ENGEL&VÖLKERS
COMMERCIAL

The rise of Dubai's next generation of commercial real estate

DUBAI OFF-PLAN COMMERCIAL PROPERTY REPORT 2026

Executive overview

Dubai's commercial real estate market is entering a new phase. Strong economic growth, continued business formation and population expansion are driving demand for commercial space, while limited availability of high-quality existing stock has created the conditions for a significant new development cycle. Against this backdrop, off-plan commercial property is becoming an increasingly important part of the market.

Historically, Dubai's off-plan market has been dominated by residential property, while commercial investors have largely focused on completed assets. That distinction is beginning to change. A growing pipeline of purpose-built offices, retail space and mixed-use developments is giving investors access to a much broader range of commercial opportunities before completion.

Nowhere is this shift more apparent than in the office market. High occupancy across Dubai's established business districts, combined with changing occupier expectations, has exposed a shortage of modern, high-specification workspace. Developers are responding with a new generation of premium commercial projects offering higher-quality specifications, extensive amenities and increasingly sophisticated working environments.

Retail development is following a different trajectory. As Dubai continues to expand geographically, new commercial space is being delivered alongside residential communities, creating opportunities tied to future population growth and emerging consumer catchments. Within the industrial and logistics sector, meanwhile, demand for modern facilities is supporting investment in Grade A logistics parks and purpose-built space tailored to increasingly complex occupier requirements.

Together, these trends are reshaping both the scale and composition of Dubai's commercial development pipeline. They are also changing the choices available to investors, who can increasingly gain exposure to the city's future commercial stock during the development phase rather than relying exclusively on the secondary market.

This report examines the rise of commercial off-plan investment in Dubai, the sectors and locations driving its growth, and the new generation of projects coming to market. It also considers the factors investors should assess as supply expands.

The opportunity is significant, but the next phase of the market is likely to reward selectivity. As more projects compete for capital and occupiers, location, developer quality, specification and underlying demand will become increasingly important in determining long-term performance.

The rise of commercial off-plan

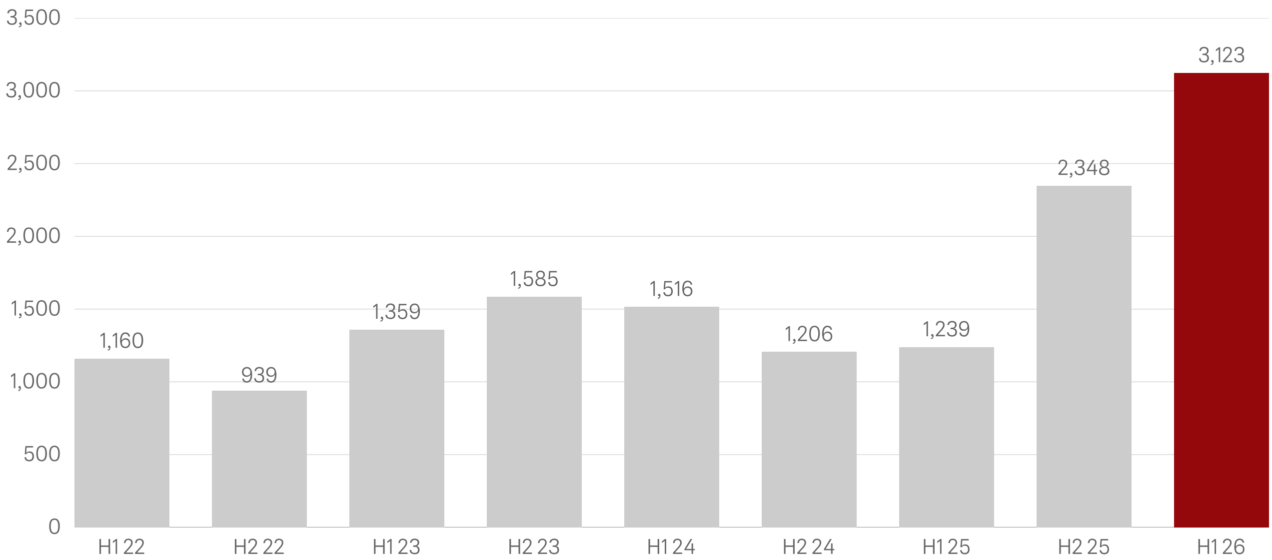
Dubai's commercial property market is undergoing a significant shift. After typically accounting for around 20-25% of transactions over the past five years, off-plan property represented 48.3% of all commercial sales in H1 2026.

The acceleration of off-plan commercial real estate has been particularly pronounced since the second half of 2025. Off-plan sales reached 3,123 transactions worth AED 17.04 billion in H1 2026, representing increases of 152% and 473% respectively compared with H1 2025.

Importantly, this growth has significantly outpaced the wider commercial market, demonstrating that the rise in off-plan activity reflects more than simply higher overall transaction volumes.

The scale of capital being deployed is perhaps the clearest indication of how quickly the market is evolving. The value of off-plan commercial sales in H1 2026 was almost six times higher than a year earlier, as investors increasingly committed to the next generation of Dubai's commercial real estate.

