

ALBERTA
SOUTHWEST

CROWSNEST PASS

Accommodation and Food Services

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Executive Summary

Crowsnest Pass's accommodation and food services sector presents a small but varied local picture, marked by a sharp drop in resident workers between 2016 and 2021 and a more uneven pattern in business activity and employment since 2020. Resident labour force participation in the sector fell substantially over that earlier five-year period, while the number of local jobs and establishments in the sector later moved up and down rather than following a steady direction. By 2025, employment had edged above its 2020 level, but recent gains were modest and followed several years of fluctuation.

The sector is anchored by restaurants and eating places, which remain by far the largest source of employment, with smaller tourism-related activities forming a secondary layer. RV parks and recreational camps stand out as the clearest area of specialization and the strongest source of long-term growth, even though their recent momentum has softened. Drinking places are also notably concentrated locally, but they too weakened in the short term. Elsewhere, the pattern is mixed. Traveller accommodation has grown over a longer horizon but declined recently, while special food services has contracted sharply. This leaves the sector neither broadly expanding nor broadly weakening, but instead split between a dominant food-service base, a few niche activities with strong local concentration, and several smaller segments showing softness. The business base reflects that structure: establishments are few in number, their totals have fluctuated from year to year, and most are very small, with microbusinesses making up much of the local footprint.

The result is a sector with visible tourism-related specialization but limited scale and uneven momentum. Crowsnest Pass shows a modest labour market gap, with jobs slightly exceeding resident workers in 2021, though the imbalance is far narrower than in major tourism comparators nearby. What emerges is not a large accommodation and food services economy, but a compact one shaped by a handful of concentrated niches, a dominant restaurant segment, and recurring year-to-year variability in both employment and establishments.

Resident Labour Force in Sector

Crowsnest Pass had 160 resident workers in this sector in 2021, down from 260 in 2016. That five-year decline was 38.5%, leaving the local total 100 workers lower.

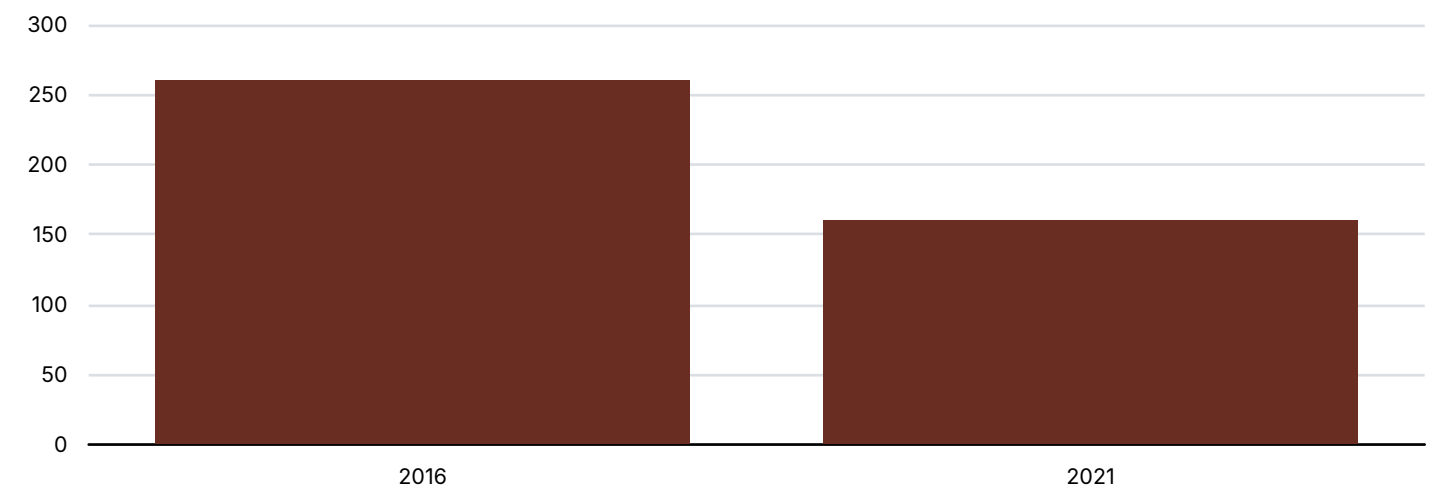
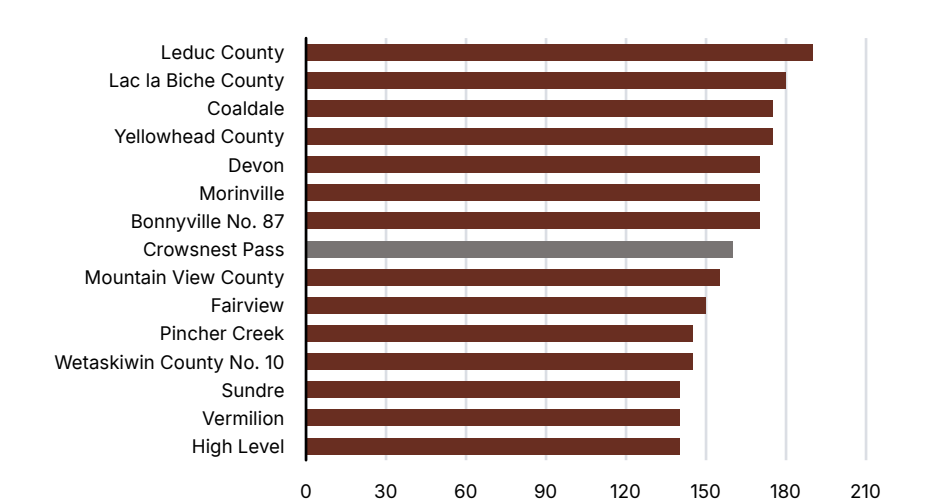


Figure 1.1: Shows the number of resident workers in a specific sector. It helps indicate how many local residents are employed in that part of the economy. (Crowsnest Pass, 2016-2021)¹

Crowsnest Pass had 160 resident workers in accommodation and food services in 2021, down from 260 in 2016. That 5-year change of -38.5% points to a clear decline in the number of local residents working in this sector. The data are limited to two census years, but they show a notable shift over time rather than a stable pattern. In 2016, the sector accounted for a larger resident labour force presence; by 2021, it was substantially smaller. With no benchmark or breakdown by sublocation provided, the main story is the reduction in sector-specific resident employment over the five-year period.



In 2021, Crowsnest Pass had 160 resident workers in accommodation and food services, down from 260 in 2016. That 38.5% decline points to a smaller local labour force in this sector over five years. Among nearby places in the dataset, the total was higher than in Kananaskis (10) and Bighorn No. 8 (65), but well below Jasper (665), Banff (1,875) and Canmore (1,560).

Figure 1.2: Comparison of Resident Labour Force in Sector with other locations (Crowsnest Pass, 2021)¹

Fastest Growing Industries in Sector

Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places led Crowsnest Pass with 131 employees in 2025, up 15.9% in a year. RV parks and recreational camps followed at 23 employees, rising 4.6% annually and 666.7% over five years.

In Crowsnest Pass, employment growth in accommodation and food services is concentrated in two industries: recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps, and full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places. The pattern is mixed, with one small industry showing strong longer-term expansion and a larger one showing recent gains after a slight five-year decline. Recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps employed 23 people in 2025, up 4.6% over the past year and 666.7% over five years. Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating

places employed 131 people, with a 15.9% increase over one year but a 1.5% decline over five years. The larger restaurant category remains the main employer in this sector, but the fastest long-term growth is in RV parks and camps. That contrast suggests the sector’s recent momentum is not uniform across industries. The data points to a small, rapidly expanding tourism-related niche alongside a larger food-service base that has recovered more recently than it has grown over the longer term.

