Queensland is experiencing the most sustained period of economic and population growth in its history.

In shaping the 2008-09 Budget, the Government has chosen to build tomorrow’s Queensland today.

The State’s prosperity is generating unprecedented demand for housing, healthcare, schools, transport, other essential services and vital infrastructure throughout Queensland’s regions.

The Budget delivers massive injections of funding to our public hospitals and healthcare system. It funds the biggest capital works program in the State’s history.

It increases services to the regions and delivers vital long-term social and economic infrastructure for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

A centrepiece of this Budget is tax cuts to help Queenslanders purchase their first home.

Queensland’s success is built on the success of our regions, from the fast-paced expansion of the south-east corner to the agricultural heartlands, the booming hubs of mining activity and the vibrant growth of coastal areas.

This document sets out the Government’s investment commitment to address the changing needs of the South Coast region.

Key priorities of the 2008-09 Budget are congestion management, housing affordability, delivering on the Health Action Plan and strengthened community services.

- Tax savings of up to $9,500 for first homebuyers
- Full abolition of mortgage duty from 1 July 2008
- Record 17% increase in health spending
- Increased rebates and tax breaks for older Queenslanders
- 200 new police officers
- 250 new ambulance officers and 145 new vehicles
- 270 new teachers
- $100 million boost for school maintenance over two years through the Tomorrow’s Schools initiative
- $20 million for ClimateSmart Home Services
- $20 million increase to develop community sport and recreation facilities
- $5.9 million boost to support front-line child protection workers
Household projections

Families come in all shapes and sizes and between now and 2026 we can expect to see a lot more of them. But what type of family will occupy most Queensland homes? For the last decade most Queensland households have consisted of couples with children. However household projections forecast that, over the next decade and beyond, the make-up of homes throughout our State will dramatically change.

Throughout our State an ageing population, declining fertility rates among younger couples, and baby boomers becoming ‘empty nesters’ will result in the number of couples without children and lone person households taking over as the most common types.

Take a look to the right to see how households in the South Coast region are likely to change between now and 2026.

Source: Data are based on medium series projections and are sourced from Department of Infrastructure and Planning, Population, Information and Forecasting Unit, Household projections Queensland Local Government Areas 2007.
Healthy individuals and communities
We are committed to improving and sustaining the health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders by investing in infrastructure and services that will strengthen our public health system, promote healthier lifestyles and enhance confidence and safety in our communities.

As part of the Government’s continued commitment to meet the growing needs of the community, in 2008-09 spending on health infrastructure and initiatives in the South Coast region will include:

- $17.2 million to support people with a disability through a range of programs
- $2.9 million for short-term and time-limited respite support for families of people with a disability
- $2.3 million over four years to establish new residential care facilities to accommodate young people with complex and extreme behaviours
- $2.1 million over four years to establish additional out-of-home care placements for children in care
- $1.7 million for youth development services to build independent living skills.

Congestion management
To help keep one of Australia’s fastest growing regions on the move, the Government will make a number of significant investments in the South Coast region in 2008-09, including:

- $127 million to extend the Gold Coast railway from Robina to Varsity Lakes
- $50.8 million towards finalising the planning for the Gold Coast Rapid Transit System from Parkwood to Broadbeach
- $37.7 million for improvements to the Pacific Motorway between Nerang and Tugun, with Queensland and Australian Government funding
- $20.9 million for the Robina Transit Oriented Development demonstration project being delivered in parallel with the new Varsity Lakes train station
- $20 million to continue widening the Gold Coast Highway to four lanes between Government Road and Robert Street
- $18 million to continue widening Hope Island Road to four lanes between Santa Barbara Road and Columbus Drive
- $10.7 million to complete bus priority works on the Gold Coast Highway south from Broadbeach

Building infrastructure
Planning and delivering the infrastructure needed to provide essential and efficient services to our rapidly growing community – now and in the future – is one of our key priorities. For many regions, growing populations have resulted in higher demand for energy.

The Government’s commitment to the South Coast region includes $31 million for new and upgraded transformers at Southport, Cades County, Merrimac and Beenleigh and a new power line between Loganholme and Beenleigh substations.

Investing in our region’s safety
The Queensland Government is committed to enhancing safety in our region by investing in police infrastructure. In 2008-09 the Government will invest in a range of projects, including $7.3 million for the new Coomera Police District Office and $3.6 million for a new 24-hour police station at Reedy Creek/Robina.

