

CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE INDUSTRY

ONTARIO

HIGHLIGHTS 2024 - 2033



MARCH 2024



Funded in part by the Government
of Canada's Sectoral Workforce
Solutions Program



SUMMARY

Although residential markets slowed in 2023 as higher borrowing and construction costs weakened demand from the historic levels reported in 2021 and 2022, construction output remained elevated in most regions of Ontario – and will be through most of the forecast period.

Non-residential construction investment in particular is being driven by a long list of major projects, including public transportation, healthcare, utilities, manufacturing, and other infrastructure. Both industrial, commercial, and institutional building and engineering-construction investment levels are expected to peak in 2027 and then recede later in the forecast period as current projects wind down.

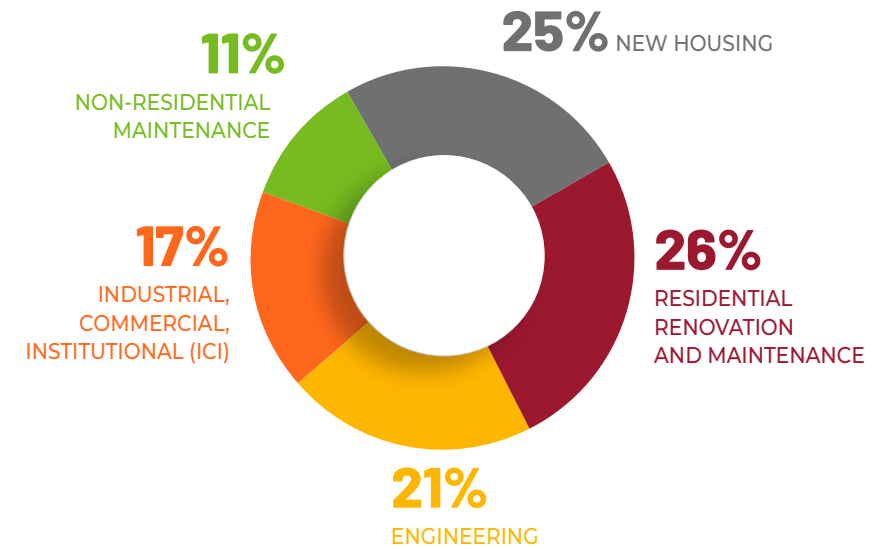
The outlook in the residential sector is more muted in the short term as interest rate levels and inflation continue to contract housing starts – and single-family homes in particular – in 2024. These declines should be viewed in context, with levels stepping down from previous highs reported in 2021 and 2022. Even with the projected contractions, housing starts remain above historical averages. Residential investment is expected to resume an upward trend commencing in 2025 as housing costs ease and population growth drives demand for additional housing.

With employment projected to reach peak levels in the residential and non-residential sectors in 2028 and 2029, many trades and occupations across the provincial labour force could experience strained conditions. Opportunities for interregional mobility will be limited by high levels of demand across most regional markets.

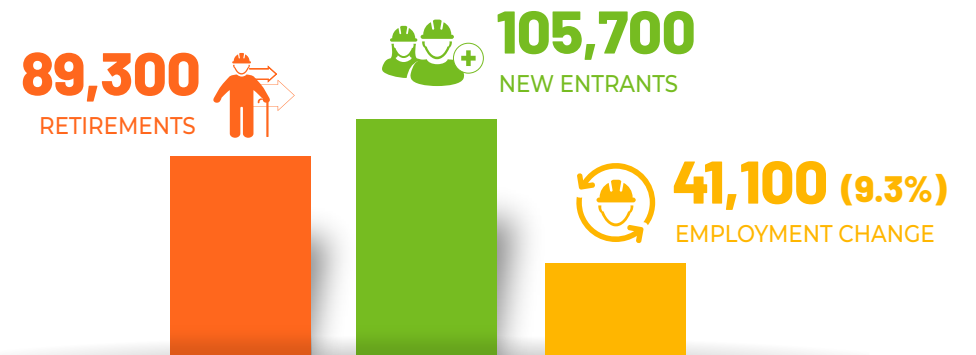
By 2033, the industry will need to add approximately 51,900 additional workers to keep pace with construction demands. The retirement of more than 89,300 workers – 19% of the current labour force – will increase the recruitment requirements for the industry to approximately 141,200 workers over the forecast period. Recent heightened promotional and recruitment activities are bearing fruit. The industry is expected to add 105,700 new entrants by 2033, creating a projected recruitment gap of some 35,500 workers that will need to be filled from outside the province's existing construction labour force to keep pace with provincial demand requirements.

The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

Distribution of construction employment in 2023, Ontario



10-Year Workforce Outlook for Ontario



AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE **6.0%**

HIGHLIGHTS

- Residential employment is projected to grow to more than 250,000 workers by 2028, an increase of 11% over 2023 levels. Although later years see contractions, employment remains well above historical highs.
- New-housing employment is projected to rise by 21% over 2023 levels by 2028. Growth is more moderate in renovation and maintenance employment.
- Non-residential employment rises to a peak in 2029, a 10% increase over 2023.
- Engineering-construction and industrial, commercial, and institutional building employment both reach peaks in 2027; maintenance employment grows in every year of the forecast period.



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ONTARIO CONSTRUCTION OUTLOOK

Construction labour markets in Ontario in 2023 stepped down somewhat from the strained conditions reported in the year previous. Low interest rates and elevated levels of population growth had challenged labour market conditions in many residential trades and occupations in 2022. As interest rates rose in the second half of that year and through 2023, new demands eased and builders in most regions were able to adjust their labour forces to the still-high levels of demand.

Labour conditions in the non-residential sector, meanwhile, remained strained. Most regions of the province continue to report high levels of demand in the form of major projects across the public-transportation, healthcare, education, utilities, and manufacturing sectors.

BuildForce Canada's *Construction and Maintenance Looking Forward* report for Ontario for 2024 to 2033 calls for investment levels in the residential and non-residential sectors to chart different courses in the short term. Residential investment levels, and housing starts in particular, were set back in 2023 and are expected to fall again in 2024. Even strong levels of population growth across the regions were not enough to offset the effects of inflation and rising interest rates on housing affordability. Housing starts are projected to grow strongly for the period between 2025 and 2028 as wages and incomes adjust to prices before they trend down slightly to the end of the decade. Renovation expenditures, meanwhile, are projected to grow continuously through 2033.

Investment levels in the non-residential sector, meanwhile, have been on a general upward trend since 2016. Growth continues to be driven by a long list of major projects in most regions of the province, including subway and light rapid transit construction and nuclear refurbishments in the Greater Toronto Area, light rail in the Eastern and Central regions, mining activity in the North, and electric vehicle manufacturing and automotive retooling projects in the Southwest. Combined, these projects maintain rising investment levels until at least 2027. They wind down in the latter years of the forecast as these projects reach peak activity and demands start to subside.

Looking across the regions, **Central Ontario** saw construction peak in 2021 with elevated levels of investment in both the residential and non-residential sectors. The former was underpinned by low interest rates and demand created by out-migration from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The latter

has seen strong activity in both engineering construction and construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings. Residential investment levels have declined since and are forecast to do so again in 2024 as interest rates cool consumer spending on new housing construction and home renovation activities. The outlook calls for growth after 2025 as builders respond to demand created by elevated levels of household formation¹ and as the region's comparative affordability continues to attract migration from the GTA. Investment in the non-residential sector, meanwhile, reaches a peak in 2029 with work on light-rail transit, roads, highways, and bridges, and major healthcare projects. The maintenance sector is supported by work across the region's manufacturing plants. Employment in both residential (+10%) and non-residential (+13%) construction is projected to grow across the forecast period.

Eastern Ontario's construction market continues to be dominated by a long list of major projects across the engineering-construction and ICI-building sector. Key projects currently underway include the light rail line in Ottawa, high levels of investment in roads, highways, and bridges, and an extensive portfolio of work being driven by the federal government. Later years call for the addition of major hospital projects in Ottawa and Kingston, as well as sustained activity across public-administration buildings. The residential sector, meanwhile, stepped back from the peak volume of housing starts reported in 2021. As in other regions of the province, this was precipitated by elevated interest rates. Housing starts are projected to return to growth between 2025 and 2028, with demand strongest among multi-family units. Total construction employment is expected to reach a forecast peak in 2028.

The **Greater Toronto Area's** construction market continues to be dominated by a series of large-scale public-transportation, nuclear refurbishment, new hospital, and other government building-restoration projects. These combine to elevate non-residential employment levels by 14% above 2023 levels by 2029, and create strained labour market conditions across most of the region's non-residential trades and occupations. Labour market demands and investment levels subside in later years as projects reach peak activity and start winding down. The outlook for the region's residential sector sees investment levels step down for the third consecutive year in 2024 as elevated interest rates curb consumer demands. The housing sector returns to growth in 2025 and maintains an upward trend into 2028, in line with increasing demand for new home construction, and a boost in demand for single-detached² homes.

¹ **Household formation** refers to the change in the number of households (persons living under one roof or occupying a separate housing unit) from one year to the next. It is the means by which population growth is transformed into demand for new housing.

² **Single-detached (single)** refers to a building containing only one dwelling unit that is completely separated on all sides from any other dwelling or structure.

Northern Ontario's construction forecast is dominated by activity in the mining and utility sectors. Overall non-residential investment levels stepped back in 2023 with the completion of several major electric-transmission projects. The decline was offset somewhat by elevated levels of work in the ICI buildings sector. The outlook calls for another contraction in 2024 before growth resumes between 2025 and 2027 with the start of key mining and utilities projects, as well as work on key projects such as the Thunder Bay Correctional facility and the Weeneebayko Hospital. Regional residential construction investment levels are driven by renovation activity. The segment peaked in 2021 and is projected to continue to fall across the remainder of the forecast period due to weaker job and income growth. New-housing activity, which has declined since 2021, is expected to return to an upcycle by 2025, in line with demand for new construction across all unit types. Construction employment is expected to trend up to 2027 before generally cycling down to the end of the forecast period.

Finally, **Southwestern Ontario's** construction sector is in a period of transition. As recently as 2021, the residential sector was the principal driver of growth in the region. Levels have subsided since, again due to

the effects of rising interest rates. As in other regions of the province, the sector is projected to return to growth between 2025 and 2028 before moderating to the end of the forecast period. By the end of the decade, levels remain elevated by historical standards, but well below the highs reported in 2021. The non-residential sector, meanwhile, has seen steady growth since 2016 with ongoing work on key projects such as the Bruce Power nuclear refurbishment, and the Gordie Howe International Bridge. More recently, automotive plant re-tooling projects and the construction of electric-vehicle battery plant projects have helped elevate activity further. Investment levels are expected to step down in the short term with the conclusion of several key projects. They rise again in 2025 with the start of work on the Volkswagen EV battery plant and accelerate strongly into 2026 and 2027 as core construction commences on the Windsor Acute Care Hospital. Employment is projected to grow strongly in both sectors through 2033.

Table 1 summarizes the estimated percent change in total residential and non-residential employment by region across Ontario's regions, and across three periods: the short term (2024–2026), the medium term (2027–2029), and the long term (2030–2033).

Table 1: Changes in total employment across Ontario's regions, 2024 to 2033

REGION	% CHANGE 2024-2026			% CHANGE 2027-2029			% CHANGE 2030-2033		
	Residential	Non-residential	Construction	Residential	Non-residential	Construction	Residential	Non-residential	Construction
Total employment — Ontario	6.1%	5.4%	5.8%	3.9%	4.7%	4.3%	-3.5%	0.1%	-1.7%
Central Ontario	6.0%	5.3%	5.7%	5.4%	6.3%	5.8%	-1.6%	0.4%	-0.7%
Eastern Ontario	4.7%	4.5%	4.6%	4.3%	-0.9%	1.5%	-6.7%	-2.0%	-4.2%
Greater Toronto Area	5.3%	7.4%	6.3%	1.1%	6.1%	3.4%	-2.8%	-0.1%	-1.6%
Northern Ontario	0.2%	5.4%	3.7%	-2.5%	-1.7%	-1.9%	-10.1%	-3.3%	-5.4%
Southwestern Ontario	11.2%	2.1%	6.2%	10.0%	6.6%	8.2%	-5.3%	3.0%	-1.0%

Source: BuildForce Canada

A YOUNGER DEMOGRAPHIC SUPPORTED BY IMMIGRATION

Ontario is experiencing a shift in its population age structure.