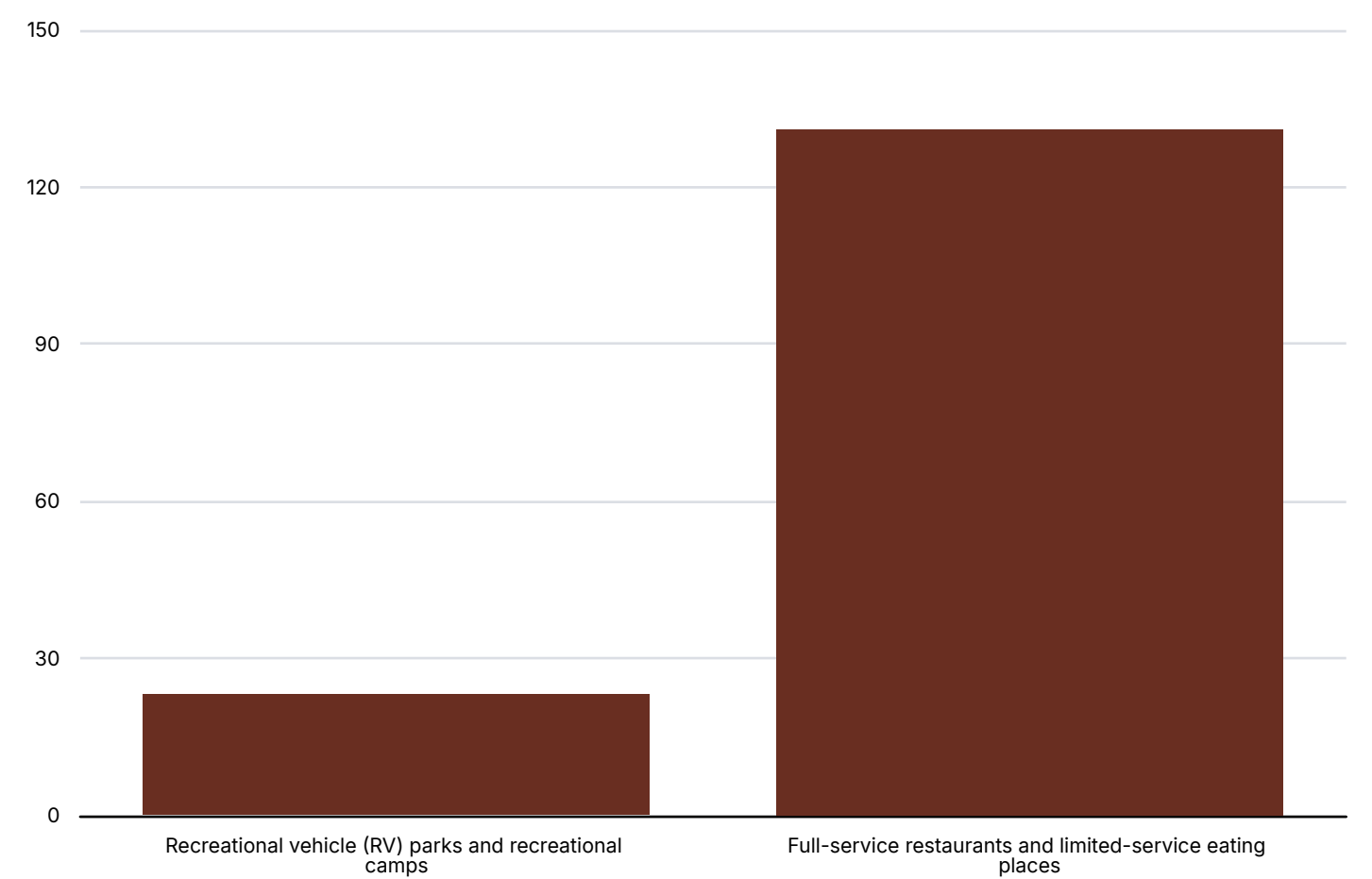


Figure 2.1: Shows industries within this sector where employment has increased the most over the selected time period. It helps identify the fastest-growing parts of the sector. (Crowsnest Pass, 2025)²

Largest Industries in Sector

Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places employed 131 people in Crowsnest Pass in 2025, the largest group. It rose 15.9% in a year, while special food services fell to 5 after a 50.0% decline.

In 2025, employment in accommodation and food services in Crowsnest Pass was concentrated in a few industries, with restaurants and eating places the clear leader. Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places employed 131 people, far more than any other industry in the sector. The next largest industries were recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps, with 23 workers, traveller accommodation with 22, and drinking places with 20. Special food services was much smaller at 5 workers. Recent movement was mixed: restaurants grew 15.9% over one year, while traveller accom-

modation fell 18.5%, drinking places declined 20.0%, and special food services dropped 50.0%. Longer-term change points in different directions. RV parks and camps increased sharply over five years, up 666.7%, and traveller accommodation rose 120.0%. Drinking places doubled over five years, while restaurants were slightly lower than five years earlier, down 1.5%. The pattern suggests a sector dominated by food service employment, with tourism-related activities also playing a notable but smaller role.

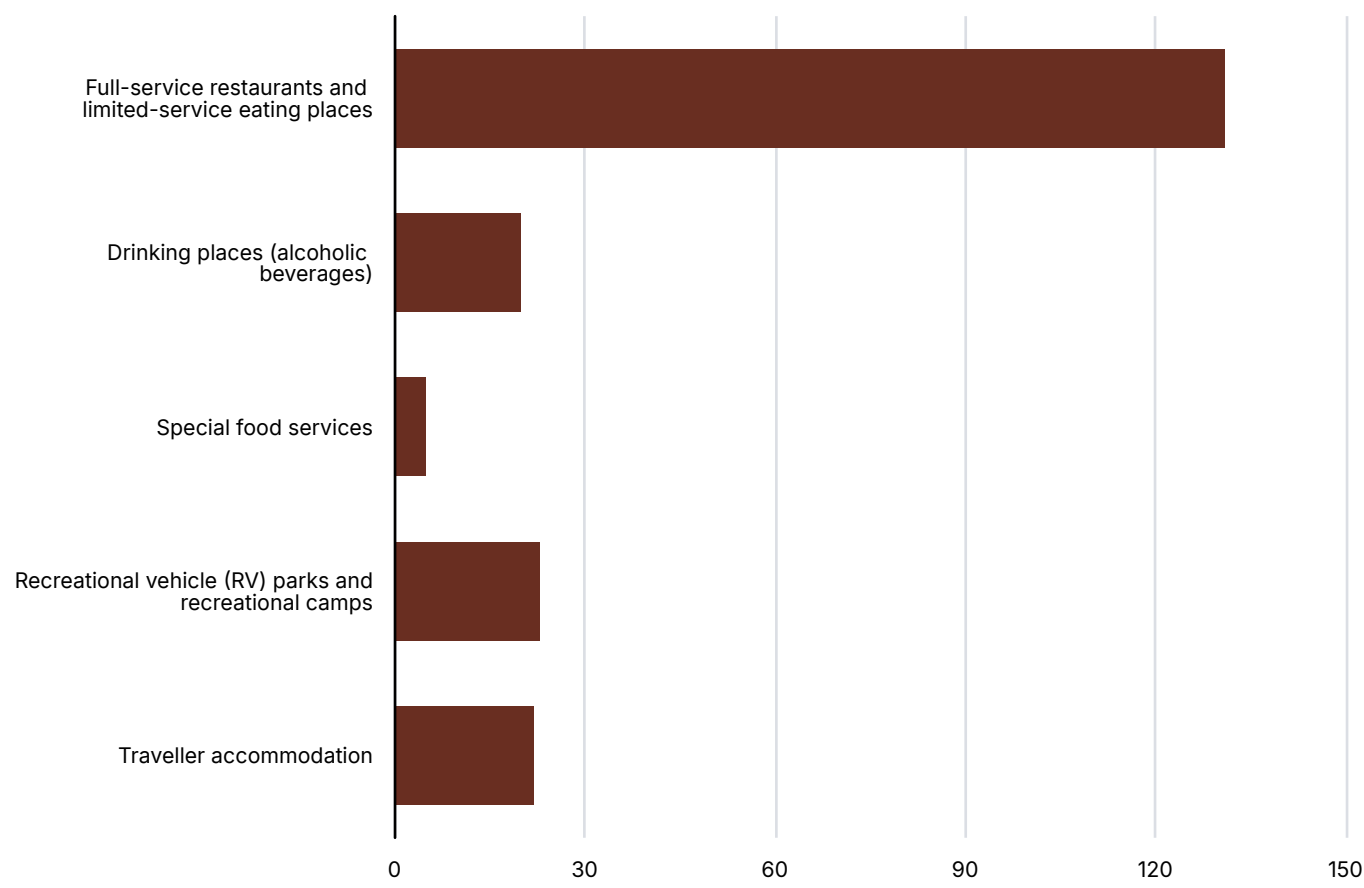


Figure 3.1: Shows the industries within this sector with the highest employment. It helps identify the biggest components of the sector. (Crowsnest Pass, 2025)²

Declining Industries in Sector

Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places remained the largest declining industry group in Crowsnest Pass at 131 people, up 15.9% from 2024 but down 1.5% over five years.

