Q3 2026 DATA CENTER CONSTRUCTION BRIEF

Data center construction slowed last quarter

Developers started 28% less data center capacity in the third quarter than in the second. But they're still building at twice last year's pace, and October picked back up.

Developers began building 8.4 gigawatts of data center capacity from July through September, down from a record 11.7 GW from April through June. It was the first quarterly drop since early 2025.

But construction remains far above last year. Developers started 38 GW in the last 12 months, twice as much as in the 12 months before, and 58 GW is under construction today.

This brief is built on a new Cleanview dataset that's available in our Data Center Tracker: **the month construction started on every data center building in the US**, dated by analysts from satellite imagery. It covers 1,338 buildings on 473 campuses.

Started in the third quarter

8.4 GW

Down 28% from a record second quarter

Started in the last 12 months

38 GW

Twice the 12 months before

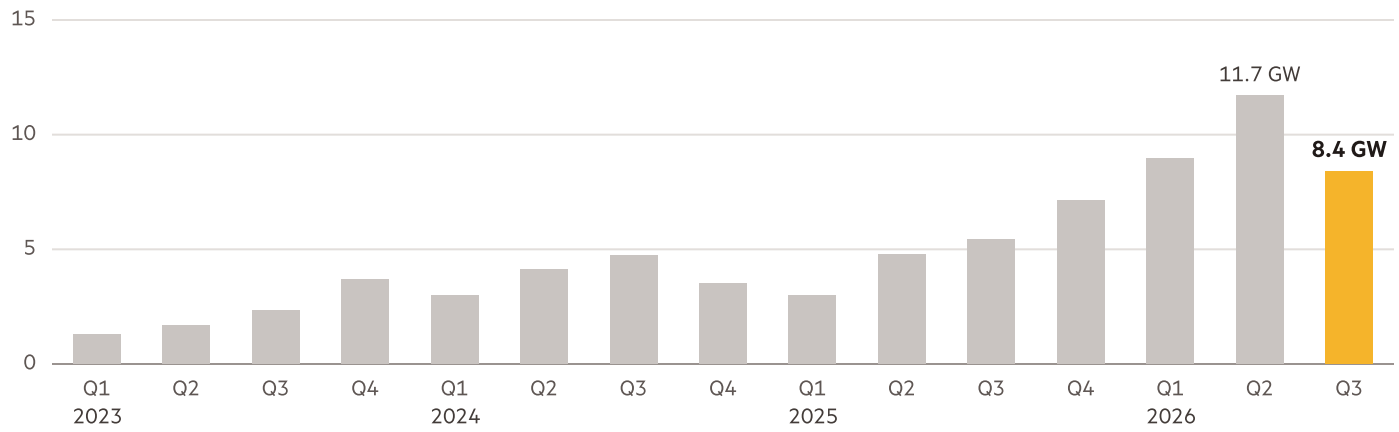
Under construction now

58 GW

Nearly double a year ago

Construction starts fell in the third quarter after five straight quarters of growth

Capacity that started vertical construction each quarter, in gigawatts



Source: Cleanview data center tracker, January 2023 to September 2026. Facility power of each building, dated from satellite imagery.

The drop came after a record spring

Developers started 11.7 GW across 96 buildings in the second quarter, the most of any quarter on record. In the third quarter, they started 8.4 GW across 65 buildings. That's still the third-biggest quarter on record, and 55% more than the same quarter last year.

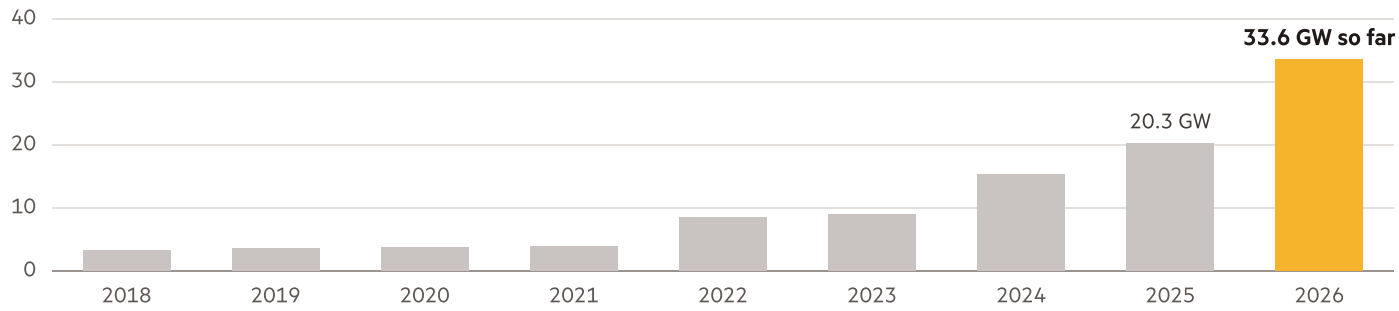
Starts have dipped before during the boom. They fell for two quarters in a row at the turn of 2025, then tripled over the next year.

