# REIT Industry Sustainability Report





REIT Sustainability Highlights REITs Build Prosperity REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

## **Leadership Statement**

his year marks the 65th anniversary of Congress enacting REIT legislation, which made it possible for everyone to benefit from the REIT approach to real estate investment in the United States.

Today, U.S. REITs own more than \$4 trillion in gross assets that include residences, workplaces, shopping centers, entertainment destinations, health care, warehouses, storage, data infrastructure, and much more.

REITs' growth and evolution over the past six decades reflect their dual focus on both the present and future; REITs know that their buildings and workforces must be flexible enough to meet the needs of today while simultaneously being resilient enough to address the challenges of tomorrow.

Nareit's eighth-annual REIT Industry Sustainability Report illustrates this duality, showing how members are taking strides to make progress in everything from improving the resilience of their portfolios to mitigate financial risks to prioritizing people and providing transparency on business strategy and governance. The report includes findings tied to three overarching themes.

#### The REIT approach to real estate investment continues to provide inherent governance benefits, including the alignment of management and shareholder financial incentives.

REIT shareholders value the transparency of the REIT model. Transparency provides REIT stakeholders with an understanding of how REITs are managing external factors such as demographic shifts and technological advances. The report also illustrates how REIT governance provides shareholders confidence in the ability to manage sustainability and social responsibility needs and requirements.

REITs are stewards of long-term investments in real assets and have a long history of owning and developing sustainable, resilient, and efficient real estate. The buildings and communities we rely upon in our daily lives must be resilient over time, especially in the face of natural disasters, such as wildfires, hurricanes, floods, and heat waves. That's why it's critical that REITs understand their exposure to physical risks and enhance their risk resilience for all property types, from apartment and office buildings to data centers and warehouses. The report shows REITs' progress on that front and demonstrates how REITs are focused on improving their energy efficiency and their access to a range of energy sources, contributing to their economic growth.

#### REITs are prioritizing people and meeting the needs of their employees, tenants, and the communities in which they operate.

Seeking stakeholder feedback and fostering wellbeing is critical to driving innovation, creativity, and productivity in REIT workforces, properties, and communities across the nation. This report details how REITs are implementing programs that are building the real estate workforce of tomorrow by refining practices to attract and retain top talent. In addition, REITs are giving back to the communities in which they operate by providing essential real estate and supporting corporate giving programs that target areas where REITs can positively impact their local communities.

#### **Nareit Sustainability**

Nareit's mission is to actively advocate for the REIT approach to real estate investment with policymakers and the global investment community.

The mission includes supporting the real estate community in assessing, managing, and disclosing risks and opportunities tied to sustainability and social responsibility, and transparency around performance and governance practices.

REIT industry sustainability-related programs and highlights are detailed throughout this report and at reit.com/sustainability.



Steven A. Wechsler President & CEO, Nareit

The physical world, our society, and the rules and regulations that govern us will inevitably continue to evolve. As an industry, we'll continue to learn and adjust as needed to remain responsible stewards of capital, employ innovative approaches to property ownership, deliver value to our tenants, and make positive contributions to the communities where we invest and operate.

I hope you enjoy reading Nareit's REIT Industry Sustainability Report 2025 and encourage you to join Nareit in continuing the conversation. We look forward to seeing how the sustainability landscape evolves and will continue to support the REIT industry in driving value for the benefit of our members; their shareholders, employees, and tenants; and the communities and broader society in which they operate.

All the best.

Min

Steven A. Wechsler

#### **About this Report**

Nareit collects information publicly reported in 2024 by the top 100 REITs by market capitalization (market cap) as of Dec. 31, 2024. Unless otherwise noted, data is compiled and reported at the industry level as a percentage of market cap.

All other REIT industry data, unless otherwise cited, is based on Nareit research as of yearend 2024.

The aggregated REIT industry sustainability data in this report can be downloaded here.

