



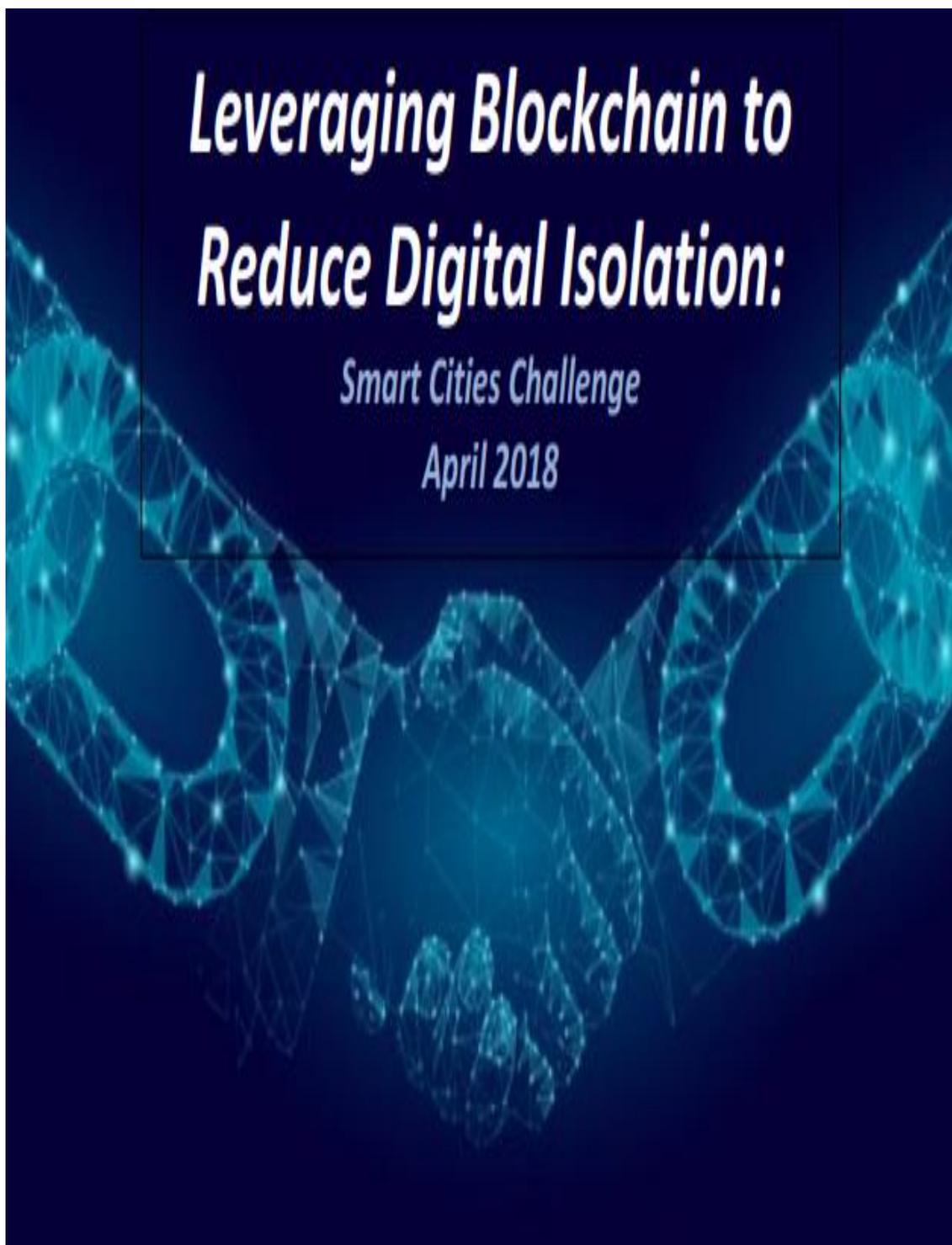
CREATING OPPORTUNITES

Share this Newsletter with your Community



Stirling submits application for federal government's Smart Cities Challenge

The Stirling Broadband Connectivity Committee is pleased to sponsor the Smart Cities Challenge Application for Stirling.



