

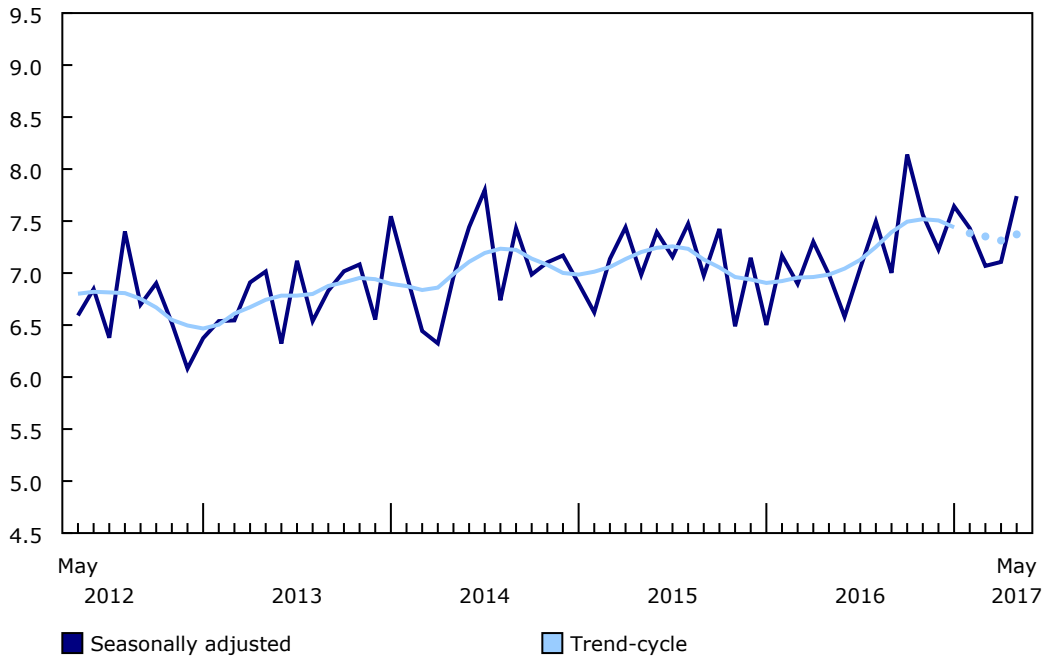
# Building permits, May 2017

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, July 6, 2017

Canadian municipalities issued \$7.7 billion worth of building permits in May, up 8.9% from April and the third highest value on record. The national increase was mainly the result of higher construction intentions for residential buildings, particularly in Ontario. Seven provinces registered gains in the total value of building permits in May, and every building component increased except institutional structures.

