

# Service Business Plan



**Service Name** Building Code Permits and Inspection

**Service Lead Name** Nick Anastasopoulos

**Service Lead Title** Director of Building and By-law, Chief Building Official

## Service Description

A statutory public service to provide building permitting and inspections in accordance with the Building Code Act, Ontario Building Code and federal and provincial regulations.

## Strategic Alignment with Vision to Focus Plan

Increasing economic prosperity and community responsive growth management

Delivering customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology

## Service Goals

To protect occupants of buildings by ensuring construction conforms to the Ontario Building Code. To ensure the community is educated and aware of the regulatory requirements of the Building Code Act (BCA) and Ontario Building Code (OBC) . This awareness will promote public safety by ensuring construction standards on all construction projects.

## Current State

Customers & Their Expectations

This service is delivered to:

Applicants for building permits including architects, builders, business owners, contractors, developers, engineers, government agencies and home owners. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is a major stakeholder as the regulator.

Expectations include:

Customers expect to receive building permit approvals within the legislated turnaround times and that prescribed inspections are conducted within the mandated time frames as mandated by the Building Code Act (BCA).

Customers expect construction to meet the fire, health, safety, structural and other requirements of the Ontario Building Code (OBC) through proper enforcement.

Building officials are expected to be fully qualified in all aspects of the OBC. Inspectors are expected to maintain accurate records of construction and enforcement activity, and provide public reports to various levels of government.

The community expects the Chief Building Official to immediately act to safeguard the health and safety of the public where buildings are damaged due to fire, vehicle collision, structural collapse or otherwise rendered unsafe including unsafe septic systems. The Chief Building Official has an obligation to exercise statutory powers and perform duties in these circumstances with a duty of care to consider the rights of property owners.

Stakeholders expect building permit review and inspection services to be fully funded by permit fees, and services to be delivered in a cost-efficient manner. The Chief Building Official shall manage the operational budget, including developing and maintaining a sustainable financial model for providing service levels, as legislated. The CBO shall also provide statistical data, produce financial reports and monitor the operational budget as legislated.

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Existing Service Delivery

The Chief Building Official has a statutory duty to administer the Building Code Act and implement its regulations under the Ontario Building Code.

The Chief Building Official strategically guides building staff and internal/external stakeholders in the administration and implementation of the Building Code Act, Ontario Building Code, related regulations and By-Laws to exceed service delivery and customer expectations.

The Building Permit By-law provides detailed operational and procedural requirements. It serves as the applicant's checklist on the application requirements. It also includes the detailed building permit fee schedule.

The pre-construction stage includes consultation and plans review of the submitted design to ensure the design complies with the minimum requirements of the OBC. During construction, prescribed building inspections take place at various stages until occupancy and/or finals are granted.

Building permit applications are processed, reviewed and issued within the legislated turnaround times and prescribed building inspections are conducted within the mandated time frames.

Building officials are certified in all categories related to their responsibilities and duties as legislated. Plans review is conducted within prescribed turnaround times, ranging from 10 to 30 business days. Deficiency letters are also issued within these time frames. Field inspections are conducted within two business days, upon proper notification.

	<p>Legal proceedings, including issuing orders (Orders to Comply, Stop Work Orders, Unsafe Orders, Cease Use and Occupancy Orders), and laying charges, are initiated when all other efforts to gain compliance have failed.</p> <p>Service is based on a “fee for service” model, supported by a Council-approved building permit fees financial model. The model is reviewed and updated every five years, to account for effort and changes in legislative requirements.</p>
Existing Customer Engagement Tools / Methods	<p>Ongoing consultations with developers and builders through the Burlington Housing and Development Liaison Committee.</p> <p>Periodic consultations with the Hamilton Halton Home Builders Association, Hamilton Halton Construction Association and Building and Land Development Association.</p> <p>Formal and informal discussions with customers, including home and business owners, contractors, builders, architects, engineers, designers and developers.</p> <p>Active participation in various professional committees and associations, including the Engineers, Architects and Building Officials committee.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction survey accompanying every building permit issued.</p> <p>Q &amp; A on the Building website.</p>
Is this Service Provincially Legislated?	<p>Yes The Building Code Act (BCA) and the Ontario Building Code (OBC). The Act delegates responsibility for enforcement to municipalities and requires the appointment of a Chief Building Official and sufficient inspectors necessary for enforcement.</p>
For this Service are there Approved Service Standards?	<p>Yes The OBC specifies the mandated provincial technical qualifications required by Building Officials and the mandated service turnaround times for permit issuance and conducting prescribed inspections. The Building Permit By-law complements the requirements outlined in the OBC.</p>