In 2025, employment in Crowsnest Pass's accommodation and food services sector was uneven, with several industries posting declines even as the sector also included areas of growth. The sharpest contraction was in special food services, where employment fell to 5 people, down 50% over one year. Drinking places employed 20 people and declined 20.0% over the year. Traveller accommodation had 22 employees and was down 18.5% from the previous year. These losses were smaller in absolute terms than the drop in special food services, but they

show broad short-term softness across parts of the sector. By contrast, recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps had 23 employees and rose 4.5% over the year, while full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places employed 131 people and increased 15.9%. The pattern suggests that declines were concentrated in smaller niche activities, while the larger restaurant segment remained the main source of employment in the sector.

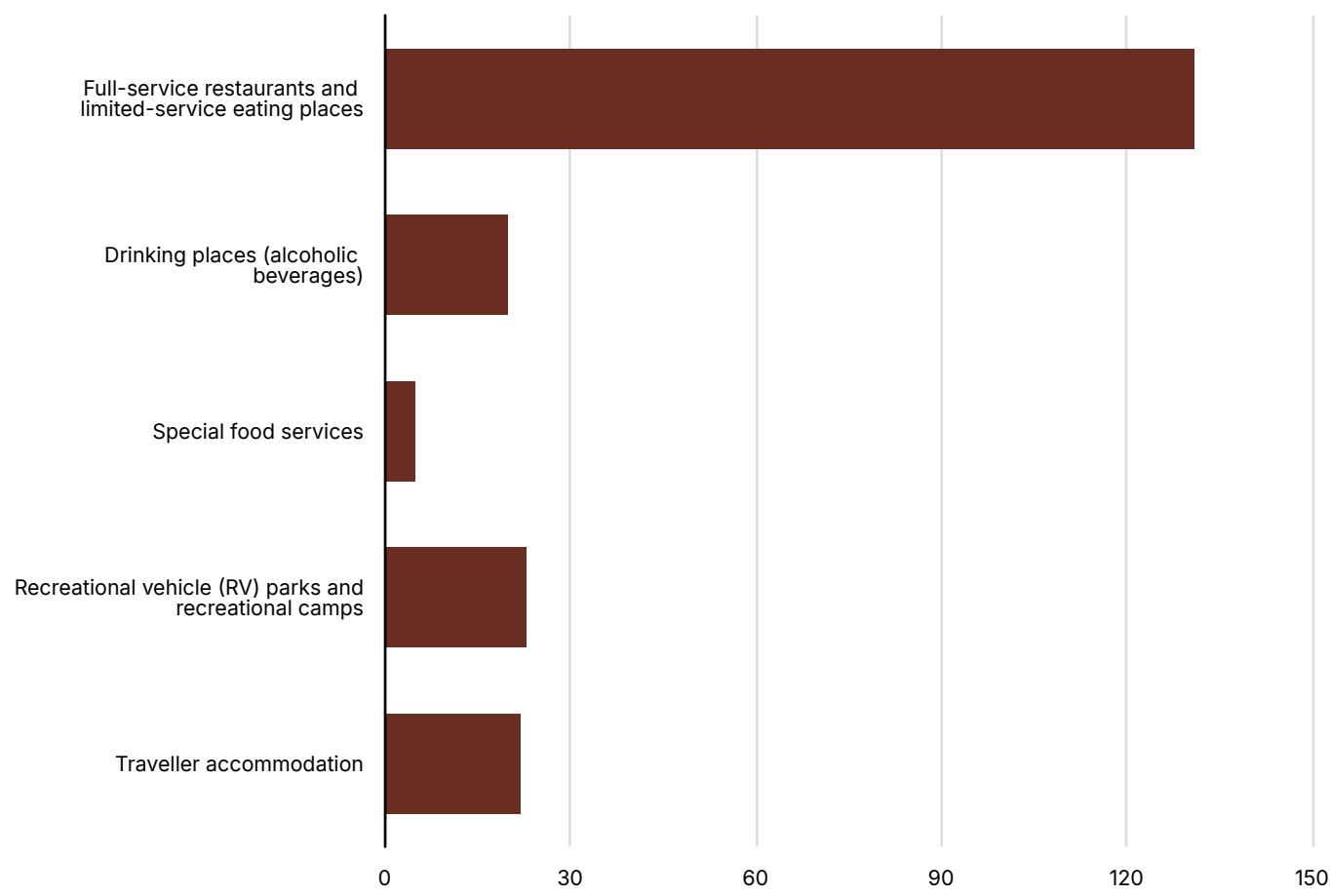


Figure 4.1: Shows industries within this sector where employment has decreased the most over the selected time period. It helps identify segments of the sector that are losing jobs. (Crowsnest Pass, 2025)²

Establishments in Sector

Crowsnest Pass had 37 business establishments in 2025, up 12.1% from 2024 and unchanged from five years earlier. The series ranged from 33 in 2024 to 41 in 2021.

