

## **MEDIA RELEASE 4 SEPTEMBER 2008**

### **PROTEST SCHEDULED FOR PREMIER BRUMBY'S TRANSPORT SUMMIT**

Tomorrow the Royal Park Protection Group (RPPG) and the Yarra Campaign Against Tunnels (YCAT) are, in consultation with resident and environmental groups in the East and West of Melbourne, facilitating a Community Protest for resident, community, and environment groups plus concerned individuals at the Premier's Transport Summit to be held at Telstra Dome in Melbourne.

Opposition to the Brumby Government's proposed extension of the Eastern Freeway in road tunnels under inner city suburbs, through Royal Park and Holland Park plus the western suburbs has steadily mounted since the Eddington Review was launched. Anger was expressed during June and July at rallies at local Council meetings. Anti-road tunnel protestors forced Councillors at Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Yarra then Brimbank to pass "no tunnels" resolutions. Many community groups were dismayed that the recent Transport Forums conducted by the Government and also by individual Members of Parliament were by invitation only and excluded many interested community representatives. People feel that they have no voice in decisions about Brumby's Grand Transport Plan.

Rod Quantock of RPPG said today: *"The East West Link is in essence a truck city by pass route designed to get freight via the Eastern Freeway and East Link to Dandenong. It will in no way serve commuters as they will not be able to turn off to the City but can only get to the Port of Melbourne or Tullamarine Airport. In the process of tunnel construction over five to twelve years, inner city suburban streets will be destroyed; Royal Park and Holland Park in Kensington will be transformed into giant quarries; and sports fields, community facilities and wetlands ripped up. In addition traffic congestion will worsen and gridlock will prevail. It is extraordinary that the Premier should be favouring building road tunnels at a time when the end of oil is in sight and the public is screaming for improved and expanded public transport. It is tragic that the Premier is considering spending \$10 billion of our money on 20th century solutions to a 21st century crisis. Democracy goes underground."*

Dr Paul Mees, transport expert and supporter of public transport, commented recently on the Eddington report tunnel proposals: *"...the rail tunnel is not needed" and "...the road tunnel is a waste of money."* He said that: *"We seemed poised to commit the largest amount ever invested in Victoria's history to dealing with non-problems in a way that will benefit only the vested interests associated with large engineering projects."*

RPPG is opposing the construction of road tunnels and is demanding a proper review of the public transport and rail freight systems; remedies for climate change; for the Government to keep its hands off our parkland; and to protect residential amenity.

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