

Apartment

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# FOCUS

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Steve Weir





## President's Message

Kelly DeMatteo

# An Update From The President

I hope the new year is off to a good start for you and your teams.

CTAA kicked off 2022 with a Strategic Planning Session, where leadership focused on our members and what they want from us. Please take a minute to stop by our website ([ctaahq.org](http://ctaahq.org)) to see what we have planned for you. We are dedicated to providing you with educational offerings, special events for networking and following industry trends and helping you grow your businesses.

The legislative session is underway, and the Government Relations Committee is tracking and advocating for you

on key topics. Our website calendar is updated with many upcoming opportunities for you to be involved.

We are looking forward to a year where we can be together again – learning and engaging with each other, focusing on topics important to multifamily. If you are interested in getting more involved with CTAA at a volunteer level, please reach out to me at [kdematteo@trioproperties.com](mailto:kdematteo@trioproperties.com).

Thank you for being a valued member of the CTAA. Please stop by our next edition for a highlight of our new members.





# CTAA Government Relations Update

In January, the GRC held the first annual legislative breakfast, bringing together legislators and property owners to discuss issues that are important to our industry. We had great dialogue and several key takeaways, which will be communicated to the association over the coming weeks. State Representatives Jill Barry, Cara Pavalock-D'Amato, Craig Fishbein, and Mike France were in attendance. Present from the CTAA were lobbyist John Bailey, President; Kelly Dematteo, Lifetime Board Member; Robert Chesson and Government Relations Committee Chair Steve Weir. Additionally, owners or senior management from Konover

Residential, Lexington Properties, Paredim Communities, Parkville Management, Trio Properties and Winn Residential attended.

The 2022 CT legislative session began Wednesday, Feb. 9. It is a short session set to conclude in May 2022. We continue to monitor many proposals at the legislature that could impact our industry.

NAA Advocate is set for March 8-9 in Washington, D.C. As of the last check, in-person meetings are not scheduled, but we will continue to monitor and update as





new information becomes available. If we cannot meet, we are looking into alternate ways to connect with our congressional delegation.

The next GRC meeting will be held via Zoom Wednesday, March 9, at 10:30 a.m. The meeting is scheduled for one hour, and we encourage you to attend.

The GRC is looking for members to join this great committee. If you have ever wondered how laws are made, what happens at the Capitol, how laws affect our industry, or if you have a passion for making a significant impact on our industry, this is the committee for you! Please reach out to committee Chair Steve Weir at 860.918.0721 or [sweir@1callair.com](mailto:sweir@1callair.com).

We encourage CTAA members to reach out to the GRC and "tell us your story." Recently, we heard from a member about the rise in car thefts and vandalism at their properties. It is not an isolated event, and with information like that, we may be able to develop a call to action. [📄](#)

“

The next GRC meeting will be held via Zoom Wednesday, March 9, at 10:30 a.m. The meeting is scheduled for one hour, and we encourage you to attend.

”

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# Meet CTAA's New Management Company, **The Markens Group!**

**C** TAA is thrilled to officially introduce our new management company, The Markens Group (TMG). Our partnership began last fall, and our board and committees are already collaborating with TMG to make our association grow and thrive. Read on to learn about the company and meet a few folks who will be regularly working with us.

## **About The Markens Group**

Founded in 1988 by Ben and Jennie Markens, TMG is a full-service association management company headquartered in Springfield, MA. They have a staff of just under 20 association professionals with a variety of specialized skillsets from event planning to marketing/communications and financial management. One of the benefits of partnering with a company like TMG is that CTAA will have access to these specialty services when we need them – without having to hire full-time staff for each functional area.

TMG has a simple, people-focused approach to association management: they connect those with common interests and needs to solve problems, share ideas and best practices, have fun, win, and close gaps. They use proven methods to accelerate growth in member recruitment, retention, and engagement while optimizing back-end efficiencies. Ultimately, TMG works with associations because they are communities of interest and kinship focused on mutuality, common interest, and collective gain. Associations also provide a sense of belonging, inclusiveness, interconnectivity, and reciprocity to their stakeholders, which is important because all human beings want to belong and feel connected with one another.

“When we began TMG more than 30 years ago, we agreed to live by two basic principles: we would only do it as long as it was fun, and we would resolve any dispute or disagreement by answering, ‘What’s fair?’” says TMG president, Ben



Markens. “We’re excited to marry our core values with our proven association management skills to benefit CTAA. Or, to put that in a different way, we are excited to welcome CTAA to the TMG family!”

It is also worth noting that TMG is one of only about 80 companies worldwide to be accredited under the Association Management Company Institute’s (AMCI) standard for management best practices. Although association management companies are not required to be AMCI compliant, accreditation demonstrates a commitment to procedural excellence. Accreditation requires that TMG develop and document standardized procedures, such as using written contracts, conducting evaluations to measure client satisfaction, setting financial controls, conducting employee

evaluations, and establishing record-keeping protocols. A third-party auditor ensures that these procedures are in line with the AMCI standard and that TMG is effectively carrying them out on a day-to-day basis.

Finally, TMG is a certified Great Place to Work®, aligning with their philosophy that happy employees lead to happy clients.

### Meet the Team

Say hello to a few of the faces you will most often see working with CTAA. Many of you have already met Sioux Wilusz, who serves as our association’s Executive Director. While you may have more contact with Sioux, a whole team of professionals is backing her up and rounding out TMG’s service offering.



