



# 2011 HAR Lifestyle Search Survey

November 2011

## WAV GROUP

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Search Survey

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WAV Group

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# HAR Consumer Panel Lifestyle Search Interest Survey

## Executive Summary

The Houston Association of REALTORS conducted a study through its newly formed Consumer Research Panel about Lifestyle Search. The survey was distributed to 2,838 consumers and received 1,891 responses, with a 66% response rate.

There was strong interest in the concept of lifestyle search. Consumers definitely see the value of accessing methods to search for a property in addition to traditional search methods e.g. bedrooms, baths and location.

The survey measured interest in a variety of lifestyle search factors like leisure activities, schools/school ratings and several others. With just one exception – Master Planned Community there was moderate to very strong interest in additional search criteria. Schools/school ratings, walkability and distance from work/school were the clear preferences for respondents. Interest for distance from sports/leisure activities, “hip” neighborhood, “up and coming” neighborhood and amenities demonstrated moderate interest.

## Recommendations and Next Steps

The research results suggest that HAR may want to add several lifestyle factors to their property search criteria. WAV Group learned in earlier research that consumers sometimes like to begin their search with lifestyle factors so ideally these factors would be searchable on the first search screen on HAR.com.

It is important to include School Ratings information on both the main search as well as embedded within the listing detail page of each listing.

Walkability appears to important as well. It may be interesting to include a program like Walkscores again as part of the search as well as embedded with the body of the listing.

Distance from work or school can be accomplished both as a search field as well as via a map search. There are great tools available now to allow a consumer to draw a circle or irregular shape around their work or school and then create a search result. Ideally the site will allow the consumer to apply multiple lifestyle search factors married with traditional search factors to provide them with a much more targeted search result.



## Survey Results & Analysis

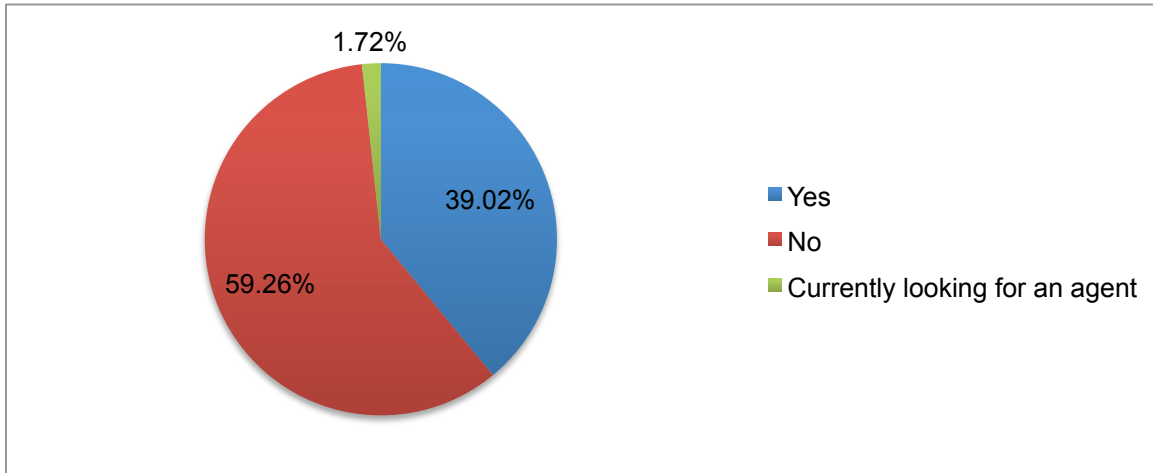
*How would you define your interest in real estate currently? (Choose all that apply)*

The majority of respondents from the panel stated they were interested in buying real estate (60.71%), while over 70% of respondents stated they were either looking for fun or they were researching what was selling in their neighborhood.



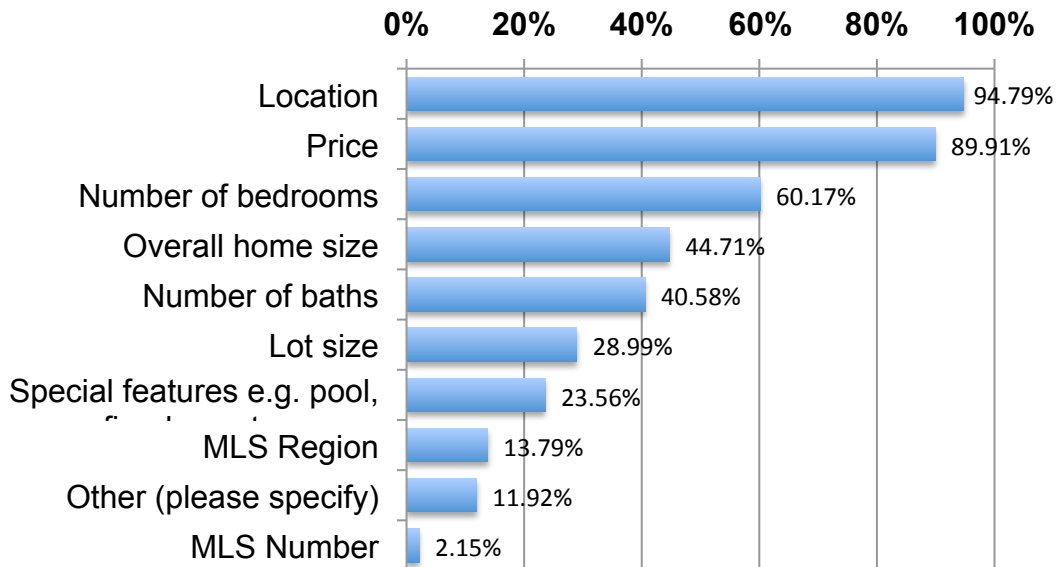
### ***Are you currently working with a real estate agent or broker?***

The majority (59.26%) of respondents in the panel are not currently working with a real estate agent or broker.



