Yardi Matrix

National Multifamily Report

January 2026

Multifamily Rents Start 2026 Up, Outlook Still Uncertain

- Multifamily got off on the right foot in 2026 with a modest increase in rents, breaking a downward trend at the end of 2025. The average U.S. advertised rent rose $3 to $1,741 in January, with year-over-year growth rising 10 basis points to 0.2%.

- The mood at the National Multifamily Housing Council's annual conference was cautious but positive, with attendees larely putting aside concerns about economic and political uncertainty to concentrate on operating their businesses. Capital availability remains extremely healthy.

- Single-family build-to-rent units fell slightly overall, but demand and occupancy remain healthy. The average BTR advertised rent dropped by $2 in January to $2,184, while the year-over-year growth rate was unchanged at -0.9%.

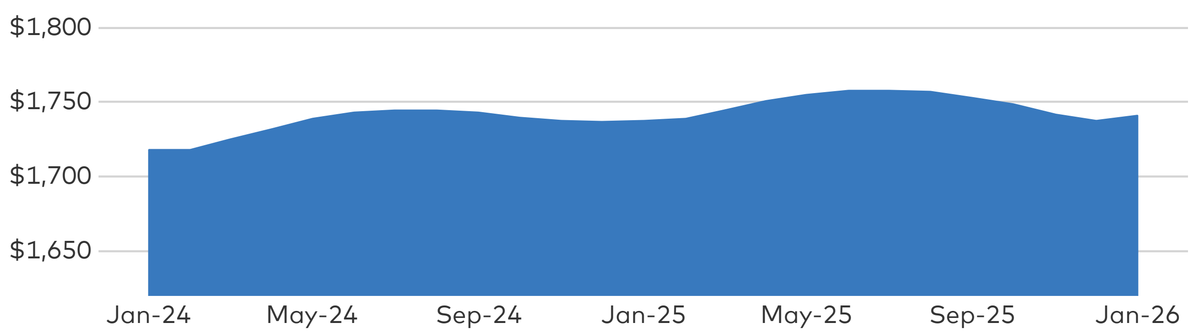
U.S. multifamily advertised rents rose $3 in January to $1,741 after five consecutive months of declines. While the reversal could be an early indication that the worst of the seasonal softness is behind us, the market remains in a tight spot, with mixed signals on the pace of rent growth heading into the critical spring leasing season. Ongoing supply pressures are likely to limit rent growth, while the high cost of homeownership continues to keep many potential buyers in the rental market.

Although new deliveries are moderating from the record highs of 2024 and 2025, a large volume of units remains in lease-up. New deliveries are projected to total approximately 469,000 units in 2026, down 21% from last year's 590,000 units but still well above the pre-pandemic average of 317,000 dating back to 2013. As a result, supply-side pressure on rents is likely to persist—particularly in Sun Belt markets—unless demand strengthens meaningfully.

However, the demand outlook remains uncertain. According to the Conference Board's latest report, consumer confidence has fallen to its lowest level in more than a decade—below even pandemic-era performance. If households increasingly view the economy as moving in the wrong direction, renter household formation is likely to slow.

At the same time, the expensive for-sale housing market should continue to support multifamily demand. Home prices and mortgage rates are unlikely to decline materially in the near term, keeping many would-be buyers renting for longer. Recent policy proposals from the White House aimed at improving affordability—ranging from 50-year mortgage terms to restrictions on institutional ownership—are unlikely to materially alter this dynamic. Ultimately, affordability remains a supply-driven issue, and decades of underbuilding will take years to unwind.

National Average Rents



National averages comprise 140 markets tracked by Matrix, which include the 30 metros featured in the report.
All data provided by Yardi Matrix.