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Home and Community Preferences of the 45+ Population

November 2010



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Data Collected by GfK Custom Research North America
Report Prepared by Teresa A. Keenan, Ph.D.

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Research & Strategic Analysis
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Washington, DC 20049
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Executive Summary

In an effort to learn more about home and community issues that affect midlife and older adults, in July 2010 AARP Research & Strategic Analysis contracted with GfK Custom Research North America to field a short series of questions as part of OMNITEL, their weekly telephone omnibus service. At the conclusion of two weeks, responses had been received from 1,616 respondents ages 45 or older.

Key Findings

- Nearly three-quarters of respondents *strongly agreed* with the statement, “what I’d really like to do is stay in my current residence for as long as possible,” while slightly more than one-tenth said they *somewhat agreed* with the statement.
- Similarly, two-thirds of respondents *strongly agreed* with the statement, “what I’d really like to do is remain in my local community for as long as possible,” while roughly one-fifth said they *somewhat agreed* with the statement. These figures are essentially equivalent to those given by respondents when they were asked about staying in their home; the difference is that when compared with staying in their community, more respondents *strongly agreed* that they wanted to stay in their home, suggesting a more intense level of agreement.
- Eight in ten respondents reported their current home having a full bath on the main level as well as a bedroom (or a room that could be used as a bedroom) on the main level. Roughly two-thirds reported having a sidewalk in front of their home. However, fewer than half of the respondents said their house has a half bath on the main level, an entrance without steps, door handles that are levers instead of knobs, or doorways that are wider than standard.
- When asked to select the statement which most closely reflects their opinion, roughly two-thirds of respondents agreed that they want to stay in their home because “*I like what my community has to offer me.*” In contrast, roughly one-quarter agreed with the alternative statement that they want to stay in their home because “*I cannot afford to move.*”
- When asked about seven different community aspects and the level of importance they have for them, two-thirds of respondents said that being near friends and/or family and being near where one wants to go (ie., grocery stores, doctor’s offices, the library) is *extremely or very important* to them. Roughly half noted that being near church or social organizations or being somewhere where it’s easy to walk are *extremely or very important* to them, while somewhat fewer said the same thing about being near good schools or being near work. Only about one-fifth of respondents reported that being near transit (bus or rail) was *extremely or very important* to them.

Background

In July 2010, AARP Research & Strategic Analysis contracted with GfK Custom Research North America to field a short series of questions about home and community issues as part of OMNITEL, its weekly national telephone omnibus service. At the conclusion of the two-week fielding period, responses had been received from 1,616 adults ages 45 and older^{1,2}.

In this survey, respondents were asked about their home and community, with particular questions focused on aspects of their current home, their opinions about where they would like to live as they age, and elements of their community that might affect their decision about remaining in their community over time.

Detailed Findings³

Plans to Stay in Current Residence

As noted in Figure 1, nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents *strongly agreed* with the statement, “what I’d really like to do is stay in my current residence for as long as possible.” Slightly more than one-tenth (13%) said they *somewhat agreed* with the statement. Roughly one-tenth of respondents reported *strongly disagreeing* (5%) or *somewhat disagreeing* (4%) with the statement. Four percent were *neutral*, neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

