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# Markets for Traditional Neighborhoods: An Analysis of a Survey of Recent Homebuyers in Maine. 1999

Maine State Planning Office

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MARKETS  
for  
TRADITIONAL  
NEIGHBORHOODS

An Analysis of a Survey of Recent Homebuyers  
in Maine

Maine State Planning Office  
August 1999

See also: *Why Households Move: Two Maine Surveys* (August 1999)

Others documents in a series of monographs addressing sprawl:

*The Cost of Sprawl* (May 1997)

*Livable Communities: A Proposal for Addressing Suburban Sprawl* (Fall 1998/Winter 1999)

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# MARKETS for TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS

An analysis of a survey of recent homebuyers in Maine  
August 1999

Maine State Planning Office  
Evan D. Richert, AICP, Director

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# INTRODUCTION

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Not everyone wants a home in the country or in a suburban development. But if you want a new home someplace besides a rural lot or a suburban development, your choices may be limited. Municipal land use ordinances discourage or ban the building of traditional neighborhoods and villages. Homebuilders have been building little besides suburban homes for so long that they are skeptical there is any other market. And consumers themselves, confronted with older in-town neighborhoods afflicted with noise and traffic and frayed around the edges, may assume there is no alternative but to move outward.

That is what most do. According to a survey of 602 recent homebuyers,<sup>1</sup> conducted in late 1998 for the Maine State Planning Office, only 12% move to or stay in in-town settings. 42% move outward to suburban or rural settings, and another 33% already in these settings stay there (see table). For many, that decision matches their lifestyle and preferences.

But for a share of the outward-moving market, the decision fails to meet the lifestyle they seem to be looking for.

Out to suburb	23%
Out to rural	19%
Stay in suburb	28%
Stay in rural	5%
In to urban	5%
Stay in urban	7%
Rural to suburban	11%
Other	2%

These homebuyers appear to value being within walking distance of a corner store and the library, knowing neighbors by name, knowing they can drop by a neighbor's home and that he or she will feel comfortable doing the same. They say they would as soon be close to gyms, ball fields, movie theaters, and cultural activities as be able to walk out the back door to hunt, fish, ski, or snowmobile. They value running into friends and acquaintances at the coffee shop on Main Street as well as seeing wildlife out the windows of their home, and visiting neighbors on their porches after dinner as much as watching a solitary sunset from their homes. Some prefer privacy to contact with neighbors but still want proximity to stores and services and don't want to be forced to get their privacy by moving to large-lot suburbs or the country. Still others may prefer a rural setting, but if they knew they were contributing to the loss of wildlife habitat, working farms and woodlands, or open space around towns, they would reconsider.

Based on the survey, [43% of homebuyers who end up in a rural or suburban environment \(or 37% of the total home-buying market\) can be considered good targets](#)

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<sup>1</sup>Survey results are available from the Maine State Planning Office in the report, "Why Households Move: Two Maine Surveys," August, 1999.

for traditional neighborhood development. By "traditional neighborhood development" we mean a neighborhood that is walkable from one end to the other; that has a civic core of some kind (a school, a church, a library, park, or similar place); that is proximate to basic goods and services; that is designed to keep through traffic down to reasonable levels; and that incorporates both important public space and, for each resident, private space.

This conclusion was reached using a statistical technique called cluster analysis. Cluster analysis groups the respondents in the survey according to their attitudes and values. The cluster analysis performed for this study found five distinct groups based on different mixes of values relating to desire to interact (or not) with neighbors, desire for proximity to stores, services, and meeting places, and nature and aesthetics. Each of the five groups has young households and old, households with higher incomes and households with lower incomes, and each has households that live in-town and households that live in secluded rural settings. But each is distinct from the others in the mix of values that it deems important. It is from this analysis that we learn that some homebuyers who value proximity to goods, services, and civic places are moving to settings that don't fully meet that need; and others who value intimacy with neighbors or neighborhoods with many children are moving to settings where these needs are unlikely to be met.

For ease of remembering these five market clusters, we have given them descriptive labels:

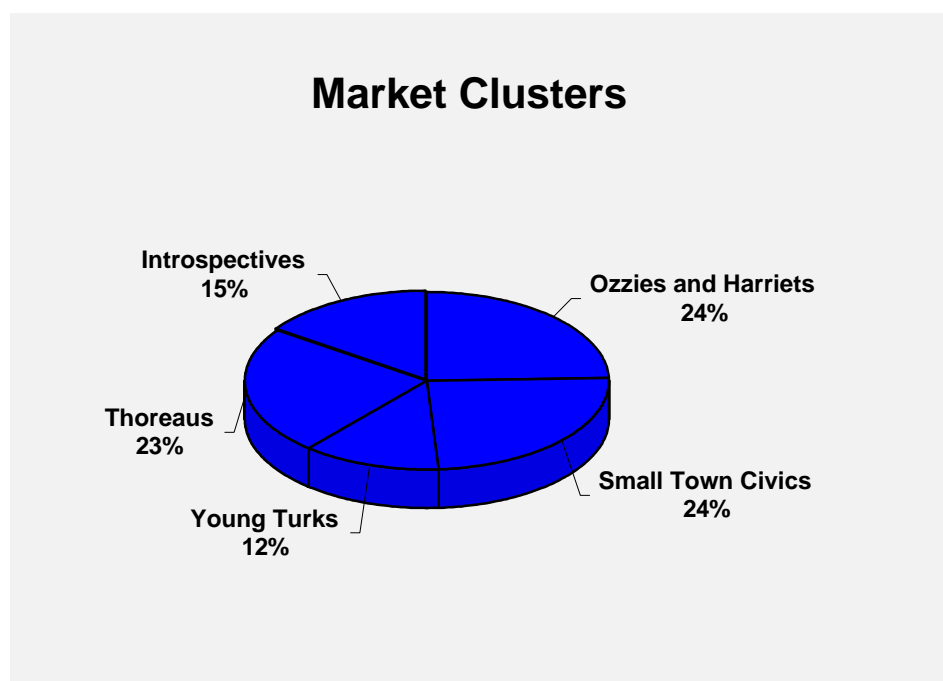
- Ozzies and Harriets (24% of the market) - mostly in the young and middle family household formation years, usually seeking child-oriented neighborhoods
- Small Town Civics (24% of the market) - mostly in the middle and later family years, many have children at home but this cluster has smallest number of children per household, strong community interests
- Young Turks (12% of the market) - youngest of all clusters, largely in professional and administrative occupations, respondents most likely to be male
- Suburban Thoreaus (23% of the market) - tend to be middle to upper income, need nature out their back door and prefer little interaction with their neighbors
- Introspectives (15% of the market) - somewhat older homebuyers, moderate to middle income, want privacy but convenient access to services is also very important.



