

# Building permits, February 2020

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Wednesday, April 8, 2020

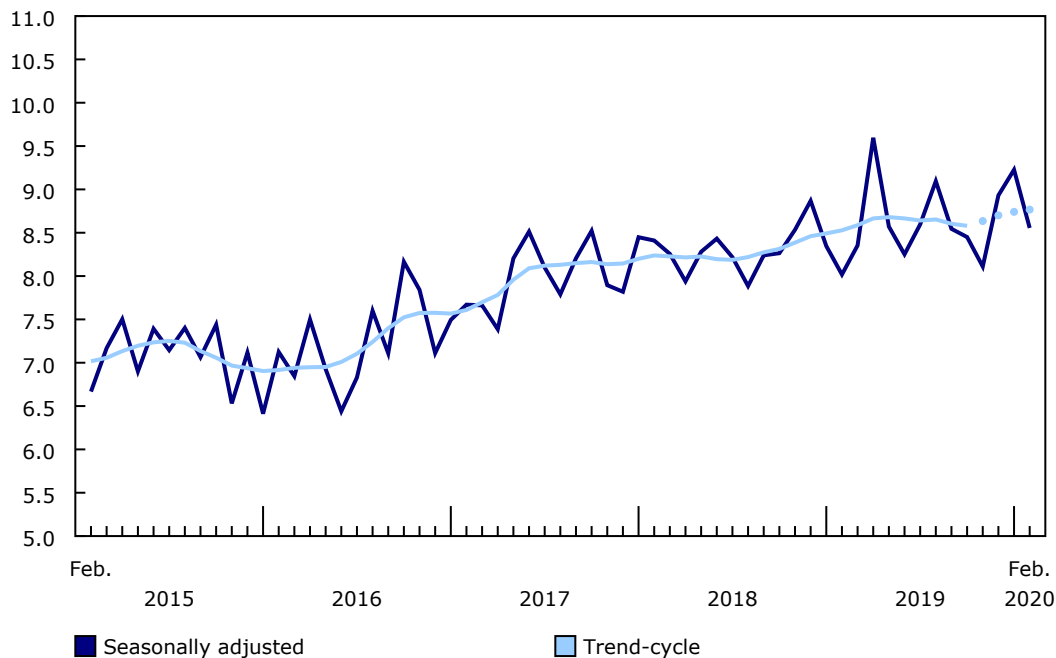
The total value of building permits issued by Canadian municipalities decreased 7.3% to \$8.6 billion in February, driven by the residential component. Declines were reported in five provinces, with the largest decrease reported in British Columbia (-39.2% to \$1.3 billion). Meanwhile, Alberta reported the fourth consecutive monthly growth, up 4.2% to \$1.1 billion.

In the context of the rapidly-evolving situation around the novel coronavirus (also known as COVID-19), Statistics Canada remains committed to providing timely information to all Canadians. As such, the agency has released March 2020 [preliminary flash estimates](#) of building permits for select regions.

For more information on housing, please visit the [Housing Statistics Portal](#).

