

Barnett's \$1.5b pitch to Turnbull

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Colin Barnett has put a figure on the amount of cash he wants from a rebooted Federal Government taking a fresh look at WA's urban rail and GST needs — \$1.5 billion.

The Premier will be hoping WA secures more than just the premiership on Saturday after vowing to use the grand final to tell Turnbull Government he wants a "minimum" \$500 million each for MAX light rail, the Forrestfield link and compensation for low GST.

Speaking after *The West Australian* revealed new Treasurer Scott Morrison's sympathy for WA's low GST, Mr Barnett said he expected a repeat of the compensation package in May's Federal Budget, which stopped the State's equivalent share dropping from 37¢ in the dollar to 30¢.

At the time, the State Government calculated \$660 million would be needed over two years to keep WA's share dropping below 37¢, meaning WA would require \$160 million this year.

But Mr Barnett said 37¢ was a "lousy" floor and WA should get more next time around.

"There's a precedent of half a billion dollars last year and I would also expect the Commonwealth to make a decision to help fund a rail project out to Forrestfield through the airport, and also light rail," he said.

"I think half a billion on each (rail) project would be a good start."

Ditching the Abbott government's ban on funding urban rail, Infrastructure Minister Jamie Briggs said this week MAX would undoubtedly feature in Infrastructure Australia's 15-year plan to be released next year, possibly under an alternative funding model.

Curtin University sustainability researcher Jemma Green said the State's contribution to the rail projects could be offset by a so-called land value capture model, whereby land sales around future transport nodes helped finance the project.

Mr Barnett said he was open to the model.