These five clusters make up 98% of the market; the remaining 2% could not be classified into any of these five groups.

This report describes each of the five market clusters. It concludes that markets do, in fact, exist for traditional neighborhood development in Maine. If municipalities understand this demand, perhaps they will make provision for it in their ordinances. And if homebuilders understand this demand, perhaps they will build homes and neighborhoods to meet it.

The Maine State Planning Office will be following this report with a guide that will demonstrate how traditional neighborhood design can meet the needs of the market place, and how this form of development can fit into local ordinances.



# OZZIES AND HARRIETS

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24% of the market, this group has the highest share of couples with children at home. They are the most likely to choose a new home on a roomy lot in a residential development. They want neighborhood, but proximity to services is unimportant. They express concern about loss of wildlife, farms, and woodlands and might consider living closer to the center of town if they knew they were contributing to the loss of these open spaces.

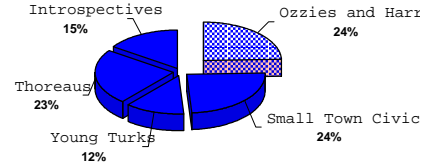
**Share of Market**

- 24%

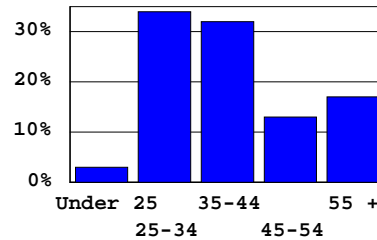
**Who They Are**

- Age: More than a third are in their household formation and young family years (25-34), and another third are in their middle family years (35-44).
- Household composition: 86%, the highest of any group, have 2 or more adults in the household. 59%, again the highest of any group, have children at home. Those with children at home have an average of 2.2 children per household, more than any other cluster.
- Occupation: About a third of respondents are in professional or administrative occupations. Nearly 15% are homemakers.
- Formal education: More than half have a four-year college degree (33%) or postgraduate degree (18%). This represents the highest level of formal education of any cluster.
- Income: Median household income is an estimated \$46,500. Nearly 44% have incomes of \$50,000 or more.
- Where they are moving from: A majority (54%) are moving from one town or city in Maine to another. Fewer than one in five are moving from out-of-state.

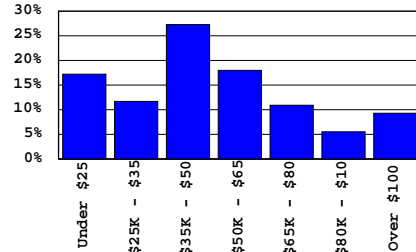
**Market Clusters**



**Ozzies and Harriets Age of Householder**



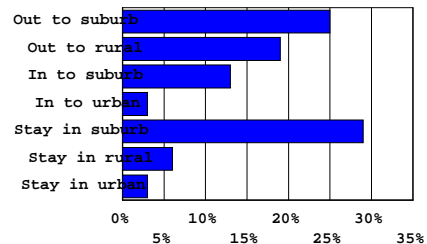
**Ozzies and Harriets Household Income**



**Where They Are Buying**

- Type of community: About half (49%) are buying in a service center<sup>2</sup>. But few buy in an urban or village-type of neighborhood. Most (68%) buy in a suburban neighborhood, and more than a quarter (26%) choose a rural setting.
- Direction of move: Nearly half (44%) moved outward: 25% to a suburban neighborhood and 19% to a rural setting. Only 16% moved in the opposite direction.

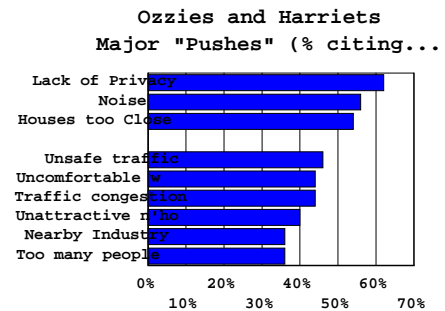
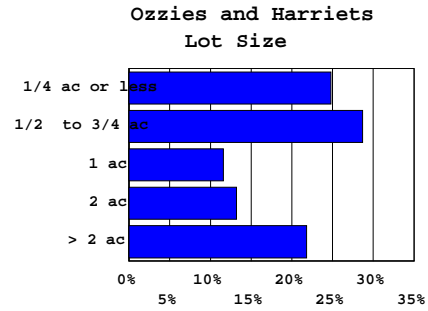
**Ozzies and Harriets Direction of Move**



- New v. previously occupied home: Close to a third (31%), highest of any group, buy newly built homes. And nearly half (47%), also highest of any group, buy in a development.