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

billions of dollars

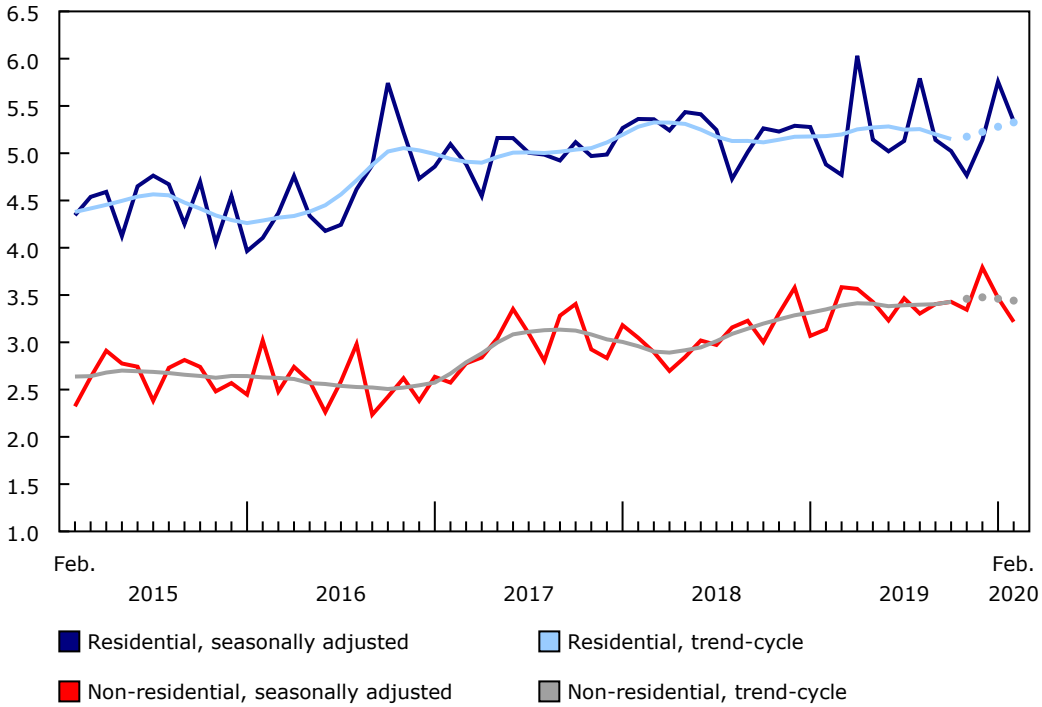


**Note(s):** The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated with a dotted line on the chart for the current reference month and the three previous months. For more information, see the note to readers.

**Source(s):** Table 34-10-0066-01.

**Chart 2**  
**Value of building permits for the 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 the note to readers.  
**Source(s):** Table 34-10-0066-01.

Infographic 1 – Building permits, February 2020

# February 2020

## Building permits

Figure 1 Month-to-month change in total value of building permits (seasonally adjusted)

