



Australian Capital Territory

Budget

2026–27

Budget at a Glance



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We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

ISSN 1327-581X

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Produced by the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate. Enquiries about this publication should be directed to the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.

GPO Box 158, Canberra City 2601

act.gov.au

Telephone: Access Canberra - 13 22 81

 Accessibility Ph 13 22 81	 Interpreter Ph 131 450
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Treasurer's message



Through the 2026-27 ACT Budget, the Government is making the most significant investment since self-government to supply more homes for Canberrans.

We are doing this because we understand the challenges many face in the housing market and we believe that current and future generations of Canberrans should have the opportunity to own their own home.

The Government is making generational investments in new affordable, community and public homes. At the same time, we are also making significant long-term investment in the repair and maintenance of public housing properties, including insourcing maintenance staff, to deliver more responsive services to tenants.

The Government has completely eliminated stamp duty for first home buyers in the Budget. This complements the tax reforms by the Australian Government which also prioritise first home buyers. Stamp duty has also been eliminated for unit-titled properties, supporting Canberrans, including downsizers, to move into 'missing middle' housing like terraces and townhouses.

The Government is continuing our microeconomic reforms to streamline planning and building processes, enhance construction productivity, and build more homes for Canberrans sooner. In the Budget, the Government has funded the establishment of a 'Canberra House' Pattern Book of high-quality

pre-approved missing middle home designs that can be built without a development application. We have also halved the lease variation charge on missing middle housing projects to encourage builders to take up the Government's zoning reforms.

The war in the Middle East has had a significant effect on the ACT economy over the first half of 2026. The Government has acted in a coordinated but targeted way, to address the supply-side shock, whilst at the same time incurring significant additional costs associated with rising fuel and other prices.

Despite these challenges the ACT economy remains resilient, with a growing economy, lower inflation than the rest of Australia and low unemployment. The ACT economy has grown faster than the rest of Australia with over 29 years of continuous economic growth, which is forecast to continue.

With inflation levels resulting in elevated interest rates, and uncertain conditions resulting from the war, the ACT Government has had to be measured in its steps towards budget repair and providing cost of living relief. The Government has targeted cost of living relief to Canberrans who need it most, with additional funding for food relief, family school

expenses, tertiary student public transport concessions, reducing home energy costs and housing crisis support.

Through the Budget the ACT Government has recognised the important role the ACT's community sector plays in supporting the most vulnerable people in our community, and the pressures faced by these vital partners. We have provided the sector longer-term funding certainty through the Budget and recognised the need for additional funding to meet demand in key areas including responding to homelessness and domestic, family and sexual violence. Further community sector funding reform is also underway to deliver a longer-term model that is focused on meeting the community's changing needs.

Although there have been some economic constraints, the 2026-27 Budget continues our responsible approach to managing expenditure and revenue. New expenditure is focused on frontline services to meet the needs of our growing community. Supported by a new Restructure Fund, continued effort is being made by all ACT Government agencies to meet their budgets and focus on Government priorities. New measures will also be introduced to limit the use of external contractors.

The Government will continue to make generational investments in health, education

and transport infrastructure while adjusting the infrastructure program to ensure it remains sustainable. This reflects the scale and complexity of delivering major city-shaping infrastructure over multiple years, with careful management of financial commitments to ensure affordability and fiscal sustainability.

The 2026-27 Budget implements a range of measures to support a more sustainable infrastructure program and ensures that the pipeline is responsive to local industry capacity. While this work has generated significant and necessary savings, the program continues a strong pipeline of investment delivering on election commitments and priorities like fully funding the new Northside Hospital project and enabling infrastructure to support the delivery of more homes across Canberra.

The work undertaken by the Government to improve the Budget position will ensure that Canberrans can continue to enjoy high levels of services, whilst we respond to external shocks and take responsible steps to ensure the Territory's finances remain sustainable. With a growing economy, and the investments made in our community, Canberrans will continue to enjoy the best quality of life in Australia.

Chris Steel MLA
ACT Treasurer



Budget overview

The 2026-27 Budget responds to areas of priority community need and supports continued high-quality services for all Canberrans. This includes significant new investments to support housing access, affordability and supply and additional support for critical frontline and community services.

