

Building permits, December 2014

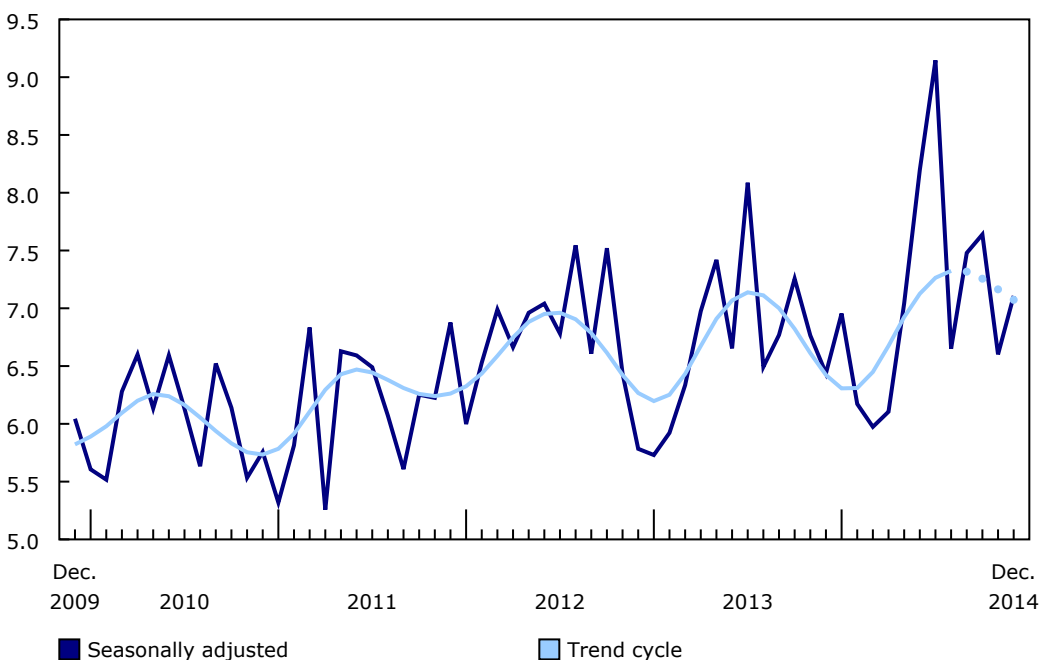
Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Friday, February 6, 2015

Contractors took out building permits worth \$7.1 billion in December, up 7.7% from November. This followed a 13.6% decline the previous month. The increase in December resulted mostly from higher construction intentions in the non-residential sector in Alberta and British Columbia.

The total value of building permits for 2014 was up 5.2% from 2013 to \$85.1 billion.

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](#).

The value of non-residential building permits rose 22.9% to \$2.7 billion in December, following a 29.4% decrease in November. Alberta was responsible for most of the monthly increase at the national level, followed by British Columbia. Declines were recorded in five provinces, with Saskatchewan posting the largest decrease.

Between January and December 2014, municipalities issued non-residential building permits worth \$34.2 billion, an increase of 5.4% from 2013.

In the residential sector, the value of permits was unchanged at \$4.4 billion in December, following a 2.5% decrease in November. Gains were posted in seven provinces, led by Alberta, British Columbia and Quebec. Ontario posted the largest decrease, following a 16.9% gain the previous month. Saskatchewan and Manitoba also registered declines.

Overall for the year, the value of residential building permits totalled \$50.9 billion, up 5.1% from the total value in 2013.



