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Journal of Property Management

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INSTITUTE OF REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT

May/June 2021

Tenants' perspectives

*Attracting the next
generation and
adapting to today's
amenity demands*

- › Catering to commuters in Montreal
- › Fostering an inclusive environment
- › Announcing the Elaina's Sustainability Fund recipients



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JPM®, *Journal of Property Management* (JPM® ISSN 0022-3905) is published bimonthly by the Institute of Real Estate Management, 430 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611. Internet: www.irem.org. This publication is provided as a medium for the expression of individual opinion concerning management practices and procedures. The articles and advertisements printed herein do not necessarily represent the endorsement of the Institute of Real Estate Management or of the majority of its members excepting such statements that are so designated. The editors exercise only a general supervision of the material and assume no responsibility for claims made in advertisements or for opinions and statements expressed in articles.

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Postmaster: Send address changes to JPM®, *Journal of Property Management*, Fifth Floor: 430 N. Michigan Ave. Chicago, IL 60611. Printed in U.S.A.

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President’s letter

Location, location, location! That’s the timeless refrain when it comes to real estate, and it’s still true to this day. But there’s a deeper meaning in that maxim we can take to heart as property managers: Location matters when it’s where people want to be. The theme of this edition of JPM is the tenant and resident perspective. Our profession might very well not require the level of specialized skillsets that it currently does were it not for the numerous types of end users we serve. In fact, IREM is unique in the real estate management community in that we serve professionals in all asset classes!

One of the initiatives of my term as IREM president is partnerships. IREM was founded out of the recognition that skilled, educated, and certified professionals are needed to maintain relationships and satisfy the needs of tenants, residents, owners, and investors. What each of us as real estate professionals can do right now is take stock of our relationships with key stakeholders and ask ourselves: What more could we do to move from building relationships to cultivating partnerships—not only partnerships with those we serve, but also those across the broad spectrum of real estate?

We all know that tenant satisfaction is a key driver of managing a successful property, and it’s also an indication that we’re performing our jobs well as property managers. IREM Federal Housing Advisory Board Member Eileen Wirth explores how property managers can better apply a partnership approach to developing relationships with building occupants in this issue’s Government affairs column on **P24**.

Across asset classes, we can observe the increasing demand for newer and better on-site amenities, and the ever-increasing array of innovative options being developed to satisfy those demands. For a closer look at the creature comforts tenants are looking for in 2021, check out the feature on amenities on **P12**.

While these extra on-site conveniences are becoming increasingly indispensable to properties vying for best-use occupants, deft renters like those of Generation Z now entering the residential market remind us that fancy photos and flattering descriptions aren’t enough to fill units. Read what will get Gen Z residents signing and renewing leases on **P6**.

Any effort spent attracting tenants and residents is for naught if they don’t feel like an integral and valued part of the properties they’re renting. We can easily understand



Chip Watts, CPM, CCIM, at IREM Advocacy Impact Day

the distinction between house and home, but we would be well served to extend that same care in seeing our buildings as communities for those who spend their lives (or careers) within them. In the second installment of IREM’s diversity, equity, & inclusion (DE&I) column on **P22**, you can take a deeper look at what it means for property managers to create an environment that is truly inclusive.

Elaina Tattersdale dreamed of creating a better world by improving sustainability in the built environment. Sadly, Elaina passed away of cancer in 2019 at just 35 years old. Her parents, 2020 IREM President Cheryl Gray and her husband, Rick Gray, had an idea: The family would donate \$50,000 to the IREM Foundation to seed a new fund that would support sustainability in Elaina’s name. Her passion for making a difference will live on through the new Elaina’s Sustainability Fund, and IREM is truly honored to steward her legacy. On **P28**, you can get a closer look at the person behind the name, the initial class of grant recipients, and what this will mean for the larger IREM family moving forward, including how you can support the fund.

We’re nearly at the halfway mark of 2021. Time flies when you take it one day at a time. That’s how we made it through the last year and a half and through the most trying of times—and it’s how we’ll continue to come out on top of whatever obstacles lie ahead! Enjoy the arrival of summer wherever you are, and I eagerly await bringing y’all more great news from IREM in the next edition of JPM.

W.A. “Chip” Watts IV, CPM, CCIM
IREM President



Source: CNBC, "As store owners sign more short-term leases, landlords are taking a risky bet on the future of retail"

Shifting expectations

More than a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, an updated picture of tenant expectations is coming into focus. A survey of more than 10,000 apartment seekers in February 2021 revealed that lifestyle improvement was the main motivator in apartment selection, with the top features people search for being open-air amenities (21%) and more space (20%). This is in contrast to the March 2020 renter survey, when the top renter preference was price, and the top concern was safety.

Source: RENTCafé 2021 Renter Survey

Read more
about popular
amenities in the
feature on **P12**.

"Building a good customer experience does not happen by accident. It happens by design." —Clare Muscutt



Mixed innovation

Rising up on the site of a former Sears building in Houston, the innovative Ion, a 260,000-square-foot structure, plans to bring entrepreneurial, corporate, and academic tenants together in a collaborative community. In an effort to support startups working on smart city solutions, the development will include the Ion Smart and Resilient Cities Accelerator in partnership with the City of Houston, Microsoft, and Intel. Projected to open in 2021, the Ion also will include:

- Shared workspaces
- Prototyping and maker resources
- Commercial offices
- Restaurants and cafes
- Academic and event spaces
- Indoor and outdoor communal areas
- Shared amenities

Source: ionhouston.com



Office insight

73% of office landlords say that digital marketing tactics have become necessary to attract tenants, and almost 60% say that tenants expect a virtual space tour before an in-person tour.

Source: 2021 VTS Global Office Landlord Report

93% of U.S. apartment seekers use online reviews in their search for a rental

74% of renters read up to 10 reviews before making a decision

For upcoming webinars to expand your property management knowledge and skills, visit irem.org/products/live-webinars.

Source: IREM webinar featuring Podium, "Tenant reviews: How to grow your online reputation and win"

Next-gen appeal

Focusing your marketing to reach Generation Z

The year was 1997—scientists successfully cloned Dolly the sheep, Purl entered the consumer market, Seinfeld was the top show in the Nielsen ratings, and the first members of Generation Z were just born.

With birthdates roughly between 1997 and 2012, Gen Z is the first tech-native generation, never knowing a world before the internet. Creative, culturally diverse, and entrepreneurial, they are concerned with the greater good, as well as financial security, having watched their parents' experiences during the Great Recession.

The oldest in the generation are turning 24 this year, and these Gen Zers, or Zoomers, were the fastest-growing active renter segment in the U.S. in 2020—no small feat given the tumultuous past year.

"We've got an entire group of individuals who are trying to establish themselves," says Barret Newberry, CEO of Seattle-based rental marketplace platform Leasera. "And it's been a tough year. For Gen Z and landlords, this can be mutually beneficial."



Image: iStock.com/Lifestyle

Projections show Zoomers will spend more on rent in their lifetimes than their millennial predecessors, according to a HotPads analysis. And as their influence on the rental market will only grow, shifting marketing to attract their attention is paramount. But it takes the right channels and messaging to do it successfully.

A mobile approach

As the most tech-savvy generation to date, it comes as no surprise that their phones are the best place to reach them.

Donna Schmidt, CPM, COO of Price Brothers Management in Overland Park, Kansas, says her company has zeroed in on reaching Gen Z this way through a number of digital strategies, including geofencing, a marketing strategy that involves digitally advertising to potential tenants within a certain geographic radius.

“Chatbots, virtual tours—everything we were forced to do in 2020—that all came very naturally to them,” Schmidt says. “Chatbots really seem to have immediate interactions. We’ve added them to most of our websites, and we’ve added stories to all of our social media platforms.”

Gen Z prefers images over text, and they lose interest more quickly than other generations, says Sherle Brown, an

Gen Z snapshot

- DOB:** Roughly between 1997–2012
- Likes:** Authenticity, luxury, inclusivity, individuality, contributing to the greater good, financial security
- Defining characteristics:**
- The first generation to never know a world without the internet
 - On track to be the most educated generation yet
 - Hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, as they are just trying to establish themselves
 - More racially and ethnically diverse than previous generations
 - Creative and entrepreneurial

Additional sources: Pew Research Center and Deloitte



Image: iStock.com/recep-bg



“Give them the lay of the land. When I’m hungry in the middle of the night, where can I get food? If it’s Friday and I’m burned out, what can I do on the weekend?”

—Barret Newberry, Leasera

instructor and family and consumer sciences (FACS) faculty ambassador at the University of Georgia, who is involved in outreach marketing targeting Gen Z. “Images are good for grabbing attention, particularly images of something they emotionally connect with doing or that include celebrities or people their own age,” she says.

Brown says research at the university has found that Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube channels are the most effective for reaching this audience, whereas channels such as Facebook, Google, and Twitter are better for older generations.