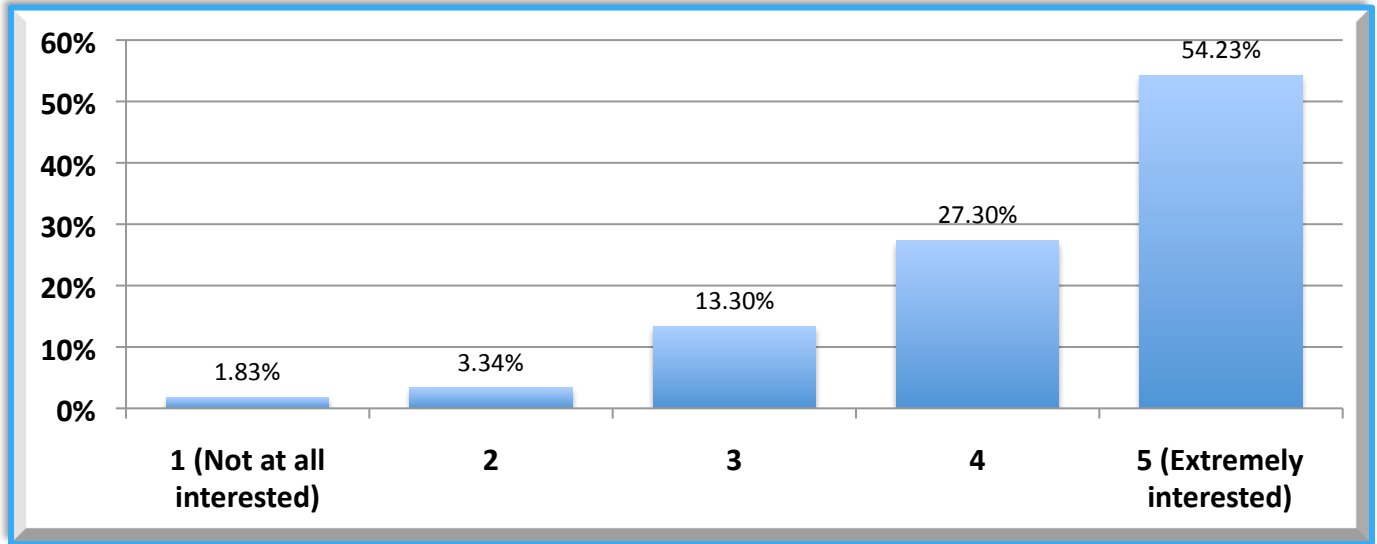
### ***When searching for a property what criteria do you use most often? (Choose all that apply)***

Respondents clearly stated that location and price were the most important criteria used when searching for a listing.



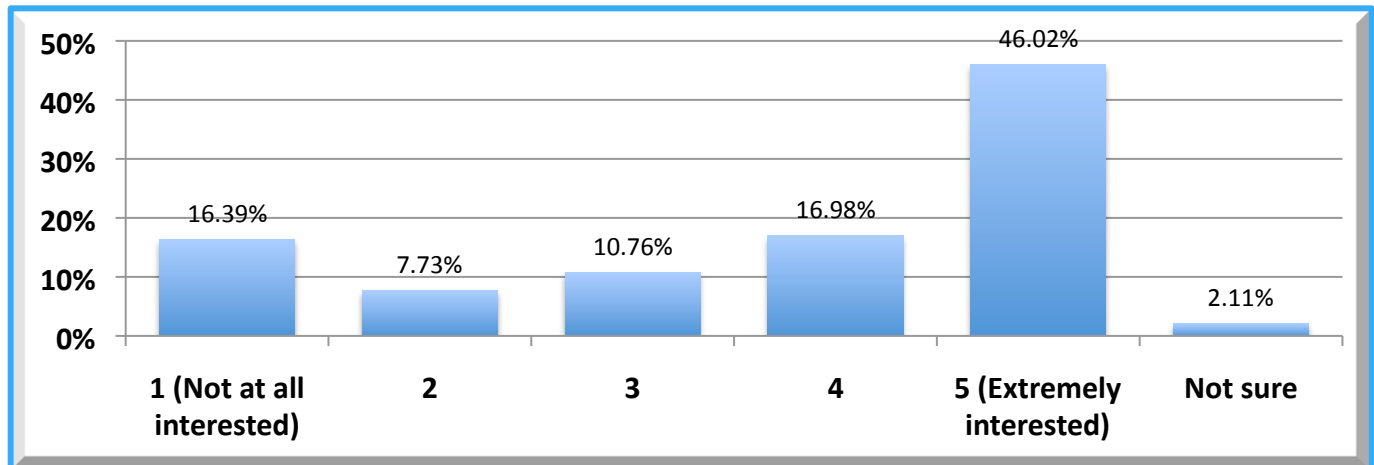
***How interested are you in being able to search for neighborhoods and properties using a variety of criteria personalized to the activities and locations you are most interested in? (1 - not at all interested, 5 - extremely interested)***

Over 80% of respondents are very interested in being able to search listings based on personalized criteria.



