



## Safe Streets

The City of Everett is engaged in a long-term collaboration with our community partners to address street-level social issues such as homelessness, poverty, and untreated substance-use and mental health issues. Under the umbrella of our Safe Streets Directive, Mayor Cassie Franklin addresses these complex issues with compassion and inclusion by engaging our community, aligning efforts with partners and collaborators, advocating for resources and systems change, and providing education on root causes and reducing stigma. The City is guided in these efforts by the mutually supportive values of community safety and individual well-being. We believe that the most effective way to address complex social issues and achieve public safety is through compassion, collaboration and strategic accountability.

## Background

Since coming to office in January 2018, Mayor Cassie Franklin has expanded efforts already underway to address street-level social issues. She created a new Community Development Division that includes work on Safe Streets, Housing and Human Services, Neighborhood and Community Engagement, and Diversity, Equity and Collaboration. The genesis of the Safe Streets Work goes back to 2014 when the City began its effort to find comprehensive, collaborative, and compassionate response to street level social issues in by convening a community stakeholder taskforce called the Community Streets Initiative (CSI Task Force). Under the leadership of then Mayor Ray Stephanson, the CSI Task Force was composed of 23 members representing a broad cross section of the City, including business leaders, residents, leaders from education, healthcare, the faith community, and major nonprofit service agencies. Mayor Franklin was one of the members in her prior role as Executive Director of Cocoon House, a community service provider addressing youth homelessness. It not only began a number of new programs but also brought her into politics where she now continues the work as Mayor.

The CSI Task Force met for six months to better understand the street-level social issues, and produced a report with 63 short and long term recommendations to address the issues and foster a vibrant and healthy community. The CSI Task Force recommendations served as shared vision for our community, and many efforts that followed trace a path back to this early work at inclusive visioning, which recognized the complexity and interconnected nature of the issues. When business leaders, police officers, social service providers, residents, faith leaders and City staff were all working together on identifiable goals, it created lasting relationships that allowed for successful implementation in the following years.

## Implementing the Safe Streets Initiatives - Key goals of the initiative included:

Implementing the Streets Initiative Recommendations takes political leadership, dedicated staff time and resources to implementing the plan, and lifting up and amplifying work going on in the community. Understanding the scale of these issues requires breaking down the initiatives into concrete plans for specific projects and programs. Having learned about other about effective

models and successful approaches from other communities during the convening, the City and community remain focused on solutions proven to bring desired results.

The community had a shared vision, but implementation allowed each partner to focus on solutions within its own sphere of influence. At the same time, partners continued to leverage collaboration for expanded funding and policy change. By setting an agenda for action with specific areas of responsibility across the county and community, agencies can realistically accomplish goals even though the broader problem of homelessness and addiction is too complex for any one entity. We measure results both for individual projects and toward our collective wish for a more compassionate and effective response to those in crisis.

As an example for how this worked, the City focuses on goals squarely within the scope of municipal government and runs a suite of programs under the umbrella of the “Safe Streets Plan” that focuses on public safety, targeted outreach, reduction of emergency services, and community education and engagement.

Community groups, social service providers, other government entities, and others focus efforts on their own respective areas of expertise and influence. The City continue to reinforce the collective nature of these efforts even as each group works on specific implementation goals.

City led initiatives in partnership with community:

- Community Forum series with presenters and panels on low barrier housing, mental health, addiction, opioids and other related issues created deeper understanding and awareness among hundreds of residents and key partners.
- Development of infographics, social media and website postings to educate the public about low barrier housing, treatment needs, community and personal impacts of lack of resources enhanced understanding and willingness to act, among the public and partners.
- Community Outreach and Enforcement Team (COET) —an effort to embed social workers in the Everett Police Department and conduct outreach to those living in homelessness or with substance-use disorders, balancing supportive and coordinated referrals with enforcement on illegal activities.
- Chronic-Utilizer Alternative Response Team (ChART)—a collaboration of police, fire, emergency medical department, jail, prosecutors, housing, social service, and faith groups to address the needs of individuals with complex behavioral and healthcare needs who disproportionately use emergency services to meet basic needs.
- Mental Health Alternatives Program—a therapeutic court that supports individuals with mental health issues who are involved in the criminal justice system
- Safe Streets Work Crew—a diversion program that allows low-level offenders to do community restitution (litter pick-up) in lieu of charges or jail.
- Give Responsibly Campaign—a public education program that seeks to direct charity in ways that provide the greatest benefit. This also included the creation of a dedication fund to receive donations that could be distributed through police embedded social workers to meet emergency needs of clients experiencing homelessness.

