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Construction input prices increased 0.5% in March, while nonresidential input prices climbed 0.6%, both unusually steep jumps, according to an analysis by Associated Builders and Contractors of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Both overall and nonresidential input prices are now 0.8% higher than a year ago and sit more than 40% higher compared to February 2020, largely due to a sharp rise in natural gas, steel, copper and lumber prices. The price escalations across the board reflect early impacts from tariffs and mark the third straight month of price jumps, said Anirban Basu, ABC chief economist. "Construction input prices increased at a rapid pace for the third consecutive month in March and have now risen at a 9.7% annualized rate through the first quarter of 2025," said Basu. "The emerging effects of tariffs are glaring in the March data release." Pressure is mounting for owners and builders heading into the second quarter, especially as tariff-related uncertainty clouds purchasing and pricing decisions, according to the Associated General Contractors of America. Suppliers hit contractors with a wave of price hike notices in March, even before new tariffs took effect, according to AGC. That volatility is making it harder to plan and budget for both public and private sector projects, said Ken Simonson, AGC chief economist. "Lumber and metals prices shot up in March, while contractors' inboxes are bulging with 'Dear valued customer' letters announcing further increases for many products," said Simonson. "Rapid-fire changes in tariffs threaten to drive prices higher for many essential construction goods." at Rider Levett Bucknall, a New York City-based construction consultancy firm. He said general contractors are largely trying to be proactive and have procurement discussions early on projects, where possible. "The latest PPI data indicates one of the largest monthly increases that we have seen in the past 36 months," said O'Reilly. "We are advising clients to consider additional, separate contingencies depending on the stage of the project and the potential exposure to risk." The monthly increases mark the first time since September 2023 that input prices jumped for three consecutive months, said Simonson. Construction input prices have now increased at a 9.7% annualized rate through the first quarter of 2025, said Basu. "While contractors remain busy for the time being, according to ABC's Construction Backlog Indicator, this pace of input price escalation, coupled with rising uncertainty, will cause projects to be delayed and canceled if it persists for any meaningful length of time," Basu said. AGC urged the Trump administration in its release to reconsider new tariffs, at least until there was greater market certainty about the impacts of those that have already been put in place. "Our members are trying to deliver that best value when you have no idea how much you are going to have to pay for many of the materials required to build projects." Nonresidential construction spending to an Associated Builders and Contractors analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data released Monday. Spending declined in nine of the 16 nonresidential subcategories on a monthly basis. Public nonresidential spending fell 0.5%, while private nonresidential spending edged up 0.1%, according to the report. President Donald Trump's proposed tariffs of 10% against China and 25% against China and Mexico generated concerns among industry economists about rising material costs and the potential impact on future project spending, though the new fees for Canadian and Mexican products were paused for at least 30 days on Monday. The Chinese tariffs went into effect Tuesday morning. Concerns over rising material costs continue to weigh on the future of construction spending, said Jeffrey Shoaf, CEO at the Associated General Contractors of America, in the trade association's latest news release. "Despite declines in a few segments, construction materials will prompt contractors to raise bid prices, potentially undermining future demand for projects." The public sector posted a sharp decline in spending to close out 2024, though the drop was likely temporary as colder weather and the transition between presidential administrations slowed construction work, said Anirban Basu, ABC chief economist. However, while public activity should rebound in the coming months, high interest rates and the emerging trade war will likely hamper many privately financed segments in the short term, he added. Trump paused 25% tariffs on Canada and Mexico for at least a month on Monday, according to the Associated Press. But his administration officially implemented additional tariffs on imports from China starting Tuesday, according to the White House. In response, Beijing announced on Tuesday several economic measures targeting the United States, including a 15% tax on certain types of coal and liquefied natural gas and a 10% tariff on crude oil, agricultural machinery, large-displacement cars and pickup trucks, according to CNN. The measures take effect on Feb. 10. China also announced new export controls effective immediately on a variety of metal products and related technologies. Those include tungsten, a mineral used in industrial and defense applications, as well as tellurium, which can be used to make solar cells. But uncertainty around tariffs shouldn't affect the pace of spending on data centers or manufacturing construction projects, said Basu. Data centers and manufacturing projects accounted for 