

March 9, 2023
Mayor Cassie Franklin

Thank you, Rich, for the introduction. And thank you to the Economic Alliance for hosting today's event. I'd like to join Garry in thanking all the elected officials here today as well as our esteemed guests from the Tulalip Tribes, especially Councilmember Mel Sheldon – it's great to see you – thank you for your partnership!

I want to also acknowledge and thank all our team members who work day in, day out to keep our City running. Many of you are here today too. THANK YOU!

And thank you, to our City Councilmembers. I see Councilmember Schwab, CM Vogeli, CM Zarlingo and I believe VP Tuohy here, thank you for your work on behalf of our city.

I know I will be talking for a while, so I invited a few people to join me – via video! The first is Councilmember Schwab.

Council Member Schwab's Video (42 seconds)

Thank you again Councilmember Schwab.

The last time I stood here, just shy of a year ago, to deliver my State of the City, our city had just experienced a devastating loss of one of our own. That loss is still deeply felt throughout our community. A faint light through this darkness was seeing the way our community came together to support each other.

At this time, I would like to thank all the law enforcement officers and first responders here today – as well as their families – for their service and dedication.

Today, I'm honored to be here giving my fifth State of the City address.

We've been through a LOT these past few years.

Including very positive things, like the opening of Paine Field to commercial air service, the gorgeous new Grand Avenue Park bridge, and welcoming next generation businesses like Helion, Terra Power and Zap Energy.

And we've been through some very difficult things, like major storms, a devastating global pandemic, and the alarming rise in violent crime.

Navigating this city through the ups and downs as your Mayor is one of my greatest honors.

And while the job is rewarding – it also comes with its challenges! For example being constantly in the limelight doesn't allow for much privacy for me and my daughter, Panda.

I get recognized at the grocery store, the gas station, and when I'm out grabbing a quick bite with friends. – Don't worry – I love the conversations I get to have with you all.... (though I'm not sure Panda always loves hanging out in the frozen food aisle discussing land use) – I truly enjoy connecting with members of our community and hearing what's on your minds.

And I'm really glad to be here with all of you today.

As I think about the next three years, I do so with incredible optimism about our city's future. Everett is something special. And the thing that sets our community apart, is the people who live and work here. We have such passionate, hardworking and caring residents and business who feel a fierce sense of pride and ownership of our city.

So today – because it's happy hour and we have so many reasons to celebrate – I'll start by highlighting some of our accomplishments.

I'll also talk about the challenges and opportunities ahead of us.

And then I'll share my vision for the future, and new initiatives to help achieve that vision.

As we work to plan our city's future, our young people are always at the forefront of my mind. So much of what we all do is with the intention of leaving our world better for the next generation.

We know that access to early childhood education and childcare are critically important to families, and yet I know how challenging it can be to find affordable, quality childcare.



So I'm proud to see Snohomish County investing nearly twenty million dollars of ARPA funding to increase access to childcare. THANK YOU!

I'm also excited about our partnership with Bezos Academy, which just last week opened a new, tuition-free, Montessori-inspired preschool at the Everett Station. The Everett Bezos Academy is providing outstanding early childhood education, prioritizing low-income and those experiencing homelessness. This will make a real difference for Everett families.

I know we have Bezos Academy here with us today – thank you so much for joining us and becoming a part of our community!

Everett really has fantastic schools.

As the mom of a middle schooler, I continue to be impressed by our local education system.

Everett Public Schools is now offering a dual language immersion program at Emerson Elementary to help students become bilingual. And Mukilteo School District is in the process of developing a bilingual program as well.

Both districts are led by passionate superintendents who are truly committed to seeing our young people thrive and succeed. Dr. Ian Saltzmann and Dr. Alison Brynson: thank you for putting kids first!

One important partnership we have with Everett Public Schools is the Career Link internship program, which connects local businesses with students for summer internships. In the last two years, our City teams have hosted 17 high school interns and we look forward to hosting many more in the future. I'd like to give a special shout out to our current Mayor's office intern Tsedenya. Thank you for being here! And I'd also like to thank the Chair of our Youth Advisory Board. Taniish- for joining us today as well and ensuring youth voices are brought to important aspects of our work. Thank you.

