



# ACT Budget Bulletin

2023-24

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## About ACTCOSS

ACTCOSS acknowledges Canberra has been built on the land of the Ngunnawal people. We pay respects to their Elders and recognise the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. We celebrate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures and ongoing contributions to the ACT community.

The ACT Council of Social Service Inc. (ACTCOSS) advocates for social justice in the ACT and represents not-for-profit community organisations.

ACTCOSS is a member of the nationwide COSS Network, made up of each of the state and territory Councils and the national body, the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS).

ACTCOSS's vision is for Canberra to be a just, safe and sustainable community in which everyone has the opportunity for self-determination and a fair share of resources and services.

The membership of the Council includes the majority of community-based service providers in the social welfare area, a range of community associations and networks, self-help and consumer groups and interested individuals.

ACTCOSS advises that this document may be publicly distributed, including by placing a copy on our website.

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# Introduction

This bulletin provides a summary of ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS) responses to the 2023-24 ACT Budget announced on 27 June 2023.

It highlights key announcements relevant to community service organisations and the Canberrans they support. It also includes a list of measures about which ACTCOSS will be requesting more information. Lastly, it highlights gaps that are not addressed in this Budget.

Overall, ACTCOSS welcomes housing, homelessness, mental health, and the expanded energy concessions. ACTCOSS invites the ACT Government to collaboratively explore where increasing service delivery by non-profit community organisations would enhance the Government's return on investment.

Other key budget measures welcomed by ACTCOSS include:

- \$55.9m for 140 new public housing dwellings
- \$37.78m over four years for cost of living support for Canberrans on low incomes
- \$430,000 in 2023-24 for increasing support for refugees and asylum seekers with essential living costs
- \$80m over two years for expanding the Sustainable Household Scheme
- Expansion of the Taxi Subsidy Scheme

ACTCOSS will be monitoring the implementation of these measures to ensure there is an appropriate distribution of funding between ACT Government services and the community sector. While a strong ACT public service is important, we need to ensure that a fairer share of resources is provided to frontline community services who are best placed to deliver support to the community.

A number of issues have not been addressed by this Budget, including dedicated funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations and to implement the Disability Strategy and Disability Health Strategy. There was also very limited investment in alcohol and other drug services.

ACTCOSS looks forward to using this Budget as the starting point towards a more equitable and just ACT community.



# Key announcements

*Note: all page numbers refer to the provided PDF version of [ACT Budget 2023-24 documents](#) at time of embargoed release.*

## Housing and homelessness



- \$177.068m in Housing ACT **operations, repairs, and maintenance** (Budget Outlook, p.168)
- The government **will establish a \$60m Affordable Housing Fund**, to grow the number of long-term affordable rental homes. This fund includes Build-to-Rent initiatives and support for the community housing sector (Budget Outlook, p.115)
- \$55.9m for **140 new public housing dwellings** (Budget Outlook, p.169)
- \$15.895m over four years to **increase capacity of existing service providers**. Partially funded through the Commonwealth National Housing and Homelessness Agreement in the first year (Budget Outlook, p.168)
- \$11m to **identify and investigate land release options** to support short-to-medium term housing supply increases and housing choice, including furthering the examination of the Western Edge in 2023-24 (Outlook, p.148)
- \$10m (fully offset by Commonwealth contributions) across 2023-25 for the **construction of a 'Youth Foyer'**, providing accommodation and support for vulnerable community members as part of the CIT Woden Campus Project (Budget Outlook, p.184)
- \$5.039m (net capital) across 2023-25 plus \$241,000 in net service costs for site **servicing work and construction of a neighbourhood park in Watson** to facilitate land release for housing (Budget Outlook, p.142)
- \$2.248m (\$1.576m offset) in additional resourcing for **Phase 2 of the Private Buildings Concessional Loan Scheme** to support testing and remediation of potentially combustible cladding (Budget Outlook, p.184)
- \$1.125m for additional staff in the Treasury (Office of the Coordinator General for Affordable Housing) **to support the assessment of proposals under the Affordable Housing Project Fund**, delivering Build-to-Rent projects and action National Housing Accord Commitments (Budget Outlook, p.116)



