



MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Matt Ransom, Executive Director   
**DATE:** November 28, 2017  
**SUBJECT:** **Clark County Transportation Alliance 2018 Policy Statement**

---

***AT A GLANCE – ACTION***

*The purpose of this memorandum is to introduce the Clark County Transportation Alliance 2018 Policy Statement to the RTC Board.*

**BACKGROUND**

The Clark County Transportation Alliance (CCTA) is an alliance of public and private organizations which was formed as a transportation sub-committee of the volunteer Clark County Governmental Affairs Roundtable. The CCTA Policy Statement (Policy Statement) is a call-to-action statement which advocates for policies and funding which benefit the Clark County region's transportation infrastructure and programs. The CCTA presents a forum for advancing a cohesive regional advocacy on priority transportation investments, and regional advocacy is critical in advancing the region's interests.

The Statement was reviewed by the multi-agency CCTA steering committee on November 20, 2017 and the committee agreed to release the Policy Statement for agency endorsements. The Policy Statement emphasizes a list of priority regional transportation actions which will be collectively advocated for in the 2018 legislation session.

RTC staff have assisted the CCTA in preparation of the 2018 Policy Statement. Staff have also compared the Policy Statement for consistency with the RTC Regional Transportation Plan (2014) priorities. As presented, the Policy Statement is consistent with and would serve to implement the Regional Transportation Plan.

Staff will submit the Policy Statement for formal endorsement at the January 2, 2018 meeting of the Board.

Attachment

# Clark County Transportation Alliance 2018 Policy Statement

# Clark County Transportation Alliance 2018 Policy Statement

[Sponsor agency names and logos here.]

DRAFT



# A CALL TO FURTHER ACTION

Clark County's residents, employers and guests are experiencing serious transportation constraints from rapid growth and urbanization. These constraints will only become more challenging as southwest Washington expects 116,000 more residents and 78,000 jobs (RTC), and Portland expects to add 260,000 residents and 140,000 jobs (PBT), by 2035. As the second-largest metropolitan area in the Pacific Northwest, our top priority remains addressing deficiencies in the I-5 corridor, including its outdated, chronically congested and accident-prone bridges.

We urge our local, state and federal legislators to be our champions in addressing specific needs described in this policy statement.



## I-5 Bridge Replacement and Corridor Enhancements

The Clark County Transportation Alliance (CCTA) fully supports replacement of the I-5 bridges and related corridor improvements. The I-5 spans are functionally obsolete and fast approaching large mechanical upgrades to remain operational. The process framework established in SSB 5806 is an important initial step to delivering practical project solutions.

A bi-state approach focused on finding significant, practical solutions through this primary freight, commerce and commuter corridor is imperative, in keeping with the I-5 Corridor Strategic Plan (2002). We applaud efforts by the Oregon legislature to fund projects that address I-5 corridor deficiencies, especially the I-5/I-84 interchange (a.k.a. "The Rose Quarter") in downtown Portland. Just seven miles apart, the Rose Quarter and I-5 Bridge rank among the nation's 50 worst chokepoints (ATRI).

We also place high priority on long-range transportation corridor planning, given steadily rising population and commerce forecasts. The Portland-Vancouver metro area suffers as the nation's 12<sup>th</sup> worst congested commute among

240 cities (Inrix). Regional data (RTC) indicates slow travel below 30 mph is now experienced seven hours a day for the nearly 300,000 trips between Oregon and Washington, and just 9 mph on I-5 during peak hours.



## Connecting WA-funded Projects

We appreciate our legislators' success in shifting funding for an SR-14 project improving the Camas Slough Bridge to an even more urgent SR-14 widening project east of I-205, and in advancing planning funds for the I-5/Mill Plain interchange.

We encourage financing innovations that will allow local agencies to accelerate planning and construction with confidence that the state will reimburse local agency expenditures as funds become available. This would help the I-5/179<sup>th</sup> St. interchange project, where early project construction will facilitate economic opportunities.



## Pursue Funding for Critical Regional Projects

We ask our elected officials to help find funding for these "regionally critical" projects as defined by RTC:

- **I-5 Bridge and Corridor:** see previous section
- **I-205/SR-500 to Padden Expressway (\$30M):** add auxiliary lanes
- **SR-500 Intersections at 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave and 54<sup>th</sup> Ave (\$80M):** capacity and safety improvements
- **NE 10<sup>th</sup> Ave from 149<sup>th</sup> to 164<sup>th</sup> St/Whipple Creek (\$15M):** alternative north-south corridor for I-5  
*Note: this project was awarded a \$7M PWTF loan, which was subsequently swept.*
- **SR-14 Phase 2 Access Improvements (\$41M):** road improvements and rail/overpass connectors at 15<sup>th</sup> St, 32<sup>nd</sup> St, 27<sup>th</sup> St, and Index St.

- **SR-500/Fourth Plain/SR-503 (\$59M):** intersection improvement
- **SR-14 Camas Slough Bridge (\$35M):** parallel bridge structure for westbound traffic
- **NW 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave Industrial Corridor (\$3M):** planning, environmental review for north-south arterial
- **I-5/179th St. Interchange:** accelerated planning and construction (see previous section)
- **I-205/SR-14 (TBD):** interchange and operational improvements



## Public Transit

Public transit is a vital component of our region's transportation network. In 2017, C-TRAN successfully launched the Vine, the Portland-Vancouver metro area's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line. It opened on time, under budget and ridership along the corridor is growing.

Building upon that success, C-TRAN's board has authorized planning for its next BRT corridor along Mill Plain Blvd. We seek state funding for planning and capital costs to help complete this important next initiative in our public transportation network, and encourage further exploration of lower-cost solutions such as additional Bus on Shoulder projects.



## Ports and Freight

We appreciate the legislature's broad support to create jobs and freight-dependent economic development along the Clark County-owned Chelatchie Prairie Railroad. Infrastructure investment in our freight, ports and rail system brings jobs and direct economic benefit to our region.

We urge continued attention to the following:

- Preserve and modernize the Chelatchie Prairie Railroad for improved freight service and economic opportunity.
- Support the Port of Vancouver's efforts to replace its Terminal 1 dock which serves as a

key riverboat cruise ship terminal on the Columbia River and a seismic disaster relief staging area.

- Support initiatives to secure funding through state and federal competitive grant programs aimed at funding freight-related improvements and at-grade railroad intersection projects.
- Maintain strategic improvements in marine access by ensuring adequate dredged channel maintenance activities.



## Infrastructure Financing and Economic Development

Southwest Washington's economic future is tied to strong and efficient investment in infrastructure projects. There is imminent need for a broader array of infrastructure financing methods, including tax increment financing, design-build, public/private partnerships (P3), and continued Public Works Trust Fund and CERB funding. These tools can support development of employment centers throughout the region.



## Embracing Technology, Safety and Accessibility for all Users

We encourage legislators to actively explore smart regulations which enable public and private sector innovations and emerging technologies that could ease pressures on our transportation grid and increase safety for all users. Examples include autonomous vehicle integration and better traffic flow techniques such as electronic signage and ramp meters.

Safety and accessibility improvements are needed in both urban and rural areas, including safe pathways, sidewalks and street crossings throughout the transportation network. Increased funding for grant programs will improve safety and accessibility for everyone who relies upon our roadways.