

SHUSWAP

SERVICE SECTOR PROFILE



**THE SHUSWAP:
LIFE'S WORK IN THE BALANCE**

Market Overview

The services sector in the Shuswap region plays a central role in supporting local communities, tourism operators, small businesses, and seasonal residents. Service industries range from consumer and personal services to specialized professional and technical services that support economic activity across the region. Economic activity in these rural and lakeside communities is strongly influenced by tourism, real estate development, small business entrepreneurship, and lifestyle migration, all of which drive demand for a diverse mix of services.



SHUSWAP
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
SOCIETY

AREA HIGHLIGHTS

Area C – Sunnybrae, Tappen, White Lake

- Population & Demand Drivers: 3,300 permanent residents, steady influx of retirees and families
- Professional Services Context: Mostly small accounting, bookkeeping, and consulting services; residents often travel to Salmon Arm for specialized legal, tax, or business advisory services.
- Investment Opportunities: Local accounting, tax planning, legal advisory, real estate consulting, and small-scale business support.

Area D – Sicamous, Mara, Seymour Arm

- Population & Demand Drivers: 4,500 residents with a strong seasonal tourism influx.
- Professional Services Context: Tourism businesses, marinas, and short-term rental operators drive demand for business support, payroll, and insurance services.
- Investment Opportunities: Hospitality consulting, property management services, insurance, and professional bookkeeping.

Area F – Sorrento, Blind Bay

- Population & Demand Drivers: 3,600 residents with high seasonal lift due to second homes and tourism.
- Professional Services Context: Dense residential clusters support accounting, mortgage, real estate, and planning services. Small and lifestyle businesses require legal, marketing, and HR consulting.
- Investment Opportunities: Real estate advisory, tax/accounting services, small business consulting, wellness business support.

Area G – South Shuswap: Carlin, Balmoral, Notch Hill, Eagle Bay, Skimikin

- Population & Demand Drivers: 5,700 residents; high proportion of second-home owners.
- Professional Services Context: Limited local presence; seasonal population supports demand for financial planning, legal, and professional consulting.
- Investment Opportunities: Mobile or hybrid professional service models, remote consulting hubs, specialized legal/accounting practices, wealth management.

SERVICE SECTOR AT A GLANCE

BC

The services sector is the largest and fastest growing part of British Columbia's economy, encompassing a wide range of activities from healthcare and education to tourism, finance, and business services. It accounts for the majority of employment and economic output in the province, driven by strong consumer demand, population growth, trade ties, and digital innovation.

Key Characteristics

- The services sector dominates BC's labour market, with most jobs in areas like healthcare, retail, hospitality, education, and professional services.
- Growth is supported by urban population concentration (e.g., Metro Vancouver, Victoria) as well as regional demand in communities like Kelowna, Kamloops, and the Shuswap.
- Services are increasingly digitalized, with many firms adopting cloud tools, ecommerce, and remote delivery models.

Professional Services — The Engine of Business Growth

Professional services are a critical subset of the services sector. They include firms that offer specialized expertise, knowledge based solutions, and business support functions. The major components are:

- Legal services.
- Accounting, bookkeeping & tax consulting.
- Architecture, engineering & technical consulting.
- Management consulting & business advisory services.
- Marketing, branding, and digital media agencies.
- Information technology (IT) and software development services.
- Human resources and organizational development consulting.

Why Professional Services Matter in BC

1. Economic Value

- Professional services contribute significantly to provincial GDP and support productivity across other industries.
- They are essential intermediaries helping businesses grow, manage risk, and innovate.

2. Employment and Skills

- These industries tend to offer higher skilled, higher wage jobs compared to many other service sub-sectors.
- They attract talent in law, finance, engineering, IT, and analytics — disciplines that fuel broader economic competitiveness.

BC - cont'd

3. Export and Digital Reach

- Many professional firms in BC serve clients beyond provincial borders, both across Canada and internationally.
- Digital delivery of advisory, software, and consulting services increases export potential.

