, and ensuring environmental sustainability.

The Town is also focused on **downtown revitalization**, recognizing the importance of a vibrant core for both residents and visitors. Through the "Reimagine Sylvan" initiative, the Town is engaging the public to shape a new vision for the downtown area. Plans include enhancing walkability, supporting local arts and culture, and creating more flexible public spaces. Investments in streetscaping, lighting, and accessibility aim to preserve the charm of Sylvan Lake's historic downtown while modernizing it for future needs.

Demographics

Growing opportunities and strong quality of life.

Sylvan Lake has experienced remarkable growth since the early 2000s, with growth rates of 21.1% (from 2006 to 2011), 19.9% (2011-2016) and 7.9% (2016-2021) over the previous three Census periods. As of 2025, it is estimated that the Town’s population is approaching 18,000, with the current high growth rates continuing through the next decade (9.5% and 8.3% projected over the next two five-year periods). This leads to an overall projected population of 21,332 by 2035, an increase of nearly 10,000 residents since 2011.



	2011	2016	2021	2025	2030	2035
Sylvan Lake	12,362	14,820	15,995	17,998	19,702	21,332
% Change	21.1%	19.9%	7.9%	N/C	9.5%	8.3%
	2011	2016	2021	2025	2030	2035
Alberta	3,645,257	4,067,175	4,262,635	4,950,528	5,298,055	5,624,945
% Change	10.8%	11.6%	4.8%	N/C	7.0%	6.2%



The Town has a larger relative population of teens and young adults (10-34) than Alberta, which is typically a difficult demographic for smaller municipalities to attract. This speaks to the growing opportunities and strong quality of life in the town of Sylvan Lake.

Resident Income Characteristics

In 2024, median total income for all Sylvan Lake residents 15 years and over was \$53,574.

The median household income in Sylvan Lake was similar to Alberta figures, while the average incomes for households were lower in comparison to Alberta figures, suggesting that the Town is home to a much more even distribution of household incomes compared to the province, signifying a strong middle class locally.

Characteristic	Total	Sylvan Lake %	Alberta %
Under \$15,000	97	1.3%	1.8%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	92	1.3%	1.0%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	131	1.8%	2.3%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	174	2.4%	2.8%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	171	2.4%	2.7%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	205	2.8%	2.8%
\$40,000 to \$44,999	263	3.6%	3.1%
\$45,000 to \$49,999	262	3.6%	3.3%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	393	5.4%	5.3%
\$60,000 to \$69,999	486	6.7%	6.3%
\$70,000 to \$79,999	528	7.3%	6.4%
\$80,000 to \$89,999	469	6.5%	6.3%
\$90,000 to \$99,999	473	6.5%	6.1%
\$100,000 and over	3,525	48.5%	49.7%
Total	7,268	100%	100%
Median household income \$	\$111,183		\$110,576
Average household income \$	\$121,943		\$141,613



Labour Force

Sylvan Lake is home to a labour force of over 10,500 persons.

Compared to the rest of Alberta, Sylvan Lake residents are more likely to work in trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations or natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations.

Economic engagement rates (participation, employment, unemployment) are higher than provincial figures. Having higher participation and employment rates are positive indicators of an engaged resident labour pool, interested in contributing economically. A higher unemployment rate is typical for a community experiencing rapid growth, as many people moving to the community may take longer than expected to find stable employment.

Industries of employment are quite varied among Sylvan Lake residents, with four industries representing at least 12.0% of resident employment. This speaks to a strong level of diversification within the local economy, suggesting a resilient business community that is a tremendous positive for the Town.



