

# 2018

Survey of Homebuyers & Renters  
Researching Lifestyle Communities





## Introduction

This report contains an analysis of results from the 2018 Survey of Homebuyers & Renters Researching Lifestyle Communities. Responses were gathered from visitors to PrivateCommunities.com, the web address for PCR (Private Communities Registry). PCR is the trusted online resource for people interested in amenity-rich, master-planned lifestyle communities. The website's visitors largely consist of retirees and pre-retirees.

The report aims to identify the behavior, motivations, and financial situations of people interested in buying or renting in a master-planned community. The findings and implications of this survey are of relevance to professionals engaged in the planning, development, and marketing of master-planned communities.

The results analysis includes answers from all respondents who took the survey in the period from March 21 through April 5, 2018. A total of 3,262 responses to the survey were received during this period of time.

The data collected from PCR's generated sales leads affords a precise glimpse into the shopping patterns of prospective buyers and renters. The goal is to put some of this unique data into context for better understanding and utilization of these shopping patterns.

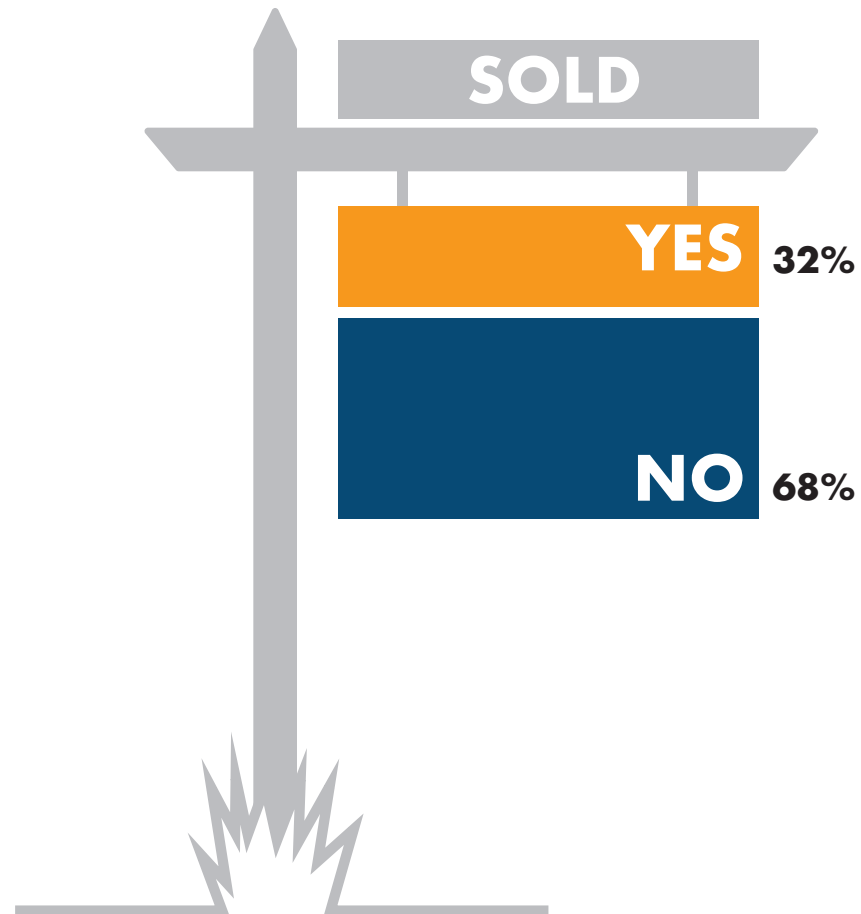


# Have you ever purchased a home in a master-planned community?

Thirty-two percent of survey respondents have purchased a home in a master-planned community. Within this segment, 66% purchased their home more than three years ago, while 34% purchased within the last three years. These buyers expressed an initial interest and then purchased a home within three years, from which it may be inferred that there is often a three-year time frame from starting to develop research to purchase date.