Housing remains a significant priority for the Government. This Budget provides significant new funding in the delivery of public and community housing to support the growth of housing stock and the Government's commitment to 13,200 public housing dwellings by 2030. Further investments in additional housing supply, especially through the new Missing Middle Housing Reforms and continued planning reform, support the Government's commitment to enable 30,000 more homes by 2030.

Frontline and community services ensure all Canberrans can access the services they need when they need them. The Budget provides new investments in emergency services, the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence, the community sector and health services. These new commitments have been carefully calibrated to respond to areas of priority community need.

The Territory economy remains strong, growing faster than any Australian jurisdiction. However, the effects of conflict in the Middle East, particularly on fuel supply, have led to

higher costs and supply chain pressures and higher sustained inflation and interest rate settings. The ACT continues to enjoy strong wage growth, low unemployment and very high workforce participation.

The budget deficit in 2026-27 is estimated to be **\$323.4 million**, improving each year across the forward estimates to a surplus of **\$244.2 million** by 2028-29. The 2026-27 Budget projects a return to cash operating surplus. The Government is committed to sound fiscal management while ensuring we deliver the critical supports that the community needs.

The Government is adjusting our broad-based infrastructure program to ensure it remains fiscally sustainable and deliverable. We are managing employee costs over time to ensure our operations are as efficient as they can be and are focused on government priorities. These decisions ensure we can continue to deliver quality services to our city.



