



ANNUAL BUILDING PERMIT INVENTORY 2016

The Annual Building Permit Inventory provides a look at new development and growth in the Strafford Region. Through contractual agreement with the NHDOT, building permit information from each municipality is collected and analyzed. This data will be used to update the Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation and Land Use Model and for municipal development planning purposes.

The current permit inventory includes new construction from January 1 to December 31, 2016. This report contains a summary analysis of activity within the region, a table of permit totals for 2016 by municipality, a chart illustrating permit allocation, line graphs showing changes in residential and commercial construction since 2008, and a map of new building locations in the region.

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Building Types

Single-Unit Residential:

Traditional and modular single family homes on permanent foundations. Seasonal homes are also included.

Multi-Unit Residential: Housing with two or more living units such as conventional apartments, duplexes, triplexes, attached townhouses, and independent living communities. This category excludes hotels, motels, and nursing homes.

Manufactured: Structures created as single units in a factory and shipped to the building site. Also known as “mobile homes” or “trailers.”

Mixed Use: Buildings with multiple units that include both residential and commercial space.

Commercial/Industrial: Retail and manufacturing spaces. Retail spaces can include storefronts, restaurants, grocers, offices, and hotels, while industrial spaces can include parts factories, machine shops, and buildings used for the processing of raw materials such as timber or scrap metal.

Other: Structures that do not fit into the residential or commercial categories, such as municipal, county, state, and federal buildings, as well as churches, schools, Scout facilities, and other non-profit facilities.

Definitions created by SRPC staff

The Process

In January 2017, Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) staff sent letters to the building inspectors of each municipality in the region requesting their construction building permit information for the previous year. The information requested included **structure type, permit number, map and lot number, number of units, date issued, and address.**

Documents from each municipality were saved in their original format and information from these documents was pulled into a single Microsoft Excel file. Staff analyzed the submitted information to ensure that only new construction was documented and that structure types were correctly categorized in the report (Table 1). For the purposes of this report “new construction” excludes renovations, replacements, additions, and the construction of supplemental structures such as residential garages or sheds. Using this organized data, a geocoded map was created with the locations of new construction activities.

Changes

In 2014, SRPC staff made a number of changes to the way building permit data is organized and presented in the annual report. Building permits are now classified by a standard list of six building types. In the past, making comparisons across years and communities was difficult due to differences in the level of detail provided by each community. This new list of building types offers broader categories that allow each community’s permits to be uniformly organized.

The annual report’s focus also changed in 2014, from individual communities to the region as a whole. Rather than include a table of past years’ data for each community, a line graph is provided that illustrates change over time for the entire region (Figure 1). Each line represents a different building type. The summary is now accompanied by a map of regional building activity (Figure 3). An interactive version of this map is available on the SRPC website and instructions for accessing the map can be found at the end of this report.

Regional Summary

The number of new buildings in the region increased 15 percent between 2015 and 2016. Most of this increase was in new single-unit residential, manufactured homes, and multi-unit residential.

In 2016, single-unit residential buildings represented over 84 percent of new construction permits in the region (Figure 1); permits were issued for 331 new single-unit homes (Table 1). Dover saw the largest growth in this category with 61 units, followed by Rochester (47) and Barrington (47). A significant portion of the new residential growth can be attributed to new subdivisions, including those on Stocklan Circle and Sandra's Run in Dover and Ebony Drive in Rochester. Newmarket saw the greatest change in new construction from the previous year, increasing from 24 new single-unit residential structures in 2015 to 43 in 2016. At the other end of the spectrum, little new construction occurred in Brookfield (2) and Madbury (3).

Most new multi-unit residential construction occurred in Rochester (8) and in Newmarket (7). Several new multi-unit townhouses were built on Rochester Hill Road and Osprey Lane in Rochester and Newmarket, respectively.

Commercial/industrial construction decreased nearly 50 percent from 2015. Most commercial/industrial construction in 2016 occurred in Dover (4). Included in this activity was a new Olympia Sports at 861 Central Avenue and the Bill Dube Ford Dealership on Dover Point Road. A new Hobby Lobby was added to the Ridge Marketplace in Rochester and a new Dairy Queen was constructed at Tri-City Plaza in Somersworth.

