

Delivering for the Great Southern

The Cook Labor Government is delivering for the Great Southern, with the 2026–27 State Budget focused on real cost of living relief while funding the housing, health, infrastructure and jobs that regional communities rely on.

The 2026–27 State Budget backs the Cook Labor Government’s Seven Cities vision for regional Western Australia – a long-term plan to unlock the next wave of regional economic opportunities including in Albany.

Through the Budget, we’re investing in the quality infrastructure and services needed to attract families, grow skilled local workforces and create quality local jobs – ensuring our Seven Cities can be everything they can be, and continue to be service delivery hubs for their regions.

The Budget will provide meaningful cost of living relief for Great Southern families with funding to roll out the third WA Student Assistance Payment and delivering the Fuel Support Payment, offering a \$100 payment to all Western Australians with a valid driver’s licence.

More than \$4 billion in Royalties for Regions funding will be invested across regional communities, and \$9.5 billion in regional infrastructure over the next four years, strengthening regional WA so it remains a great place to live, work and raise a family.

Delivering a Strong Economy and Local Jobs

- \$973 million to expand Western Power’s network and **increase electricity capacity** for industrial and residential developments
- More than \$150 million for the **Made in WA Energy Affordability Investment Program**, backing manufacturers to lower energy costs
- \$113.5 million additional investment in **road maintenance across WA**, with \$3.6 billion total to be spent on regional roads over the next four years
- \$30 million increase to the **Investment Attraction Fund** for a second round of grants to support new energy projects
- \$19.6 million to expand the **Group Training Organisation Wage Subsidy Program**, supporting construction businesses to hire more apprentices and trainees
- \$18 million for **Aboriginal tourism initiatives**
- \$13.1 million to extend the **Construction Visa Subsidy Program** and **Build a Life in WA** incentive, boosting the number of skilled tradespeople in our workforce
- \$4.5 million for the **deferral of heavy vehicle fee increases**, supporting industry throughout the Great Southern
- \$1.4 million for the **Small Business Growth Grants** program

Plus we are continuing to deliver:

- Major upgrades to **South Coast Highway**, between **Cheyne's Road** and **Kojaneerup**
- **Albany Airport upgrades** to cater for larger aircraft to support the tourism industry
- Business case **Berths 1 and 2 upgrades in Albany**, to underpin grain exports and the increase in cruise ships to Albany
- A **water desalination plant** to secure the **lower Great Southern's water future**, with planning underway
- Power Purchase Agreements for wind energy to **support WA's transition to renewables**

Real Cost of Living Relief for Great Southern Families

- \$198 million for the **\$100 Fuel Support Payment** for all Western Australians with a valid driver's licence
- \$124 million to continue **lower fee and Fee-Free TAFE** in 2027
- \$89.5 million to deliver a third round of the **Western Australian Student Assistance Payment**, providing Great Southern families with **\$150 for each primary and kindergarten student, and \$250 for each secondary school student**
- \$36.4 million to lock in **free public transport for students** travelling to and from school, including on Transalbany services
- \$35 million to **increase energy concessions**, including the Energy Assistance Payment, Dependent Child Rebate and Air Conditioning Allowance
- \$33.1 million contribution to the Fuel Excise Relief Program, **reducing fuel by 32 cents per litre**
- \$23.7 million boost to the **foster carer subsidy**
- \$16 million to extend the **Energy Ahead program**, helping those experiencing financial hardship to **improve energy efficiency** and **save on power bills**
- \$14.5 million to establish a new **Foster and Grand Carer Gold Card**, providing benefits including **\$377 of energy bill relief this year**
- \$13.5 million to **extend the WA Rent Relief Program**
- Ongoing support for the **Regional Airfare Zone Cap Scheme**, saving regional residents hundreds of dollars on flights to Perth
- \$5.5 million for the **KidSport program**, providing **\$300 vouchers** for eligible kids to help with club fees

Delivering Housing

- \$692 million for **regional specific housing initiatives** to boost housing and land supply, including:
 - \$419 million for more than **500 GROH and key government worker dwellings** through the **Seven Cities initiative**, including new houses, expansion of the GROH Investor Program, and establishment of a revamped Home Ownership Subsidy Scheme including shared equity options. This includes **26 homes for regional frontline workers in Albany**
 - \$50 million increase to the **Regional Housing Support Fund**, taking it to \$75 million for **local housing** and **residential subdivision projects**

- \$297 million for a housing tax package to **support first home buyers** and boost housing supply
- \$250 million First Home Buyer Commercial Financing Facility to provide **concessional loans for affordable housing projects**
- \$250 million for **Keystart's Pre-sale Guarantee**, helping developers meet pre sale thresholds for apartment projects with at least 30 per cent affordable dwellings
- \$48 million to **manufacture modular housing and infrastructure in WA**, supporting **prefabricated homes for regional areas**
- \$10.8 million to **assist Albany residents to prepare** for the decommissioning of ATCO's Albany Gas Distribution System