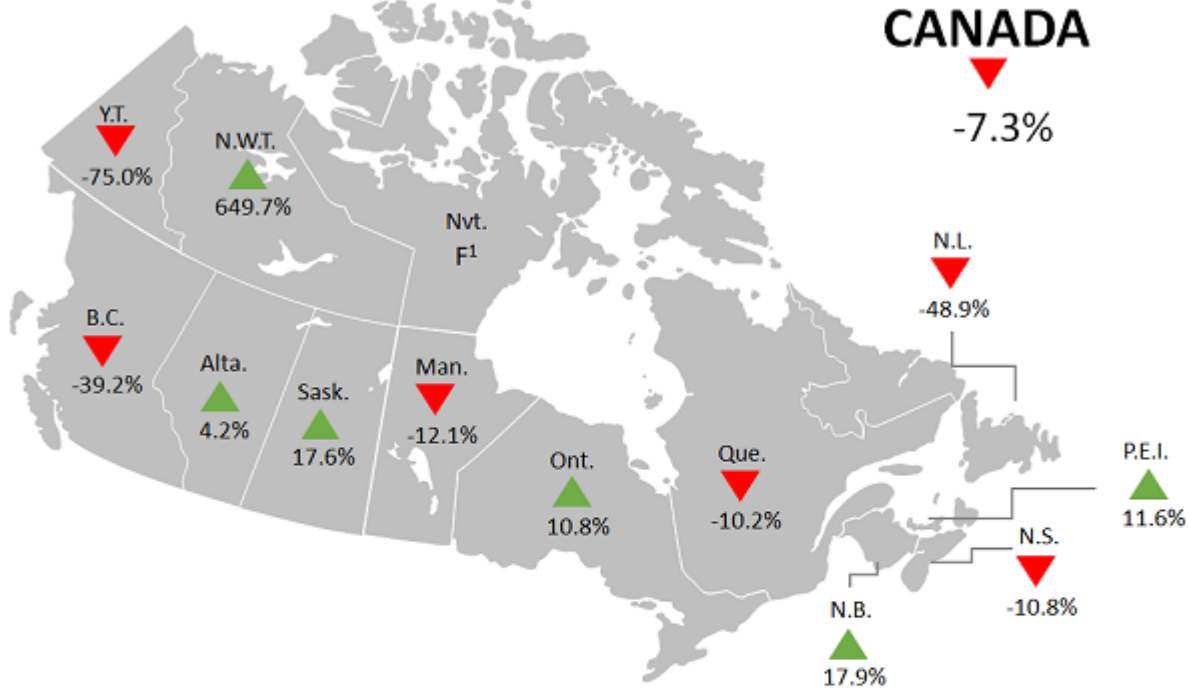
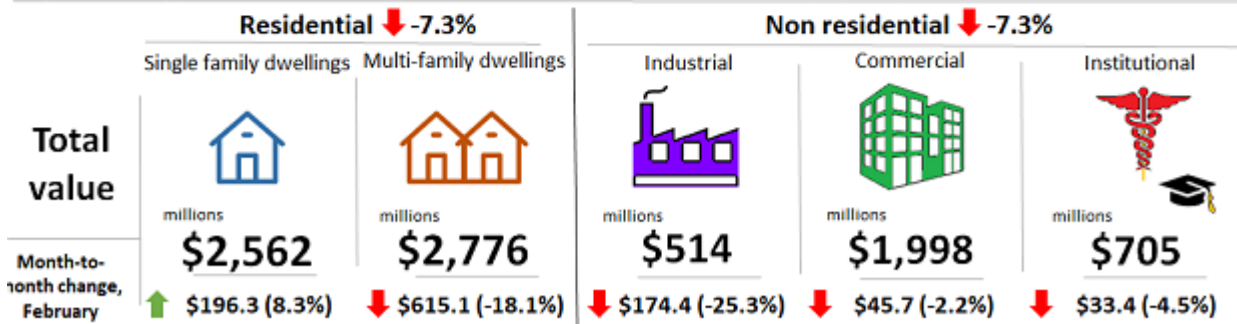


Figure 2 Building permits for residential and non-residential construction in Canada (seasonally adjusted)



Source: Table 34-10-0066-01—Building permits, by type of structure and type of work.

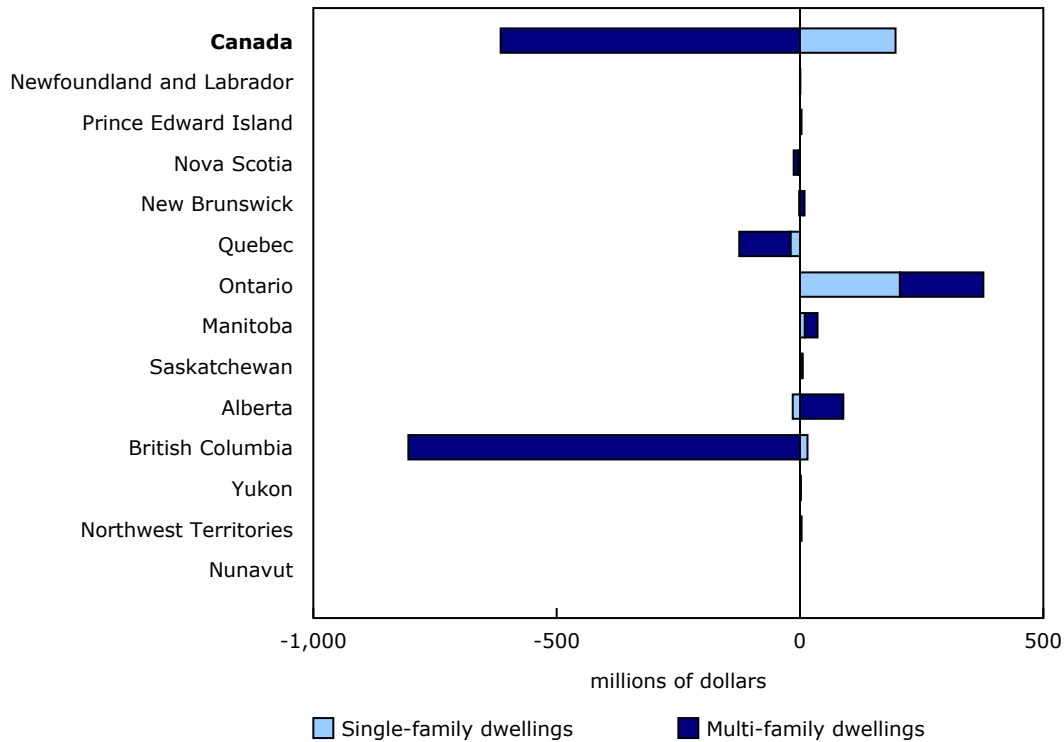
### Single-family permits post largest growth since October 2016

