



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, March 6, 2008

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The value of building permits in January fell below the \$6-billion mark for the first time since April 2007. An increase in the non-residential sector was insufficient to compensate for fewer construction intentions in the residential area.	
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Living Census: A unique multimedia experience

Statistics Canada's today releases its first-ever virtual history of Canada's Census of Population, conducted every five years to provide a statistical portrait of the nation.

This unique multimedia experience, called the *Living Census*, offers visitors a virtual tour of more than 340 years of census-taking in Canada. It illuminates the role the census has played in the lives of Canadians and in the growth of a strong and vibrant Canadian democracy.

With its 8 "mini-movies" or flash presentations, the *Living Census* places key Canadian censuses in the political and social context of their day. With more than 30 follow-up backgrounders, it deepens and enriches the story of the census in Canadian history which begins with the first colonial census conducted by Jean Talon in the winter of 1665/1666.

The *Living Census* holds a mirror to the changing face of Canada. With its vividly illustrated historical material and photos, and with its memorable flashes of the past, it has much to offer all wishing to know more about this venerable Canadian institution.

For more information, contact Jonina Wood (613-951-1114), Communications and Library Services Division.



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Releases

Building permits

January 2008

The value of building permits in January fell below the \$6-billion mark for the first time since April 2007. An increase in the non-residential sector was insufficient to compensate for fewer construction intentions in the residential area.

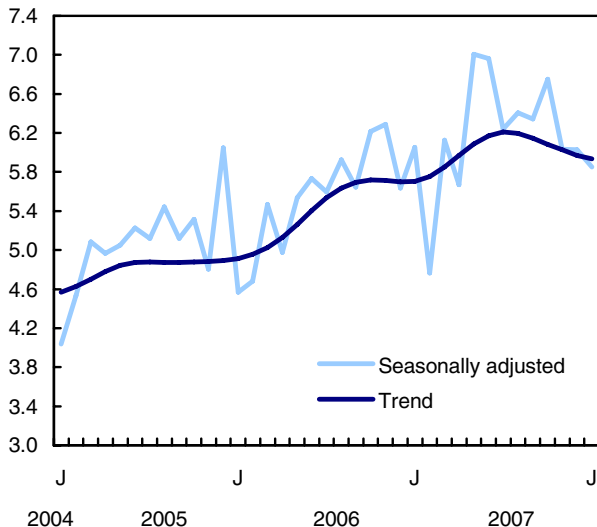
Municipalities issued \$5.9 billion worth of building permits, down 2.9% from the December 2007 value of \$6.0 billion. This was a third consecutive monthly decline.

Despite the recent declines, building sites should remain busy in the first part of 2008 since construction intentions were strong in 2007. Building permits are a leading indicator for construction activity.

In the residential sector, the value of building permits dropped by 13.9% to \$3.3 billion. This was fuelled by a 26.9% drop in multi-family housing. Intentions also decreased in the single-family component (-5.4%).

The total value of permits declines for a third consecutive month

\$ billions



After two consecutive monthly decreases, the value of non-residential permits increased by 16.4% to \$2.5 billion. January's gain was due to increases in institutional, commercial and industrial permits.

Note to readers

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which ease comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations.

The Building Permits Survey covers 2,400 municipalities representing 95% of the population. It provides an early indication of building activity. The communities representing the other 5% of the population are very small, and their levels of building activity have little impact on the total.

The value of planned construction activities shown in this release excludes engineering projects (e.g., waterworks, sewers or culverts) and land.

For the purpose of the Building Permits release, the census metropolitan area of Ottawa-Gatineau is divided into two areas: Ottawa-Gatineau (Quebec part) and Ottawa-Gatineau (Ontario part).

Important movement in permits in Ontario

Provincially, the largest gain (in dollars) occurred in Ontario, where municipalities approved \$2.4 billion worth of permits in January. A record high was reached in the value of non-residential permits (+68.8% to \$1.4 billion). The Ontario non-residential components (industrial, commercial and institutional) all had very high values in January. These increases more than offset a 29.1% drop in residential permits, the largest among all provinces.

Alberta also posted a significant gain (+4.2% to \$1.2 billion) in the total value of permits, thanks to growth coming from the industrial and the institutional components.

Quebec experienced, to a lesser extent, a state of affairs similar to Ontario. A decline in residential permits (-2.7%) was offset by an increase in non-residential sector (+14.0%) leading the total value of permits to \$989 million in January, up 1.9% from December.