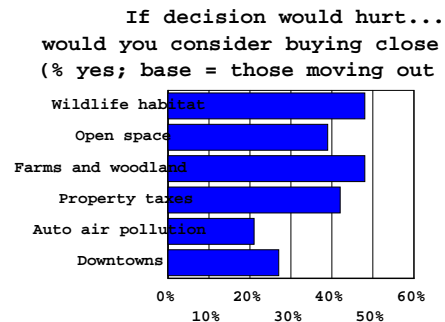
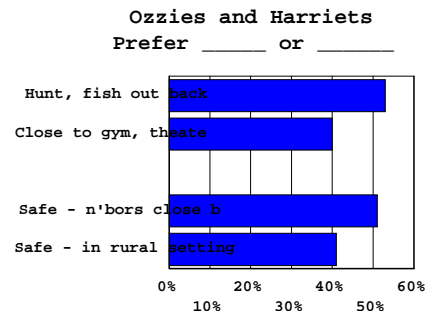
### What They Are Buying

- Type of home: Four of five buy a single family detached home, and 10% buy a mobile home.
- Lot size: The median lot size is about two-thirds acre. A quarter have lots of one quarter acre or less, while 35% have lots of two acres or more.
- No. of bedrooms: Most Ozzies and Harriets buy three or four bedroom homes (mean = 3.15), and two-thirds have one and a half bathrooms or more (mean = 1.64).
- Price: The median purchase price of \$94,400 was 5% higher than the sample-wide median of \$89,600. Half bought homes priced at under \$100,000, while a fifth bought at more than \$150,000.



### Behind the Decision

- Push factors: The strongest factors pushing respondents from their previous setting to their new setting were lack of privacy (cited by 62%), noise (56%), and houses too close together (54%). Traffic congestion, discomfort with neighbors, unattractiveness of neighborhood, and nearby commerce and industry were moderate push factors. Crime, condition of schools, high real estate prices, and taxes were less important.
- Preferences: Ozzies and Harriets put high value on sense of community, intimacy with neighbors, and a natural setting. A majority want a neighborhood with many children. Proximity to a corner store, other stores, restaurants, and the library is unimportant. A majority feel safer because neighbors are close by than because they're away from urban crime in a rural setting. On the other hand, a majority prefer having outdoor recreation (hunting, skiing, etc.) outside the back door versus being close to gyms, ball fields, theaters, and cultural activities.



### Impact of Sprawl

- If they had known their home-buying decision would contribute to loss of wildlife or working farms and woodlands, nearly half of those who moved to outlying areas would have reconsidered. The thought of causing higher property taxes or loss of open space around towns would have affected a sizable minority as well. But knowing that they contributed to the loss of downtowns or to air pollution and congestion from cars would have had little effect.

### Target Markets for Traditional Neighborhood Development

- In addition to the 6% of Ozzies and Harriets already moving back to or staying in an urban or village setting, the best targets may be the 13% moving to the suburbs from the country (since they are moving inward); and the 44% moving outward from an in-town setting (it should be easier to retain these than to reverse the direction of those already in the suburbs or country).
- These represent about 14% of the total home-buying market.
- Message: sprawl harms wildlife, farms, woodlands, and open space. Test positive messages about sense of community and neighborhood.

### BEST TARGETS Those Moving

<b>Out to suburbs</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Out to rural</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>In to suburbs</b>	<b>13%</b>
In to urban	3%
Stay in suburbs	29%
Stay in rural	6%
Stay in urban	3%

(note: **bold** = best targets)

# SMALL TOWN CIVICS

24% of the market, this group is middle-aged and middle income. While many have children at home, the average number is the smallest of any cluster. Small Town Civics want neighborhood and proximity to services. Most buy a home on ½ acre or less in a residential setting. Among the few who move to rural areas, a majority would have reconsidered if they knew it would contribute to loss of wildlife, working farms and woodlands, or higher property taxes.

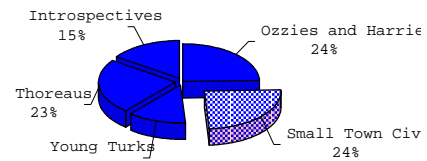
## Share of Market

- 24%

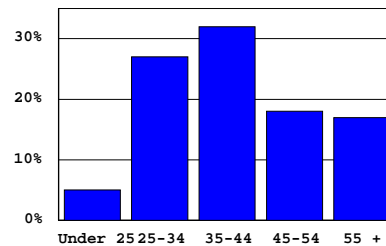
## Who They Are

- Age: Nearly a third are in their household formation and young family years (25-34), but half are in their middle and later family years (35-54).
- Household composition: 81% have 2 or more adults in the household. 49% have children at home. Those with children at home have an average of 1.7 children per household, fewer than any other cluster.
- Occupation: Fully a third of respondents are in professional or administrative occupations. 25% are in other white collar jobs.
- Formal education: 46% have a 4-year college degree (30%) or postgraduate degree (16%). Another 30% have some college or a 2-year degree.
- Income: Median household income is an estimated \$43,200. 36% have incomes of \$50,000 or more.
- Where they are moving from: Most (45%) are moving from one town or city in Maine to another, but a third are moving to a different home in the same town. 22% are from out-of-state.

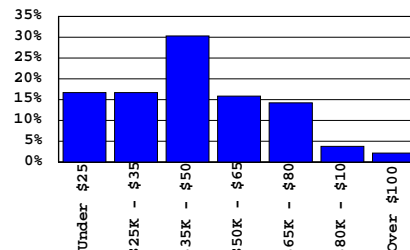
Market Clusters



Small Town Civics Age of Householder



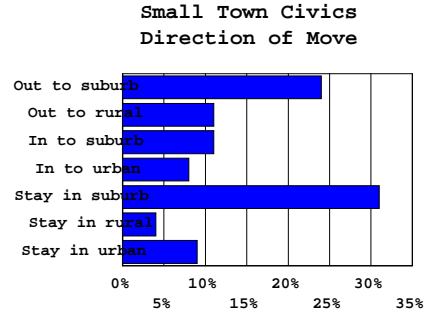
Small Town Civics Household Income



## Where They Are Buying

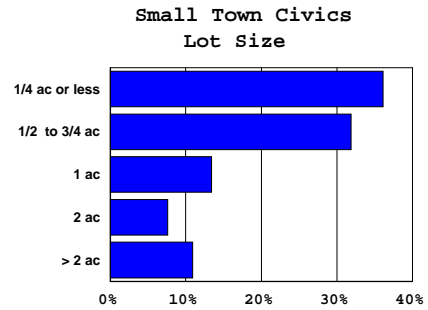
- Type of community: A majority (59%) are buying in a service center, the highest share of any cluster. Most (67%) buy in a suburban neighborhood in those communities, but nearly a fifth choose an urban or mixed use setting.