Where our money goes

Health

\$3 billion

Environment,
sustainable development
and climate change

\$257 million

Justice

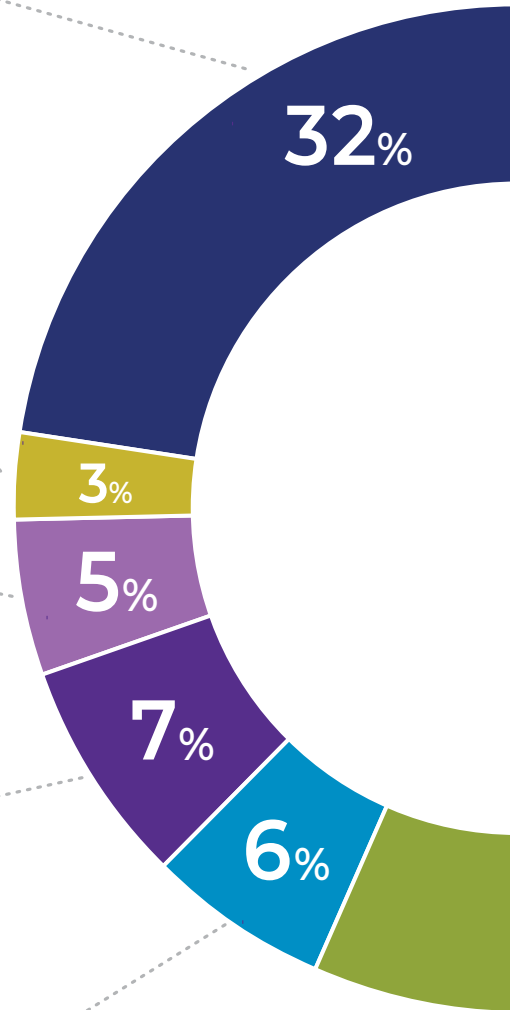
\$426 million

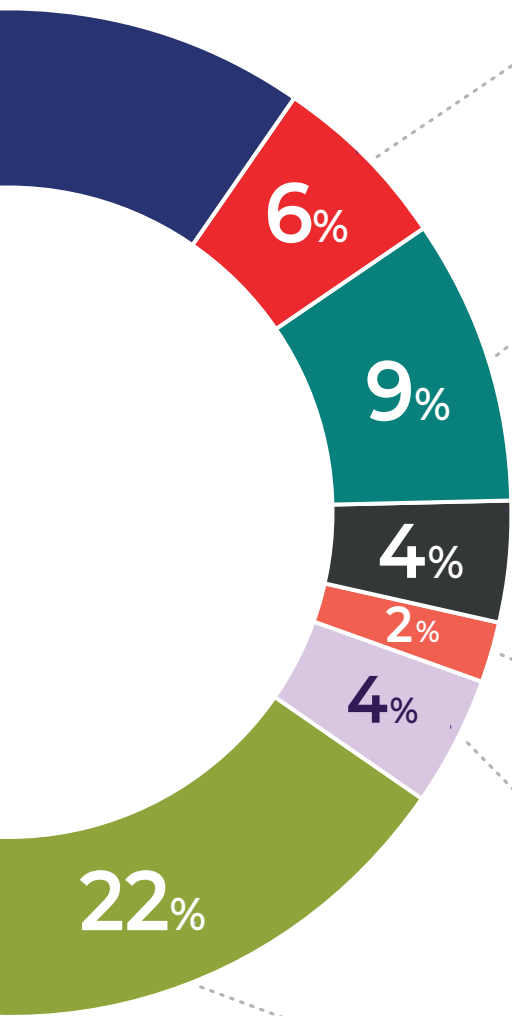
Community services

\$688 million

Emergency services
and policing

\$526 million





City services

\$559 million

Access Canberra and government services

\$807 million

Transport

\$361 million

Economic development, tourism, sports and arts

\$164 million

Housing

\$370 million

Education

\$2.1 billion

Strengthening housing access and supply

The Government is continuing its commitment to enable 30,000 more homes by the end of 2030 and supporting a new, generational investment in public and community housing.

Canberrans want to build, buy and rent more homes. With our population set to reach half a million by 2030, we are committed to planning for and investing in more housing for the entire community. That is why in this Budget, we're investing **\$770 million** in new and expanded housing initiatives.

The Government is committed to ensuring every Canberran has access to **secure and affordable housing**, including the most vulnerable in our community. This Budget includes significant investment in public housing:

- > Over \$360 million to deliver an additional 450 public housing dwellings. This contributes to our commitment to grow our public housing portfolio by 13,200 homes by the end of 2030, as well as our commitment to deliver an additional 5,000 public, community and affordable homes by the end of 2030.
- > Over \$90 million in capital funding to meet our committed target of 1,000 property renewals and 400 net public housing portfolio growth by June 2027, supporting the ongoing delivery of the Growing and Renewing Public Housing program and the Social Housing Accelerator Program.
- > More than \$180 million to uplift our public housing repairs and maintenance program. This investment will prioritise

vacant property upgrades, delivering the essential repairs and upgrades required to return existing vacant housing stock to the public housing pool.

- > A progressive implementation of an insourced public housing repairs and maintenance delivery model.
- > Funding to support the delivery of crisis and transitional housing for vulnerable cohorts facing homelessness across up to 28 dwellings, under the Commonwealth's National Housing Infrastructure Facility Crisis and Transitional Housing Program.
- > Supporting applications for over 1,000 affordable homes through the Housing Australia Future Fund. This includes the ACT Government offering to provide financial guarantees for approved projects in the order of \$650 million.

We're expanding our housing supply, choice and access through a program of land use planning and precinct development to support our goal of **enabling 30,000 more homes by 2030**, including through the Missing Middle Housing Reforms. This Budget includes:

- > Expanding stamp duty concessions to help more Canberrans buy a home:
 - First home buyers or eligible pensioners will no longer pay stamp duty.



- The existing stamp duty concession for owner-occupier off the plan units will be made permanent and expanded to the purchasers of turn-key units. This will remove stamp duty from new unit-titled missing middle properties for owner-occupiers.
 - Homebuyers eligible for the Disability Duty Concession Scheme will no longer pay any duty regardless of the price of the property.
 - The commercial stamp duty tax-free threshold will increase to \$2.1 million.
 - The Pensioner Duty Concession Scheme will be expanded to Service Pension recipients with a permanent incapacity to work, and Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card holders will no longer require a 12-month waiting period.
- > Undertaking planning studies to support the housing pipeline and identify developable sites – sequencing land use, transport, utilities and social infrastructure required for sustained housing delivery and ongoing heritage regulatory functions under the *Heritage Act 2004* to ensure timely advice on matters including development applications and Conservation Management Plans.
- > \$1 million to commission the Canberra House Pattern Book. This will provide a range of housing designs to address housing shortages in the missing middle housing types such as dual occupancy, tri-occupancy, terraces and townhouses.
 - > A temporary 50 per cent remission of the codified Lease Variation Charge (LVC) for developments in Suburban (RZ1) and Suburban Core (RZ2) zones to support the uptake of missing middle housing developments. The remission will apply to eligible developments that have not paid or deferred their LVC prior to 10 June 2026, receive development approval before 30 June 2029, and complete construction by 31 December 2030.