Commercial off-plan sales volume

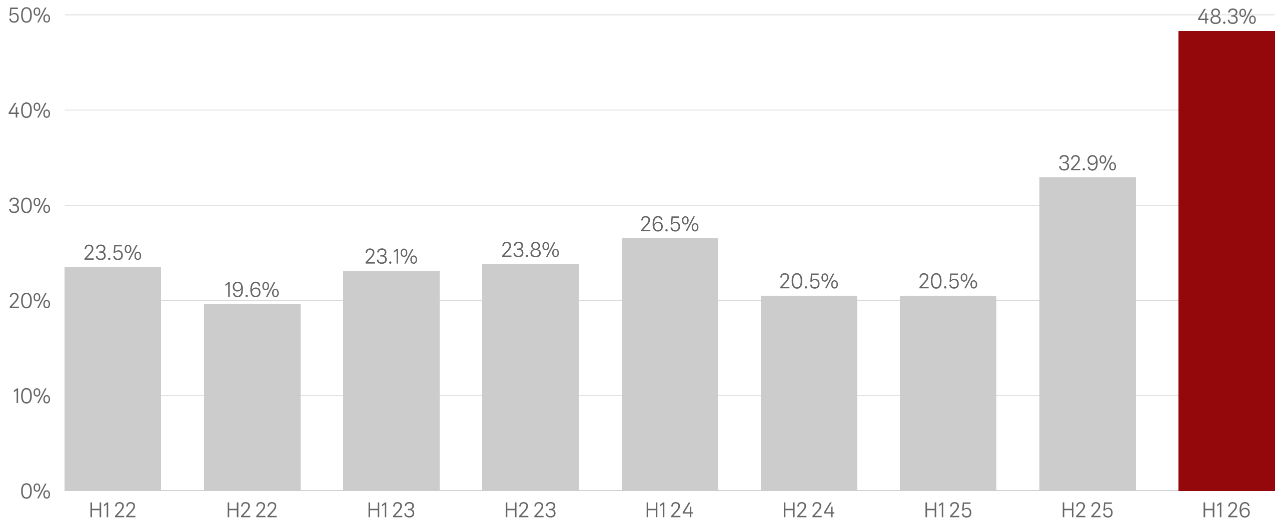


Source: Property Monitor

Commercial off-plan sales value (AED Bn)

Source: Property Monitor

Off-plan share of total transactions



Source: Property Monitor

48.3%

Nearly half of all commercial property transactions in H1 2026 were off-plan, up from just 20.5% one year earlier. The shift marks a significant change in a market historically dominated by ready assets.

Why commercial off-plan is booming now

The rapid growth of commercial off-plan is being supported by a combination of demand and supply-side factors. Strong occupier demand and continued business expansion are coinciding with the emergence of a new generation of commercial developments, creating new opportunities for investors across Dubai's evolving commercial property market.

Limited availability of high-quality commercial stock

Strong occupier demand led to a sustained shortage of well located, high-specification commercial space, particularly within the Grade A office segment. Citywide office occupancy is estimated at around 92-94%, rising to over 95% for Grade A assets, creating a clear incentive for developers to bring new high-quality commercial stock to market.

Dubai's expanding business economy

Continued company formation, international business relocation and economic diversification are creating deeper demand for commercial space and supporting investor confidence in future requirements. At a national level, the UAE's non-oil real GDP grew by 6.8% in 2025, reflecting the strength of the wider economic environment supporting demand across offices, retail, logistics and other commercial sectors.

A new generation of commercial developments

Developers are responding to demand with increasingly sophisticated office, retail and mixed-use projects offering higher specifications, stronger amenities and environments aligned with changing occupier expectations. This is expanding the investable commercial market beyond traditional completed stock and giving buyers access to a broader range of purpose-built, institutional grade assets.

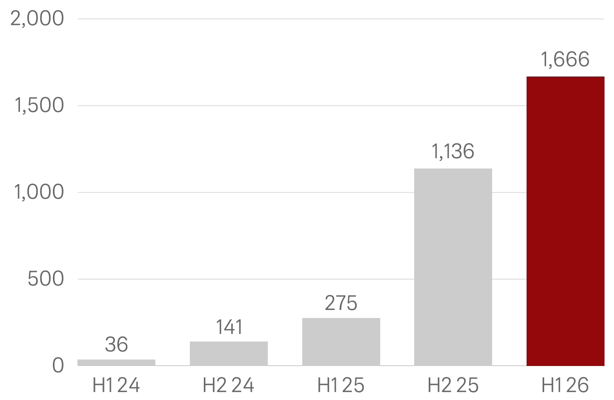
Commercial off-plan becomes more mainstream

Off-plan investment has long been a defining feature of Dubai's residential property market, but opportunities within the commercial sector have historically been more limited. The recent expansion of new office, retail and mixed-use developments is changing this, bringing off-plan commercial property into the mainstream and opening a new segment of the market to investors seeking exposure before completion.