94% of the total nonresidential spending increase from December 2023 to December 2024, highlighting the concentrated in just two segments," said Basu. "Activity in [the data center and manufacturing] segments, and perhaps only these segments, will remain elevated regardless of upward pressure on construction activity, with no signs of a slowdown this year. Data centers continue to drive significant growth in nonresidential construction planning, said Sarah Martin, associated director of forecasting at Dodge Construction Network. These projects contributed to a 19% increase in planning activity since December 2023, compared to just 5% growth without their inclusion, according to Dodge. That momentum shows no signs of fading. J.P. Morgan estimates spending on data centers could add between 10 to 20 basis points to U.S. economic growth in 2025 and 2026, according to Reuters. Big tech companies are a major reason for the surge, doubling down on data center investments in order to meet growing artificial intelligence demand. For example, President Donald Trump recently announced Stargate, a joint venture between OpenAI, Softbank and Oracle. The JV plans to invest \$100 billion by 2028. Each data center facility will span about 500,000 square feet, according to Stargate. Here are some other major data center projects that top tech giants plan to build in 2025: Amazon is going big on data centers, with plans to invest \$150 billion in the coming 15 years on its infrastructure to handle the expected demand for artificial intelligence and other cloud computing needs, Bloomberg reported. The tech giant first started opening data centers in central Ohio in 2016, and recently announced a \$10 billion plan to further expand its cloud computing infrastructure in the state, per a December news release from Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine. The new investment follows a \$7.8 billion plan announced in 2023, including work in New Albany, Ohio. Those planned projects include a new \$2 billion data center campus in Sunbury, Ohio. Amazon's facility will occupy about 200 acres in an industrial park in the city, according to WBNS10. Construction of the first 450,000-square-foot building is expected to begin in January 2028 and be complete by December 2034, Data Center Dynamics reported. The Mountain View, California-based multinational corporation plans to continue its aggressive expansion into data center construction, with a number of high-profile projects slated for 2025, according to Devon Smiley, communications manager of technical infrastructure at Google. For example, Google broke ground in July 2023 on its first data center in Arizona. The site will span 750,000 square feet, with the first phase due in July, according to Data Center Dynamics. Plans feature a \$600 million facility to support some of the firm's signature services, such as Gmail and Google Cloud. The Mesa project will tie into the establishment of a new Phoenix cloud region, expanding Google's digital infrastructure footprint in the area. No general contractor has been confirmed yet, said Smiley. In the Midwest, Google broke ground in April 2024 on a \$2 billion data center in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The facility will power its global AI and cloud infrastructure, according to the company. The Indiana Economic Development Corp. will give Google a 35-year data center sales tax exemption for the first \$800 million invested, with options to extend up to 50 years. Atlanta-based Holder Construction is the general contractor on the project, according to local outlet 21Alive. Meanwhile, in Nebraska, the tech giant's newest date center project in Lincoln is under construction on roughly 580 acres, according to the Nebraska Examiner. That project complements a separate \$750 million facility under construction in Omaha, according to a government release. Once complete, Google will have four data center campuses in the state, according to the company of Facebook and Instagram, has big plans for data center construction. On Jan. 24, CEO Mark Zuckerburg called 2025 "a defining year for AI" in a Facebook post, and claimed the company would construct a data center large enough to "cover a significant part of Manhattan." Zuckerburg said Meta will bring on about 1 gigawatt of computing power in 2025, and plans to invest heavily in growing the firm's AI teams. That ambtious goal aligns with previously shared plans. In 2024, the firm announced new data center campuses in: Jeffersonville, Indiana, awarded to Mortenson, according to Finance and Commerce. Montgomery, Alabama, awarded to Hensel Phelps. Cheyenne Wyoming, awarded to Portland, Oregon-based Fortis Construction. Aiken, South Carolina (no contractor announced). Each of those campuses represents an \$800 million investment in the region, Meta claims. In December, the Menlo Park, California-based tech giant announced a larger investment in the region, Meta claims. In December, the Menlo Park, California-based tech giant announced a larger investment in the region, Meta claims. Mortenson to build the multibillion-dollar project. No completion date has been announced. One of the largest and most recognizable tech companies in the world has been busy on the data center front. Redmond, Washington-based Microsoft has announced plans to pump more than \$80 billion into cloud data centers, with half of that money going to facilities in the U.S. "AI promises to drive innovation and boost productivity in every sector of the economy," said Brad Smith, vice chair and president of this new technology wave, especially if it