## Programs

Application Process	<p>Receive applications, create permit files, verify completeness of forms and issue building permits once plans review is complete. Verify permit applications for conformance with applicable law as legislated by the BCA, and calculate/collect required permit fees and related development charges. Issue deficiency letters as required.</p> <p>Respond to public inquiries and educate customers regarding the building permit process.</p>
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Plans Review	<p>Review applications for the various disciplines to ensure compliance with the health and safety requirements of the OBC, National Building Code, Ontario Fire Code and related regulations and standards such as NFPA, CSA and ULC.</p> <p>Ensure plans review is conducted within the legislated turnaround times, and that deficiency letters are comprehensive and well documented.</p> <p>Respond to public inquiries and educate applicants or their agents on OBC requirements and other related technical regulations/standards.</p> <p>Prepare formal responses to the Building Code Commission in relation to technical disputes of the OBC.</p> <p>Review the technical merits of alternate solutions proposed in place of specified OBC requirements in the course of making recommendations.</p>
Building Inspections	<p>Conduct field inspections to ensure construction takes place as per approved permit drawings and in compliance with the health and safety requirements of the OBC and applicable law.</p> <p>Respond to requests for building inspections within the legislated turnaround times.</p> <p>Provide field enforcement to ensure that construction does not take place without a building permit.</p> <p>Respond to emergencies or unsafe conditions resulting from structural failures, vehicular accidents, fires and/or other causes, coordinating with other services and external agencies (Fire/Police Services, Burlington Hydro, Ontario Fire Marshal) as needed.</p> <p>Issue orders and pursue legal action when necessary to achieve compliance with the Building Code Act and the Ontario Building Code.</p> <p>Issue occupancy permits when construction has finalized and all appropriate documentation has been verified.</p> <p>Respond to public enquiries as related to building inspections and enforcement.</p>

## Recent Continuous Improvement Initiatives

The Building Section is currently exploring industry best practices and is collaborating with industry partners such as the Large Municipality Chief Building Officials Association (LMCBO) and the Ontario Building Officials Association (OBOA) to standardize building permit workflows throughout the Province of Ontario.

Upgrading of the AMANDA platform was delayed due to an announcement by the vendor that they would not support the tax module on the updated platform. Workarounds had to be developed in order to allow the tax module to remain on the older version of AMANDA (version 5 and 6) while the rest of the user base is migrated to AMANDA version 7. It is anticipated the development and testing will be concluded by Q1 2020.

The Building Section continued its paper management initiative this year by digitizing files currently residing in an off site storage facility. Ultimately the digitized files will be incorporated into the AMANDA platform. This will ensure that information is centralized and is easily accessible to all relevant stakeholders and will improve customer service by reducing waiting times for routine disclosure requests. The continuing digitizing of paper files will free-up office floor space, improve the integrity, accuracy, accessibility and security of permit drawings/documentation and will reduce expenditures related to off-site storage.

Succession planning and knowledge transfer has become an increasingly important issue as the workforce ages and an increasing number of experienced building officials are retiring.

The Building Section continues to receive positive feedback for its program of staffing public information kiosks in local Burlington hardware stores. These information sessions take place both in the Spring and Fall periods and provide an opportunity for staff to meet directly with Burlington residents to exchange information on building permit requirements. It also educates residents on certified and authorized building materials and construction best practices.

## Environmental Considerations

The Building Permit Section is performing an industry "best practice" review of existing and emerging technology in order to determine the optimum path for implementing on-line submissions of building permit applications and electronic plan review. This technology will drastically change the permitting process as paper documents/drawings will become obsolete and all interactions will be conducted on-line.

