

# Swan River Crossings Project



Jointly funded by the Australian and State governments, \$230 million has been committed to the Swan River Crossings Project, which will replace the Fremantle Traffic Bridge.

We have put together a snapshot of the project so far. There is a lot more work to be done and we look forward to keeping the community updated as part of this significant infrastructure project.

The Fremantle Traffic Bridge was opened in 1939 as a temporary structure (it is the fourth built at this site) and, has served its function well.

However, the bridge's structure has been deteriorating over a number of years and despite extensive strengthening and maintenance works (including a highly disruptive closure in 2016) the bridge needs to be replaced.

The project also includes a new rail bridge - providing an opportunity to improve passenger and freight rail access in and out of Fremantle, and a new principal shared path for people walking and riding, connecting North Fremantle Station, over Tydeman Road to the new bridge and across the Swan River.

Extensive planning and development is underway and includes engagement with several State and local government agencies to determine what can be built, and how it can be built, to minimise disruption to the community, whether they be driving, riding, walking, catching public transport or using boats and ferries in the river below.

The Swan River Crossings Project will not only make it easier for you to walk and cycle around your local area but also improve:

- traffic flow and travel times
- safety and lower the risk and severity of crashes
- connectivity to communities either side of the Swan River
- services on the Fremantle train line with a new rail bridge dedicated to passenger services
- maritime safety under the new bridge for river users

## **Better traffic flow**

We'll upgrade the intersection at Canning Highway to ease traffic congestion.

## **Safer roads**

The new traffic bridge will meet current design standards and make your journey safer with wider lanes and a median. (Noting we are replacing like for like with two traffic lanes in each direction).

## **Greater connectivity**

The new wider walking and cycling paths will better connect people to local destinations, paths and networks.

## **Recognising heritage**

We're seeking innovative ways to include cultural heritage interpretations of the crossing into the project (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal).

## **Efficient rail services**

A new passenger rail bridge will separate freight and passenger rail lines and improve services for community and industry.

# TIMELINE



## PROJECT INCEPTION

### February 2019

- Project identified as a Priority Initiative by Infrastructure Australia

### April 2019

- Australian and Western Australian Governments commit \$230 million funding

### Mid 2019

- Review of all previous planning and engineering works
- Engagement with Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and Environmental regulators

## ALIGNMENT SELECTION

### October 2019

- Engage technical team to identify engineering, safety and regulatory requirements
- Stakeholder workshop to identify site constraints and issues

### July 2020

- Preferred alignment identified

### August 2020

- Preferred alignment shared with wider community and stakeholders

### February 2020

- Proposed alignment of the bridges released for steering committee review

## CONCEPT REFERENCE DESIGN

### Late 2019

- Engagement with Heritage Council and Office of Government Architect commences
- Stakeholder workshop to define project objectives

### Mid 2020 – late 2020

- Community consultation commences
- Community feedback informs heritage interpretation and design objectives for the project

### Early 2020

- Engage architect and heritage consultants to develop urban landscape and design framework and heritage interpretation strategy

## DETAILED DESIGN

### August 2020

- Expressions of interest sought from industry to develop, design and construct bridges

### Early 2021

- Stage two community consultation for urban landscape, design and heritage interpretation plans

### December 2020

- Award of contract to design, develop and construct bridges

### Mid 2021

- Design finalised and project approvals achieved

## CONSTRUCTION

### Late 2021

- Construction works commence

- Engagement with the Whadjuk Working Party is a priority and has recently recommenced following Covid-19 restrictions.

## Project scope

A team of expert consultants across a range of disciplines were engaged to identify and consider the environmental, technical and engineering issues relevant to the planning for the alignment of the new bridges.

In late-2019 a Steering Committee including the City of Fremantle, Town of East Fremantle, Fremantle Ports, the Public Transport Authority and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage was established and input sought from Department of Transport's marine, freight and active transport (cycling and walking) teams.

The Fremantle Traffic Bridge will be demolished and replaced with a new structure to the east of the current traffic bridge.

The current rail bridge will remain - but will be dedicated to freight rail services

A new dedicated passenger rail bridge – will be built alongside and to the east of the current rail bridge.

A new principal shared path for people walking and riding from North Fremantle Station, over Tydeman Road and to the Swan River traffic bridge and across to connect to Beach Street will be built.







## What's next?

- Community consultation to inform heritage interpretation, design objectives and pedestrian and cyclist connectivity
- A connectivity assessment to map out a new path network for cyclists and pedestrians from North Fremantle to the river and across the bridge.
- Geotechnical surveys to examine the soil, rocks and riverbed and inform the design of the bridge earthworks and foundations.
- Historic and Aboriginal Heritage surveys will be undertaken which will inform both the required approvals and guide the interpretations in the final designs.
- Environmental investigations to inform approvals and identify how we can best mitigate impacts during construction.

