

REGIONAL PRESS NEWS

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Communities celebrate Canada Day with strong turnout in Valleyview and Fox Creek



By Haylee Dianne

Residents in both Valleyview and Fox Creek came together on Canada Day to mark the national holiday with full schedules of community events, bringing families, volunteers and local organizations together in celebration.

In Valleyview, festivities were held at the Polar Palace Arena after organizers moved activities indoors. The day began with a pancake breakfast hosted by the Elks, followed

by a RCMP meet-and-greet and a photo booth provided by Mary Colleen Photography. Residents then gathered for an official flag-raising ceremony, where Mayor Burke and representatives from the local Legion spoke to the crowd.

The Valleyview Legion is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year and will be hosting a community barbecue at Legion Park on

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Todd Loewen, MLA photo

Lower your risk of West Nile virus infection this summer

Primary Care Alberta release

Mosquitoes are a common summer pest. It's important to remember that if you're bitten, you may be at risk for West Nile virus. With mosquitoes thriving this time of year, Primary Care Alberta asks Albertans to protect their health by preventing bites.

While the risk of West Nile virus remains low in Alberta, some mosquitoes can carry the virus, so it's best to avoid being bitten at all. West Nile virus is an infection that can give you flu-like symptoms. In rare cases, the infection can lead to brain and spinal cord inflammation, which can be hard to recover from. There is currently no specific treatment for West Nile virus infection.

Here are some ways you can help prevent mosquito bites:

- Cover as much of your body as possible when outdoors, especially in grassy or wooded areas.
- Wear long-sleeved, light-coloured shirts and pants, and a hat.
- Stay indoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- Use a Health Canada-approved insect repellent (for example, products with DEET or Icaridin) and follow the product label instructions.

If you're a parent or caregiver, do not use insect repellent with DEET on babies under six months of age. Instead, use mosquito netting and try not to be outside when insect activity is high,

CONTINUED PAGE 2



Career Exposure Summer Camp participants spent Day 3 immersed in hands-on activities, developing new skills and exploring potential career paths. With students showing plenty of curiosity and enthusiasm, the first week of camp is already nearing its conclusion. *Fox Creek School photo*



Fox Creek School photo

Canadian Natural Resources Limited continued its support of Fox Creek School by sponsoring a Grade 12 scholarship for students pursuing post-secondary studies in fields including mental health, emergency services, nursing and medical services, recreation, and STEM. Pictured are Canadian Natural representative Mark Maidment and assistant principal Ronica DeCiccio.



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like at dawn and dusk.
If your child is old enough for you to use insect repellent with DEET, limit use where you can:

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- If your child is over two years of age, you

can use it up to three times a day.

Always make sure you use a registered product labelled as an insect repellent for use on people. Visit Personal Insect repellents - Canada.ca for more information. To learn more about West Nile virus and ways to keep safe, visit Fightthebite.info.

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Fox Creek graduates encouraged to apply for Legacy Scholarship

Press Release

Graduates of Fox Creek School who have made a positive impact in their school and community are invited to apply for the Legacy Scholarship before the August 15 deadline.

The scholarship recognizes students who have shown leadership, maintained a strong commitment to their studies, and contributed to school life and the community through volunteerism, extracurricular activities, or other

forms of involvement. Applicants should also be planning to continue their education at a provincially approved post-secondary institution.

Rather than focusing solely on grades, the Legacy Scholarship also considers the qualities that help build a strong community, including a positive attitude, a willingness to support others, and consistent participation both inside and outside the classroom.

Students wishing to be considered are asked

to submit a letter describing how they meet the scholarship criteria. Completed applications should be emailed to ea@foxcreek.ca no later than August 15.

The scholarship provides an opportunity to recognize graduating students for their dedication, achievements, and contributions while supporting them as they take the next step in their educational journey. Eligible graduates are encouraged to submit their applications before the deadline.

Greenview welcomes Mark Schonken as Director of Corporate Services

Municipal District of Greenview press release

The Municipal District of Greenview has appointed Mark Schonken as Director, Corporate Services, bringing more than 20 years of municipal finance and leadership experience to the organization. Schonken will lead corporate operations, financial management, and fiscal planning that supports Council's priorities and long-term service delivery goals.

