

Industry Sector Profile

Manufacturing



Snapshot of Sylvan Lake

The town of Sylvan Lake is situated on the southeast edge of Sylvan Lake, a 15-kilometre-long freshwater lake in Red Deer County. Sylvan Lake is more than just a picturesque destination; it's a thriving community that combines lakeside charm with vibrant economic opportunities.



Location

The town of Sylvan Lake is centrally located within the Calgary-Edmonton Corridor, just 18 km west of Red Deer, the third largest city in the province, with access to all 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.

About the Sector

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).

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.

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.



Local Competitive Advantage

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 provides businesses the opportunity to locate within a tight-knit rural community, with access to urban centres and services.

The municipality consistently ranks highly in terms of business friendliness, with local entrepreneurs noting a business-first mentality and ease of connection with municipal staff. Local businesses also rank available labour and their current labour force highly, suggesting the town is home to a highly skilled workforce.

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.

Demographic Advantage

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

Sylvan Lake's economy is thriving, having 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. More recently, the town has had a growth rate of 13.4% over the past five years, one of the highest rates in Alberta. This rapid growth supports a forward-looking economy, with a diverse population seeking employment across a host of sectors.

The quality of life in Sylvan Lake is unmatched along the Calgary-Edmonton Corridor. Whether you're looking to invest, grow your business, or enjoy lakeside living, Sylvan Lake is ready to welcome you.



Business Supports

Bringing your business to our community offers a unique opportunity with a host of local supports, business-to-business collaboration, and innovation. In town, regionally and provincially, Manufacturing is a key sector of growth.



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 (RDP) is consistently ranked among Canada's Top 50 Research Colleges. At the heart of this innovation ecosystem is the [Centre for Innovation in Manufacturing – Technology Access Centre \(CIM-TAC\)](#), along with the Energy Innovation Centre. These 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, Red Deer Polytechnic is a proven partner in research, development, and commercialization.

Incentives & Programs

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

Invest Sylvan Lake

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



[The Alberta Manufacturing Productivity Grant \(AMPG\)](#) is a 2-year pilot program, beginning in mid-2025, funded by the Government of Alberta and administered by the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME). This funding will help to provide successful applicants with the resources they need to boost their productivity. The grant will empower local business owners to invest in new technologies, machinery and equipment while driving job creation and accelerating growth in Alberta's manufacturing sector. The pilot program is expected to support approximately 130 small- and medium-sized businesses.

Industry Data

Sylvan Lake Business Counts

	1-9 Employees	10-49	50+	Sole Proprietor	Total
Dec 2013	9	2	1	9	21
Dec 2024	7	5	1	16	29

Sylvan Lake Sales and Exports*

Exports from Manufacturing
Businesses, 2016:

\$61 million

Exports from Manufacturing
Businesses, 2022:

\$253.4 million

2022 Manufacturing Sales: **\$303.5 million**



* Export and sales figures represent the sum of all subsector activity within this field. Exports are community-based; they reflect any dollars spent from outside Sylvan Lake. All economic impact data is from Lightcast Analyst 2024.3.

Wages

Average Manufacturing Wages

Alberta
\$73,526

Sylvan Lake
\$71,148

¹ Sylvan Lake, Red Deer, Red Deer County, Lacombe, Lacombe County.

² A location quotient (LQ) measures how concentrated an industry or activity is in a region compared to a larger reference area (like a province or country). An LQ above 1.0 means the industry is more concentrated locally (a local strength or specialization), while below 1.0 means it's less concentrated.

Job Counts

252

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

7,115

Labour Recruitment
Area Job Count¹



Labour Recruitment
Area Location²

1.43





Sector Landscape

Supply chain specifics depends on the specific subsector of manufacturing businesses, as different subsectors require different services and/or different buyers. Sylvan Lake's manufacturing sector is relatively modest, but growing considerably thanks to a concentrated investment attraction approach across the region. Local firms such as Cabinet Creations exemplify this growing strength, which helps support (and benefits from) the region's active building sector. For example, nearby suppliers such as Blackwood Interiors or Cupboards Express in Red Deer contribute to a strong value chain in construction-related manufacturing. These small and medium-sized enterprises help support the growing regional construction market, booming alongside local population growth.

Beyond Sylvan Lake, manufacturing activity across the Central Alberta region is diversifying into advanced and specialized areas, notably led by Red Deer Polytechnic, profiled above. Additionally, recent federal and provincial investments have focused on enhancing Red Deer'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.

The region is also strengthening its aviation-related manufacturing and maintenance presence through the Red Deer Regional Airport (i.e., Airpower Canada providing aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul services). This activity complements the region's industrial profile by integrating advanced technical skills and supply-chain capabilities. Just 30 minutes east of Sylvan Lake, NOVA Chemicals' Joffre complex operates one of the largest ethylene and polyethylene production facilities in the world. The Joffre site links central Alberta to global markets, supplying feedstock for a range of manufacturing applications. These operations provide Sylvan Lake businesses, or potential entrepreneurs, with a wealth of knowledge, supply chain resources, and business-to-business supports in town and across the region.