The total value of residential permits decreased 7.3% to \$5.3 billion, mostly due to a significant decline in permits for multi-family dwellings. Permits for multi-family dwellings were down 18.1% to \$2.8 billion, with the largest decrease originating in the census metropolitan area (CMA) of Vancouver (-\$841 million). The decrease in

Vancouver was mainly due to an increased number of permits being issued in January to preempt an increase in local development fees. Excluding the CMA of Vancouver, the value of permits for multi-family dwellings rose 10.3% on a national level in February.

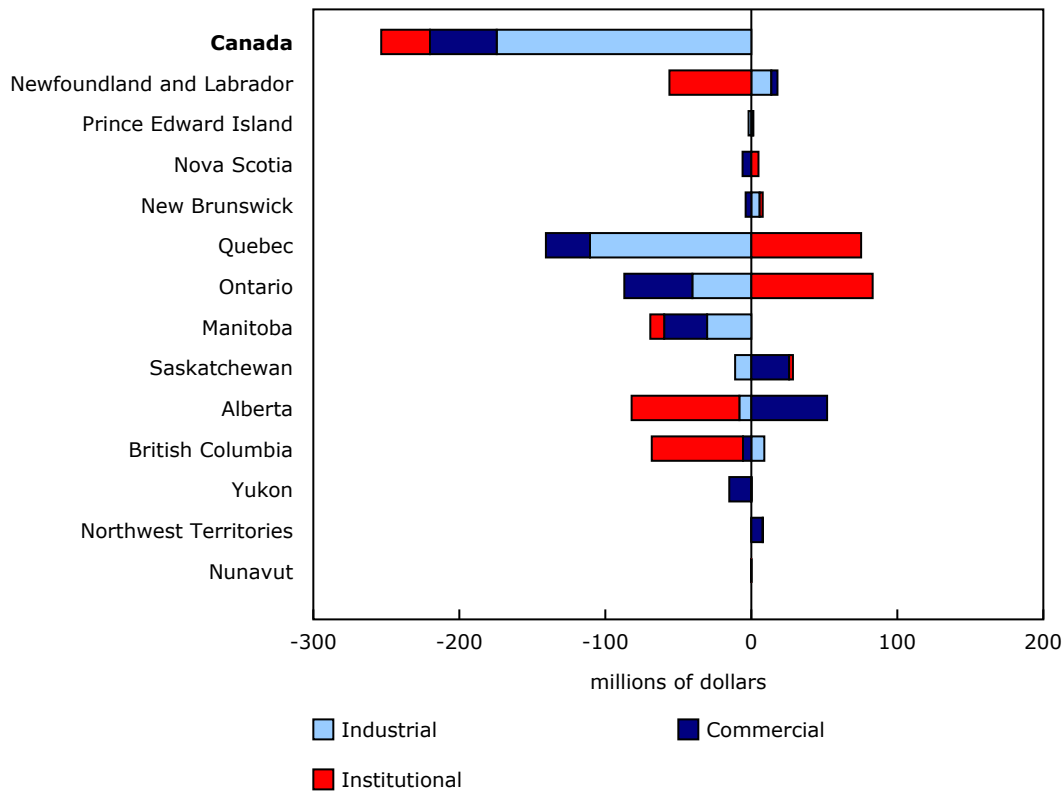
The total value of permits for single-family dwellings increased 8.3% to \$2.6 billion. These gains were driven by housing developments in Ontario (+\$205 million), bringing the value of permits in the province to its highest level since December 2017.