72.0%
Participation Rate

Alberta
69.1%

67.3%
Employment Rate*

Alberta*
64.0%

7.0%
Unemployment Rate*

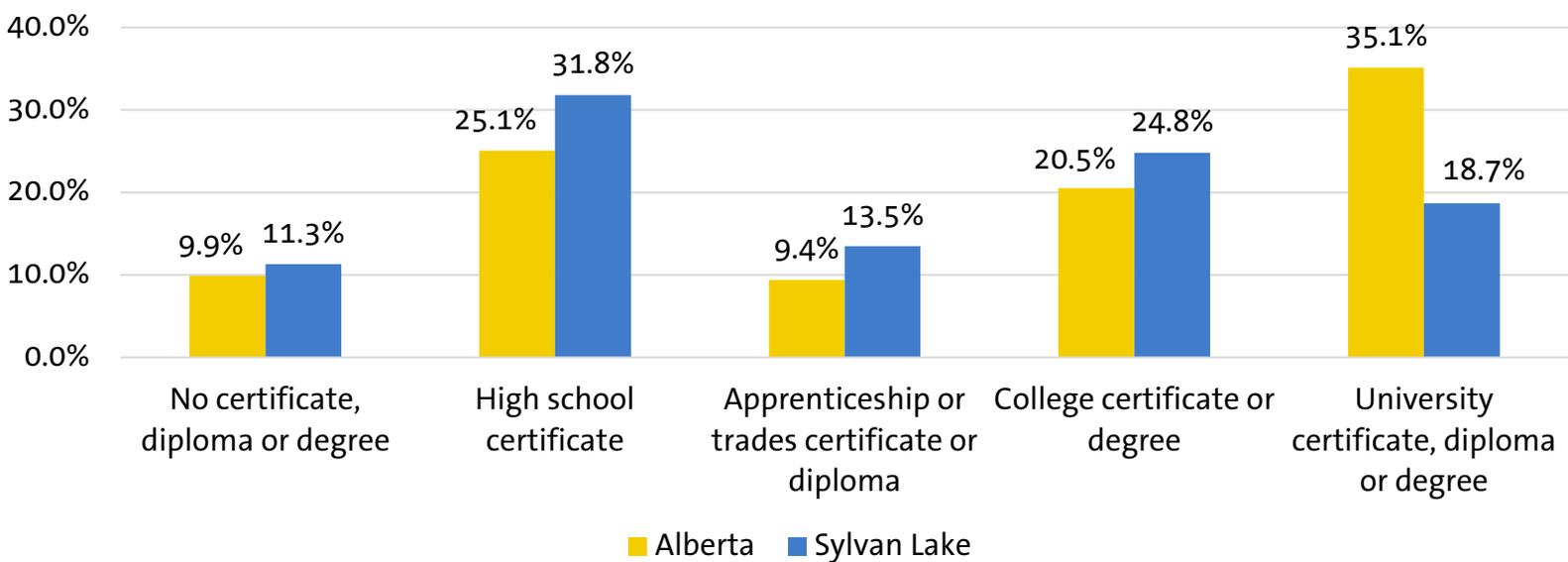
Alberta*
7.6%

*Unemployment and employment rates are from Statistics Canada Table 14-10-0480-01 (Sylvan Lake) and 14-10-0017-02 (Alberta).

Education

Sylvan Lake’s educated population offers a valuable and highly skilled workforce for the major economic sectors in the region.

Nearly one in four (24.8%) residents have attained college level education, while nearly one in five (18.7%) have completed university level education. The percentage of persons with an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma is higher than the province (13.5% vs. 9.4% in Alberta). Just under 32% of residents have a high school certificate.



Post-Secondary Academics & Training

Central Alberta offers post-secondary education primarily through Campus Alberta Central (CAC), a partnership between Olds College of Agriculture & Technology and Red Deer Polytechnic that provides post-secondary programs to communities throughout the central Alberta region.



Red Deer Polytechnic

Red Deer Polytechnic is Red Deer's largest post-secondary institution. 2025 will see a graduating class of 918 students.

RDP Applied Research Specialists connect with businesses and entrepreneurs throughout Alberta to collaborate, innovate and find solutions to real-world problems. As one of Canada's Top 50 Research Polytechnics and Colleges they partner with nearly 190+ companies annually and had over 70 projects in 2023-24.

Home to the Centre for Innovation in Manufacturing Technology Access Centre (CIM-TAC) and the Energy Innovation Centre, RDP offers state-of-the-art facilities and expertise in our four areas of focus: Manufacturing & Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare & Health Technology, Energy Innovation, and Social Innovation. The CIM-TAC houses \$7.6 Million of advanced manufacturing equipment in 15,000 square feet. Thanks to a \$12.9 million investment from the Government of Alberta, the CIM-TAC will expand from 15,000 to 25,000 square feet. Construction has begun and the new facility will open in Fall 2026.



OLDS COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & TECHNOLOGY

Olds College Centre for Innovation (OCCI) is the applied research division of Olds College of Agriculture & Technology, and focuses on practical, industry-driven applied research that can be easily implemented by the agriculture industry. Industry partners connect with OCCI for support in the development and testing of innovative products in the core areas of crop production, livestock production, environmental stewardship, cereal breeding and technology integration. These focus areas align with infrastructure at the College, available expertise and gaps identified by the agriculture sector.

The Smart Farm was built to support start-up development, validation, scaling and demonstration of smart agriculture technologies and practices. Olds College is connected with Alberta Innovates, the Central Alberta Regional Innovation Network (CARIN), SVG Thrive and UCEED with the goals of:

- Encouraging innovation, creating and sustaining a healthy economy, and solving problems within the agriculture industry.
- Supporting businesses by guiding them to the right partners through Olds College networks of businesses and organizations throughout Alberta and Canada.
- Providing training and resources to developers to help them market their products effectively.

Cost of Doing Business in Sylvan Lake

With no provincial sales tax and a streamlined permit/development process, Sylvan Lake is primed for growth.