4. Entrepreneurial Contribution

- A large share of professional services firms are small and medium enterprises (SMEs), including solo professionals and boutique consultancies. This makes the sub sector an important source of local entrepreneurship and innovation.

Trends Shaping Professional Services in BC

- Digital Transformation - cloud platforms, automation, and remote collaboration tools are reshaping how services are delivered, and expanding reach beyond local markets.
- Global Market Access - BC's location on the Pacific Rim and strong trade links expand opportunities for consultancies, IT firms, and design services to serve Asia Pacific clients.
- Demand for Specialized Expertise - business complexity, regulatory change, and digital disruption increase demand for legal, HR, risk, tax, and technology advisory services.
- Hybrid Staffing Models - firms are blending traditional staffing with contract professionals, virtual teams, and gig economy talent to scale capacity.

Regional District of Columbia Shuswap Areas C, D, F, G

Community Snapshot

- Population: 16,519 (2021).
- Population Growth (2011-2021): 2,442 (17.3%).
- Columbia Shuswap Regional District Population Growth (2021-2025): 3,599 (6%).
- Dwellings (2021): 10,688.
- Households: 7,365.
- Seasonal Dwellings: 3,327 (31% of total dwellings).
- Total Accommodation Units (hotel/motel/B&B, RV & campground): 780.
- Median Household Income (2021): \$71,473.
- Median Age (2021): 56 (BC 42.8).
- Median Dwelling Value (2021): \$523,795.
- Number of Businesses (2025): 1952.
- Top 5 Industries: Construction – 21%, Retail – 11%, Accommodation and Food Services – 9.5%, Education – 6.5%, Agriculture – 5.5%.
- Employment Growth 2015-2025: 1426 (50%). BC 581,704 (23%).
- Projected Job Growth: 268 (6% of 2025 industry employment).
- Broader Shuswap Projected Job Growth (2025-2031): 1,344 (7% of 2025 industry employment).
- Regional Economic Role: Tourism and Agriculture Hub, Lifestyle Relocation.
- Highway 1 Traffic: 12,752 vehicles/day peak summer in

Sorrento area.

Sources: Census Canada, 2021, Lightcast, BC Government.

Services Economy: Columbia Shuswap Regional District

- **Service Jobs** (2025): 1951 jobs (45.3% total employment, 8.4% growth 2015-2025). Top sub-sectors: accommodation and food services (411), educational services (280), administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (276), other services (223), healthcare and social services (220), professional / scientific / technical services (184), arts / entertainment / culture (182).
- **Service Exports** (2022) – latest input-output modeling available): \$735 M (28.6% of total exports). Key exports (in order): healthcare and social assistance, educational services, real estate and rental and leasing, accommodation and food services, finance and insurance, professional / scientific / technical services.
- **Services Employment Projection** (2025-2031): 163 (8.4% of sector jobs). Leading sub-sector growth (in order): administrative and support / waste management / remediation services, accommodation and food services, healthcare and social assistance, educational services, arts / entertainment / recreation.
- **Services Key Imported Purchases** (Enterprise Import Replacement Opportunities) (2022 – latest input-output modeling available): 1) Architectural, engineering and related services (\$6.2 M total purchases, 99% imported); 2) Realtors (\$4.6 M total purchases, 100% imported); 3) Insurance carriers (\$4.6 M total purchases, 100% imported); 4) Banks (\$4.6 M total purchases, 100% imported); 5) Computer systems design and related services (\$3.3 M total purchases, 84% imported); 6) Accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping and payroll (\$2.4 M total purchases, 79% imported); 7) Legal (\$2 M total purchases, 96% imported); 8) Other professional, scientific, and technical services (\$1.5 M total purchases, 100% imported); 9) Management, scientific, and technical consulting services (\$1.6 M total purchases, 94% imported); 10) Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment rental and leasing (\$1.4 M total purchases, 100% imported).

