



# WORKFORCE RESET

*Surrey Labour Market Intelligence and Impact Reports*

## November 2021 Surrey Labour Market Summary Report

**\*\*THE ONLY SURREY-FOCUSED LABOUR MARKET REPORT\*\***

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# Surrey Board of Trade COVID-19 Surrey Labour Market Intelligence Report #7 November 2021 (including results of Statistics Canada's October 2021 Labour Force Survey)

**\*\*THE ONLY SURREY-FOCUSED LABOUR MARKET REPORT\*\***

The Surrey Board of Trade (SBOT) continues to provide the only Surrey-specific labour market data on a regular basis! This summary report compares employment changes in Surrey from before the COVID-19 pandemic (February 2020) and through to October 2021 to show the local employment impacts of the pandemic. This report is prepared by Human Capital Strategies in conjunction with SBOT.

*Please note that until December 2020, the Labour Force Data provided by Statistics Canada was based on population counts from the 2011 Census of Population. As of January 2021, the estimates have been adjusted to reflect the population counts from the 2016 Census. As a result, you will see some minor changes in numbers from Labour Market Intelligence Reports published in 2020. All the numbers for 2020 provided in this report have been updated based on the revised labour force data from Statistics Canada.*

## HIGHLIGHTS

In October 2021, Surrey's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be driven by a two-pronged strength: knowledge-based industries and resource industries. Many other goods and services sectors in Surrey remain impacted and below February 2020 employment levels.

Health care, natural resources, public administration and tech sectors are leading the Surrey jobs recovery. An exception to knowledge-based growth is the recovery of wholesale and retail trade. The single largest percentage growth in terms of occupational categories has been in natural resources positions (83.0%) – many British Columbians do not realize the extent to which non-agriculture resource companies are prevalent in Surrey.

On the other hand, the construction sector in Surrey continues to lag in its jobs recovery; and of course, the high-touch, large-group accommodation & food services, other services, and arts & culture jobs remain below pre-pandemic levels.

The construction-driven trades, transport and equipment operator category remains almost 10,000 jobs below February 2020 – also impacted by a lagging transportation sector recovery in Surrey.

## COVID-19 Employer, Labour Force and Workforce Impacts in October 2021

**Surrey Employer COVID-19 Employment Impacts: Estimates extrapolated from Statistics Canada's 2016 Census and 2021 Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey (October 2021)**

### Surrey Employment COVID-19 Impacts BY INDUSTRY – February 2020 to October 2021

Table 1 shows employment change between February 2020 (Pre-COVID) and October 2021 in Surrey, by industry.

While dropping slightly by just over 200 jobs since August, the Surrey economy has recovered an estimated over 6,800 jobs for a 2.3% growth since pre-pandemic February 2020. It is up overall almost 32,000 jobs or 11.8% since the trough (lowest level) of employment in April 2020.

The sectors most impacted and still not fully recovered in Surrey are estimated to be:

- Construction is still down over 6,200 jobs or -19.0%;

- Educational services (private and public) is down 1,500 jobs or -9.2%;
- Accommodation & food services is lower than pre-pandemic levels by over 1,400 jobs or -7.4%;
- Other services (personal services, high touch jobs) is down 1,500 jobs or -11.2%.

The sectors showing the greatest recovery since February 2020 in Surrey are estimated to be:

- Health care & social assistance is up almost by over 5,400 jobs or 16.0%;
- Public administration employment is up over 4,000 jobs or 43% in Surrey, perhaps from back-to-school trends;
- Wholesale & retail trade has rebounded with almost 3,100 new jobs for a 6.0% increase;
- Professional, scientific & technical businesses in Surrey are up by over 1,600 jobs or 8.2%;
- Business, building & other support has recovered by over 3,500 jobs or 24.1% since the start of the pandemic;
- While gaining almost 1,300 jobs, the natural resources sector saw a large percentage recovery in Surrey at 43.1% since February 2020;
- Manufacturing in Surrey is up over 1,100 jobs since before the pandemic with a 4.2% increase.