Taxes

	Residential	Commercial	Designated Industrial	Machinery & Equipment
Municipal	0.00663100	0.01174300	0.01174300	0.01174300
School	0.00245220	0.00379520	0.00379520	--
Lodge	0.00013510	0.00013510	0.00013510	0.00013510
Recreation	0.00031210	0.00031210	0.00031210	0.00031210
Transportation	0.00028290	0.00028290	0.00028290	0.00028290
Designated Industrial	--	--	0.00007010	--
Total	0.00981330	0.01626830	0.01633840	0.01254320

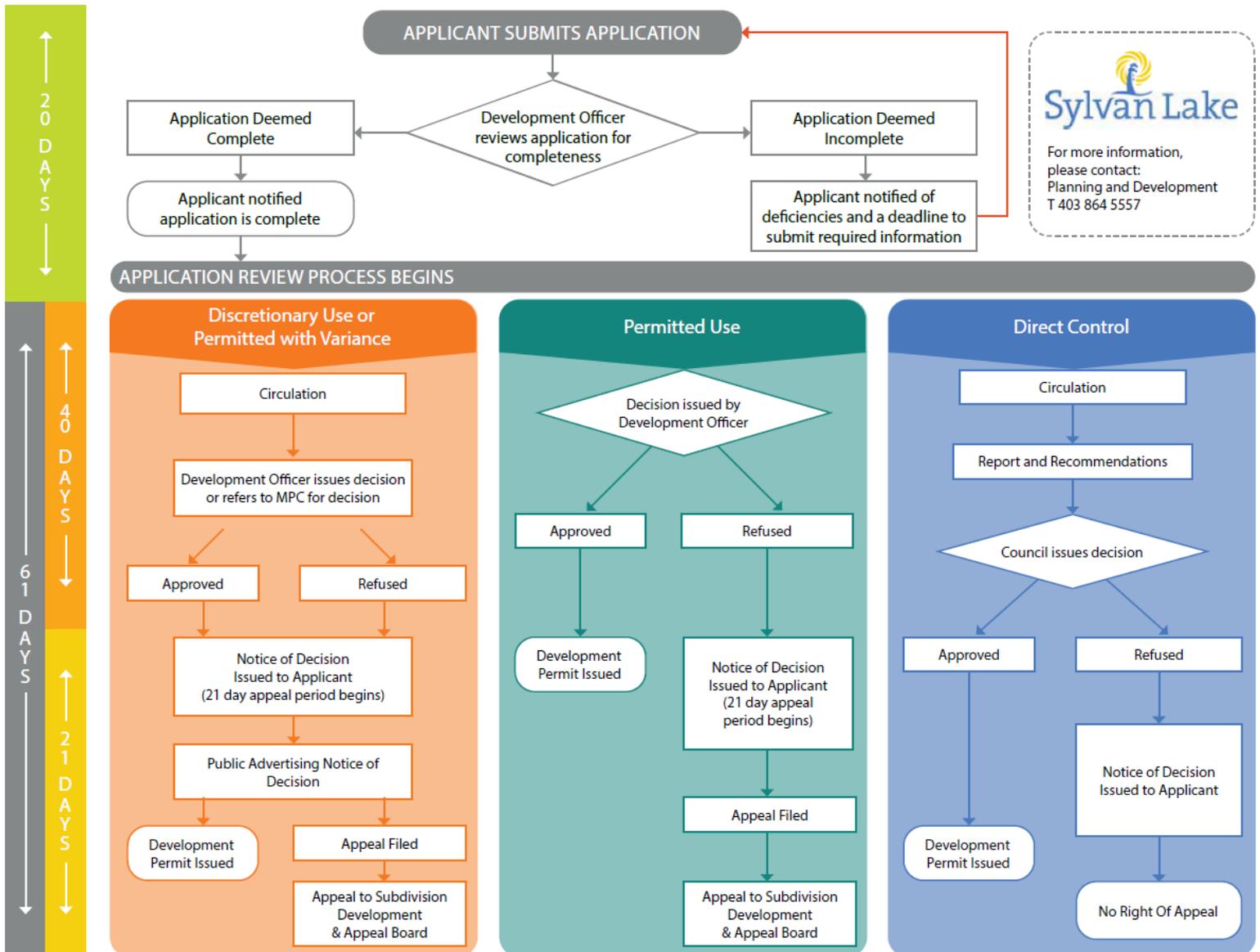
Corporate Tax Rates – Non-Canadian Controlled	2025
Combined Federal and Provincial	%
General/Manufacturing and Processing/Investment	25.0
General; Active Business Income	26.5

Corporate Tax Rates - Canadian Controlled	2025
Combined Federal and Provincial	%
Small Business Income up to \$500,000	12.2
General; Active Business Income	26.5
Investment Income	50.2

Alberta offers one of the most competitive tax environments in Canada, with no provincial sales tax, no payroll tax, and no health premium, making it an attractive destination for investors and businesses. Corporate income tax rates remain among the lowest in the country, supporting profitability and reinvestment. Sylvan Lake benefits directly from these provincial advantages while also offering a business-friendly local environment, streamlined permitting processes, and access to regional incentives.

Development Process

The Town of Sylvan Lake has established a clear and streamlined **development process flowchart** to guide investors, developers, and business owners through each stage of land use and project development. This user-friendly framework outlines key steps including pre-application meetings, land use and zoning reviews, permitting, and approvals for both residential and commercial developments. By integrating provincial legislative requirements with local expertise, Sylvan Lake ensures a transparent, efficient, and supportive development experience. The process is designed to reduce uncertainty, encourage investment, and help applicants navigate municipal requirements with confidence.