\$770m

for new and expanded housing investments, including:

\$367.9m

to deliver the new Public Housing Pipeline

\$183.4m

for public housing repairs and maintenance

Eliminating

stamp duty

for all first home buyers

Community support, social inclusion and safety

Ensuring that all Canberrans feel safe and supported is a key priority for the Government.

The Government is focusing on securing a strong and responsive community sector to provide critical and frontline support to those who need it most. This Budget provides new initiatives worth **\$182.6 million over four years** to community support, safety and inclusion. This includes a permanent uplift to community sector organisations to ensure they can plan into the future, grow and retain their staff, and provide high-quality services and care to the community.

Every Canberran deserves to feel safe in their homes, in their relationships and in their community. As part of the 2026-27 ACT Budget, the Government is investing \$44.2 million to strengthen frontline domestic, family and sexual violence services and provide secure, long-term funding. Domestic, family and sexual violence is an ongoing national crisis and the Government is committed to addressing this and preventing future violence through tailored, responsive services.

Supporting homelessness services

A safe and secure home is vital to fostering wellbeing in our community. In this Budget, the Government is making significant investment to support vulnerable Canberrans who are experiencing homelessness.

We're delivering on our commitment to continue providing targeted assistance to low-income households experiencing rental stress through a new Housing Crisis Support Fund. This Fund aims to help people stay in safe, secure and stable accommodation during periods of financial difficulty. This initiative will provide:

- > direct support for short-term rental costs which includes grants covering up to four weeks' rent (capped at \$2,500); and
- > a new \$250 Crisis Support Payment to assist with essential household expenses such as utilities, insurance and basic furnishings.

The Government is investing more in our homeless and housing support service providers with an investment of more than \$16 million in critical services such as Samaritan House, Roadhouse, Bluedoor, Our Place Braddon and Community Housing Canberra. This investment supports the ongoing delivery of crucial specialist frontline services, advocacy and outreach services for community members experiencing homelessness.

This Budget will also expand the Housing Asset Assistance Program (HAAP) portfolio by 65 properties, providing bespoke wraparound supports for people with complex needs experiencing long-term homelessness. There will also be an expansion of the Housing First model with an additional 10 HAAP properties to support people experiencing chronic homelessness.

The Government is also delivering on its commitment for a comprehensive and evidence-based strategy to end domestic, family and sexual violence in Canberra with the release of the *ACT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Strategy 2026–2036*.

This Budget continues to support key initiatives that make Canberra a lively and inclusive city, including funding ongoing delivery of the National Multicultural Festival, delivering the Gender Pathways Peer Navigation Service, and providing free period products in public facilities. Supporting Canberrans at all stages of life will ensure that we continue to be a thriving city.

\$182.6m

for community services and support, including:

\$44.2m

to strengthen frontline domestic, family and sexual violence services

\$16.9m

for housing and homelessness services

\$16.7m

additional support for the community legal assistance sector

The 2026-27 Budget also funds:

- > Ongoing funding for the community legal sector, including Canberra Community Law, the Women's Legal Centre and the Aboriginal Legal Service.
- > Additional food relief and emergency material aid to support Canberrans to access timely, flexible support when facing acute financial pressure, particularly due to fuel supply disruptions and increasing demand.
- > Delivery of extraordinary residential care, crisis accommodation and emergency supports for children and young people who cannot remain safely with their families.
- > Continuation of the Children and Young People Equipment Loan Scheme.
- > Commitments under the National Agreement on Foundational Supports – Thriving Kids bilateral agreement.
- > Sustainable operations at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.
- > Continuation of the Family Settlement Assistance Grants program and the Humanitarian Fund.



Delivering for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans

The Government remains committed to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, delivering on its Closing the Gap commitments, and supporting greater community control.

This Budget, we're investing in the wellbeing of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Canberra through healthcare, education, housing, cultural projects and governance.

