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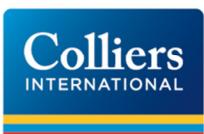
Insights from Colliers Clients – survey says...

By [Aaron Jodka](#) | FEBRUARY 2018

What's the best way to understand what matters to people? Ask. We did just that with the registrants for our 39th Annual Trends in the Real Estate Market Seminar, Open Mic Night with Colliers International. Some of the results were what you might expect, but others were surprising. Would you have thought that 75% of those selecting bike storage as one of their top amenity choices were 55-plus? And when it comes to outdoor space, nearly half (47%) of those putting that at the top of their want list were 35–44.

UPS and FedEx appear to be regular visitors to our clients' homes or offices. Nearly 70% of you did at least half of your holiday shopping online, while 8% did it all from behind a screen of some sort (or maybe through a home assistant such as Amazon's Alexa or Google Home). The most commonly selected response was 75%. On the other hand, 17% of you did no shopping online. And the older you are, the more likely you were to choose this answer; in fact, 64% who answered "none" were 55 or older.

Where do people live and work? Overall, more of you (58%) live in the suburbs, but two-thirds work in an urban setting. A lot of airtime was dedicated to Millennials during our Open Mic Night, but that age group isn't the only one living the urban life. Showing the change in our urban core's profile, 87.5% of all respondents aged 35–44 have an urban-urban commute. If you chose "urban" as your home address, 89% of you work there too. Those in the suburbs have a nearly equal chance of working in a suburban or an urban setting. Of all respondents with a suburban-suburban selection, 72% are in the 55-plus demographic.



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On some of the broader topic questions, a vast majority favor Amazon putting its HQ2 in the Hub (78% vs. 22%). A minority think that autonomous vehicles will be widespread in the next decade, while 58% disagree, and 30% of them don't think they will see it in their lifetime. To be fair, more than half of that camp are 55 or older, but even those aged 26–34 are skeptical.

Amenities were a heavily discussed topic at this year's Seminar and remain front and center on a lot of clients' minds. When polled about how you typically use your lunch hour, over half (52%) of you identified most with the "what lunch break?" option, suggesting the importance of on-site and close-by food service. Gyms (23% of responses) and parking (21%) were the top two choices for amenities (the survey asked for your top two choices). Parking is most important the older you get, while an office on-site gym is popular with the 26–34-year-old set as well as those 55-plus. Transit access (13%), outdoor space (12%), and a tie between food service and pet-friendly offices (9%) rounded out the top picks. Game room was the least-selected option, so if you're a landlord seeking key building differentiators, contrary to Millennial stereotypes, ping pong tables and Xbox may not do the trick. Two write-in selections included beer taps and shared conference/work areas.

There was a lot of variety in answers to the open-ended question "I wish my company's workplace had...". Similar to the popular amenity list, gyms and parking were noted on a recurring basis, while showers were suggested multiple times. Napping pods, free food, informal seating, peace and quiet, more privacy—be it in offices or phone rooms—and a car wash stood out. Some had concerns with the workplace itself, wishing for more reliable WiFi, better seating, a little more spunk, and better plumbing and heating. Though one responder said their workplace had everything they wanted or needed!



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The bottom line? The market is still trying to figure out the best combination of amenities, inside the office, within the building, and in the surrounding area. The answers were diverse, which makes complete sense given the work habits of a multi-generational workforce and workplace. For those struggling to figure out the best mix, perhaps the best solution—as we learned—is just to ask.

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