## Emerging Opportunities and Anticipated Risks

<p>Emerging Opportunities</p>	<p>Electronic delivery of building permit and inspection services. This multi-year initiative will help improve and streamline customer service for building permit applications. In line with our Paper Management Strategy it will also reduce the need for paper submissions and paper waste with resubmissions. Electronic submissions will also increase customer satisfaction as communication/collaboration will be conducted electronically rather than paper-based interactions.</p> <p>Ongoing changes to the Ontario Building Code will enhance requirements in accessibility, residential affordability and climate change. This will be in line with Burlington’s initiatives related to energy efficiency and sustainable development which aligns with the 2015-2040 Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Anticipated Risks</p>	<p>Increased exposure and liability due to changing requirements in the Ontario Building Code, such as affordable housing initiative, climate change initiatives, mid-rise wood frame and accessible built environment.</p> <p>A reduction in greenfield development due to scarcity of undeveloped land may lead to a temporary dip in building permit revenues while infill redevelopment projects go through the time intensive approval process. It is anticipated that the size and quantity of redevelopment projects will lead to an upswing in permit revenue in the longer term (2 to 5 years) as intensification momentum builds.</p> <p>Continuing to be an overshadowing concern is the outcome of the Elliott Lake Public Inquiry which may introduce new regulations in the Ontario Building Code regarding maintenance of existing buildings and parking structures. Additional resources and revenue would likely be required in order to fund these potential requirements.</p> <p>Knowledge maintenance and/or re-qualification of Building Officials and its impact on existing and future resources (human and financial) continues to be a concern.</p> <p>Due to the aging of the workforce and increasing numbers of building officials choosing to retire, there is a province wide shortage of experienced and qualified building officials. Succession management is emerging as a major concern for all municipalities across the Province and will remain an issue for several years to come. Training, qualification and retention of building officials will be a challenge requiring creativity and a focused effort by all municipal Building Departments.</p>
<p>Enterprise Risk Considerations</p>	<p>Labour Market &amp; Workforce - Recruitment, Retention, Skills            Technology - IT Systems, Staff expertise and competency            Legislative Changes - Provincial and Federal Legislative Changes</p>

Service Initiatives	Target Completion
Ensure all building staff are fully qualified and trained for the Ontario Building Code and specific to areas of enforcement and litigation. Ensure that staff qualifications are upgraded when required by the Director of the Building Branch at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.	Dec 2020
Continue in 2020 with a program to close open permits, as part of an overall risk management program. This initiative is funded from the building permit revenues and does not negatively affect the City tax base.	Dec 2020
Continue streamlining and re-working the processes, workflow and documents in AMANDA to simplify and more accurately reflect the business processes within the Building Permit Services Section.	Dec 2020
Perform an industry "best practice" review of existing and emerging technology in order to determine the optimum path for implementing on-line submission of building permit applications and electronic plan review.	Dec 2020
Undertaking a review of the Financial Model for the Building Section in order to ensure that the fees for service charged will maintain the enterprise model in the current development environment and that the proposed permit fees are competitive and in line with other municipalities. Implementation of a new Building By-law will proceed to Committee and Council Q4 2019.	Jan 2020

