

**Request for a Non-Substantive Change to the
U.S. Department of Commerce / U.S. Census Bureau
Report of Building or Zoning Permits Issued
for New Privately-Owned Housing Units (C-404)
OMB Control Number 0607-0094**

The Census Bureau uses the Form C-404 to collect data on the number and valuation of new residential housing units authorized by building permits from local governments in the U.S. that issue building permits. The survey is voluntary and the data collected are public information. The current information collection for Form C-404 (OMB Control Number 0607-0094) is approved through 12/31/2021.

Form C-404 is mailed to about 8,400 places monthly and 11,900 places annually. In section 4 of the form, the respondent is asked to provide additional information on individual residential permits valued at \$1,000,000 or more. The respondent provides additional information such as the description and address of the building and the name and address of the builder or owner for these larger, more expensive projects. This additional data is not published but is used in editing the permit data provided in other sections. The details provided in this section for large projects allows staff to verify the projects are in scope and reported correctly for new residential construction.

The Census Bureau is requesting a minor non-substantive change to the questionnaire to raise the cutoff value in section 4 to \$2,000,000 and no longer capture additional details on projects between \$1,000,000 and \$2,000,000. This value was last raised from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 in 2010. This request is to reduce burden on our respondents and reflect the increased costs and inflation in residential construction since 2010. Raising the value to \$2,000,000 will still allow us to capture additional details on the largest and most important residential construction projects across the United States while lessening the burden on respondents to provide details on mid-value projects. No changes are being requested to any other data item or content on the form. Our published data will also not change.

In 2009, when we evaluated raising the value to \$1,000,000 for 2010, we found that 11,711 projects had a value over \$500,000 and of those 3,504 had a value above \$1,000,000. In 2019, 9,716 projects were above \$1,000,000 and of those 3,715 were above \$2,000,000. By raising the value to \$2,000,000 beginning in 2021 we anticipate collecting a similar amount of large projects in comparison to the last time the value was raised in 2010. The result will be respondents will not have to provide details on about 5,200 projects that fall between \$1,000,000 - \$2,000,000.

The proposed version of the questionnaire to be used beginning January 2021 is shown in Attachment A. Respondents will also be informed about the change in a notice on the online reporting instrument within the section 4 question. Attachment B shows the notice that will be displayed when the change is implemented.

The contact person for questions relating to this collection is Mr. William Abriatis, Chief of the Residential Construction Branch in the Census Bureau's Economic Indicators Division. He can be reached on (301) 763-3686.

Attachments:

- A. Proposed updated version of Form C-404, “Report of Building or Zoning Permits Issued for New Privately-Owned Housing Units”
- B. Proposed notice for the online collection questionnaire