VIDEO Intern Tsedenya (28 seconds)

Thank you, Tsedenya (Sah-Den-Yuh).

Everett is also fortunate to have a strong, collaborative higher education system. Thank you to Everett Community College, Edmonds Community College, the Everett University Center partners, Western, Eastern and UW Bothell and WSU Everett for everything you do to ensure our residents have access to the BEST higher education institutions.



And a thank you to the strong leadership at these schools, including WSU-Everett Chancellor Dr. Paul Pitre and Everett Community College's Interim President Dr. Darrell Cain.

One of the most impressive things about our beautiful city is our incredible parks system. And with the first day of Spring right around the corner, I'm sure many of us are looking forward to spending more time outdoors. Our city parks are the BEST place to do that.

For our furry friends, we recently opened another new fenced, off-leash dog park at Lowell Park. We also opened the Emma Yule park last year, in Glacier View neighborhood, named for the first teacher at Everett's schools. And we are continuing work on the trail system around the beautiful Silver Lake in South Everett.

And Everett has two great public golf courses. Last year was a record-breaking year for both Walter E. Hall and Legion Memorial golf courses.

Another success to highlight is our partnership with Volunteers of America Western Washington for the Carl Gipson Center. In addition to providing fantastic programs and working with Homage to offer hot meals for our seniors, VOA has created new activities and programs to serve the greater community. This includes a new program that helps young people with developmental disabilities gain work and life skills. To Cory Armstrong-Hoss and the VOA team, thank you for your leadership.

Everett is fortunate to have organizations like VOA and so many other fabulous nonprofits that are dedicated to serving our community. I know I saw many of you here today - including Child Strive, Cocoon House, Habitat for Humanity, Housing Hope, Village Community Services, and many more! Thank you for all you do to enrich lives in our city and greater region.

Everett is great at helping people and Everett also likes to have fun.

We are a sports town – and people come from across the region to see our local teams compete!

I'd like to start with a shout out to Mia, who placed 2nd in the STATE in wrestling, and also our Everett High basketball teams - both the girls and boys teams went to State this year. Congratulations Seagulls! You have made your school and your city very proud!

We have the Everett Jets FC and the Everett Royals, who both kick off their seasons this spring. Our Everett Silvertips are having another great year and are once again in the playoffs. So get your tickets and go cheer our TIPS!

We are also very proud to be the home of the Everett Aquasox! Opening night is - Friday, April 7th at



Funko Field, and I heard from my good friend Webby that there will be an impressive fireworks show! I believe Aquasox owners Tom and Chad Volpe as well as manager Danny Tetzlaff are also here today – thank you for joining us!

For the thrill-seeking kids, our partners at the Everett Boys and Girls Club hosted their first ‘Everett Skates’ skateboarding camp at Wiggums Hollow Park. Local kids were given a skateboard, a helmet and lessons – for free!

I commend these kids for being brave enough to try something new. Learning to skateboard is tough. I should know – my daughter and I started taking lessons together last summer. She immediately showed real potential and can actually skate on her board... I, on the other hand... well, I haven’t yet broken my wrists or anything, so - so far, so good!

And in addition to our thriving sports fun, Everett also continues to grow a vibrant arts and culture scene. I’m incredibly excited that we are working with renowned Tulalip Tribes artist James Madison on a new piece of art to honor and acknowledge the original inhabitants of the lands our city rests upon. The art will be a series of fabricated metal sculptures featuring a traditional Coast Salish motif and cultural symbolism. This series will be outside the Everett Municipal Building – we look forward to unveiling it later this year.

It’s been pretty awesome to see our downtown coming alive again. Last year we hosted a record number of downtown events including the Fisherman’s Village Music Fest, Sorticulture, Everett3on3 basketball, Upper Left Beer & Food Truck Festival and Schack’s Fresh Paint.

Our Historic Everett Theatre, Village Theatre and Angel of the Winds arena continue to entertain us, bringing fantastic shows and events into town.

Last year, the arena even hosted the Street League Skateboarding Championship Tour which drew the biggest names in skating and tons of fans to our city!

The Apex Art and Culture Center also opened this year and is home to the largest graffiti and urban art collection in the world. Apex will host music, arts and entertainment events –and will soon have a restaurant and cocktail bar.

