Residential & Commercial Growth

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

Using 2021 permit data, total building permits are projected by the end of the year to increase 2.7% from 2020 (513 vs 527). Residential permits are projected to decrease 1.6% (340 vs 335) as compared to an increase of 11% (173 vs 192) in the total number of commercial permits.

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

By the end of 2021, building square footage is expected to decrease 31.8% from 2020 (3,518,299 sq. ft. vs. 2,400,008 sq. ft.). The value of building permits is on pace to increase by 12.6% ($203,029,665 vs. $228,582,896). The table below shows the Top 10 Permits by valuation through September 2021.

* 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 September 2020 to September 2021, increased 65.6% from 224 vs 371. Additions and alterations decreased 9.2% from September 2020 to September 2021 (173 vs 157).

Tracking total new housing unit types can be an indicator of more quality housing choices and affordability. From 2010 to 2019, the share of new non-single accounted for only 39% of new units. However, since 2020 this trend has reversed, with 73% of new units being non-single family. 2021’s year-to-date count continues this trend with 78.4% of units being new non-single family.

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 79% through September 2021 (371 out of 467 units) indicating better alignment with LUGMP priorities.

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 third quarter of 2021 to accommodate 5.8 years of housing growth for new single-two family dwellings.
Building Permits

https://maps.topeka.org/BuildingPermits/
3-Mile ETJ, UGA, and City Boundary
New Housing Units — September 2021