The driving force behind commercial off-plan growth

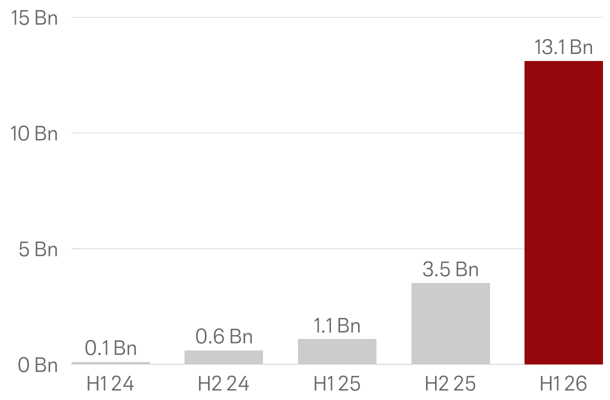
Offices have emerged as the primary driver of Dubai's commercial off-plan expansion. Off-plan office sales increased from just 36 transactions in H1 2024 to 1,666 transactions worth AED 13.1 billion in H1 2026. Offices accounted for more than half of all commercial off-plan transactions in H1 2026 and approximately 77% of total off-plan sales value. The growth has coincided with a significant shift in the type and positioning of office inventory entering the market. Average off-plan office prices reached AED 3,874 per sq.ft. in H1 2026, compared with AED 2,042 per sq.ft. in the secondary market, reflecting the increasing concentration of new supply within higher-specification and premium developments. Rather than simply expanding in volume, Dubai's off-plan office market is increasingly being shaped by a new generation of Grade A commercial projects.

Office off-plan sales volume



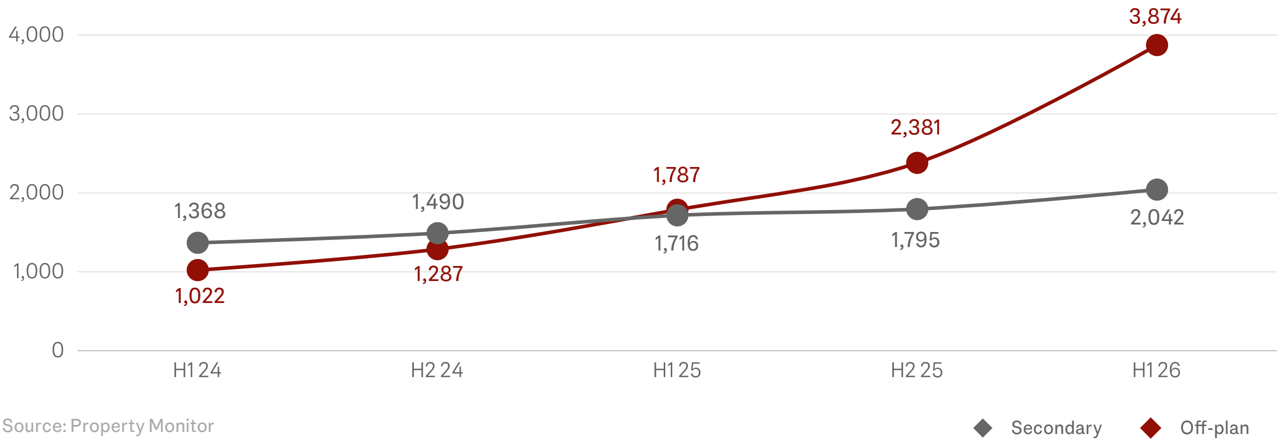
Source: Property Monitor

Office off-plan sales value (AED Bn)



Source: Property Monitor

Average office price (AED/sq.ft.)



Source: Property Monitor

AED 3,874/sq.ft.