Pictured here is the Southport Police Station.
Regional development

Regional development is at the heart of Queensland’s economic future and the Government is laying the foundation for future economic growth and prosperity for all Queenslanders by responding to the growth needs of the region.

In 2008-09, the Government will invest $217 million in the 96-kilometre Southern Regional Water Pipeline between Camerons’ Hill in western Brisbane and Molendinar on the Gold Coast, linking the Wivenhoe system with supply sources including the Hinze Dam and the desalination plant under construction at Tugun.

The Government will invest a further $106 million to improve the reliability and supply of water including:

- $100 million to increase the Hinze Dam’s total storage capacity
- $3 million to the Queensland Smart Water Facility at Griffith University’s Gold Coast Campus
- $3 million to complete the state of the art Pimpama Recycled Water Treatment Plant at the Gold Coast.

Economic growth

Queensland’s economic growth is supported by rising productivity and increasing labour force participation. The Government remains committed to expanding the productive capacity of the Queensland economy through initiatives that develop infrastructure, promote education and training and facilitate research and innovation.

Commitments to the South Coast region in 2008-09 include:

- $12 million to commence constructing a new campus at Gold Coast Institute of TAFE to deliver high technology training
- $91.5 million to provide over 5.6 million hours of vocational education and training including $1.6 million to provide additional trades training places as a part of the Queensland Skills Plan. This is expected to create an additional 2,360 training places in the South Coast region by 2010
- $4.2 million to provide employment and training assistance to 468 people and employ an Indigenous Employment and Training Support Officer.

Helping Queenslanders under financial pressure

With household budgets under increasing stress from rising interest rates, higher rents and mounting grocery and fuel prices, the Government is committed to taking the pressure off Queensland families.

Each year the Government offers relief to many Queenslanders through discounts, rebates and subsidies to help improve their access to, and meet the cost of, a range of services including discounted rail and taxi fares, reduced car registration costs, exemption from the community ambulance levy and cheaper electricity bills. In 2008-09 these concessions are estimated to have a total value of around $1 billion.

However the Queensland Government recognises more and more families are ‘doing it tough’ and is acting on its commitment to help Queenslanders make ends meet.

On top of the existing concessions, the 2008-09 State Budget sees the implementation of a major housing affordability strategy that will provide relief for Queenslanders who are buying or renting their homes.

The Government will also spend $570 million in 2008-09 in further relief as it tackles the rising cost of fuel by ensuring all Queenslanders receive the full 8.354 cents per litre fuel subsidy.

Housing affordability

The Queensland Government is committed to improving housing affordability for those Queenslanders hardest hit by the current economic environment.

In addition to the substantial tax relief to be introduced by the Government in 2008-09 for first home buyers, low-income families and individuals in the South Coast region will receive housing services and support in 2008-09 in the form of:

- $16.2 million to construct, purchase and upgrade public housing involving purchasing or completing 25 homes and commencing the construction of a further 27 homes
- $17 million to provide affordable rental accommodation
- $1.7 million to purchase land for future public housing
- $900,000 for community housing programs and services to address crisis and long-term housing needs
- $3.1 million for community renewal programs

Education and early childhood development

Giving every child every chance to learn in the best possible environment is a priority for the Government. This is reflected in our 2008-09 commitment to the South Coast region of an additional $4.1 million for maintenance programs and $83.8 million in capital works investment in schools, including:

- $26.6 million for a new high school at Ormeau
- $25.5 million for a new primary school at Western Oxenford
- $16.9 million for a new primary school at Cupania
- $9.7 million to complete stage 1B of Coomera Springs State School
- $2.8 million for a two-storey, eight-space teaching block at Greenbank State School
- $2.1 million over two years to redevelop the former Beenleigh Preschool as an early childhood education and care facility
- $266,000 towards the Nerang Early Years Centre.

Prevention and early intervention

The Queensland Government is focused on developing and supporting prevention and early intervention strategies or initiatives that are targeted to disadvantaged areas, individuals and/or population groups.

In 2008-09 the Government will commit $3.3 million to support South Coast families, including early intervention programs to improve the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and their families. A further $1.3 million over four years will be allocated for a Family Intervention Service which will strengthen child protection, providing direct support to families in their own home.

Managing climate change and protecting the environment

The Government is committed to minimising harm to the environment by using and promoting modern and effective environmental management techniques. In 2008-09 the Government will allocate $30 million for new climate change initiatives from the proceeds of the Queensland Climate Change Fund. The first major initiative of the Fund is a ClimateSmart Home Service to provide Queenslanders with tools to monitor and reduce their energy use to deliver savings in household electricity costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Unemployment rate(a)

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<th>Unemployment rate (%)</th>
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(a) Data based on un-smoothed series.
Source: DEEWR, Small Area Labour Markets – Australia.