Construction is still twice last year's pace

Developers started 38 GW of data center capacity in the last 12 months, against 18 GW in the 12 months before. With two months to go, 2026 has already reached 33.6 GW, 1.7 times all of 2025.

Developers have already started 1.7 times as much capacity in 2026 as in all of 2025

Capacity that started vertical construction each year, in gigawatts



Source: Cleanview data center tracker. 2026 is January to October.

The data centers started from January through October will cost about $1 trillion once they're built and equipped, at Cleanview's estimate of $38 million per megawatt of IT capacity. That covers the building, its electrical and cooling systems, and the servers and chips inside. At this fall's pace, 2026 will reach about $1.2 trillion.

The next few months will show whether this is a pause

A slower quarter doesn't yet mean a slower boom. Starts are lumpy: a single 700 MW building can swing a month. And recent months tend to be revised up as new satellite imagery comes in and analysts date buildings they couldn't see before.

But if starts stay below the spring's pace through the winter, it would be the first sustained slowdown since the AI buildout began.

October's data suggests the slowdown may not last

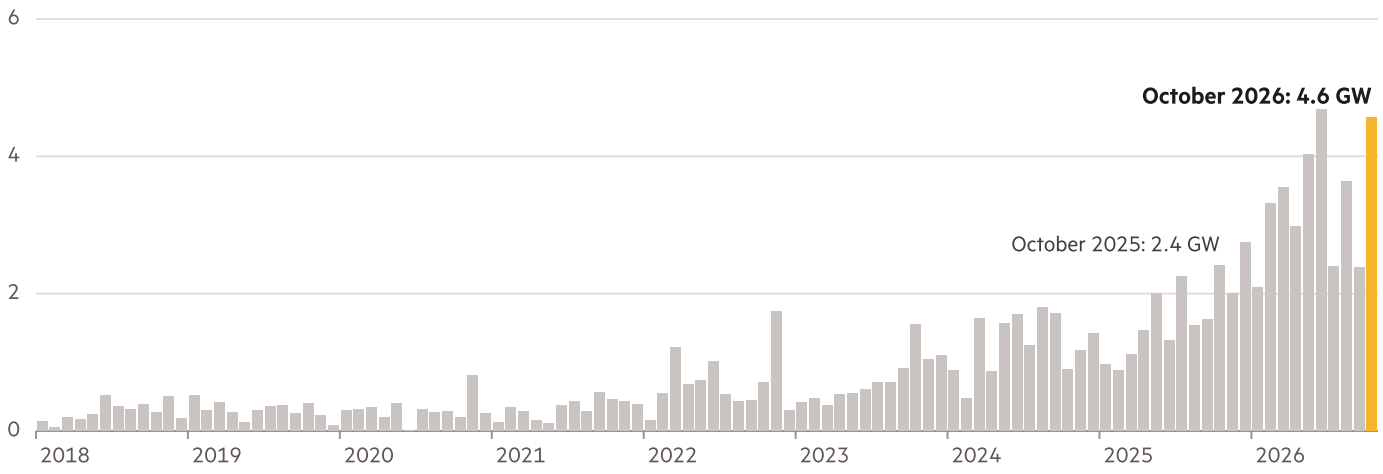
Developers started 4.6 GW across 33 buildings in October, the second-biggest month on record after June and nearly double October 2025. One month doesn't make a trend. But if November and December match October, the fourth quarter will set a new record, at about 13.7 GW.

A few very large buildings led the month:

- Nscale's Monarch campus in West Virginia, for Anthropic: 720 MW
- Related Digital's Stargate Michigan campus, for Oracle and OpenAI: 461 MW
- Crusoe's Abilene campus in Texas, for Microsoft: 450 MW

October was the second-biggest month for data center construction starts on record

Capacity that started vertical construction each month, in gigawatts



Source: Cleanview data center tracker, January 2018 to October 2026. Facility power of each building, dated from satellite imagery.

