Residential & Commercial Growth

The Planning Department tracks the total number of building permits issued on an annual basis in the City of Topeka. Total building permits issued is an indicator of development activity. From 2016 to 2017, total building permits decreased 9.7% from 495 to approximately 447. A 9.7% (196 vs. 215) increase in commercial permits is not enough to offset a 22.4% decrease in residential permits from 2016 (299 vs. 232).

The Planning Department tracks the square footage and value of all building permits. Building square footage and building value can be used to better understand the scale of investment per building permit issued within the City of Topeka.

From 2016 to 2017, building square footage increased by 41.2%, (3,023,538 sq. ft. vs. 4,275,853 sq. ft.). The value of building permits decreased by 4.3% ($160,406,799 vs. $153,581,821). The table below and map on page 3 show the Top 10 Permits by valuation for the year.

Both building square footage and building value can be used to better understand the scale of investment per building permit issued within the City of Topeka.
Residential Growth

The Planning Department tracks the total number of residential building permits issued in the City of Topeka as an indicator of housing growth. Data is presented from 2000 through 2017. The number of new residential building permits (by units) decreased 11.3% (124 vs. 110) between 2016 and 2017, with the number of additions and alterations remaining well above new construction but still decreasing 24% (204 vs. 155).

The Planning Department tracks the number and location of new residential dwelling units created within Topeka and Shawnee County in order to evaluate 2015 policy changes made in the Topeka Land Use and Growth Management Plan 2040 (LUGMP). A key performance indicator of the LUGMP is Topeka’s percentage of new dwelling units relative to those outside the city. For evaluation, Shawnee County is divided into Topeka’s Urban Growth Area: Tier 1 (City), Tier 2/3 (UGA), Topeka’s Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (3-mile ETJ), and the balance of Shawnee County (Non-ETJ). Data is shown from 2010.

The city’s share of new dwelling units compared to all of Shawnee County was 45.8% in 2016, compared to 47.8% as of December 2017.

In 2016, dwelling unit share of new city dwelling units as a portion of the 3-mile ETJ area was 61.4% and 79% of the UGA. As of December 2017, share of new city dwelling units was 59.5% as a portion of the 3-mile ETJ area and 79.7% of the UGA.

Prime vacant lots are those lots within the city that were platted since 1970. Topeka has a sufficient supply of prime vacant lots at the end of 2017 to accommodate 11-12 years of housing growth for new single/two-family dwellings.
2017 Building Permits