The number of permits issued for manufactured structures decreased 40 percent from 2015, when a greater than average number of manufactured

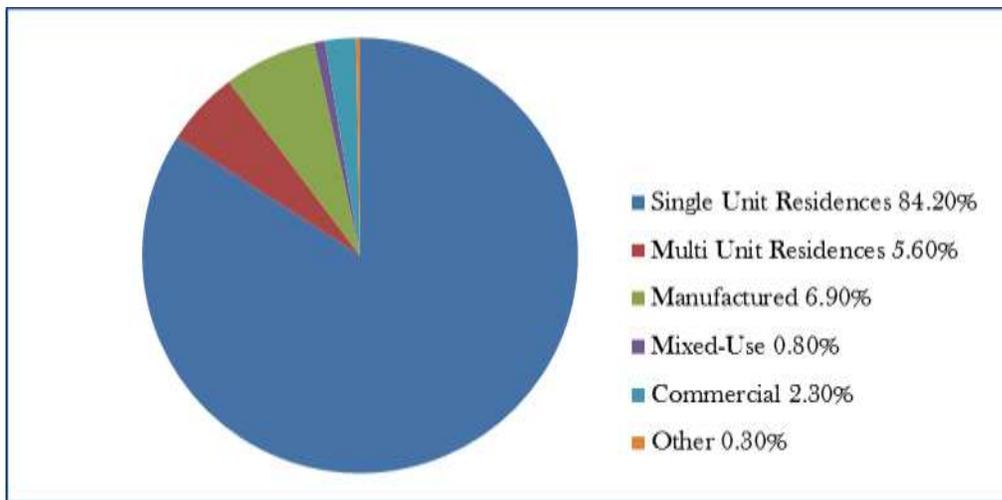


housing permits were issued due to a large new mobile home development in Rochester.

Table 1. 2016 Building Permit Totals by Community and Type

Municipality	Single Unit Residential	Multi Unit Residential	Manufactured	Mixed Use	Commercial/Industrial	Other	Total
Barrington	47	-	-	-	-	-	47
Brookfield	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Dover	61	2	3	3	4	-	73
Durham	4	3	-	-	-	-	7
Farmington	5	-	2	-	-	-	7
Lee	11	1	-	-	-	-	12
Madbury	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Middleton	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
Milton	5	-	8	-	-	1	14
New Durham	7	-	2	-	-	-	9
Newmarket	36	7	-	-	-	-	43
Northwood	23	-	3	-	-	-	26
Nottingham	25	-	-	-	-	-	25
Rochester	47	8	2	-	2	-	59
Rollinsford	7	-	-	-	-	-	7
Somersworth	15	1	7	-	3	-	26
Strafford	12	-	-	-	-	-	12
Wakefield	16	-	-	-	-	-	16
Total	331	22	27	3	9	1	393