Figure 1 shows that the share of residents between 15 and 24 years of age and who are about to enter the province's labour force comprised 13% of the population in 2023. That figure is expected to remain unchanged across the forecast period. The share of the population over 65 years of age and mainly retired is projected to grow from 18% to 21% during this same period.

This trend will create challenges regarding future labour force recruitment. All industries will be competing for a relatively smaller pool of youth over the next 10 years.

Ontario's population is generally younger than the national average, which has helped to maintain a positive, although declining, natural rate of population growth*.

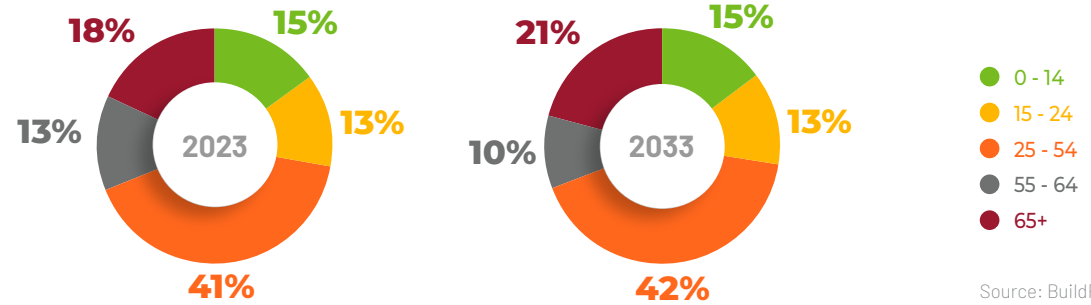
The population increased significantly in 2023 with a surge in the number of permanent and non-permanent residents. Many of these people are international students seeking to obtain permanent residence status after graduation.

Although these levels are unlikely to be sustained, Ontario will benefit from the newly expanded federal Immigration Levels Plan through 2025. Moreover, with many of these immigrants coming to Ontario in their prime child-bearing years, upward growth in the province's rate of natural population growth is anticipated across the forecast period. They will also be essential to supporting growth in the province's core working-age group of 25 to 54 years of age, and may help to ease labour-market pressures over the decade.

The combination of these factors should sustain Ontario's annual population growth rate at between 1.5% and 2% across the short term, and above 1% through 2033.

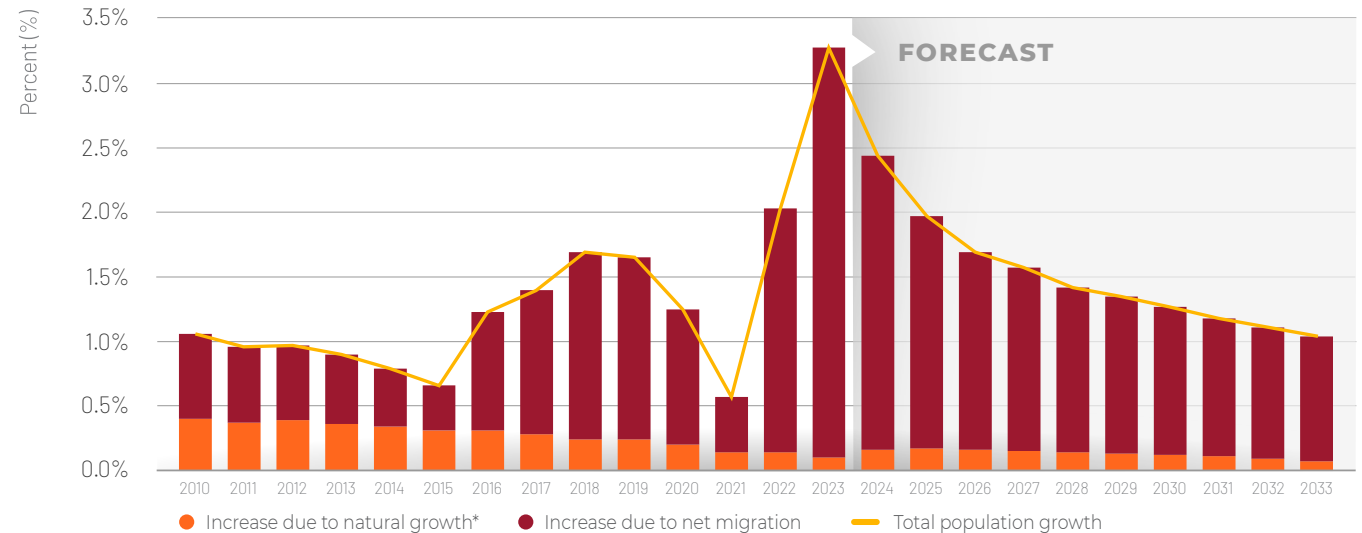
Figure 2 shows the various factors affecting population growth in Ontario over the forecast period.

Figure 1: Population age distribution, Ontario



Source: BuildForce Canada

Figure 2: Sources of population growth (%), Ontario



* Natural rate of population growth refers to the growth in the population due to the number of births relative to the number of deaths, which leads to a positive or negative natural rate.

Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2024-2033)

The available labour force

Ontario's construction labour force has rebounded strongly since the COVID-19 pandemic. Labour Force Survey³ data from Statistics Canada shows that although it contracted by 9,700 workers between 2019 and 2021, it has rebounded since, adding 45,700 workers in 2022 and an estimated 5,700 more in 2023. Industry employment has outpaced labour force growth since 2021, which helped push unemployment rates to record lows (3.8% in 2022) in the province. In 2023, the trend reversed and labour force growth has been keeping pace or exceeding employment growth, which helped push unemployment rates slightly higher to 4.2% for the year.

Adding to market challenges, the industry will need to replace an estimated 89,300 workers, or 19% of its current labour force, due to retirements over the 10-year forecast period. Combined with projected growth, the construction industry will likely need to recruit and train an estimated 141,200 additional workers between 2024 and 2033.

Due in part to robust industry and government promotional efforts regarding the benefits of careers in the trades, the construction industry has increased the number of workers aged 24 years of age and younger in the construction labour force by 14% since 2019. Of particular note is that the recruitment of women in this cohort is up by 27%.

Notwithstanding this success, the industry is expected to recruit approximately 105,700 new entrants under 30 years of age from within the province over the forecast period, leaving a projected gap of almost 35,500 workers that will need to be filled from a variety of sources, including through the additional recruitment and training of youth, through the additional recruitment of individuals from equity-deserving groups traditionally under-represented in the construction sector, from the construction labour forces of neighbouring provinces with higher levels of unemployment, from other industries in the province employing workers with the skill sets required by the industry, and from outside the country through permanent immigration.

The BuildForce LMI system tracks supply and accounts for the change in the available labour force, including retirements, new entrants⁴, and net mobility⁵.

Figure 3 provides a summary of the estimated changes in the construction labour force across the full 2024–2033 forecast period.

Figure 3: Changes in the construction labour force, Ontario



* **Net mobility** refers to the number of workers needed to be brought into the industry from other industries or other provinces to meet rising demands or the number of workers that exit the industry in downturns. Positive net mobility means that industry must attract workers, while negative net mobility arises from an excess supply of workers in the local construction labour force.

Note: Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to the totals indicated.

Source: BuildForce Canada

³ Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey captures the labour force status of all workers within the industry, including those in occupations outside of the direct trades and occupations tracked by BuildForce Canada.

⁴ **New entrants** are measured by applying the traditional proportion of the provincial labour force that enters the construction industry. The projected estimate across the forecast period assumes that the construction industry can recruit this group in competition with other industries.

⁵ **Net mobility** refers to the movement of labour in and out of the local construction industry labour force. In-mobility captures the movement into the labour force of out-of-province industry workers and/or workers from outside the industry. Many members of this group will move quickly out of the provincial labour force as work declines, referred to as out-mobility.

REGIONAL INSIGHTS

The following sections provide region-specific outlook highlights and labour market conditions for Ontario's five regions: Central, Eastern, Greater Toronto Area, Northern, and Southwestern.

CENTRAL ONTARIO

The Central region⁶ has benefitted in recent years from an out-flow of residents from the neighbouring, and comparatively more expensive, Greater Toronto Area. This trend, combined with historically low interest rates, drove residential construction activity to high levels in 2021. Housing starts in the region grew by nearly 50% compared to the year previous, and renovation activity saw strong gains.

The local housing market has contracted since, as rising interest rates have cooled demand in both components. Residential investment levels dropped by 13% in 2023 and are forecast to drop again in 2024. Investment levels are projected to return to growth in 2025 and through to the end of the decade, supported by more stable interest rates and strong population growth.

The region's non-residential construction market has been growing steadily since 2016, with strong activity underway in both engineering construction and construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings. The former has benefitted from work on the Central region's portion of the Barrie Go Rail corridor, while the latter has been supported by strong levels of activity in manufacturing, healthcare, and education projects. Investment is projected to reach a peak in 2029, with work on light-rail transit, roads, highways, and bridges, and major healthcare projects.

The combination of these trends is projected to create an overall employment peak in 2029, with both components adding approximately 12% employment above 2023 levels. Work is concentrated in Hamilton's non-residential sector, where several key projects are underway. Employment growth over this period is concentrated in the ICI buildings (+15%) and maintenance (+15%) segments.

Although labour demands in the residential and non-residential sectors rise to a scenario peak in 2029, labour market requirements are generally balanced, given scheduling requirements. It is important to note, however, that rising demands in other regions of the province will create competition for workers in Central Ontario. These, in turn, should contribute to lower unemployment rates for the region's construction labour force.

⁶ Central Ontario includes the economic regions of Muskoka-Kawartha, Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie, and Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula as defined by Statistics Canada, which includes the census metropolitan areas of St. Catharines-Niagara, Hamilton, and Kitchener-Waterloo. The region includes such cities as Peterborough, Orangeville, Guelph, Barrie, and Brantford.

Residential sector

Central Ontario’s residential sector reached a peak employment level in 2022. This was driven by a surge in both new-housing and renovation investment in 2021, which in turn was spurred by low interest rates, and high levels of migration – both from abroad and from other parts of Canada. Employment has stepped down since, contracting as interest rates rise and investment levels decline. 2023 saw employment fall by 5%; 2024 calls for a further contraction of 4%.

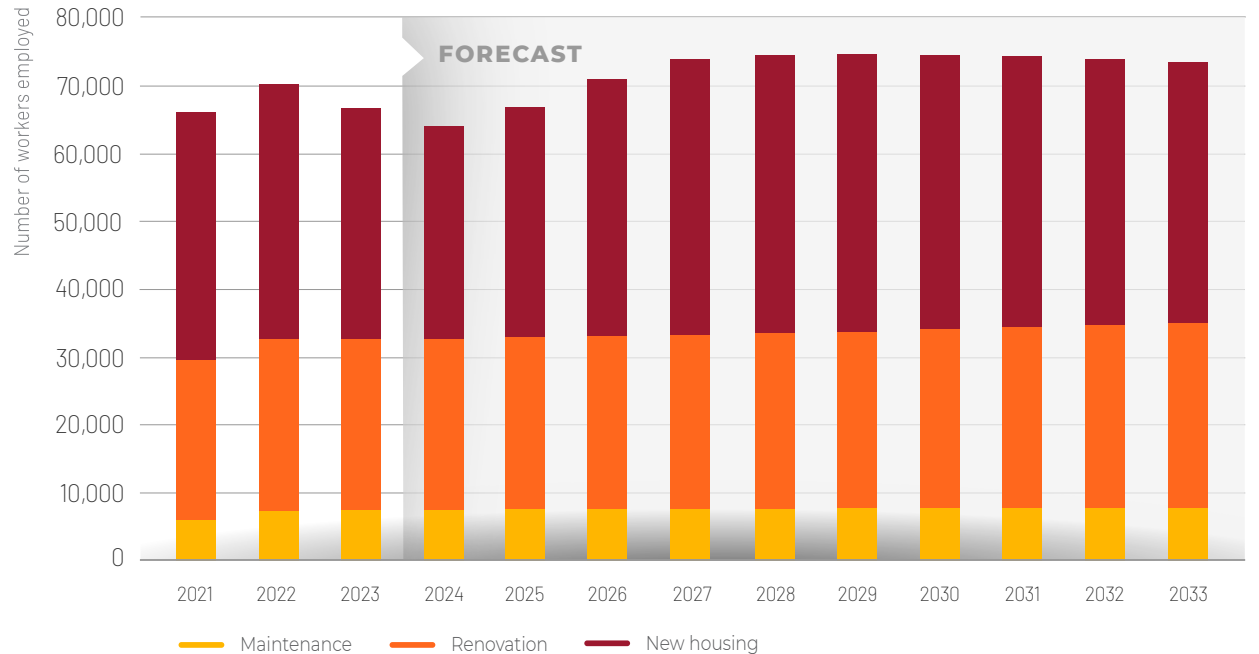
As Figure 4 shows, employment rises steadily between 2025 and 2029, adding nearly 12% above 2023 levels before contracting slightly into 2033 and finishing the decade 10% above 2023 levels. New-housing employment rises to a peak of more than 20% above 2023 levels by 2029, and finishes the decade at 13% above 2023 levels. Renovation employment grows by 8%, while maintenance adds 5%.

