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
MADE POSSIBLE BY AMERICAN EXPRESS
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.
KEY TAKEAWAY

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?
KEY TAKEAWAY

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

National Trust for Historic Preservation
KEY TAKEAWAY

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.
**KEY TAKEAWAY**

**Authentic Experiences Matter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Arts and Crafts</th>
<th>Music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>72% enjoy dining at restaurants or shopping at markets that sell local and sustainable foods</td>
<td>71% value authentically crafted products, e.g. local, handcrafted, unique items</td>
<td>64% say they are interested in music as a key aspect of American history and culture (#1 aspect most interested in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59% say food is a key interest of American history &amp; culture</td>
<td>45% say art is a key interest of American history and culture</td>
<td>54% cite music as a personal interest of theirs (#1 interest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27% say farmer’s markets a personal interest</td>
<td>40% say arts and crafts a personal interest</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
KEY TAKEAWAY

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:

- Living in a neighborhood with historic character
  - Strongly Prefer: 22%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 22%
  - Neutral: 25%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 17%
  - Strongly Prefer: 14%

- Living in a historic home or building
  - Strongly Prefer: 15%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 19%
  - Neutral: 26%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 20%
  - Strongly Prefer: 21%

- Living in a new subdivision with modern amenities


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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History and Culture Reasons</th>
<th>Experiential and Practical Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To tell our story, our history</td>
<td>To have authentic experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To save America’s treasures for the future</td>
<td>To preserve a sense of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To protect our cultural heritage</td>
<td>To re-use structures with good use still left to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To save the places that define us as Americans</td>
<td>To memorialize a significant event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep our communities culturally rich and diverse</td>
<td>To support small legacy businesses local to your area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To preserve the character of a neighborhood</td>
<td>To revitalize local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Green = Very Important
Blue = 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.
KEY TAKEAWAY

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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Interest Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stay in a historic hotel or bed and breakfast while on vacation</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote online for which historic sites should receive funding</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a happy hour at a historic site or establishment</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign a petition to save a historic site or building (local, state, or national)</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote historic places on social media, e.g. Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc.</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a small donation at check out at a local retailer, in support of historic preservation</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchase a ticket to a fundraising event to support the restoration of a historic site or building</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a talk/presentation about important historic sites in your local community</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer to make repairs to help restore a historic site or building</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a donation to save a specific historic site or building</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise funds to help save an important historic building in your community</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign up to receive e-newsletters to your e-mail account on historic preservation</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a donation to a historic preservation organization or historical society</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribute to a crowdfunding campaign to save a historic site or building</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write to a politician (local, state, or national) in support of saving a historic site or building</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top 5 Ways To Be Involved (Extremely, Very Interested)
Given the choice, Millennials prefer unique dining and shopping experiences in historic buildings and downtown areas.

- **Dining or going out in unique restaurants/bars**
  - Strongly Prefer: 33%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 24%
  - Neutral: 22%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 12%
  - Strongly Prefer: 9%

- **Shopping or dining in historic downtowns**
  - Strongly Prefer: 25%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 27%
  - Neutral: 22%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 15%
  - Strongly Prefer: 11%

- **Shopping and dining in places with historic appeal**
  - Strongly Prefer: 23%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 26%
  - Neutral: 30%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 12%
  - Strongly Prefer: 10%

- **Dining or going out at chain restaurants**
  - Strongly Prefer: 33%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 24%
  - Neutral: 22%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 12%
  - Strongly Prefer: 9%

- **Shopping or dining in shopping malls or planned commercial districts**
  - Strongly Prefer: 25%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 27%
  - Neutral: 22%
  - Somewhat Prefer: 15%
  - Strongly Prefer: 11%
KEY TAKEAWAY

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 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

- Strongly Prefer: 52%
- Somewhat Prefer: 28%
- Neutral: 17%

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

- Somewhat Prefer: 2%
- Strongly Prefer: 1%
KEY TAKEAWAY

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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