



CARDSTON

Workforce Report

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Executive Summary

Cardston presents a labour and education profile shaped by stability in some core measures and uneven movement beneath the surface. In 2021, employment remained the largest labour force status group, but only slightly ahead of the number of residents outside the labour force, while unemployment was comparatively small. Both the participation rate and employment rate changed little from 2016, with each edging down slightly rather than shifting sharply. Work arrangements also remained centered on regular workplaces, even as working from home increased and a notable share of workers reported no fixed workplace. The broad picture is of a town with a recognizable core of steady labour market attachment, but not one marked by strong overall momentum.

That mixed pattern becomes clearer in the details. Work activity shows a sizable group who did not work during the reference period, alongside substantial counts in full-year full-time and part-year or part-time work. At the same time, the class of worker profile was led by permanent jobs, suggesting that for those in work, stable positions were more common than temporary ones. The resident labour force was spread across a range of industries, but health care and social assistance stood out as the largest base in 2021, followed by education and retail, indicating a local economy anchored in services rather than a single dominant private industry. Occupationally, sales and service roles were the largest group, with education, social services, trades, business, and health also forming a meaningful part of the employment mix. The separate 2025 employment figures reinforce that service orientation, with educational services far ahead of other sectors and health care remaining prominent.

Education adds another layer to the same overall impression. High school completion was widespread, with far more residents holding a diploma or equivalent than having no credential, and the town's highest education profile was centered on secondary and non-university postsecondary attainment. College and bachelor's credentials were present in meaningful numbers, while advanced degrees remained less common. Over the five years covered, gains appeared in several education categories, though trades credentials declined. Cardston emerges as a community with a broad base of completed schooling and a service-oriented labour market, where headline indicators were largely steady but underlying work patterns and sector trends were more mixed.

Place of Work Status

Cardston’s largest work status group remained people with a usual place of work, edging up to 1,020 in 2021. Worked at home rose to 155, a 55% increase, while no fixed workplace reached 220.

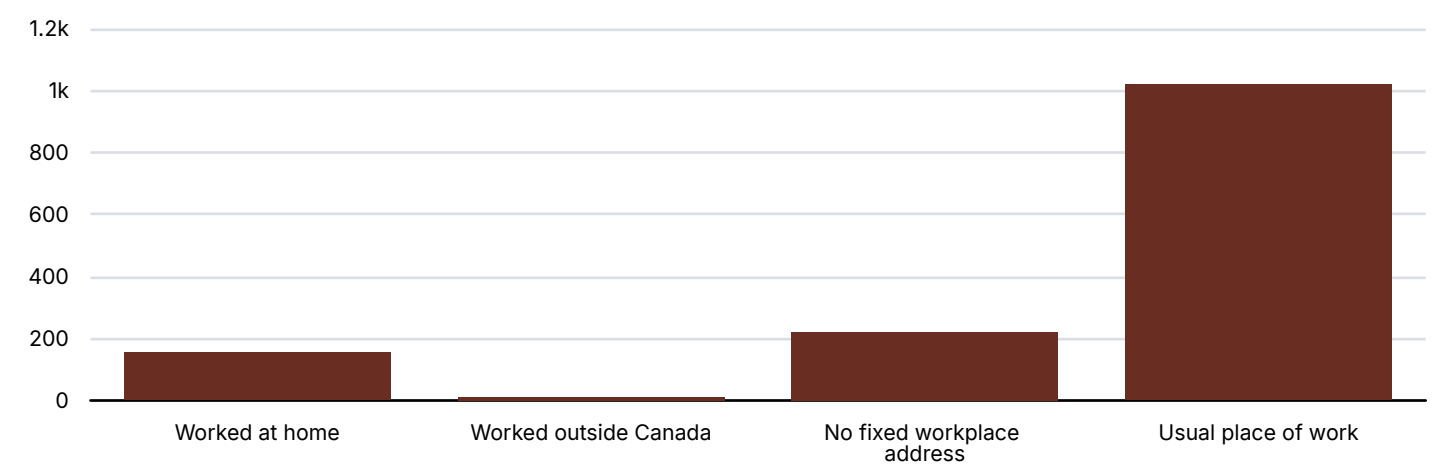
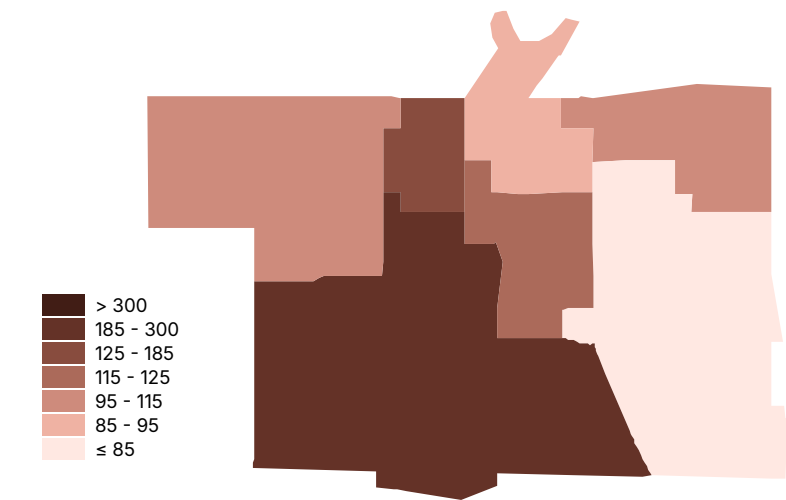


Figure 1.1: Shows whether people work from home, at a usual workplace, or at no fixed workplace. It helps indicate how work is organized across locations. (Cardston, 2021)¹

In Cardston, most of the employed labour force aged 15 years and over worked at a usual place of work in 2021, while smaller groups worked from home or had no fixed workplace address. The pattern points to a work structure still centered on regular workplace locations, with some flexibility. The usual place of work category counted 1,020 people. Another 220 people reported no fixed workplace address, and 155 worked at home. Only 10 people worked outside Canada. Over the previous five years, working at home rose by 55, while no fixed workplace address increased by 7.3% and usual place of work edged up by 0.5%.



In Cardston, most employed residents aged 15 and over worked at a usual place of work in 2021, with 1,020 people in that category. Smaller groups worked from home (155), had no fixed workplace address (220), or worked outside Canada (10). The pattern suggests a work profile still centered on fixed workplaces, with some flexibility.

Figure 1.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Place Of Work Status - Usual place of work (Cardston)¹

High School Completion

Cardston’s largest education group in 2021 was residents with a high school diploma or equivalent, at 2,305 people. Those without any certificate, diploma or degree numbered 475, making diploma holders nearly five times as many.

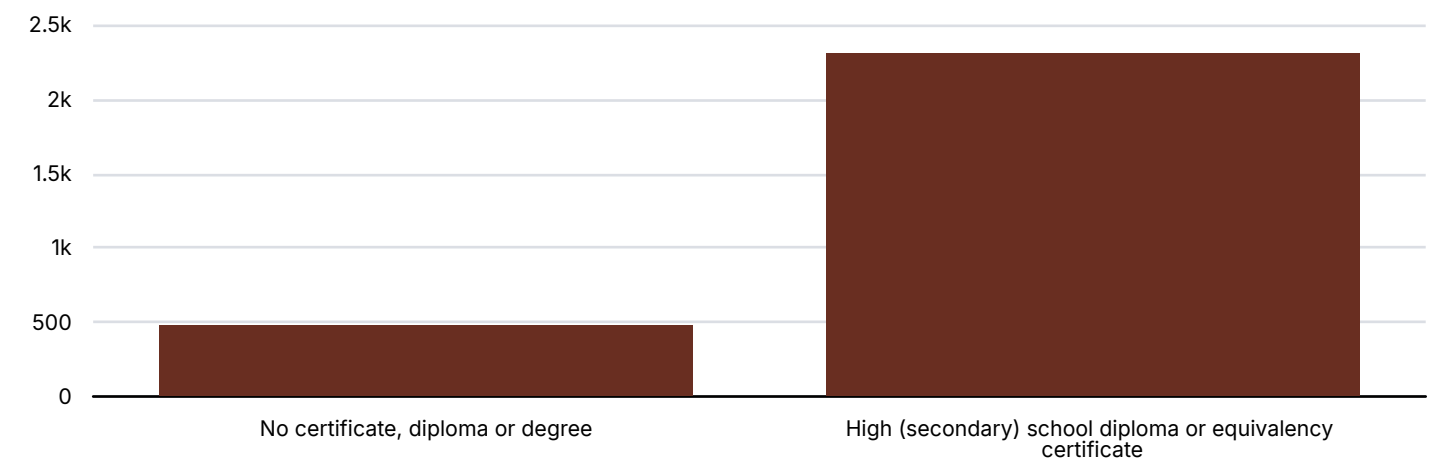


Figure 2.1: Shows whether residents have completed high school or an equivalent credential. It helps indicate a basic foundation for workforce participation and further study. (Cardston, 2021)¹

Cardston’s high school completion profile for residents aged 15 and over in private households is clear but limited to a single census year, so time trends cannot be assessed from the data provided. In 2021, 2,305 residents had a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, while 475 had no certificate, diploma, or degree. That means the completed-high-school group was much larger than the group without any credential. Within the available figures, the pattern suggests that high school completion was the dominant education status in Cardston at the time, but the dataset does not provide earlier years or a benchmark for change.



