



National Trust *for*  
Historic Preservation

# Millennials and Historic Preservation: A Deep Dive Into Attitudes and Values

Results from an Online Survey of Millennials

June 18, 2017

CONDUCTED BY EDGE RESEARCH

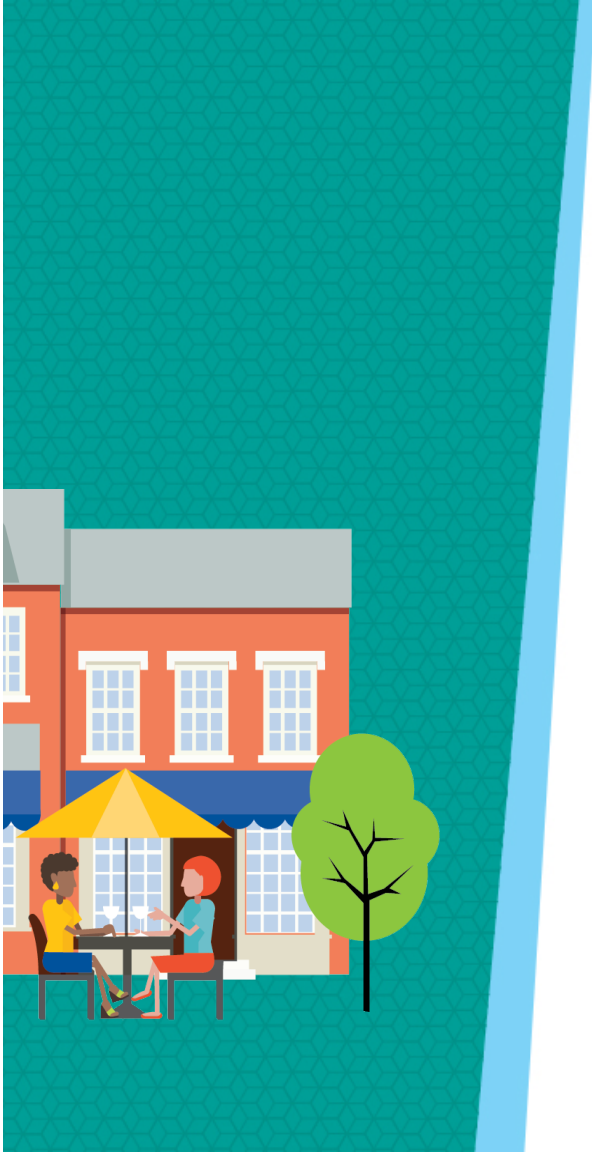
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*Save the past. Enrich the future.*

# Research Objectives

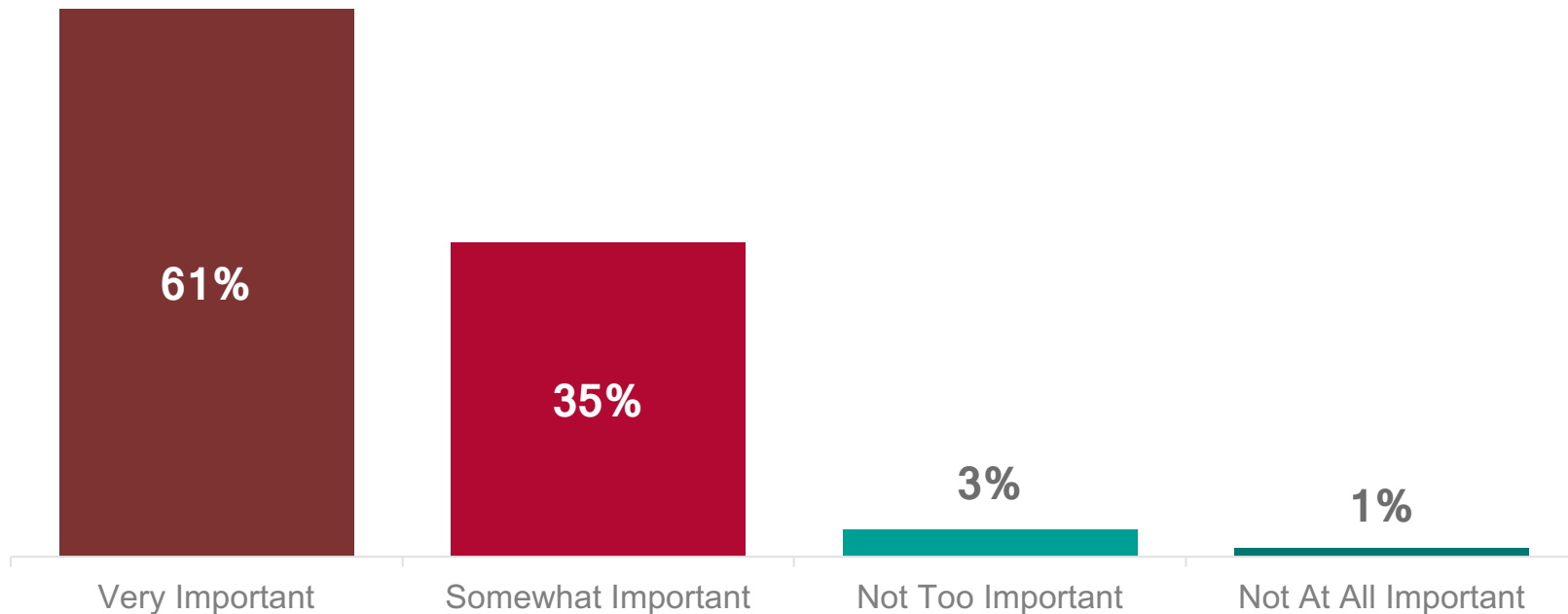
- Explore Millennial affinity to, and relationship with, the cause of historic preservation.
- Understand how Millennials experience and interact with historic places today.
- Understand the importance of authentic experiences to Millennials – from shopping to dining to travel.
- Determine ways to position historic preservation in a way that speaks to Millennials and motivates them to engage.