This three-year time span, therefore, is a strategic time for marketers to provide marketing collateral to that 68% segment of respondents who have never purchased in a master-planned community but have made initial inquiries and have expressed interest via newsletters, discovery tours, property listings, and community information pages.

*Percentages based on 3,255 answers.*

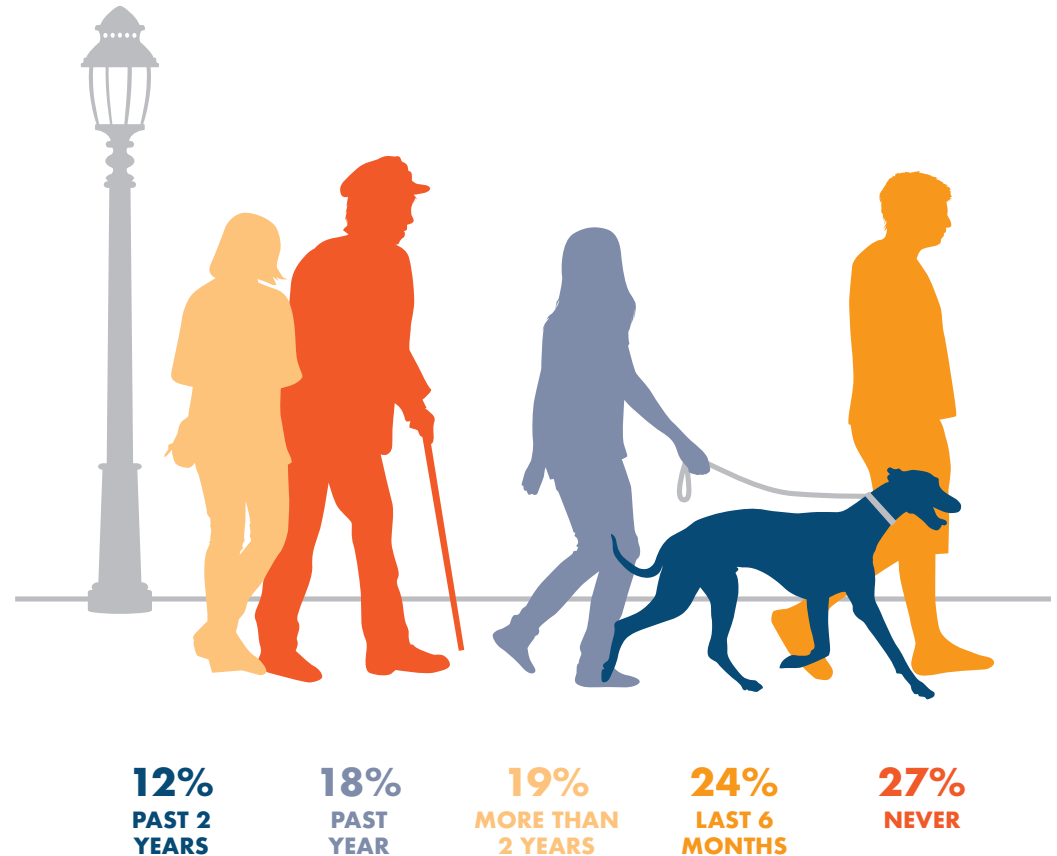


# When was the last time you toured a community?

Among respondents, 73% of searchers are researching online and in person.

This data underlines the importance of marketing discovery tours online and suggests opportunity to engage buyers beyond the computer screen. Only 27% of online searchers have never toured a master-planned community. This group is likely at the beginning phase of their research.

*Percentages based on 2,560 answers.*



# Which type of community are you looking for?



Survey respondents were instructed to select all community types they are interested in. Therefore, results may indicate that respondents desire a combination of lifestyles. Age-targeted and age-restricted communities are most sought-after, with 64% of searchers looking for a community in the active adult, retirement, or 55 plus category. 57% selected gated communities which suggests privacy and security are of high importance. Golf communities are the third most requested community type.

Percentages based on 1,809 answers.



