Proposed alternative to Tram Bridge Panel Hearing
Madam Chair & Panel Members

Thank you for the opportunity to present my proposal.

Firstly, I want to preface my remarks to our opposition of proposed tram bridge across the Yarra River from Collins to Lorimer Streets, but before I do, I want to compliment all involved in the draft for consultation document for their input and attention to detail. I also want to put on the record that we believe the Fishermans Bend redevelopment will be Australia’s greatest piece of infrastructure if done correctly over the many years.

In presenting our alternative plan, we do so, as it’s easy to oppose and criticise the Public Transport proposal on page 31 of the document. We have spent countless hours trying to find a compromise that satisfies all parties and our plan has been modified many times, we are not saying that with experts input that it can’t be improved or modified further.

We would have loved to provide a proper feasibility study with plans engineering and technical details for presentation today but that would have cost thousands which we don’t have. It’s not for the want of trying, as I have met with Hon Jacinta Allan, Minister for Public Transport- Dept of Economic Development and with her Advisor on 2 occasions even inviting him to our balcony which he has done so, as to appreciate the loss of yachts & larger boats would have on the YE Marina. The same offer has been extended to Jacinta & Premier Andrews. I also met with Director, of Precinct Development & Projects, and have met with a person who is an experienced professional Quality Surveyors & Construction Cost Consultants, who again could not give estimate without proper detailed plans and specifications.
The alternate Immersed Tube Proposal.

1. We believe that our option would eliminate the need for 3 expensive bridges -

(a) Already mentioned Yarra crossing from Collins to Lorimer Streets which, if constructed at a height of 6.5m would almost certainly kill the viability and ambiance of Yarra’s Edge Marina and would eliminate between 49-71 yachts & larger boats from YE Marina which only has 149 berths.

(b) The need for a bike and pedestrian bridge linking Docklands & Yarra’s Edge (North & South sides of the Yarra, admittedly it would not be as attractive going underwater but it’s for a short distance only (see objective 1.4) but again a much less expensive option, as it would be included in the immersed tube (see page 73 plan)

(c) Eliminate a very expensive freight bridge believed to run parallel with The Bolte Bridge using freight trams carrying containers from Webb Dock via the existing Lorimer St freight alignment directly into the north-side Swanson and Dyson port facilities. (See page 36) Item 1.8.3 using the immersed tube maybe an option to investigate the opportunity to relocate underground, overhead transmission lines.

2. The immersed tube is a kind of underwater tunnel composed of segments, constructed elsewhere and floated to the tunnel site to be sunk into place. They are commonly used for road & rail crossings of rivers, estuaries and sea channels/harbours. The main advantage of an immersed tube is that they can be considerably more cost effective than bored tunnels and bridges. Please see link for more information. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immersed_tube
There are approximately 200 tubes across the world with the deepest in Istanbul Turkey and the longest link will connect Denmark & Germany and is expected to be completed in 2021. Sydney Harbour already has one which was completed in 1992 at a depth of 25m so I shouldn't think crossing the Yarra for that short distance would be a problem, considering the deepest part of the Yarra is 11m with approx 2m of Coode Island silt.

3 My suggestion is to extend tram routes 70 & 86 into Fishermans Bend precinct where they currently terminate in Docklands Drive. The reason for these tram routes is that I believe they have plenty of capacity as opposed to tram routes 11 & 48 terminating in Collins St also tram route 109 Box Hill to Port Melbourne was considered, but again at maximum user capacity.

4 The new route would either go under or beside Ron Barassi Snr Park, with a new tram stop servicing that sporting precinct. The tunnel would surface in 3 possible locations

(A) Lorimer St, for tram heading to Fishermans Bend and to take containers north side to Swanson dock using automated robotics.

(B) Turner St as per original route see page 31 coming either above or under Graham St. To me this is the better option as it is better having the tube go under the Yarra running parallel with Bolte Bridge as it's the shortest distance to cross, plus coming up in Turner St means no crossing required in Lorimer which is already an extremely busy road particularly at peak times. Using Rail and Tram crossings seems to go totally against Andrews Govt policy of eliminating them across Melbourne at considerable expense.
(C) It seems to me that the proposed southern corridor tram down Fennell St would be far better coming along Graham St so that you are not duplicating tram tracks and a less expensive option. Also acquiring the many strata title properties off Ingles St to provide for northern corridor tram and creating Lorimer Central Open Space See Page 73 will cost millions when other open spaces could be provided at minimal cost elsewhere.

(D) Public Transport along Lorimer St is already provided via Bus route 237 which goes via Collins St & Queen St to Franklin St

(E) We believe that PT should explore the option of river transport starting from new tram stop at the base of Bolte Bridge stopping at Marina Y.E South Wharf Crown Casino South Bank (termination) And returning on the hour depending on patronage.

5 The alternate tram route coming from Fishermans Bend area into Docklands Drive could bring much needed activation to the New Quay area and should boost patronage to the upgraded “The District” shopping precinct, which should create jobs and increase business opportunities in the Docklands area. It would also assist with the new urban renewal area of City North via the under-utilised LaTrobe St tram corridor.

6 After discussions with Transport Minister Allan she explained the importance of Southern Cross Station as a hub for future growth. The new tram route would satisfy that suggestion and would connect Fishermans Bend with Southern Cross, Flagstaff, Melbourne Central and State Library Metro stations.
7 Other considerations to be taken into account is the possible Yarra’s Edge Class Action Committee (YCAC) whereby residents and boat owners may take action against the Government and it’s believed that figures of between $300-$500 million could be sought for loss of amenity and damage done to existing businesses in that area.

8 The City of Melbourne supports no tram bridge and has a major interest in YE Marina. When council discussed Fishermans Bend Consultation report, former Lord Mayor Robert Doyle stated ‘We have enough low level bridges.’ As we already have 8 low level bridges across the Yarra from Webb Bridge to Princes Bridge, do we really need a 9th? As new residents to the area and talking to tourists they are amazed at the beauty of the Marina the variety of large boats that visit the area and some have said it’s an unknown part of Melbourne’s jewel in the crown location. So why spoil it with a tram bridge when there are other possible options. Sydney has abundance of waterfront, Melbourne does not, so let’s enhance what we have.

9 Fishermans Bend and Docklands/Yarra’s Edge will have many similarities in the future with Fishermans Bend having approximately 80,000 residents and host 80,000 jobs by approx 2050. Docklands and Yarraw’s Edge currently has 58,000 jobs expecting that figure to rise to 80,000 by 2025. Experts believe there will be approximately 25,000 residents by 2025 so let’s make it as attractive as possible for people living so close to CBD thus alleviating growth pressures on Governments to provide much needed infrastructure to corridor growth areas.

10 Finally, with Andrews Government having signed contracts on West Gate tunnel and expecting to move 9 metres per day surly the alternate tram proposal could link in with the well-established Melbourne Metro Rail Project. I am aware that the tram network into Fisherman’s Bend is not a priority until 2025 but why not start discussions now rather than try and duplicate services at a later date. In my opinion, real emphasis should be put into train services with some new trains able to carry up to 1000 passengers.
We the residents of Docklands/Yarra’s Edge would like to have the comfort that our alternate tram proposal could be considered sooner rather than later, as once your consultation period has ended and the final draft is forwarded to Government for consideration it may be too late for inclusion.

Keith & Karen Sutherland
0418509430