

# Senior Living Advisory Board

## Spring Newsletter

April 2016

***By sharing your opinions and ideas with us, you help us understand what current and future seniors are looking for in the senior living space. We use this information to help us operate our communities today and develop the communities of tomorrow.***

***In this edition of the newsletter, we cover the highlights from a survey about apartment homes. We also share the findings from the most recent survey, which was about the Senior Living Advisory Board itself.***

### **SURVEY TOPIC: Apartment Homes**

Late in 2015 we conducted a survey about apartment homes at senior living communities.

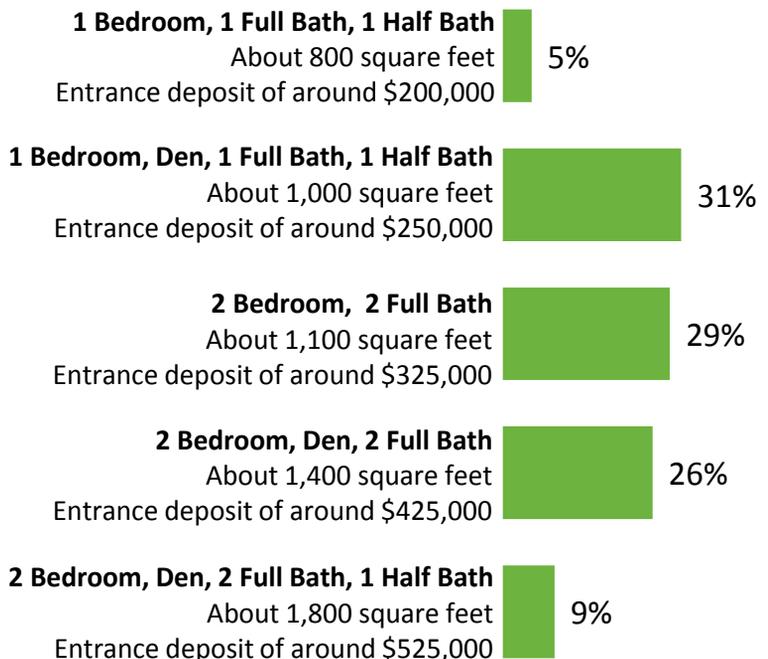
Participants were asked to imagine that they had decided to move to a senior living community. At this community residents pay a 90% refundable entrance deposit with which they “buy” an apartment. Participants were then asked about their preferences for apartment size, layout, features, and finishes. The prices and refund plans in the survey were for research only.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Apartment Size**

We asked first about preferred apartment size. As Figure 1 shows, most members select mid-sized apartments. The two most popular options are the 1BR/1.5BA with den (31%) and the 2BR/2BA (29%).

Among singles, the 1BR/1.5BA with den is by far the most popular option (48%). For those who would be living with a spouse or partner, the most popular option is the 2BD/2BA with den (35%) followed by the 2BR/2BA (28%).

**Figure 1: Preferred Apartment Size**



NOTE: Graph recalculated to exclude the 11% who said “none of the above.”

<sup>1</sup> In reality prices and refund plans vary by factors including but not limited to region of the country, type of senior living community, and size of the community.

## Apartment Layout

Most members (67%) say they would prefer an open floor plan in which the kitchen is open to the dining and living room areas. However, 20% say they prefer a closed floor plan in which the kitchen is its own room, blocked off from the dining and living area. The remainder (13%) have no preference.