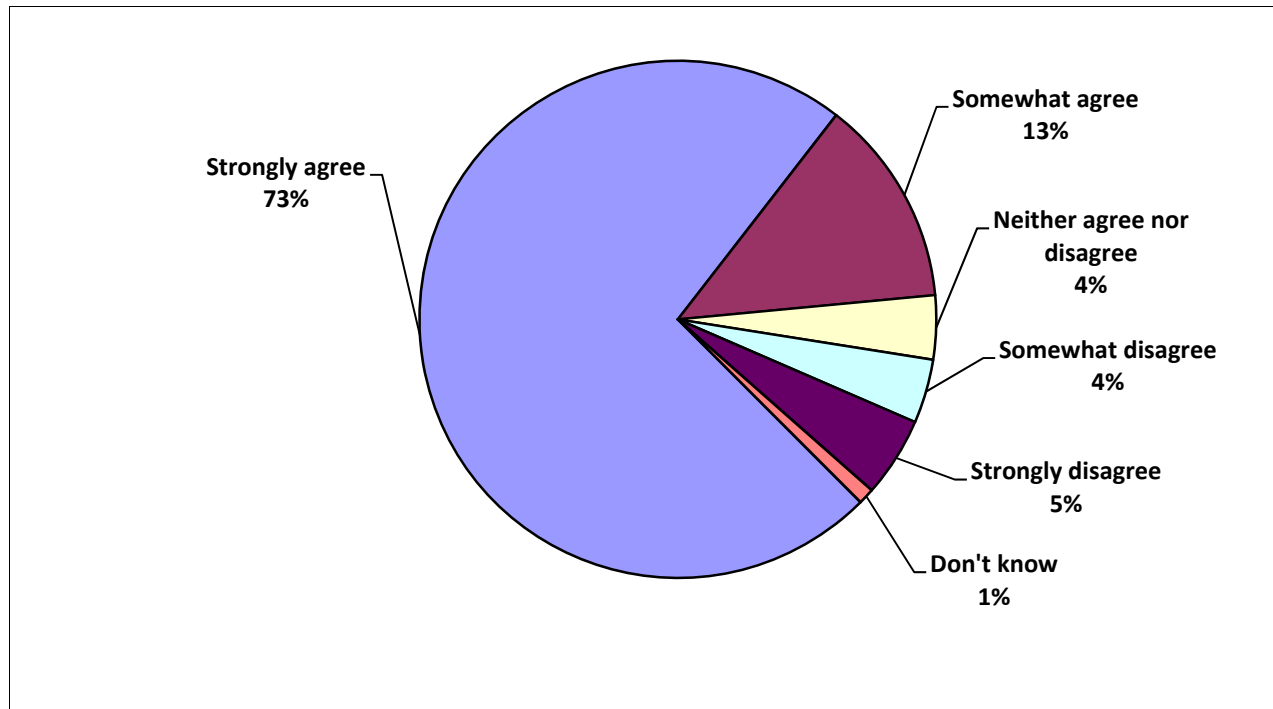
¹ The survey was fielded between July 16 and July 25, 2010. At the conclusion of the fielding period, responses had been received from 1,616 individuals. The sampling error is +/- 3.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results would fall in a range of no more than three and one-half percentage points of what would have been obtained if every person age 45 or older had been surveyed.

² Data were weighted by a GfK-designed computer program which uses the variables age, sex, education, race, and geographic region to reflect the U.S. population age 45 and older. Throughout the report, results are presented using the weighted data figures wherein the total sample n=985.

³ Respondents in this study are ages 45 and over with roughly one-quarter (27%) between ages 45-54, four in ten (40%) between ages 55-64, and one-third (34%) ages 65 or older. Somewhat more than half were women (53%) and slightly less than half were men (47%). Three-quarters (74%) are white, non-Hispanic; one in eight (13%) are black, non-Hispanic; six percent are Hispanic; one percent are Asian. Four in ten (42%) had a high school education or less, while three in ten (31%) had some college or technical training and one-quarter (24%) had a college or post-graduate education. Three in ten (31%) have household incomes of less than \$30,000 per year, while roughly one in six (17%) have household incomes of \$30,000-\$49,999 per year. Fourteen percent reported an annual household income of \$50,000-\$74,999, while one-fifth (21%) reported an annual household income of \$75,000 or more.

Figure 1
Level of Agreement: Statement One

What I'd Really Like to Do is Stay in My Current Residence for as Long as Possible
(n=985)



Source: Home and Community Preferences of the 45+ Population, November 2010

Table 1
Level of Agreement: Statement One

***“What I’d Really Like to Do is
Stay in My Current Residence for as Long as Possible.”***
By Age, Gender, and Income Level

	Age			Gender	
	45-49	50-64	65+	Male	Female
	A	B	C	D	E
	(n=109)	(n=542)	(n=334)	(n=466)	(n=519)
Strongly or Somewhat Agree	81%	85%	88%	81%	89%^d
Strongly agree	60%	72%^a	78%^{ab}	69%	76%
Somewhat agree	21%^{bc}	13%	10%	12%	13%