ASKED TO CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY:

**12% SENIOR LIVING**

**13% OTHER**

**24% COUNTRY CLUB COMMUNITY**

**29% NEO-TRADITIONAL (TOWN STYLE)**

**30% GOLF**

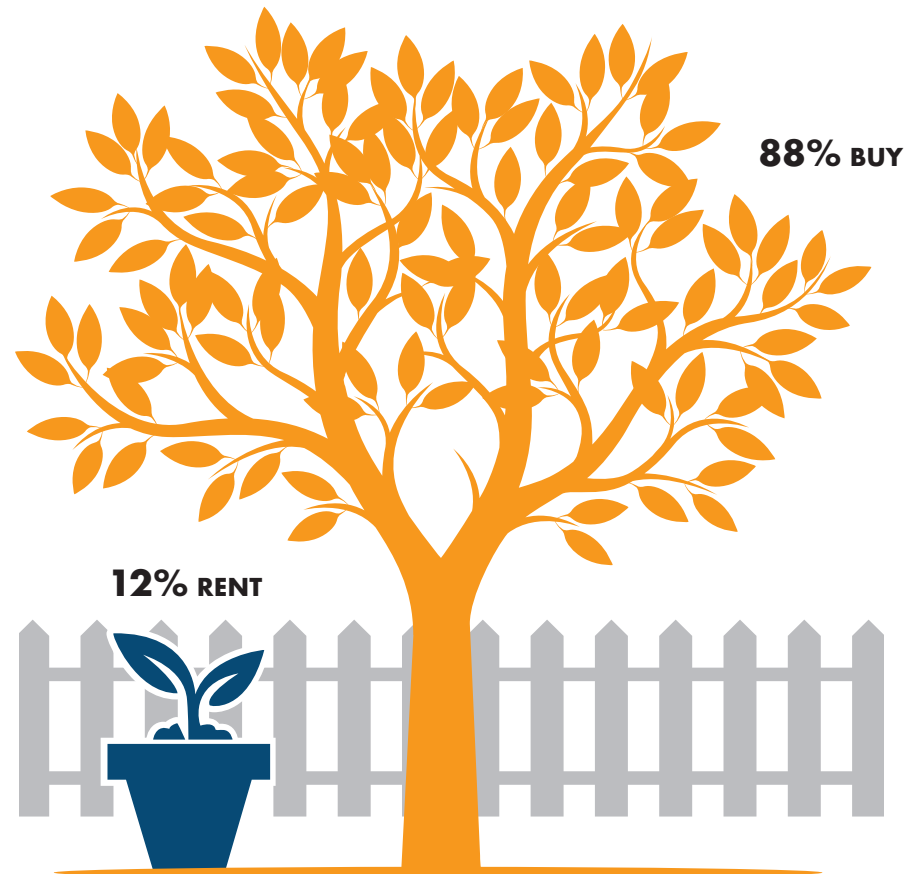
**57% GATED**

**64% ACTIVE ADULT RETIREMENT**

# Are you planning to buy or rent a home in a master-planned community?

A strong majority, or 88%, of searchers plan to buy a home in a master-planned community. Of interest is the respondents' anticipated timeframe for buying; 77% plan to buy within two years and 23% plan to buy in more than two years.

*Percentages based on 2,522 answers.*



# Why are you choosing to rent?

Although most are looking to buy, an appreciable number of searchers have made the decision to rent based on lifestyle and economic motivations. The most common reason for favoring rental is the desire to test the local area and to explore the community (63%). Another 12% want to rent because they like the convenience of not being responsible for maintenance.

A variety of other reasons were less significant. For example, some were waiting for an existing home to sell or for a change in the current economic climate. Others wanted to rent because their motivation was for anticipated vacation or seasonal usage rather than for a permanent residence.