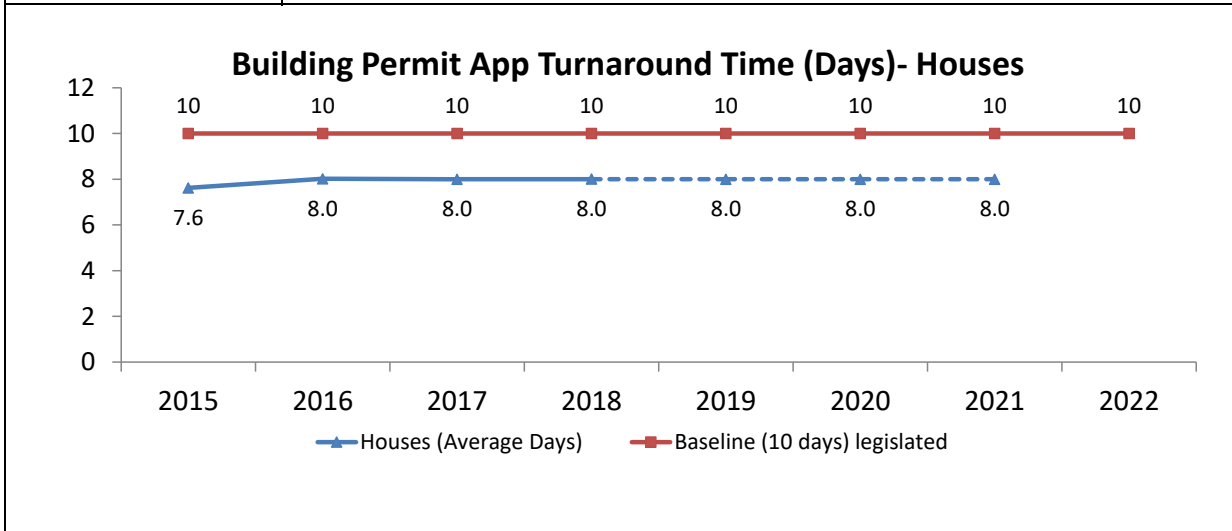
## MEASURING SUCCESS

### How much did we do?

Performance Measurement	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Forecast	2020 Forecast	2021 Forecast	2022 Forecast
Total Gross Floor Area	401,333	379,163	453,833	370,121	402,371	410,418	418,627	418,628
Construction Value of Building Permits Issued (\$ millions)	\$539	\$431	\$588	\$419	\$457	\$467	\$476	\$477

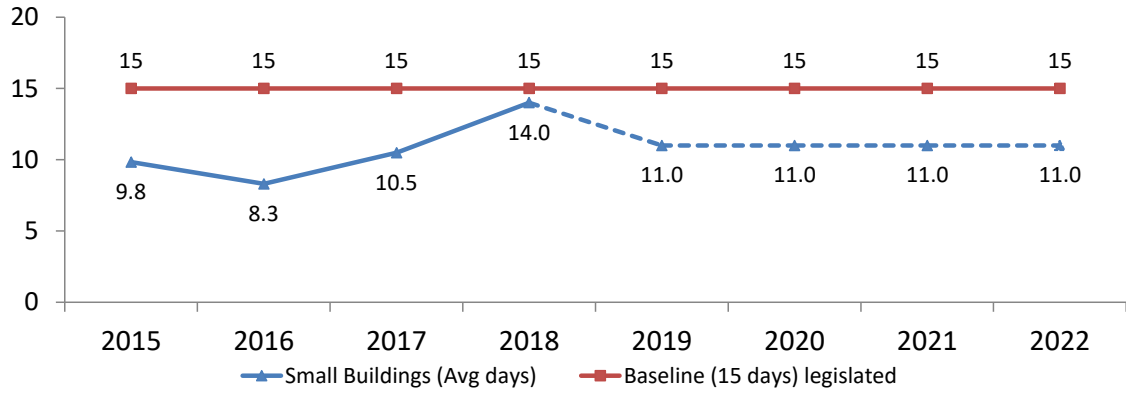
### How well did we do it?

Performance Measurement	Turnaround Time to Process Building Permit Apps (Days)
Story behind the data	<p>This chart indicates the time measured in business days required to review building permits broken down into different classes of buildings defined in the Ontario Building Code. Average turnaround times for building permit applications is a major indicator of service performance in delivering building permits to customers. The chart outlines actual turnaround times compared to the Ontario Building Code legislated turnaround times for each category or class of building and provides a comparative analysis over a 5 year period.</p> <p>Although not shown in this chart, turnaround time is the main performance measure for delivering building inspections services to our customers. Statistics drawn from the permit tracking software (AMANDA) show that inspections are generally completed within the legislated two business days from the date of notification from the customer.</p>

