

MEDIA RELEASE

Budget 2026–27: Builders welcome clarity on market conditions

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Master Builders ACT has welcomed the focus of the ACT Budget 2026-27 on housing and market conditions but has said more must be done to deal with skills and productivity.

Master Builders ACT CEO Anna Neelagama said the ACT building and construction industry is ready and willing to build, despite critical challenges of rising costs, reduced land release, and changes to the forward pipeline.

'We congratulate the Treasurer on delivering his second Budget. Changes to Lease Variation Charge and stamp duty, the funding and forward plan of the pattern book and investment in our public housing pipeline are all welcome developments that will help with housing affordability and delivery for Canberrans.

'We also welcome an additional allocation of \$50 million to the Capital Works Program to support unexpected price escalations for projects on foot due to the Middle East conflict. We look forward to a framework being finalised to support the delivery of these provisions.'

Master Builders ACT remains concerned that residential housing activity has fallen to record lows during this term of the Assembly.

'More must be done to reform the structural challenges holding the sector back particularly skills and red tape and regulation,' Ms Neelagama said.

'Budget 2026-27 is a missed opportunity to deal with the wicked challenge of workforce issues in the ACT.

'Without broader support beyond fee-free TAFE places, this approach risks falling short of what the industry truly needs.

'People are our best asset, and this Budget does nothing to attract, retain and grow skilled construction workers.'

Ms Neelagama said that the ACT continues to rank worst in the nation for multifactor productivity, with building and construction productivity declining year on year.

'Building and construction is the engine room of the ACT economy and is proud to employ about 19,000 Canberrans.

'The ACT building and construction sector is largely made up of small and medium-sized family businesses owned and operated by long term Canberrans.

'Our message to the Government is clear: we stand ready to deliver the housing and community infrastructure requirements that the ACT needs to grow our city and our region.'

Master Builders ACT will continue to work closely with the Barr-Steel ACT Government to advocate for practical reforms that reduce costs, improve productivity, and accelerate housing delivery across the Territory.

The Master Builders ACT Budget Submission 2025–26 can be viewed [here](#).

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Media enquiries:

Tara Nichols | Communications & Marketing Manager
tnichols@mba.org.au | 0430 026 612

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