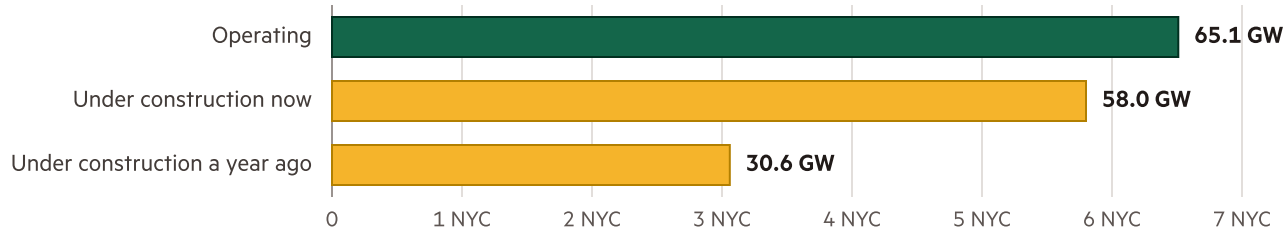
Nearly as much is being built as is running

58 GW of data center capacity is under construction across 577 buildings, up from about 31 GW a year ago. That's nearly 90% as much as the 65 GW operating today.

New York City's power demand peaks at about 10 GW. The data centers under construction will use as much power as almost six New York Cities.

Data centers under construction will use as much power as almost six New York Cities

Data center capacity, in gigawatts. Each gridline is New York City's peak demand.



Source: Cleanview data center tracker, November 2026. A year ago is October 2025.

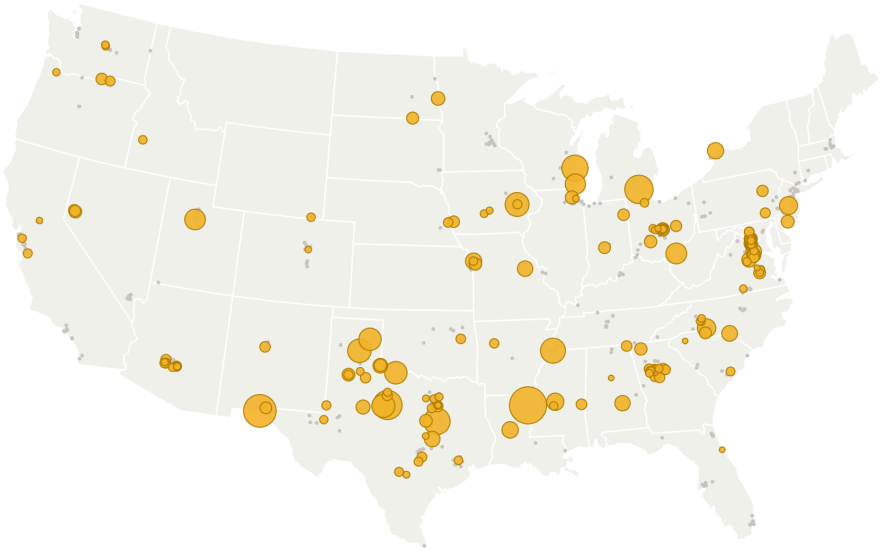
Texas leads, and new states are joining

Texas started 9.8 GW in the last 12 months, a quarter of the national total and three times its pace a year earlier. Texas also just elected a governor, Gina Hinojosa, who called for a moratorium on new data center approvals.

Louisiana, New Mexico, Wisconsin and Michigan each started more than 1 GW. A year earlier, the four started less than 0.5 GW combined.

Where developers started building data centers in the last 12 months

Campus that started construction, sized by capacity started Other operating or under-construction campus

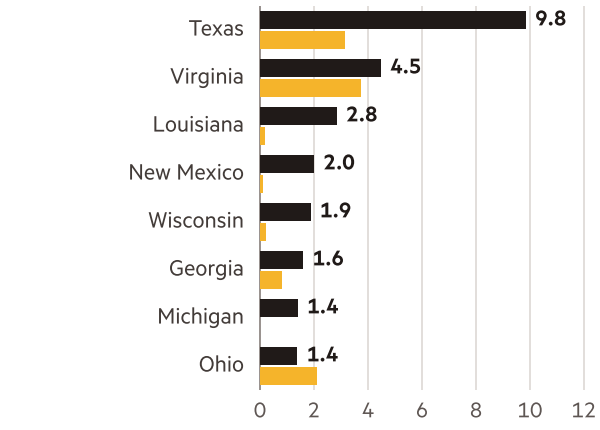


Source: Cleanview data center tracker, November 2025 to October 2026.