I also want to congratulate Imagine Children’s Museum on their fantastic new expansion, doubling the size of the museum! I had the opportunity to tour the new facility just prior to their opening and was wishing I was a kid again and could spend the day there!



This past year, we've also continued to expand our bar and dining options throughout the City. Pints & Pups opened on Evergreen Way, just south of Madison Street, as the city's first and only beer bar AND indoor dog park. What a fun place to go with your pooch! – *Of course I'm still waiting for a Kegs & Kittens location!*

However, I was pretty excited when one of my favorite local food trucks, El Mariachi, opened their first brick and mortar location. Now you can get those delicious soyrizo tacos without having to hunt down Hugo's truck!

Just last week I enjoyed a tasty savory crepe at Cup and Crepe and I simply can't get enough amazing Indian food at the new Red Chilly downtown! ☺ I hope everyone here takes the opportunity to dine out in Everett following this afternoon's event!

It's great to see more and more businesses choosing Everett. Our city is THE place for creativity, innovation and sustainable growth.

This is underscored by Boeing's recent announcement that they are opening a 4th assembly line for the 737 Max here in Everett.

Everett is a Boeing town. And our history with Boeing goes back to the very first 747 being built here in 1967. Named "The City of Everett", this plane completely revolutionized the aerospace industry, travel and our world – and put us on the map as the aerospace leader.

I am grateful to Boeing – its leadership, staff and assembly line-workers – you are the fabric of our community! And I remain committed to actively supporting the entire aerospace industry's growth here in our city.

Everett is also a proud Navy town. And Naval Station Everett is an important part of our community and one of our City's top employers. My team and I will continue to advocate for more growth at the base and we look forward to the arrival of the new Constellation-class frigates in a few years.

Also on the waterfront - I'd be remiss to not mention the amazing transformation happening there! The Port of Everett team continues to make our waterfront an even MORE attractive destination for residents and visitors alike. Five new restaurants will be opening in late spring including Fisherman Jack's and The Muse Whiskey and Coffee Bar – with many more to come!

The Port also recently opened the new Norton Terminal, increasing their cargo capacity and putting the



former Kimberly-Clark site back into productive use for the first time in ten years!

Thank you to Port of Everett CEO Lisa Lefebber and the Port of Everett commissioners for your leadership and vision. Again thank you Commissioners David Simpson and Glen Bachman for joining us today!

Everett has a strong and diverse manufacturing sector, creating products that support aerospace, biotech, and healthcare, to name a few. And some have been here decades! Like Achilles USA – who has been in Everett since 1973. I recently had the chance to take a tour of their facility and was amazed to learn how big of an impact they have on many local industries! They are one of the top manufacturers of many products our healthcare industry relies on for important things like COVID vaccines, dialysis equipment and more. I know we have Chad Turner, Achilles President and Executive Officer, here – thank you to your organization for choosing Everett 50 years ago! And thank you for the incredible work you do for our city, state and world!

Healthcare is a key employer in our region - with Providence Regional Medical Center and the Everett Clinic together bringing over 14,000 jobs to our city. We also have Kaiser Permanente, Seattle Children's Hospital, Compass Health and many other wonderful medical clinics and services.

Notably, Providence, was selected as one of only four hospitals in the country to participate in a trial treatment for methamphetamine addiction. With so many people struggling with severe substance use disorder, I am so grateful for innovative work like this that will change and save lives.

Our health care workers are heroes – truly – and they have had and continue to experience incredible challenges. On behalf of our entire community, I'd like to thank our healthcare workers and services providers for their dedication and care of all of us!

We have businesses, large and small, that have seen growth and success this past year. These businesses are the backbone of our city! A big Congratulations to Holly Pohland and her team on the expansion of Burkett's downtown. It's definitely my go-to spot when I need to find that perfect gift or last minute power outfit.

And a big welcome to some of our newest downtown businesses - MyMyToy Store, Think Tank Coworking, Cassandra's Closet, Petrikor and Artisan's Pacific Northwest.

We also welcome our new ones in south Everett such as Flying Squirrel Trampoline Park, Glint Car Wash, Sonic, and Woods Coffee!

And we know we will soon see more – our team processed 172 million dollars in commercial investment land approvals just this last year!



