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## **Targeted investments support local sport and recreation sector**

The 2010-11 ACT Budget provides \$15.617 million in capital funding for a range of targeted investments in ACT sport, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation, Andrew Barr, announced today.

“The Government values the contribution sport makes to the social and economic life of Canberra and we will continue to promote active and healthy lifestyles and encourage community participation in sporting activities,” Mr Barr said.

“A total of \$4.2 million has been provided to continue the significant redevelopment of the Lyneham Precinct in accordance with the Master Plan for the area. This funding will go towards significant landscaping work, a children’s playground, an amenities kiosk, directional signage and establishing sealed car parking.

“The Budget also includes a range of upgrades to Canberra Stadium, Manuka Oval and Narrabundah Ball Park. A total of \$2.550 million has been allocated to replace the outdated video screen and scoreboard at Canberra Stadium, as well as upgrading the Stadium’s internal television distribution system to digital and undertaking other improvements.

“To address various safety and compliance issues at Manuka Oval, a range of works totalling \$407,000 will be undertaken to the Hawke and Menzies Stands and to the scoreboard. This includes repairing cracking in stairs, replacing stairs, adding extra rails and installing a fire sprinkler system in the scoreboard structure.

“Following the announcement that a Canberra team will be entering into the new Australian Baseball League from 2010, the ACT Budget provides just over \$1 million to upgrade Narrabundah Ball Park. This involves improving the playing surface, upgrading the lighting towers to the required standard, installing a new electronic scoreboard and improving player amenities.”

Mr Barr said the ACT Budget also provided a range of sensible water-saving projects.

“The ACT Budget provides \$300,000 for initiatives to help reduce reliance on potable water at Murrumbidgee Country Club and Yowani Country Club. The funding will allow Murrumbidgee Country Club to build a pipeline from the Murrumbidgee River and associated pumping station. It will also allow Yowani to construct a pipe and dam to harvest stormwater from Sullivan’s Creek to help water their golf course and bowling greens. This will complement other drought proofing initiatives funded through the ACT Government’s Where Will We Play initiative,” Mr Barr said.

Mr Barr said a further \$2.599 million had been provided to continue the program of community and major sports facility upgrades ranging from upgrading pavilions to improving playing surfaces.

“As part of these upgrades, a total of \$1 million has also been provided to implement a range of water demand management initiatives at priority ACT Government sportsgrounds, including the replacement of old and inefficient irrigation systems and greater use of drought tolerant grass,” Mr Barr said.

“Nearly all of our irrigation systems are over 20 years old with some even 40 years old. Recent audits have recommended that systems over the age of 20 years should be replaced or renewed which will lead to water savings of up to 20 per cent. They will ensure water is applied in a highly efficient manner which also allows for a more uniform and healthy turf cover.

“Where possible, converting sportsgrounds to couch can also provide water savings of up to 50 per cent. This follows on from similar couch conversion work that has recently been completed at the Hawker International Softball Centre and Narrabundah Ball Park facilities. With climate change and the likelihood of reduced rainfall, our sportsgrounds are increasingly reliant upon efficient irrigation systems and drought tolerant grass varieties to maintain quality playing surfaces.

“The ACT Government is committed to ensuring Canberra remains the most active and healthy community in the country by continuing to enhance our sportsgrounds and facilities.”

**4 May 2010**

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