**Table 1: Estimated Employment by Industry in Surrey<sup>1</sup> – February 2020 through October 2021**  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0379-01, Statistics Canada<sup>2</sup>

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)	Employment February 2020	Employment April 2020	Employment October 2021	Change February 2020 to October 2021	
				Jobs	%
Total Employed (all industries)	296,748	271,848	303,581	6,833	2.3%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas	3,008	4,483	4,306	1,298	43.1%
Utilities	1,687	2,230	1,368	-319	-18.9%
Construction	32,644	29,793	26,429	-6,215	-19.0%
Manufacturing	26,833	25,580	27,950	1,117	4.2%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	51,604	46,077	54,692	3,088	6.0%
Transportation & Warehousing	27,229	23,931	27,355	126	0.5%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	18,511	16,766	17,393	-1,118	-6.0%
Professional, Scientific & Technical	19,536	19,337	21,139	1,603	8.2%
Business, Building & Other Support	14,609	14,212	14,659	50	0.3%
Educational Services	16,380	15,489	14,880	-1,500	-9.2%
Health Care & Social Assistance	34,132	32,973	39,543	5,411	15.9%
Info, Culture & Recreation	9,496	8,164	10,603	1,107	11.7%
Accommodation & Food Services	19,052	13,845	17,644	-1,407	-7.4%
Other Services (except public administration)	13,420	11,700	11,920	-1,500	-11.2%
Public Administration	9,416	8,376	13,496	4,080	43.3%

After Table 1, several charts break down the employment patterns over the last 20 months for key sectors in the Surrey economy.

<sup>1</sup> Estimates based on Surrey share of Metro Vancouver (Census Metropolitan Area) by Industry in 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Employment by Industry, three month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

Chart 1 shows that employment in Surrey troughed in July 2020, with a low of over 258,000 jobs. Its economy has then continually recovered since then, through September-December 2020 and in spring and summer 2021 through to October 2021.

**Chart 1: Total Estimated Employment by Industry in Surrey – February 2020 through October 2021**  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0379-01, Statistics Canada