Source: Lightcast.

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services has solid presence in Columbia Shuswap Regional District Areas C, D, F and G:

- 9th biggest of 21 industry sectors (2025).
- 12th highest ten-year growth rate in absolute numbers (30), and 14th as percent change (19%)
- 3rd highest sector wages.

The sector inherently has more entrepreneurship and footloose location than other sectors.

Average Wages - Retail

\$42,488 – Columbia Shuswap Regional District Areas C, D, F, G

\$61,519 – BC

All sectors: \$44,110 (BC \$60,308)

Source: Lightcast. 2022 latest input-output modeling available.

NAIC	Industry	Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) Areas C, D, F, G	BC Average Wages	CSRD as % of BC
51	Information & cultural industries	\$21,530	\$82,434	26%
52	Finance & insurance	\$53,829	\$79,434	68%
53	Real estate & rental, & leasing	\$40,190	\$63,491	63%
54	Professional / scientific / technical services	\$60,892	\$86,473	70%
55	Administrative & support, waste management & remediation services	\$42,345	\$55,885	76%
61	Educational services	\$56,223	\$62,234	90%
62	Healthcare & social assistance	\$45,330	\$53,272	85%
71	Arts, entertainment & recreation	\$31,076	\$37,493	83%
72	Accommodation & food services	\$23,042	\$26,094	88%
81	Other services	\$50,423	\$50,146	100%

Source: Lightcast. 2022 latest input-output modeling available.

The BC Government produces a [wage survey](#) that indicates weekly earnings by industry sector/location.

[BC Workforce Profile](#) (Thompson Okanagan).

Key Drivers

- **Population & Seasonal Dynamics:** Permanent population growth plus high seasonal homes drives both steady and cyclical service demand.
- **Small Business Base:** Local enterprises dominate the economic landscape, creating a market for business advisory, accounting, and legal support.
- **Retiree Demographics:** Higher median age increases demand for financial planning, estate planning, tax advisory, and health-adjacent consulting.
- **Tourism Economy:** Hospitality, recreation, and rental businesses need specialized consulting and back-office services.
- **Proximity to Salmon Arm:** Regional hub offers professional networks, but gaps exist in convenience and niche services for surrounding areas.

Sector Opportunities

- **Accounting & Financial Services:** Tax preparation, bookkeeping, payroll, retirement/estate planning, wealth management.

- **Legal Services:** Real estate, property management, business incorporation, contracts, estate planning.
- **Business & Consulting Services:** Marketing, HR, operational consulting, technology implementation, tourism consulting.
- **Health & Wellness Adjacent Services:** Insurance, physiotherapy administration, and wellness business support.
- **Remote/Hybrid Service Delivery:** Virtual consultations and mobile office models can service multiple areas efficiently.

Investment Considerations

- **High Seasonal Variation:** Peak demand occurs during summer months and holiday periods in Columbia Shuswap Regional District Areas D, F, and G.
- **Underserved Areas:** Columbia Shuswap Regional District Areas C and G have limited on-the-ground professional services, creating entry opportunities.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** Expanding advanced broadband makes remote or hybrid delivery feasible.
- **Community Integration:** Successful firms often partner with local tourism operators, realtors, and small businesses to gain early traction.
- **Complementary Growth Sectors:** Real estate, construction, tourism, and retail growth directly increase demand for professional services.

SHUSWAP TARGET INDUSTRY: SERVICES



COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Professional services thrive on underserved business needs, repeat client relationships, and digital/remote delivery models that expand the market beyond local boundaries.

Why Shuswap?