Non-residential sector: Double-digit increases in all three components

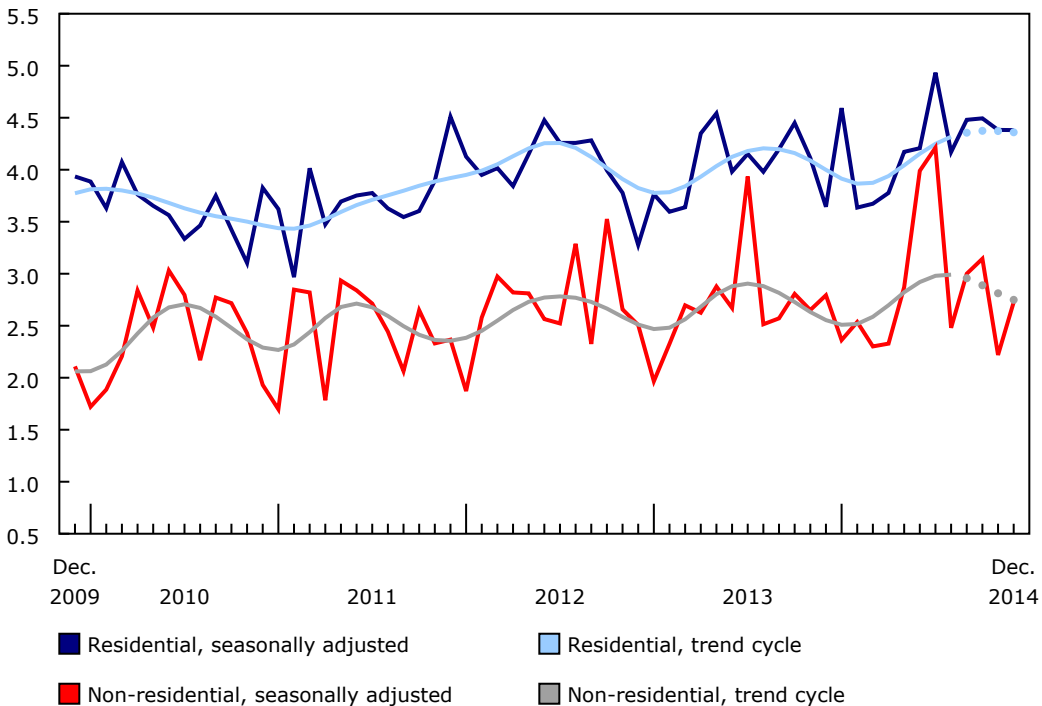
Canadian municipalities issued commercial building permits worth \$1.4 billion in December, 21.2% more than in November. This followed a 25.0% decrease the previous month. The increase was the result of higher construction intentions for a variety of commercial buildings, including office buildings, recreational facilities, hotels and restaurants as well as warehouses. Gains were recorded in six provinces, with Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec posting the largest increases. In contrast, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick reported the largest decreases.

In the industrial component, construction intentions rose 36.5% to \$529 million, following a 41.4% decline the previous month. The increase was mainly attributable to higher construction intentions for transportation-related buildings and, to a lesser degree, manufacturing plants. Gains were registered in five provinces, led by Ontario, with British Columbia and Quebec a distant second and third. Manitoba posted the largest decline.

The value of building permits in the institutional component increased 17.7% to \$768 million in December, following a 28.4% decrease in November. Alberta, which saw the largest advance, posted a significant increase in construction intentions for educational institutions, while in British Columbia, medical facilities contributed most to the gain. Construction intentions for institutional buildings declined in seven provinces, led by Ontario.

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](#).

Residential sector: Higher construction intentions for single-family dwellings

Municipalities issued building permits for single-family dwellings worth \$2.6 billion in December, up 8.0% from November. Increases were reported in every province, led by British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta.

Construction intentions for multi-family dwellings fell 9.5% to \$1.8 billion in December, marking a second consecutive monthly decrease. The decline in December was mainly the result of lower construction intentions in Ontario, followed by Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Gains were registered in five provinces, led by Alberta, followed by New Brunswick and Quebec.

At the national level, municipalities approved the construction of 16,023 new dwellings in December, down 5.6% from November. The decrease came from multi-family dwellings, down 11.9% to 9,550 units. The number of single-family dwellings rose 5.5% to 6,473 units.

Provinces: Large gains in Alberta and British Columbia

The total value of permits was up in seven provinces in December, led by Alberta, followed by British Columbia.

Alberta reported the largest increase, as the value of permits rose 30.7% to \$1.7 billion, with higher construction intentions for all types of buildings, most notably for institutional buildings.

British Columbia reported a 20.1% increase to \$989 million, the result of higher construction intentions in every component except multi-family dwellings.

The largest decline occurred in Ontario, with institutional buildings and multi-family dwellings accounting for the decrease. Saskatchewan and Manitoba also registered declines.

Higher construction intentions in just over half of the census metropolitan areas

In December, the total value of building permits was up in 18 of the 34 census metropolitan areas.

