

**U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell**

**Mount Vernon Library Commons Grand Opening**

**September 28, 2024**

**Sen. Cantwell Opening Remarks**

[\[AUDIO\]](#) [\[VIDEO\]](#)

**Sen. Cantwell:** Jill was just in DC, and she's like - you're coming, right? Of course, of course I'm coming.

Mayor Boudreau, thank you so much for the introduction. Good morning, everyone from Mount Vernon, and oh my gosh, what an incredible audience for an incredible celebration.

I'm glad to be here with so many key members of the local community, and certainly our local legislators like Dave Paul and Liz Lovett and Representative Shavers and Senator Ron Mizell. Thank you all for being here. The city council, all of the wonderful people who have been working hard for this community.

I especially, though, want to thank the hard working men and women who poured the concrete, built the walls, put a roof on this incredible facility, and the hard work to make this celebration possible.

I'm glad to be here with my colleague, Representative Larson, who is a national leader on transportation. In fact, his leadership, I'm sure, played a key role in getting all of this done. So thank you so much for that.

And finally, I want to thank the people of Mount Vernon and Skagit County, because you now have put a new name to what a community center really looks like. The Commons is a very smart, cost effective way to build community, and you're proof of that this morning.

As I look out and see the excited faces here, I can tell you how much this means to everyone. I know exactly what a library means. It's a place where kids can start their dreams. I helped build a library in Montlake Terrace decades ago, and I know how important that community still is there.

Libraries and common places are where we gather, where we share ideas, and I was proud to work with Congressman Larsen on the \$3 million in federal funds here that are specifically for the library construction of a young adult STEM center, computer lab, and a community meeting room, so those new generations of, as you were saying, electrical engineers, might get their first impetus right here at this library.

But we also made sure that it was transit oriented, and that helped in the subsidization of the loans, and the project being the very first transit oriented development loan provided ever by the Department of Transportation. Literally, Skagit County and Mount Vernon are making history in the United States of America.

Transit oriented development projects like this create more livable communities. And listen, you have a great food co-op. So you're basically saying, come up here, recharge, go to the co-op, stop at the library, see all the wonderful things in Skagit County.

This year alone, we've been able to provide \$12.5 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill for the 78 electrical charging stations, and more in the future, and the entire building, really, is an apex of what

energy efficiency is. Even the concrete used to pour the foundation took the environment into consideration.

So it is really, really a great testament to the leadership of this city. Today is a celebration for all of that partnership and hard work, for making this region an even more attractive place to be and live. And Mayor Jill Boudreau, thank you so much for helping make this a reality. Congratulations to Mayor Donovan, you're going to take it to even more heights, but that's why you're so tall. And we're all here today to see this beautiful facility and celebrate a very, very bright future for a place called The Commons.

Thank you.