



ECONOMIC INDICATORS*	THIS YEAR May 2019	LAST YEAR May 2018	% CHANGE 2018-2019
Retail Sales (May)	\$ 583,696,959	\$ 580,160,538	0.6%
Retail Sales (Year-to-Date)	\$ 2,797,565,035	\$ 2,592,731,290	7.9%
Dollars Spent on Auto Purchases (May)	\$ 170,952,607	\$ 162,174,358	5.4%
Dollars Spent on Auto Purchases (YTD)	\$ 764,886,351	\$ 724,228,492	5.6%
Lodging Tax Receipts (May)	\$ 332,077	\$ 304,020	9.2%
Lodging Tax Receipts (YTD)	\$ 1,784,172	\$ 1,555,718	14.7%
Airline Boardings (May)	39,028	31,399	24.3%
Airline Boardings (1st Quarter)	164,497	141,100	16.6%
Value All Construction Permits (May)	\$ 48,701,063	\$ 47,661,220	2.2%
Value All Construction Permits (YTD)	\$ 206,373,916	\$ 275,878,595	-25.2%
New Home Permits (May)	113	131	-13.7%
New Home Permits (YTD)	537	566	-5.1%
Home Sales (May)	330	281	17.4%
Home Sales (YTD)	1,366	1,206	13.3%
Average Home Sale Price (May)	\$ 175,812	\$ 172,098	2.2%
Average Home Sale Price (YTD)	\$ 163,972	\$ 159,931	2.5%
Dollar Volume of Home Sales (May in 1995\$)	\$ 58,018,047	\$ 49,540,459	17.1%
Dollar Volume of Home Sales (YTD)	\$ 224,792,343	\$ 198,391,595	13.3%
Hidalgo Bridge Crossings (May)	437,495	462,288	-5.4%
Hidalgo Bridge Crossings (YTD)	2,133,787	2,171,984	-1.8%
Peso Exchange Rate (May)	19.09	19.51	-2.1%
<b>Employment</b>			
Wage & Salary Employment (May)	272,600	265,900	2.5%
Wage & Salary Employment (YTD Avg)	270,140	263,900	2.4%
Unemployment Rate (McAllen City - May)	3.5	4.3	-18.6%
Unemployment Rate (YTD Average)	4.2	4.8	-13.0%
 INDEX - January (Base=100 January 1996)	 191.7	 186.6	 2.7%

\* 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 surged upward to its new all-time record in May improving a full point to 197.7 for the month, up from 190.7 in April, and the previous record 191.4 (revised upward from 191.3 due to a slight upward revision in McAllen metro area housing sales) in January of this year. The May index is up by 2.7% from the May 2018 MEI of 186.6.

The spending indicators, along with travel/tourism and the residential real estate numbers along with continued improvement in the McAllen metro area employment situation are driving the upward increase, while construction, including home building, are down through the first five months of the year along with Hidalgo Bridge crossings.

General real (inflation-adjusted) spending per sales tax receipts in McAllen, Edinburg, Mission, and Pharr were up only slightly compared to a year ago at 0.6% improved over the May 2018 spending total, which in turn was up by a solid 7.2% compared to May of the prior year. The year-to-date gains are impressive however with general real spending through May up by nearly 8% compared to the January-May 2018 total.

Auto sales activity is growing at an impressive pace as well with inflation-adjusted spending on new and used motor vehicles up by some 5.5% both for May, and for the year-to-date through May compared to year-ago levels.

The travel/tourism indicators are strong and gaining momentum in the first half of the year with real hotel/motel activity up by nearly 15% through May compared to a year ago (and May monthly lodging revenue up by nearly 10% year-over-year); passenger enplanements at McAllen International Airport were up by over 24% in May, and are up by over 16% through the first five months of the year.

Construction activity is just slightly higher for the month of May compared to year-ago levels, but remains lower for the year-to-date, off by some 25% compared to the real permit valuation total through May 2018. Single-family housing construction (the value of those permits is included in the total) is trending lower in 2019 as well with the number of new single-family permits issued down for both the month and year-to-date compared to year-ago levels.

Existing home sales are more than offsetting the construction numbers, however, with the number of closed sales at record levels through May and posting a 13.3% increase compared to the sales total through May 2018. The 330 closed sales are the second-highest on record for the month of May, down only compared to 333 sales in May 2017. The average price of those sales is up modestly at 2.5% through May compared to the average through the first five months of a year ago.

McAllen metro area employment continues to post steady employment growth with the May monthly payroll employment estimate up by 2.5% compared to May of a year ago, and the average employment growth rate of 2.4% for January-May. That's been the range of McAllen employment growth for most years dating back to 2011. The McAllen city unemployment rate reached its lowest level ever for the month of May at 3.5%, down from 4.3% in May 2018.