- ✓ Underserved Local Market – small businesses, tourism operators, and nonprofits often lack access to high-quality accounting, legal, HR, IT, and consulting services.
- ✓ Population & Seasonal Demand – a growing permanent resident population combined with recreational property and tourism-driven spikes create consistent, diversified, and expanding client opportunities.
- ✓ Strong Client Relationships – tight-knit communities foster repeat business, loyalty, and referrals, critical for knowledge-based services.
- ✓ Lifestyle & Talent Attraction – professionals benefit from affordable office space, high quality of life, natural amenities, and Highway 1/Kelowna and Kamloops airport access.
- ✓ Digital & Hybrid Delivery – Internet infrastructure has improved dramatically; high speed broadband expansion supports remote work, digital consultations, and cloud-based service delivery.



WHY SHUSWAP?



THE SHUSWAP OFFERS PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ENTREPRENEURS A STRATEGIC COMBINATION OF UNDERSERVED BUSINESS MARKETS, GROWING LOCAL AND SEASONAL POPULATIONS, AND STRONG DEMAND FROM BOTH RESIDENT AND VISITOR ECONOMIES. THE REGION PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSULTANTS, ACCOUNTANTS, LEGAL ADVISORS, IT SPECIALISTS, MARKETING AGENCIES, AND OTHER KNOWLEDGE-BASED SERVICE PROVIDERS SEEKING TO DELIVER HIGH-VALUE EXPERTISE IN A COMMUNITY-ORIENTED AND LIFESTYLE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT.

VALUE CHAIN GAPS

Current Columbia Shuswap Regional District Areas C, G, D, F Retail Value-Chain Gaps

Value chain gaps occur where the flow of goods, services, or information is weak, costly, or underserved – and therefore where opportunities for new entrants are most often found. The Shuswap has a growing demand for professional services, but gaps exist in talent availability, business support, operational efficiency, marketing, and digital capability. Addressing these gaps can unlock higher value, expand client reach, and strengthen the local professional services ecosystem.

Professional Services Value Chain Stages:

1. Talent & Skills Supply – professionals, consultants, specialists.
2. Business Formation & Support – incorporation, licensing, advisory.
3. Service Delivery & Operations – client projects, consulting, IT, legal, accounting.
4. Marketing & Client Acquisition – networking, digital presence, referrals.
5. Technology & Tools – software, digital platforms, remote work capability.
6. Client Support & Retention – ongoing service, training, follow-ups.

Key Services Value Chain Gaps are:

1. Talent & Skills Supply

Gap: Limited local access to specialized professionals (e.g., IT, legal, accounting, engineering).

Impact: Small businesses struggle to hire or contract local expertise.

Opportunity: Remote professionals, training programs, local internships, and talent attraction initiatives.

2. Business Formation & Support

Gap: Entrepreneurs face complexities in business setup, regulatory compliance, and financing.

Impact: Slows new professional service ventures and expansion of existing firms.

Opportunity: Enhanced advisory services, incubators, and mentoring (e.g. Community Futures, Chambers of Commerce).

3. Service Delivery & Operations

Gap: Fragmented service provision with small firms lacking scale or infrastructure.

Impact: Inefficient project management, higher operational costs, limited ability to serve multiple clients.

Opportunity: Shared office spaces, collaborative service networks, virtual teaming, and professional co-ops.

4. Marketing & Client Acquisition

Gap: Limited digital presence, branding, and coordinated regional marketing.

Impact: Missed opportunities to reach tourism operators, small businesses, or regional clients.

Opportunity: Centralized marketing platforms, regional directories, professional networking events, and online lead generation.

5. Technology & Tools

Gap: Many firms lack access to modern tools for remote consulting, cloud accounting, project management, CRM systems, and/or AI.

Impact: Reduced efficiency, limited ability to expand beyond local markets.

Opportunity: Training and adoption programs for cloud-based professional services software, AI, co-invested digital infrastructure.

6. Client Support & Retention

Gap: Professional services providers often operate in isolation with limited after-service follow-up or long-term engagement programs.

Impact: Lower client lifetime value, weak referral networks.

Opportunity: Collaborative client support networks, subscription-style service models, cross-referral programs between professional firms; Centralized service desks or cooperative support networks for multi-store regions.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Given the relatively small local population, the most viable professional services business model is “Regional specialist serving the entire Shuswap.”

