

SW FACT

Southwest Washington Freight & Commerce Task Force



TASK FORCE FORMED TO UNDERScore FREIGHT AND COMMERCE NEEDS IN SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

VANCOUVER, Wash. – (January 20, 2015) – As state and federal legislators come to grips with vast transportation infrastructure needs, a regional business task force has formed to urge decision-makers to prioritize projects that improve the flow of freight and commerce throughout Southwest Washington.

The Southwest Washington Freight and Commerce Task Force, known as **SW FACT**, has been formed by regional business leaders and will operate as a special project of the private non-partisan business group [Identity Clark County](#) and advocate for freight and commerce-related projects.

“Investing in infrastructure that supports freight and commerce movement creates and maintains jobs and economic activity that will energize our local economy for decades to come,” said Lance Killian of Killian Pacific, a Vancouver-based industrial and commercial property development company. “Additionally, these improvements make our region safer and more accessible for workers, citizens and emergency personnel, while keeping transportation costs low and protecting the environment.”

SW FACT has prioritized [a dozen projects](#) that its supporters view as important to freight and commerce mobility over the next ten years. These projects are chosen from among the vast numbers of projects in various stages of consideration by transportation and infrastructure development authorities, including government agencies, ports and non-profit groups.

- First tier projects (\$51 million): A Ridgefield overpass at Pioneer Street to finish an at-grade crossing and create access to additional land for development, capacity and flow improvements along Mill Plain Boulevard west of I-5 in downtown Vancouver, and freeway widening along SR 14 east of I-205 to SE 164th Street.
- Second tier projects (\$290+ million): Improvements to the I-5 and Mill Plain Boulevard interchange; a series of projects along SR 14, including improvements to SR 14, finishing the Camas Slough bridge, and eliminating an at-grade crossing at 27th Street; improvements to Pioneer Street west of I-5 entering Ridgefield, and; addressing the rail and I-5 road bottlenecks across the Columbia River.
- Third tier projects (\$150 million): Improving the I-5 interchange at 179th Street, improving access and flow at Columbia Shores/Columbia Way, and making improvements to the Chelatchie Prairie railroad in preparation of future industrial development.

Funding for these projects may surface from a variety of sources, including existing mechanisms and emerging state and federal transportation packages.

“Identity Clark County lends its unanimous support to the high priority projects outlined by SW FACT and pledges to work with lawmakers and agency staff to advance these critically important projects,” said Eric Fuller, principal of Eric Fuller & Associates Real Estate and a long-time ICC director.

Fuller noted that freight and commerce mobility projects have long earned support across the political spectrum because they create many beneficial outcomes and serve as opportunities for policymakers to find common ground.

“Investing in key freight and commerce projects sends a strong signal that we truly want businesses to locate and grow here, especially including those who can leverage the strategic benefit of our existing river, rail, road and land infrastructure. To area citizens, that means we’re attracting more living-wage jobs to the region while also improving traffic flow and safety.”

SW FACT envisions participation by businesses affected by freight and commerce mobility, in close coordination with public agencies, ports, planning bodies, economic development interests, and the region’s local, state and federal elected officials.

Businesses and organizations wishing to participate in SW FACT are urged to contact Ron Arp, president of the communications firm Amplify Group which is supporting SW FACT. He can be reached at rarp@amplifygroup.com or 360.601.2991.