



MONTHLY ECONOMIC DASHBOARD

June 5, 2026

*All data reflect the Chicago metro area geography, unless otherwise noted.
Sources available upon request.*

CHICAGOLAND'S ECONOMY: WHAT TO KNOW IN JUNE 2026

▲ **Trending Upwards:** Chicagoland's economy continues to show signs of resilience. Output is projected to reach \$963 billion in Q2 2026, up 0.8% QoQ. The Chicago Business Barometer surged 13.5 points to 62.7 in May, returning to expansionary territory and reaching its highest level since January 2022. Regional residential construction is a somewhat bright spot, with 5,213 new housing permits authorized through April – up 19.7% YoY. Trade activity through O'Hare also rebounded sharply, rising to \$31.9 billion in March from \$26.2 billion in February. Pro-Chicagoland Decisions are ahead of last year's pace.

▼ **Trending Downwards:** Employment declined modestly in April to 4.68 million and unemployment remains elevated at 4.9%, the highest among compared metros. Growth capital investment has softened, with Chicagoland startups raising \$669 million in Q1 2026, down 36% from a year ago. Commercial real estate fundamentals remain mixed, with office vacancy rates increasing in both downtown and suburban markets. Chicagoland remains 17th for new residential housing permits authorized, and construction permits in the city of Chicago are about a quarter below last year.

U.S. Macroeconomic Update:

- The U.S. economy added **172,000 jobs in May**, well above expectations of roughly 80,000–85,000 jobs, while the unemployment rate remained unchanged at **4.3%** for the third consecutive month. Upward revisions added an additional 93,000 jobs to March and April payroll figures, reinforcing signs of labor market resilience. Job gains were concentrated in leisure and hospitality, local government, and healthcare, while employment in financial activities declined.
- Inflation accelerated in March, with headline CPI rising **3.3% year-over-year**, the highest reading since May 2024, while the Fed's preferred PCE measure increased to **3.5% headline and 3.2% core**, reflecting continued inflationary pressure. Real GDP grew at a **2.0% annualized rate in Q1 2026**, driven by strong private investment, including continued spending on AI-related infrastructure and equipment. The combination of resilient job growth and elevated inflation has reduced expectations for near-term interest rate cuts and increased attention on the Federal Reserve's inflation outlook.

CHICAGOLAND'S ECONOMY: KEY MACROECONOMIC METRICS

- ▬ **Output:** Chicagoland's output for Q2 2026 was projected by Moody's Analytics to be \$963 billion, up 0.8% from Q1 2026. All four of the comparison metro areas are also projected to experience a modest increase in output over the previous quarter.
- ▼ **Employment:** According to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for the Chicago metro area decreased by 1.1% to 4.681M from March 2026. This is on par with slight employment declines in New York, Los Angeles, and Houston. Employment decreased modestly in all counties between March and April 2026.
- ▼ **Unemployment:** Chicagoland's unemployment rate in April 2026 declined slightly to 4.9%, with similar patterns seen among most regional counties. Unemployment in the Chicago metro is still the highest among its peers. There are 16,275 more unemployed people today than there were at this time last year.
- ▬ **Job Postings:** Chicagoland saw little growth in active job postings between April and May 2026, staying around 225,000. Legal and Food Preparation and Serving occupations saw large increases in job postings (10% and 6% respectively), while Protecting Service and Military occupations saw the largest dip in postings (10% and 15%) between March and April. Job postings growth is mixed among the city of Chicago and all collar counties, with the city, Kane, Kendall, McHenry, and Will counties all seeing slight growth in postings.
- ▲ **Pro-Chicagoland Decisions:** In 2026 thus far, there have been 76 Pro-Chicagoland decisions, which is more compared to 2025 year-to-date. This includes 57 expansions and 19 relocations/new market entrants. Of these projects, 46 are regional investments and 30 involve projects within city limits—including 7 South/West Side investments. *PCDs are confirmed expansions, relocations, or new market entrants with at least 10 jobs or 10K square feet.*

