MEDIA RELEASE
Improving economic development in Victorian municipalities

The Victorian Parliament’s Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee has tabled its report on the Inquiry into local economic development initiatives in Victoria.

The report examined the range of economic development initiatives being carried out in Victoria and how all levels of government interact with businesses and communities to achieve strong local economies.

Mr Neale Burgess MP, Chair of the Committee, said ‘the report aims to strengthen the Victorian economy by improving the way all levels of government engage in economic development strategies.

‘Although some councils are performing well when it comes to economic development, it was clear that many don’t consider it a priority.’ Mr Burgess said. ‘Local councils are seen by many businesses as another level of red tape, rather than an avenue for support services.

‘It is important that economic development is a priority of not only government, but also the private sector and the community as a whole. To reap the benefits of strong economies we need to communicate the message that growing business is everybody’s business.’

The report makes 43 recommendations on:

- clarifying the roles of government, the private sector and the community in economic development
- reinforcing the importance of economic development for communities
- promoting and strengthening collaboration and partnerships with the private sector
- infrastructure funding and delivery mechanisms
- improving investment attraction schemes
- improving the Victorian regulatory environment
- local government electoral reform.

The Committee received 76 submissions and took evidence from 73 individuals representing 48 organisations. It travelled around Victoria to meet with local councils and business representatives in Melbourne, Bendigo, Ballarat, Mansfield, Dandenong, Geelong and Traralgon. It also travelled to Manchester, London, Amsterdam and Berlin to meet with organisations that are considered international leaders in research and promotion of local and regional economic development.

For comment on the report, contact the Committee Chair, Neale Burgess MP, on (03) 5977 5600.