2026 STATE OF THE ECONOMY REPORT

CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 Economic Snapshot

- Nanaimo's economy **stabilized in 2025**, transitioning from post-pandemic volatility toward more moderate, sustainable growth.
- **Population growth and in-migration** remained the primary drivers of economic activity, while affordability constraints increasingly shaped housing, labour, and business outcomes.
- **Public-sector capital investment** played a decisive role in development activity, offsetting softness in private residential and commercial construction.
- Looking ahead to **2026, incremental recovery** is expected, with sales activity improving faster than prices and continued pressure on rental supply and workforce availability.

Housing & Development

- **Housing market conditions in Nanaimo moved toward balance** in 2025. Single-family and townhouse prices held steady on a 12-month basis, while detached home sales increased by 9.4% (1,070 vs. 978). Condominiums showed the most consistent price strength, driven by sustained entry-level and downsizer demand. Active listings increased, improving buyer choice and contributing to softer price pressures. Sale-to-list ratios in the mid-40% to mid-50% range (balanced conditions) and modest increases in days-to-sell reflect a market normalizing rather than declining.
- **Rental market conditions remained tight**. Private rental stock expanded by 5.4%, yet vacancy rates fell from 2.9% to 2.2%, indicating that new supply was absorbed quickly. Average rents increased by approximately 8%, reinforcing the continued need for purpose-built rental housing—particularly family-sized and seniors-oriented units.
- **Development activity in 2025 was dominated by major public-sector projects**, including significant investments in healthcare, post-secondary education, and K–12 facilities. These projects drove total building permit values to $386.8 million, masking ongoing **softness in private residential and commercial construction**. As a result, 2025 reflects a major-project year rather than a broad-based market recovery.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Population & Demographics

- **Nanaimo's population continued to grow in 2025**, supported by ongoing in-migration and relative affordability compared to major B.C. urban centres. The city remains a key destination for interprovincial movers, with more than 30,000 residents (in 2025) originating from other provinces—an important pillar of long-term population growth.
- **Demographic dynamics** increasingly reflect a **dual-demand (barbell) pattern**. An aging population is driving demand for healthcare, seniors' housing, and support services, while continued in-migration of younger households sustains demand for family-oriented housing, childcare, education, and recreation. Planning and service delivery will need to account for this widening range of needs.
- **Household composition is expected to grow modestly over the next decade**. Nanaimo's average household size is projected to increase from 2.3 to 2.4 persons by 2030, while the Regional District of Nanaimo remains at 2.3 and British Columbia is projected to rise to 2.6, reflecting slightly larger household sizes province-wide.

Labour Market

- **Labour-force growth** in Nanaimo remains overwhelmingly **population-driven**. Since 2021, approximately 86% of labour-force growth has come from an increase in residents aged 15+, with only a modest contribution from higher participation rates. This contrasts with stronger participation-driven growth in the broader Vancouver Island Coast region and declining participation at the provincial level.
- **Labour market conditions softened in the latter half of 2025**. Nanaimo's unemployment rate rose to 7.3%, while job postings declined in the fourth quarter, reflecting broader economic cooling. Despite this softening, Nanaimo outperformed provincial trends during several periods of the year, and core strengths remain concentrated in healthcare, trades, sales, and service occupations.
- Structural gaps persist in professional, STEM, and management occupations, limiting wage depth and long-term economic resilience. Addressing these gaps will require coordinated efforts in workforce development, housing availability, and business expansion support.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Business Activity

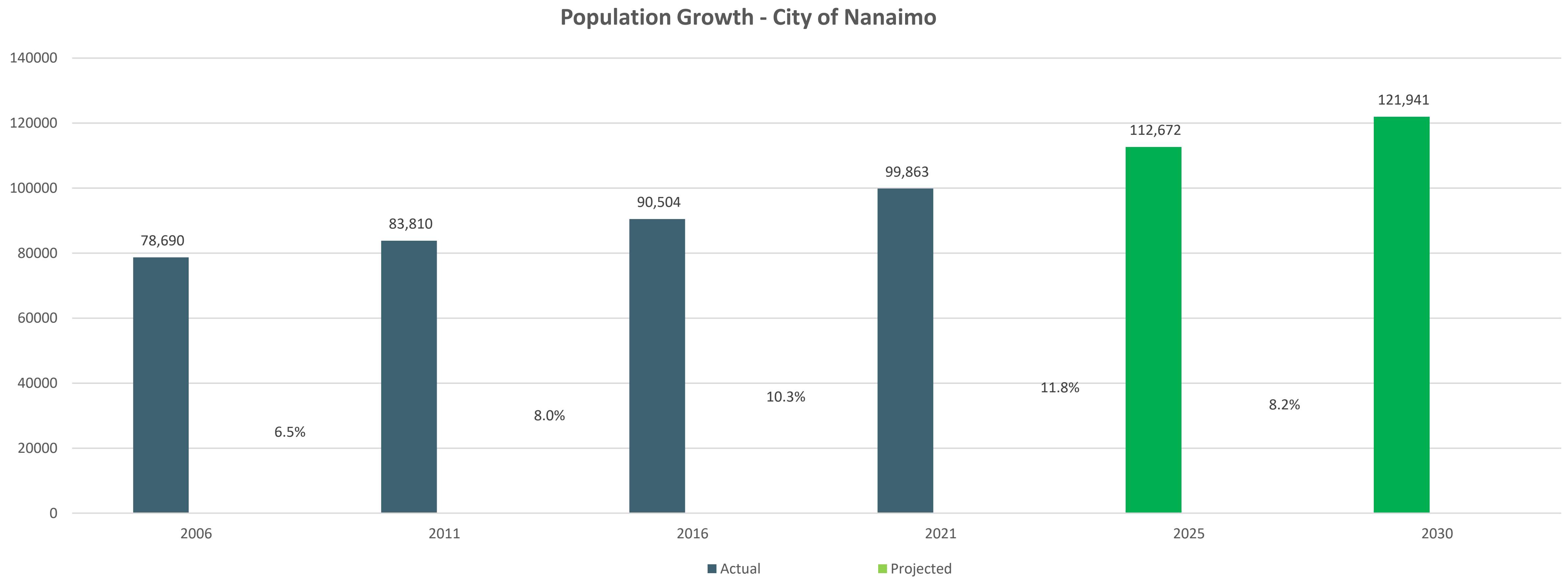
- Business activity in Nanaimo remained resilient in 2025. The city recorded more than 7,300 licensed businesses, representing growth of 4.8% year-over-year. Part of this increase reflects new regulatory requirements for short-term rental licensing, though **underlying strength was also evident in accommodation and food services, healthcare, and construction.**
- Nanaimo continues to function as a central-Island service hub, characterized by strong local ownership and a high share of small and home-based enterprises. While this structure supports local resilience and entrepreneurship, it also underscores challenges related to business scaling, commercial space affordability, and attraction of mid-to-large employers.

Economic Outlook to 2026

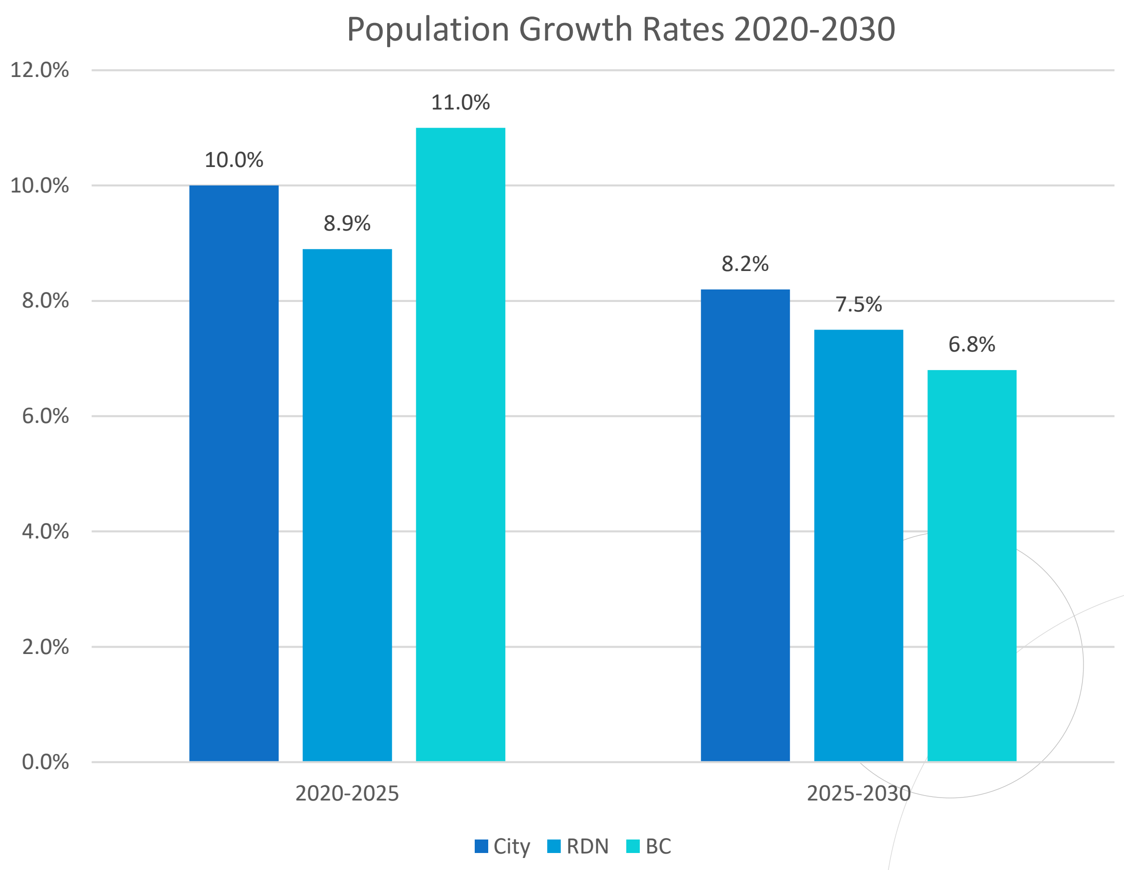
- Looking ahead, Nanaimo is positioned for **measured, incremental recovery** rather than rapid expansion. Sales activity is expected to improve faster than prices as interest rates stabilize and pent-up demand gradually re-enters the market. Continued lift from major public and institutional projects will support economic activity, though private investment is likely to remain cautious.
- External risks persist. Trade tensions and U.S. tariff policies continue to weigh on British Columbia's resource sectors, creating spillover risks for mid-Island contractors, logistics firms, and suppliers. At the same time, slower population growth driven by federal immigration policy changes may ease some labour-market pressure while limiting consumer spending growth.
- Nanaimo's competitive advantage remains its relative affordability, diversified service economy, and role as a regional hub. Key priorities into 2026 should include expanding rental supply, supporting scalable private investment, and strengthening workforce development as demographic and affordability pressures continue to evolve.

POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION- CITY OF NANAIMO



POPULATION GROWTH RATE CITY, RDN, BC



Population Growth Rate Slowing Down

- Nanaimo experienced a notable population growth rate of 10.3% during the last Census, exceeding the growth rates of British Columbia (7.6%) and Canada (5.2%). Population projections indicate growth will continue in the region albeit at a slower pace.

- For **2025**, the City of Nanaimo's population is estimated at **112,672**. Over the next five years, the population is expected to grow by 9,269 to 121,941, reflecting an average annual growth rate of 1.6%. **Over the next five years the City of Nanaimo will grow by 8.2%, compared to 10.0% in the previous five years.**

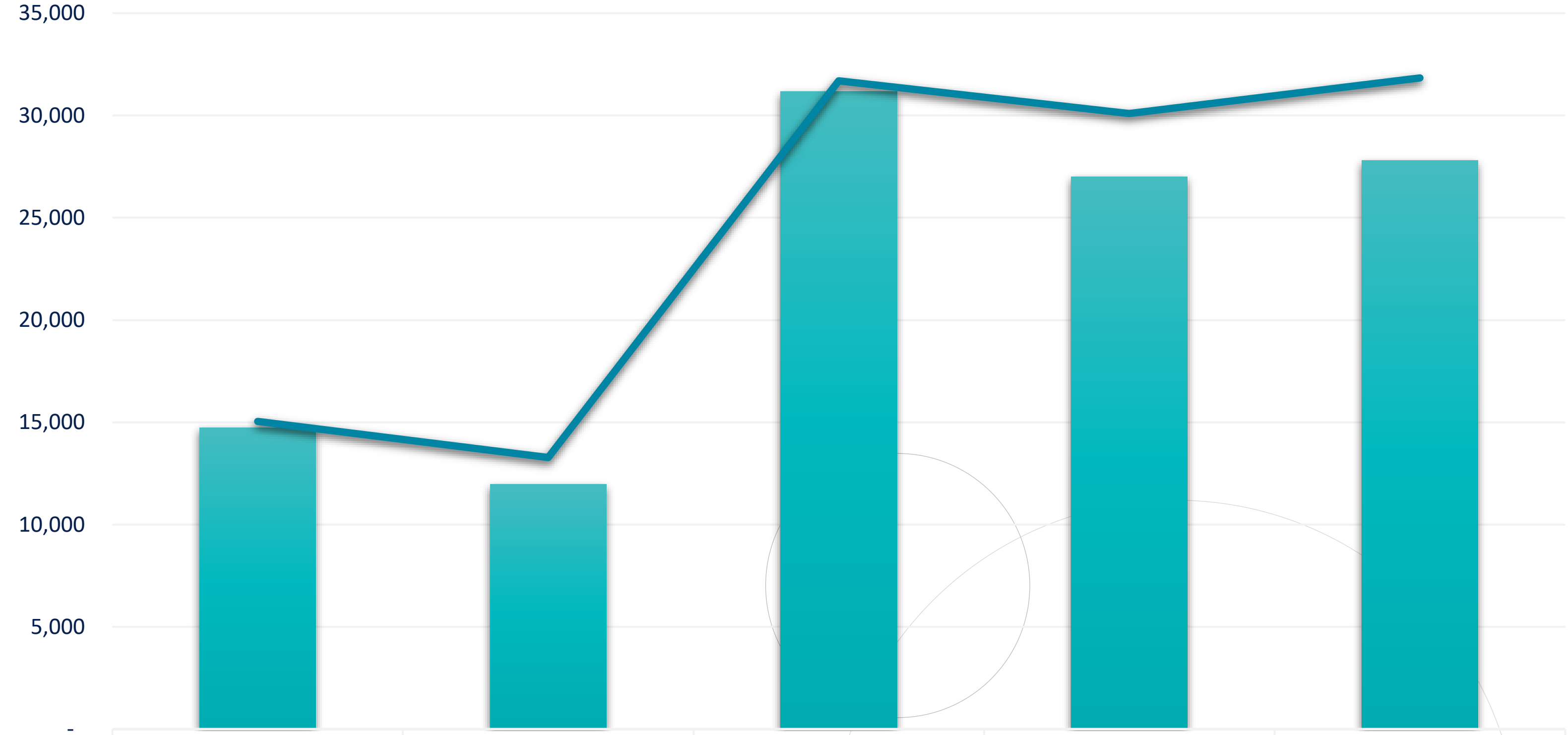
- The **Regional District of Nanaimo** (RDN) is forecasted to have a population of **189,308 in 2025**. By 2030, this is expected to rise by 14,245 to 203,553 representing an average annual growth rate of 1.5%. The Vancouver Island region is projected to grow at an annual rate of 1.6%, while British Columbia is expected to see slightly slower growth of 1.4% per annum.

Younger & higher concentration of Indigenous people

- The 2021 Census revealed Nanaimo was home to 7,910 Indigenous people, accounting for 8.2% of the city's total population. This proportion was higher than the provincial average of 5.9% and the national average of 5.0%. The average age of the Indigenous population in Nanaimo was 32.8 years, significantly younger than the non-Indigenous population's average age of 45 years.

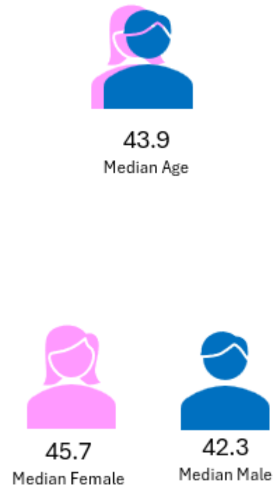
AGE DISTRIBUTION 2025-2030 TRENDS

Population by Age Breakdown
City of Nanaimo



	0-14 (Children)	15-24 (young adults)	25-44 (Early working years)	45-64 (later working Years)	65+ Retirement
2025	14,743	11,959	31,165	27,003	27,802
2030	15,045	13,280	31,692	30,090	31,834

2025 2030



AGE DISTRIBUTION 2025-2030 TRENDS & IMPLICATIONS

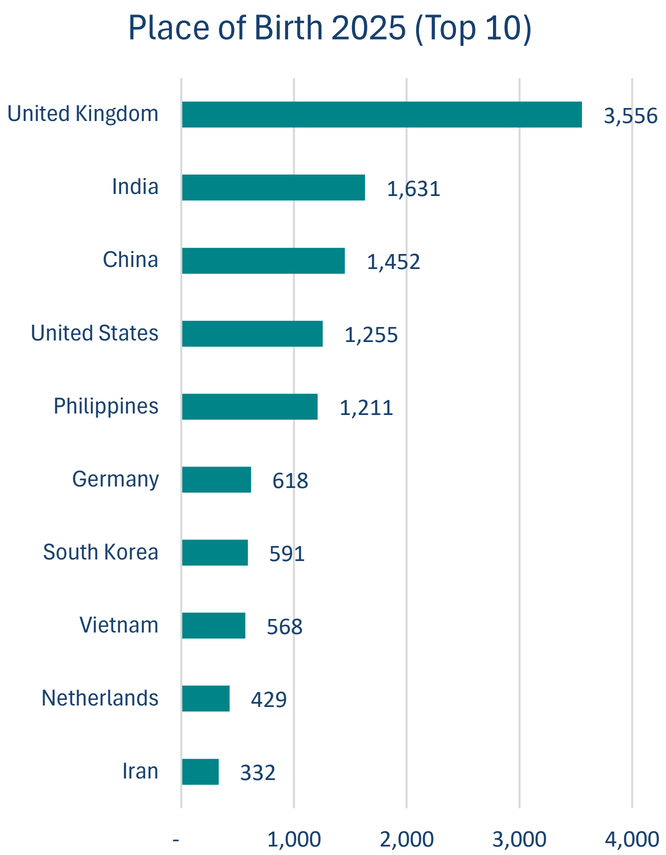
Aging trend with modest workforce growth

- Nanaimo's **median age** edges down to **43.9** in 2025, then up to **45.6** by 2030—signaling the recent infusion of younger residents is **not** enough to offset cohort aging longer-term. Females remain notably older than males (47.1 vs. 44.00) by 2030.
- **Largest absolute growth** over the next five years**: 65+** (+4,032;14.5%) followed by **45–64** (+3,087;11.4%). 65+ becomes the largest single age group by 2030 (26.11% of total population)
- **Working-age (15–64) population** grows from 70,127 to 75,062 **(+4,935; +7.0%).**
- **Smallest growth:** 0–14 (+302; 2%) and 25–44 (+527; 1.7%).
- **Dependents** (0–14 & 65+) will **grow faster, than workers** lifting the **overall dependency ratio** from **60.7 to 62.5**, roughly 63 dependents per 100 workers by 2030.

Implications

Aging tilt with moderate workforce growth	•Working-age population increases, but old-age dependency rises faster. Plan for service mix shifts (health/social care) and productivity enhancements in the economy.
Talent pipeline hinges on 15–24 and in-migration	•The growing 15–24 band is the **near-term replacement pool**. Pair this with **targeted attraction** of 25–44s to rebalance the age structure.
Housing strategy must prioritize accessibility and attainability	•Expand **attainable rentals** for young adults and **age-friendly, adaptable homes** for seniors. Keep a measured pipeline of **family-sized units**.
Transport & public realm need to be age-friendly	•Invest in complete, walkable neighborhoods, frequent transit, and paratransit capacity; retrofit public spaces to support mobility and social connection.
Fiscal planning shifts	•More seniors can stabilize the **property tax base**, but **operating costs** for health, and social supports will grow. Emphasize **preventive, community-based programs** to manage costs.

ETHNIC DIVERSITY



Visible Minorities- City of Nanaimo			
	2020	**2025**	**5 yr % chng**
Chinese	2,800	3,379	21%
South Asian	2,916	3,900	34%
Black	1,105	1,380	25%
Filipino	1,458	1,893	30%
Latin American	682	892	31%
Southeast Asian	1,095	1,355	24%
Arab	405	484	20%
West Asian	302	385	27%
Korean	659	919	39%
Japanese	644	770	20%
Visible Minority (not inc elsewhere)	196	235	20%
Multiple Visible Minorities	450	529	18%
Total	**12,712**	**16,121**	**27%**

ETHNIC DIVERSITY- TRENDS & PROJECTIONS

Ethnic Diversity in Nanaimo: Trends and Projections

- **Growing Diversity:** Nanaimo's visible minority population has increased from 12,712 in 2020 (12.4% of the total population) to 16,121 in 2025 (14.3%). By 2030, this figure is projected to reach 18,636 (16.0%).

- **2025 Composition:** The **five largest** visible minority communities in Nanaimo are **South Asian, Chinese, Filipino, Black,** and **Southeast Asian** in that order. South Asian (24%) and Chinese (21%) communities make up nearly half of Nanaimo's visible minority population.

- **Top 5 groups by absolute increase 2020-2025:** South Asian +984 (+33.7%), Chinese +579 (+20.7%), Filipino +435 (+29.8%), Black +275 (+24.9%), Southeast Asian +260 (+23.7%).

- Other rapidly growing segments include Latin American (+31%), and Korean (+39%).