doubles down on its strengths and effectively partners internationally." The firm, which is also one of the largest investors in ChatGPT parent company OpenAI — with nearly \$14 billion pumped into the company so far, according to CNBC — has jump-started its plans. It's building a \$3.3 billion data center on the site of the former Foxconn site in Mount Pleasant, Wisconsin, which it tapped Chicago-based Walsh Construction to lead. It's also planning to invest \$1 billion on three data centers in Licking County, Ohio, according to Data Center Dynamics. Burnsville, Minnesota-based Ames Construction update blog. Two other data centers worth \$1 billion in West Des Moines, Iowa, and La Porte, Indiana, are also in the works. While Oracle CEO Larry Ellison made news with the White House announcement unveiling the Stargate initiative on Jan. 21, he had ramped up his commitment to building massive, power-hungry data centers long before that. The co-founder and chief technology officer of Austin, Texas-based tech giant Oracle told attendees of Oracle Cloud World 2024 in September that the firm now has 160 public and private data center requiring more than a gigawatt of electricity that would be powered by three small nuclear reactors, according to CNBC. While he didn't reveal the exact location of the facility, he said it was in a region where permits had already been approved to build the reactors as a power source. Those announcements followed the tech firm's pledge from last year to spend \$10 billion on data center expansion in 2025. At the time, Ellison told investors that an AI-focused data center the firm is building in Salt Lake City is so large, eight Boeing 747s would fit nose-to-tail inside it. "We're bringing on enormous amounts of capacity over the next 24 months," Ellison said. Listen to the article 9 min This audio is auto-generated. Please let us know if you have feedback. While it's important to the article 9 min This audio is auto-generated. for construction pros to stay up to date on the latest trends and technologies, who has time for a class or book? Another form of learning — podcasts, from new construction technology trends to effective management topics Did we miss one of your go-to downloads? Let us know. Brought to listeners by the American Society of Civil Engineers, ASCE Plot Points delves deep into contemporary engineering topics, sometimes driven by the news. Recent episodes include what listeners need to know about the aviation industry, what happens when a wildfire comes to your neighborhood and how artificial intelligence is changing civil engineering. Listen to the ASCE Plot Points Podcast here. This show aims to help listeners build up their contracting businesses, with the help of expert guests from a variety of backgrounds in the industry. 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Past episodes cover data centers, historic restorations and Texas education construction Management tips. Past episodes cover data centers, historic restorations and Texas education construction. Listen to The Construction Leaders podcast is helmed by Nick Soto, vice president of professional development at CMAA, along with Carly Trout, the organization's senior manager of professional development eLearning. The podcast covers topics ranging from starting a construction Management Podcast is for both new and seasoned construction professionals who want to better understand how to further their management career in construction management. Listen to The Construction Management Podcast here. This show from Canada-based Giatec Scientific covers the practices, people and companies that are shaping the construction industry, with an emphasis on materials and cutting-edge technology. 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Co-hosted by labor leaders Anthony Abrantes and Cyndie Williams, the podcast explores the world of construction labor and interviews the people on the ground to learn more about the construction labor and life on the jobsite. The podcast is for anyone who wants to learn more about the construction labor and life on the jobsite. The podcast is for anyone who wants to learn more about the construction labor and life on the jobsite. industry, and those in the labor force. Listen to the Labor Lounge Podcast here. Hosted by Joe Kelly, an independent consultants, the Mass Construction show covers real estate, code, risk management, technology and more, but with a bit of self-proclaimed "Massachusetts bias." Kelly talks to a range of construction consultants, the Mass Construction show covers real estate, code, risk management, technology and more, but with a bit of self-proclaimed "Massachusetts bias." Kelly talks to a range of construction consultants, the Mass Construction show covers real estate, code, risk management, technology and more, but with a bit of self-proclaimed "Massachusetts bias." Kelly talks to a range of construction consultants. professionals on topics including how building materials affect the environment and health to the ways modular construction is changing the industry. Listen to Mass Construction Show here. Talking Infrastructure, from Dallas-based AECOM, discusses the industry's most important engineering and infrastructure topics, key projects and the groundbreaking innovations that are helping to solve some of the world's most complex built-world challenges. Listen to the Talking Infrastructure Podcast here. Every week, this podcast from real estate industry, including building. The podcast brings on guests who are experts in timber construction, the future of suburban and city planning and many other trends. Listen to The Weekly Take Podcast here. The Women Talk Construction podcast, hosted by construction veterans Angela Gardner and Christi Powell, aims to share stories and experiences that they hope will encourage diversity in the construction industry. Their episodes feature interviews with women across the industry and in different relevant topics each session. Listen to the Women Talk Construction Podcast here. Courtesy of World of Concrete Construction Dive rounds up the industry conferences, contech expos and meetings on tap through the rest of the year. 