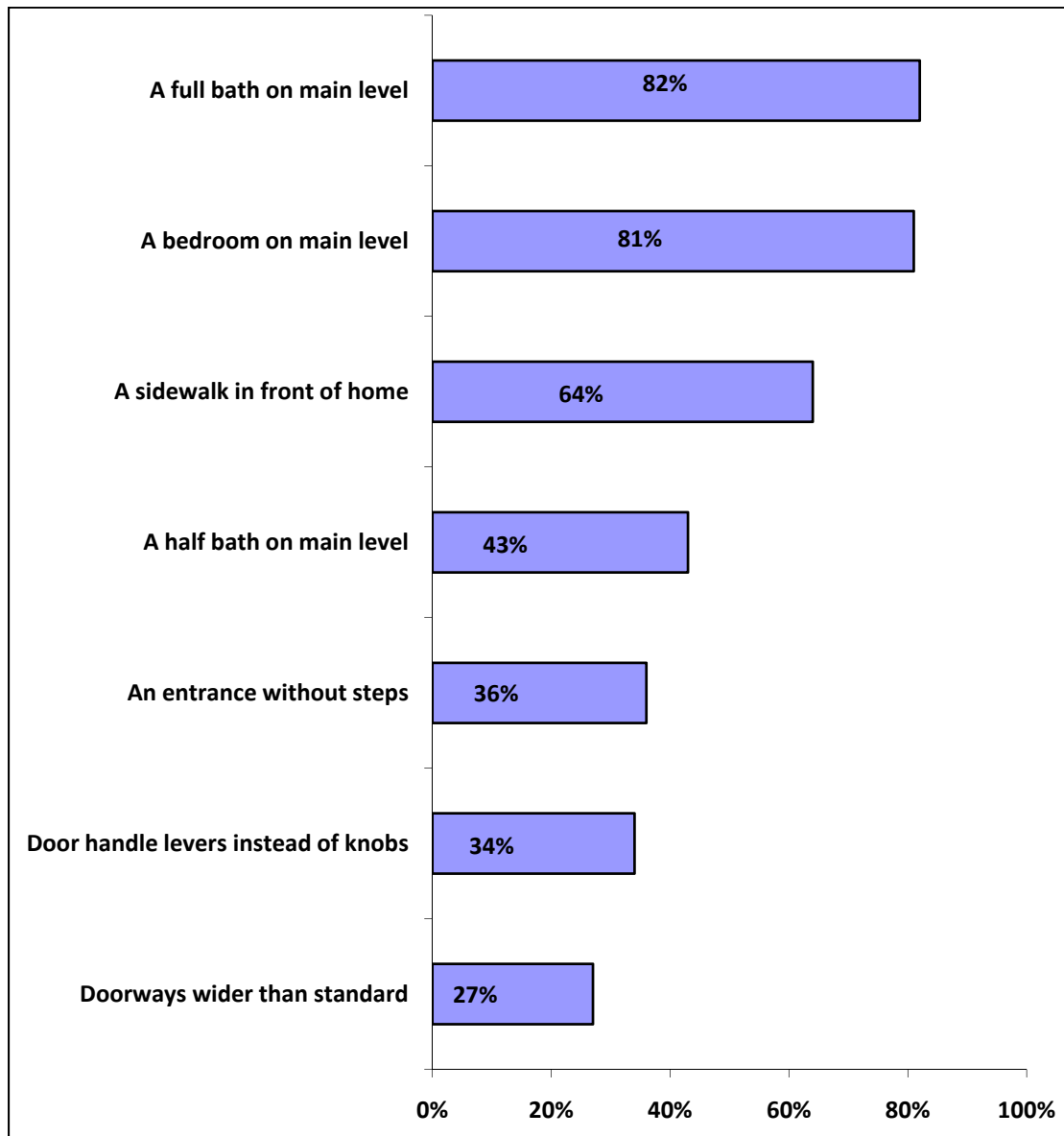
	Income Level			
	<\$25K	\$25-<\$50K	\$50-<75K	\$75K+
	F	G	H	I
	(n=388)	(n=437)	(n=272)	(n=504)
Strongly or Somewhat Agree	86%	90%ⁱ	87%	83%
Strongly agree	73%	78%ⁱ	71%	69%
Somewhat agree	13%	12%	16%	14%

- As shown in Table 1, respondents ages 50-64 and those ages 65 and older are more likely than those ages 45-49 to *strongly agree* (72% and 78% vs. 60%) with the statement “*what I’d really like to do is stay in my current residence for as long as possible.*” Those ages 45-49 are more likely than their older counterparts to say they *somewhat agree* with the statement (21% vs. 13% and 10%).
- Women are more likely than men to say they *strongly or somewhat agree* (89% vs. 81%) with the statement, “*what I’d really like to do is stay in my current residence for as long as possible.*”
- Respondents with annual household incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999 are more likely than those with incomes of \$75,000 or more to *strongly or somewhat agree* with the statement (90% vs. 83%).
- Notably, there are no regional differences in respondents’ level of agreement with this statement (not shown).