CHICAGOLAND'S ECONOMY: OTHER NOTABLE UPDATES

- ▲ **New Private Residential Permits:** There were 5,213 new residential building permits authorized through April of 2026 – representing a 19.7% increase when compared to the same period last year.
- ▼ **City of Chicago Building Permits:** There were 5,348 new construction or renovation/alteration building permits applied for in the last rolling 12-month period (6/1/25-5/31/26) – representing a -25.5% drop when compared to the prior rolling 12-month period.
- ▲ **Trade:** Trade value for O'Hare International Airport saw a increase to \$31.9 billion in March 2026 from \$26.2 billion in February 2026. As of March 2026, it is the third largest port by value following Port Laredo (\$34.3 billion) and JFK Airport (\$34.2 billion).
- ▼ **Chicago Fed Survey:** The Chicago Fed Survey of Economic Conditions Activity Index decreased to +12 in May from +20 in April, suggesting that economic growth softened but remained above trend.
- ▲ **ISM Business Barometer:** The Business Barometer – a survey of supply chain professionals in the Chicagoland area climbed 13.5 points to 62.7 in May. The Barometer is now at its highest since January 2022, and back in expansionary territory after one month below the neutral 50 mark. This was the joint second largest monthly increase in the Barometer since its inception in February 1967 (only July 2020 saw a bigger monthly jump). The rise was driven by increases in New Orders, Production, Order Backlogs and Supplier Deliveries. A decline in Employment provided some marginal offset. Read report for full details [here](#).
 - In May, the Business Barometer asked: *“In today's environment of geopolitical instability, supply chain disruption, and rapidly shifting consumer demand, what steps is your organization taking to remain resilient and responsive?”* Responses were: 54% “Diversifying supplier base and sourcing regions to reduce geopolitical risk,” 54% “Strengthening supplier collaboration and real-time visibility across the supply chain,” 50% “Increasing inventory buffers or nearshoring production to improve delivery reliability,” 31% “Leveraging data analytics and AAI for demand forecasting and scenario planning,” 15% “Adapting product mix, pricing, or channels to align with changing consumer demand,” 4% “Other.”

PRO-CHICAGOLAND DECISIONS

as of June 2, 2026

Companies making a known pro-Chicagoland decision in 2026

76

57 Expansions
19 Relocations/New Market Entrants

30 city investments, including 7 on the S/W Sides
46 suburban investments

223 PCDs in 2025

140 PCDs in 2024
163 PCDs in 2023
180 PCDs in 2022

SPENDING & ACTIVITY

	CONSUMER PRICE INDEX METRO AREA Apr. 2026 12 month % change, all items	TOTAL ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES METRO AREA 2025	WEEKLY OFFICE OCCUPANCY METRO AREA Week of May 6th	PUBLIC TRANSIT May 24 – May 30 Benchmark: Dec. 2019		AVG. DAILY FLIGHTS Apr. 2026	
CHI	+3.1%	\$403B (+2.5% from 2024)	55.9%	-25% (CTA)	-25% (Metra)	2,653 (ORD)	438 (MDW)
NYC	+4.6%	\$959B (+5.0% from 2024)	57.6%	-1% (MTA)	-6% (LIRR)	1,170 (JFK)	1,013 (LGA)
LA	+3.7%	\$537B (+2.3% from 2024)	47.8%	-15%		1,369	
HOU	+2.8%	\$290B (+4.3% from 2024)	60.6%	-9%		1,179	

CHICAGO FED SURVEY OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

METRO AREA



+12

May 2026
Suggests economic growth was above trend

-8
from Apr. 2026

CHICAGO BUSINESS BAROMETER

METRO AREA



62.7

May, 2026

+13.5
from Mar. 2026

HOUSING

NEW PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL PERMITS

METRO AREA
1/1/26 – 4/30/26

5,213

+19.7%
FROM YTD 2025

#17
METRO RANK

ALL BUILDING PERMITS

CITY ONLY
6/1/25 – 5/31/26

5,348

-25.5%
CHANGE FROM 6/1/24 – 5/31/25

TRADE & BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

	TRADE VALUE Mar. 2026	HOTEL OCCUPANCY CITY (CBD) ONLY Apr. 2026	OPENTABLE RESERVATIONS CITY ONLY May 2026 Benchmark: May 2025	BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICATIONS CITY ONLY 6/1/25-5/31/26
CHI	\$31.9B <i>O'Hare Airport</i>	72.7%	+5%	6,127
NYC	\$34.2B <i>JFK Airport</i>	84.5%	+15%	N/A
LA	\$20.0B <i>Port of LA</i>	68.6%	+13%	N/A
HOU	\$20.4B <i>Part of Houston</i>	N/A	+8%	N/A

