#1 of 7: Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Permit Rate per 1,000 Residents (2025

# Shelby County Leads Alabama in Permit Growth

23.66x gap in permit rates per 1,000 residents

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THE DATA

# 23.66x

**Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Permit Rate per 1,000 Residents (2025)**

Shelby County's permit rate is 23.66 times higher than Walker County's, the lowest in the Birmingham metro.

This staggering disparity reveals a deep bifurcation in housing development across the region. While Shelby County sees robust new construction, Walker County remains stagnant, creating a fragmented market where growth is not only unequal but actively polarizing.



Photo: Davidwells75 · CC BY-SA 3.0 · Wikimedia Commons

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Building Permits Survey, county annual totals, 2025; population from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-25-birmingham-permits-county-spread

01

# Growth Is Not Shared — It’s Concentrated

The result is a market where opportunity is not distributed — it’s clustered. Buyers in Walker County face fewer choices, longer wait times for new homes, and less upward mobility, while Shelby County experiences rising property values and tighter supply. This isn’t just a data point — it’s a structural flaw in regional planning.

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# 02

## The Market Is Fragmenting by County

Over time, this could lead to a self-reinforcing cycle — more construction attracts more investment, which drives up prices and further discourages entry for builders and buyers in low-permit counties. Without policy intervention, this divide will widen, undermining regional equity and long-term stability.

Real Estate Strategy & Intelligence Leader. Democratized Blue Ocean Strategist & Operator.

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