

WILLOW CREEK NO. 26

Accommodation and Food Services

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Executive Summary

Willow Creek No. 26's accommodation and food services sector is small, narrowly based, and marked more by volatility than by steady growth. The resident labour force remained limited and edged down between 2016 and 2021, while the local labour market gap in 2021 was minimal, suggesting little separation between sector jobs and resident workers at that point. Across the available measures, the defining feature is not scale but the way a very small base can produce sharp swings from year to year.

That pattern is most visible in business counts and employment. Establishments rose to 15 in 2022, then dropped to 2 in 2023 before recovering to 5 in 2025, roughly back to their 2018 level but well below the temporary peak. Employment followed an even more uneven path: it sat at 1 job through most of the period, spiked to 111 in 2022, fell back to 1 in 2023 and 2024, and then rose to 8 in 2025. The sector's structure also remained concentrated at the smallest end of the market, with most establishments either having no employees or only a handful. Within the recorded industries, traveller accommodation accounted for most employment in 2025, far exceeding recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps in headcount, which points to a narrow operating base rather than a broad mix of accommodation and food activities.

Specialization adds another layer to the picture, but it remains concentrated in only a few accommodation-related activities. Traveller accommodation showed the strongest specialization in 2025, with RV parks and recreational camps also standing out as a locally concentrated niche. At the same time, the RV-related segment showed weaker concentration than in earlier years, even though it had also appeared as a strong specialty in 2023. The sector therefore appears to hold a recognizable local niche, but one carried by very few activities and very small numbers. The overall impression is of a sector with a visible accommodation focus, limited local scale, and a history of abrupt shifts rather than stable expansion.

Resident Labour Force in Sector

Willow Creek No. 26 had 45 resident workers in this sector in 2021, down 10% from 50 in 2016. The sector’s resident labour force remained small over the five-year period.

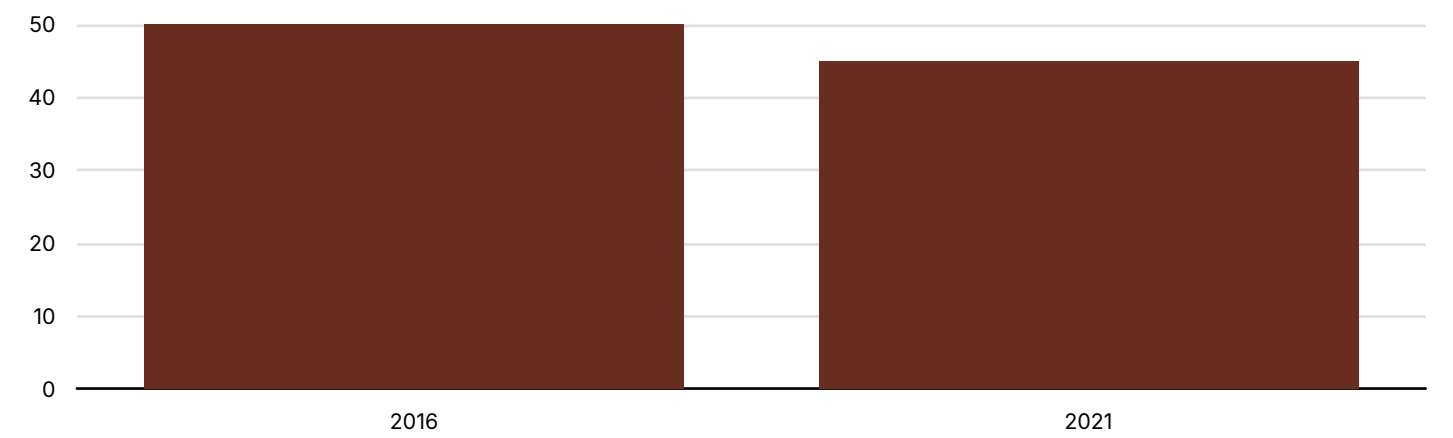


Figure 1.1: Shows the number of resident workers in a specific sector. It helps indicate how many local residents are employed in that part of the economy. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2016-2021)¹

In Willow Creek No. 26, the resident labour force in accommodation and food services was small and slightly lower in 2021 than in 2016. The count fell from 50 people in 2016 to 45 in 2021, a 10% decline over five years. Within the labour force aged 15 years and over, that points to a modest contraction in this sector rather than stable growth. The data show a limited base and a recent downward movement, with no broader context provided to suggest how it compares with other sectors.

In accommodation and food services, Willow Creek No. 26 had 45 resident labour force participants aged 15 and over in 2021, down from 50 in 2016, a 10.0% decline. That places it below several nearby communities such as Claresholm (135), Pincher Creek (145), and Cardston (115), while remaining above places with no recorded workers in this sector, including Hill Spring, Glenwood, and Stavely. The pattern suggests a modest but smaller local presence in this part of the labour force.

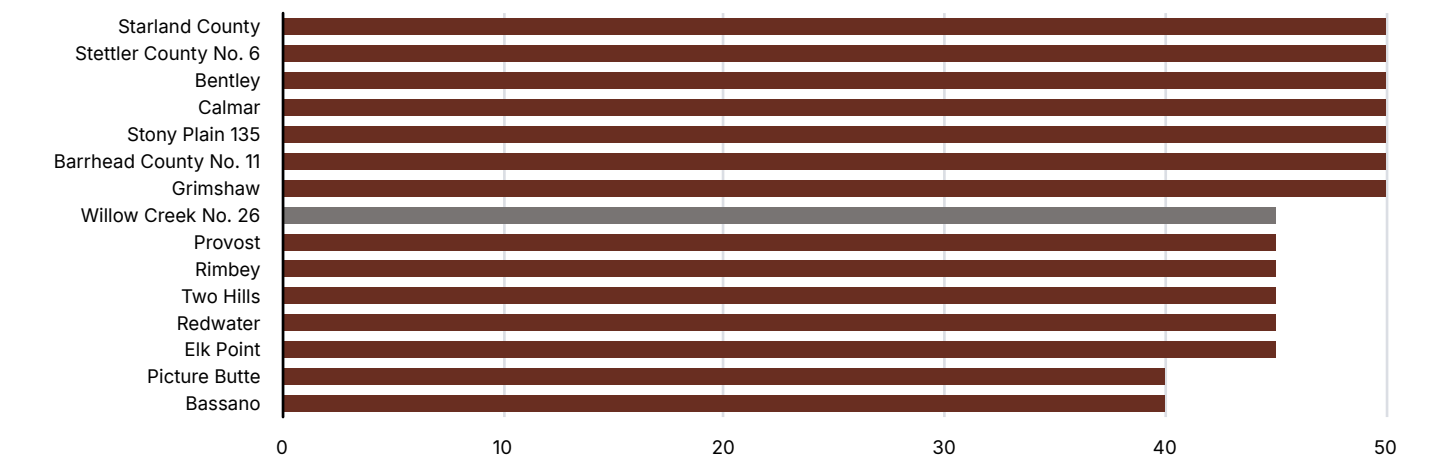


Figure 1.2: Comparison of Resident Labour Force in Sector with other locations (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021)¹

Largest Industries in Sector

In 2025, traveller accommodation was the largest industry in Willow Creek No. 26 with 7 people, and recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps also employed 1 person. The most changed group had 7 people.