# Millennials Connect with the Cause

- Millennials connect with the cause, but most are not yet active in historic preservation. There is real opportunity to increase engagement with this generation
  - Nearly all Millennials (97%) feel it's important to preserve and conserve buildings, architecture, neighborhoods, and communities
  - Nearly two-thirds (62%) who believe this is important have not been involved in this cause.
  - More than half of Millennials (53%) are very interested in getting involved with a group like the National Trust.

**Question: Personally, how important is the preservation, conservation, and protection of buildings, architecture, neighborhoods, and communities?**



# Millennials Connect with the Cause

**97%** feel it's important to preserve and conserve buildings, architecture, neighborhoods, and communities

...however

**61%** find the cause to be important, but have not been involved

...and

**53%** are strongly interested in getting involved with a group like the Trust in the future

# Authentic Experiences Matter

- Music, locally-sourced food, and hand-crafted items are personal interests, as well as ways Millennials are interested in engaging with our history and culture.
  - More than half of Millennials prefer to shop or dine in unique or historic downtowns vs. chain restaurants or shopping malls. They will do business with those that support historic preservation (80% prefer) over those that do not.





# Authentic Experiences Matter

## Food

72% enjoy dining at restaurants or shopping at markets that sell local and sustainable foods

59% say food is a key interest of American history & culture

27% say farmer's markets a personal interest

## Arts and Crafts

71% value authentically crafted products, e.g. local, handcrafted, unique items

45% say art is a key interest of American history and culture

40% say arts and crafts a personal interest

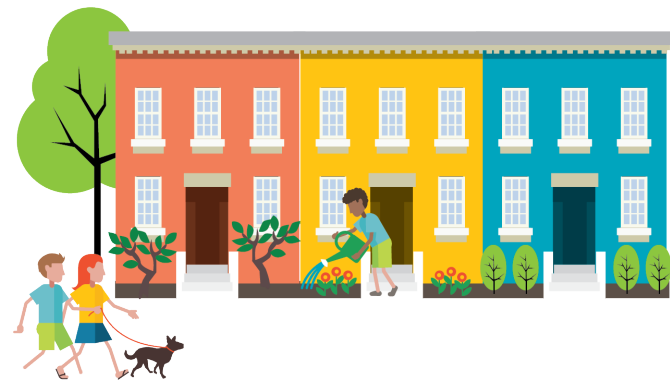
## Music

64% say they are interested in music as a key aspect of American history and culture (#1 aspect most interested in)

54% cite music as a personal interest of theirs (#1 interest)

