



Georgia State  
University



**WGI**®

# PARKING STRUCTURE COST OUTLOOK FOR 2025

Georgia State University Fulton Street Parking Structure | Atlanta, GA

Ideas for parking. SOLUTIONS FOR **P**EOPLE®



The Strong Museum of Play Parking Structure | Rochester, NY

WGI has specialized in parking structure planning and design since 1983, and our annual *Parking Structure Construction Cost Outlook* report continues to provide an essential planning tool for owners, contractors, and design teams. Over the past five years, architects, engineers, developers, parking facility owners, and construction professionals have downloaded our report thousands of times. We have also seen significant participation in our client seminars that supplement the report.

WGI maintains a database of completed parking structure projects, and we developed a methodology to analyze the historical cost information and publish a baseline cost to assist our clients and the architecture, engineering, and construction community. Our construction cost database contains hundreds of completed parking structure projects of varying sizes, scopes, and geographic locations. For this forecast, we omit cost data for parking structures that are statistical outliers, such as underground, below buildings, or at the far ends of the size spectrum. We also exclude the oldest projects because parking

structures evolved considerably over the past 50+ years from very utilitarian structures into architecturally sensitive, environmentally sustainable buildings, often with mixed-use space to activate the street frontage, technology, and user comfort considerations that the older facilities never contemplated. The cost data we utilize for our study is assigned factors based on the time of bidding and the parking structure's location. The time factor is based on the Building Cost Index (BCI), published by *Engineering News-Record* (ENR). The location factor is derived from the yearly edition of *Gordian Building Construction Costs* with RS Means Data. Applying these two factors to actual construction cost data normalizes the cost to a current national basis, and from that, we determine the national median figures. WGI can then factor the national median construction cost to an equivalent median cost in almost every city in the United States.

As of May 2025, our statistical data indicates that the median construction cost for a new parking structure is \$31,400 per space, or \$93.85 per square foot, a 5% increase from 2024 when the median cost was \$29,900 per space. The table shown on page 5 lists the 2025 median parking structure construction costs in various U.S. cities with the lowest cost in Dallas, the highest in San Francisco, and Kansas City nearest the national median of 100.0.



University of Illinois Chicago Grenshaw Street Parking Structure | Chicago, IL

Gensler



The construction cost data does not include costs for items such as land acquisition, architectural and engineering fees, environmental evaluations, materials testing, special inspections, geotechnical borings and recommendations, financing, owner administrative and legal, jurisdiction permitting, or other project soft costs. Soft costs are typically about 15% to 25% of the actual construction costs but can be higher for owners who allocate their internal costs directly to the project. Note also that the 2021 and 2024 editions of the *International Building Code* (IBC) require an automatic fire sprinkler system for all garages with footprints exceeding 48,000 square feet or with floors more than 55 feet above grade, regardless of their openness. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 2024 edition of its *Life Safety Code* (NFPA 101) and the 2023 edition of the *Standard for Parking Structures* (NFPA 88A) go much further, requiring automatic fire sprinklers for all parking structures irrespective of openness. Most of the parking structures in our database predate these codes, and while our analysis does include fire-sprinklered facilities, the median cost generally does not reflect the cost of a fully sprinklered garage. Additionally, more jurisdictions now require provisions for charging electric vehicles (EVs). In certain areas, EV charging can be up to 100% of the parking spaces serving multifamily residential and 25% or more of the parking spaces serving commercial buildings. For the past two decades, WGI's garages have incorporated EV charging, but the parking spaces dedicated to EV charging historically made up only 1% to 2% of the total, at most. When considering a parking structure in a jurisdiction requiring significant investment in EV charging, this infrastructure can be a substantial portion of the construction and operating costs.

## FOR COMPARISON, A MEDIAN-COST PARKING STRUCTURE TODAY TYPICALLY INCLUDES

- 8'-6" to 8'-9" wide parking spaces
- Precast concrete superstructure
- Precast concrete façade with relatively simple architecture
- Glass-backed elevators and unenclosed stairs clad with exterior glass curtain wall
- Standard wayfinding and signage
- Shallow-spread footing or strip footing foundations
- All above-grade construction
- Open parking structure with natural ventilation; without mechanical ventilation or fire sprinklers
- Minimal or no grade-level commercial space, and no other occupancies within the building
- Conventional parking technology for gated or ungated operation
- Standard energy efficient LED lighting

