



BUDGET 2008 - 2009 READY FOR THE FUTURE MEDIA RELEASE

No. 2

BILLION-DOLLAR *BUILDING THE FUTURE* INVESTMENT

The ACT Government will embark on a record billion-dollar *Building the Future* Infrastructure Investment Program for the Territory, Chief Minister and Treasurer Jon Stanhope announced today.

“Today the ACT Government embarks on a visionary program of infrastructure building unmatched in the history of the Territory – to ensure that the physical infrastructure of our city is ready for the future,” Chief Minister and Treasurer Jon Stanhope said.

“The billion-dollar investment will increase the productive capacity of our economy, reduce future costs and give Canberra a competitive edge against other urban centres.

“Since coming to office in 2001, the Government has made substantial investments in infrastructure – from levels of around \$100 million in 2001 to record capital works programs over the past few years, with \$314 million invested in infrastructure in 2007-08.

“The 2008-09 Budget builds on these investments with a billion-dollar *Building the Future* infrastructure program that will strengthen and refresh the Territory’s infrastructure and ensure that the ACT is on a solid footing as we embark on our second century.

The billion-dollar *Building the Future* program will:

- re-engineer the health system to serve the needs of the next decade and beyond;
- improve the transport system;
- meet the challenges of climate change;
- improve urban amenities;
- invest in public service infrastructure; and
- provide for the growth of the city and its economy.

“The Territory’s health system is set to benefit with a massive infrastructure upgrade to ensure that our health services are ready for the next decade and beyond. The first \$300 million investment will include:

- a \$37.6 million suite of mental health facilities including, an Adult Acute Inpatient Unit, a Secure Adult Unit, a Mental Health Assessment Unit and design of a Young Persons’ Unit;
- the construction of a \$90 million Women’s and Children’s Hospital;
- the construction of a \$4.1 million Surgical Assessment and Planning Unit;
- a new \$5.5 million Neurosurgery Operating Theatre;
- a \$9.4 million Intensive Care/High Dependency Unit at Calvary Hospital; and
- an \$18 million new Community Health Centre in Gungahlin.

“Our transport infrastructure is also set to further improve with \$250 million invested through the billion-dollar *Building the Future* program over the next five years in transport system initiatives, including:

- the \$21 million upgrades of Tharwa Drive and Airport Roads to improve travel times;

- \$49.5 million for the replacement of 100 buses with greener, wheelchair-accessible buses;
- the \$16.5 million extension of Cohen Street and the construction of a bus interchange in Belconnen;
- \$500,000 for bus lanes and bus priority measures;
- \$530,000 for Park'n'Ride and Bike'n'Ride' facilities;
- the \$22 million duplication of Athllon Drive and Flemington Road; and
- \$84 million for future projects required to meet future transport demand as our city grows.

“The ACT Government continues its commitment to tackling climate change, as set out in our climate change strategy, *Weathering the Change*, with \$100 million invested through the billion-dollar *Building the Future* program. This investment includes:

- the ‘One Million Trees’ initiative, with \$24.4 million for additional trees across the city, ten new forests at the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens, and \$731,000 for the urban forest replacement program;
- energy-efficient street lighting for Canberra’s streets, worth \$3 million;
- the \$1.7 million East Lake Urban Renewal project for sustainable design and planning works; and
- Stages 1 and 2 of the ‘Where Will We Play?’ sportsgrounds project worth \$16 million.

“The look and feel of our city will also receive a boost with \$100 million committed over five years for new amenities through the billion-dollar *Building the Future* program. This includes:

- \$53 million to expand our capital upgrades program for better community amenities, such as public toilets, barbeque places and the general recreation areas;
- \$6 million for pavement upgrades;
- \$4 million for lighting improvements;
- \$6 million for playground and park upgrades;
- \$6 million for urban space upkeep and landscaping; and
- \$6 million for shopping centre upgrades.

“The billion-dollar *Building the Future* program also provides for a \$50 million investment over five years for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the public sector (including schools and hospitals) to ensure that the Government’s own workforce has access to state-of-the-art technology. This funding includes \$7.7 million to enable 95 per cent of the ACT primary schools to be connected to the gigabit fibre network, and ICT initiatives monitoring and diagnostics in our public health system.

“The ACT Government released its five-year land release program in April 2008. The billion-dollar *Building the Future* program provides \$200 million to support the land release program. This includes:

- \$11 million for a Molonglo Arterial Road to support planned land releases in Molonglo;
- \$12 million for a North Weston Pond and Bridge;
- \$5 million for the Horse Park Drive Extension to support land releases in Gungahlin; and
- \$4.7 million for the design of a number of infrastructure projects for future land releases.”

Statement ends

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Enquiries: Penelope Layland 6205 9777 0438 289 714 penelope.layland@act.gov.au
Jess Wurf 6205 0504 0411 772 700 jess.wurf@act.gov.au