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Meet the neighbors driving residential sales



Ave Maria tallied 38 fresh home purchases in May. SUBMITTED

Buyers seek out ‘non-previously sneezed in’ homes



In the Know

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As the pandemic rages on, you can't miss the out of place bright gold New York and drab yellow New Jersey license plates in Southwest Florida traffic.

A Pew Research Center study released this past week found that 3% of U.S. adults have moved permanently or temporarily due to the COVID-19 crisis. That would translate to 7.7 million Americans, not counting the kids, on the move.

Florida, including Sarasota, Collier and Lee counties, served as a top draw for Big Apple residents, based on the U.S. Post Office's 137,000 March and April mail forwarding requests analyzed by The New York Times.

In addition, Times' cell phone data shows about 420,000 people left Gotham between March 1 and

May 1, and many headed to the Sunshine State.

And while a large number of them broke the snowbird rule of staying here well past the established Easter exodus, they've been helping drive residential sales, often preferring new over existing. In this age of coronavirus, might be a touch of mysophobia that NPR says has been exhibited by other native New Yorkers such as Howard Stern, Donald Trump and the Seinfeld TV character.

“When we spoke to some home builders here

lately I heard the term, buyers are preferring a ‘non-previously sneezed in home,’” said Justin Thibaut, president of LSI Companies, a major Southwest Florida real estate broker, with a focus on both vacant land and developed home sites and communities. “There's definitely going to be a trend toward newer



A rendering of a New York license plate. COURTESY OF NYS DMV

product versus existing, mostly just because of the psychological element of, ‘Hey, somebody was living in here’ versus ‘Hey, this is brand new, and no one's

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