

Renting High on Baby Boomers' Priority Lists

The Millennials get a huge amount of attention and their housing habits and desires are carefully dissected.

But the aged 55+ generation still wields enormous power.

After all, homeowners in this age group control about \$8 trillion of the nation's home equity and their decisions will have a tremendous influence on the future of the housing market.

That's according to the Freddie Mac 55+ Survey, a study that looked at baby boomers' housing preferences and challenges, along with some of the issues influencing their decision-making.

It found that renting, not buying, is high on some baby boomers' lists and that by 2020, over 5 million members of the aged 55+ crowd want to be tenants.

Here's more of what Freddie Mac found.

Aging in place preferences: It's not surprising that 63 percent of the aged 55+ homeowners surveyed would prefer to age in place if they had complete control over it.

But nearly 40 percent say that they'd prefer to move at least once more, meaning that nearly 27 million homeowners over age 55 could move again. Thirteen percent think they'll make a move within four years.

Renters by choice: Among 55+ renters who plan to move again, 71 percent of them plan to rent their next home.

It looks like they're a part of the renters-by-choice, given that 38 percent say they have enough extra money after each payday to save money.

Moreover, more than half (59 percent) think it makes financial sense for people their age to be renters, and it's a view is held by 67 percent of multifamily renters.

Financial comfort: The bulk of those in the over 55 group -- 76 percent of homeowners -- are confident that they'll be financially comfortable in retirement.

Influences, amenities: Cost and convenience are top factors influencing the aged 55+ group when members are deciding whether to move and where to live.

Other desires and influences:

- Affordability of living in a particular community (46%)
- Having the amenities needed to live there for many years after I retire (44%)
- Less maintenance (41%)
- Proximity to other family members (31%)
- Having a place where I was no longer responsible for caring for the property (e.g. yard work, snow removal) (30%)
- Being in a walkable community (28%)
- Having abundant services for adults my age (25%)
- Access to public transportation (17%)
- Warmer climate (19%)
- Having a place that is smaller than my current home (e.g. downsizing) (19%).

For more on Freddie Mac's findings, see: http://www.freddie.mac.com/finance/report/20160608_55ers_significant_impact_housing_market.html and http://www.freddie.mac.com/finance/report/20160628_five_million_boomers_expect_to_rent_next_home_by_2020.html

30 Questions to Strategize for Your Future

We all know that it's important to think ahead, plan for aging, and to decide what we do and don't want.

But it's an easy topic to put off and considering all the variables can be daunting.

Here's a straightforward infographic (<http://ageinplace.com/planning/retirement-planning-30-questions>) that provides 30 aging-related questions to answer.

They're divided into five categories:

- Living at home
- Staying active and social
- Managing finances
- Driving and transportation
- Living with adult children
- Residential and assisted living

Here are a couple sample questions from each section.

-Does my home have health and safety issues that need to be addressed?

-Can I get around comfortably in my home, even if my health declines?

-Are there opportunities for me to stay active during the day?

-During winter, are there indoor fitness facilities available?

-Does my family have access to all necessary assets, such as property deeds, legal documents, account information, and safe deposit boxes?

-Do I have an updated will, and have I made a clear accounting and division of my estate?

-Do I drive my car enough to justify the cost of ownership, compared to the cost of taxis or ride-shares?

-If I am living with grandchildren, what role will I have in helping to raise them?

-Will I be dependent on my children for care and transport?

-Can an assisted living facility provide the level of care that I need?

-What options exist if I lose my memory?

The questions can be a starting point for a deeper exploration of your own challenges and solutions, and if you're a baby boomer, you can use the list as a planning tool. And if you have an aging parent or relative, the list can be a gentle way to broach a sometimes difficult topic.

Disrupt Aging

Young people share some of their views about old age, including at what age they think someone is old and their ideas about the limitations those old people face.

Then their perceptions – really stereotypes – change.

Watch the four-minute Disrupt Aging video:

<http://www.aarp.org/etc/everywhere/statics/disrupt-aging/home.html?cmp=RDRCT-DSO-DISAGING-vanitymain2-011516>.

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