Lafayette, Lake Charles Continue To Advance

Growth in non-residential construction in the Lake Charles and Lafayette areas of the state continued through the first nine months of 1981, while activity in the Bayou Parishes was off when compared to the same period in 1980.

The findings are part of the Commercial-Industrial (C-I) Construction Indez of the Associated General Contractors of Louisiana, an index designed to chart and forecast non-residential construction spending by general contractors.

Contracts in the Lake Charles area awarded to AGC member firms stood at a monthly average of $10 million through the third quarter of 1981, up 30.2% over 1980’s pace of $7.7 million.

“We’re not surprised at the continued increase in spending, since the Lake Charles area, a major center for industrial expansion, is demonstrating its attractiveness to that segment of the economy,” says Carl Ivey, chairman of the AGC’s Lake Charles District.

“Through September of last year, AGC member firms reported $90 million in contract awards for non-residential construction,” he said.

The Lafayette region, too, continued to experience strong advances, with monthly expenditures through the third quarter up 10.6%, from $5 million in 1980 to $5.5 million in the same period in 1981.

“Our growth in this area has been consistent,” says Frank Etier, chairman of the Acadian District of the AGC of Louisiana. “And because of continuing opportunities in the oil and gas industry, we don’t see a downturn in the near future.”

Meanwhile, non-residential construction in the Bayou Parishes of Iberia, Lafourche, St. Mary and Terrebonne was off in the first nine months of 1981 compared to 1980. Contract awards averaging $364,000 a month were 70.5% below 1980 levels. In addition, building permit volumes reported to the AGC by the U.S. Department of Commerce were off 24.4% from the same period a year earlier.