Figure 2.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Education Credential Ca - High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate (Cardston)¹

Labour Force Participation Rate

Cardston’s labour force participation rate was 54.5% in 2021, down slightly from 54.8% in 2016. Over five years, the rate changed by -0.55%, indicating little movement.

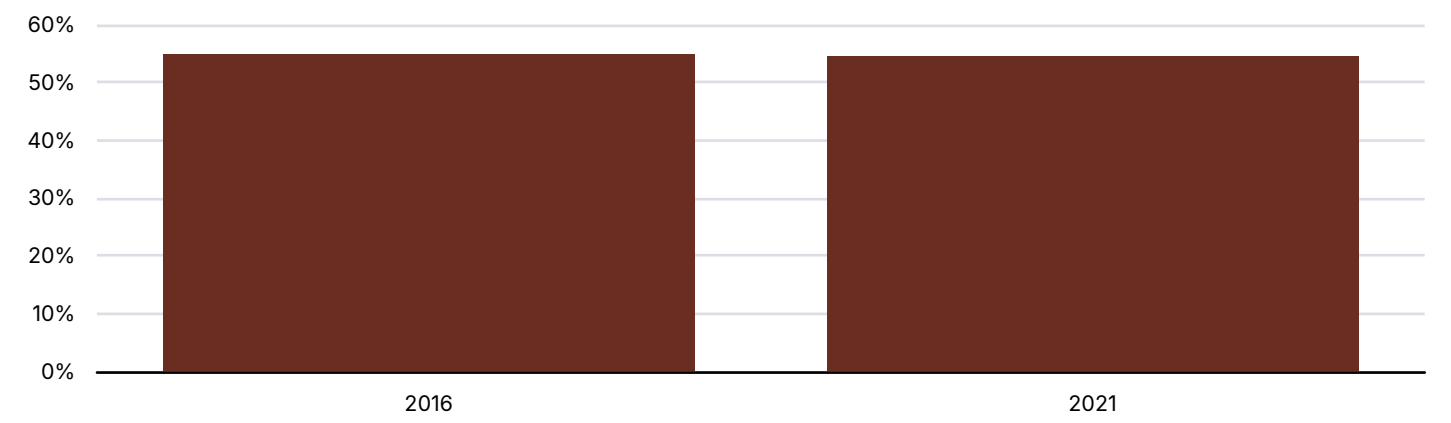


Figure 3.1: Shows the share of the working-age population that is employed or actively looking for work. It helps indicate the level of labour market engagement. (Cardston, 2016-2021)¹

Cardston’s labour force participation rate was essentially stable between the two available census points, edging down from 54.8% in 2016 to 54.5% in 2021. The five-year change was -0.6%, a modest shift that leaves participation close to the mid-50s. Because the dataset provides only these two observations, the main pattern is steady performance rather than pronounced movement. For a total population measure, Cardston’s labour market engagement appears broadly unchanged over the period covered.

Cardston’s labour force participation rate was 54.5% in 2021, essentially unchanged from 54.8% in 2016. That places it below Cardston County, which edged up to 68.1% in 2021, and below nearby higher-participation places such as Cowley at 73.0% and Willow Creek No. 26 at 71.0%. It is closer to Fort Macleod at 55.2% and Pincher Creek at 57.2%. The pattern suggests a middle-to-lower level of labour market engagement relative to several local comparators.

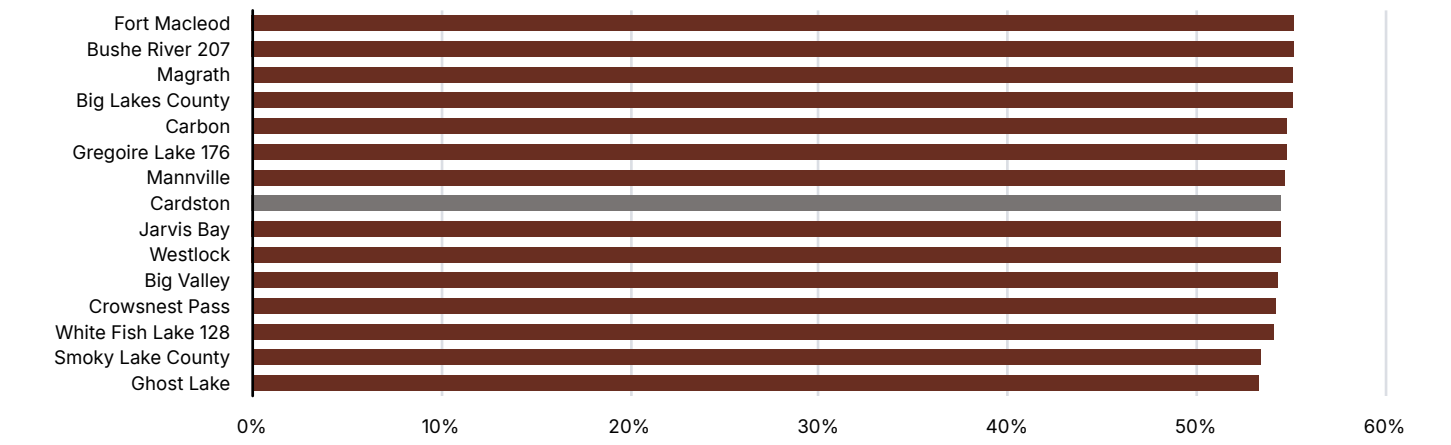


Figure 3.2: Comparison of Labour Force Participation Rate with other locations (Cardston, 2021)¹

Labour Force Status

In Cardston, employed residents remained the largest group in 2021 at 1,405 people, up from 1,320 in 2016. Those not in the labour force rose to 1,265, while unemployed increased to 110.

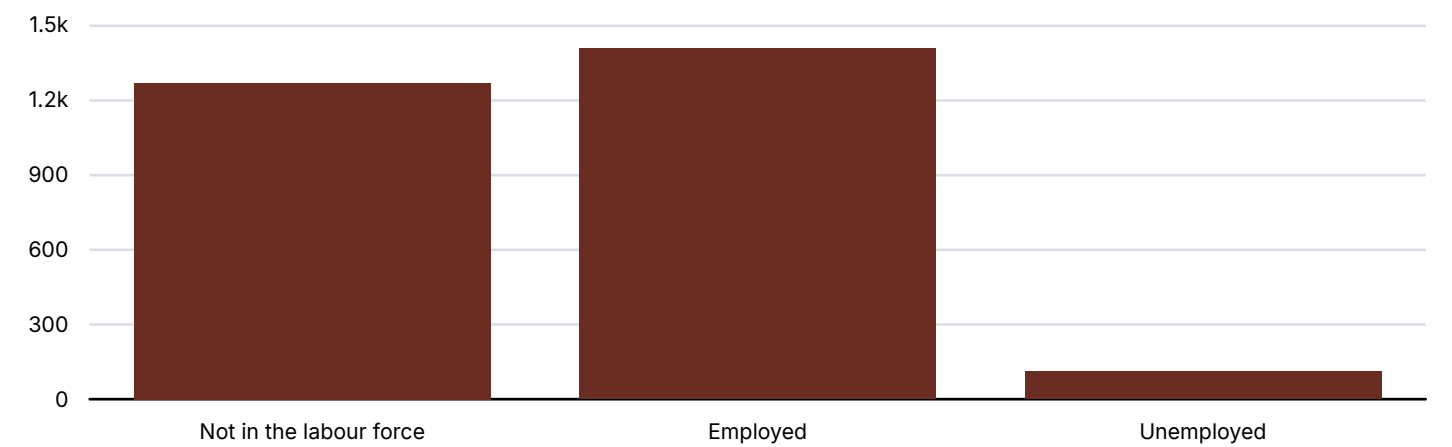


Figure 4.1: Shows whether residents are employed, unemployed, or not in the labour force. It helps indicate how people are participating in the labour market. (Cardston, 2021)¹

In Cardston, the 2021 labour force profile for residents aged 15 years and over shows a slightly larger share outside the labour force than in work. The town had 1,265 people not in the labour force, compared with 1,405 employed and 110 unemployed. Taken together, the employed and unemployed groups total 1,515 people, while those not in the labour force account for the largest single category. The unemployed group is small relative to both other statuses. The pattern suggests a labour market where most adults were participating, but a substantial number were not counted as active participants at the time of the census. Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profile.