"Council is pleased to welcome Mark to Greenview at an important time for the organization," said Reeve Ryan Ratzlaff. "His experience in municipal finance, fiscal planning, and leadership will support informed decision-making and help ensure residents continue receiving strong, reliable services."

Mark brings more than 20 years of experience in financial management, public administration, and organizational leadership, including nine years in senior management roles. As a Chartered Professional Accountant, he has strong expertise in municipal budgeting, business planning, and financial accountability.

"Greenview continues to focus on long-term financial sustainability, responsible growth, and strong service delivery," said CAO Stacey Wabick. "Mark's experience leading municipal finance and business planning functions will



help position the organization to meet future opportunities and challenges while maintaining accountability to residents."

Schonken has extensive Alberta municipal experience, including serving as General Manager of Financial and Business Planning Services for the County of Grande Prairie and, most recently, as Senior Manager, Finance with the City of Chestermere.

"Local governments play an important role in supporting strong communities through responsible financial stewardship and effective services," said Schonken. "I am excited to join Greenview and work with Council, Administration, and staff to support the organization's long-term goals."

In addition to his municipal experience, Mark has owned and operated a private accounting practice and worked on environmental financial

planning projects. These roles shaped his practical and adaptable approach to long-term planning and organizational performance.

In his new role, Mark will lead a diverse portfolio of corporate services functions while helping to advance Greenview's strategic priorities and organizational goals. In addition to overseeing finance and corporate services, Schonken will work closely with Council and Administration to support strategic priorities, long-term planning, and organizational performance, and has officially assumed his role on July 6.



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Back in the game: Canadian GDP growth returns

By Mark Parsons,
ATB ECONOMICS

Canada's economic growth returned to positive territory in both April and May (advance reading), following two straight quarterly declines.

The headline numbers show that April real GDP gained 0.5%, while the advance reading for May points to a 0.1% increase.

Industry details for April:

Goods-producing industries (+1.2%) drove April's gain.

- Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction: Rose by 2.9%, the largest monthly gain in over two years, and accounting for about half the headline increase. The oil sands sector expanded 6.6% as synthetic crude oil production rebounded following previous unscheduled maintenance.
- Construction: Grew by 0.7%, the first increase in five months.
- Manufacturing: Up 0.6% after a string of weak performances. This sector has been hampered by sector-specific tariffs (GDP in primary metals, lumber, and auto manufacturing all remain below January 2025 levels).

Services-producing industries (+0.3%)

- Widespread gains—notably in real estate, transportation and warehousing, finance and insurance, and public administration—helped offset declines in wholesale trade and professional services.

Bottom line

It's not worthy of a World Cup game celebration, but we'll take it. Today's report comes after two straight quarterly declines in GDP and a month-long debate over whether we're in a recession or not (our view: it's not an actual recession and this report should quiet the recession chatter, but a sign of economic weakness and long-term structural issues - more below).

When combined with May's solid job gain,

today's report shows that the Canadian economy still has some life. While the monthly GDP report is not always a reliable gauge of quarterly results, the economy is on pace for annualized growth of over 2% in the second quarter (assuming June comes in flat).

Further, Canada's GDP is growing again on a per-person basis, even if that's in large part due to a shrinking denominator.

But let's leave the champagne on ice for now, as we put today's data into historical context. Growth is returning in the second quarter, but this comes after declines in three of the past four quarters. The economy is now making up for lost ground.

More importantly, we are still looking for evidence that long-term structural issues (see playing less injured below) are getting resolved. So far, the consumer has been doing too much of the heavy lifting (retail trade GDP was flat in April, but this comes after an annualized gain of 3.5% in Q1).

What's next?

Corner kick. A one-time tourism bump can be expected from the World Cup festivities in June/July. Food

and accommodation services are poised for a temporary lift.

Playing less injured. Our eyes are squarely on whether the struggling components of GDP—exports and investments—will return to the field. The consumer has been resilient, providing an offset to a challenging trade environment for business. But consumer spending will be put to the test by a declining population, wobbly labour market and higher energy costs. As the tariff shock wears off, and businesses adjust to the new trade environment, we expect to see exports grinding higher, but still being challenged. The Bank of Canada is also banking on more investment and exports in their latest forecast.