States that started the most capacity

Gigawatts started

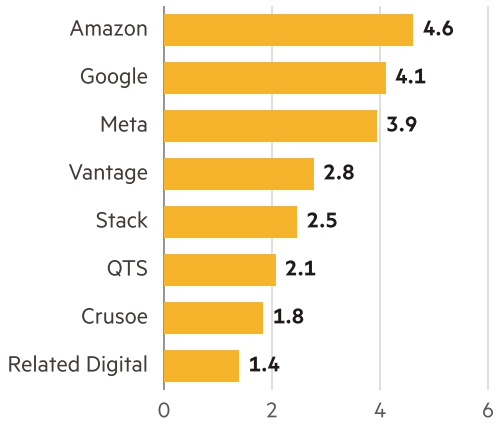
Last 12 months 12 months before



Developers that started the most capacity

Gigawatts started in the last 12 months

Last 12 months



Source: Cleanview data center tracker. Last 12 months is November 2025 to October 2026.

Amazon started 4.6 GW across 68 buildings on 25 campuses, the most of any developer. Google and Meta followed. Vantage and Stack, which build data centers for other companies, more than tripled their starts.

The biggest construction starts of the third quarter

Developers started 65 buildings in 21 states from July through September. Ten campuses accounted for 4.6 GW, more than half of the quarter's total. Five of them are in Texas.

The largest was Nexus Data Centers' campus in Hill County, Texas, where two buildings for Anthropic started construction. Three more are leased to Oracle for OpenAI's Stargate program.

Campus	Developer	Location	Buildings	MW started
Nexus Hubbard	Nexus Data Centers	Hill County, TX	**2**	**800**
Stargate Jupiter	Stack Infrastructure	Doña Ana County, NM	**1**	**613**
Meitner Data Center	Google	Gray County, TX	**2**	**560**
Colossus 2	SpaceX	DeSoto County, MS	**1**	**528**
Crusoe Abilene	Crusoe	Taylor County, TX	**1**	**450**
Google Wilbarger County	Google	Wilbarger County, TX	**1**	**425**
Stargate Frontier	Vantage Data Centers	Shackelford County, TX	**2**	**364**
Stack Stafford Technology Campus	Stack Infrastructure	Stafford County, VA	**4**	**301**
Stargate Lighthouse	Vantage Data Centers	Ozaukee County, WI	**1**	**293**
Digital Realty West Charlotte	Digital Realty	Mecklenburg County, NC	**1**	**276**

Source: Cleanview data center tracker. Facility power of the buildings that started vertical construction from July to September 2026.

What the election means for construction

Nine states now have a governor or governor-elect who has promised or already imposed a pause on new data centers. Those states hold 159 GW of planned data center capacity, 41% of the US pipeline, according to Cleanview's analysis of the November 3 results.

Most of those pledges target projects that haven't started. Buildings already under construction are much less exposed, which makes construction starts the clearest early sign of whether the pauses are working.

That timing matters for the grid. Most of what comes online in the next two years is already under construction. A moratorium can stop a project that hasn't started. It's much harder to stop a building that's already coming out of the ground.

Tracking construction as it happens

Cleanview now shows the month construction started on every data center building in the US, updated each month from new satellite imagery.

Until now, there's been no reliable way to tell whether the data center boom is speeding up, leveling off or slowing down. Announcements can't answer that. Companies announce far more than they build, on their own schedules. And a building that comes online today was a decision made two years ago. Construction starts show what developers are committing to right now. They'll help answer the biggest open questions about the buildout:

- **Did the election slow the boom?** New governors and local moratoriums take effect next year. Starts will show whether developers pull back in those states, or move elsewhere.
- **Are supply chains holding it back?** Transformers, turbines and skilled labor are scarce. If they're the bottleneck, starts will slow even where demand is strong.
- **When will the power demand arrive?** Data centers typically come online about 16 months after construction starts. Today's starts show where new demand will hit the grid over the next two years.

What's included

For every data center building, Cleanview now shows the month construction started, back to 2017: 1,338 buildings on 473 campuses so far. The start dates are in Cleanview's data platform, CSV exports and API, alongside each building's capacity, developer, tenant, status and location.

How we measure construction

- **A construction start** is the month vertical construction began on a building: the foundation and steel, not land clearing. Analysts date it from monthly satellite imagery and check it against permits, utility filings and company announcements.
- **Capacity** is each building's facility power, the most it can draw from the grid or an on-site plant, unless a chart says otherwise. The cost estimate uses IT capacity, the power available to servers, at $38 million per megawatt (methodology).
- **Under construction** counts every building with that status in the tracker, including a few conversions of existing buildings that we don't date.
- **Recent months are revised.** New imagery lets analysts date buildings they couldn't see before, so recent months tend to grow. Data is as of November 13, 2026.

About Cleanview

Cleanview tracks every data center and power project in the US. Investors, utilities, developers and journalists use its data platform and API to follow where data centers are being built, who is building them and how they'll be powered. To get construction dates for every building, contact our team.

