

NARROMINE SHIRE COUNCIL

ABN 99 352 328 405

"Times Change... Values Don't"



4 July, 2008

The Secretary,
House Standing Committee on Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development and Local Government,
itrldg.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Inquiry into Regional Development Funding

Narromine Shire has been a beneficiary of the previous Regional Partnerships funding program which contributed to development of our excellent Narromine Shire Family Health Centre.

Points we would like considered in your inquiry into possible future funding programs of this type are:

1. There is a critical need for ongoing Australian Government support for mid level infrastructure development projects in regional and rural areas (valued, say in the range of \$100,000 to \$1,000,000). The need for such projects is generally clearly conceived by local communities and planned, delivered and supported by local government organisations and/or community groups. Such groups simply do not have the resources or capital raising capacity to independently, locally fund such infrastructure development.
2. There must be transparent and clearly communicated selection criteria for grant funding, and a similarly defined assessment process.
3. There should be a process for regional coordination, advice to applicants, and possibly, for some inputs to prioritisation.
4. There should be a clearly communicated commitment to a short time period between receipt/closure of applications and communication of decisions – say, two months.
5. Final recommendations for funding should be the domain of an independent, skills based advisory panel appointed by, and reporting to, the Minister.

I look forward to the outcomes of your inquiry and to the establishment of a new, improved scheme for financial support of Regional Infrastructure Development.

Yours faithfully,

Ian Rogan,
General Manager.