## The community sector



- \$15m in **increased funding for the community sector** (5.25% indexation rate) (Budget Outlook, p.111)
- \$4.143m and \$27.127m over four years for **public building upgrades** including continued transition of ACT Government facilities from gas to electricity (Budget Outlook, p.103)
- \$1.6m over the next four years covering **Out of Home Care service providers** for physical and sexual abuse liability claims (Budget Outlook, p.129)
- \$634,000 over three years to relocate existing ACT Government and non-Government tenants to **better office accommodation** (Budget Outlook, p.119)

## Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander self-determination



- \$50.218m, including \$48.993m in capital, over four years for the redevelopment of the **Watson Health Precinct**. This includes the replacement of the existing Ted Noffs and CatholicCare facilities, and funding for Winnunga Nimmitjiah Aboriginal Health and Community Services to **construct a new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alcohol and other drug residential rehabilitation facility** (Budget Outlook, p.159)
- \$1.925m over four years will establish a dedicated **First Nations Family Support team within Child and Youth Protection Services** to improve culturally safe practice and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families engaged with child protection services. This initiative builds on recent Government actions to implement the recommendations of the *Our Booris, Our Way* review including improved frontline services such as Family Group Conferencing, Family Finding, embedding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle and foundational work to grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector (Budget Outlook, p.129)
- \$1.25m (fully offset) over three years for the continuation of **Indigenous Allied Health Australia Health Academic Program** in the ACT to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce (Budget Outlook, p.166)
- \$48,000 over four years and \$620,000 in capital (\$500,000 offset) in 2023-24 to construct a machinery shed at the **Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm** (Budget Outlook, p.158)



## Poverty, inequality, and cost of living



- \$37.78m over four years for **cost of living support for Canberrans on low incomes** (Budget Outlook, p.112) including:
  - Expansion of **utilities concession eligibility** to include Commonwealth Health Care Card (12,000 more households)
  - One-off **increase of \$50 to utilities concession** to \$800 in 2023-24
  - Payment of **\$250 to households on Housing ACT's priority housing waiting list**
  - Increasing the **Taxi Subsidy Scheme cap** by 15%, and increasing trip limit from 126 trips to 854 trips per year
- \$430,000 in 2023-24 to increase **support for refugees and asylum seekers with an ACT Services Access Card** with essential living costs, including additional funding for the Red Cross family settlement assistance grants programs (Budget Outlook, p.126)

## Children, young people, and families



- \$110.8m (\$45.321m offset expenses) over four years for **establishing a new residential care provider and Chief Practitioner** for vulnerable young people who cannot remain safely with their families and are not able to be placed in foster or kinship care (Budget Outlook, p.130)
- \$5.917m (capital) and \$53.160m (\$24.275m offset expenses) over four years for **universal access to preschool for three-year-olds**, including one day per week of free early childhood education for all three-year-olds from January 2024 and investment in the early childhood education workforce (Budget Outlook, p.141)
- \$9.445m (\$2.7m offset by the Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence National Partnership Multilateral Agreement) over four years for **frontline domestic, family and sexual violence services** (Budget Outlook, p.132)



- \$3.3m over four years for **establishing the Child Safe Standards Scheme** through the ACT Human Rights Commission as part of commitments to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Budget Outlook, p.170)
- \$2.95m (\$1.099m offset expenses) over four years for **expanding work health and safety supports in ACT public schools**, including further training for school staff and improved safety systems (Budget Outlook, p.136)
- \$2.4m (capital) in 2023-24 and \$604,000 (cost of services) over four years for maintaining **Therapeutic Residential Care Services** for children and young people (Budget Outlook, p.130)
- \$1.45m in 2023-24 and \$4.594m (provisional) over the following three years for continued **delivery of the Room4Change men's behaviour change program**, to be partially funded by the Safer Families Levy (Budget Outlook, p.131)
- \$679,000 (fully offset) over two years for **implementing the external merits review process for child protection decisions** relating to care plans (Budget Outlook, p.127)
- \$665,000 (fully offset provisional expenses) in 2023-24 for supporting the **continuation of the Care and Protection Intensive List program** within the ACT Children's Court (Budget Outlook, p.177)

