Housing starved cities seek relief in micro-apartments

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SHELTER FOR NEW YORK CITY'S restless young is in short supply. With the city's high-rise apartments selling for millions, even studios are becoming out of reach for many. But a new type of housing is emerging: micro-apartments, small spaces that are being built in response to the city's growing need for affordable housing.

These units range from about 300 to 500 square feet, and are designed to accommodate one or two people. They are typically furnished with minimal furniture and have limited amenities, but they offer a affordable rent that many young professionals can afford.

In New York, developers are transforming old warehouses and industrial buildings into micro-apartments. One such project is the Lincoln Square apartment complex, which is set to open later this year. The complex will feature 200 studios and one-bedroom units, all with kitchens and bathrooms.

The micro-apartments are being marketed as a way to save money and live closer to work. Many young professionals are drawn to the city's vibrant arts and entertainment scene, but they are priced out of living in traditional apartments.

"There's a real demand for these affordable units," said Sarah Lawrence, a developer who is building micro-apartments in the city. "People are willing to live in smaller spaces if they can afford it and get to be close to the action.

Some developers are also incorporating amenities such as fitness centers and roof decks, to make the units more attractive. But the emphasis is on affordability, with rents starting at around $1,000 per month.

The micro-apartments are part of a trend that is spreading across the country, as cities look for ways to provide more housing for their growing populations.

In San Francisco, for example, a new micro-apartment complex is set to open later this year. The building will feature 50 units, all with kitchens and bathrooms.

"These units are a great way to provide more housing for people who can't afford traditional apartments," said John Hickey, a developer who is building the complex. "They're also a way to bring more people into the city, which is important for the economic vitality of the area.

The micro-apartments are also being watched closely by housing advocates, who see them as a possible solution to the city's housing crisis.

"These units are a step in the right direction," said Sarah Jenks, a housing advocate. "But we still need to do more to address the root causes of the crisis, such as skyrocketing rent and a lack of affordable housing.

The micro-apartments are likely to be a part of the city's housing landscape for years to come. But they are just one piece of the puzzle, and much more needs to be done to address the city's housing needs.

"We're making progress," said Hickey. "But there's still a long way to go. We need to continue to build more affordable housing, and to provide more support for those who need it most.

The micro-apartments are a step in the right direction, but they are not a complete solution. The city still needs to do more to address the root causes of the housing crisis, and to provide more support for those who need it most.