Cover of Stirling, Alta.'s application for the federal government's Smart Cities Challenge

After months of committee meeting work the application was submitted for the Smart Cities Challenge in April 2018. The application "Leveraging Blockchain to Reduce Digital Isolation" has passed the preliminary review and is now being published online for all

residents to read. Finalists will be selected over the summer with a number of communities receiving grants to develop final proposals. Stirling is competing for a prize of up to \$5 million.

To view the application please click the following link for a PDF version.

[Smart Cities Challenge Application - April 2018](#)

For more information on the Smart Cities Challenge, follow this link:

<https://impact.canada.ca/en/challenges/smart-cities>

Weekly Economic Briefing

From the Ministry of Economic Development & Trade

Week of May 14, 2018

Indicators Updated this Week

MANUFACTURING SALES



In March 2018, the value of Alberta's manufacturing sales increased 5.2% compared with March 2017, to \$6.16 billion. Nationally, manufacturing shipments increased 6.4% over the same period to \$57.14 billion. In Alberta, machinery saw the highest growth at 16.5%, while fabricated metal products saw the largest decline at -17.0%.

NEW MOTOR VEHICLE SALES



The number of new motor vehicles sold in Alberta decreased 5.9% between March 2017 and March 2018 to 21,218, while the number of motor vehicles sold in Canada decreased 0.4% over the same period. Sales of passenger vehicles decreased 20.0% year-over-year, while sales of trucks (including minivans, suvs, light and heavy trucks, vans and buses) decreased 2.5%. In March 2018 trucks comprised 83.3% of all vehicle sales.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX



On a year-over-year basis, Albertans paid 2.3% more in April 2018 for the goods and services that comprise the Consumer Price Index (CPI) than in the same month a year ago, slightly higher than the national average rise in CPI of 2.2%. Energy prices increased the most in Alberta (+16.1%), while recreation, education and reading (-1.6%) was the only product category to see a decline.

NATURAL GAS PRICE



The price of natural gas in March 2018 was CDN\$1.54 per gigajoule, down 30.0% from March 2017.

HOUSING STARTS

-11.5%
2,253
(new units)



In Alberta, urban housing starts totalled 2253 in April 2018, a year-over-year decrease of 11.5%. Canadian starts decreased 1.4% over the same period. In Alberta, single-detached (-12.6%) and row units (-58.7%) decreased, while semi-detached (+1.0%) and apartments (+10.8%) increased.

RETAIL TRADE

+2.5%
\$6.8B



Alberta's retail trade value increased by 2.5% in March 2018 compared to March 2017, to \$6.75 billion. Nationally, retail sales increased by 4.1% over the same time frame. In Alberta, building materials (+11.4%) and sales at gasoline stations (+8.1%) saw the largest increases.

News Highlights

- Legal pot spurs demand for commercial real estate, especially in Alberta where it's 'absolute insanity'. [Read more](#)
- Alberta communities look to cash in big on legal weed. [Read more](#)
- Aurora Cannabis to buy MedReleaf in \$3.2B takeover. [Read more](#)
- IEA: Canadian oil production holds near record rates, growing despite pipeline constraints. [Read more](#)
- Varcoe: Oilsands producers move to shed high-cost, high-carbon label. [Read more](#)
- Alberta pipeline disrupted as fire season starts in oil patch. [Read more](#)
- Alberta premier 'prepared to turn off the taps' now that legislation approved. [Read more](#)
- Oilers Entertainment Group lays off 30 people to focus on core business. [Read more](#)
- Calgary brewery blames municipal 'red tape' for 11-month wait to open outdoor patio. [Read more](#)
- Enbridge to consolidate assets in \$11.4-billion restructuring. [Read more](#)