Information on data sources and methodology for the information in this report can be found in the REIT Sustainability Data Methodology Statement. REIT Sustainability Highlights REITs Build Prosperity REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

# **REIT Sustainability Highlights**

## REITs Build **Prosperity**



More than half of all households in the U.S. are invested in REITs

## **\$278b** of labor income contributed to the U.S. economy

# 42 countries and regions

have adopted a REIT approach to real estate investment

#### **REITs Build** Accountability 98% 7 out of 10 1% **REIT board directors** issue report in accordance have served for stand-alone with the TCFD framework sustainability 10 years or less reports 46% 23% in 2017 in 2020 **REITs Build** 80% **Resilience 94%** report procuring clean energy from report on off-site energy consumption 1 report on 66% 33% capital improvements in 2020 report generating to boost resilience in 2017 clean energy on-site **REITs Build U.S. REITs** Community directly employ provide regular performance reviews report on community development programs full time equivalent employees (2023)perform workforce

62%

in 2018

engagement surveys

Source: Social Responsibility Survey

REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

## 

A real estate investment trust (REIT) is a company that owns, operates, or finances income-producing real estate. REITs enable everyday investors to benefit from real estate investments and, as long-term investors, are structured for today and for the future, supporting the communities where they invest that grow, thrive, and revitalize over time.

#### **REITs Deliver Accessibility and Returns**

REITs are an accessible way for everyday investors to benefit from commercial property investment, delivering competitive total returns based on high, steady dividend income and long-term capital appreciation. REITs can serve as a portfolio diversifier that helps reduce overall portfolio risk and provides a broad range of investment opportunities for institutional and individual investors.

# Own Operate Finance

# 65 years

since the REIT model for real estate investment was first established in the U.S. in 1960





of the 25 largest U.S. and global institutional investors use REITs in their portfolios

## **170**<sub>M</sub> Americans

more than half of all households in the U.S. are invested in REITs through stocks, investment accounts, and retirement plans

#### Did you know?

REITs must pay a dividend of at least 90% of their taxable income, and most pay 100%, generating consistent passive income for everyday investors.

**\$110.8B** returned to shareholders in dividends paid in 2023

#### REITs provide diversification benefits and strong risk-adjusted returns in investment portfolios

CEM Benchmarking's 2024 study,

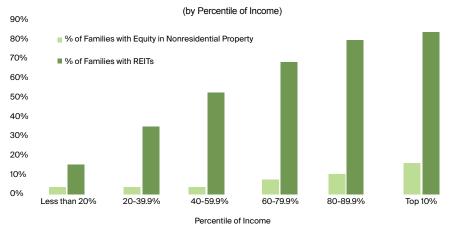
sponsored by Nareit, shows that REITs have historically outperformed most styles of private real estate and other asset classes over a 25-year period.

# **2**% higher average annual return

net of fees generated by REITs over private real estate in defined benefit plans.

Source: Nareit, CEM Benchmarking Study, November 2024

#### U.S. Families Invested in Commercial Real Estate



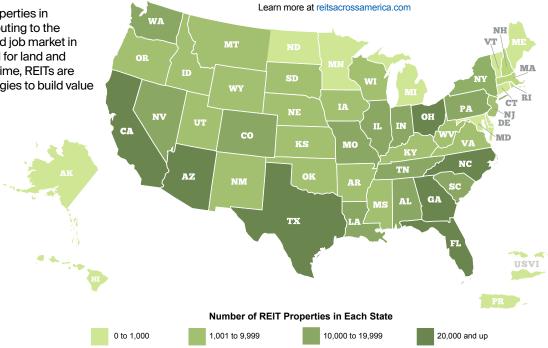
Source: Federal Reserve Board, 2022 Survey of Consumer Finances, Table 9; Nareit, 170 Million Americans Own REIT Stocks

REIT Sustainability Highlights REITs Build Prosperity REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

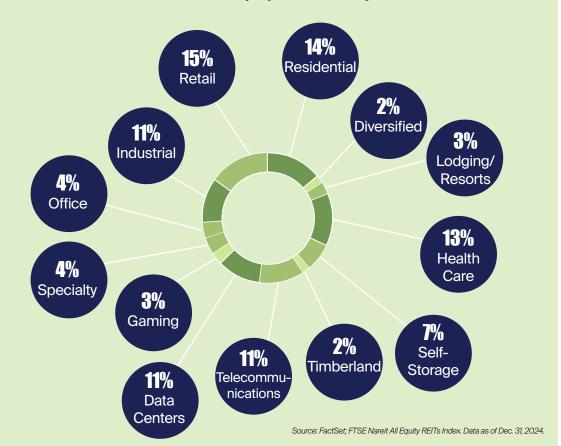
**REIT Assets by State** 

#### **REITs Invest Across Sectors and Regions**

REITs own, manage, and develop properties in 14 diverse real estate sectors, contributing to the economic development, tax base, and job market in communities nationwide. As demand for land and the real estate upon it changes over time, REITs are prepared with forward-thinking strategies to build value through market cycles.