She acknowledges that grabbing and keeping their attention through online marketing can be a challenge, though, thanks to all of the competing digital noise and their preference for completing transactions on phones, which isn’t always the most user-friendly method. “Messages must be powerful but short,” Brown says. “That is not easy. You must entertain first and then quickly provide a hook to get to the next step. Every step must be close to perfect.”

Newberry says marketing this way is a major shift for some industry veterans. “The industry was built on in-person tours and paper leases, and Gen Z has entirely different expectations,” he says. “For an apartment complex to not use Instagram for marketing is pretty crazy. People want you to sell them an experience, not just a unit.”

Show me the assets

Selling Gen Z on an experience means showing them the experience.

“This means virtual tours of the unit and building and a detailed peek around the neighborhood,” Newberry says. “Creative property managers are starting to do self-walk-throughs of the community.”

These walk-throughs could feature popular restaurants in the area, entertainment spots, or even services available,

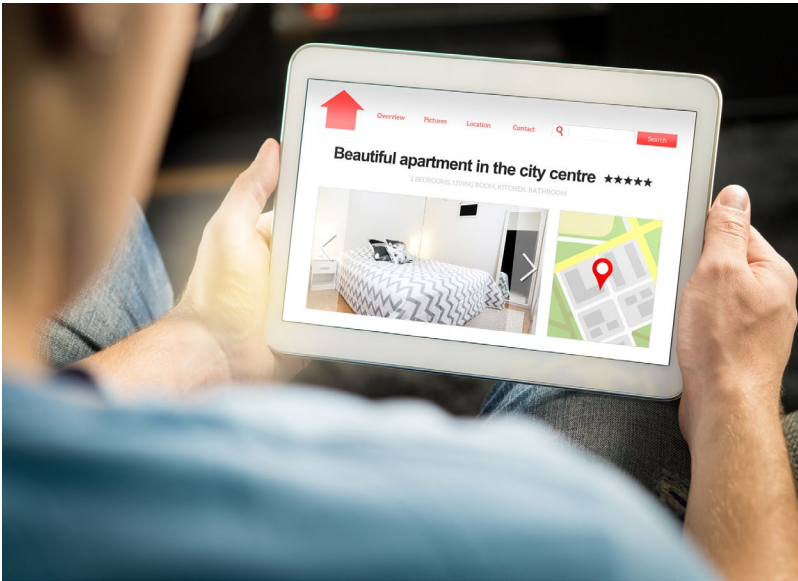


Image: iStock.com/Tero Vesalainen

like a robotics company that can deliver food to your door contact-free.

“Give them the lay of the land,” Newberry says. “When I’m hungry in the middle of the night, where can I get food? If it’s Friday and I’m burned out, what can I do on the weekend?”

In Schmidt’s communities, they have played to the creative sides of Gen Zers with classes and activities, like a virtual class on growing a succulent garden, which she says was a great success.

As for appealing to their altruistic ambitions, Gen Z wants to feel like their community makes a positive impact. They will be interested in anything that gives back and gets them involved, such as food drives, Schmidt says.

Image: iStock.com/Eva-Katalin



Grab their attention

A cheat sheet for marketing to Gen Z

- Be short and sweet.** Use well-thought-out images and minimal text.
- Get social.** The best places to reach Gen Z are Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.
- Show them.** Take them on a virtual walking tour of the unit, community, and surrounding neighborhood. Give them details on local delivery options, services, and entertainment.
- Highlight the upgrades.** Voice-activated smart technology and upscale amenities will go far. Tell them about any loyalty program or rewards partnerships you offer.
- Be authentic.** Don't try to mislead them with a fisheye lens or exaggerated descriptions.

Proving that your company serves the greater good—not just offering lip service—will go far in attracting this generation. “If you can prove that you’re actually part of a virtuous ecosystem, it will serve you incredibly well,” Newberry says.

And don’t forget to tell them about the tech. Just as technology is the way to reach them, it is also a major selling point.

“They get carried away just talking about smart technology in the home,” Brown says. “They love the ‘cool’ factor of technology, but much of the appeal is the convenience and control it provides to fit their lifestyles.”

She says students show the most interest in smart technology, such as voice-activated commands to lock doors, turn on lights, play music, turn on television, or control the temperature, among other tasks.

Along with the digital amenities, Gen Z wants to see upscale features. “When I asked a class what appeals to them with marketing, the first answer was ‘luxury,’” Brown says. “This was surprising, because I had read that luxury is not something Gen Z finds appealing. Informally, I asked students for a show of hands if they agreed. It was unanimous!”

Don’t forget the perks

As a generation that has been able to shop around for the best deal literally at their fingertips, Zoomers love incentives and rewards programs.

Price Brothers, for example, offers a Pet Royalty Club, which offers exclusive access to special offers and discounts at local pet-related businesses for tenants with pets. “Anything with pets, that’s huge. It really speaks to them,” Schmidt says. During the pandemic, Price Brothers hosted contests and drawings for residential tenants in an effort to drum up business for some of their ailing commercial tenants, like pet bakeries or groomers. “That spoke to our Gen Z residential tenants and really said, ‘We’re all in this together,’ and they really formed a bond.”

Leasera, whose platform links prospective renters with available properties, offers a loyalty program for tenants to amass points and use them with partner companies for discounts or free offers on hotel bookings, car rentals, dog walking, food delivery, and more.

“From the moment you sign up on Leasera, you begin accruing points,” Newberry says. “Renters



“They love the ‘cool’ factor of technology, but much of the appeal is the convenience and control it provides to fit their lifestyles.”

—Sherle Brown, University of Georgia

then accrue more points when they submit their background check or make their first rent payment.”

Offers featuring the words “free” and “giveaway” for items such as gift cards and iPads will catch their attention, Brown says. “But the positive will turn into a negative if it is difficult to take advantage of the offer,” she says. “They will repost to boost a message if it is easy for them.”

They also pay attention to reviews and ratings.

“If someone truly wants to impress and attract new [Gen Z] tenants, you’d better find a way to ensure your existing ones are happy,” Newberry says.

Mind the message

Two other things Gen Z loves: individuality and authentic messaging.

To craft the perfect personal message, property managers need to tap into the Gen Zers in their market. One aspect property managers should take into consideration is the diversity within Gen Z, as it creates differences in psychographics, Brown says.

“What is effective with one group within Gen Z may not be as effective with another,” she says. “Even geographic areas make a difference. For example, images of football may be extremely effective with Gen Z in the Southeast but not have much impact in another part of the country.”

Schmidt agrees. “This generation really does want to be talked to more personally, and they really want to be inclusive of everyone,” she says.

Image: iStock.com/wunder/suats



Every word and image of your marketing must be perfectly accurate, because these renters will point out any discrepancies, says Schmidt, who emphasizes how crucial this is, as it isn’t unusual for a Gen Z tenant to rent a unit sight-unseen.

“The times of having only pretty pictures and creative angles of your rooms are over,” Schmidt says. “You have to be very clear about the product. There is no hiding.”

Brown agrees. “They know things aren’t perfect, and they don’t trust language that comes across as manipulative or as a sales pitch,” she says.

A booming future

By 2025, about 45 million Gen Zers will be at the peak ages for renting (20–29), an estimation that cannot be ignored by property managers. Looking forward, property managers need to be open to adapting practices to not only attract, but also retain Gen Z renters. “To keep these high-value customers happy and loyal, you’re going to have to get with the digital, more personalized program,” Newberry says.

Fortunately, these high-value customers can be yours for the taking. With the right marketing tools and mindset, you can ensure that your properties are the top choices when these prized renters log on and search for apartments in your area. ▀



“The times of having only pretty pictures and creative angles of your rooms are over. You have to be very clear about the product. There is no hiding.”

—Donna Schmidt, CPM, Price Brothers Management

Accelerated

Resident requests in a post-COVID world

amenities

By John Salustri

There is an increasingly common

theme around our ongoing experience with COVID-19. Namely, despite the watershed changes the pandemic has made to our relationship with work, productivity, and how we socialize, not every change we've experienced this past year is a COVID-driven disruptor. Alongside last year's quick shifts, there were also trends in place prior to 2020 that have only accelerated. We're seeing it with the growth of technology as well as the greater emphasis on locations other than our central business districts.

Tenants can paint or build furniture in spaces specially fitted out by CF Real Estate.

Such also seems to be the case when the topic turns to amenities. It's not just the obvious considerations like deeper cleaning, hand sanitizer stations, and plexiglass; this discussion revolves around the tenant and resident requests that make life bearable in both quiet times and periods of risk. These are the amenities that differentiate an asset and challenge property managers to think outside of the COVID-19 box, largely in the name of comfort and support. And, as you'll read shortly, these requests can be fairly colorful.