In 2021, Cardston's labour force status was fairly balanced for people aged 15 and over, with 1,405 employed residents and 1,265 not in the labour force. Unemployment was much smaller at 110 people. The pattern suggests a community with substantial labour market participation, while a sizable share remained outside the labour force.

Figure 4.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Labour Force Status - Employed (Cardston)¹

Highest Education Level

In Cardston, high school diploma or equivalency was the largest credential group in 2021 at 925 people, up 117.7% from 2016. College credentials followed at 495, while apprenticeships fell to 205.

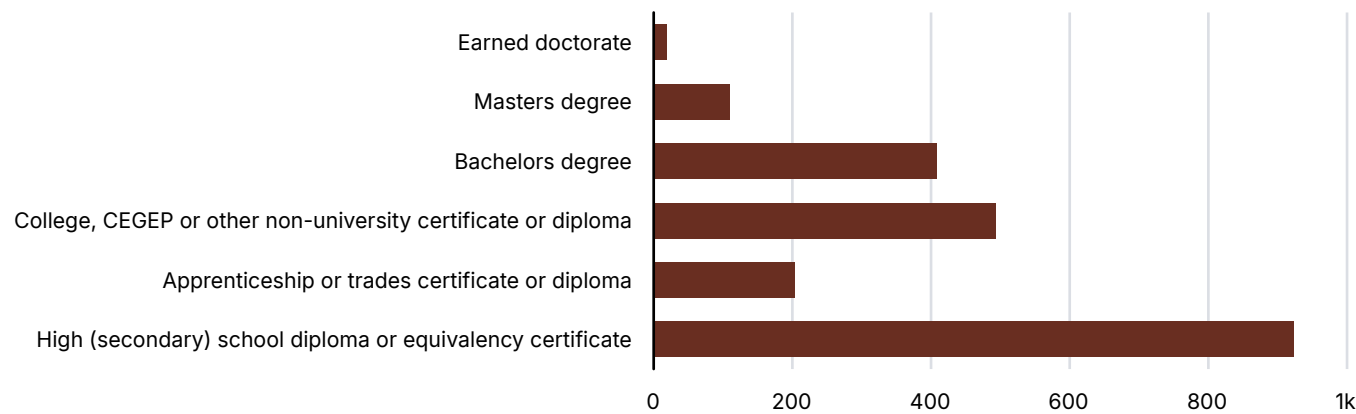
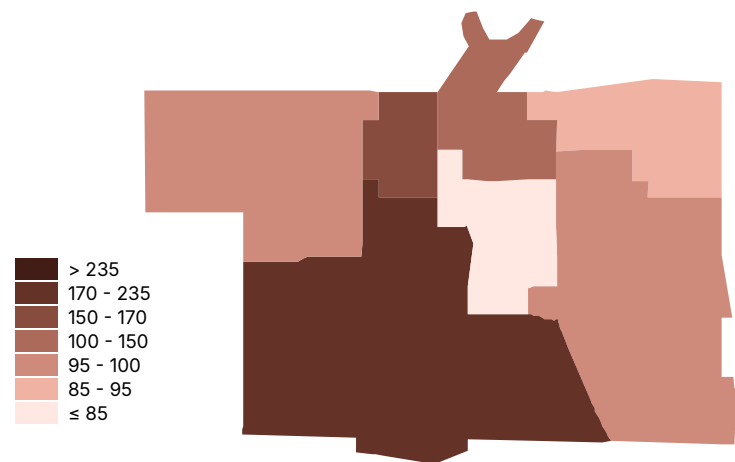


Figure 5.1: Shows the highest level of education completed by residents. It helps indicate the overall educational profile of the population. (Cardston, 2021)¹

In Cardston, the 2021 education profile for residents age 15 and over shows the largest counts at the high school and college levels, with 925 people holding a high school diploma or equivalent and 495 with a college, CEGEP or other non-university credential. Bachelor’s degrees accounted for 410 people, while apprenticeship or trades certificates totaled 205. The five-year changes point to growth in several categories. High school credentials rose by 117.7%, bachelor’s degrees by 86.4%, and master’s degrees by 57.1%. College credentials increased by 52.3%. Apprenticeship or trades credentials were the exception, falling 42.3%, while earned doctorates were unchanged at 20. The pattern suggests shifting educational attainment within the community, with gains concentrated in postsecondary categories.



In 2021, Cardston’s education profile among residents aged 15 and over was centered on secondary and postsecondary certificates. The largest group had a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, at 925 people, followed by college, CEGEP or other non-university credentials at 495 and bachelor’s degrees at 410. Smaller counts held apprenticeship or trades credentials, at 205, while 110 had a master’s degree and 20 had an earned doctorate. The mix points to a broad base of completed schooling with fewer advanced degrees.

Figure 5.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Education Credential Ca - High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate (Cardston)¹

Work Activity

Cardston’s largest group in 2021 was people who did not work, at 1,220, up 18.5% from 2016. Those working full year full time reached 760, while part year and/or part time fell to 795.

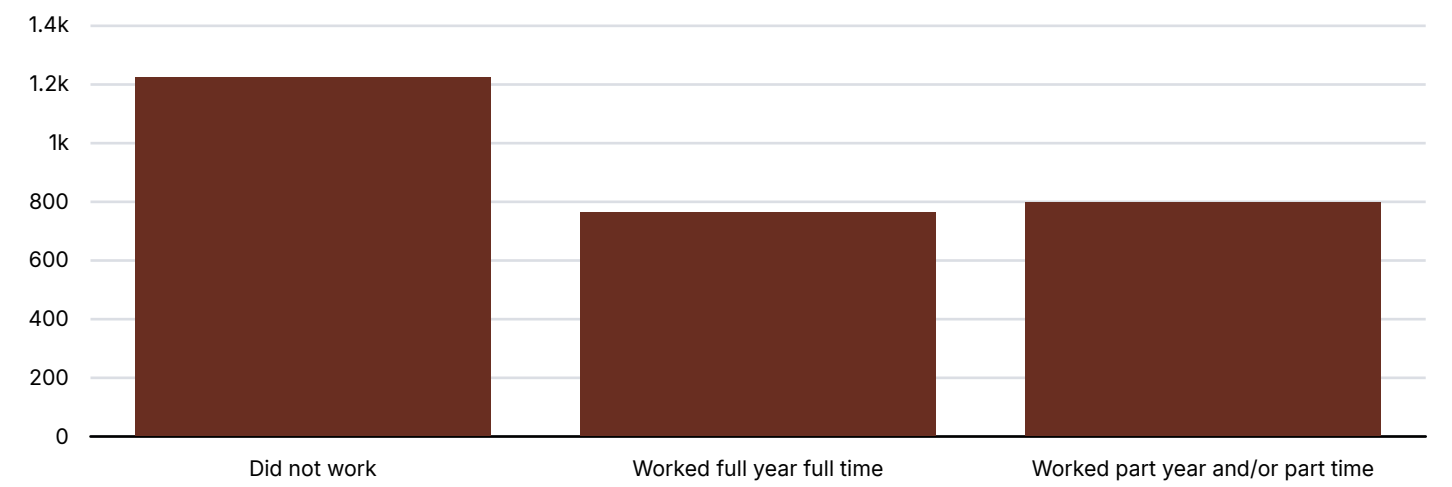
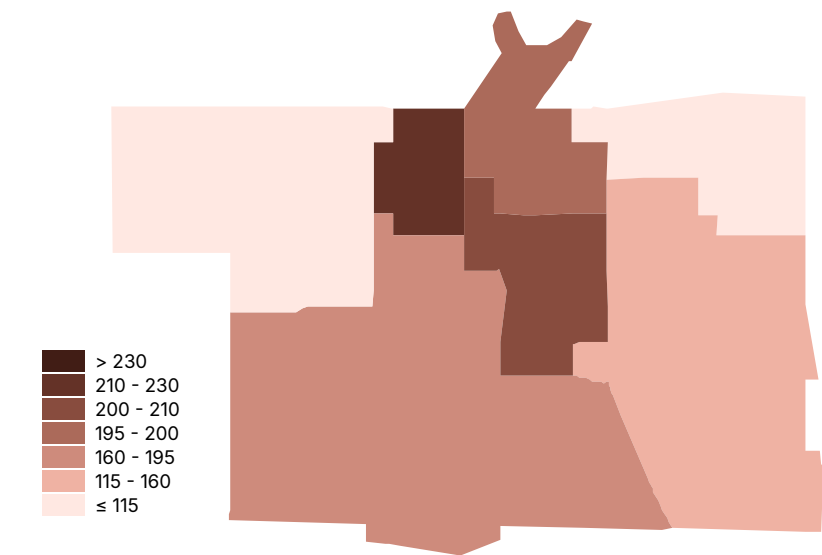


