

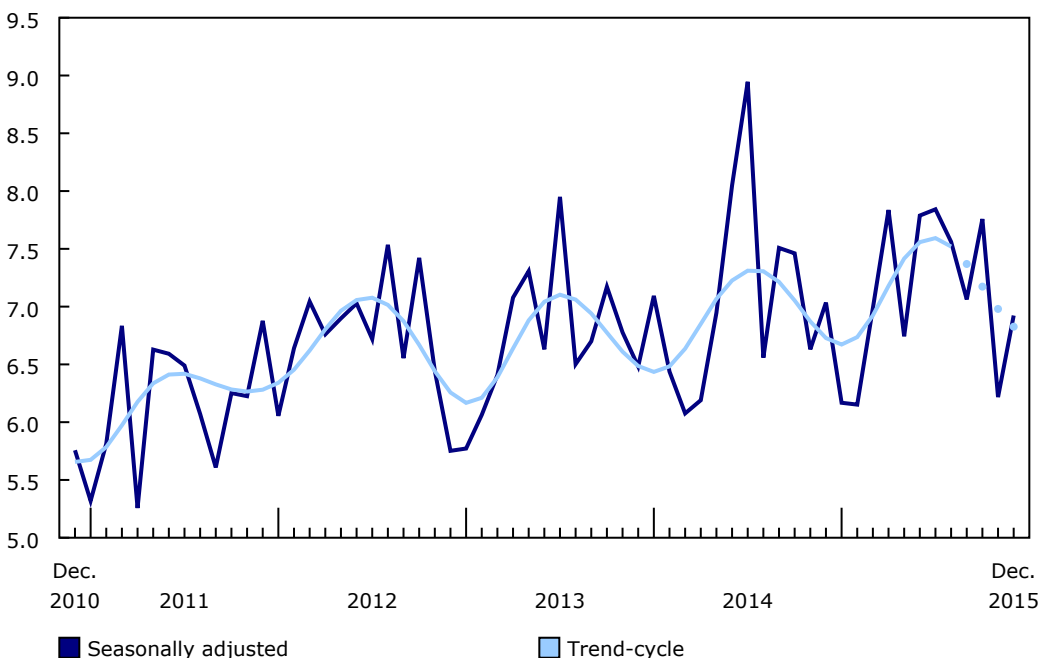
Building permits, December 2015

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Monday, February 8, 2016

The total value of building permits issued by Canadian municipalities rose 11.3% to \$6.9 billion in December, following a 19.9% decline the previous month. Higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings in Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta explained the advance.

Chart 1
Total value of permits

billions of dollars



Note(s): The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated with a dotted line on the chart for the current reference month and the three previous months. See note to readers.

Source(s): CANSIM table [026-0010](#).

Construction intentions in the residential sector increased 16.3% to \$4.7 billion in December, following a 17.9% decline the previous month. Gains were posted in every province except Saskatchewan. Higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings led the advance.

Municipalities issued \$2.3 billion worth of non-residential building permits in December, up 2.5% over the previous month. This increase followed a 23.2% decline in November. An increase in the value of commercial permits more than offset decreases in the institutional and industrial components. Six provinces reported gains, led by Alberta.

Residential sector: Higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings behind the advance

The value of building permits for multi-family dwellings rose 39.1% to \$2.3 billion in December, following a 33.8% decline in November. Higher construction intentions were reported in nine provinces, led by Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta. Newfoundland and Labrador was the lone province to post a decline.

