Residential & Commercial Growth

The Planning & Development Department issues and tracks building permit information in the City of Topeka.

Total building permits issued is an indicator of development activity. Comparing April 2021 to April 2022, total building permits decreased 8.4% (167 vs 154). Likewise, Residential permits decreased 24.1% (108 vs 87) and commercial permits increased 11.9% (59 vs. 67).

In addition, both building square footage and building value can be evaluated to better understand the scale of investment the City of Topeka.

Comparing April 2021 to April 2022, building square footage decreased by 57.5% (962,309 sq. ft. vs. 611,007 sq. ft.). The value of building permits increased by 4.9% ($63,533,383 vs. $66,875,284). The table below shows the Top 10 Permits by valuation through April 2022.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Permit Valuation - April YTD</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Residential</td>
<td>$316,023,334</td>
<td>$452,757,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Commercial</td>
<td>$4,376,522,250</td>
<td>$7,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Add/Alt</td>
<td>$310,000</td>
<td>$210,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The Top 10 Permits table includes permits with the highest project completion cost issued to date, both commercial and residential.
Residential Growth

The total number of residential building permits issued in the City of Topeka are an indicator of housing growth. The number of new residential building permits (by units), when comparing April 2021 to April 2022, decreased 69.4% from (61 vs 36). Additions and alterations decreased by 10.5% from April 2021 to April 2022 (63 vs 57).

Tracking total new housing unit types can be an indicator of more quality housing choices and affordability in keeping with the priorities of the City’s Housing Market Study and Land Use and Growth Management Plan 2040 (LUGMP). From 2010 to 2019, the share of new non-single family units surprisingly did not grow, accounting for only 39% of new units. While the sample size is much smaller, an important reversal of that trend (69% non-single family share) is taking place since 2020.

In order to evaluate 2015 policy changes made in the LUGMP, tracking the location of new residential dwelling units created within Topeka (City), Urban Growth Area (UGA), Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (3-mile ETJ), and Shawnee County is vital. The City’s share of new dwelling units compared to all of Shawnee County was 59% through April 2022 (36 out of 61 units) compared to 75.3% in 2021.

Buildable prime vacant lots (BPVL) are those lots/units within the city that were platted since 1970 and currently have street access or approved benefit districts. Topeka has a sufficient supply of BPVL’s through the end of the second quarter of 2022 to accommodate 5.3 years of housing growth for new single-two family dwellings.
3-Mile ETJ, UGA, and City Boundary
New Housing Units — April 2022