The same, only more

Says Kevin Owens, CPM: "Rather than create a new need, more than anything, the pandemic has accelerated the implementation and reconfiguration of certain amenities." Owens, the executive vice president of property operations for CF Real Estate Services in Atlanta, manages some 26,000 units and says the most common post-COVID request, especially from prospects, has been the ability to pass through a building and into their apartments in touchless fashion. And while CF was already building out its tech, the requests have ramped up, he says.

Despite CF's blossoming technological capabilities, the focus seems to be on traditional offerings with a COVID twist. "They're looking for areas to gather in a private space without a big crowd, with firepits and outdoor exercise equipment," Owens says. "We're not hearing anything much different than before."

"Residents are looking for us to up our game in terms of amenities," adds Miranda Jernigan, CPM, ARM, senior regional property manager at McLean, Virginia-based Kettler Management. Similar to before the pandemic, residents in the communities Kettler



Image: iStock.com/laona



“The more we know about COVID, and the more we discover that gathering outside is safer, residents want to socialize rather than spend all their time in their apartments.”

—Miranda Jernigan, CPM, ARM, Kettler Management

manages throughout the South and Mid-Atlantic states still want private work and play space. "They want us to have the latest and greatest in workout trends. Peloton bikes and virtual workouts are popular," she says.

She says residents look to management to provide anything they can't get in their apartments, including grilling stations and outdoor spaces where people can gather in small groups. Pet amenities also remain high on the resident wish list, such as dog washing stations. "The more we know about COVID, and the more we discover that gathering outside is safer, residents want to socialize rather than spend all their time in their apartments," she says.

Regina Mullins, CPM, CCIM, adds an interesting riff on the requested-amenities theme from the commercial perspective. "It's not so much that tenants are asking for it," says the director of roughly 14 Washington D.C.-area properties for Cushman & Wakefield. "It's the leasing brokers."

Essentially, buildings in their sites have to check certain boxes. "Are you a class A building?" she asks. "If so, do you have a rooftop terrace, a fitness center, a conference center, and bike cages? Check, check, check." But once again, "Those boxes didn't change in 2020," she says.

It stands to reason that the past year, with its meteoric rise in work-from-home approaches, would also bring a flood of social-gathering requests, such as those listed above, to provide some relief for overstressed residents.



“Are you a class A building? If so, do you have a rooftop terrace, a fitness center, a conference center, and bike cages? Check, check, check.”

—Regina Mullins, CPM, CCIM

Akin to grilling stations and social areas, offices-on-demand give residents a chance to escape the confines of home. "We want to give our residents a chance to get out of their apartments and still get their jobs done," says Owens, who is currently president of IREM's Georgia Chapter.

"We've reconfigured some of our common areas to accommodate coworking," he adds. This comes in addition to more informal spaces that can be used for heads-down work. While coworking providers will enter into bespoke agreements with managers and landlords to create five-star spaces, Owens says CF manages the spaces on its own. In certain markets, he adds, the firm had to upgrade its Wi-Fi offerings just to ensure volume reliability.

But once again, there's nothing new under the COVID sun. "Personalized workspaces were a trend we saw four and five years ago," says Jernigan, who was the 2018 president of IREM's Northern Virginia Chapter. "Now they're getting more use."

Pay for play?

CPMs often chalk up the provision of such services to the cost of doing business. This has apparently been true through the pandemic as managers tried to help both tenants and residents over the hump of COVID-driven stresses. Chargebacks, however, are always an option.

"It depends in part on if you're a class A or B building," Mullins says. "But typically, there's not a huge return on investment in these amenities," other than getting on the short list of interested leasing brokers. For instance, towel service and attendants in fitness centers are costs typically eaten by building ownership, she says.



Image: iStock.com/archigram



“*Rather than create a new need, more than anything, the pandemic has accelerated the implementation and reconfiguration of certain amenities.*”

—Kevin Owens, CPM, CF Real Estate Services

The same has been true for CF’s coworking spaces—at least for their test run. “These were provided to give our residents options,” Owens says. “Also, since they were a relatively new offering, we didn’t have a good idea of what people would pay for.” As the pandemic wore on, though, the

demand soared. “We’ve been able to apply fees and actually grow them,” he says.

Owens notes that reservations and payments (the spaces are rented by the hour or the day) are handled by phone apps. Between uses, strict cleaning protocols are applied, “so the next user feels good about the space.”

Other offerings are harder to pin a cost to. Technology, he says, is tough to delineate. CF either folds the expenses into the base rent—depending in large part on what’s taking place in the local market—or ends up lumping tech, dog amenities, and the like into an umbrella amenities fee. “We attempt to monetize most of our amenities, but the reality is that a lot of this is trial-and-error,” he says. With all first-time offerings, “we collect usage and market data

Personalized workspaces were a trend we saw four and five years ago. Now they’re getting more use.

—Miranda Jernigan, CPM, ARM, Kettler Management



Private meeting space at Kettler

Photo © John Cole

to help us identify upfront what we can charge and then include those numbers in a pro forma,” he adds.

Amenities: onward and upward

Not surprisingly, the types of amenities occupants are asking for—and building managers are providing—are limited only by imagination. At the tamer end of the spectrum, Jernigan says they would sponsor monthly resident events in their communities. “After COVID, we flipped the script and started providing virtual events, something that would appeal to residents, get them outdoors and encourage small, safe gatherings,” Jernigan says. Food trucks are one example. Since the events were already budgeted, the property continues to foot the bill.

Moving a bit farther out on the scale, she says one of the Kettler-managed buildings has an indoor, half-court basketball court, a feature that also comes in handy for fitness classes and large resident events—at least with proper social distancing. Some of their properties offer rooftop dog parks, and she says other buildings have experimented with indoor pet areas.

Cooler still is the market set up in the lobby of another of their buildings, structured as a revenue share with management. “If the providing company meets a certain threshold, the building gets a certain percentage of the revenue,” she explains.

Increasingly, Owens says properties in the CF portfolio feature electric vehicle charging stations. While they’ve been popular in urban locations for a while now, he says their presence is growing in the suburbs, as well.

Almost as cool, however, are what Owens calls “experiential amenities, where we offer things like craft and building rooms where residents can paint something or build furniture. We provide the supplies and tools.”

But aren’t those accidents just waiting to happen? “The decision to offer any amenity has the potential for liability, even fitness environments,” he says. A rewording of insurance policies is a necessity, or, at the very least, they ask residents to sign a waiver. “We do as much as we can to protect ourselves, our clients, and our residents,” he says.

Ultimately, Owens sees more upside than down, especially in these cooped-up, COVID days. “When you live in an apartment, you don’t have many opportunities to do stuff like that.”



Five beehives at a Cushman & Wakefield asset

Photo by Cushman & Wakefield

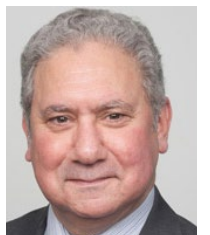
As stated, rooftop spaces in both commercial and residential properties are growing in their popularity for meetings and socializing. And here we find what’s probably the most intriguing of amenities: a rooftop apiary.

“We started doing it for sustainability,” Mullins says. “A vendor cares for the five hives in our Arlington property, and each houses about 1,000 bees. Honeybees in North America have been decimated, and our ownership has a strong environmental focus.”

And there’s an added benefit: honey. Curated by the vendor, the private-label jars are given to tenants and visitors alike. “It’s a marketing cost,” she explains.

In an era of unprecedented stresses, property managers have it in their power to help their residents and tenants maintain a bit of normalcy. The means to that end needn’t be budget-busting or even wildly creative; a space to gather or a change of scenery are really all it takes. While free honey is smart and purposeful, any well-crafted amenity will help make life sweeter for everyone involved. ▀

John Salustri is a contributing writer for JPM.



Living for the city

Innovative developments in Montreal unite transportation and residential spaces

By Salima Jaafari, CPM



Du Quartier REM station
bridge connected to
Solar Uniquartier

The transit system will link downtown Montreal, the South Shore, West Island, the North Shore, Montreal-Trudeau International Airport, and three major stations connected to the city metro lines.

Over the past 25 years, there have been major changes in the way that residents of Montreal choose to live and work. The most recent census, in 2016, showed that the number of people commuting within Montreal's city core fell by 47.4% between 1996 and 2016 but that traditional commutes (from the suburbs into the city core) and reverse commutes (from the city core outward) grew by 47.3% and 48.8%, respectively.

Increasing numbers of Montreal residents are opting to live separately from where they work. Real estate developments have followed these trends and sought to provide residents with increased flexibility, particularly when it comes to transportation.

Transit-oriented development

A new market trend called transit-oriented development (TOD) aims to create sustainable housing communities with

a unique lifestyle centered around access to public transportation, a variety of residential options, offices, and shops.

Devimco, a major real estate developer in the province of Quebec, is currently working on Solar Uniquartier, a major TOD project that leverages Devimco's experience in the area developing communities woven into transportation systems.