- Direction of move: About a third (35%) moved outward: 24% to a suburban neighborhood and 11% to a rural setting. About one in five (19%) moved in the opposite direction.
- New v. previously occupied home: About one in five buy newly built homes. Only a quarter buy in a development.



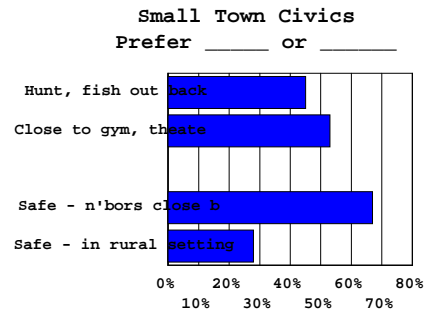
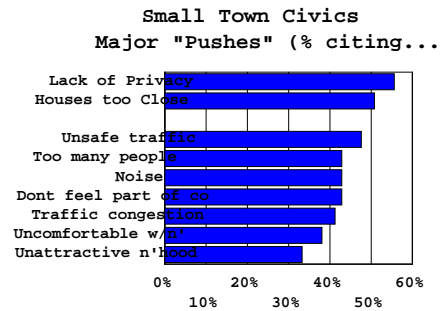
**What They Are Buying**

- Type of home: Four of five buy a single family detached home, and 9% buy a mobile home.
- Lot size: Median lot size is under one-half acre. 36% have one-quarter acre or less, while 19% have two or more acres, the smallest share of any cluster.
- No. of bedrooms: Most Small Town Civics buy three bedroom homes (mean = 3.01), and most (72%) have one or one and a half bathrooms (mean = 1.50).
- Price: The median purchase price of \$87,500 was 2% lower than the sample-wide median of \$89,600. Most (64%) bought homes priced at under \$100,000, while only 7% bought at more than \$150,000.

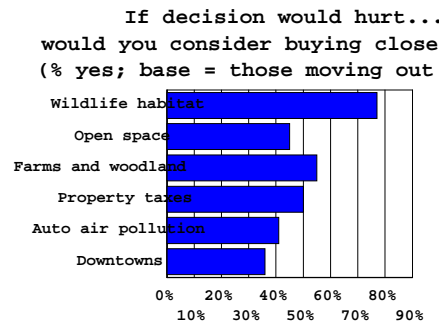


**Behind the Decision**

- Push factors: The strongest factors pushing respondents from their previous setting to their new setting were lack of privacy (cited by 56%) and houses too close together (51%). Noise, too many people, traffic, discomfort with neighbors, not feeling part of the neighborhood, and unattractiveness of neighborhood were moderate push factors. Crime, condition of schools, nearby commerce and industry, and taxes were less important.
- Preferences: Small Town Civics put high value on all four major values tested: sense of community, intimacy with neighbors, a natural setting, and proximity to stores and services. Their need for sense of community and good neighbors is especially high, and a majority want to be within walking



distance of services. Two-thirds feel safer because neighbors are close by as opposed to feeling safe by being away from urban crime in a rural setting. And a majority prefer being close to gyms, ball fields, theaters, and cultural activities versus having outdoor recreation (hunting, skiing, etc.) outside the back door.



### Impact of Sprawl

- If they had known their home-buying decision would contribute to loss of wildlife, 77% of those moving to rural areas would have reconsidered. High percentages also would have reconsidered if they knew they were contributing to loss of open space around towns (45%), loss of working farms and woodlands (55%), higher property taxes (50%), or air pollution from cars (41%).

### BEST TARGETS Those moving...

<b>Out to suburbs</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Out to rural</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>In to suburbs</b>	<b>11%</b>
In to urban	8%
<b>Stay in suburbs</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Stay in rural</b>	<b>4%</b>
Stay in urban	9%

(note: **bold = best targets**)

### Target Markets for Traditional Neighborhood Development

- Given their combination of values, all Small Town Civics who moved to or stayed in suburban or rural settings are worthwhile targets for traditional neighborhood development. The former account for 46% of Small Town Civics, the latter for another 35% of Small Town Civics.
- These represent between 11% and 19% of the total home-buying market.
- Messages: positive ones, emphasizing neighborhood, sense of community and convenience; educate about impacts of sprawl on wildlife, farms, woodlands, open space, and taxes.



# YOUNG TURKS

12% of the market, this group is younger than the others. A large share are in professional and administrative occupations, and respondents are most likely to be males. Their environmental and neighborhood surroundings are comparatively unimportant to them. They are widely distributed across all types of settings, but are somewhat more likely than others to move to or stay in an urban setting and less likely to leapfrog to rural settings.