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Courtesy of Skanska/Sweco Fazer The Stockholm-based firm's success in U.S. construction continues to anchor its success, according to a second quarter earnings report. Courtesy of Chicago Fire FC Theorem Powell to quit. venue, announced in early June, will be privately financed by the club's owner. The Los Angeles-based firm's building subsidiary broke ground earlier this month on Phase 2 of the Eagle Mountain Casino expansion south of Modesto, California. Bill Vorasate via Getty Images Federal accessibility standards won't apply to buildings using U.S. Energy Department funds for energy efficiency or other uses under a rule rescission taking effect soon. Justin Sullivan/Getty Images via Getty Images their own experiences and researched how women wear and use gear to create better products. alvarez/E+ via Getty Images As return-to-office momentum takes hold, employers are emphasizing quality and usability in reinvented spaces to entice employees. David Ryder via Getty Images Substance use occurs more often in blue-collar and service industry jobs, but comprehensive policies and supportive interventions can help, researchers said. designer 491 for iStock via Getty Images OSHA wants to narrow its General Duties Clause for athletic and entertainment occupations, leaving the door open for other industries. Gerville via Getty Images Contractors reported stronger pipelines despite lingering tariff-related impacts on costs, according to Associated Builders and Contractors. mihailomilovanovic via Getty Images The investment will expand the hyperscaler's data center footprint across the largest U.S. power grid in the next two years. The image by formulanone is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0 The contractor will rework six bridges and add lanes in a four-mile section through the Charlotte, North Carolina, area. Michael Gonzalez/Getty Images via Getty Images Firms expect a spike in starts, but the race to break ground may compound certain issues. Spencer Platt via Getty Images Basics like shade, water and rest can help, but companies should involve workers in the planning process, experts say. In a markup session Monday, a House subcommittee proposed slashing the transportation department's discretionary spending by over \$3 billion. Courtesy of Nashville International Airport It's the first major project completed under the airport's \$3 billion New Horizon development plan to accommodate passenger growth. Permission granted by Messer Construction Nicolle Lewis appreciates how the industry provides opportunities for advancement saying "the sky is the limit." Scott Olson/Getty Images via Getty Images Construction prices jumped 6% through May on an annualized basis, but the full impact of tariffs has yet to be felt. Courtesy of Granite Construction The California-based contractor will perform work at San Francisco International Airport and on I-215 in Salt Lake City. Listen to the article 7 min This audio is auto-generated. Please let us know if you have feedback. In the first half of the year, one word continued to appear in headlines surrounding broad economic and political change: "uncertainty." Construction Dive's Uncertainty Series delves into how this lack of clarity is affecting contractors and what the future holds. Uncertainty around trade policy and its impact on materials costs could lead more contractors to hold off on shovels hitting the ground. Construction input costs climbed 6% through May on an annualized basis and have remained up more than 40% since February 2020, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. That jump follows several months of policy uncertainty, with tariff announcements rolled out unevenly and implementation timelines in flux. In fact, contractors say tariff hikes have already triggered delays on certain projects. Pittsfield, Massachusetts-based Unistress Corp., for example, recently laid off 233 workers after the postponement of two major contracts due to stee price volatility. The precast manufacturer said the delays caused significant financial pressure, temporarily shrinking its backlog and forcing the company to cut nearly half its workforce. Much of the confusion stems from how President Donald Trump has rolled out tariffs this year. The Trump administration initially suspended many country-specificant financial pressure, temporarily shrinking its backlog and forcing the company to cut nearly half its workforce. duties, then announced in July that they would resume on Aug. 1 for trading partners without a deal. That has left many construction firms unsure how to plan procurement. "The impact of tariffs will impact not just the price, or cost, but also the quantity consumed of such goods," said Michael Guckes, chief economist at ConstructConnect, a Cincinnati-based construction data provider. "The fact that many tariffs have been delayed, some several times now, may mean that more inflationary pain is to come." The levies will directly affect key construction