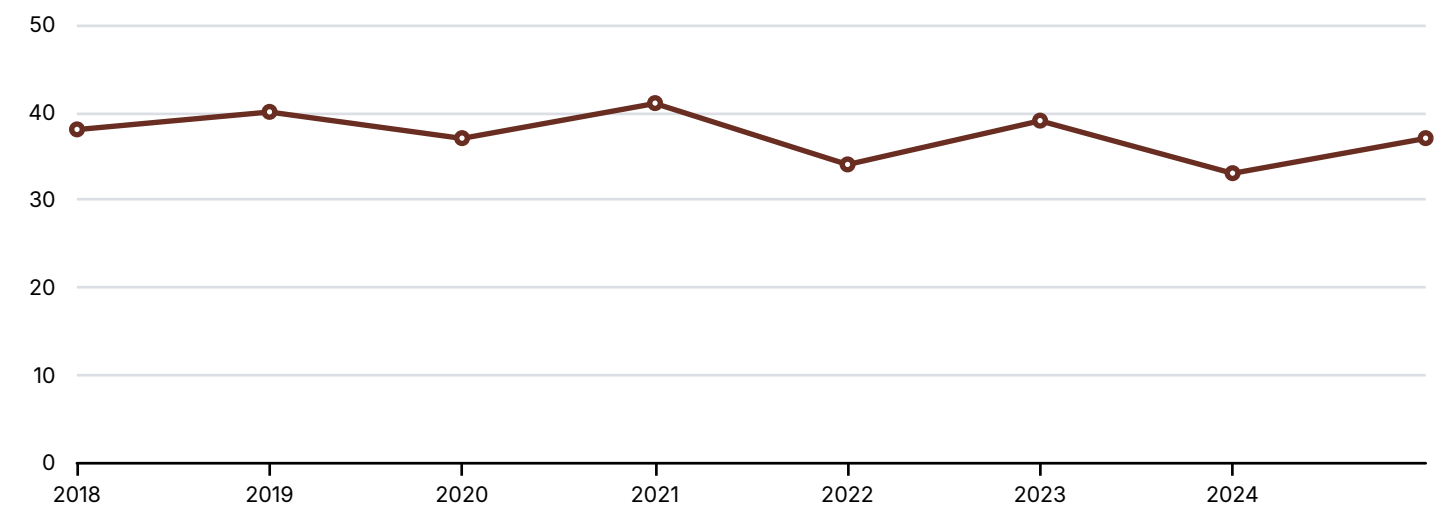
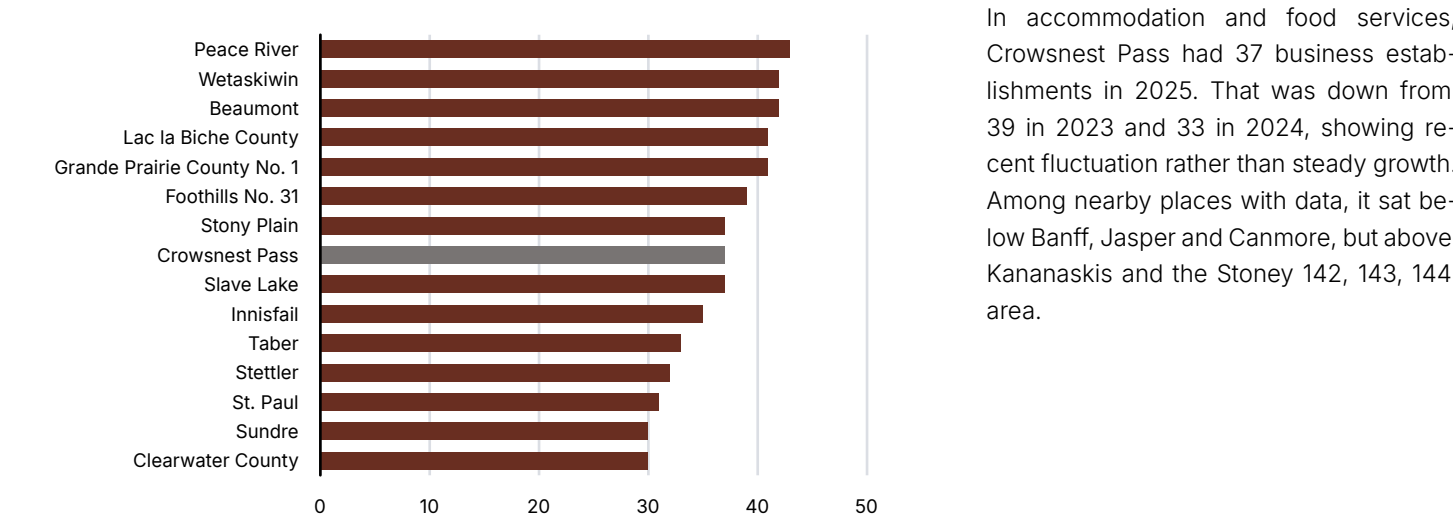


Figure 5.1: Shows the number of business establishments in a specific sector. It helps indicate the scale of business activity in that sector. (Crowsnest Pass, 2018-2025)³

In Crowsnest Pass, the number of accommodation and food services establishments has moved up and down over the past several years, with no clear sustained direction. The count was 38 in 2018, rose to 40 in 2019, fell to 37 in 2020, and reached a recent high of 41 in 2021. It then dropped to 34 in 2022, recovered to 39 in 2023, and slipped again to 33 in 2024 before edging up to 37 in 2025. The latest figure is unchanged from 2018. Recent swings suggest a small, variable local business base in this sector.



In accommodation and food services, Crowsnest Pass had 37 business establishments in 2025. That was down from 39 in 2023 and 33 in 2024, showing recent fluctuation rather than steady growth. Among nearby places with data, it sat below Banff, Jasper and Canmore, but above Kananaskis and the Stoney 142, 143, 144 area.

Figure 5.2: Comparison of Establishments in Sector with other locations (Crowsnest Pass, 2025)³

Specialist Industries in Sector

Crowsnest Pass is most specialized in recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps, with a location quotient of 6.2. Drinking places follow at 4.9, while special food services rank lowest at 0.5 and fell 57.5% year over year.

In Crowsnest Pass, specialization in accommodation and food services is concentrated in a small set of industries, and the pattern has shifted unevenly over time. The strongest local concentration in 2025 is in recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps, followed by drinking places. By contrast, special food services and full-service restaurants are not specialized. The location quotient is 6.2 for RV parks and recreational camps, with a 1-year change of -8.7% and a 5-year change of 443.8%. Drinking places stand at 4.9, with a 1-year change of

-20.2% and a 5-year change of 70.6%. Traveller accommodation is near parity at 0.9, while special food services is 0.5. The time trend is mixed. The most specialized industry still shows the clearest long-term expansion, even after a recent decline. Drinking places also remain highly concentrated, though they have softened in the short term. Taken together, the sector points to a local profile shaped more by a few specialized niches than by broad-based concentration.