Household Features

Eight in ten respondents reported their current home having a full bath on the main level (82%) as well as a bedroom (or a room that could be used as a bedroom) on the main level (81%) (see Figure 2). Roughly two-thirds (64%) of respondents reported having a sidewalk in front of their home. However, fewer than half of the respondents said their house has a half bath on the main level (43%), an entrance without steps (36%), door handles that are levers instead of knobs (34%), or doorways that are wider than standard (27%).

Figure 2
Aspects of Home
(n=985)



Source: Home and Community Preferences of the 45+ Population, November 2010

- In terms of age differences, respondents ages 50-64 and 65 and older are more likely than younger respondents to report their home has a full bath on the main level (83% and 85% vs. 69%).
- Respondents ages 65 and older are more likely than those ages 50-64 to have an entrance without steps (40% vs. 33%) and to have doorways wider than standard (31% vs. 24%).
- The youngest respondents—those ages 45 to 49—are more likely than their older counterparts (49% vs. 31% and 35%) to report having levered door handles rather than knobs.
- As for gender differences, women are more likely than men to have a bedroom on the main level (84% vs. 78%), but men are more likely to have a half bath on the main level (46% vs. 41%).

Table 2
Aspects of Home
By Respondents' Income Level⁴

	Income Level			
	<\$25K	\$25-<\$50K	\$50-<75K	\$75K+
	A	B	C	D
	(n=388)	(n=437)	(n=272)	(n=504)
Full bath on main level	86% ^{cd}	87% ^{cd}	81%	77%
Half bath on main level	32%	42% ^a	45% ^a	57% ^{abc}
Bedroom on main level	82%	85%	81%	77%
Doorways wider than standard	26%	29%	28%	32%
Door handle levers instead of knobs	25%	33% ^a	37% ^a	46% ^{abc}
Entrance without steps	34%	33%	39%	38%
Sidewalk in front of house	59%	65%	63%	65%

- As noted in Table 2, there is a negative relationship between income and having a home with a full bath on the main level such that respondents with annual household incomes of below \$50,000 are more likely than those with incomes above that level to report their home having such a feature. But, there is a positive relationship between having a home with a half bath on the main level and with door handle levers such that more affluent respondents are more likely than less affluent ones to say their homes have these features.

⁴ How to Read the Tables: **Bold face** percents in columns (which represent demographic subgroups) are significantly higher than percents in adjacent columns. Superscripts (^{a/b/c, d/e, f/g/h, i/j}) indicate those columns in which there is a statistically significant difference. Dashes (----) indicate no responses were reported.

Table 3
Aspects of Home
By Respondents' Region of Residence⁵

	Region			
	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
	A	B	C	D
	(n=201)	(n=237)	(n=351)	(n=196)
Full bath on main level	69%	83%^a	88%^a	85%^a
Half bath on main level	39%	45%	45%	42%
Bedroom on main level	69%	82%^a	85%^a	84%^a
Doorways wider than standard	28%	25%	26%	28%
Door handle levers instead of knobs	31%	33%	34%	40%
Entrance without steps	32%	29%	40%^{ab}	40%^{ab}
Sidewalk in front of house	63%	68%^c	59%	69%^c

- Respondents who live in the Midwest, South, and West regions are more likely than those who live in the Northeast region to report that their home has a full bath on the main level and a bedroom on the main level (see Table 3). Additionally, those who live in the South and West regions are more likely than those in either the Northeast or Midwest to have entrances to their homes without steps. Finally, respondents in the Midwest and West regions are more likely than those in the South region to report having a sidewalk in front of their homes.

