

Infrastructure

NAA Viewpoint

Federal Infrastructure policy should drive new investment in housing, promote transit-oriented and high-density development, ease regulatory barriers to apartment construction and fund community-level infrastructure needs.

The Build More Housing Near Transit Act aims to facilitate the construction of more housing, increase transit ridership and maximize federal investments.

Changing demographics, economic factors, lifestyle preferences and other considerations are spurring historic demand for apartment homes, uprooting the housing development patterns of the past 50 years and placing upward pressure on housing affordability. Recent research by NAA and the National Multifamily Housing Council reveals that America must build at least 4.6 million new apartment homes at all price points by 2030 or risk facing a serious shortage.

This undersupply of housing and the resulting affordability crisis are particularly acute in walkable, transit-served locations. Demand for these walkable, transit-oriented communities has increased, but housing production has not always followed due, in large part, to artificial barriers. Bipartisan legislation, the Build More Housing Near Transit Act, H.R. 4307, would ensure that housing is a higher priority in federally funded transit projects.

Transit is critical for connecting Americans to economic opportunities, but the benefits of transit are not fully realized when stations are located too far from a high concentration of housing. Land-use policies that allow an adequate supply of housing near transit-served areas will increase ridership and allow a greater number of people better access to jobs and amenities.

As policymakers consider infrastructure legislation, we urge the inclusion of H.R. 4307 to support housing development near transit locations. H.R. 4307 would help address the need for housing near transit by:

- Maximizing federal investment in fixed-guideway transit by ensuring the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) takes a holistic and quantitative approach to evaluating the potential for affordable and market-rate housing development near transit station areas;
- Improve the rating criteria for the FTA New Starts program, which funds transit projects like commuter rail, light rail and bus rapid transit through the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program;
- Prioritizing local commitments to change land-use policies to accommodate market-rate and affordable housing.