Utilities

Communication Infrastructure

Alberta has a competitive environment for providing Internet services in rural areas. Outside of urban areas, this is accomplished primarily through fixed wireless access. There are more than 45 wireless internet service providers in the province.



Water and Waste Management

Sylvan Lake utility costs (water and sewer), are self-funded, meaning utility fees are only used towards management, maintenance, and operation of utility-based infrastructure, and property taxes do not contribute towards utility costs. This means that increases to either property tax rates or utility rates do not affect the other. To cover any gaps between expenses and utility fees, the Town uses grant funding, borrowing, and development levies associated with water and sewer infrastructure for new or rehabilitated utility infrastructure.

Monthly Utility Rates	Residential	Commercial
Water (fixed charge)	\$43.49 per Dwelling Unit	\$43.49 per Business Unit
Sewer (fixed charge)	\$27.91 per Dwelling Unit	\$27.91 per Business Unit
Water consumption rate	\$0.97 per m ³	\$0.97 per m ³
Sewer collection rate	\$3.09 per m ³ (as per water consumption)	\$3.09 per m ³
Garbage base	\$19.50	N/A
Recycling base	\$6.50	\$7.25

Electricity & Natural Gas

Alberta’s electricity and natural gas systems are owned and operated by a mix of investor and municipally owned companies. The price paid by consumers is determined by supply and demand with prices fluctuating on a monthly basis. Consumers have the option to enter into contracts to ensure price certainty.

In Sylvan Lake, Fortis Alberta is the provider of the electrical infrastructure, and ATCO provides the natural gas infrastructure, but there are numerous retailers that residents and businesses may purchase their services from. For a complete list of retailers and price comparisons, visit the Utilities Consumer Advocate website.

	ATCO Gas Distribution Service	Fixed Charge (\$/daily)	Variable Energy (\$/GJ)	24 Hr Demand (\$/GJ/Day)
Low Use	Delivery Service (<1200 GJ/YR)	0.993	1.043	-
	Transmission Service Charge Rider T	-	1.260	-
Mid Use	Delivery Service (1200-8000 GJ/YR)	1.899	1.026	-
	Transmission Service Charge Rider T	-	1.167	-
High Use	Delivery Service (>8000 GJ/YR)	7.214	-	0.177
	Transmission Service Charge Rider T	-	-	0.283
Ultra High Use	Delivery Service (>100,000 GJ/YR)	8.142	-	.0209
	Transmission Service Charge Rider T	-	-	.0330
ATA	Delivery Service (<40 GJ/YR)	0.461	6.669	-
	Transmission Service Charge Rider T	-	1.260	-
Producer	Delivery Service (injecting gas into system)	182.022	-	0.206
Unmetered Lights	Unmetered Gas Lights (per mantle)	0.099	-	-

Fortis Electrical Commercial Transmission Charges			
Component	Billing Unit	kW Rate	kVa Rate
System Usage Charge	Peak Metered Demand (in kW or kVa)	\$0.146925 /kW-day	\$0.1322325 /kVA-day
Capacity Charge	kW (or kVa) of Capacity	\$0.112439 /kW-day	\$0.1011951 /kVA-day
Variable Charge	kWh	\$0.007239 /kWh	

Transmission Charges			
Component	Billing Unit	kW Rate	kVa Rate
System Usage Charge	Peak Metered Demand (in kW or kVa)	\$0.154816 /kW-day	\$0.1393344 /kVA-day
Local Facilities Charge	kW (or kVa) of Capacity	\$0.280322 /kW-day	\$0.2522898 /kVA-day
Service Charge	Daily	\$1.094781 /day	

Community Supports, Programs & Incentives

Sylvan Lake is committed to fostering a business-friendly climate through a range of programs and partnerships designed to support businesses, developers, and investors.

Sylvan Lake's Economic Development team offers a personalized concierge service for investors, providing tailored guidance, streamlined access to municipal processes, and direct connections to local resources—ensuring a smooth and informed investment experience from concept to completion.

A comprehensive list of business development and support programs; municipal, federal and provincial programs; and incentive directory can be found at invest.sylvanlake.ca/incentives-programs/.



[The Tourism Industry Partnership Program](#) is an opportunity for local tourism businesses to be involved and actively participate in Town of Sylvan Lake tourism initiatives and strategies, collaborate, provide great visitor experiences, and be involved in the development of the destination. Participants in the Program must have a valid license with their jurisdiction and be operating in the tourism industry sector in Sylvan Lake. The program is free of cost to businesses within the Town of Sylvan Lake or \$65 for tourism businesses located in Lacombe or Red Deer Counties.

Non-Residential Tax Incentive Program

The Non-Residential Tax Incentive Program is aimed at stimulating economic growth and encouraging business development. Under this program, eligible properties may receive a 5-year municipal tax exemption on the increased assessed value resulting from new construction or significant expansion. During this period, a 75% reduction will be applied to the municipal portion of the tax bill. For more information, please email invest@sylvanlake.ca.