INNOVATION - METRO AREA

Q1 2026	GROWTH CAPITAL (PRE-VC, VC + PE) RAISED			
	VC	PE	VC + PE	Change from Q1 2025
SF	\$220.3B	\$6.4B	\$226.8B	912%▲
NYC	\$11.1B	\$10.8B	\$21.9B	135%▲
BOS	\$5.3B	\$789M	\$6.1B	12%▼
LA	\$4.1B	\$1.4B	\$5.4B	12%▲
SEA	\$1.2B	\$39M	\$1.2B	47%▼
CHI	\$508M	\$162M	\$669M	36%▼

INNOVATION - CITY & COUNTIES

Q1 2026	GROWTH CAPITAL RAISED	
	CAPITAL RAISED	DEAL COUNT
CHICAGO CITY	\$510.6M	85
COOK SUBURBS	\$23.8M	12
DUPAGE	\$82.4M	12
KANE	\$0.01M	2
KENDALL	\$0	0
LAKE	\$48.75M	3
MCHENRY	\$3.8M	1
WILL	N/A (undisclosed)	1

MACROECONOMIC											
	NOMINAL GDP (PROJECTED)		BUSINESS COUNT		EMPLOYMENT		UNEMPLOYMENT			ACTIVE JOB POSTINGS	
	Q2 2026	PRIOR QUARTER CHANGE	Q4 2025	PRIOR QUARTER CHANGE	Apr. 2026 (Prelim.)	CHANGE FROM Mar. 2026	Apr. 2026 (Prelim.)	CHANGE FROM Mar. 2026	CHANGE FROM Apr. 2025	May 2026 As of June 3	PRIOR MONTH CHANGE
CHI	\$963B	0.8% ▲	255,086	1.1% ▲	4,680,945	1.1% ▼	4.9%	0.2pp ▼	0.5pp ▲	225,285	0% =
NYC	\$2,595B	0.8% ▲	681,709	1.2% ▲	9,918,455	0.1% ▼	4.2%	0.3pp ▼	0.0pp =	402,819	4% ▲
LA	\$1,586B	0.8% ▲	757,454	2.4% ▲	6,369,765	0.9% ▼	4.8%	0.0pp =	0.1pp ▼	234,905	6% ▲
HOU	\$787B	1.3% ▲	175,619	0.4% ▼	3,729,551	0.0% =	4.3%	0.1pp ▼	0.3pp ▲	129,559	4% ▲

WHO'S HIRING (MAY 2026)	
COMPANY	UNIQUE JOB POSTINGS
Northwestern Memorial Healthcare	1,606
Walgreens Boots Alliance	1,499
Walmart	1,395
University of Chicago	1,332
Advocate Aurora Health	1,304
AbbVie	1,085
Endeavor Health	889

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY (Q2 2026, PROJECTED)												
	TECH	QUARTERLY CHANGE	LIFE SCIENCES	QUARTERLY CHANGE	TD&L	QUARTERLY CHANGE	MFG	QUARTERLY CHANGE	BUS. & PRO. SERVICES	QUARTERLY CHANGE	FOOD MFG	QUARTERLY CHANGE
CHI	241,250	0.2% ▲	91,649	0.1% ▲	275,047	0.0% =	404,871	0.1% ▼	390,888	0.2% ▲	73,701	0.1% ▼
NYC	578,255	0.2% ▲	193,293	0.1% ▲	377,871	0.0% =	321,225	0.2% ▼	858,017	0.1% ▲	63,561	0.2% ▼
LA	294,902	0.0% =	125,005	1.3% ▲	235,223	0.3% ▼	445,268	0.3% ▼	466,583	0.1% ▼	54,188	0.0% =
HOU	126,545	0.4% ▲	63,290	0.3% ▲	177,951	0.3% ▲	238,602	0.1% ▲	283,341	0.4% ▲	17,856	0.1% ▲

