

MEDIA RELEASE

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Great 'lifestyle divide' forces more Sydney people to consider a better life elsewhere, new research shows

- *64 per cent of Sydneysiders have considered leaving the city*
- *Lifestyle, cheap housing, low living costs and less traffic driving considerations*
- *Research shows Australian dream lives on in regional NSW*

A majority of Sydneysiders have considered leaving the 'rat race' for a more affordable and less stressful life, with 64 per cent of residents casting their eyes further afield, new research has found.

According to the research, Sydney residents want to find a better lifestyle, cheaper housing, lower living costs and less traffic. One in three would consider relocating to a regional city in NSW in pursuit of these and other benefits.

The research of 1,000 Sydney people, and 500 Evocities regional dwellers, also found that people in regional NSW cities are much more likely to already be living the Australian dream.

They have larger properties, bigger yards (which can cater for a game of cricket, a hills hoist and a shed), and their kids are more likely to be seen playing outdoors (71 per cent in the Evocities compared to 53 per cent in Sydney).

Undertaken by **Evocities*** - an alliance of seven thriving regional NSW cities - the research sought to identify some of the key lifestyle differences between Sydney and regional NSW cities.

It showed that in an Evocity, more people live in a free-standing house (71 per cent compared to 59 per cent in Sydney), are more likely to have at least three-bedrooms (85 per cent compared to 68 per cent in Sydney) and are significantly less likely to live in an apartment (5 per cent in a regional city compared to 21 per cent in Sydney).

And when it comes to property, size matters, with 77 per cent of Evocities residents saying they have a yard big enough to play a game of cricket in compared to only 55 per cent in Sydney! Evocity backyards were also considerably more likely than their Sydney counterparts to have a BBQ (76 per cent compared to 62 per cent in Sydney), a Hills Hoist clothes line (93 per cent compared to 75 per cent) or shed (74 per cent compared to 50 per cent).

According to the research, Sydneysiders are more likely to be feeling the squeeze with 65 per cent of people saying their house was either 'packed to the rafters' or getting close, compared to half in NSW's regional cities.

Evocities spokesperson, James Treloar, said there was a 'great lifestyle divide' between Sydney living and regional city living.

"Looking at some of the main lifestyle challenges identified by Sydney residents, such as traffic congestion, high prices and poor quality of life, it's no wonder that nearly two in three people have considered leaving," he said.

"And for those who do make the move, there are a multitude of lifestyle benefits on offer, including the opportunity to live in a bigger, better and cheaper home than they could get in Sydney, with a

backyard to entertain, relax and bring up a family. For Sydneysiders struggling to get a foot on the property ladder, this is a real incentive to consider a move to what an Evocity has to offer.”

While it's no surprise the housing prices vary from Sydney to a regional city, what is surprising is the sheer gap in the numbers of people paying what is the norm in Sydney. Less than 4 per cent of people in a regional city paid over \$550,000 for their property, while in Sydney 33 per cent paid more than that amount.

Other marked differences between Sydney and regional city living included:

- **Traffic congestion** was cited by 38 per cent of Sydney people as an issue compared to 18 per cent in the regions
- **Noise pollution** was a problem for 23 per cent of Sydney residents compared to 9 per cent of Evocity residents
- **Lack of community** was an issue for 21 per cent of Sydney people compared to 8 per cent in a regional city

Mr Treloar said the research shows that a regional NSW city has something special to offer - a genuine city change without the big city drawbacks.

“We want Sydney people to know that regional NSW cities are working collaboratively to make the transition an easy one,” he said.

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***About Evocities.** In an Australian first, seven of NSW's leading regional cities have united to form the Evocities campaign and encourage Sydneysiders to live, work and invest in an Evocity. The seven Evocities are Albury, Armidale, Bathurst, Dubbo, Orange, Tamworth and Wagga Wagga. The Evocity name was coined because the cities are centres of Energy, Vision and Opportunity.

Each of the seven cities has dedicated resources and funding to the campaign, and has in turn secured Australian Government funding, as well as support from the NSW State Government and corporate sponsors, including the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Charles Sturt University, the University of New England, Rex Airlines and Orange Mental Health.

The campaign showcases the abundance of opportunities in these regional cities due to their lower cost of living, strong career and business opportunities and enhanced lifestyle. Living in an Evocity means less time commuting, working and stressing, and more time for you and your family to enjoy NSW's beautiful natural surrounds.