## Climate and energy



- \$18.272m (with \$7.5m offset by Commonwealth contribution) and \$80m in capital over two years (offset by \$24.18m in loan repayments over four years) to extend the **Sustainable Household Scheme**. Eligibility requirements will also change from 1 July 2023 to limit access to solar-only loans to a needs basis and focus the scheme on efficient electrification (Budget Outlook, p.110)
  - \$3.6m of the above (jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the ACT Government Sustainable Household Scheme) for rebates and loans to body corporates for solar panels on apartment blocks<sup>1</sup>
- \$17.390m (\$318,000 offset) and \$69.72m in capital expenses over four years for **electrification of government gas assets program**. The program will electrify around 200 ACT Government owned and operated building over the next decade including ACT Property Group properties (Budget Outlook, p.145)

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<sup>1</sup> M Coade, '[Canberra's solar incentive to help renters and body corporates with energy bills](#)', *The Mandarin*, 27 June 2023, accessed 28 June 2023.





- \$6.95m (\$1.288m offset) over two years to **expand energy and climate capability** and deliver the **Integrated Energy Plan** (Budget Outlook, p.146)
- \$4.981m over four years to continue and expand the Vulnerable Household Energy Support Scheme (now known as the **Home Energy Support Program**), so eligible low income homeowners can access rebates and zero interest loans for efficient electric home upgrades. This includes insulation and electrification upgrades in public housing properties. The program eligibility will also be expanded to include homeowners that have a Health Care Card (Budget Outlook, p.109)
- \$3.711m (\$3.250 offset) and \$3m (fully offset) in capital over two years to continue the delivery of the Zero Emissions Vehicle Strategy 2022-30 and **expand the EV public charging network**, by delivering at least 180 public EV charging stations by 2025 (Budget Outlook, p.144)
- \$2.06m over four years to deliver **reforms for sustainable building construction**. This involves developing a 10-year pathway to climate-ready and environmentally sustainable buildings. This initiative will support building and construction reform projects that will deliver improved accountability, consumer protection and building quality. (Budget Outlook, p.146)
- \$400,000 in capital expenses in 2023-24 for the **Big Canberra Battery** (Stream 1). The net cost of services will be -\$9.75m over four years, offset by \$12.58m revenue. This will increase energy security and reliability by building battery storage at Williamsdale and at 11 Government sites (Budget Outlook, p.109)
- \$366,000 over two years (fully offset through the Health Funding Envelope) to **fund research into the health impacts associated with climate change** and develop a climate change adaptation and resilience (Budget Outlook, p.165)

## Community facilities and infrastructure



- \$31.27m (\$4.143m and \$27.127m in capital) over four years for a range of **upgrades and rectifications to Government and community buildings** for ongoing functionality, safety and accessibility (includes support for transitioning ACT Government facilities from gas to electric) (Budget Outlook, p.103)