- **Religious Affiliation:** In Nanaimo, 62% of residents report having no religious affiliation, compared to 52% in British Columbia and 35% across Canada. The three most common religions in the area are Christian, Other Christian, and Catholic.

- **Indigenous Population:** In 2025, 9,351 residents of Nanaimo identified as Indigenous.

- **Place of Birth:** The largest share of Nanaimo's population by place of birth originates from the United Kingdom, followed by India and China.

- **Increasing Immigration:** The proportion of immigrants in Nanaimo's population has grown from 16% in 2020 to 16.3% in 2025. By 2030, it is expected to reach 17.4%.

- **Non-Permanent Residents:** The number of non-permanent residents in Nanaimo increased from 3,027 in 2020 to **5,087 in 2025**. This figure is **projected to reduce, reaching 4,341 by 2030.**

Opportunities:

- **Position Nanaimo as a Welcoming City:** Enhance newcomer support programs and promote inclusivity to attract skilled immigrants.

- **Engage Diverse Communities in Planning:** Strong opportunity to engage South Asian & Chinese business networks, plus targeted support for Filipino & Korean entrepreneurs in food, retail, and services—these communities are expanding and often highly entrepreneurial.

- **Leverage Cultural Diversity for Tourism & Events:** Support festivals, markets, and cultural programming to boost local economy and community cohesion.

IMMIGRATION & LANGUAGE DYNAMICS

Immigrant share of population inches up: 2020: 16,029 (16.1%)→ 2025: 17,880 (16.33%)→ 2030: 20,613 (17.41%).

Non-permanent residents (NPRs): 3,027 (2020) → 5,087 (2025)→ 4,341 (2030) **share jumps from 3.04% → 4.65%, then moderates to 3.67% by 2030**. The 2030 projected decline reflects recent policy changes around temporary workers and international students.

Mobility within Canada remains important: Arrivals from outside the province at 30,094 in 2025 suggest Nanaimo is **competitive nationally** for interprovincial movers, not just international newcomers.

Mother tongue: multilingual demand is rising

- **English as mother tongue**: **85.49% (2025)**, trending down to **~84.27% (2030)**. **Non-official languages** represent **12.85% (2025)**, rising toward **~14.23% (2030)**. Multiple mother tongues are ~1.99% (2025).
- **Largest growth (2020→2025)** among select languages: **Hindi +45.9%**, **Punjabi +45.7%**, **Tagalog +42.6%**, **Mandarin +37.2%**, **Persian +34.7%**, **Spanish +32.4%**. (Korean, Vietnamese, Arabic also up ~19–29%.)
- **Continued momentum (2025→2030)**: **Tagalog +29.8%**, **Mandarin +23.9%**, **Cantonese +20.7%**, **Spanish +20.2%** lead the pack, indicating **sustained growth** in East Asian and Latin linguistic communities.
- **Implications:** City touchpoints (permits, licensing, recreation, transit, health) should consider **multilingual outreach**—especially **Punjabi, Tagalog, Mandarin, Spanish, Korean**—to improve service uptake and compliance. This also signals **consumer market growth** for ethnic grocers, restaurants, and cultural events

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS

46,620
Total Households

2.3
Household size

112,672
Total Population

43.9
Median Age

More homes, more residents per household

- The City of Nanaimo had 46, 620 households in 2025. The number of households in Nanaimo are projected to grow by 8% (an additional 3,749 households) over the next five years, reaching 50,369 by 2030. This **growth rate of 8% for the next five years is slightly higher than the 6% growth observed in the previous five years.**
- Nanaimo's annual household growth rate from 2025 to 2030 is estimated at 1.56%, higher than British Columbia's rate of 1.2% and the Regional District of Nanaimo's (RDN) rate of 1.3%.
- Additionally, **the average household size** is **expected to increase** from 2.3 persons in 2025 **to 2.4 persons by 2030,** reflecting a slightly larger household composition. The **RDN** retains the **2.3 household size**, while **BC's** average household size is projected to increase to **2.6 by 2030**.

Aging Population

- City of Nanaimo's median age decreased from 44.0 in 2020 to 43.9 in 2025, suggesting an influx of younger residents. However, this trend is expected to reverse, with the median age rising to 45.6 by 2030, indicating **a gradual aging of the population after 2025.**
- The median age in the Regional District of Nanaimo is projected to be 50.1 in 2025, compared to 41.1 across British Columbia. Consistent with historical trends, the **City of Nanaimo has a younger population** than both the **Regional District of Nanaimo** and the **Vancouver Island Coast** region, but remains older than the provincial average.

HOUSING STOCK 2025

Houses

60% (27,854)

Single-Detached House

50.3%

Semi-Detached House

5.%

Row House

4.5%

Apt, Building Low/High Rise **37%** (17,410**)**

Apt. Building, 5+ Stories

3.3%

Apt. Bldg, < 5 Stories

19.3%

Detached Duplex

14.8%

Other Dwelling Types

3**%** (1,356)

Other Single-Att, House

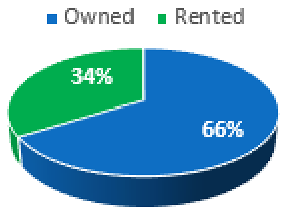
0.2%

Movable Dwelling

2.7%

46,620

Total Households



16%

Living in Condo

KEY HOUSING TRENDS 2020-2030

1. Tenure is steadily shifting toward rental

- Nanaimo's housing tenure is slowly shifting toward rental. The ownership share declines from 66.85% (2020) to 65.84% (2025) and 64.90% (2030), while the rental share rises from 33.15% → 34.16% → 35.10%.
- In absolute terms, **renter households** grow by **+1,342 (2020–2025)** and **+1,754 (2025–2030)**. **Owner households** also increase (**+1,280** and **+1,995**), but at a slower pace, resulting in a **declining ownership share**.
- **Implication:** Rental demand will continue to grow. Planning should prioritize **purpose-built rental**, strengthen **tenant stability tools**, and support **mixed-tenure projects**.

2. Product mix is tilting to multi-unit forms

- Housing growth is increasingly concentrated in multi-unit forms. Apartments add **+1,657 units (2020–2025)** and **+1,782 (2025–2030)**, outpacing single-detached growth (**+577** and **+1,445**). Detached duplexes also show steady gains (**+870**, then **+844**).
- As a result, the share of houses declines from **61.56% (2020)** to **59.75% (2025)** and **58.83% (2030)**, while apartments increase from **35.80% → 37.34% → 38.10%**. Most apartment growth occurs in **low-rise buildings (<5 storeys)**, indicating that densification is primarily mid- and low-rise rather than high-rise.
- **Implication:** Emphasize **mid-rise infill**, **gentle density**, and **missing-middle housing** (duplexes, multiplexes, row housing) to scale attainable units while aligning with Nanaimo's built form.

KEY HOUSING TRENDS 2020-2030

3. Housing Stock Is Older, with Limited Recent Supply

- In **2025**, about **37.55%** of **occupied dwellings** were built **before 1980**, including **12.16% pre-1961** and **25.39% from 1961–1980**. By comparison, only **12.39%** were built between **2016–2021**, and **3.78%** after 2021.

- **Implication:** The older stock creates a significant **renovation and retrofit burden**, while recent construction lags population growth. Support for **rehabilitation, energy retrofits**, and a stronger **new-build pipeline** should be encouraged.

4. One-Person Households:

Especially Seniors—Continue to Rise

- **One-person households increase** by +798 (2020–2025) and +1,122 (2025–2030), holding a stable share of roughly 31%. Growth is driven largely by seniors, with people aged **65+ living alone increasing** by +789 (2020–2025) and +807, reaching 7,368 by 2030.

- Implication : Expand age-friendly housing, in-home supports, and housing near services, transit, and health care to support aging in place and reduce isolation.

KEY HOUSING TRENDS 2020-2030

5. Household Size Edges Up Slightly

- Average household size remains at **2.3** in 2020 and 2025, increasing to **2.4 by 2030**. The share of **four- and five-person households** rises modestly, suggesting more shared or family living arrangements.
- **Implication: Encourage 2–3 bedroom units and flexible layouts that support families, multigenerational households, and roommates under affordability pressures.**

6. Condos are an Important Part of the Rental Market

- In **2025**, condos account for **~16.03% of households**. Of these, **~9.92%** are owner-occupied and **~6.11%** are renter-occupied—meaning **about 38% of condos are rented**.
- **Implication: Condos play a meaningful role in rental supply**. Monitor investor activity and strata policies, particularly in downtown and growth areas, where rental demand is strongest.

KEY HOUSING TRENDS SUMMARY

Growth & Densification

- Nanaimo's population is projected to grow by nearly 19%, from 102,415 in 2020 to 121,941 by 2030, with households increasing from 43,998 to 50,369. This growth is driving a shift toward higher-density housing forms. While single-detached homes remain the largest category, their share is expected to decline from 61.6% to 58.8%. In contrast, apartments—including low-rise and high-rise buildings—will rise from 35.8% to 38.1%, signaling a clear move toward urban densification and mixed-use development.

Housing Diversity & Affordability

- The rental market is expanding rapidly, with rented households projected to grow by 21% over the decade. This trend underscores the need for purpose-built rental housing and affordability strategies. Condominiums, which account for 16% of dwellings as of 2025, play a dual role—offering both ownership and rental options. Their growth reflects increasing demand for compact, affordable housing choices that cater to diverse household needs.

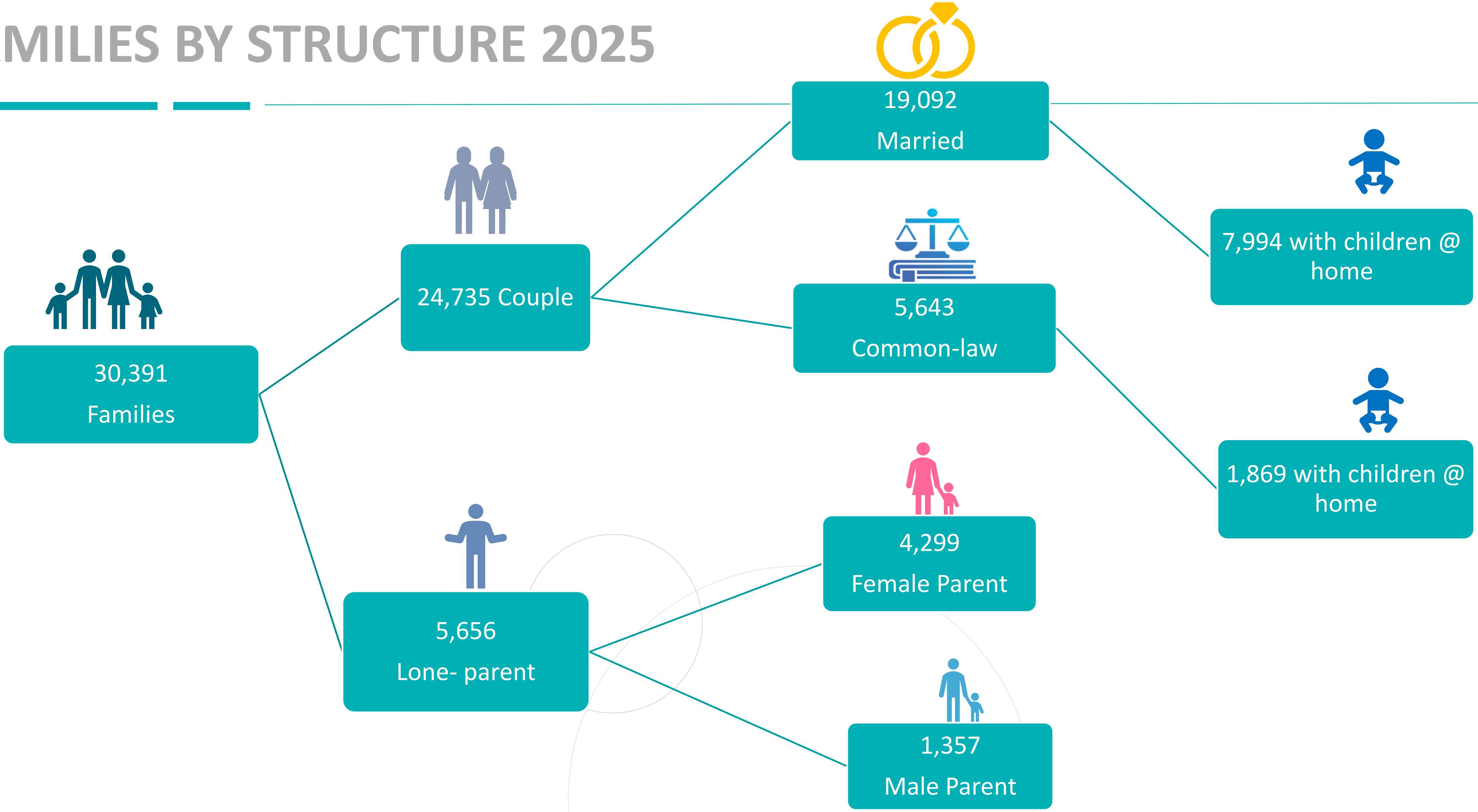
Renewal & Adaptation

- A significant portion of Nanaimo's housing stock is aging, with 37.6% of homes built before 1980. Many of these older structures will require maintenance, energy-efficiency upgrades, and redevelopment to meet modern standards and climate resilience goals.
- **The proportion of seniors aged 65+ living alone is expected to grow from 13.1% of households in 2020 to 14.6% in 2030**. This trend highlights the increasing demand for senior-friendly housing, healthcare, and community services to support aging residents.
- At the same time, demographic shifts—particularly an aging population—will increase demand for accessible housing designs and proximity to services.

Strategic planning and investment:

- Support compact growth and mixed-use communities,
- Expand affordable and rental housing options, and
- Modernize aging stock to ensure safety, sustainability, and livability.

FAMILIES BY STRUCTURE 2025



FAMILY STRUCTURE TRENDS 2020-2030

A ***Census family*** is defined as either a married or common-law couple (with or without children), or a lone-parent family with at least one child living in the same dwelling.

1. Family Growth

- Nanaimo had **30,391 Census families in 2025**, projected to reach **32,761 by 2030** (+2,370 families; ~1.5% annual growth).

2. Changing Family Mix

- The family mix is shifting toward **couples without children**.
- **Common-law couples continue to gain share**, while **married couples dip slightly**, reflecting changing household norms.
- Couples remain approximately **81% of all families**, with **no-children couples gaining share**, indicating durable demand for **adult-oriented housing and amenities**.

3. **More People Living Alone & Longer Stays at Home**

- More people are living alone—especially seniors—while adult children are staying longer at home.
- Seniors aged 65+ living alone increase from 5,772 (2020) to 7,368 (2030), representing strong growth in one-person senior households.
- At the same time, the number of adult children aged 25+ living at home also rises, reflecting housing affordability pressures and delayed household formation.

Implications

- Reinforces the need for age-friendly housing design, home-care and support services, and adaptable unit layouts that enable aging in place.
- Highlights demand for attainable, step-down housing options (e.g., downsizing-friendly units, secondary suites, accessible apartments).
- Suggests planning for intergenerational living flexibility, including policies that support gentle density and diverse housing forms.

BUSINESS

BUSINESS LICENSES BY INDUSTRY SECTOR 2025

Construction	1,203	Manufacturing	180
Healthcare & Soc	872	Transp & Warehousing	164
Accommod & Food	870	Wholesale Trade	126
Retail	756	Finance & Insurance	111
Professional Services	757	Education & Training	89
Other Services	716	Info & Cultural Industries	60
Admin, waste mgt	598	Agri Fishing Forestry Hunt	12
Real Estate	581	Utilities	4
Arts, Entert & Recreation	209	Management of Companies	3

- In 2025, the **City of Nanaimo** had **7,316 licensed businesses**, reflecting an **increase of 335** from the previous year—a growth of **4.8%.** This surge was primarily driven by **new legislation requiring short-term rentals to be licensed**.
- The **construction sector** held the most business licenses, followed by **Healthcare & Social Assistance, Accommodation & Food Services, Professional Scientific Technical services and Retail Trade**.
- The **largest growth** occurred in **Accommodation & Food Services (+362)**, followed by **Healthcare & Social Assistance (+125)** and **Real Estate & Leasing (+58)**. In contrast, **declines** were seen in **Other Services (-37)** and **Professional, Sci & Tech (-36)**.

BUSINESS COMPOSITION 2025

- Nanaimo benefits from strong local ownership and entrepreneurial activity.
- The economy could be strengthened by attracting more mid-to-large companies and supporting scalable business growth.
- Improving access to affordable commercial spaces could help businesses expand beyond home-based operations.

Strengths:

- **Strong Local Ownership (70%)** – A high percentage of locally owned and operated businesses fosters economic resilience, community investment, and keeps profits circulating within Nanaimo. This strengthens the local economy and creates a unique business culture.
- **High Home-Based Business Presence (36%)** – A significant share of businesses are home-based, indicating a thriving entrepreneurial spirit and lower barriers to entry for new businesses. This represents flexibility in the local economy.
- **Diverse Business Models (Franchises: 4%, Branch Offices: 10%)** – A mix of independent businesses, franchises, and corporate branches ensures some economic diversity. Franchises bring brand recognition and customer trust, while branch offices connect Nanaimo to larger business networks.

Challenges:

- **Few Large Corporate Presence (Only 10% Branch Offices)** – A low share of branch offices suggests limited corporate investment, potentially less resilience during downturns. Attracting more corporate investment can strengthen the job market further.
- **High Rate of Home-Based Businesses (36%)** – While this fosters entrepreneurship, it may also indicate lack of commercial space affordability or business scalability. If many businesses remain home-based, they may struggle with expansion, hiring, and visibility.
- **Heavy Reliance on Leased Space (45%)** – Nearly half of businesses rent their premises, making them vulnerable to rent increases and market fluctuations. This can limit long-term stability and growth, especially for small businesses.

BUSINESSES BY EMPLOYEE SIZE 2014-2024

Businesses By Employee Size (City of Nanaimo)

Employees	2014	2019	2024	5 yr growth 2016-2020	5 yr growth 2020-2024	10 yr growth 2016-2024
1-4	1,683	1,777	1,889	5.6%	6.3%	12.2%
5-9	682	720	793	5.6%	10.1%	16.3%
10-19	473	500	522	5.7%	4.4%	10.4%
20-49	291	300	339	3.1%	13.0%	16.5%
50-99	86	95	98	10.5%	3.2%	14.0%
100-199	34	37	38	8.8%	2.7%	11.8%
200-499	11	13	15	18.2%	15.4%	36.4%
>500	5	7	7	40.0%	0.0%	40.0%
With Employees	3,265	3,449	3,701	5.6%	7.3%	13.4%

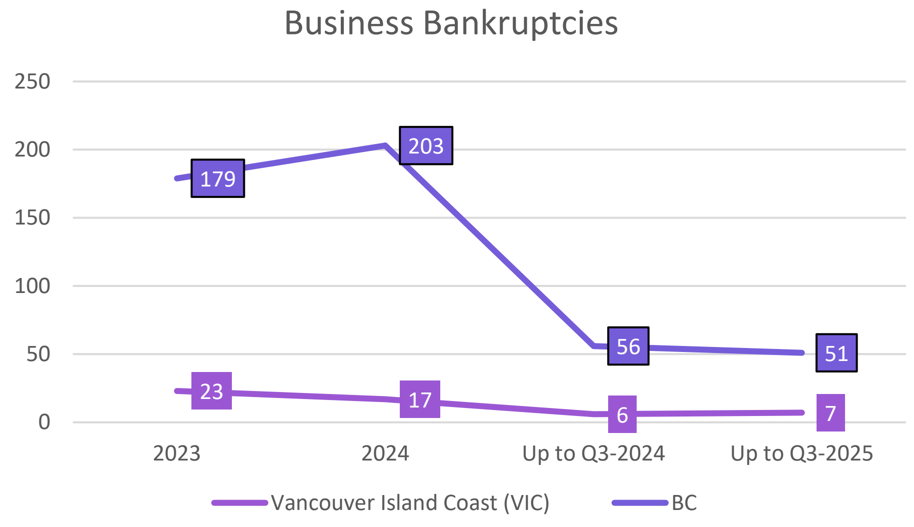
- In 2024, the City of Nanaimo was home to 3,701 businesses with one or more employees, indicating a **consistent growth trend in the overall number of businesses with employees over time**. Over the past decade, the number of businesses with employees has increased by 13.4 per cent. Additionally, in the past five years, sole proprietorships have seen a notable increase of 13 per cent in Nanaimo.
- Similar to trends observed across British Columbia, the majority of businesses in the City of Nanaimo are categorized as small to medium enterprises. Specifically, **86.6 per cent of businesses have between 1 and 19 employees**, while 12.8 per cent have between 20 and 199 employees. Those with over 200 employees represent less than 1 per cent (0.6 per cent) of the total business landscape in Nanaimo.