Invest Sylvan Lake

Invest Sylvan Lake is a comprehensive online platform designed to support business owners, entrepreneurs, and site selectors with the tools and insights needed to thrive in Sylvan Lake. For those in the **professional services sector**—including legal, financial, consulting, and technical services—the platform offers a centralized hub for accessing critical data, community profiles, and business development resources.

The site features up-to-date **demographic and economic data**, helping professionals understand market trends, workforce characteristics, and client potential. It also provides **step-by-step guidance** for business startup and expansion, including licensing, zoning, and local contacts. Professional service providers can explore **training opportunities**, connect with local networks, and access programs that support innovation and growth.

Whether you're launching a new firm, expanding your practice, or relocating to Sylvan Lake, the platform simplifies decision-making and accelerates success. With its user-friendly design and curated content, Invest Sylvan Lake empowers professionals to make informed choices and tap into the town's vibrant, growing economy.

www.invest.sylvanlake.ca



Living in Sylvan Lake

Sylvan Lake offers an exceptional quality of life, blending small-town charm with modern amenities and year-round outdoor recreation.

A Lifestyle That Balances Work and Play

- Great dining and shopping options.
- 60 km of walking trails maintained all year.
- Lake fishing year round.
- 10 golf courses within 35 km.
- 2 craft breweries.
- Home to the Sylvan Lake Gulls (Western Canadian Baseball League) team and Stadium.
- Youth Entrepreneurship Program (Lemonade Day).

Summer on the Lake

Boating, water sports (including wakeboarding/surfing), swimming, beach playground.

Winter on the Lake

OHV's, Skidoo's, Wild Ice Skating, kite-boarding, ice fishing.

18,000 Residents

Source: Manifold SuperDemographics.

Median Age : 37

Source: Manifold SuperDemographics.

12 Schools

1,842 Licensed Businesses

Source: Lightcast Analyst

Tourism & Events

As the largest lakeside community in central Alberta, Sylvan Lake attracts high visitor traffic and benefits from strong local and regional demand.

Sylvan Lake is a year-round destination known for its stunning lake and diverse recreational opportunities. With over 26 km of trails and four golf courses, there's something for everyone. Join the Sylvan Lake Sailing Club, enjoy beach swimming, or have fun at the Aqua Splash and Lakefront Park's paddle sports. In winter, experience fireworks, ice skating, winter dragon boat races, and colorful festivals. No matter the season, Sylvan Lake offers endless activities for all interests!





Manufacturing



Manufacturing businesses add value to naturally extracted goods and help diversify the economic opportunities for those extracted resources.

Sylvan Lake manufacturing businesses most often operate as food production manufacturers (e.g., beverage manufacturing), construction-related manufacturers, or natural resource-related manufacturers (e.g., agricultural, construction and mining machinery manufacturing).

Sylvan Lake's manufacturing sector is relatively modest, but growing considerably thanks to a concentrated investment attraction approach across the region.

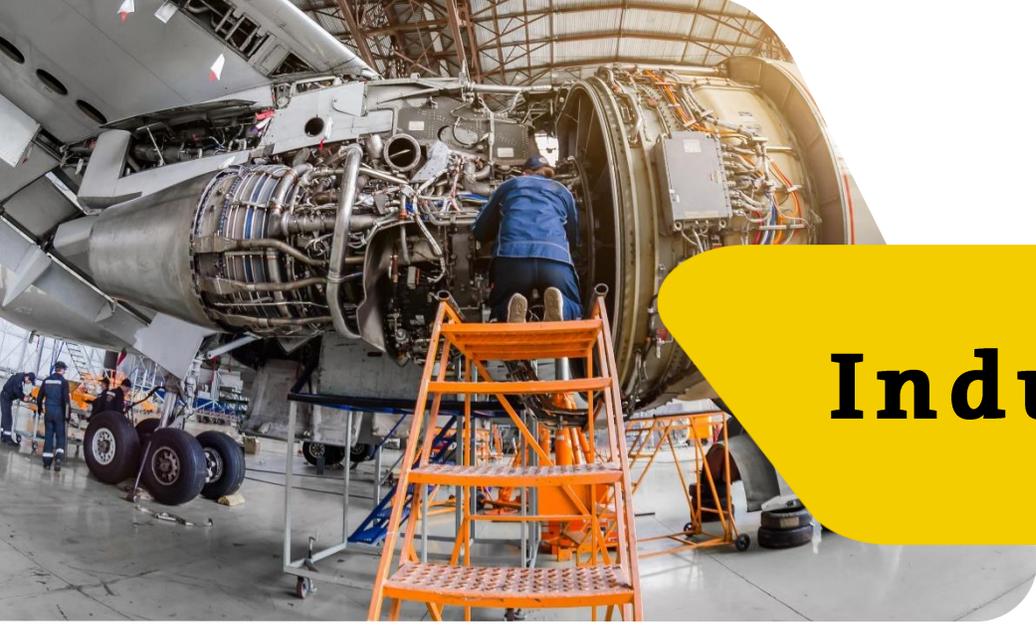
Regional Approach

Central Alberta is home to a diverse and growing economy with a highly skilled workforce across a range of industries. With expertise in oil and gas, agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare, the region's talent pool brings technical proficiency, adaptability, and a strong work ethic.