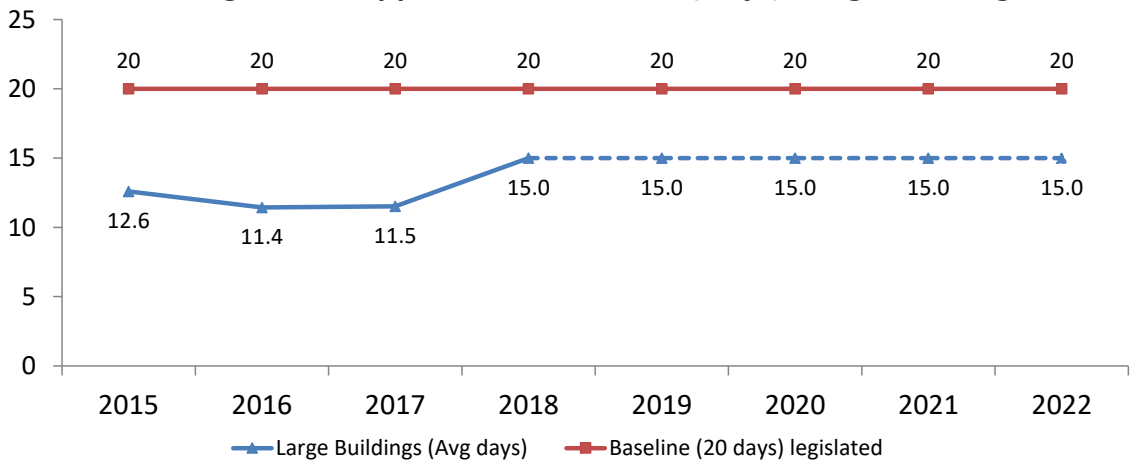




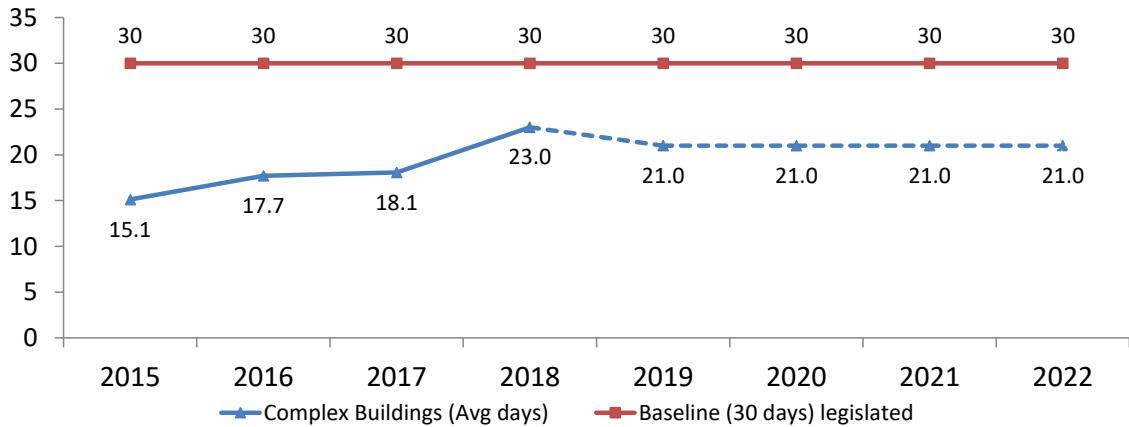
### Building Permit App Turnaround Time (Days)- Small Building



### Building Permit App Turnaround Time (Days)- Large Building



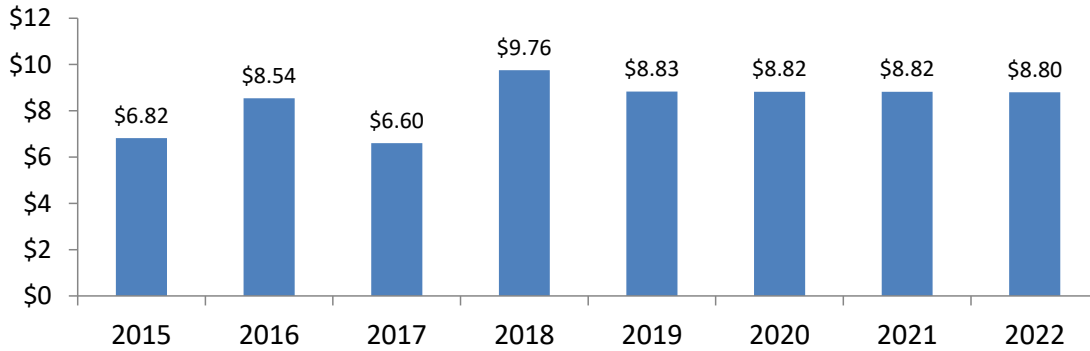
### Building Permit App Turnaround Time (Days)- Complex Building