Game time decision. The Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) review is slated to start tomorrow, though President Trump does not appear to be in a rush. An optimistic take is a positive renewal, extending the agreement for 16 more years. But we think a more likely scenario is no renewal, ushering in annual reviews. Our base case is that sector tariffs remain in place, but with the CUSMA exemption retained. That

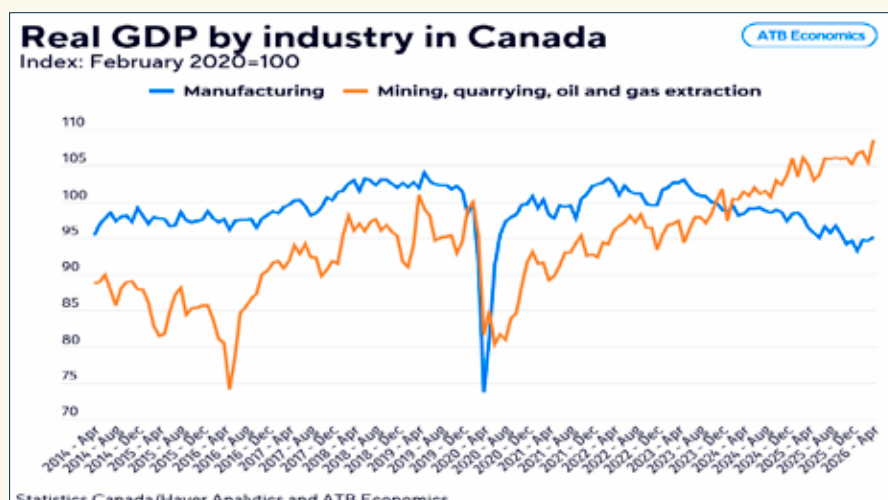
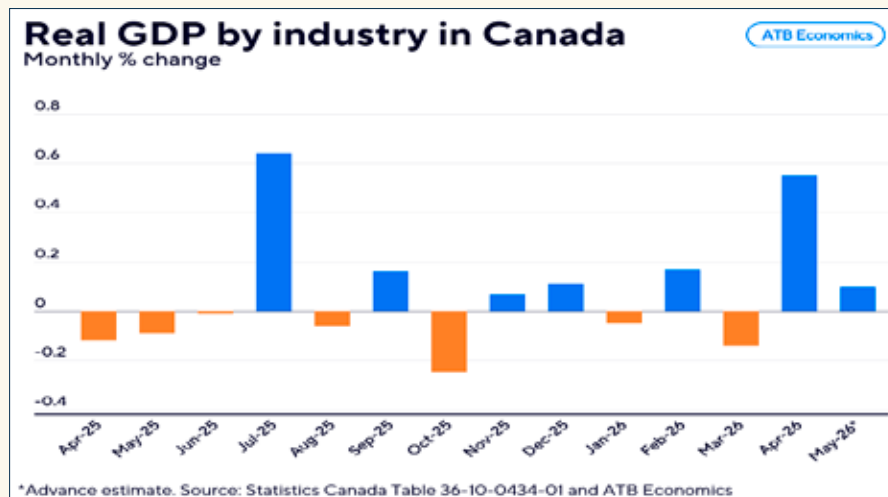
is, no better or worse, but the same. Still, compared to last year's tariff turmoil, a period of relative stability.

Also coming soon, Alberta will announce its submission of the proposed West Coast oil pipeline to the federal Major Projects Office on July 2. The federal government will then have until October 1 to designate it as a project of national interest.

Will a ringer enter the field? Canada could use the assistance of the "made in Canada" playmaker to kickstart growth. The largest upside comes from accelerating major projects that have been promised, but with shovels waiting to hit the ground. Lofty investment goals (Carney's plan is to catalyze \$1 trillion over five years) are not yet showing up in the data, with real business investment falling 1.9% y/y in Q1 2026. Going back further, investment is still 16% below its Q4 2014 peak.*

On the sidelines. Don't expect the Bank of Canada to react too much to this report. The economy is only now making up for lost ground, and inflation is too high. We continue to see the Bank of Canada on hold next month and for the remainder of the year.