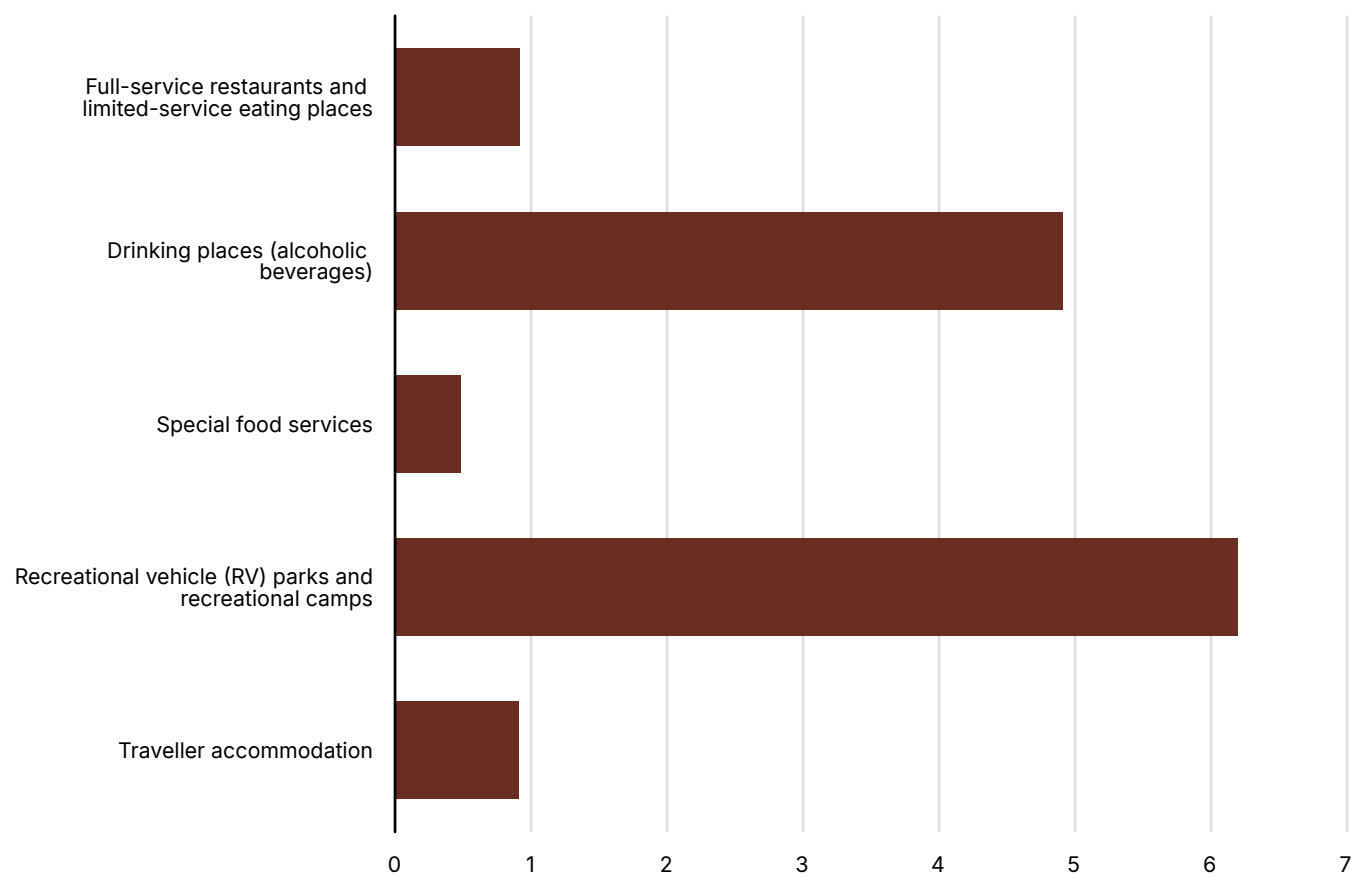


Figure 6.1: Shows industries within this sector where the local economy has the highest level of specialization based on employment concentration. Industries are categorized based on specialization (location quotient) and recent employment growth or change in concentration. (Crowsnest Pass, 2025)⁴

Star Industries in Sector

Crowsnest Pass is most specialized in RV parks and recreational camps at 6.8, up 2.0% in 2024. Drinking places also rank high at 6.2, while special food services rose 113.5% to 1.1.

In Crowsnest Pass, the accommodation and food services sector shows a small set of star industries with clear specialization in 2024. The strongest concentration appears in recreational vehicle (RV) parks and recreational camps, followed by drinking places and traveller accommodation. RV parks and recreational camps recorded a location quotient of 6.8 with 1.97% growth over the past year. Drinking places stood at 6.2 and rose 6.3%, while special food services reached 1.1 but posted the fastest recent increase at 113.5%. Traveller accommodation was also

above average in concentration at 1.2 and increased 85.7%. The pattern is more concentrated at the lower-complexity parts of the sector than at traditional lodging. RV parks and drinking places are the clearest specializations, while traveller accommodation and special food services show weaker concentration but sharper recent momentum. Taken together, the data suggests a sector where a few niche activities are especially prominent, and recent growth is broadening within the local accommodation and food services mix.

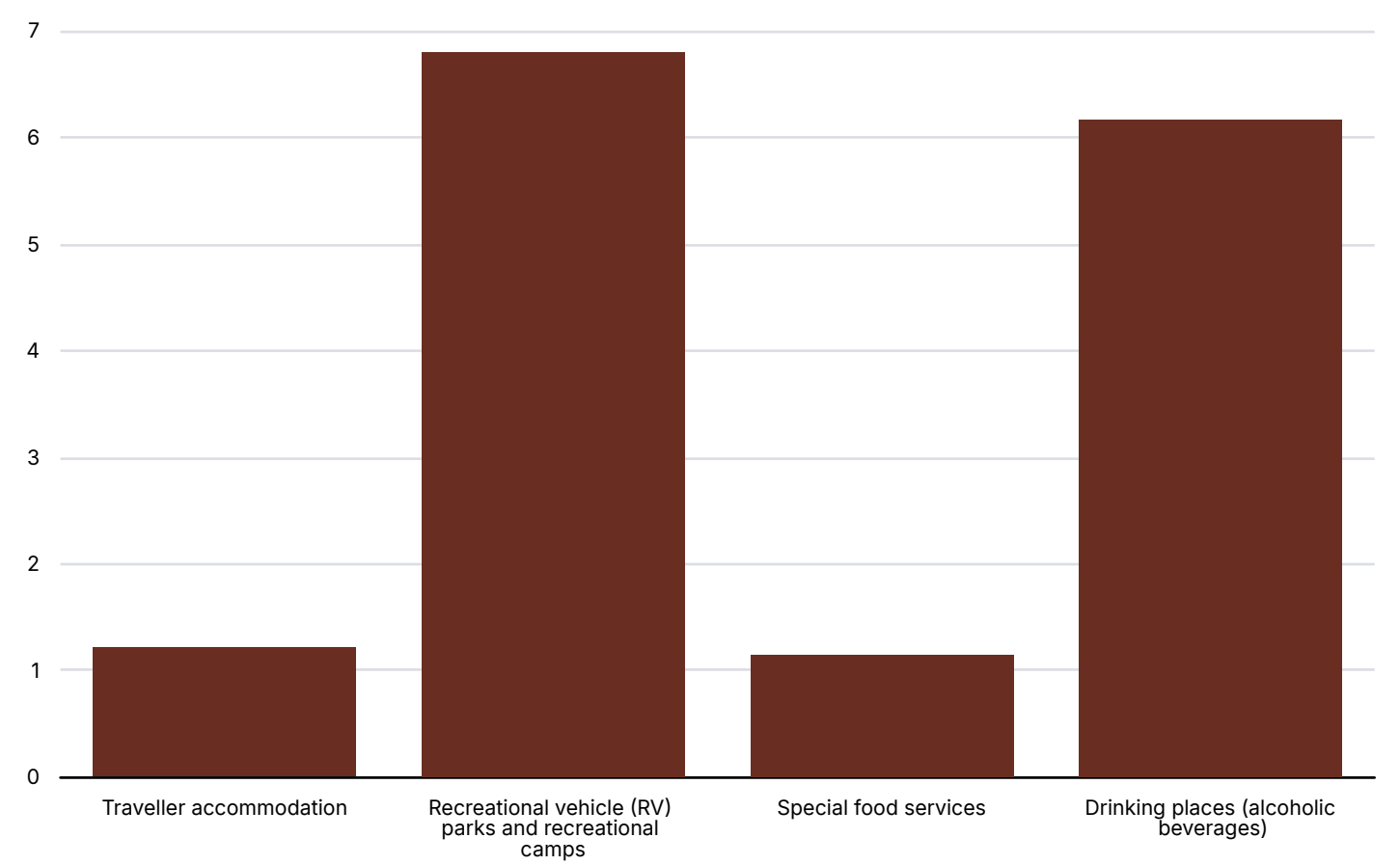


Figure 7.1: Shows industries within this sector where the local economy has strong specialization and increasing concentration or strong growth. Industries are categorized based on specialization (location quotient) and recent employment growth or change in concentration. (Crowsnest Pass, 2024)⁴

Anchor Industries in Sector

Recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps lead Crowsnest Pass’s anchor industries at 6.2, down 8.7% in the past year but up 443.8% over five years. Drinking places follow at 4.9, down 20.2% yearly.

In Crowsnest Pass, the accommodation and food services sector shows two niche industries with strong local specialization in 2025. Both recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps, and drinking places, stand out as mature anchor industries rather than fast-growing ones. Recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps posts a location quotient of 6.2, with employment concentration down 8.7% over the past year but up 443.8% over five years. Drinking places registers an LQ of 4.9, with a 20.2% decline over the past year and a 70.6% increase over five years. Taken together, the data suggest a sector shaped by concentrated but unevenly moving activities. The longer-term gains are still visible, especially in RV parks and camps, but the recent declines point to softer current momentum. For Crowsnest Pass, these are specialized parts of the local accommodation and food services mix, with concentration remaining high even as recent employment trends turn weaker.