Construction has started on Anthropic's latest data center

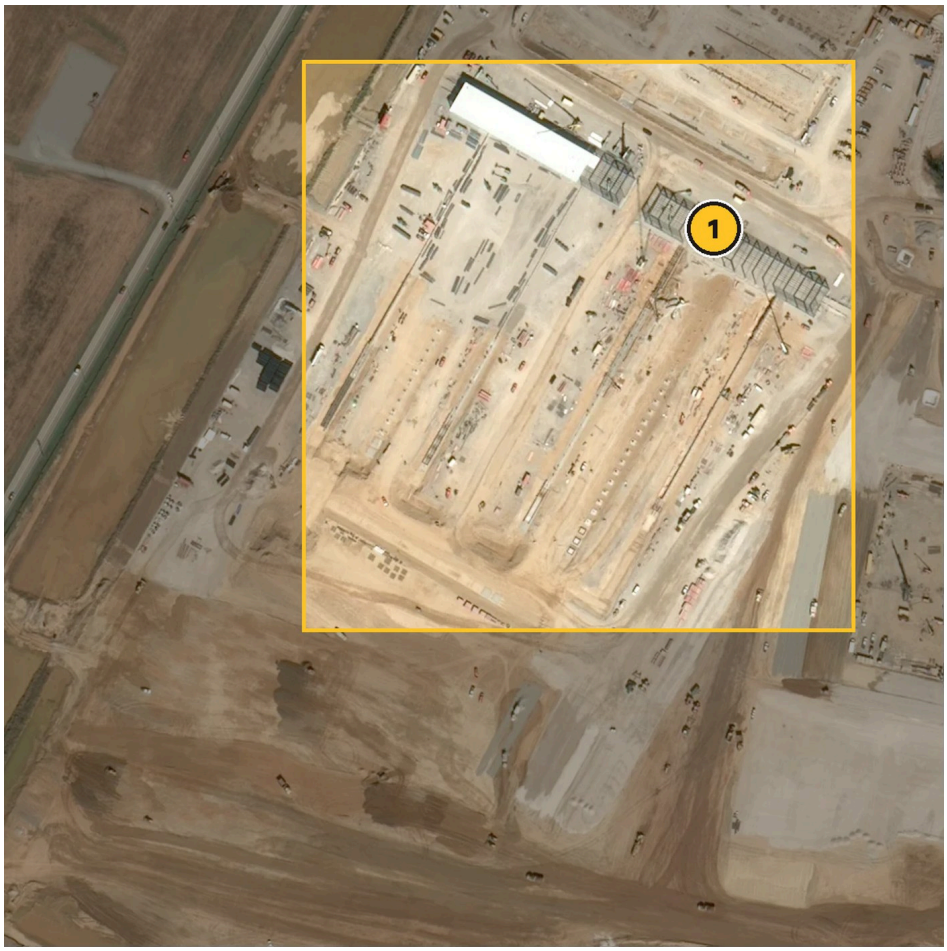
Nscale began vertical construction on the first building of its Monarch Compute Campus in Mason County, West Virginia, in October. Anthropic agreed in August to pay about $45 billion over six years for about 460 MW of computing capacity there, according to Bloomberg and CNBC. Neither company has confirmed the deal.

The start comes weeks before Anthropic's stock market debut. The company expects to price its IPO on or about November 18 and begin trading on Nasdaq the next day, according to Bloomberg.

The building will run on its own gas plant, not the grid: 288 Caterpillar G3520K engines, about 735 MW, according to Nscale's draft air permit. Each of four power nodes holds 72 engines, and the permit application lists a January 2027 start-up. Nscale has said the campus could eventually reach 8 GW.

Monarch Compute Campus, Building 1

720 MW of facility power, 460 MW of IT capacity



1 **Steel frames** are going up at the building's north end.

Image: Airbus Pléiades, October 7, 2026. Annotations: Cleanview.

Stargate Michigan's third building breaks ground

Related Digital started construction on the third data center building at The Barn, its Stargate Michigan campus in Saline Township, in October. Oracle leases the campus, and OpenAI will use it, according to Related. Cleanview estimates each building will draw about 461 MW, about 1.4 GW in all.

The campus is moving fast. Its first building went from foundations to a finished shell in about three months, half the typical time.



1. **Building 1:** construction started in May 2026, and the shell was finished in August.
2. **Building 2:** construction started in June 2026. Its roof is on.
3. **Building 3:** construction started in October 2026. Its steel frame is going up.

Image: Airbus Pléiades Neo, October 13, 2026. Annotations: Cleanview. Construction dates: Cleanview data center tracker.