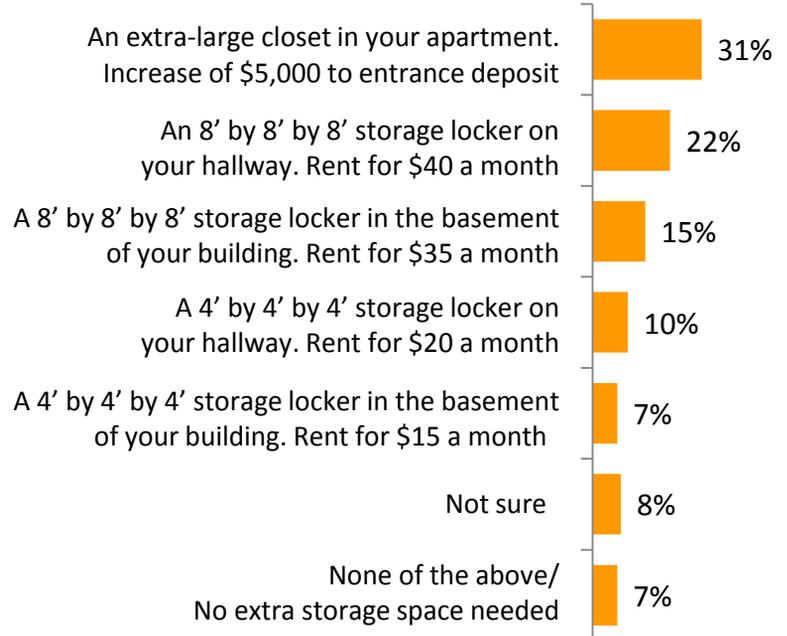
Among those who said they would select a two bedroom apartment home, the majority (64%) say they would prefer the two bedrooms be on opposite sides of the living area. A quarter (24%) say they would prefer the two bedrooms be next to each other off of a hallway, and 12% have no preference.

## Extra Storage

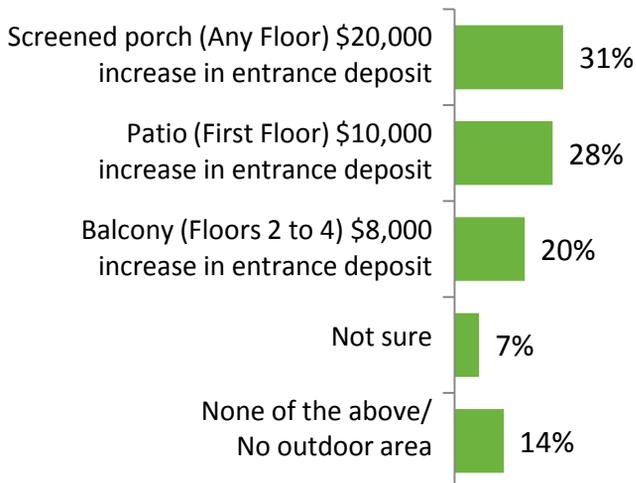
Almost all members (94%) say extra storage space is important; six in ten (61%) consider it essential. Those who will be living with a spouse or partner are especially interested in storage.

As Figure 2 shows, when asked about specific extra storage options, the most often selected option was an in-unit extra-large closet, followed by an 8' by 8' by 8' storage locker located on the resident's hallway.

**Figure 2: Extra Storage Options**



**Figure 3: Outdoor Space Options**



## Outdoor Space

Most members (88%) say they want outdoor space. However, less than half (38%) say it is essential. Women are more likely than men to say they consider outdoor space essential (45% vs. 25%).

As Figure 3 shows, when asked about specific outdoor options, the two most popular choices are a screened porch and a patio. One in five (21%) are not sure or say they are not interested in outdoor space.

## Finishes

**Flooring:** When it comes to flooring in living and bedroom areas, half of those surveyed would prefer hard flooring, and hardwood in particular. Four in ten would like carpeting.

**Figure 4: Preferred Flooring in Living Room and Bedrooms**

	Total	<70	70+	Men	Women
Hard flooring	50%	56%	47%	42%	54%
Carpet	39%	31%	43%	46%	35%
Other/Not sure/ No preference	11%	13%	10%	12%	11%

Women and those under 70 express a slight preference for hard flooring. Men and those 70 and older are about equally split between those who prefer hard flooring and carpet.

**Appliance Color:** Members are divided when it comes to preferred appliance color. Four in ten (39%) prefer white appliances and almost as many (34%) prefer stainless steel. Only 9% prefer black.

**Kitchen Counter Material:** Members are also divided when it comes to their preference for kitchen counters. A third (35%) want granite, a quarter (26%) want quartz, and 7% want something else, such as Formica. A third are not sure or have no preference.

## SURVEY TOPIC: The Senior Living Advisory Board

The March 2016 survey was about the Senior Living Advisory Board itself. We sought members' feedback and ideas on the research panel and how to make it even better.

