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Budget provides \$97m for comprehensive transport package for the future

The 2010-11 ACT Budget provides a massive down-payment on the future of the Territory's transport system through a comprehensive \$97 million funding package for all modes of transport.

The Transport package outlines the Government's vision for a sustainable transport system, with investments in new roads, transit ways, bus frequency and bus stations, road safety, new pedestrian and cycle paths, real-time passenger information, and park/bike-and-ride facilities, Chief Minister and Minister for Transport, Jon Stanhope, announced today.

Mr Stanhope said the Budget provided \$86.3 million in capital funding and \$10.7 million in recurrent funding for the new *Transport for Canberra program* - to increase the reliability and sustainability of the Territory's public transport system, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the safety of the ACT's roads.

"The ACT Government is preparing for our growing city by investing significantly in a more reliable, more frequent and more sustainable transport system through our new *Transport for Canberra program*," Mr Stanhope said.

"This investment represents the first down-payment on a new vision for transport – where bus services are closer to home and work, buses are more rapid and frequent, and more Canberrans choose to leave their cars at home."

Mr Stanhope said the Budget provided targeted funding to increase the frequency and reliability of the Territory's bus network, through more services, drivers and workshop staff, and to meet the needs of our growing city.

"The Budget provides \$7.3 million for the first stage of the Belconnen-to-City Transit Way, which includes bus priority measures on Barry Drive and College Street, a transit way facility between Clunies Ross and Marcus Clarke Streets, and a bus station at the ANU," Mr Stanhope said. "\$2 million will be spent on improvements to city bus services and facilities, including new bus stations and layover facilities."

A further \$200,000 will be spent on a feasibility study to identify options for a transit way between Haydon Drive and Macarthur Avenue, which will be the third key sector of the Belconnen to City transport corridor.

"To reduce congestion between Gungahlin and the City, we are investing \$4.250 million over two years to design bus priority measures on Northbourne Avenue and construct a major bus station in Dickson," Mr Stanhope said.

“There’s another \$8.2 million for new bus priority measures along Canberra Avenue, which is used by over 20,000 vehicles every day.

“The Budget provides almost \$5 million for major bus stations in Gungahlin and Erindale and \$100,000 to identify a site for a bus station in Barton to service the Parliamentary Triangle.

“To improve the reliability of our buses, the Budget provides \$12.5 million over three years for a real-time passenger information system which will provide accurate bus arrival information using GPS technology.

“The successful REDEX service will be continued and extended from the Kingston Railway to Fyshwick, stopping at the Direct Factory Outlet.”

Other highlights for public transport in the *Transport for Canberra* program include:

- \$4.850 million for park-and-ride and bike-and-ride facilities at locations including Exhibition Park, Erindale Shopping Centre, Phillip Pool, Cohen Street in Belconnen, Gungahlin, and Tuggeranong;
- \$3.5 million for lighting in the City to encourage more people to walk and cycle;
- \$2.750 million for new bus stops, shelters, signs, lights and bike racks on major bus routes; and
- \$1 million for new on-road and off-road cycle and community paths.

Mr Stanhope said the Government would introduce Canberra’s first ever point-to-point road safety cameras with \$1.350 million funded in the Budget, adding to the Government’s suite of measures to reduce road trauma and save lives.

“Point-to-point cameras will be installed at up to six major arterial roads where the incidence of speeding is high and the consequences of a crash at high speeds are potentially catastrophic.”

Mr Stanhope said the *Transport for Canberra* program also provided targeted funding for new roads and road upgrades to reduce traffic congestion including:

- \$14.7 million for a third lane on Parkes Way from the Glenloch Interchange to the Acton tunnel;
- \$7.150 million to upgrade the Cotter Road from the Tuggeranong Parkway to Yarra Glen;
- \$7 million to upgrade the Barry Drive and Clunies Ross Street intersection; and
- \$1 million to upgrade the Phillip Avenue and Majura Avenue intersection.

“This important down-payment on the future of Canberra’s transport network will help to deliver the essential infrastructure and services needed to support our growing city,” Mr Stanhope said.

In addition to the funding committed for *Transport for Canberra*, the Budget funds:

- \$14 million to reconstruct three major intersections in North Weston;
- A further \$11 million for John Gorton Drive (North-South Arterial Road) in Molonglo;
- \$4 million to upgrade the intersection of Horse Park and Gundaroo Drives at Forde;
- \$2.5 million for upgrades to Edinburgh Avenue;
- \$2.5 million to upgrade intersection of Ginninderra Drive and Aikman Drive;
- \$2.250 million for upgrades to Majura and Sutton Roads; and
- \$615,000 for new bridge safety screens to prevent rock throwing at vehicles.

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Media Contact: **Jess Wurf** **6205 0504 (w) 0411 722 700 (m)**
jess.wurf@act.gov.au