This investment includes:

- > \$1.2 million for a culturally informed perinatal mental health 'Safe Space' service – delivering a comprehensive perinatal support model that will provide continuity of care through peer mentoring, advocacy and education. It will include services run by, or in partnership with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, respecting cultural practices, knowledge, expertise and lived experience, including the impact of intergenerational trauma.
- > \$1.9 million to boost the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce in the ACT – which is essential for improving the health and wellbeing of First Nations communities. This funding will support Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) to continue its Health Academy program in the ACT, training 30 students annually. In addition to finding employment as Allied Health Assistants, previous graduates of the program have gone on to pursue further study, including nursing and physiotherapy.
- > \$500,000 to support Yerrabi Yurwang's Housing Australia Future Fund application for building costs of a 29-dwelling townhouse development in Moncrieff. The Government is supporting Yerrabi Yurwang to acquire the Moncrieff site with over \$3 million through the Affordable Housing Project Fund.
- > \$754,000 to commence a Truth Telling (Seed of Truth) Project with community to advance the Government's commitment to the Uluru Statement from the Heart.
- > \$1.8 million to strengthen oversight of justice system reforms and fund two independent justice advisors (youth and adult) to support the Jumbunna review response, and to expand capacity for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body.

Justice, police and emergency services

Boosting our frontline services is critical to meet the demands of our growing city.

This Budget delivers more first responders, new infrastructure, upgraded systems and new equipment to improve strong emergency services coverage across Canberra. The 2026-27 Budget includes new initiatives worth **\$198.3 million over four years** to support the justice system and police and emergency services.

This Budget will provide additional resourcing to the ACT Ambulance Service in response to the growing demand, supporting our frontline paramedics as they undertake critical work. The Government is also ensuring ACT Fire & Rescue keeps pace with the rapid population growth in Molonglo by providing firefighters to the new Molonglo Emergency Services Station. These initiatives ensure our communities are safe through any emergency.

To further support our frontline services, the Government is also investing in vital systems and equipment, including the upgrade and replacement of operational Emergency Services Agency vehicles, and the modernisation of response systems used by our emergency services, such as radio systems.

The Government is committed to the safety and wellbeing of our community, including those most vulnerable. To support this, the Government is making significant investment in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and providing ongoing funding to support the community legal assistance sector. These investments ensure that vulnerable Canberrans receive the support they need while navigating the legal system.



Strengthening essential prosecution services

The Government is committed to supporting those most vulnerable and promoting a strong and timely justice response. As the Government has delivered on its commitments through the *Listen. Take Action to Prevent, Believe and Heal* report, there has been increased community awareness and reporting of family and sexual violence, and more cases are moving to prosecution.

This Budget invests \$18.9 million in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) to strengthen access to justice in our community. This initiative funds 24 new and permanent positions, including additional prosecutors

and witness assistance officers, to boost the DPP's capacity to manage increasing volumes and complexity of cases.

This ensures witnesses and complainants are better supported throughout the prosecution process.

The ACT Government will continue to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of victim survivors with support for frontline services and a strong justice response.

The 2026-27 Budget also includes:

- > Additional resourcing for the ACT Government Solicitor's Office, the Human Rights Commission, and to maintain the Territory's security capabilities.
- > Grants of assistance to vulnerable and low-income applicants for Legal Aid.
- > Implementation of the national gun buyback scheme and digitisation of the ACT's Firearms Registry.
- > Enhanced firearms storage and replacement assets at ACT Policing facilities.
- > Continuation of the Justice Housing Program and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Transitional Accommodation Program.
- > Ongoing operation of Circle Sentencing in the ACT Supreme Court.
- > Continued delivery of Integrated Case Management for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander detainees.
- > A six-month Board of Inquiry into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in custody at the Alexander Maconochie Centre.
- > Development of an Emergency Services Agency Infrastructure Master Plan.
- > Upgrades to the electronic security system at the Alexander Maconochie Centre.

Health

The Government continues to invest in high-quality, accessible healthcare to support our growing city and deliver better outcomes for Canberrans.

This Budget the Government is making further significant investments to improve access to health services, bolster state-of-the-art infrastructure and equipment, and support critical public health safety. We will continue to respond to growing demand for, and the rising cost of, public hospital services, to ensure Canberrans receive the quality care they need.

The Government is investing in the future of our health system with a \$1.3 billion investment over seven years to deliver the new Northside Hospital.

