

East-West Link meeting at Adam Bandt's office, 280 King Street, Melbourne, 29 March 2012, 6.00pm – 7.30pm

Rose Iser chaired meeting; Adam Bandt didn't make an appearance.

Daniel Bowen (Public Transport Users Association) and Paul Mees (RMIT University) were the main presenters.

Other energetic contributors: Katie Miller (Flemington Association) and Freda Watkin and John Cox (Yarra Campaign for Action on Transport); also Alison Clarke (councillor, City of Yarra) but she left early.

Suggested strategy: Define alternatives to East-West tunnel, which Adam can support (*Rose Iser*). Put together a package of perhaps 10 rail projects, including outer suburban ones, to improve public transport options for commuters, targeting, say, Wyndham and Frankston, emphasising "This is what \$11 billion really buys" (*Katie Miller*). (Outer suburbanites support public transport.) At the same time bust 'myths' put out by powerful pro-roads lobby, using expert technicians, such as those working in Perth (*Paul Mees*).

A 'signature project' makes government popular. Current good projects include: rail to Monash/Rowville; Doncaster (light) rail along freeway median (*Paul*).

Also lobby councils; this makes government take notice. Yarra Council has committed serious money to campaign to oppose E-W tunnel and support Doncaster rail link to city (see *Melbourne Times Weekly* 11/4/12, p.8). Keep pressure up on City of Melbourne, which resolved in 2008 not to support E-W Link but is now sitting on fence.

Challenge technical myths (extrapolated from notes of meeting) such as:

- (1) That rail projects cost more than road projects. Not true: Perth rail project cost four times less than promoted (*Paul*).
- (2) That rail projects (as currently planned for Rowville) require deep tunnels or high bridges and maximum vertical grade of 2% (one in 50). Nonsense: Glen Waverley line has steep gradients that haven't caused failures (*Paul*).
- (3) The claim that no outer lines can be built until central city rail tunnel is constructed. Not true: not dependent on tunnel.
- (4) That none of three route options suggested for Doncaster rail project is feasible. No, it's not difficult on government-owned freeway median.
- (5) That Clifton Hill Station doesn't have capacity for more trains. Not true: Clifton Hill carries fewer trains now than in 1929 (*Paul*).
- (6) The effectiveness of a road tunnel: The number of people travelling across town is quite small; not many would be served by a new road tunnel (*Daniel Bowen*).
- (7) That new roads eliminate congestion on local roads. Not true: witness King Street in Melbourne and Springvale Road still blocked in peak hours (*Daniel*).

We need more Smartbuses, running frequently on arterial roads. Possibly changes to tram routes — priority at traffic lights? Carrot and stick: carrot is better services and connections; stick is rising petrol prices, road congestion (*Daniel*).

Action: Disseminate main arguments, websites people should read. Create small reference group — Rose, Gabby Stannus, Katie, YCAT (Freda or John?). Formulate specific actions to take before next meeting. Meet again in four weeks, having reported back to groups. Continue to meet every few weeks.