Figure 6.1: Shows the amount of work activity people had during the reference period. It helps indicate attachment to work over the year, not just at a single point in time. (Cardston, 2021)¹

In Cardston, 2021 work activity among people aged 15 and over was marked by a relatively large share who did not work during the reference period. That group numbered 1,220 people and rose 18.4% over five years. By contrast, 760 people worked full year full time, up 9.3%, while 795 worked part year and/or part time, down 8.1%. The mix suggests a workforce profile with both steady full-year attachment and a substantial group with no work activity, alongside a smaller part-year presence.



In 2021, work activity in Cardston’s population aged 15 and over was mixed. A total of 1,220 people did not work, while 760 worked full year full time and 795 worked part year and/or part time. The number not working rose 18.4% over five years, while part year work fell 8.1%.

Figure 6.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Work Activity - Did not work (Cardston)¹

Class of Worker

Permanent positions accounted for the largest worker group in Cardston in 2021, with 985 people. Casual, seasonal or short-term positions followed at 165, while fixed-term roles totaled 60.

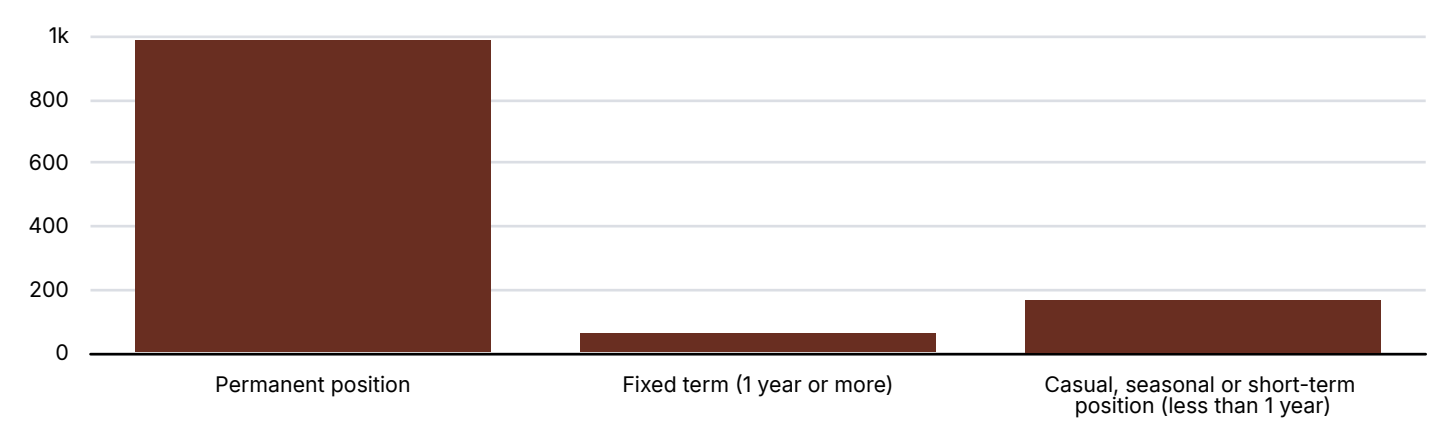


Figure 7.1: Shows whether workers are employees, self-employed, or unpaid family workers. It helps indicate the structure of work in the local economy. (Cardston, 2021)¹

In Cardston, the 2021 profile of workers aged 15 and over was led by permanent positions, with 985 people in that category. Casual, seasonal or short-term positions accounted for 165 people, while fixed-term jobs of one year or more were less common at 60. The distribution suggests a workforce centered on stable employment, with a smaller share in more temporary roles.

In 2021, Cardston’s workers were mostly in permanent positions, pointing to a stable class-of-worker profile. Permanent jobs numbered 985, compared with 165 casual, seasonal or short-term positions and 60 fixed-term jobs. Across the included areas, permanent work also dominated, though the smaller areas showed much lower counts. The mix suggests that permanent employment was the main form of work in Cardston, with temporary arrangements remaining limited.

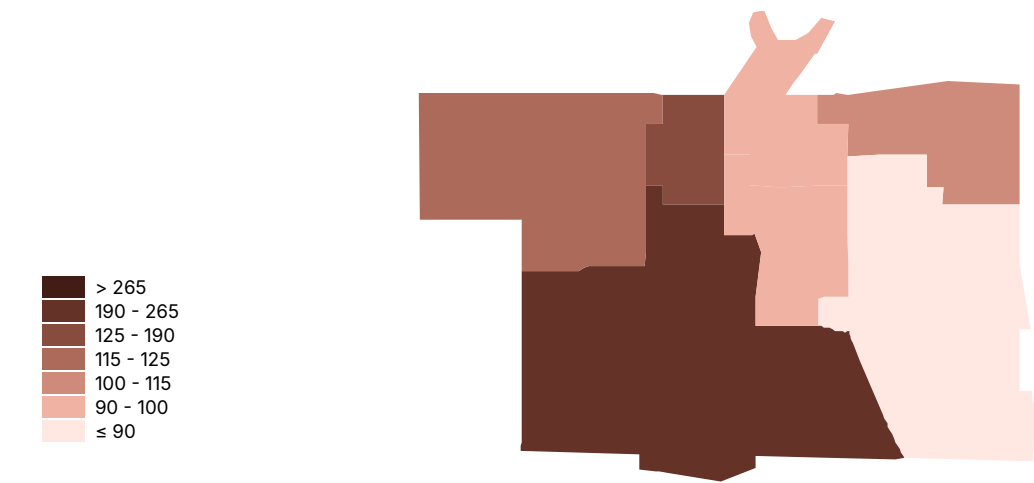


Figure 7.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Class Of Worker - Permanent position (Cardston)¹

Employment Rate

Cardston's employment rate was 50.5% in 2021, down from 51.2% in 2016. Over five years, the rate fell 1.37%, leaving just over half of the labour force aged 15 and over employed.

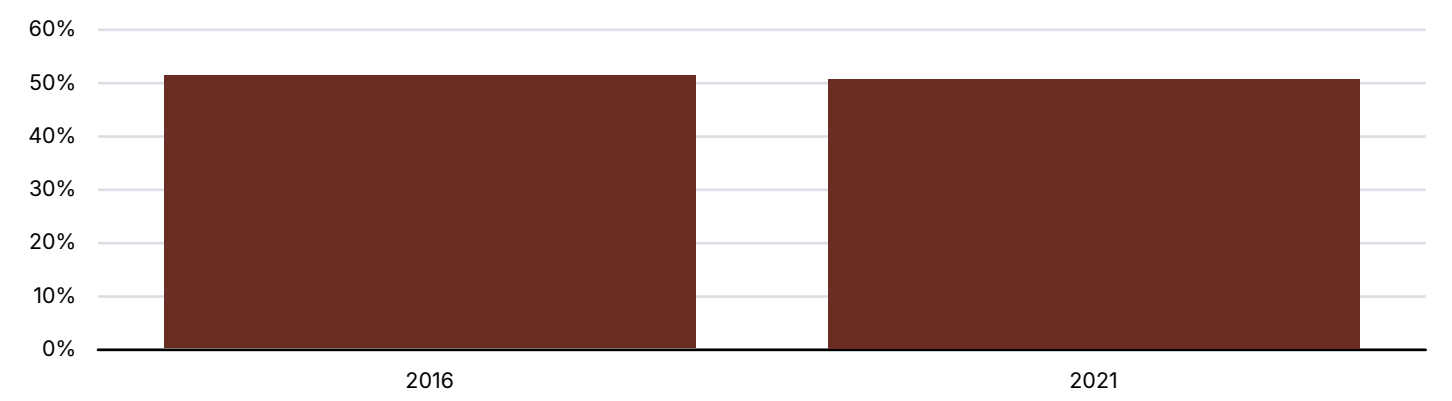


Figure 8.1: Shows the share of the working-age population that is employed. It helps indicate overall labour market health and how fully local talent is being used. (Cardston, 2016-2021)¹

Cardston's employment rate was 50.5% in 2021, measured for the labour force aged 15 years and over. That was slightly below its 2016 level of 51.2%, a decline of 1.4 percentage points over five years. The change suggests a modest softening in the share of working-age residents who were employed. With only two time points available, the data points to a small downward shift rather than a pronounced change in labour market conditions.