To support current demand, this Budget provides \$47.6 million to boost vital services such as breast and lung cancer services, paediatric orthopaedic services, and acute palliative care. The Government is continuing to improve the wellbeing and career development of our junior doctors, who are essential to our hospital system, with a \$14.1 million investment. The Government is also delivering on its commitment to insource hospital cleaning staff at Canberra Hospital, improving quality and consistency of services across our hospitals. These investments strengthen all levels of our healthcare system to improve outcomes into the future.

\$1.3b

for the new Northside Hospital

\$23.4m

for the new Acute Palliative Care Unit

\$21.7m

for new medical equipment

\$14.1m

to improve wellbeing and career development for junior medical officers

In total, the 2026-27 Budget includes new initiatives worth more than **\$910 million over four years** to support public health care, mental health and community wellbeing, and health infrastructure.

The 2026-27 Budget funds:

- > Upgrades to critical hospital infrastructure and medical equipment.
- > Operations at the South Tuggeranong Health Centre, expected to open later in 2026.
- > An outpatient transport service for individuals with chronic conditions.
- > Safe and effective management of medicine and vaccinations, including upgrades to Canberra Script – the Territory’s real-time prescription monitoring system.
- > Additional funding to support free abortion services for ACT residents.
- > Development of voluntary assisted dying substitute decision-making legislative reform to explore models to access voluntary assisted dying following loss of decision-making capacity.
- > Expansion of Autism Spectrum Disorder assessment services.



Delivering the new Northside Hospital

The ACT Government is delivering a new hospital on Canberra's northside to provide state-of-the-art facilities, improve patient access and support Canberra's growing health needs. This Budget includes \$1.3 billion over the next seven years to construct a seven-storey clinical services building, with more than 300 treatment spaces. This brings the total commitment to the new Northside Hospital to almost \$1.5 billion over a decade.

Key features of the new hospital include:

- > A state-of-the-art emergency department with a dedicated paediatric short-stay unit and better support for mental health presentations.
- > A modern 14-bed intensive care unit.
- > A co-designed Birth Centre, six birthing suites, maternity inpatient unit and special care nursery.

- > Eight operating theatres with future proofing for two more to be brought online when required.
- > Two endoscopy suites with space for a third.
- > More than 200 new inpatient beds.
- > Expanded outpatient spaces to support pre-admission clinics, specialised outpatient clinics and allied health clinics.

Early works are already underway, with main construction expected to start in 2027-28.

This project marks the largest single health infrastructure project in the Territory's history. With this investment, our hospital system will continue to meet the needs of our growing community, ensuring services are accessible, modern, and built for the future.



Education and training

The Government is continuing to support full and equal access to high-quality, free public education at every stage.

We are continuing our commitment to generational change in the way public education is delivered and supported in the ACT.

We believe providing earlier and better supports to children and their families is one of the strongest investments we can make in our community and are committing to supporting every child to get a strong start even before school.

Vocational education and training are critical to support our commitment to grow the total workforce to 300,000 by 2030. We are continuing to invest in building CIT as a state-of-the-art educational institution and ensuring CIT can deliver contemporary and flexible learning environments through its Woden and Yurauna campuses and completion of the Cloud Campus Program.

Strengthening early childhood education and care

This Budget provides over \$14 million to support quality early childhood education. This includes:

- > Additional funding under the extended Preschool Reform Agreement to continue delivering the free four-year-old preschool program in ACT public schools throughout the 2026 and 2027 school years.
- > Ongoing resourcing for the Education Directorate to meet its regulatory obligations as the ACT's Approved Provider and requirements set under the Education and Care Services National Law to oversee public preschools.
- > Additional capacity for the ACT Children's Education and Care Assurance regulator to undertake assessments, ratings, audits and investigations of the early childhood education and care sector.
- > Funding for the Teacher Quality Institute to implement mandatory registration for early childhood teachers.

In this Budget, the Government will invest **\$253 million over four years** to support education and skills.

This Budget funds:

- > Over \$46 million to support Stage 2 of the Whitlam School Project and further investment in the construction of a second college in Gungahlin.
- > More than \$3 million to continue delivery of the free four-year-old preschool program in ACT public schools in 2026 and 2027 and strengthen the regulation of early childhood education and care.
- > A 2026 round of the Future of Education Student Equity Fund and the Head Start Program in 2027.
- > A two-year trial of a parent advocacy service.
- > Replacement of gas furnaces with electric reverse-cycle appliances, feasibility studies to assess the long-term demand and infrastructure needs for flexible education

services and specialist schools and additional resourcing for cleaning services in ACT public schools.

