



November 2011



BC Stats has released updated projections of employment by industry and occupation for all of British Columbia's College Regions and Development Regions.¹ The revised regional data includes estimates for 2010 and projections for the period up to 2015.

The New Caledonia College Region, in which Prince George is the largest community (making up more than half of the population), is expected to see employment growth in line with that of the province over the projection period. Northern BC as a whole² is expected to exceed provincial employment growth over the projection period, averaging 2.5% per year compared to 1.8% across the province.



New Caledonia College Region

The industries that are anticipated to have above average employment growth in the region include *Health Care & Social Assistance, Mining and Oil & Gas*, and

¹ <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/repn.asp>

² New Caledonia, Northern Lights and Northwest College regions, combined.

Information, Culture & Recreation (31.3%, 18.9% and 18.4% of total estimated employment growth, respectively). *Construction* employment is also expected to make up a significant proportion of the increase in employment, accounting for 9.9% of the growth in demand.

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BC Stats has also projected the demand for occupations within each industry, providing insight into the types of skills and education that will be required to facilitate a match between individuals in the labour force and upcoming employment opportunities.

Nursing, assisting and technical occupations will make up 85.5% of the total increase in demand for health occupations, while professional occupations including physicians and dentists will make up only 14.5%. Nursing, assisting and technical occupations will make up 11.9% of growth in employment demand throughout the region over the projection period.

Mining and Oil & Gas and *Construction* industry employment demand will be largely driven by demand for trades, transportation occupations and equipment operators. This occupation group is anticipated to make up 18.4% of growth in employment demand

throughout the region and 33.8% of the total growth in Northern BC as a whole.

Employment opportunities in occupations related to art, culture, recreation and sport will also require a certain level of technical skill or specific expertise. Technical occupations³ are anticipated to account for 57.1% of the employment demand in this occupational group, while professional occupations such as performing artists and writers will account for the remainder.

While there will be considerable demand for occupations that require some level of post-secondary education or specific skills training, sales and service occupations are also expected to be in increased demand throughout the projection period. These occupations are expected to make up 20.6% of new employment demand in the New Caledonia region.

The wide array of occupations and industries for which there is anticipated growth in demand throughout the region reflects the continued diversification within the region and throughout Northern BC. Prince George, as the service and supply hub for activities throughout the north, will be a major source of labour to fill new and emerging employment opportunities, which has positive implications for future population growth and continued diversification within the city's economy.

³ Technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport include, but are not limited to: archive technicians, photographers, creative designers and coaches.



Economic Statistics

Employment

There were 50,200 persons employed in Prince George in October, down 100 persons (0.2%) from the previous month. Employment remained near the highest level on current record while the number of persons engaged in the labour force declined slightly (0.6%; 300 persons) after five consecutive months of growth. The decline in the labour force alongside relatively stable employment led the number of unemployed persons to decrease slightly (4.9%; 200 persons); as a result, the unemployment rate decreased 0.3% to 7.2%. In BC, the number of persons employed and in the labour force decreased by 0.5% and 0.6%, respectively; as a result of the greater decline in the labour force relative to employment, the number of unemployed persons decreased by 2.9%. Across Canada, persons employed and in the labour force decreased by 0.3% and 0.1%, respectively, leading unemployment to rise 3.0%. As a result, the unemployment rate decreased by 0.1% (to 6.6%) in BC and increased by 0.2% (to 7.3%) in Canada. Prince George's working age population was stable last month and the employment rate decreased 0.1% to 70.5%; employment rates declined 0.3% and 0.2% (to 60.4% and 61.8%) in BC and Canada.

(Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey)

Real Estate

There were 74 single family homes sold in Prince George last month, 25 more than in October 2010, with an average price of \$249,657 (8.5% higher than in the same month last year). Year-to-date, the average price of a single family home was up 1.7% compared to the first ten months of 2010; unit sales were up 5.4%. Comparatively, average prices were up 12.9% and 7.8% in BC and Canada, respectively, year-to-date; unit sales were up 3.5% in BC and 1.8% across Canada, as of the end of October.

(Source: BC Northern Real Estate Board; Canadian Real Estate Association)

Housing Construction

There were 16 housing starts in Prince George in October (all single family dwelling units), compared to 26 starts (18 single family and 8 multiple dwelling units) in the same month last year. Year-to-date starts at the end of October were down 24.2%, relative to the first ten months of 2010.



Comparatively, housing starts were up 4.1% and 3.7%, respectively, in BC and across Canada for the same period. There were 19 residential units completed in the city in October (15 single family and 4 multiple dwelling units), 4 more than in the same month in 2010, and there were 176 housing units under construction (137 single family and 39 multiple dwelling units); 27.0% fewer than in October 2010.

(Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation)

Building Permits

The City of Prince George issued 72 building permits valued at \$10.2M in September,⁴ down 1.9% compared to the same month last year. Residential building permits accounted for 46.0% of the total value of permits issued in the city, with 14 new single family dwellings making up most of this category. The Commercial category accounted for 36.8% of the value of permits issued in September, with the District Energy Plant on George Street and the

⁴ October 2011 building permit statistics were not available at the time of publication.

rebuild of Boston Pizza on Central Street making up almost the entire value of this category. Industrial building permits accounted for 13.3% of the permits issued, with PG Pulp Mill and Petro Canada projects making up the entirety of the category. At the end of September, the year-to-date value of permits issued in the city was down 47.2%. Comparatively, year-to-date permits were down 6.2% provincially and 1.3% nationally at the end of September.

(Source: City of Prince George; Statistics Canada)

Business Licenses

The City of Prince George issued 62 business licenses in October (30 new licenses⁵ and 32 renewals). 5 of the new licenses issued were a result of existing businesses changing location.

(Source: City of Prince George)



Airport Passenger Volumes

36,732 passengers passed through the Prince George airport in October, 11.1% more than in October 2010. Year-to-date, passenger traffic through the airport was up 1.7% compared to the first ten months of last year. Comparatively, traffic through the Vancouver airport was up 1.2%, year-to-date, for the same period.

(Source: Prince George Airport Authority; Vancouver Airport Authority)

⁵ New business licenses are issued when a new business is established, when a business is re-established after not operating for a period of time and when a business changes ownership or relocates.