Our own Everett Mall will soon see some exciting changes. There will be a new main street, with retail along a walking path right through the middle of what is now the food court - leading to a new pocket park! Also, Panda's favorite store, Ulta, and a great home décor store called At Home will be moving into the new units that are being built in what used to be Sears.

Please keep your eyes on the news too as we will soon have an incredible new entertainment partner coming to the mall that we can't wait to share with all of you! Thank you to our partners, Mark Selman, President of Brixton Capital and Justin Long, VP of Development, for your work and for being here today.

I'm also really excited to announce that we will be re-establishing the Everett Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Economic Alliance! The Everett Chamber will play a critical role in strengthening our local economy, offering resources and support to businesses throughout the city and attracting new investment.

The Chamber will complement the work of the Downtown Everett Association and our other business improvement areas who already do so much to better our city and support our business community!

Next I'll take a minute to recognize a few city teams.

The city employs over one thousand people across many departments, including Police, Fire, Public Works, Parks & Facilities, Motor Vehicles, Transit and our libraries. We also have IT, Finance, HR, Economic and Community Development, Planning, Engagement and more!

Now, I'd like to introduce, our outreach coordinator - Alberto Vasquez!

Alberto Video (1.29)

Community engagement, Planning and Development are doing important work ahead – especially on the comprehensive plan and I appreciate how dedicated our teams are to connecting with our community. Community input is vital to our success as a city.

I'd also like to take just a moment to highlight a couple more city teams for their work this past year. Starting with our Everett Police Department, who continues to be a regional leader in law enforcement. I remain so proud of the work they do to keep our community safe. Once again, compared to the top ten most populous cities in the state, Everett Police received the #1 clearance rate, as reported in the Crime in Washington Annual Report. This means cases are being closed and arrests are being made. This past



year we also hosted our first Community Police Academy. And our team also organized its first Guns for Gift Cards event, which collected over 240 unwanted firearms in one day.

Our EPD team is led by our Chief of Police Dan Templeman, who reached a major milestone - 30 years working for the City! There isn't a day that goes by that I'm not incredibly grateful for his dedication to our community and his thoughtful leadership. He exemplifies his department's values of honor, professionalism and integrity. Chief Templeman, on behalf of the City and our residents, thank you so much for everything you do.

When it comes to keeping us safe, day in and day out, I also must mention our Public Works team. Most of what they do that goes unseen, so I want to express my sincere appreciation for these unsung heroes. Especially during what's been a very long, snowy, icy and windy winter! Our teams work round the clock to take care of our vital infrastructure, water and systems and keep Everett moving, so that our first responders, transit operators and all of us can safely get where we need to go.

Ryan Sass, our extraordinary Public Works director also celebrated 30 years with the City this last year. Ryan, I have so much respect and appreciation for the work that you do and the unparalleled expertise and professionalism you bring to the job every day. Thank you for your leadership.

It is an honor to lead our team of 1000+ public servants. I am incredibly proud of these dedicated individuals for everything they do to take care of all of us and serve our community. Thank you!

Clearly Everett has some great things going for us!

But our City faces some serious challenges, some of which are reaching a critical level.

One that weighs most heavily on my heart is violent crime.

We have seen a concerning rise in violent crime over the past couple of years, especially gun violence. The frequency of these violent acts is alarming. And they have extremely serious consequences for our entire community. Our residents deserve to feel safe in every part of our city, at any time.

So today I am issuing a new Directive on violence prevention.

Everett Police Department will be reallocating resources to establish a violent crime unit which will focus on the response and investigation of violent crimes throughout our community.



We will also ramp up efforts to prevent gun violence. I'm advocating for changes needed at the state and federal levels. This includes innovative policies supported by the Alliance for Gun Responsibility to restrict access to semi-automatic weapons and require a permit to purchase a firearm. These common-sense changes will help keep us safer while still protecting the rights of law-abiding owners of firearms.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with local survivors of domestic violence and it was heartbreaking to hear what they have lived through – but their strength, courage and their desire to make things better for the next person is inspiring. I know we have Snohomish County Domestic Violence Services in the room – thank you for everything that you do to support survivors.

