Yardi Matrix

Multifamily National Report

March 2026

Multifamily Rents Rise, but Growth Remains Historically Weak

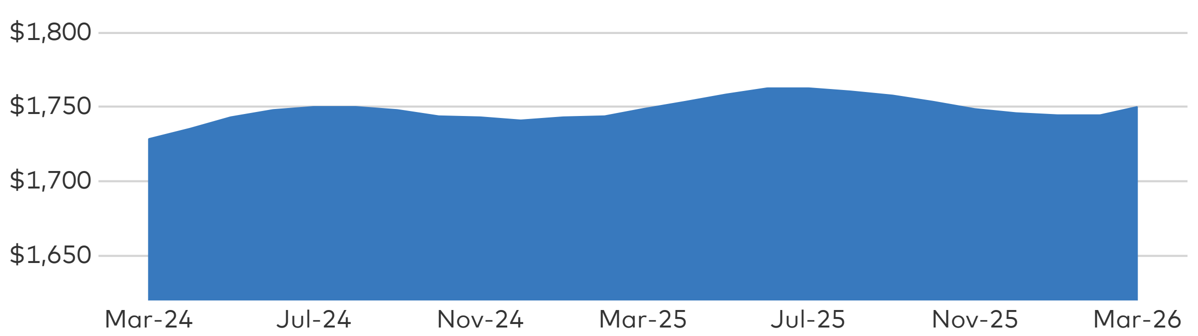
- Multifamily rents rose in March for the first time since last summer, but the growth was modest and most of the Matrix top 30 metros remain negative year-over-year. The average U.S. advertised rent increased $5 to $1,750 in March, with year-over-year growth holding at 0.1%.
- Advertised rents increased $4, up 0.2%, during Q1 2026, a positive but weaker-than-normal first-quarter performance. Operators in many markets report spotty demand in recent months, and the national occupancy rate for stabilized properties is down 40 basis points year-over-year.
- Advertised rents in single-family build-to-rent properties rose $5 nationally in March to $2,202, the segment's best performance since last spring. The national occupancy rate was 94.5% in February, which is down 50 basis points year-over-year.

U.S. multifamily advertised rents rose $5 in March to $1,750, signaling an improvement as the market enters the critical spring leasing season. Rents typically begin accelerating in March, ahead of peak summer moving activity. So this month's short-term rent gains, which were broadly distributed across markets, suggest early signs of seasonal momentum. However, the 0.1% year-over-year increase remains the weakest March growth on record, dating back to 2012. By comparison, rents grew an average of 3.6% in March between 2012 and 2019. The continued weakness is not entirely unsurprising, as an ongoing supply glut—particularly across Sun Belt markets—combined with reduced immigration and slower job growth, has created persistent headwinds.

Conflict with Iran has introduced an additional drag on economic activity, posing downside risks to growth while adding renewed pressure on inflation. Prior to the escalation, markets anticipated a steady path of Federal Reserve rate cuts throughout the year. However, rising geopolitical tensions—and their impact on global energy markets—have shifted expectations toward a prolonged "higher-for-longer" rate environment as the Fed remains focused on containing inflation. Bond markets reinforce this shift, with weak demand at recent U.S. Treasury auctions signaling that investors are requiring higher yields. As a result, borrowing costs are rising, directly impacting commercial real estate through tighter financing conditions and continued pressure on asset valuations.

If the conflict persists, elevated energy prices could place sustained pressure on household formation. Affordability pressures are already elevated, and higher energy costs—particularly at the pump—erode discretionary income and disproportionately impact lower-income households, further limiting renters' ability to absorb rising housing costs.

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.