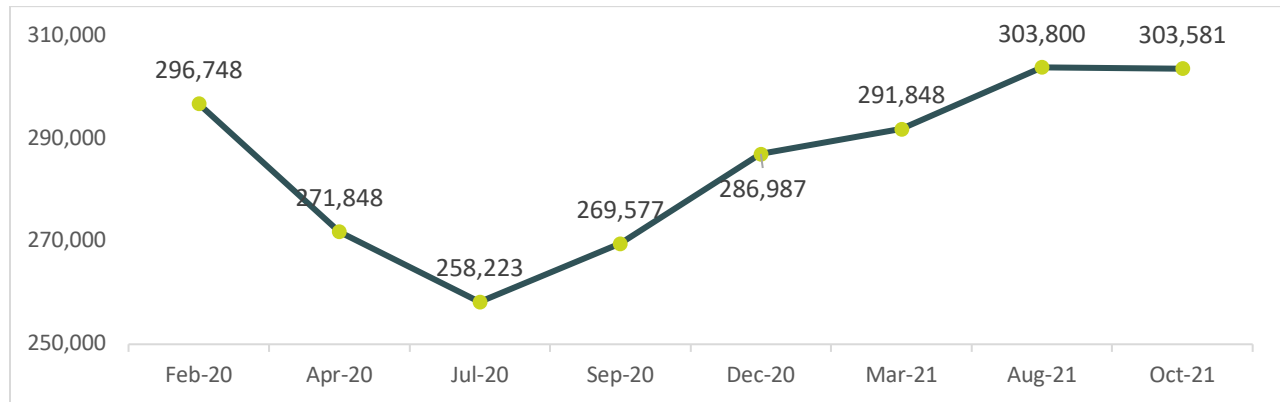
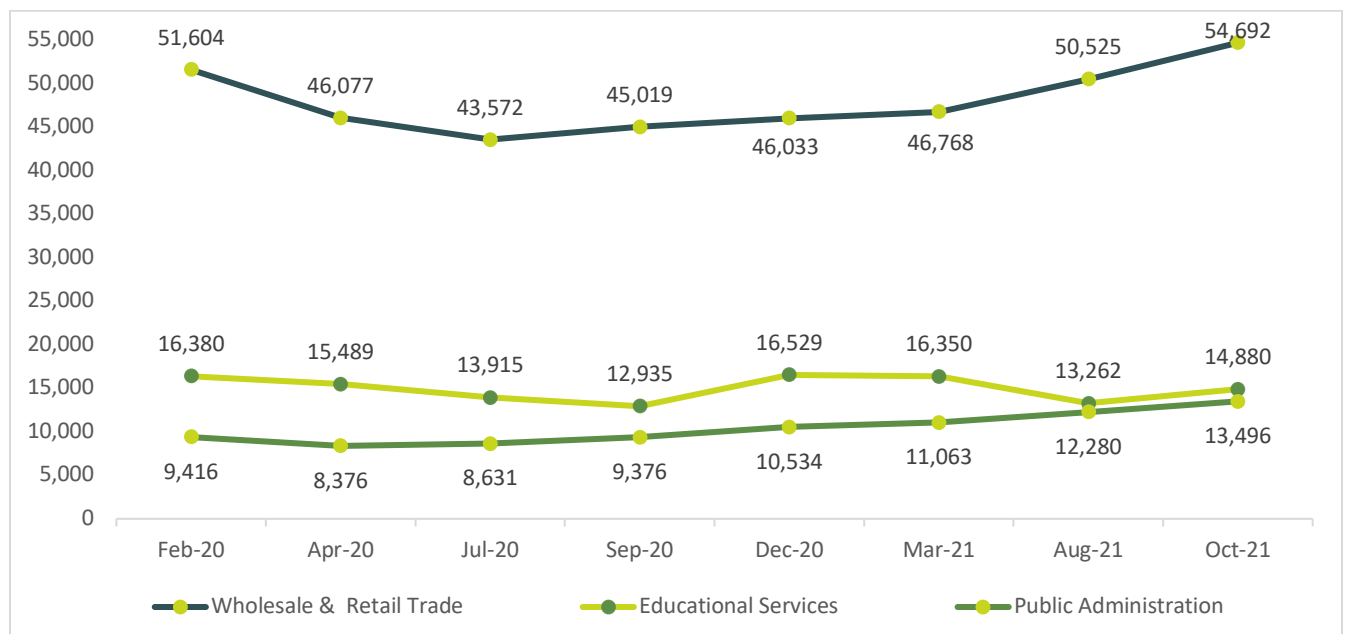


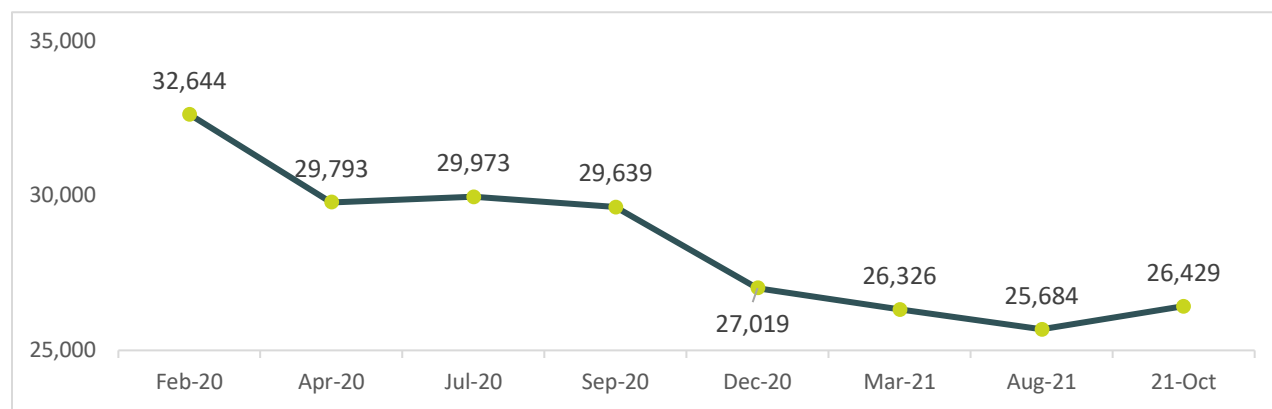
Chart 2 shows the recovery patterns of three of the least negatively impacted industries in Surrey during the pandemic. Interestingly, the tech sector employment rose continually throughout the pandemic to August 2021; however, it dropped jobs in Surrey slightly from August to October 2021 (-1,678 or -7.4%).

