

Greater Darwin

The Greater Darwin region includes the cities of Darwin and Palmerston, the Litchfield Shire, East Arm and Robertson Barracks.

The region is home to around 159,300 people, representing about 60% of the Territory's population. Greater Darwin has the lowest proportion of young people among the regions, with around 32% aged 24 years and under, and the highest proportion of population aged 65 years and over, at around 11%.

Darwin is the Territory's capital city and main administrative centre. Major industries include construction, defence, retail, tourism, education and training, public administration, community safety and health care. Darwin is a key gateway to the Territory's regional centres and tourist attractions, and an important strategic hub for trade and defence.

Major industries in Palmerston and the Litchfield Shire include construction, aquaculture, horticulture, cattle and crocodile farming, defence and LNG production.

The Robertson Barracks army base, located near Palmerston, hosts ongoing rotations of the United States marines in the Territory.

Coolalinga road safety upgrades

The 2026 Budget includes \$26.5 million to deliver safety upgrades and improve flow of traffic through the roundabout on Girraween Road and connect Henning Road to Virginia Road. The upgrades will be delivered over two stages:

- stage 1: \$7 million in 2026-27 to upgrade the Pickering Road/Girraween Road intersection, including constructing a slip-lane diversion around the existing roundabout to provide an alternative exit from Coolalinga Central to the Stuart Highway and reduce pressure on the Girraween Road roundabout
- stage 2: \$19.5 million will extend Henning Road, upgrade a section of Virginia Road, and construct a new roundabout to improve connectivity and traffic movement.

The Commonwealth and Territory-funded project will deliver significant safety upgrades by improving connections between commercial hubs to support rural and residential growth, provide safer pedestrian access, increase reliability for defence, essential services and freight and reduce local traffic pressure on the Stuart Highway.

Schools and community infrastructure

The 2026 Budget includes \$119.5 million to construct the new Palmerston Secondary Special Education School and deliver upgrades to Driver Secondary School and Rosebery Secondary School.

The \$110 million purpose-built secondary special education school will improve access and choice for secondary students with disability by allowing them to attend a specialised school in their local area.

A further \$9.5 million will deliver upgrades to the existing science block at Driver Secondary School, redevelop the former middle-years science and home economics facilities at Rosebery Secondary School into fit-for-purpose secondary spaces, and allow for detailed design for future growth at Rosebery.

This investment will support both schools to build a strong performance culture, retain students through the senior years, attract new enrolments and contribute to Palmerston's long-term liveability.

The 2026 Budget also invests \$20 million in community infrastructure in Darwin and Palmerston so more Territorians can get out and enjoy our amazing Territory lifestyle.

The funding will see upgrades to parks, playgrounds and footpaths making them safer and more accessible, while improvements to sporting facilities will help boost youth engagement. The Territory Government will work closely with local councils on the developments where facilities are Council-owned.

Royal Darwin Hospital

The 2026 Budget continues to invest in upgrades to Royal Darwin Hospital, including additional funding of:

- \$18.3 million per annum from 2026-27 to open and operate the new 32-bed multi-purpose modular ward, which will increase the number of beds available, improve patient flow, and support our frontline workers. Construction of the new ward is completed and due to be opened in mid-2026
- \$3 million over two years for detailed planning of a new forensic morgue and bereavement centre, urgent works at Royal Darwin Hospital to expand capacity of the existing morgue, and refresh amenities including the viewing room and reception area.

The 2026 Budget also includes \$500,000 to upgrade air-conditioning for a number of areas in Royal Darwin Hospital, including the maternity ward.

Kirkland Road roundabout

The 2026 Budget invests \$7 million in 2026-27 to deliver safety upgrades at the Kirkland Road and Woodlake Boulevard intersection, including upgrading the existing T-junction to a roundabout to reduce congestion, particularly during peak periods, improve commuter reliability and lower transport costs for businesses.

As part of the over-size and over-mass freight route to Darwin Port, the project will enhance network resilience by reducing crashes and incident-related disruptions that impact freight, defence and essential services.

Youth Hub

The Territory Government has launched the Maloerroe-ma Pathway Program, a new youth homelessness hub backed by a \$7.5 million investment delivered in partnership with Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

The hub is located at the Malak Shopping Centre and Community Services Complex, and will provide a safe, culturally grounded and locally led response for youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness, as well as emergency accommodation, meals, clothing, hygiene facilities, case management and pathways to health care, education and vocational opportunities.

Northern Marine Complex

The 2026 Budget includes activation of the Territory Coordinator's statutory powers for the first time, to support a coordinated, whole of government approach to deliver the Northern Marine Complex development area in East Arm, a precinct of major economic significance. This designation strengthens governance, coordination and cost control, ensuring public investment delivers maximum value while attracting private sector involvement and local jobs.

The Northern Marine Complex integrates the Darwin ship lift and Marine Industry Park across 246 hectares into a single, strategic maritime precinct. Anchored by a 5,500 tonne ship lift with multi-vessel dry-docking capability, and supported by purpose-built industrial land, hardstand, barge access and marine services, the precinct positions Darwin as a full-service maritime hub. As a Territory Development Area, the complex is set to drive defence capability, international trade and industrial growth, reinforcing Darwin's role as Australia's northern maritime gateway.

Darwin work camp

The 2026 Budget includes \$192.2 million to construct a new 192-bed work camp at Holtze, with the design and planning currently underway.

The centre will deliver accommodation and a skills training program for up to 192 low-security prisoners, offering an important opportunity for prisoners to leave custody with practical skills, work experience, and better likelihood of integrating successfully into the community. The site is expected to be commissioned and operational in late 2027.

