

The Barkly is the Territory's third largest region and extends along the Stuart Highway from Tara to Elliott and east across the Barkly Tablelands to Queensland.



The Barkly region is made up of small communities separated by long distances and is home to around 6,100 people, of whom around 69% are Aboriginal. Tennant Creek is the main centre with a population of around 3,500 people. A high proportion of people living in the region are young, with around 39% aged 24 years and under, and about 8% aged 65 or older.

Major industries in the region include government services, agriculture, construction and mining. The Barkly and Tennant Creek pastoral district accounts for a substantial proportion of the Territory's total cattle industry. The Territory Government is also investing to develop Tennant Creek as a mining and mineral services centre.

### Roads

The 2025 Budget includes \$57.5 million to upgrade the Tennant Creek to Townsville road corridor, including sealing, strengthening, widening and road safety improvements.

The Tennant Creek to Townsville corridor is a key economic freight route that supports major industries including mining, agriculture and tourism.

The upgrades will:

- ensure key freight roads efficiently connect agricultural and mining regions to ports, airports and other transport hubs
- provide a more reliable and safe road network, especially during the wet season
- improve access for higher capacity vehicles
- facilitate other economic opportunities, especially tourism.

The 2025 Budget also includes \$28 million for the Sandover Highway to upgrade, widen and seal 20 kilometres of unsealed road.

The Sandover Highway upgrades will enhance social and economic conditions in the Barkly, improving access to essential services and bolstering economic growth through reliable transport for regional development and cattle logistics.

## Housing milestone for Tennant Creek

Works have been completed on 12 newly built social and affordable homes in Tennant Creek as part of the joint partnership between the Territory and Commonwealth under the Barkly Regional Deal.

The \$6.9 million partnership marks the first Territory project to be funded by Housing Australia, through the Commonwealth’s National Housing Infrastructure Facility (Social and Affordable Housing).

Five of the homes, built by Habitat NT, will be allocated to residents on the Territory’s social housing waitlist. The other seven will be affordable homes leased at subsidised rents to eligible working households on low to moderate incomes to support key workers who deliver critical services to Tennant Creek and the Barkly region more broadly.

Venture Housing will also be constructing three new social housing dwellings in Tennant Creek.

## Reducing crime

The Tennant Creek Youth Justice Facility has commenced operations under the Department of Corrections, with clients transferred and the new facility operational from March 2025.

The 2025 Budget provides \$15.2 million to construct a new visitor park in Tennant Creek, which includes \$5 million from the Commonwealth. The facility will provide access to a range of safe accommodation options for transitional and seasonal visitors from outside Tennant Creek.

## Remote housing

The 2025 Budget is reducing overcrowding and improving housing quality by delivering up to 2,700 houses over 10-years, and a comprehensive repairs and maintenance program, under the \$4 billion remote housing agreement, co-funded by the Territory and Commonwealth governments.

In 2024-25, around 24 dwellings are expected to be delivered across communities in the Barkly, including Ali Curung, Ampilatwatja, Canteen Creek, Epenarra and Imangara.

## Industrial subdivision

The 2025 Budget allocates \$1 million to progress design works to support the development of stage 2 of the Parnttali industrial subdivision in Tennant Creek.

## Mining centre

The Territory Government is investing to develop Tennant Creek as a mining, mineral and energy resources services centre to support a range of new projects across the region.

Tennant Mining, which has been acquired by global miner Pan African Resources, is establishing a gold processing facility at Nobles Nob that will support the reinvigoration of Tennant Creek as a key centre for gold production in the Territory. Construction is due to be complete in mid-2025, with first gold produced in the second half of 2025.

## Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Cultural Centre

The 2025 Budget includes investment in the Barkly region’s developing tourism industry.

The Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Cultural Centre will reopen in 2025 providing a new artist studio, upgraded gallery, performance and storage spaces, and immersive audio visual displays and experiences that share history, stories, arts and culture.

## Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	88 197
Housing and community amenities	10 221
Recreation, culture and religion	1 681
Economic affairs	945
Education	319
Total Barkly	101 364

Photograph courtesy of Department of Education and Training