In Willow Creek No. 26, the accommodation and food services sector is concentrated in a small number of industries, with traveller accommodation clearly the largest component in 2025. Within the sector, it accounts for most of the recorded employment in this dataset. Traveller accommodation employs 7 people, while recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps employ 1. That leaves a very small sector total in the available data, and the largest industry is seven times the size of the

second-largest one. The figures are reported for employees aged 15 years and over. This pattern shows a narrow industry base rather than a broad spread across accommodation and food services. The gap between the two listed industries is substantial even though the overall counts are small. For Willow Creek No. 26, the sector's employment profile in 2025 is defined less by scale than by concentration, with traveller accommodation carrying most of the weight in the available records.

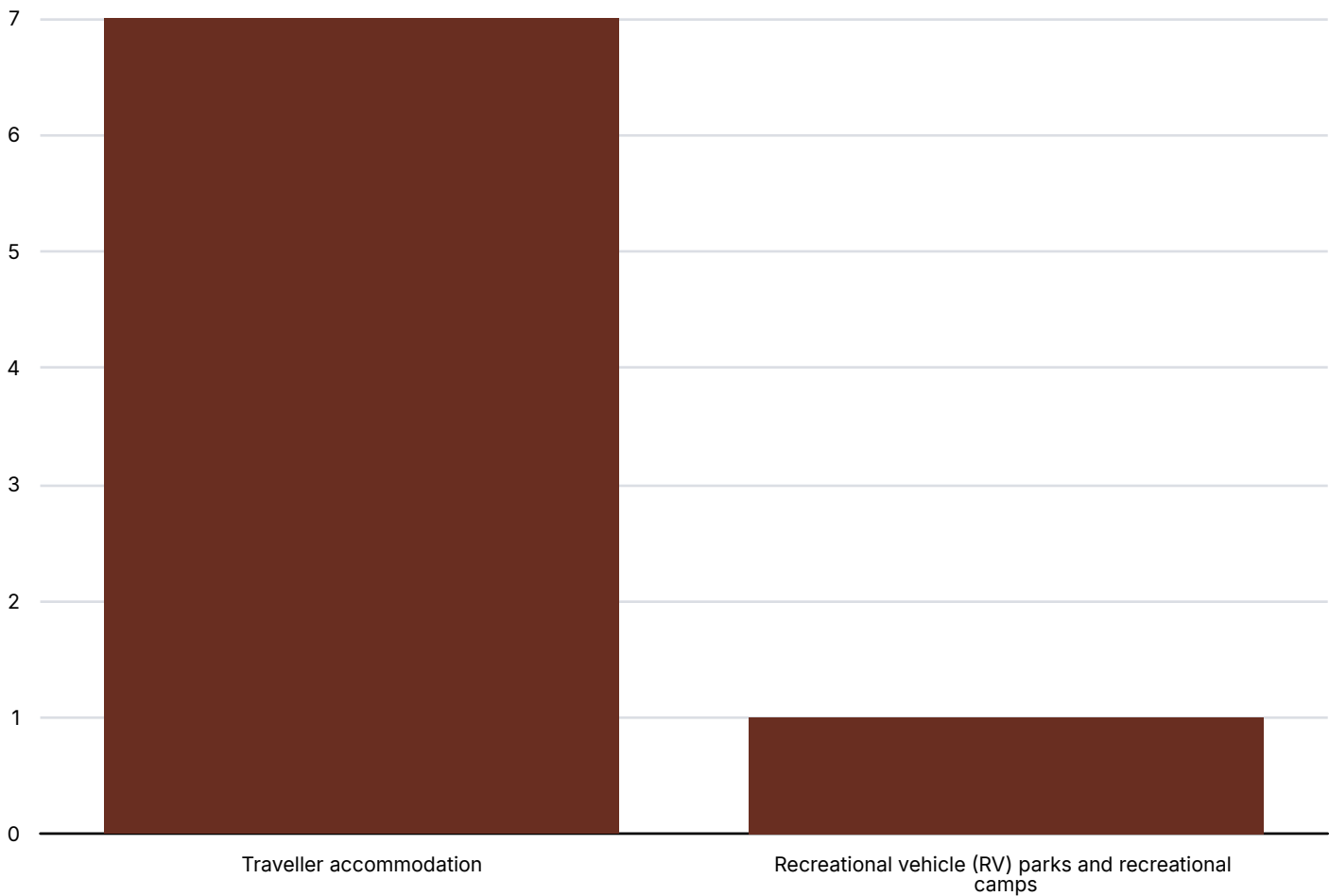


Figure 2.1: Shows the industries within this sector with the highest employment. It helps identify the biggest components of the sector. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2025)²

Declining Industries in Sector

In Willow Creek No. 26, traveller accommodation had the largest employment decline, with 7 people in 2025. Recreational vehicle parks and camps recorded 1 person and no change over one and five years.

In Willow Creek No. 26, the available data for accommodation and food services does not show clear industry declines over the selected period. The two listed industries are traveller accommodation, with 7 employees, and recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps, with 1 employee. The only change values provided are for recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps, where both the 1-year and 5-year changes are 0. Traveller accommodation has no change values reported,

so the dataset does not support a statement that it declined over time. Within this sector, the picture is one of a very small employment base rather than a broad pattern of job loss. The sector coverage here is limited to these two industries, and both are represented at low counts. Based on the data provided, the main takeaway is that there is no measurable decline shown for the industries listed, and any wider trend in the sector cannot be confirmed from this record alone.