Housing starts in the region are projected to follow a similar curve. After reaching a peak in 2021, they have declined since, contracting by nearly 20% in 2023. A further contraction is projected for 2024. Single-detached units have been most affected by rising interest rates and affordability concerns; multi-unit starts have also contracted. As interest rate pressures ease in 2025 and beyond, housing starts are projected to return to growth. This trend continues to the end of the decade, driven by demand created by population growth.

Renovation investment levels are also projected to fall into 2024, as slower economic growth weighs on households’ disposable incomes. As the region’s economy continues to see growth towards mid-decade, renovations should see a general upward trend through the end of the decade.

Note that this analysis is based on currently known demands. It does not take into account public-sector initiatives to address housing affordability challenges.

Figure 4: Residential construction employment growth outlook, Central Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada(2024-2033)

Residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For Central Ontario, residential rankings are reported for 26 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system⁷, as shown in Table 2.

Residential labour demands enter the forecast period under mostly balanced conditions. The labour pressures experienced in the market in 2021 and 2022 have eased with contractions across the new-housing construction and renovation components. Some trades and occupations more concentrated in new-home construction may even see weakening conditions in 2024, following two years of employment contractions.

As new-housing demands escalate quickly between 2025 and 2028, and as renovation activity grows continuously across the decade, labour market conditions are expected to tighten.

Requirements for workers in senior management roles remain elevated for most of the forecast period.

MARKET RANKINGS

- 1 Workers meeting employer qualifications are available in local markets to meet an increase in demand at the current offered rate of compensation and other current working conditions. Excess supply is apparent and there is a risk of losing workers to other markets.
- 2 Workers meeting employer qualifications are available in local markets to meet an increase in demand at the current offered rate of compensation and other working conditions.
- 3 The availability of workers meeting employer qualifications in the local market may be limited by large projects, plant shutdowns or other short-term increases in demand. Employers may need to compete to attract needed workers. Establish patterns of recruiting and mobility are sufficient to meet job requirements.
- 4 Workers meeting qualifications are generally not available in local markets to meet any increase. Employers will need to compete to attract additional workers. Recruiting and mobility may extend beyond traditional sources and practices.
- 5 Needed workers meeting employer qualifications are not available in local markets to meet current demand so that projects or production may be delayed or deferred. There is excess demand, competition is intense and recruiting reaches to remote markets.

Table 2: Residential market rankings, Central Ontario

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Bricklayers	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Concrete finishers	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electricians	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Elevator constructors and mechanics	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gas fitters	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Glaziers	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Home building and renovation managers	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Insulators	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	4	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Tilesetters	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	3	2	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Welders and related machine operators	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

⁷ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

Non-residential sector

Non-residential construction investment levels have been increasing in Central Ontario since 2021, supported by strong activity in engineering construction and on the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings. Investment is poised to rise to a peak in 2029 with the culmination of these projects as well as new work on healthcare and factory maintenance projects, and other work in the manufacturing sector.

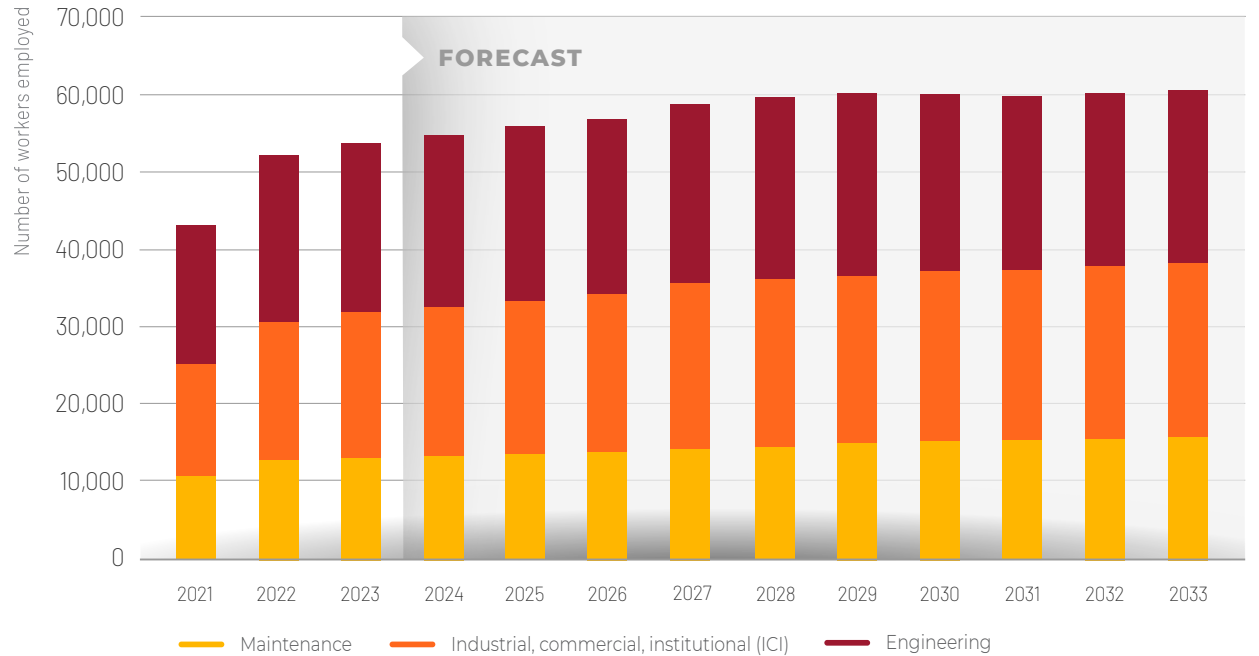
Growth in engineering construction through the decade will be driven by work on the light rail transit (LRT) project in Hamilton, phase 2 of the Kitchener-Cambridge LRT, the Niagara Region Wastewater project, as well as major highway projects such as the Bradford Bypass and the Garden City Skyway Twinning. As these projects approach completion in the later years of the forecast, investment levels decline.

Growth in the ICI buildings sector, meanwhile, is expected to remain on a strong upward trend through 2027. Activity is supported by work on billions of dollars of projects in the healthcare sector. Investment in commercial and industrial buildings is also expected to grow, with the former benefitting from strong economic output after 2025, and the latter supported by growth in manufacturing and local light rail projects. Overall ICI buildings investment flattens after 2027 to the end of the decade.

As Figure 5 shows, non-residential construction employment is projected to rise continuously to 2029, increasing by 12% over 2023 levels during this period. Afterwards, it stabilizes near 60,000 workers to the end of the forecast period. Engineering construction employment fluctuations are more acute than other sectors as they are driven primarily by the timing of planned major projects included in the forecast. Employment in the construction of ICI buildings, meanwhile, grows in most of the next 10 years.

By 2033, total non-residential employment is projected to be 13% higher than 2023 levels, with ICI buildings employment increasing up by 19%, engineering by 1%, and maintenance by 22%.

Figure 5: Non-residential construction employment growth outlook, Central Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada(2024-2033)

Non-residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For Central Ontario, non-residential rankings are reported for 31 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system⁸, as shown in Table 3.

Labour demands were elevated in 2022 with the start of several major projects in warehousing, healthcare, manufacturing, and public transit. They increased further in 2023, bringing many trades and occupations into strained labour conditions by the end of the year.

Although project demands rise to a scenario peak in 2029, labour market requirements are generally

balanced, given scheduling requirements. Demand for experienced management workers is high across the forecast period.

Note that the widespread conversion of ICI buildings to the greater use of electricity for heating and cooling is excluded from this report, as these efforts are still in their early phases and have had only minor impacts on overall construction labour markets. As these efforts accelerate, they will be added to future BuildForce Canada outlook reports.

Table 3: Non-residential market rankings, Central Ontario

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Boilermakers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Bricklayers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Concrete finishers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Construction estimators	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Drillers and blasters	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electrical power line and cable workers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electricians	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Elevator constructors and mechanics	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gas fitters	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Glaziers	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Heavy equipment operators(except crane)	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Insulators	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Painters and decorators(except interior decorators)	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Welders and related machine operators	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

⁸ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

EASTERN ONTARIO

Eastern Ontario's⁹ construction sector has been supported in recent years by a combination of peak levels of residential activity and sustained growth across the non-residential sector. The residential sector has been propelled by demand created by historically low interest rates and historically high levels of immigration. These combined to bring residential investment levels to a peak in 2021. They have stepped down since. Rising interest rates in 2022 and 2023 have curbed housing affordability and contracted housing starts considerably. The outlook across the forecast period calls for investment levels to cycle down further into 2024 before returning to growth between 2025 and 2028.

Output in the non-residential sector, meanwhile, has been driven by peak levels of activity in both engineering construction and the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings. Key projects underway include the light rail line in Ottawa, high levels of investment in roads, highways, and bridges, and an extensive portfolio of work being driven by the federal government. Engineering construction is expected to remain elevated across the forecast period, while the construction of ICI buildings grows further with the addition of major hospital projects in Ottawa and Kingston.

By 2033, construction employment is projected to grow modestly compared to 2023 levels, with both sectors adding 2% to their respective employment bases. Of note are peak employment requirements in both by 2028, with the non-residential sector growing by 5% compared to 2023 levels, and the residential sector increasing by 10% – with employment in new housing in particular growing by 20%.

The projected rise in overall employment alongside an estimated 12,500 retirements could create a hiring gap of 15,300 workers. The addition of 13,000 new-entrant workers from local recruitment efforts will offset most of this requirement, but could leave the industry with a gap of as many as 2,300 workers to fill.

⁹ Eastern Ontario includes the economic regions of both Ottawa and Kingston-Pembroke, including the census metropolitan areas of Ottawa and Kingston. Cities include Cornwall, Brockville, Belleville, and Petawawa.

Residential sector

Residential construction activity reached an investment peak in 2021, as low interest rates and strong consumer demand helped spur demand for both new housing and renovation work. Investment stepped down in 2022 as rising interest rates began to erode housing affordability and contract housing starts. The same trends affected the region's market in 2023 and are poised to do so again in 2024. The full effects of these shifts are being muted somewhat by the high levels of household formation caused by regional in-migration. They are also causing buyers to show preference toward more affordable multi-family units over single-family housing.