# MEDIAN PARKING STRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION COST 2025

▲ 5.0% FROM 2024

CITY	INDEX	COST/SPACE	COST/SF
Albuquerque	90.4	\$28,386	\$84.84
Atlanta	90.7	\$28,480	\$85.12
Birmingham	88.6	\$27,820	\$83.15
Boston	113.4	\$35,608	\$106.43
Charlotte	89.0	\$27,946	\$83.53
Chicago	116.1	\$36,455	\$108.96
Cincinnati	91.0	\$28,574	\$85.40
Cleveland	94.4	\$29,642	\$88.60
Denver	91.1	\$28,605	\$85.50
Dallas - Lowest	85.5	\$26,847	\$80.24
Detroit	97.9	\$30,741	\$91.88
Houston	86.7	\$27,224	\$81.37
Indianapolis	91.9	\$28,857	\$86.25
Jacksonville	87.6	\$27,506	\$82.21
Kansas City, MO - Median	98.6	\$30,960	\$92.54
Las Vegas	104.5	\$32,813	\$98.07
Los Angeles	115.6	\$36,298	\$108.49
Miami	86.7	\$27,224	\$81.37
Minneapolis	106.9	\$33,567	\$100.33
Nashville	90.3	\$28,354	\$84.75
New Orleans	88.2	\$27,695	\$82.78
New York	126.3	\$39,658	\$118.53
Oklahoma City	88.0	\$27,632	\$82.59
Philadelphia	113.2	\$35,545	\$106.24
Phoenix	89.4	\$28,072	\$83.90
Pittsburgh	102.5	\$32,185	\$96.20
Portland, OR	104.8	\$32,907	\$98.36
Richmond	89.4	\$28,072	\$83.90
St. Louis	98.1	\$30,803	\$92.07
Salt Lake City	90.5	\$28,417	\$84.94
San Diego	110.8	\$34,791	\$103.99
San Francisco - Highest	128.6	\$40,380	\$120.69
Seattle	107.5	\$33,755	\$100.89
Tampa	87.4	\$27,444	\$82.03
Washington, D.C.	95.1	\$29,861	\$89.25
<b>National Median</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>\$31,400</b>	<b>\$93.85</b>



# OVERALL PARKING STRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION COST WOULD BE GREATER THAN THE MEDIAN IF IT INCLUDES THESE ENHANCED FEATURES:

- 9'-0"-wide or larger parking spaces for improved user comfort
- Cast-in-place post-tensioned (PT) concrete superstructure for lower maintenance costs
  - Note that PT construction may have a lower construction cost than precast concrete in some markets or circumstances

- Architectural façade with ornate precast, brick, metal panels, and other materials
- Storm-water management, including on-site retention/detention
- Deep foundations such as caissons or piling
- Below-grade construction
- Enclosed stair towers due to local code requirements
- Enclosed parking structure without natural ventilation where mechanical ventilation and fire sprinklers are required
- Flexibility for future parking/building expansion, or incorporation of roof-level solar panels
- Service life in northern/coastal regions beyond a standard 50 to 60 years

## COST DRIVERS: Features Impacting the Cost of a Parking Structure



- Design for future adaptive reuse as detailed in WGI's FlexPark® planning model
- Grade-level commercial space
- Mixed-use development where the parking integrates with office, retail, residential, or other occupancies
- ParkSmart® Certification following the Green Business Certification, Inc. (GBCI) program
- Facilities that are EV Capable, EV Ready, or have EV charging equipment installed
- Enhanced parking technology, including:
  - License-plate recognition
  - Parking-guidance system with dynamic signage
  - WiFi and cellular services
  - Solar-energy collection
  - Building management system

## PARKING INDUSTRY 2025 CONSTRUCTION ECONOMIC FORECAST

Headlining our construction cost forecast is very positive news that 2024 brought significant stabilization in construction materials prices, including steel, concrete, aluminum, and copper. Despite that welcome news, Dodge Construction Network (Dodge) indicates that direct input costs in 2025 are currently, and expected to remain approximately 40% higher than the early 2020 price levels. Notably, lingering challenges related to interest rates, tariffs on imported materials, and skilled and unskilled labor availability are all working to put upward pressure on construction costs while also acting as a depressive factor for new starts in 2025.

Following a 6.6% increase in non-residential construction spending in 2024, reported by the American Institute of Architects (AIA), Dodge predicted in November 2024 that construction starts would increase by up to 8.4% in 2025, primarily driven by forecasted interest-rate reductions. In its forecast, Dodge indicated that new starts would be led by retail, healthcare, and data-center development. We should mention, though, that through the first quarter of 2025, WGI has not observed the realization of the predicated interest-rate reductions nor the anticipated level of increase in construction starts.