- \$29.202m (\$26.877m in capital expenditure over three years and \$2.325m for the cost of services over four years) for the design and construction of a **Gungahlin Community Centre**. The centre will host a range of community services, including a youth centre and space for community activities. While the centre is under construction an interim location will be rented to re-establish the youth centre (Budget Outlook, p.142)
- \$25.5m over four years, including \$18.345m in capital for **City Precinct Renewal Program** to upgrade streetscapes in the City and at Dickson shops to improve access, walkability, sense of safety and stimulate economic activity (Budget Outlook, p.124)
- \$16.1m in capital expenditure over four years (offset by \$20.08m over three years) and \$900,000 for the cost of services over three years to deliver and finalise the **Action Waterfront Park** (Budget Outlook, p.124)
- \$7.1m (\$3.967m and \$3.132m in capital) in 2023-24 for the **Garran Surge Centre to be deconstructed and Garran Oval to be remediated and returned to community use** (Budget Outlook, p.183)
- \$6.9m (\$4.246m and \$2.738m in capital) to support operations and essential upgrades at the **Canberra Olympic Pool and Dickson Aquatic Centre** (Budget Outlook, p.104)
- \$3.28m over four years to **enhance community use of public school facilities**. The Government will introduce an online booking system to improve community access to facilities at 12 public schools (Budget Outlook, p.138)
- \$3.27m in capital expenditure over two years for **Yerrabi Pond District Park** (Budget Outlook, p.189)
- \$1.3m in capital expenditure over two years for infrastructure upgrades at **Hawker District Playing Fields** (Budget Outlook, p.188)
- \$1.2m over two years to design the **Stromlo Forest Park district playing fields** to service the Molonglo region (Budget Outlook, p.103)
- \$775,000 over two years to progress the design of a second access road to the **National Arboretum** to support more visitors, improve safety and improve traffic flow (Budget Outlook, p.113).
- \$432,000 over four years to continue the **CBRfree Wifi** service until 2027 (Budget Outlook, p.111)



## Disability



- \$9.2m (\$1.761m offset) for the implementation of **Inclusive Education Coaches in ACT public schools**. The initiative aims to support students with disability to undertake transitions and to develop workforce capacity. The funding follows the Government's commitment to review Disability funding and support in education (Budget Outlook, p.137)
- \$4.26m (\$3.7m in fully offset capital expenditure) to modernise facilities for the Canberra Institute of Technology, including **upgrades to the campuses that will improve disability access** and ensure that facilities are compliant with Work Health and Safety requirements (Budget Outlook, p.100)
- \$2.7m over two years for redesigning and **expanding the Child Development Service (CDS)** and Children and Young Person Equipment Loan Scheme (CAYPELS) to integrate within the Early Childhood Early Intervention system of care, including funding to expand the Autism Spectrum Disorder assessment service (Budget Outlook, p.127)
- \$553,000 (\$287,000 offset) to deliver **Disability Liaison Officers** to support people with disability who are victims of crime to improve equity of access to justice. The funds are partially offset by the Confiscated Assets Trust Fund (Budget Outlook, p.171)
- A **15% increase to the Taxi Subsidy Scheme** subsidy cap and the removal of the requirement to apply for extra trips. Eligible scheme participants will be automatically eligible for 854 trips per year, up from the previous number of 126 trips per year (Budget Outlook, p.112, p.199)

## Environment



- \$31.082m (\$23.670m offset) to support the **Urban Forest Act** by providing additional resources for the assessment of tree damaging activity applications, tree inspections, and tree maintenance including removal of end-of-life trees and planting of new trees (Budget Outlook, p. 191)
- \$5.759m (\$343,000 offset) and \$2.683m in capital **expand the Healthy Waterways project** to improve waterway health and water quality in the ACT (Budget Outlook, p.149)
- \$4.827m over four years to strengthen **biosecurity and nature conservation** programs. Activities will include pest control and invasive species management,



habitat restoration for endangered flora and fauna, and conservation to address decline in biodiversity (Budget Outlook, p. 150)

- \$1m in 2023-24 to implement the **Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary Strategy**. This will enable continued management and monitoring of re-introduced species (Budget Outlook, p. 150)
- \$650,000 over two years to **continue the Canberra Grassland Earless Dragon program** (Budget Outlook, p.149). This involves captive breeding and reintroduction in Tidbinbilla Nature reserve and Jerrabomberra Valley
- \$546,000 over four years to **maintain tracks and trails in Canberra Nature Park**. This includes developing in-house capability to improve climate resilience and disaster recovery to minimise future costs of environmental asset repair and replacement, after climate-related events like fires, floods, and storms (Budget Outlook, p.143)

