

# ARCHITECTS and the ECONOMY

ARCHITECTS are on the front lines of an industry that accounts for ONE IN NINE DOLLARS of U.S. Gross Domestic Product.<sup>1</sup>

Architects are the first workers to be involved in the construction process when they develop designs. Hiring an architect leads to employment in other construction-related fields, from engineers and manufacturers to steel and electrical contractors.



There is ONE architectural service worker for every 34 construction industry workers,<sup>2</sup> which created over \$1 TRILLION in economic activity in 2008<sup>3</sup>.

Architectural activity is a HARBINGER of construction work: the AIA Architecture Billings Index, which surveys work on the drawing boards, is a LEADING INDICATOR of construction activity 9 to 12 months down the line.<sup>4</sup>

## The ECONOMIC CRISIS is TAKING its TOLL

From 2008 to 2009, the number of workers in the architectural industry DROPPED BY 18 PERCENT.<sup>5</sup>

The amount projected to be invested in the construction industry was projected to SHRINK NEARLY 20 PERCENT by the end of 2009.<sup>6</sup>

The most recent AIA Architectural Billings Index shows continued WEAKNESS in work on the drawing boards<sup>7</sup> . . . meaning LIMITED CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY in the next year.

The hardest hit are SMALL BUSINESSES: Nearly 95 percent of architecture firms employ 50 or fewer people.<sup>8</sup>

## INVESTMENTS in DESIGN and CONSTRUCTION PAY DIVIDENDS

Every \$1 MILLION invested in design and construction creates 28.5 NEW FULL-TIME JOBS.<sup>9</sup>

It also BOOSTS MANUFACTURING AND RELATED INDUSTRIES that depend upon construction activity to generate business.

*For more information about the role of architects in the economy, visit [www.aia.org/rebuildandrenov](http://www.aia.org/rebuildandrenov), or contact the AIA government relations team at [govaffs@aia.org](mailto:govaffs@aia.org).*

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis

<sup>2</sup> Department of Labor

<sup>3</sup> [www.census.gov/const/C30/total.pdf](http://www.census.gov/const/C30/total.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [www.aia.org/aiaucmp/groups/aia/documents/pdf/aia076074.pdf](http://www.aia.org/aiaucmp/groups/aia/documents/pdf/aia076074.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics

<sup>6</sup> [info.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek09/1218/1218b\\_consensus.cfm](http://info.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek09/1218/1218b_consensus.cfm)

<sup>7</sup> [info.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek09/1218/1218b\\_otb.cfm](http://info.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek09/1218/1218b_otb.cfm)

<sup>8</sup> AIA Firm Survey, 2009

<sup>9</sup> [www.naiop.org/foundation/contdev.pdf](http://www.naiop.org/foundation/contdev.pdf)



THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE  
OF ARCHITECTS