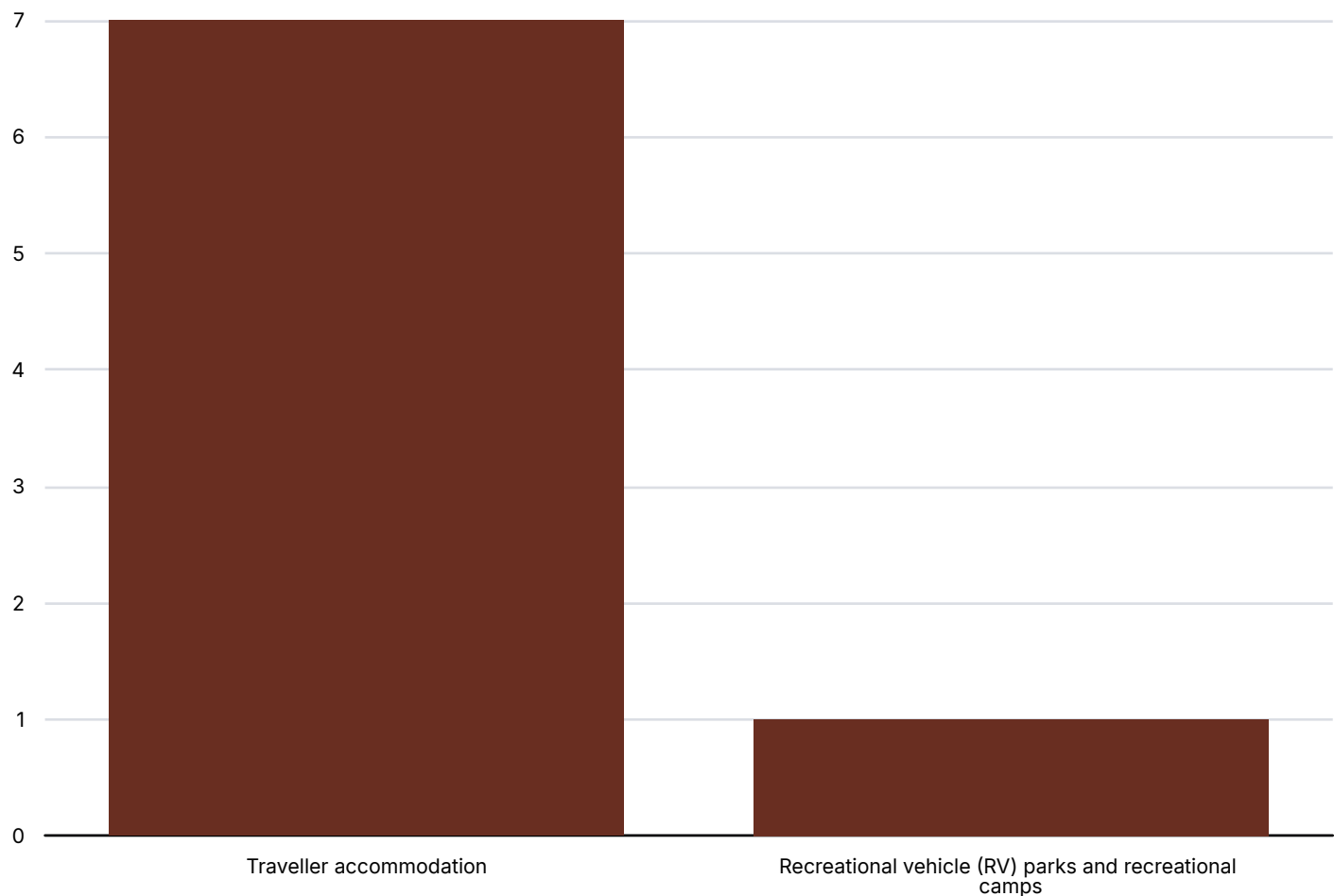


Figure 3.1: Shows industries within this sector where employment has decreased the most over the selected time period. It helps identify segments of the sector that are losing jobs. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2025)²

Establishments in Sector

Willow Creek No. 26 had 5 business establishments in 2025, up 25.0% from 2024 but down 16.7% from 2020. The series peaked at 15 in 2022 and fell to 2 in 2023.