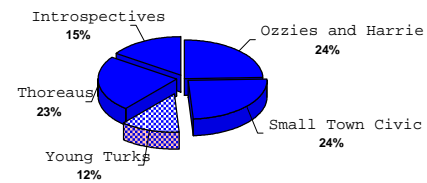
## Share of Market

- 12%

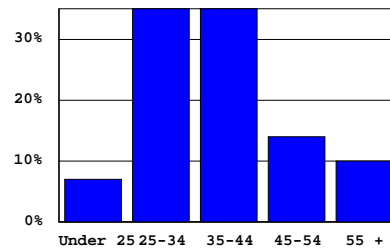
## Who They Are

- Age: 42%, the highest percentage of any group, are in their household formation and young family years (under 35), and another 35% are in their middle family years (35-44).
- Household composition: 77%, the lowest of any group, have 2 or more adults in the household. 46% have children at home. Those with children at home have an average of 1.8 children per household.
- Occupation: 44%, highest of any group, are in professional or administrative occupations. 22% are in other white collar jobs.
- Formal education: 46% have a 4-year college degree (29%) or postgraduate degree (17%). Another quarter have some college or a 2-year degree.
- Income: Median household income is an estimated \$47,100. 46% have incomes of \$50,000 or more.
- Where they are moving from: A majority (53%) are moving from one town or city in Maine to another. Only 17%, the lowest share of any group, are from out-of-state.

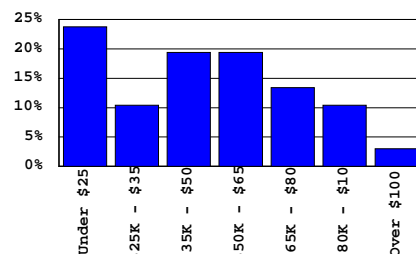
Market Clusters



Young Turks  
Age of Householder



Young Turks  
Household Income

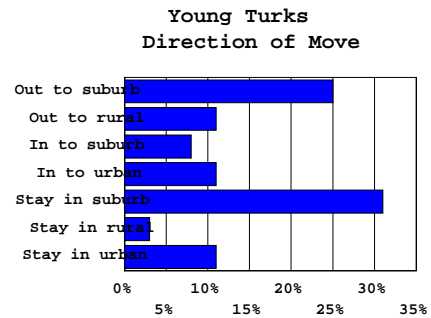


## Where They Are Buying

- Type of community: A substantial share, 39%, are buying in a service center. 64% buy in a suburban residential

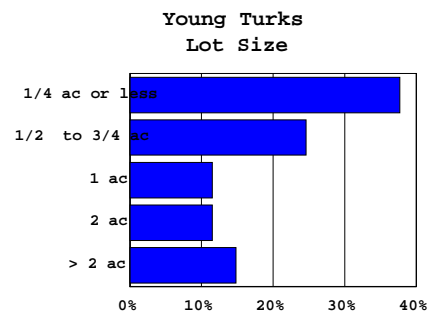
neighborhood in their selected communities, but 22%, more than any other group, buy in an urban or mixed use setting.

- Direction of move: 36% moved outward: 25% to a suburban neighborhood and 11% to a rural setting. About one-fifth moved in the opposite direction, and 11% stayed in the city.
- New v. previously occupied home: A quarter buy newly built homes. 38% buy in a development.



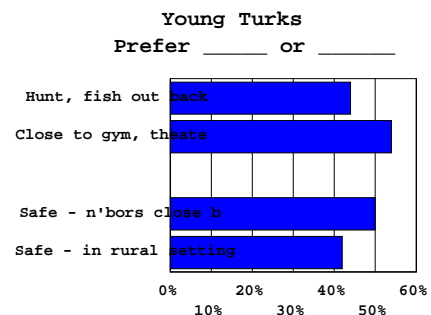
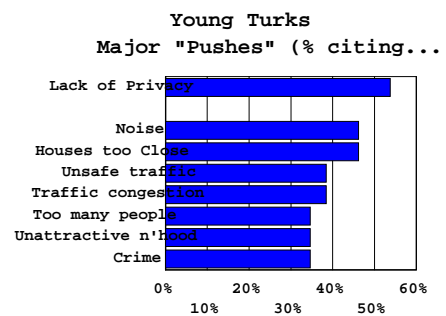
### What They Are Buying

- Type of home: Nearly four of five buy a single family detached home, and 8% buy a mobile home.
- Lot size: The median lot size is just under one-half acre. 38% have one-quarter acre or less, while a quarter (26)% have lots of two or more acres.
- No. of bedrooms: Most Young Turks buy two or three bedroom homes (mean = 2.83), and 78% have one (43%) or one and a half (35%) baths (mean = 1.46).
- Price: The median purchase price of \$83,100 was 7% lower than the sample-wide median of \$89,600. This was the lowest median of any group, perhaps reflecting the relative youth of this cluster and the likelihood that many are first-time buyers. 67% bought homes priced at under \$100,000, while 17% bought at more than \$150,000.



### Behind the Decision

- Push factors: Young Turks are not susceptible to strong pushes. Only lack of privacy was cited by a majority (54%) as a reason for moving. Moderate push factors were noise (46%), houses too close together (46%), traffic (38%), crime (35%), and unattractive neighborhood (35%). Condition of schools, high real estate prices, pollution, nearby industry, and taxes were relatively unimportant.
- Preferences: Young Turks appear not to place particular importance on their



surroundings. Half value "sense of community," but otherwise no one value - neighborhood, intimacy with neighbors, proximity to services or to a corner store -- is cited by as many as 50%. A majority feel safer because neighbors are close by than because they're away from urban crime in a rural setting. A majority also prefer being close to gyms, ball fields, theaters, and cultural activities to being able to walk out the back door and hunt, fish, swim, ski, or snowmobile.

**Impact of Sprawl**

- Too few Young Turks move to rural settings for a statistically significant consideration of the impacts of their decisions on wildlife, open space, farms, and other resources.

**Target Markets for Traditional Neighborhood Development**

- A significant share of Young Turks move to or stay in an urban setting. The best targets for traditional neighborhood development are those who might be intercepted before moving outward to suburban (25% of the group) or rural (11%) settings, or who already have moved part-way inward to the suburbs.
- These represent about 5% of the total home-buying market.
- In marketing to this group, given its young profile and work-oriented lifestyle, emphasize affordability and the convenience of living in or near town.

**BEST TARGETS**

Those moving...