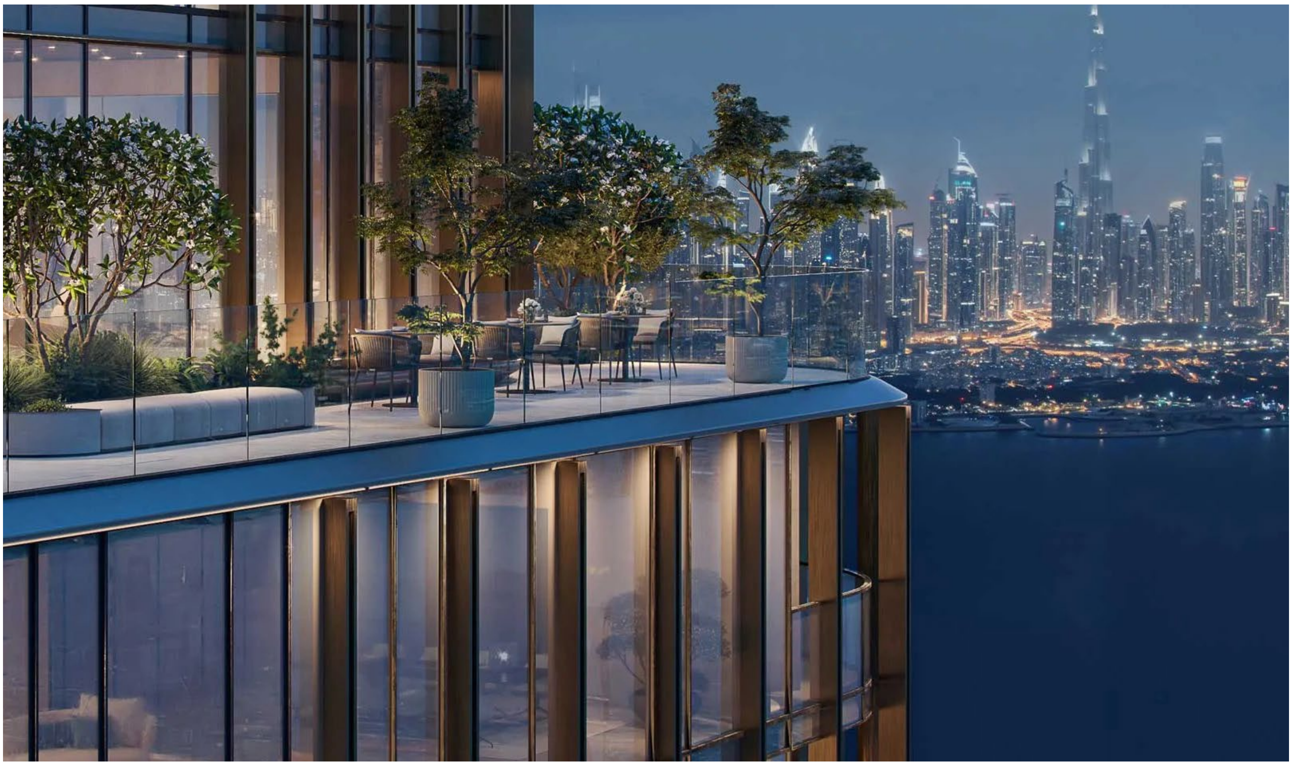
AVG. OFF-PLAN OFFICE PRICE IN H1 2026

Almost 90% above the secondary market average of AED 2,042 per sq.ft. The premium reflects the growing concentration of off-plan activity within higher-specification, premium office developments, highlighting how investors are increasingly allocating capital towards Dubai's next generation of commercial assets.

Where off-plan office investment is happening

Off-plan office investment in H1 2026 was concentrated within a relatively small number of locations, with the six leading communities accounting for approximately 89% of total sales value. Business Bay emerged as the clear centre of capital deployment, recording AED 6.77 billion in sales across 475 transactions and attracting activity across several major new developments.

However, the data also highlights how differently Dubai's emerging off-plan office markets are developing. Al Sufouh recorded the highest transaction volume, driven entirely by Shahrukhz by Danube, while major individual projects also shaped activity in Trade Centre 2 and Dubai Maritime City. Average pricing ranged from AED 1,778 per sq.ft. in Majan to AED 5,120 per sq.ft. in Business Bay, demonstrating the increasingly broad range of locations, product types and investment entry points available within the sector.



AED 6.77bn

H1 2026

Business Bay alone accounted for more than half of Dubai's total off-plan office sales value in H1 2026.

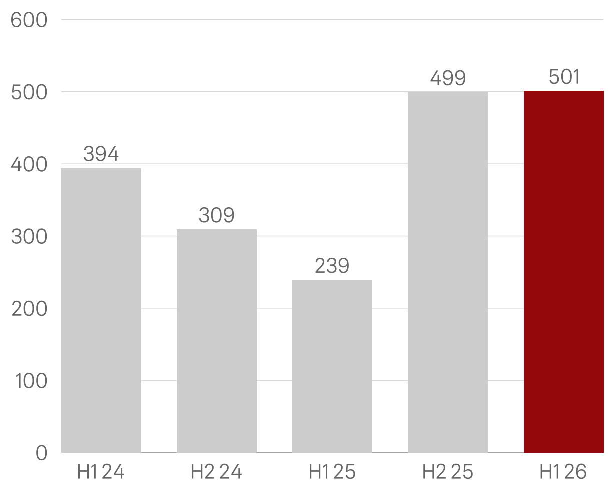
Leading locations for off-plan office investment (H1 2026)

Community	Transactions	Sales Value	Avg. AED/sq.ft.	Key Developments
Business Bay	475	AED 6.77bn	AED 5,120	HQ by Rove Lumena Alta Lumena Burj Capital
Trade Center 2	76	AED 1.68bn	AED 4,902	AHS Tower
Al Sufouh	498	AED 1.45bn	AED 4,278	Shahrukhz by Danube
Dubai Maritime City	88	AED 1.01bn	AED 3,686	31 Above
Meydan Horizon	70	AED 0.66bn	AED 3,162	The Symphony by Imtiaz
Majan	68	AED 0.13bn	AED 1,778	Samana Barari Avenue

Off-plan investment accelerates

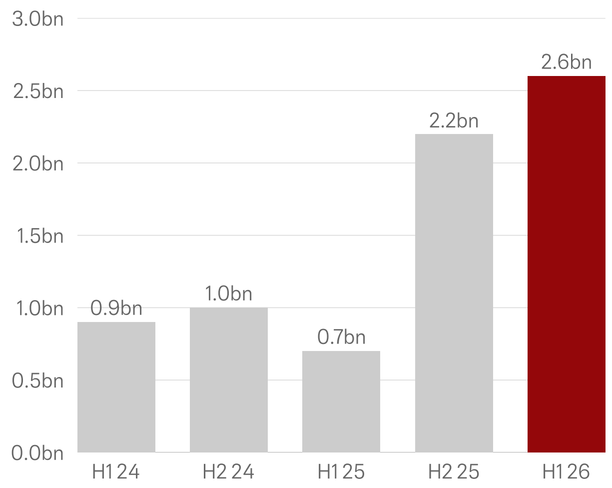
Off-plan retail has been an established part of Dubai's commercial property market for several years, but the scale of investment has accelerated significantly since the second half of 2025. H1 2026 recorded 501 off-plan retail transactions worth AED 2.6 billion, with off-plan properties accounting for 58.7% of all retail sales during the period. Investment growth has been accompanied by strong pricing for new retail stock. Average off-plan prices reached AED 4,054 per sq.ft. in H1 2026, approximately 52% above the secondary market average of AED 2,673 per sq.ft. Unlike the office market, this premium is not a recent development, with off-plan retail consistently commanding higher average prices since at least 2024, reflecting the different locations and characteristics of new retail supply entering the market.

