



For Immediate Release
July 29, 2005

**Congressman Baird Secures Over \$45 Million for Southwest WA
Transportation Projects
-Baird Brings Over \$5 Million to Thurston County-**

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Brian Baird used his position on the influential House Transportation Committee to secure \$45,979,600 million for Southwest Washington in a major transportation bill that passed the House today. Congressman Baird secured \$5,544,400 for transportation projects in Thurston County.

"These projects will generate jobs, boost our local economy, and create safer, less congested roads to travel on," said Congressman Baird. "Given the current budget constraints, I am pleased Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell, and I were able to work together to bring this funding home to Southwest Washington."

Congress reauthorizes funding for the nation's transportation systems every six years. The last reauthorization was passed in 1998. In 2004, both the House and Senate passed reauthorizations bills that later died in conference. The Senate is expected to vote on the Transportation Equity Act (TEA-LU) as early as tomorrow.

Thurston County Projects Congressman Baird Secured Funding For:

Chehalis-Western Trail "Bridging the Gap" Project: \$4.108 million

Provides funding for a project that will "bridge the gap" in the backbone of the Thurston County region's north-south non-motorized corridor. Specifically, the project constructs a .6 mile pedestrian and bike bridge over I-5, thereby connecting separate parts of the Chehalis-Western Trail system. The total system reflects a fifteen-year commitment of local, state, and regional agencies to develop this non-motorized transportation system.

Port of Olympia Infrastructure Enhancement: \$684,000

Provides funding to advance Phase 2 of the Port of Olympia's Infrastructure Enhancement Project. Funding will be utilized for the installation of signals at a grade level crossing where the port's rail traffic intersects with an existing roadway, and the addition of a rail spur for additional intermodal loading and storage to minimize instances where trains block a major city street to accomplish required assembly. The three-phase project is designed to respond to the tremendous growth in cargo volume over the past 6 years, and balance the port's transshipping capacity between truck and rail based operations.

Bus Replacement: \$752,400

Provides funding for the replacement of vehicles for the Intercity Transit fleet in Thurston County.

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