## We want to hear from you

Heritage interpretation and urban and landscape design – including walking and bike riding connectivity - are key opportunities that the community can be involved in to help shape the project.

We want to understand how you use the bridge now, and how the cultural heritage of the crossing (including both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) may be considered in the design for the new crossings.

The State Design Review Panel will review the project - we have engaged architects Woods Bagot and heritage consultants Element to prepare an urban landscape strategy and a heritage interpretation strategy.

Fill in our feedback survey online at [mysaytransport.wa.gov.au](https://mysaytransport.wa.gov.au) or attend one of our upcoming drop in sessions and help us develop the look and feel of the project.

## Stay updated

To stay informed about the project and upcoming drop in sessions, sign up for email updates by visiting the Swan River Crossing page at

[www.mainroads.wa.gov.au](https://www.mainroads.wa.gov.au)

Or if you have any enquiries email [enquiries@mainroads.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@mainroads.wa.gov.au) or phone 138 138.

## Environment

Main Roads is committed to minimising the impact on the environment and sensitive areas such as the Swan River. We will be liaising with environmental agencies to ensure a balance between providing transport infrastructure and protecting the natural environment. As part of our environmental commitment, water quality, sediment sampling, bathymetric surveys and other surveys underwater will be conducted to identify any vulnerable species and ecosystems.

We acknowledge the Whadjuk Noongar People as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters on which the Swan River Crossings Project is on.

Aboriginal heritage surveys will be completed in 2020 and Whadjuk representatives will be consulted at the earliest possible opportunity.

## Noise

Independent noise forecasts are a key part of planning for the Swan River Crossings Project. This helps identify and put in place any measures needed to minimise the impact of noise on nearby residents and communities. As the design develops, the extent and type of measures to be put in place will be confirmed and discussed with the community.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Why can't we restore the current traffic bridge?

Due to its significant age, it would unfortunately be unsafe and not economically viable to retain the bridge. Main Roads has been in discussions with the City of Fremantle to retain a portion of the existing traffic bridge on the southern embankment for potential future activation opportunities.

### When will construction begin?

At this stage it is anticipated construction will begin in late 2021.

The construction schedule is subject to various statutory and environmental approvals.

### How long will it take to build?

It is expected to take approximately two years to complete. One of the biggest challenges is keeping essential rail, maritime and road traffic moving during construction, as well as maintaining safe access for active travel modes.

## CHOOSING THE ALIGNMENT

The broad bridge alignments have been confirmed. However, the design aspects will continue to be subject to detailed analysis, stakeholder engagement and engineering investigations.

As part of planning for the works we engaged with stakeholders to identify the constraints. The outcome was that we needed to find a solution that fits within the following parameters:

- **Operational:** Road traffic, freight and passenger rail, local paths as well as navigational channels, must stay operational during construction.
- **Heritage:** The heritage of the crossing must be recognised, the Ferry Capstan Base maintained and Cantonment Hill avoided.
- **Social:** The need for modern facilities for people walking and riding, consider local amenity and place and minimise noise impacts.
- **Environmental:** Impacts to the river and marine life must be mitigated and well managed.
- **Economic:** We need to build within the allocated funding for the project and deliver value to the community.
- **Constructability:** A low impact construction staging process is needed as there is limited space between the bridges and at the northern and southern embankments.

### Can we build a new crossing between the existing bridges?

That was our starting point but when we took into account the above constraints, we found:

- **Space:** Unfortunately there is insufficient room. There is only 30 metres between the two current bridges on the northern embankment – we need to construct a new rail bridge, a new road bridge and a path for bike riders and pedestrians.
- **Traffic impacts:** Building in between the existing bridges would need us to demolish the traffic bridge immediately shifting 23,000 vehicles a day to the Stirling Bridge. The impact would gridlock the Stirling Bridge and local roads in North Fremantle, limiting access into Fremantle for locals, visitors and tourists.
- **Remnant bridge:** We committed to retaining part of the existing bridge, so we must have space to do that.

### Can we build the new crossings to the west of the freight bridge?

We investigated this option, but again, we found more constraints, including:

- There would be significant disruption to freight and passenger rail services during the two-year construction phase – which is not viable.
- The Western Power substation would need to be relocated.
- Existing port and rail infrastructure needs to be reconstructed – exceeding the allocated project funding (placing other project elements at risk).
- If a new freight rail bridge was built it would need to meet current standards, would require a much larger land footprint to the north and south (extending all the way to Fremantle Station) and require construction of new pier protection devices.
- The ferry capstan base would be impacted by any bridge alignment between the existing bridges.

## SITE OVERVIEW - Broad alignment and precincts indicative illustration only