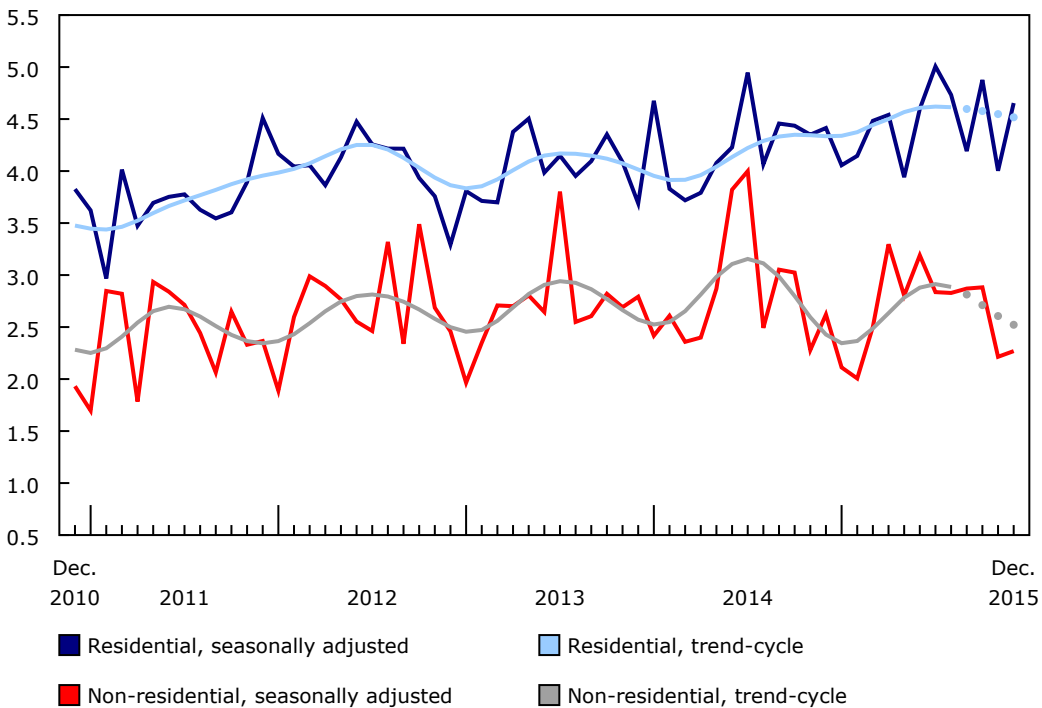


The value of permits for single-family dwellings edged down 0.1% from November, remaining fairly stable at around \$2.3 billion for the fourth consecutive month. Advances in seven provinces failed to offset declines in the three other provinces. Saskatchewan posted the largest decrease.

Municipalities approved the construction of 17,506 new dwellings in December, up 16.5% from the previous month. The gain mainly resulted from multi-family dwellings, which increased 25.6% to 11,816 new units. Single family dwellings were up 1.3% to 5,690 new units.

Chart 2
Residential and non-residential sectors

billions of dollars



Note(s): The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated with a dotted line on the chart for the current reference month and the three previous months. See note to readers.

Source(s): CANSIM table [026-0010](#).

Non-residential: Gain attributable to higher commercial building intentions

Following a notable decline the previous month, the value of non-residential building permits rose 2.5% to \$2.3 billion in December. Gains in commercial construction intentions more than offset decreases in the institutional and industrial components.

After three consecutive monthly declines, construction intentions for commercial buildings rose 14.6% to \$1.3 billion in December. The advance was largely the result of higher construction intentions for retail complexes and, to a lesser extent, storage buildings and research centres. Increases were posted in five provinces, led by Ontario and British Columbia. The largest declines were in Alberta and Quebec.

The value of permits in the industrial component fell 3.2% to \$405 million in December, a third consecutive monthly decline. Lower construction intentions for manufacturing plants, minor industrial projects and maintenance buildings accounted for the majority of the decline. The decreases in Ontario and British Columbia more than offset the gains reported elsewhere.

Institutional construction intentions declined for a second consecutive month, down 13.6% to \$594 million in December. The decrease at the national level was largely the result of lower construction intentions for medical facilities and elementary schools. Declines were posted in seven provinces, with Quebec recording the largest decrease, followed by Ontario and British Columbia. Alberta recorded a notable gain in the value of permits for institutional structures.

Provinces: Alberta, Ontario and British Columbia post notable gains

The total value of building permits was up in eight provinces in December, with Alberta posting the largest gain, followed by Ontario and British Columbia.

In Alberta, the value of building permits was up 26.0% to \$1.2 billion in December, following a 56.3% decline the previous month. The gain was attributable to higher construction intentions in both the non-residential and residential sectors, led by institutional structures and multi-family dwellings.

Ontario municipalities issued \$2.7 billion worth of building permits in December, up 5.7% from a month earlier. Higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings and commercial buildings largely explained the advance.

The total value of building permits in British Columbia rose 12.5% to \$1.2 billion in December, the third consecutive monthly gain. Higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings and commercial buildings were responsible for the monthly increase.

Higher construction intentions in most census metropolitan areas

In December, the total value of building permits was up in 20 of the 34 census metropolitan areas, with Toronto registering the largest increase, followed by Calgary and Montréal.

In Toronto, the gains resulted mainly from higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings and, to a lesser extent, commercial buildings. In Calgary, higher intentions for multi-family dwellings and industrial buildings were responsible for the advance.

Montréal reported higher building intentions for multi-family dwellings, which offset declines in every other component.

Annual 2015

The value of building permits in 2015 totalled \$85.0 billion, unchanged from 2014. While residential construction intentions rose 4.4%, the growth was offset by a 6.3% decline in the non-residential component.

Residential: Higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings explain the increase

Residential building permits issued by municipalities were up 4.4% from the previous year to \$53.2 billion in 2015, continuing the upward trend started after the declines in 2008 and 2009. In 2015, the value of residential permits rose in three provinces: Ontario, British Columbia and Nova Scotia. Alberta (-8.9%) reported the largest decline, its first decrease since 2009.

