

# Rise of centralised living: Benefits of mixed-use buildings

By [Astrino Nicoloudakis](#)

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As cities become more crowded and people search for ways to make the most of their time, centralised living has become an increasingly attractive option. From luxury developments to mixed-use buildings, centralised living allows for an uninterrupted lifestyle that is tailored to the individual. With access to amenities, services, and technology, it is easy to see why so many are turning to this option.



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For the most part, living in a centralised location offers access to uninterrupted services, such as utilities and transportation. Instead of having to commute long distances to access essential amenities and services, people can access these quickly and easily from the comfort of their own home. This not only saves time but also money as it eliminates the need for long-distance travel.

Moreover, centralised living also gives people access to seamless technology. With the rise of the internet of things (IoT), residents can connect their home appliances to their phones and gain access to a wealth of data and features. From controlling lighting to setting thermostat temperatures, centralised living allows individuals to make the most of their technology and enjoy a connected lifestyle.

Mixed-use developments are a great way to experience centralised living in luxury. With top-of-the-line amenities, such as gyms and spas, and shops and restaurants, mixed-use buildings offer a one-stop shop for all of the services and amenities that might be required. Furthermore, these buildings usually feature smart technology, such as automated systems, that allow for efficient management of the amenities and services, making life even easier for the residents.

One of the biggest advantages of centralised living is cost savings. With lower transport costs (due to the reduction in diesel and petrol usage), residents can save money while obtaining services and conducting meetings within the building. The cost savings are further boosted by the different types of meeting spaces available, such as hotel-standard conference rooms for professional and corporate clients, co-working pods and hot desks for venture capitalists, reception lounges and office pause areas for informal dealmaking, and neutral meeting areas.

## Access to public transportation

Another factor to consider is public transportation. Cities such as Sandton have a strong public transportation infrastructure, thanks to the Gautrain and its quick access to the airport. This means that residents can go about their day-to-day activities with peace of mind, knowing that their personal belongings are safe and secure. Furthermore, the mixed-use buildings prioritise safety, making it easier for residents to lock-up-and-go, whether it be to catch shuttles, trains, or travel to other destinations.

E-commerce is also made more accessible with centralised living as residents have access to various delivery services like Uber, Checkers, and Mr D. This convenience is coupled with the benefits of being part of a community of like-minded professionals, entrepreneurs, and digital nomads. The mixed-use building provides an environment where these individuals can cross-pollinate ideas, interact with different uses, and work in different areas with different people.

For digital nomads, a centralised living environment is essential. They need a base and infrastructure to work and travel, and a community of individuals who share the same ideals. The multi-use building offers the ability to change their environment on a daily basis, which is crucial for digital nomads who are always on the move.



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### Off-grid services

The South African energy crisis and the impending 'water shedding' have also highlighted the need for centralised living. Service delivery from municipalities and government organisations continues to be a problem in South Africa, and the trend is unfortunately spiralling downwards. To combat this, landlords and developers are designing buildings that take these services off the grid and provide uninterrupted delivery to tenants and guests.

However, it can be difficult to achieve a cost-effective solution for both the property developer and tenants as some services like climate-controlled air-conditioning are energy-intensive and difficult to provide during load shedding. The multi-use building caters to the population and each individual's temperature and health requirements, making it a much more desirable option.

Safety is also a concern in South Africa, and estate living is not suitable for the majority of the population due to the increasing levies required to maintain the standard of living and 24-hour security. In a high-rise mixed-use building, costs are contained as there is a reliance on technology, and fewer security officers are required. Although the initial cost of building a high-rise mixed-use building may be higher, the savings and efficiencies across the uses and services are passed on to the tenant once critical occupancy levels are achieved.

### Benefits of build-to-let model

Finally, the trend among property developers is to build-to-let rather than build-to-sell. This allows for annuity revenue income, capital appreciation, and a reduction in costs as mixed-use buildings without a body corporate do not need to keep 25% of their profits for a repairs and maintenance reserve. The ever-increasing building costs, coupled with the demand for rental properties, has driven this trend.

Moreover, the build-to-let model provides property developers with a stable source of income over a longer period, compared to the once-off revenue from build-to-sell. This has made build-to-let an attractive option for property developers in today's market.



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### Technology integration

Technology drives interaction in mixed-use developments and enhances the overall experience for tenants. Utilising the latest trends in OpenAI and IT infrastructure, property developers are able to provide services such as security (electronic locks), entertainment (Netflix, Showmax), loyalty programmes and discounts, without the need for people-oriented customer service which is suffering due to the skills shortage in South Africa.

This seamless technology makes living in mixed-use developments a desirable choice for those seeking cost savings, ease of access to services, and the convenience of all amenities being under one roof. In conclusion, centralised living in mixed-use developments, with a focus on luxury living, uninterrupted services and seamless technology, is a sensible choice for both individuals and businesses.

Overall, centralised living offers numerous benefits for those looking for an uninterrupted lifestyle. From luxury mixed-use developments to access to utilities and seamless technology, this type of living makes a lot of sense for those looking to make the most of their time and money.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Astrino Nicoloudakis, chief investment officer of Acision Limited at Acsiopolis Mixed Used Precinct. He is an experienced shareholder and corporate executive with a history of working in the property and retail industries. His skillset encompasses business process optimisation, negotiation, corporate finance, property development, renewable energy systems, and real estate investments.

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