

PulteGroup Survey: Pondering 60, Gen X's Alternative Streak Still Strong

As the “grunge generation” begins turning 60, survey finds changing attitudes toward retirement and increasing demand for luxury lifestyle communities that are not age-restricted.



Suddenly, sixteen candles aren't nearly enough: Having long ago traded mosh pits for minivans, the first members of Generation X are turning 60 in 2025. And while so much has changed for the generation that brought us grunge music, flannel as a fashion statement and teen angst as a movie genre, Gen X's fierce independent streak remains stronger than ever – and it's making an impact on what they want from the next chapter of life.

Generation X may be approaching traditional retirement age, but their approach to retirement will be anything but traditional.

According to a new survey of Gen Xers by PulteGroup, one of America's largest homebuilders, 62% want to spend their upcoming retirement years living among a mix of people from different generations and life stages, versus 38% who would prefer to live among people their own age. And this trend is even more pronounced among those who are closest to traditional retirement age, with 66% percent of respondents age 53 or older indicating a preference to live among people of different generations and life stages.

This matches recent PulteGroup market research that led the company to launch Del Webb Explore, a new generation of active lifestyle communities that feature resort-style amenities such as activity centers focused on health and wellness, clubhouses with social spaces for connecting around a bar and grill, hiking trails, sports courts and pools, with one key difference: Instead of being limited to residents age 55 and older, it is open to all ages.

PulteGroup's first Del Webb Explore communities are currently under development just as many members of Gen X are beginning to see the finish line for their careers: 73% of respondents in the PulteGroup Gen X survey say they're either ready to retire in a few years (39%), already retired (19%) or ready to retire now (15%).

But 27% of those surveyed say they'll never be ready to retire. That group cites financial concerns (34%), fear of being bored in retirement (20%) and finding fulfillment in the work they do (20%) as the main reasons they plan to continue working.

The online survey of 1,177 American Gen Xers was conducted by PulteGroup's market research division from May 7-11, 2025.

"As a proud member of Gen X myself, I am not at all surprised to see that our generation has its own unique take on what we want from the next chapter of life," PulteGroup President and CEO Ryan Marshall said. "The takeaways from our recent Gen

X survey dovetail with a trend we are seeing in the market: People who are pondering retirement often want the amenities and lifestyle of an active lifestyle community, but many of them would prefer to continue living in a setting that includes multiple generations. PulteGroup recently launched the Del Webb Explore brand to meet the needs of this growing segment of customers, with the first communities opening this year and more to come. We invite Gen X – and everyone else – to find out more about this intriguing new lifestyle option.”

Worried about getting older? As if!

Often left to raise themselves as “latch key kids,” Gen X remains self-reliant today. For a generation that grew up drinking water straight out of garden hoses and who normally wasn’t seen back home until after dark, perhaps it’s no surprise that getting a little older isn’t phasing them.

Asked how they feel about their generation’s oldest members turning 60 in 2025, the leading response was “can’t believe it but embracing it” at 35%, followed by “totally awesome!” and “meh, it’s just a number” tied at 26% each. Meanwhile, only 13% report “feeling old and tired.”

True to themselves, Gen X remains comfortable in their own skin. Asked what words best describe Generation X, 13% said “experienced,” 12% said “independent” and 11% said “resilient.” Nine percent answered “adaptable” and 8% said “grounded” or “balanced.”

Despite often being described as cynical, survey respondents overwhelmingly rejected that label.

’90s pop culture still rocks

The flannels might be at the back of their closets today, but you’ll still find grunge and hip hop at the top of Gen Xers’ playlists.

When asked what aspect of their youth remains a part of their identity today, Gen X members resoundingly chose music preferences (35%), followed by obsession with '80s and '90s movies (22%), not being addicted to technology and proud of it (15%) and questioning authority (14%).

If there was a Gen X Mount Rushmore, whose face would be on it? Asked which celebrity who turns 60 in 2025 best epitomizes Generation X, 14% answered Robert Downey Jr., followed by Brooke Shields (12%), Charlie Sheen (10%), Dr. Dre (9%), Sarah Jessica Parker (8%), Ben Stiller (8%), Chris Rock (7%) and Martin Lawrence (7%).

Note: The results of this survey question do not imply a celebrity endorsement of PulteGroup or Del Webb Explore.

An economic chill pill

Gen Xers certainly have an eye on the economy, but it may not derail their plans.

For some Gen Xers, broader economic uncertainty may play a role in decisions about where to live, with nearly one third (32%) saying they're waiting to see what's happening before buying a new home. But at the same time, 38% said their plans remain unchanged.

Choosing their own adventure

As members of Generation X move into their peak earning years, it's time for this largely overlooked generation to start thinking about the next act of their lives – and the best revenge, of course, is living well.

Settling down doesn't mean slowing down. What do Gen Xers look forward to doing most over the next decade? Traveling was the top response at 23%, followed by spending time with family and friends (20%), staying physically active (18%) and enjoying more "me" time (17%).

Over the years, many members of Gen X stayed close to home. A total of 66% of respondents still live in the same state (29%), city (28%) or even the home they grew up in (9%). As they look forward, they're split on when to make their next move. Of survey respondents, 44% do not plan to move in the next few years, while 35% either moved recently or plan to move in the next few years.

Those who are open to moving are seeking a better life -- at the right price. For respondents who did move recently or plan to soon, 25% said they wanted something more affordable, followed by better weather (23%), wanting to downsize (18%) and new cultural experiences (15%).

Asked where they'd prefer to live next, 39% said a cozy home in the countryside or near the beach, but 37% are happy right where they are. But there also was significant interest in a luxury community with fitness and lifestyle amenities at 14% – and that interest was even more pronounced among younger Gen Xers, age 52 or younger, at 16%.

That's where Del Webb Explore comes in. Featuring exercise and art classes, wine tastings, pickleball, outdoor activities and so much more, the first Del Webb Explore communities are planned for Southern California and West Florida, with planned expansion nationwide.

Want to learn more? Visit the Del Webb Explore website at <https://www.delwebb.com/explore>

About PulteGroup

PulteGroup, Inc. (NYSE: PHM), based in Atlanta, Georgia, is one of America's largest homebuilding companies with operations in more than 45 markets throughout the country. Through its brand portfolio that includes Pulte Homes, Centex, Del Webb, DiVosta Homes, and John Wieland Homes and Neighborhoods, the company is one of the industry's most versatile homebuilders able to meet the needs of multiple buyer groups and respond to changing consumer demand. PulteGroup's purpose is building incredible places where people can live their dreams.

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