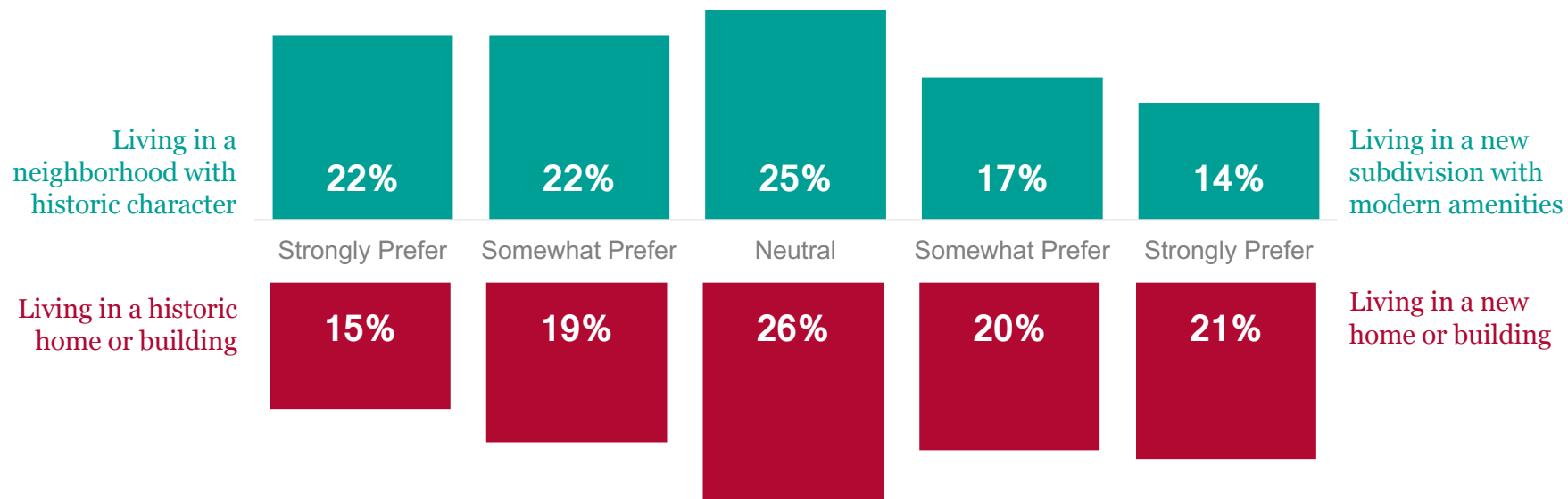
# Millennials Mix the Old and the New

- Millennials want to mix the old with the new: they may prefer living in a modern home, but in a neighborhood with historic character
  - There is slightly stronger preference for living in a new home with modern amenities than in an older home (41% to 34%); but more want to live in an old neighborhood with historic character vs. a new one with modern amenities (44% to 31%)





**Question: Which of the following would you prefer if cost was not a factor? For each pair of statements, select your degree of preference**



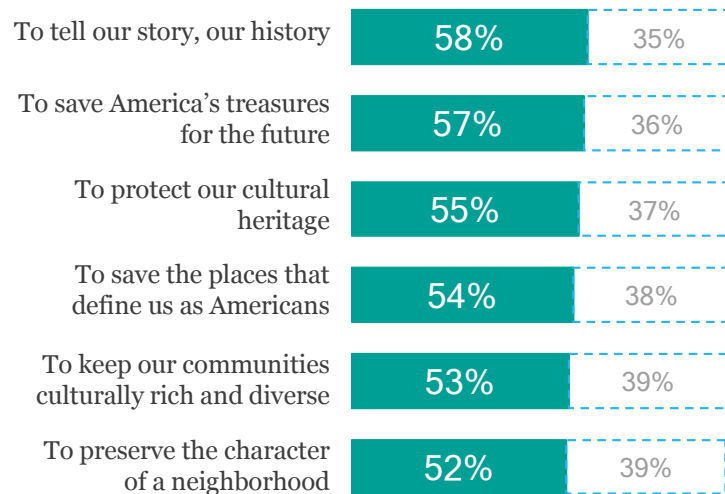
## KEY TAKEAWAY

# History and Culture Matter

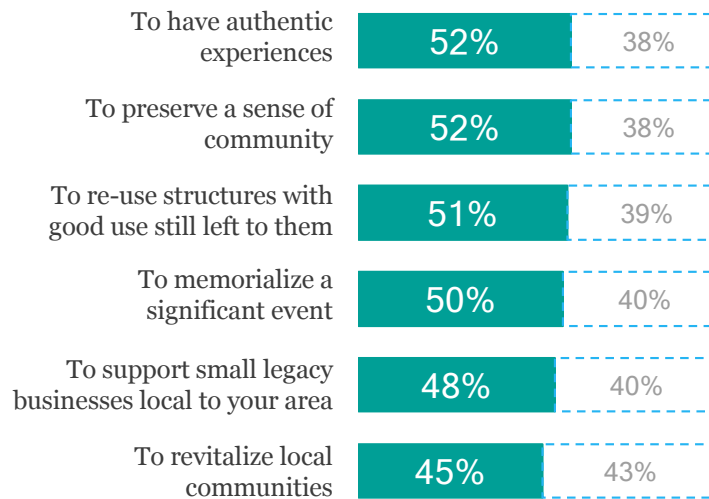
- There are many reasons Millennials find important to preserve our historic buildings and neighborhoods, led by historical and cultural reasons.
- The even spread suggests that while Millennials primarily interact with historic buildings and neighborhoods by shopping, dining, or visiting them; the underlying history and culture are what make these structures and communities special and worth preserving.