**Chart 3**  
**Month-to-month change in the value of residential building permits**



Source(s): Table 34-10-0066-01.

**Chart 4**  
**Month-to-month change in the value of non-residential building permits**



Source(s): Table 34-10-0066-01.

### Value of industrial permits down

In February, the value of non-residential permits was down 7.3% to \$3.2 billion. This decrease was largely due to declines in the value of industrial permits (-25.3% to \$514 million), mainly in the province of Quebec.

The value of institutional permits declined 4.5% to \$705 million. This was largely due to decreases in Alberta (-\$74 million) and British Columbia (-\$62 million), following strong gains in those provinces in January.

Total value of commercial permits was down 2.2% to \$2.0 billion, with declines reported in six provinces.

## Note to readers

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which facilitate month-to-month 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 permit 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 and Quebec) is divided into two areas: the Ottawa part and the Gatineau part.

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

### Building components

**Single-family dwellings:** Residential buildings containing only one dwelling unit (for example, single-detached house, bungalow, linked home [[linked at the foundation](#)]).

**Multi-family dwellings:** Residential buildings containing multiple dwelling units (for example, apartment, apartment condominium, row house, semi-detached).

**Industrial buildings:** Buildings used in the processing or production of goods, or related to transportation and communication.

**Commercial buildings:** Buildings used in the trade or distribution of goods and services.

**Institutional and government buildings:** Buildings used to house public and semi-public services, such as those related to health and welfare, education, or public administration, as well as buildings used for religious services.

### Revision

Unadjusted data for the current reference month are subject to revision based on late responses. As per standard Statistics Canada practices, unadjusted data for the previous year have been revised. Seasonally adjusted data have also been revised for the previous three years.

Trend-cycle estimates have been added to the charts as a complement to the seasonally adjusted series. Both seasonally adjusted data and trend-cycle estimates are subject to revision as additional observations become available. These revisions could be large and could even lead to a reversal of movement, especially at the end of the series. The higher variability associated with 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 on building permits for March will be released on May 8.

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

	February 2019	December 2019 <sup>r</sup>	January 2020 <sup>r</sup>	February 2020 <sup>p</sup>	January to February 2020	February 2019 to February 2020
	millions of dollars				% change	
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,018.3</b>	<b>8,931.0</b>	<b>9,227.2</b>	<b>8,554.8</b>	<b>-7.3</b>	<b>6.7</b>
Residential	4,880.9	5,138.7	5,756.9	5,338.1	-7.3	9.4
Single <sup>1</sup>	2,131.0	2,237.8	2,365.9	2,562.2	8.3	20.2
Multiple	2,749.9	2,901.0	3,391.0	2,775.9	-18.1	0.9
Non-residential	3,137.4	3,792.2	3,470.2	3,216.7	-7.3	2.5
Industrial	721.0	648.5	688.3	513.9	-25.3	-28.7
Commercial	1,724.6	2,093.0	2,043.8	1,998.1	-2.2	15.9
Institutional	691.8	1,050.7	738.1	704.7	-4.5	1.9
	number of units				% change	
<b>Total dwellings</b>	<b>18,726</b>	<b>19,067</b>	<b>21,847</b>	<b>20,841</b>	<b>-4.6</b>	<b>11.3</b>
Single <sup>1</sup>	4,667	4,851	5,386	6,465	20.0	38.5
Multiple	14,060	14,216	16,461	14,376	-12.7	2.2

<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):** Table [34-10-0066-01](#).