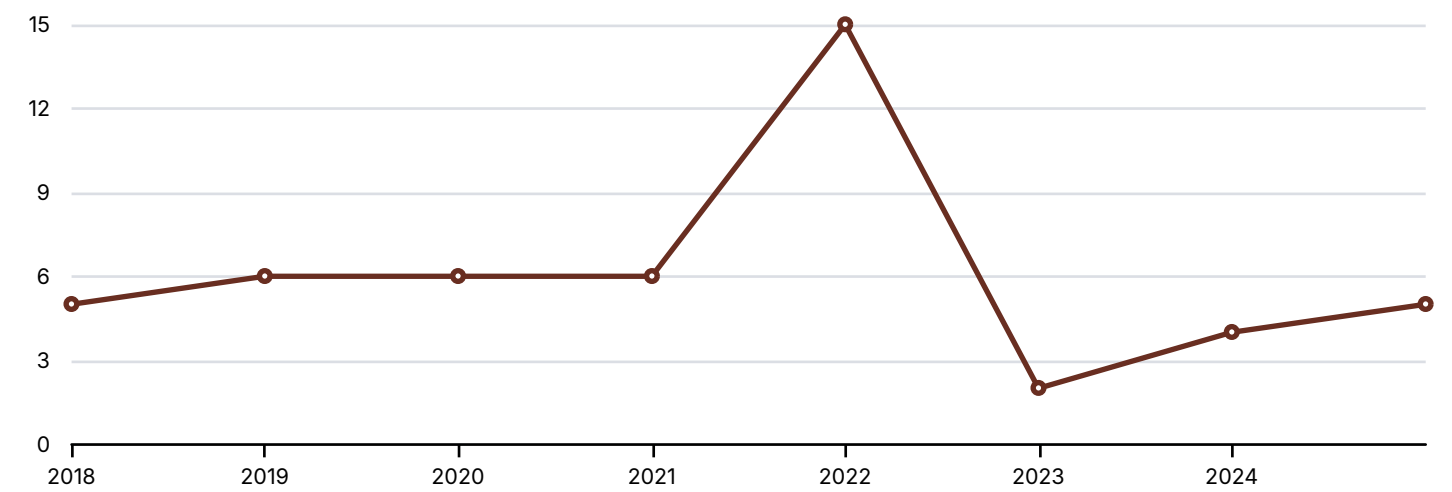
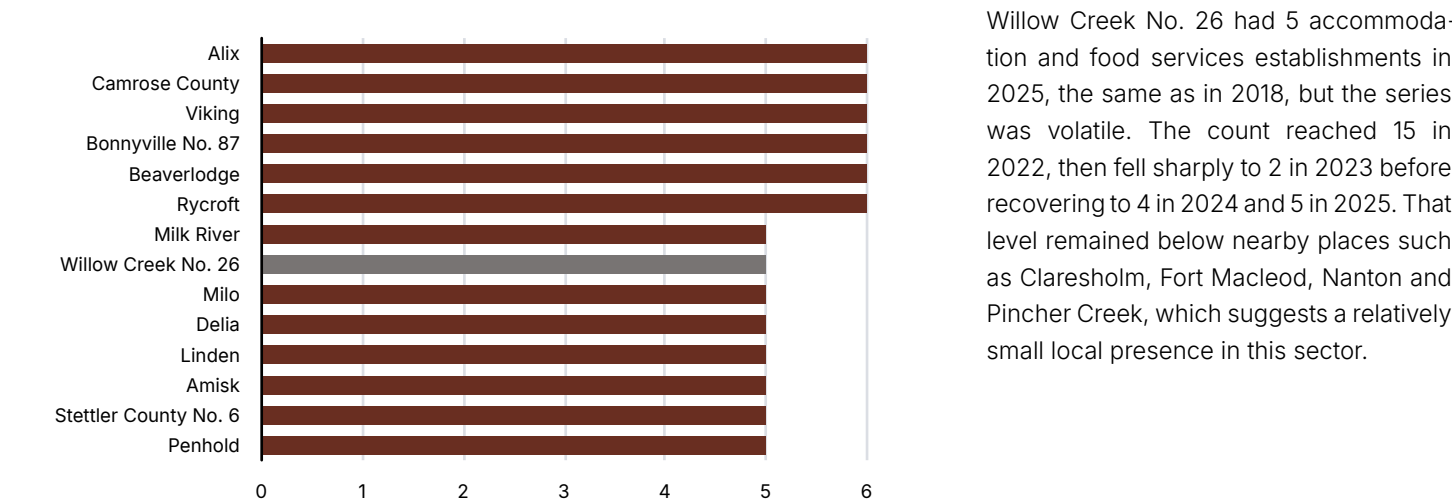


Figure 4.1: Shows the number of business establishments in a specific sector. It helps indicate the scale of business activity in that sector. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2018-2025)³

In Willow Creek No. 26, accommodation and food services establishments were few and uneven over time, with the clearest feature being a sharp rise and then a partial recovery. The count moved from 5 businesses in 2018 to 6 in 2019, stayed at 6 through 2021, then jumped to 15 in 2022. That increase was followed by a steep drop to 2 in 2023, before rebounding to 4 in 2024 and 5 in 2025. The 2025 total was still below the 2022 peak, but it returned close to the 2018 level. The pattern suggests a small, volatile business base in this sector.



Willow Creek No. 26 had 5 accommodation and food services establishments in 2025, the same as in 2018, but the series was volatile. The count reached 15 in 2022, then fell sharply to 2 in 2023 before recovering to 4 in 2024 and 5 in 2025. That level remained below nearby places such as Claresholm, Fort Macleod, Nanton and Pincher Creek, which suggests a relatively small local presence in this sector.

Figure 4.2: Comparison of Establishments in Sector with other locations (Willow Creek No. 26, 2025)³

Specialist Industries in Sector

Willow Creek No. 26’s most specialized industry in 2025 was traveller accommodation at 1.5143, followed by RV parks and recreational camps at 1.4026. The latter fell 5.1% over one year and 14.8% over five years.

In 2025, Willow Creek No. 26 showed its strongest specialization in accommodation and food services within two accommodation-related industries. The local economy was more concentrated in Traveller accommodation than in RV parks and recreational camps, pointing to a narrow but clear niche in this sector. Traveller accommodation posted the highest location quotient at 1.5. RV parks and recreational camps followed at 1.4. The two industries were close in specialization, but Traveller accommodation was the stronger of the pair. RV parks and

recreational camps also showed a 5.1% decline over one year and a 14.8% decline over five years in concentration. That pattern suggests the area’s specialization is present, but not evenly distributed across the sector. The lead industry has only a modest edge, while the second specialty has weakened over both the short and longer term. For Willow Creek No. 26, the sector’s specialty appears concentrated in a small number of accommodation activities, with recent change pointing to softer momentum in RV-related services.