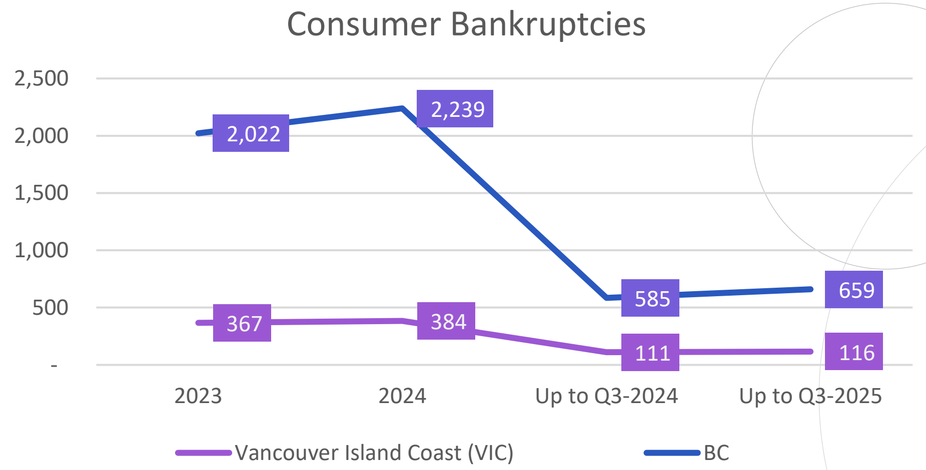
BUSINESS INCORPORATIONS

Business Incorporations (2020-2024)						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average 2022-2024
City of Nanaimo	615	860	791	831	801	808
Reg. Dist. Nanaimo (RDN)	823	1,136	1,027	1,061	1,055	1,048
Vancouver Island Coast (VIC)	4,372	5,880	5,149	5,226	5,133	5,169
Nanaimo as share of VIC	14%	15%	15%	16%	16%	16%
Nanaimo as share of RDN	74%	76%	77%	78%	76%	77%

- Incorporations are the number of new limited companies registered under the Business Corporations Act. Sole proprietorships or partnerships are not included. In 2024, there were 801 new business incorporations in the City of Nanaimo, while the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) saw a total of 1,055 registrations under the Business Corporations Act. Notably, **Nanaimo accounted for 76 per cent of the new incorporations in the RDN and 16 per cent of Vancouver Island Coast region.**
- In 2024, business incorporations in the City of Nanaimo and the Vancouver Island Coast Region fell below their respective three-year averages, whereas the Regional District of Nanaimo surpassed its three-year average.

BUSINESS & CONSUMER BANKRUPTCIES





Business bankruptcies

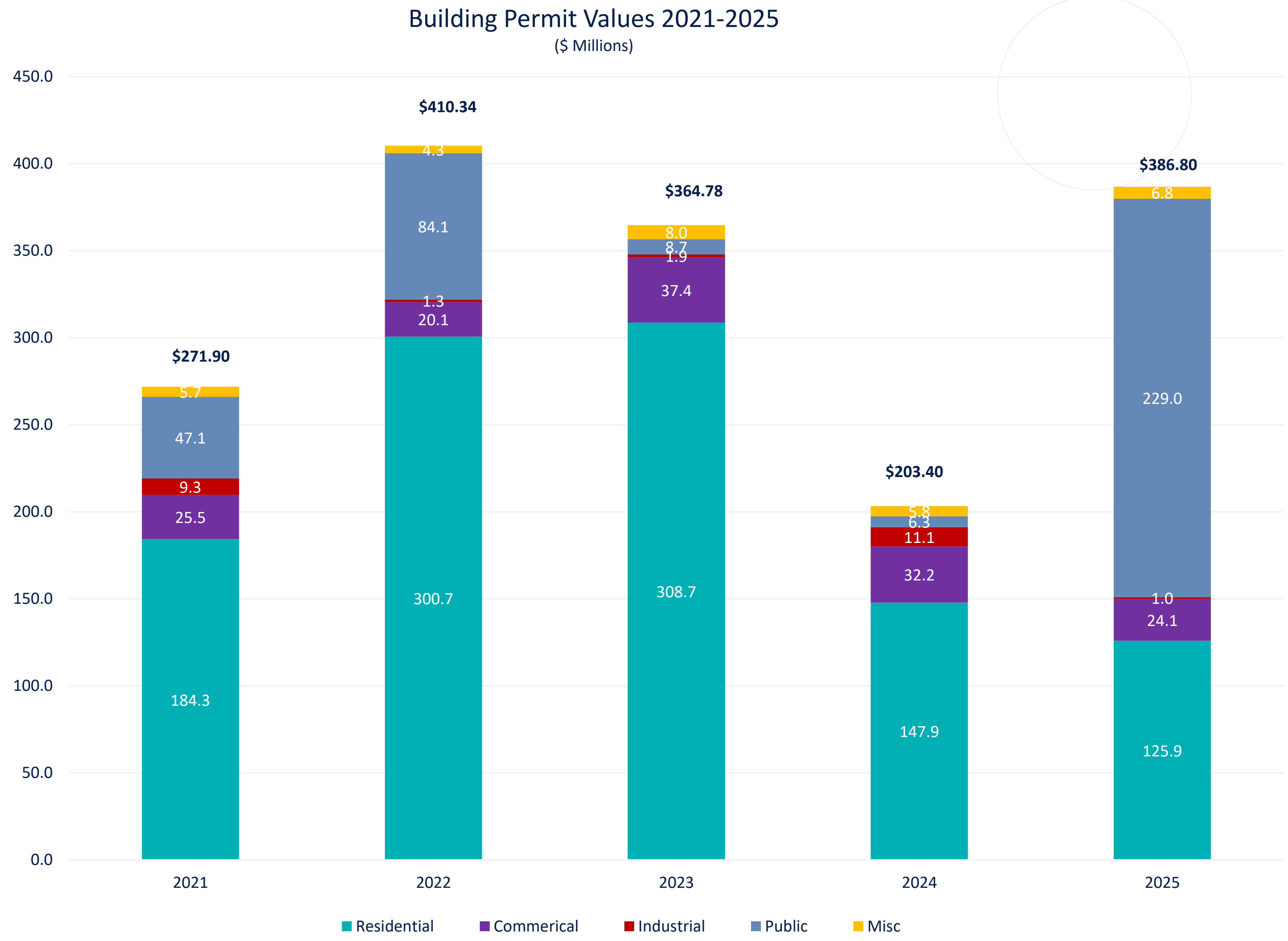
- On an **annual basis**, **VIC improved**, with significantly fewer business bankruptcies (-26.1%), while **BC deteriorated** (+13.4%).
- In the **year-to-date comparison**, **VIC saw a small uptick** from a low base, while **BC edged down**, which may signal **early stabilization at the provincial level**.
- Overall, **bankruptcy volumes in VIC remain comparatively low** despite the recent uptick.

Consumer bankruptcies

- **Consumer bankruptcies are rising locally and provincially**, but growth has been **more pronounced across BC** than in VIC.
- **VIC's share** of BC consumer bankruptcies **declined** from **~18.15% in 2023** to **17.15% in 2024**, and stands at **17.60% in YTD Q3-2025** (down from **18.97% in YTD Q3-2024**).
- This pattern suggests that **financial pressure is intensifying more broadly across the province than locally**, with VIC accounting for a slightly smaller proportion of hardship cases over time.

DEVELOPMENT

BUILDING PERMIT VALUES



BUILDING PERMITS

5-year trends (2021-2025)

- Over the past five years, building permit (BP) values have shown **significant volatility**, driven primarily by **large institutional projects** and shifts in the housing market.
- **Total permit values ranged between $203M and $410M annually**, with peaks in **2022** ($410.3M) and **2025** ($386.8M).
- **Residential activity surged from 2021 to 2023**, nearly **doubling**, before entering a **two-year decline** (2024–2025).
- **Non-residential activity** was relatively stable until 2024, when it dipped significantly (to $49.6M), followed by a sharp rebound in 2025, entirely due to large public sector investments.

2025 BPV Highlights:

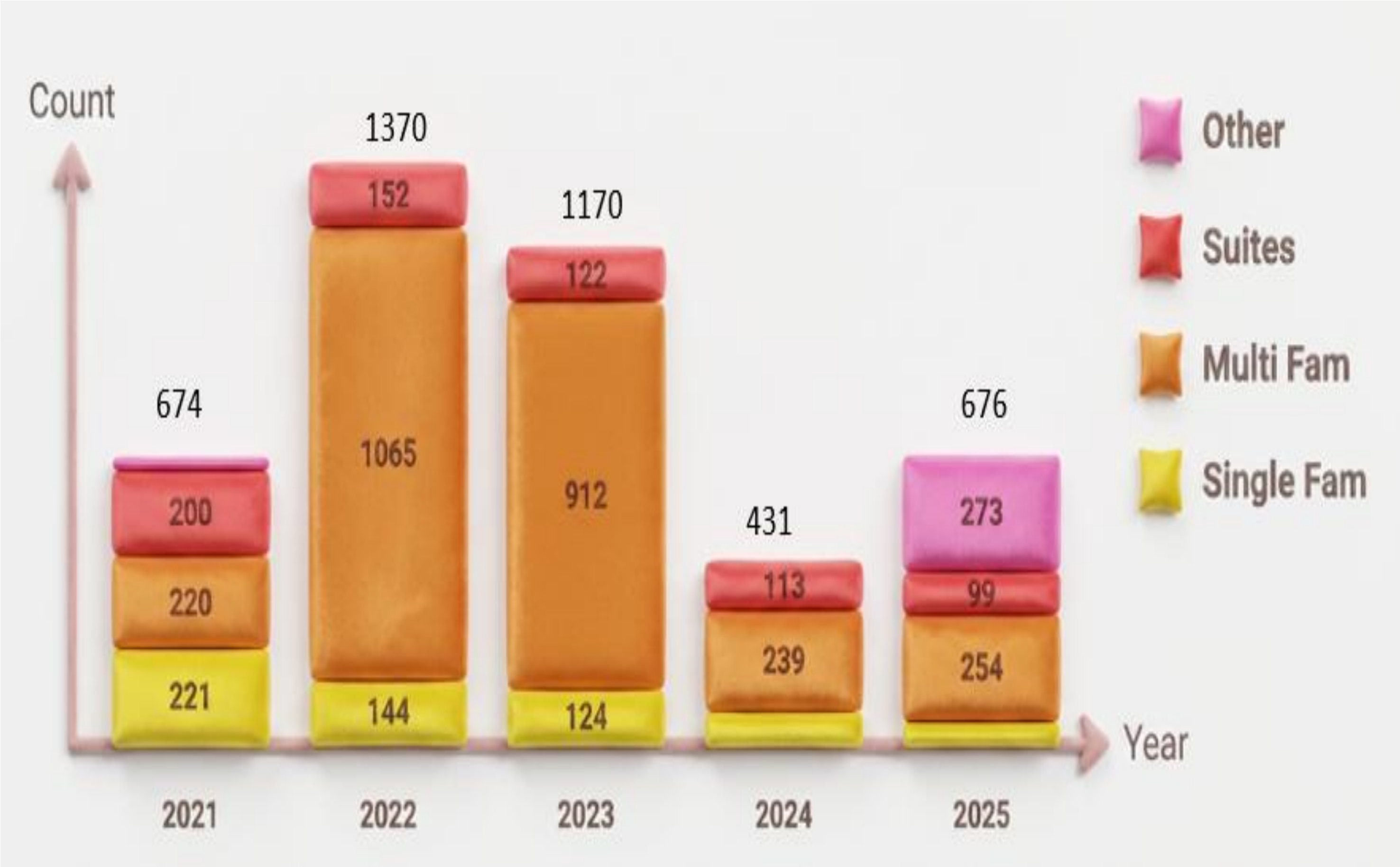
- BPV $386.8M (+90% over 2024). Public-sector permits drove this growth increasing from **$6.3M (2024) → $229M (2025)**.
- Public projects accounted for **59.2%** of all permit value in 2025—the **highest share in the 5-year period**.
- **Private Development Declined in 2025: Residential:** $125.9M (–15%) **Commercial:** $24.1M (**–25%**) **Industrial:** $1.0M (**–91%**) in comparison to 2024.

- The 2025 rebound masks continued **softness in private development**, especially in housing and commercial sectors.
- Large public and institutional projects are **dominating year-to-year totals.**
- Residential permits are now **~60% below the 2023 peak**, signaling reduced new housing supply pressures but also potential impacts on construction-sector employment and future unit availability.
- Major public/institutional investments (NRGH, VIU, K–12) are supporting construction employment and economic activity.
- However, the **heavy reliance on a few large projects** creates exposure when these institutional cycles slow.

Summary:

- 2025 was a major-project year, not a broad market rebound.
- Public-sector investment is the primary driver, contributing nearly $230M in permit value.
- Private development softened, continuing the trend observed in 2024.
- Over the 5-year period, permit values remain strong but highly variable, driven mainly by large institutional builds rather than consistent growth across sectors.

Housing Starts by Type



* Note: Other category in 2025 includes 266 VIU student housing units.

Housing Starts Rebound on Student Housing; Core Market Still Subdued.

- After falling to 431 units in 2024 (–63% year-over-year), housing starts in Nanaimo rebounded to 676 units in 2025.
- The increase was **driven almost entirely by student housing (266 units, 39% of total)**. Excluding student housing, starts would have been **410 units (–5% year-over-year)**, reflecting continued softness in the underlying market.
- **Multi-family** activity **stabilized** (+6% year-over-year), while **single-family** (–32%) and **suites** (–12%) declined.
- Overall, 2025 remains below the five-year average, but the mix continues to tilt toward **smaller and attached formats**, consistent with affordability-oriented demand.
- **Nanaimo's housing starts outlook remains comparatively resilient.** While near-term moderation is likely, continued delivery of **rental, low-rise, mid-rise, and missing-middle housing** positions Nanaimo to outperform many Island and provincial markets that are more exposed to condominium-sector volatility.

Housing market outlook

1) Overall Starts Momentum: Moderating, Not Collapsing

- In **Nanaimo**, housing starts are expected to **moderate in the near term** as financing and construction costs constrain new projects, but activity should remain **above long-run averages** due to strong population growth and relative affordability.
- A similar pattern is evident across **Vancouver Island**, where starts are easing from recent highs but remain historically solid, particularly in mid-sized communities. At the **BC level**, starts are forecast to **cool through 2025**, driven largely by weaker condominium activity, with a **gradual recovery expected in 2026**.

2) Rental Housing Continues to Drive New Starts

- In **Nanaimo**, **purpose-built rental housing** is expected to account for the majority of new starts, supported by sustained renter demand and provincial housing policy.
- This trend aligns with **Vancouver Island**, where rental construction remains the most consistent source of new supply, and with **BC overall**, where rental starts remain elevated even as growth begins to level off later in the forecast period.

3) Condominium Development Remains Constrained

- In **Nanaimo**, larger condominium projects face **ongoing feasibility challenges**, particularly where pre-sales are required, increasing the likelihood of delays or phased development.
- Similar conditions are evident across **Vancouver Island**, while at the **provincial level**, condominium construction faces the strongest headwinds due to high costs, weak pre-sales, and rising unsold inventory—especially in major metropolitan markets.

4) Strength in Low-Rise, Mid-Rise, and "Missing Middle" Housing

- In **Nanaimo**, housing starts are expected to remain concentrated in **low-rise apartments, townhouses, and missing-middle forms**, which are more viable under current market conditions and align well with local planning policies.
- This pattern mirrors trends across **Vancouver Island** and **BC**, where wood-frame, lower-rise multi-unit housing is outperforming high-rise formats.

5) Gradual, Uneven Recovery Expected into 2026

- In **Nanaimo**, a **measured improvement in housing starts is expected into 2026**, assuming easing interest rates and improved project viability.
- Across **Vancouver Island** and **BC**, recovery is also anticipated but will be **uneven**, with more affordable and mid-sized markets rebounding ahead of high-cost urban centres.

MAJOR PROJECTS

2025 Major Projects (Over $2 Million)

Address	Description	Construction Value
2060 EAST WELLINGTON ROAD	2 storey temple with a caretaker suite (Gurdwara, Sikh Temple)	$ 2,200,000.00
1960 MOUNTAIN VISTA DRIVE	3 storey, 21-unit apartment building	$ 3,640,000.00
1200 DUFFERIN CRESCENT	4 storey cancer treatment centre (NRGH)	$ 142,263,635.00
1200 DUFFERIN CRESCENT	3 storey home away from home for families of children at NRGH	$ 7,800,000.00
1503 CRANBERRY AVENUE	2 storey institutional building (Chase River Elementary)	$ 4,999,999.00
1400 WINGROVE STREET	3 storey mixed use building, 12 residential apartments on 2 & 3 floor with 3 commercial CRU's on main floor	$ 3,750,000.00
1200 DUFFERIN CRESCENT	Southwest Parkade - 3 storey, sprinklered, storage garage (NRGH)	$ 4,762,907.00
3612 ISLAND HIGHWAY N	2 storey building (Nissan)	$ 7,136,680.00
3135 MEXICANA ROAD	2 storey institutional building, additional scope of work includes the installation of a non-combustible(steel) non-enclosed covered walkway structure over the exit pathways from all three buildings (Wellington Secondary)	$ 6,400,000.00
1125 SEAFIELD CRESCENT	5 storey, 62 unit Senior Housing apartment building with basement parking garage	$ 15,000,000.00
900 FIFTH STREET	10 storey student residential housing building (VIU) - Phase 2	$ 55,868,506.00

MAJOR PROJECTS

1200 Dufferin Crescent ($142.3 million) – 4 storey cancer treatment centre (NRGH)

1125 Seafield Crescent ($15 million)- 5 Storey, 62-unit Senior Housing apartment

In 2024 and 2025, there were a total of 24 projects valued at $2 million or more. 2025 saw significant public sector investment.

900 Fifth Street ($55.9 million - Phase 2) - 10 storey student residential housing building (VIU)

1200 Dufferin Crescent ($7.8 million) – 3 storey home away from home for families of children at NRGH

REAL ESTATE

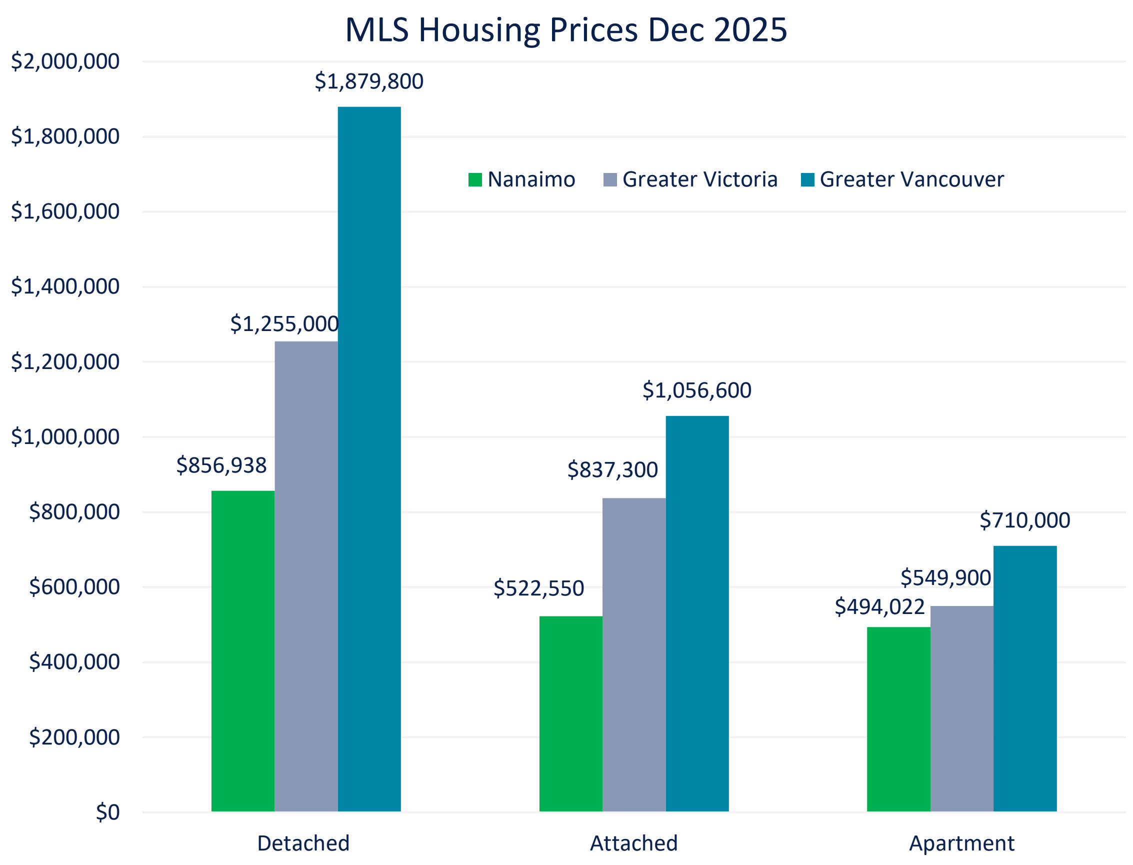
MLS ANNUAL AVERAGE PRICES - NANAIMO

Property Type Comparison

Property Type	Avg Price (2025)	YoY Change	Comment
Detached	$852,006	+1.42%	Modest price appreciation alongside stronger sales activity.
Apartment / Condo	$445,418	+0.50%	Prices essentially flat with steady demand.
Townhouse / Row	$564,457	+0.61%	Stable pricing with softer sales volumes.

- **Detached homes show solid buyer engagement**: Sales rose **9.4%** (**1,070 vs. 978**) while average price advanced **1.4%**; liquidity remains healthy as the sell/list ratio improved (**54.29% vs. 50.57%**) even with a slightly longer selling period (**43 vs. 39 days**).
- **Condominiums display consistent pricing performance**: average price is **flat-to-up** (**+0.5%**), with sales essentially steady (**275 vs. 278**). A small uptick in the sell/list ratio (**46.45% vs. 44.98%**) and a quicker selling time (**48 vs. 50 days**) point to sustained entry-level and downsizer demand.
- **Row/townhouse remains balanced but more selective**: average price is **stable** (**+0.6%**), while sales pulled back (**–7.3%, 229 vs. 247**). The sell/list ratio eased (**54.01% vs. 59.23%**), yet **days to sell improved** (**41 vs. 43**), indicating buyers are active but more price-sensitive in this segment.
- Across product types, **sale-to-list ratios in the mid-40s to mid-50s** and **sale-price-to-list-price near ~98%** (e.g., Detached **97.88%**, Condo **98.59%**, Row **98.33%**) signal continued liquidity and disciplined pricing as the market normalizes.

