

From...



A case for turning empty malls into housing.

Second life: In the Lynnwood suburb of Seattle, developers are turning a big part of the 41-year-old Alderwood Mall into a 300-unit apartment complex, a grand experiment in transforming struggling malls into much-needed affordable housing.

Such conversions may be the best use of vacant space across an over-retailed country, writes contributor Patrick Sisson. Before the pandemic, shifts in consumer behavior were already hurting brick-and-mortar stores. Shutdowns and stay-at-home orders have accelerated the trend, bringing in-person shopping to a standstill. Shopping centers, it turns out, are often sited in locations that would be perfect for commuters who work downtown but can't afford to live there. The challenge now is to create community-oriented developments, not just replace stores with apartments.

Today on CityLab: [The Dying Mall's New Lease on Life: Apartments](#)

-Linda Poon

FROM: The Dying Mall's New Lease on Life: Apartments

As the pandemic hastens the retail apocalypse, some developers are betting that empty malls can mix housing with stores and community space.

Patrick Sisson

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