



proud past, promising future

## NEWS RELEASE

CLARK COUNTY  
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### **Commissioner Boldt gives State of the County Address** ***Copy of the speech is available on county Web site***

Vancouver, WA – On Friday, February 17, Clark County Commissioner Marc Boldt presented the annual State of the County Address. The text of his speech can be found on the county's Web site at <http://www.clark.wa.gov/bocc/documents/2006StateOfCounty.pdf>. In addition, Clark-Vancouver Television filmed the event and plans to broadcast it on Sunday, February 19, at 2 p.m. on Channel 23.

"After my first full year as a county commissioner, it is my pleasure and my honor to talk to you about the state of the county," Boldt said. "I am proud to be able to do that, because I am proud of county government; proud of our staff, our accomplishments, and the direction we are heading; and proud of you, our citizens."

A major theme in the commissioner's speech was self-sufficiency. One thing counties have learned from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, he said, is that we cannot look to the state and federal government to fix our problems. "We need to be self-sufficient, and we need for county problems to have county solutions," Boldt emphasized.

Here is a summary of other comments from Commissioner Boldt:

- Budget: "We cannot talk about a strong Clark County without also talking about the strength of our finances. Make no mistake: At this moment Clark County is fiscally strong...But If federal funding stays flat – and recent decisions out of D.C. show that's likely – then it is all the more important that we rally our local resources."
- Taxes: "County commissioners have the authority to impose an additional two-tenths of one percent sales tax within unincorporated Clark County...Additional revenue from this small bump in the tax would help. I want to be clear that we are seriously considering it."
- Mandated services: "I'd like to say this as directly as possible, and it's a message that is aimed at the state legislature -- If you are going to give us a mandate and you want us to implement that mandate, then please fund that mandate. If you do not fund it, we will not implement it."

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- Transportation: Bonding for roads will be a major conversation for the board this year ... We will continue our strong support of a public transit system...One of the most important transportation questions facing our region is the Columbia River Crossing. The Board of County Commissioners believes that we need to build a third bridge across the Columbia River first instead of spending billions to rebuild the existing I-5 bridge.”
- Social Services: “Look at the new Center for Community Health that opened just in the last month. For people needing public health services or social services ... it means having easy access to resources and being treated with respect ... Social services will continue to need more of our attention. It is an area where we are determined to become more self-sufficient and to solve our own problems...We’ll be looking more closely at faith-based resources – and other resources that aren’t funded by tax dollars – and seeing how they can work more effectively with us.”
- Annexation: “So as cities acquire land and residents leave the unincorporated area, it is our goal that the cities and county all be financially whole. It is not only a goal but a true obligation. Clark County must remain financial strong to retain a businesslike approach to the regional services we are expected – and required – to provide. Commissioner Morris, Commissioner Stuart, and I are the elected officials in Clark County who have a responsibility to all of the people within the county’s borders. We serve all of you. Because of that, we firmly believe we have a duty to make sure all annexations benefit the entire community. It’s not about stopping annexations. It’s about doing them right.”
- Growth Management Plan: “Growth management does have goals that we should attain...Our growth plan calls for a variety of housing types, so that people who want to have different lifestyle choices can all find them in Clark County.
- Jobs: “I want our county and our cities to be a threat to every other county and city in the nation when it comes to attracting and retaining business... “If we want entry-level jobs that will prepare workers for high-paying jobs, we must make sure that we include housing that is affordable for workers earning low-and mid-level incomes – housing for all incomes and all ages.”
- Environment: “We will protect our environment...You will soon see wetlands and habitat ordinances moving forward for review and adoption...We will ensure that environmentally sensitive lands are protected. We will do this while maintaining our economic strength, while striving to make sure that my children as well as yours can afford to buy a house here.”
- Clark County government: “Our goal is to have the best run county, not only in the state, but in the nation.”

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