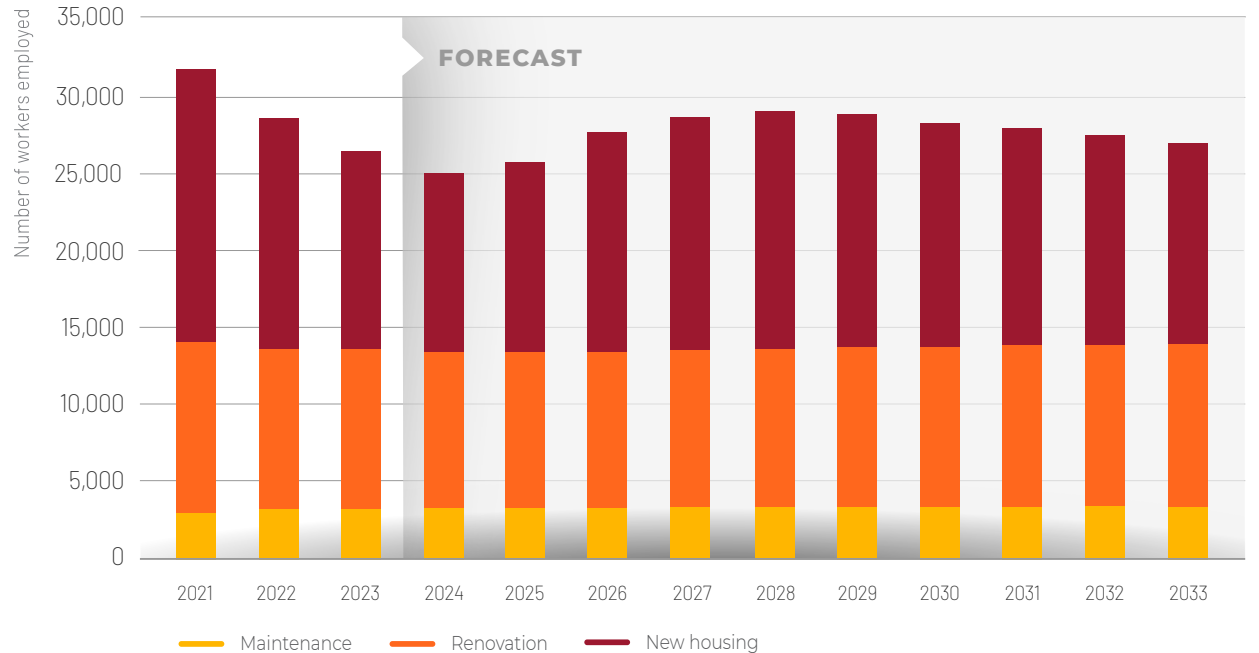
Housing starts are expected to return to growth in 2025, beginning a cycle that carries through to 2028, and which is supported by strong population growth. Of note is the fact that although demand returns to single-family housing starts in this period, multi-unit starts are expected to account for more than 70% of the region's housing starts by the middle of the forecast period. Later years see starts slow as they re-align with household formation.

Renovation investment, meanwhile, slowed in 2023 and is expected to do so again, driven by rising construction costs and elevated interest rates. Investment levels trend upward after 2025, supported by anticipated improvements in household disposable income.

Figure 6 shows the employment trends by sector for residential construction in Eastern Ontario.

Note that this analysis is based on currently known demands. It does not take into account public-sector initiatives to address housing affordability challenges.

Figure 6: Residential construction employment growth outlook, Eastern Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada(2024-2033)

Residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For Eastern Ontario, non-residential rankings are reported for 24 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system¹⁰, as shown in Table 4.

Residential labour markets returned to balance for most trades and occupations working in single-detached home construction in 2023 after a challenging year in 2022. A pull-back on renovation activity also allowed trades and occupations to return to balanced labour market conditions. Trades and

occupations working on mid-rise and high-rise apartment buildings, however, remained busy.

Another year of contracting new-home construction may create excess supply of workers for some trades and occupations in 2024. An upcycle begins in 2025 and tightens markets for many trades and occupations through 2026 and 2027.

Table 4: Residential market rankings, Eastern Ontario

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Bricklayers	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Concrete finishers	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	3	3	4	5	4	4	3	2	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electricians	3	2	3	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3
Elevator constructors and mechanics	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Floor covering installers	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gas fitters	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Home building and renovation managers	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Insulators	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	3	2	3	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3
Tilesetters	3	2	3	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

¹⁰ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

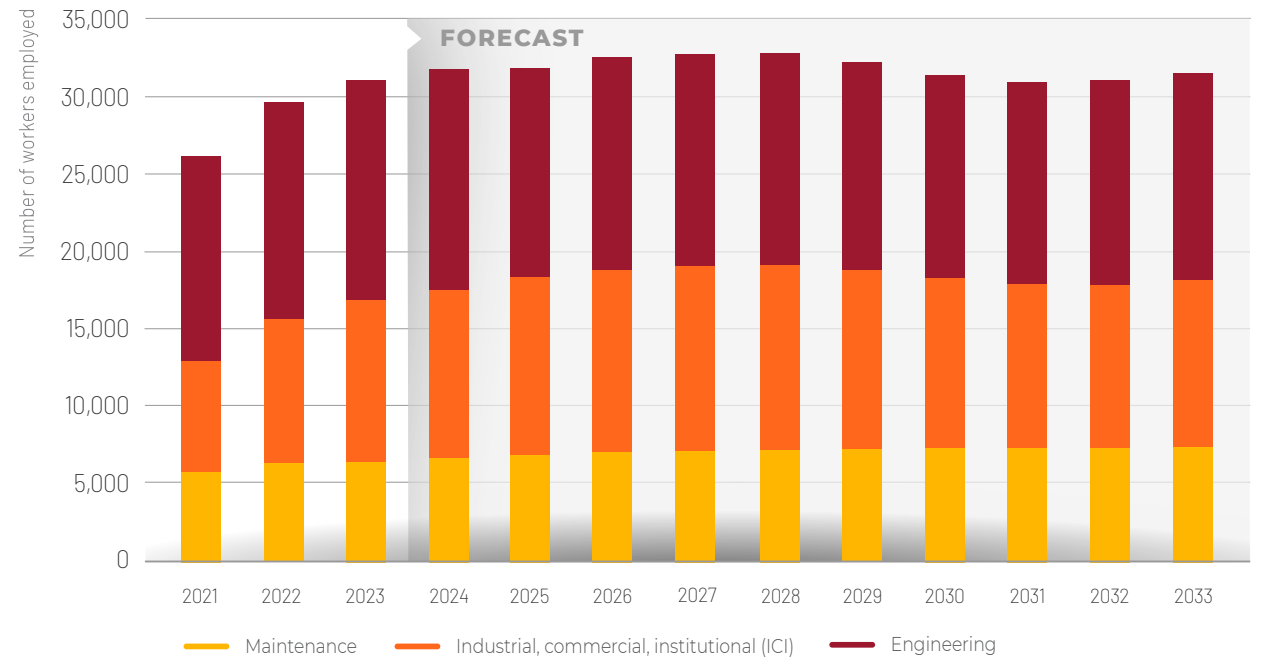
Non-residential sector

Activity in the region's non-residential construction sector has been rising strongly since 2019, when work began on Ottawa's light-rail transit (LRT) project. This work in engineering construction has been supplemented with high levels of investment in roads, highways, and bridges, and continued growth in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings.

The non-residential investment outlook calls for engineering construction to remain at an elevated level across the forecast period. Although activity may slow into 2025 with the completion of the Ottawa LRT project, it rebounds into 2028 with work on key roads, highways, and bridges projects. Construction work on ICI buildings, meanwhile, cycles to a peak in 2028, driven by numerous major federal projects. Core construction work on hospital projects in Quinte, Ottawa, and Kingston also begins in 2025 and 2026. These are combined with work on the Umicore electric vehicle battery materials plant, and at the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories campus at Chalk River. Later years see non-residential investment levels decline as known projects reach or approach completion.

As Figure 7 shows, non-residential employment rises to a peak of 5% above 2023 levels in 2028. ICI buildings employment in particular adds 14% over this period. Overall growth slows through the latter years of the decade as known major projects are completed. By 2033, employment is projected to rise by 2% over 2023 levels, with engineering construction contracting by 6% from 2023 levels, maintenance adding 14%, and ICI buildings rising by 4%.

Figure 7: Non-residential construction employment growth outlook, Eastern Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada(2024-2033)

Non-residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For Eastern Ontario, non-residential rankings are reported for 30 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system¹¹, as shown in Table 5.

Labour market demands tightened significantly in 2022 and remained elevated for most trades and occupations in 2023, given ongoing work on several major ICI buildings projects such as the Ottawa light rail project, the Parliamentary Precinct, the Umicore electric vehicle battery materials plant, and others.

Although growth in employment in 2024 is modest, it is sufficient to maintain tighter labour markets across most trades and occupations given the rapid employment increases of recent years. Labour markets are projected to adjust in 2025 as some projects wind down, but this relief may be short-lived

as the start of work on major hospitals in Ottawa and Kingston tighten markets for several trades and occupations in 2026.

After 2028, most trades and occupations return to balance with the winding down of several major projects. Some trades and occupations may even experience excess supply.

Note that the widespread conversion of ICI buildings to the greater use of electricity for heating and cooling is excluded from this report, as these efforts are still in their early phases and have had only minor impacts on overall construction labour markets. As these efforts accelerate, they will be added to future BuildForce Canada outlook reports.

Table 5: Non-residential market rankings, Eastern Ontario

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Bricklayers	5	4	3	4	5	5	3	2	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Concrete finishers	4	4	3	4	3	2	3	2	3	3	3
Construction estimators	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	5	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	3	3	3
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	4	5	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	5	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Drillers and blasters	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electrical power line and cable workers	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electricians	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	2	2	3	3
Elevator constructors and mechanics	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	3	2	3	3
Floor covering installers	4	4	4	3	4	4	2	3	2	3	3
Gas fitters	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Glaziers	4	4	4	4	4	5	3	2	2	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Insulators	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	2	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	2	3	3
Plumbers	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	3	2	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Truck drivers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Welders and related machine operators	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

¹¹ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

GREATER TORONTO AREA

Construction activity in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)¹² continues to be dominated by a series of large-scale public-transportation, nuclear refurbishment, new hospital, and other government building-restoration projects. Non-residential construction investment is forecast to rise to a peak in 2027 – increasing by 18% above 2023 levels – as these key projects culminate. Labour market conditions across most non-residential trades and occupations are strained as a result. Investment remains elevated to 2029 before slowing in 2030 and 2031.

The region's residential sector, meanwhile, has experienced several years of declining investment levels. Activity reached a peak in 2021 as low interest rates and strong rates of immigration drove demand for new housing. Investment has stepped down since. Rising interest rates in the latter part of 2022 and 2023 contracted demand for single-family homes and, combined with elevated levels of immigration, bolstered demand for multi-family units. The outlook calls for residential investment to contract into 2024 before returning to growth between 2025 and 2028.

Construction employment in the GTA peaks in 2028 at levels 8% higher than those recorded in 2023. Thereafter, employment retreats slightly and levels off in the latter years of the forecast. Over the forecast period, residential employment increases by 4%. Non-residential employment peaks a year later, with the sector rising to 14% above 2023 levels in 2029. It is mostly sustained thereafter.

In addition to keeping pace with construction demands, the GTA's construction sector will have to contend with the retirement of a projected 39,600 workers, or 22% of the current labour force, over the forecast period. These trends are expected to create hiring needs of approximately 59,800 workers.

¹² The **Greater Toronto Area** (GTA) includes the municipalities of Ajax, Aurora, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Brampton, Brock, Caledon, Clarington, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Georgina Island, Halton Hills, King, Markham, Milton, Mississauga, Newmarket, Oakville, Oshawa, Pickering, Richmond Hill, Scugog, Toronto, Uxbridge, Vaughan, Whitby, and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Residential sector

New housing investment levels in the GTA surged in 2020 and edged even higher in 2021, supported by strong population growth, low interest rates, and consumer preferences. Investment has contracted since, and is expected to do so again in 2024, as rising interest rates have reduced housing affordability.

Notable in this trend is the fact that the number of housing starts in the region increased in 2022 and 2023. Although buyers are generally trending away from single-detached homes, which tend to be the most expensive unit types, demand for multi-family units, and apartment units in particular, was elevated in in both years. This is likely due to factors such as housing costs, an influx of permanent and temporary residents to the region (who tend to rent homes before they buy), very tight regional rental vacancy rates, and diminishing land availability.

