



Highlights

- Permit volumes up for both residential and non-residential
- Employment Insurance figures continued to improve in June

Permit volumes growth up, multi-family homes remain strong

Alan Chow, Business Economist

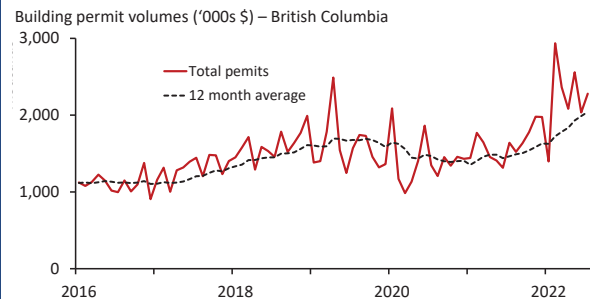
Total dollar volume permits were up in July, increasing 12.0 per cent over the previous month and 14.5 per cent above the trailing 12-month average. Higher volume was seen in both residential and non-residential permits. Non-residential permits volumes led the way, up 23.7 per cent after having fallen 36.1 per cent the previous month while residential permits were up at a lesser extent of 7.9 per cent.

The growth in multi-family permits led the way for residential, as they were up 9.3 per cent. This also represents the sixth consecutive month the dollar volume amount for multi-family homes exceeded \$1 billion dollars. Single-family homes also increased, but only 3.2 per cent. Volumes in single-family homes has been relatively stable over the past year, ranging from 330 to 380 million each month.

Non-residential permits were led by an increase in the public sector, which doubled to \$255 million, which is about 8.7 per cent above its 12-month average. Volatility in this sector is greatest as large projects tend to sway monthly numbers. Industrial permits were also up 10.6 per cent while commercial permits were a drag, down 14.2 per cent. Commercial permits volumes, however, remain 3.5 per cent above the previous 12-month average.

The metropolitan areas in B.C. saw a 7.5 per cent increase over the previous month. Growth was seen in the biggest areas, with Vancouver seeing an increase in permit volumes of 9.5 per cent, followed by Victoria and Kelowna, which were up 43.1 per cent and 35.5 per cent, respectively. The smaller metros, Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Kamloops and Nanaimo saw permit volumes fall.

Permit volumes up in June and trend continues upward



Source: Statistics Canada, Central 1

latest: Jul/22

June number of Employment Insurance recipients in B.C. remained below pre-pandemic level

Ivy Ruan, Economic Analyst

With national Employment Insurance (EI) beneficiary counts down 1.4 per cent more in June, large proportional decrease was reported in many provinces. Following May's 9.4 per cent decrease, B.C. recorded 1.2 per cent fewer EI recipients from the previous month at 40,080 persons, which remained lower than pre-pandemic levels in February 2020 (42,340 persons). This was consistent with the provincial labour market performance which pre-dominantly added strong full-time jobs while the unemployment rate remained exceptionally low at 4.6 per cent according to the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Most demographic groups continued to report fewer EI recipients in B.C. Consistent with the national trend, fewer females collected regular EI benefits in June, with 3.8 per cent lower than the reading in May. On the other hand, an increase of 1.2 per cent more male EI recipients was reported comparing to last month. June's drop in EI beneficiaries spread among age groups, having the highest proportional decline of 2.2 per cent (80 persons) in younger group (age 15-24). Both the 25-54 and 55+ age groups had steady monthly declines around 1.0 per cent, with the former reporting 1.2 per cent drop (290 persons) and the latter registering 1.1 per cent fewer EI recipients (130 persons). The beneficiary counts were back to pre-pandemic level among all age groups.

LFS data points to persistence of a tight labour market. With the increase in June (0.2 per cent), B.C. employment was almost 4.0 per cent higher than pre-pandemic levels in February 2020. Going forward, the local economy is expected to moderate among sectors impacted by the inflation and higher interest rate environment, such as housing and retail spending, but the summer lift from tourism, major project construction and higher investment in commodity sectors should keep the labour market steady.

For more information, contact economics@central1.com.