Out to suburbs	<b>25%</b>
Out to rural	<b>11%</b>
In to suburbs	<b>8%</b>
In to urban	11%
Stay in suburbs	31%
Stay in rural	3%
Stay in urban	11%

(note: **bold = best targets**)

# SUBURBAN THOREAUS

23% of the market, this group is middle-to-upper middle income. These homebuyers need nature out their back doors. Proximity to services is unimportant, and they prefer little interaction with neighbors. They are more likely than others to be on lots of 3+ acres and would not change their decisions even if they knew they were contributing to air pollution or the loss of wildlife habitat, working farms and woodlands, or downtowns.

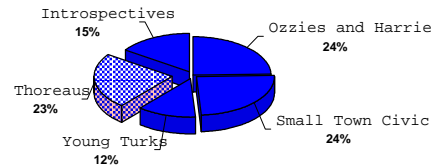
## Share of Market

- 23%

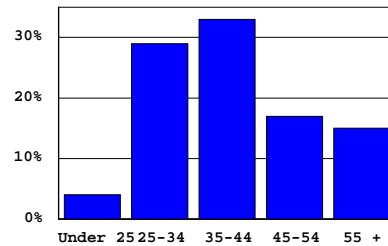
## Who They Are

- Age: A third are under 35, but most are middle-aged. A third are 35 to 44, and a third are 45 or older, including 15% 55+.
- Household composition: 82% have 2 or more adults in the household. Only 38%, among the lowest of any group, have children at home. Those with children at home have an average of 1.9 children per household.
- Occupation: 60% are white collar workers, including 36% in professional/administrative occupations and 24% in other white collar jobs.
- Formal education: 47% have a 4-year college degree (34%) or postgraduate degree (13%). Another 27% have some college or a 2-year degree.
- Income: Median household income is an estimated \$47,400, highest of any group. 46% have incomes of \$50,000 or more.
- Where they are moving from: A majority (52%) are moving from one town or city in Maine to another. Nearly a quarter (23%) are moving from out-of-state.

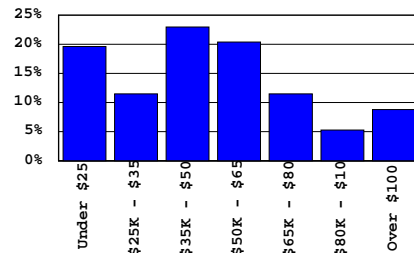
Market Clusters



Suburban Thoreaus Age of Householder



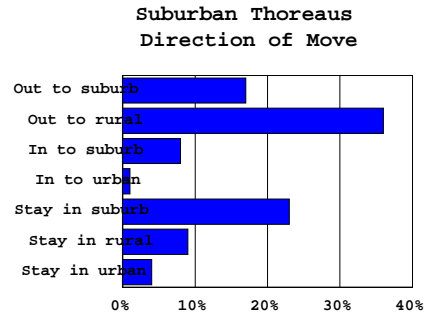
Suburban Thoreaus Household Income



## Where They Are Buying

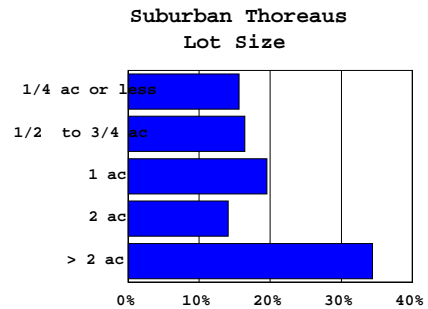
- Type of community: Only a third, least of any group, are buying in a service center. Fully 45% buy in a rural setting, and another 49% in a suburban setting.

- Direction of move:** A majority (53%) moved outward: 17% to a suburban neighborhood and 36% to a rural setting, the highest share of any group, with more than twice as many choosing a rural setting as a suburban setting. Few, 9%, moved in the opposite direction, and only 1% came back to an urban setting.
- New v. previously occupied home:** 28% buy newly built homes. A mere 19%, smallest share of any group, buy in a development.



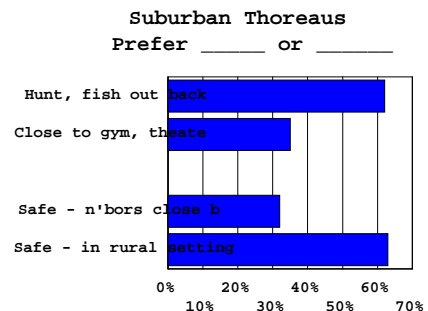
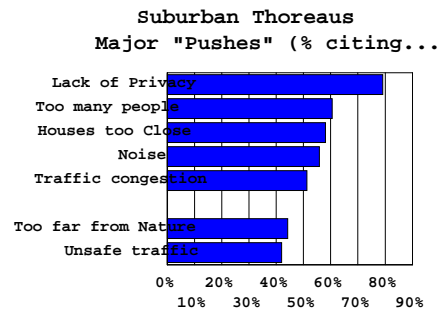
**What They Are Buying**

- Type of home:** Four of five buy a single family detached home, and 7% buy a mobile home.
- Lot size:** The median lot size is about one acre, largest of any group. Only 16% have lots of one-quarter acre or less, while nearly half (49%) have lots of two or more acres, including a third with three or more acres.
- No. of bedrooms:** Suburban Thoreaus tend to buy three bedroom homes (mean = 2.99), and one or one and a half bathrooms (mean = 1.65).
- Price:** The median purchase price of \$96,000 was 7% higher than the sample-wide median of \$89,600. A little more than half bought homes priced at under \$100,000, while nearly a fifth bought at more than \$150,000.