**Chart 2: Estimated Employment by Industry in Highest-Recovery Sectors in Surrey – February 2020 through October 2021**  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0379-01, Statistics Canada



On the other hand, most impacted sector in Surrey during the pandemic is construction (Chart 3). While up slightly by 2.9% in the last two months, it is still over 6,000 jobs below the pre-pandemic period in Surrey (-19.0%).

Chart 3: Estimated Employment by Industry: Construction in Surrey – February 2020 through October 2021  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0379-01, Statistics Canada



### Surrey Employment COVID-19 Impacts BY OCCUPATION – February 2020 to October 2021

Table 2 shows employment trends by occupation in Surrey.

Table 2: Estimated Employment by Occupation in Surrey – February 2020 through October 2021  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0381-01, Statistics Canada

National Occupational Classification	Employment February 2020	Employment August 2021	Employment October 2021	Change February 2020 to October 2021	
				Employment	%
Total Employed (all occupations)	296,748	303,800	303,581	6,833	2.3%
Management	22,822	22,772	21,830	-992	-4.3%
Business, Finance & Administration	41,703	49,034	51,267	9,564	22.9%
Natural & Applied Sciences	19,658	22,682	21,293	1,636	8.3%
Health	21,380	25,747	26,700	5,319	24.9%
Education, Law & Social, Community and Gov Services	26,370	27,017	28,078	1,707	6.5%
Art, Culture, Rec & Sport	6,636	5,636	6,017	-619	-9.3%
Sales & Services	83,042	75,815	75,267	-7,775	-9.4%
Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators	58,356	51,167	48,441	-9,916	-17.0%
Natural Resources Agriculture & related production	3,414	6,651	6,239	2,825	82.8%
Manufacturing & Utilities	13,226	14,820	14,853	1,628	12.3%

When we consider employment by occupation in Surrey and impacts by occupation, the greatest number of jobs impacted were in:

- Trades, transport & equipment operators (over -9,900 or -17.0%);
- Sales & service employment (-7,775 or -9.4%);
- Management employment (-992 or -4.3%);

- Arts, culture, recreation & sport (-619 jobs or -9.3%).

These drops were offset by occupational sectors which have significantly recovered the most in Surrey during the pandemic, which are estimated to be:

- Business, finance & administration (over 9,500 jobs or 23.0%) since February 2020;
- Health (over 5,300 jobs or 25.0%);
- Natural resources, agriculture & related production (over 2,800 jobs or 83%) – **single largest occupational recovery area** in percentage terms;
- Natural & applied sciences (over 3,000 jobs or 15.4%).

Chart 4 shows a continual growth in employment in Surrey in business, finance and administrative positions, ending up almost 23% over pre-pandemic levels, as mentioned above.

**Chart 4: Estimated Employment by Occupation: Business, Finance & Administration in Surrey – February 2020 through October 2021**  
Adapted from Table: 14-10-0381-01, Statistics Canada