**2%** WAITING FOR HOME TO SELL

**6%** VACATION

**8%** ECONOMIC REASONS

**9%** OTHER

**12%** NO MAINTENANCE

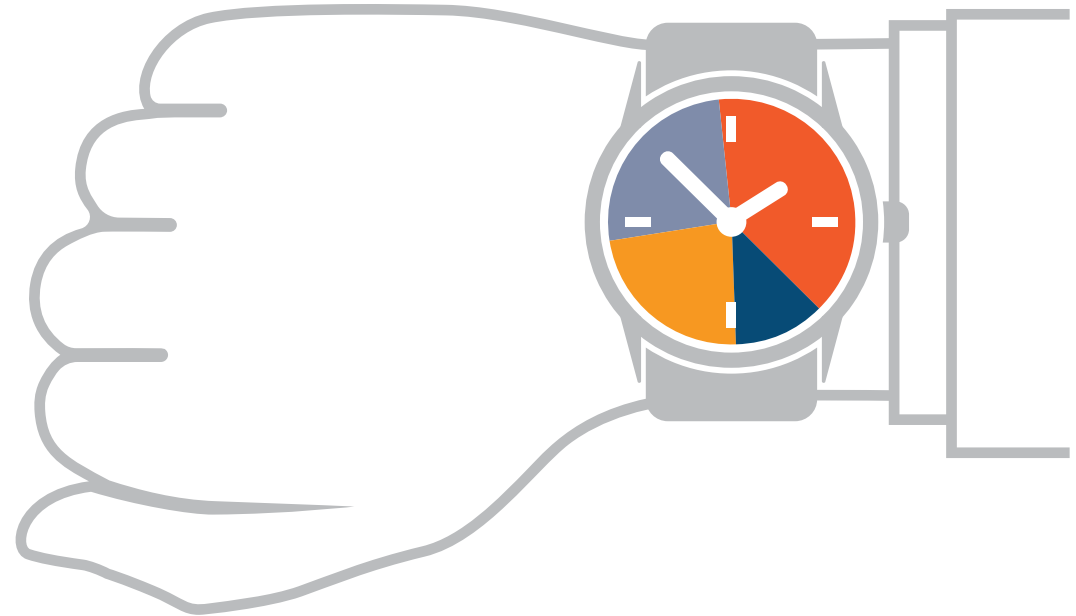
**63%** TO TEST THE AREA

# How soon do you plan on buying?



Respondents' anticipated timeframe for buying provides insight into the buying cycle of lifestyle homebuyers; 77% plan to buy within two years and 23% plan to buy in more than two years. This demonstrates that leads are viable for at least two years beyond receipt of an initial information request and should continue to be nurtured during this time period.

*Percentages based on 1,621 answers.*





# How much are you willing to spend?

The amount that homebuyers are willing to spend on a home in a master-planned community has been on an upward trend since 2014. The \$250,000 to \$500,000 price range continues to see the most growth, with 61% willing to pay this amount. The percentage of buyers looking in this range has increased 5% in the last year. This data is proportional to the percentage of buyers looking for homes below \$250,000, which decreased by 5%.



Percentages based on 1,629 answers.

<b>1%</b> <b>\$1 MILLION +</b>	<b>3%</b> <b>\$750,000 - \$1MILLION</b>	<b>13%</b> <b>\$500,000 - \$750,000</b>	<b>21%</b> <b>LESS THAN \$250,000</b>	<b>61%</b> <b>\$250,000 - \$500,000</b>
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# Which property type are you most interested in?



Single-family homes are the most desired property type within master-planned communities, with 68% of respondents showing interest. This supports the trends of having enough space to gather with extended family and aging in place.