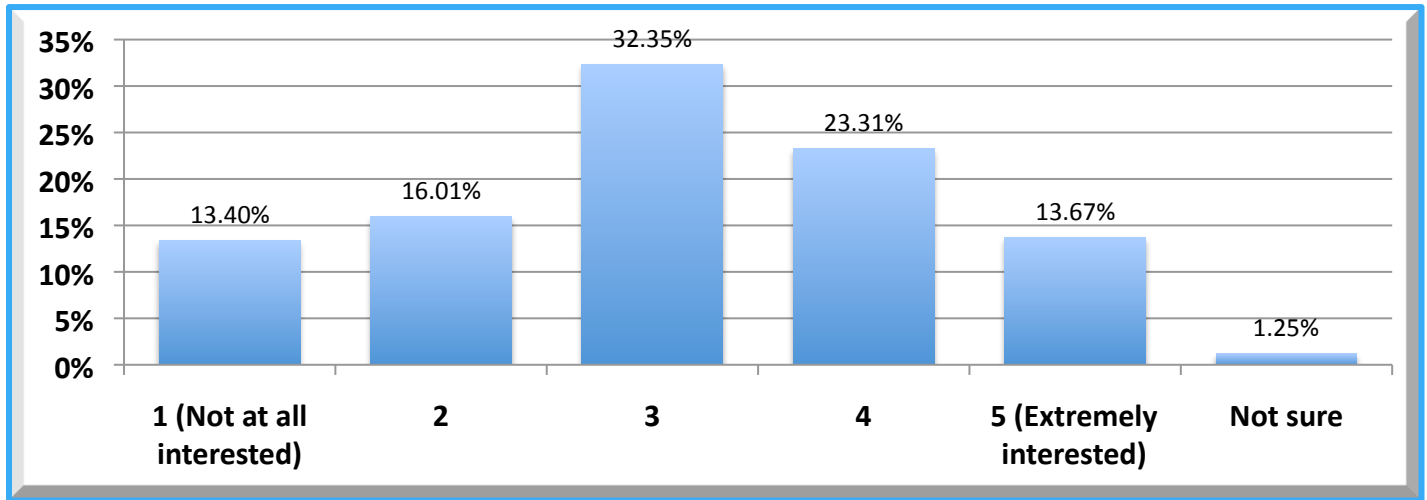
***Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested)*** **School/School Ratings**

46% of respondents are extremely interested in being able to search listings based on schools/school ratings. This correlates to the high preference of location in search criteria.



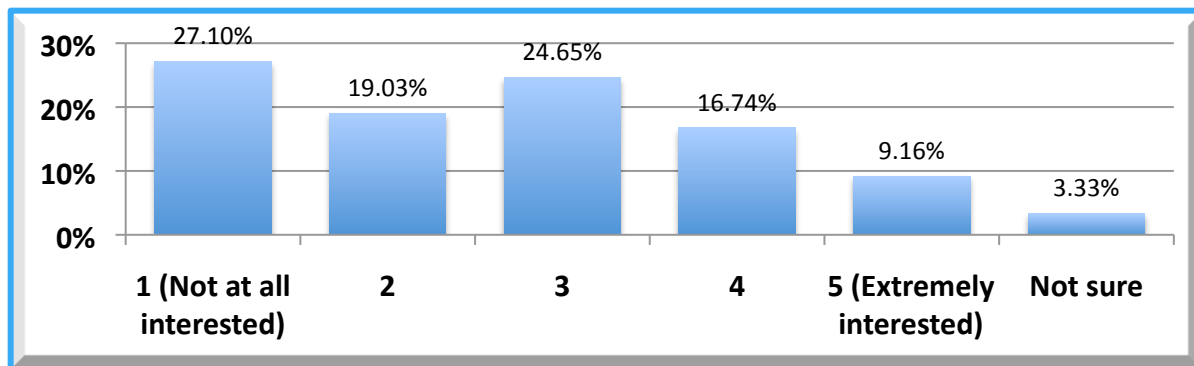
*Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested) Sports/Leisure Activities e.g. Golf, tennis, swimming, parks etc.*

Respondents are less interested (32.35%) in being able to search listings based on sports/leisure activities.



*Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested) Master Planned Community*

The majority of respondents (69.16%) are not interested or only somewhat interested in being able to search listings based on the availability of a Master Planned Community.



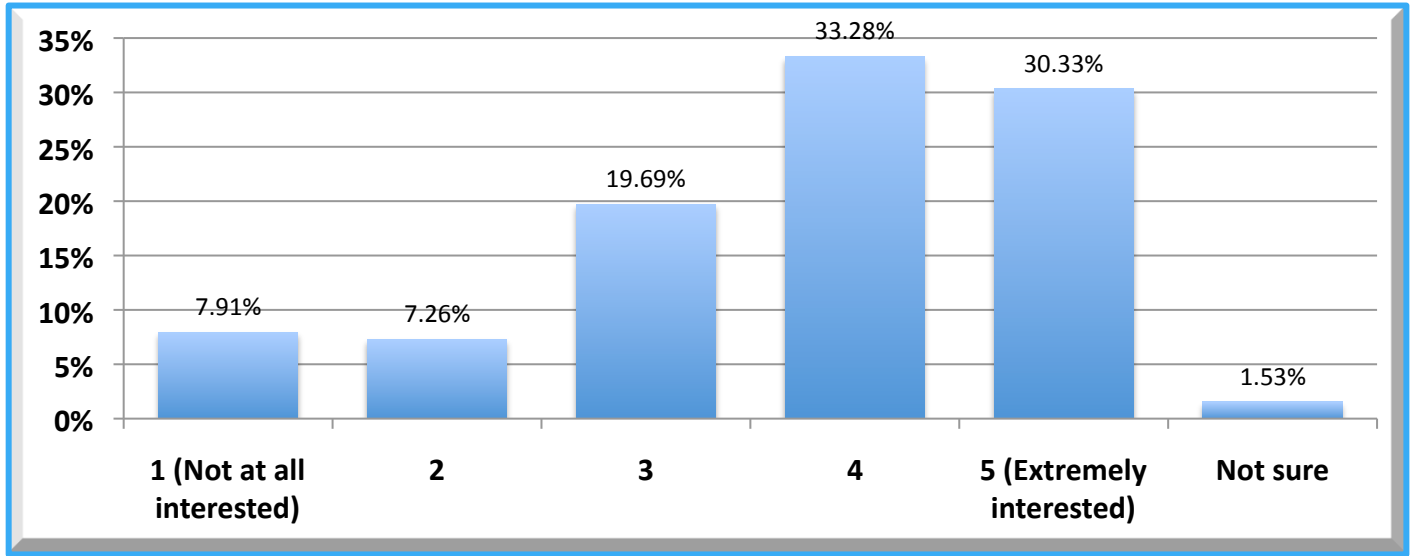
*Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested)* **Hip Neighborhood**