# Question: How important are each of the following to you personally as reasons to preserve, conserve, and protect buildings, architecture, neighborhoods, and communities?

## History and Culture Reasons



## Experiential and Practical Reasons



 Very Important
  Somewhat Important

## KEY TAKEAWAY

# Telling Stories Matters

- Takeaway: Experiences on their own, aren't reasons to preserve historic places. Telling “our story, our history” and “saving America’s treasures” make places worth protecting and saving.
- The underlying history and culture are what make these historic structures and communities special and worth preserving, visiting, and experiencing.

# Engagement can be Experiential or Virtual

- Takeaway: Ways to engage Millennials are multi-faceted: experiential, as well as virtual.
  - Two-thirds (67%) are interested in staying at a historic hotel and over half (58%) would attend a happy hour in a historic building.
  - Showing online support through tactics like online voting and sharing on social media are of interest to more than half of Millennials.

## Question: How interested are you in the following activities related to the preservation, conservation, and protection of buildings, architecture, neighborhoods, and communities?

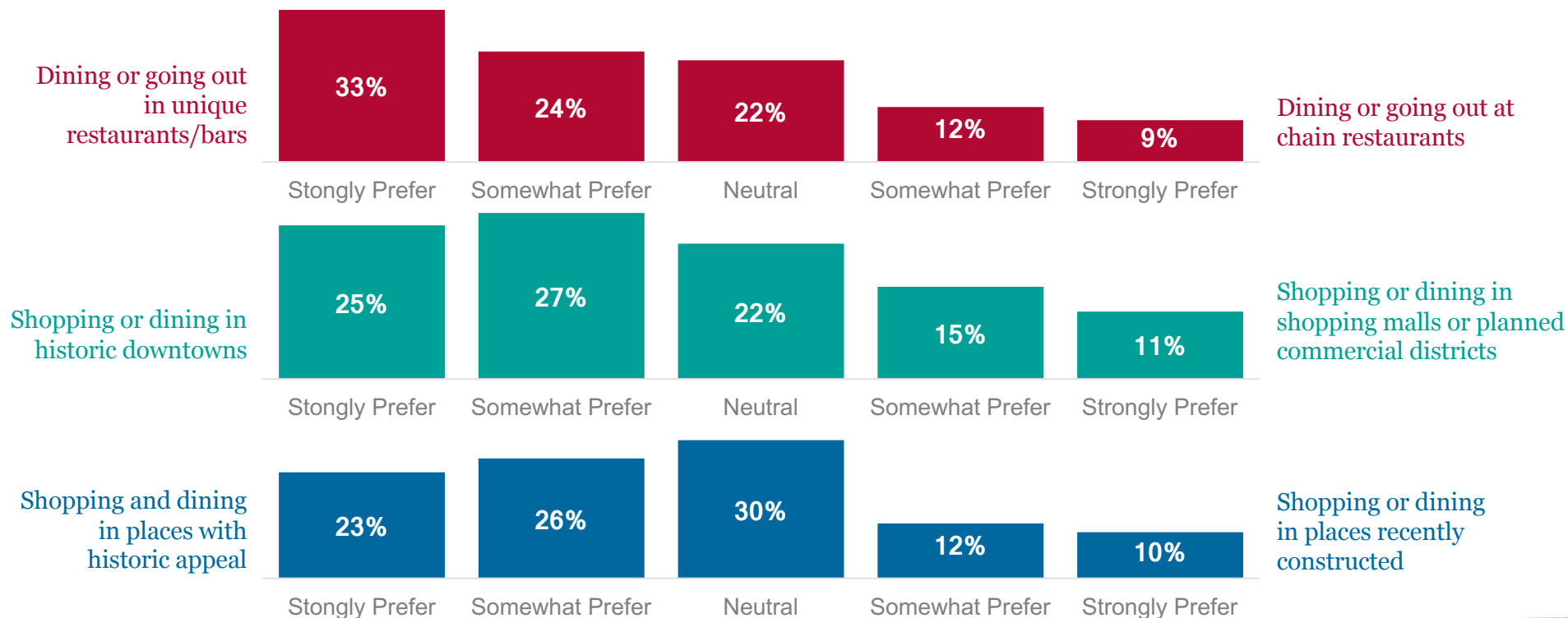
Stay in a historic hotel or bed and breakfast while on vacation	67%
Vote online for which historic sites should receive funding	59%
Attend a happy hour at a historic site or establishment	58%
Sign a petition to save a historic site or building (local, state, or national)	56%
Promote historic places on social media, e.g. Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc.	53%