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Todd Loewen, MLA photos



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July 25. Throughout the afternoon, families took part in a range of activities including bouncy houses, face painting by Chameleon Art, a visit from the Foothills Creamery ice cream truck, karaoke, a watermelon-eating contest and a cribbage tournament. Local vendors and volunteers helped keep the event running smoothly as residents enjoyed the holiday together indoors. Planned fireworks were cancelled due to unsafe weather conditions caused by humidity, which made

launching them unsafe. Due to volunteer availability, the display could not be rescheduled on short notice. Plans are now being directed toward a fireworks display during Fall Fest later in the year.

In Fox Creek, Canada Day celebrations were held at the Fox Creek Greenview Multiplex, where residents enjoyed a full day of activities beginning with a pancake breakfast at the Community Hall. The morning parade was followed by opening ceremonies and a variety of family-friendly entertainment.

Activities throughout the day included bouncy castles, balloon artists, glitter tattoos, a dunk tank and vendor tables set up along the walking track. Food and refreshments were available on site, including A&W apple turnovers, bottled water, ice cream treats and concessions offered throughout the venue.

The Canada Day celebrations in both communities reflected strong local participation, with residents coming together to enjoy a wide range of events supported by volunteers, businesses and community groups.



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Swan Hills School recognizes departing teachers



By Valerie Winger

Staff at Swan Hills School gathered June 24, the final student day of the school year, to recognize two teachers

who will be transferring to other schools within the Pembina Hills School Division. Miss Shelley Witwer and Ms. Tresa Brodersen were recognized during

an evening of shared memories, stories and laughter as staff reflected on their time at the school. In a message shared by the school, staff

thanked both teachers for their years of service, friendship and dedication to Swan Hills School. The school said Witwer and Brodersen

had a positive impact on students, staff and the community through their dedication, compassion, professionalism and commitment to student success.

The school wished both teachers well as they move on to their new schools and said they will always be part of the Swan Hills School family.



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RCMP reminds residents to be alert for fraud and phone scams

By Valerie Winger

The Alberta RCMP is encouraging residents to stay alert as fraudsters continue to use a variety of phone and mass marketing scams to target victims.

Police say scams can include spoofed phone numbers, fake tech support or airline calls, fraudulent telemarketers, mass mail-outs and subscription offers, emergency or

grandparent scams, work-from-home schemes, Canada Revenue Agency scams, foreign lottery and prize scams, overpayment schemes, inheritance scams and credit card interest rate reduction scams.

The RCMP says fraud tactics continue to evolve and can appear convincing, making it important for people to be cautious before sharing personal or

financial information or responding to unexpected calls or offers.

Residents are encouraged to stay informed about common fraud schemes, report suspicious activity and make use of trusted resources such as the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre. Police say public awareness is one of the best ways to help protect individuals and communities from fraud.



Fox Creek departments provide updates to council

By Valerie Winger

The Town of Fox Creek's Operations, Finance and Administration departments provided council with updates on work completed from May to early June 2026.

The Operations Department reported continued work on public works projects, including dust control, culvert installations, road maintenance and community infrastructure improvements. Staff also continued utility operations while responding to equipment failures and service issues.

Capital projects also moved forward during the reporting period, including water treatment plant upgrades, paving and sidewalk planning, fleet procurement and landfill initiatives. Regular maintenance,

safety training and administrative work also continued.

The Finance Department reported that all positions have now been filled and several process improvements are underway.

More than \$120,000 has been collected through tax recovery efforts, while work continues on outstanding accounts totalling about \$1.46 million. The department also issued 2026 tax notices and expects activity to remain high leading up to the July tax deadline.

Other updates included standardized utility billing timelines, upgrades to the town's phone system and the implementation of a new payroll system. The department also continues grant reporting for infrastructure and capital projects, including

more than \$1 million received through the Small Communities Fund and \$2.5 million through the Community Development Initiative.

The Chief Administrative Officer reported that all vacant positions have been filled. Administration also continued work on infrastructure improvements, economic development initiatives and bylaw services.

