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 March 2021 to March 2022, total building permits increased 6.4% (109 vs 116). Likewise, Residential permits decreased 15.1% (73 vs 62) and commercial permits increased 50% (36 vs. 54).

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

Comparing March 2021 to March 2022, building square footage decreased by 17.2% (642,158 sq. ft. vs. 531,849 sq. ft.). The value of building permits increased by 49.7% ($40,331,483 vs. $60,382,663). The table below shows the Top 10 Permits by valuation through March 2022.

* 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 March 2021 to March 2022, decreased 56.6% from (53 vs 23). Additions and alterations decreased by 6.3% from March 2021 to March 2022 (48 vs 45).

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 (70% 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 57.5% through March 2022 (23 out of 40 units) compared to 75.3% in 2021.
3-Mile ETJ, UGA, and City Boundary
New Housing Units — March 2022