Investments worth nearly \$100 million to support our future workforce including:

- > Establishment of the University of New South Wales Canberra City Campus,
- > Progressing the Electric Vehicle TAFE Centre of Excellence and expanding the scope to include a Clean Energy Fund under the National Skills Agreement.
- > Working with the Commonwealth Government on the extension of fee-free TAFE training to an additional 9,093 training places in healthcare, advanced technology, construction, hospitality and foundation skills.
- > Operationalising the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) Woden Campus and the co-located Youth Foyer and establishing CIT Yurauna as a standalone campus.



Jobs, entertainment, sport and culture

The Government is strengthening our cultural calendar, backing local talent, and enhancing the experiences that attract people to live in, work in, and visit Canberra.

The Government is continuing to deliver on the objectives of its T2030 ACT Tourism Strategy by investing in the growth of visitors and visitor spend, tourism industry development and major events for Canberra. We are providing artists, organisations and creative businesses

with certainty and stability – enabling them to innovate, collaborate and reach new audiences. We are supporting community participation in sports at all levels through funding for local teams and for new and existing facilities.

Major expansion of Belconnen Basketball Stadium

Basketball is one of Canberra's most popular and fastest-growing sports with more than 14,000 registered participants across the Territory. The Government is investing \$37.5 million to back its election commitment to expand the Belconnen Basketball Stadium, boosting court capacity and access for training and competition through a major upgrade.

The centrepiece of the upgrade will be the convertible show court with retractable seating for up to 1,800 spectators, enabling Canberra to host higher-level competitions.

This will see a 75 per cent increase in the number of courts, from four to seven, allowing greater access for current players as well as encouraging more people to take up the sport. Additional change rooms and toilet facilities for players, officials and spectators, increased car parking and installation of solar panels and batteries will also be key features of the expansion.

The expanded facility will create more opportunities for people to stay active.



The 2026-27 Budget includes new initiatives worth **\$143.5 million over four years** to support economic development, tourism, arts and sports, including:

- > Progressing the new National Convention and Entertainment Centre project to a 'construction ready' stage through the development of a reference design, procurement plan and business case.
- > An investment of \$7 million for the continuation and expansion of the Major Event Fund to attract and secure a diverse range of high-quality events that deliver significant benefits to our visitor economy.
- > Development of a new ACT aquatic strategy and feasibility studies for new sporting pavilions at Amaroo District Playing Fields and Kambah District Playing Fields.
- > Support to host international cricket matches at Manuka, in partnership with Cricket Australia, and increased financial support for local women's sporting teams.
- > Increasing funding for arts organisations in the ACT by 25 per cent plus indexation, with an investment of over \$8 million.
- > Upgrades across Canberra Stadium, Exhibition Park in Canberra, Manuka Oval, the National Arboretum Canberra and Stromlo Forest Park to improve safety and the visitor experience.
- > Extending Floriade's operating hours, as a two-year pilot, to coincide with the event's 40th anniversary.
- > Continued funding for Screen Canberra to support television, film and digital gaming projects and expansion of the Canberra Business Advice and Support Service.



Transport, city services, environment and climate

Canberra's population is growing rapidly, and we are committed to building a city that is efficient, sustainable and resilient.

This Budget is committed to a better and more liveable Canberra with further investments in suburban infrastructure, frontline city services and our parks and natural spaces. We are also delivering on the Government's commitment to undertake action to reach net zero by 2045 and bolster environment protection through

investments to support energy efficiency, promote biodiversity and nature conservation.

The 2026-27 Budget includes new initiatives worth **\$343.1 million over four years** related to transport, city services, environment, climate and water.



Advancing the Canberra–Sydney Rail

The ACT Government is investing \$25 million to improve train travel between Canberra and Sydney. This project is a joint initiative with the NSW and Commonwealth Governments. The total investment is \$100 million, with the Commonwealth contributing \$50 million and NSW contributing \$25 million.

More than 3,000 people travel between Canberra and Sydney by air or bus each day, and many more drive. Canberra passenger trains share the corridor with some of the busiest freight movements in regional NSW. Congestion on the rail network also affects the performance of passenger rail services. Faster train services will provide a more convenient alternative and better connect communities along the route.

