Friendly residents ranks as top neighborhood draw

Schools, amenities, home price trends -- these might seem like the sort of neighborhood features that would matter most to homebuyers. But while those factors are important to aspiring homeowners, "friendly neighbors" actually tops the list of selling points, according to a new survey. Half of respondents to Berkshire Hathaway Homeservices' latest homeowner sentiment survey said that friendly neighbors was their top choice for a neighborhood feature. Other popular draws were walkability (45 percent of respondents cited it as an additional top feature), followed by good school district (41 percent), "accurate market value of a home" (39 percent) and confidence that a home will turn out to be a good investment (37 percent), according to the survey. Real estate agents don't always know if a community is blighted by curmudgeons or blessed with altruists. Plus, character judgments are subjective and fair housing laws can making disclosing demographic information t...

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