The majority of respondents (70.78%) are also not interested or only somewhat interested in being able to search listings based on the neighborhood being considered “hip.”

*Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested)* **Walkability of neighborhood**

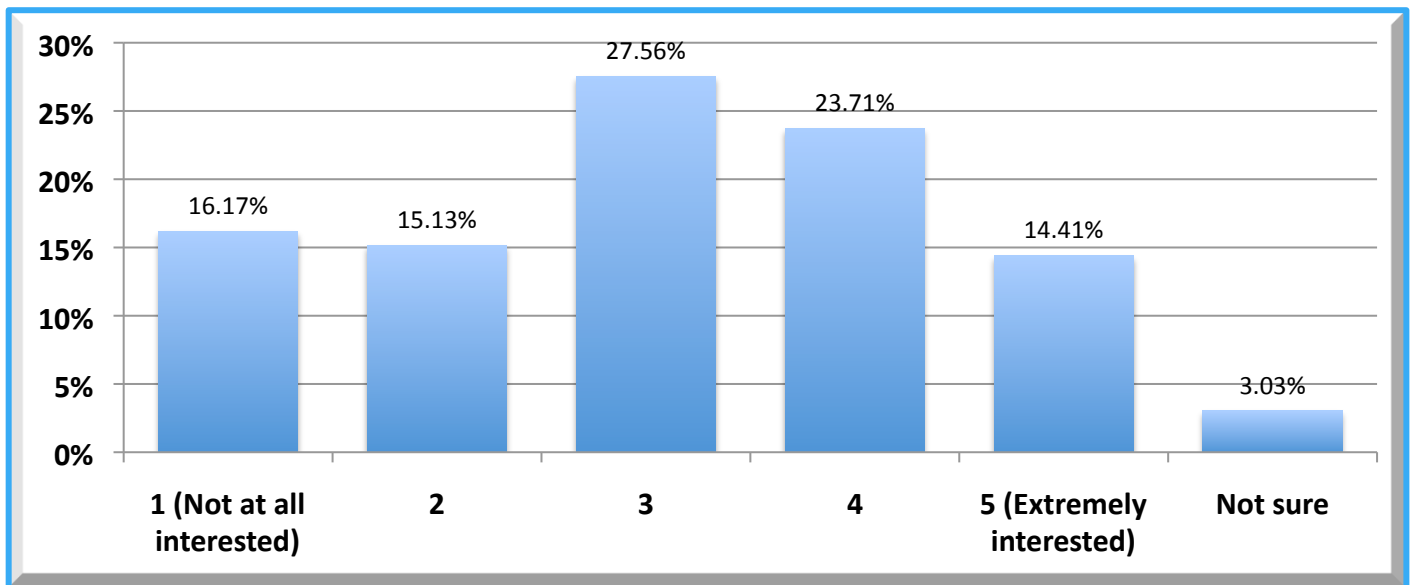
Over 60% of respondents are very interested in being able to search listings based on the walkability of the neighborhood. This also correlates to the high preference of location in search criteria.





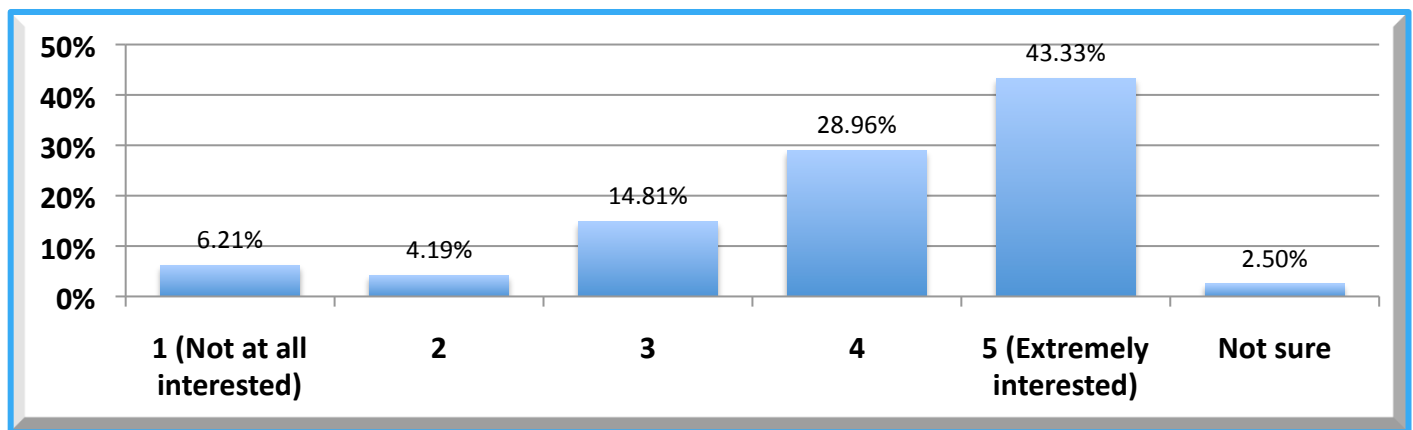
*Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested) "Up and Coming" neighborhood*