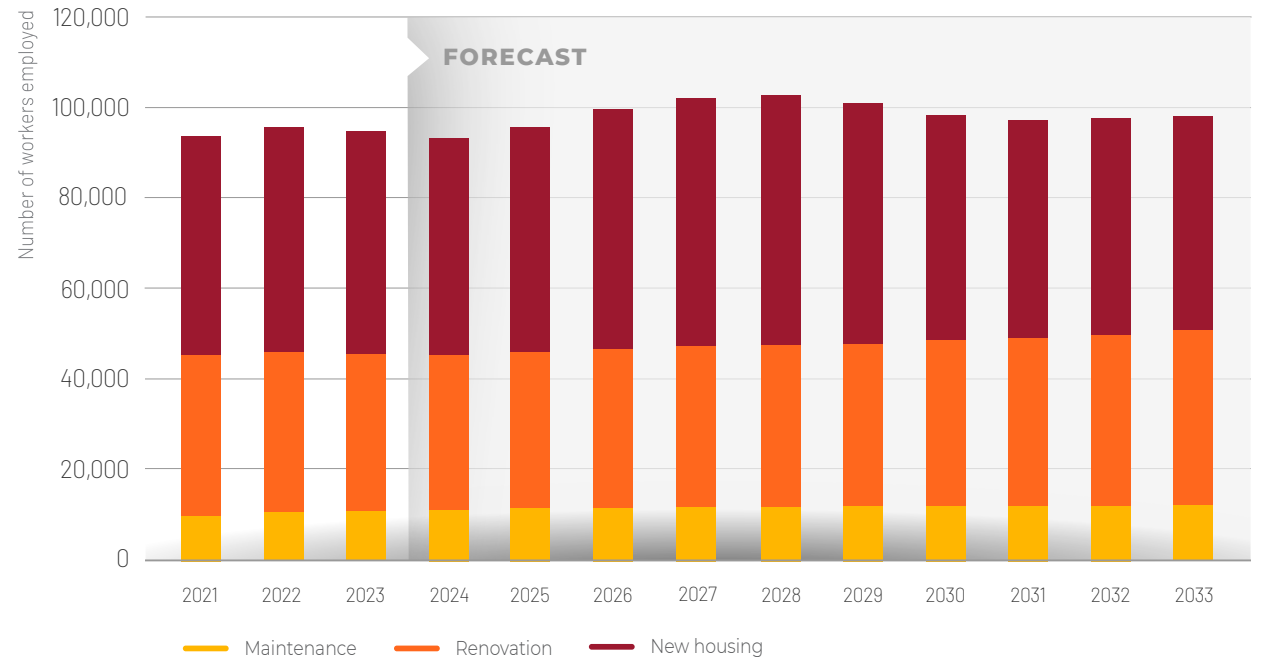
Housing starts are expected to contract in 2024 before returning to growth between 2025 and 2028, in line with increasing demand for new home construction, and a boost in demand for single-detached homes. By 2033, multi-family housing units are expected to account for more than 85% of total housing starts in the region.

Renovation investment levels, meanwhile, contracted in 2022 and 2023, and are forecast to do so again in 2024. Investment levels are expected to return to growth in 2025 with monetary policy relief and a regional upward trend in wage and income growth.

As Figure 8 shows, residential employment was virtually unchanged in 2023 as builders responded to housing demands created in the previous years. Levels are expected to moderate further in 2024, given the relatively higher interest-rate environment. They return to growth thereafter, with new-housing employment rising to a peak of 12% above 2023 levels by 2028 before moderating in later years. By 2033, overall residential employment is projected to be 4% higher than 2023 levels, with maintenance and renovation employment rising by 10% and 11% respectively New-housing employment contracts by 4%.

Note that this analysis is based on currently known demands. It does not take into account public-sector initiatives to address housing affordability challenges.

Figure 8: Residential construction employment growth outlook, Greater Toronto Area



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2024-2033)

Residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For the GTA, non-residential rankings are reported for 27 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system¹³, as shown in Table 6.

Labour market pressures were elevated among many residential trades and occupations in the GTA in 2021 and 2022. They have eased since, but only slightly and generally among those building single-detached homes and those performing renovation work. Trades and occupations building high-rise,

multi-unit residential properties remain strained.

Market pressures are expected to ease again in 2024 for some trades and occupations as new housing construction demands contract. The respite is brief, however. Pressures return with demand for single-detached homes in 2025 and 2026.

Table 6: Residential market rankings, Greater Toronto Area

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Bricklayers	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Concrete finishers	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	5	5	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	3
Electricians	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Elevator constructors and mechanics	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	2	3	3
Floor covering installers	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gas fitters	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Glaziers	5	3	3	4	4	3	3	2	2	3	3
Heavy equipment operators(except crane)	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Home building and renovation managers	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Insulators	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	5	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Tiles setters	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	2	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Welders and related machine operators	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

¹³ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

Non-residential sector

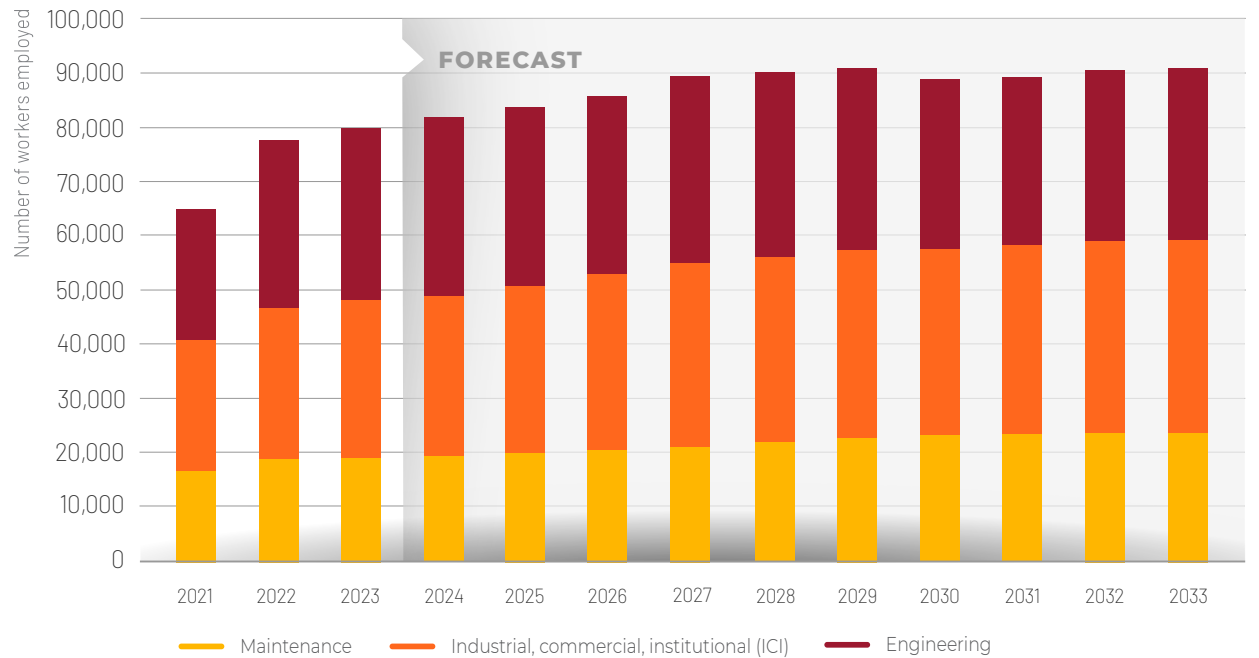
Non-residential construction investment has climbed significantly since 2021, with activity underpinned by work on a series of major projects in the engineering-construction and industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) building construction sectors. It rises to a peak in 2027, at which point work on several of the downtown Toronto transit projects begins to wind down. Investment levels remain elevated into 2029 before stepping back in later years.

On the engineering-construction side, work in the short term is being driven by such projects as the Darlington nuclear refurbishment, Ontario Power Generation’s small modular reactor project, strong levels of investment in roads, highways, and bridges projects, and the huge volume of transit infrastructure projects in downtown Toronto. These works peak in 2027, adding 17% in investment value over 2023 levels.

On the ICI buildings side, activity is being driven by numerous healthcare, education, and government buildings projects. Investment on these will increase significantly to 2026, after which strong growth in commercial building construction carries investment levels to a peak in 2029. Overall ICI buildings construction investment adds nearly 22% across the forecast period.

As Figure 9 shows, these trends are expected to create significant upward pressure on non-residential employment demands in the short and medium terms. Employment rises to a peak of 14% above 2023 levels in 2029 and remains relatively unchanged to the end of the decade. ICI buildings and maintenance employment are both projected to report gains of more than 20% above 2023 levels, while engineering construction employment remains virtually unchanged.

Figure 9: Non-residential construction employment growth outlook, Greater Toronto Area



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada(2024-2033)

Non-residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For the GTA, non-residential rankings are reported for 32 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system¹⁴, as shown in Table 7.

Labour market conditions were tight among most non-residential trades and occupations in the GTA in 2023. Given the stacking of major projects in both engineering construction and in ICI buildings construction through the short and medium terms, these pressures are unlikely to be relieved until at least 2027.

As these projects wind down, more balanced labour market conditions are expected to emerge in 2028 and 2029. Some trades may even experience pockets of greater frictional unemployment during this time.

The widespread conversion of ICI buildings to the greater use of electricity for heating and cooling is excluded from this report, as these efforts are still in their early phases and have had only minor impacts on overall construction labour markets. As these efforts accelerate, they will be added to future BuildForce Canada outlook reports.

Table 7: Non-residential market rankings, Greater Toronto Area

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Boilermakers	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Bricklayers	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	5	3	4	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
Concrete finishers	4	5	4	4	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	5	5	3	4	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
Drillers and blasters	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Electrical power line and cable workers	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Electricians	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	2	3	3	3
Elevator constructors and mechanics	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gas fitters	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Glaziers	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Insulators	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	3	5	4	5	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	3
Tilesetters	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Truck drivers	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Welders and related machine operators	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

¹⁴ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

NORTHERN ONTARIO

Construction activity in Northern Ontario¹⁵ has been generally declining since residential investment levels peaked in 2021, and investment in the non-residential sector peaked a year later.

Although housing starts have been elevated, and are being supported by historically high levels of in-migration, residential investment is trending down as high interest rates shift home buyers' preferences from single-family units to less expensive multi-family homes. In the non-residential component, investment slowed in 2023. The completion of several major electric-transmission projects was only partially offset by elevated levels of activity in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings.

The region's construction outlook calls for residential activity to moderate further into 2024 before returning to an upcycle between 2025 and 2028. Housing starts in particular reach a peak during this period as interest-rate pressures ease. Renovation activity, meanwhile, is projected to decline across the forecast period.

The outlook for the non-residential sector calls for a decline into 2024 before investment rebounds quickly between 2025 and 2027 with the start of new engineering-construction projects. ICI building investment is also projected to grow on the strength of new investments in manufacturing and healthcare facilities.

Total construction employment is projected to contract across the forecast period, with non-residential employment growing by 8% above 2023 levels by 2027 and contracting in later years to finish the decade almost unchanged. Employment in the residential sector, meanwhile, is expected to contract by 12% compared to 2023 levels.

Northern Ontario will compete with other regions for skilled labour over the near term, and must replace a large number of retiring workers across the forecast period. Approximately 4,900 workers are expected to exit the industry during the 10-year forecast period, which equates to 19% of the 2023 labour force.

Of note, there is a significant upside risk to this scenario. Several major resource development projects are awaiting final investment decisions. If approved, they could have a significant impact on labour demand and carry market pressures across the outlook period.

¹⁵ Northern Ontario includes the economic regions of the Northeast and Northwest as defined by Statistics Canada, including the census metropolitan areas of Thunder Bay and Sudbury. Cities include Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, Kirkland Lake, Dryden, Kenora, and Fort Frances.