HOUSING PRICES-December 2025 Comparison

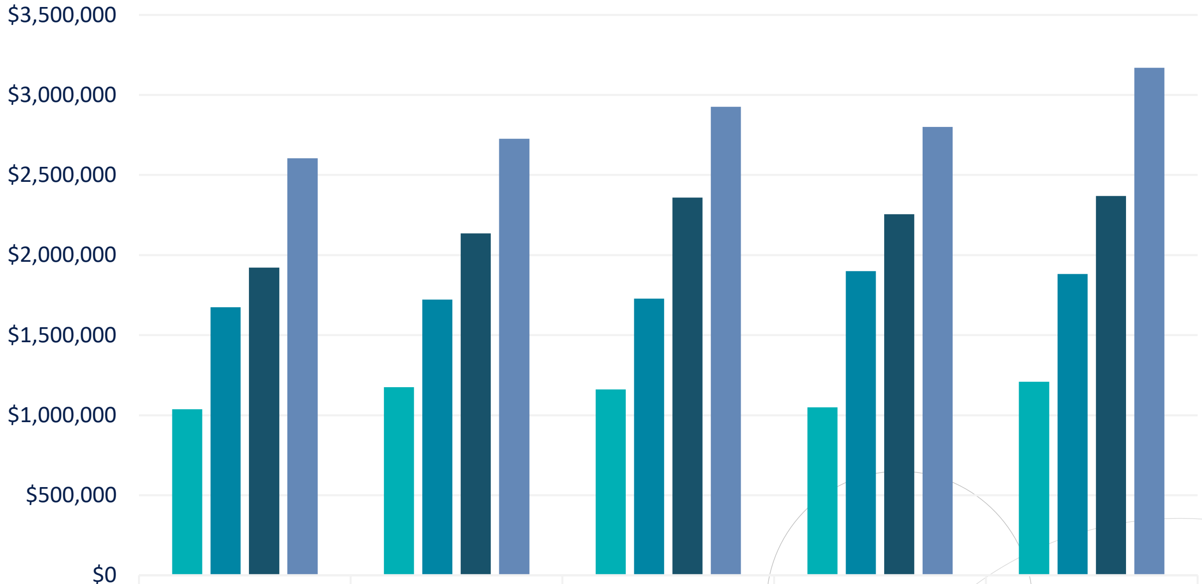


- In **December 2025**, the benchmark price for an average single- family detached home in Nanaimo was 0.4 per cent lower compared to December 2024. Average price fell by 5.3 per cent in Greater Vancouver and 4.7 per cent in Greater Victoria.
- Row-housing (Attached) prices saw a decline of 6.9 per cent in Nanaimo and 5 per cent in Greater Vancouver, but held steady in Greater Victoria.
- Apartment/Condo prices saw a whopping increase of 27.3 per cent in Nanaimo, .7 per cent in Victoria and a dip of 5.3% in Vancouver.
- Nanaimo is the most budget-friendly market, with home prices across all categories well below those in Victoria and Vancouver.

Nanaimo	Victoria	Vancouver
• Strongest **sales growth**, especially in detached segment. • Condo prices surging → **rising demand for compact & affordable housing**. • Presents **opportunities for developers** focused on densification.	• Stable and predictable, driven by **high inventory + balanced demand.** • Good environment for measured housing starts.	• Softening presents **medium-term buying opportunities** for investors/developers. • Oversupply + low demand = favourable acquisition environment.

NEW SINGLE-DETACHED Home Price Comparison

Detached **New** Single-Family Absorbed Home Price
Annual Average 2022-24, Q3 2024 & Q3 2025



	2022	2023	2024	Q3 2024	Q32025
Nanaimo	$1,036,127	$1,174,797	$1,160,844	$1,048,923	$1,208,016
Victoria	$1,673,643	$1,721,515	$1,728,035	$1,900,213	$1,882,238
BC	$1,922,017	$2,136,074	$2,358,258	$2,255,110	$2,369,220
Vancouver	$2,604,772	$2,726,136	$2,926,576	$2,799,789	$3,169,622

Nanaimo Victoria BC Vancouver

New single-family Absorbed home prices:

- **Vancouver** remains the most expensive market, with new home prices rising from **$2.60M (2022)** to **$3.17M (Q3 2025)** — a **+22%** increase. **Momentum strengthened in 2025**, with a **+13% YoY** jump from Q3 2024.

- **Victoria** surged to **$1.90M in Q3 2024** before **easing to $1.88M in Q3 2025 (–1%)**, though prices are still **~9% above** the 2024 average. This points to **post-surge stabilization** amid improving inventory.

- **Nanaimo** shows **renewed strength**: from **$1.04M (2022)** to **$1.21M (Q3 2025)** (**+17%**). After a slight dip in 2024, **Q3 2025 rebounded +15% YoY**, consistent with **steady demand** and **affordability-driven interest**.

- **BC-wide** follows a **rising trend**, up from **$1.92M (2022)** to **$2.37M (Q3 2025)** (**+23%**). The **aggregate picture** is a **composite of Vancouver's upswing, Victoria's mild cooling**, and rebounds in markets like **Nanaimo**.

REAL ESTATE MARKET OVERVIEW BC

While **2024 saw modest growth in Nanaimo's real estate market** and early signs of recovery in Metro Victoria and Metro Vancouver, **2025 has largely been a year of stabilization across British Columbia** rather than a full recovery. Market activity has improved from 2023 lows, but affordability pressures continue to limit stronger gains.

- **Market activity** across BC is generally balanced, with moderate sales and subdued price growth. **Nanaimo and other Vancouver Island markets** have remained relatively **resilient** due to population growth and lower price points than major metropolitan areas.
- **Interest rates** have eased compared to 2023–2024, improving borrowing conditions, though declines have been gradual and have not triggered a broad surge in demand.
- **Affordability remains the primary constraint**, as high home prices, modest wage growth, and continued population growth continue to price out many households.
- **Provincial housing policies** and regulatory changes continued reshaping market behaviour in 2025, creating short-term adjustment for buyers and developers while aiming to improve supply over the longer term.
- **Buyer re-entry** has been cautious, with first-time buyers supported by extended amortizations and updated property transfer tax thresholds, though overall demand remains selective.

Overall, **2025 reflects a period of consolidation and adjustment**, with improved stability but persistent affordability challenges.

2026 Outlook

- **A gradual recovery is anticipated**, supported by more stable interest rates and pent-up demand following several years of below-average activity.
- **Sales volumes are expected to recover more than prices**, as higher inventory levels keep price growth modest.
- **Mid-sized and relatively affordable communities**, including Nanaimo and much of Vancouver Island, are expected to outperform larger metropolitan markets.
- **Affordability will remain a defining issue**, continuing to shape buying behaviour and housing development patterns.
- **2025 represents stabilization rather than recovery**, with Nanaimo performing comparatively well within a constrained provincial market.
- **2026 is expected to bring incremental improvement**, though affordability pressures will continue to limit the pace of growth across British Columbia

RENTAL MARKET: RENTS, VACANCY, UNITS

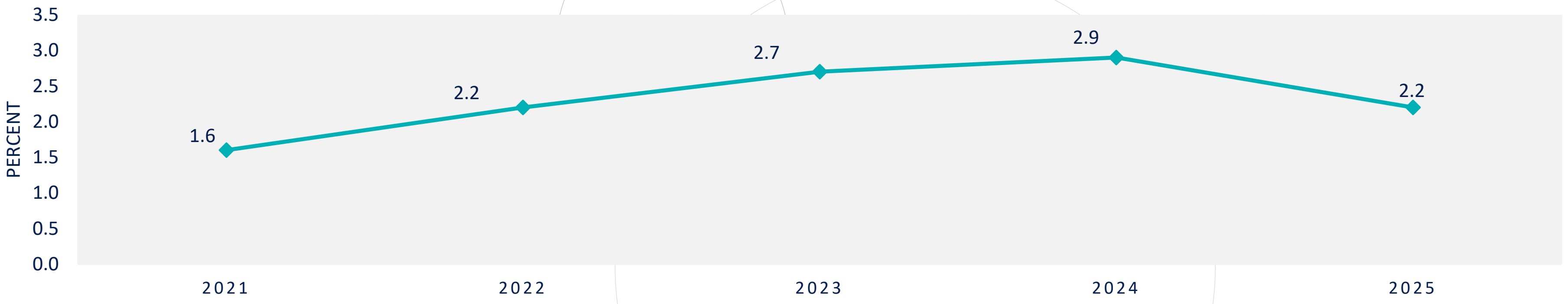
Nanaimo Average Rents, Vacancy & Units

October 2025

Private Apartments	**Rent**		**Vac Rate**		**Units**	
	2024	**2025**	**2024**	**2025**	**2024**	**2025**
Studio	$1,246	$1,244	2.4%	0.0%	443	493
1 Bedroom	$1,408	$1,526	3.1%	2.9%	2,597	2,685
2 Bedroom	$1,787	$1,910	3.0%	2.1%	2,205	2,348
3+ Bedroom	$1,858	$1,999	0.9%	0.5%	192	203
Total	**$1,558**	**$1,685**	**2.9%**	**2.2%**	**5,437**	**5,729**

- **Rental universe grew**: +292 units **(+5.4%)** — from 5,437 to 5,729 private apartment units, signaling **new supply** but not enough to loosen conditions.
- **Vacancy tightened**: Total vacancy fell from 2.9% to 2.2% (–0.7 pp), indicating stronger demand even as stock expanded.
- **Rents climbed materially**: Average rent (all units) rose from $1,558 to $1,685 (+8.2% / +$127), consistent with tightening market dynamics.

NANAIMO RENTAL MARKET VACANCY RATE

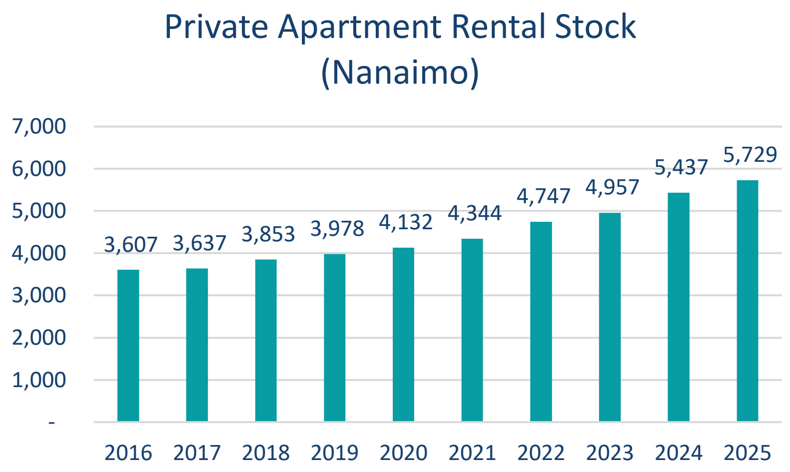


NANAIMO RENTAL MARKET OVERVIEW 2025

Category	Units Δ (%)	Vacancy Δ (pp)	Avg Rent Δ ($ / %)	
Studio	11.30%	–2.4 pp	–$2 (–0.16%)	Entry-level product is **severely constrained**. The lack of rent movement likely reflects **measurement issues**, **small sample size**, and/or **tenant turnover patterns** rather than market softness. Expect **upward pressure** if tightness persists.
1 Bedroom	3.40%	–0.2 pp	+$118 (+8.38%)	Core renter segment shows **robust rent growth**, with moderate new supply failing to raise vacancy. Affordability pressure concentrates here.
2 Bedroom	6.50%	–0.9 pp	+$123 (+6.88%)	Despite added stock, **demand strengthened**, pushing vacancy down and rents up. This is the **workhorse segment** for families; constraints here translate directly to affordability challenges.
3 Bedroom+	5.70%	–0.4 pp	+$141 (+7.59%)	Family-sized apartments are **scarce and increasingly expensive**; developers and policy should prioritize this typology
Total	5.37%	–0.7 pp	+$127 (+8.15%)	In 2025, **demand outpaced added supply**. Falling vacancy with rising average rents strongly suggests ongoing **population inflows and household formation** pressure in Nanaimo's rental market.

RENTAL MARKET: Average Rent Comparison

Two Bedroom Average Monthly Rent			
	Nanaimo	G. Victoria	G. Vancouver
2024	$1,787	$1,993	$2,314
2025	$1,910	$2,120	$2,363
% Change	↑ 6.8%	↑ 6.37%	↑ 2.1%



BC Rental Market 2025

1. Rents softened across major markets

- Asking rents in Vancouver declined 2–8% year-over-year in early 2025.
- Rent growth slowed significantly across major BC cities.

2. Vacancy rates surged

- Vancouver: **1.6% → 3.7%** (highest in 30 years), Victoria: **up to 3.3%** (highest since 1999)
- Province-wide: **1.9% → 3.5%**

3. Rental supply jumped

- Record rental construction and completions in 2024–2025
- Thousands of newly built and newly converted long-term rental units

4. Market conditions softened across major Centres

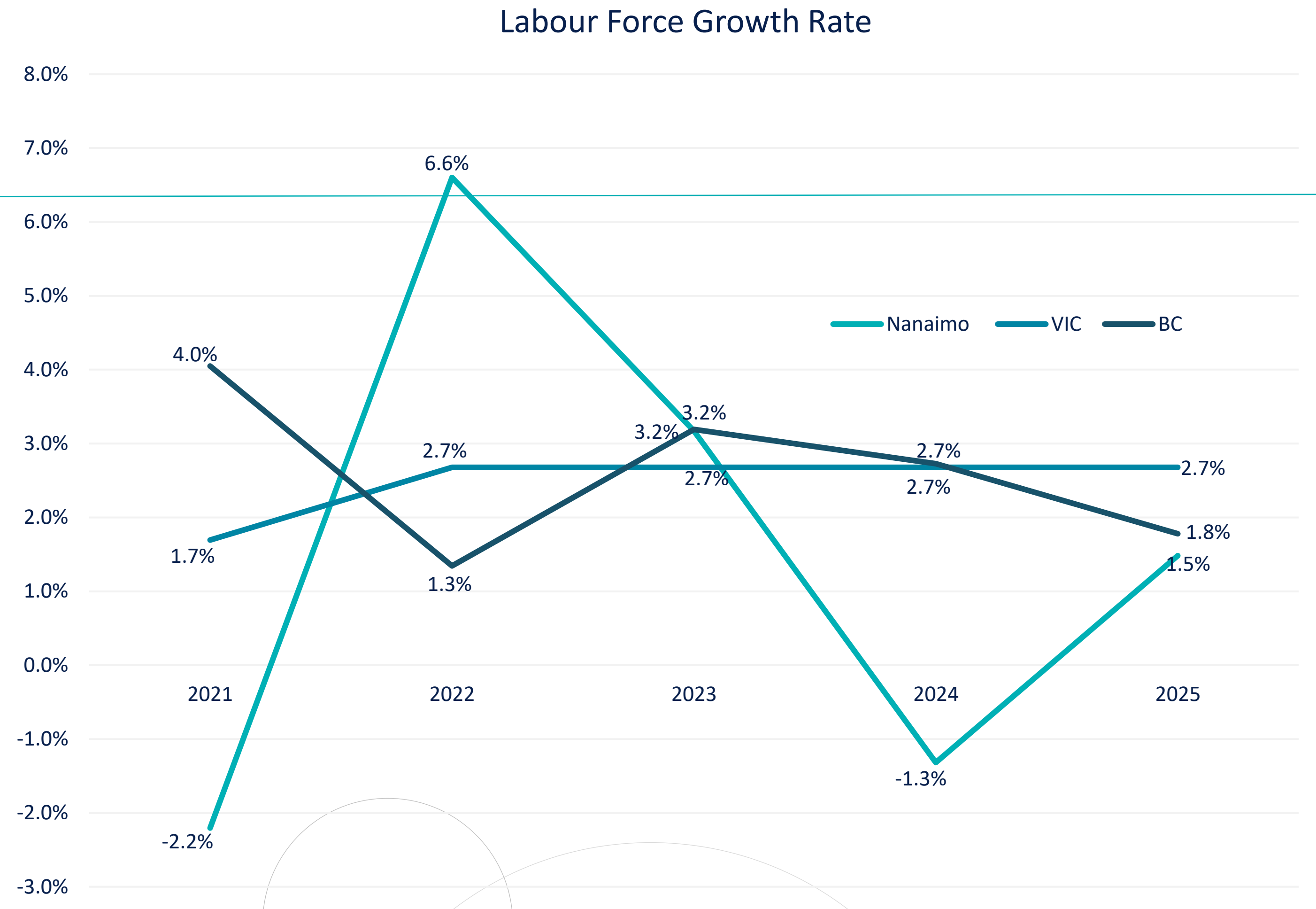
- Increased supply + slower population/labour growth
- Competition from condo rentals and new purpose-built stock

5. Affordability: Some easing, but still strained

- Despite easing rents, turnover units remain costly
- Lower-income renters continue facing the tightest market conditions

LABOUR FORCE

Labour Force Growth Rate



Growth Rate	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	5-yr. average 2020-2025
Nanaimo	-2.2%	6.6%	3.2%	-1.3%	1.5%	1.5%
VIC	1.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.5%
BC	4.0%	1.3%	3.2%	2.7%	1.8%	2.6%
Nanaimo Labour Force	**62,100**	**66,200**	**68,300**	**67,400**	**68,400**	**66,480**

Labour Force Growth Rate

- The labour force includes individuals aged **15 and over** who are either employed or actively seeking employment. Changes in the labour force reflect both **population dynamics** and **economic conditions**, with growth typically driven by in-migration and job creation, while slowdowns can prompt labour force exits or reduced participation.

- Between **2020 and 2025**, Nanaimo's labour force increased from **63,500 to 68,400**, a net gain of **4,900 workers**. This represents a **five-year average annual growth rate of 1.5%**, below both the **Vancouver Island Coast (2.5%)** and **British Columbia overall (2.6%)**.

- Growth patterns over the period reflect sharp swings. Following a pandemic-related decline in **2020 (-2.2%)**, Nanaimo rebounded strongly in **2021 (+6.6%)** and **2022 (+3.2%)**. Growth then softened in **2023 (-1.3%)**, before stabilizing with **moderate increases of 1.5% in both 2024 and 2025**. In **2025**, the labour force reached **68,400**, up slightly from **67,400 in 2024**.

- Compared with Nanaimo, labour force growth in the **Vancouver Island Coast** and **BC** has been steadier year to year, reflecting larger population bases and more diversified employment structures. Nanaimo's variability likely reflects its smaller size, survey sensitivity.

- Overall, Nanaimo's labour force shows **solid long-term expansion but short-term volatility**, with recent years indicating a transition from post-pandemic rebound to **more moderate, sustainable growth**.

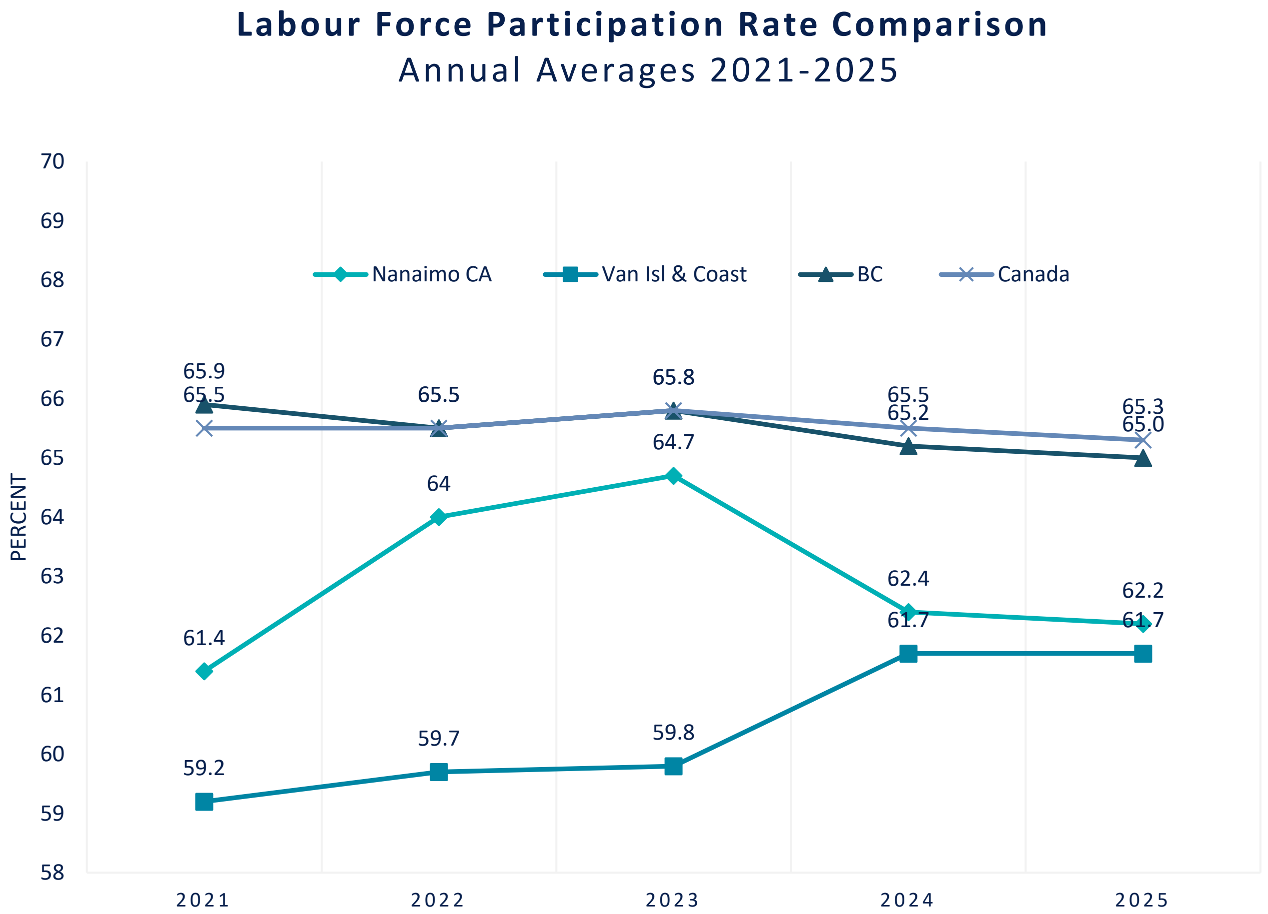
- Going forward, labour force stability will increasingly depend on **housing availability, workforce skills development, and economic diversification**, particularly as BC faces significant long-term labour demand across multiple sectors.