To continue supporting and protecting survivors, we will remain a leader in pursuing Extreme Risk Protection Orders, which help keep firearms out of the hands of people who are likely to use them to hurt themselves or someone else.

And, I will continue the important work of the Mayors and Business Leaders for Public Safety coalition that I formed last year together with Mayor Nehring of Marysville, Mayor Gailey of Lake Stevens and Mayor Wiita of Sultan.

The coalition includes 16 Snohomish County mayors and multiple business leaders. This group continues to grow and bring a united voice to the changes needed to make our communities safer.

This session, we are in Olympia advocating for policies to improve public safety, including a fix for the Blake decision as well as other bills that impact our ability to have a safe community. In coming months, our coalition will be focused on unlawful possession of firearms, behavioral health services and fixes to what's broken in our criminal justice system. I see Mayor Nehring, Mayor Gailey and Mayor Frizzell of Lynnwood here, thank you for joining me in this work. And a big thank you to Sheriff Fortney and your team for your work as well – you're a great partner in this important work!

Another Directive I'm issuing seeks to address the challenges of behavioral health we see in our community each and every day. Now, we will hear from our community development director, Julie Willie about these challenges.

Julie Video (1.23)

As Julie mentioned, too many people are in crisis on the streets, struggling with addiction and serious mental health conditions – and they desperately need medical care. Just this morning I attended a seminar together with many community leaders and members of our law enforcement and treatment community on Fentanyl and Methamphetamine, which was both inspiring and terrifying. Fentanyl has taken an alarming hold on our region. It's cheap --and sadly--incredibly addictive as well as



deadly. We don't have enough treatment options available – and we do not have the tools necessary to get individuals into treatment and save lives.

Also, because the services and support that is available is concentrated in Everett, the entire County's behavioral health and homelessness crisis is here – on our streets.

Untreated behavioral health conditions and substance use disorder are the main causes of the extremely challenging street-level social issues we're seeing in our City. I know we all see this every day, and I hear from concerned business owners and residents multiple times a day. I know conditions are not good and we must do more.

So to address this, I am directing our Community Development department to create a plan with our regional partners to strengthen our behavioral health treatment system. We need to find ways to support our existing service providers and encourage capacity building, so they can help more people in need. And we need treatment across the region so people can get support in their home community. I'll also be tasking teams to maximize the impact of the funds we are receiving from the opioid distributors settlement. This money can be used to increase treatment options and address the many ways the opioid epidemic has devastated our community.

And this year we will be expanding our embedded social worker program and supporting legislative and policy changes that will help create more pathways into treatment and support innovative ideas like co-and-alternate response units.

We need to advocate for a compassionate approach, which must have accountability for individuals that are engaged in illegal, dangerous behavior.

Leaving our friends and neighbors untreated on our streets, is not safe or humane – getting people the help they need, sometimes which comes from our criminal justice system, is far more compassionate and also protects others from becoming victims of this crisis.

The next Directive I'll talk about is Housing Choices for All.

We are growing and the cost of housing is rising at a rate that far outpaces incomes. We also don't have anywhere close to enough housing for our growing community. To address this, we must be fiercely pro-housing.

Everett is. And we are adding more housing citywide. The new Four Corners apartment complex on Evergreen Way, for example, will add 430 much-needed affordable units to our community. And in the past year, The Nimbus and the Carling both opened – adding nearly 300 more beautiful apartments.



In the next 20 years our population is expected to increase by 66,000 people. To accommodate that, we'll need to add 36,000 more homes.

Therefore, I'm directing staff to move forward with strategies that will help increase the supply of housing at all price points, including permit streamlining and development incentives. We have to continue to make it easier and more attractive to build here.

We will advocate for middle-income housing as well as affordable housing while pursuing ways to make our existing affordable housing permanent and to create a better rental environment for both renters and property owners.

And to help our unsheltered population, the City will continue working with the County and other partners to sustain and increase shelter options with support and services. The goal is to help people find shelter and stability and then move on to long-term housing.

Moving on to my fourth directive – I'd like to touch on Climate Action and Sustainability.

We are seeing the impacts of climate change with extreme weather events becoming the norm. Just think of the crazy winters we've been having. Or the fact that wildfire smoke chokes our community every summer.

This should be a wake-up call for all of us that we must do our part to reduce our impact and make environmental sustainability a priority.