Cardston's employment rate was 50.5% in 2021, down slightly from 51.2% in 2016. Within the labour force aged 15 and over, that places the town in a midrange position among nearby places. It sits below Cardston County at 65.1%, Willow Creek No. 26 at 68.7%, and Pincher Creek No. 9 at 61.6%, but above Hill Spring at 30.8% and Blood 148 at 31.3%. Claresholm and Magrath were also lower, at 47.2% and 50.3%. The five-year change of -1.4% suggests a modest softening rather than a sharp shift.

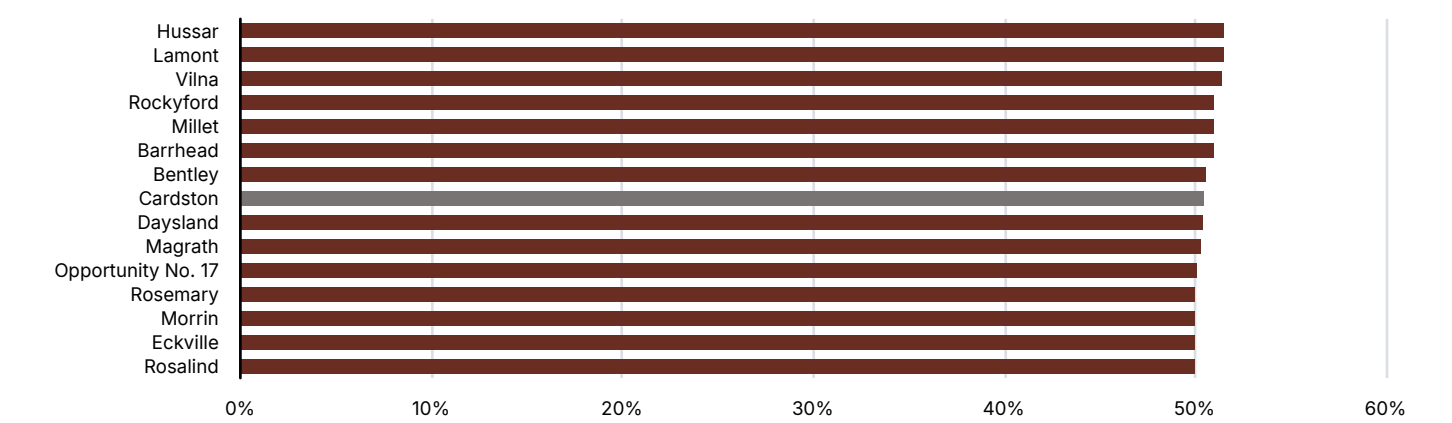


Figure 8.2: Comparison of Employment Rate with other locations (Cardston, 2021)¹

Work Activity

Cardston’s largest group in 2021 was people who did not work, at 1,220, up 18.5% from 2016. Those working full year full time reached 760, while part year and/or part time fell to 795.

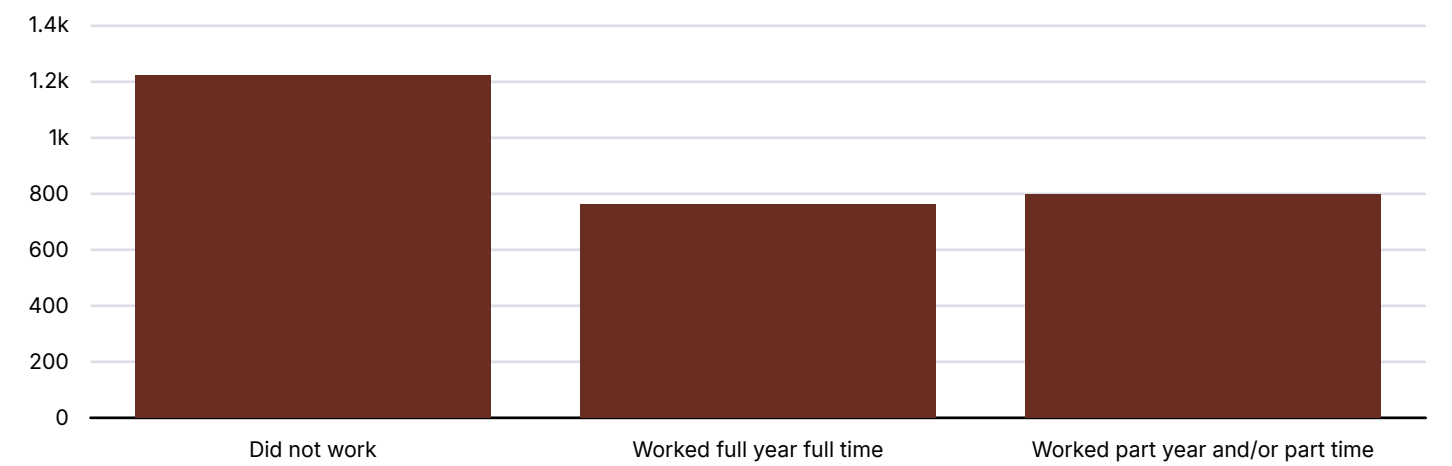


Figure 9.1: Shows the amount of work activity people had during the reference period. It helps indicate attachment to work over the year, not just at a single point in time. (Cardston, 2021)¹

In Cardston, work activity in 2021 was marked by a larger group who did not work during the reference period than those with more sustained attachment to work. Among people aged 15 and over, 1,220 did not work, compared with 760 who worked full year full time and 795 who worked part year and/or part time. The 5-year changes point to a mixed trend. The number who did not work was up 18.4%, and full-year full-time work rose 9.4%. By contrast, part-year and/or part-time work fell 8.1%. That pattern suggests a labour profile with both gains and setbacks across different types of work activity, rather than a single clear direction.



Figure 9.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Work Activity - Did not work (Cardston)¹

Labour Force Participation Rate

Cardston's labour force participation rate was 54.5% in 2021, down slightly from 54.8% in 2016. Over five years, the rate changed by -0.55%, indicating little movement.

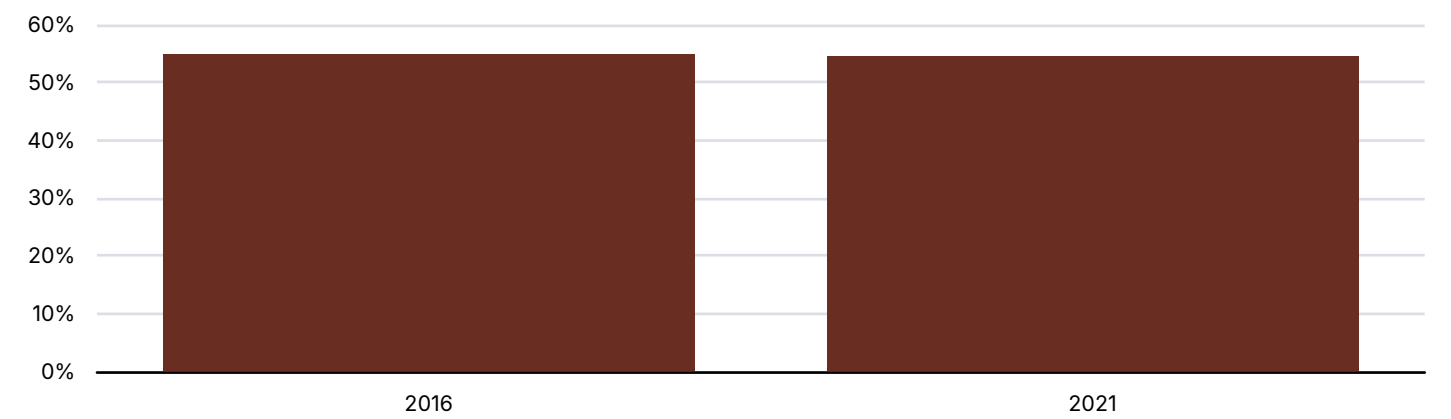


Figure 10.1: Shows the share of the working-age population that is employed or actively looking for work. It helps indicate the level of labour market engagement. (Cardston, 2016-2021)¹

Cardston's labour force participation rate was 54.8% in 2016 and 54.5% in 2021, a small decline of 0.6 percentage points over the five-year period. The figures suggest a largely steady pattern rather than a sharp shift in labour market engagement. With no broader benchmark in the dataset, the main story is the limited movement between the two census years. That stability, with a slight downward edge, points to little change in the share of the working-age population active in the labour force.