- **More than 1 million job openings** are projected across B.C. over the next decade. Provincial employment is expected to grow from **~2.9 million jobs in 2025 to ~3.3 million by 2035**, averaging **about 1.2% annual growth** — slower than prior outlooks due to demographic and immigration changes.

- **Approximately 60% of openings** are expected to come from **replacement demand** (retirements), with the remaining **40% from economic growth**.

- **77% of job openings** will require **some form of post-secondary education, training, or experience**, reinforcing long-term skills and workforce development needs.

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE



- The **labour force participation rate (LFPR)** measures the share of residents **15+** who are employed or actively seeking work. Participation is shaped by **age structure**, **economic conditions**, and **worker confidence**. Younger regions tend to have higher LFPRs; older regions, lower.
- 2025 reflects **stabilization** across all regions after several years of larger post-pandemic movements.
- Nanaimo continues to have a **lower LFPR than BC and Canada**, driven by an **older demographic profile**, but remains **slightly above** the broader Island Coast region.
- Nanaimo's LFPR shows **greater annual variability** likely due to smaller Labour Force Survey sample size.
- Continued focus on **workforce development**, **training access**, and **attracting working-age residents** will support long-term participation levels.

LABOUR FORCE GROWTH RATE

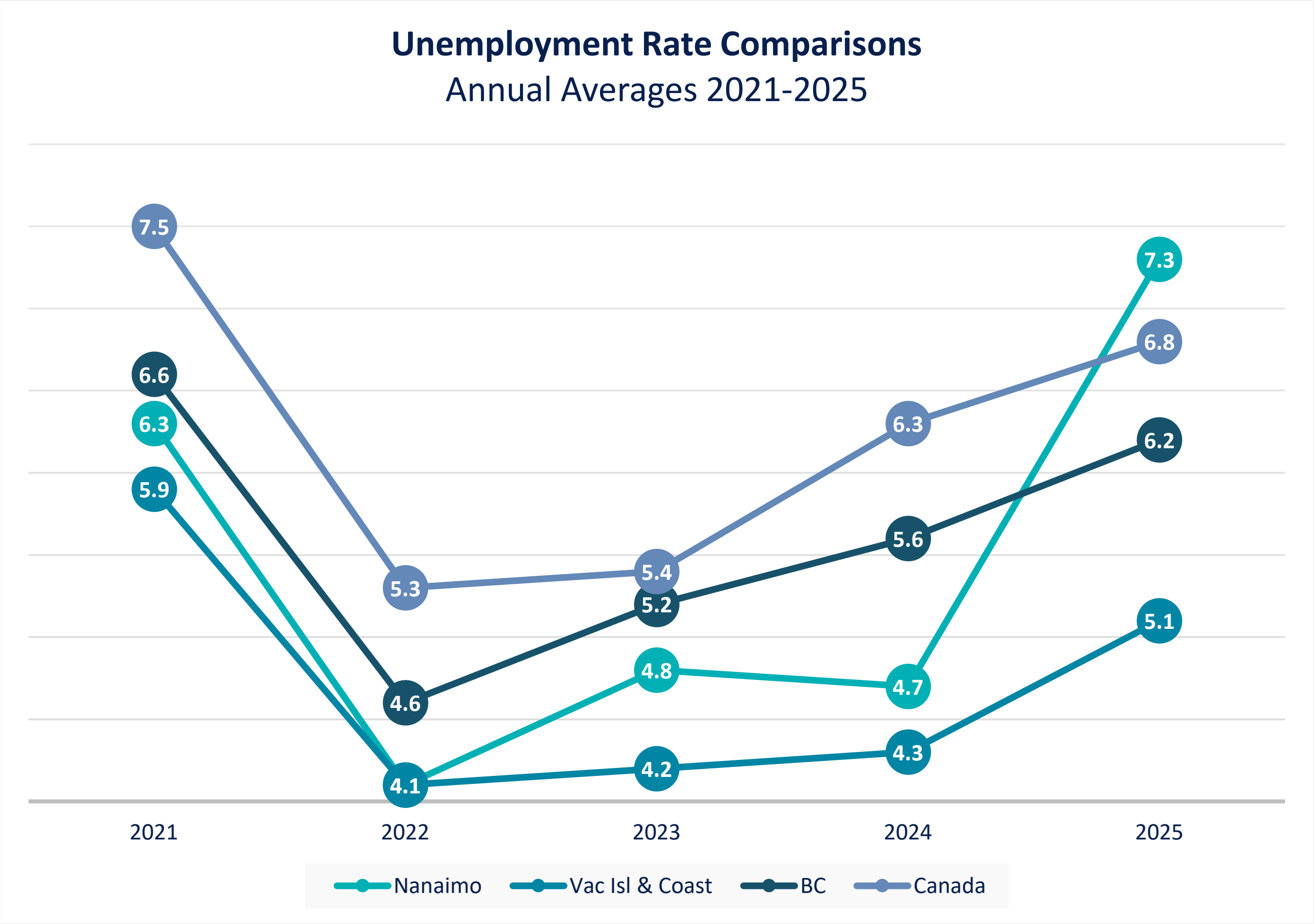
Geography	Pop 15+ 2021 (k)	Pop 15+ 2025 (k)	Pop % change	Partic 2021	Partic 2025	PR change (pp)	LF change from Pop (k)	LF change from PR (k)
Nanaimo	101.1	110	8.70%	61.40%	62.20%	0.8	5.4	0.9
VIC	750.3	805.8	7.40%	59.20%	61.70%	2.5	32.9	20.1
BC	4,358.70	4,832.00	10.90%	65.90%	65.00%	-0.9	311.9	-43.5

PR = Participation Rate
LF = Labour Force

What's driving labour force growth-Population vs Participation?

- A labour force can grow because: there are more people aged 15+ (**population effect**), and/or a higher share of them is working or looking for work (**participation effect**).
- **Nanaimo** LF growth (6.3K) is **mostly population-driven (5.4K or~86%** of the increase), with a **small but positive** participation lift (0.9K~14%).
- **VIC:** LF growth is **both** population growth (32.9K) **and** a **meaningful participation increase** (participation adds ~**20k** workers to the labour force over the period—big effect).
- **BC:** LF growth is **entirely population-driven**, and participation **falls** enough to **subtract ~43k** from what the labour force would otherwise have been. This is consistent with ageing dynamics and/or more people sitting outside the labour force.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



- **Nanaimo's unemployment rate rose to 7.3% in 2025**, up from **4.7% in 2024**, marking a significant increase following two years of lower unemployment (2022–2023).
- **Vancouver Island & Coast** also saw an increase, reaching **5.1%,** compared to **4.3% in 2024**.
- **BC's unemployment rate** climbed from **5.6% (2024)** to **6.2% (2025)**.
- **Canada** experienced a similar rise from **6.3% to 6.8%**.
- Rising unemployment across all regions reflects **slower economic conditions**, tighter job markets, and broader national cooling following earlier post-pandemic expansion.
- In Nanaimo, the increase in unemployment accompanied a **stable but lower LFPR**, suggesting some workers may still be **exiting the labour force** or facing mismatches between their skills and available jobs.
- The sharp rise from 2024 to 2025 indicates a period of **labour market adjustment** for both Nanaimo and the Island region.
- In Canada, a **healthy unemployment rate** typically ranges between **4%–5.5%**.
- The 2025 rates for Nanaimo, BC, and Canada all fall **above this range**, signalling labour market softening that aligns with national economic conditions.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY TRENDS 2021-2025

Industry Sector	2021	2025	Change
Ag, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,068	1,134	6%
Mining, Quarrying, Oil,Gas	414	307	-26%
Utilities	279	229	-18%
Construction	4,236	5,289	25%
Manufacturing	2,136	2,086	-2%
Wholesale Trade	1,200	1,277	6%
Retail Trade	7,147	8,111	13%
Transportation and Warehousing	2,274	3,069	35%
Information and Cultural Industries	1,386	1,085	-22%
Finance and Insurance	1,612	1,914	19%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	801	1,234	54%

Industry Sector	2021	2025	Change
Professional, Scientific and Tech	3,189	3,830	20%
Management of Companies and Entp	14	105	650%
Admin Support, Waste Mangt	2,516	2,814	12%
Educational Services	3,380	4,393	30%
Health Care and Social Assistance	7,224	9,167	27%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	898	991	10%
Accommodation and Food Services	4,258	4,476	5%
Other Services (expt Public Admin)	2,275	2,628	16%
Public Administration	2,298	2,841	24%
Total	48,605	56,980	17%

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY TRENDS 2021-2025

+17.2%

Total employment increase

8,375 jobs added, reaching 56,980.

+4.0%

Average annual growth (CAGR)

Growth over the period.

+18.4%

Services sectors job growth

7,463 jobs added in services.

+11.2%

Goods-producing sectors job growth

912 jobs added in goods-producing.

~89%

Net job gains from services

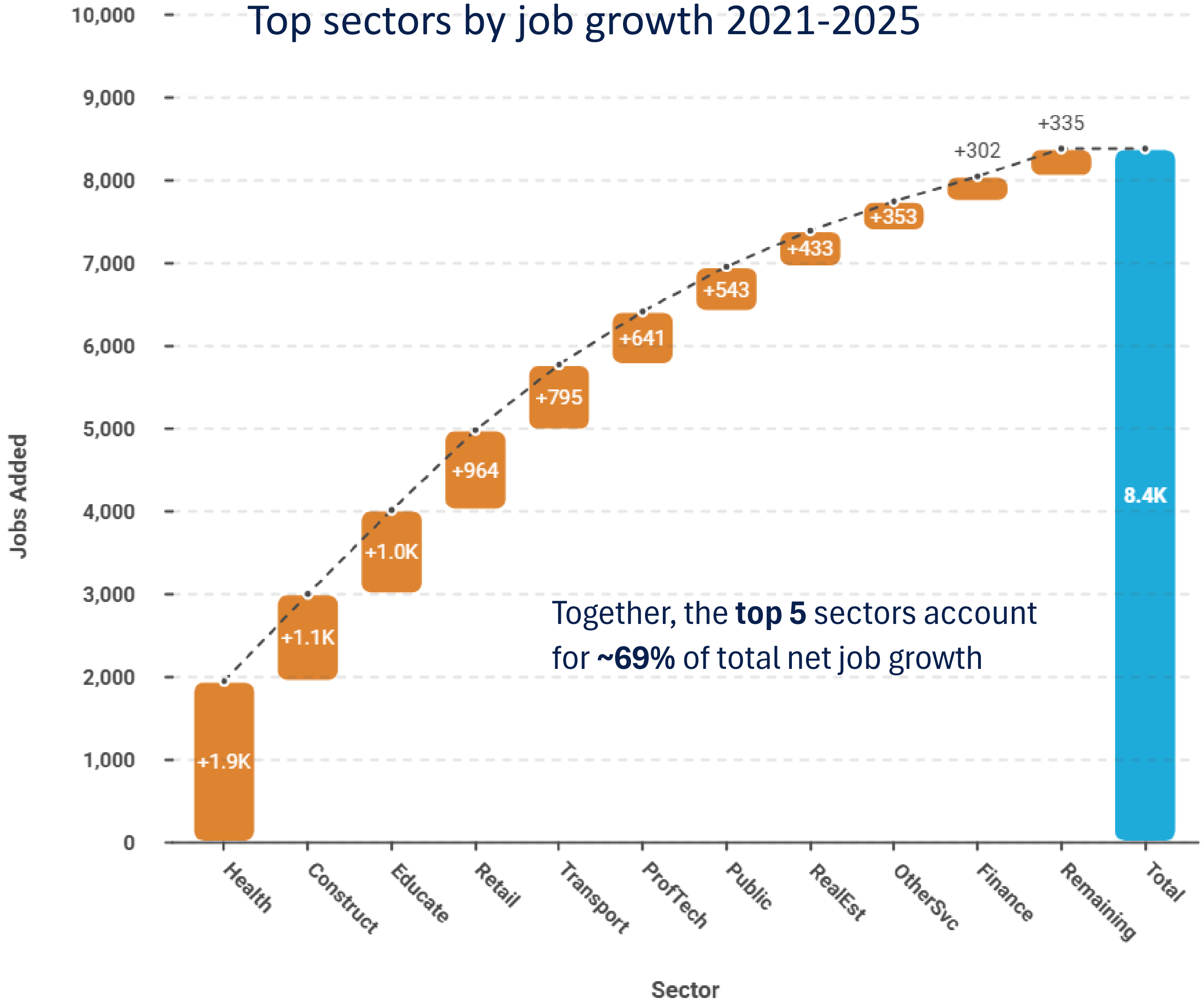
Services accounted for most job gains.

Diversification: Sector concentration (HHI)* rose slightly from **0.080** to **0.086** — still **well-diversified**, with a modest tilt toward a few large service sectors.

*HHI - The Herfindahl–Hirschman Index is a **measure of concentration**. It's used to show **how concentrated or diversified employment is across sectors**.
Lower HHI = more diversified economy (jobs spread across many sectors) **Higher HHI** = more concentrated economy (jobs clustered in fewer sectors)

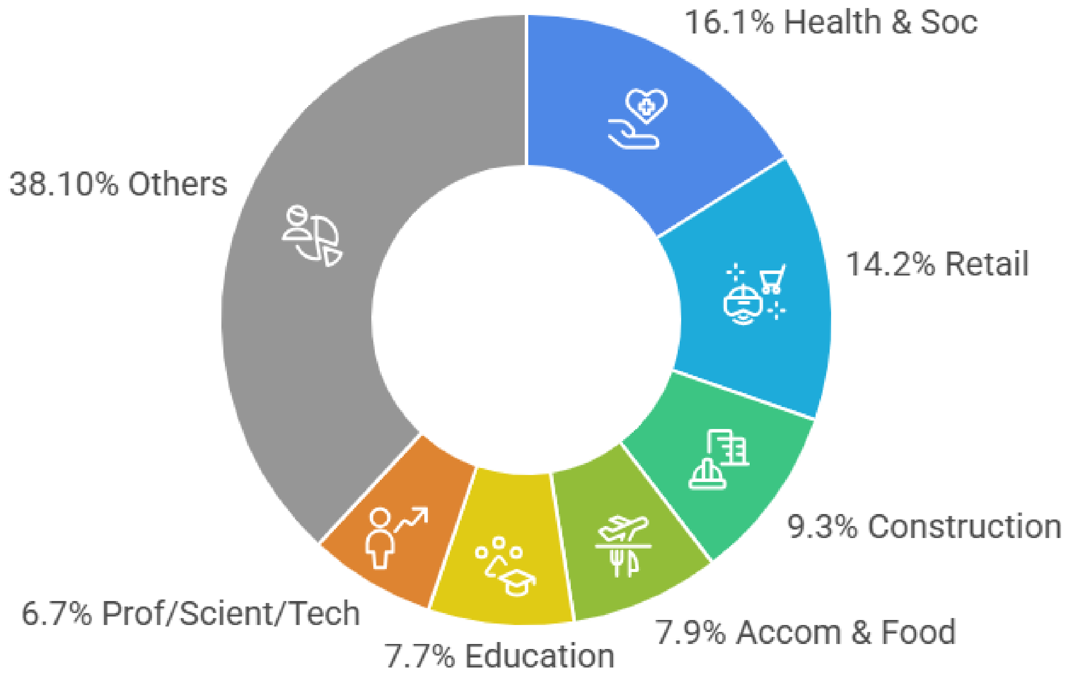
NET JOB GROWTH BY SECTOR

Top sectors by job growth 2021-2025



Together, the **top 5** sectors account for **~69%** of total net job growth

Largest Sectors by Employment Share 2025



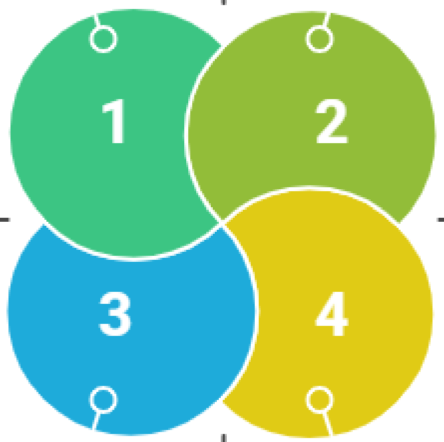
Key Structural Shifts

Health & Education Anchors

Added 3,000+ jobs, now 24% of employment. Key to stability—requires continued investment in talent, facilities, and housing.

Logistics & Construction Hub

Transportation (+35%) and Construction (+25%) reinforce Nanaimo as a regional distribution and build-out center.



Tradable Services Growth

Professional Services (+20%) show potential for attracting high-value firms in engineering, environmental, and digital sectors.

Consumer-Driven Resilience

Retail and Accommodation growth reflects strong demand. Focus on productivity and affordability to sustain momentum.

Emerging Opportunities

Real Estate & Leasing: +54% growth; linked to population inflows.

Management of Companies: +650% (small base); potential HQ attraction.

Challenges & Declines

Information & Cultural Industries: -22%

Mining & Utilities: -26% and -18%

Manufacturing: -2% (flat growth

ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

Areas Where Nanaimo & BC Align (2025)

1. Construction:*(Nanaimo: 9.28% | BC: 8.92%)*

- Both Nanaimo and BC have strong construction employment, reflecting ongoing housing demand, infrastructure investment, and population growth.

2. Educational Services*(Nanaimo: 7.71% | BC: 7.47%)*

- Employment shares are closely aligned, indicating stable demand for K–12, post-secondary, and education support roles in both geographies.

3. Transportation & Warehousing:*(Nanaimo: 5.39% | BC: 5.51%)*

- Nearly identical employment levels suggest similar reliance on goods movement, logistics, and regional distribution networks.

Key Areas Where Nanaimo & BC Differ (2025)

1. Higher Health Care & Social Assistance*:(Nanaimo: 16.09% | BC: 12.29%)*

- Nanaimo has a significantly larger healthcare workforce, reflecting higher demand for hospitals, long-term care, and community-based social services.

2. Lower Professional, Scientific & Technical Services: *(Nanaimo: 6.72% | BC: 9.32%)*

- BC has a stronger concentration of professional and knowledge-based jobs, while Nanaimo's smaller share points to a more limited presence of tech, consulting, and specialized professional services.

3. Lower Manufacturing: *(Nanaimo: 3.66% | BC: 5.87%)*

- Manufacturing plays a larger role provincially, supported by BC's industrial hubs, whereas Nanaimo has fewer large-scale production facilities.

Economic Diversity Insights

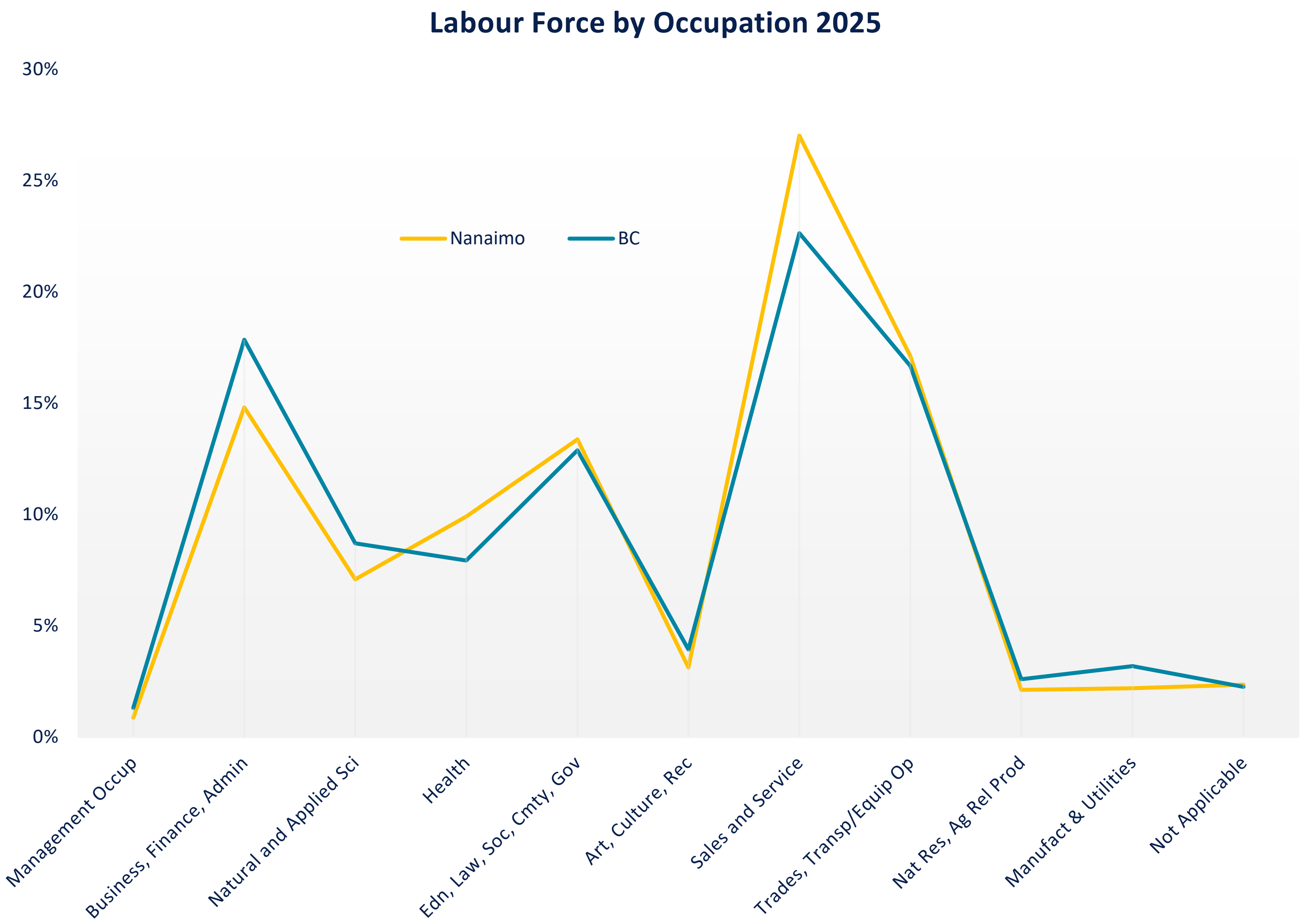
- **Nanaimo is more service- and people-care oriented.** Its largest employment shares are **Health Care & Social Assistance (16.09%)** and **Retail Trade (14.23%)**, indicating a strong concentration in consumer services and social support sectors
- **BC is more weighted toward knowledge-based and industrial activity.** The province has higher shares in **Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (9.32%)** and **Manufacturing (5.87%)**, reflecting stronger presence of specialized services and production activity at the provincial scale.
- **Nanaimo's concentration implies different resilience/sensitivity.** A higher reliance on **health care** and **retail** can mean greater exposure to sector-specific pressures (e.g., health workforce availability and funding environments; retail sensitivity to household spending). Conversely, BC's larger professional-services base can be more responsive to business investment cycles and broader market demand.
- **Shared foundations remain important in both economies.** Similar shares in **construction**, **education**, and **transportation/warehousing** suggest both geographies depend on core enabling sectors that support population growth, daily services, and goods movement

LABOUR FORCE BY OCCUPATION

Labour force analysis by occupation helps illustrate the **skills and talent composition** within a region's workforce and provides a practical indicator of employability across different parts of the economy.

