Half of Americans want to live in the town next door: Study

Most Americans don't live in their dream neighborhood, but for more than half of those, the dream isn't that far away.

A new study from ImproveNet finds that 70 percent of the 2,210 Americans surveyed between the ages of 18 and 76 don't yet live in their dream neighborhood. But of those individuals, more than 50 percent want to live in a different town in the same part of the state, and more than 20 percent want to live in a radius of less than 10 miles from their current neighborhood.

"Naturally, as people climb income brackets, it's more likely they'll be living in their dream neighborhood already," the study explains. "Just 27 percent of people making less than $50,000 per year are living in their ideal neighborhood, compared with 44 percent of those making more than $100,000."

"However, that means a full 56 percent in the higher income bracket have yet to arrive at their dream destination," the study continues. "Make no mistake, Americans love striving."

The respondents – of which 54 percent live in suburbs, 33 percent live in cities and 13 percent live in exurbs – also chose what's most important in their dream neighborhood and the study found that most people want a grocery store, followed by public parks and a strong public school system. Shopping malls, theaters and houses of worship were the three least important attributes, according to respondents.

Only 17 percent of respondents to the survey wanted to be very close with their neighbors, while the overwhelming amount, at 61 percent, said they wanted to be somewhat close.

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“On the subject of wealth, a vast majority of Americans just want to fit in – ninety percent of respondents said they’d prefer to be equally affluent to neighbors, while just six percent prefer to be more affluent and four percent prefer to be less affluent,” the study says.

Despite many Americans not feeling like they yet live in their dream neighborhood, only 59 percent of the survey’s respondents say they’ve actually made an effort to improve their current neighborhood, by cleaning up trash, supporting local businesses and volunteering.

Grocery store(s)	8.8
Park space	8.0
Strong public school system	7.8
Fine dining restaurants	7.3
Fast casual restaurants	7.3
Farmer's market	7.1
Public library	7.0
Big box store(s)	7.0
Bike lanes and paths	6.8
Public transportation	6.6
Ethnic and cultural diversity	6.5
Lots of families	6.4
Street festivals, block parties	6.2
Movie theater	6.1
Park district / community center	6.1
Gyms, fitness studios	6.0
Public pool	5.9
Communal gardens	5.8
Lots of young adults	5.8
Bars and pubs	5.7
Museum	5.6
Public art (murals, sculptures, etc.)	5.5
Music venue	5.4
Large shopping mall	5.4
Theatre	4.9
Place(s) of worship	4.9

Courtesy: ImproveNet

Email Patrick Kearns

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