

Pet-Friendly Apartment Amenities Gather Steam Amid Societal Shifts

Young, urban professionals want their best friends to be treated to something special – and they're willing to pay for it

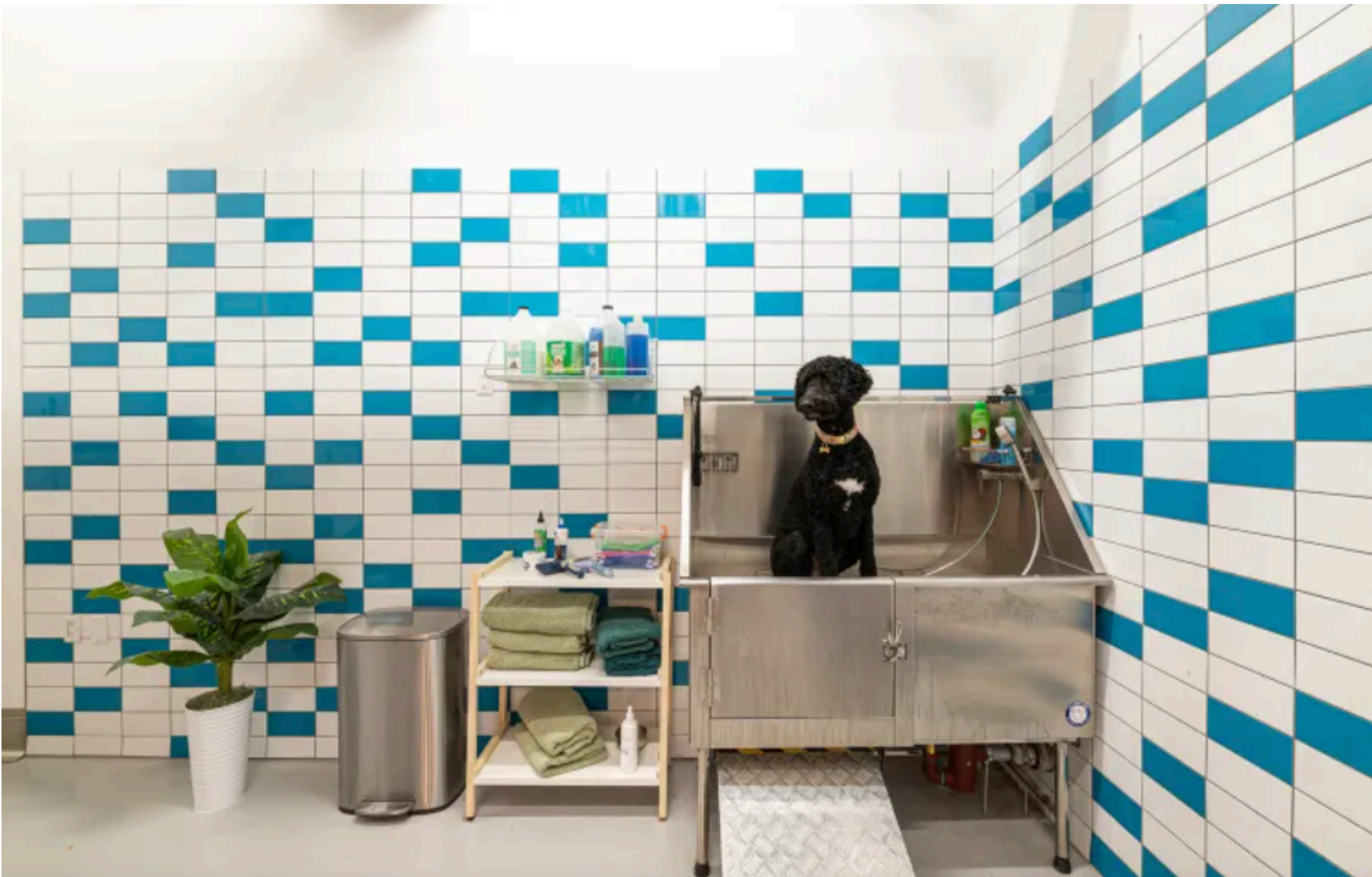
COMMERCIAL OBSERVER

Woof, there it is.

Forget marble countertops, rooftop infinity pools, in-building cafes and coworking spaces. If luxury developers really want to attract residents to their apartment and condo buildings, they better start thinking about providing tenants' dogs with everything a pup will need to live that bougie life. OK, maybe don't *forget* those other amenities. But, honestly, adding some dog-specific elements to your developments could make your buildings more attractive.

Just ask Mary Wallace, a New York City resident with a full-time marketing director job who spends her free hours volunteering for Rescue City, an organization that helps dogs in need find their *fur-ever* homes. Wallace has fostered 14 dogs since joining Rescue City in 2021, and now that she is on the hunt for a new apartment, the building she moves into will need to meet some pretty specific dog-friendly criteria. "A dog bath station is an amazing amenity," Wallace said. "Dogs can roll around in God only knows what, so having a place that is not necessarily your bathroom where you could wash your dog, and you don't have to take the dog to a groomer, is amazing. A dog-friendly outdoor space [as part of the building] would be incredible. To just be able to let your dog out and play with other dogs in the middle of the day, if you don't have time to take them for a longer walk, would be incredible." Just the simple act of a building allowing pets of any kind can have a positive impact on tenant attraction and retention. Indeed, residents living in pet-friendly housing stay 21 percent longer — or 10 additional months — than residents in non-pet-friendly housing, according to research from [The Pet Inclusive Housing Initiative](#). Additionally, 83 percent of owners and operators say they fill vacancies in pet-friendly units faster than in their non-pet-friendly properties. Some 79 percent of owners and operators say it is easier to fill pet-friendly units as well.