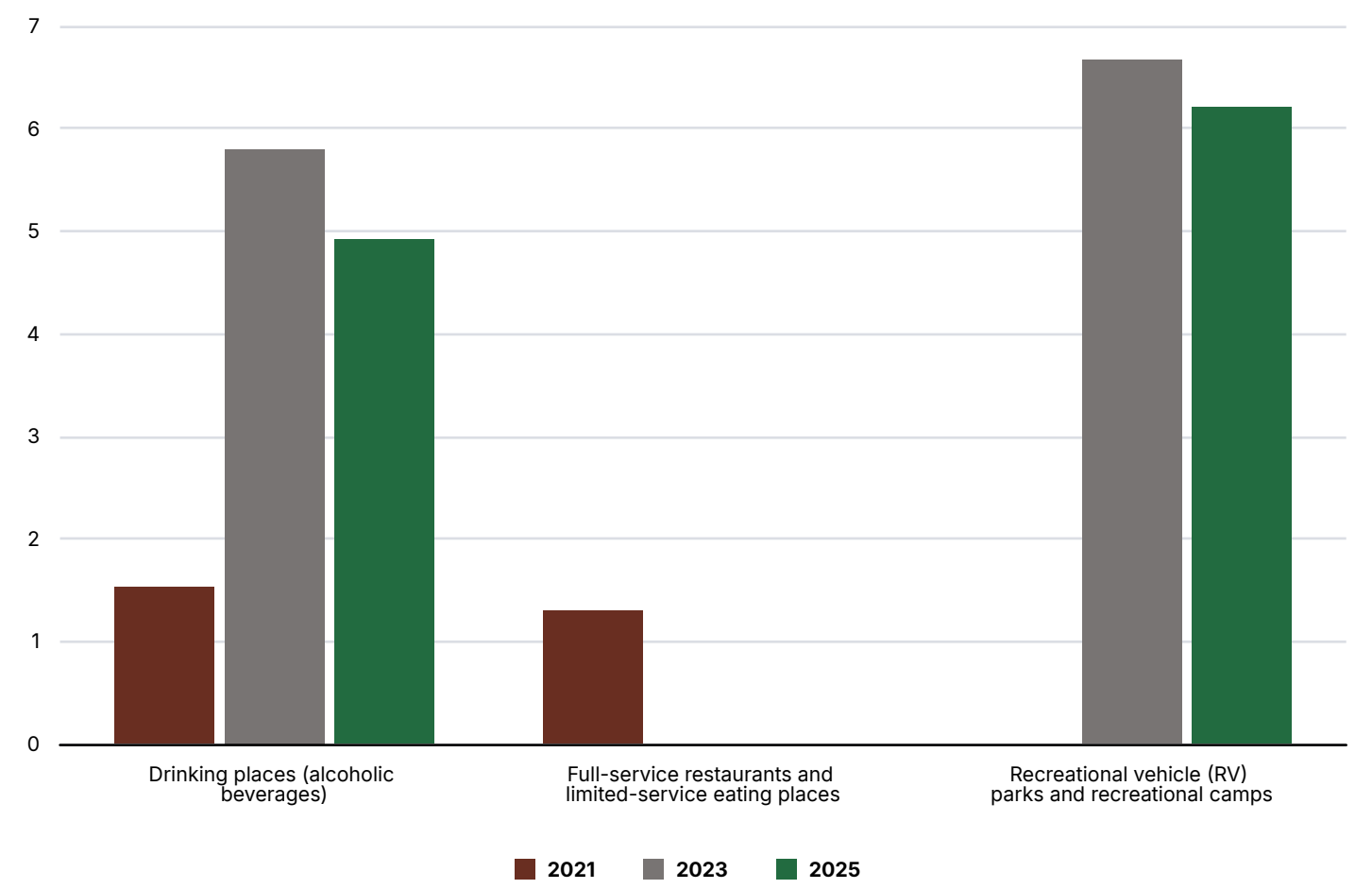


Figure 8.1: Shows industries within this sector where the local economy has strong specialization but relatively stable or declining concentration. Industries are categorized based on specialization (location quotient) and recent employment growth or change in concentration. (Crowsnest Pass, 2021-2025)⁴

Transitioning Industries in Sector

Traveller accommodation is the largest transitioning industry in Crowsnest Pass at 0.9158, down 24.35% in a year but up 33.36% over five years. Special food services fell to 0.4858, with declines of 57.46% and 37.72%.

In Crowsnest Pass, the accommodation and food services sector contains two transitioning industries in 2025, both with location quotients below 1.0, which points to relatively limited local specialization. Traveller accommodation has an LQ of 0.9, while special food services is lower at 0.5. The sector is measured for employees aged 15 years and over. The recent trend is mixed. Traveller accommodation fell 24.4% over one year, yet its five-year change is up 33.4%, suggesting weaker short-term concentration after a longer period of growth. Special food ser-

vices moved in the opposite direction, with a 57.5% decline over one year and a 37.7% decline over five years, showing both recent and longer-term erosion in concentration. Taken together, the data show a small set of lower-specialization industries with uneven momentum. Traveller accommodation remains closer to parity with the local economy than special food services, but both sit below a strong specialization threshold and do not show sustained recent strengthening.

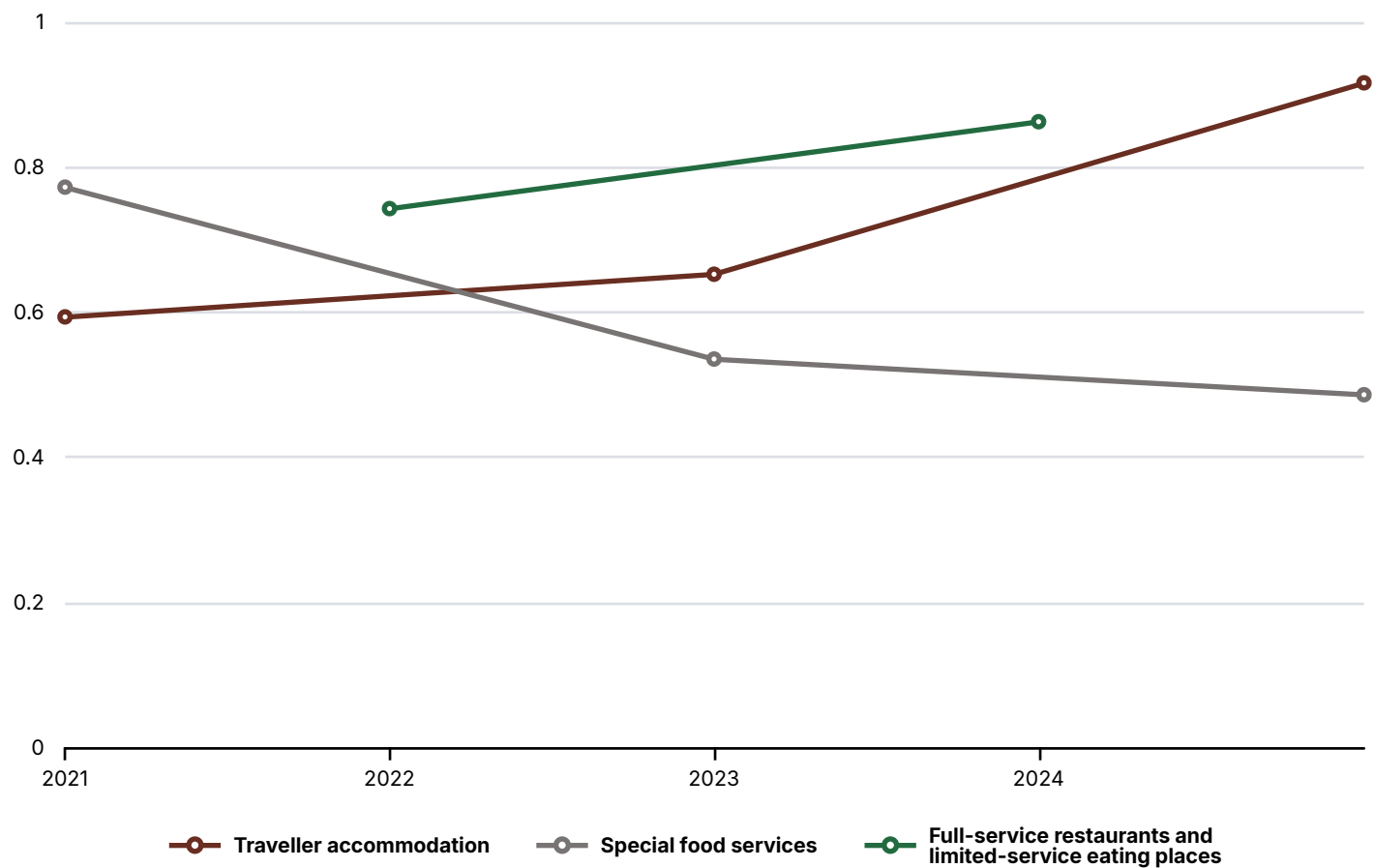


Figure 9.1: Shows industries within this sector that have relatively low specialization in the local economy and limited or declining concentration. Industries are categorized based on specialization (location quotient) and recent employment growth or change in concentration. (Crowsnest Pass, 2021-2025)⁴

Employment in Sector

Crowsnest Pass had 201 industry jobs in 2025, up 2.0% from 2024 and 24.8% above 2020. Employment fell from 224 in 2021 to 197 in 2024 before edging up.