The total value of building permits fell in four provinces. With significant drops in both residential and non-residential components, the largest decrease in dollars occurred in British Columbia, where the total value of permits dropped 22.4% to \$815 million, the lowest level since April 2006.

Important retreats also occurred in Saskatchewan (-44.4%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (-54.6%). In both provinces, the drops followed exceptional results in the non-residential sector in December.

Housing sector: The demand for multi-family units drops

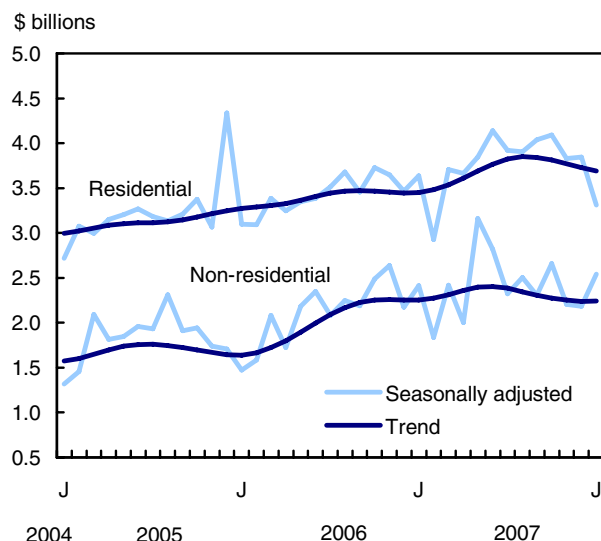
The value of permits for multi-family dwellings fell by 26.9% in January to \$1.1 billion, the lowest amount since February 2007. The number of multiple-family units approved decreased by 17.6% to 8,216.

Single-family permits decreased by 5.4% to \$2.2 billion. The corresponding number of units declined by 5.5%.

Both single- and multi-family units approved have been on a downward trend since the summer of 2007.

Strength in employment, growth in disposable income, dynamic economy in Western Canada and tight apartment vacancy rates in certain centres are factors that could affect positively the demand for housing. On the other hand, the impact of price increases on housing affordability and the signs of a weakening US economy and their spillover effects in Canada could erode the demand.

Residential and non-residential sectors move in opposite directions



All non-residential components are on the rise

The value of permits in the institutional component jumped 26.6% in January to \$701 million. This gain followed two consecutive monthly declines. Large projects for medical buildings in Ontario and Alberta were behind this marked increase.

The value of commercial permits gained 9.0% in January to \$1.4 billion, thanks to several large projects for office buildings in Ontario. In 2007, this category

played a key role in the strong showing of the commercial component.

Having reached a 10-month low in December, the value of industrial permits rebounded with a 28.1% gain in January as the value of permits totalled \$423 million. Construction projects for manufacturing buildings in Ontario and for utility buildings in Alberta led to this gain.

Despite the strong results in January, the value of permits in the commercial and industrial components has been on a downward trend since the summer of 2007. In contrast, the institutional component has been maintaining its upward trend since February 2007.

The non-residential sector continued to be positively affected by low office vacancy rates, the vigorous retail sector and strong corporate profits. Furthermore, business and government intend to increase their spending in non-residential construction in 2008, according to the latest Private and Public Investment Survey released on February 27, 2008.

Metropolitan areas: Sharp decline in Vancouver

The total value of permits declined in 15 out of the 34 metropolitan areas in January. The largest decline occurred in Vancouver as \$427 million worth of permits were issued, the second lowest level since April 2006 (the lowest being in September 2007 when there was a municipal strike in the city of Vancouver). Marked declines occurred in both residential and non-residential sectors. Barrie and Saskatoon also showed substantial declines in January, after record levels in December 2007.

In contrast, significant increases occurred in Edmonton, London and Montréal due largely to projects in the non-residential sector.

In Toronto, a tremendous gain in the non-residential sector (+143.2%) was largely offset by a sharp decline in residential construction intentions.

Available on CANSIM: tables 026-0001 to 026-0008 and 026-0010.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2802.

The January 2008 issue of *Building Permits* (64-001-XWE, free) will be available soon.

The February building permit estimate will be released on April 7.