One example is District Griffin, which is located in the trendy downtown neighborhood of Griffintown. While not technically a TOD project by itself, it is one of Devimco's developments that united a large number of services, parks, and transportation options. At the same time, Devimco created Dix30, a commercial project in Montreal's suburban South Shore with 200 shops, a cinema, a hotel, and a spa.

Solar Uniquartier launched in 2016 and seeks to take the retail offerings of Dix30 in the suburbs and pair them with residential and office buildings to create a walkable community with links to a reliable public transportation structure—a combination that you might expect to see closer to the city center.

Increasing transportation options

Solar Uniquartier's location at the intersection of Autoroutes 10 and 30 provides easy access for drivers, but public transportation is a major consideration. Recent census data also showed that Montreal had the highest

Solar Uniquartier launched in 2016 and seeks to take the retail offerings of Dix30 in the suburbs and pair them with residential and office buildings to create a walkable community with links to a reliable public transportation structure—a combination that you might expect to see closer to the city center.

increase in traditional commuters using public transportation, growing from 38% in 1996 to 58% in 2016.

The commitment to public transportation is best demonstrated by the Réseau Express Métropolitain (REM), a new public mega-transit project

in Quebec launched in 2018, which will be a 100% electric, driverless light rail network with 26 stations across Montreal and 67 kilometers (41.64 miles) of tracks adapted to the Canadian winters. The Nobel Condominiums, one of the main towers being developed in Solar Uniquartier, will be directly connected to the REM by a footbridge.

The transit system will link downtown Montreal, the South Shore, West Island, the North Shore, Montreal-Trudeau International Airport, and three major stations connected to the city metro lines. The first trains are expected to start running in 2022, and other sections will



Townhome – Oria Condominiums

The building has many amenities, like a swimming pool and gym, making this an easy choice for those seeking fuss-free fitness.



commercial basilica area, targeting professionals working in downtown Montreal who don't own cars or don't want to drive to work. Oria Condominiums will add 400 units in two phases and will create townhouses surrounded by gardens and parks, perfect for families with kids.

For rentals, the Lumeo Apartments complex provides 248 one- to three-bedroom apartments facing a large park. Many utilities are included in the rent, such as electricity and heating, as are essential features like in-unit washer and dryer, stove, fridge, dishwasher, and microwave. The building has many amenities, like a swimming pool and gym, making this an easy choice for those seeking fuss-free fitness.

Devimco is also taking advantage of the mixed-use and easily walkable Solar Uniquartier community

A park in front of Oria Condominiums

be gradually put into service from 2022 to 2024. Construction is underway and has progressed to an advanced stage for the South Shore section.

The convenience of public transportation, savings on gas and travel time, and the environmental benefits are all expected to attract residents. The REM will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 680,000 tons over 25 years of its operation.

Diversified approach to residential units and retail

Devimco's strategy for residential and commercial spaces provides a good fit for many different needs and for residents looking to either rent or own.

The Nobel Condominiums tower has 275 condominiums elevated above the

by incorporating apartments for seniors. Éolia Appartements will offer rentals for residents age 55 and older. With access to indoor and outdoor community activities and amenities as well as proximity to services and public transportation, Solar Uniquartier is expected to make life easier and more enjoyable for residents.

In total, over 1,400 units for rent or sale are expected to become available in the near future.

The convenience of public transportation, savings on gas and travel time, and the environmental benefits are all expected to attract residents.



Offices are embedded in the various towers of the development and include a variety of floor plan sizes. Devimco is attracting companies, their own workers, and additional residents by locating shops, restaurants, schools, and daycares nearby, and the goal of the commercial development is to provide local neighborhood services, such as cleaners, hairdressers, bakeries, and cafes. Tenants will be able to access a high quality of life and develop a strong sense of living within an actual community.

COVID-19 and changing transportation habits

The Canadian Census of Population is conducted every five years, and 2021 may reveal how much has changed in the past year.

A survey conducted by researchers at HEC Montréal showed that Canadians are wary of using public transportation during the pandemic and intend to use personal vehicles instead. The authors note that buses may still be preferred over subways because there is no need to wait indoors to ride, suggesting that light rail may not be as affected.

A Statistics Canada report from June 2020 noted that 42% of public transit users in Canada switched to telework, and 74% of public transit users are concerned about using public transit.

Although many towers in Solar Uniquartier are still under construction, the development perhaps provides a model for future communities. Situated in the suburbs with connections to both expressways and public transportation, with easy access to the city center, it seems well aligned with changes in transportation trends. In addition, increased remote work opportunities could draw residents looking to escape the crowding while maintaining access to commercial services.

Residential developers and property managers will need to continue focusing on tenant needs and shifts in the larger underlying trends as they strive to create the best living experience. ▀

Salima Jaafari, CPM, is the owner of JAAFS Property Management Inc. in Montreal, Quebec, and has 20 years of experience in managing multifamily and commercial properties. She received her CPM designation in 2017 and is a member of the Real Estate Institute of Canada Quebec Chapter Board.

Du Quartier REM station connected to Solar Uniquartier



The inclusion equation

How inclusion efforts impact managers and tenants

Discussions about inclusion in the property management space can emerge in two different aspects: how property managers of diverse backgrounds are treated as employees within their own companies and how tenants interact with the property and the management team.

In the latter case, those interactions can be particularly challenging because the relationship is inherently transactional. A tenant may feel at a disadvantage asking for anything beyond common courtesy when dealing with a property manager because of a perceived power imbalance. On the other hand, property managers dealing with tenants may assume that the “rules of engagement”



“It’s a very delicate process. You’ve got to be very careful about what you’re saying and the tone with which you say it, because it could easily be misinterpreted.”

—Saadat Keshavjee, CPM, Amhurst Property Management, Ltd.

are clear: Tenants must pay rent on time and do nothing to devalue the property. However, sometimes cultural differences can disrupt that assumed understanding.

Saadat Keshavjee, CPM, managing director of Amhurst Property Management, Ltd., in Calgary, Alberta, appreciates how cultural differences can impact tenant relations. “When people come to Canada from another country, whether that’s somewhere in Europe, Asia, Africa, India, etc., we find that cultural nuances can definitely make a difference,” Keshavjee explains. “Let’s face it, not everybody knows how to use what we use in North America in the same way that we use it. Some people don’t fully understand how a bathroom should be used here, how a kitchen should be used, or how to treat maintenance issues. So, my managers already know that if somebody arrives here and wants to rent a place, we may have to gently inculcate or train them about things like changing the filter in the furnace, for instance.”

Keshavjee goes on to say that he encourages his managers to educate tenants who might be unaware of certain common practices so that problems can be avoided.

“It’s a very delicate process. You’ve got to be very careful about what you’re saying and the tone with which you say it, because it could easily be misinterpreted. We’re not telling them how to handle their personal issues, we’re dealing purely with the property,” he explains. “We’re dealing with filters, lightbulbs, fuses, general cleanliness around bathrooms and kitchens—we



“We have encouraged things like GED training and provided the location for the sessions.”

—Pedro E. Vermales, CPM, Horizon Housing Management

address it purely from a safety point of view. For instance, we talk about fire risk. People often don’t realize that if you don’t maintain the kitchen, an oil fire can burn the whole house down. When we talk about these things from a safety, security, liability, and emergency perspective—not from a personal perspective—that is a better way to deal with an issue.”

Open dialogue

Working with residents and listening to their concerns about topics beyond the property can also be a way to address inclusion. Pedro E. Vermales, COO of Horizon Housing Management in Oviedo, Florida, and his wife, Elizabeth Vermales, who is the company president and co-owner, hold weekly meetings with their managers to assess what is going on with the properties and with the employees themselves. They encourage their team members to raise concerns

from residents and bring suggestions to the table.

Before the pandemic, the company put together many programs that tenants could take advantage of. “We’ve done surveys with the residents to see what kinds of services they would like to see,” says Vermales. “We have encouraged things like GED training and provided the location for the sessions. And we have sometimes worked with nonprofits to provide additional services—in fact, one of our managers took the training to become certified to teach financial literacy to the residents.” In the event that they do get a resident complaint, it is the Vermales’ policy to not only resolve the conflict, but to follow up with residents within the month to confirm 100% satisfaction.

Personal experience

Having property managers who can understand and respect these kinds of differences is what inclusion is all about. Part of what makes those kinds of interactions authentic is having managers who can draw on personal



“We’re including everyone. Our managers represent the residents we serve. That’s what we look like.”

—Kimberly Parker, ARM, The Abrams Management Company

experiences or perspectives they have in common with tenants.

Kimberly Parker, ARM, senior property manager at The Abrams Management Company in Boston, has more than 30 years’ experience working in property management and can also draw on her own personal experience of having been a tenant in affordable housing growing up. She had a counselor in an after-school program who went into property management, and Parker followed her into the career. “I don’t care what neighborhood you are in, I want people to have decent housing,” she says.