**Chart 1**  
**Total value of building permits**

billions of dollars

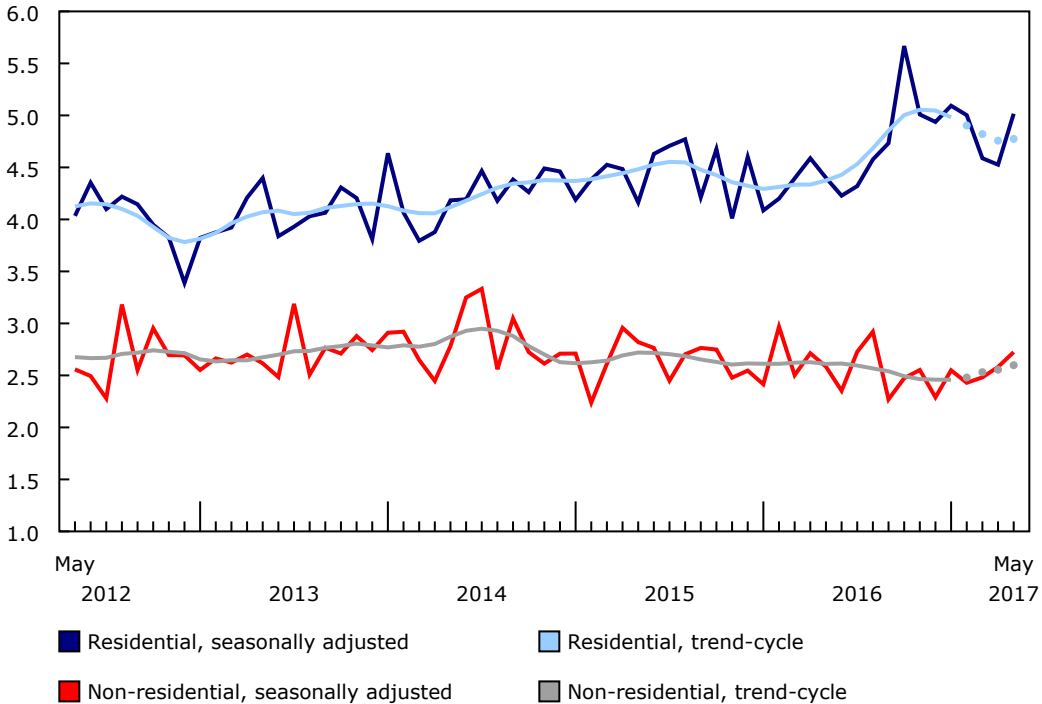


**Note(s):** The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated with a dotted line on the chart for the current reference month and the three previous months. For more information, see Note to readers.  
**Source(s):** CANSIM table [026-0010](#).



**Chart 2**  
**Value of building permits for 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. For more information, see Note to readers.  
**Source(s):** CANSIM table [026-0010](#).

### Residential sector: Both multi-family and single-family components report higher construction intentions

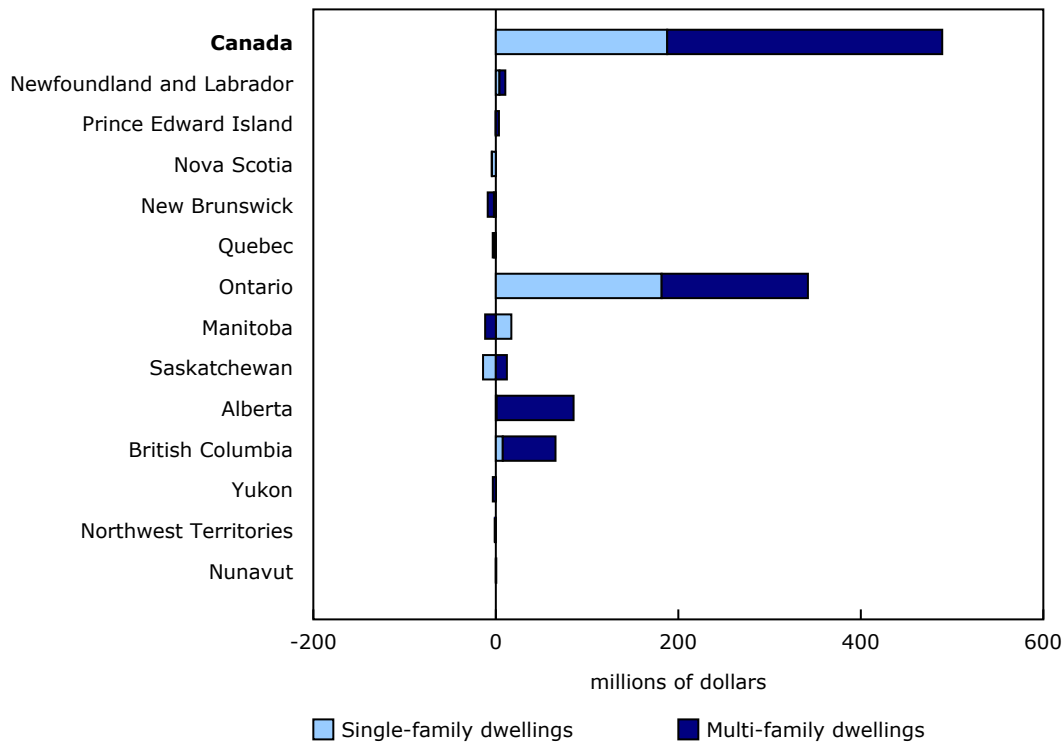
The value of residential building permits issued by Canadian municipalities increased 10.8% from April to \$5.0 billion in May. Six provinces registered gains in the month, with Ontario reporting the largest increase, followed distantly by Alberta and British Columbia.