Local Competitive Advantage

Specific to the manufacturing sector, Sylvan Lake provides easy access to natural goods required for refinement or production, opportunities in construction materials and precision manufacturing, and has a labour pool well supported by regional training institutions.

Beyond Sylvan Lake, manufacturing activity across the Central Alberta region is diversifying into advanced and specialized areas. Additionally, recent federal and provincial investments have focused on enhancing the region's capacity for applied research, product development, and small-scale medical device production. These investments contribute to the growing shift toward higher-value, knowledge-driven manufacturing activity that supports strong quality of life and high-income jobs.



Industry Data

Average Manufacturing Wages

Alberta
\$73,526

Sylvan Lake
\$71,148

252

Sylvan Lake Job Count
(27% growth in the last decade)

7,115

Labour Recruitment
Area Job Count¹



Business Supports



Launched in early 2021, the [Manufacturing Export Enhancement \(MEE\) Cluster](#) has been a dynamic, industry-led initiative dedicated to driving growth and enhancing the global competitiveness of Western Canada’s manufacturing sector. Through its focus on fostering collaboration, de-risking innovation, and accelerating technology adoption, the Cluster has become a trusted platform for catalyzing industry advancement.



Red Deer Polytechnic’s (RDP) [Centre for Innovation in Manufacturing – Technology Access Centre \(CIM-TAC\)](#), along with the Energy Innovation Centre, state-of-the-art facilities are equipped to support a wide range of industries, with focused expertise in Manufacturing & Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare & Health Technology, Energy Innovation, and Social Innovation. RDP’s Applied Research Specialists work hands-on with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to co-develop solutions, build prototypes, refine processes, and accelerate innovation. For companies seeking meaningful, results-driven collaboration, RDP is a proven partner in research, development, and commercialization.

Oil & Gas Supply and Service



The oil and gas supply and service sector refers to businesses that provide specialized services to oil and gas producers, rather than extracting resources themselves. These businesses typically work on a contract or fee basis and support different stages of the resource development process.

Work can include preparing well sites and assisting with drilling, to maintaining, servicing, and eventually decommissioning wells. The sector plays a crucial role in keeping production operations efficient, safe, and compliant with industry standards, and growing Alberta's oil and gas sector through the 21st century.

Local Competitive Advantage

Specific to the oil and gas support and services sector, Sylvan Lake already hosts a well-established energy-services cluster, making it a strong base for support-services firms. Being host to already successful firms in the community and surrounding area allows the town to have the infrastructure, labour pool, and necessary supply-chain relationships to support new businesses.

Sylvan Lake offers distinct advantages for companies in the oil and gas sector thanks to its strategic location, skilled workforce, and strong infrastructure geared toward energy services. Located between Red Deer and key oil-producing regions in central and northern Alberta, the town provides direct access to major transportation routes like Highway 11 and Highway 20. This multimodal connectivity across Alberta and through north America makes it a practical base for mobilizing equipment, personnel, and services across Alberta's energy corridor.



Industry Data

Future Outlook

Overall, the outlook for natural resource extraction, and therein the oil & gas services and support-services sector is promising. Of note, the Government of Alberta has deliberately backed the development of downstream, value-added and support-service clusters, recognising that the province's legacy of hydrocarbon extraction has spawned a robust ecosystem of specialist firms, infrastructure and trained labour. For example, research shows that Alberta's hydrocarbon "cluster" encompasses over 3,500 support-activity firms — including environmental services, engineering procurement & construction, and drilling-/well-services companies. This broad provincial support will funnel to Sylvan Lake businesses and provide opportunities for expansive growth.

Business Supports

Sylvan Lake lies within an economic region dense with upstream oil and gas activity, and hosts a number of service-companies such as Sylvan Production Services (well-testing, workovers and flow-back operations) and Precision Well Servicing (oil & gas well-servicing) which supply key support services to extraction firms.

Support for this sector can be felt across the province. For example, the Emissions Reduction and Energy Development Plan of the Province of Alberta provides a policy backbone for continued investment, innovation and growth in the energy sector, including direction on land-conservation, emissions-management and modernization of operations.

The confluence of local, regional and provincial government support for this sector provides significant opportunity to potential investors. This supportive government policy environment means that businesses in the oil and gas support-services arena in Sylvan Lake are tapping into a mature supply chain, nearby clients, infrastructure and government commitment to energy development.

255

Sylvan Lake Job Count
(135% growth in the last decade)

2,209

**Labour Recruitment
Area Job Count**



Average Oil and Gas Support Wages

Alberta
\$122,49

Sylvan Lake
\$84,207

Professional Services

The professional services sector encompasses a wide range of businesses that provide specialized expertise and support to individuals, organizations, and government agencies. Key subsectors within Sylvan Lake include legal services, accounting and financial advisory, and marketing and communications services.