FTSE Nareit All Equity REIT Index by Sector



**3.5** full-time equivalent jobs contributed by U.S. REITs Direct employment Property operations I Construction Investment activities (2023)

580,000

propérties

owned by REITs in the U.S.

> in property taxes paid

S278B of labor income contributed by REITs to the U.S. economy



REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

### **REITs Build Alongside Stakeholders**

REITs' business activities reach a wide range of stakeholders with unique views, priorities, and opportunities. REIT shareholders are interested in how REITs manage long-term opportunities and challenges related to sustainability and social responsibility.



#### Shareholders

Expect REITs to demonstrate effective capital allocation, risk management, and corporate governance.

#### Tenants

Preference for modern, healthy, and efficient spaces helps drive REIT leasing demand.



#### Workforce

Driver of REIT productivity, innovation, and growth through employing and engaging top talent.

#### Community

Connection to the neighborhood creates opportunities to drive growth, develop community, and support safety, preserving value over the long term.



#### Suppliers & Business Partners

Partner with REITs to manage day-to-day operations, execute building improvements, and implement responsible management practices.

Global REIT Approach to Real Estate Investing 20 8 8 Nareit's 2025 edition of its Global REIT Approach to Real Estate Investing study summarizes the dramatic growth of REITs worldwide and the benefits of the REIT model for economies, investors, and communities, and finds:

- REITs have grown dramatically around the world over the past 30 years.
- REITs have outperformed global stocks.
- REITs have diversified to keep pace with the modern economy.
- REITs have a strong commitment to environmental and social sustainability.

I,021

countries and regions have adopted a REIT approach to real estate investment

REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

## **REITs Build Accountability**

The REIT approach to real estate investment is rooted in transparency, liquidity, and accountability and is based on effective capital markets and efficient regulatory principles. REITs have aligned corporate governance to empower shareholders and to provide decision-useful data tied to their real estate portfolio and business operations.

#### **REITs Make Sustainability Accessible**

REITs report detailed information that includes performance metrics, targets, and alignment with global sustainability frameworks, making it easier for investors to access.



### **REITs Issue Sustainability Reports**

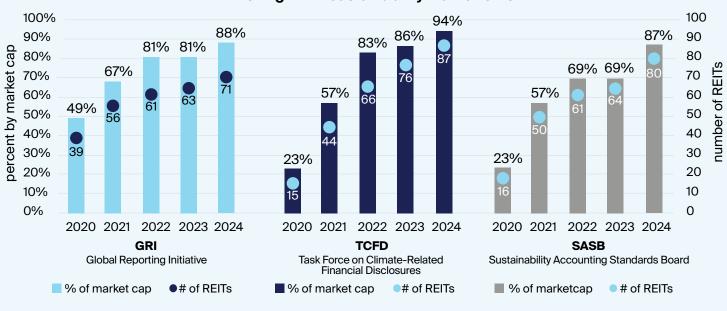


**1000%** include sustainability disclosures in proxy statements and/or annual reports



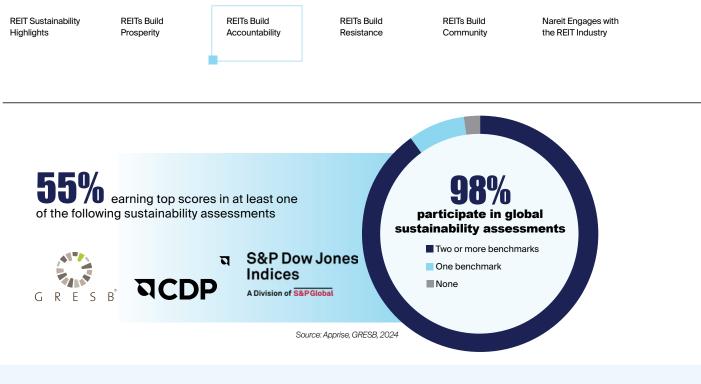
**90%** provide quantitative sustainability metrics in proxy statements and/or annual reports Source: Apprise

