Data center spending hits record in 2026

Year-to-date tally for newly started projects tops $81 billion, according to analysts

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CoStar News
August 3, 2026 | 2:20 P.M.

Year-to-date U.S. spending on data center projects started through June stood at $81.5 billion, already surpassing the full-year 2025 total of $72.5 billion. That's also more than three times the total for full-year 2024, according to the latest figures from ConstructConnect.

Spending totaled $22.3 billion in June, second only to January 2026, according to analysts at the construction technology and consulting firm. Spending is rising as numerous technology and other firms seek to support escalating deployment of artificial intelligence services.

ConstructConnect reported that 23 projects broke ground nationwide in June, bringing the year-to-date start count to 116. The biggest single-month tally for starts in the firm's records, based on project values, was January's $25.5 billion.

"These projects are also getting larger, as the average data center has more than doubled in size since 2022, reaching nearly 700,000 square feet in the second quarter of 2026," Chief Economist Michael Guckes said in the latest report from ConstructConnect, a division of Roper Technologies that provides software and related analytical services to construction industry clients.

More than 1,500 data center projects are in some stage of planning nationwide, according to The Pew Research Center. Guckes noted this year's project starts "remain concentrated in a handful of states," with North Carolina, Indiana, Illinois and Michigan each recording more than $10 billion in new starts. Virginia and Texas remain close behind for starts, the report said.

Data centers among largest US projects

The latest figures from data firm Dodge Construction Network showed data centers continued to rank among the nation's largest projects going into planning in June after receiving government approvals and valued at $100 million or more.

Those included the $500 million Stak Energy AI Data Center Campus in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, the $480 million Project Swan Data Center Complex in Lakeland, Florida, and the $456.8 million Parcel A Data Center in Manassas, Virginia.

Several other projects in planning have yet to receive formal approvals but could rank among the nation's largest data centers when construction gets underway.

Officials in eastern Georgia's Columbia County confirmed last week that Google plans to occupy a proposed data center totaling 8 million square feet across 23 buildings. It would be developed in phases on an industrial site spanning about 1,900 acres near Augusta over a period of 10 years. The project is being planned by affiliates of Trammell Crow Co. in partnership with utility provider Georgia Power, according to public filings.

In coastal Georgia near Savannah, ChatGPT developer OpenAI is planning a $20 billion data center expected to total four buildings spanning a total of about 4.4 million square feet on a 1,600-acre site, state filings showed.

Guckes said U.S. construction activity is generally moving toward the South and Midwest, as developers seek sites with ample power and water resources. As with other types of projects, U.S. data center construction costs have been rising over the past five years — 17% on a median basis and 22% on an average basis, ConstructConnect reported.