“When we talk about equity, we want to make sure that everybody has a voice at the table,” Parker says. “We’re including everyone. Our managers represent the residents we serve. That’s what we look like.”

Parker credits the company’s founder with setting the right example. “Mr. Abrams was a pioneer of this sort of inclusion,” she says. She also credits her current boss, Martha Abrams-Bell, with noticing when Parker was left out of conversations in meetings or at social events and going out of her way to address it. “She would bring them over to greet me and say, ‘By the way, this is Kimberly Parker my senior property manager at The Abrams Management Company.’ Abrams-Bell really helped me with inclusion. It does no good to have you there if you can’t have a voice.”

Company culture

Supporting inclusion efforts within a company furthers the goal of providing all employees with a chance to participate in—and add to—the success of the business. Kim Collins, CPM, director at CBRE Property Management, AMO, in Indianapolis, feels good about the way her group has not only welcomed diverse personnel, but also supported their participation in



“There’s always room for improvement, but the company is striving really hard to be who they say they are, and I think that’s important.”

—Kim Collins, CPM, CBRE Property Management, AMO

groups that actually address matters of inclusion.

“One of the things that our company does that I think is pretty cool is the many specialized networking groups within our larger organizations,” Collins says. “There’s a Women’s Network, an LGBTQ and Allies network, an African American networking group, and an Abilities Employees networking group. There are all kinds of different groups that our company has put out there, not only to allow people to create their own network and camaraderie within those individual spaces, but also to allow for everybody to celebrate and learn from each other.

“I think it’s great because it’s allowing those voices to become a little bit louder, a little bit stronger, and a little more heard,” Collins says. “There’s always room for improvement, but the company is striving really hard to be who they say they are, and I think that’s important.”

Owner/occupant

Communication is key in the landlord-tenant relationship



Image: iStock.com/Drazen Zigic

Measure twice, cut once. This may be familiar advice for working on a construction or home improvement project, but what does this statement have to do with landlord-resident relationships? It is the simple message of this axiom that should be taken to heart: careful preparation can avoid extra work later.

What careful preparation can property managers undertake to establish great relationships with tenants? The answer, too, is simple: time spent with each new resident at move-in. This time together establishes the tone of the landlord-tenant relationship, a rapport in which strong and open communication is critical to long-term success.

Are you projecting a feeling that welcomes your resident into their new home? Are you taking steps to ensure they feel included in the building community, or will they feel like a nuisance because you are perpetually focused on the next task that requires your attention?

Later communication will be negatively impacted if a resident believes that they are bothering management by asking questions or taking up too much time at move-in. But residents reaching out to management with issues goes a long way in successfully managing properties, so this state of hesitancy to communicate should be prevented. Property managers that have had to deal with damage in a unit due to a resident not reporting an

issue, such as a small leak, understand this all too well.

Welcome to the neighborhood

Just as imperative as educating residents on the importance of reporting maintenance issues is communicating with them the expectations for living in your community.

A thorough review of the full lease is another example of a property manager engaging in “measure twice, cut once.” Does your property have a common lease violation? When reviewing house rules, are there guidelines or provisions that are unique to your property? Highlighting these and having the provisions initialed by the resident can save time and avoid confusion and the need to send lease violation notices later. Another consideration is an already-scheduled property inspection within a few months of a move-in. Inform your new resident that something is on the calendar, and explain what access may be needed.

First-time renters benefit from an in-depth review of lease provisions and house rules. However, “first-time” does not necessarily mean young; there are undoubtedly older individuals who are also new to multi-unit living. Many active adult communities have residents that transitioned from private home ownership. Facing policies or rules for the use of community space and amenities for the first time can, therefore, lead to pushback. For example, these residents might not want to hear that a loud party by the pool is unacceptable.

Affordable housing

Certain sectors of housing have always required a more expansive document review at move-in. This is particularly relevant for affordable or subsidized housing, where multiple lease addendums must be executed, such as those

required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Rural Housing Services, investors, or the allocating agency for any properties receiving low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC). Lease renewals also involve execution of many of the same documents that were completed at move-in.

Taking time to explain all of the program-reporting requirements helps residents new to living in these types of properties avoid being surprised by requirements to provide proof of income or the overwhelming number of forms and addendums that must be completed to ensure program compliance. The penalties for noncompliance can be too severe to risk taking shortcuts. For LIHTC properties, these penalties for noncompliance can be millions of dollars, so both landlords and tenants can avoid a lose-lose scenario by taking the time for a thorough documentation process.

Working together

There is another principle common to property management: It is less expensive to keep a resident than to find a new one. Some estimates put the cost of finding a new resident at

six times the cost of keeping a current renter in place. The landlord-tenant relationship can be a major factor in a resident deciding to remain in a community for the long run.

When residents are facing challenges such as job loss, medical issues, or other unexpected expenses, open communication with property management ensures that these challenges will not be kept a secret. Residents reaching out to management immediately when facing these challenges means that an action plan can be developed together and—crucially—before the situation becomes critical.

“First-time” does not necessarily mean young; there are undoubtedly older individuals who are also new to multi-unit living.

It's the simple message of this axiom that should be taken to heart: Careful preparation can avoid extra work later.



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Image: iStock.com/fizles

Entering into a realistic payment arrangement is easier when a resident, facing circumstances that might feel impossible to overcome, is met with a level of understanding from management—the culmination of the cultivated relationship, established firmly all the way back on Day One.

Right now, it seems that there are daily news reports of resident payment issues, eviction moratoriums, and the potential crisis anticipated when current health emergency orders are ultimately lifted. Having a resident come to the office looking only for a deferment of rent does not help anyone, but neither does management being inflexible. Entering into a realistic payment arrangement is easier when a resident, facing circumstances that might feel impossible to overcome, is met with a level of understanding from management—the culmination of the cultivated relationship, established firmly all the way back on Day One. The first question posed by management when approached by a resident experiencing a financial challenge should be, “How much can you pay now?” Securing this immediate buy-in from the resident is critical, even if only a minimum payment is made. Setting biweekly payment dates that align with when unemployment benefits are received, focusing on rent payments, and deferring late fees to be paid once new employment is obtained are not at all unreasonable.

A chance to reiterate

A review of critical lease terms or changes to house rules at renewal creates another touch point for communication. Scheduling an appointment for renewals can make

a resident feel valued. This time together provides an opportunity to obtain details on potentially unreported maintenance issues as well as gain open-ended feedback. Comment cards or “How did you hear about us?” feedback are both commonly collected when leasing, but are questions such as “Why did you decide to remain?” or “What do you like best about your current home?” asked at the lease renewal stage? These answers provide insights into the state of resident relations, help management recognize which amenities or features to highlight in marketing, and can even be used as testimonials.

It should be noted that the principle of “measure twice, cut once” is not limited to residential property management. Even if someone is already familiar with residential leases, becoming a tenant in commercial space opens up a whole new world of lease terms, including leasehold improvements, triple net, and common area maintenance, just to name a few. A new business owner leasing space for the first time can certainly benefit from a landlord or broker taking the time to carefully review the lease and explain any unfamiliar terms.

For owners and managers reflecting on the time that they invest into their tenant relationships, the operating principle of “measure twice, cut once” simply cannot be underestimated. ▀

Eileen Wirth, CPM, MBA, HCCP, SHCM, NAHPe, is the president and CEO of the Octavia Hill Association, Inc. She has served as a New Jersey Chapter officer and currently serves on the IREM Federal Housing Advisory Board and IREM Foundation Board of Directors.



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Elaina’s Sustainability Fund

Supporting innovation and wellness to honor one person’s legacy

By Julie L. Scott, CPM

Elaina Tattersdale believed that one person could make a difference. She dreamed of creating a better world by working in sustainability to improve the impact that buildings have on our environment. Sadly, Elaina was diagnosed with stage 4 colon cancer and passed away on June 5, 2019, at just 35 years old.

Her parents—2020 IREM President Cheryl Gray, CPM, and Rick Gray, CPM—set aside funds for special treatment, but the cancer acted quickly. “It was important for us to honor her and create something that had meaning to her,” Cheryl said.

Cheryl met with the IREM Foundation Executive Committee and shared her idea. The Gray family would donate \$50,000 to seed a fund that would support sustainability in Elaina’s name. There were very few stipulations: The name of the fund should be simple. The funds would support innovation or adoption of sustainability or wellness initiatives in the real estate industry. Applicants should not be limited to just members,

or even real estate managers, since Elaina believed that anyone could make a difference. The fund should live on in perpetuity. The Foundation would define the rest.

The Executive Committee eagerly and emotionally accepted the proposal, honored to be entrusted with Elaina’s legacy and the creation of a meaningful program that better the impact of commercial real estate.

Starting from scratch

The Foundation was new to supporting sustainability, but IREM had been operating its own Certified Sustainable Property program since 2015 and had a roster of experts that the Foundation was able to leverage. A task force of sustainability experts and Foundation board members was created to define the parameters of this new program.