Turner Construction Company, publishers of the Turner Building Cost Index, reported in early 2025 that it observed an annualized 3.33% nationwide cost increase in the non-residential construction market in 2024 - while at the same time noting that the U.S. market was exhibiting resilience and moderately strong activity levels. The annualized cost increase observed





by Turner is consistent with the official inflation statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

The AIA was more modest in its predictions for 2025, indicating that an increase in non-residential construction spending of 2.2% should be expected. Paralleling WGI's outlook, the AIA also cited tariffs and stress in the labor market as factors exerting downward pressure on new starts while also contributing to construction cost increases. Echoing these sentiments, investment banking firm FMI suggests that construction spending will increase between 2% and 3% through 2028, with downward pressure coming from the market's multifamily, office (exclusive of data centers), and lodging sectors. Meanwhile, global real estate firm JLL warns its clients to prepare for possible delays in new project starts because of governmental trade policies, regulatory environments, and environmental factors such as natural disasters.

Similarly, the Portland Cement Association (PCA) also forecasted in late 2024 that near-term construction activity would be negatively impacted by what it terms "oppressively high interest rates," the U.S. Federal Reserve put in place because of its desire to reduce price inflation in the economy. At the same time, PCA predicted that interest-rate declines could lead to an increase in demand for new structures and other construction-related markets in the second half of 2025. In the absence of significant interest-rate reductions, PCA further predicts that non-residential construction activity is expected to remain flat until 2026.

Much uncertainty plagues the industry when it comes to tariffs on imported construction materials. U.S. Department of Commerce data indicates that we import a combined 37%

of our steel and up to 70% of our lumber and gypsum from Canada or Mexico. At the time of publication of this article, a 25% tariff was in place for all steel and up to 15% for all lumber coming into the United States. The authors of this paper want to emphasize that exact tariff rates have proven unpredictable through the first four months of 2025, and we see little evidence of that changing as the year progresses. While tariffs loom over the markets, they will likely increase delivery times and prices for construction markets in the short term.

Finally, the labor availability was cited by many experts as a factor contributing to higher input prices for new construction. In its 2025 forecast, Deloitte notes that the construction sector faces significant labor shortages, which are anticipated to intensify for construction firms in the years ahead. In its report, the AIA also cited changes to Federal immigration policy as a potential detriment to increasing the availability of construction labor.

Migration patterns continue to impact construction costs on a regional basis. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that each of the 387 largest metro areas in the United States had positive net international migration in 2024, with nine of the 10 fastest-growing metro areas all located in southern states. The top 10 counties with the most growth by percentage in 2024 were all in Florida, Texas, Georgia, South Carolina, and Arizona.





Colorado School of Mines Classroom Building and Parking Garage 2 | Golden, CO

## SUMMARY

What does all this mean for constructing new parking structures and the median construction cost for these facilities in 2025? We predict that the cost of building new parking structures nationwide will increase by 3% to 6% in 2025, somewhat exceeding the headline inflation rates published by the BLS. The cost increases will not be uniform nationwide and will depend on regional and local factors unique to specific markets.

Factors contributing to cost increases will include financing costs due to interest rates, cost increases resulting from tariffs, and labor shortages. A decrease in construction starts will offset these upward pressures, leading to a somewhat more competitive bidding market for contractors.

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The parking professionals at WGI are happy to assist with planning and budgeting your next parking structure. If you have any questions or would like specific cost information for your area, contact Raymond Smith at [Raymond.Smith@WGInc.com](mailto:Raymond.Smith@WGInc.com) and Rob McConnell at [Rob.McConnell@WGInc.com](mailto:Rob.McConnell@WGInc.com). Or call us at 800.FYI.PARK (800.394.7275).

As a multidisciplinary solutions-providing consulting firm, WGI has 23 offices in ten states, serving an active client base nationwide, specializing in the following disciplines: parking solutions, mobility planning, traffic and transportation engineering, restoration and structural engineering, environmental sciences and water resources, geospatial and land surveying, subsurface utility engineering, land development, municipal engineering, landscape architecture, architecture, land planning, and MEP engineering. In 2024, ENR ranked WGI #171 on its list of the Top 500 Design Firms in the United States. ENR Magazine also named WGI its 2021 Design Firm of the Year in the southeast United States. For more information, please visit [www.wginc.com](http://www.wginc.com).

# LET'S TALK.

For more information about this study or to have a conversation with one of our experts, please contact us:



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