Edmonton registered the largest gain, followed by Toronto and Vancouver. In Edmonton, higher construction intentions, mainly for institutional buildings and multi-family dwellings, were responsible for the increase. In Toronto, the advance was largely the result of higher construction intentions for industrial buildings, while in Vancouver, the increase came mainly from higher construction intentions for commercial buildings.

Barrie recorded the largest decrease in December, after posting a notable gain the previous month. The decline was the result of lower construction intentions in all components of the residential and non-residential sectors, particularly in multi-family dwellings. Ottawa and Greater Sudbury also registered decreases. In Ottawa, the decline was largely attributable to lower construction intentions for institutional buildings. In Greater Sudbury, institutional and industrial buildings were responsible for the decline.

Note to readers

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

The Building Permits Survey covers 2,400 municipalities representing 95% of the 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.

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

	December 2013	October 2014	November 2014 ^r	December 2014 ^p	November to December 2014	December 2013 to December 2014
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total	6,436.8	7,638.7	6,601.4	7,107.0	7.7	10.4
Residential	3,643.6	4,494.2	4,382.8	4,381.3	-0.0	20.2
Single ¹	2,171.7	2,418.6	2,365.2	2,554.8	8.0	17.6
Multiple	1,471.9	2,075.6	2,017.5	1,826.5	-9.5	24.1
Non-residential	2,793.2	3,144.5	2,218.6	2,725.6	22.9	-2.4
Industrial	495.6	661.3	387.2	528.7	36.5	6.7
Commercial	1,311.0	1,572.2	1,179.3	1,429.4	21.2	9.0
Institutional	986.6	910.9	652.1	767.5	17.7	-22.2
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	15,650	18,524	16,974	16,023	-5.6	2.4
Single ¹	6,068	6,386	6,138	6,473	5.5	6.7
Multiple	9,582	12,138	10,836	9,550	-11.9	-0.3

^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 table [026-0010](#).

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

	December 2013	October 2014	November 2014 ^r	December 2014 ^p	November to December 2014	December 2013 to December 2014
	millions of dollars				% change	
Canada	6,436.8	7,638.7	6,601.4	7,107.0	7.7	10.4
Residential	3,643.6	4,494.2	4,382.8	4,381.3	-0.0	20.2
Non-residential	2,793.2	3,144.5	2,218.6	2,725.6	22.9	-2.4
Newfoundland and Labrador	72.7	94.5	47.9	66.4	38.5	-8.7
Residential	45.8	40.9	34.2	45.4	32.8	-0.9
Non-residential	26.9	53.5	13.7	20.9	52.9	-22.1
Prince Edward Island	11.9	15.1	16.2	18.2	12.4	53.2
Residential	6.0	11.8	9.9	16.5	66.7	174.4
Non-residential	5.8	3.3	6.2	1.6	-73.7	-71.9
Nova Scotia	50.2	128.9	77.7	83.7	7.8	66.9
Residential	33.8	102.5	56.4	64.4	14.3	90.6
Non-residential	16.4	26.3	21.3	19.3	-9.4	18.1
New Brunswick	45.5	70.1	56.0	63.7	13.7	39.9
Residential	34.0	31.4	32.1	48.7	51.9	43.5
Non-residential	11.6	38.8	23.9	15.0	-37.4	29.5
Quebec	1,753.6	1,233.1	1,093.9	1,151.8	5.3	-34.3
Residential	670.4	706.9	696.7	719.0	3.2	7.3
Non-residential	1,083.3	526.2	397.2	432.8	9.0	-60.0
Ontario	2,133.3	2,475.4	2,733.5	2,663.2	-2.6	24.8
Residential	1,297.3	1,540.4	1,801.1	1,714.3	-4.8	32.1
Non-residential	836.0	935.0	932.4	948.9	1.8	13.5
Manitoba	130.4	190.4	256.7	238.0	-7.3	82.5
Residential	91.8	134.6	172.0	155.4	-9.6	69.3
Non-residential	38.6	55.7	84.7	82.6	-2.5	113.9
Saskatchewan	152.5	254.4	191.7	133.7	-30.3	-12.3
Residential	109.1	162.1	105.6	68.1	-35.5	-37.6
Non-residential	43.3	92.3	86.2	65.6	-23.9	51.4
Alberta	1,358.9	1,629.4	1,291.2	1,687.4	30.7	24.2
Residential	824.7	1,020.1	855.1	895.8	4.8	8.6
Non-residential	534.3	609.3	436.2	791.6	81.5	48.2
British Columbia	690.9	1,501.6	823.1	988.6	20.1	43.1
Residential	525.0	733.6	616.0	643.2	4.4	22.5
Non-residential	165.9	768.0	207.1	345.5	66.8	108.2
Yukon	1.0	41.2	11.7	8.7	-25.8	780.2
Residential	0.1	6.6	2.3	7.2	216.0	...
Non-residential	0.9	34.5	9.4	1.4	-84.8	62.9
Northwest Territories	0.8	4.5	1.7	3.6	111.5	375.9
Residential	0.5	3.1	1.4	3.2	132.7	568.7
Non-residential	0.3	1.3	0.3	0.4	24.9	49.1
Nunavut	35.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	...	-100.0
Residential	5.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	...	-100.0
Non-residential	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	-100.0

