

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Inside the real estate market's performance

From price fluctuations to changing lifestyles, here's how the sector has been performing and what the future holds

ROHAN.PATIL
@timesofindia.com

If the last year is any indication of how the real estate sector will perform, then one can expect the year to tilt towards consolidation and experience-driven development. "Last year, real estate accelerated its transformation into a more transparent, tech-enabled, and consumer-centric sector," says Prashant Sharma, president, NAREDCO Maharashtra.

Infrastructure emerged as the most powerful growth catalyst, fundamentally altering how value is created across cities. "Last year marked a clear shift from connectivity to accessibility. Homebuyers are no longer evaluating locations solely by distance, but also by ease of daily movement, time savings, and seamless access to workplaces, social infrastructure, and lifestyle hubs. With multiple infrastructure projects nearing completion, several underserved corridors are expected to transform into prominent residential and mixed-use destinations," notes Kamlesh Thakur, co-founder and managing director, Srishti Group.

Demand from homebuyers also witnessed a sea change as efficiently planned and amen-

ity-rich homes, while important, didn't dominate the market. Homebuyers now want homes that are value-conscious and strongly inclined towards sustainability. "The year going forward will reinforce sustainability not just as a trend but as a fundamental development pillar. Developers are expected to prioritise certified green buildings, renewable energy integration, waste management systems, and water conservation technologies," expects Sharma.

ESG-centric projects will continue to attract capital from global institutional investors and sovereign funds. Thus, Shilpin Tater, managing director, Superb Realty, opines that, "In this year, integrated, mixed-use developments aligned with walkability and proximity will gain prominence. Buildings designed around people, intelligence, and balance will remain relevant for decades."

Luxury and ultra-luxury housing witnessed record absorption, fuelled by HNIs and NRIs seeking stability. "Global

design sensibilities, state-of-the-art amenities, and curated lifestyle offerings thus became a norm for luxury developments to cater to this buyer base," shares Shradha Kedia-Agarwal, director, Transcon Developers.

Residential and commercial both emerged as dual engines of growth. "Warehousing remained a strong institutional play, with 45-50 million sq ft of absorption, driven by e-commerce, 3PL, and manufacturing. Tier-II and III cities gained prominence due to improved logistics connectivity," explains Gaurav Varma, director, ORA Group.

Market experts believe that luxury housing in 2026 is expected to broaden its footprint beyond conventional high-value zones. Emerging micro-markets will attract affluent buyers looking for spacious apartments, bespoke amenities, and distinctive architectural design. "Overall, the real estate sector has entered 2026 on a stronger footing, with more transparency, financial stability, while being aligned with long-term fundamentals, positioning it as a reliable contributor to India's economic growth story," concludes Nihar Jayesh Thakkar, founder, The Mandate House.

