



## BUDGET 2008 - 2009 READY FOR THE FUTURE MEDIA RELEASE

No. 5

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVES EXTENDED IN 2008-09

The ACT Government is continuing its commitment to ensuring that all Canberrans have access to safe, secure and affordable housing now and into the future. To meet this commitment, the 2008-09 Budget funds a number of the actions included in the Government's *Affordable Housing Action Plan*, Chief Minister Jon Stanhope announced today.

"In April 2007, the ACT Government released its *Affordable Housing Action Plan* which contained practical steps that can, and are, influencing the affordability of housing, as the price of housing around the country continues to rise," Mr Stanhope said.

"The ACT Government has responded quickly to implement the 63 initiatives included in the Action Plan. The Government has provided more opportunities for home ownership and rental accommodation, supported the growth of community housing and better targeted public housing.

"The 2008-09 Budget provides funding to continue our commitment to the actions listed in the Plan and building on the foundations laid in 2007-08. These include further accelerating the supply of land to the market with 4,200 blocks to be released in 2008-09 and more than 15,000 blocks over the next five years; continuing to diversify the range of housing products on the housing market with 15 per cent of blocks in new estates being for affordable housing; the introduction of a land rent scheme; and increasing the supply and range of properties available for private rental.

"There is \$1.65 million in the 2008-09 Budget for the planning and future development of affordable housing in the new suburbs of Molonglo, North Weston and Gungahlin. This funding will ensure the timely delivery of new land in accordance with the ACT Government's Residential Land Supply Strategy and Land Release Program. Planning for Molonglo and North Weston is progressing with the first blocks expected for release at the end of 2008.

"In new suburbs, the Government will ensure that a diverse range of housing products is available, with 15 per cent of blocks released each year to be for affordable house and land packages under \$300,000. The first lot of these blocks have been released at Franklin and over 150 blocks have been sold in the first releases at West Macgregor.

"As part of its comprehensive approach to affordable housing, the ACT Government is also establishing a land rent scheme, which allows home buyers to rent land from the Government on which they will construct their home. This assists first-home buyers by reducing their monthly mortgage payments.

"The ACT Government is also encouraging older Canberrans, particularly those on fixed incomes, to move into more appropriate housing based on their needs, by providing a one-off exemption from conveyance duty to aged pensioners, eligible disability support