Respondents stated they were somewhat interested in being able to search listings based on a neighborhood being "up and coming."



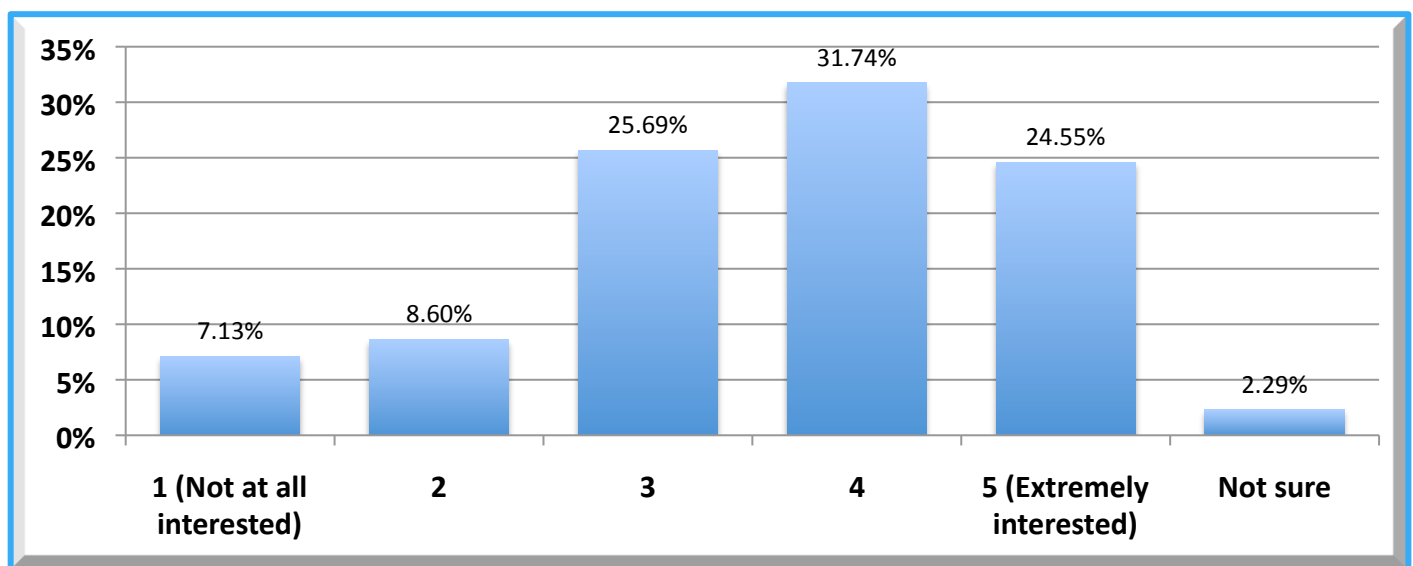
*Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested) Distance from Work, School*

Again, this illustrates the importance of location with over 70% being very or extremely interested in being able to search listings based on the distance from work or school.



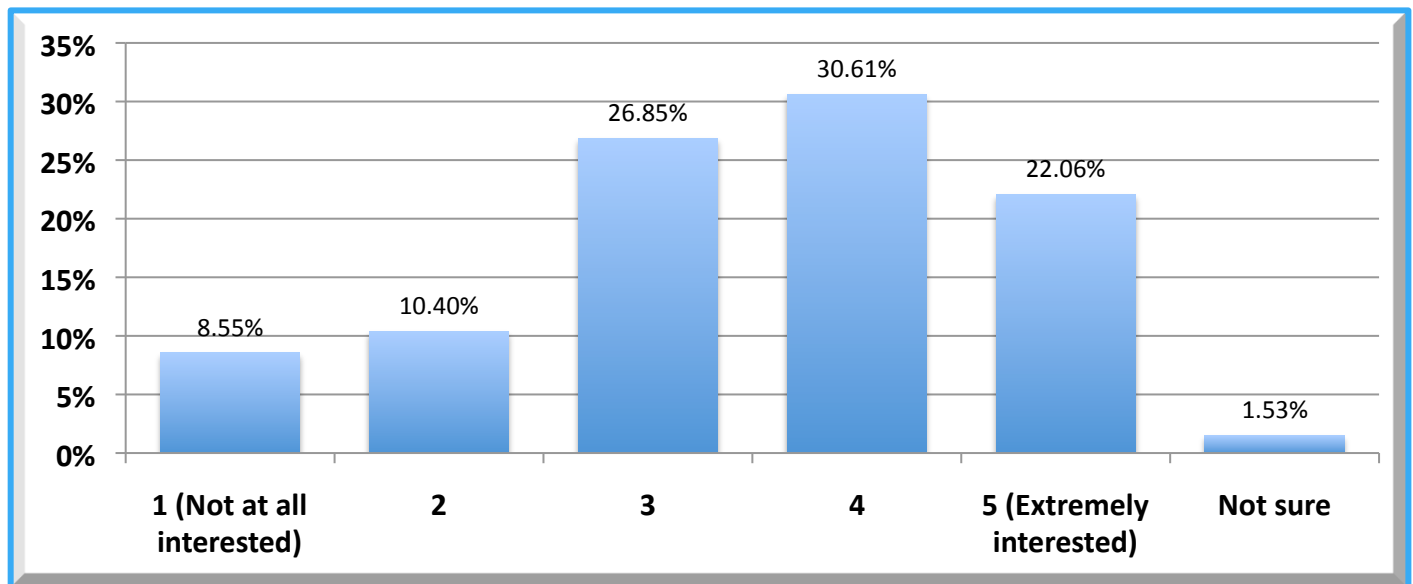
*Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested)* **Distance from amenities - e.g. church, country club, restaurants, museums, etc.**