Plus we are continuing to deliver:

- **New affordable homes** as part of the **Spencer Park mixed-use development**
- 36 **new social and affordable rentals** in Bayonet Head
- Planning for an **additional 2,500 affordable homes in McKail North**

Investing in Regional Health

- \$492 million additional investment in **regional health and mental health**, including:
 - \$68.6 million funding for **WA Country Health Service**, including for **specialist health services**
 - \$60 million for the **Albany Health Campus** expansion
 - \$48.6 million to continue **culturally appropriate** social and emotional **wellbeing support for Aboriginal people**
 - \$43.8 million investment in **community mental health** and alcohol and other drugs services
- \$214 million **increase to hospital maintenance** funding
- \$143 million additional investment for **medical equipment and imaging upgrades**
- \$49.8 million for **Child Development Services**
- \$29.7 million to extend **suicide prevention initiatives**
- \$27.1 million to deliver the **free flu vaccination program** and the **RSV immunisation program**
- \$4.1 million to **train pharmacists** to diagnose, treat and prescribe everyday conditions, including in the Great Southern

Plus we are continuing to deliver:

- An adult residential alcohol and other drugs **withdrawal and rehabilitation service** in the Great Southern
- The **largest-ever expansion to the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme**, including a 54 per cent boost to the fuel subsidy and expanding eligibility to cover more dental and allied health services

Supporting Regional Schools and Students

- \$310 million increase to **support students with disability** at public schools

- \$218.6 million **boost to school maintenance**, benefiting schools in the Great Southern
- \$15.7 million to **expand training and support** for staff working with students with disability
- \$7.7 million to **support swimming lessons** across the State, particularly in regional areas
- \$5 million through the **Schools Clean Energy Technology Fund** to provide solar panels and LED lighting upgrades at public schools across WA
- \$400,000 for **Denmark Primary School car park upgrades**

Plus we are continuing to deliver:

- Expansion and new classroom block at **North Albany Senior High School** with planning underway
- The **Spencer Park Education Support Centre** redevelopment with planning underway
- Design and Technology block upgrades at **Albany Senior High School**

Building Strong and Inclusive Communities

- \$421 million for child protection services plus \$52.4 million additional **support for foster and grandcarers**
- \$361 million for **Foundational Supports - Thriving Kids services over the next five years**, to provide support for children aged 8 and under with developmental delays or autism
- \$91 million funding boost for **new and continuing homelessness services**
- \$61.4 million to continue the **Target 120 early intervention program**, including in **Albany**
- \$60.7 million for **road safety community awareness** campaigns and **school education** programs
- \$45 million boost for **refuges and safe houses**, including \$11.6 million for five **refuges under development**, including in **Albany**
- \$36.1 million to continue the **Driving Access and Equity Program**, helping disadvantaged learner drivers to get their licence
- \$31.2 million for **fire and emergency fleet replacement**
- \$29.5 million **boost for Home Stretch**, supporting young people leaving care
- \$24.2 million to continue **Operation Regional Shield**, boosting police resources when they're needed in Albany
- \$20.3 million for **at-risk youth services** around the State

Plus we are continuing to deliver:

- An **expanded Safe at Home program**, supporting victim-survivors of family and domestic violence to stay in their homes, including in **Albany**
- An additional **six units** at the new **Albany Women's Refuge**
- Conservation works and cultural mapping for **Strawberry Hill at Barmup Heritage site**

Protecting and Restoring our Environment

- \$52.9 million to establish the **Regional Water Source Fund** for planning and investigation in regional WA
- \$24.7 million for **biosecurity** and **animal disease preparedness**
- \$8.5 million towards the **Fisheries Support Package**, including funding for an **enhanced science program** and **FishCatchWA app upgrades**
- \$6.2 million to further support the **Healthy Estuaries WA** program, benefiting **Wilson Inlet, Torbay Inlet** and **Oyster Harbour** waterways
- \$2.5 million to strengthen **climate resilience planning**

Plus we are continuing to deliver:

- Tourism infrastructure at **Torndirrup National Park**, including at **The Gap** and **Cable Beach** with construction underway
- Upgrades at **William Bay National Park** near Denmark, including pedestrian access to **Elephant Rocks** and **Greens Pool** and to realign the **Munda Biddi trail**
- Support for **community-led conservation efforts** through our Community Stewardship Grants
- The **Aboriginal Ranger Program**, creating ranger jobs and caring for land and sea Country