Non-residential: Declines in all three components, led by commercial buildings

Construction intentions in the non-residential sector declined 6.3% from 2014 to \$31.8 billion in 2015. Decreases were posted in every component, led by commercial buildings. Six provinces reported lower construction intentions for non-residential buildings. Institutional building permits in Quebec posted the largest decline.

Note to readers

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which facilitates comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations. For information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).

The Building Permits Survey covers over 2,400 municipalities representing 95% of the Canadian population. The communities representing the other 5% of the population are very small, and their levels of building activity have little impact on the total for the entire population.

Building permits data are used as a leading indicator of activity in the construction industry.

The value of planned construction activities shown in this release excludes engineering projects (for example, waterworks, sewers or culverts) and land.

For the purpose of this release, the census metropolitan area of Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario/Quebec) is divided into two areas: Gatineau part and Ottawa part.

Revision

Data for the current reference month are subject to revision based on late responses. Data for the previous month have been revised.

Trend-cycle estimates have been added to the charts as a complement to the seasonally adjusted series. Both the seasonally adjusted and the trend-cycle estimates are subject to revision as additional observations become available. These revisions could be large and even lead to a reversal of movement, especially at the end of the series. The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated with a dotted line on the chart.

Next release

The January building permits data will be released on March 8.

Table 1
Dwelling units, value of residential and non-residential building permits, Canada – Seasonally adjusted

	December 2014	October 2015	November 2015 ^r	December 2015 ^p	November to December 2015	December 2014 to December 2015
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total	7,035.0	7,757.8	6,217.3	6,922.9	11.3	-1.6
Residential	4,414.1	4,876.2	4,002.9	4,653.5	16.3	5.4
Single ¹	2,519.6	2,348.0	2,329.0	2,325.9	-0.1	-7.7
Multiple	1,894.5	2,528.3	1,673.9	2,327.6	39.1	22.9
Non-residential	2,620.9	2,881.6	2,214.4	2,269.4	2.5	-13.4
Industrial	435.9	449.2	418.3	404.8	-3.2	-7.1
Commercial	1,413.5	1,412.1	1,108.0	1,270.3	14.6	-10.1
Institutional	771.5	1,020.2	688.1	594.2	-13.6	-23.0
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	16,095	19,866	15,022	17,506	16.5	8.8
Single ¹	6,320	5,732	5,616	5,690	1.3	-10.0
Multiple	9,775	14,134	9,406	11,816	25.6	20.9

^r revised

^p preliminary

1. Included in this category are the following types of dwellings: single-detached, mobile home and cottage.

Note(s): Data may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM tables [026-0006](#) and [026-0010](#).

Table 2
Value of building permits, by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	December 2014	October 2015	November 2015 ^r	December 2015 ^p	November to December 2015	December 2014 to December 2015
	millions of dollars				% change	
Canada	7,035.0	7,757.8	6,217.3	6,922.9	11.3	-1.6
Residential	4,414.1	4,876.2	4,002.9	4,653.5	16.3	5.4
Non-residential	2,620.9	2,881.6	2,214.4	2,269.4	2.5	-13.4
Newfoundland and Labrador	67.7	55.4	48.3	45.0	-6.9	-33.5
Residential	45.0	41.4	34.3	38.2	11.4	-15.2
Non-residential	22.6	14.0	14.1	6.8	-51.6	-69.9
Prince Edward Island	19.5	24.3	11.8	11.6	-2.0	-40.6
Residential	17.9	9.9	6.5	9.3	43.6	-48.1
Non-residential	1.6	14.4	5.4	2.3	-56.9	40.9
Nova Scotia	86.9	95.1	72.6	76.8	5.7	-11.7
Residential	63.4	51.2	50.5	51.1	1.2	-19.3
Non-residential	23.6	43.9	22.1	25.6	16.1	8.8
New Brunswick	62.6	66.8	46.8	57.3	22.5	-8.4
Residential	47.6	33.6	29.9	34.6	15.7	-27.3
Non-residential	15.0	33.1	16.9	22.7	34.5	51.6
Quebec	1,139.8	1,122.3	1,084.9	1,171.6	8.0	2.8
Residential	723.7	673.5	587.4	806.1	37.2	11.4
Non-residential	416.1	448.8	497.5	365.5	-26.5	-12.2
Ontario	2,513.6	2,623.4	2,576.5	2,723.8	5.7	8.4
Residential	1,688.6	1,785.0	1,734.8	1,893.9	9.2	12.2
Non-residential	825.1	838.4	841.7	829.9	-1.4	0.6
Manitoba	236.3	202.7	157.7	227.0	43.9	-3.9
Residential	150.4	103.1	94.3	134.2	42.3	-10.8
Non-residential	86.0	99.6	63.4	92.8	46.3	8.0
Saskatchewan	140.0	325.6	148.7	165.1	11.0	17.9
Residential	74.5	84.8	86.6	76.0	-12.3	2.0
Non-residential	65.6	240.7	62.1	89.1	43.6	35.9
Alberta	1,741.8	2,165.2	945.7	1,191.5	26.0	-31.6
Residential	943.3	1,314.1	565.1	674.0	19.3	-28.5
Non-residential	798.5	851.1	380.7	517.5	35.9	-35.2
British Columbia	1,014.0	1,061.8	1,108.4	1,247.2	12.5	23.0
Residential	649.0	772.3	807.2	931.8	15.4	43.6
Non-residential	365.0	289.5	301.2	315.4	4.7	-13.6
Yukon	8.7	11.3	11.5	3.2	-72.4	-63.4
Residential	7.2	4.9	2.9	1.7	-41.8	-76.9
Non-residential	1.4	6.4	8.6	1.5	-82.6	4.9
Northwest Territories	4.0	2.3	4.1	2.8	-32.1	-30.7
Residential	3.6	1.7	3.5	2.8	-19.2	-22.8
Non-residential	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.0	-100.0	-100.0
Nunavut	0.0	1.7	0.2	0.1	-46.2	...
Residential	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	-100.0	...
Non-residential	0.0	0.9	0.2	0.1	-37.9	...