Again, the majority of respondents are very interested in being able to search listings based on the distance from certain amenities. This again correlates to the high preference of location in search criteria.



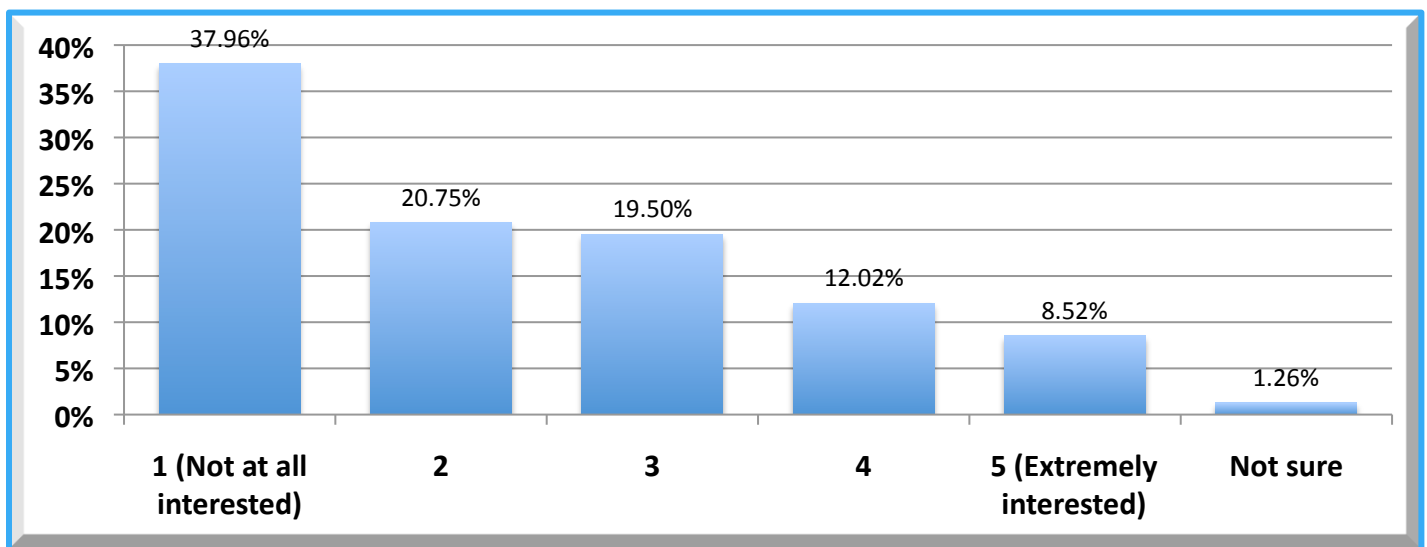
***Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested) Distance from Favorite retailers e.g. Starbucks, grocery store, etc.***

Again, distance is very important to the respondents as it relates to the importance of location in the earlier question. Over 50% of respondents are very or extremely interested in being able to search listings based on the distance from favorite retailers.



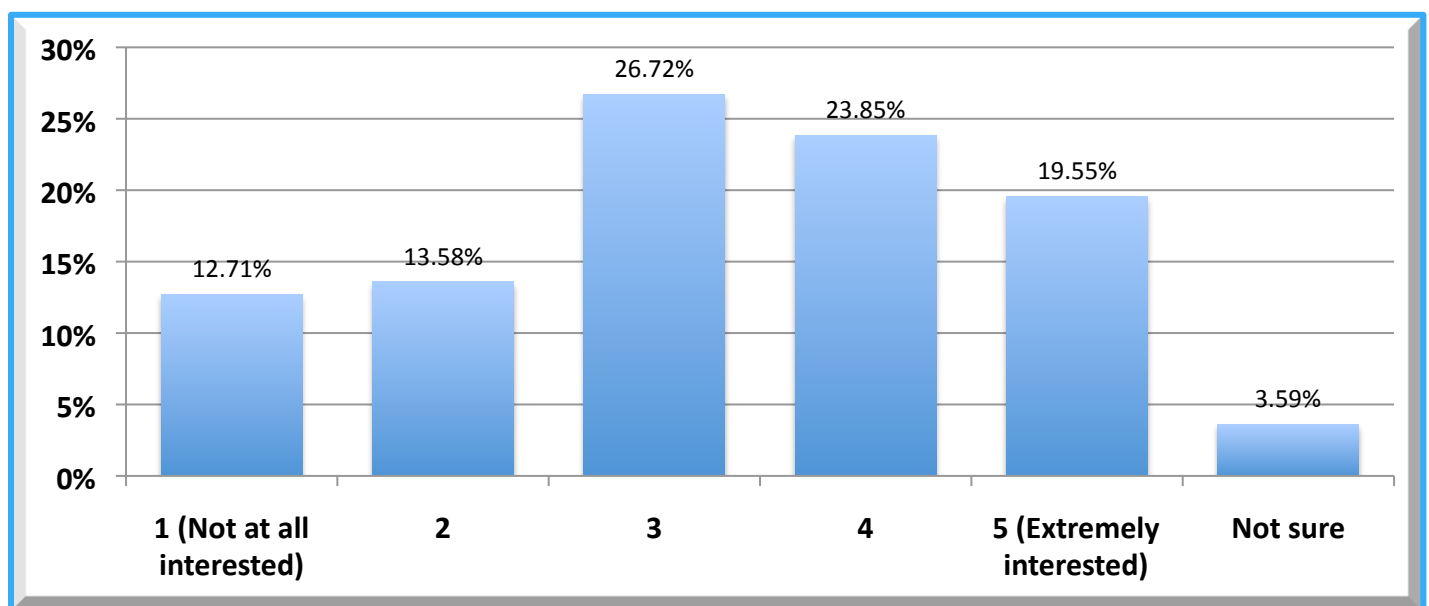
***Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested) Distance from transportation - eg. bus, public transportation***