The sector is characterized by highly skilled labour, knowledge-based work, and a focus on client-driven solutions, making it essential to both the private and public economies.

Regional Approach

Central Alberta is home to a diverse and growing economy with a highly skilled workforce across a range of industries. With expertise in oil and gas, agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare, the region's talent pool brings technical proficiency, adaptability, and a strong work ethic.

Local Competitive Advantage

Specific to the professional services sector, investors have frequently noted businesses prefer communities with a strong quality of life. Professional service employees are typically well educated with sizable discretionary incomes and the flexibility to move to smaller communities (especially as work-from-home expands). Sylvan Lake's value proposition, with respect to business and employee attraction, is therefore quite strong. A 2022 business survey noted that:

- The town is home to a growing business community, with over half of local businesses noting their plans to expand (54%); and
- Sylvan Lake's downtown was reviewed positively, with businesses rating the "overall attractiveness and experience" highly and flagging the downtown as accessible, close to beneficial services, and easy access to the beach and tourist areas.



Industry Data

Financial Outlook

Growth in the professional and business-to-business services sector has largely been driven by rising corporate demand for specialized third-party expertise. This trend aligns well with Sylvan Lake's value proposition, as the community is close enough to Red Deer to easily access and service the larger urban business network, while offering the benefits of small-town living, amenities, and lifestyle.

On the consumer side, increasing per-capita disposable income has supported demand for professional services. At the same time, the rapid adoption of cloud technologies, mobile platforms and artificial intelligence has led both businesses and individuals to rely more heavily on external specialists.

Looking to the next decade, strong financial sector performance and sustained public investment are expected to support ongoing growth in third-party professional services, as rising corporate budgets and shifting workplace technology reinforce the need for specialized consulting.

From an investment attraction perspective, Sylvan Lake is well-positioned in offering affordability relative to major Alberta cities while delivering a high-quality, nature-based small-town lifestyle attractive to both professionals and the businesses that employ them.

Average Professional Services Wages

Alberta

\$78,274

Sylvan Lake

\$65,249

516

Sylvan Lake Job Count

(14% growth in the last decade)

7,712

Labour Recruitment Area Job Count



Sylvan Lake Location Quotient

0.74



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Seniors Support Services

Seniors care services encompass a broad range of supports designed to meet the medical, personal, and social needs of older adults as they age. These businesses directly operate community care facilities and also provide services that support seniors as well as others in the community.

Examples of community services include medical and rehabilitative services, including nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and specialized dementia or memory care.

Beyond health-related supports, seniors care services often incorporate **social programming and community engagement**, helping older adults maintain independence, connection, and quality of life.

Regional Approach

Central Alberta is home to a diverse and growing economy with a highly skilled workforce across a range of industries. With expertise in oil and gas, agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare, the region's talent pool brings technical proficiency, adaptability, and a strong work ethic.

Local Competitive Advantage

Specific to the seniors support services sector, the community's supportive municipal programs, engaged families, and focus on wellness create an ideal environment for innovative senior services. Additionally, new services bring economic benefits, including job creation in healthcare and social support sectors, while reducing pressure on hospitals and long-term care facilities through early intervention and community-based care. For organizations looking to grow in a vibrant, people-first community, Sylvan Lake offers both a meaningful mission and a sound business case.



Industry Data

Average Seniors Support Wages

Alberta
\$50,400

Sylvan Lake
\$49,088

663

Sylvan Lake Job Count
(60% growth in the last decade)

12,934

**Labour Recruitment
Area Job Count**



**Labour Recruitment
Area Location Quotient**

1.17



Value Proposition

Sylvan Lake presents a strong case for investment in senior support services, driven by its growing seniors population and commitment to community well-being. As more residents age, the demand for in-home care, assisted living, dementia support, and accessible transportation continues to rise, creating clear opportunities for service expansion. Investing in Sylvan Lake not only meets this demographic need but also contributes to improved quality of life for older adults, allowing them to age in place with dignity and connection.

Sylvan Lake is home to a growing older population. In 2001, 502 residents (6.7% of the total population) were aged 65+, while in 2021 that number had more than tripled, with 1,765 residents (11% of the population) being aged 65+. Both in total and as a percentage of the overall population, seniors are growing in Sylvan Lake, bringing opportunity with them. Across the spectrum, access to Red Deer, in concert with providing a community where aging in place is possible and desirable, positions Sylvan Lake well to take advantage of the coming demographic wave of seniors needing health care support.

Tourism



Tourism encompasses a broad range of recreational activities undertaken by individuals away from the communities where they reside, work, or study.

The industry is commonly understood to consist of five primary sectors: transportation, accommodation, food and beverage, recreation and entertainment, and travel services.

Sylvan Lake's tourism sector includes direct tourism operators (i.e., hotels/motels) as well as businesses who are supported by tourism but not solely tourism-related (i.e., restaurants).