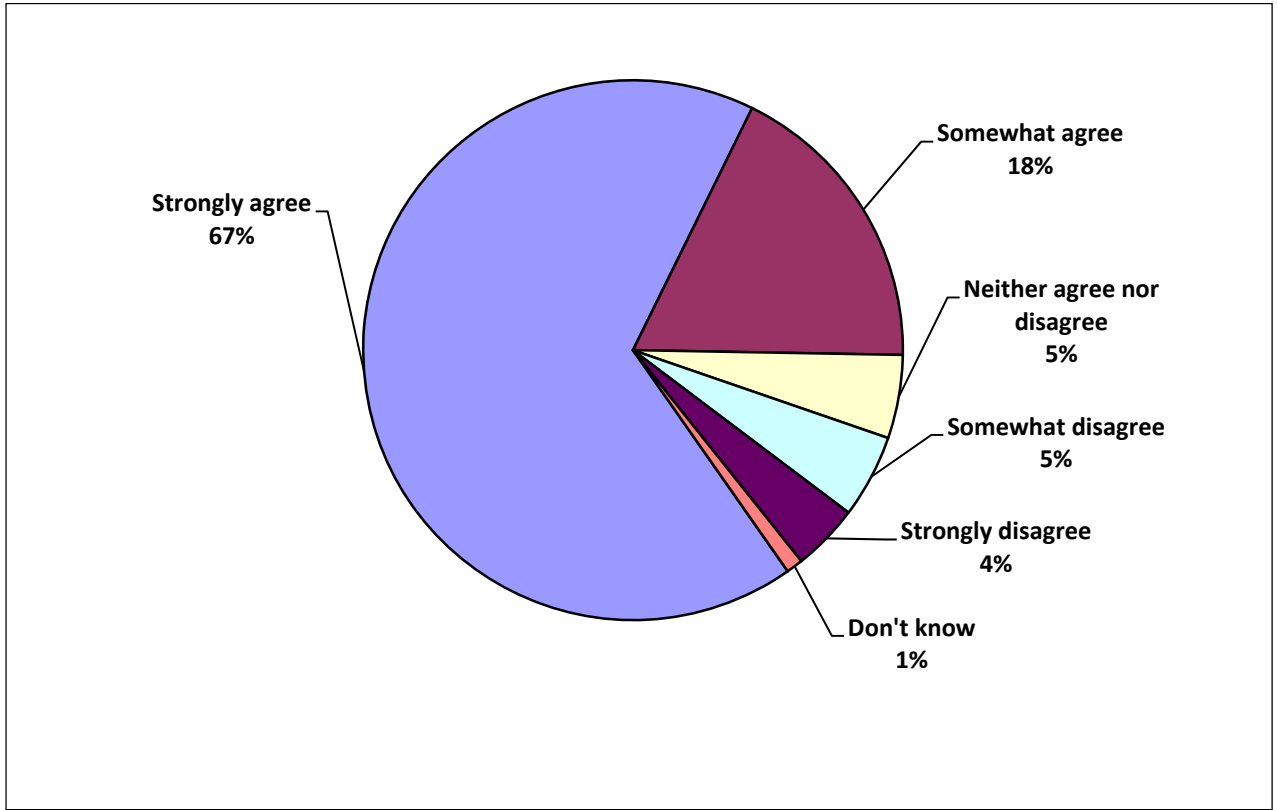
Plans to Stay in Local Community

As shown in Figure 3, two-thirds (67%) of respondents *strongly agreed* with the statement, “what I’d really like to do is remain in my local community for as long as possible,” while roughly one-fifth (18%) said they *somewhat agreed* with the statement. These figures are essentially equivalent to those given by respondents when they were asked about staying in their home; the difference is that when compared with staying in their community, more respondents *strongly agreed* that they wanted to stay in their home, suggesting a greater intensity of agreement (home: 86% *strongly* or *somewhat agreed*; community: 85% *strongly* or *somewhat agreed*). Also similar to their responses about staying in their home, roughly one-tenth of respondents reported *strongly disagreeing* (4%) or *somewhat disagreeing* (5%) with the statement about remaining in their community. Five percent were *neutral*, neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

⁵ **GfK’s geographic distinctions are as follows:** The Northeast region includes Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The South region includes Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana. The Midwest region includes North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio. The West region includes Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico.

Figure 3
Level of Agreement: Statement Two

***What I'd Really Like to Do is Remain in My Local
Community for as Long as Possible***
(n=985)



Source: *Home and Community Preferences of the 45+ Population*, November 2010

- Although there are no gender or income differences in levels of agreement with the community statement, those ages 65 and older are more likely than those between 45 and 49 or between 50 and 64 to say they *strongly* or *somewhat agreed* with it (92% vs. 82% for both).
- Additionally, there are no regional differences in respondents' level of agreement with this statement.

When asked to select the statement which most closely reflects their opinion, roughly two-thirds (65%) of respondents agreed that they want to stay in their home because “*I like what my community has to offer me.*” In contrast, roughly one-quarter (24%) agreed with the alternative statement that they want to stay in their home because “*I cannot afford to move.*” Notably, one in nine (11%) respondents *did not know* which statement most closely reflected their opinion.