Residential sector

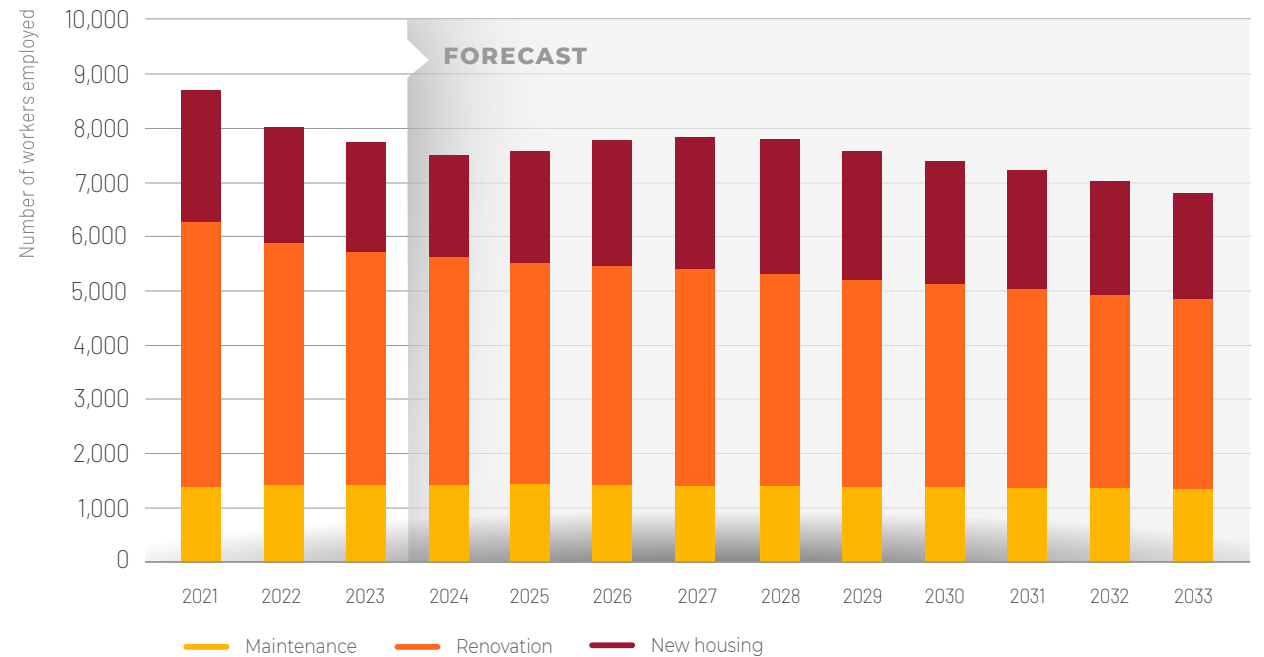
Residential construction investment levels peaked in Northern Ontario in 2021 with strong demand for both new-housing construction and renovation activity. Investment in both segments has stepped down since, largely in response to rising interest rates. Renovation activity is projected to continue to decline across the forecast period as job and income growth weakens across the region. Despite this, renovation activity remains the key driver of residential investment, accounting for more than half of total output.

New housing investment, meanwhile, is projected to decline in 2024 before experiencing a period of growth between 2025 and 2028. Construction demand is strong across this period, with growth in all unit types. Starts reach a new peak in 2028 before declining in later years in line with slowing regional population growth.

Note that this analysis is based on currently known demands. It does not take into account public-sector initiatives to address housing affordability challenges.

Figure 10 shows the employment trends by sector for residential construction in Northern Ontario.

Figure 10: Residential construction employment growth outlook, Northern Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada(2024-2033)

Residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For Northern Ontario, residential rankings are reported for 15 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system¹⁶, as shown in Table 8.

Residential labour demands have stepped down in recent years, after many trades and occupations reported strained conditions between 2019 and 2021. Most trades and occupations returned to balance in 2023, with conditions expected to soften further in 2024.

Projected growth in new housing between 2025 and 2027 will create new market pressures for some trades and occupations, including construction and homebuilding managers and trades helpers and labourers. All trades and occupations will return to balance thereafter as new housing starts moderate in line with slower population growth, and as renovation work continues to recede.

Table 8: Residential market rankings, Northern Ontario

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Bricklayers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Construction estimators	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	4	3	5	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electricians	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Home building and renovation managers	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2

Source: BuildForce Canada

¹⁶ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

Non-residential sector

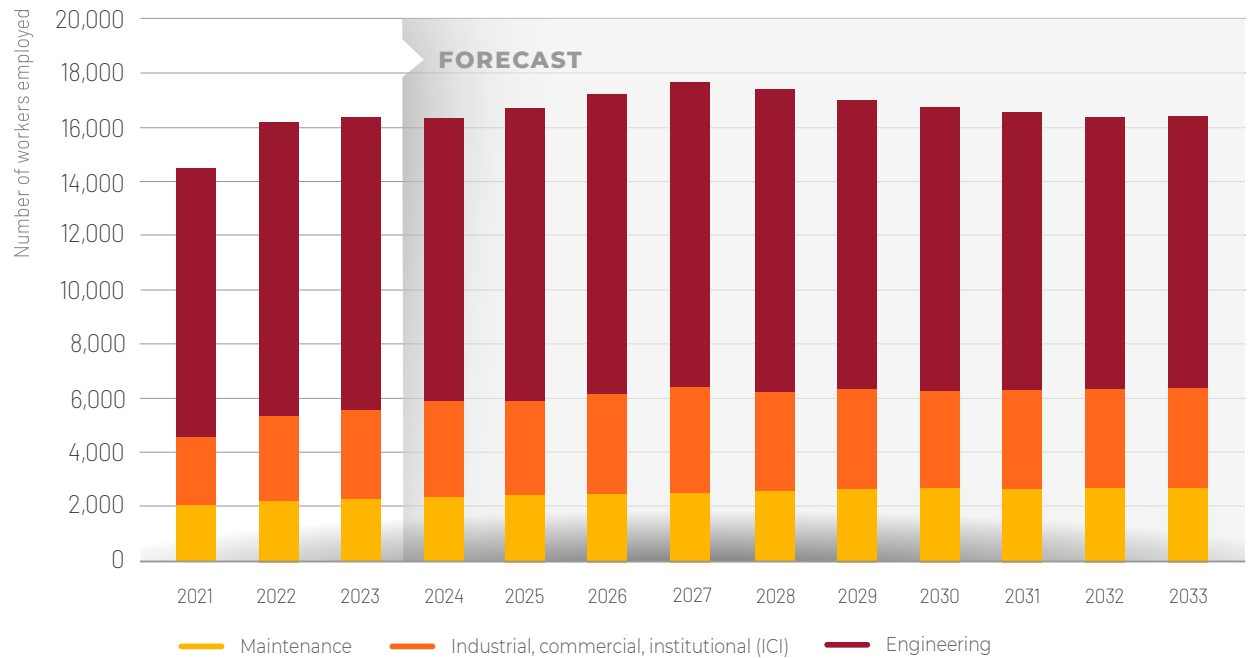
Non-residential construction investment levels have been elevated in recent years, supported by strong activity in engineering construction, and on mining and utilities projects in particular. As these projects ended or approached conclusion in 2023, investment levels stepped down. They are forecast to do so again in 2024.

An upcycle is projected for the period between 2025 and 2029 as several new mining and utilities projects commence, and the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings is supported by such key projects as the Thunder Bay correctional facility and the Weeneebayko Hospital. Activity in later years is driven by population growth.

These factors combine to elevate employment to a peak of 8% above 2023 levels through 2027. Demand cycles down in later years, and leaves employment virtually unchanged across the decade. Employment is projected to rise by 13% in ICI buildings construction, and by 18% in maintenance activity. Engineering-construction employment contracts by 7%.

Figure 11 shows the employment trends by sector for non-residential construction in Northern Ontario.

Figure 11: Non-residential construction employment growth outlook, Northern Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada(2024-2033)

Non-residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For Northern Ontario, non-residential rankings are reported for 21 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system¹⁷, as shown in Table 9.

Labour markets are strained for many trades and occupations entering the forecast period, with several major mining, industrial, and institutional projects underway. Although most trades see conditions ease into 2024 and 2025, others are challenged into 2025 and beyond as ongoing and new projects add to labour demands.

After 2027, markets are expected to return to balance, with some trades and occupations potentially experiencing surplus conditions.

The widespread conversion of ICI buildings to the greater use of electricity for heating and cooling is excluded from this report, as these efforts are still in their early phases and have had only minor impacts on overall construction labour markets. As these efforts accelerate, they will be added to future BuildForce Canada outlook reports.

Table 9: Non-residential market rankings, Northern Ontario

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Boilermakers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	4	3	5	4	4	3	2	3	3	3	3
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	4	3	5	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Electrical power line and cable workers	4	3	5	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Electricians	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gas fitters	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	4	5	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	2	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	3	3	4	3	4	2	2	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Welders and related machine operators	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

¹⁷ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Southwestern Ontario's¹⁸ construction industry is in the midst of a transition period. Until 2021, the residential sector had been the industry's principal driver of growth. Despite strong levels of population growth, residential investment has trended downward in recent years, and is projected to reach its lowest level since 2015 in 2024. Meanwhile, the region's non-residential construction sector has been growing strongly since 2016. Ongoing work on key projects such as the Bruce Power nuclear refurbishment, the Gordie Howe International Bridge, as well as auto plant retooling projects and the construction of electric-vehicle battery plant projects elevated activity to a peak in 2023.

The outlook calls for a decline in both sectors in 2024. The residential sector continues to be constrained by high interest rates, but is projected to return to growth in 2025 and beyond as these pressures ease. The non-residential sector, meanwhile, will be constrained in the short term by the conclusion of work on the Gordie Howe International Bridge and the Stellantis and LG electric-vehicle battery plant. Investment accelerates between 2025 and 2027 before being largely sustained to the end of the decade.

These trends combine to elevate construction employment across the forecast period. Non-residential construction employment is projected to grow continuously after 2024, and end the decade at 12% above 2023 levels. Employment in the residential sector is also expected to reach a peak in 2029 – rising by 22% above 2023 levels – before slowing in later years.

The combination of these employment growth projections and the anticipated retirement of 13,900 workers, or 19% of the 2023 labour force, could create a hiring gap of as many as 25,700 workers that will need to be addressed by a combination of recruitment strategies.

¹⁸ Southwestern Ontario includes the economic regions of London, Windsor-Sarnia and Stratford-Bruce Peninsula as defined by Statistics Canada, including the census metropolitan areas of London and Windsor. Cities include Chatham, Ingersoll, Sarnia, Stratford, Goderich, and Owen Sound.

Residential sector

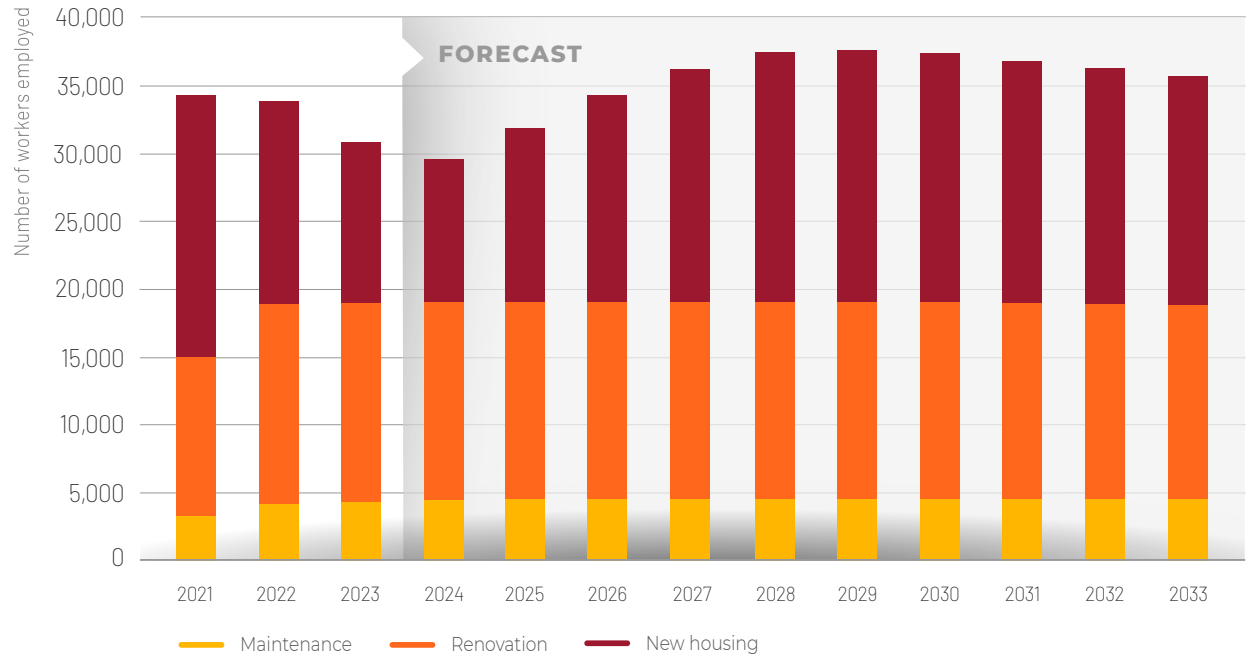
Housing starts in Southwestern Ontario peaked at more than 12,000 units in 2021, supported by record-low interest rates and an influx of permanent and temporary residents. They have stepped down since, and are expected to decline again in 2024. Starts are projected to return to growth between 2025 and 2028 as interest rate pressures ease and population growth remains elevated. Multi-unit starts are expected to rebound significantly during this period, driven by strong levels of immigration, tight rental vacancy rates in urban centres, and the comparatively lower cost of living compared to other regions.