Major Projects

- Calgary's Heritage Park embarks on \$10M expansion to celebrate the energy industry. [Read more](#)
- Greengate proposing 400-megawatt solar project in Vulcan County. [Read more](#)
- Pembina to expand Peace pipeline system. [Read more](#)

- Trudeau announces \$40 million for railway underpass, more lanes on 50 Street in Edmonton. [Read more](#)
- Edmonton infrastructure projects should spur redevelopment, panelists say. [Read more](#)
- Canmore Rec Centre moving forward with \$12.9 million budget. [Read more](#)

Key Economic Indicators

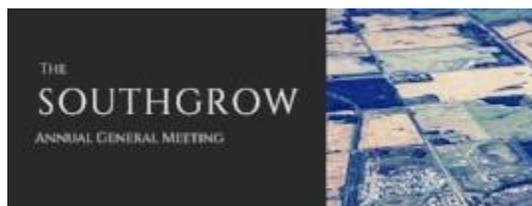
Period	Indicator	Latest Update	Change	Last Updated
2017	GDP <i>yr/yr</i>	\$304.7B	+4.9%	May 2018
Q1 2018	Population <i>yr/yr</i>	4.3M	+1.4%	March 2018
Apr 2018	Unemployment <i>yr/yr</i>	6.7%	-1.2%	May 2018
May 14-18, 2018	WTI Oil Price <i>wk/wk</i>	\$71.30	+2.1%	May 18, 2018 midday
Mar 2018	Retail Trade <i>yr/yr</i>	\$6.8B	+2.5%	May 2018

Looking Ahead

Mon 21	Tue 22	Wed 23	Thu 24	Fri 25
	Indicator Releases: Wholesale trade		Indicator Releases: Employment insurance	

Things You Need to Know

From the SouthGrow Office



Upcoming SouthGrow Event: Annual General Meeting

SouthGrow will be hosting our Annual General Meeting on June 14th. As our agency grows and pushes the boundaries on behalf of southern Albertans, we need to have approved representatives there from all 24 of our member communities in order to vote on new initiatives and organizational structures that will be proposed. Dinner will be supplied. [Learn more & register.](#)



Upcoming SouthGrow Event: Learning from the Netherlands: Waste Management & Bio-Energy

We welcome Maarten den Ouden, Trade Officer from the Consulate General of the Netherlands who will talk about the challenges facing agricultural regions in the Netherlands during the 1990s and outline the steps taken to drive improved sustainability and create a successful economic model. Mr. den Ouden will share examples of regional strategies and resulting successes, failures and lessons learned. A question and answer session will be followed by a light lunch and networking opportunity. [Learn more & register here.](#)



ATB Financial's latest Alberta Economic Outlook released today

Alberta's economy is once again expanding with most major economic indicators moving in the right direction. This, from ATB Financial's latest Alberta Economic Outlook released today. The Outlook provides insight into what has happened in our economy this year and what is likely to occur in the months ahead.

[Read the complete ATB Alberta Economic Outlook \(May 2018\)](#) and [watch](#) ATB's Chief Economist summarize it.



ASTech Awards

You might ask: why should we apply for an ASTech Award? The answer is simple: because an ASTech Award honours leadership and outstanding achievement in science and technology in Alberta. Winning an ASTech has multiple benefits, but most importantly, enhanced credibility and profile that often leads to partnerships and financing. Now more than ever, it's vitally important to celebrate success in Alberta and share those stories to inspire the next generation of innovation. [Learn more.](#)



RMA Post-Secondary Scholarship Program

The 2018 application term is now open and closes August 31, 2018 In recognition of the importance of an educated population to the future well-being of rural

communities, the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) established the RMA Scholarship Program in 1995. The RMA Scholarship Program is designed to encourage young rural Albertans to pursue further education, and thereby enhance the ability of these young people to make meaningful contributions to their communities in subsequent years. A scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 is presented to one successful applicant from each of the five districts. [Learn more.](#)

Community and Regional Economic Support Program

(CARES)

CARES Program

On April 9th, Minister of Economic Development and Trade, Deron Bilous, announced the 62 recipients of the latest Community and Regional Economic Support program (CARES).