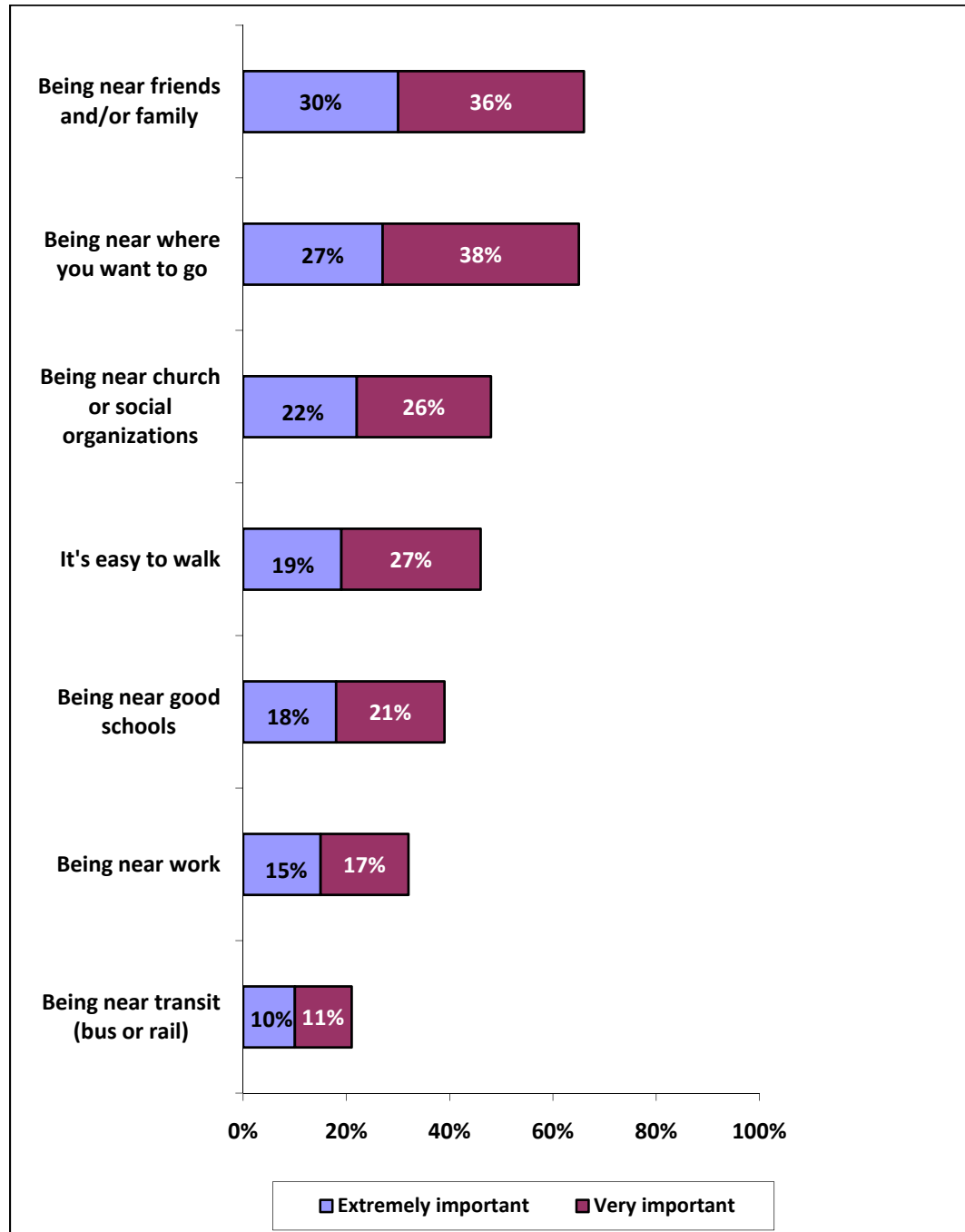
- Younger respondents are more likely than those ages 65 and older to say they will stay because they “*cannot afford to move*” (29% for those 45-49 and 27% for those 50-64 vs. 17% for those 65+); those ages 65 and older are more likely than those ages 50-64 to say they will stay because they “*like what the community has to offer*” (71% vs. 61%).
- Women are more likely than men to say they want to stay in their home because they “*cannot afford to move*” (28% vs. 20%).
- There is a positive relationship between respondents’ income level and their agreement on wanting to stay in their community for what it *has to offer*, such that agreement increases for each level of income. That is, those respondents having the highest annual incomes expressed the most agreement with the statement (49% for those with incomes <\$25,000; 70% for those with incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999; 73% for those with incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999; 78% for those with incomes of \$75,000 or more).
- Not surprisingly, there is a negative relationship between respondents’ income level and their agreement on *not being able to afford to move*, such that agreement decreases for each level of income (43% for those with incomes <\$25,000; 20% for those with incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999; 14% for those with incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999; 11% for those with incomes of \$75,000 or more).
- The only geographic difference is that respondents who live in the Midwest region are more likely than those who live in the South region to say they want to stay in their home because they “*like what the community has to offer*” (68% vs. 61%)