*Percentages based on 1,791 answers.*



**5%**  
LOT OR  
CUSTOM BUILD

**9%**  
CONDOMINIUM

**18%**  
VILLA OR  
TOWNHOME

**68%**  
SINGLE  
FAMILY HOME

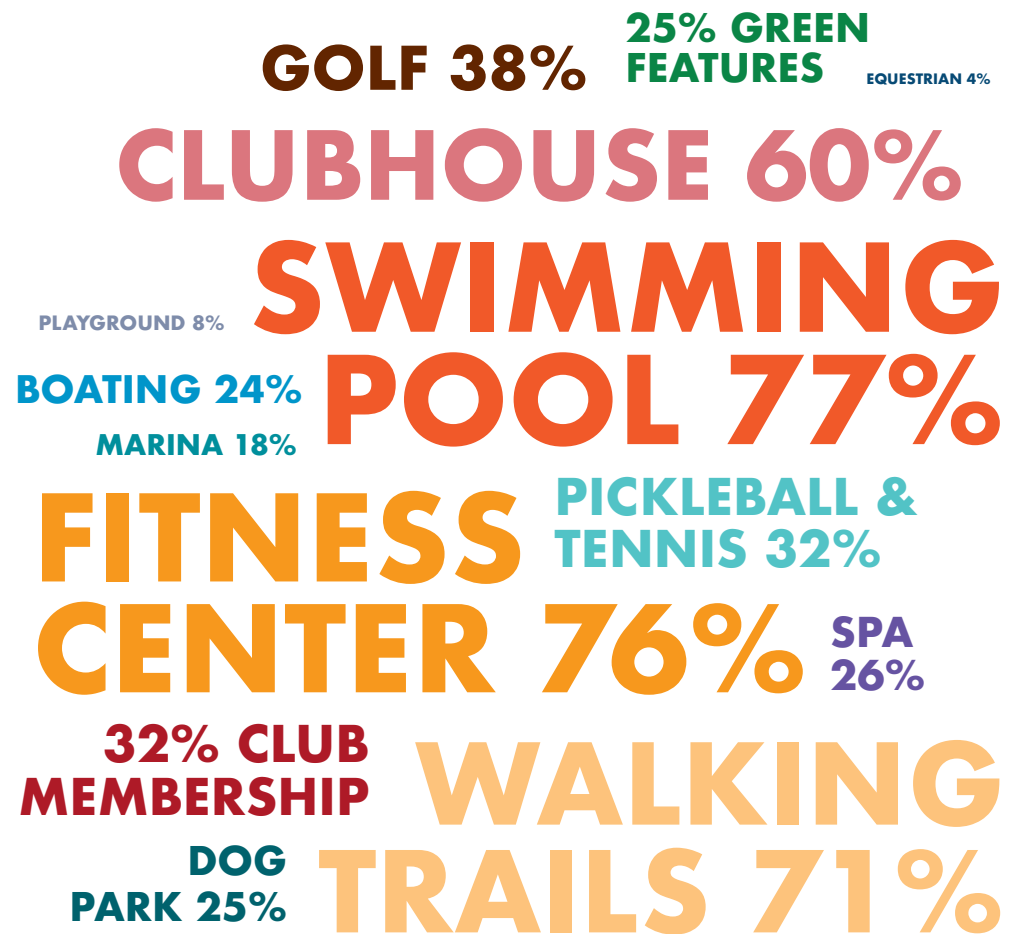


# Which amenities/activities must your community have?

Master-planned communities are residential developments that provide homeowners amenities/activities they perceive to be essential for a fulfilling life. One of the reasons people prefer master-planned communities is there are activities and amenities in which homeowners can take advantage, features which would not be fully available outside of a community.

This year's respondents were asked to choose which amenities and activities are a necessity in their future community. As with the 2017 survey results, buyers are most interested in fitness-related amenities, a national trend. Swimming pools, fitness centers, and walking trails top the list.