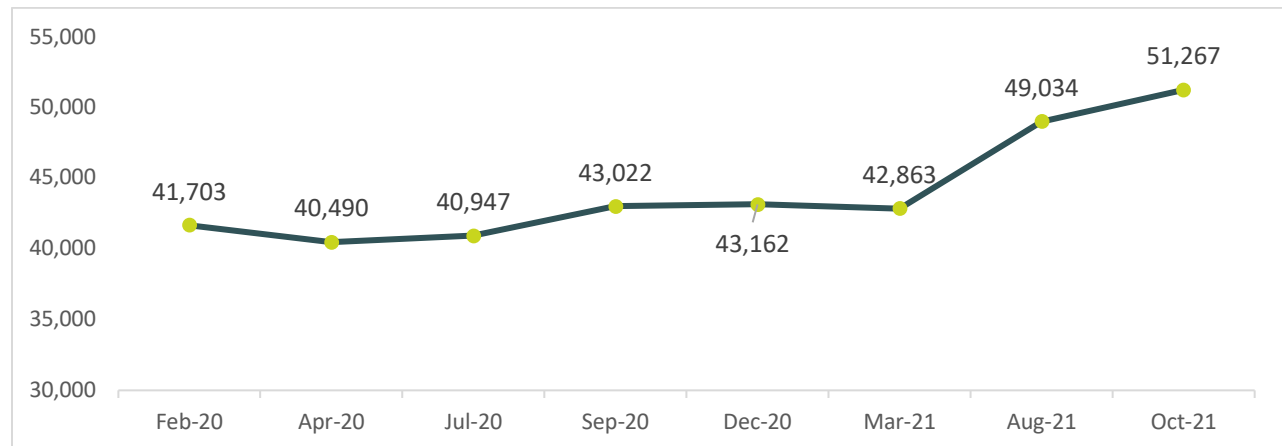
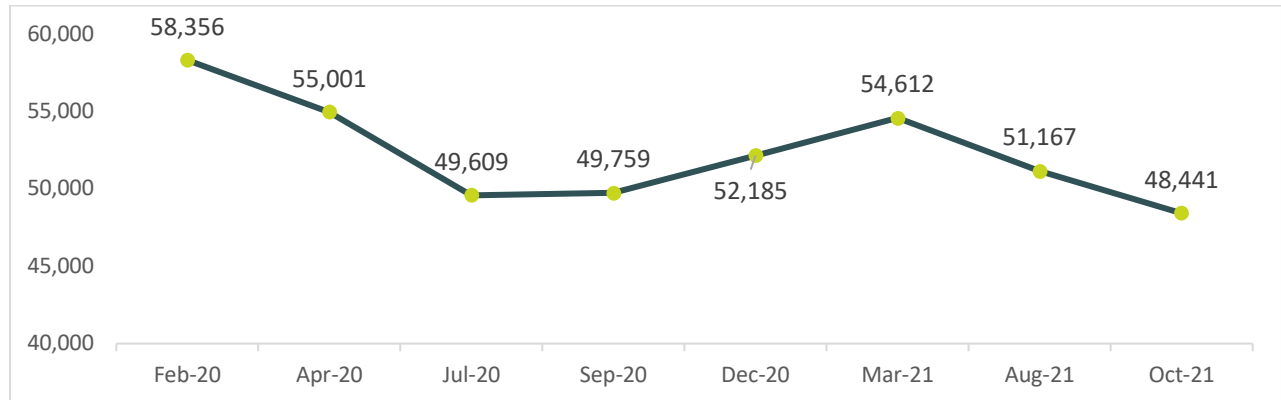


Chart 5 shows almost opposite trends with trades, transport & equipment operator down by almost 10,000 jobs in Surrey, largely driven by the impact on the construction sector in the community.

Consistent with industry trends, shows employment in positions in natural resource and related categories experienced mostly monthly growth in jobs. By August 2021, its employment was almost double that of February 2020 (+95.0%); and in October 2021 it is still up by 83.0% in Surrey.

Chart 5: Estimated Employment by Occupation: Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators in Surrey – February 2020 through October 2021

Adapted from Table: 14-10-0381-01, Statistics Canada



**Sources:**

Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0379-01 Employment by industry, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality \(x 1,000\)](#)

Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0381-01 Employment by occupation, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality \(x 1,000\)](#)

**MORE INFORMATION:**

SURREY BUSINESS LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

BC Labour Force Survey Data, Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, October 2021

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