After two rounds of meetings, requests for additional information, and vetting of the candidates, five global grant recipients were chosen, with projects ranging from \$500 to \$5,000.



Elaina Tattersdale

“A significant challenge was to establish a grant program that would both encourage adoption as well as innovation,” says Randy Woodbury, CPM, chair of Elaina’s Sustainability Task Force. “Innovation can be expensive, so it’s often the larger, well-resourced companies that are able to innovate. Yet, the intent of the program is really to help get projects off the ground that might not happen without funding, even if it’s something as simple as implementing a recycling program or planting a community garden.”

Under Woodbury’s leadership, the task force established a set of criteria intentionally designed to be inclusive. Where a large company may get extra points for innovation, a smaller company might earn extra points for demonstrating a need for funding or for proposing a project where the grant would fund a majority of the cost. To encourage the applications for projects both large and small, the task force established three distinct categories: innovate, adopt, and research, with specific ideas for initiatives outlined under “adopt.”

Awaiting the unknown

There was no benchmark for what to expect once the application window opened. Elaina’s Fund had inspired a lot of people, raising an additional \$40,000 in its first year, but there was no way to predict what requests would come in or if the applications would align with the intent of the program. When the application window opened in early November, the Foundation received six applications in the first week. It was clear there was interest, and the Foundation eventually received a wide range of applications. By Jan. 31, 2021, 31 applications had been submitted, 25 of which met the criteria to be officially considered.

Thoughtful decisions

The selection committee reviewed and scored the applications based on the criteria defined by the task force. “The scoring process gave our committee an objective, unbiased view of which applications truly stood out,” says Jo D. Miller, IREM Foundation board member and chair of the Selection Committee. “There were so many wonderful projects to consider, but with limited funding, the committee needed to make some tough decisions.”

After two rounds of meetings, requests for additional information, and vetting of the candidates, five global grant recipients were chosen, with projects ranging from \$500 to \$5,000. Elaina’s passion has indeed lived on through the creation of this program, and the Foundation is truly honored to steward her legacy. The following is a list of the five 2021 Elaina’s Sustainability Fund Grant Recipients, which represent



Image: World Bank

a range of initiatives, scopes, and geographies. We look forward to following the success of these initiatives throughout the year. Check irem.org/elaina for project updates, application information, or to donate.

Wastezon CEO
Ghislain Irakoze

Innovate

Wastezon, Rwanda—\$5,000

In Africa, waste is often disposed of inappropriately, posing a threat to human health and the environment. While organic waste can generate compost, smallholder farmers, who make up 70% of the population in Africa, can’t afford fertilizer, which results in soil nutrient depletion and low harvest yields. Wastezon is a cleantech startup that is creating a scalable win-win solution for farmers and registered users. Users receive a Wastezon Smart Bin that automatically sorts biodegradable waste and directly decomposes biowastes into fertilizer in just seven days. The Smart Bin sensors notify the user directly through the app, which then allows them to request collection from a registered farmer in need of fertilizer. The grant from Elaina’s Fund will support the creation of 30 Smart Bins, all of which are equipped to track data on reduced carbon emissions.

Elaina’s Sustainability Fund Selection Committee

- Jo D. Miller
Committee chair
IREM Houston
- Julie L. Scott, CPM
IREM Foundation
president
Colliers, International
- Benjamin Forsyth, CPM
Westerra Corp.

- Randy Woodbury, CPM
Woodbury Corporation
- Elizabeth Machen, CPM
Machen Advisory
Group, Inc.
- Lynne Miller, CPM
Charles Dunn Company
- Rhianne Menzies
Brookfield Properties
- Sarah Palmisano
Ventas, Inc.
- Kelly Vickers
SitelogIQ



The Vietnamese American Community of Austin, Texas

Innovate

The Vietnamese American Community of Austin, Texas (VACAT)—\$5,000

According to VACAT, “The majority of Vietnamese own their own homes but lack understanding of what to do to conserve energy or how to detect leakage.” \$5,000 will enable VACAT to provide educational materials, including videos to educate more than 12,000 Vietnamese residents in Austin, Texas. Five hundred families

will be targeted to participate in a survey to test their knowledge and win prizes, and additional funding will be raised to perform minor fixes to senior homes that support energy conservation.

Adopt

Riverview Apartments, Inc., Pittsburgh—\$500

This senior HUD-subsidized housing recently underwent a significant renovation adhering to Green Communities standards. As part of the renovation, Riverview secured raised gardening beds and plans to purchase gardening tools, soil, and plants so residents can grow herbs, vegetables, and flowers to use and enjoy in their own homes. Research supports the healing and calming attributes of gardening, and these raised beds are conducive to accommodating the physical capabilities of Riverview’s aging and at-risk residents.



Riverview Apartments, Inc., Pittsburgh

Adopt

Zion Christian Academy, Ogbomoso, Nigeria—\$5,000

Nigeria has one of the largest wealth gaps in the world, and this gap is reflected in the appearance and quality of commercial properties. Hundreds of thousands of people in the Ogbomoso area live without access to education and electricity, and solar panels are a rare commodity typically afforded only to the upper class. This grant will provide 25–35 solar panels, allowing for access to a clean source of electricity for disadvantaged youth and faculty members at Zion Christian Academy. The solar panels will reduce the property’s dependence on generators for power and provide a life-changing impact to more than 200 students.

This grant will provide 25–35 solar panels, allowing for access to a clean source of electricity for disadvantaged youth and faculty members at Zion Christian Academy.



Zion Christian Academy, Ogbomoso, Nigeria



Erin A. Hopkins, PhD

Research

Erin A. Hopkins, PhD, assistant professor of Property Management, College of Liberal Arts and Human Services, Virginia Tech University—\$5,000

Apartment rentals represent \$1.3 trillion in the United States economy, and with the possibility of 5 million new rental units entering the market by 2023, there is a tremendous growth opportunity for sustainable management practices. IREM’s Certified Sustainable Property (CSP) program offers a roadmap for implementation of green real estate management practices, yet capital constraints, regulatory issues, and marketing concerns may diminish interest in green building certifications. This research will provide multifamily stakeholders with best practices that contribute to the success of green building certifications and management practices. ▀

Julie L. Scott, CPM, is a senior real estate manager with Colliers in Portland, Oregon. She serves on IREM’s Executive Committee as well as the Governing Council, and she is the current president of the IREM Foundation.



Senior status

Modern senior housing options are expanding right along with the aging population

In 2030, the year the last baby boomers will turn 65, it is estimated that one in five Americans will be 65 or older. The trend is similar around the globe: Worldwide, the number of people aged 60 and over is projected to hit 1.4 billion in 2030, which is a 56% jump from 901 million in 2015, according to the United Nations. As this segment of the population ages into senior status, they have a variety of housing options to consider that meet their individual wants and needs.

The sheer number of offerings and specialized types of care available in senior housing is a major shift from a couple decades ago, says Steve Ring, managing principal at Fulcrum Real Estate & Development, which develops assisted living and memory care facilities. "Twenty years ago, the term 'assisted living' was fairly new, and memory care communities were almost nonexistent," says Ring, a former IREM president.

Today's seniors have a vast array of options:

- Active adult communities, which typically cater to those adults over



“Twenty years ago, the term ‘assisted living’ was fairly new, and memory care communities were almost nonexistent.

—Steve Ring, Fulcrum Real Estate & Development

the age of 55 who are able to live without assistance

- Independent living housing, for seniors who can live on their own but want ease of housekeeping, maintenance, and available meals
- Assisted living communities, which offer assistance with daily activities and needs, such as bathing, and may have available nursing or medical care
- Nursing homes, which provide a higher level of medical care or other assistance around the clock
- Memory care communities, which are specifically designed to meet the needs of seniors with Alzheimer's disease or dementia

Within each of these types of facilities, there can also be low-income options or tax-credit communities.

What seniors want

More options mean more opportunities for seniors to get exactly what they are looking for in housing.

For seniors moving into an independent living environment, the main draw is right there in the name: independence. Avanath Realty Senior Vice President Toni Harris, CPM, ARM, who is based in Alexandria, Virginia, says seniors moving into the low-income independent living communities she oversees want their lives generally untouched.

"One of the things that has changed in 10 years is that seniors are looking to move into communities where they have more control over their lives and decision-making," says Harris,

adding that many want to stay in their hometowns. "They want to keep their familiar routines."

Similarly, location is the No. 1 factor for prospective tenants looking for affordable senior housing in the Boston area where Peter Lewis, CPM, NAHP-e, CGPM, works. Lewis, executive vice president of property management at the Schochet Companies, AMO, says some seniors will wait for years to live in their preferred location.

"For residents who want to stay in Boston, they may be on a waitlist for up to 10 years, whereas locations further outside of the city limits may have only a six-month to one-year wait," he says.

As for assisted living and memory care residents and their families, Ring says the key desires are safety and quality of care, followed by a delicious and healthy menu.