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

	February 2019	December 2019 <sup>r</sup>	January 2020 <sup>r</sup>	February 2020 <sup>p</sup>	January to February 2020	February 2019 to February 2020
	millions of dollars				% change	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>8,018.3</b>	<b>8,931.0</b>	<b>9,227.2</b>	<b>8,554.8</b>	<b>-7.3</b>	<b>6.7</b>
<b>Residential</b>	<b>4,880.9</b>	<b>5,138.7</b>	<b>5,756.9</b>	<b>5,338.1</b>	<b>-7.3</b>	<b>9.4</b>
<b>Non-residential</b>	<b>3,137.4</b>	<b>3,792.2</b>	<b>3,470.2</b>	<b>3,216.7</b>	<b>-7.3</b>	<b>2.5</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	52.2	49.6	76.8	39.3	-48.9	-24.8
Residential	18.8	18.6	16.9	17.5	3.6	-6.8
Non-residential	33.4	31.0	59.9	21.8	-63.7	-34.9
Prince Edward Island	24.5	24.2	22.7	25.3	11.6	3.0
Residential	18.1	20.1	18.2	21.3	17.1	17.9
Non-residential	6.5	4.1	4.5	4.0	-11.0	-38.5
Nova Scotia	127.8	114.0	130.6	116.6	-10.8	-8.8
Residential	82.9	82.3	91.5	78.5	-14.2	-5.4
Non-residential	44.9	31.7	39.1	38.1	-2.7	-15.2
New Brunswick	101.2	92.2	64.6	76.1	17.9	-24.8
Residential	39.0	40.5	39.2	46.8	19.4	20.1
Non-residential	62.3	51.7	25.4	29.3	15.6	-52.9
Quebec	1,774.6	2,234.5	1,858.6	1,668.3	-10.2	-6.0
Residential	1,038.1	1,143.2	1,133.9	1,009.1	-11.0	-2.8
Non-residential	736.5	1,091.3	724.7	659.2	-9.0	-10.5
Ontario	3,164.3	3,639.1	3,439.3	3,812.2	10.8	20.5
Residential	2,033.6	1,958.5	2,027.9	2,404.7	18.6	18.3
Non-residential	1,130.7	1,680.6	1,411.4	1,407.5	-0.3	24.5
Manitoba	252.1	223.9	274.9	241.5	-12.1	-4.2
Residential	117.4	94.1	110.3	146.3	32.6	24.5
Non-residential	134.7	129.9	164.6	95.2	-42.1	-29.3
Saskatchewan	106.1	100.7	128.6	151.3	17.6	42.6
Residential	44.4	50.2	58.7	64.0	9.0	44.2
Non-residential	61.6	50.5	69.9	87.3	24.8	41.5
Alberta	868.4	1,027.1	1,045.2	1,089.2	4.2	25.4
Residential	536.6	631.8	619.1	693.2	12.0	29.2
Non-residential	331.8	395.3	426.1	396.0	-7.1	19.4
British Columbia	1,451.5	1,419.1	2,165.9	1,317.3	-39.2	-9.2
Residential	946.2	1,093.6	1,636.6	847.3	-48.2	-10.5
Non-residential	505.3	325.4	529.4	470.0	-11.2	-7.0
Yukon	17.1	3.3	18.0	4.5	-75.0	-73.7
Residential	3.6	2.8	2.7	4.2	55.1	16.0
Non-residential	13.5	0.4	15.3	0.3	-97.8	-97.6
Northwest Territories	1.5	3.1	1.7	13.0	649.7	738.8
Residential	1.4	2.8	1.7	5.0	198.9	261.0
Non-residential	0.2	0.4	0.1	8.0	...	...
Nunavut	76.8	0.2	F	F	F	F
Residential	0.8	0.2	F	F	F	F
Non-residential	76.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	-100.0