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE (Q1 2026, CBRE)					
	ABSORPTION/DEMAND (YTD)	AVAILABILITY	QUARTERLY CHANGE	VACANCY	QUARTERLY CHANGE
OFFICE MARKET (CBD)	(515,176 sqft)	31.1%	▼ 0.2 pp	27.0%	▲ 0.4 pp
OFFICE MARKET (SUBURBAN)	(430,887) sqft	30.7%	▼ 0.3 pp	28.7%	▲ 0.5 pp
INDUSTRIAL MARKET (METRO AREA)	1,613,042 sqft	8.6%	▼ 0.4pp	5.8%	▲ 0.4 pp

MACROECONOMIC – CITY OF CHICAGO AND GCEP COUNTIES

	NOMINAL GDP (ESTIMATE)		BUSINESS COUNT		EMPLOYMENT			UNEMPLOYMENT		ACTIVE JOB POSTINGS	
	2025	CHANGE FROM 2024	Q4 2025	PRIOR QUARTER CHANGE	Apr. 2026 (Prelim.)	CHANGE FROM Mar. 2026	Apr. 2026 (Prelim.)	CHANGE FROM Mar. 2026	CHANGE FROM Apr. 2025	May. 2026 As of June 3	CHANGE FROM Apr. 2026
CHICAGO CITY					1,383,298	1.4% ▼	5.3%	0.2pp ▲	0.5pp ▲	70,602	2.5% ▲
COOK SUBURBS	\$560.4B	4.1% ▲	139,707	1.2% ▲	1,193,965	1.4% ▼	5.2%	0.0pp =	0.0pp =	55,323	3.5% ▼
DUPAGE	\$121.7B	2.7% ▲	34,273	1.1% ▲	488,319	1.3% ▼	4.2%	0.0pp =	0.4pp ▲	29,609	1.0% ▼
KANE	\$34.9B	2.1% ▲	13,162	0.8% ▲	255,508	0.7% ▼	4.5%	1.5pp ▼	0.5pp ▲	10,894	3.3% ▲
KENDALL	\$4.9B	1.0% ▲	2,521	1.4% ▲	71,851	0.7% ▼	4.2%	1.0pp ▼	0.6pp ▲	1,983	11.3% ▲
LAKE	\$96.9B	1.8% ▲	20,305	1.2% ▲	340,748	0.4% ▼	4.5%	1.5pp ▼	0.4pp ▲	19,171	1.1% ▼
MCHENRY	\$15.7B	3.5% ▲	8,024	1.1% ▲	167,664	1.3% ▼	4.5%	0.3pp ▼	0.4pp ▲	5,393	3.0% ▲
WILL	\$45.9B	3.0% ▲	16,150	1.2% ▲	363,797	1.3% ▼	4.9%	0.1pp ▼	0.5pp ▲	17,582	0.8% ▲
METRO AREA	\$940.8B	3.4% ▲	255,086	1.1% ▲	4,680,945	1.1% ▼	4.9%	0.2pp ▼	0.5pp ▲	225,285	0.3% ▲

