



Brendan Smyth MLA

Australian Capital Territory

Minister for Urban Services

Member for Brindabella

ENHANCING THE LOOK OF CANBERRA

The ACT Government will spend an additional \$1.9 million in 2000/01 on improving the look of the region, ACT Urban Services Minister, Brendan Smyth announced today.

“The ACT Government has a strong commitment to maintaining the appearance and safety of our city. As Canberra grows older, many of our assets deteriorate over time and this funding will target these areas to make sure our city is at its best for the community to enjoy,” Mr Smyth said.

“Assets such as footpaths, trees, urban lakes and playgrounds will be improved through a range of measures.

“The Government has allocated a further \$750,000 for the continuation and expansion of the Streetsmart program to improve the appearance of our city. This funding will allow for extra streetsweeping, litter collection, grass mowing, weed spraying and tree pruning, as well as the more frequent replacement of street and traffic signs.

“We have allocated \$250,000 to the new Lakesmart program, which includes a number of projects to improve the quality and amenity of Canberra’s urban lakes and surrounding parklands.

“Initial actions will target improvements to maintenance and facilities at Lake Ginninderra and Lake Tuggeranong, with improvements to be made to Point Hut Pond, Gunghalin Pond, Yerrabi Pond and Molonglo Reach later in the program.

“The replacement of our older trees as required is also a priority with \$300,000 allocated to street and park tree replacement,” he said.

The ACT has an estimated 590,000 trees in suburban streets and urban parks. The planned nature of Canberra means there were major tree planting programs between 45 and 80 years ago. Many of these trees are now approaching the end of their useful and safe life and will require progressive replacement over the next 25 years.

Mr Smyth said while the ACT Government will make every effort to retain older trees, many are becoming unsafe or had simply seen better days. The replacement program, managed by Canberra Urban Parks and Places, will be undertaken in full consultation with the ACT Heritage Council and local residents.

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More of Canberra's playgrounds are also in for safety upgrades with \$300,000 to be spent next year, on top of \$200,000 brought forward to this year.

"Canberra is renowned for its children's playgrounds, with about 450 of them dotted throughout the region. Many of these were built when suburbs first developed, so it is important we ensure they continue to meet the highest available standards.

"Draft Australian standards specific to playgrounds have been developed for some 10 years and are still under review by Standards Australia. The ACT will continue to take a pro-active approach, however, by progressively upgrading its playgrounds ahead of the standards being officially adopted, he said."

Community footpaths in established areas requiring maintenance will be upgraded with \$300,000 allocated in the 2000/01 budget.

"The combination of the Lakesmart and Streetsmart programs, together with tree replacements, playground and footpath upgrades will go a long way to enhancing Canberra's beautiful environment. The ACT Government is committed to maintaining our city's great reputation for the enjoyment of Canberra's resident and visitors," Mr Smyth said.

Statement ends / Tuesday 23 May 2000

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