Interestingly enough, this distance question differs from the earlier ones when it relates to the location of a listing. It may be because most consumers in Houston drive their own cars. Over 57% of respondents are not interested in being able to search listings based on the distance from transportation.



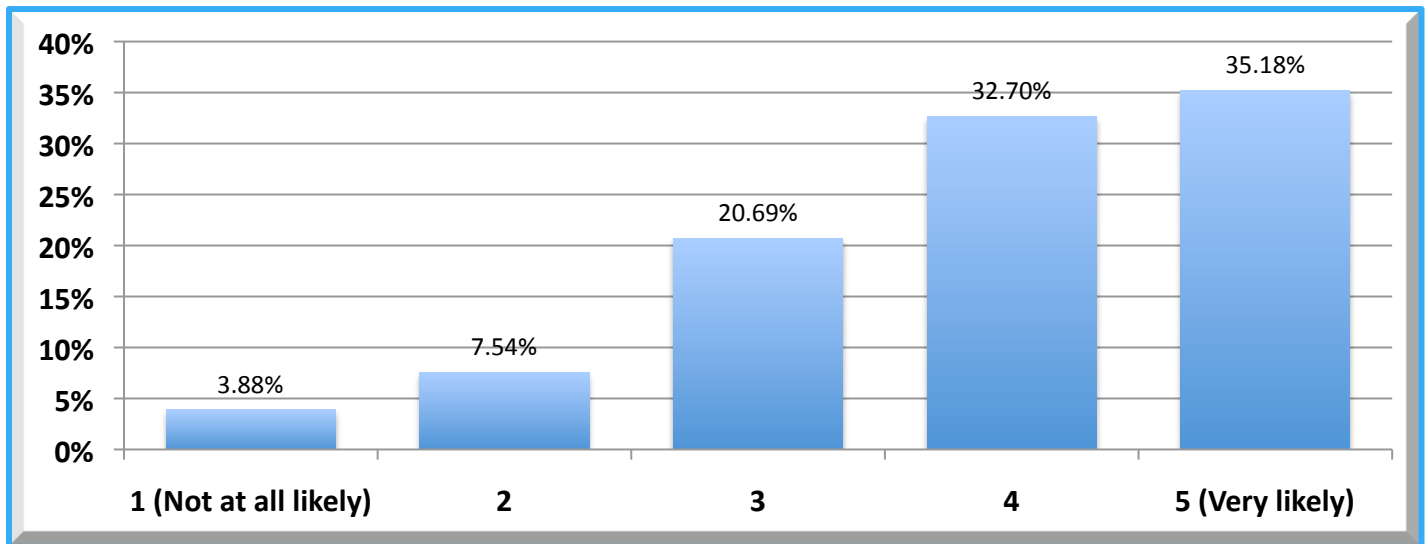
*Please indicate how interested you would be in conducting a search based on each of the following outlined below (1 is not at all interested, 5 is extremely interested)* **Distance from specific address of specific personalized interest/activity/location**

Most respondents are either somewhat or very interested in being able to search listings based on the distance from a specific address.



***How likely would you be to use the lifestyle search criteria discussed in this survey in addition to traditional search criteria like price, bedrooms and paths? (1 - not at all likely, 5 - very likely)***

