

NMHC/NAA Viewpoint

Outdated land-use policies and zoning laws are giving way to smarter growth plans that include apartments. Apartments represent compact and efficient development and provide many economic benefits to their communities.

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LAND USE

Changing demographics, employment patterns and lifestyle preferences are creating demand for new types of homes, offices and retail outlets. In turn, this trend is challenging the sprawling, low-density development pattern of the past 50 years. Understanding that the suburban growth model is unsustainable, many community leaders are turning to apartments to help create vibrant, economically strong communities where citizens can enjoy a high-quality lifestyle.

In addition to offering their residents numerous advantages, including maintenance-free living, proximity to job centers and flexibility, apartment communities also benefit their surrounding communities in the following ways:

Economic growth. The apartment industry and its residents contribute more than \$1 trillion to the economy annually

Infill opportunities. According to University of Utah professor, development trends expert and author Arthur C. Nelson, more than half of all new development is set to occur in infill and redevelopment areas by 2030. Apartments are a perfect fit for these opportunities, representing compact development and new economic stimulus for existing neighborhoods.

Traffic reduction. Apartments help minimize congestion because apartment residents own fewer cars and are more likely to use public transportation. In fact, one in four apartment residents use alternate transportation to commute, like walking, biking or taking the subway.

Municipal savings. Apartments also help localities reduce costs and taxes by concentrating public services, such as water, sewer, roads, and police and fire operations, over a smaller area. On average, an apartment home costs municipalities \$7,000 less to service than a single-family home.

Sustainable growth. Apartments' higher density and compact development are also more environmentally friendly, helping preserve parks and other natural areas.