## **J** Transparency **D** Liquidity **X** Accountability



#### **REITs Align with Sustainability Frameworks**

Source: Apprise



IFRS® has issued sustainability standards that may be adopted by REITs to comply with regional regulations and/ or as part of voluntary reporting. The standards build on TCFD and SASB standards and are intended to support companies in identifying industry-specific sustainability and climate-related risks and opportunities.



have adopted the IFRS<sup>®</sup> sustainability reporting standard Source: Apprise

#### REITs Embrace Sustainable Business Strategy

REITs understand that responsible management practices may be linked to strong returns and have taken steps to formally embed sustainability and social responsibility into business practices and formal corporate governance structures.

**85%** have an employee committee responsible for sustainability *Source: Apprise* 



**44%** provide board training on sustainability-related topics

Source: Apprise

#### **REITs Dedicate Staff Resources to Sustainability**



REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community

**REITs Report on Directors' Skills** 

Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

#### REITs Accountable for Performance

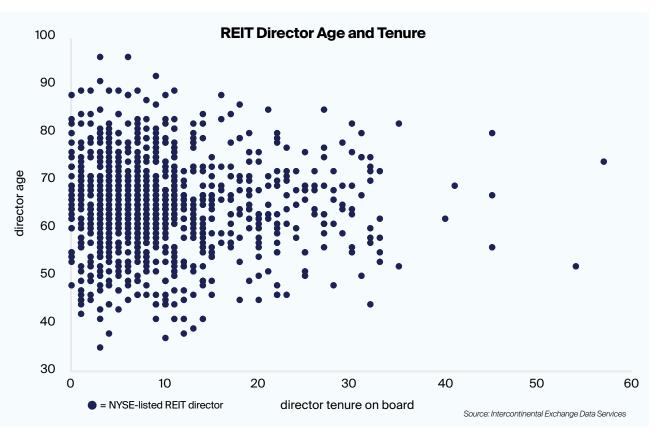
The REIT approach to real estate investment is responsive to shareholders by electing independent directors who oversee leadership teams, ensure management is acting responsibly in establishing guidelines and policies tied to legal and ethical conduct, and impose strong internal controls and fiscal accountability. REIT directors contribute a wide range of skills, perspectives, and experiences that help guide REIT management to maximize value and long-term growth.



% of all NYSE-listed REIT directors Source: Intercontinental Exchange Data Services

# out of **10**

REIT directors have served on the board for 10 years or less Source: Intercontinental Exchange Data Services



**80%** of REIT directors are independent

**32%** of directors are female

23% are racially or ethnically diverse Source: Apprise

**REITs Build** Accountability **REITs Build** Resistance

## **REITs Build Resilience**

**REITs are stewards of long-term** investments that benefit from efficient operations and sound risk management practices. Many public REITs specialize in a sector or business model, making them well-positioned to develop market-leading solutions that prepare local communities to adapt to changing environmental risks and regulatory landscapes.

### **REITs Use Resources Efficiently**

REITs measure performance, and assess opportunities to improve assets, and implement operating practices that use resources efficiently. REITs regularly update stakeholders on their progress with metrics that provide comparable data for benchmarking and measuring improvement.





water use intensity (WUI)