### Top 5 Ways To Be Involved (Extremely, Very Interested)

Make a small donation at check out at a local retailer, in support of historic preservation	49%
Purchase a ticket to a fundraising event to support the restoration of a historic site or building	49%
Attend a talk/presentation about important historic sites in your local community	48%
Volunteer to make repairs to help restore a historic site or building	47%
Make a donation to save a specific historic site or building	47%
Raise funds to help save an important historic building in your community	46%
Sign up to receive e-newsletters to your e-mail account on historic preservation	46%
Make a donation to a historic preservation organization or historical society	45%
Contribute to a crowdfunding campaign to save a historic site or building	45%
Write to a politician (local, state, or national) in support of saving a historic site or building	40%



# Given the choice, Millennials prefer unique dining and shopping experiences in historic buildings and downtown areas



# Historic travel has strong appeal

- Historic travel is appealing to nearly three-in-four (71%) Millennials. One-in-four (26%) make it a point to visit historic places when traveling.

78% enjoy travel experiences which explore the natural beauty or wonders of the area, such as to national or local parks

71% enjoy travel experiences which explore the history of an area, such as visiting museums, historic churches or historic neighborhoods



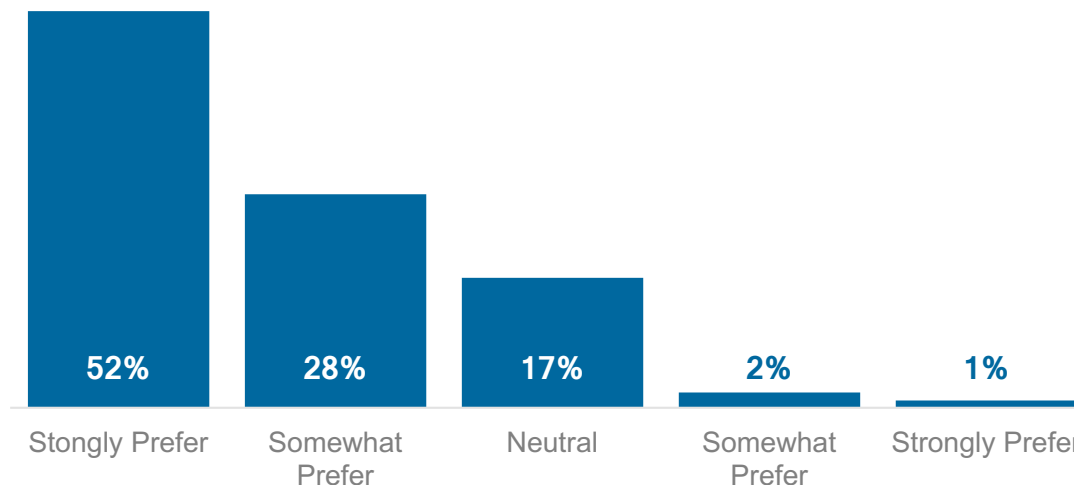
## KEY TAKEAWAY

# Millennials will shop at businesses that support historic preservation

Consider two businesses ... which of the following best describes how this might impact your decision on which to do business with?

**Business A:** Supports efforts to preserve, conserve, and protect buildings, architecture, neighborhoods and communities

**Business B:** Does not support efforts to preserve, conserve, and protect buildings, architecture, neighborhoods and communities



# There are True Believers

- Takeaway: About a third of Millennials are “True Believers” who are most interested and already active on this issue – this is an attractive audience to target for future engagement with historic preservation.
  - This group is more male, slightly older, and of a higher socioeconomic status than the average.
  - They are more likely to live in an urban area, own their own home, and have kids.
  - They describe themselves as “modern, trendy, urban and hip.” They love music and dining at unique, local establishments

# Research Methodology

An online survey was conducted among 636 Millennials from February 7-15th, 2017.

The sample was balanced to be representative of the Millennial generation by gender, age, and race.

The survey averaged 10 minutes in length.



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