*Percentages based on 1,766 answers.*

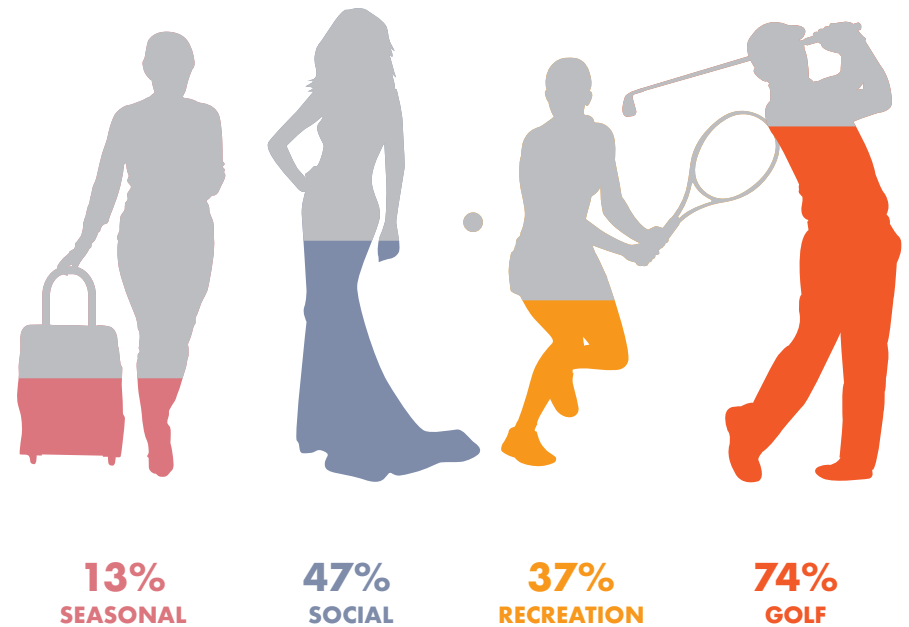


# What kind of club membership are you interested in?



Club membership is of interest to 32% of searchers. These respondents were asked to select all membership types that appeal to them. Of this group, 74% seek golf membership, 47% seek social membership, and 37% seek recreational membership. Little preference was given to equity, non-equity, and seasonal membership types. This indicates that lifestyle is of most importance when choosing a club membership.

*Percentages based on 118 complete answers.*



# How important is proximity to the following conveniences?

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of proximity to healthcare, entertainment, recreation, shopping/dining, airports/transportation, and cultural attractions. The scale ranged from “not at all important” to “extremely important.” After isolating responses with conveniences ranked as “extremely important,” it was found that healthcare is most important. Shopping & dining and recreation follow close behind, and are of near equal importance to one another.

*Percentages based on 1,795 answers.*

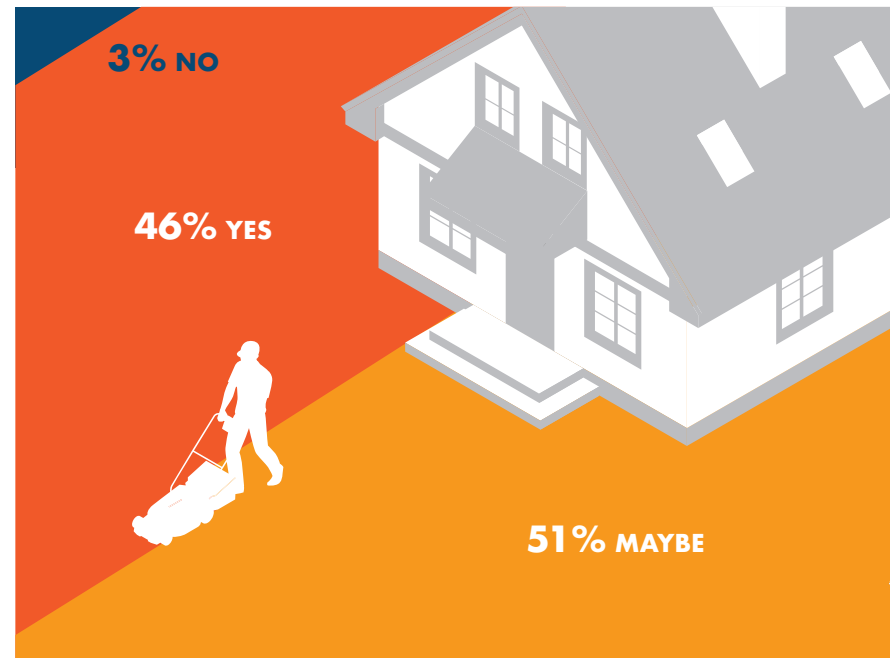
- 10%** CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS
- 11%** ENTERTAINMENT
- 12%** AIRPORT/TRANSPORTATION
- 18%** RECREATION
- 20%** SHOPPING/DINING
- 29%** HEALTHCARE



# Do you plan to buy in a community with an HOA?



Homeowners Associations (HOAs) require monthly or annual fees to maintain common areas of planned communities. 46% of respondents plan to purchase a home in a community with an HOA, while 51% are undecided. Only 3% of respondents do not plan on buying in a community with an HOA.