^r revised

^p preliminary

... not applicable

Note(s): Data may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM table [026-0006](#).

Table 3
Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area – Seasonally adjusted¹

	December 2014	October 2015	November 2015 ^r	December 2015 ^p	November to December 2015	December 2014 to December 2015
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total, census metropolitan areas	5,452.5	6,272.4	4,734.1	5,487.5	15.9	0.6
St. John's	49.2	33.7	27.2	28.1	3.1	-42.9
Halifax	39.3	45.5	26.2	32.6	24.3	-17.0
Moncton	21.5	32.6	13.1	11.8	-9.5	-45.0
Saint John	6.5	11.2	5.9	11.2	88.8	71.5
Saguenay	9.2	11.6	8.6	8.5	-1.2	-8.0
Québec	87.7	117.9	157.1	140.2	-10.7	59.9
Sherbrooke	19.0	23.5	28.8	42.4	47.3	123.3
Trois-Rivières	12.4	23.7	45.4	15.3	-66.3	23.8
Montréal	655.0	594.9	404.2	563.8	39.5	-13.9
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	179.8	214.2	226.2	195.9	-13.4	9.0
Gatineau part	58.2	31.3	28.2	29.6	5.2	-49.2
Ottawa part	121.5	183.0	198.0	166.3	-16.0	36.8
Kingston	17.0	16.0	10.8	12.4	14.6	-27.0
Peterborough	11.9	11.0	14.0	9.0	-35.8	-24.9
Oshawa	77.0	50.9	83.1	50.1	-39.7	-34.9
Toronto	1,376.3	1,380.2	1,327.8	1,579.0	18.9	14.7
Hamilton	144.1	121.1	134.2	100.2	-25.3	-30.5
St. Catharines–Niagara	39.7	76.2	76.3	42.0	-45.0	5.8
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	122.7	91.6	98.5	122.8	24.7	0.1
Brantford	5.4	12.5	24.2	8.1	-66.7	49.8
Guelph	43.8	23.1	51.0	57.3	12.5	31.0
London	110.2	85.7	72.4	73.1	1.0	-33.7
Windsor	31.9	53.9	38.7	25.3	-34.7	-20.6
Barrie	28.5	46.5	52.2	69.7	33.3	144.1
Greater Sudbury	10.3	37.6	16.3	5.3	-67.7	-48.8
Thunder Bay	2.4	23.9	8.7	7.1	-18.6	195.8
Winnipeg	175.3	157.2	111.5	182.1	63.2	3.9
Regina	57.9	44.6	27.6	72.3	161.9	24.8
Saskatoon	47.3	244.7	61.2	64.0	4.6	35.5
Calgary	566.6	1,396.0	279.4	468.9	67.8	-17.2
Edmonton	774.7	439.4	412.9	462.1	11.9	-40.4
Kelowna	39.4	84.9	51.9	29.1	-43.9	-26.0
Abbotsford–Mission	18.6	23.9	15.3	71.9	370.5	287.6
Vancouver	604.6	698.5	762.6	831.4	9.0	37.5
Victoria	67.5	44.1	60.6	94.5	55.9	40.1

^r revised

^p preliminary

1. Go online to view the census subdivisions that comprise the [census metropolitan areas](#).

Note(s): Data may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM table [026-0006](#).

Available in CANSIM: tables [026-0001](#) to [026-0008](#) and [026-0010](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2802](#).

The December 2015 issue of *Building Permits* ([64-001-X](#)) will soon be available.

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300;
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To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Monia Bergeron (613-286-5152), Investment, Science and Technology Division.