Retail off-plan sales volume



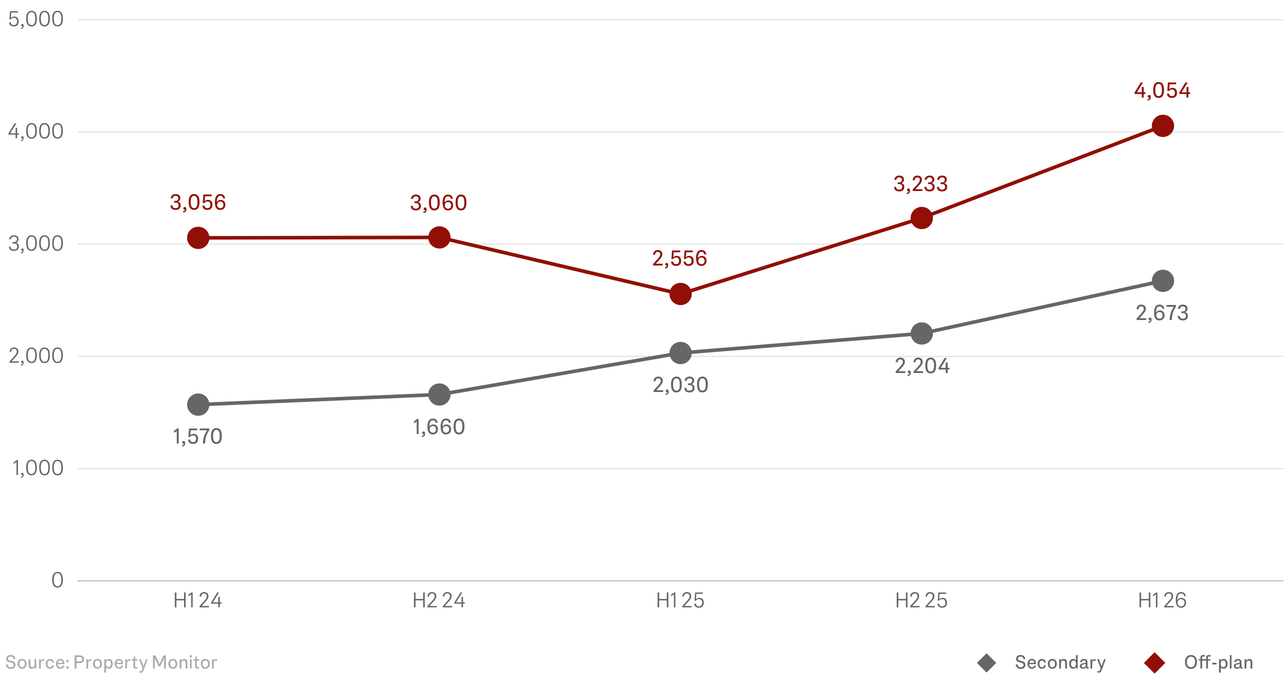
Source: Property Monitor

Retail off-plan sales value (AED Bn)



Source: Property Monitor

Average retail price (AED/sq.ft.)



Source: Property Monitor

Retail growth follows residential development

The expansion of Dubai's off-plan retail market is closely connected to the city's residential growth. As new apartment towers and master-planned communities are developed, retail units are increasingly incorporated at ground and podium level, creating commercial space designed to serve the residents and wider catchment of these emerging neighbourhoods. This creates a different investment dynamic from the office market. Rather than being concentrated primarily within major business districts, off-plan retail activity is distributed across residential growth locations such as JVC, Majan, Dubai South and Motor City. For investors, the long-term performance of these assets is therefore closely linked to factors such as residential occupancy, population growth, accessibility, visibility and the level of competing retail supply within the surrounding community.

Investing in future catchment

For off-plan retail investors, the surrounding development pipeline can be as important as the individual unit. Residential handovers, eventual occupancy, accessibility, visibility and competing retail supply will all influence the size and quality of the future customer base.

Leading locations for off-plan retail investment (H1 2026)

	Community	Transactions	Sales Value	Avg. AED/sq.ft.	Key Developments
◆	Sobha Central	38	AED 330.2m	AED 6,668	Sobha Central Mall
◆	JVC	62	AED 279.4m	AED 2,772	Broad project mix
◆	Motor City	43	AED 247.6m	AED 3,854	Sobha Orbis, 15 Cascade
◆	Dubai South	49	AED 131.9m	AED 3,767	Azizi Venice
◆	Majan	50	AED 90.9m	AED 2,575	Celia Heights, Samana projects

Demand shifts towards purpose-built space

Dubai's industrial and logistics market is evolving alongside the wider commercial sector, although the development model differs considerably from offices and retail. Rather than being driven primarily by individual off-plan sales, new industrial supply is increasingly emerging through large-scale logistics parks, long-term leasing structures and build-to-suit developments tailored to occupier requirements.

Established industrial locations such as Al Quoz continue to benefit from strong connectivity and an established occupier base, but much of the available stock was built for an earlier generation of industrial demand. Businesses increasingly require higher clear heights, deeper yards, stronger power infrastructure, efficient loading facilities and layouts capable of supporting automation, distribution and more complex supply chains.