# Please share the monthly amount you are willing to pay for an HOA.

Most respondents are willing to pay a monthly amount between \$100 to \$250 (47%) and \$250 to \$500 (25%). Several respondents commented that the amount they are willing to pay depends on what is included in the HOA fees.

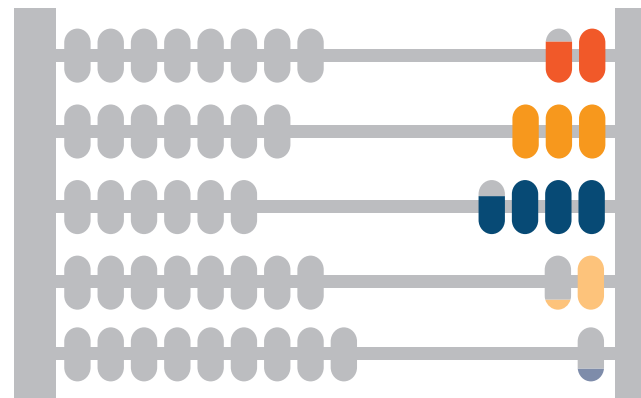
*Percentages based on 1,593 answers. Majority of "other" responses want to know what is included in HOA fees.*



# How important is HOA price and control over HOA pricing in your purchasing decision?

Most respondents indicated that HOA price and control over HOA price are important to some degree; 85% ranked HOA price from “important” to “extremely important,” while 87% ranked control over pricing from “important” to “extremely important.” Only 3% of respondents indicated that HOA price and control over HOA price are not at all important.

Percentages based on 1,614 answers.

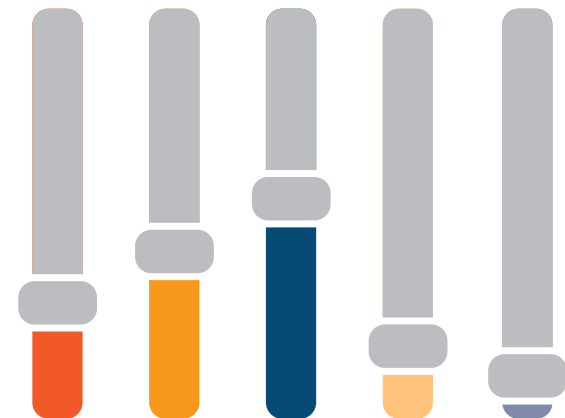


## PRICE

- 18% EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
- 30% VERY IMPORTANT
- 37% IMPORTANT
- 12% SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3% NOT IMPORTANT

## CONTROL

- 18% EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
- 29% VERY IMPORTANT
- 39% IMPORTANT
- 10% SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3% NOT IMPORTANT





# Methodology

**Target audience:** Active searchers who signed up for the consumer newsletter or used a “Send Me Information” form at PrivateCommunities.com and provided an email address.

**Sample size:** 45,059 unique email addresses

**Inboxes reached:** 44,318

**Response rate:** 7%

*From March 21 through April 5, 2018, an invitation to participate in the survey was sent to a sample size of 45,059 unique email addresses and reached 44,318 inboxes. Respondents were NOT offered any incentive to participate in the survey. Respondents for this survey volunteered to participate, so the sample is based on self-selection rather than a probability sample. No estimates of sampling error can be calculated, nor would they be needed. The survey closed on April 5, 2018 with a response rate of 7%.*

**View our [media kit](#) to learn more about the benefits of listing a master-planned lifestyle community on [PrivateCommunities.com](#)**