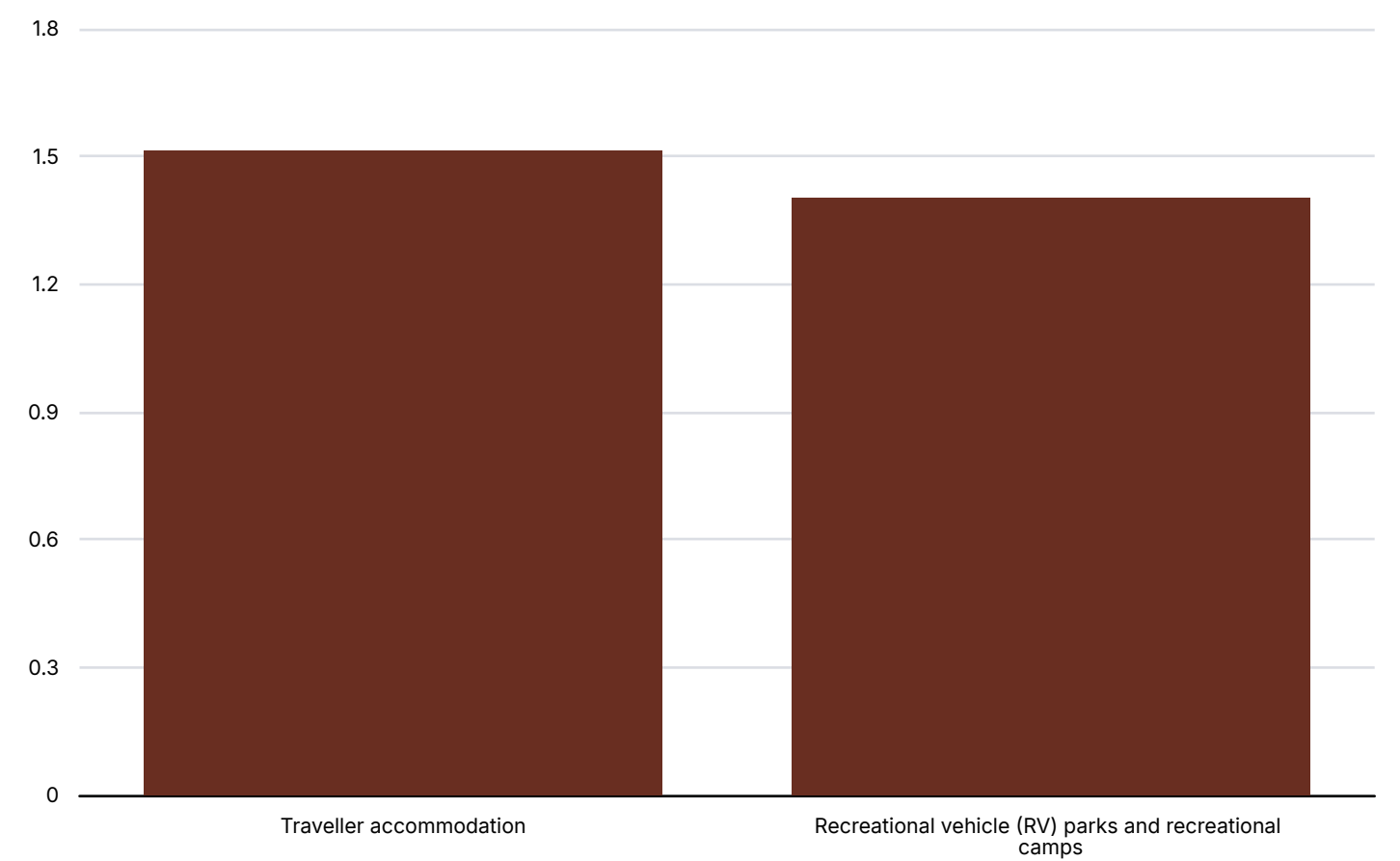


Figure 5.1: Shows industries within this sector where the local economy has the highest level of specialization based on employment concentration. Industries are categorized based on specialization (location quotient) and recent employment growth or change in concentration. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2025)⁴

Star Industries in Sector

Willow Creek No. 26’s largest and most changed industry was recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps, with a location quotient of 3.7495 in 2023. Concentration rose 30.8% from 2022 and 30.8% from 2021.

In 2023, Willow Creek No. 26 shows a clear concentration in one accommodation and food services industry: recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps. The location quotient is 3.7, which means this activity is represented at a much higher level than the broader employment base used for comparison. The recent movement is also notable, with a 1-year change of 30.8%, pointing to rising concentration over the period measured. Because the dataset includes only one industry in

this view, that result stands out on its own rather than as part of a wider ranking. Within the sector, the pattern is simple: a single specialty with both a strong existing presence and recent upward momentum. For Willow Creek No. 26, the data suggest that this is not just a small niche but a clearly concentrated part of the local sector profile. The combination of a high location quotient and a sizeable one-year increase is the main signal in the dataset.