Along with the desire for independence, Harris says her residents are looking for a fitness center, pool or water activities, and cooking or financial literacy classes. "They want convenience, better health, and a sense of community where they can interact with neighbors. They don't want to feel isolated."

One way that Avanath facilitates connection is through its "Activate" program, which focuses on health and wellness and promotes an active lifestyle through classes, exercise, and quarterly events. They also partner with local providers, such as holistic wellness practitioners, to enhance the lives of the residents.

During the pandemic, Harris says they have held contact-free events, such as jazz music played in the corridors, so the residents could listen safely from their apartments.

Supporting the transitions

Roughly 90% of seniors want to stay in their current homes or communities as long as possible, according to AARP. The transition to senior living demands sensitivity and caring from property managers and staff. "One of the programs I started looking into is grief counseling," Harris says. "Grief doesn't only have to be for the loss of a loved one; it can arise from the loss of a lifestyle. We know that homesick seniors are at a higher risk of stress, depression, and illness, and we want resources in place to reduce that risk."

Some communities offer the full continuum of care—providing independent living options, as well as nursing or memory care facilities if and when the need to transition arises, but these communities are an unrealistic option for many seniors, Ring says. "The continuum of care community, or CCRC, is a great concept for the right individual," Ring says. "Unfortunately, it usually comes with a large upfront fee that the majority of the elderly population can't afford."

Ring says the communities he develops answer this need by offering month-to-month pricing structures with a minimal move-in fee. "We believe this is a popular model for the future," Ring says. "In many cases, you can move in with little or no need for the assistance and as you age in place, assistance can be offered to you in your unit."



“They want convenience, better health, and a sense of community where they can interact with neighbors. They don’t want to feel isolated.

—Toni Harris, CPM, ARM, Avanath Realty

For Lewis, one of his properties is working on an application under the Section 8 Renewal Guide – Chapter 15 program to offer an additional suite of services, such as technology programs, a wellness nurse, hairdresser, blood pressure clinic, and a variety of ways to address food insecurity.

"We're just trying to enhance the level of care and create more touch points to make sure they are OK, getting the food they need, and keeping them in place longer," Lewis says.

For residents who need to move from independent living to a nursing home or assisted living, helping with the transition is imperative, Harris says. Her communities never impose a penalty for breaking a lease in these situations. "We have policies in place to help them with that, and we work closely with caretakers and family," she says.

Lewis agrees that this transition needs to be handled gently, especially when the move is suggested by the senior housing manager with the interest and safety of the resident in mind.

The future of senior housing

Technology is already having a huge impact on senior housing, as evidenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. By helping residents learn how to use Zoom and FaceTime or implementing temperature scanners and ultraviolet technology for sanitation, technology has proven its place.



“For residents who want to stay in Boston, they may be on a waitlist for up to 10 years, whereas locations further outside of the city limits may have only a six-month to one-year wait.

—Peter Lewis, CPM, NAHP-e, CGPM, Schochet Companies, AMO

Lewis expects tech to continue to make an impact on operations through advances such as occupancy sensors to check for movement in an apartment as a safety and wellness touch point, as well as online tools to request repairs, allow for payments, and facilitate the income certification process.

Even with technological advances, all property managers agree that the heart and soul of senior housing will never change.

"In the end, it's about the people and not the real estate," Ring says, remembering what a CEO told him when he entered the business. "Don't cut corners, and always make sure the food is top notch. The residents will notice when you substitute the Club Crackers with Saltines."

Adds Harris, "You have to have the same passion as if your mother or grandmother lived there. That is what leads to success in senior housing." ▀

New CPMs

Arizona

Shawn Fetter, CPM, Gilbert

California

Jasmine Alarcon, CPM, ARM
Chula Vista
Gina Cartwright, CPM, San Diego
Sarah Davis, CPM, Oak Hills
Giovanna Garcia, CPM, ACoM,
San Diego
D'Eidra Lyons, CPM, Long Beach
Jason Trueblood, CPM, ARM, Glendale
Rashelle Wedgwood, CPM, ARM, San
Clemente

Florida

Taylor Brittain, CPM, Riverview
Glennon Flavin, CPM, Boca Raton

Georgia

Lisa Landis, CPM, Senoia

Hawaii

Gregory Skaltsas, CPM, ARM, Honolulu

Illinois

Jamie Falconer, CPM, Buffalo Grove
Elizabeth Landers, CPM, Chicago
Margo Lewis, CPM, Chicago

Indiana

Jamie Navas, CPM, Avon

Iowa

Christy Conrad, CPM, Sioux City

Maryland

Harrison Drier, CPM, Bethesda
Heather Grant, CPM,
Montgomery Village

Massachusetts

Lilyan Sayre, CPM, ARM, Boston

Michigan

Gustavo Bueno, CPM, Lansing

Missouri

David Harris, CPM, Saint Louis
Duane Lockyer, CPM, ACoM,
Lee's Summit

Nevada

Heather Simola, CPM, Carson City

New Jersey

Lori Wissemann, CPM, Jersey City

New York

Anya Kim, CPM, New York
Dana Padilla, CPM, ARM, Astoria

North Carolina

Sarah Bekkach, CPM, Charlotte
Keirstin McHenry, CPM, Raleigh
Veronica Williams, CPM, Gastonia
Brett Wright, CPM, Wake Forest

Rhode Island

Erin Reed, CPM, ARM, Cranston

South Carolina

Jessica King, CPM, ACoM,
Mount Pleasant
Carolina Little, CPM, Lake Wylie

Tennessee

Gina Butler, CPM, ARM, Smithville
Joel Schlichtemier, CPM, Nashville

Texas

Yvette Andreu, CPM, Houston
Kristi Baird, CPM, San Antonio
Joseph Hoa, CPM, Rowlett
Tiffany Korbell, CPM, Fair Oaks Ranch
Cheryl Rivers, CPM, Houston
Jonathan Robertson, CPM, El Paso
Stacy Shotwell, CPM, Katy
Colleen Thelen, CPM, Southlake

Virginia

Kevin Donahue, CPM, Richmond
Benjamin Lincoln, CPM, Arlington
Alexandra Mitchener, CPM,
Newport News
Jeffrey Stone, CPM, Chesapeake

Washington

Natalie Bell, CPM, Seattle
Katie Neely, CPM, ARM, Everett

Washington, D.C.

Anita DiPietro, CPM, Washington

Wisconsin

Christopher Pirkey, CPM, Wauwatosa

Canada

Nina Belyavsky, CPM, Calgary, Alberta
Jennifer Boyd, CPM, Ottawa, Ontario
Frederick Crouch, CPM, ACoM,
Ottawa, Ontario
Damian Gasparetto, CPM, Richmond,
British Colombia
Sylvain Mathieu, CPM, Montreal,
Quebec

China

Zhouwei Bao, CPM, Shanghai
Xinmeng Cai, CPM, Shanghai
Han Cao, CPM, Changsha
Jie Cao, CPM, Shanghai
Chen Chen, CPM, Shanghai
Ying Chen, CPM, Hangzhou
Wei Cheng, CPM, Shanghai
Sheng Ding, CPM, Shanghai
Yuhua Du, CPM, Shanghai
Xiuxia Fan, CPM, Chengdu
Feng Gao, CPM, Shanghai
Xiang Gao, CPM, Xian
Lijun Gu, CPM, Shanghai
Winnie Yu Loi Ha, CPM, Shanghai
Hongwei Han, CPM, Shanghai
Hu Hong, CPM, Shanghai
Ning Hu, CPM, Beijing
Qiaoli Hu, CPM, Guiyang
Jin Huang, CPM, Zhengzhou
Shanyuan Huang, CPM, Shenzhen
Ping Jiang, CPM, Chengdu
Danyang Li, CPM, Beijing
Hong Li, CPM, Shanghai
Li Li, CPM, Beijing
Lingbo Li, CPM, Inner Mongolia
Ruyu Li, CPM, Linyi
Xinhui Lian, CPM, Shanghai

Liang Liao, CPM, Shanghai
Hujia Lin, CPM, Shanghai
Kai Lin, CPM, Shanghai
Lei Lin, CPM, Shanghai
Dan Liu, CPM, Changsha
Kai Liu, CPM, Shanghai
Lijian Liu, CPM, Hangzhou
Qiguo Ma, CPM, Shanghai
Leung Chi Ming, CPM, Shanghai
Xuefeng Pan, CPM, Shanghai
Mengxuan Pang, CPM, Shanghai
Tianen Pei, CPM, Shanghai
Lei Shi, CPM, Shanghai
Qiang Shi, CPM, Shanghai
Zhe Su, CPM, Chengdu
Guangwu Sun, CPM, Shenzhen
Yining Sun, CPM, Shanghai
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Yan Tang, CPM, Nanchang
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Xiao Wu, CPM, Shenzhen
Zufa Wu, CPM, Shanghai
Minghui Xia, CPM, Shanghai
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Xingjun Yang, CPM, Suzhou
Yijie Yang, CPM, Shanghai
Hua Ye, CPM, Shanghai
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Yongyi Ye, CPM, Hangzhou
Zhang Yi (Echo Zhang), CPM, Shanghai
Huiping Yu, CPM, Hangzhou
XiaHan Yu, CPM, Wenzhou
An Yuan, CPM, Shanghai
Qiaoling Yuan, CPM, Shanghai
Jizhou Zhang, CPM, Shanghai
Jun Zhang, CPM, Shanghai
Zhang Yi (Echo Zhang), CPM, Shanghai
Yousheng Zhang, CPM, Changsha
Ying Zhao, CPM, Shanghai
Zheng Zheng, CPM, Beijing