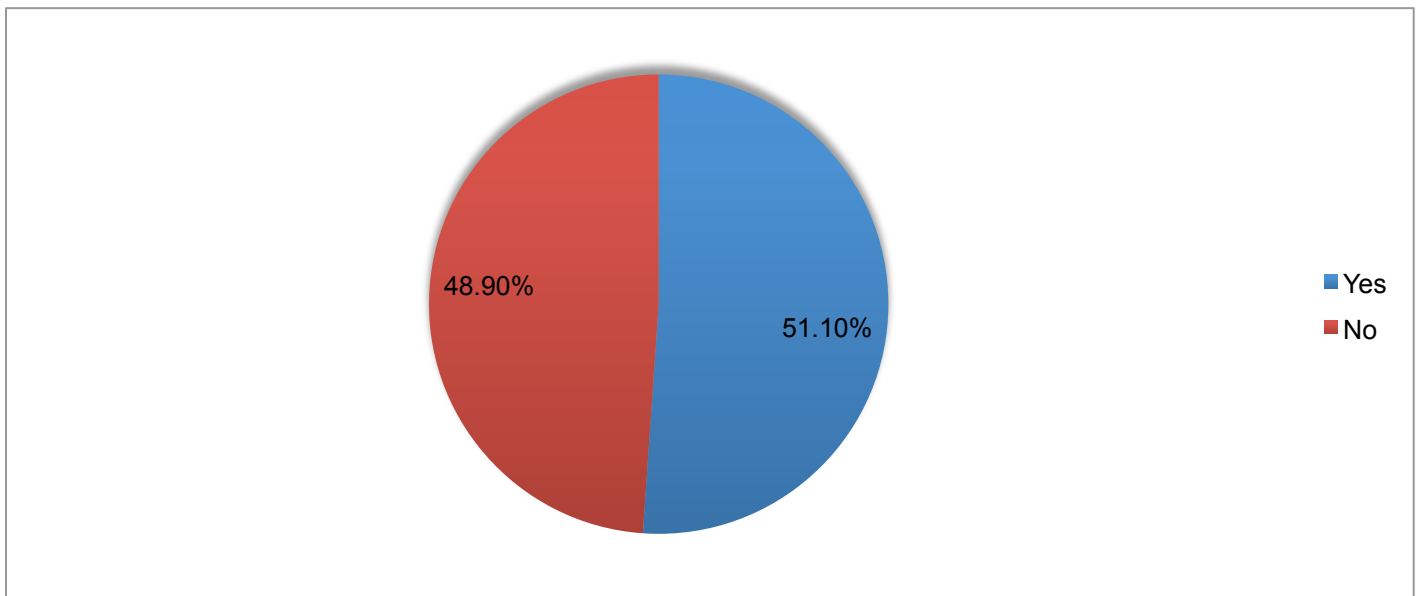
Respondents clearly stated that they are very or extremely likely to use lifestyle search criteria when searching for listings.



## Demographics

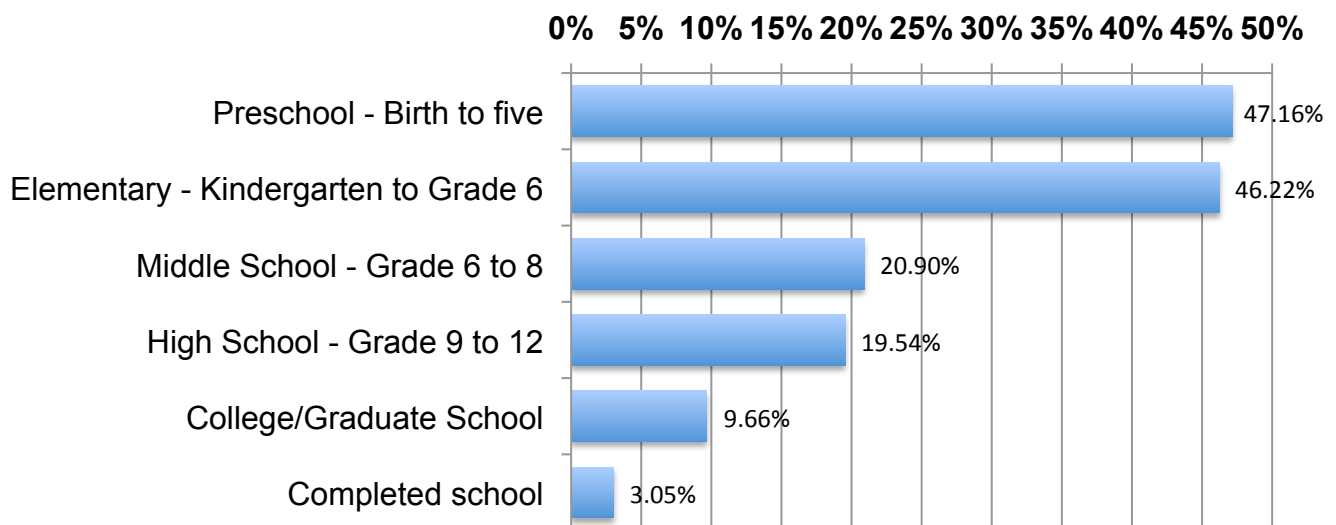
### *Do you have any children living with you currently?*

It was about a 50/50 response for whether the respondents has children living with them.



***What age children do you have in your household? (Choose all that apply)***

Respondents reported that the majority of children living with them are between the ages of 0 (newborn) and 12 years old. This strongly correlates with the question about the high level of interest in being able to search listings based on nearby schools.





**WAV Group** has a depth of experience in technology, strategic planning, research, business development, sales, product development and marketing in the real estate industry. We work with your organization as virtual executives and help you meet the objectives of your business or association, more quickly, more effectively and more affordably. Our partners have collectively launched over 25 businesses and have led several hundred business process evaluations and system installations in North America, Europe and Asia. We have created significant increases in sales and profits for Fortune 100 to start-up companies. Our clients include real some of the largest MLS's in North America, International real estate franchise organizations, technology companies and trade associations. This diverse collection of global industry experience allows the **WAV Group** to cross-fertilize ideas and bring best of breed solutions to its clients.

All of the **WAV Group** partners have been CEO's, Executive team members or founders of Fortune 100 and venture-funded corporations and approach each relationship with a clear understanding of the challenges that face our client's businesses today. We are here to help you take your association or business to the next level and create the next wave of success!



