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Dubai's master plan: *where the government is investing, and what it means for property*

The D33 agenda, the 2040 Urban Master Plan, the Metro Blue Line and a record AED 302bn budget. A buyer's guide to the areas they favour.

Image: Dubai Media Office

Dubai plans its growth years ahead and publishes the plans. Three of them shape where demand for homes will go over the next decade: the **Dubai Economic Agenda (D33)**, the **Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan**, and the transport projects that connect the two, led by the **Dubai Metro Blue Line** and the new **Al Maktoum International Airport**. Here is what each one commits to, and which areas stand to gain.

Dubai today *in numbers*

4.8M
RESIDENTS (SEPTEMBER 2026), UP 226,885 SINCE JANUARY

AED 917B
REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS IN 2025, A RECORD (+20%)

AED 355B
GDP IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 2025 (+4.7%)

AED 302.7B
GOVERNMENT BUDGET FOR 2026–2028, THE LARGEST EVER

Sources: Dubai Data and Statistics Establishment via Gulf News (29 September 2026); Dubai Land Department via Gulf News (12 January 2026); WAM; The National (23 November 2025).

1. D33: *doubling the economy by 2033*

Launched in January 2023, the Dubai Economic Agenda D33 sets the economic targets for the decade:

Size of the economy	Double it by 2033 and rank among the world's top three cities
Economic transactions	AED 32 trillion over 10 years
Foreign trade	Double to AED 25.6 trillion, adding 400 cities as trading partners
Foreign direct investment	AED 650 billion
Digital economy	AED 100 billion a year from digital transformation
Projects	100 transformative projects

The 2026–2028 budget backs this with **AED 302.7 billion** of spending. Around **48%** of 2026 spending goes to infrastructure, the largest single share.

2. The 2040 Urban Master Plan: *where people will live*

The 2040 plan, launched in March 2021, decides how land is used across the emirate as the population grows from 3.3 million in 2020 to a planned **5.8 million by 2040**, with 7.8 million people in the city during the day.

- **Five urban centres** get the most investment: Deira and Bur Dubai; Downtown and Business Bay; Dubai Marina and JBR; the Expo 2020 centre (now Expo City Dubai, next to Dubai South); and Dubai Silicon Oasis.
- **Green and leisure space doubles**, and nature reserves and rural areas will cover **60%** of the emirate.
- **Public beaches grow by up to 400%**, which is why waterfront projects such as Dubai Islands and Palm Jebel Ali matter.
- Land for hotels and tourism rises by **134%**, and land for commercial activity rises to **168 sq km**.

3. The Metro Blue Line: *a new spine for the east*

The Blue Line is the biggest public transport project under way in Dubai. Construction started in 2025 and tunnelling began in May 2026.

Cost	**AED 20.5 billion** (MAPA, Limak and CRRC consortium)
Length and stations	30 km, about half underground, with **14 stations** and 28 trains
Areas served	Mirdif, Dubai Silicon Oasis, Dubai Creek Harbour and International City, with direct links to Dubai International Airport
Riders	200,000 a day by 2030 and 320,000 a day by 2040
Opening	**9 September 2029**
Effect on property	The RTA estimates land and property values around its stations will rise by **up to 25%**, and it will serve areas home to about 1 million residents by 2040



The RTA's official Blue Line facts sheet. Image: Dubai Media Office

Prices along the Blue Line

The Blue Line was approved in November 2023. Dubai Land Department data shows how median prices per square foot have moved in three of the areas it will serve since then:

AREA	2023	2026 (TO OCTOBER)	CHANGE
Dubai Silicon Oasis	AED 673	AED 1,077	+60%
International City	AED 518	AED 675	+30%
Dubai Creek Harbour	AED 2,063	AED 2,563	+24%

Source: Dubai Land Department transaction data, median sale price per sq ft, all property types. Prices also reflect the wider market and the mix of homes sold each year, so the Blue Line is one factor among several.

4. Al Maktoum Airport: *the south-west*

The other big bet is the AED 128 billion expansion of Al Maktoum International Airport in Dubai South, with the first phase due in 2032. Together with Jafza and Jebel Ali Port, it anchors growth in the south-west of the city. Read our articles on **the airport** and **Jafza**.

Which areas *benefit most*

AREA	WHY	READ MORE
Dubai Creek Harbour	Blue Line station and a link to Dubai International Airport	Palace Residences Creek Blue
Dubai Silicon Oasis	One of the five 2040 urban centres and on the Blue Line	Danube Timez
Dubai South & Expo City	2040 urban centre next to the new airport	Dubai South guide
Dubai Marina & JLT	2040 urban centre with 26,000 DMCC companies next door	DMCC article
Deira & Dubai Islands	2040 urban centre and new public beaches	Dubai Islands guide
Bur Dubai & Rashid Yachts	2040 urban centre, waterfront regeneration	Rashid Yachts & Marina guide
Palm Jebel Ali & Jebel Ali	New beaches, Jafza and Jebel Ali Port	Palm Jebel Ali guide

What this means *for buyers*

- **Follow the infrastructure dates.** Areas often re-price as projects get closer to opening: the Blue Line in September 2029 and Al Maktoum Airport's first phase in 2032.
- **Buy near the station, not just the area.** The RTA's up-to-25% uplift applies to land around the stations, so walking distance matters.
- **Demand keeps growing.** Dubai added about 227,000 residents in the first nine months of 2026, and the 2040 plan expects 5.8 million people.
- **Check the developer and the handover.** Strong plans attract many launches, so choose developers with a delivery record and payment plans that match the infrastructure timeline.

Projects *to consider*



Palace Residences Creek Blue

Dubai Creek Harbour · Emaar



Danube Timez Residences

Dubai Silicon Oasis · Danube



Oasis Lofts

Dubai Silicon Oasis · Uniestate

Buy where Dubai *is investing*

Ask for launches near the Blue Line stations, the new airport and the 2040 urban centres.

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