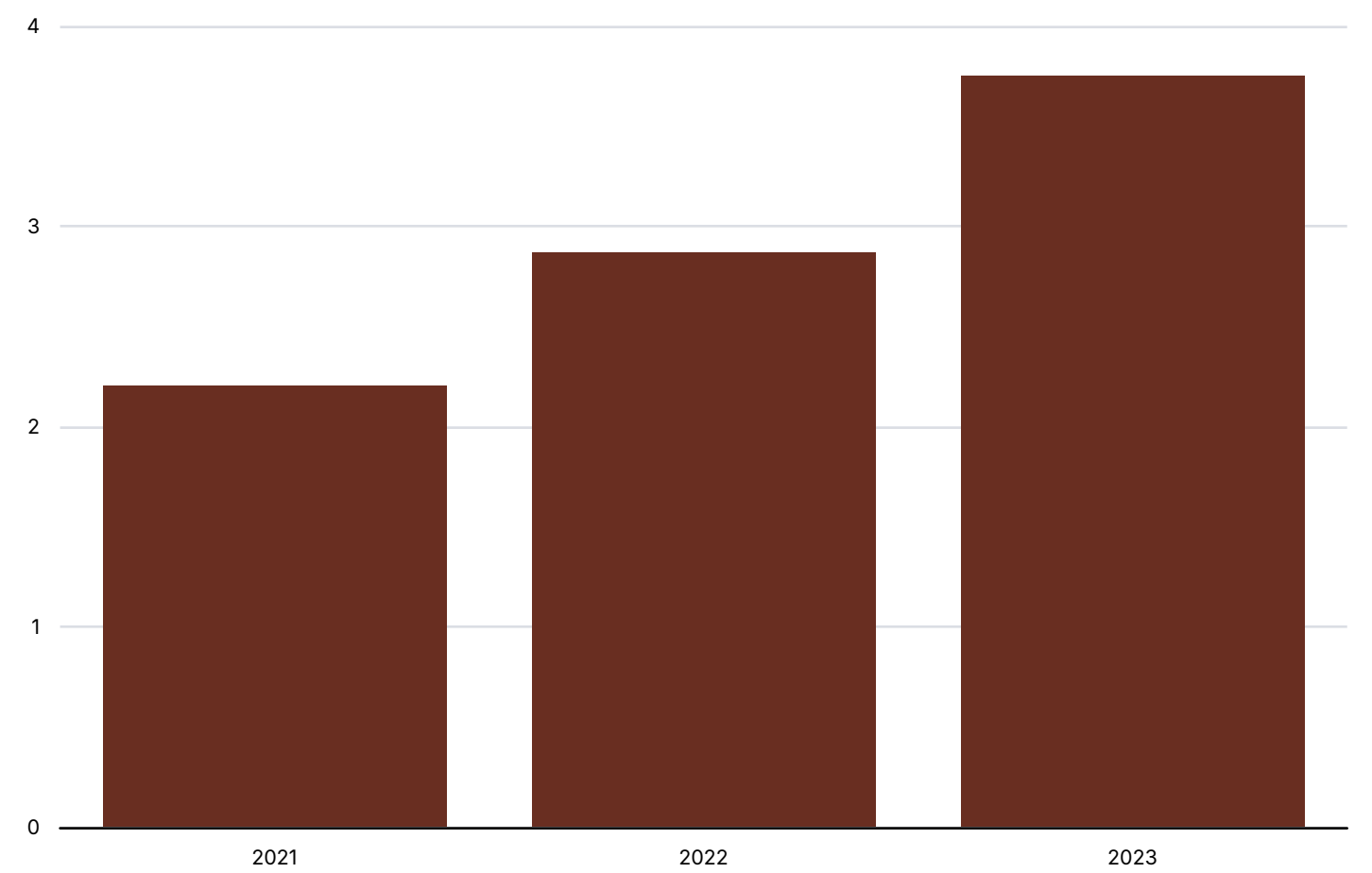


Figure 6.1: Shows industries within this sector where the local economy has strong specialization and increasing concentration or strong growth. Industries are categorized based on specialization (location quotient) and recent employment growth or change in concentration. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021-2023)⁴

Anchor Industries in Sector

Willow Creek No. 26’s largest anchor industry is recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps, with a location quotient of 1.4026 in 2025. Concentration fell 5.1% over one year and 14.8% over five years.

Willow Creek No. 26 shows a clear anchor industry within accommodation and food services: recreational vehicle (RV) parks and recreational camps. In 2025, this 4-digit industry group posted a location quotient of 1.4, which means it was more concentrated locally than in the broader reference area. The recent pattern is weaker than the current level of specialization suggests. The location quotient fell 5.1% over the past year and was down 14.8% over five years. That points to a sector presence that remains above average, but with declining

relative concentration. Because the measure is based on employees aged 15 years and over, the figures describe the local employment structure rather than business counts or visitor activity. Within the accommodation and food services sector, this industry stands out as a specialized component that has been losing some ground over time. The data suggest a locally important niche that is still present, but no longer as prominent as it was a few years ago.

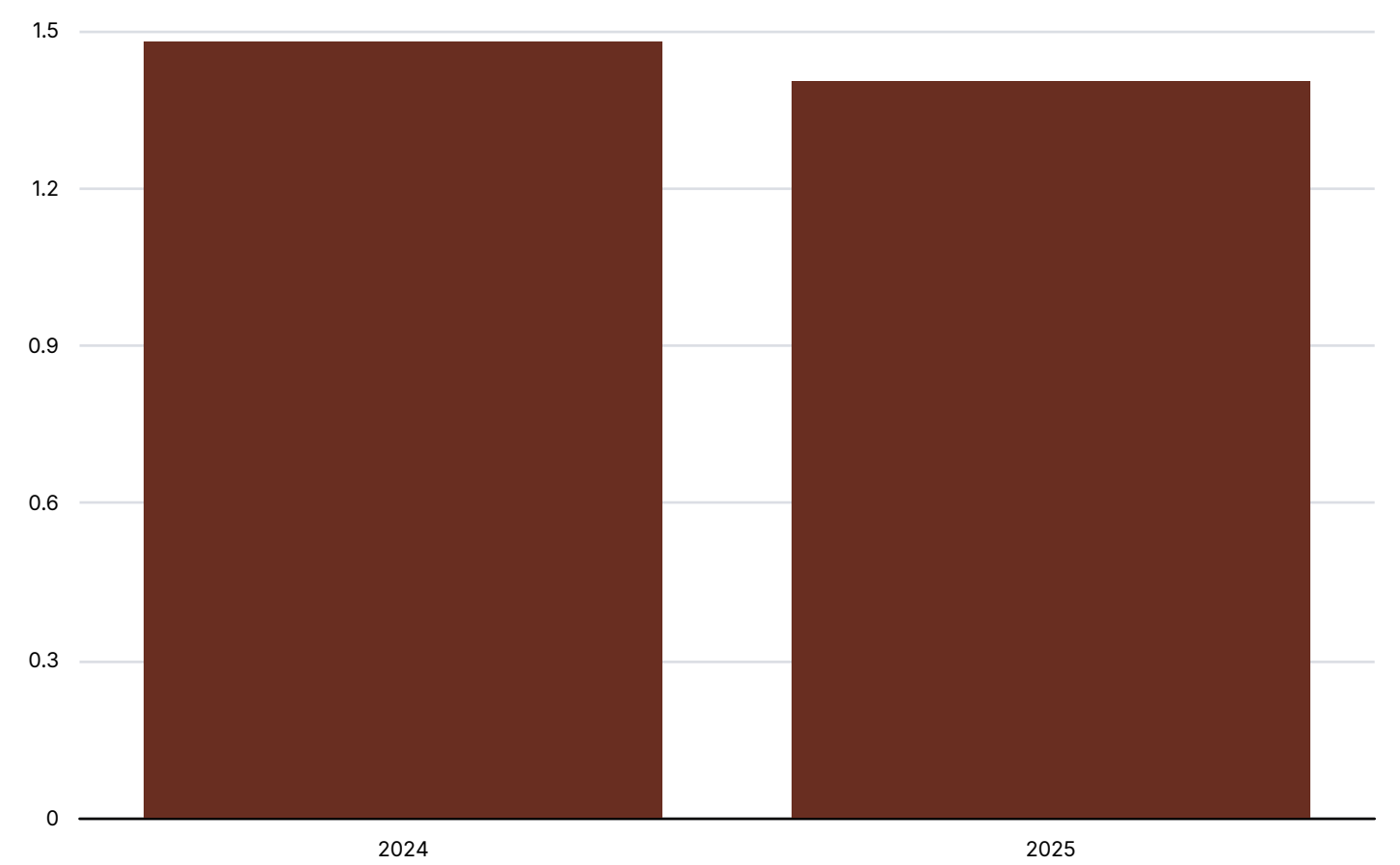


Figure 7.1: Shows industries within this sector where the local economy has strong specialization but relatively stable or declining concentration. Industries are categorized based on specialization (location quotient) and recent employment growth or change in concentration. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2024-2025)⁴

Employment in Sector

Willow Creek No. 26 had 8 people employed in 2025, up 700.0% from 2024 and 700.0% over five years. Employment had fallen to 1 person in 2023 and 2024 after reaching 111 in 2022.

