



# Media Release

5<sup>th</sup> March 2009

## Committee welcomes early road by-pass

Committee for Ballarat has warmly welcomed Premier Brumby's announcement that the Deer Park Bypass on the Western Freeway will be open next month, eight months early.

The bypass will allow motorists and road transport vehicles to avoid about ten kilometres of inefficient and congested urban roads on the route to and from Melbourne. It will provide alternative, freeway grade roads with their associated safety and efficiency.

The Committee Chair, Professor David James said "this has been a project we recognised as being important for Ballarat and the region, and we fought hard with the others in the region to gain State and federal support. We were very pleased that the federal Treasurer at the time, Mr Peter Costello, acknowledged our role in securing the Commonwealth's funding commitment. It is very good to see those efforts have come to an early conclusion"

Professor James gave credit to Committee for Ballarat members who had the insight and persistence in 2005 to become very active in this key initiative, and who have the credibility and lobbying power to influence government decisions for the long term good of the region.

Professor James said that "the early opening will allow the benefits for businesses in Ballarat to be realised earlier. These benefits include safer, more efficient and faster access to the Ballarat region from Melbourne, and to Melbourne from Ballarat and the region. The bypass will stimulate growth in Ballarat's business activity at a time when the region's businesses are under some pressure"

Committee for Ballarat CEO Dr Doug Lloyd said "the focus on road transport will help make Committee's other transport projects more effective." These other priorities include the future arterial road link in Ballarat's west, and a road and rail freight hub connected with developments near the airport precinct.

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**Media contact:** Doug Lloyd 5332 1240