## Health

- \$17.298m (fully offset by the Health Funding Envelope) over four years to **establish the Eating Disorders Residential Treatment Centre** (Budget Outlook, p.152)
- \$16.816m (including \$16.561m in capital) over four years for **expanding health centres across the city** including a community-based health service in South Tuggeranong, North Gungahlin and the Inner South (Budget Outlook, p.158)
- \$15.796m over four years (fully offset by the Health Funding Envelope) to **expand paediatric services in the ACT**, including the establishment of a dedicated paediatric gender service (Budget Outlook, p.163)
- \$9.955m over four years (\$4.518m offset by the Health Funding Envelope) to **manage ongoing impacts of COVID-19** (Budget Outlook, p.164)
- \$9.752m over four years (fully offset by Health Funding Envelope) to enhance **specialist health services for LGBTIQ+ Canberrans** including establishment of a Canberra Health Services Adult Gender Service (Budget Outlook, p.155)
- \$2.926m over four years (\$2.764m offset by the Health Funding Envelope) for measures to **reduce harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs**, including implementation of drug law reform, continuation of the CANtest drug checking pilot, support for peer workers in the alcohol, tobacco and other drugs sector and a communications campaign targeting young people to raise awareness of the health risks of vaping and provide cessation support (Budget Outlook, p.153)





- \$1.609m over two years to establish a **Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD)** team to provide input into policy design for a VAD model for the ACT (Budget Outlook, p.165)

## Human rights

- \$6m for 2023-24 for **additional funding for ACAT operations** (Budget Outlook, p.173)
- \$3.102m in capital over two years and \$1.553m over four years (\$1.253m offset) for a new client interface for **ACAT Energy and Water Hardship and Complaints programs** and replacement of **Forensic Medicine Centre** cold storage facility (Budget Outlook, p.177)
- \$2.874m over four years for the **Human Rights Commission** to meet growing demand for services (Budget Outlook, p.178)
- \$1.874m over two years for resourcing for the **ACT Government Solicitor's Office** to respond to claims of alleged breaches of the Human Rights Act (Budget Outlook, p.176)
- \$1.81m for the **ACT Intermediary Program within the ACT Human Rights Commission** to expand capacity to support vulnerable witnesses in criminal matters as they engage with the police and courts (Budget Outlook, p.176)



## Justice

- \$74.330m over four years for **126 additional ACT Policing personnel** (Budget Outlook, p.181)
- \$19.002m (cost of services) over four years and \$737,000 (capital) in 2023-24 for resourcing key custodial staff at the AMC and for initiatives to **improve safety and wellbeing in the AMC** (Budget Outlook, p.175)
- \$14.024m (\$3.805m offset by revenue) over four years for resources to support the **implementation of the Project Assisting Victims Recovery and Experience (PAVER) system review**, including additional resources to Victims Support ACT (Budget Outlook, p.172)
- \$10.426m over four years for **new service responses to raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility**, including for an ongoing Functional Family Therapy Youth Justice program, establishment of a Therapeutic Support Panel





and intensive case management and support services including accommodation (Budget Outlook, p.131)

- \$8.884m over two years to continue development of **Electronic Gaming Machine harm reduction measures** through ongoing EGM buyback initiatives (Budget Outlook, p.170)
- \$8.41m (cost of services) and \$175,000 (capital) in 2023-24 for **expanding the Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List**, and \$27.042m (provisional expenses) over the following three years (Budget Outlook, p.173)
- \$4.464m over four years to develop a **masterplan for the AMC to inform longer-term infrastructure requirements**, including planning for a future Reintegration Precinct, and a unit for staff accommodation (Budget Outlook, p.175)
- \$3.581m over four years (funded through the Safer Families Levy) for **expanding the Health Justice Partnerships** to support early intervention and free legal support for pregnant women and new families at risk of domestic and family violence (Budget Outlook, p.132)
- \$2.324m over four years to **support legal needs of vulnerable Canberrans** by providing additional resources to community legal centres and Legal Aid, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse client liaison officers (Budget Outlook, p.179)
- \$1.012m over two years to respond to **recommendations of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Steering Committee final report**, including funding for research to inform approaches to hold perpetrators of sexual violence to account and support victim-survivors' access to justice (Budget Outlook, p.133)
- \$721,000 (\$38,000 offset revenue) over four years to **establish a centralised function at Access Canberra to manage infringement notice management plan requests** and administer approved community work or social development programs (Budget Outlook, p.174)
- \$706,000 over four years to provide additional funding to the **Office of the Inspector of Correctional Services** to oversee Bimberi Youth Justice Centre and reinforce the ACT's National Preventive Mechanism (Budget Outlook, p.175)
- \$634,000 over two years to resource a **forensic counselling service for families involved in coronial processes** (Budget Outlook, p.178)
- \$553,000 over two years (\$287,000 offset by the Confiscated Assets Trust Fund) to support implementation of the Disability Justice Strategy for **funding Disability Liaison Officers to assist people with disability who are victims of crime** (Budget Outlook, p.171)



