

Highlights

Why We Did This Audit

The City Council adopted [Resolution 240484](#) directing the city auditor to conduct a performance audit to assess the timeliness of the issuance of residential single-family housing building permits between January 1, 2023 and April 30, 2024.

Assessment includes identifying the number permits issued; the average time from application to permit issuance; the number of permits pending; and the average time in process for pending permits.

This audit reviewed processing times at various milestones for the building permit, the permit to construct the home's structure.

Objective

How long did it take the city to issue Residential Single-Family Housing Building permits from January 1, 2023, and April 30, 2024?

Background

City code requires a builder to obtain a permit to build a single-family home in Kansas City.

The permitting process begins when a builder submits a construction plan for review in CompassKC. Each single-family home construction plan submitted to the city for approval is reviewed against building code requirements, including the energy code. New energy code standards became mandatory September 29, 2023.

When construction is ready to begin a builder applies for a permit to build the home's structure in CompassKC. After a permit application is approved by the city, a builder pays the permit fees. Paying the fees issues the permit, marking the end of the permit issuance process.

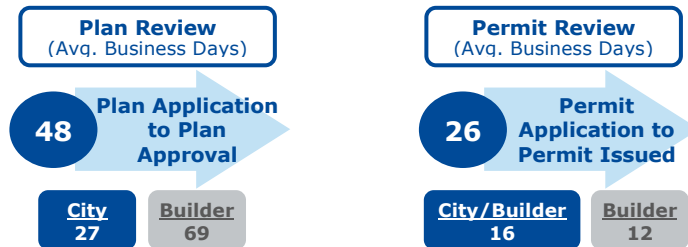
[Click here to view the full report.](#)

PERFORMANCE AUDIT – September 2024

Timeliness of Residential Single-Family Building Permits

What We Found

Between January 1, 2023, and April 30, 2024, the city issued 971 residential single-family housing building permits based on 478 approved construction plans. On average, these plans were approved in 48 business days and permits were issued in 26 business days.



Permit issuance has three phases. City Planning and Development staff and builders both have responsibilities during the plan and permit review phases. In between, the builder decides when to apply for a permit.

Permit issuance fluctuated between 10 to 134 permits per month between January 2023 and April 2024. (See graph on back.) Fewer single-family building permits were issued after the energy code changed in September 2023. Builders continued to obtain permits under the previous energy code through April 2024. Permits issued under the current energy code do not begin to appear until January 2024.

Between January 2023, and August 2023, the city received an average of 35 single-family home construction plan applications per month. Construction plan applications jumped to 122 in September, the month prior to the energy code change. (See graph on back.) The number of plan applications dropped significantly then increased to 43 plan applications in March 2024 and 44 in April 2024.

The time it took builders to apply for permits after plan approval varied greatly. Builders decide when they are ready to begin construction and need to apply for a building permit. Half of the permits were applied for within 13 business days.

On April 30, 2024, 22 of 30 unissued single-family housing building permits were waiting for the builder to pay fees required to issue the permit. By July 15, 2024, 4 of the 8 remaining unissued permits were issued, and 4 were in the review process waiting for the builder to send additional information.

As of July 15, 2024, 48 construction plans applied for during the period were still in the review process. The city was waiting an average of 147 days for the builder to respond to requests for additional information for 41 of these plans. The builder was waiting an average of 1 business day for city staff to complete their review work on the remaining 7 plans.

We did not make any recommendations in this audit.



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Office of the City Auditor

Douglas Jones, CGAP, CIA, CRMA – City Auditor
21st Floor, City Hall, 414 E. 12th St.
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

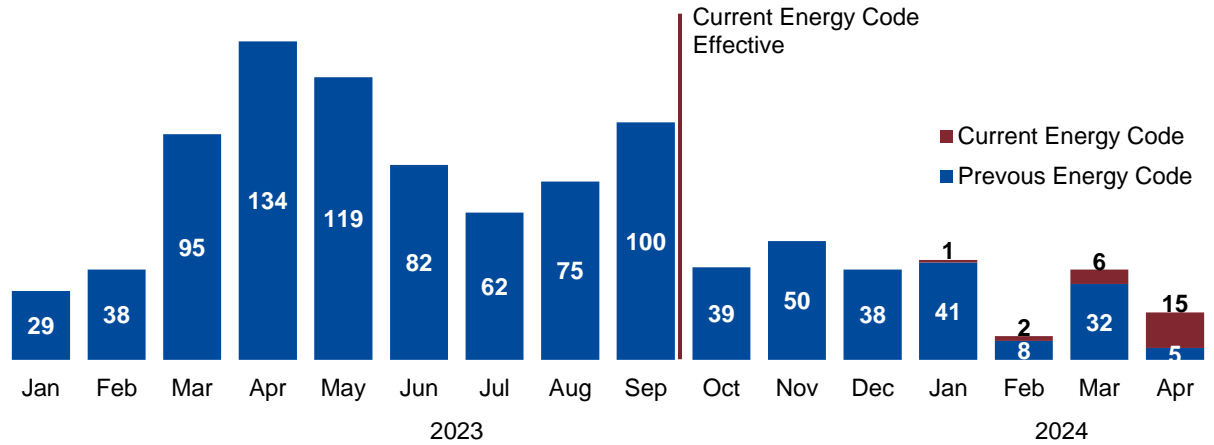
816-513-3300

cityauditor@kcmo.org

[@KCMOCityAuditor](https://twitter.com/KCMOCityAuditor)

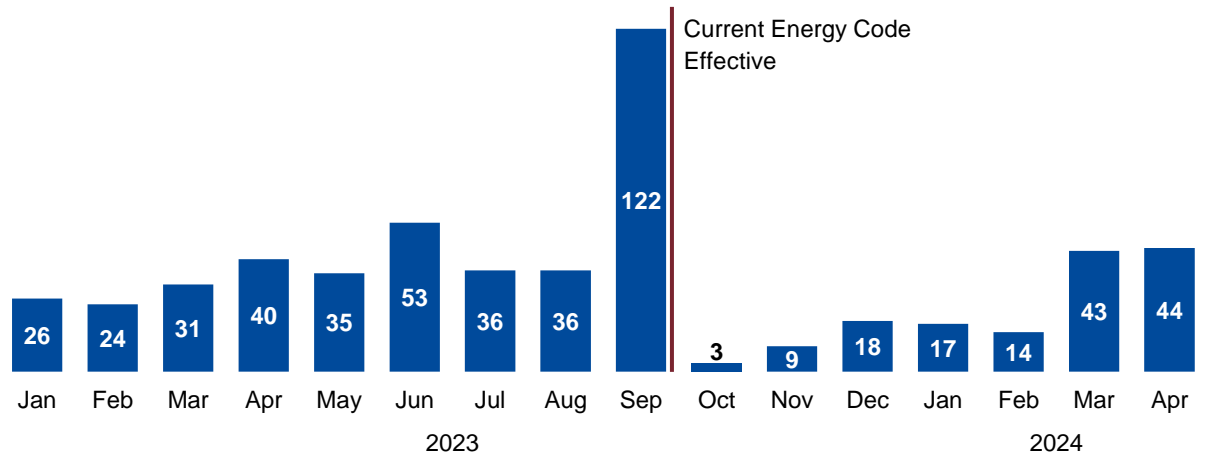
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Single-Family Building Permits Issued (January 2023 – April 2024)



Source: CompassKC and City Auditor's Office analysis.

Single-Family Home Construction Plan Submittals (January 2023 – April 2024)



Source: CompassKC and City Auditor's Office analysis.



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[@KCMOCityAuditor](https://www.instagram.com/KCMOCityAuditor)

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