

Senator Maria Cantwell

Spanaway Transit Center Groundbreaking Event

October 3rd, 2022

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

CANTWELL: Well, thank you, Mike, and thank you for that introduction and what a beautiful in the Northwest to celebrate infrastructure investment and how it's helping our economy.

I want to thank all of the dignitaries that Mike mentioned and to add my thanks and support to them as well. Obviously, my dear colleague who is and here really helped lead the charge on Congressional requests for this, Congresswoman Strickland are really one of the key leads in Olympia. State Representative Jake Fey, and Pierce County Council Member, Marty Campbell, but I also see that we have Senator T'wina Nobles who I consider a dear friend. State Representative Dan Bronoske and obviously Representative Mari Leavitt, and want to thank them as well as Councilman Amy Cruver. And obviously to the dignitary from JBLM, thank you Lieutenant Colonel Bloom for your service and everything you do.

Well, we all know where Spanaway is and just on the other side of the base is a key transportation corridor to getting people to and from work. But we know with today's high gas prices we also need alternatives to getting people to and from work in a more economical and easy fashion. That's why we're here today to break ground today on a new major investment in a transit center that will make commuting a little bit easier in the future.

I want to thank the partners who helped get us here, Pierce Transit CEO Mike Griffus, Congresswoman Strickland, as I mentioned, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee Jake Fey, and the Council Member Marty Campbell, and Washington DOT. We know that people here have been waiting a long time for this groundbreaking, and that's why you're going to celebrate with a little golf activity afterwards.

But this transit center is the first new transit center in Pierce County in decades, and that is long overdue. It's definitely time because Pierce County continues to grow, adding 130,000 residents since 2010. That means we need to improve our transportation system we need to add more capacity, more routes, and certainly a transit center for the future like this one.

Route One which will have its southern terminus at the station is Pierce Transit's busiest route with more than 55,000 residents living within a half a mile of the route. This means we need to get them to where they need to go. The Transit Center will also eventually get them to the Tacoma Dome Station where they can connect with other places like the Sounder System, or getting to Seattle Airport, or the stadium district, or even catch the Amtrak Cascade Route which we're so glad was just so recently reestablished after a lot of pushing and a lot of hard work.

The sooner we'll have a park and ride lot to accommodate 250 vehicles, and vehicle charging stations for electric vehicles on site. And it will feature comfort station so our bus drivers will have a little capacity to get to things handled when they need to get them handled.

And I know that you're all looking forward to 2027 when Route One will become Pierce Transits first bus rapid transit line. That means the buses instead of arriving every 30 minutes they will arrive every 10 minutes. I can't tell you what that means -- yes, applause (applause) -- I can't tell you what that means for the traveling commuter. I hear so much, I live in Snohomish County and trust me all along the I-5 corridor there people tell me as far up as Mill Creek, they're planning on when they leave their house what station they're going be able to go to, to get a parking space. That's how much these facilities are needed. But now that you know that something's leaving every 10 minutes gives you the extra capacity.

So that is why Representative Strickland and I both fought very hard to secure a \$3 million Congressional Direct Spending award for the Spanaway Transit Center. And why we think that this community needs the help in the future. The package of \$24 million needed to complete this project, \$6.3 million will come from federal transit dollars. That is just on the formula basis. It was so important that we got our infrastructure bill done just like the state legislature did.

We know that the Department of Transportation -- US Department of Transportation -- listing this project, we know in the future that Federal Transit Administration Capital Investment Grant funds also will come. They won't have to restructure and reapply as long as we keep providing investments for the future. Part of that rapid transit system will get federal dollars, that we're -- Marilyn and I -- are going to be working to make sure that that that happens.

So we fought for this project to get to this stage because we know that communities like this can transform when they have the capital investment of transportation infrastructure. It's not always easy. And not everybody back in the other Washington sees the value of this investment in transportation. But I guarantee you those who supported the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law knew that this was exactly what we needed to do to make our transportation network work in the state of Washington. And certainly here in Pierce County.

So we're going to continue to work to make sure that that capital investment grant program for mass transit, which is \$23 billion over the next five years continues to work. We know that this is a perfect location to spend these dollars. Let's make sure that commuters here in Spanaway get to their workplace, get to where they need to go. So that it can keep the economy growing in the future. Thank you very much.