> report on waste diversion



use intensity (EUI) report on

report on energy

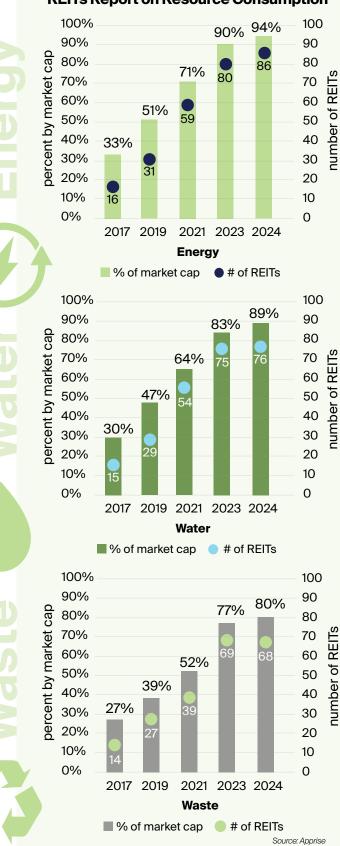
energy goals have public

have public

have public waste goals

water goals

Source: Apprise



## **REITs Report on Resource Consumption**

Nareit | REIT Industry Sustainability Report 2025 | 9

REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

#### **REITs Report on Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions** 98% 100% 94% 100 90% 90 78% 80% 80 81 percent by market cap 70% 70 ŝ number of REI 60% 60 51% 60 50% 50 38% 40% 40 30% 30 20% 20 20 10% 10 0% 0 2017 2019 2021 2023 2024

% of market cap

# CO2

#### **REITs Report on Indirect Emissions**

REITs are measuring and reporting on upstream and downstream indirect emissions. This includes emissions from "whole-building" energy use, which includes energy used in tenantcontrolled operations, and emissions from construction activities.

report on Scope 3 emissions

46% report on embodied emissions

**REITs Expand Energy Supply Opportunities** 

REITs are implementing innovative ways to incorporate a broad range of energy sources to heat, cool, and power their assets. REITs are utilizing market-based solutions to demonstrate a commitment to expanding energy supply opportunities, controlling price volatility, and utilizing clean power.

procure clean energy

from off-site



Source: Apprise

# of REITs

report on goals to expand the use of clean energy

**63%** report using power purchase agreements (PPAs)

50% report on the portion of their portfolio covered by clean energy procurement strategies **94%** report generation of clean energy on-site



**34%** report using rooftop leases as part of their on-site clean energy strategy

Source: Apprise

REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

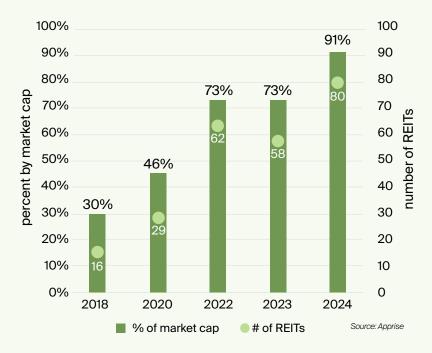
#### **REITs Prepare for Long-Term Resilience**

**REITs Build** 

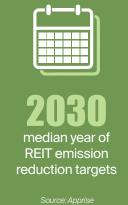
Prosperity

REITs align investment strategies to strengthen resilience against current and emerging risks. By taking advantage of opportunities associated with evolving regulatory requirements for efficiency, investor and tenant demand for green buildings, and preparing for extreme weather events, REITs are positioned to endure for the long term. **98%** report on assessing transition risk **86%** report on exposure to building performance standard regulations

Source: Apprise

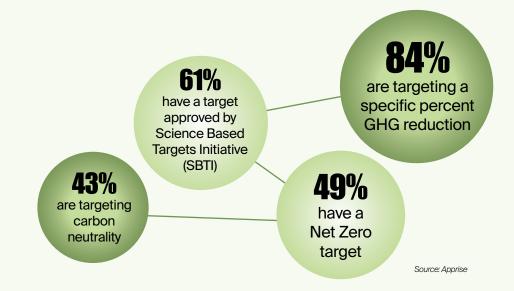


#### **REITs Report Emission Reduction Targets**



**80%** report on assessing impacts on nature and biodiversity as part of investment planing and decision making

#### **REITs Provide Details on Emissions Reduction Plans**



REIT Sustainability Highlights	REITs Build Prosperity	REITs Build Accountability	REITs Build Resistance	REITs Build Community	Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry	1
		REITs Assess	s Exposure to Ph	ysical Risks		
				(A)		$\bigcirc$
93% assess flood ris	sk asses	storm risk	<b>90%</b> assess water stress % of market cap	820 assess wild		67% sess heat stress Source: Apprise
<b>98%</b> report on disa preparedness		<b>94%</b> report on capital improvements to b property resilience	oost prograr	<b>)/0</b> n indoor air qualit		inancial losses ral disasters Source: Apprise
sustainability cer	quality, efficiently tifications that p	managed buildings ovide science-base	s, many of which hav ed solutions and pro portfolios across al	mote		<b>929/6</b> own certified green buildings <i>Source: Apprise</i>