This is encouraging investment into a new generation of Grade A industrial and logistics assets. Developments such as Terralogix in Al Warsan demonstrate the shift towards professionally managed, master-planned logistics parks, while build-to-suit structures are enabling occupiers to secure purpose-built facilities without committing capital to land acquisition and development.

Build-to-suit gains traction

Build-to-suit allows industrial and logistics occupiers to define technical specifications, layouts and infrastructure before construction begins, typically under a long-term lease with the developer or investor. For businesses unable to find suitable existing stock, this can provide greater operational efficiency and long-term certainty than retrofitting an older facility.

A new generation of logistics assets

New logistics parks are increasingly focused on Grade A specifications, professional management and flexible, scalable layouts. Terralogix, for example, will provide 182,000 sqm of leasable Grade A logistics and light industrial space within a 305,000 sqm master-planned site in Al Warsan.

Dubai's commercial development pipeline

Dubai's commercial development pipeline is becoming broader and more sophisticated, with a new generation of offices, retail destinations, mixed-use projects and logistics assets progressing across both established and emerging locations. Rather than concentrating exclusively within traditional business districts, new commercial supply is increasingly following the city's wider expansion, from premium office towers in Business Bay to retail and logistics projects serving fast-growing residential and industrial corridors.

The pipeline also reflects a shift in product quality and development strategy. New projects are placing greater emphasis on Grade A specifications, amenities, professional management and flexible layouts, while payment plans and phased delivery structures are widening access for private investors. For occupiers, this is creating greater choice across modern, purpose-built commercial space. For investors, it is expanding the range of opportunities available before completion.

Lumena Alta

OMNIYAT

Ultra-luxury offices with extensive lifestyle and business amenities

BUSINESS BAY

PREMIUM OFFICES | Q3 2030

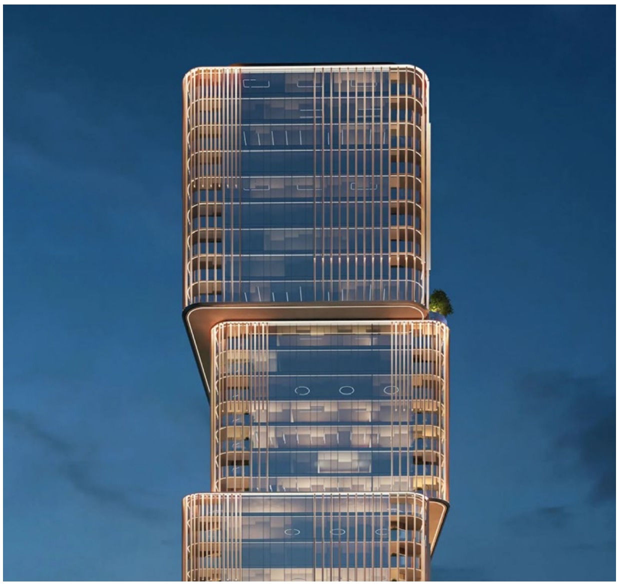
Enara by Omniyat

OMNIYAT

Ultra-luxury waterfront offices with private landscaped terraces, smart technology and an exclusive members' club.

BUSINESS BAY

PREMIUM OFFICES | Q4 2028



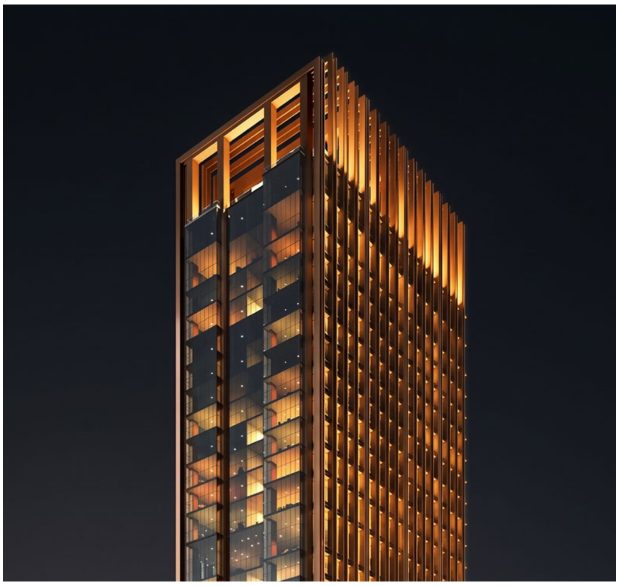
31 Above

BEYOND

Sea-view offices with 40+ amenities in an emerging commercial location

DUBAI MARITIME CITY

PREMIUM OFFICES | Q1 2029



Burj Capital

CENTURION PROPERTIES

Amenity-led offices with Sky Club, rooftop pool, gym and padel court

BUSINESS BAY
PREMIUM OFFICES | Q4 2028

Marriott Residences JVC

MARRIOT RESIDENCES

Licensed freehold F&B and retail within a branded hospitality development

JUMEIRAH VILLAGE CIRCLE
RETAIL & F&B | Q4 2026

Sobha Central Mall

SOBHA REALTY

Tech-enabled retail destination integrated within a six-tower mixed-use community

SHEIKH ZAYED ROAD
RETAIL | Q4 2030

Off-plan vs ready commercial property

The rapid expansion of Dubai's commercial off-plan market is giving investors significantly greater choice in how they gain exposure to the sector. While off-plan developments can provide access to new-generation assets, flexible payment structures and potential capital appreciation during construction, completed properties offer greater visibility over the asset, occupier demand and immediate income potential.