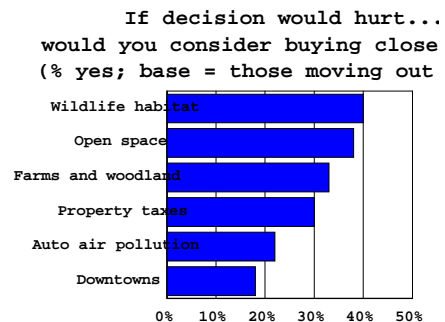


**Behind the Decision**

- Push factors:** Suburban Thoreaus moving to rural settings cite several strong push factors, including lack of privacy (79%), too many people (61%), homes too close (58%), noise (56%), and traffic (51%). Being too far from nature also was a push, and close to a third identified crime as a reason for leaving. Condition of schools, high real estate prices, and taxes were less important.
- Preferences:** Suburban Thoreaus put very high value on a natural setting, and a majority cite sense of community as an important value. But intimacy with



neighbors (knowing them by name, dropping in on them, etc.) is unimportant, and a neighborhood with children or that is walking distance to stores and services is of no value; these probably are negatives. Two-thirds feel safer by living away from urban crime in a rural setting than because neighbors are close by. Most (62%) also prefer having outdoor recreation (hunting, skiing, etc.) outside the back door versus being close to gyms, ball fields, theaters, and cultural activities.



### Impact of Sprawl

- If they had known their home-buying decision would contribute to loss of wildlife, open space, or working farms and woodlands, 60% to two-thirds of those who moved to rural settings would not have reconsidered. The thought of causing higher property taxes or contributing to air pollution, traffic congestion, or loss of downtowns would have mattered even less.

### Target Markets for Traditional Neighborhood Development

- Suburban Thoreaus are not a target for traditional neighborhood development. Most of this group are not likely to accept even a well-designed neighborhood of homes and services that are in close relationship to each other.
- Any capture of this group will be incidental to marketing to other groups.

### BEST TARGETS

#### Those moving...

Out to suburbs	17%
Out to rural	36%
In to suburbs	8%
In to urban	1%
Stay in suburbs	23%
Stay in rural	9%
Stay in urban	4%

(note: no bold = no good targets)

# INTROSPECTIVES

15% of the market, this group is moderate-to-middle income and has a somewhat older age profile than others. Introspectives want proximity to services, but not a lot of interaction with neighbors. They want their privacy, but also the services that come with an urban or village environment. They tend to have small lots in service centers. They are similar to Small Town Civics in where they live, but don't necessarily want the community that goes with it.

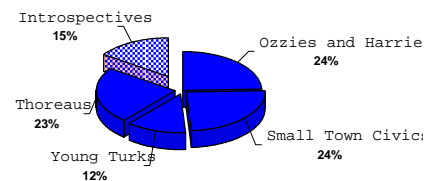
## Share of Market

- 15%

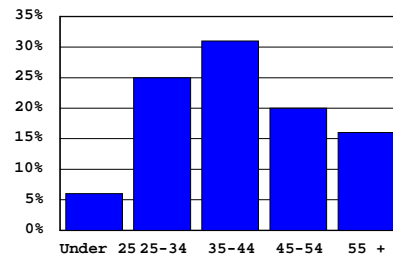
## Who They Are

- Age: 31% are in their household formation and young family years (under 35), but 36%, highest of any group, are in their later family, pre-retirement, and retirement years (45+).
- Household composition: 80% have 2 or more adults in the household. 38%, among the lowest of any group, have children at home. These have an average of 1.9 children per household.
- Occupation: 31%, lowest of any group, are in professional or administrative occupations, while 25%, highest of any group, are in blue collar occupations. Another 14% are retirees.
- Formal education: 41% have a college degree (22%) or postgraduate degree (20%). Another 31% have some college or a 2-year degree.
- Income: Median household income is an estimated \$41,400, lowest of any group. 36% have incomes of \$50,000 or more.
- Where they are moving from: Half are moving from one town or city in Maine to another. One in five is moving from out-of-state, and 30% are moving to another home in the same town.

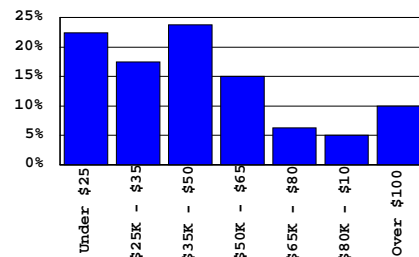
Market Clusters



Introspectives  
Age of Householder



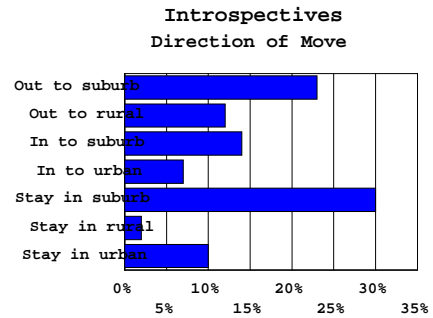
Introspectives  
Household Income



## Where They Are Buying

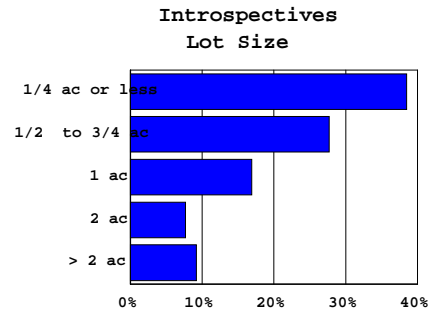
- Type of community: Almost two-thirds (63%) are buying in a service center. Most (68%) buy in a suburban neighborhood in the community, but 17% live in-town.

- Direction of move: A third (35%) moved outward: 23% to a suburban and 12% to a rural setting. 21%, highest of any group, moved in the opposite direction, and 10% stayed in-town.
- New v. previously occupied home: Only 10%, lowest of any group, buy newly built homes. And only 24% buy in a development.