- \$377,000 over two years for a **feasibility study on the introduction of electronic monitoring** of offenders in the ACT (Budget Outlook, p.174)
- \$200,000 for 2023-24 to **develop a Throughcare program for youth justice** (Budget Outlook, p.128)

## Mental health



- \$6.364m (offset by Health Funding Envelope) over four years for **community based residential accommodation** for people with mental health needs (Budget Outlook, p.154)
- \$2.398m including \$700,000 in capital (\$1.616m offset by Health Funding Envelope) over four years for the establishment of a **Safe Haven at Canberra Hospital**, a peer support worker mental health service to support patients with mental health support needs (Budget Outlook, p.157)
- \$2.178m in 2023-24 for **children and youth mental health** including MindMap Online Youth Navigation Portal, Youth Aware of Mental Health Program, WOKE and Stepping Stones. Funding also includes establishment of the Child/Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Services Network (Budget Outlook, p.163)
- \$1.7m (fully offset) over four years to provide ongoing funding for the **Hoarding Advocacy Support Service** provided through Woden Community Services (Budget Outlook, p.154)
- \$1.303m (\$702,000 offset) in 2023-24 for a **second Police, Ambulance and Clinician Early Response team** to support emergency mental health care (Budget Outlook, p.153)
- \$250,000 in 2023-24 for a **feasibility study and early design of a safe assessment area** in the North Canberra Hospital Emergency Department for mental health patients presenting with high-risk behaviours (Budget Outlook, p.159)

## Planning and transport



- \$76.98m (\$70.1m in capital expenditure fully offset and \$6.88m net cost of services) for **Light Rail Stage 2A and 2B**. This will continue the City to Woden section, modify depots, deliver five new trams, as well as enter into the contract to start construction of Stage 2A and design and plan Stage 2B (Budget Outlook, p.183)



- \$44m for **Willian Hovell Drive duplication**, including on-road cycle lanes, a three-metre-wide off-road asphalt shared path and the removal and signalisation of the existing roundabout at the Drake Brockman Drive intersection (Budget Outlook, p.191)
- \$29.5m (including \$5m Commonwealth funding) for **active travel improvements** and upgrades and maintenance work to walking and cycling network (Budget Outlook, p.190)
- \$17.3m for **improving public transport services**. This will increase services and improve reliability through employing more bus operators (Budget Outlook, p.192)
- With rising cost of living pressures, the Government will not apply any indexation to public transport fares for 2023-24 (Budget Outlook, p.203)
- \$16.34m (\$5.352m in capital expenditure over three years and \$10.995m for the cost of services over four years) for further planning in possible **Eastern Broadacre land use**. This will create new nature reserves and finalise the Eastern Broadacre Strategic Assessment which will identify future land uses (Budget Outlook, p.147)
- \$5.33m (\$5.09m in capital expenditure over two years and \$241,000 for the cost of services over four years) to continue **work and construction of a new local park at Section 76 Watson** to facilitate land release for new housing (Budget Outlook, p.142)
- \$1.35m in 2023-24 to **modernise traffic and parking systems**. This will include joining the current traffic contract and parking enforcement contract (which are at their end of life) into a consolidated procurement of an integrated traffic and parking management solution (Budget Outlook, p.119)
- \$1.33m over two years to **better support planning outcomes**. This will include scoping to inform the development of a Survey Data Validation Tool to support the transition away from manual processing of survey plans and addressing service pressures associated with the National Capital City Design Review Panel (NCDRP) (Budget Outlook, p.144)
- \$1.172m in 2023-24 to implement the first stage of **heritage reforms**. These reforms will create better governance and administration of heritage matters in the ACT, planning to inform future action and design and development of a new heritage database and website (Budget Outlook, p.147)
- \$400,000 in 2023-24 to develop a **Gungahlin Transport Plan**, including multimodal area and corridor transport plans for the Gungahlin region and town centre (Budget Outlook, p.189)