Cardston's labour force participation rate was 54.5% in 2021, down slightly from 54.8% in 2016. That places it near the middle of the local comparison set, with rates below Cardston County (68.1%) and Cowley (73.0%), but above Hill Spring (34.6%) and Blood 148 (41.0%). Among nearby places, Cardston was close to Claresholm (52.6%) and Glenwood (51.3%), and below Fort Macleod (55.2%). The pattern suggests a moderate level of labour market engagement, with only a small decline over the five-year period.

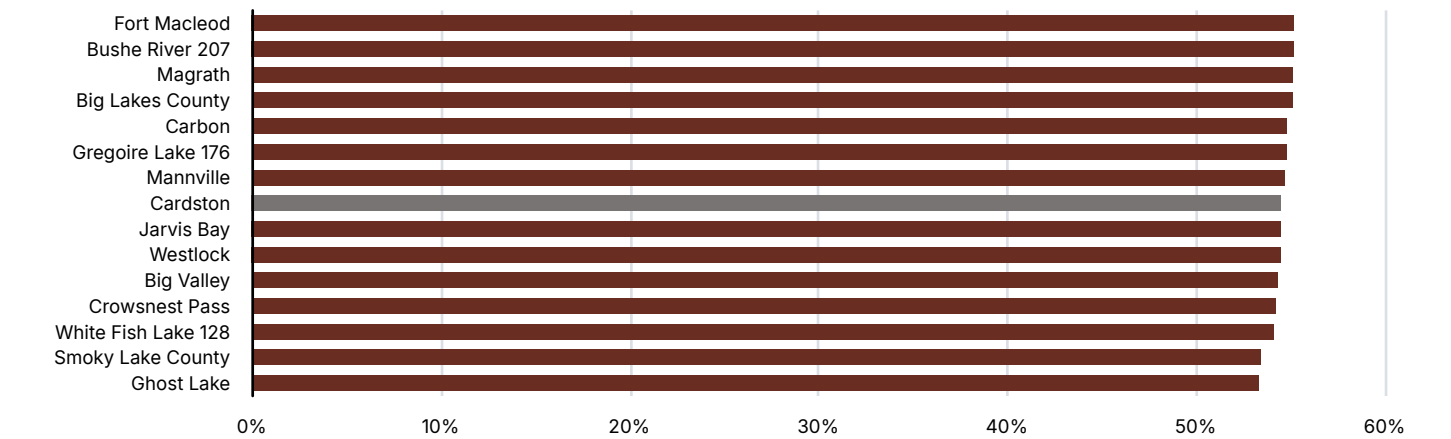


Figure 10.2: Comparison of Labour Force Participation Rate with other locations (Cardston, 2021)¹

Employment Rate

Cardston’s employment rate was 50.5% in 2021, down from 51.2% in 2016. Over five years, the rate fell 1.37%, leaving just over half of the labour force aged 15 and over employed.

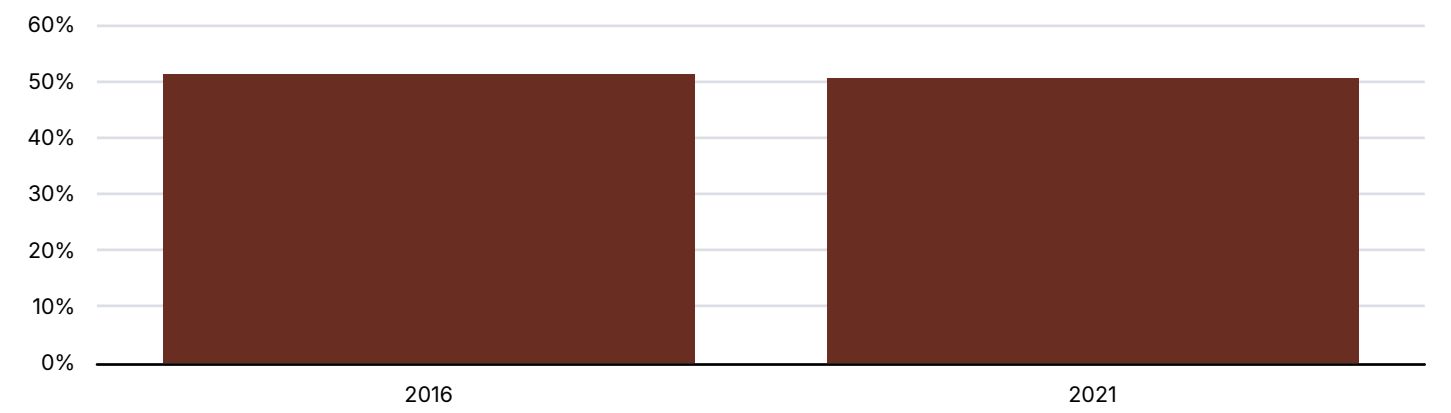


Figure 11.1: Shows the share of the working-age population that is employed. It helps indicate overall labour market health and how fully local talent is being used. (Cardston, 2016-2021)¹

Cardston’s employment rate was 50.5% in 2021, down slightly from 51.2% in 2016. The five-year change was -1.4%, pointing to a modest decline over the period rather than a sharp shift. Within the labour force aged 15 years and over, this places employment at about half of the working-age population. The pattern is straightforward: a small weakening between censuses, with no other trend data provided to suggest a broader rebound or deeper downturn.

Cardston’s employment rate was 50.5% in 2021, down slightly from 51.2% in 2016, a decline of 1.4 percentage points. That places it below nearby Cardston County at 65.1% and Willow Creek No. 26 at 68.7%, but above Hill Spring at 30.8% and Pikani 147 at 33.2%. The pattern suggests a middling local labour market within this group, with only a modest recent softening.

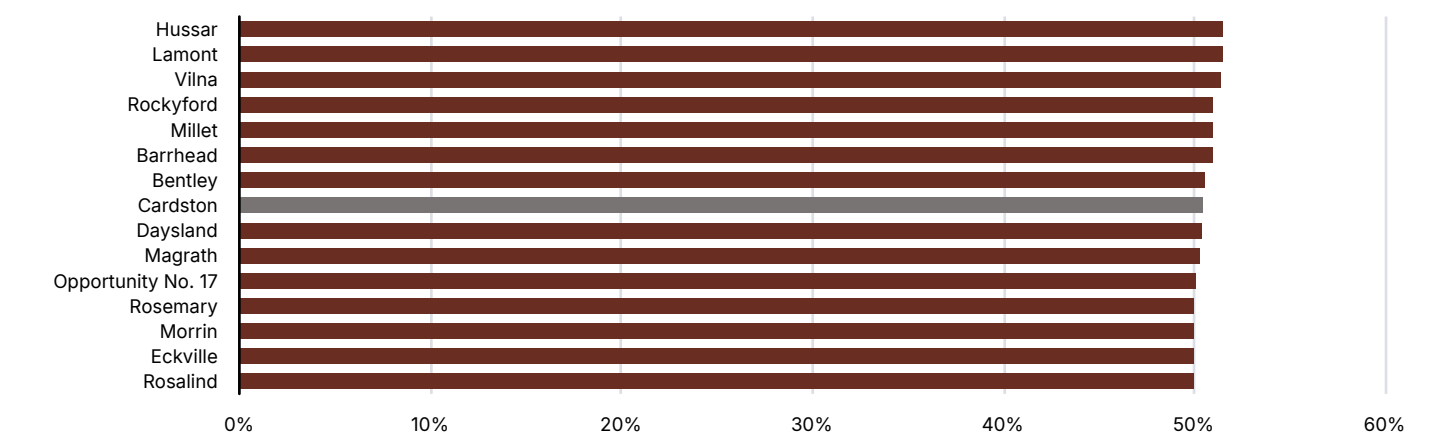


Figure 11.2: Comparison of Employment Rate with other locations (Cardston, 2021)¹

Labour Force Status

In Cardston, employed residents remained the largest group in 2021 at 1,405 people, up from 1,320 in 2016. Those not in the labour force rose to 1,265, while unemployed increased to 110.