① REAL ESTATE & LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

These are among the most viable opportunities due to rural land transactions, subdivision activity, and recreational property ownership. Specific opportunities: Rural land planning consultant (ALR applications, subdivision feasibility); Environmental impact assessment consultant; Septic design / wastewater engineering; Rural civil engineering for small subdivisions; Surveying firm specializing in rural boundary and subdivision work; Development permitting consultant; Short-term rental compliance consulting; Property tax appeal consulting. Why this works: Recreational and lakefront property turnover; Agricultural land; Small-scale subdivisions and rural development.

② CONSTRUCTION & PROPERTY PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Rural areas generate steady demand from second homes, renovations, and seasonal housing. Specific opportunities: Quantity surveying / construction cost consulting; Building envelope consulting; Energy advisor (home efficiency / retrofit programs); FireSmart consulting for wildfire mitigation; Building code consulting; Construction project management for absentee owners; Insurance loss consulting for wildfire or flood claims. Particularly strong in: Area C/G (South Shuswap lakefront development); Area F (North Shuswap recreation properties).

③ TOURISM & HOSPITALITY PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Tourism is a core economic driver, particularly around Shuswap Lake and Adams River recreation areas. Specific opportunities: Destination marketing consultant; Hospitality revenue management consulting; Short-term rental management services; Adventure tourism business planning; Tourism experience design; Digital marketing agency focused on rural tourism operators; Outdoor recreation safety and certification training. Client Base: Resorts; Campgrounds; Vacation rentals; Tour operators; Marinas

④ AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEM PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Agriculture exists across the Shuswap including orchards, small farms, and agri-tourism. Specific opportunities: Agrologist / crop consulting; Farm transition planning; Agri-tourism business development consulting; Irrigation system design; Regenerative agriculture consulting; Farm financial management consulting; Local food supply chain consulting.

⑤ BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP SERVICES

Many local businesses are owner-operators who lack formal advisory services. Specific opportunities: Fractional CFO services for small businesses; Small business bookkeeping and accounting; Rural business strategy consulting; Business succession planning; Indigenous partnership consulting; Cooperative business structuring; Grant writing and funding advisory. Major clients: Tourism operators; Trades businesses; Small manufacturers; Farms.

⑥ REMOTE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

These areas increasingly attract remote professionals relocating from urban markets. Services that could export work out of the region: Remote accounting firm; Virtual legal services; HR consulting for small companies; Remote IT services; Cybersecurity consulting; Data analytics consulting; Technical writing. These can serve clients globally while living locally, which is one of the strongest rural business models.

⑦ ENVIRONMENTAL & RESOURCE SECTOR CONSULTING

Forestry, lakes, and protected areas create demand for environmental expertise. Specific opportunities: Forestry management consulting; Wildfire risk planning; Fisheries and habitat consulting; Watershed planning; Environmental permitting; Climate adaptation planning; Carbon offset project consulting.

⑧ HEALTH & WELLNESS PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Large seasonal populations and retirees create service demand. Specific opportunities: Occupational therapy clinics; Physiotherapy; Mental health counselling; Workplace ergonomics consulting; Rehabilitation consulting for injured workers; Telehealth practice serving rural BC.

SERVICE BUSINESS RESOURCES & INCENTIVES

This resources directory helps businesses identify funding, technical support, training, and market development opportunities to grow, innovate, and scale their operations.

SHUSWAP

Chambers of Commerce

Business advocacy & connections.

- [North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce](#) - business advocacy & connections.
- [South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce](#) - business advocacy & connections.
- [Salmon Arm Chamber of Commerce](#) - business advocacy & connections.

Community Futures Shuswap

Business and economic development services. Primary local touchpoint for financing and business coaching.