Importance of Community Aspects for Staying in One’s Community

When asked about the importance of seven different community aspects and the level of importance they have for staying in one’s community, two-thirds of respondents said that being near friends and/or family (66%) and being near where one wants to go (ie., grocery stores, doctor’s offices, the library) (65%) is *extremely* or *very important* to them (see Figure 4).

Roughly half noted that being near church or social organizations (48%) or being somewhere where it’s easy to walk (46%) are *extremely* or *very important* to them, while somewhat fewer said the same thing about being near good schools (39%) or being near work (32%). Only about one-fifth (21%) of respondents reported that being near transit (bus or rail) was *extremely* or *very important* to them.

Figure 4
Importance of Community Aspects for Staying in One's Community
(n=985)



Source: *Home and Community Preferences of the 45+ Population*, November 2010

- In general, as shown in Table 4, older respondents and women are more likely than their demographic counterparts to note the importance of being near friends and family, places they want to go, church and social organizations, and a place where it's easy to walk. Not surprisingly, younger respondents are more likely than older respondents to rate being near good schools and being near work as *extremely* or *very important* to them.
- Less affluent respondents are more likely than more affluent ones to consider being near where they want to go, being near church or social organizations, being near transit, and being somewhere easy to walk as *extremely* or *very important* to them. More affluent respondents are more likely to note the importance of being near their work.

Table 4
Importance of Community Aspects for Staying in One's Community
Extremely or Very Important
By Age, Gender, and Income Level

	Age			Gender	
	45-49	50-64	65+	Male	Female
	A	B	C	D	E
	(n=109)	(n=542)	(n=334)	(n=466)	(n=519)
Being near friends and/or family	60%	64%	71%^{ab}	59%	72%^d
Being near where you want to go	68%	62%	70%^b	60%	70%^d
Being near church or social organizations	42%	43%	57%^{ab}	41%	53%^d
It's easy to walk	46%	43%	51%^b	42%	49%^d
Being near good schools	64%^{bc}	38%^c	31%	37%	40%
Being near work	43%^c	36%^c	21%	32%	32%
Being near transit	16%	22%	21%	20%	23%

	Income Level			
	<\$25K	\$25-<\$50K	\$50-<75K	\$75K+
	F	G	H	I
	(n=388)	(n=437)	(n=272)	(n=504)
Being near friends and/or family	68%	69%ⁱ	68%	62%
Being near where you want to go	71%^{ghi}	63%	60%	60%
Being near church or social organizations	54%^{hi}	49%	44%	35%
It's easy to walk	53%^{hi}	49%	45%	37%
Being near good schools	32%	37%	35%	37%
Being near work	24%	28%	32%^f	31%^f
Being near transit	29%^{ghi}	19%	14%	13%

Table 5
Importance of Community Aspects for Staying in One’s Community
Extremely or Very Important
By Respondents’ Region of Residence

	Region			
	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
	A	B	C	D
	(n=201)	(n=237)	(n=351)	(n=196)
Being near friends and/or family	57%	69%^a	70%^a	63%
Being near where you want to go	67%	63%	69%^d	59%
Being near church or social organizations	45%^d	45%^d	56%^{abd}	37%
It’s easy to walk	46%	43%	47%	46%
Being near good schools	37%	37%	43%^d	34%
Being near work	28%	30%	38%^{abd}	27%
Being near transit	21%	20%	22%	23%

- In general, respondents who live in the South region are more likely than respondents in other regions to rate five of the seven community aspects as being *extremely* or *very important* to them: being near friends and/or family, being near where one wants to go, being near church or social organizations, being near good schools, and being near work (see Table 5).

Summary

Results from this study of adults ages 45 and older suggest that wanting to remain in one's home and one's community as one ages continue to be paramount. While nearly three-quarters of respondents *strongly agreed* with the statement, "what I'd really like to do is stay in my current residence for as long as possible," roughly two-thirds *strongly agreed* with the second statement, "what I'd really like to do is remain in my local community for as long as possible."