What's more, he also announced that the program will be extended for at least two more intakes. These intakes will be in June 2018 and October 2018 respectively. So get your people together and start planning for your next impactful economic development project now. [Learn more.](#)

Stories That We're Following

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

[Municipal tax rates determined](#)

Westwind Weekly

Magrath, Raymond and Stirling have passed their tax bylaws for 2016. The Town of Magrath passed their tax bylaw for the 2016 budget at town council meeting ...

[Alberta now has world's largest expanse of protected boreal forest](#)

CBC News

Alberta is now home to the largest area of protected boreal forest in the world, following an announcement Tuesday. The provincial and federal governments ...

[Notley backs out of western premiers' meeting, citing Trans Mountain deadline](#)

CBC News

Alberta Premier Rachel Notley has pulled out of a meeting of Western Canada premiers in Yellowknife at the last minute, reportedly over the Trans Mountain ...

['Significant' issues remain over NAFTA: U.S. treasury secretary](#)

CBC News

U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Monday said major issues remained in talks involving the United States, Mexico and Canada to renegotiate...

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

[Extended winter runoff setting back seeding for southern Alberta farmers](#)

Global News

Randy Howg said it is going to cost him at least \$15,000 just in propane to clear his land of floodwater thanks to a late snowfall just over a month ago ...

[Alberta cannabis to undergird Beijing Winter Olympics](#)

Calgary Herald

Industrial hemp fibre, processed in Calgary from cannabis plants grown in southern Alberta, will help pave the way for safe, stable bobsled and luge ...

[Manufacturing to help sustain economic growth this year](#)

The Owl: ATB Financial's Economics & Research Team

The sale of manufactured goods in Alberta continues to improve and help fuel economic growth in the province. In March, total manufacturing ...

[Farmers hoping for a balance in moisture](#)

Grainews

On the flip side, over a wide area of southern Alberta seeding rice from a canoe might have appeared as the best cropping option as of late April and ...

[Manufacturing to help sustain economic growth this year](#)

The Owl: ATB Financial's Economics & Research Team

The sale of manufactured goods in Alberta continues to improve and help fuel economic growth in the province. In March, total manufacturing shipments ...

[Alberta communities look to cash in big on legal weed](#)

CBC News

Marijuana is already big business in Canada and some southern Alberta communities are lining up to fully take advantage of recreational cannabis ...

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

[Alberta releases trail plans for off-highway vehicle use on threatened ...](#)

Global News

New rules for two heavily used areas of Alberta's southern foothills that include restricting off-highway vehicles to designated trails are getting high praise from ...

[Chinook Country considers new direction](#)

Lethbridge Herald

After putting out the "Welcome" mat for almost 50 years, southern Alberta's tourism promotion organization is looking to new directions. The Chinook ...

[Mother Nature co-operating in southern Alberta: Little chance of big flood](#)

National Post

Alberta's snowpack may be deep but officials say that doesn't mean the recurrence of heavy flooding that devastated the southern part of ...

[Parched Prairies desperate for rain, extreme fire ratings](#)

The Weather Network

"A system is expected to develop stateside, bringing widespread showers to the Foothills and southern Alberta in general in this time." As much as 40 ...

[Albertans spending less on alcohol and drinking less too](#)

The Owl: ATB Financial's Economics & Research Team

For many Albertans, the May-long weekend is the first real chance to experience summer after a long winter. It's a chance to fire up the barbeque ...

BIG IDEAS

[Bitcoin is an energy hog: New numbers suggest how big a problem it is](#)

CBC News

Bitcoin miners will guzzle more electricity this year than some countries do, according to new numbers from a leading researcher. And while some critics ...