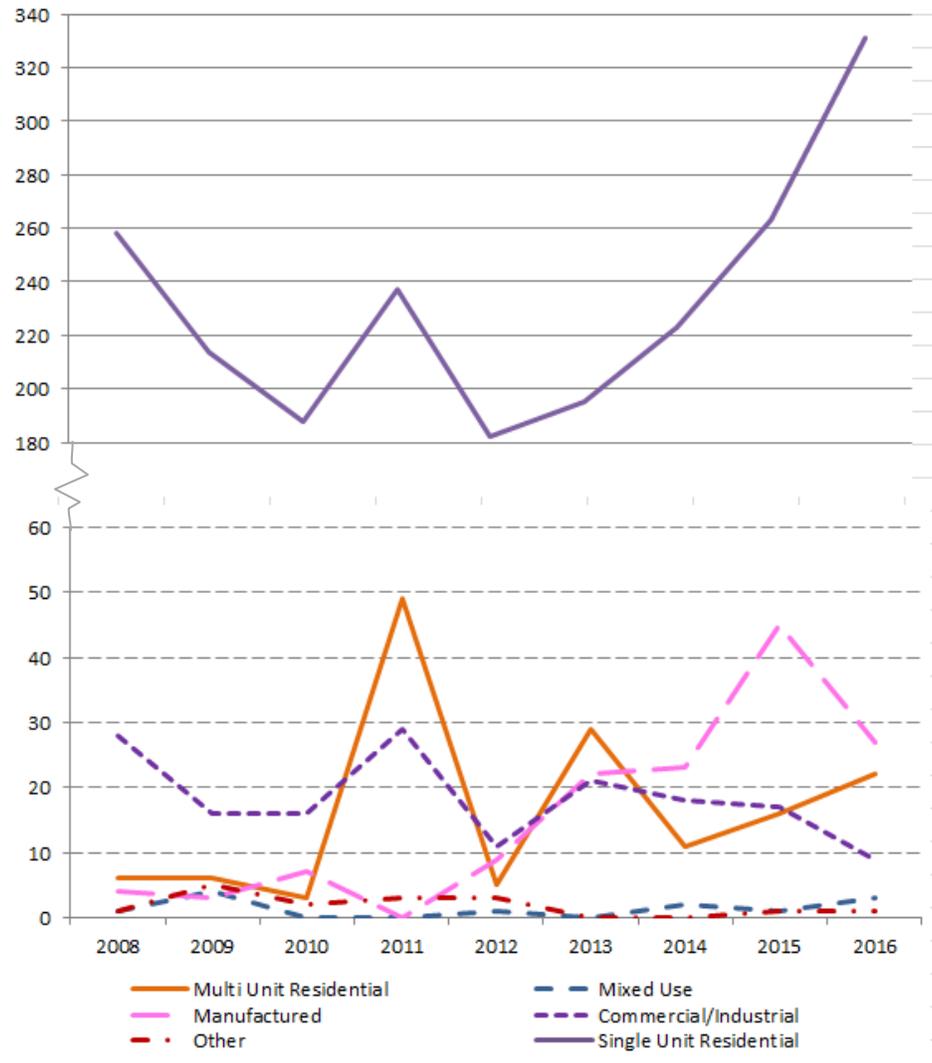
Figure 1. Permitting Allocation in the Strafford Region



Between 2008 and 2010, single-unit construction decreased by approximately 27 percent and commercial/industrial construction decreased by approximately 40 percent. Construction of other building types remained relatively constant during this period. Unfortunately, data on building permits issued in 2010 was not available for all communities, so totals from municipal annual reports were used to get a sense of total new construction.

Single-unit and multi-unit construction rose significantly in 2011 and again in 2013. The rise was due in part to the beginning of several large multi-unit student apartment projects in Durham, including the Cottages in 2011. New construction in the region has been on a steady rise overall since 2012. The majority of the 31-percent increase was in new single-unit residential construction. Manufactured homes also saw an increase during this time, with the total number rising from nine in 2012 to 27 in 2016. Overall, single-unit and multi-unit structures have seen the greatest fluctuation over time (Figure 1).

Figure 2. Regional Change in Permits Issued for New Construction from 2008 to 2016



Conclusions

Recommendations

The SRPC staff has these recommendations for collecting building permit data. Over the past years the primary issues included the low level of detail in structure descriptions, missing location information, and delayed receipt of permit data from municipalities.

The following list of recommended strategies was developed to help improve the efficiency with which permit data is stored and retrieved, which will benefit both SRPC and the municipalities in the region:

- Ensure that the address on the building permit is accurate and complete. The address should include both the house number and street name. Map/Lot numbers help as well.
- Be as accurate and detailed as possible in the description of the structure. Rather than simply identify a home as residential, distinguish the type of home, such as manufactured, modular, duplex, or condo.
- Include both the previous and future land use if the permit is for a conversion or demolition.
- Include building square footage or change in square footage in the case of a demolition or conversion.

Using SRPC Maps

Interactive versions of the 2014–2016 building permit maps are available at <http://srpc.maps.arcgis.com>. By clicking on any point you will be able to see attribute data such as structure type, permit number, map and lot number, number of units, date of permit issuance, and general location. Data points are geocoded to the building locations provided by each municipality and color coded based on building type.

Contacting SRPC

SRPC is always looking for ways to improve the way we collect and deliver data. For the purpose of reporting building permit data, SRPC keeps on file the original document sent by the building inspector, an Excel file of organized permit data by community, and a copy of this report. If you would like access to this data or have any questions or suggestions about how this report could better help you or your community, please contact the Strafford Regional Planning Commission office at (603) 994-3500 and ask for the transportation staff, or send an email to srpc@strafford.org.