- \$350,000 in costs for services and \$5.3m in capital expenditure (fully offset through the Better Infrastructure Fund) for **additional support for suburban and city services infrastructure projects**, including:
  - Upgrading stormwater infrastructure for Goliath Court and the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings
  - The Belconnen half-pipe skateboarding facility
  - Eight playgrounds including the Casey Community Recreation Park and the Inner North Destination Play Space, and
  - Tree and pavement improvements at the Charnwood Group Centre
- \$260,000 over four years (full offset through the ACT Road Safety Fund) to **improve roads and road safety**. The program will support ACT businesses to develop a positive road safety culture (Budget Outlook, p.189)

## Social inclusion



- \$3.305m (\$3.305 offset by user charges and sponsorship revenue) over two years for delivering the **National Multicultural Festival** (Budget Outlook, p.126)
- \$1.416m over two years (fully offset by the Health Funding Envelope) to establish a **Centre of Excellence for older Canberrans** (Budget Outlook, p.155)
- \$626,000 over four years for funding for **programs focused on the wellbeing of older Canberrans** including a seniors' art festival, Gold Soul Program and (Budget Outlook, p.128)
- \$321,000 (including \$300,000 capital) over two years for **celebrating significant women through commission of a major public artwork** (Budget Outlook, p.102)

## Measures requiring further consideration

- More detail requested about how the \$177.068m for Housing ACT **operations, repairs, and maintenance** (Budget Outlook, p.168) will be used. Will Housing ACT properties be upgraded or newly built to gold standard so that all properties are accessible?



- Further clarification required about the \$110.8m to establish a new residential care provider and **Chief Practitioner** for children in out of home care and what this role entails (Budget Outlook, p.130)
- More detail requested about \$37.78m over four years for **cost of living support for Canberrans on low incomes** (Budget Outlook, p.112)
  - Is there funding allocated for the ACT Government's response to the Inquiry into Cost of Living Pressures in the ACT?
  - Will the ACT Government consider putting more money into the Rent Relief Fund before more affordable housing is delivered in 2025?
- \$15m in **increased funding for the community sector** (5.25% indexation rate) (Budget Outlook, p.111). What proportion of budget funding has been allocated to the community sector, compared to ACT Government delivered services?
- Further clarification is required about what the \$9.445m for **frontline domestic, family and sexual violence services** (Budget Outlook, p.132) includes and if funding for DFV goes beyond crisis services.
  - Will there be ongoing funding for the disability inclusion role in DFV services?
  - How has the \$1.039m from the 2022-23 budget for developing a ten year prevention of sexual assault strategy been spent?
- Clarification is required about the \$9.2m for the implementation of **Inclusive Education Coaches in ACT public schools** (Budget Outlook, p.137). What does this program entail and what is its purpose? What is involved in the role of an Inclusive Education Coach?
- Further details are requested about the extra \$4.981m over four years to continue and expand the Vulnerable Household Energy Support Scheme (now known as the **Home Energy Support Program**). How will vulnerable renters be supported (Budget Outlook p.211)? How has the \$50m been invested across key household types e.g., low–moderate income homeowners, private rental tenants, and social housing tenants?
- \$4.548m over four years for implementing the **Procurement Reform Program** (Budget Outlook, p.118). How will this intersect with Commissioning reform?
- \$3.3m over four years for **establishing the Child Safe Standards Scheme**. How has this funding been allocated across Government and the community sector?