Financial Data

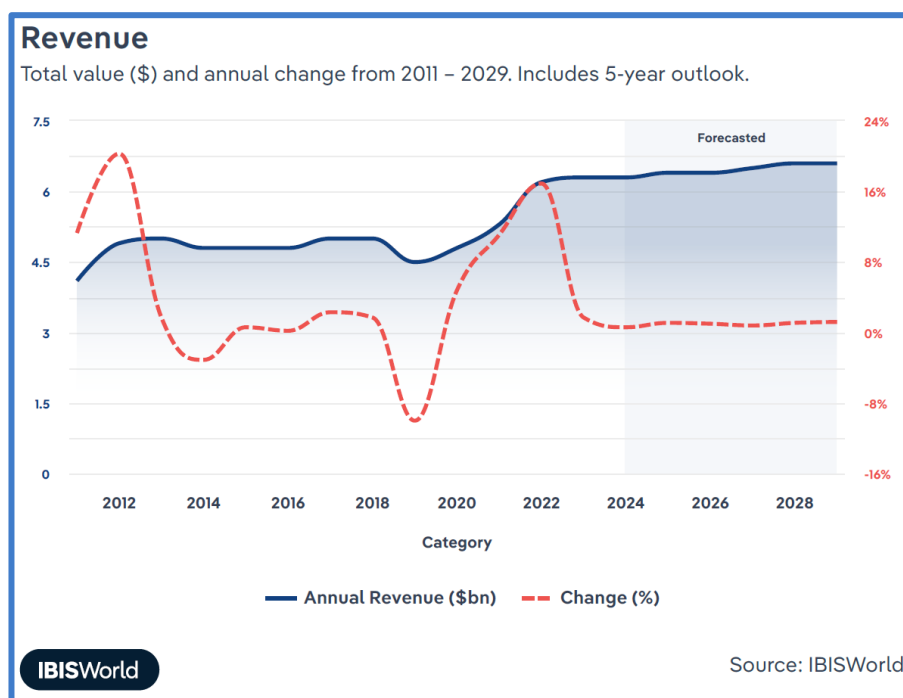
Over the past half-decade (2019-2024) most manufacturing subsectors relevant to Sylvan Lake have seen revenue growth rates of 5-10 % nationally.

Manufacturing subsectors have generally seen considerable success post-pandemic due to rising exports and increases in per-employee productivity due to technological advancements.

The manufacturing subsectors most relevant to Sylvan Lake have seen relatively low volatility and above average GDP growth compared to other Canadian subsectors, suggesting it is a strong anchor sector for the town.

This is largely due to the fact Sylvan Lake manufacturers provide “essential” goods (i.e., farming equipment for agricultural businesses, or food products for retailers) that are valued for being locally produced and grown. While exports will potentially face challenges in the current uncertain international trade climate, there is also likely to be a boost from Canadian consumers pushing to “buy local.”

Figure: Revenue History and Projections for Agricultural Machinery Manufacturing in Canada, 2011-2029.³



³ This manufacturing subsector is Sylvan Lake’s largest, and its financial outlook and history are aligned with national manufacturing averages well.

“A dollar goes so much further in Sylvan Lake than it does in a larger urban centre.”



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

In the heart of Central Alberta, Sylvan Lake glows with crisp skies, golden leaves, and plenty to explore. Stroll the trails, browse local shops, or cozy up on a patio, experience the small town charm, lakeside leisure and big-time adventures.

The NexSource Centre provides state-of-the-art facilities, including NHL-sized arenas, an aquatic center, and spaces for community events. The town features excellent healthcare services, strong public and Catholic schools, and a vibrant arts and culture scene. Residents and visitors enjoy summer activities like boating and paddleboarding, while winter brings ice fishing and hockey. The revitalized waterfront and affordable housing make Sylvan Lake a premier destination for living and recreation.



Local Spotlight

Cabinet Creations is a locally owned custom cabinetry business based in Sylvan Lake, Alberta, serving homeowners, builders, and contractors across the province since 2001. Known for their craftsmanship and attention to detail, they specialize in fully customized cabinetry solutions for kitchens, bathrooms, and built-in storage, with every piece built in-house at their workshop. Their hands-on approach allows for complete flexibility in design, sizing, materials, and finishes to suit each client's unique space and style. With a reputation for professionalism, quality service, and reliable installation, Cabinet Creations has become a trusted name in residential and commercial cabinetry throughout Central Alberta.



consider yourself **invited**

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Invest
Sylvan Lake



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