Now imagine what adding those luxury dog-specific amenities might do for tenant attraction and retention. At [3Eleven](#), a luxury Manhattan rental at 311 11th Avenue, dogs receive concierge-level service, including a split third-floor dog run — one side for small dogs and the other side for bigger dogs — as well as boarding, doggy day care and spa services, all on-site and operated by services company [Throw Me A Bone](#).



Some 30 percent of residents at 3Eleven have pets, and the dog amenities proved to be a “major driver in leasing decisions,” Sammy Ahmed, regional leasing manager for [Clinton Management](#) and general manager at 3Eleven, said in an email. “Prospective residents recognize the level of care and consideration we put into their pets’ well-being, making these amenities a key factor in closing deals,” Ahmed said. “One of our recent move-ins even joked that their dog had already ‘settled in’ before they did, thanks to the luxurious amenities.” Dog- and pet-specific amenities “create stickiness,” said Dan Kaplan, a senior partner with architectural firm [FXCollaborative](#), the design team behind 3Eleven. “It keeps people in the building, and that’s the most important thing for a rental developer.” At the [Dupont](#), a luxury apartment building in Brooklyn’s Greenpoint neighborhood, residents have access to a fully equipped doggy spa, where they can bring their pups for a bath in a cutely designed space, with a large professional-grade tub and blow dryers.

To be able to groom your dog “outside of your apartment, for free, on a daily basis is a huge benefit,” said Isaac Henderson, managing director for Northeast development at [Rockefeller Group](#) — the firm developing the Dupont with the Park Tower Group. “It makes sense to have this at the Dupont and was a critical early amenity we wanted to offer.” Given the Dupont’s waterfront location and proximity to parks, there are lots of opportunities for pups to get good and dirty while out and about with their humans. “We felt very confident that given the location we would attract a large percentage of residents with dogs,” Henderson said. “We wanted to be able to accommodate the demand for cleaning services.” At the time of publication, the Dupont — which began leasing in late fall of 2024 — was about 35 percent leased. And some 40 percent of that resident population owns a dog, according to Henderson. But the Dupont’s developers aren’t stopping at just offering dog parents a grooming salon for their pups. Henderson said the firm is close to securing a veterinary clinic tenant in its ground-floor retail space. “We wanted the Dupont to be a place where your pet can come and have it all,” he continued. And it’s not just 3Eleven and the Dupont. Buildings across New York City — including [77 Greenwich](#) in Lower Manhattan, [555Ten](#) in Hudson Yards, [277 Fifth Avenue](#) in NoMad, [547 West 47th Street](#) in Hell’s Kitchen, [130 William](#) in Downtown Manhattan, and Pierhouse in Brooklyn Bridge Park — all offer a variety of dog-specific amenities. Such luxuries include dog runs, pet spas, grooming stations and covered outdoor dog parks on property. Some even offer in-house training and doggy day care programs.

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In Philadelphia, [One Thousand One](#) — the city’s largest rental project — is proudly offering dog parents a 25,000-square-foot dog park on the second floor, alongside the building’s human-focused amenities space. The dog park will include canine turf, a doggy race course, and other features to provide small and large dogs with the stimulation they need during playtime. It cost about \$200,000 to add the dog park amenity at One Thousand One, given the top-quality turf that was used and the addition of a washdown area to take care of messes and smells, said Elise Halter, co-chief operating officer for [Post Brothers](#), the brains behind One Thousand One. It might not take them long to recover that investment considering a studio at One Thousand One starts at \$1,563 per month and a three-bedroom tops out at \$6,704 per month.

“The dog park has become an essential — just like having a great kitchen, the best closets, a world-class gym,” Halter said. “We just have to have it for our residents. It just needs to be easy for them to be able to take their dog out.” When conceiving One Thousand One, Halter said the Post Brothers team took a deep look at the expanding life cycle of the residents who’d be moving into the building. For many young professionals, having a dog is a big part of that cycle, and designating a significant portion of the amenities space — which includes a spa, a pool deck with a hot tub and a golf simulator — for dog parents just made sense. A dog park “is just an essential,” Halter continued. “It doesn’t make sense that we would have all of these other [amenities] and we wouldn’t have this.” Some 58 million households across the U.S. own a dog, according to data from trade group [American Pet Product Association](#), with millennials between the ages of 28 and 43 making up the largest percentage of pet parents in general. Millennials are also the generation that most expects to rent forever, data from real estate firm Metonic found. Additionally, 51 percent of pet parents say they consider their pets to be as much a part of the family as their human relatives, according to the [Pew Research Center](#). The way people interact with their dogs has evolved dramatically over time. Dogs, once relegated to tiny outdoor doghouses, now sleep cosily alongside their humans on memory foam mattresses, eat farm-to-table food, and enjoy a drive-through pup cup on their way to doggy day care. “Over the past several decades there has been a revolution in the way humans relate to pets. No longer property relegated to back yards and kitchens, pets have ‘moved inside the home’ becoming full-fledged family members,” Bruce Fagin, executive director and chief advancement officer for The Good Dog Foundation, a provider of therapy dog services, said in an email. “So profound is the shift in the human-animal bond that over the past quarter century, state legislatures have changed laws to allow loving, well-mannered dogs into hospitals, nursing homes and schools as cohorts to health care and education professionals.” Seeing this change in the human-dog relationship has inspired some developers to think more about the different kinds of families moving into their rentals and condos as they become more aware of the deeply rooted bond between humans and dogs. “More people are bringing more dogs into their family, and I don’t think this is a trend that is going to slow down,” Rescue City’s Wallace said. “Dogs are integral to our culture, and developers need to think about how people’s expectations will change in the next five or 10 years, about what they want their dog to have access to on a property, in the same way they think about what children would want access to.”