

The Contribution of Office, Industrial and Retail Development and Construction to Washington's Economy*

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The value of commercial buildings is much more than the sum of pre-construction (soft costs) and construction outlays (site development, building construction and tenant improvements). Commercial buildings generate continuing post-construction value within the local and state economies as a result of the spending associated with their operations and the value of output generated by the workers and businesses they house. This report measures the contribution of office, industrial and retail building development, construction and operations to Washington's economy in the form of annual direct spending for new development, construction and annual expenditures to operate existing buildings.

The analyses presented in this report define the economic impacts of commercial buildings on Washington's economy, highlighting the economic impacts from office, industrial, warehouse and retail buildings, during the three life stages: development, construction and maintenance.

The Three Stages in the Life of a Commercial Building



Soft Costs/Site Development/Tenant Improvements

Architects, engineers, developers and marketing/design professionals working during the development phase begin the life span of a commercial building.



Hard Costs

During the construction phase, new commercial projects employ workers who spend their paychecks in the local economy and contribute to the tax base.



Operating Costs

After new commercial buildings are completed and occupied, they add to the productive capacity of their host economies. The outlays that support the new buildings' operations add ongoing annual sources of economic impact that accumulates over the life span of commercial buildings.

* This report, prepared for the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties Research Foundation with 2007 construction data provided by McGraw-Hill Construction, is part of the larger report issued in October 2008 by Stephen S. Fuller, PhD entitled, The Contribution of Office, Industrial and Retail Development and Construction to the U.S. Economy, 2008 Edition.

The following table provides the soft costs, site development, tenant improvements and construction (hard) costs for the state of Washington.

**The Impacts of Construction Spending for Soft Costs, Site Development,
Tenant Improvements and Construction (Hard) Costs on the Economy of Washington,
2007**

(in billions of 2007 dollars)

Sources	Direct Spending	Total Output ¹	Personal Income ²	Jobs Supported ³
Office Buildings				
Soft Costs	\$0.367	\$0.782	\$0.297	9,059
Site Development*	0.318	0.682	0.211	5,986
Construction Costs	1.053	2.255	0.699	19,799
Tenant Improvement**	0.384	0.823	0.255	7,223
Totals	\$2.123	\$4.542	\$1.462	42,067
Industrial Buildings				
Soft Costs	\$0.048	\$0.103	\$0.039	1,189
Site Development*	0.069	0.148	0.046	1,300
Construction Costs	0.198	0.423	0.131	3,713
Tenant Improvement**	0.050	0.107	0.033	941
Totals	\$0.365	\$0.781	\$0.249	7,142
Warehouse Buildings				
Soft Costs	\$0.062	\$0.131	\$0.050	1,520
Site Development*	0.077	0.165	0.051	1,444
Construction Costs	0.236	0.505	0.157	4,435
Tenant Improvement**	0.060	0.129	0.040	1,136
Totals	\$0.435	\$0.930	\$0.297	8,535
Retail Buildings				
Soft Costs	\$0.246	\$0.523	\$0.199	6,064
Site Development*	0.270	0.579	0.179	5,084
Construction Costs	0.729	1.561	0.484	13,701
Tenant Improvement**	0.222	0.475	0.147	4,169
Totals	\$1.467	\$3.138	\$1.009	29,019
Totals Buildings				
Soft Costs	\$0.722	\$1.539	\$0.584	17,833
Site Development*	0.735	1.574	0.488	13,814
Construction Costs	2.215	4.744	1.470	41,648
Tenant Improvement**	0.716	1.534	0.475	13,468
Totals	\$4.390	\$9.391	\$3.017	86,763

Source: *The Contribution of Office, Industrial and Retail Development and Construction to the U. S. Economy*, 2008 Edition, NAIOP Research Foundation, October 2008, pp. 27-63.

Notes: ¹ the total value of goods and services generated directly and indirectly as a result of the initial construction spending within the state; ² the additional earnings generated within the state from direct spending during the construction phase; ³ the additional new jobs supported by the spending and re-spending of direct spending associated with the spending for new construction. *Site development includes grading, infrastructure, parking and landscaping. **Tenant improvements exclude furniture and equipment.

On a state level, Washington accounted for \$4.390 billion in direct spending for new office, industrial, warehouse and retail buildings as follows (in billions of 2007 dollars):

Office Buildings	\$2.123
Industrial Buildings	0.365
Warehouse Buildings	0.435
Retail Buildings	1.467
Totals Buildings	\$4.390

On a state level, commercial buildings supported 86,763 full-time-equivalent, year-round jobs.

The Contribution of Operating Costs on the Economy of Washington

The following table provides the state spending values for the existing buildings (spending for maintenance and repair, cleaning, utilities, security and administrative expenses) that will recur annually following the completion of a commercial building.

Annual Impacts of Existing Buildings on the Economy of Washington, 2007 (in millions of 2007 dollars)

Sources	Direct Spending	Total Output ¹	Personal Income ²	Jobs Supported ³
Office Buildings	\$40,391.00	\$83,618.79	\$27,211.42	988
Industrial Buildings	1,554.06	3,217.28	1,046.97	38
Warehouse Buildings	3,138.47	6,497.36	2,114.38	77
Retail Buildings	29,623.02	61,326.56	19,957.03	725
Totals Buildings	\$74,706.55	\$154,659.99	\$50,329.80	1828

Source: The Contribution of Office, Industrial and Retail Development and Construction to the U. S. Economy, 2008 Edition, NAIOP Research Foundation, October 2008, p. 65-69.

Notes: ¹ the total value of goods and services generated directly and indirectly as a result of building operating spending within the state; ² the additional earnings generated within the state from spending for building operations; ³ the additional new jobs supported by the spending and re-spending of spending associated with building operations. Operations impacts include maintenance and repair, cleaning, utilities, roads and grounds, security and administrative expenses.

Commercial Construction Counterbalances Residential

Another important contribution of commercial buildings is that the long-term pattern of commercial real estate development, construction and operations spending lags residential spending, helping to cushion the negative economic impact of slower residential construction outlays in 2007 and 2008.

The magnitude and significance of commercial buildings is clear. Changes in construction activity during the business cycle are directly reflected in GDP growth rates. The combined impact of development, commercial construction and building operations spending is a major source and closely watched barometer of economic vitality at the national and local levels.

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