Tourism

Tourism takings ( $ million)

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</table>

Source: ABS, Tourist Accommodation, Queensland (8635.5 ABS001 and 8635.5)
Strong economic growth maintains record low unemployment

- Economic growth in Queensland is forecast to strengthen to 4¼% in 2008-09, outstripping the nation for the 13th year in a row.

- With jobs growth again outpacing the nation, the unemployment rate is estimated to fall to a 34-year low of 3¾% in 2007-08 and remain there in 2008-09, taking it below the national rate for the fifth consecutive year.

Strong finances

- A General Government operating surplus of $809 million is forecast in 2008-09.

- The State’s net worth is budgeted to grow from $123 billion at 30 June 2008 to over $140 billion by 30 June 2012 – reflecting Queensland’s position of holding the strongest balance sheet in the nation.

- Interest expenses in the General Government sector is budgeted at just 1.5% of revenue in 2008-09.

Competitive taxes

- Queensland maintains its competitive tax status, with taxpayers in other states and territories to pay an average of $274 more state tax each than Queenslanders in 2008-09.

- The 2008-09 Budget provides tax relief to make housing more affordable. From 1 July 2008, the home and first home transfer duty concession thresholds will be increased from $320,000 to $350,000. The first home concession threshold will be further increased from 1 September so that no transfer duty will be payable on a first home valued up to $500,000.

- Mortgage duty will be abolished in full from 1 July 2008 – another saving to those taking out home loans.

- There are also land tax cuts, including specific measures to benefit Queensland’s elderly such as exempting aged-care facilities.

- While already having the nation’s lowest pay-roll tax rate, further relief will benefit 6,800 businesses in Queensland.

The 2008-09 State Budget delivers a massive boost to health, with a record Budget allocation of $8.352 billion.

The Budget funds new hospitals and upgrades at locations across the State. Areas of increasing demand such as emergency departments and birthing services are a key focus.

There is a $100 million boost to school maintenance to deliver a record program for the next two years – part of the $6 billion Budget allocation to the Department of Education and Training. This funding includes 270 new teachers and teacher aides to meet enrolment growth and 4,250 additional trade training places to help address skills shortages.

To boost front-line services, 200 new police and 250 new ambulance officers are funded. The Budget also provides for 145 new ambulance vehicles as part of a record emergency services allocation.

A new $20 million ClimateSmart Home Service will assist Queensland households to meet the challenges of climate change. Public transport will be boosted with 12 new trains funded this financial year.

An increase in the electricity rebate and other tax breaks will assist older Queenslanders.

With tax cuts to assist Queenslanders break into home ownership, this is a Budget focussed on the future and delivering the front-line services a growing state needs.
Beaudesert
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Centre 9, William Street, Beaudesert QLD 4285
E-Mail qgbeaudesq@transport.qld.gov.au
Telephone 5542 9400
Facsimile 5542 9450
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Wednesday – 10am to 4:30pm

Beenleigh
Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry
96 George Street
Beenleigh QLD 4207
Telephone 3287 8585
Facsimile 3287 8589
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday – 8.30am to 5pm

Beenleigh
Department of Natural Resources and Water
32 Tansey Street
Beenleigh QLD 4207
Telephone 3884 8020
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Opening Hours: Monday to Friday – 8.30am to 4.30pm

Gold Coast
Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry
Ground Floor
26 Marine Parade
Southport QLD 4215
Telephone 5583 7599
Facsimile 5583 7591
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday – 8.30am to 5pm

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Level 1, APVC Building
14 Edgewater Court
Robina QLD 4230
Telephone 5583 1700
Facsimile 5583 1744
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday – 8.30am to 4.30pm

Robina
Department of Communities – Gold Coast
Level 1, APVC Building
198 Robina Town Centre Drive
Robina QLD 4230
Telephone 5583 4400
Facsimile 5583 4429
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday – 8.30am to 5pm

Ipswich
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(Services Beaudesert Shire residents)
5-7 Wharf Street
Ipswich QLD 4305
Telephone 3280 1031
Facsimile 3280 1035
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday – 8.30am to 5pm

Other services
Smart Service Queensland
For information on all other Government services call 13 13 04
www.qld.gov.au

State Emergency Service
Telephone 132 500

Queensland Water Commission
Telephone 1300 789 906

13 HEALTH
Telephone 13 43 25 84