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What does the future hold for Melbourne?

Future Melbourne

Future Melbourne: Readers' survey finds Melburnians love major events, worried about traffic growth

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MELBURNIANS prize the city for its major events and relaxed lifestyle but are worried that rapid population growth is threatening livability, says a key readers' survey.

Another sports stadium and redevelopment of the Docklands waterfront are top priorities for readers, while many would like to see fewer tollways and apartment towers.

More than 1000 people took part in the survey over the *Herald Sun's* Future Melbourne series which highlighted the challenges and possible solutions for the city's ongoing livability.

When asked to name the key things that made Melbourne so liveable, 40 per cent said sport and major events, 23 per cent said relaxed lifestyle and 19 per cent cafes and restaurants.

Asked to describe the city in one word, 27 per cent chose liveable, 21 per cent said cosmopolitan, while 18 per cent thought of its sport focus.

But, a quarter described Melbourne as congested, while a solid 57 per cent said population growth and transport congestion were the biggest threats to its future livability.

Lord Mayor Robert Doyle welcomed the support for the city's livability and cosmopolitan character, saying he was proud of the global reputation that the City of Melbourne had helped build.

"Congestion and planning for growth are two of the major challenges faced by most world cities and Melbourne is no exception," he said.

"That's why it is so important that all levels of government work together constructively and collaboratively to deliver hard and soft infrastructure, especially in our urban renewal areas."

On the question of what do other cities have that Melbourne should get, just over half said an airport rail link, while 12 per cent wanted a road that links the northern and western suburbs.

Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief executive Mark Stone said an airport rail link and the proposed Northeast Link would solve many problems.

"Congestion and lack of connectivity in some areas of the city is the biggest threat on the horizon and is recognised by all sides of government," he said.

Committee for Melbourne CEO **Martine Letts** said it should be possible to live and do business in Melbourne without needing a car.

"An integrated public transport system-linking rail, tram, bus, taxi, car and bike share will go a long way to alleviating public transport and traffic congestion, even with significant population growth," she said.

The survey revealed that more than half of respondents said gang violence was the number one public safety concern for the future, followed by general crime (28 per cent) and terrorism (nine per cent).

While almost half of the respondents were satisfied with current levels of immigration and cultural diversity, 39 per cent believed they were too high and 13 per cent had no opinion.

As for future environmental concerns, 41 per cent named overdevelopment and loss of green space, 19 per cent said too many cars and 14 per cent climate change.

If given the powers of the Lord Mayor or Premier, about a quarter said fixing public transport would be top of their priority list, then housing affordability (16 per cent), roads (15 per cent) and population growth (14 per cent).



A readers' survey found Melburnians want to see fewer apartment towers. Picture: James Croucher.



📍 Almost half of survey respondents said sport and major events made the city more liveable. Picture: Janine Eastgate.

THE SURVEY RESULTS

Melbourne in one word:

27 per cent liveable

25 per cent congested

21 per cent cosmopolitan

18 per cent sports-focused

What are the key things that make Melbourne such a liveable city?

40 per cent sport and major events

23 per cent relaxed lifestyle

19 per cent cafe and restaurants

16 per cent parks and gardens

What has been the biggest change to your suburb in the past 10 years?

50 per cent housing prices have soared

21 per cent takes longer to get around

19 per cent its grown too much

5 per cent local services and amenities have improved

5 per cent it's friendlier and a better place to live

What would you like to see more of in the next 25 years?

44 per cent major events

17 per cent restaurant and bars

13 per cent car parks

What would you like to see less of in the next 25 years?

44 per cent tollways

41 per cent apartments and skyscrapers

10 per cent car parks



📷 Almost one quarter of survey respondents said public transport would be a priority if they were Premier or Lord Mayor. Picture: Rebecca Michael.

If you were either the premier or the lord mayor, which is the ONE issue you would make your priority to address so that Melbourne can thrive in the future?

- 24 per cent public transport
- 16 per cent housing affordability
- 15 per cent roads
- 14 per cent population growth
- 13 per cent more jobs in the suburbs
- 11 per cent homelessness

What is your main concern about public safety in Melbourne in the future?

- 52 per cent gang violence
- 28 per cent general crime
- 9 per cent terrorism
- 9 per cent I have no concern

What sporting event should Melbourne host?

- 40 per cent soccer World Cup
- 35 per cent Olympics
- 12 per cent NBA game/s
- 8 per cent T20 World Cup (permanently)
- 5 per cent State of Origin (one match annually)

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