own ENERGY STAR buildings





US, Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) | Building Research Establishment (BRE Global) Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) | US, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ENERGY STAR | International WELL Building Institute (IWBI) WELL Building Standard | Center for Active Design (CfAD) Fitwel



report on green leasing practices that provide shared benefits to building owners and tenants



report on the portion of new leases that include sustainability provisions

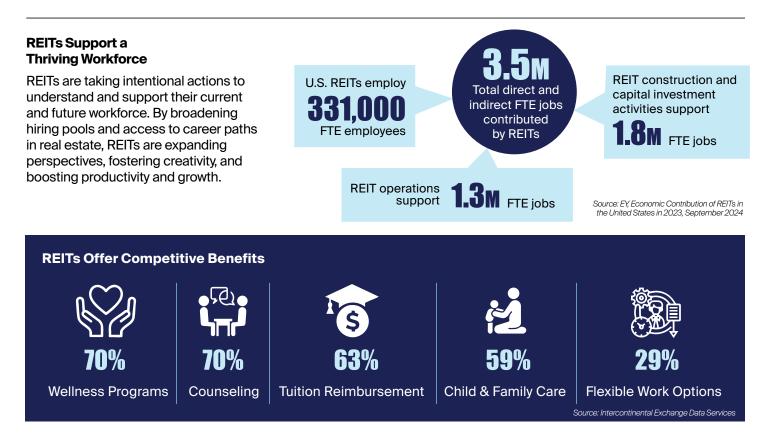


recognized as Green Lease Leaders, a program that provides support and recognition for building owners, tenants, and leasing teams integrating green leasing into their standard practices.

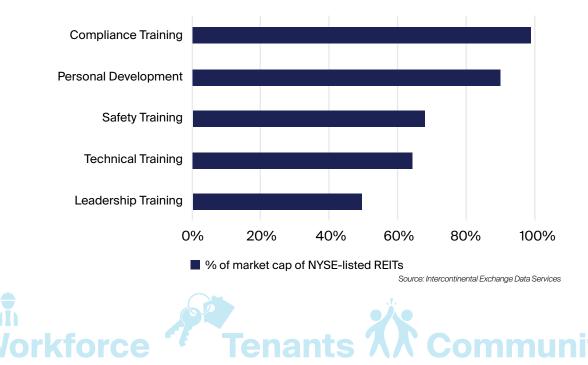
REIT Sustainability	REITs Build	REITs Build	REITs Build	REITs Build	Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry	
Highlights	Prosperity	Accountability	Resistance	Community		
				•		

## 

REITs understand that when people and communities thrive, it creates value and drives innovation. REITs are advancing responsible business practices that address the needs of their workforce, tenants, and communities to build strong leaders and create vibrant places.



#### **REITs Provide Employee Training**



REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

#### 2024 Nareit Social Responsibility Survey

Nareit's Social Responsibility Survey is conducted annually in partnership with Ferguson Partners. Survey participants represent approximately 72% of the U.S. listed equity REIT industry by market cap. Data was collected between April and June 2024. The full report is available to participating Nareit members.





#### Survey participants responded that:



provide regular performance and career development reviews





offer programs that provide work-life balance



**70%** 

have employees with responsibilities related to workforce engagement

Source: 2024 Nareit Social Responsibility Report

98%



report on the composition of their workforce, including by gender, race, and/or other demographics

have a supplier code of ethics and business

Source: Apprise

conduct

Source: Apprise

#### **REITs Strengthen Business Connections**

REITs drive business value by engaging with tenants, visitors, suppliers, and local communities to enhance health, safety, and collective prosperity. REITs create welcoming spaces, address customer feedback, and cultivate connections with community organizations.



report conducting tenant satisfaction surveys

#### **REITs Report on Programs to Support Communities**



**REITs Build** Accountability **REITs Build** Resistance

# Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

Nareit provides leadership opportunities, organizes educational programs, convenes events for REIT industry professionals, and advocates for commercial real estate with organizations that are advancing sustainable business practices across the REIT industry.