Additionally, aspects of one's community continue to be the primary motivation for aging in place as one ages, reflected in the two-thirds of respondents who *agreed* that they want to stay in their home because they like what their community has to offer. In contrast, roughly one-quarter of respondents noted that they would stay in their community because they cannot afford to move.

Appendix A: Annotated Questionnaire

Annotated Questionnaire
(N=1,616; weighted n=985)

Q.1: I'm going to read you a statement and after I read that statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree. "What I'd really like to do is stay in my current residence for as long as possible." Would you say you...?

Strongly agree	73%
Somewhat agree	13%
Neither agree nor disagree/neutral	4%
Somewhat disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	5%

Q2: Thinking about your current home, does it have...?

A full bath on the main level	82%
A half bath on the main level	43%
A bedroom (or a room that could be used as one) on the main level	81%
Doorways that are wider than standard	27%
Door handles that are levers instead of knobs	34%
An entrance without steps	36%
A sidewalk in front of my home	64%

Q3: Now I'll read you two statements about your home. Which one of the following statements most accurately reflects your opinion?

<i>I want to stay in my home because...I like what my community has to offer me</i>	65%
--OR--	
<i>I want to stay in my home because...I cannot afford to move</i>	24%
Don't know/no response	11%

Q4: Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: "What I'd really like to do is remain in my local community for as long as possible." Would you say you...?

Strongly agree	67%
Somewhat agree	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	5%
Somewhat disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	4%

Q5: Now, I'm going to read you a short list of reasons for wanting to stay in your current community for as long as possible. How important are the following items to you? Would you say they are extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not too Important	Not at all Important
	%	%	%	%	%
Being near work	15	17	17	8	36
Being near transit (bus or rail)	10	11	18	16	41
It's easy to walk	19	27	23	9	19
Being near friends and/or family	30	36	20	5	8
Being near church or social organizations	22	26	22	9	20
Being near where you want to go (ie., grocery stores, doctor's offices, the library)	27	38	22	4	7
Being near good schools	18	21	11	10	37

Demographic Questions:

What is your age as of your last birthday? _____ years

45-54	27%
55-64	39%
65+	34%

Are you male or female?

Male	47%
Female	53%

Are you or your spouse or partner currently a member of AARP?

Yes	40%
No	60%

Do you own or rent your current home?

Own	80%
Rent	17%
Don't Know	2%
Refused	1%

What is your current marital status?

Married	56%
Separated, Widowed, or Divorced	31%
Single/ never married	12%

What is the highest level of education that you completed?

Less than high school	7%
High school graduate	35%
Some college or technical training beyond high school	31%
College graduate	15%
Post-graduate or professional degree	9%

Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

Employed or self-employed <u>full-time</u>	29%
Employed or self-employed <u>part-time</u>	9%
Not employed	61%
Refused	2%

What best describes your race?

White, non-Hispanic	74%
Black, non-Hispanic	13%
Hispanic	6%
Asian	1%
Other	4%
Refused	4%

Households are sometimes grouped according to income. Please indicate which group best estimates your annual household income before taxes. (Check only one.)

Less than \$15,000	14%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	5%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	6%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	6%
\$30,000 to \$39,999	8%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	14%
\$75,000 or more	21%

Thank you very much for your time. Your responses are important to us!

Appendix B: Methodological Note

OMNITEL is a weekly national telephone omnibus service from GfK Roper, a division of GfK Custom Research North America. Each week, an OMNITEL sample consists of 1,000 completed interviews, with approximately an equal number of males and females 18 years of age and older. Each study is based on a random digit dialing (RDD) probability sample of all telephone households in the continental United States. Since the sampling system is completely computer-based, it provides an equal probability of selection for each and every telephone household and represents telephone households with both listed and unlisted phones proportionately. All sample numbers are subject to an original and four follow-up attempts to complete an interview.

All telephone interviews are conducted from four GfK sites: Twin Falls, Idaho; Rexburg, Idaho; San Jose, Costa Rica; and Cebu, Philippines.

According to information from GfK Roper, the raw data are weighted by a custom designed computer program which automatically develops a weighting factor for each respondent. The procedure uses age, sex, education, race, and geographic region as the weighting variables. Each interview is assigned a single weight derived from the relationship between the actual proportion of the population with its specific combination of age, sex, education, race, and geographic characteristics and the proportion in the sample that week.

This report reflects results obtained from two weeks' of interviews, July 16-25, 2010.