Renovation investment, meanwhile, slowed in 2023 and is forecast to do the same in 2024, under high interest rates and rising construction costs. Activity is sustained thereafter as consumers see lower interest rates and household disposable incomes improve.

Note that this analysis is based on currently known demands. It does not take into account public-sector initiatives to address housing affordability challenges.

Figure 12 shows the employment trends by sector for residential construction in Southwestern Ontario.

Figure 12: Residential construction employment growth outlook, Southwestern Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada(2024-2033)

Residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For Southwestern Ontario, residential rankings are reported for 21 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system¹⁹, as shown in Table 10.

Labour market demands cooled significantly in 2023, as both single-detached and multi-unit starts fell from the elevated levels reported in 2021 and 2022. Markets are anticipated to weaken further in 2024 as

housing starts contract again and as renovation activity declines. Some trades and occupations may even experience brief periods of surplus labour conditions in the short term.

Market demands increase significantly between 2025 and 2028 as the new housing market rebounds strongly. Markets are expected to return to balance in 2029 and beyond as employment growth moderates.

Table 10: Residential market rankings, Southwestern Ontario

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Bricklayers	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	3	2	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Concrete finishers	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	3	2	4	5	5	4	4	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Electricians	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Gas fitters	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Home building and renovation managers	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Tilesetters	3	3	4	5	5	4	3	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	3	2	4	5	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

¹⁹ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

Non-residential sector

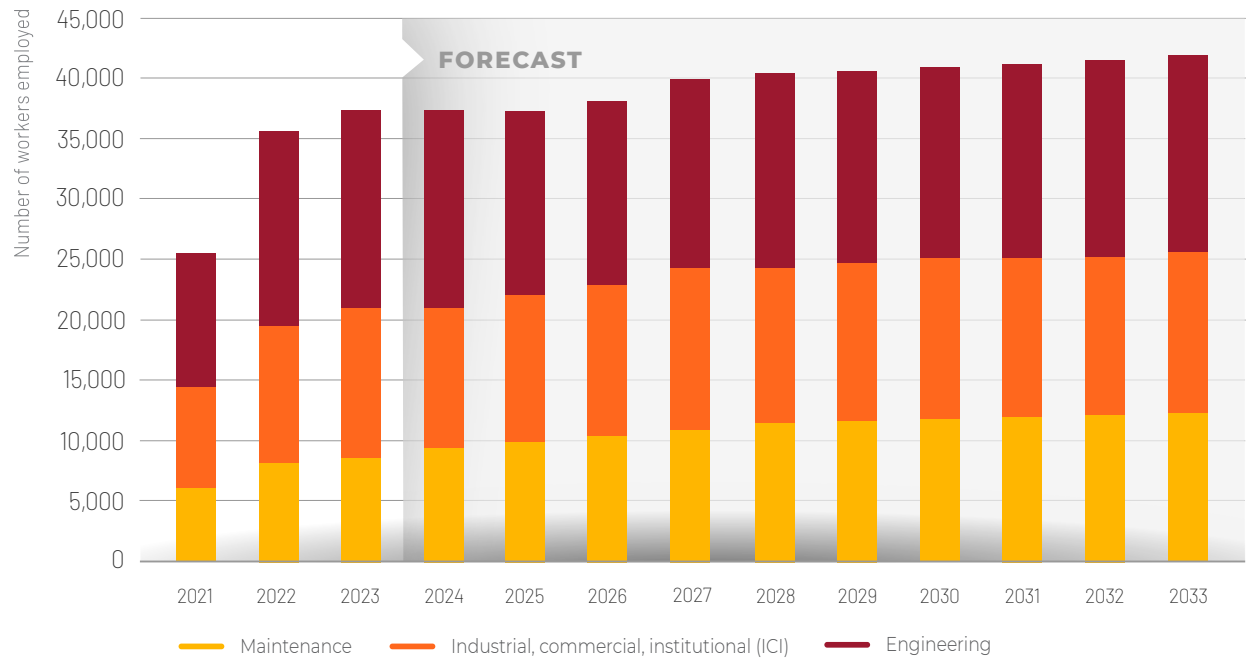
Non-residential construction activity has been elevated in Southwestern Ontario, driven by several large-scale engineering construction projects underway and planned across the period including nuclear refurbishment, automotive retooling, EV battery facilities, a major hospital project, and transmission line projects. The outlook calls for investment to step back briefly in 2024 as both engineering construction work and work on industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings construction concludes on several key projects, including the Gordie Howe International Bridge.

The outlook for engineering construction sees investment follow a modest upward trend in later years, supported by the start of work on the Chatham to Lakeshore transmission line, ongoing work at Bruce Power, and various manufacturing projects. The ICI buildings outlook projects a brief decline in 2024 before investment rises thereafter, supported by several major industrial projects, a general up-turn in commercial building construction, and the start of the Windsor Acute Care Hospital in 2027.

After remaining relatively unchanged in 2024 and 2025, non-residential employment is projected to rise steadily across the remainder of the forecast period, and on the strength of the wide range of major projects underway across the region. By 2033, sector employment is forecast to be 12% higher than 2023 levels, with gains reported in ICI buildings (+8%) and maintenance (+44%). Engineering employment is almost unchanged.

Figure 13 shows the employment trends by sector for non-residential construction in Southwestern Ontario.

Figure 13: Non-residential construction employment growth outlook, Southwestern Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada(2024-2033)

Non-residential rankings, risks, and mobility

For Southwestern Ontario, non-residential rankings are reported for 29 of the 34 trades and occupations covered by the BuildForce LMI system²⁰, as shown in Table 11.

Labour demands were particularly tight for almost all non-residential trades and occupations in 2022, driven by the start of a series of major projects and several large-scale, ongoing maintenance projects. Conditions eased slightly in 2023, but remained challenging in some cases.

As some major projects wind down, demands are expected to lessen again in 2024, while other trades and occupations are challenged again by new or ongoing projects including automotive plant retooling, an electric vehicle battery facility, and nuclear refurbishment and transmission line projects.

Market conditions ebb and flow for the period of 2025 to 2029 as some projects such as the Gordie Howe International Bridge conclude while others, such as the Volkswagen electric vehicle battery plant and the Windsor Acute Care Hospital, start.

The widespread conversion of ICI buildings to the greater use of electricity for heating and cooling is excluded from this report, as these efforts are still in their early phases and have had only minor impacts on overall construction labour markets. As these efforts accelerate, they will be added to future BuildForce Canada outlook reports.

Table 11: Non-residential market rankings, Southwestern Ontario

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Boilermakers	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Concrete finishers	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	5	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Drillers and blasters	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electrical power line and cable workers	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electricians	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Elevator constructors and mechanics	4	4	4	4	5	4	3	3	3	3	3
Gas fitters	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Glaziers	5	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators(except crane)	4	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS — NON-RESIDENTIAL	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Insulators	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	5	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	5	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	5	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Welders and related machine operators	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

²⁰ Please see "About the BuildForce Canada labour market information system" at the end of this report for a detailed explanation of the system methodology.

LABOUR FORCE DIVERSIFICATION

LABOUR FORCE DIVERSIFICATION

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is a key source of labour for the construction industry. New registrations in the 32 largest construction trade programs were on an upward trend leading into the pandemic, reaching record levels in 2019. (See Figure 14.) New registrations have risen at a faster rate than employment over the past decade, leading to an increased supply of journeypersons to meet demand requirements over the near-term. However, select trades, including bricklayer, floorcovering installer, instrumentation and control technician, painter and decorator, and roofer, have seen significant declines in new registrations over the past decade.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought significant challenges to Ontario's apprenticeship system, contributing to significant declines in new registrations and completions in 2020. In 2022, the province saw an almost complete recovery in new registrations to the pre-pandemic level. For the bricklayer, insulator, ironworker (reinforcing), roofer, and sprinkler fitter trades, new registrations had not returned to the pre-pandemic level in 2022. The number of program completions in 2022 exceeded the pre-pandemic level, marking the highest number since 2013.

Figure 14: New apprentice registrations, completions, and trade employment, Ontario



Table 12 provides a trade-by-trade breakdown of the anticipated certification requirements to meet the construction industry's share of employment and replacement demand over the scenario period. Based on projected new registrations, several trades are at risk of undersupplying the number of new journeypersons required by 2033. Trades within this group include roofer, tractor trailer driver, construction craft worker,

painter and decorator, floorcovering installer, welder, heavy-duty equipment operator, insulator (heat and frost), boilermaker, bricklayer, mobile crane operator, instrumentation and control technician, carpenter, and glazier.

Table 12: Estimated construction certification demand and projected completions by trade, 2024 to 2033²¹

TRADE	Target certification demand — construction	Target new registrants — construction	Apprentice certification supply risk — all industries	TRADE	Target certification demand — construction	Target new registrants — construction	Apprentice certification supply risk — all industries
Roofer	485	32	●	Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic	2,841	2,831	●
Tractor Trailer Commercial Driver	745	64	●	Heavy-Duty Equipment Technician	275	355	●
Construction Craft Worker	10,668	1,112	●	Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)	1,078	1,401	●
Painter and Decorator	613	81	●	Metal Fabricator (Fitter)	152	210	●
Floorcovering Installer	303	59	●	Construction Electrician	13,837	19,835	●
Welder	605	131	●	Sprinkler Fitter	542	785	●
Heavy Equipment Operator (Tractor - Loader - Backhoe)	452	110	●	Steamfitter/Pipefitter	717	1,058	●
Insulator (Heat and Frost)	529	132	●	Construction Millwright	207	324	●
Heavy Equipment Operator (Dozer)	430	110	●	Residential Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic	831	1,349	●
Boilermaker	1,421	423	●	Industrial Electrician	1,148	1,879	●
Heavy Equipment Operator (Excavator)	447	144	●	Sheet Metal Worker	1,621	2,730	●
Bricklayer	841	365	●	Powerline Technician	330	556	●
Mobile Crane Operator	899	477	●	Plumber	3,816	9,702	●
Instrumentation and Control Technician	14	7	●	Ironworker (Reinforcing)	64	399	●
Carpenter	6,509	5,163	●	Ironworker (Structural/Ornamental)	139	844	●
Glazier	301	247	●				
Lather (Interior Systems Mechanic)	1,007	937	●				

- Certifications required exceed projected completions
- Certifications required in line with projected completions
- Projected completions exceed certifications required

Source: BuildForce Canada

²¹ This analysis does not account for an existing skills mismatch at the 2023 starting point.