components, namely rebar, structural steel, copper and aluminum, said Michael O'Reilly, vice president at Rider Levett Bucknall, a New York City-based construction consultancy firm. "Given the current landscape, we anticipate continued volatility in materials pricing through the second half of the year," said O'Reilly. "A meaningful decline in costs appears unlikely without greater clarity or stabilization in trade dynamics." If materials costs stay elevated, that could prolong the caution already taking hold across parts of the construction industry, said O'Reilly. Much of that reaction will depend on how administration policies and broader economic conditions evolve over the coming months. "Contractors are adapting where they can, through smarter procurement, tighter project planning and more selective bidding," said O'Reilly. "While uncertainty remains, the industry is staying agile and watching closely for signs of stabilization that could unlock more activity in the second half of the year." Though the whipsaw of changing or delaying tariffs may not be as constant as the earlier days of the Trump administration, new changes are still rolling out. The U.S. announced plans to install a 50% tariff on copper imports, a common material on data center projects, starting Aug. 1. The move follows the increase on steel and aluminum tariffs from 25% to 50% earlier this summer. Despite the tariff hikes however, planning activity rebounded in June, according to Dodge Construction Network. Yet that growth has not fully erased underlying volatility or unease. That's because if more tariffs move forward as proposed, additional pricing pressure could materialize in the second half of the year, according to construction economists. "In the five months ending the year, according to construction material prices have overall increased by 5.8%, making the latest price hikes one of the steepest on record," said Guckes. "Only a few times in the past 20 years have we seen such meteoric price rises including in 2007, 2017 and 2020." Additional tariffs are pushing contractors once again to brace for more availability issues on imported specialty materials. Shortfalls in these product categories have triggered project delays in the past, especially when owners resist using substitute products. Those issues will put a dent on private construction activity. Private developers already scrapped more projects in May than in any other month on record. Cancellations on private construction jumped 62.6% in May, according to the latest data from ConstructConnect. To avoid disruption some firms are renewing their focus toward alternate procurement strategies, said O'Reilly. That includes early work packages, bulk-purchases and warehouse storage. Concord, California-based Swinerton has increased its use of mass timber, a method less impacted by steel and aluminum tariffs. The move helped mitigate risk and improved schedule and budget efficiencies, said Kevin Smith, vice president of Swinerton's Carolinas division. Its mass timber affiliate, Timberlab, has taken the strategy further by vertically integrating its supply chain. With domestic fabrication facilities already online and a sawmill planned for 2027, the company has reduced its reliance on imported steel and joists, said Chris Evans, president of Timberlab. "These strategies should be transparent and developed in close collaboration with project owners to proactively manage risk," said O'Reilly. "One key approach is to explore alternative materials that can be sourced domestically or from countries with fewer tariff-related disruptions, helping to stabilize costs and timelines." Guckes said the U.S. does not have the workforce or capacity to quickly replace imported construction materials with domestic production. Labor force participation already sits near record highs and unemployment remains low, meaning few workers are available for companies to hire. So, even if these factories are brought online, the current workforce is neither large enough nor trained for the scale and types of goods the construction industry currently depends on, said Guckes. As material costs continue to climb amid constrained capacity, the result could be a period of stagflation, where contractors face both slowing demand and rising prices heading into 2026, said Guckes. "Our labor force is neither skilled up for, nor physically large enough and with sufficient free capacity, to produce the types and volumes of goods we currently import," said Guckes. "The full execution of the presidential administration's tariff strategy as-is would thus logically result in both increased prices and reduced consumption volumes." These interconnected factors, along with the flow of private equity, investor sentiment and immigration dynamics, will likely determine the pace and resilience of construction pipelines moving forward, said O'Reilly. "While recent tariff activity has certainly been a factor, it hasn't been the primary driver of construction trends in 2025," said O'Reilly. "Looking ahead, construction activity in the second half of the year will likely be shaped more by macroeconomic forces than by tariffs alone." Louis Molinini is Americas market lead for project and development services at global real estate investment firm JLL. Opinions are the author's own. In 2025, an evolving tangle of climate events and policy shifts will create new pressures for project sponsors. With a new administration in 2025, new economic, environmental and technological conditions, the 2025 outlook for the construction sector is positive. While net construction growth is anticipated in 2025, the growth will likely be uneven across property types. For example, office and core industrial projects are going strong. The most recent interest rate cut will not resolve every construction industry issue, but it has created a pivotal moment. So, what has led to this modestly optimistic, but uncertain outlook for 2025? As noted in JLL's recent 2025 U.S. Construction Outlook, the first three quarters of 2024 saw materials pricing leveling out, the start of interest rate cuts, and overall, an incredibly strong performance by the construction industry. In fact, once the numbers settle, 2024 is expected to show a 7% increase in construction spend over 2023. 