The multi-family component rose 15.0% in May to \$2.3 billion, following a 6.9% gain in April. Construction intentions were up for every type of multi-family dwelling, led by row houses. Meanwhile, the value of single-family building permits rose 7.4% to \$2.7 billion in May, stemming mainly from single homes in Ontario.

Canadian municipalities approved the construction of 18,037 new dwellings in May (up 7.2% compared with April), consisting of 12,032 multi-family units (+11.8%) and 6,005 single-family units (-1.0%). Ontario contributed the most to the increase in new dwellings approved in May, bringing the year-to-date number of new dwellings approved in that province to 35,860. In comparison, Ontario approved the construction of 30,661 new dwellings from January to May 2016.

British Columbia reported a second consecutive monthly gain in new multi-family units approved following a notable decrease in March 2017, while over 100 new multi-family units were approved in Prince Edward Island for just the fourth month since January 1989.

**Chart 3**  
**Month-to-month change in value of residential building permits, May 2017**



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

### Non-residential sector: Commercial and industrial components register increases

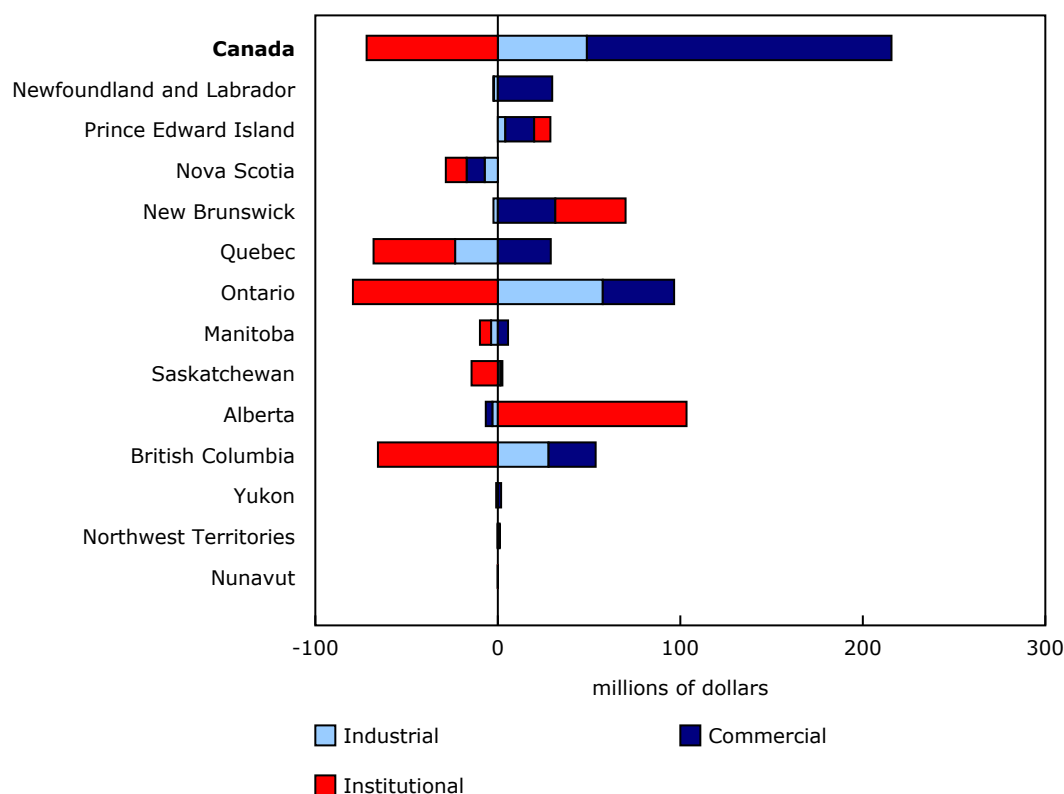
The value of building permits issued for non-residential structures rose 5.6% in May to \$2.7 billion, marking a third consecutive monthly increase. Alberta and New Brunswick led the five provinces that posted gains in the non-residential sector in May.