Regional Approach

Central Alberta is home to a diverse and growing economy with a highly skilled workforce across a range of industries. With expertise in oil and gas, agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare, the region's talent pool brings technical proficiency, adaptability, and a strong work ethic.

Local Competitive Advantage

Specific to the tourism sector, the town's lakefront location provides opportunities for visitor attraction unparalleled in many parts of Alberta. With ever increasing visitor numbers, opportunities abound for perspective businesses.

“This is a Town that shops local, and supports local. I can't imagine starting my business anywhere else.”

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Industry Data

Average Tourism Wages

Alberta
\$34,339

Sylvan Lake
\$22,972

746

Sylvan Lake Tourism Jobs
(13% growth in the last decade)

9,090

**Labour Recruitment
Area Job Count**



**Sylvan Lake Location
Quotient**

1.33

Business Supports

Visit Sylvan Lake is the visitor services umbrella through which visitor information and destination marketing for Sylvan Lake are delivered. This includes the visitsylvanlake.ca website and social media [@visitsylvanlake](https://www.instagram.com/visitsylvanlake). Visit Sylvan Lake is operated by the Town of Sylvan Lake.

Opportunities to collaborate with the Town of Sylvan Lake on marketing campaigns and initiatives are a great way for businesses to leverage and find mutual benefit in ongoing campaigns. Visit Sylvan Lake regularly runs seasonal campaigns, hosts giveaways, and brings in influencers.

[The Tourism Industry Partnership Program](#) is an opportunity for local tourism businesses to be involved and actively participate in Town of Sylvan Lake tourism initiatives and strategies, collaborate, provide great visitor experiences, and be involved in the development of the destination. Participants in the Program must have a valid license with their jurisdiction and be operating in the tourism industry sector in Sylvan Lake. The program is free of cost to businesses within the Town of Sylvan Lake or \$65 for tourism businesses located in Lacombe or Red Deer Counties.

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Value-Added Agri-food



The agricultural value-added sector transforms, supports, and enhances primary agricultural production, including animal food manufacturing, grain and oilseed milling, dairy and meat product manufacturing, or the production of agricultural, construction, and mining machinery.

Within Sylvan Lake this sector encompasses manufacturing and processing alike, as local activities span the full agricultural supply chain connecting both “upstream” and “downstream” components of the industry.

Downstream manufacturers purchase raw materials (e.g., milk, meat, or grain) from local farms and process them into higher-value goods. This process of adding value increases the market worth of agricultural products. Conversely, upstream manufacturers produce goods and materials used directly in farming operations. These include the fabrication of agricultural machinery and equipment, animal feed, and other farm inputs, typically improving productivity and efficiency. Together, upstream and downstream activities form the foundation of the value-added agriculture sector.

Local Competitive Advantage

The Sylvan Lake region offers a unique blend of strategic advantages that make it an ideal location for value-added agriculture businesses. Situated between the major centres of Calgary and Edmonton, the area provides excellent access to key transportation routes, ensuring efficient distribution across Alberta and beyond. Sylvan Lake’s proximity to a skilled and diverse workforce, drawing from both rural communities and nearby urban centres like Red Deer, supports a wide range of agri-processing operations.

The community is further surrounded by productive grain, oilseed, and livestock farms, which provide raw materials for regional processors and create opportunities for small-scale food producers and agri-business startups. While most large-scale processing currently occurs elsewhere in Central Alberta, Sylvan Lake has the potential to capture some of this market while maintaining support for smaller-scale farm-to-table enterprises, direct-to-consumer markets, and small-scale food production that leverage local supply.

Businesses also benefit from the region’s strong agricultural foundation, with access to high-quality local inputs such as dairy, grains, and specialty crops.



Industry Data

Business Supports



[Olds College Centre for Innovation \(OCCI\)](#) is the applied research division of Olds College of Agriculture & Technology, and focuses on practical, industry-driven applied research that can be easily implemented by the agriculture industry. Industry partners connect with OCCI for support in the development and testing of innovative products in the core areas of crop production, livestock production, environmental stewardship, cereal breeding and technology integration.

[The Olds College Smart Farm](#) is made up of more than 3,000 acres of land for crop and forage production including state-of-the-art equipment and technology, 1,000-head capacity feedlot, commercial cow/calf herd, Purebred Red Angus herd and sheep flock — as well as expertise and leadership in ag tech research and development. The Smart Farm also has access to greenhouses, labs, incubator space, a brewery, the National Meat Training Centre, plus additional infrastructure at Olds College of Agriculture & Technology.

Average Value-Added Agriculture Wages

Alberta
\$56,103

Sylvan Lake
\$55,212

152

Sylvan Lake Job Count
(-2% growth in the last decade)

5,794

Labour Recruitment
Area Job Count



Labour Recruitment
Area Location Quotient

1.89



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sylvanlake.ca
MUNICIPAL

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EC DEV

visitsylvanlake.ca
TOURISM

engage.sylvanlake.ca
PARTICIPATION