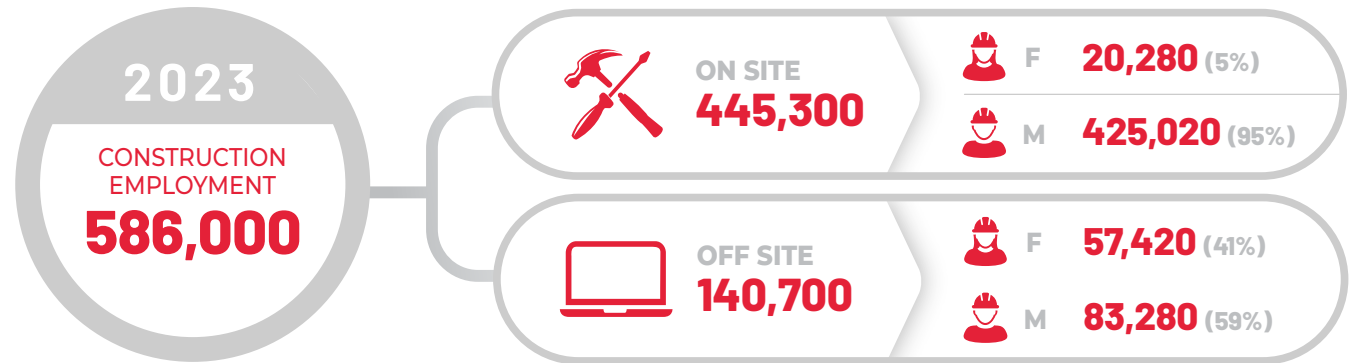
Under-represented groups of workers

Due in part to lower fertility rates and smaller family sizes in Canada for more than three decades, the share of younger Canadians available to enter the labour force has been in decline for several years. As the baby boomer generation of workers commences retirement over the next decade, the competition for younger workers will be intense. To help mitigate the impact of this shift in demographics, the construction industry must diversify its recruitment. In order to succeed, the industry must increase recruitment of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in the current construction labour force, including women, Indigenous People, and newcomers.

In 2023, there were approximately 77,700 women employed in Ontario's construction industry, of which 26% worked on site, directly on construction projects, while the remaining 74% worked off site, primarily in administrative and management-related occupations. Of the 445,300 tradespeople employed in the industry, women made up 5% (see Figure 15).

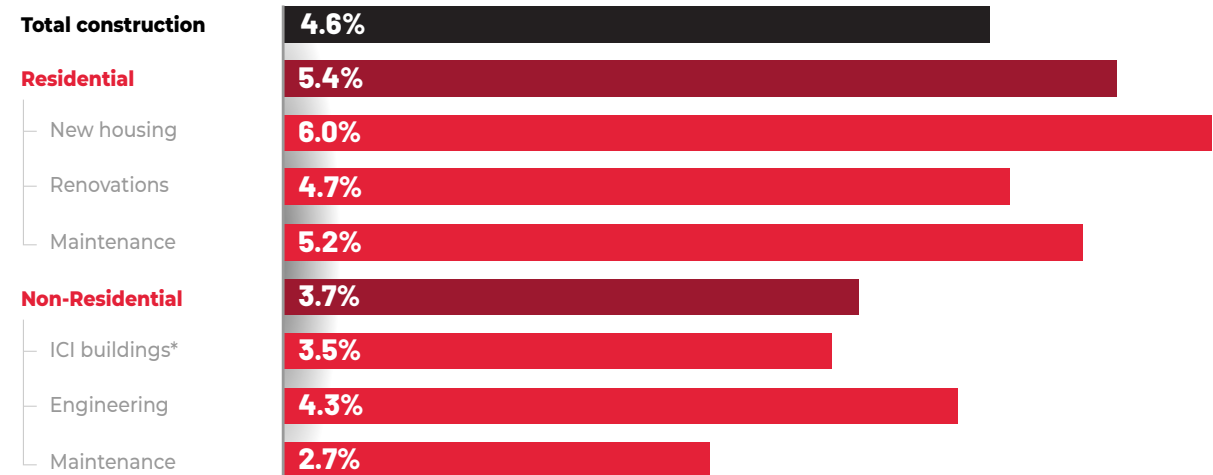
The estimated 20,280 tradeswomen in Ontario are represented across all sectors of construction, but given the nature of construction work in the province, women account for a higher share of total tradespeople (5.4%) in residential construction. Across sectors, new housing construction has the highest representation of women, accounting for 6.0% of the workforce (see Figure 16). The top five trades and occupations in which women tend to be employed are construction managers (22% of all tradeswomen), trade helpers and labourers (19%), painters and decorators (12%), home building and renovation managers (11%), and contractors and supervisors (9%).

Figure 15: Detailed construction employment by gender, Ontario, 2023



Source: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and 2016 Census of the Population.

Figure 16: Women's share of total direct trades and occupations (on site), Ontario



*Industrial, commercial, institutional

Source: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and 2016 Census of the Population.

The Indigenous population is the fastest growing population in Canada and therefore presents recruitment opportunities for Ontario's construction industry. The province has been successful in maintaining the share of Indigenous People in the construction workforce. In 2021, Indigenous People accounted for 3.0% of the province's construction labour force, consistent with the share observed in 2016.²² This share is slightly higher than the share of Indigenous People represented in the overall labour force (see Table 13). As the Indigenous population continues to expand, recruitment efforts will need to be dedicated to increasing the industry's share of the population into the labour force.

Ontario's construction industry may also leverage newcomers (immigrants) to Canada over the forecast period to meet labour requirements. Due to the declining natural rates of population growth, immigrants are the primary source of labour force growth in the province. Immigrants have played an increasingly important role in replenishing the workforce, with the share of immigrants in the workforce increasing from 30% in 2012 to 33% in 2022. Ontario has a higher proportion of immigrants in the labour force than the rest of Canada across all industries and in the construction sector. The province has been successful in attracting and integrating immigrants into the labour force; however, immigrants remain underrepresented in Ontario's construction industry. The construction labour force share of immigrants was 27% in 2022, which is notably lower than the share in the overall provincial labour force. (See Figure 17).²³

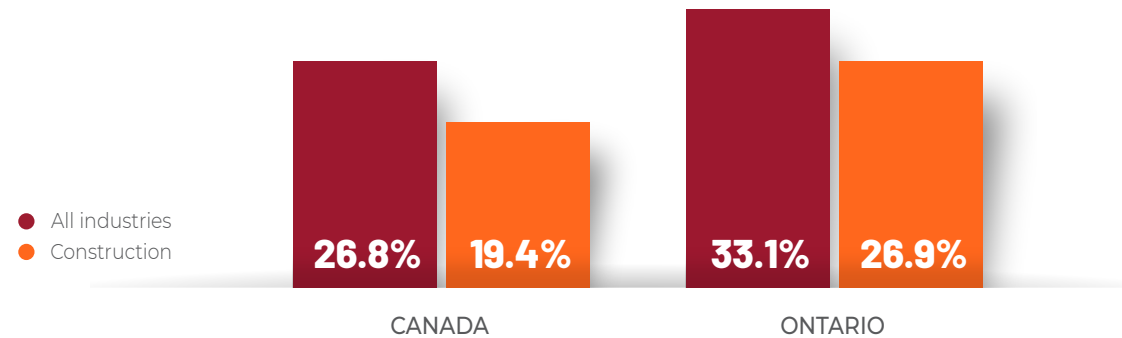
Based on historical settlement trends, the province is expected to welcome more than 2,293,000 new international migrants between 2024 and 2033. As these individuals will make up an increasing share of the province's core working-age population, additional recruitment efforts will be required to ensure the construction industry recruits its share of newcomers into the labour force.

Table 13: Representation of Indigenous population in Ontario's construction workforce

SECTOR	YEAR	INDIGENOUS	NON-INDIGENOUS	TOTAL	INDIGENOUS SHARE OF TOTAL WORKFORCE, %
Construction	2016	14,160	462,670	476,835	3.0%
	2021	16,410	521,935	538,335	3.0%
All Industries	2016	168,335	6,802,290	6,970,630	2.4%
	2021	181,580	7,005,115	7,186,695	2.5%

Source: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's 2021 and 2016 Census of the Population

Figure 17: Share (%) of immigrants in the construction labour force, 2022, Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0083-01. Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, annual

²² Statistics Canada, 2021 Census. Custom Data Request.

²³ Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Data Request 2022.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

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The 2024–2033 *Construction and Maintenance Looking Forward* scenario for Ontario calls for activity in the residential and non-residential sectors to chart very different paths in the short term. The residential sector, which has seen record levels of activity in recent years, driven by low interest rates and strong population growth, has been on a downward trend since 2022, and is forecast to contract again in 2024. It is projected to see a period of strong growth between 2025 and 2028 as interest rates stabilize and buyers again invest in new housing. Later years see new-housing investment levels contract, while renovation expenditures rise.

The non-residential construction outlook, meanwhile, calls for a steady rise in investment levels to 2027. Output is driven by activity on a long list of major projects in all regions, including subway and light rapid transit projects, automotive retooling projects, and major nuclear refurbishments in the Greater Toronto Area, light rail in the Eastern and Central regions, mining activity in the North, and electric vehicle manufacturing and automotive retooling projects in the Southwest. Although investment levels decline in later years as these known projects conclude, activity remains high by historical standards.

Meeting peak demands across all sectors will be challenged by limited interregional mobility, as most regions of the province are projected to report high levels of demand in the form of major

projects across the public-transportation, healthcare, education, utilities, and manufacturing sectors over the near term. Construction also faces the added challenge of an aging workforce and the expected retirement of 89,300 workers, or 19% of the 2023 labour force.

Meeting labour demands will require a combination of industry strategies that include increased local recruitment and training, attracting more permanent residents and recent newcomers to the industry, workers from other industries, and potentially out-of-province workers during anticipated peak periods.

The industry scenario-based approach developed by BuildForce Canada to assess future labour market conditions provides a powerful planning tool for industry, government, and other stakeholders to better track labour market conditions and identify potential pressure points. The anticipated labour market conditions reflect current industry expectations of population growth and the timing of major projects. Any changes to these assumptions present risks and potentially alter anticipated labour market conditions.

ABOUT THE BUILDFORCE CANADA LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM

BuildForce Canada's labour market information (LMI) system uses the most advanced and detailed industry model available in Canada to produce a forecast scenario that reflects current and future labour demand and supply information for the residential and non-residential construction sectors, by province.

Updated annually, the system is calibrated to the latest information on global, national, and provincial economic conditions derived from various data sources including Statistics Canada, Canadian financial institutions, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and federal and provincial budget plans. Key factors driving the outlook scenario include: economic environment measures such as real GDP growth, inflation, interest rates, exchange rates, commodity prices, and international trading partner trends, and population growth and demographic trends.

Unique to the BuildForce system is the integration of a major projects inventory. This is developed in partnership with provincial LMI committees – networks of industry stakeholders that include labour groups, construction associations, owners, and federal/provincial government departments – and identifies key projects that may distort construction investment trends and market conditions.

Information on economics, demographics, and major projects are combined into a dynamic, multi-sector and multi-factor macroeconomic model to generate a 10-year labour market outlook scenario for the residential and non-residential construction sectors in each Canadian province.

The system incorporates coefficients derived from Statistics Canada's input-output tables to determine industry demands and proprietary coefficients developed by BuildForce Canada to translate residential and non-residential investment data into labour demands for the 34 most common on-site trades and occupations in the construction sector. These account for 75% of the total construction labour force.

For labour supply, the system utilizes Statistics Canada's 2021 Census of Population as a starting point. That data is adjusted to reflect current public-policy and demand factors, and is further refined through consultation with the provincial LMI committees to produce measures of provincial economic and population growth, employment growth, retirements, new entrants to the labour force, and interprovincial and international migration patterns.

Provincial residential and non-residential labour market conditions, by trade and occupation, are assessed based on changes in supply and demand and summarized in the form of tables. For each year, conditions are ranked from a low of 1 (in which excess labour supply is apparent, and there is a risk of losing workers to other markets) to a high of 5 (in which there is excess demand, competition is intense, and recruiting extends beyond local labour markets). Ranks are calculated based on annual employment growth, natural or normal unemployment rates, and changes in supply (i.e., retirements, new entrants, and mobility requirements to meet demands).

Rankings for some trades or occupations may be suppressed in some provinces and regions due to the small size of the workforce (i.e., fewer than 100 workers) and limited statistical reliability when assessing labour market conditions at the sector level. Some trades are also excluded because they typically do not work in the sector being assessed (e.g., boilermakers and millwrights typically do not work in residential construction, nor do homebuilding and renovation managers work in non-residential construction).

Finally, to further improve the robustness of the system, BuildForce Canada's outlook scenario is validated by provincial LMI committees.

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- ➔ Macroeconomic and investment data



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For more information, contact:



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MARCH 2024