- [Launch-a-Preneur Program](#) - fostering new business start-ups in the region by encouraging participants to support one another as they build their businesses from concept to launch.
- [Business Toolkit](#) - downloadable templates for business planning, cash flow analysis, legal checklists, and loan applications.

[Commercial real estate listings.](#)

BC

Business Programs and Services Portal

A central provincial page listing programs related to advisory services, funding, export support, permits, and procurement opportunities for B.C. businesses.

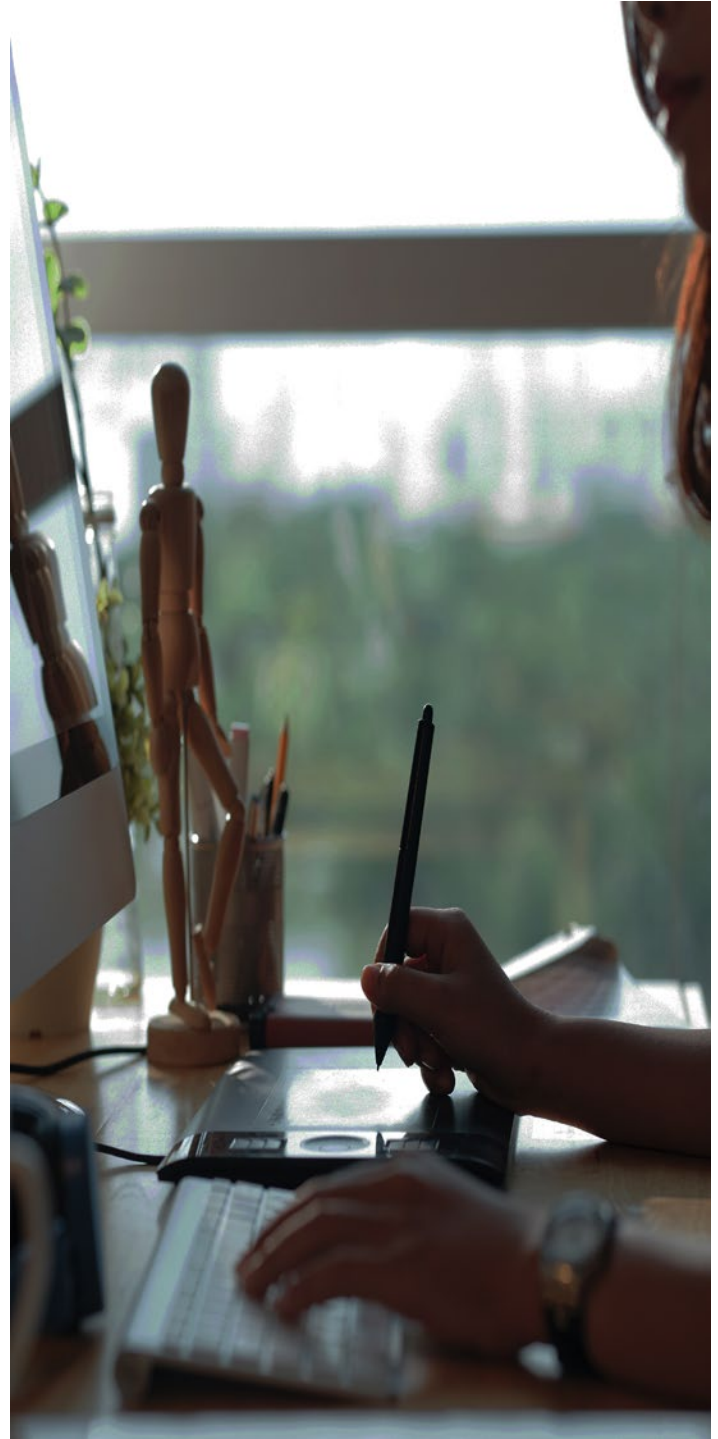
CANADA

Canada Business Benefits Finder

Government of Canada tool that asks a few questions and generates a customized list of government benefits and programs a business may be eligible for.

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