During the reporting period, administration continued securing grant opportunities, managing procurement processes and supporting major projects, including water treatment plant upgrades, paving, land acquisition and facility improvements. Staff also continued working with regional partners while participating in training for both staff and council.

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Free workshop offers support for healthy lifestyle changes



By Haylee Dianne

A free six-week workshop designed to help people make healthy lifestyle changes is being offered through the Alberta Healthy Living Program and Primary Care Alberta.

The Better Choices, Better Health Group Support Workshop will be held on Thursdays from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Sessions are scheduled for July 16, 23 and 30, and Aug. 6, 13 and 20.

According to the program information, the workshop is intended for people living with long-term health conditions or pain. Topics include

healthy eating, physical activity, managing medications, improving sleep, dealing with fatigue, setting goals and connecting with others who are living with chronic conditions.

The workshop is free. Registration is available online through the Alberta Healthy Living Program or by calling 1-877-349-5711.



Cadets march with flags during the Canada Day parade in Fox Creek.
Jay Relative photo



Pros and cons of a home equity line of credit

News Canada

With the warm weather finally here, maybe you're considering installing a pool or doing those home renovations you've been dreaming about. Perhaps you want to get away and an RV or a cottage are at the top of your wish list.

A home equity line of credit (HELOC) is a quick and easy way to pay for such big expenses. But the long-term risks of HELOCs can

outweigh their up-front benefits if you don't manage the loan well.

How do HELOCs work?

HELOCs are secured by your home as a guarantee that you'll pay back the money you borrow. With a HELOC you can borrow money, pay it back and borrow it again up to a maximum credit limit. They use a variable interest rate, which means your payment amounts will

change as the lender's prime interest rate goes up or down.

Advantages of HELOCs:

- They offer easy access to credit.
- They have lower interest rates than other types of credit, especially unsecured loans and credit cards.
- You can pay back the money you borrow at any time without a penalty.

- You can borrow as much as you want, up to your available credit limit.

Disadvantages of HELOCs:

- It takes discipline to pay off a HELOC because you're usually only required to pay the monthly interest charges.
- Large amounts of available credit can make it easier to over-spend and carry debt for a long time.

- You will have to pay off your entire HELOC if you sell your home or want to switch your mortgage to another lender.
- The amount you owe on your HELOC reduces the equity in your home.
- Your bank could take possession of your home if you miss payments.

Before you take out a HELOC, make sure you consider the risks and have a repayment plan.

If your lender is a federally regulated bank, they must offer and sell you products and services that are appropriate for you, based on your circumstances and financial needs. They must also tell you if they assess that a product or service isn't appropriate for you. Don't hesitate to ask questions and make sure you understand the product offered to you. Find more information at canada.ca/money.

Can you develop food allergies as an adult?

News Canada

Most people assume food allergies are a childhood condition that you either grow up with or outgrow. But for a growing number of Canadians, the first signs are showing up later in life.

"Adult-onset allergies are more common than people realize," says Dr. Harold Kim, an allergist and immunologist. "The challenge is that adults are more likely to dismiss symptoms or assume it was something else, and that can be dangerous."

When symptoms don't seem serious

Symptoms like hives, upset stomach, scratchy throat or even chest pain after eating can be easy to blame on stress,

a stomach bug or acid reflux. This tendency to explain away reactions can delay a proper diagnosis and leave you unprepared to respond if a severe reaction happens.

Why reactions can change over time

Allergic reactions don't always stay the same and can change as we age. Research indicates that factors like declining physical activity and underlying health conditions such as cardiovascular disease or respiratory illness can make an allergic reaction worse.

"An allergy that caused mild symptoms in your 40s may present very differently in your 60s," says Dr. Kim. "Age-related changes to the immune system

and the presence of other conditions can change how your body responds."

An allergic reaction can happen fast and without warning. If you've noticed a pattern of repeated symptoms after eating a particular food, it's important to see your doctor and not ignore it.

An allergist can confirm a diagnosis through testing, help identify triggers and advise on how to manage it, including whether carrying emergency epinephrine medication, like an EpiPen, is recommended. The earlier an allergy is properly diagnosed, the safer you can be.

Find more information on allergies and treatments at epipen.ca.