Top Occupations in Nanaimo (2025):

1. **Sales & Service (27.02%)**
   Nanaimo's largest occupational group, reflecting a strong base in retail, hospitality, tourism, and personal services
2. **Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators (17.12%)**
   A major share of Nanaimo's workforce, supporting construction, logistics, maintenance, and infrastructure delivery
3. **Business, Finance & Administration (14.81%)**
   A substantial share indicating ongoing demand for administrative, business operations, and finance-related skills.



LABOUR FORCE ANALYSIS

Strengths of Nanaimo's Labor Force (vs. BC)

1. **Strong Sales & Service Base: Nanaimo: 27.02% vs BC: 22.64%**
   This points to Nanaimo's role as a regional service centre and a workforce that supports consumer-facing industries (often with a wide range of wage levels depending on subsector).

2. **Trades & Transportation Capacity: Nanaimo 17.12% vs BC 16.68%**
   A slightly higher concentration supports housing delivery, infrastructure work, and industrial/site development capacity.

3. **Higher "Public/Community-Facing" Employment (Education, Law, Social, Community & Government Services): Nanaimo 13.38% vs BC 12.89%**
   This suggests steady employment in education and community/government-related roles, contributing to local economic stability.

4. **Robust Healthcare Workforce: Nanaimo 9.91% vs BC 7.93%**
   A higher share in health occupations aligns with sustained demand for care services and helps underpin job stability in the region.

Areas for Potential Growth (where Nanaimo is lower than BC)

1. **Business, Finance & Administration: Nanaimo: 14.81% vs BC: 17.85%**
   This gap can reflect fewer head-office functions and a smaller concentration of finance/administrative hubs. Growing entrepreneurship, scaling local firms, and supporting remote/hybrid professional work could help raise this share over time.

2. **Natural & Applied Sciences: Nanaimo: 7.09% vs BC: 8.71%**
   A smaller STEM footprint can indicate fewer tech and innovation-driven roles. Strengthening applied training pathways and improving conditions for tech/engineering employers could help close this gap.

3. **Manufacturing & Utilities: Nanaimo: 2.19% vs BC: 3.19%**
   A smaller industrial base may limit export-oriented activity. Targeting niche manufacturing, value-added production, and clean/industrial services could expand higher-wage opportunities.

4. **Management Occupations: Nanaimo: 0.87% vs BC: 1.31%**
   Fewer management roles can signal fewer larger firms or headquarters functions locally; business growth and investment attraction often increase leadership roles over time.

LABOUR FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Building a Stronger Economy (Implications & Direction)

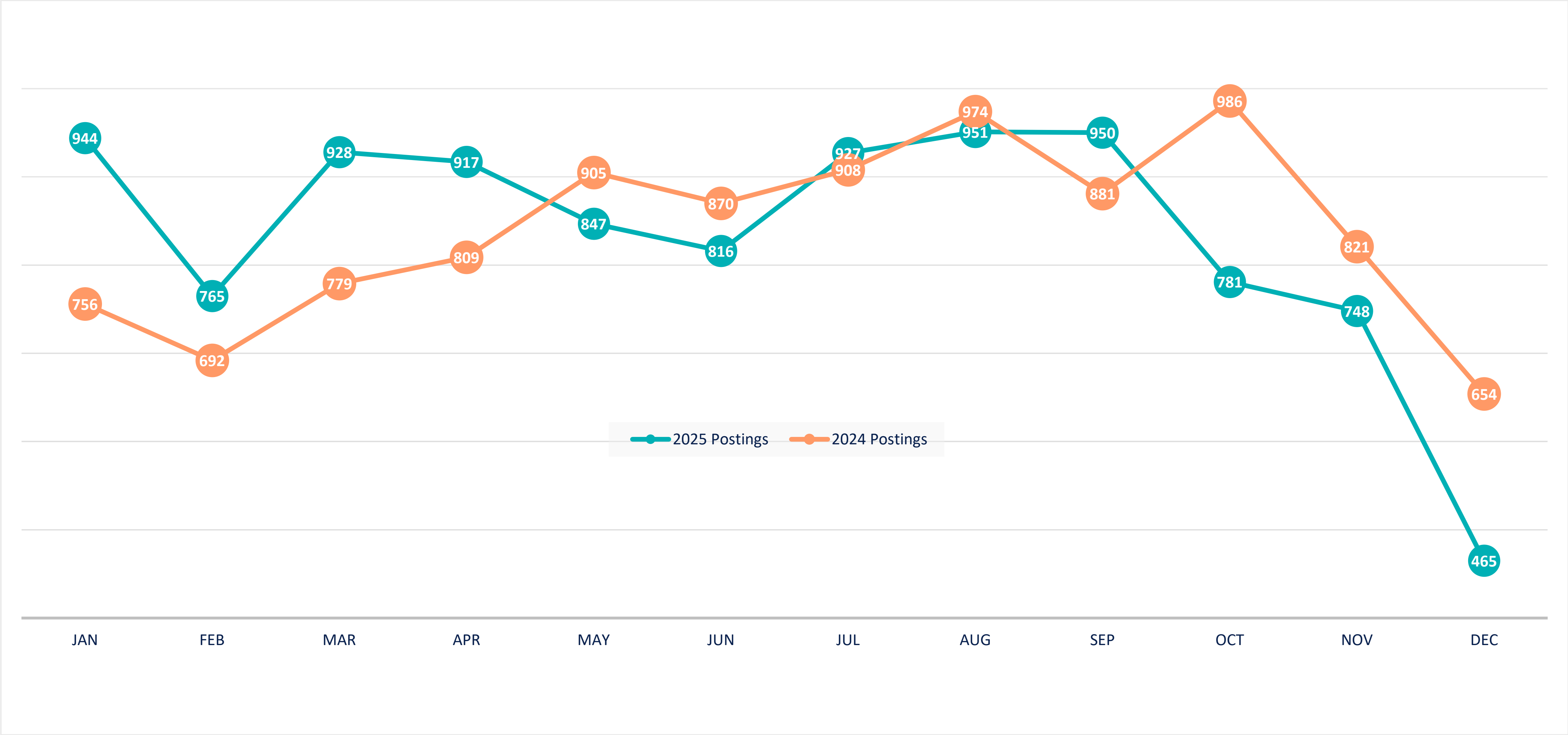
- **Strengthen high-wage occupational pathways** by supporting growth in business/finance, STEM, and industrial roles (through business expansion supports, skills pipelines, and targeted investment attraction).

- **Leverage existing strengths in healthcare and trades** to support sustainable growth—these are already major workforce assets and can anchor expansion in related industries (construction, care innovation, specialized services).

- **Attract and retain more professional and STEM workers** by enabling remote work ecosystems, supporting startup/scale-up services, and aligning training with employer needs.

❖ Nanaimo’s occupational profile is strongest in services, trades, healthcare, and community-facing roles, with clear opportunities to grow its share of business/finance, STEM, manufacturing/utility, and management occupations to improve wage depth and resilience

NANAIMO JOB POSTINGS 2024-2025



NANAIMO JOB POSTINGS

Postings by VI Regional District

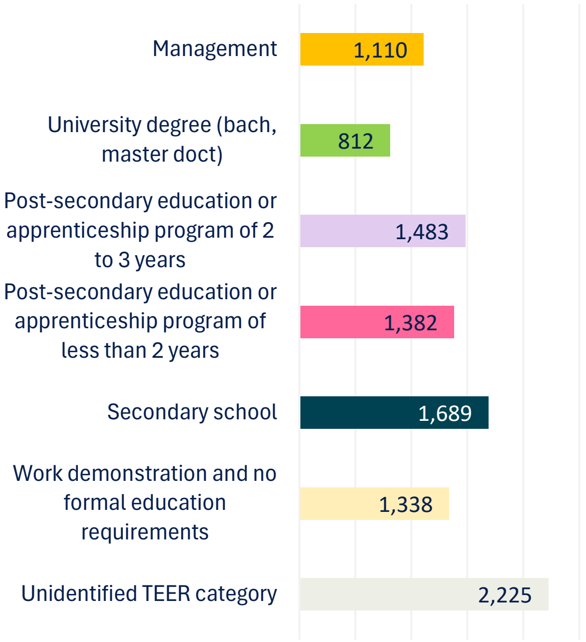
District	Postings 2025	% change 2024
Alberni-Clayoquot	2,717	7.6%
Capital	31,765	-1.8%
Comox Valley	5,100	3.1%
Cowichan Valley	6,026	0.6%
Mount Waddington	980	-7.5%
Nanaimo	12,510	-0.8%
Strathcona	4,755	12.7%
Grand Total	63,853	-12.2%

Job postings hold steady in Nanaimo

- Nanaimo remained stable in year-over-year job posting while BC postings declined in 2025 (–7.5%).
- Nanaimo outperformed BC in the first four months of the year and again in July and September, suggesting stronger early-year local hiring demand than the provincial pattern.
- Late in the year, Nanaimo weakened more sharply than BC, especially in October–December, indicating a more pronounced Q4 slowdown locally.
- After the Capital Region, Nanaimo Regional District had the highest number of job openings in 2025. In Year over year comparison Capital Region's postings experienced a sharper drop than Nanaimo.
- In 2025, Nanaimo postings were flat overall, but the mix shifted—full-time postings **declined** while part-time and flexible (FT/PT) postings increased, suggesting steadier demand but more flexible staffing patterns.
- Vancouver Island Health Authority was the top employer by number of job postings, followed by Vanc over Island University and the Home Depot.

NANAIMO JOB POSTINGS

Job Postings by TEER* Categories



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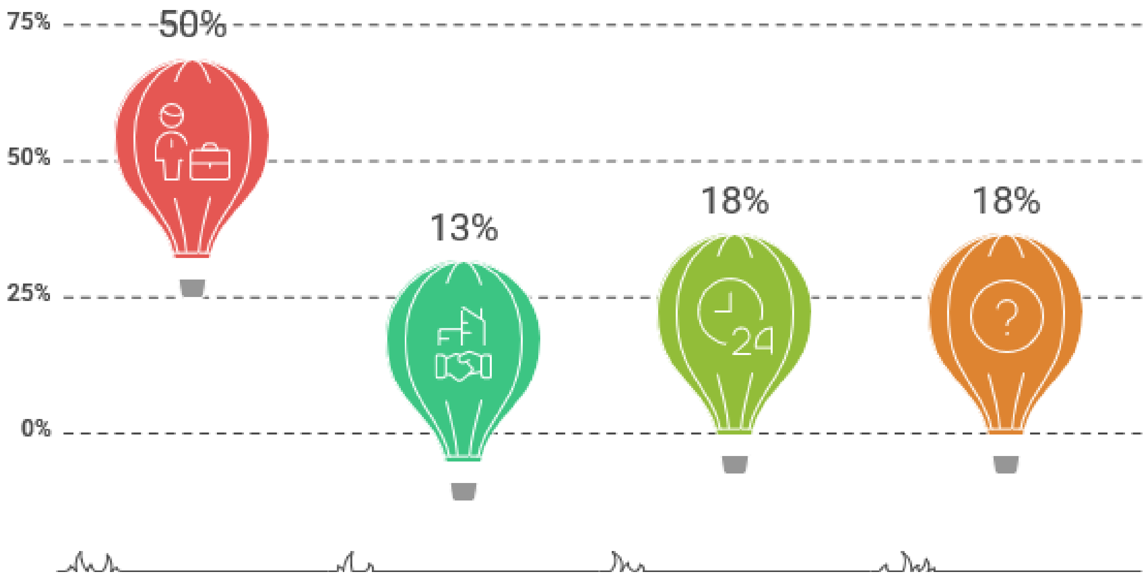
❖ TEER: Training, Education, Experience, and Responsibilities.

Top 10 Sectors by Job Postings

Sector Name	Postings 2025	% Change 2024
Retail Trade	1215	25.3%
Healthcare & Social Services	1169	-2.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	904	12.0%
Educational Services	282	-13.8%
Admin & Sup, Waste Mgt & Remd Serv	221	48.3%
Finance and Insurance	199	-12.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	179	-8.2%
Manufacturing	171	10.3%
Public Administration	164	-4.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	161	91.7%

JOB POSTINGS

Job postings by Full-time vs Part-time*



Full-time Postings 2025

5,062 postings, down 8.9% from 2024.

Full-time or Part-time Postings 2025

1,326 postings, up 16.6% from 2024.

Part-time Postings 2025

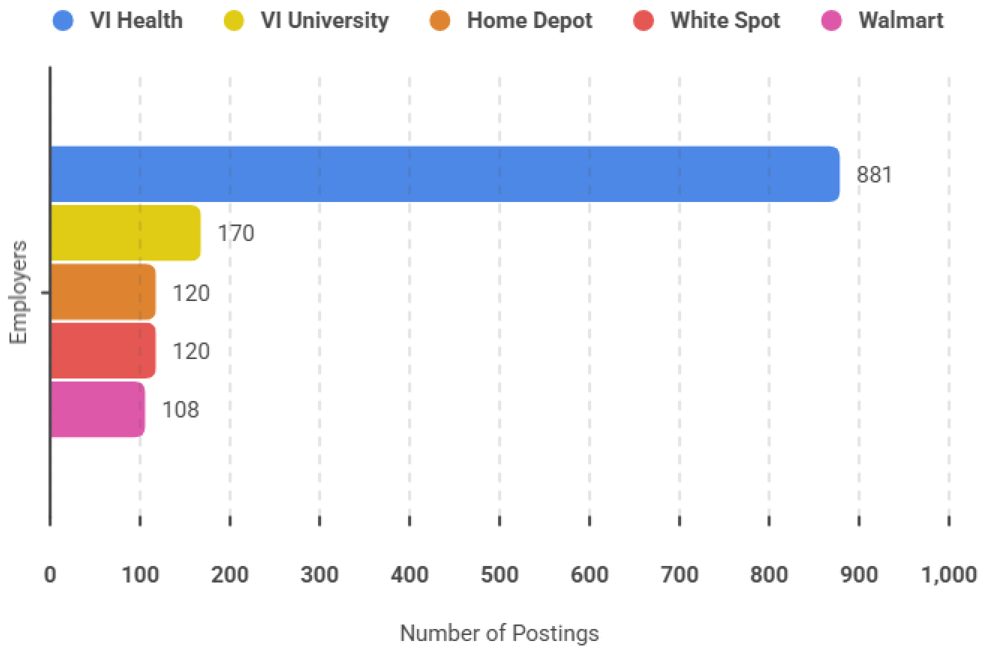
1,834 postings, up 24.3% from 2024.

Unknown/not identified Postings 2025

1,817 postings, down 2.8% from 2024.

***Note: Full-time or part/time refers to all postings mentioning both a full-time and a part-time option, including jobs that are part-time leading to full-time**

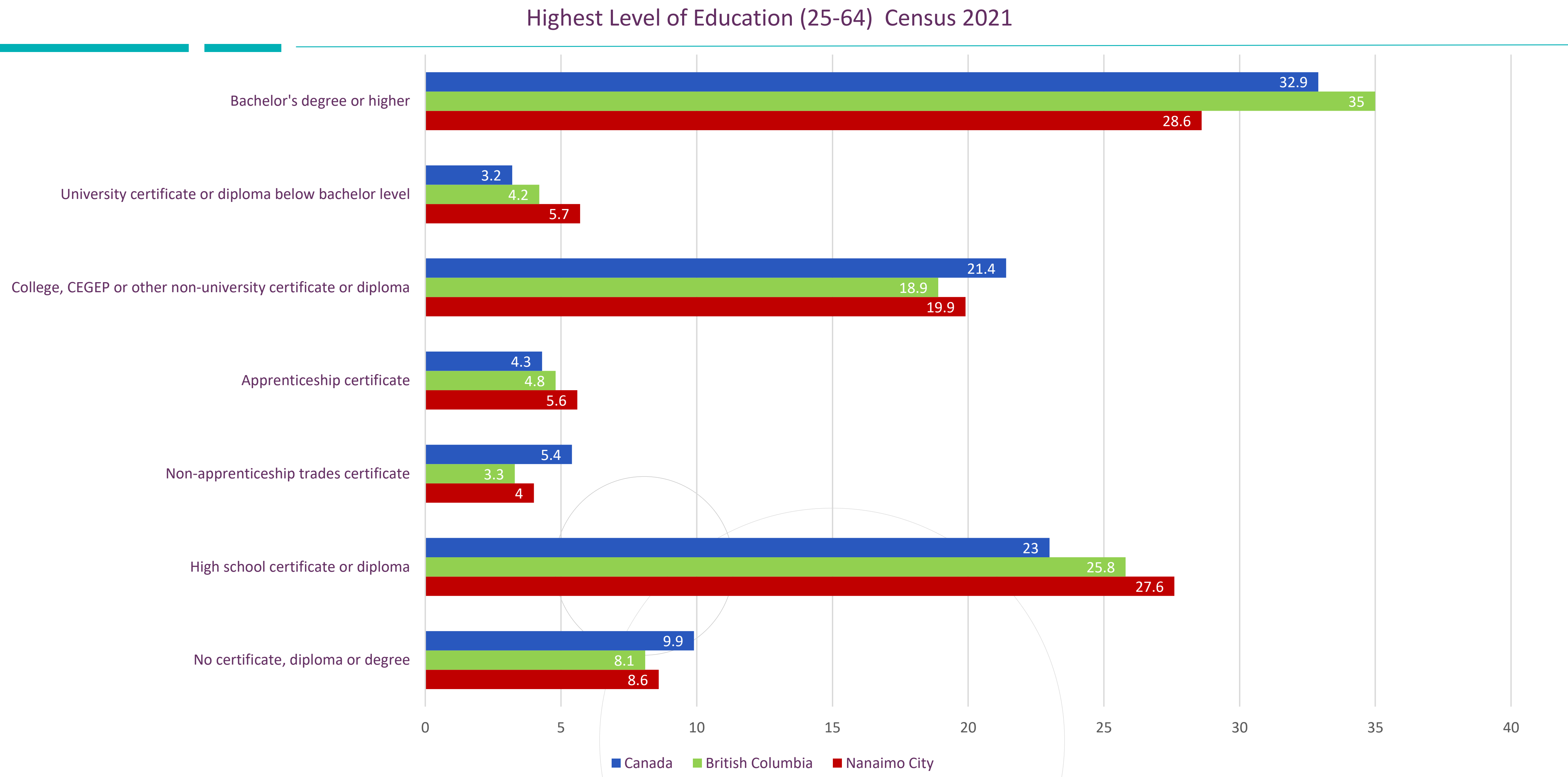
Top 5 Employers by job postings*



***Includes postings from identified known employers only**

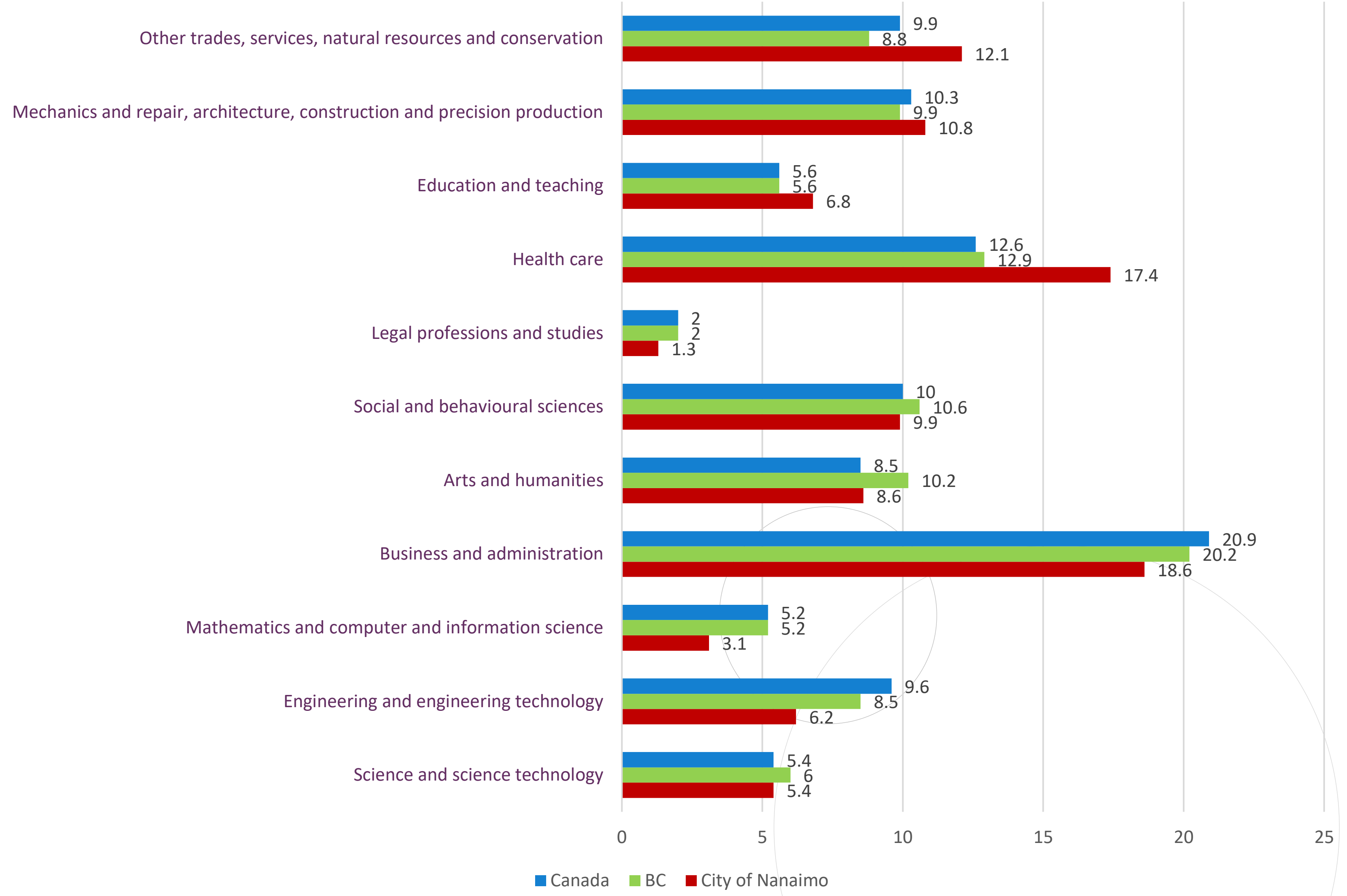
EDUCATION & ENROLLMENT

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION (25-64)



POPULATION BY FIELD OF STUDY

Population (25-64) wih Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree by field of Study



Nanaimo's **educational profile and fields of study distribution** reveal key trends that influence its **labour market, economic opportunities, and future development potential.**

NANAIMO'S WORKFORCE & EDUCATIONAL TRENDS

1. Lower University Attainment but Strong Technical and Trade Skills

- 28.6% of Nanaimo residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, significantly lower than BC (35%) and Canada (32.9%).
- Higher representation in trades, technical certifications, and apprenticeships suggests a workforce oriented toward skilled trades, hands-on industries, and applied learning programs.