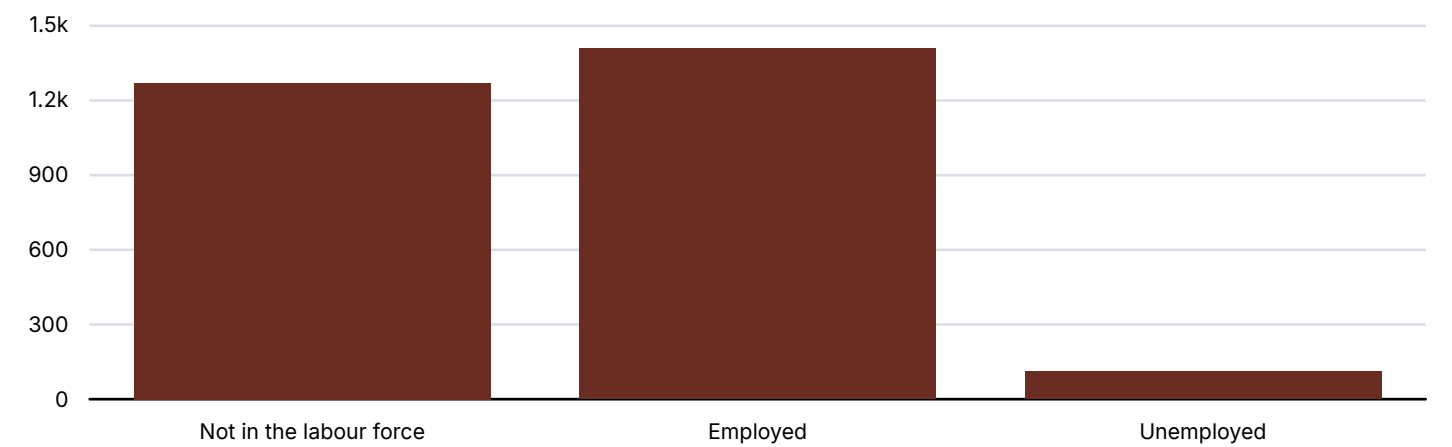


Figure 12.1: Shows whether residents are employed, unemployed, or not in the labour force. It helps indicate how people are participating in the labour market. (Cardston, 2021)¹

In Cardston, the labour force status profile for the population aged 15 years and over in 2021 shows more residents outside the labour force than unemployed, with employment still the largest active category. There were 1,405 employed people, 110 unemployed people, and 1,265 people not in the labour force. That means the employed group was only slightly larger than the non-participating group, while unemployment remained much smaller by comparison. The pattern suggests a labour market with a substantial share of residents not participating in work or job search, alongside a sizeable employed population. Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profile.



In Cardston, among residents aged 15 and over in 2021, employment was the largest labour force status group, with 1,405 employed people, or 50.5% of the population. Another 1,265 people, or 45.5%, were not in the labour force, while 110 people, or 4.0%, were unemployed. The split suggests a community where participation is fairly balanced between workers and those outside the labour market, with unemployment remaining a small share.

Figure 12.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Labour Force Status - Employed (Cardston)¹

Resident Labour Force

Cardston's resident labour force remained led by health care and social assistance, which reached 350 people in 2021, up 20.7% from 2016. Transportation and warehousing grew fastest, rising to 55 people from 20.

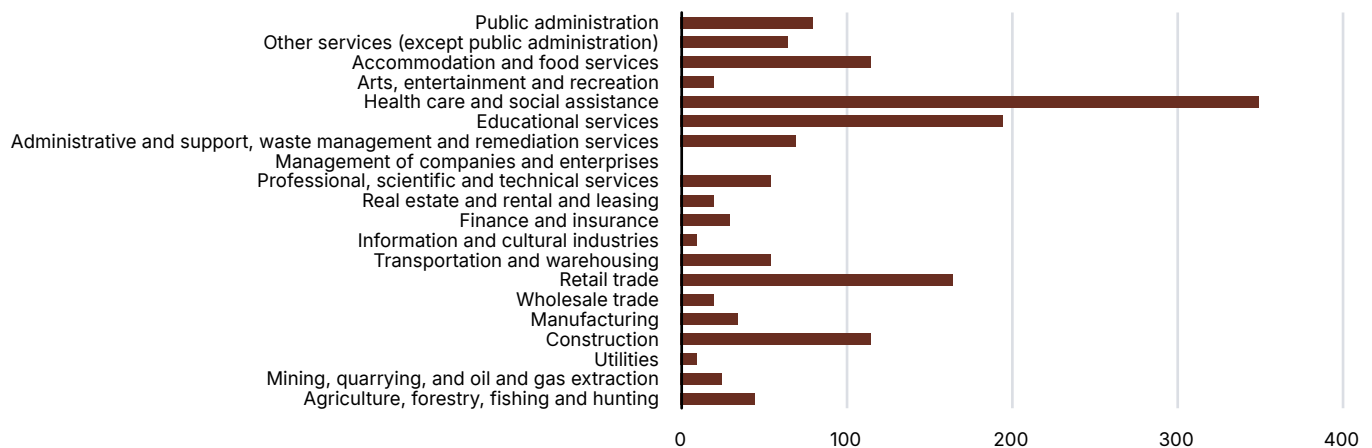


Figure 13.1: Shows the number of residents who are in the labour force. It helps indicate the size of the locally available workforce. (Cardston, 2021)¹

Cardston's resident labour force in 2021 is spread across a mix of service, public, and goods-related industries, with health care and social assistance standing out as the largest employer group at 350 people. Educational services followed at 195, while retail trade accounted for 165. Construction and accommodation and food services were each at 115, showing a broader base beyond a single sector. Recent five-year changes were uneven. Transportation and warehousing rose sharply to 55 people, up 175%, and real estate and rental and leasing doubled to 20. By contrast, manufacturing fell to 35, and arts, entertainment and recreation declined to 20.

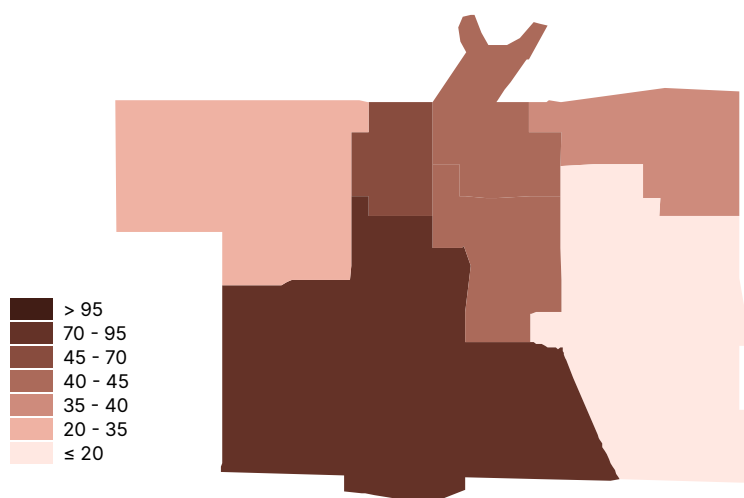


Figure 13.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Industry Sector - Health care and social assistance (Cardston)¹

Cardston's resident labour force in 2021 was spread across a range of sectors, with health care and social assistance the largest at 350 people. Educational services followed with 195, while retail trade and construction employed 165 and 115 residents, respectively. Several smaller sectors also stood out: transportation and warehousing rose sharply over five years, while manufacturing and construction declined. The pattern points to a labour force anchored in care, education, and local services, with mixed momentum across other parts of the economy.

Employment by Sector

Educational services remained Cardston’s largest employer in 2025 at 1,448 people, up 2.9% from 2024 and down 1.0% over five years. Health care followed with 499, and retail had 192.

