

# Premier Mark McGowan: 'Virtually' no impact on WA from Commonwealth infrastructure review

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Premier Mark McGowan says the Prime Minister has assured him WA projects will be largely unaffected.  
Credit: Iain Gillespie/The West Australian

The future of [road and rail projects planned](#) across WA remains in doubt, despite Premier Mark McGowan's claims the State will emerge largely unscathed from a snap review of the nation's infrastructure pipeline.

The Federal opposition is warning the Albanese Government that cutting "vital" projects will send a message that it doesn't care about Western Australians.

The Federal Government has launched a review of the Commonwealth's infrastructure pipeline, which it claims became clogged up with "press release" projects during the Coalition's nine years in power.

The Albanese Government remains committed to a 10-year, \$120 billion pipeline, but the spiralling cost of construction and workforce shortages means it can't fund all of the more than 730 projects on the list.

Labor-promised projects aren't facing the axe, meaning it's those announced under the Morrison Government which are vulnerable to being delayed, stripped of funding or scrapped altogether.

The previous Morrison government included more than \$500 million in new road and rail funding in its final pre-election Budget alone, headlined by cash for substantial upgrades to Tonkin Highway and Great Northern Highway, and an additional level crossing removal at Morrison Road on the Armadale Line.

Mr McGowan, who was briefed on the 90-day review at national cabinet on Friday, said Prime Minister Anthony Albanese had advised him that there would be “very little impact” on federally-funded projects in WA.

The Premier believed the review would mostly target the Nationals’ pet projects in NSW, Queensland and Victoria, including the \$31bn Inland rail.

“I expect very little impact on us,” Mr McGowan said.

“I think most of the projects here, in fact, virtually all, will have very little impact. That’s certainly the advice I received from the Prime Minister.”

Mr Albanese on Monday said there would be no cuts in next week’s Federal Budget.

But the Federal Coalition is adamant that projects across the State are under threat, in particular the almost 60 proposals which were still in the “planning” phase at the time of the October budget or the ones already hit with funding cuts.

The Albanese Government’s first Budget resulted in delays to \$1b worth of transport projects in WA, with funding deferred for a slate of road and rail upgrades.

They included a \$200m upgrade to the Canning Bridge bus

interchange in Como, which was supposed to start in late 2024 and be completed in 2026.

Construction now won't begin until 2025-26.

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The new three-month review is expected to target the smaller scale projects which Labor believes were promised to win or sandbag seats for the Coalition.

The review could signal a shift in direction for Federal infrastructure funding as the new Government focuses on "nation-building" projects.

WA Liberal senator Michaelia Cash urged the Government not to scrap projects which were "vital" to local communities.

"By focusing on just big projects the Albanese Government is telling Western Australian local communities they really don't care about them," she said.

"If they kill off vital road projects the Albanese Government is saying to Western Australians they don't care about their safety, convenience or the productivity of this State."