2025 will likely see more modest gains. One indicator is that the Architecture Billings Index has reported architectural industry contraction spending data over the next few months Nonetheless, interest rate cuts and increased loan originations should make for a robust round of starts in late 2025 and drive net spending growth for the year. In a welcome reprieve, construction cost growth was nearly flat in 2024. However, our report finds cost growth will be between 5% and 7% in 2025. Increases will vary by materials, reflecting demand shocks from natural disasters, booming sectors and vulnerability to changing economic policy. From a construction projects. Advanced technologies — including artificial intelligence, internet of things devices and digital twins — are driving new building design, construction and management approaches to improve efficiency, conserve resources and create value. Resource conservations — along with state and local governments — will undoubtedly continue investing in decarbonization initiatives. Many corporate owners and occupiers have been investing in energy-efficient building operations for decades. As employees increasingly expect their employers to provide sustainable workplaces that foster well-being and productivity, JLL has forecasted a 70% shortage of low-carbon buildings by 2030. Embracing sustainability and innovation, green building practices, energy efficiency and reduced carbon footprint is no longer a 'nice to have' — it is imperative for talent recruitment and retention, and for meeting corporate commitments to decarbonization. It's reasonable to expect in 2025 that sustainable design and operations will continue to shape project requirements. Data centers, healthcare and advanced manufacturing, in particular, have embraced sustainable design and operation strategies. As noted in JLL's Opportunity Though Obsolescence report, around \$1 trillion in capital expenditure globally could be needed to bring legacy office assets up to current standards. The U.S. and Europe together are home to 78% of potentially obsolete office space. Obsolescence is an opportunity to keep the construction industry's recent momentum going by tackling retrofit challenges. For selected office properties, adaptive reuse is another option. Some cities and investors are targeting under-utilized office properties with the right characteristics for conversion to housing. When developing strategic plans, asset owners, investors and city authorities will need to consider the many facets of obsolescence — age, design, location, regulatory considerations, product type life cycles and city authorities will need to consider the many facets of obsolescence — age, design, location, regulatory considerations, product type life cycles and city authorities will need to consider the many facets of obsolescence — age, design, location, regulatory considerations, product type life cycles and city authorities will need to consider the many facets of obsolescence — age, design, location, regulatory considerations, product type life cycles and city authorities will need to consider the many facets of obsolescence — age, design, location, regulatory considerations, product type life cycles are the many facets of obsolescence — age, design, location, regulatory considerations, product type life cycles are the many facets of obsolescence — age, design, location, regulatory considerations, product type life cycles are the many facets of obsolescence — age, design, location, regulatory considerations, and regulatory considerations are the many facets of obsolescence — age, design, location and regulatory considerations are the many facets of the many facets o potential project delays. The construction industry will need to navigate new policy priorities while transitioning into AI-driven automation. The coming year will also require construction industry will need to navigate new policy priorities while transitioning into AI-driven automation. The coming year will also require construction industry will need to navigate new policy priorities while transitioning into AI-driven automation. The coming year will also require construction industry will need to navigate new policy priorities while transitioning into AI-driven automation. professionals can develop strategies for resiliency and flexible approaches to managing projects and risks. With lower interest rates, moderating inflation, and steady economic activity, the outlook for 2025 is positive for the construction sector. However, shocks from natural disasters, and potential trade policy changes, are likely to raise prices across a broad range of materials in 2025 — and the impact may be greater for in-demand sustainable building materials sought by some industry sectors. The construction industry is primed for growth, but this opportunity comes with uncertainty. In this complex landscape, one of the best strategies for ensuring