The commercial component rose 12.9% in May to \$1.5 billion, as increases were registered across several building categories, led by retail and wholesale construction intentions. Every province except Nova Scotia and Alberta reported gains in the value of commercial building permits.

The industrial component rose for a third consecutive month, up 9.8% in May to \$545 million. This increase was mainly due to higher construction intentions for maintenance buildings in Ontario.

In contrast, the value of building permits issued for institutional structures fell 9.1% to \$719 million in May. This followed notable construction intentions in April for government administration buildings and medical facilities.

**Chart 4**  
**Month-to-month change in value of non-residential building permits, May 2017**



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

## Provinces and census metropolitan areas

The total value of building permits rose in seven provinces in May, led by Ontario and Alberta. Meanwhile, construction intentions were up in 22 of 36 census metropolitan areas (CMAs), led by Hamilton, Toronto, Calgary, and the Ontario part of Ottawa–Gatineau.

In Ontario, the gain in May stemmed primarily from the residential sector, the result of increases in both the multi-family and single-family components in the Toronto CMA. The industrial component in Ontario rose for a third consecutive month, with the gain in May mostly attributable to higher construction intentions for maintenance buildings in the Hamilton CMA. The commercial component, specifically the hotel and restaurant category, led the increase in the total value of building permits in the Ontario part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.

The increase in construction intentions in Alberta in May stemmed from institutional structures, as well as multi-family dwellings. This gain coincided with a notable increase in the multi-family component in the Calgary CMA, but was moderated by the Edmonton CMA, which registered lower construction intentions in all building components for the month, except institutional structures.

## Fort McMurray

May 2017 marks the one year anniversary of the start of the 2016 Fort McMurray wildfire.

During this period, the municipality of Wood Buffalo issued record levels of both the unadjusted number of building permits and the unadjusted value of building permits for residential dwellings.

In the 12 months to May, 1,817 residential building permits worth \$493 million were issued for Wood Buffalo, compared to an annual average of 1,311 residential building permits totalling \$194 million since the beginning of the 21st century. In May 2017 alone, Wood Buffalo issued 305 residential building permits worth \$92 million, the highest monthly levels for this municipality since January 2000.



In celebration of the country's 150th birthday, Statistics Canada is presenting snapshots from our rich statistical history.

Construction intentions for hotels and restaurants generally rise and fall in tandem with the economic cycle. In other words, they are up in good economic times and down in bad economic times.

The first peak in the value of hotel and restaurant permits since the current data series began (1978) occurred in 1981 when \$524 million in permits were issued. This was just prior to the economic recession of 1982, when the value of permits fell 45.7% to \$284 million.

Construction intentions for hotels and restaurants peaked again in 1988 at \$846 million, then fell sharply in the early 1990s to hit their lowest level on record at \$259 million in 1994.

The value of hotel and restaurant permits picked up in the latter half of the 1990s and through the early 2000s, breaking the \$1 billion mark in 2002. The value peaked at \$1.9 billion in 2008. The recession of 2009 then brought permit values down almost 30% to \$1.4 billion.

Construction intentions for hotels and restaurants broke the \$2 billion mark in 2011, and peaked at a record \$2.9 billion in 2014. One reason for the strong growth in permit values over this period involved permits being issued for work camps in northern Alberta to house oil sand workers. In 2012 and 2013, the value of hotel and restaurant permits in Alberta exceeded the totals for Ontario.

The value of hotel and restaurant permits totalled \$1.9 billion in 2016, almost \$1 billion lower than the peak in 2014. This decrease was partially attributable to a sharp drop in Alberta, where the value of permits for hotels and restaurants fell more than 50% from 2013 levels.

### **Note to readers**

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which facilitate comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations. For information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#). The data presented in the Canada 150 section is not seasonally adjusted.

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 presented in this release excludes engineering projects (such as waterworks, sewers or culverts) and land.

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

Unless otherwise specified, the highlights refer to seasonally adjusted current dollars and are ranked in terms of dollar change rather than percentage change.

### **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.

For information on trend-cycle data, see the [StatCan Blog](#) and [Trend-cycle estimates – Frequently asked questions](#).

### **Next release**

Data for June on building permits will be released on August 9.