Bocheng Zhou, CPM, Shanghai
Xueming Zhou, CPM, Shanghai
Ao Zhu, CPM, Beijing
Hongyu Zhu, CPM, Shanghai
Ying Zhu, CPM, Shanghai
Yunfei Zhu, CPM, Shanghai
Liyan Zhuang, CPM, Shanghai
Ming Zhuo, CPM, Shanghai

Japan

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Yuta Harasawa, CPM, Tokyo
Kenichi Hirano, CPM, Fukuoka
Hideki Homma, CPM, Nagoya
Jun Hori, CPM, Tokyo
Kensuke Ishii, CPM, Tokyo
Nana Karikomi, CPM, Tokyo
Kazuaki Maruyama, CPM, Tokyo
Yasuaki Matsumoto, CPM, Osaka
Yukie Nagao, CPM, Oita
Masataka Nagura, CPM, Aichi
Yuki Nakanishi, CPM, Tsu
Yasuhiro Oguro, CPM, Tokyo
Yosuke Ohashi, CPM, Fukuoka
Hiroyuki Sato, CPM, Chiba
Shinji Wakita, CPM, Kumamoto
Natsuki Watanabe, CPM, Tokyo
Ryosuke Yamamoto, CPM, Chiryu

South Africa

Tlangelani Shallort Ngobeni, CPM,
Pretoria

Uganda

Buyondo Athanasius, CPM, Kampala

UAE

Christian Pural Molina, CPM

New ARMs

Arizona

Jesse Recker, ARM, Mesa
Heather Williams, ARM, Phoenix

California

Flynnard Brooks, ARM, Los Angeles
Mandi Hansen, ARM, Irvine
Deborah Jones, ARM, Ventura
Chaz Logan, ARM, Hawthorne
Vera Utley, ARM, Sacramento
Teresa Watkins, ARM, Salinas

Florida

Alyce Deckler, ARM, Jacksonville
Holly Grant, ARM, Jacksonville
Erlandie Simms, ARM, Cape Coral
Jasmine Smith, ARM, Jacksonville

Georgia

Latavia Freeman, ARM,
McDonough
Amanda Price, ARM, Grovetown



New certifications

Hawaii

Leonard Cantor, ARM, Kailua
Robert Johnston, ARM, Honolulu
AG Christian Regino, ARM, Waipahu
Steven Saito, ARM, Honolulu
Sarah Solmirin, ARM, Honolulu
Nathan Stann, ARM, Honolulu
Amy Yoon, ARM, Mililani

Illinois

Tara Hoerth, ARM, Chicago
Karroll McFern, ARM, Dolton
Courtney Rosen, ARM, Chicago
Alexander Sepanski, ARM, Chicago
Isabella Zach, ARM, Chicago

Indiana

Pam Bombino, ARM, Carmel
Heidi Frick, ARM, Carmel
Shauna Nelson, ARM, Gary
Linda Norris, ARM, Carmel

Kansas

Cameron Blair, ARM, Lawrence

Louisiana

Marissa Smith, ARM, Baton Rouge

Maryland

Sulaiman Alli, ARM, Germantown
Michael Celmer, ARM, Owings Mills
Aprile Crawford, ARM, Owings Mills
Rodelle’ Ann Harris, ARM, Bryans Road
Michael Kopinetz, ARM, Rockville
Shakira White, ARM, Silver Spring

Massachusetts

Larissa Azevedo, ARM, Boston
Kathy Dionne, ARM, Foxboro
Franz Israel, ARM, Lynn
Ryan Laughlin, ARM, Brookline
Kosal Saren, ARM, Methuen
Paul Spivak, ARM, Natick
Marilyn Tamaklo, ARM, Boston

Michigan

Edward Lambrecht, ARM,
Saint Clair Shores

Nebraska

Munica Brophy, ARM, Bennington

New Hampshire

Cheryl Demetriou, ARM, ACoM, Exeter

New Jersey

Samuel Newman, ARM, ACoM,
Glendora

New York

Jennifer Haase, ARM, Middle Island
Albert Lulaj, ARM, Bedford Hills
Lourdes Ortiz, ARM, Gloversville
Sean Paul, ARM, Bedford Hills
Erin Vandeusen, ARM, Troy
Chris Wiltey, ARM, Johnstown

Pennsylvania

Joshua Hankle, ARM, Pittsburgh

Rhode Island

Erin Blais, ARM, North Smithfield
Kimberly Duran, ARM, Pawtucket
Trisha Morrison, ARM, Hope

Texas

Alexander Pankow, ARM, Austin
Raichel Patrick, ARM, Rowlett

Utah

Senaida Kahriman, ARM,
Cottonwood Heights

Virginia

Steven Dyer, ARM, Norfolk
Erin Jones, ARM, McLean
Nastassia Lavrentieva, ARM, Fairfax
Yessica Martinez, ARM, Springfield
Ashley Matheny, ARM, Virginia Beach
Adrienne Newson, ARM, McLean
Heidi Nichols, ARM, Roanoke

Washington

Eric Adlawan, ARM, Vancouver
Barbie Hourihan, ARM, Seattle
Ernie Isordia, ARM, Tacoma
Adriana Perez Martinez, ARM,
Vancouver
Michael Smyth, ARM, Ocean Shores

Wisconsin

Madelyn Jaeger, ARM, Milwaukee
Caleb Mueller, ARM, Menomonie

Canada

Patrick Cameron, ARM, Ottawa,
Ontario
Nicodemus Choruma, ARM, Calgary,
Alberta
Kristina Dukic, ARM, Calgary, Alberta
Adebanke Ogunkoya, ARM,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

New ACoMs

Alabama

Chelsea Maher, ACoM, Birmingham

Arizona

Michael Ash, ACoM, Tucson
Lance Norling, ACoM, Phoenix
Darci Rodriguez, ARM, ACoM, Tucson

California

Sarah Keefer, ACoM, Los Angeles

Florida

Marjesca Brown, ACoM,
Green Cove Springs

Maryland

Valerie Cseplo-Jeffrey, CPM, ACoM,
Eldersburg

Massachusetts

Katharine Slowe, ACoM, Chelmsford

Missouri

Vanessa Grayson, ARM, ACoM,
Kansas City

Nevada

Brooke Barraza, ACoM, Reno
Alicia Kutcher, ACoM, Las Vegas
Jenacee Torri, ACoM, Reno

New Hampshire

Cheryl Demetriou, ARM, ACoM, Exeter

North Carolina

Dana Jiles, ACoM, Greensboro
Ronda Kunsman, ACoM, Fuquay Varina
Stacy Venters, ACoM, Wilmington

Ohio

Nathan Branscom, ACoM, Lakewood

South Carolina

Julie Morton, ACoM, Rock Hill

Tennessee

Jennifer Long, ACoM, Antioch

Texas

La Nee Evans, CPM, ACoM, Kingwood
Tiffany Maciejack, ACoM, Oak Point
Andrew Ruggles, ACoM, Forney

Virginia

Brandon Cardwell, ACoM, Vienna
Tyler Coy, ACoM, Christiansburg

Canada

Brandon Brophy, ACoM,
Toronto, Ontario

New AMOs

Minnesota

Clarity Commercial Services, LLC,
AMO, Saint Louis Park

Texas

City Gate Property Group, AMO, Dallas

Japan

Takayama Real Estate, Inc., AMO,
Ishikawa

New Certified Sustainable Properties (CSPs)

Maryland

The Gallery at Harborplace—Shopping
Mall and Office Tower, Baltimore

Virginia

Barracks Road Shopping Center,
Charlottesville



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“

I think it's great because it's allowing those voices to become a little bit louder, a little bit stronger, and a little more heard. P23

The REM will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 680,000 tons over 25 years of its operation. P20

”



Rendering of Devimco Immobilier ©Graph Synergie

“

For an apartment complex to not use Instagram for marketing is pretty crazy. P9



Image: iStock.com/Vasyi Dolmatov

Some estimates put the cost of finding a new resident at six times the cost of keeping a current renter in place. P25

”

“

A vendor cares for the five hives in our Arlington property, and each houses about 1,000 bees. P17