Neither approach is inherently better. The right strategy depends on an investor's objectives, appetite for development risk, income requirements and investment horizon. Understanding the differences is particularly important in commercial real estate, where location, specification, tenant demand and lease structure can have a significant influence on long-term performance.

Off-plan commercial property	Ready commercial property
Access to new-generation stock. Opportunity to invest in newly developed Grade A and higher-specification assets.	Established asset performance. Investors can assess the completed property, surrounding market and existing demand.
Flexible payment structures. Developer payment plans can spread capital requirements across the construction period.	Immediate income potential. Tenanted assets can generate rental income from acquisition.
Potential for capital appreciation. Investors may benefit if market values increase between purchase and completion.	Greater income visibility. Existing rents, leases and operating costs provide a clearer basis for assessing returns.
Wider choice at launch. Earlier purchasers may have greater choice of units, sizes, positions and layouts.	No construction wait. The asset can generally be occupied, leased or actively managed immediately.
Development and completion risk. Returns depend partly on successful delivery, timing and future market conditions.	Higher upfront capital requirement. Payment is typically concentrated around acquisition rather than spread through construction.

Different strategies, different opportunities

Off-plan can appeal to investors seeking longer-term capital growth, flexible payment structures and exposure to Dubai's newest commercial developments. Ready properties may be better suited to investors prioritising immediate rental income, greater visibility over asset performance and reduced development risk.

What should commercial investors look for?

Investing in off-plan commercial property requires a different assessment from residential real estate. Beyond price and payment terms, investors need to consider how the asset will perform for future occupiers, whether the location supports the intended use and how the development will compete when it reaches the market.

Developer track record
Assess the developer's experience delivering commercial projects, including build quality, completion history and the long-term management of completed assets. Commercial occupiers can be particularly sensitive to specification and operational performance.

Location and future demand
Consider who is likely to occupy the property when it completes. For offices, this may mean access to business districts, transport and surrounding amenities. For retail, residential catchment, footfall, visibility and competing supply become critical.

Specification and amenities
Commercial requirements extend well beyond aesthetics. Floorplates, ceiling heights, parking, accessibility, power provision, loading facilities, technology infrastructure and shared amenities can all influence occupier demand, depending on the asset type.

Payment plan and completion timeline
The payment structure should align with the investor's capital position and intended holding period. Completion timing also matters, particularly when assessing future supply, expected occupier demand and when the asset can begin generating income.

Exit and leasing strategy
Investors should consider the likely tenant profile, achievable lease structure and potential resale market before purchasing. A strong commercial investment needs a clear route to generating income or attracting another buyer after completion.

Specialist advice matters
Commercial property is highly asset-specific, and two units within the same development can have very different investment potential. Working with a commercial real estate specialist can help investors assess developer credentials, future occupier demand, specifications, competing supply and realistic leasing potential before committing to an off-plan purchase.

Outlook: the next phase of Dubai commercial real estate

Dubai's commercial real estate outlook remains positive, supported by continued economic expansion, population growth and the city's increasing importance as a global destination for businesses, investment and trade. These structural drivers are supporting demand across the commercial market, although the factors shaping each asset class are increasingly distinct.

Offices are benefiting from continued business formation, corporate expansion and international companies establishing or growing their presence in Dubai. High occupancy and rising rents have highlighted the shortage of Grade A space, while the strong response to recent launches demonstrates significant investor appetite for the next generation of premium office developments.

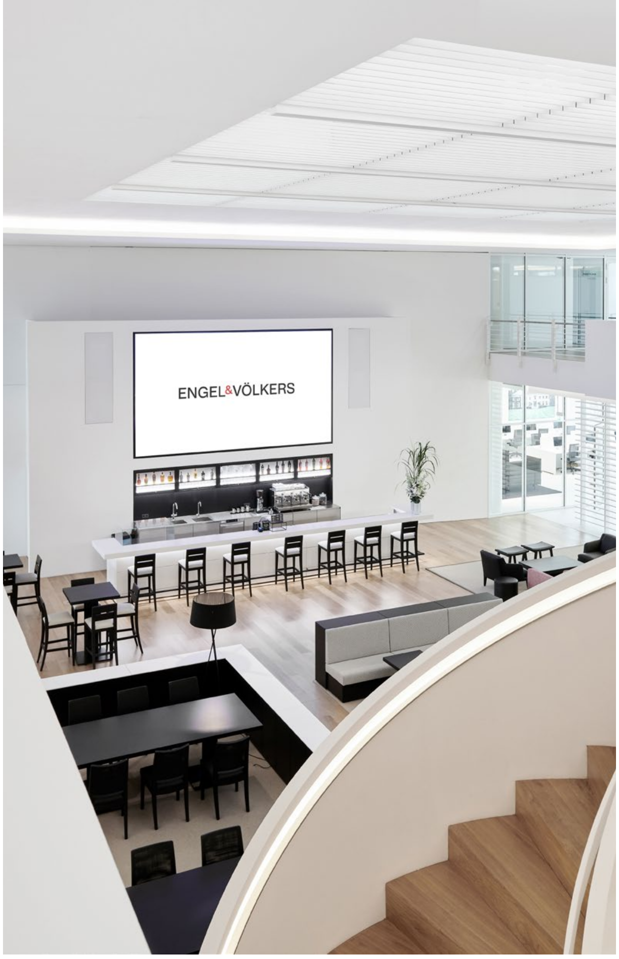
Retail continues to benefit from Dubai's expanding population, tourism and resilient consumer economy. As residential development extends into new communities, opportunities are emerging beyond established retail destinations, particularly where new supply can serve growing residential catchments.

