Real Estate Facts Column

**Walkable, Mixed-Use Communities Most Desirable, Say Realtors®**

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***(463 Words)***

Most homeowners would agree that the location of their home is just as important as the home itself. That’s why consumers cite community as one of the most important factors when choosing a home. Recent research has shown that most homebuyers say their ideal community is one with a mix of houses, stores and other businesses that are easily walkable, rather than neighborhoods that require more driving between home, work and recreation.

According to the National Association of Realtors® *2013 Community Preference Survey*, respondents noted that while the size of the property does matter, consumers are willing to compromise size for their preferred neighborhood and less commuting. When asked to identify their ideal community, the most popular choice was a suburban neighborhood with a mix of houses, shops and businesses. The least popular was a suburban neighborhood with just houses.

“More and more consumers are being drawn to mixed-use neighborhoods that come with shorter commutes and more walkable areas,” said **[full name of your local spokesperson]**. “Realtors® care about improving communities and we recognize that growth patterns, economic development and quality-of-life issues are closely linked to the success of a community and its residents.”

The survey showed that a majority of Americans prefer houses with small yards and easy to walks to schools, stores and restaurants, over houses with large yards that require owners to drive to schools, stores and restaurants. An even larger majority prefer a house with a smaller yard and a shorter commute to work, over houses with larger yards and a longer commute.

While Americans say they prefer walkable communities, it seems they do so only to a certain point. The survey found that a majority of consumers responded that they prefer communities where it is easier to walk and their commute is shorter; however, when comparing a detached single-family house to an apartment or townhouse, the detached home wins out – even with a longer commute and more driving.

“Today’s buyers want a community where they can walk to shopping, restaurants and schools,” said **[last name of your spokesperson]**. “Yet buyers aren’t willing to compromise on a single-family house; they want the house and the walkable community.”

The **[full name of your local association/board]** says the survey seems to suggest a growing momentum away from the sprawling suburban environments of the past and toward mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly communities.

“Consumers’ attitudes are changing and it’s becoming evident that suburban neighborhoods – where amenities are spread out – aren’t as desirable as they once were,” said **[last name of your spokesperson]**. “Keeping a community attractive, livable and functioning well is a complex task. Realtors® realize the healthier a community, the better the environment for consumers. That’s why we work hard to improve the community and the lives of those who live in it.”