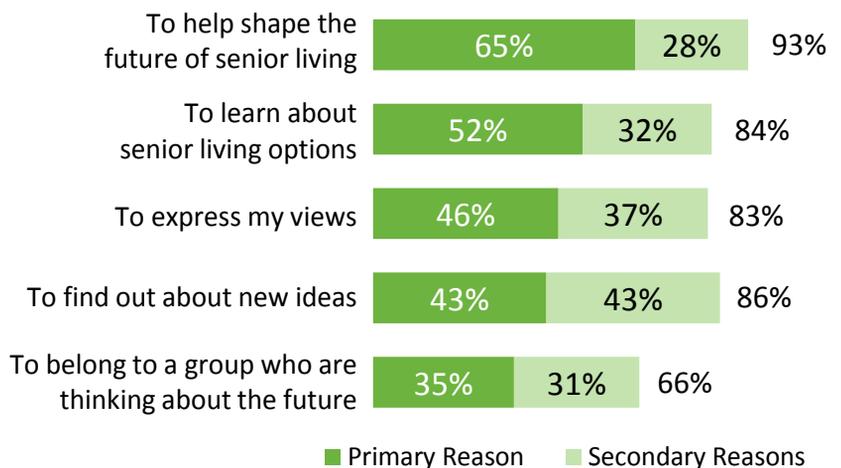
### Reasons for Belonging

The top two reasons panelists belong to the Board are to help shape the future of senior living (93%) and to learn about senior living options (84%).

*"[I participate in the Board in order] to learn what is going on. To help give my opinion. To be part of a positive change."*

**Figure 5: Top Five Reasons Members Belong to the Senior Living Advisory Board**

*Ranked by Primary Reason*



## Survey Participation

The majority of panelists (92%) say they take all or most of the surveys they are invited to participate in. Most members (83%) say they take most of the surveys, regardless of the topic rather than participating only if they are interested in the topic (17%). We encourage all panelists to participate in every survey. The better our participation rates, the more confidence we have in the results!

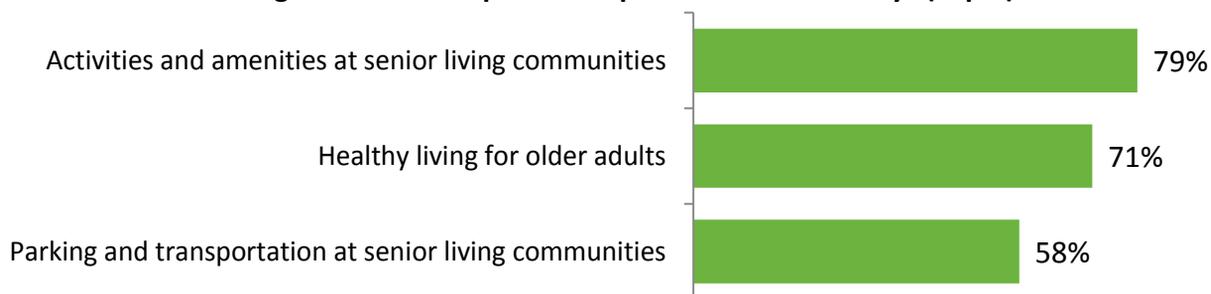
Two-thirds of you (67%) said you would be interested in participating in an online focus group about senior living with other members of the Senior Living Advisory Board! Later this spring we will be testing different online focus group platforms, and by fall we hope to begin doing online focus groups with randomly selected members of the Senior Living Advisory Board.

## Survey Topics

The results show that we have done a good job in recent surveys focusing on the topics members are interested in, such as apartment preferences, dining programs, and fitness.

As Figure 6 shows, members also agreed on some topics we should cover in the coming year, including activities and amenities, healthy living, and parking and transportation.

**Figure 6: Most Important Topics for Future Surveys (Top 3)**



## What is the Senior Living Advisory Board?

The Senior Living Advisory Board is a research panel of individuals age 55 and older from across the U.S. who are interested in senior living and lifestyle options.

The panel includes people who are considering a senior living community in the near future or many years from now. It includes people who know they will move to a senior living community and those who are just investigating their options. The panel also includes individuals who are looking into senior living options for their parents, parents-in-law, and other loved ones.

By participating in periodic surveys, the members of the Senior Living Advisory Board help Erickson Living® develop the best communities for our residents today and tomorrow.