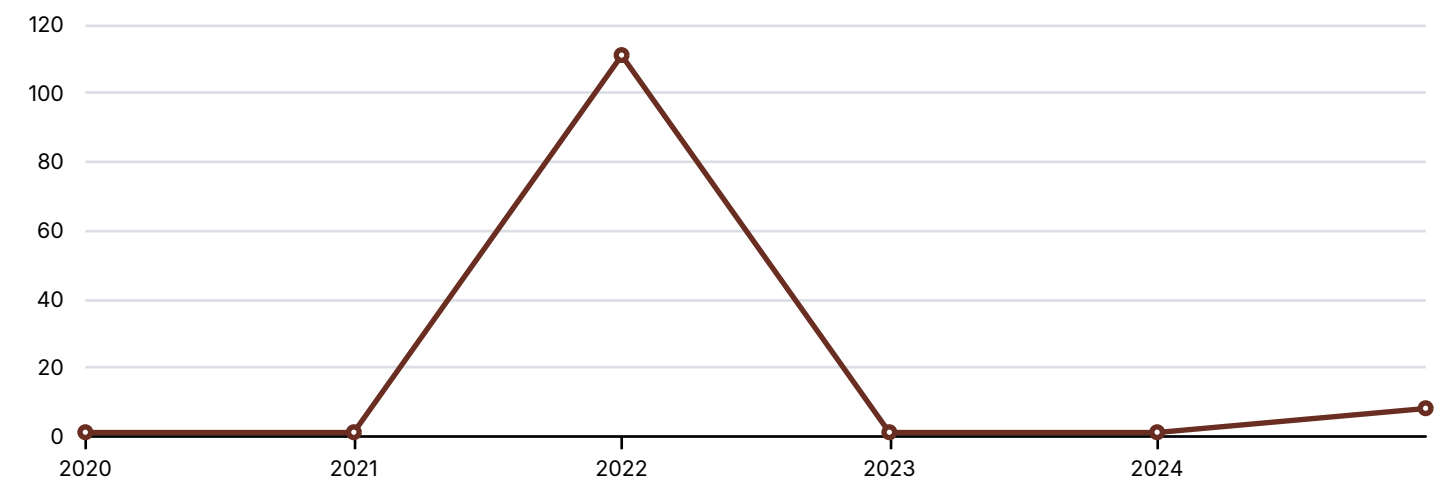
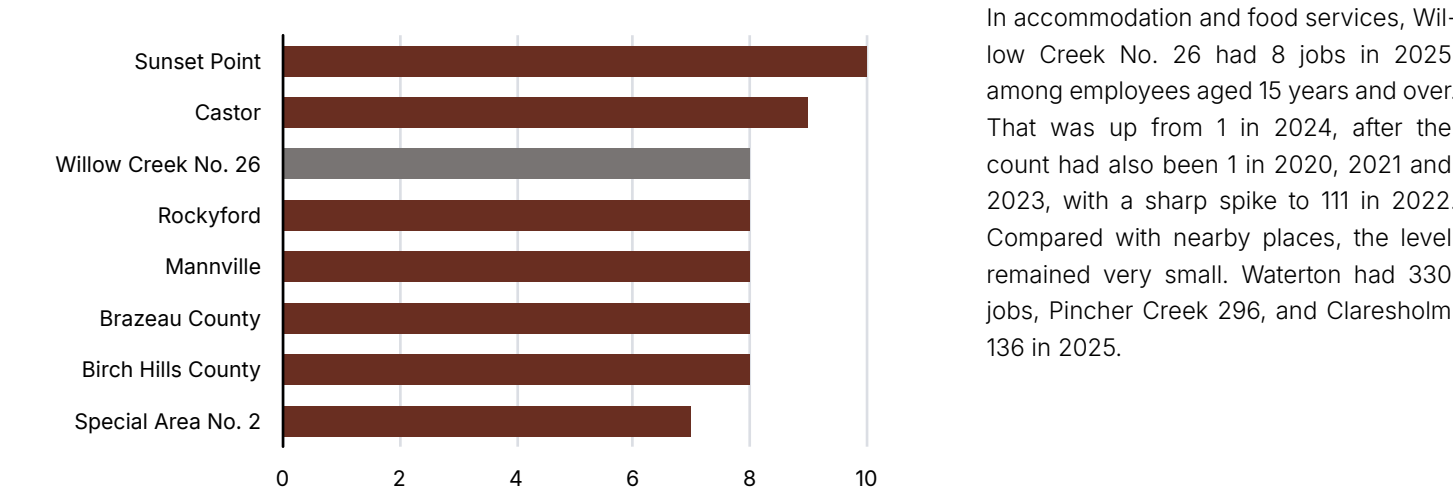


Figure 8.1: Shows the number of jobs in a specific industry sector. It helps indicate the scale of that sector within the local economy. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2020-2025)²

Employment in accommodation and food services in Willow Creek No. 26 was very small for most of the period, but the series shows sharp volatility. The count was 1 job in 2020, stayed at 1 in 2021, jumped to 111 in 2022, then dropped back to 1 in 2023 and 2024 before rising to 8 in 2025. The latest figure is still well below the 2022 spike, but it is higher than the earlier years in the series. The 1-year change in 2025 was 700%, and the 5-year change was also 700%, showing a recent increase after several minimal readings.



In accommodation and food services, Willow Creek No. 26 had 8 jobs in 2025 among employees aged 15 years and over. That was up from 1 in 2024, after the count had also been 1 in 2020, 2021 and 2023, with a sharp spike to 111 in 2022. Compared with nearby places, the level remained very small. Waterton had 330 jobs, Pincher Creek 296, and Claresholm 136 in 2025.

Figure 8.2: Comparison of Employment in Sector with other locations (Willow Creek No. 26, 2025)²

Establishments in Sector by Number of Employees

Willow Creek No. 26’s largest group remains businesses without employees, at 3 in 2025. That count is unchanged from 2024, but 40% below 2020. The 1-to-4 employee group held at 1.