- More information on which schools are identified for the \$3.28m over four years **enhanced community use of public school facilities**. The Government will introduce an online booking system to improve community access to facilities at 12 public schools (Budget Outlook, p.138)
- \$3.102m in capital over two years and \$1.553m over four years (\$1.253m offset) for a new client interface for **ACAT Energy Water Hardship and Complaints programs** and replacement of **Forensic Medicine Centre cold storage facility** (Budget Outlook, p.177). How much of this funding is for ACAT as opposed to the Forensic Medicine Centre cold storage facility?
- \$2.324m over four years to **support the legal needs of vulnerable Canberrans** includes funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse client liaison officers. How much will be dedicated to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community? (Budget Outlook, p.179)
- \$2.2 million over four years for initiatives to **improve health workforce planning and attraction and retention strategies**. What is the initial focus for these?
- \$1.2m over four years better care for our community – implementing the **national code of conduct for health care workers** (Budget Outlook, p.152). What percentage of funding will flow to the community sector?
- \$1.045m (net cost) across 2024-26 to **fund staffing in the Suburban Land Agency** to support the land release project in Gungahlin for a Build-to-Rent site (Budget Outlook, p.148). What does this include?
- More detail requested on **National Legal Assistance Partnership: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services** (\$799 in 23-24, \$815 in 24-25, \$832 in 25-26)
- More detail requested on **Accommodation for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People Commissioner** \$705,000 in 2023-24 (Budget Outlook, p.320)
- More detail required on the \$626,000 support for **older Canberrans** (Budget Outlook, p.88)
- More detail requested for the \$430,000 in 2023-24 to increase **support for asylum seekers with an ACT Services Access Card** (Budget Outlook, p.126). What cohort and what specifically does this include?
- More detail requested about the \$366,000 to **fund research into the health impacts associated with climate change** (Budget Outlook, p.165). What does this funding entail?



- \$256,000 for one year for **(housing) sector development and training**. What are the priorities for this training? Who will it target, community sector workers or public sector?

## What's missing

- Cost of Living responses including a trial of free public transport and analyse the costs, benefits and distributional impact, a review of public transport concessions and an income-based approach to ACT Government fines, fees and other charges
- Investment in transport equity including expanding the Sustainable Households Scheme to include access to loans to purchase electric bicycles and scooters and investment in adequate and affordable transport for students, including free public transport for school students and sufficient transport options for university and CIT students
- A review and update the Targeted Assistance Strategy to ensure concessions are adequate and targeted to need
- Further housing funding including support for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled housing provider, maintenance of funding for the Rent Remittance model for social housing providers, funding for a disability housing advocacy service and improved housing responses for LGBTIQ+ Canberrans
- Increase investment in Community Controlled organisations, including an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peak Body in the ACT
- Increased sector funding to cover all costs including staffing, engagement in commissioning, policy process and monitoring and evaluation
- Investment in perinatal wellbeing including through in-patient parent and baby care
- Replacement funding for the Escaping Violence Payment
- Adequate and ongoing funding for the implementation of the Disability Health Strategy, ACT Disability Strategy, ACT Disability Justice Strategy, and Inclusive Education Strategy
- Funding for a specialty Disability Legal Service within the community legal sector
- Funding for the ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan
- Commitment to review police complaints handling mechanisms to ensure greater practical independence, accountability and transparency of investigations



- Investments in solutions to address racism experienced by children and young people as outlined in the ACTHRC 'It really stabs me' Report 2023
- Funding for dedicated programs for women, resourcing financial literacy and education programs and implementation of a needle and syringe program for the AMC
- Significantly increased funding to community-managed mental health services
- Funding for the volunteering sector

# Thank you

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