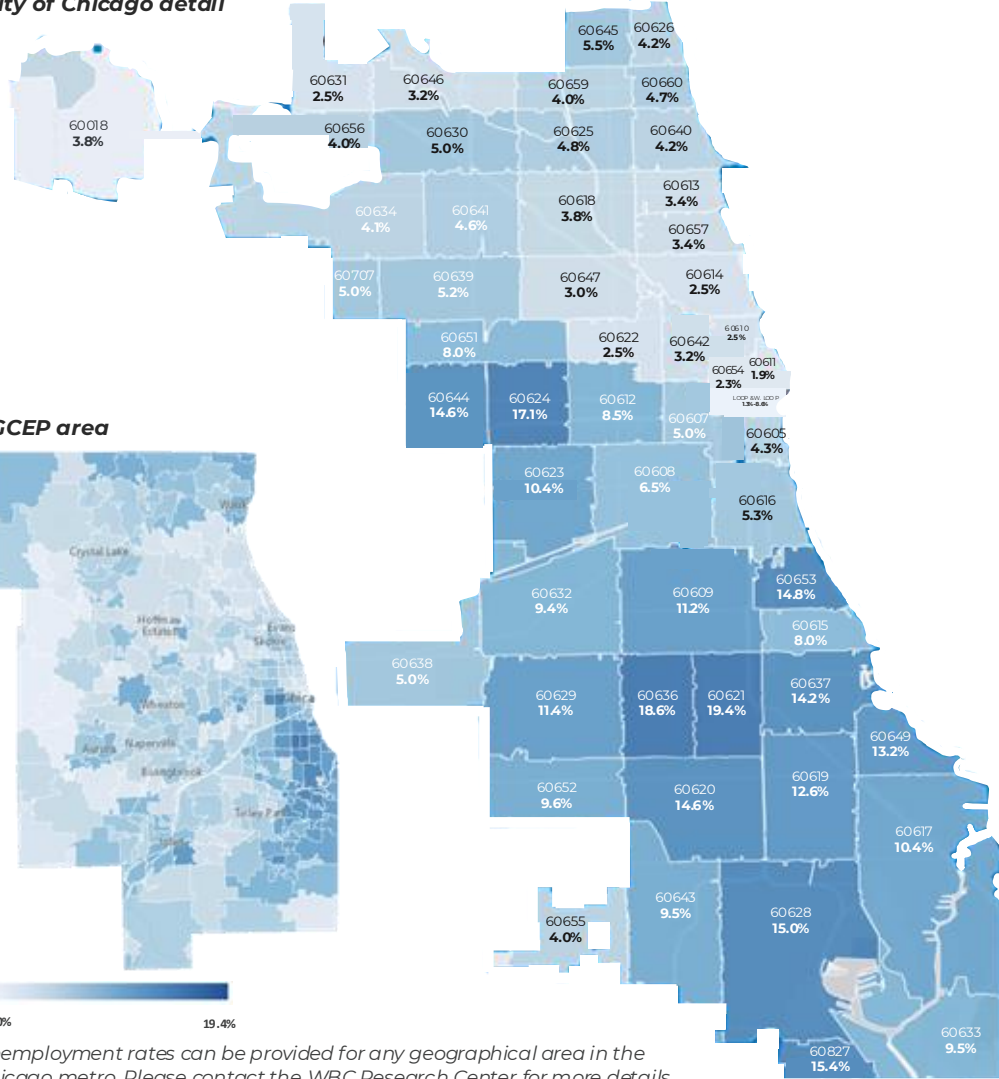
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY (2026, PROJECTED) – CITY OF CHICAGO AND GCEP COUNTIES

	TECH	CHANGE FROM 2025	LIFE SCIENCES	CHANGE FROM 2025	TDL	CHANGE FROM 2025	MFG	CHANGE FROM 2025	BUS. & PRO. SERVICES	CHANGE FROM 2025	FOOD MFG	CHANGE FROM 2025
CHICAGO CITY	49,143	1.0% ▲	12,563	0.1% ▲	59,395	1.2% ▲	69,777	1.0% ▼	183,859	0.5% ▲	26,857	1.3% ▲
COOK SUBURBS	15,227	0.2% ▼	20,887	2.0% ▲	113,042	0.7% ▲	111,284	1.1% ▼	77,157	0.0% =	15,077	2.1% ▲
DUPAGE	25,018	1.4% ▼	13,961	0.5% ▲	39,050	2.3% ▲	61,804	1.1% ▲	58,437	0.5% ▼	8,743	4.8% ▲
KANE	3,756	2.7% ▲	4,143	4.3% ▲	8,031	3.4% ▲	33,979	1.6% ▲	11,409	0.7% ▲	5,973	7.6% ▲
KENDALL	302	3.8% ▲	116	6.4% ▲	2,720	0.0% =	3,087	1.4% ▲	1,420	1.4% ▲	716	3.8% ▲
LAKE	4,345	3.7% ▼	27,973	0.0% =	10,621	2.9% ▲	51,446	0.4% ▲	21,705	1.2% ▼	2,429	3.7% ▲
MCHENRY	566	0.9% ▼	616	1.1% ▼	2,330	0.3% ▼	12,174	1.1% ▼	4,983	0.9% ▲	1,195	2.1% ▲
WILL	3,251	4.7% ▲	3,108	1.5% ▲	43,662	4.0% ▲	25,439	2.7% ▲	12,016	1.2% ▲	5,858	6.5% ▲