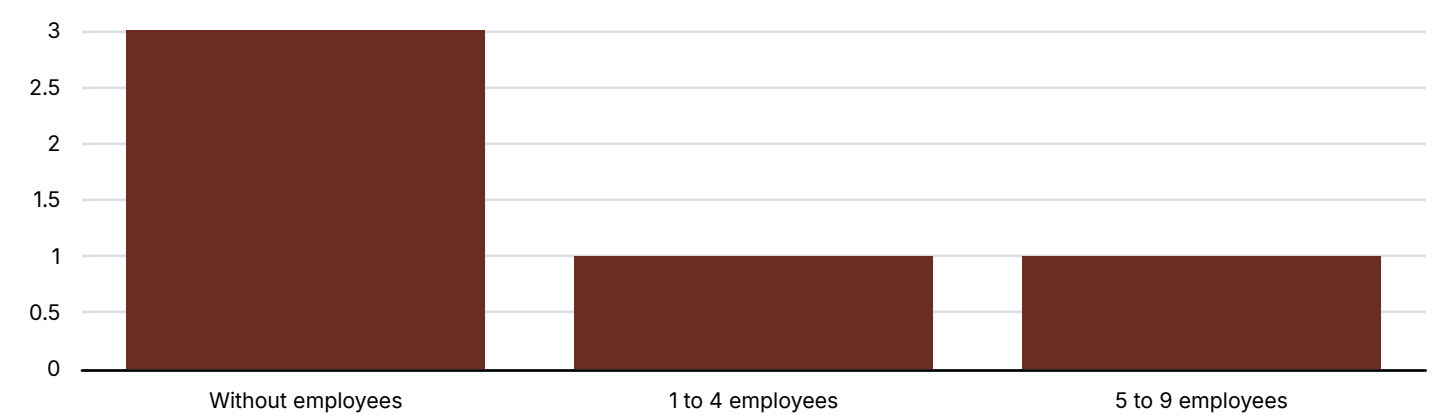


Figure 9.1: Shows the number of business establishments in a sector by employee size class. It helps indicate whether that sector is made up mostly of small or larger firms. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2025)³

In Willow Creek No. 26, accommodation and food services establishments in 2025 were concentrated at the smallest end of the size scale. There were 3 without employees, alongside 1 establishment with 1 to 4 employees and 1 with 5 to 9 employees. The no-employee category was unchanged from a year earlier, but was down 40% over five years. The 1 to 4 employee group was flat over both periods, while the 5 to 9 employee count had no change data available.

In Willow Creek No. 26, accommodation and food services establishments were concentrated in the smallest size classes in 2025. There were 3 businesses without employees, 1 with 1 to 4 employees, and 1 with 5 to 9 employees. The count of no-employee establishments was unchanged from a year earlier, but it was down 40% from five years earlier. That pattern points to a very small sector base with limited recent change.



Figure 9.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Business Establishment Size - Without employees (Willow Creek No. 26)³

Sector Labour Market Gap

Willow Creek No. 26 recorded a labour market gap of 0.0200 in accommodation and food services in 2021, showing almost no difference between jobs and resident workers in this sector for the labour force aged 15 years and over.

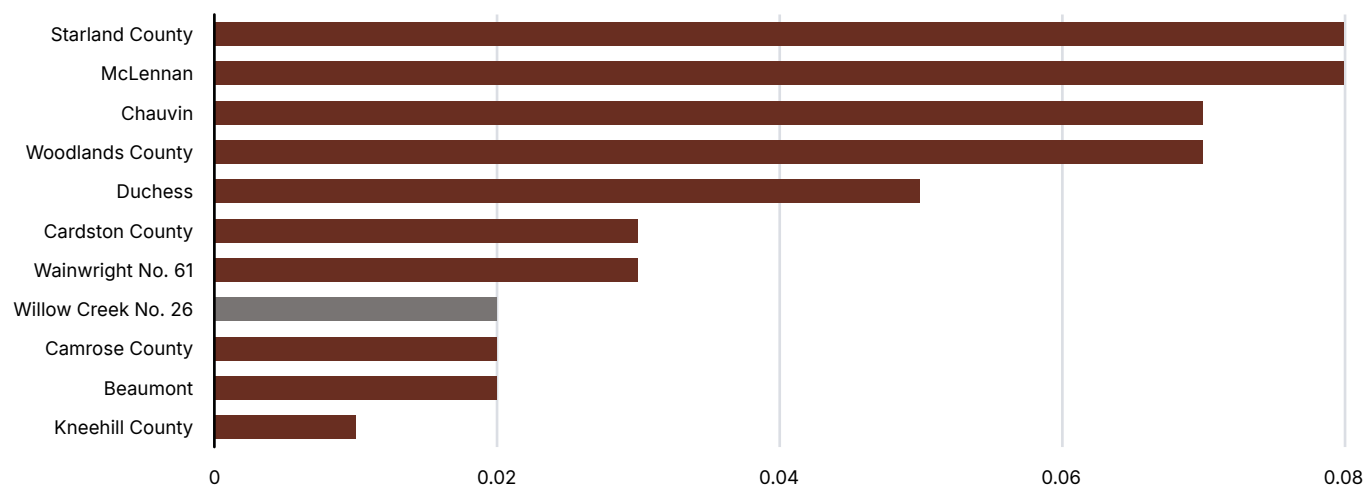


Figure 10.1: Comparison of Sector Labour Market Gap with other locations (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021)⁵

In 2021, Willow Creek No. 26 showed a very small labour market gap in accommodation and food services, with a ratio of 0.02. That is far below nearby places with reported values, including Cardston County at 0.03, Pincher Creek No. 9 at 0.28, Blood 148 at 0.40, and Nanton at 0.9. Higher ratios in Claresholm (1.39), Fort Macleod (1.66), Pincher Creek (2.23), and Cardston (1.13) point to a much different balance between jobs and resident workers. Within this regional set, Willow Creek No. 26 stands out as the lowest reported value by a wide margin, suggesting a very limited sector gap in this industry.



In Willow Creek No. 26, the accommodation and food services labour market gap was very small in 2021. The ratio stood at 0.02 for the labour force aged 15 and over, pointing to a sector that was close to balance between local jobs and resident workers. With only this figure available, the data does not show whether the sector leaned toward in-commuting or exporting workers. It does show a limited gap in that year.

Figure 10.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Industry Sector - Accommodation and food services (Willow Creek No. 26)⁵

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.
3. Statistics Canada, Business Register. Published in Jun 1, 2025.
4. Statistics Canada, Business Register; Localintel, Employment Location Quotient by Industry Estimates of Census Areas. Published in Mar 13, 2026.
5. Statistics Canada, Business Register; Statistics Canada, Census Profile; Localintel, Labour Market Gap Estimates of Census Areas. Published in Mar 13, 2026.

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