

Cambridge, MA Housing Starts Metadata

File Name: Housing Starts

Current as of: 1996 through June 30, 2020. All data and Information in this dataset is accurate to the best of our knowledge at the time of publication and is subject to revision or retraction at any time.

Frequency of Update: Every six months after June 30 and December 31.

Source

Housing start data is collected from building permit information filed with the Inspectional Service Department (ISD). From 2013 through 2019 such data has been collected and reported through the Energov permitting system. Starting in the second half of 2018 the City began to migrate building permit applications to the Viewpoint permitting system. From 2001 through 2012 ISD provided written quarterly reports to the Community Development Department, which were cross-checked using the permitting system in use at that time. From 1996 through 2000 CDD staff reviewed permitting database reports to identify instances where projects added or subtracted housing units from the overall stock.

Data Collection

Data collection involves the manual review of each building permit identified as adding or removing units from the housing stock. For each such project the following information is identified:

- Based on review of building permit information, net change in units from prior conditions.
 - In some cases that can be 0, if an existing structure is replaced by a new structure with the same unit count.
 - If existing units are combined to create a single new unit the change is recorded as one unit lost to the building stock and one housing start.
- Based on review of building permit information, total number of new units created.
- If the project involves eight or more units or one or more inclusionary units, relevant Development Log data is also reviewed to confirm project details.
- Based either on review of building permit information or Assessing Department information Map-Lot parcel identifier of affected parcel(s).
- Neighborhood location based on Cambridge GIS system analysis.
- Latitude and longitude based on geocoding and analysis using Cambridge GIS system.

Limitations of the Data

- Map-Lot data was collected on an intermittent basis prior to July 2013. Missing values were updated in August 2017 using the Cambridge GIS system.
- Map-Lot values are subject to change during and after the development process; some of the Map-Lot values shown here may no longer be in use.
- In cases where more than one parcel is included in the development only one related Map-Lot number is reported.
- Data is collected for reporting on an annual basis and starting in calendar year 2013 also on a fiscal year basis. To accommodate this need, projects dating prior to 2012 that involved a demolition in one calendar year followed by construction in a different calendar year are reported as separate projects. Beginning in calendar year 2012 this approach was applied to half year segments to allow for fiscal year reporting as well.

- Housing Starts, separate from the number of units gained or lost, were not recorded prior to 2000. Thus, the Net Change and Housing start numbers are identical for all projects reported prior to 2000.
- Project requirements and specifications may change at any time. Subsequently, all data reported here is subject to ongoing revision to improve accuracy.

Summary Statistics

Year	Units Added	Units Removed	Net Change	Housing Starts	Projects Adding Units	Projects Removing Units
1996	544	13	531	531	24	5
1997	508	16	492	492	29	10
1998	127	33	94	94	24	10
1999	212	8	204	204	23	3
2000	622	5	617	632	26	4
2001	193	2	191	222	24	2
2002	48	16	32	125	7	3
2003	312	12	300	342	15	6
2004	461	8	453	487	12	6
2005	530	15	515	581	28	13
2006	950	19	931	988	20	11
2007	668	27	641	756	20	12
2008	104	20	84	134	15	10
2009	10	4	6	29	6	3
2010	124	11	113	206	14	11
2011	150	9	141	169	14	7
2012	898	5	893	917	20	4
2013	1756	20	1736	1784	16	15
2014	340	25	315	370	20	16
2015	462	129	333	485	25	18
2016	860	26	834	892	16	16
2017	842	42	800	863	27	13
2018	951	43	908	988	23	16
2019	966	31	935	1017	31	17
2020 thru June 30	5	3	2	8	2	2

For More Information

For additional information about this data set contact Cliff Cook, Senior Planning Information Manager, at 617/349-4656 or ccook@cambridgema.gov.