To order data, contact Jasmine Gaudreault (613-951-6321; toll-free 1-800-579-8533; bdp_information@statcan.ca). For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Nicole Charron (613-951-0087), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

□

Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area¹

	December 2007 ^r	January 2008 ^p	December 2007 to January 2008	January 2007	January 2007 to January 2008
	Seasonally adjusted				
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions	% change
St. John's	38.8	25.5	-34.4	23.4	8.9
Halifax	28.3	37.5	32.5	30.2	24.0
Moncton	12.7	22.6	78.2	9.1	148.0
Saint John	15.1	12.9	-15.1	17.7	-27.2
Saguenay	3.3	4.9	47.2	4.8	1.4
Québec	150.6	80.5	-46.6	101.6	-20.8
Sherbrooke	11.2	24.0	115.3	18.7	28.1
Trois-Rivières	19.0	23.9	25.5	18.0	32.9
Montréal	429.6	523.7	21.9	486.9	7.5
Ottawa-Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	220.5	237.2	7.6	223.5	6.1
Ottawa-Gatineau (Que. part)	68.4	31.9	-53.3	45.0	-29.0
Ottawa-Gatineau (Ont. part)	152.1	205.3	35.0	178.5	15.0
Kingston	10.3	6.0	-41.7	10.8	-44.2
Peterborough	11.1	3.0	-73.1	2.2	34.6
Oshawa	74.6	57.6	-22.8	100.3	-42.6
Toronto	1,247.9	1,274.3	2.1	1,242.0	2.6
Hamilton	60.0	95.7	59.4	84.2	13.6
St. Catharines-Niagara	38.4	42.7	11.1	20.3	110.4
Kitchener	138.4	63.4	-54.2	39.6	60.2
Brantford	6.2	12.8	105.4	9.3	38.6
Guelph	13.5	25.1	85.6	12.6	99.5
London	54.3	152.0	180.3	72.4	110.1
Windsor	71.6	14.7	-79.4	19.6	-24.9
Barrie	113.5	21.6	-81.0	15.4	40.4
Greater Sudbury	10.9	26.4	141.1	110.1	-76.1
Thunder Bay	3.6	5.9	64.9	10.3	-42.4
Winnipeg	65.2	69.0	5.8	66.7	3.5
Regina	26.1	21.3	-18.4	32.9	-35.3
Saskatoon	135.9	53.3	-60.8	46.1	15.5
Calgary	487.8	408.8	-16.2	435.4	-6.1
Edmonton	205.7	343.3	66.8	351.8	-2.4
Kelowna	102.4	75.1	-26.7	34.0	121.1
Abbotsford	28.7	45.2	57.4	48.7	-7.2
Vancouver	578.0	426.9	-26.1	651.2	-34.4
Victoria	33.1	54.3	64.1	82.8	-34.4

^r revised

^p preliminary

1. Go online to view the census subdivisions that comprise the census metropolitan areas.

Note: Data may not add to totals as a result of rounding.

Value of building permits, by province and territory

	December 2007 ^r	January 2008 ^p	December 2007 to January 2008	January 2007	January 2007 to January 2008
Seasonally adjusted					
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions	% change
Canada	6,028.8	5,851.0	-2.9	6,051.4	-3.3
Residential	3,845.9	3,310.6	-13.9	3,636.9	-9.0
Non-residential	2,182.9	2,540.4	16.4	2,414.5	5.2
Newfoundland and Labrador	100.5	45.6	-54.6	41.4	10.0
Residential	33.9	39.2	15.4	23.7	65.4
Non-residential	66.5	6.4	-90.4	17.7	-64.1
Prince Edward Island	12.3	9.2	-25.4	11.6	-20.9
Residential	7.1	5.6	-21.4	8.6	-35.2
Non-residential	5.2	3.6	-30.9	3.0	19.6
Nova Scotia	73.4	75.6	3.0	73.0	3.6
Residential	51.3	65.5	27.7	52.1	25.7
Non-residential	22.1	10.2	-54.1	20.9	-51.3
New Brunswick	50.4	70.1	39.2	56.1	25.0
Residential	40.0	44.0	10.1	36.0	22.5
Non-residential	10.4	26.1	151.5	20.2	29.4
Quebec	970.4	988.8	1.9	967.3	2.2
Residential	704.2	685.4	-2.7	634.3	8.0
Non-residential	266.2	303.4	14.0	333.0	-8.9
Ontario	2,302.1	2,429.0	5.5	2,457.3	-1.2
Residential	1,487.7	1,054.5	-29.1	1,276.0	-17.4
Non-residential	814.4	1,374.5	68.8	1,181.3	16.4
Manitoba	97.6	112.0	14.7	112.6	-0.5
Residential	70.6	88.1	24.7	76.6	15.0
Non-residential	27.0	23.9	-11.4	35.9	-33.6
Saskatchewan	214.7	119.4	-44.4	99.1	20.4
Residential	95.7	81.7	-14.7	58.0	40.7
Non-residential	119.0	37.7	-68.3	41.1	-8.3
Alberta	1,136.8	1,184.1	4.2	1,171.9	1.0
Residential	606.2	591.9	-2.4	750.0	-21.1
Non-residential	530.6	592.2	11.6	421.9	40.4
British Columbia	1,050.5	815.3	-22.4	1,051.6	-22.5
Residential	738.2	653.0	-11.5	717.9	-9.0
Non-residential	312.4	162.3	-48.0	333.7	-51.4
Yukon	10.3	1.4	-86.9	4.0	-65.7
Residential	9.5	1.3	-86.5	2.2	-41.2
Non-residential	0.8	0.1	-91.5	1.8	-96.0
Northwest Territories	9.8	0.2	-97.7	4.2	-94.7
Residential	1.3	0.1	-93.2	0.1	-38.5
Non-residential	8.5	0.1	-98.5	4.0	-96.8
Nunavut	0.0	0.4	...	1.3	-72.7
Residential	0.0	0.4	...	1.3	-72.7
Non-residential	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	...