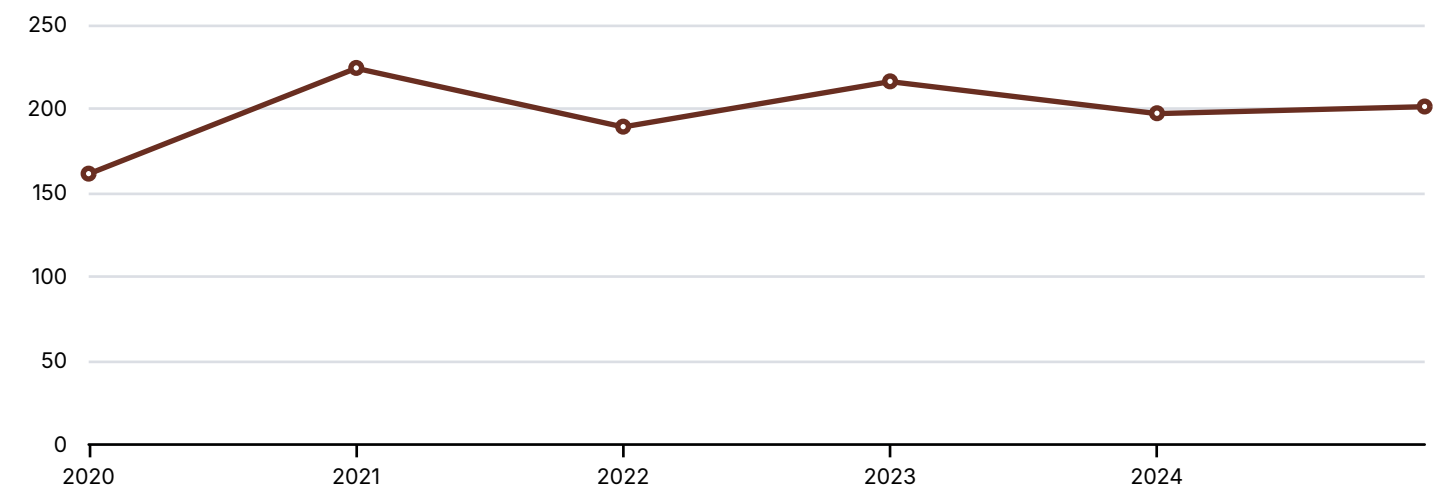
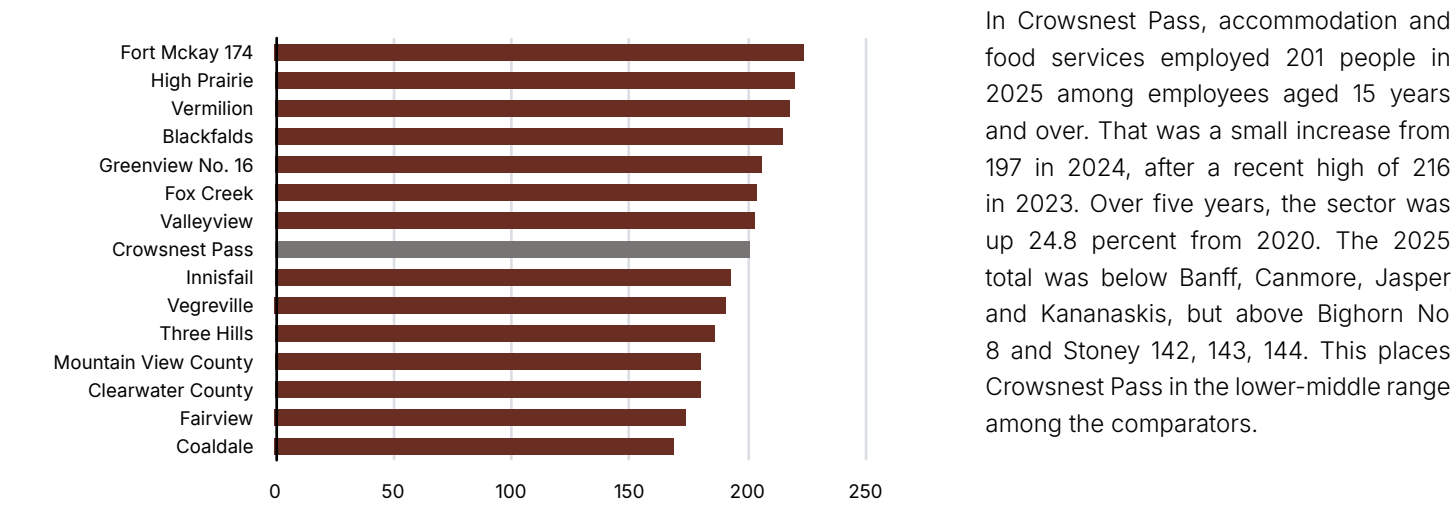


Figure 10.1: Shows the number of jobs in a specific industry sector. It helps indicate the scale of that sector within the local economy. (Crowsnest Pass, 2020-2025)²

Employment in accommodation and food services in Crowsnest Pass has moved around over the past six years, but it ended 2025 slightly above its 2020 level. The sector counted 201 workers in 2025, compared with 161 in 2020. The series rose sharply to 224 in 2021, fell to 189 in 2022, recovered to 216 in 2023, and then eased to 197 in 2024 before edging back up in 2025. That leaves a 24.8% increase over five years. Recent momentum is modest rather than strong: the 2025 total was up 2.0% from 2024, after an 8.8% decline the year before. The pattern suggests a small sector with noticeable year-to-year variation, but no sustained recent surge.



In Crowsnest Pass, accommodation and food services employed 201 people in 2025 among employees aged 15 years and over. That was a small increase from 197 in 2024, after a recent high of 216 in 2023. Over five years, the sector was up 24.8 percent from 2020. The 2025 total was below Banff, Canmore, Jasper, and Kananaskis, but above Bighorn No. 8 and Stoney 142, 143, 144. This places Crowsnest Pass in the lower-middle range among the comparators.

Figure 10.2: Comparison of Employment in Sector with other locations (Crowsnest Pass, 2025)²

Establishments in Sector by Number of Employees

Crowsnest Pass remained led by establishments without employees in 2025 at 12 businesses, followed by 5 to 9 employees at 10 and 1 to 4 employees at 7, with the latter up 133.3% from 2024.

