




Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Southport CBD

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (3.40 pm): On 4 October last year, the Deputy Premier and I had the pleasure of declaring the Southport CBD as a priority development area. Last month the state officially adopted the Southport PDA scheme—a huge milestone for the Southport business community. One of my primary reasons for running for parliament in 2012 was to fight for the reinvigoration of the Southport CBD. It has been a major focus since being elected. The declaration of the PDA has been a significant step forward for Southport and the Gold Coast. For many years, I have told anyone who would listen that Southport is and always has been the traditional business hub and CBD of the Gold Coast. All it needed was some formal recognition and some serious TLC. On the wall of my electorate office hangs a map of the Gold Coast from the city council's new City Plan 2015, which clearly identifies Southport with a higher order designation as the city's CBD. This is the first time that has ever been done in the history of our city.

So what is in a name? What does the PDA and the designation of Southport as the CBD of the Gold Coast really mean? As of 25 September this year, 29 new development applications had been submitted and approved, and these applications have been calculated to be worth more than \$1.96 billion in investment value; approximately 5,000 new apartments have been approved; some 41,000 square metres of office and commercial space have been approved, increasing the existing floor space in the area by a third; and the decision time on applications has been slashed, with the average approval time being fewer than 34 days.

The vision for Southport—which was long fought for by John Howe, Hans Torv, James Frizelle, Dr John Kearney, Charlie Schwerkolt and other members of the Committee for Southport, along with the Southport Chamber of Commerce's Brian Sohler, Laird Marshall, Noel Grummitt and Alan Rickard—is finally being realised. We now have a world-class sporting venue in the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre. We have a revitalised health and knowledge precinct, with a brand-new private hospital with 450 beds being built. We also have a brand-new integrated public transport system—all adding to the soon-to-be-revamped retail and hospitality precinct of Southport. The owners of Australia Fair have told us that since the light rail started operating retail sales have increased between 20 and 30 per cent in the centre alone in the last few months.

As a government, we have been busy cutting red tape for business. We have been investing in growth. The opportunities for business in Southport are just phenomenal. The new Chinatown is well underway, with a further \$12 million to be invested in Australia Fair West. That is without even mentioning the construction of the games village and some \$200 million that our government has committed to the upgrade of Smith Street.