

## 1.4 NEW POLICY OVERVIEW

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### Overview

The 2011-12 Budget supports new policy initiatives totalling \$266.5 million over four years. It also includes \$79.7 million in the Health Funding Envelope, and revenue and other offsets of \$13.6 million.

New initiatives focus on key Government priorities, including assisting low income households with the cost of living and improving housing affordability.

Existing services are expanded to meet increased demand. New services are established to meet particular areas of need.

The Budget provides for new infrastructure investments of \$928.5 million over four years. This includes New Capital Works (\$884.9 million), Plant and Equipment (\$8.8 million) and Information and Communication Technology (\$34.8 million).

### Expenditure Initiatives

The Budget supports expenditure initiatives of \$94.5 million in 2011-12; \$93.4 million in 2012-13; \$87 million in 2013-14; and \$84.8 million in 2014-15.

Many of the Health initiatives are supported by the growth funding envelope, including: \$16.3 million in 2011-12; \$20.6 million in 2012-13; \$21.1 million in 2013-14; and \$21.7 million in 2014-15, totalling \$79.7 million over four years. The envelope was established to ensure budget capacity is maintained to meet the growing costs of health care.

Descriptions of individual initiatives by agency are provided in Chapter 4.2: Expenditure Initiatives.

### *Health Care Services*

Investments in health care services, totalling \$84.8 million over four years are made to continue to meet the growth in demand for emergency and acute care, obstetrics and gynaecology, cancer treatment and mental health, critical care and aged care and rehabilitation services. This funding will assist with redesigning care delivery systems to create additional capacity.

Significant enhancements over four years are made:

- to the Canberra Hospital's Intensive Care Unit (\$8.3 million);
- to provide for an additional 306 elective surgery and around 100 emergency surgery operations annually (\$10.4 million);
- for cancer services (\$10.9 million); and
- around \$20 million for mental health services, with a new Adult Mental Inpatient Unit.

## *Education and Training*

New initiatives in Education and Training total \$33.4 million over four years.

The main focus of the investments is to:

- further support students with disabilities;
- reward high performing teachers;
- strengthen administration and accountability in primary schools;
- encourage secondary school innovation and sporting excellence;
- increase access to the arts; and
- invest in vocational education and training.

Education programs for students with disabilities receive additional funding of \$20 million over four years. Around \$12 million over four years is invested to reform teacher salary structures, to better reward high performing teachers.

## *Territory and Municipal Services*

Territory and municipal services are supported by funding of \$38.7 million over four years to invest in public transport, roads, urban tree program, increasing nature conservation efforts and further support delivery of RSPCA services.

To support the ongoing maintenance of municipal assets in new suburbs, funding of \$4.3 million over four years is allocated for services such as roads, paths, stormwater drains and trees. Costs associated with Canberra's 700,000 urban trees are supplemented with funding of \$6.2 million over four years.

Public transport will receive an additional \$21.4 million over four years. This will make ACTION buses more accessible and effective and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from other forms of transport.

The Government's uptake of green power is increased from 32.5 per cent to 37.5 per cent at a cost of \$2.9 million over four years.

## *Economic Development*

Investments in Economic Development, totalling \$22.4 million over four years, further support small businesses, housing affordability and land release, skill shortages, Manuka Oval and the Canberra Stadium, and promote Canberra to tourists.

A grant of \$6 million over nine years to the University of Canberra is being provided to support the provision of additional student accommodation. The University is also being provided a loan of \$23 million at the Government borrowing rate for this project. Other initiatives implement the Affordable Housing Action Plan including a loan of \$20 million to Community Housing Canberra.

## *Community Services*

New initiatives in Community Services, totalling \$39.3 million over four years:

- expand services for people with disabilities;
- support children in out of home care;
- provide increased energy and utility concessions to address cost of living concerns;
- improve services for young people at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre; and
- assist childcare workers.

Further support is also provided for people from a range of diverse cultures, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and those who are homeless.

More than \$10 million over four years is provided for people with disabilities for emergency accommodation when natural or formal support fails, for after school and holiday care programs and young people transitioning from school.

Around \$6 million over four years is allocated to improve the lives of children and young people in out of home care. Supplementary funding of \$3.9 million over four years will improve services for young people in the justice system, and help divert them from custody. Around \$0.5 million over four years is provided for services to homeless people and to support those in public housing.

Households on low incomes are assisted with cost of living pressures, with around \$14.6 million over four years in practical assistance provided. The Taxi Subsidy Scheme for people with disabilities is increased, as are the maximum concessions for electricity and gas and water costs.

## *Justice and Community Safety*

New initiatives in Justice and Community Safety totalling \$55.3 million over four years invests in administering roadside drug testing, improving court security, the responsiveness of emergency services and the capacity of the Office of Regulatory Services and provides greater support to the Alexander Maconochie Centre.

Emergency services receive an additional \$21.7 million over four years for additional ambulance staff and other investments in fire services. To better support compliance and licensing services, the Office of Regulatory Services will be provided \$5.1 million over four years. Resourcing issues identified in the Independent Review of the Alexander Maconochie Centre are addressed, with \$5.1 million allocated.

## *Sustainable Development*

Sustainable Development is supported by \$20.4 million over four years in additional funding for land planning, building quality, energy efficiency, nature conservation and resource management and urban waterways.

Additional building inspectors are funded to ensure new dwellings meet expectations of quality, safety and environmental sustainability. Dedicated inspectors to better regulate residential properties' energy efficiency ratings are also funded.

A boost to the Resource Management Fund of \$2 million will provide an incentive for the ACT Public Service to improve resource and energy efficiency.

### *Public Service Reform*

The Budget also invests in Public Service reform with funding for a Performance and Accountability Framework, an Evaluation Policy, initiatives to strengthen leadership and management and training for employees with disabilities and people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. A Workers' Compensation and Work Safety Improvement Plan, measures to improve the delivery of Information Technology and community engagement are also funded.

### **Infrastructure Investments**

The 2011-12 Infrastructure Investment Program is aimed at:

- meeting the needs of a growing city and the impact of this growth on the essential services that must be provided to the community; and
- increasing the productive capacity of the Territory's economy in the long term.

The Budget provides for new infrastructure investments of \$928.5 million over four years. This includes New Capital Works (\$884.9 million), Plant and Equipment (\$8.8 million) and Information and Communication Technology (\$34.8 million).

The value of works in progress, flowing from previous years is almost \$860 million over four years, with \$605.1 million available for expenditure in 2011-12. The total Infrastructure Investment Program over four years is \$1.785 billion.

Significant infrastructure investment commitments made in the 2011-12 Budget include:

- Government Office Building (\$432.196 million);
- *Transport for Canberra* – Majura Parkway (\$144 million);
- Bonner Primary School (\$60.270 million);
- Franklin Early Childhood School (\$42.7 million);
- Enhancing Hospital Facilities (\$41 million);
- John Gorton Drive Extension to Molonglo 2 and Group Centre (\$34 million);
- Gungahlin Pool (\$26.3 million);
- Horse Park Drive Extension to Moncrieff Group Centre (\$24 million);
- Integrated Cancer Centre – Phase 2 (\$15.102 million);
- Expansion of Social Housing (\$9.446 million);
- Upgrade of Early Childhood Facilities (\$9 million);
- Holder Early Childhood Centre (\$7.5 million);

- Namadgi P-10 School – Pedestrian Bridge (\$6 million); and
- Northside Hospital Specification and Documentation (\$4 million).

Detailed information on the individual projects by agency is provided in Chapter 5: Infrastructure.