**Ben Markens**  
President & CEO



**Brian Westerlind**  
VP Communications



**Danielle Eaton**  
Communications Specialist



**David Furioni**  
Project Coordinator



**Emily Leonczyk**  
VP Marketing & Strategy




**Kate Smith**  
VP Operations & Events



**Sioux Wilusz**  
Account Manager & CTAA  
Executive Director



**Amy Sfakios**  
Financial Manager

To see a full staff roster and learn more about our new friends at TMG, visit [markens.com](http://markens.com). 



# Apartment Trends To Watch In 2022





**T**he rental housing industry is ever-evolving, thanks to the coronavirus pandemic.

The shifts seen during the past two years – both small and large – in socializing, technology and workspaces have created a different lifestyle for many residents. Naturally, these changes have inspired housing providers to explore and implement new ideas within their communities.

So, what can we expect to see as we head into 2022? From innovative co-working spaces to continued advances in smart technology, here are some trends to watch for in the new year.

### Outdoor utilization

When the pandemic hit, many communities got creative and looked to outdoor spaces to safely bring residents together and give communities different ways to connect. With additional space and open-air, this move provided residents with the opportunity to gather and participate in activities while social distancing. This adaptation has proved popular among many residents, making outdoor utilizations here to stay. Moving forward, community managers are likely to offer additional outdoor amenities, including gyms, places to work or complete schoolwork, kitchens, fire pits and green space with activities like bocce or cornhole. Additionally, we may see communities expanding their traditional outdoor areas like pools and seating to accommodate the needed space with more residents enjoying outdoor areas.

### Work from home spaces

The pandemic has significantly impacted the concept of the workspace. Still, today, many businesses are continuing hybrid and remote work options rather than returning full-time to a traditional office space. With so

many people now working from home, we'll likely see an increased number of co-working spaces throughout apartment communities.

A cross between a business center and an office, a designated co-working space provides residents the option to work somewhere other than their own apartment. These spaces foster the same meaningful social connections as a traditional office and can even create valuable professional contacts with other residents. Spaces will range depending on the community, but we expect to see a larger variety of seating options, private rooms for meetings and more access to communal technology like printers or scanners – not to mention another aspect that has become crucial in the wake of the work-from-home trend: WiFi. Now, more than ever, having a fast and reliable network will be vital for apartment communities looking to optimize their co-working space potential.

### Self-leasing

We continue to experience a historic mass adoption of technology in the housing industry – much in part thanks to virtual and self-guided tours becoming a popular solution for prospective residents to safely view a space. We're beginning to see more innovative digital options enabling residents to “self-lease,” such as upgraded virtual tours, consumer relationship management technology, AI leasing assistants and automated income validation. Embracing this new technology not only meets residents' needs and expectations much quicker – but also helps housing providers adapt to the current labor shortage. With the unique challenges of this shortage, these new tools allow them to optimize workflow management and streamline

*Continued on page 10*



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the leasing process, making the experience easier for both themselves and their residents.

### Electric vehicle charging stations

As we've seen, the electric vehicle (EV) market has experienced rapid growth during the past few years and shows no signs of stopping. Eighteen car companies have all been vocal about their plans to offer EVs by 2030 – while the investment bank UBS forecasts that all new cars sold in the United States will be electric by 2040. With the rising popularity of EVs, many housing providers are installing electric charging stations in their communities. This move allows them to keep up with residents' needs and provide them with the convenience of charging their car at home. Some urban apartment communities are even starting to offer EVs as an amenity, allowing residents to reserve and rent a vehicle for several hours to use around town. Installing charging stations also demonstrates providers' commitment to clean energy, a topical push we're increasingly seeing on a national and global scale. EVs produce no carbon dioxide

emissions and are quieter than traditional vehicles, reducing air and noise pollution.

### Smart technology

EVs parallel another critical trend in apartment living: More residents are interested in incorporating smart technology in their homes like remote thermostats, smart locks, key fobs and motion-detecting lights. Therefore, we can expect smart features to continue gaining traction alongside other advances in apartment-home technology.


As we continue to navigate the challenges of the pandemic's long-term impacts, the apartment industry's flexibility and innovation will shape the future of housing. By communicating their needs and shifting with the inevitable changes of a progressing society, both housing providers and residents can work together to create apartments that innovatively adapt to the world as it will be – in 2022 and well into the future. 

Source: *The Washington Post*.

*Robert Pinnegar, president and CEO of the National Apartment Association in Arlington, Va.*

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# Employee SPOTLIGHT

## Rising Star



### **BEVANN BRYAN, ASSISTANT PROPERTY MANAGER KONOVER RESIDENTIAL**

Let's give a shoutout to Assistant Property Manager, Bevann Bryan for her recent achievements. Bevann joined Konover in January 2021 and in the last three months has received both her Certified Occupancy Specialist and Tax Credit Specialist designations. She also maintained 100% Occupancy at Washington Park throughout 2021. In addition to those occupancy numbers, Bevann collected over \$75K in aged receivables from Park City Communities (Housing Authority City of Bridgeport). Bevann has shown tremendous motivation and leadership over the last 12 months and is truly an example of an up and coming rising star for Konover Residential. CONGRATULATIONS BEVANN!

Do you have an employee you'd like recognized in the next issue of the CT Apartment Focus? Email Morgan Miller at [mmiller@trioproperties.com](mailto:mmiller@trioproperties.com).







## CTAA VOLUNTEER LEADERS

Please join us in honoring the dedication and commitment of CTAA's transitioning volunteer leaders. Thank you for your two-year team of service.

### **2022 Transitioning Officers:**

Brenda Sandoval

Brian Lemire

Jim Brooks

Rachel Montoya

We wish to extend our sincere gratitude to all of our CTAA Volunteer Leaders.





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