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

	May 2016	March 2017	April 2017 <sup>r</sup>	May 2017 <sup>p</sup>	April to May 2017	May 2016 to May 2017
	millions of dollars				% change	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,984.9</b>	<b>7,068.7</b>	<b>7,107.2</b>	<b>7,740.2</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>10.8</b>
Residential	4,400.5	4,587.6	4,526.5	5,015.7	10.8	14.0
Single <sup>1</sup>	2,329.2	2,712.7	2,522.3	2,710.1	7.4	16.4
Multiple	2,071.3	1,874.9	2,004.2	2,305.6	15.0	11.3
Non-residential	2,584.4	2,481.0	2,580.7	2,724.5	5.6	5.4
Industrial	386.0	446.7	496.6	545.5	9.8	41.3
Commercial	1,299.7	1,321.2	1,293.6	1,460.5	12.9	12.4
Institutional	898.8	713.1	790.5	718.5	-9.1	-20.1
	number of units				% change	
<b>Total dwellings</b>	<b>16,855</b>	<b>16,816</b>	<b>16,826</b>	<b>18,037</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>7.0</b>
Single <sup>1</sup>	5,558	6,109	6,066	6,005	-1.0	8.0
Multiple	11,297	10,707	10,760	12,032	11.8	6.5

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> 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**

	May 2016	March 2017	April 2017 <sup>r</sup>	May 2017 <sup>p</sup>	April to May 2017	May 2016 to May 2017
	millions of dollars				% change	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>6,984.9</b>	<b>7,068.7</b>	<b>7,107.2</b>	<b>7,740.2</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>10.8</b>
<b>Residential</b>	<b>4,400.5</b>	<b>4,587.6</b>	<b>4,526.5</b>	<b>5,015.7</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>14.0</b>
<b>Non-residential</b>	<b>2,584.4</b>	<b>2,481.0</b>	<b>2,580.7</b>	<b>2,724.5</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>5.4</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	59.9	31.9	30.6	68.4	123.1	14.1
Residential	27.8	24.8	18.9	29.3	54.8	5.4
Non-residential	32.1	7.1	11.7	39.1	233.4	21.7
Prince Edward Island	21.6	18.0	18.6	50.7	172.8	135.3
Residential	11.3	12.7	14.7	18.0	22.5	58.2
Non-residential	10.2	5.3	3.9	32.8	733.6	221.0
Nova Scotia	127.4	99.1	125.6	92.6	-26.3	-27.3
Residential	85.8	60.1	66.1	61.7	-6.7	-28.1
Non-residential	41.6	39.0	59.4	30.9	-48.0	-25.7
New Brunswick	65.4	63.7	85.1	143.8	69.0	120.0
Residential	31.1	38.9	39.7	30.8	-22.4	-1.0
Non-residential	34.3	24.9	45.4	113.0	148.9	229.6
Quebec	1,197.1	1,270.4	1,309.6	1,267.0	-3.3	5.8
Residential	716.1	777.9	794.3	790.9	-0.4	10.4
Non-residential	481.0	492.5	515.3	476.2	-7.6	-1.0
Ontario	2,844.1	3,158.0	2,930.3	3,289.4	12.3	15.7
Residential	1,906.4	2,046.3	1,824.5	2,166.5	18.7	13.6
Non-residential	937.6	1,111.7	1,105.8	1,122.9	1.6	19.8
Manitoba	200.2	181.6	212.1	213.2	0.5	6.5
Residential	100.9	120.3	136.4	141.8	4.0	40.5
Non-residential	99.3	61.2	75.7	71.5	-5.6	-28.1
Saskatchewan	166.3	153.4	173.2	159.5	-7.9	-4.1
Residential	91.1	90.7	95.7	93.9	-1.9	3.0
Non-residential	75.2	62.7	77.5	65.6	-15.3	-12.7
Alberta	1,019.5	1,111.9	1,001.6	1,183.7	18.2	16.1
Residential	558.2	695.2	661.8	747.0	12.9	33.8
Non-residential	461.3	416.7	339.8	436.6	28.5	-5.3
British Columbia	1,163.7	973.4	1,206.6	1,260.0	4.4	8.3
Residential	859.1	717.3	864.7	930.2	7.6	8.3
Non-residential	304.6	256.1	341.9	329.8	-3.5	8.3
Yukon	12.1	5.5	10.4	7.9	-23.6	-34.6
Residential	3.6	1.8	7.9	4.6	-42.5	26.2
Non-residential	8.5	3.7	2.4	3.4	37.5	-60.4
Northwest Territories	106.9	1.8	3.7	3.4	-6.2	-96.8
Residential	8.4	1.7	1.8	0.7	-58.6	-91.2
Non-residential	98.5	0.1	1.9	2.7	44.0	-97.3
Nunavut	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.5	...	-41.3
Residential	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.5	...	-17.1
Non-residential	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	-100.0