The work will focus on priority rail infrastructure upgrades between Canberra and Goulburn to increase the capacity,

reliability and efficiency of the rail line, to complement current work being undertaken by the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC). Part of the funding will also be used to plan for future works that will deliver further increases to service performance and passenger capacity.

Potential works include:

- > Investigating new express services.
- > Upgrading level crossings with new boom gates and lights to improve safety and allow higher speeds.
- > Improving track layouts and switching equipment.
- > Upgrades to stations and train storage facilities.
- > Planning and design for possible future works, such as passing loops and track straightening.



The 2026-27 Budget includes more than \$65 million to support better local infrastructure and frontline city services including:

- > Upgrades to the local shopping centres at Kingston, Chisholm, Cooleman Court (Weston) and Kippax with new seating, lighting, crossings, paving and landscaping.
- > A new public toilet for the Umbagog District Park.
- > Construction of the Hall Village Main Active Travel Route from Hall Village to Gold Creek and detailed design for improvements to the public transport corridor between Belconnen and the City.
- > New stormwater infrastructure for the Hall Village.
- > Continued investment in important bushfire risk reduction in our city's nature reserves and parks, including fire trail maintenance, prescribed burns and vegetation maintenance.
- > Further support for effective and responsive city services, including mowing, street sweeping and horticultural services to ensure Canberra's green spaces remain well maintained and cared for.



Continued support for climate action and the environment include:

- > Delivering the next Climate Change Strategy and first Action Plan, engaging with the community on climate action and improving our environmental management practices to support the long-term sustainability of natural systems facing pressure from climate change.
- > Supporting community-led outcomes for the environment with funding for local community environment groups to support climate resilience and biodiversity initiatives, including expanding the ACT Environment Grants Program.
- > Continuing the Renters' Home Energy Program and the Home Energy Support Program to assist renters and low-income households manage energy use within their homes.
- > Increasing the Sustainable Household Scheme loan cap to \$20,000 for all products in the scheme for new participants from 1 July 2026 and adding electric cargo bikes as eligible for support under the scheme following completion of the required administrative changes.
- > Funding a specialised biosecurity team to strengthen the Territory's preparedness and response capabilities to growing biosecurity threats.

Undertaking a range of programs to improve water efficiency across the Territory, including:

- > Replacement of inefficient household tapware, improving irrigation systems at sportsgrounds, and water management activities at businesses, schools and government facilities.
- > Education for consumers and for the investigation of regulatory changes for new builds to increase water efficiency.
- > A range of measures to improve water quality in Lake Tuggeranong.

Investment in public transport including:

- > More funding to support safe and reliable transport services, including continued weekday flexible public transport services to support accessible transport needs for eligible Canberrans, incentives for permanent drivers working weekend shifts, continued support for operations of the new Woden Bus Depot.
- > Reducing the monthly fare cap for tertiary students.
- > Continued delivery of the light rail from the City to Woden through the delivery of Light Rail Stage 2A to Commonwealth Park.



Wellbeing

We continue our commitment to wellbeing, and to building a stronger, more inclusive and more resilient city that supports Canberrans today and for generations to come.

The ACT Government places the wellbeing of Canberrans at the centre of decision-making. This reflects a commitment to ensuring that our policies, services and investments improve quality of life – not only through economic growth, but across the social, environmental and community factors that shape how we live.

A wellbeing approach to budgeting strengthens our ability to address immediate challenges while driving sustained, system-level improvements. It seeks to widen the frame of reference and recognise wellbeing means supporting our community, institutions and environment in the present while promoting intergenerational equity and not compromising the wellbeing of future generations.

Wellbeing priority areas help to target complex, cross-cutting challenges that extend beyond single agencies and budget cycles. This is the third Budget to continue the six wellbeing priorities, with an acknowledgement that the delivery of long-lasting and meaningful change requires sustained effort.

The 2026-27 Budget prioritises investment to meet the immediate needs of our community while supporting the long-term growth of our city. Wellbeing remains a central consideration in policy development, focussing on areas where it can have the greatest impact. We have done that in this Budget, with investments in early supports, critical services and transformational infrastructure and programs.







Australian Capital Territory

Budget

2026–27