

U.S. Senator Patty Murray

# Clark County Transportation Report



Senator Murray knows that transportation is a top priority for Clark County residents and businesses. She's spent years working with local leaders to address the region's transportation needs and to ensure the federal government is a strong partner in the region's economic growth.

## Clark County Faces Unique Challenges

Senator Murray recognizes that Clark County faces unique challenges when it comes to transportation and the economy, including:

### **Soaring Growth:**

The Southwest Washington/Metropolitan Portland region has been growing at a tremendous rate. Today, 1.9 million people live here, but that number is expected to grow to 2.4 million by 2020. That growth is already straining the region's transportation infrastructure.

### **Severe & Costly Traffic Congestion:**

Southwest Washington faces some of the state's worst traffic congestion, and it will get worse. For example, on the I-5/Columbia River corridor, we can expect:

- Vehicle traffic to increase by 44 % by 2020.
- The "peak congestion" period to expand from 4 hours to 10 hours.
- "Annual vehicle hours of delay" for trucks on the I-5 corridor will increase by 93 %.

### **A Critical Trade Corridor:**

The region is home to several major deep water seaports, a large international airport, significant up-river barging on the Columbia River, two transcontinental rail lines, and extensive industrial space.

### **Industries that Rely on Efficient Transportation:**

The region has some of the nation's most significant lumber, wood, and paper industries and some of America's wheat-producing counties. They rely on safe, reliable and efficient rail and barge transportation to compete in the global market.

### **Slow Recovery:**

Clark County has taken longer than other counties to recover from the economic downturn. That makes transportation investments even more critical to support the region's full economic recovery.

## An Advocate for Clark County

Given these challenges, Senator Murray has used her position as the top Democrat on the Senate's *Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee* to provide federal funding for the region's priorities. This handout summarizes some of that partnership. For more about Senator Murray's work in Southwest Washington, we recommend: <http://murray.senate.gov/region-southwest/>

To get updates about Senator Murray's work, please visit: <http://murray.senate.gov/updates>

# Better Transportation For Clark County

## Brought an Official Senate Fielding Hearing on Transportation to Southwest Washington



*“Good jobs and continued economic development depend upon having the transportation infrastructure to sustain the region’s growth. This field hearing will be an opportunity to hear from local and national leaders on how to accomplish our transportation goals.”*

- Senator Murray

In August 2003, Senator Murray convened a rare Senate Field Hearing to examine southwest Washington’s regional transportation needs, including the I-5 Bridge, regional congestion relief, and river traffic. The hearing included four panels to discuss the challenges and solutions to improving congestion and getting goods and services to market.

From that hearing, a list of priorities emerged that Senator Murray has worked to fund. For example, the hearing showed the need to develop a strategic plan to address the region's transportation needs.

Senator Murray provided the funding for such a plan through the:

**I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Project** (\$2 million in FY05): This project will help continue the work on analyzing and implementing the strategic plan to improve transportation problems in the Southwest Washington/Portland Metropolitan Region.

Additional transportation improvements include:

**SR-14 Pedestrian Bridge** (\$2 million in FY04 and FY05):

This project is part of the Confluence Project commemorating the Lewis and Clark expedition. Specifically, this project will help construct a pedestrian crossing over I-5 that will be designed by renowned artist Maya Lin.

**SW 1st/NW Lake Road Project** (\$3 million):

Senator Murray secured \$3 million to help the City of Camas make transportation improvements. The funding will ease congestion, increase public safety, and help Camas pave the way for future economic growth.

Senator Murray attended the groundbreaking ceremony (pictured at right).



## Channel Deepening



**"Channel Deepening is one of my highest priorities because it means jobs and competitiveness."**

- Senator Murray at the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, March 2004

**"Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., was the chief booster for the Columbia project on the Senate Appropriations panel."**

- Associated Press article, July 18, 2003

### Channel Deepening (\$9 million in FY05):

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Energy and Water Subcommittee, Senator Murray has fought hard to ensure that funding is included for this important project. Senator Murray was able to secure \$15 million in the Senate in FY05. Unfortunately, during conference the committee split the difference between the House and Senate earmarks, and the final number was reduced to \$9 million. Over the past 6 years, Senator Murray has secured an additional \$13.5 million.

## Improving Local Ports

Senator Murray has also worked to fund improvements at local ports.

### Meeting with the Port of Ridgefield



#### **Port of Ridgefield Grade Crossing Project** (\$1 million in FY05)

This project will help construct a grade crossing improvement project at the Port of Ridgefield. Currently, the at-grade crossing is extremely dangerous in design and lacks sufficient visibility.

This project will improve overall safety and efficiency at the port.

### Port of Vancouver, Fruit Valley Bypass/26th Avenue Extension (\$1 million in FY05):

This project will improve rail and truck access to the Port of Vancouver. Currently, the road and rail infrastructure is inadequate to handle the volume of trains coming in and out of the Port. This project will help make needed improvements to both.

<http://murray.senate.gov>