## Leadership Councils

DTD CEO Council includes more than 25 member REIT CEOs who support increasing the publicly listed REIT industry's visibility and appeal to a wide range of talent and businesses by focusing on initiatives and programs tied to employment, entrepreneurship, and investment in commercial real estate.

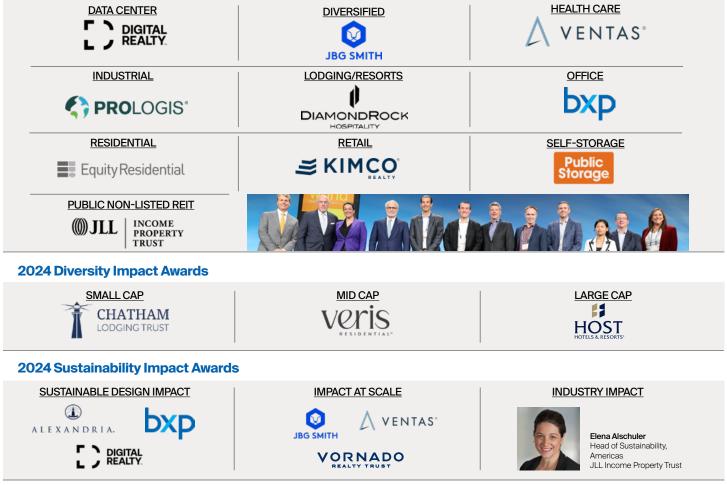
Corporate Governance Council (CGC) consists of a select group of member REIT general counsels to provide input and perspective on Nareit's approach to addressing corporate governance policy matters affecting REITs and the publicly traded real estate community.

Real Estate Sustainability Council (RESC) includes more than 120 of Nareit's corporate member sustainability leaders from all REIT sectors. Its mission is to help shape and lead the REIT industry as it continues to address various complex environmental and sustainability reporting topics.

Social Responsibility Council (SRC) includes more than 75 cross-disciplinary member REIT representatives who advise Nareit regarding a broad range of social responsibility issues, including workforce, community, and supply chain-related matters. For more information visit reit.com/sustainability/leadership.

### Awards Program

Nareit's Leader in the Light and Impact awards recognize REITs for implementing business practices that demonstrate transparent, inclusive leadership, ingenuity, and social and environmental impact in the commercial real estate industry.



**2024 Leader in the Light Awards** 

REITs Build Accountability REITs Build Resistance REITs Build Community Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

### **Nareit Foundation**

For nearly two decades, the Nareit Foundation has supported educational and charitable initiatives for the REIT and publicly traded real estate industry. The foundation's activities include the Nareit Hawaii Community Giving Initiative, supported by REITs operating in Hawaii, and the DTD Initiative, supported by Nareit, member REITs, or their philanthropic organizations, which helps expand opportunities in the REIT industry. For more information, visit nareitfoundation.org.

# Nareit. FOUNDATION

#### DTD Giving Campaign and Grant Program

The DTD Giving Campaign advances philanthropic efforts aimed at increasing the visibility, awareness, and appeal of the REIT industry to a broader range of businesses, talent, and communities. Through the DTD Grant Program, funding is provided to nonprofit organizations that drive economic prosperity by expanding access, representation, and opportunity in the REIT industry—particularly through initiatives focused on employment, entrepreneurship, and investment-related education. For more information on how to contribute, visit the campaign's webpage.

#### 2025 DTD Grant Recipients

In 2025, the Nareit Foundation awarded more than \$1 million to nine nonprofit organizations to advance education and opportunities that increase talent development, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy. Read the full announcement.