2. Workforce Strength in Health Care & Trades

- Health care is a major field of study in Nanaimo (17.4%), surpassing BC (12.9%) and Canada (12.6%), indicating a strong medical and caregiving workforce. This aligns with Nanaimo's aging population, which drives demand for healthcare services and professionals.
- Trades and applied technical fields are more prevalent, with 12.1% of post-secondary graduates in trades, services, and natural resources, compared to 8.8% in BC and 9.9% in Canada.
- Construction and mechanics-related fields (10.8%) also exceed BC (9.9%) and Canada (10.3%), reflecting a strong labour force for housing and infrastructure development.

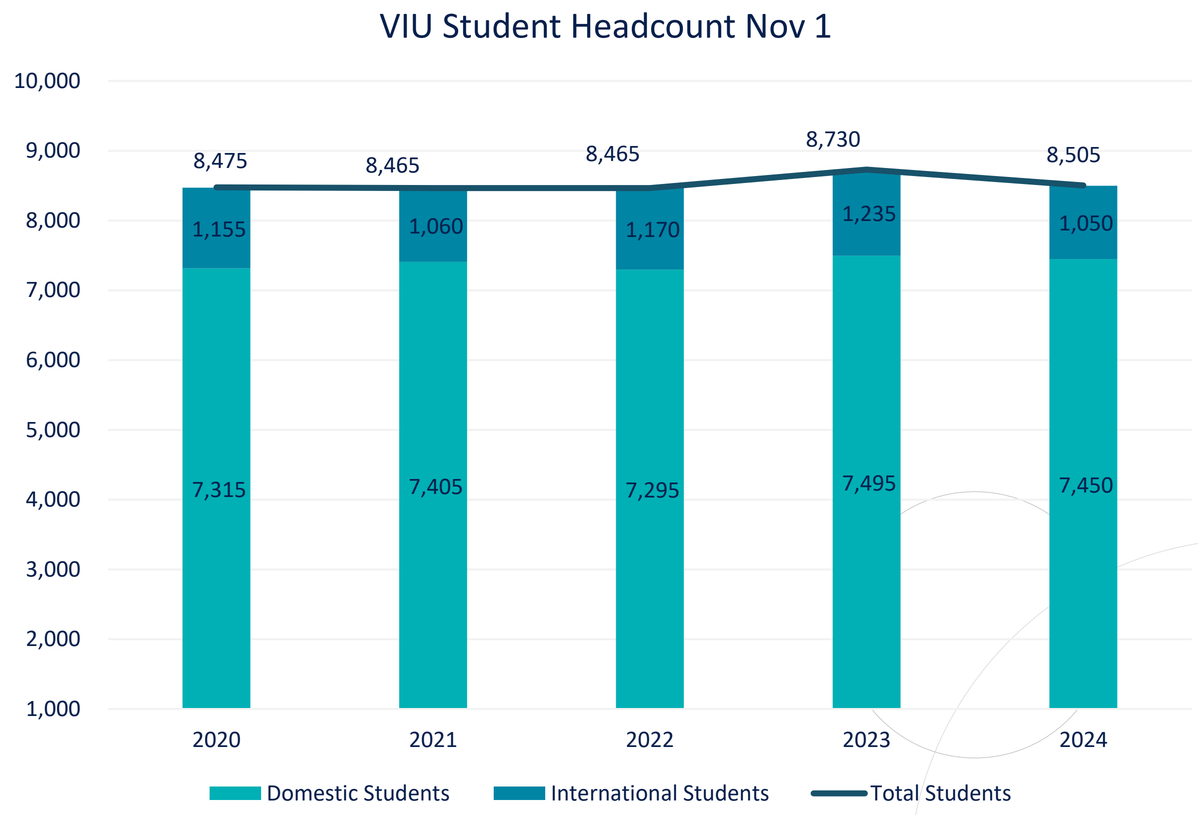
3. Underrepresentation in STEM & Business Fields

- STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) is lower in Nanaimo than in BC and Canada:
  - ➢ Science & technology (5.4%) matches the national average but lags behind BC (6%).
  - ➢ Engineering (6.2%) is significantly lower than BC (8.5%) and Canada (9.6%), indicating fewer professionals in high-tech manufacturing, infrastructure, and innovation sectors.
  - ➢ Computer and IT fields (3.1%) are well below BC (5.2%) and Canada (5.2%), suggesting a gap in the digital economy and tech industry workforce.
- Business & administration (18.6%) is lower than both BC (20.2%) and Canada (20.9%), which may indicate fewer professionals in corporate management, finance, and entrepreneurship.

4. Implications for Nanaimo's Economic Development

- Healthcare & skilled trades are core strengths, meaning continued investment in hospitals, senior care, and construction projects will drive local economic growth.
- The lower share of STEM graduates could limit Nanaimo's ability to attract high-tech industries and innovation-driven businesses. Encouraging STEM education and IT workforce development could boost diversification and tech-based job creation.
- With a strong trades and applied sciences workforce, Nanaimo is well-positioned for growth in housing, construction, and resource-based industries but may need to enhance digital and high-tech industry development to remain competitive.

VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY STUDENT ENROLLMENT



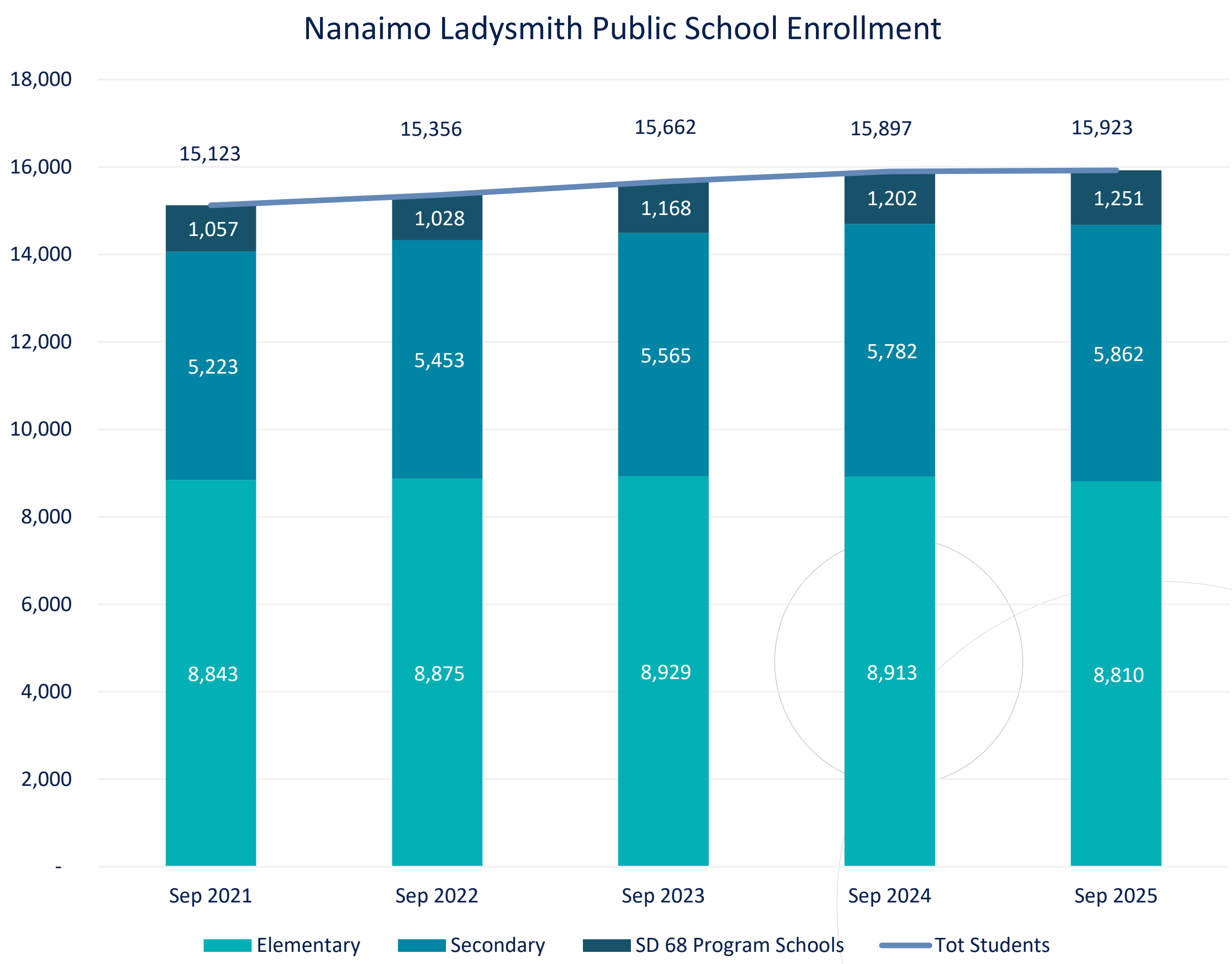
Total student numbers are steady, but international enrollment at risk

- Total enrollment remained relatively stable between 2020 and 2024 (8,475 → 8,505), despite a temporary peak in 2023.
- Domestic student numbers show modest, steady fluctuations, contributing to a predictable revenue baseline.
- International enrollment, however, is highly variable—declining by approximately 15% in 2024—creating significant volatility in tuition revenue.
- Because international students pay higher tuition rates, even small declines have disproportionately large financial impacts.

Federal policy changes will likely reduce international enrollment in 2025–2026

- Canada has introduced stricter **study-permit caps**, lowering the national approval target for 2025 and imposing additional requirements such as Provincial Attestation Letters (PALs).
- New **Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP)** rules—such as mandatory language benchmarks and program-eligibility restrictions—make Canada a less accessible and less appealing study destination for many prospective students.
- These regulatory changes increase uncertainty in the application and approval process, reducing the likelihood that international enrollment will recover in the near term.

SD 68 ENROLLMENT



Overall growth is real, but slowing sharply:

- **+800 students** over four years or **+1.30%** Compound Annual Growth Rate (**CAGR**).
- Overall year-over-year gains have **decelerated of late: +233 (2022)** → **+306 (2023)** → **+235 (2024)** → **+26 (2025)**.

Secondary enrollment the growth engine:

- **+639** students since 2021 (**+2.93% CAGR**).
- Accounts for **~80% of total net growth** .
- Share of secondary enrollment rose **from 34.5% to 36.8%**.

Program Schools are the fastest-growing slice: *(Island ConnectED, Learning Alt, Career Technical Centre, Continuing Ed)*

- **+194** students (**+4.3% CAGR**).
- Share increased **from 7.0% to 7.9%**.
- Demonstrates rising demand for alternative, online, adult, and career pathways.

Elementary is easing back:

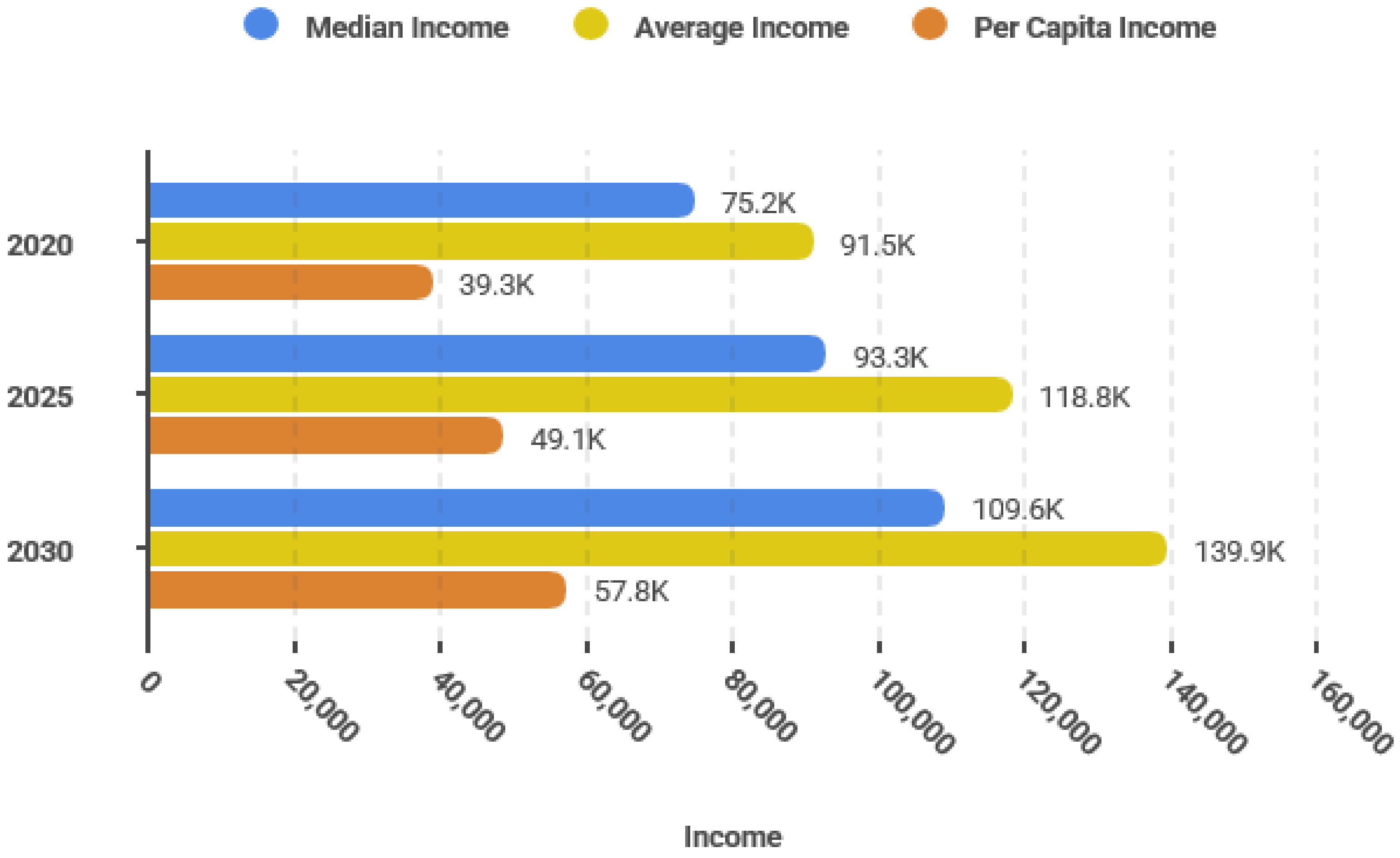
- Net change **–33** students overall (–0.09% CAGR).
- Largest single-year drop was **–103** in **2025**.
- Share of total fell **from 58.5% to 55.3%** (–3.2 percentage points).

Peak enrollment is now:

- **15,923** total in **Sep 2025** — a new high — but the **momentum weakened** (only **+26** year-over-year).
- **The 2024 → 2025 shift: Elementary –103, Secondary +80, Program Schools +49 ⇒ Total +26.**

INCOME & SPENDING

Income 2020-2030



MEDIAN, AVERAGE AND PER CAPITA INCOME

- In 2025, the estimated median household income in the City of Nanaimo is $93,296, marking a significant 24 per cent increase over the past five years. By 2030, Nanaimo's median household income is projected to reach $109,588, reflecting a growth of 17.5 per cent. In comparison, BC's median household income was $103,405 in 2025 and is anticipated to grow by 16.9 per cent over the next five years.

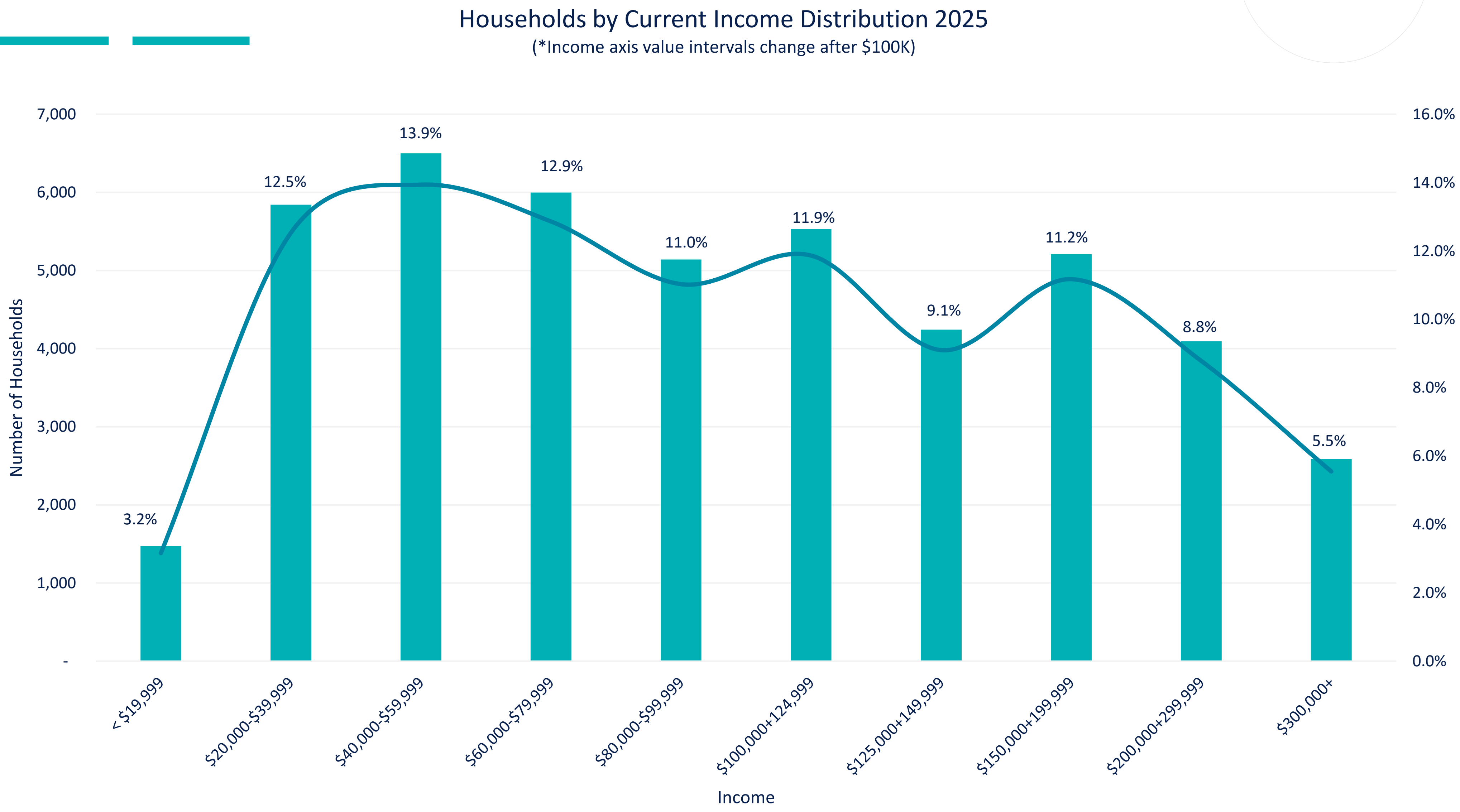
- Similarly, the average household income in Nanaimo reached $118,750 in 2025, indicating a 29.8 per cent increase over the past five years. Projections suggest that the average household income will climb to $139,948 by 2030, representing a growth of 17.9 per cent. Meanwhile, BC's average income for 2025 stood at $137,550 and is forecasted to grow by 17.4 per cent to $161,541 by 2030.