... not applicable

^r revised^p preliminary**Note:** Data may not add to totals as a result of rounding.

Canadian Vehicle Survey

July to September 2007

Vehicles registered in Canada travelled an estimated 87.7 billion kilometres during the third quarter of 2007, down 3.9% compared with the same quarter of 2006. This was the lowest third quarter total kilometres since the third quarter of 2004, when Canadians drove 82.7 billion kilometres.

Nationally, light vehicles (weighing up to 4.5 tonnes) travelled an average of 4,118 kilometers during the quarter. The heaviest vehicles in the survey (trucks weighing 15 tonnes or more) were driven, on average, 17,855 kilometres for Canada as a whole.

Among the provinces, drivers in Manitoba were the heaviest users of their light vehicles during the quarter, with an average of 5,385 kilometres per vehicle. As has often been the case, drivers in British Columbia drove the least, at 3,340 kilometres per vehicle.

As has been the case for the past three quarters, Canadians continued to experience improved fuel efficiency with their light vehicles in the third quarter of 2007 than they did a year earlier. Light vehicle fuel consumption was measured at 10.3 L/100 km in the third quarter of 2007, and 10.6 L/100 km in the third quarter of 2006. This represented an improvement of 3.0%.

The survey measures the activity of all on-road vehicles registered in Canada with the exception of some vehicles such as buses, motorcycles, construction equipment and road maintenance equipment.

Available on CANSIM: tables 405-0005 to 405-0020, 405-0026 to 405-0036, 405-0039 to 405-0042, 405-0044 to 405-0046, 405-0053, 405-0054, 405-0099 and 405-0101 to 405-0110.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2749.

The July to September 2007 issue of *The Canadian Vehicle Survey* (53F0004XWE, free) is now available from the *Publications* module of our website.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality

of this release, contact Réjean Doiron (613-951-5680; rejean.doiron@statcan.ca) or Client Services (toll-free 1-866-500-8400; transportationstatistics@statcan.ca), Transportation Division. ■

Asphalt roofing

January 2008

Data on asphalt roofing are now available for January.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0052.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2123.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (toll-free 1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; manufact@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Pipeline transportation of crude oil and refined petroleum products

November 2007

Data on the net receipts of crude oil and equivalent hydrocarbons, liquefied petroleum gases and refined petroleum products, pipeline exports of crude oil and deliveries of crude oil by pipeline to Canadian refineries are now available for November.

Available on CANSIM: tables 133-0001 to 133-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2148 and 2191.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (toll-free 1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; energ@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

New products

Canadian Vehicle Survey: Quarterly, July to September 2007
Catalogue number 53F0004XWE
(free).

Industry Price Indexes, January 2008, Vol. 34, no. 1
Catalogue number 62-011-XWE
(free).

Employment, Earnings and Hours, December 2007, Vol. 85, no. 12
Catalogue number 72-002-XIB
(free).

All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.

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Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997
For release at 9:30 a.m.



MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Discusses the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 40 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

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