#### 2023-2024 DTD Grantee Impact Metrics







**1,037** 

organizations, academic institutions, and corporations engaged by grantees

### Hawaii Community Giving Initiative and Grant Program

In 2024, Nareit Hawaii continued to support nonprofit organizations making a difference in Hawaii's communities, such as Hawaii Land Trust, Hawaii Literacy, and The Pantry by Feeding Hawaii Together. The Nareit Hawaii Community Giving Initiative concluded its 2024 grant cycle for the Nareit Foundation in July 2024 and <u>awarded grants</u> to five nonprofit organizations supporting affordable housing in Hawaii. grants to support affordable housing and other causes in Hawaii since November 2018



Photo courtesy of HomeAid Hawai'i

**REITs Build** 

Prosperity

**REITs Build** Accountability **REITs Build** Resistance

**REITs Build** Community

Nareit Engages with the REIT Industry

#### **Educational Initiatives**



Nareit's REITwise: Law, Accounting & Finance Conference offers legal, accounting, tax, and finance professionals in the REIT and publicly traded real estate industry dedicated networking time, educational sessions, and continuing education credits. In 2026, this conference will expand to include full sustainability and HR education tracks, expanding on existing REITwise discussions of disclosures and reporting, corporate governance matters, and corporate workforce programs. Full list of Nareit events here.

## Nareit. Webinar

Nareit Webinars offer insights and best practices for REITs, commercial real estate, and investment management professionals. Topics include performance, including FTSE Nareit U.S. Real Estate Indexes analysis, sustainability, social responsibility, innovation, technology, and more. Full schedule of webinars here.



The REIT Report podcast is an essential element of Nareit's REIT industry coverage, including weekly interviews with industry experts. Podcast guests include REIT CEOs, portfolio managers, investment strategists, and analysts who discuss key trends and developments impacting REITs. Nareit's Jessica Long hosts a special series throughout the year that covers REIT sustainability-related topics and features a variety of experts and industry leaders. Subscribe here.

## Nareif. Sustainability

Nareit Sustainability is a quarterly newsletter featuring a compilation of sustainability-related industry articles, executive interviews, member REIT profiles about sustainability and social responsibility initiatives, and upcoming events. Subscribe here.



#### **Additional Nareit Resources**

Nareit 2025 REIT Outlook: Offers expert insights into commercial real estate, REITs, and the global trends shaping the future of the industry.

Nareit Market Commentary Blog: Presents analysis of the macro- and micro-economic fundamentals impacting the REIT and commercial real estate industry.

**REITWatch:** A monthly statistical publication that provides a snapshot of the REIT industry.

Nareit Research Library: Provides rigorous analytic research-developed by Nareit's economists as well as sponsored research-that individually and collectively highlights and clarifies the competitive long-term market performance record and portfolio benefits of REITs and the role REITs should play in diversified investment portfolios.

## **Report Resources**

🕀 Data Methodology 🛛 🕀 Download Data

#### About Nareit

REITs invest in America's future. Through the diverse array of properties they own, finance, and operate, REITs help provide the essential real estate that revitalize neighborhoods, enable the digital economy, power community essential services, and build the infrastructure of tomorrow, while creating American jobs and economic activity along the way. REITs of all types collectively own more than \$4 trillion in gross assets across the U.S., with public REITs owning \$2.5 trillion in assets. U.S. listed REITs have an equity market capitalization of more than \$1.4 trillion. REITs provide everyday Americans the opportunity to invest in real estate, and 170 million Americans live in households that benefit from ownership of REITs through stocks, 401(k) plans, pension plans, and other investment funds.

Nareit, the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts, serves as the worldwide representative voice for REITs and publicly traded real estate companies with an interest in U.S. real estate. Nareit's members are REITs and other real estate companies throughout the world that own, operate, and finance income producing real estate, as well as those firms and individuals who advise, study, and service those businesses. Nareit's focus is to broaden and deepen REIT ownership to help a growing set of everyday American investors enjoy the benefits of holding real estate in a well-diversified portfolio, while increasing capital sources that invest in America's future. Nareit is the exclusive registered trademark of the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts, Inc.®

Copyright<sup>©</sup> 2025 by Nareit.<sup>®</sup> All rights reserved.



1875 I Street, NW, Suite 500 Washington, D.C. 20006 202-739-9400

REIT.com