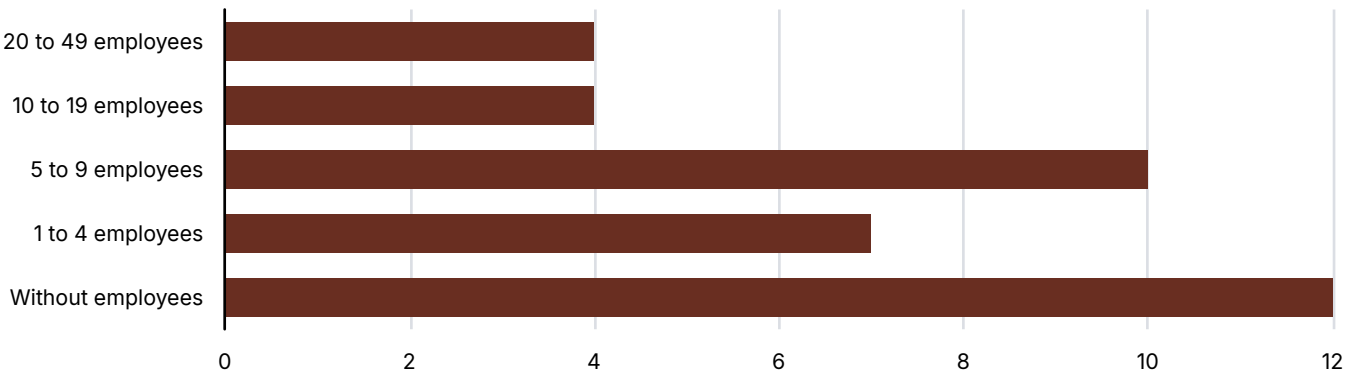


Figure 11.1: Shows the number of business establishments in a sector by employee size class. It helps indicate whether that sector is made up mostly of small or larger firms. (Crowsnest Pass, 2025)³

In 2025, accommodation and food services establishments in Crowsnest Pass were concentrated in very small businesses. The largest group had no employees, with 12 establishments, followed by 10 with 5 to 9 employees and 7 with 1 to 4 employees. The smaller end of the size range also showed mixed movement over time. Establishments without employees were up 20% from a year earlier but still down 25% over five years. Firms with 1 to 4 employees rose 133.3% in the past year and 40% over five years.

In Crowsnest Pass, accommodation and food services is dominated by very small establishments in 2025. There are 12 businesses without employees and 7 with 1 to 4 employees, compared with 10 in the 5 to 9 employee class. Larger firms are fewer: 4 establishments have 10 to 19 employees, and 4 have 20 to 49. The pattern suggests a sector built mainly around microbusinesses, with only limited presence of mid-sized operations.

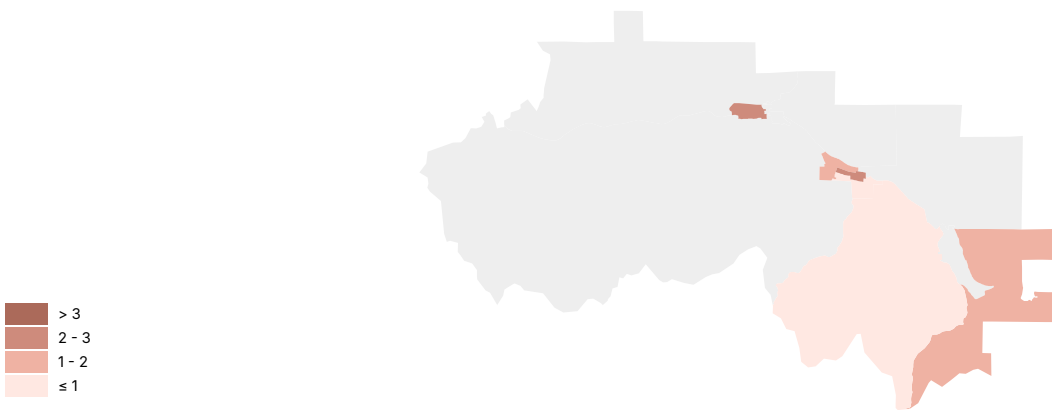


Figure 11.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Business Establishment Size - Without employees (Crowsnest Pass)³

Sector Labour Market Gap

In Crowsnest Pass, accommodation and food services had a labour market gap ratio of 1.4 in 2021, meaning jobs exceeded resident workers. The metric is reported for the labour force aged 15 years and over.

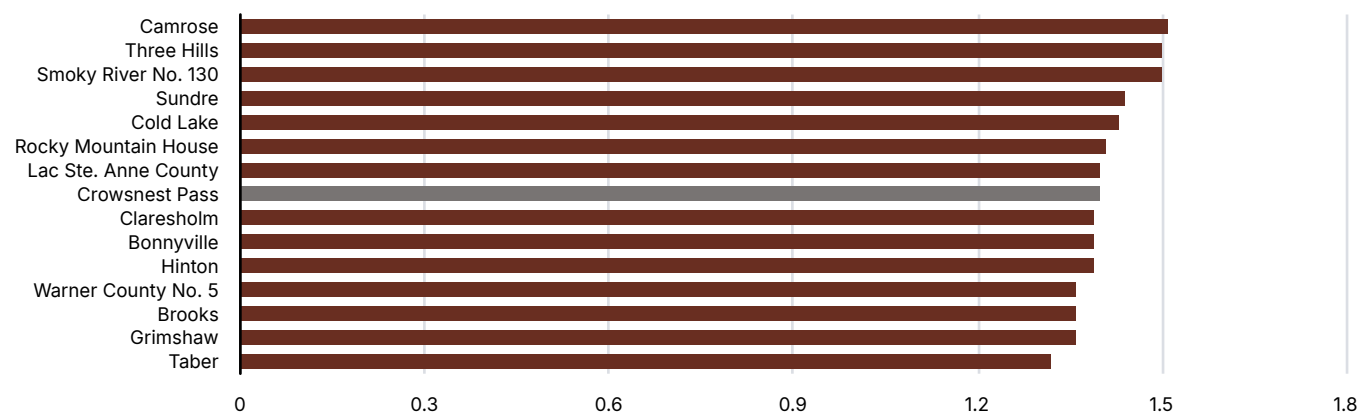


Figure 12.1: Comparison of Sector Labour Market Gap with other locations (Crowsnest Pass, 2021)⁵

In 2021, Crowsnest Pass had a labour market gap ratio of 1.4 in accommodation and food services, suggesting a small mismatch between local jobs and resident workers in that sector. That level was far below Kananaskis at 44.5, Improvement District No. 9 Banff at 30.2, and Jasper at 3.5, and it was close to Canmore at 1.1 and Banff town at 2.5. The pattern places Crowsnest Pass near the low end of the regional comparison, with a much narrower gap than the tourism-focused comparators.

In 2021, Crowsnest Pass showed a modest labour market gap in accommodation and food services, with a ratio of 1.4 for the labour force aged 15 and over. That suggests jobs in this sector slightly exceeded resident workers available locally. One descendant dissemination area stood out much more strongly at 22.4, indicating a far larger gap within part of the area. The contrast points to uneven local dependence on in-commuting or local worker outflow across the subdivision.

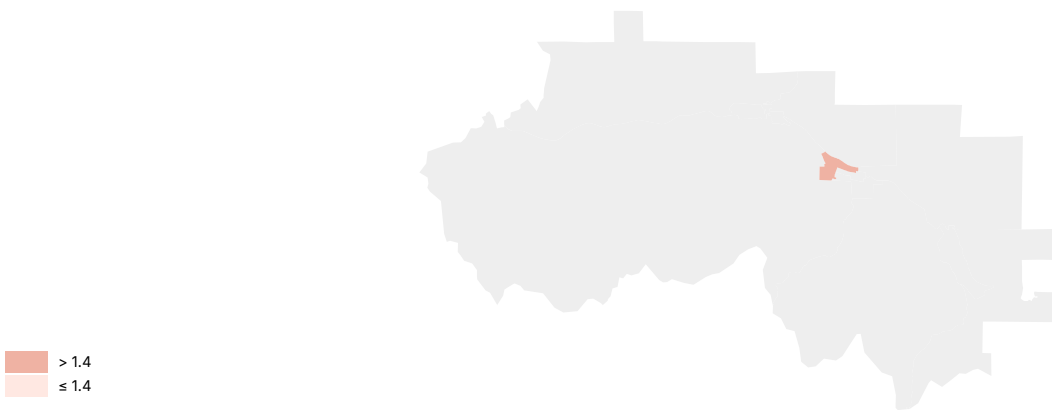


Figure 12.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Industry Sector - Accommodation and food services (Crowsnest Pass)⁵

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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