- Beyond the Streets Forums, Education Series, and stakeholder groups—A series of forums, training programs and localized community groups focused on learning ways to include broad stakeholders in solution and reduce stigma associated with social issues.
- Supportive Housing Initiative—Sustained effort to increase access to affordable housing, specifically housing-first, low-barrier, supportive housing that resulted in 170 new homeless housing units coming online in Snohomish County in 2019. The City provided funding to all three projects but directly led to the creation of 65 units of permanent supportive housing on land the City donated to non-profit for purpose of developing housing.
- Crisis Intervention Training - Everett Police Chief Dan Templeman spearheaded Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) requiring each officer to participate in 40 hours of training on mental health and de-escalation methods, exceeding state mandated requirements for 10 hours of CIT training. All officers completed training by 2017 and continue to participate in refresher training on these methods.
- Everett, as the county seat for Snohomish County, cannot work without other Cities and the County. Over the past several years, the City has convened leadership from across the county to dialogue on the shared nature of the problem, to learn about effective methods from other cities, and explore ways that towns and cities could work together. These meetings built support for coordinated requests to the state legislature and collaboration on securing more housing/shelter and treatment allocations.

Community led projects in partnership with the City:

- Everett Faith in Action (EFIA) —A coalition of faith leaders working to align efforts to support the City’s most vulnerable residents.
- Hot Meals Group—a collaboration among the City’s hot meal providers to share resources, coordinate delivery, and plan for long term sustainability of providing free hot meals.
- Initiation of collaboration on housing funding requests to state government to insure a pipeline of projects and reduce unnecessary competition where collaboration could provide mutual support.

### **Most difficult problems confronted**

Addressing complex social issues such as poverty and addiction require compassion and inclusion. The City of Everett faces several challenges including lack of affordable housing at all price points, the need for more shelter beds, the need for greater funding levels to address lack of housing, lack of treatment beds and for treatment of addictions and mental health.

The goal of the Safe Streets work has always been to address the needs of safety, sanitation, and health by including those living without housing, facing addiction and mental health issues. When we address the underlying causes of addiction, and provide supportive interventions, we are confronting the issues honestly and looking for real solutions.

All partners realize the need for greater collaboration on response to the issues, including housing funding requests. Federal funds for housing have decreased and local dollars cannot begin to make up the difference to address housing demand. State funding and private public-partnerships will be necessary for years to come because the lack of housing funding has created a back log of demand.

Facing these issues head-on means addressing the stigma of addiction and poverty. By speaking opening, factually, and frequently about the causes of addiction and poverty, Mayor Franklin addresses stigma and reinforces the message that we are an inclusive community. While we uphold the standards of respect for all and accountability for harm done to the community by individual actions, we reinforce the message of compassion for those who suffer addiction and poverty.

### **Evidence of Impact**

We are still learning the full impact of these efforts, but we no some preliminary outputs directly related to these efforts

- By 2020, we will have a combined 170 new supportive housing units available in Everett from three projects addressing chronic homelessness, youth and young adult homelessness, and for those preparing to enter the workforce.
- In 2018, the Community Outreach and Enforcement team found housing for 113 people and temporary housing for 47 at the County's new Diversion Center.
- We now have "treatment without delay" for those with substance use disorder who received same day intakes with several community partners who have expanded treatment capacity.
- Over the past two years, the Work Crew Diversion program that diverts low level misdemeanor defendants from charges or jail through community restitution has picked up 4,700 bags of garbage from the streets of Everett. Additionally, 209 successful participants had charges dismissed or reduced and received referrals to social service programs.
- The first five participants through the CHART program reduced jail contacts by 90 percent and an 80% reduction in EMS and Police contacts. The primary interventions include greater collaboration with healthcare and social services and providing low-barrier supportive housing. A larger full-scale evaluation is underway.
- Graduate of our Municipal Court Mental Health Alternatives Program have a 93% reduction in recidivism post-graduation.

### **Resources required for successful implementation**

These efforts would not have been possible without strong Mayoral and City Council leadership. Prior Mayor Ray Stephanson convened the community and other elected leaders around these issues but also directed staff and city resources to implement the

recommendations. Current Mayor Cassie Franklin was a member of the original CSI Task Force as the CEO of Cocoon House—a social service and housing provider for homeless youth. The process inspired her to seek elected office, first as a member of City Council and then as Mayor. The elected leaders held steady to the goals of the initiative even as transitions of leadership occurred.

In addition, a key element of success to date is the recognition by the city, social services, residents, police, hospital and other partners that collaboration was the best approach, that arrests were not going to solve the problem, that the issue impacts the entire community and needs a community wide response. The City dedicated financial and staff resources to the work and set the expectation that we would be working together. Our efforts including those experiencing addiction and poverty as we sought to include their voice in our implementation and keep human connection at the center of our work.