

Weekly economic review

Alberta vehicle sales continue to improve

New Motor Vehicle Sales

New vehicle sales gain momentum

New motor vehicle sales grew in March for the second month in a row. The number of new vehicles sold in Alberta advanced 27% month-over-month (m/m) to 16,763 units in a non-seasonally adjusted basis. Sales of passenger cars (+58% m/m) and trucks (+24% m/m) both increased, and the average price per vehicle rose 0.5% to \$54,472. Despite improving monthly sales, year-to-date (YTD) new motor vehicle sales were down 14% from 2021 in part due to strong sales last year. For Canada, YTD sales were down 9.3%, with declines in all provinces.

Consumer Insolvencies

Insolvencies tick up

Alberta's consumer insolvencies went up in March for the second consecutive month. The number of Albertans that filed for insolvency increased 17% m/m to 1,354, with both bankruptcies and proposals rising. In March, the Bank of Canada increased its policy interest rate by 25 basis points to 0.5%. Despite this uptick, consumer insolvencies were down 4.7% from the 12-month high in March 2021 amid Alberta's ongoing labour market recovery. Nationally, consumer insolvencies rose 24% m/m, with the largest growth in New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia.

Business Insolvencies

Insolvencies buck national trend

Alberta's business insolvencies declined in March as the provincial economic recovery gathered momentum. Seventeen businesses initiated insolvencies, a decrease of four from February. The number of bankruptcies went down while proposals remained unchanged. Likewise, Alberta's share of national business insolvency filings narrowed to 5.3%. Nationally, 42 more business insolvencies were filed in March, driven by increases in Quebec and Ontario.

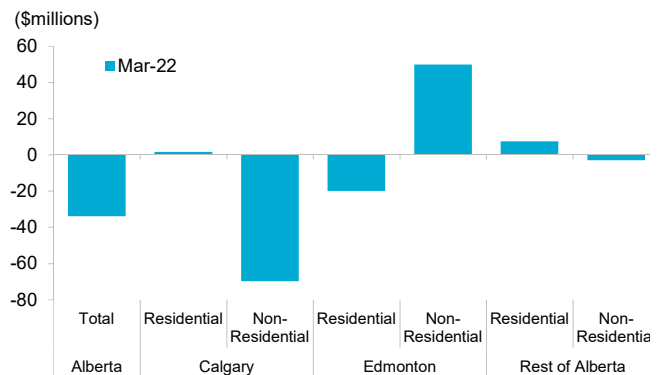
Building Permits

Construction intentions ease

Spending intentions for Alberta's construction sector softened in March. Building permit values declined 2.8% m/m to \$1.2 billion, down for both residential (-1.4% m/m) and non-residential (-5.3% m/m) permits. The decline in Edmonton's residential permits (-7.3% m/m) more than offset the higher values in Calgary and Lethbridge. Conversely, Calgary's lower commercial permits outweighed a sizeable uptick in Edmonton's institutional & governmental permits, pushing non-residential values lower (Chart 1). Over the same period, Canada's building permit values declined 9.3% m/m from February's record high.

CHART 1: CALGARY COMMERCIAL PERMITS DRIVE M/M DECLINE

Monthly change in building permits, by CMA and type (seasonally adjusted)



Sources: Statistics Canada and Haver Analytics

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For current snapshot of Alberta indicators [Alberta Economy - Indicators at a Glance](#)