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

... not applicable

F too unreliable to be published

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

**Source(s):** Table 34-10-0066-01.



**Table 3**  
**Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area – Seasonally adjusted<sup>1</sup>**

	February 2019	December 2019 <sup>r</sup>	January 2020 <sup>r</sup>	February 2020 <sup>p</sup>	January to February 2020	February 2019 to February 2020
	millions of dollars				% change	
<b>Total, census metropolitan areas</b>	<b>5,978.5</b>	<b>6,899.4</b>	<b>7,109.0</b>	<b>6,354.8</b>	<b>-10.6</b>	<b>6.3</b>
St. John's	35.3	40.1	15.7	13.5	-14.2	-61.9
Halifax	74.6	71.4	88.5	71.6	-19.1	-4.1
Moncton	46.8	27.2	20.9	17.2	-17.8	-63.2
Saint John	13.5	12.1	12.4	13.6 <sup>E</sup>	9.7	0.6
Saguenay	15.9	67.1	25.1	19.7	-21.3	23.9
Québec	192.1	143.7	190.2	134.3	-29.4	-30.1
Sherbrooke	35.2	62.4	127.1	51.2	-59.7	45.6
Trois-Rivières	32.2	25.5	22.8	19.1	-16.3	-40.7
Montréal	1,001.3	1,318.7	928.8	908.3	-2.2	-9.3
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario and Quebec	305.5	350.8	395.2	464.1	17.4	51.9
Gatineau part	97.4	59.3	46.6	55.2	18.5	-43.3
Ottawa part	208.1	291.5	348.6	408.9	17.3	96.5
Kingston	13.1	11.0	26.4	13.9	-47.5	5.6
Bellefleur	14.4	8.7	15.5	19.3	25.0	34.5
Peterborough	20.3	36.5	41.6	10.0	-76.0	-50.7
Oshawa	44.6	36.5	91.3	95.9	5.1	114.9
Toronto	1,432.7	1,828.8	1,507.0	1,673.3	11.0	16.8
Hamilton	102.2	199.8	114.7	115.5	0.7	13.1
St. Catharines–Niagara	126.6	128.6	78.9	125.5	59.0	-0.9
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	163.2	94.9	149.5	161.2	7.9	-1.2
Brantford	17.5	13.8	50.7	37.7	-25.7	115.3
Guelph	56.9	65.8	22.9	39.9	74.0	-29.9
London	104.1	130.9	111.6	112.8	1.1	8.3
Windsor	39.9	58.7	68.4	47.2	-31.0	18.4
Barrie	28.7	21.2	68.8	31.6	-54.1	10.0
Greater Sudbury	22.1	18.3	24.9	25.9	4.1	17.2
Thunder Bay	29.6	4.4	9.5	10.4	8.7	-65.0
Winnipeg	172.3	161.3	173.6	158.3	-8.8	-8.1
Regina	29.7	27.8	44.3	45.7	3.4	54.0
Saskatoon	64.4	46.0	60.7	61.6	1.5	-4.3
Lethbridge	24.5	25.6	23.3	25.6	10.0	4.6
Calgary	393.5	477.5	452.0	453.8	0.4	15.3
Edmonton	307.2	353.9	344.4	414.3	20.3	34.9
Kelowna	70.4	88.1	82.0	90.4	10.2	28.4
Abbotsford–Mission	36.5	34.3	25.4	26.0	2.3	-28.8
Vancouver	842.3	792.8	1,593.8	722.6	-54.7	-14.2
Victoria	69.5	115.4	101.0	123.5	22.4	77.8

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

<sup>E</sup> use with caution

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

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

**Source(s):** Table [34-10-0066-01](#).

**Available tables:** [table 34-10-0066-01](#).

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

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)).