

# "Tweeners" Are on the Rise in the Indiana Housing Market

In Indiana, a new housing market category – or should we say non-category – is on the rise. Tweeners (those considered to be between two recognized categories) are driving a significant portion of the housing market. Like millennials, they like to be in close proximity to where they work and play. But much more similar to the baby boomers, they also want to plant their roots in an area where they plan to stay. They're often just starting to raise families, yet don't want to let go of a vibrant community and move into the traditional suburban community. So, where do they go? In Indiana the options are plentiful – with various neighborhoods and family communities that each offer their own unique set of amenities, the tweeners of Indiana are being offered the best of both worlds.

A huge factor in the home buying decision making process is the environment, and a key word that REALTORS® are hearing more and more of is the "built" environment. Buyers often want to know what amenities an area as a whole has to offer, not just the physical home amenities. This generation wants a walkable community. According to local RE/MAX REALTORS®, large cities like Indianapolis are a beacon for millennials. They have breweries, unique restaurants, coffee shops and many other "fun" amenities to draw in the young buyer or renter. All of these community features, in larger cities, are usually within walking distance of where the buyer lives and works. According to a recent poll by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) and the Transportation Research and Education Center at Portland State University, millennials prefer walking over driving by a significantly larger margin than any other generation.

But, surprisingly, this has also started to trend for the boomers. It's become almost passé for a baby boomer to migrate to traditional retirement communities and locations known for attracting snowbirds (think Florida and Arizona). The boomers are now doing a 180 and heading straight back in to the urban cities often marked off for the youth. In a 2015 NAR report, they indicated that between July 2013 and June 2014 only 11 percent of buyers age 50-59 closed on homes in urban areas and central cities. The number for the same period in 2015 was 13 percent.

That brings us to the tweeners - the middle aged young(ish) adults that historically have moved out to the areas traditionally known as suburbs. The tweeners demanded more from their environment – and in Indiana they got it. Areas like Carmel, Zionsville, Noblesville and Broad Ripple have made great strides in attracting the young buyer that's



**National Association of REALTORS® lists Gen X (what we are calling tweeners) as making up 26 percent of homebuyers last year. Further, 26 percent of Gen X buyers were first-time buyers**

2016 Home Buyers and Sellers Generational Trends Report



**While millennials favor convenience of access to jobs (60%) and affordability (50%), Gen X favors convenience to a job (50%), quality of school districts (41%), and distance to schools (34%)**

2016 Home Buyers and Sellers Generational Trends Report



ready to settle down but doesn't want to give up the amenities that downtown living offers. Unique districts, shopping and walkability are key features in these communities. These things, combined with great schools and parks for the new, young family make these communities ideal locations to plant roots. Often times, these buyers are willing to pay more to get the homes that they want, in the area that they want. The median sales price of a home in Hamilton County increased by 5 percent when comparing June 2015 to June of this year. And with a median age of 37.5 in Hamilton County, it's clear that young adults have found their ideal destination.

But tweeners aren't just settling for Central Indiana. Areas such as Fort Wayne in Allen County has also started to draw in young adult buyers and touts a similar median age. This community makes a conscious effort to build and enhance their communities to attract these types of buyers. Recently, the City of Fort Wayne broke ground on a trail extension project that will connect more than 300 residents around a major road and will affect the more than 2,000 residents who live within a half-mile of the trail.

These communities offer the best of both worlds to the Indiana tweener, and real estate experts expect that trend to continue.



**Buyers, overall, plan to live in their homes for a median of 14 years while 26 percent say that they are never moving. For buyers 35 and younger (millennials) the expected stay length is 10 years, while boomers (61-69 years old) is 20 years.**

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