



ACT Government  
**2005-2006 BUDGET**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**RECURRENT AND CAPITAL FUNDING FOR ARBORETUM**

New life has been breathed into Walter Burley Griffin's vision for Canberra, with \$2.1 million in recurrent funding and \$2 million in capital funding being set aside in the Budget for the International Arboretum and Gardens, Chief Minister Jon Stanhope has announced.

"A massive living museum of tree specimens from around the world, the Arboretum is a compelling opportunity to ensure that something good and lasting arises from the ashes of the 2003 bushfires," Mr Stanhope said.

"This is a monumental project, one that has the potential to draw together community groups, scientists, volunteers and the diplomatic community in pursuit of an enduring legacy. The result will be a place for recreation and reflection, a site for events ranging from major civic functions to private picnics. Over time it will also become a leading tourist attraction.

"Ninety years ago, Walter Burley Griffin imagined an Arboretum on the shores of the lake. Over the decades that dream has been kept alive by such inspirational individuals as Thomas Weston and Lindsay Pryor, whose own legacies we see around us every day in our parks, our avenues of street trees and areas such as Westbourne Woods."

The \$2.1 million in recurrent funding over the next four years will support the management and maintenance of the 250-hectare Arboretum site, with preliminary work scheduled to begin later this year.

The site extends from the existing cork plantation in the north through to the existing Himalayan pine plantation, past Dairy Farmers Hill and down towards the Molonglo River in the south. In addition to featuring trees from all parts of the world, the Arboretum will be home to stunning permanent gardens with hedging, bonsai specimens, flowers and works of art.

The \$2 million earmarked for capital works in 2006-07 will fund initial work on the Arboretum and Gardens, which are expected to open in spring 2008.

"This major funding boost in the 2005-06 Budget comes on top of the \$10 million already allocated to the Arboretum and Gardens capital works project," Mr Stanhope said.

"Planning for the Arboretum is well advanced, with five finalists submitting designs that take full advantage of the outstanding potential of the site. The designs were publicly released in February this year and the winning design will be chosen later this month.

“The Arboretum truly has a chance to become a major tourist attraction for the national capital, as well as an unparalleled recreational facility for the whole community.

“Part of the Government’s response to the recommendations of the *Shaping Our Territory Final Report*, this project is a crucial aspect of the ACT Government’s commitment to help the Territory recover from the 2003 bushfires.

**Statement ends**