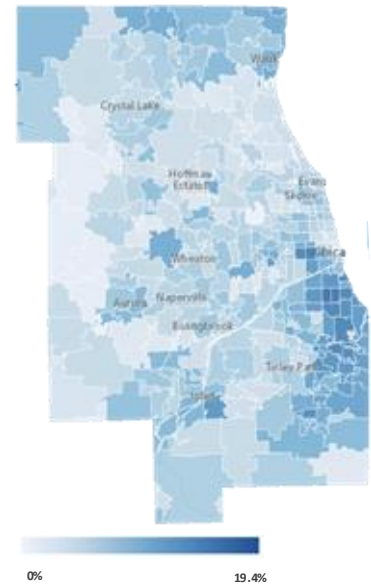
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE MAP

Estimated unemployment rates by zip code, 2025 (updated yearly)

City of Chicago detail



GCEP area



Unemployment rates can be provided for any geographical area in the Chicago metro. Please contact the WBC Research Center for more details.

JOB POSTINGS & OPPORTUNITY ZIP CODES

HIGH DEMAND OCCUPATIONS

UNIQUE JOB POSTINGS METRO AREA

HIGH OPPORTUNITY ZIP CODES IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO

Occupations with the most unique job postings

May 2026

PRIOR MONTH CHANGE

TOP ZIP CODES FOR RECRUITMENT
Zip codes in Chicago with the highest concentrations of residents in high demand occupations

Occupations with the most unique job postings	May 2026	PRIOR MONTH CHANGE	TOP ZIP CODES FOR RECRUITMENT Zip codes in Chicago with the highest concentrations of residents in high demand occupations				
Management	29,557	0% =	Downtown Station	Fort Dearborn	Main Post Office	Edge-Brook	Norwood Park
Sales and Related	25,614	0% =	North Loop	Chestnut Street	Main Post Office	Fort Dearborn	South Loop
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	22,890	0% =	Chestnut Street	South Inner Loop	Lincoln Park	South Loop	Main Post Office
Business and Financial Operations	18,672	4% ▼	Main Post Office	Main Post Office	Chestnut Street	Lincoln Park	Chestnut Street
Office and Administration	15,471	1% ▲	Riverdale	South Shore	Roseland	Hegewisch	Grand Crossing

HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT ZIP CODES (PROJECTED 2025 RATES)

Zip	City of Chicago Neighborhood	2025	Change from 2024	Zip	Chicagoland Suburb	2025	Change from 2024
60621	Englewood	19.4%	▲0.3pp	60419	Dolton	14.3%	▲0.2pp
60636	West Englewood	18.6%	▲0.2pp	60428	Markham	13.7%	▲0.2pp
60624	West Garfield Park	17.1%	▲0.2pp	60433	Joliet	12.6%	▲0.5pp
60827	Riverdale	15.4%	▲0.2pp	60471	Richton Park	12.5%	▲0.2pp
60628	Pullman, Roseland	15.0%	▲0.2pp	60472	Robbins	12.4%	▲0.8pp
60653	Bronzeville	14.8%	▲0.4pp	60473	South Holland	11.4%	▼0.1pp
60620	Auburn Gresham	14.6%	▲0.2pp	60426	Harvey	11.3%	▲0.1pp
60644	Austin	14.6%	▲0.2pp	60409	Calumet City	10.6%	▲0.1pp
60637	Woodlawn	14.2%	▲0.2pp	60429	Hazel Crest	10.5%	=0.0pp
60649	South Shore	13.2%	▲0.2pp	60155	Broadview	10.4%	▲0.1pp
60619	Chatham, Grand Crossing	12.6%	▲0.2pp	60406	Blue Island	10.2%	▲0.1pp
60629	West Lawn, Chicago Lawn	11.4%	▲0.3pp	60141	Hines	10.1%	▲1.6pp