[The environmental argument for cattle](#)

Alberta Farmer Express

Critics who slam the sector over water use and greenhouse gases only give half the story, says Beef Cattle Research Council. Pastures and feed crops ...

[Compare and Contrast: Water shortages to be key environmental challenge of the century, Nasa warns](#)

The Guardian

Water shortages are likely to be the key environmental challenge of this century, scientists from Nasa have warned, as new data has revealed a drying-out ...

Upcoming Events

May 29 | Lunch & Learn: NAFTA (Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce)

As the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) renegotiations lurch from forced optimism to apprehension, small businesses in Canada need to face the possibility that the trade deal might collapse. But, now is not the time to panic. Join the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce for a discussion featuring Carlo Dade, Director of Trade & Investment Centre, Canada West Foundation. Carlo will discuss NAFTA and what businesses can do now to prepare. [Learn more.](#)

May 30 | Learning from the Netherlands: Waste Management & Bio Energy (Economic Development Lethbridge & Partners)

We welcome Maarten den Ouden, Trade Officer from the Consulate General of the Netherlands who will talk about the challenges facing agricultural regions in the Netherlands during the 1990s and outline the steps taken to drive improved sustainability and create a successful economic model. Mr. den Ouden will share examples of regional strategies and resulting successes, failures and lessons learned. A question and answer session will be followed by a light lunch and networking opportunity. [Learn more.](#)

June 6, 7 & 8 | INVENTURE\$ (Alberta Innovates)

Guy Kawasaki and Arlene Dickinson have just been announced as the first two keynotes for Alberta Innovates new innovation experience, Inventure\$. This unconference, featuring 150 thought leaders, will converge on the Calgary Telus Convention Centre, June 6-8. The event brings together innovators, investors, and thought-leaders to discover and share new developments in innovation and experiential learning. It offers 16 tracks of programming that include clean energy, oil and gas, agriculture, forestry, bio-technology, construction, artificial intelligence and more. [Learn more.](#)

June 7 | Getting your Agriculture and Food Products to Market: Trade & Logistics Workshop (Alberta Ag. & Forestry)

Join experts who will provide you with:

- Connections to logistics and supply chain experts;
- Valuable information on logistics, cargo services, freight forwarding and customs brokerage considerations related to exporting products;

- Expertise and information on different modes of transportation including trucking, air, and rail;
- Updates on the new Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific;
- Partnership (CPTPP) and market access opportunities created;
- Information on market development programs and services from multiple government agencies and departments; and
- Information on the newly launched Canadian Agriculture Partnership grant program and learn more about application process and eligible activities. [Learn more.](#)

June 14 | SouthGrow Annual General Meeting

SouthGrow will be hosting our Annual General Meeting on June 14th. As our agency grows and pushes the boundaries on behalf of southern Albertans, we need to have approved representatives there from all 24 of our member communities in order to vote on new initiatives and organizational structures that will be proposed. Dinner will be supplied. [Register here.](#)

September 26 | 2018 Alberta Climate Summit (Pembina Institute)

The Alberta Climate Summit is the event for innovative thinking and knowledge sharing on energy and climate in Alberta. The event brings together 500+ thought leaders from industry, government, environmental NGOs, and community stakeholders to learn from success stories, identify opportunities and challenges, and explore solutions related to Alberta's clean energy future. The Climate Summit showcases successes underway in Alberta, informs and connects decisionmakers, and inspires participants to play an active role in Alberta's transition to a clean energy future. [Learn more.](#)

Employment Opportunities

[AUMA | Association of Urban Municipalities of Alberta](#)

[RMA | Rural Municipalities of Alberta](#)

[Government of Alberta](#)

Questions? Suggestions? Need Help? Got a story we should share?

Contact the SouthGrow team!

info@southgrow.com | [\(403\) 394-0615](tel:4033940615)

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