



ECONOMIC INDICATORS*	THIS YEAR July 2018	LAST YEAR July 2017	% CHANGE 2017-2018
Retail Sales (July)	\$488,826,105	\$454,688,106	7.5%
Retail Sales (Year-To-Date)	\$3,486,157,248	\$3,342,443,016	4.3%
Dollars Spent on Auto Purchases (July)	\$153,991,323	\$124,460,354	23.7%
Dollars Spent on Auto Purchases (YTD)	\$1,017,452,498	\$942,229,023	8.0%
Lodging Tax Receipts (July)	\$337,690	\$423,011	-20.2%
Lodging Tax Receipts (YTD)	\$2,211,509	\$2,367,657	-6.6%
Airline Boardings (July)	36,010	34,160	5.4%
Airline Boardings (YTD)	212,065	205,057	3.4%
Value All Construction Permits (July)	\$41,494,769	\$44,931,405	-7.6%
Value All Construction Permits (YTD)	\$348,137,754	\$382,495,674	-9.0%
New Home Permits (July)	114	138	-17.4%
New Home Permits (YTD)	800	843	-5.1%
Home Sales (July)	236	266	-11.3%
Home Sales (YTD)	1,753	1,664	5.3%
Average Home Sale Price (July)	\$177,146	\$159,774	10.9%
Average Home Sale Price (YTD)	\$160,152	\$154,470	3.7%
Dollar Volume of Home Sales (July in 1995\$)	\$41,806,456	\$43,668,789	-4.3%
Dollar Volume of Home Sales (YTD)	\$282,472,432	\$265,634,868	6.3%
Hidalgo Bridge Crossings (July)	448,277	454,992	-1.5%
Hidalgo Bridge Crossings (YTD)	3,038,519	3,142,987	-3.3%
Peso Exchange Rate (July)	19.05	17.84	6.8%
<b>Employment</b>			
Wage & Salary Employment (July)	258,000	251,100	2.7%
Wage & Salary Employment (YTD Avg)	261,855	256,970	1.9%
Unemployment Rate (McAllen City - July)	4.9	5.4	-9.3%
Unemployment Rate (YTD Average)	4.9	5.4	-9.8%
 INDEX - July (Base=100 January 1996)	 186.6	 185.9	 0.4%

\* With the exception of the average monthly home sale price, all economic indicators expressed in dollar form above are adjusted for inflation by restating prior periods in current dollars

The McAllen Economic Index stalled a bit in July, retreating slightly to 186.6 for the month down from a revised 186.7 in June (the original June index was 186.6 but was revised upward due to an upward revision in the June payroll employment data) but still up 0.4% from the July 2017 MEI of 185.9. While some important local economic indicators are beginning to register strength anew, thus far the index continues to elude its all-time high point of 188.7 in November 2016.

The negatives on the table of economic indicators kept index growth in check in July, but there are some encouraging signs. Spending growth has picked up the pace, the rate of employment growth in July was the highest in over a year, and the McAllen city unemployment rate remains on the decline.

General real (inflation-adjusted) spending per July sales tax receipts was up by a stout 7.5% compared to July of a year ago, pulling the year-to-date total to 4.3% improved over the first seven months of a year ago. Real auto spending in July was even more impressive, up by a sharp 23.7% compared to the July 2017 auto spending total.

Payroll employment expanded at a 2.7% clip in July compared to July of a year ago, the highest rate of year-over-year growth since June 2016. That represents the addition of an estimated 6,900 jobs over the last 12 months.

Construction activity remains on the decline through July with real building permit valuations (in McAllen, Edinburg, Mission, and Pharr) down by 7.6% compared to July of a year ago, which in turn was down by some 12% compared to July of the previous year. Housing construction is lower as well with the number of new single-family residence building permits down by 17% for the month and 5% for the year-to-date.

Existing home sales are higher on balance, but the monthly closed sales total was down for the second straight month. The average price of those sales is sharply higher, however, up by nearly 11% compared to the July 2017 monthly average, which in turn was up by nearly 12% year-over-year. The inflation-adjusted total dollar volume of residential real estate sales activity is up by a solid 6.3% through the first seven months of 2018.