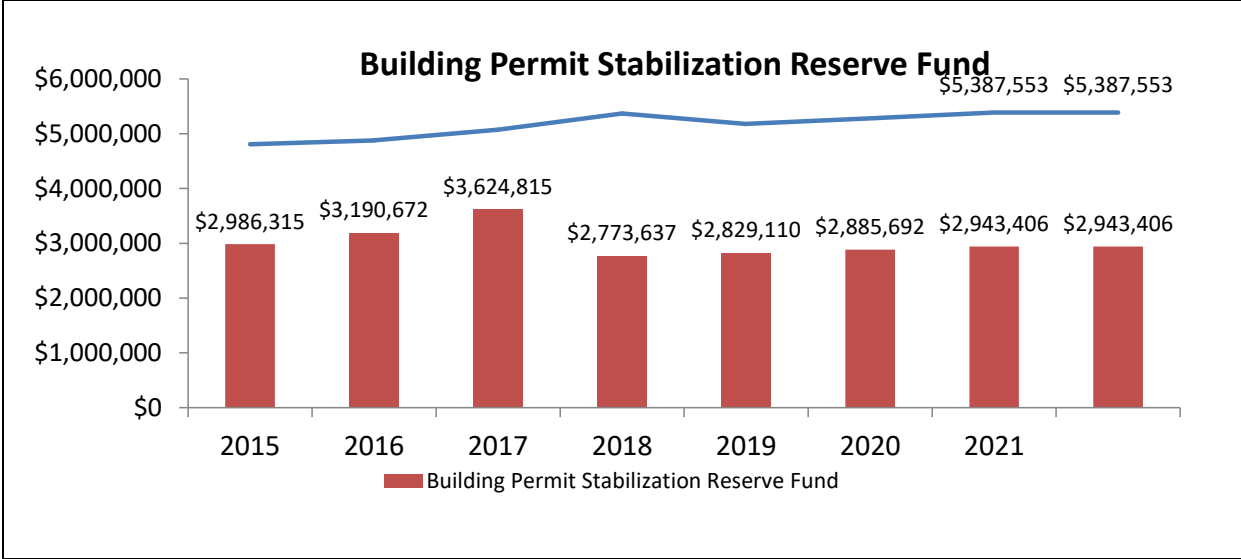
**Is anyone better off?**

<b>Performance Measurement</b>	Legislated reporting for efficiency: Operating cost per \$1,000 of construction value
Story behind the data	This chart represents efficiency data based on the direct and indirect costs published annually to Council and the Public in accordance with Legislated requirements. It measures the total cost of providing administration, permitting, inspection and enforcement services in relation to the total construction value of the permits issued.
Where do we want to go?	Continue to provide building permits and inspection services within the legislated turnaround times and in a cost efficient manner.

**Operating Cost per \$1,000 of Construction Value**



<b>Performance Measurement</b>	Building permit fees stabilization reserve fund: Total balance and percentage target to operating costs.
Story behind the data	Building Permit and Inspection Services are based on a "fee for service" financial model. In accordance with Bill 124 building permit fees can only be utilized to cover direct and indirect costs which can reasonably be attributed to providing building permit services plus allow for a contribution to a Building Permit Fee Stabilization Reserve Fund. The reserve fund allows the Chief Building Official to provide consistent building permits and inspections throughout economic cycles that include fluctuations and downturns without compromising the quality of service delivery or the public health and safety of the community.
Where do we want to go?	In 2019, the financial model was reviewed to ensure that the fees for service model in the Building Section accurately reflects revenues and costs and has adequate provision to maintain a healthy Reserve Fund. A report to Council will be presented in Q4-2019 for approval and implementation in 2020.



<b>Performance Measurement</b>	Percent of building permit applications fast-tracked
Story behind the data	The fast track service continues to be a popular option for customers who want to expedite permit issuance. The additional fee charged for this service allows plan examination staff to work overtime to review applications without delaying applications that are submitted under the normal process. The fast-track stream reduces the number of building permit applications in the regular stream and therefore allows additional time to dedicate to regular stream permit applications. There continues to be a significant number of customers who use the Fast-Track Service.
Where do we want to go?	Continue to offer the Fast-Track Service to those customers who wish to take advantage of this service.

**Total Fast Tracks Issued (% of overall building permits issued)**