that a project achieves its desired outcomes is to assemble a well-rounded, multi-disciplinary team, and leverage project management technology to reduce cost and risk and streamline project delivery. Not long ago, it was unusual to find more than a few women working in a skilled trade or leading a team on a construction project. Although women only make up about 11% of the construction workforce, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more join the industry every year as superintendents, project managers, department directors, tradesworkers and CEOs. In 2025, women not only work to build some of the country's largest and most important projects, they also help draw others into construction. These leaders serve as mentors, teachers and advocates to help elevate the industry and make it an attractive career option for other women. This year, as part of Construction Dive's fifth annual Construction Dive's fifth and mentorship. They were nominated in five categories: Rising Stars — Although they are still early in their construction carreers, these women have already made a mark on the industry. Up-and-Coming Leaders — They are known as hard-working change agents in their companies and in the broader construction community. Mentors — These women not only help others break into the industry but have long strived to make it a better place for all who work in it. Tradeswoman Leaders — They use their hands and their heads to shape commercial construction and promote the industry's career benefits for all. Industry Veterans — These women are stalwarts of the industry, well known in their fields and respected by those who work with them. The 31 talented women selected as this year's Construction Champions stand as shining examples of how intuition, dedication and intelligence are making the industry a more diverse, productive and welcoming place for all. Read on for more about each of these exceptional women, and know that there are many more like them working for construction firms throughout the country, Nonresidential construction spending dipped 0.1% in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1.248 trillion, according to an Associated Builders and Contractors analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data released Monday. Spending fell in six of the 16 nonresidential subcategories, with private nonresidential construction down 0.5%, while public nonresidential construction rose 0.5%, according to the report. Tariff-related disruptions and persistent financing challenges continue to weigh on project demand, with 22% of contractors reporting project delays or cancellations tied to trade policy, said Anirban Basu, ABC chief economist, in the release. Construction spending's April decline marked the second consecutive monthly drop as contractors of America report. "A pullback in many types of private nonresidential projects, as well as a sharp drop in homebuilding, contributed to the latest drop in construction inputs, along with potential retaliatory measures by U.S. trading partners, are making owners hesitant to commit to new projects." Private nonresidential investment has now fallen in three of the first four months of 2025, and is on pace for a 4% annual decline, said Basu. In 2024, private nonresidential construction posted about a 2.3% gain for the year. Data centers and select public infrastructure projects remain the only reliable bright spots, while other segments, notably manufacturing, have begun to cool. "Construction spending slipped in April as headwinds like trade policy uncertainty, high interest rates and tight lending standards continued to batter industrywide momentum," said Basu. "Contractors reported tariff-related project delays or cancellations in April, and despite changes to certain import tax rates in May, policy uncertainty remains extraordinarily elevated." ABC noted a nearly 10% year-over-vear decline in computer and electronic manufacturing construction, a category that had previously been a major source of growth. On the other hand, public construction continues to prop up the overall spending picture. Public nonresidential spending increased 0.5% in April and remains up 5.6% year over year. Transportation, highway and street projects led growth, while educational spending remained flat, according to the report. "Unless contractors and investors have greater certainty about what costs and demand to expect, private construction is likely to continue declining," said AGC CEO Jeffrey Shoaf in a news release. "That will make the U.S. less competitive and damage the prospects for economic growth." A stable backlog and dip in energy costs offered some relief, but outside of data centers, momentum weakened across key construction sectors, according to the latest economic reports. Data center projects remained the bright spot for commercial contractors. Work on these facilities drove most of the growth in planning and total construction starts tumbled 9%, including steep drops in infrastructure and commercial groundbreakings. Private nonresidential investment also fell for the third time in four months, though public dollars continued to support transportation and utilities work. Contractors reported rising cancellation rates tied to tariffs, even as many firms remained optimistic about profit margins and future staffing. Labor data showed little movement in job openings or turnover, as firms pulled back on hiring but continued to hold onto workers amid uncertainty. Here, Construction Dive rounds up the latest key economic data for builders.

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