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> 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 adjusted<sup>1</sup>**

	May 2016	March 2017	April 2017 <sup>r</sup>	May 2017 <sup>p</sup>	April to May 2017	May 2016 to May 2017
	millions of dollars				% change	
<b>Total, census metropolitan areas</b>	<b>5,334.4</b>	<b>5,615.5</b>	<b>5,540.2</b>	<b>6,140.1</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>12.6<sup>2</sup></b>
St. John's	42.0	18.8	19.0	53.0	179.4	26.3
Halifax	73.0	58.5	78.1	56.6	-27.6	-22.5
Moncton	27.9	23.1	31.0	72.1	132.7	158.4
Saint John	5.4	9.1	25.0	43.3	72.9	695.1
Saguenay	30.2	10.0	13.6	19.6	43.6	-35.2
Québec	128.8	120.8	130.5	218.1	67.1	69.3
Sherbrooke	31.7	29.8	54.2	43.7	-19.5	37.8
Trois-Rivières	31.8	20.0	25.1	23.8	-4.9	-25.1
Montréal	612.8	753.5	661.4	597.9	-9.6	-2.4
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	237.5	202.3	299.6	389.7	30.1	64.1
Gatineau part	28.7	31.4	54.1	35.6	-34.2	24.3
Ottawa part	208.9	170.9	245.5	354.1	44.2	69.5
Kingston	20.6	83.9	25.8	22.8	-11.5	11.0
Belleville	..	16.4	18.3	27.1	48.2	..
Peterborough	17.8	7.6	10.6	13.7	29.1	-23.1
Oshawa	93.7	116.2	125.7	80.5	-36.0	-14.1
Toronto	1,297.3	1,642.4	1,420.6	1,578.4	11.1	21.7
Hamilton	94.3	168.1	83.8	272.7	225.4	189.3
St. Catharines–Niagara	83.8	57.1	99.7	58.4	-41.4	-30.3
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	235.9	78.2	143.5	93.4	-34.9	-60.4
Brantford	12.9	24.0	32.4	38.5	18.6	199.0
Guelph	55.5	46.5	17.6	46.4	163.2	-16.4
London	141.9	115.4	117.6	120.1	2.1	-15.4
Windsor	48.7	59.5	41.6	58.2	39.9	19.4
Barrie	46.6	42.5	80.9	29.8	-63.1	-36.1
Greater Sudbury	28.3	35.9	12.7	26.0	104.9	-8.2
Thunder Bay	11.7	7.6	7.2	14.7	102.9	25.7
Winnipeg	138.0	135.5	141.4	153.1	8.2	10.9
Regina	45.5	53.4	66.9	51.0	-23.8	12.1
Saskatoon	76.5	66.3	80.2	80.5	0.3	5.2
Lethbridge	..	10.8	14.4	108.2	651.6	..
Calgary	394.5	408.5	308.9	430.5	39.3	9.1
Edmonton	336.8	460.8	421.2	350.6	-16.8	4.1
Kelowna	78.5	124.7	115.6	70.6	-38.9	-10.0
Abbotsford–Mission	20.8	21.7	74.5	45.2	-39.4	117.1
Vancouver	769.0	501.7	633.4	722.4	14.0	-6.1
Victoria	64.9	84.9	108.0	129.7	20.1	99.8

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

.. not available for a specific reference period

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

2. This figure excludes Belleville and Lethbridge.

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

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).