Our residents deserve to live in a healthy, resilient and livable community and to have a high quality of life for generations to come.

To reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, our Transit department will continue electrifying our fleet – securing funding to buy more buses and getting them in service as quickly as possible.

Our City will also develop a plan to fully transition our buildings away from fossil fuels when possible, prioritizing buildings that present the greatest opportunity for greenhouse gas reductions.

We also know that trees and greenspaces play a huge role in the health of our communities, so over the next several years, we'll develop an Urban Forest Management plan to provide the framework for preserving, maintaining and growing a healthy urban forest.

Climate change is not something any of us can solve on our own. But working together, our collective actions can make a difference. I encourage each of you to join us in this important work!



The final Directive I'm issuing today focuses on initiatives to ensure Everett is a thriving and prosperous city. Let's hear from our economic development director Dan Eernissee about the opportunities on our horizon.

Dan Eernissee Video (1.27)

Like Dan, my vision for Everett is that we are a city full of opportunity and innovation, supporting entrepreneurship, attracting new industries while continuing to grow our existing ones, creating jobs and attracting more people to move and invest here.

It's no secret, though, that we have faced serious financial concerns for several decades. This impacts our ability to provide the services and amenities our residents rely on. We've made extraordinary efforts these past few years to reduce expenses and ensure a lean, efficient government. However, the City still has a significant structural deficit. We received emergency grant funds that helped, but we need a sustainable plan for our future.

One of the best ways to address this is to bring revenue to the City is through economic development. So our first initiative is to establish Everett's reputation as the first choice for business.

We have a great economic development ecosystem here – and I want to see the City work closely with our partners, like the Economic Alliance, Greater Seattle Partners, the Downtown Everett Association, Northwest Innovation Resource Center and the re-launched Chamber, to support our local businesses and industries.

As businesses grow, it's important to ensure our transportation network keeps up. As a member of Sound Transit's board, one of my top priorities, aside from getting light rail to Everett as fast as humanly possible, has been to ensure that this growth positively impacts the communities it serves.

So I'm directing our team to work in partnership with the community on a 10-year business strategy for the Westmont-Holly-Evergreen-Boeing community to support wealth creation, preserve local businesses and to ensure support is available to businesses that will be impacted by light rail.

I'm excited about light rail coming to the County. Mayor Frizzell in Lynnwood gets to see it first! But it's also coming to southwest Everett soon- maybe not soon enough- but it will be here before we know it, bringing billions of dollars of investment to an area that historically hasn't received that kind of attention. So our continued focus on light rail in Everett will remain my priority.

Another big part of my vision for a more thriving and prosperous Everett is expanding our recreation, entertainment and arts scene, making our city an even better place to live and visit.



Staff will continue to pursue new public-private partnerships to bring new parks and entertainment options to our city and also develop a plan to offer more support for big events that take place here. We will also partner with the Aquasox, Snohomish County and others to develop a fiscally responsible plan to build or redevelop a multipurpose stadium in Everett that will generate revenue for our community and ensure we are the sports and entertainment center of our County for decades to come. With the Aquasox needing a field that meets Minor League Baseball's updated standards, a new 15,000-person outdoor venue will benefit our beloved local baseball team while also bringing opportunities to energize our economy. Plus, we will expand recreation to include an amphitheater and park venue. I look forward to catching a concert – or a fly ball – there in the near future.

CONCLUSION

My vision for our city is aspirational.

Some may even think I'm dreaming too big. But I believe in Everett - I believe in our city teams, our businesses, our partners and our residents – and I know that there is no limit to what our community can accomplish.

Our city is and will remain a great place for all to live, recreate, raise a family, and start a business.

Our residents will have affordable, quality housing options in neighborhoods that connect them to jobs, parks, vibrant retail spaces, entertainment and each other.

Our city will be innovative, resilient and sustainable.

Our city will be known across the region and the country as a small city with big opportunities.

We have big challenges ahead. But I believe that together, WE can solve them.

Our city teams and I are committed to making this vision a reality.

So thank you for being here, I hope you share our vision of Everett's amazing future!

I am very proud and honored to be your Mayor.

Here's to a more prosperous Everett for all!

Thank you.