Industrial and logistics remain supported by Dubai's strategic position between major global markets, its transport and trade infrastructure and the continued expansion of logistics, distribution and manufacturing activity. Growing occupier requirements for modern specifications should further support demand for Grade A logistics parks and purpose-built facilities.

Across each sector, the expansion of the development pipeline should gradually increase the availability of modern commercial stock. However, recent transaction activity, high occupancy rates and rental growth indicate substantial demand for well-located, high-quality assets, and we expect commercial off-plan investment to remain an increasingly important part of Dubai's property market. As supply expands, selectivity will become increasingly important. Future performance will depend on the quality of the development, location, specification, competing supply and depth of occupier demand. Dubai's commercial growth story remains compelling, but investors will need to look beyond headline market momentum and identify the projects best positioned to meet the requirements of tomorrow's businesses.

A global network with local market experts

For 49 years, we have specialized in the brokerage of residential and commercial property in the premium segment. As a leading real estate platform, we operate across 5 continents, providing specialized local knowledge on a global scale.



> 35
COUNTRIES
Ensure our presence across five continents

49
YEARS
Successful in global real estate since 1977

> 200
AGENTS
Professional real estate consultants in Dubai

> 16,700
PEOPLE
Work under the brand around the world

> €1.3bn
REVENUE
The total turnover (gross) in 2025

> 1,100
LOCATIONS
Provide local market expertise from experts

Methodology
Our market experts have taken a holistic approach to provide a comprehensive overview of Dubai's commercial real estate market for H1 2026. We have used the Property Monitor Intelligence Platform, which contains detailed DLD transaction information, alongside our internal sales and leasing data, to build a full picture of market trends and dynamics. This rigorous analysis ensures an in-depth understanding of the residential real estate market in Dubai.

Meet the team

Daniel Hadi
CEO - Middle East
Get in touch

Diana Dzaka
CMO - Middle East
Get in touch

Alex Lourenco
Head of Commercial
Get in touch

Rogier Arends
Sales Manager
Get in touch

A global network with local market experts

For 49 years, we have specialized in the brokerage of residential and commercial property in the premium segment. As a leading real estate platform, we operate across 5 continents, providing specialized local knowledge on a global scale.

> 35
COUNTRIES
Ensure our presence across five continents

49
YEARS
Successful in global real estate since 1977

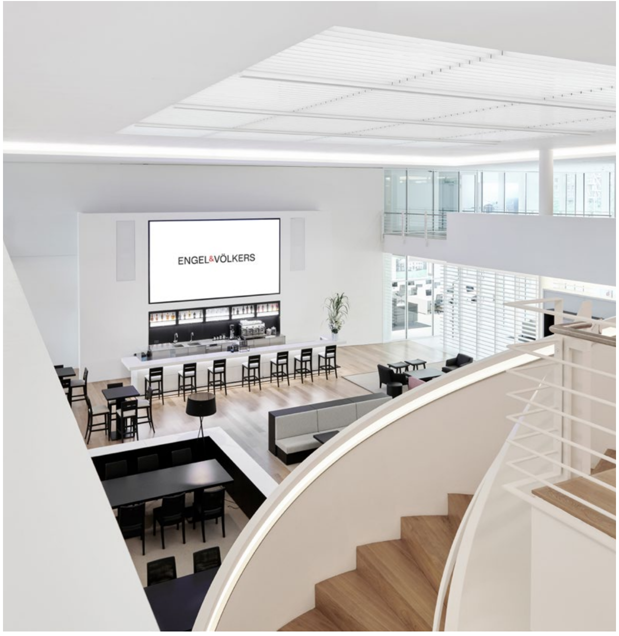
> 200
AGENTS
Professional real estate consultants in Dubai

> 16,700
PEOPLE
Work under the brand around the world

> €1.3bn
REVENUE
The total turnover (gross) in 2025

> 1,100
LOCATIONS
Provide local market expertise from experts

Methodology
Our market experts have taken a holistic approach to provide a comprehensive overview of Dubai's commercial real estate market for H1 2026. We have used the Property Monitor Intelligence Platform, which contains detailed DLD transaction information, alongside our internal sales and leasing data, to build a full picture of market trends and dynamics. This rigorous analysis ensures an in-depth understanding of the residential real estate market in Dubai.



Meet the team

Daniel Hadi
CEO - Middle East
Get in touch

Diana Dzaka
CMO - Middle East
Get in touch

Alex Lourenco
Head of Commercial
Get in touch

Rogier Arends
Sales Manager
Get in touch

Richard Hoult
Sales Manager
Get in touch

DUBAI

Golden Mile Galleria 1, Mezzanine, Office 25, Palm Jumeirah, Dubai
Al Khail Plaza, 6th Floor, Jumeirah Village Triangle, Dubai, P.O.Box 2608 | ORN: 16081
+971 52 932 8933 | 800 3555 | dubai@engelvoelkers.com | www.engelvoelkers.com/ae/en