^r revised

^p preliminary

... not applicable

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

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

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

	December 2013	October 2014	November 2014 ^r	December 2014 ^p	November to December 2014	December 2013 to December 2014
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total, census metropolitan areas	5,090.6	5,995.0	5,211.2	5,554.0	6.6	9.1
St. John's	49.7	68.1	32.9	48.3	47.0	-2.8
Halifax	20.6	81.6	32.9	39.8	20.9	93.2
Moncton	12.3	27.8	19.7	19.9	1.0	61.6
Saint John	12.9	8.4	6.8	6.7	-2.5	-48.3
Saguenay	16.8	19.3	11.4	9.6	-15.5	-42.8
Québec	126.3	107.2	98.6	88.1	-10.7	-30.2
Sherbrooke	34.6	42.7	36.4	19.8	-45.5	-42.7
Trois-Rivières	25.2	22.0	18.7	12.2	-34.5	-51.4
Montréal	1,122.4	669.3	586.2	662.0	12.9	-41.0
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	135.4	275.7	227.0	187.0	-17.6	38.2
Gatineau part	44.8	54.3	30.0	67.0	123.2	49.7
Ottawa part	90.6	221.4	197.0	120.0	-39.1	32.5
Kingston	10.6	14.8	20.1	17.3	-13.8	62.8
Peterborough	11.0	21.1	39.3	12.4	-68.5	13.1
Oshawa	58.7	40.6	46.2	79.4	71.8	35.2
Toronto	1,123.5	1,228.3	1,410.7	1,504.8	6.7	33.9
Hamilton	198.8	106.6	79.3	146.2	84.3	-26.5
St. Catharines–Niagara	60.1	78.3	57.2	39.7	-30.5	-33.9
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	129.8	129.6	94.1	123.7	31.4	-4.7
Brantford	4.2	20.0	33.1	5.3	-83.9	27.2
Guelph	25.5	55.4	25.4	43.4	70.9	70.1
London	39.0	71.0	100.0	111.4	11.4	185.3
Windsor	15.9	37.2	24.3	32.2	32.5	102.9
Barrie	45.0	32.1	197.5	28.7	-85.5	-36.3
Greater Sudbury	4.6	17.2	78.5	10.0	-87.3	119.2
Thunder Bay	3.1	7.3	7.0	2.3	-67.4	-27.5
Winnipeg	87.5	133.6	212.5	179.7	-15.4	105.3
Regina	58.5	74.8	50.5	57.5	14.0	-1.6
Saskatoon	58.0	83.4	67.7	46.8	-30.9	-19.2
Calgary	657.8	606.9	537.7	538.7	0.2	-18.1
Edmonton	389.5	624.9	431.0	756.9	75.6	94.4
Kelowna	27.6	56.5	47.1	39.3	-16.6	42.2
Abbotsford–Mission	13.0	6.5	14.9	18.2	22.4	40.1
Vancouver	480.5	1,168.6	509.1	599.3	17.7	24.7
Victoria	32.0	58.4	57.5	67.2	17.0	109.9

^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 2014 issue of *Building Permits* ([64-001-X](#)) will soon be available.

The January building permits data will be released on March 6.

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jérémie Bennett (613-951-0793), Investment, Science and Technology Division.