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Potential economic boom of summits being assessed

Regional Economics Applications Laboratory at the University of Illinois has estimated that local spending could hit \$150 million

By [Kathy Bergen](#), Chicago Tribune reporter

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Chicago's host committee for the May international summits has yet to estimate the potential economic impact on the city, with an analysis expected to be unveiled in late March or early April. But unofficial estimates have begun to get attention.

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Lori Healey, the committee's executive director, on Monday cited a preliminary estimate drawn up last fall by the Regional Economics Applications Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

She mentioned an \$8 million effect during remarks at an Illinois Restaurant Association luncheon. That figure represents the estimated state and local taxes expected to be generated during the G-8 and NATO summits, said Geoffrey Hewings, director of the U. of I. economics lab.

The economists estimated that \$66 million would be spent in the region on hotels, restaurants and entertainment. That total included the expected federal reimbursement for security costs, such as police overtime. Since then, other sources have put the potential security spending at \$40 million to \$65 million.

The U. of I. lab also estimated an additional \$84 million in indirect, ripple-effect spending, for a total of \$150 million.

Its estimate assumes 10,000 visitors, with each staying five days. Though the summits run over three days, May 19 through 21, it is expected that delegation staff will spend additional time here in preparation for the meetings.

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