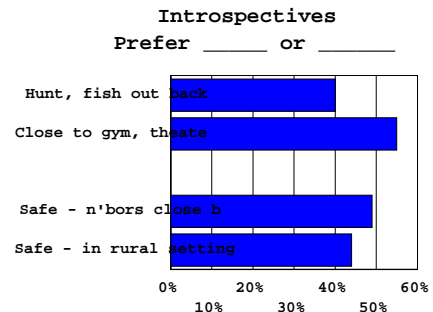
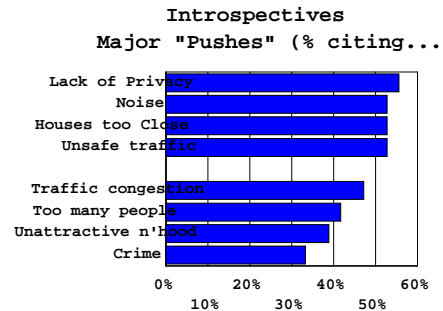
### What They Are Buying

- Type of home: Three of four buy a single family detached home, but 10% buy a condo or other attached unit.
- Lot size: The median lot size is about three-eighths acre. 38% have lots of one-quarter acre or less, while 17% have lots of two acres or more.
- No. of bedrooms: Most Introspectives buy three bedroom homes (mean = 3.00), and 60% have one or one and a half bathrooms (mean = 1.6).
- Price: The median purchase price of \$79,700 was 11% lower than the sample-wide median of \$89,600. 65% bought homes priced at under \$100,000, while 14% bought at more than \$150,000.



### Behind the Decision

- Push factors: The strongest factors pushing respondents from their previous setting to their new setting were lack of privacy (cited by 56%), noise (53%), houses too close together (53%), and traffic (53%). Crime, too many people, and unattractiveness of neighborhood were moderate push factors. Condition of schools, concern with community or neighbors, high prices, and taxes were less important.
- Preferences: Introspectives put higher value on proximity to services than on intimacy with neighbors. A majority want to be within walking distance of stores and services. Sense of community is important, but intimacy with neighbors (knowing their names, dropping by, etc.) is not. Neighbors with children or who track your whereabouts probably are negatives. Introspectives are split between feeling safer because neighbors are close by or because they're away from





are close by or because they're away from urban crime in a rural setting. On the other hand, a solid majority prefer having outdoor recreation (hunting, skiing, etc.) outside the back door versus being close to gyms, ball fields, theaters, and cultural activities.

### Impact of Sprawl

- Too few Introspectives move to rural settings for a statistically significant consideration of the impacts of their decisions on wildlife, open space, farms, and other resources.

### Target Markets for Traditional Neighborhood Development

- Besides the 17% of Introspectives who already are moving back to or staying in an in-town setting, the best targets may be the 35% who might be intercepted before they move outward and the 14% who have moved part-way inward to the suburbs.
- These represent about 7% of the total home-buying market.
- Test positive messages about convenience and proximity to services. Essential to provide home and lot designs that build in privacy and landscaping.

### BEST TARGETS

Those moving...

<b>Out to suburbs</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Out to rural</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>In to suburbs</b>	<b>14%</b>
In to urban	7%
Stay in suburbs	30%
Stay in rural	2%
Stay in urban	10%

(note: **bold = best targets**)

# CONCLUSION

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If traditional neighborhood alternatives are offered in the marketplace, a significant share of homebuyers will choose them. Slowing the outward flow of homebuyers through well thought-out alternatives will be easier in places like Maine than in more heavily urbanized states because some of the strongest "push" factors haven't reached serious levels here. Crime, urban pollution, high taxes, and school programs and conditions are not the reasons that most leave for the countryside. The reasons Maine homebuyers move outward are more related to "good neighbor" conditions, like traffic and noise, and to the desire for a sense of space, greenery, and privacy -- physical matters that are amenable to design solutions.

The most fruitful markets to target in a traditional neighborhood, anti-sprawl marketing campaign are those Small Town Civics, Young Turks, and Introspectives who, despite their values and preferences, move outward to suburban or rural settings (or move part-way inward from the country to suburbia). These represent about 23% of the home-buying market. Small Town Civics who are moving from place to place in rural or suburban settings (another 8% of the market) may also be amenable targets. The message to these market segments should be positive ones, emphasizing convenience, proximity to services, and, in a well-designed setting, the availability of community and public interactions when that is what is wanted, and the assurance of privacy and quiet when that is what is wanted.

To achieve the benefits of a traditional neighborhood will require thoughtful design -- design that builds in both a desirable public realm and essential private space, that manages traffic and noise, and that recaptures the best elements of the Great American Neighborhood -- walkability, landscaping, important institutions (like churches, schools, and parks) nearby, and civic space and pride. The Maine State Planning Office, drawing on a growing body of innovative work of architects, landscape architects, and homebuilders across the country, will provide such guidelines for municipalities and homebuilders over the coming months.

A second market segment at which to aim a campaign are those Ozzies and Harriets who also are moving outward to suburb or countryside and might be intercepted with the appropriate education and message about the potential harm of such decisions on wildlife habitat, open space, woodlands, and farms. While presently unaware of such impacts, this market cluster apparently is sensitive to these features of the landscape. Ozzies and Harriets want neighborhood, and if presented with an opportunity to experience a place with strong neighborhood values in a traditional setting, might opt for it rather than a more contemporary suburban development. This portion of the Ozzie and Harriet cluster represents about 14% of the market. Other Ozzies and Harriets, particularly those already ensconced in suburban or rural settings and moving to another such setting, probably would be less fruitful targets.

One market segment that appears set in its ways and not a worthwhile target for a campaign are the Suburban Thoreaus. They need to be close to nature and will tend to move in that direction even if they come to realize that they, either individually or cumulatively with others like them, are harming the very nature they seek.

Nevertheless, the market research suggests that in addition to those already choosing to buy in-town, [43% of those shifting to rural or suburban locations -- representing 37% of the total home-buying market](#) -- may respond favorably to the benefits of traditional neighborhoods in service centers or in-town locations.