- Nanaimo's per capita income in 2025 was $49,135 showing a 25 per cent increase over the past five years. Projections indicate that per capita income will rise to $57,807 by 2030, reflecting a growth of 17.6 per cent. BC's per capita income was $52,817 in 2025 and is expected to increase by another 16.7 per cent to reach $61,648 by 2030.

- Nanaimo lags behind BC in all three income categories, however, Nanaimo's projected annual rate of growth in median (3.5 per cent), average (3.6 per cent), and per capita household income (3.5 per cent) over the next five years is slightly higher than BC.

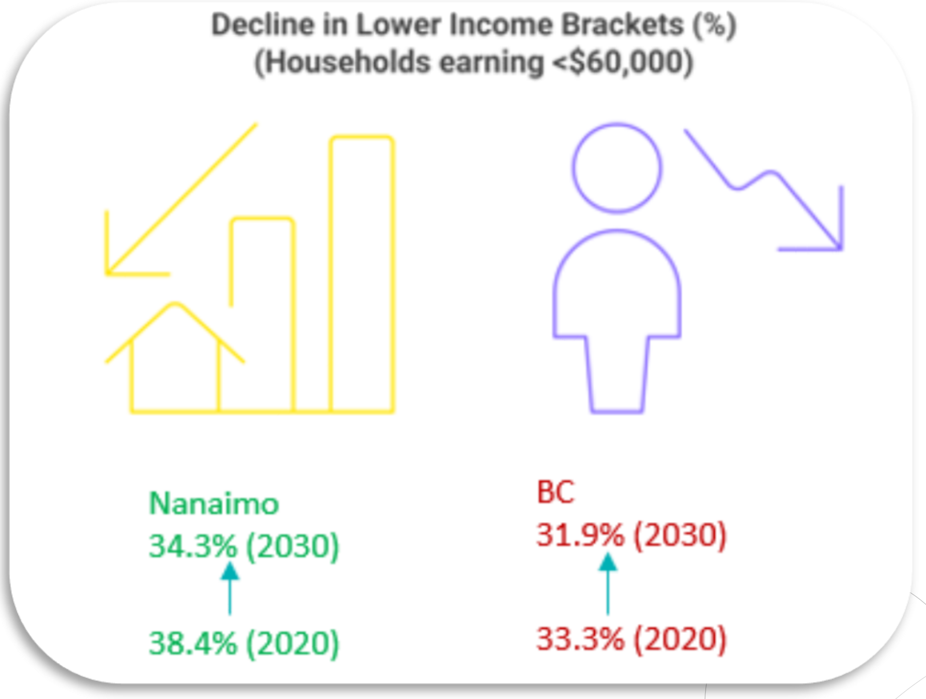
Definitions:
- Median Household Income is the middle value of all household incomes in a given area. This means half of the households earn more than this amount, and half earn less.
- Average Household Income is the total income of all households divided by the number of households.
- Per Capita Income is the total income of an area divided by the total population (including adults and children).

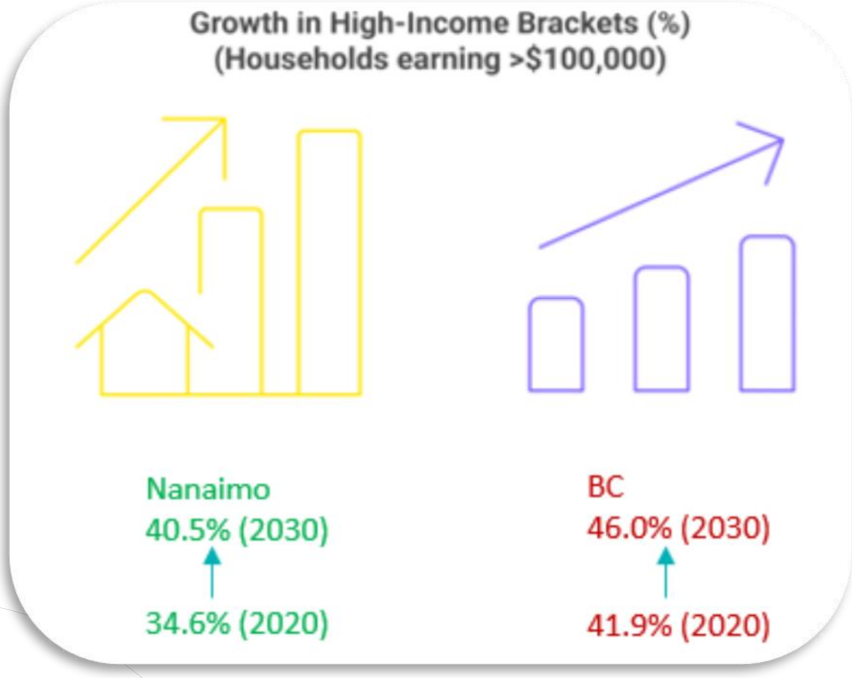
HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION



10-YR INCOME DISTRIBUTION TRENDS & INSIGHTS

INFLATION ADJUSTED (CONSTANT DOLLARS)





Decline in Lower Income Brackets (2020-2030)

- Nanaimo households earning <$60,000 shrinks from **38.4% to 34.3%**
- BC households earning <$60,000 drop from **33.3% to 31.9%**

Significant Growth in High-Income Brackets (2020-2030)

- Nanaimo households earning >$100,000 increases from **34.6%** to **40.5%**
- BC households earning >$100,000 increase from **41.9%** to **46.0%**
- Nanaimo households earning > $200,000 grows from **6.2%** **to 11.3%**

10-YR INCOME DISTRIBUTION TRENDS & INSIGHTS

Nanaimo is becoming wealthier over time, a trend consistent across the province. BC has maintained a slightly higher proportion of high-income households throughout this period. It's also important to note that considerable income supports provided during the COVID-19 pandemic are reflected in the past five years of income trends.

- **Real income growth is solid**—Nanaimo households are genuinely better off, not just nominally richer. Real income adjusts your nominal income for changes in the price level (CPI). **Median (real**) rises $75.2k → $79.2k → $83.4k; **average (real**) $91.5k → $100.4k → $106.6k; **per-capita (real)** $39.3k → $41.6k → $44.0k—all pointing to true purchasing-power gains.

- **Upper-income expansion is pronounced**, especially $200k+—**while the share below $60k shrinks - Income projections** show in **nominal terms**, $100k+ hits 54.6% by 2030 and $200k+ reaches 20.1%; **even in real terms**, $100k+ climbs to 40.5% and $200k+ to 11.3%. This will reshape demand toward premium services—and heightens the need for affordability safeguards.

- **Nanaimo's market capacity is rising with population**—fueling retail, services, and housing upgrades.
  Nominal median/average/per-capita incomes are projected to grow ~17–18% over 2025→2030, alongside population gains—supporting strategies to attract higher-value businesses, retain professional talent, and expand retrofit/renovation ecosystems

- **Affordability Pressures:** Despite overall income growth, the decline in lower-income households highlights potential affordability challenges for the working class and those on fixed incomes.

- **Inequality Concerns:** The shrinking low-income bracket suggests that rising housing and living costs may be pushing out lower-income households. This could impact community diversity and service-sector employment, reinforcing the need for affordable housing initiatives and social equity policies.

- **Low Income Measure (LIM):** There are three main measures of poverty in Canada but the most common measure is the Low-Income Measure (LIM). LIM is a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted household income, where "adjusted" refers to the household size or the number of members in a household. In Nanaimo households making <$46,700 in 2025 would be considered in the low-income measure (unadjusted for household size).

- **Living Wage** is considered a better measure of poverty in BC as it takes into consideration regional differences in basic expenses such as food, clothing, rental housing, transportation etc.

SOURCES OF INCOME COMPARISONS

Percentage of Income Sources 2023

Income Source	Nanaimo % of Total	BC % of Total	Economic Implications
Employment Income	63.1%	68.7%	Key driver of economic activity, needs continued workforce support
Dividend & Interest Income	7.7%	9.4%	Growing importance of investments, reflects rising wealth for some
Government Transfers (EI, GST,CPP, QPP,OAS)	16.1%	12.0%	Higher reliance on Government Transfers in Nanaimo due to aging population
Private Pensions (Excludes OAS, CPP, QPP)	10.2%	7.0%	More significant in Nanaimo, indicating a more retiree-heavy demographic
RRSP Income (only 65+ included)	0.4%	0.4%	Minor source of income, but important for financial planning
Other Income (Rental income, Support payments, Scholarships, Retirement allow)	2.5%	2.4%	Reflecting diverse sources, such as rental and alternative income streams

- Analyzing income sources within a community can provide valuable insights into its overall financial well-being, including its reliance on government transfers.
- Nanaimo's share of employment income (63.1%) remains lower than the provincial average (68.7%), reflecting its older population and greater reliance on pensions. However, Nanaimo has seen a positive shift, with employment income rising from 62.8% in 2018 to 63.1% in 2023, driven by an influx of younger workers during this period.
- Job creation and labor market stability are key to sustaining employment income growth.
- Nanaimo has a higher percentage of income from government transfers and private pensions in comparison to BC, reflecting its slightly older demographic.

LIVING WAGE 2025- NANAIMO & VANCOUVER ISLAND

- A **living wage** is the hourly pay a worker needs to cover **basic expenses**, such as housing, food, transportation, and childcare, after accounting for taxes, credits, deductions, and subsidies. Unlike the minimum wage, which is legally mandated, the living wage reflects **actual local costs** and does not include debt repayment or savings for future goals. The living wage calculation is currently based on a two-parent family with two children, the most common family unit in BC, and each parent working full-time.
- In a diverse province like British Columbia, the cost of living varies widely. Some communities benefit from lower housing or childcare costs, while others lack transit options, making car ownership a necessity. Regardless of location, everyone should be able to afford a decent quality of life, as all communities rely on workers to fill essential jobs.
- Living Wage BC and Canada calculate the living wage locally so that communities can better understand the economic challenges their residents face and advocate for policies that address poverty and affordability issues in their region.
- **Nanaimo: $24.40/hour** in 2025 (**+2.6% from 2024**).
- **Range on Vancouver Island: $22.60** (Port Alberni) **to $27.40** (Greater Victoria). Nanaimo sits **mid-range**, below Victoria and Cowichan but above Port Alberni.

LIVING WAGE 2025

1. **Living wage gap vs minimum wage is widening**

   - Nanaimo's $24.40/hour is $6.55 higher than BC's minimum wage—a gap that leaves many full-time workers struggling to meet basic needs.

2. Housing and food costs are key affordability drivers

- **Housing costs** remain the largest driver—rents rising faster than inflation, vacancy rates low.
- **Food prices** up **3.6%** year-over-year; food insecurity affects **1 in 5 British Columbians**.
- **Child care costs** jumped **27%** for two-parent families and **15%** for single parents despite subsidies.
- **Transportation costs** increased modestly; smaller communities face higher costs due to car dependency.

3. Government supports help but are insufficient and uneven

- Government programs (child-care benefit, dental care plan, rental assistance) help offset costs but **clawbacks and elimination of credits** (e.g., Climate Action Tax Credit) reduce net benefit especially for single adults.

Vancouver Island vs Metro Vancouver

- **Metro Vancouver:** $27.85 (highest urban rate)
- **Whistler:** $29.60 (highest in BC)
- **Island communities:** generally **$24–27/hour**, reflecting lower housing costs than Metro Vancouver but still significant affordability challenges.
- Nanaimo's rate suggests **moderate cost pressures**, primarily housing and food, with less extreme transit costs compared to rural areas.

2025 NANAIMO CONSUMER EXPENDITURES

	Average Household Spend	Total spend	Spending Potential Index		Average Household Spend	Total spend	Spending Potential Index
Food	$ 12,935.29	$ 603,043,048	**103**	**Reading/Other printed materials**	$ 259.10	$ 12,079,358	**112**
Shelter	$ 27,255.21	$ 1,270,638,098	**107**	**Education**	$ 1,413.22	$ 65,884,181	**80**
Household Operation	$ 6,798.90	$ 316,964,538	**109**	**Tobbacco, alcohol**	$ 1,495.48	$ 69,719,496	**111**
Household Furnishings & Equipment	$ 3,421.86	$ 159,526,936	**97**	**Games of chance**	$ 1,405.77	$ 65,536,970	**101**
Clothing	$ 2,540.83	$ 118,453,404	**89**	**Misc Expenses**	$ 2,132.08	$ 99,397,697	**119**
Transportation	$ 12,472.24	$ 581,456,017	**99**	**Personal Taxes**	$ 18,228.73	$ 849,823,446	**74**
Healthcare	$ 3,463.64	$ 161,474,937	**108**	**Personal Insurance payments & pension**	$ 516.21	$ 24,065,789	**88**
Personal Care	$ 1,985.71	$ 92,573,726	**103**	**Gifts of money & contributions**	$ 2,032.62	$ 94,760,923	**134**
Recreation	$ 6,579.85	$ 306,752,764	**121**	**Total**	$ 114,192.67	$ 5,323,662,254	98

2025 NANAIMO CONSUMER EXPENDITURES

- Average household and total spending by category are detailed in this table. The Spending Potential index represents he amount spent in the area relative to the national average of 100. An index of 117 means that the area spends 17% more than the national average on that good or service.
- **Shelter remains the largest category of household spending**, accounting for nearly one quarter of total consumption in 2025. Nanaimo households spent **7 per cent more than the national average** on shelter, reinforcing ongoing affordability pressures and the importance of housing supply, energy-efficient construction, and retrofits to help contain costs.
- Nanaimo households also spend more than the national average on several **quality-of-life and locally oriented categories**. Spending on recreation was **21 per cent above the Canadian average**, underscoring the community's strong engagement in leisure, wellness, parks, sports, and cultural activities. Above-average spending on food, personal care, health care, and reading materials further reflects a community that values everyday services, personal well-being, and local amenities.
- **Household operation costs**, including utilities and home services, exceeded the national average by **9 per cent**, consistent with Nanaimo's housing mix and aging dwelling stock. Together with shelter costs, home-related expenses remain a major driver of household budgets.
- In contrast, **personal tax payments were well below the Canadian average**, with Nanaimo households paying **26 per cent less** than the benchmark. This reflects income composition rather than tax rates, influenced by a higher share of retirees, non-taxable income sources, and employment patterns with more part-time, seasonal, and self-employed workers.
- Several discretionary categories — including **education and clothing** — remained below national averages, suggesting households continue to prioritize essential living costs and experiences over large discretionary purchases.
- Overall, **Nanaimo's household spending profile remains relatively stable**. Elevated housing and home-related costs present ongoing challenges, while above-average spending on recreation and community services points to continued investment in quality of life and local amenities.

TOURISM

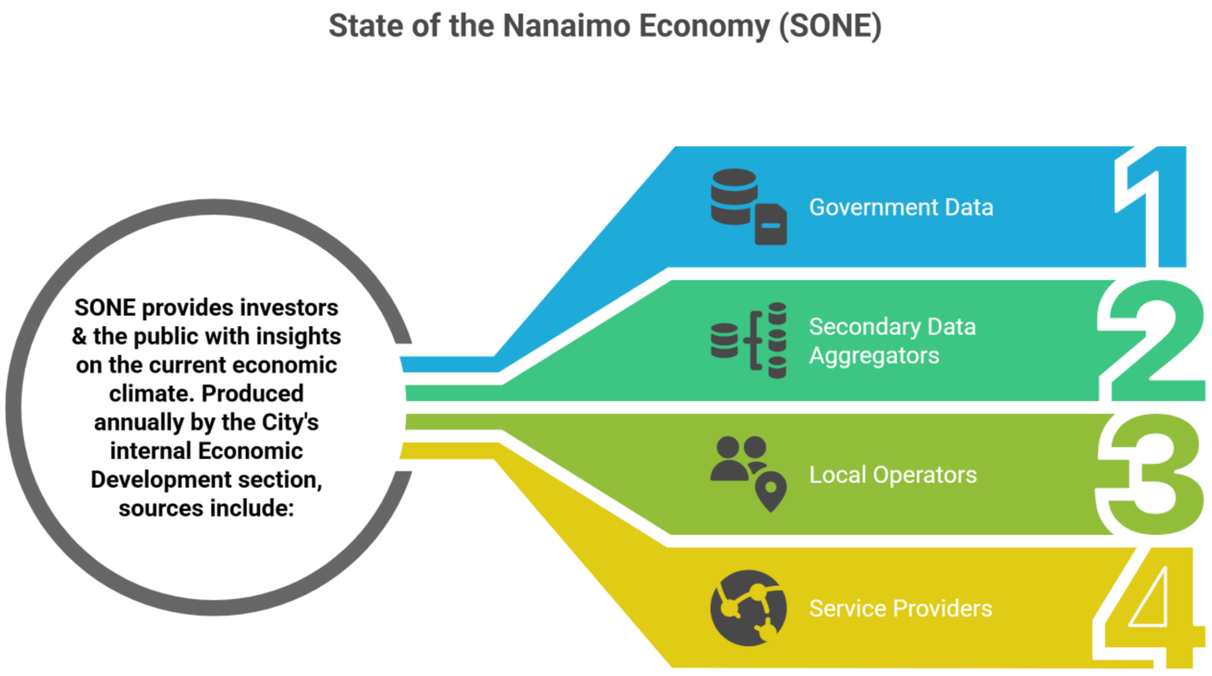
Tourism Statistics			
December Year- to- Date	**2024**	**2025**	**Varience**
Visitor Data			
Visitor Spending	$362,400,000	$371,500,000	2.5%
Visitors Served at Visitor Centre	9,804	10,998	12.2%
Economic Impact from Meetings, Conferences, & Events	$6,185,522	$11,733,601	89.7%
Vancouver Island Conference Centre (delegate days)	28,764	32,163	11.8%
Total attendance VICC (incl. delegate days)		72,361	
Hotels/Motels			
Average Occupancy	62.9%	67.2%	6.8%
Average Daily Room Rate	$171.07	$180.55	5.5%
Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR)	$110.09	$121.30	10.2%
Transportation Data			
BC Ferries (Duke Pt/Tsaw & Dept Bay/Hors Bay)			
Passengers	4,253,213	4,286,523	0.8%
Vehicles	1,754,994	1,765,975	0.6%
Hullo Ferries passengers	490,000	580,000	18.4%
Nanaimo Airport passengers	359,525	355,639	-1.1%

TOURISM

- **Tourism delivered a solid 2025**: higher **occupancy**, **ADR**, and **RevPAR**, combined with **stronger meetings & events** and **incremental gains in ferry** point to a healthy, diversified visitor base.
- **Visitor spending edged up** to **$371.5M** (**+2.5% YoY**), indicating steady growth in overall tourism receipts.
- **Meetings & events were a standout**, with **economic impact nearly doubling** to **$11.73M** (**+89.7% YoY**).
- **VICC performance strengthened**: **delegate days** rose to **32,163** (**+11.8% YoY).**
- **Hotel occupancy improved** to **67.2%** (**+6.8% YoY**, +4.3 pts), reflecting firmer demand. **ADR increased** to **$180.55** (**+5.5% YoY**), **RevPAR advanced** to **$121.30** (**+10.2% YoY**), with room rate and higher occupancy, both contributing.
- **BC Ferries (major Nanaimo routes)**: **Passengers 4.287M** (**+0.8% YoY**) and **vehicles 1.766M** (**+0.6% YoY**)—steady connectivity and capacity utilization.
- **Hullo Ferries**: **580,000 passengers** (**+18.4% YoY**), underscoring strong adoption of the fast-ferry service and added travel options.
- **Nanaimo Airport (YCD)**: Airport Passenger volumes were down for the second year in a row.

- Tourism continues to play a strategic role in Nanaimo's economy by generating demand that supports jobs, small businesses, and investment across multiple sectors. Its impact extends beyond accommodations, contributing directly to food and beverage, transportation, arts and culture, sport, retail, and services that strengthen both downtown activity and neighbourhood economic health. Because tourism spending is widely distributed, coordinated destination management is essential to ensure community-wide benefit.
- The City's investment in Tourism Nanaimo supports this coordinated approach through destination marketing, business event attraction, sport hosting, and development initiatives. These efforts help drive intentional, measurable demand that boosts local spending, supports shoulder-season activity, and contributes to a more balanced year-round economy.
- The visitor economy showed steady performance in 2024–2025 despite broader market adjustments. Hotel occupancy increased 6.8%, and short-term rental indicators remained stable, reflecting continued demand driven largely by domestic and short-haul travellers. Growth in meetings, conferences, and sport tourism strengthened midweek and off-season visitation, providing more predictable room nights and spending outside the summer peak.
- Nanaimo's position as a central-island hub—supported by strong transportation links, a walkable downtown, and an expanding events portfolio—continues to offer competitive advantages. Visitor spending patterns show high local expenditure, supporting cultural amenities, community assets, and small enterprises.
- Entering 2026, tourism strategy emphasizes value creation, balanced seasonal demand, and alignment with broader community and economic development goals. Tourism remains a key driver of local resilience, business vitality, and place-based growth.

ABOUT & SOURCES



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- Statistics Canada
- ESRI Canada
- City of Nanaimo
- School District 68
- Vancouver Island University
- Vancouver Island Conference Centre
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- Tourism Nanaimo
- Nanaimo Airport
- Vancouver Island Real Estate (VIREB)
- Hullo Ferries
- LASR, Destination Canada
- Victoria Real Estate Board (VREB)
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- Real Estate Board Greater Vancouver (REBGV)
- Ministry of Advanced Education & Training
- Province of BC
- TD Economics
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- Signal 49 Research

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