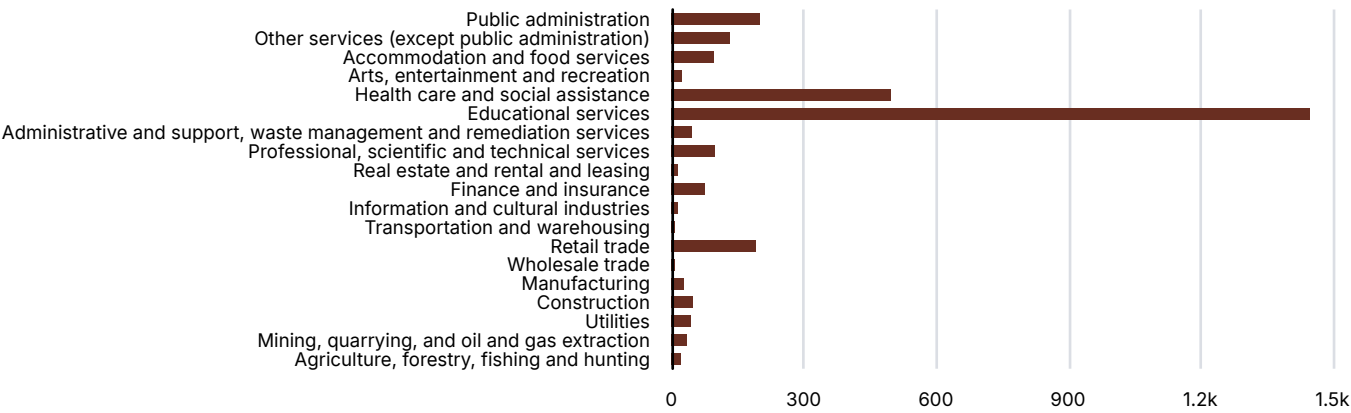
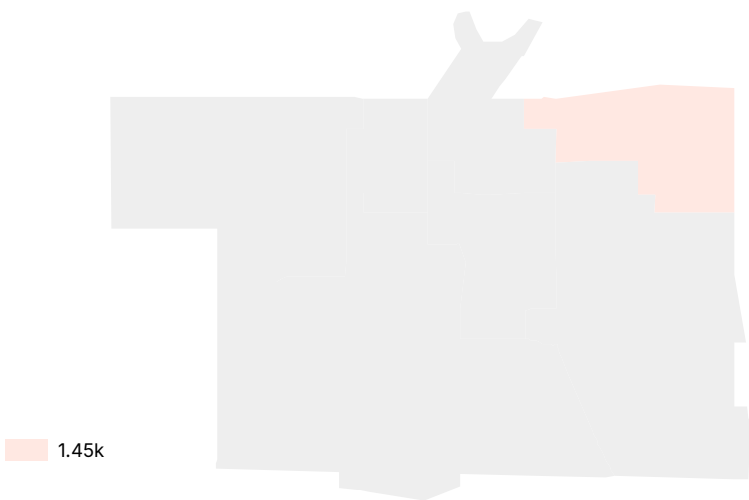


Figure 14.1: Shows how employment is distributed across industry sectors. It helps indicate which sectors account for the largest share of local jobs. (Cardston, 2025)²

Cardston’s employment in 2025 is concentrated in educational services, with 1,448 workers, far ahead of health care and social assistance at 499 and public administration at 200. Retail trade, at 192, is the next largest private-sector employer. Several smaller sectors showed mixed momentum. Administrative and support services rose 119.1% over one year to 46, while manufacturing grew 20.8% to 29. By contrast, agriculture fell 27.6% to 21 and wholesale trade dropped 20.0% to 8. Longer-term change is less uniform. Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction nearly doubled over five years to 35, and professional services more than doubled to 100. Retail, accommodation, and transportation were all lower than five years earlier. The pattern points to a job market dominated by education, with health care and public administration also important, while many smaller sectors remain volatile.



Cardston’s employment by sector is dominated by education and health care, within employees aged 15 years and over in 2025. Educational services is the largest sector at 1,448 people, followed by health care and social assistance at 499 and public administration at 200. Retail trade adds 192, while other sectors are much smaller. This pattern shows a local job base concentrated in public-facing services, with several smaller private-sector industries.

Figure 14.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Naics - Educational services (Cardston)²

Employed Residents by Occupation

Sales and service occupations were the largest group in Cardston in 2021, rising to 450 people from 305 in 2016. Occupations in education, law and social services followed at 270, while legislative and senior management fell to 15.

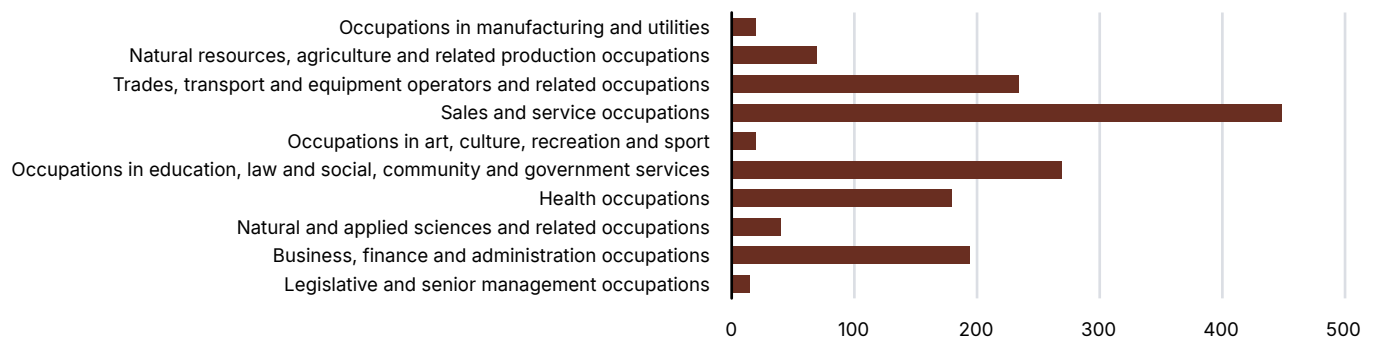


Figure 15.1: Shows the occupations held by employed residents. It helps indicate the community's skill mix and the kinds of work people do. (Cardston, 2021)¹

Cardston's employed residents in 2021 were concentrated in sales and service occupations, which counted 450 people and grew 47.5% over five years. Education, law, social, community and government services was the next-largest group at 270, followed by trades, transport and equipment operators at 235 and business, finance and administration at 195. Health occupations added 180, while natural resources and agriculture had 70. Smaller groups included sciences, management, arts, and manufacturing, each with limited counts and some decline.

Cardston's employed residents in 2021 were concentrated in a few occupation groups, with sales and service occupations standing out at 450 people. Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services followed at 270, while trades, transport and equipment operators accounted for 235. Business, finance and administration had 195 and health occupations 180. Smaller groups included natural and applied sciences at 40, natural resources and agriculture at 70, and both legislative and senior management and manufacturing and utilities at 20 each. Over five years, sales and service rose 47.5%, trades grew 23.7%, and business roles increased 18.2%.

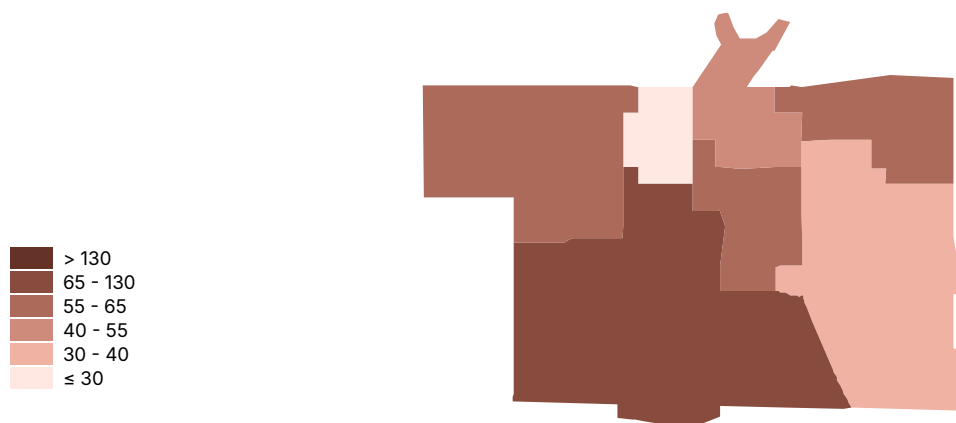


Figure 15.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Occupation - Sales and service occupations (Cardston)¹

Data Sources

1. Statistics Canada, Census Profile. Published in Dec 15, 2022.
2. Statistics Canada, Business Register; Localintel, Employment by Industry Estimates of Census Areas. Published in Mar 13, 2026.

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