



CITY OF EVERETT
Office of the Mayor

Mayoral directive 2020-03: Affordable housing for all

Housing and affordability are key to a thriving, healthy community. Over the past 10 years, Everett—along with the rest of the Puget Sound region—has faced a shortage of housing at all price points and particularly for lower-income residents. This is contributing to a crisis that is most visible in the increase of the homeless population around our city and county. The economic and public health impacts of COVID-19 are worsening the situation.

Since 2018, we have made meaningful progress in our efforts to encourage building capacity. We have implemented actions such as adopting the Metro Everett Plan that increases residential densities in the downtown core and adjacent areas, expanded the Multi-Family Tax Exemption to other areas of the city, adopted reduced residential parking standards and adopted a special connection charge exemption for affordable housing.

These efforts, however, are not keeping pace with the growing need. Everett’s population has been growing by an average of 1,000 residents a year since 2010. Today we have about 112,000 residents and expect a population growth of 55,000 by 2035. What’s more, local incomes are increasingly out of step with the cost of housing. In 2019, the median house purchase price in Everett was \$389,000. Rental prices increased by 53 percent between 2010 to 2018. The median household income in Everett is only \$55,000. Owning a home in Everett is out of reach for too many of our residents and even renting a home is challenging. Many households are one paycheck away from housing instability. Communities of color and low-income populations are especially impacted.

Homelessness remains a challenge in our community as well and the current public health pandemic is exacerbating conditions. Programs and services that support those experiencing homelessness have been reduced and public buildings have been closed. There is a great need for expanded shelter capacity and additional supportive housing.

Addressing housing and homelessness is a challenge that extends beyond city limits. Regional partnerships and collaboration are essential to finding enduring solutions. We will continue to work with Snohomish County, regional nonprofit organizations and the private sector to advance plans and bring more resources to our community to create a supportive housing production climate.

Although the City does not build housing, there are opportunities at the local level to encourage an increase in housing and shelter for all community members.

- We must complete our work in developing a citywide housing action plan to align our policies, regulations and funding affecting housing.
- We must continue to improve Everett's property development process and permitting requirements to eliminate barriers to more streamlined development of new housing.
- We can incentivize housing construction by offering initiatives such as the Washington State's Multifamily Property Tax program, promoting Everett's two federally-recognized Opportunity Zones, and helping affordable housing providers tap into the tax credit and grant programs available to them.
- We must redouble our efforts to address homelessness and support housing stability and in particular, to eliminate student homelessness. Roughly 1,200 Everett school children are living without safe, stable housing. Children cannot succeed without a roof over their head and a safe place to call home.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cassie Franklin, Mayor of Everett, hereby direct City of Everett staff to pursue the following three initiatives:

Initiative 1: implement the Rethink Housing engagement process and develop a citywide housing action plan by June 30, 2021.

- a. Utilize advisory members from existing boards and commissions to help develop strategies that promote and plan for housing opportunities for all.
- b. Engage and educate key stakeholders through a series of virtual forums and online meetings. Stakeholders should include, but are not limited to, Everett residents, industry professionals, housing providers and community partners. It is especially important to engage communities of color and underserved populations.
- c. Complete the housing action plan. This plan should include a framework of actions, policies, regulatory improvements and implementation measures identifying engaged stakeholder roles and responsibilities driven by the spectrum of governmental and economic influences that address housing for all. The plan should also address displacement and equitable housing policies and actions.
- d. Monitor progress of expected housing production progress.

Initiative 2: improve procedures and permitting requirements to ensure Everett is a friendly, attractive place for investors to develop housing.



- a. Under the leadership of the City's new planning director, begin preparations for planning of transit-oriented development and light rail development that addresses increased density, mixed income housing and mixed building use.
- b. Recruit and encourage a range of market-rate and affordable housing developers with an expanding offering of incentives, development-friendly housing policies, and placemaking efforts that enhance return on investment

Initiative 3: aggressively address homelessness and support housing stability in 2021.

- a. In January 2021, re-launch the City's Homeless Student Task Force. This task force paused its work this past spring due to COVID-19, but will be reactivated to resume work developing recommendations on practical approaches for solving student homelessness.
- b. Pilot a year-round shelter program using Pallet shelters, funded through the Washington State Department of Commerce Shelter Grant program.
- c. Administer the next round of CARES 3.0 Community Development Block Grant funds for rental assistance and housing stability.
- d. Staff the Community Outreach and Enforcement Team with a total of three social workers to help meet the growing needs of homeless residents, providing more coverage and support for our police teams and people experiencing trauma.

Progress on these initiatives, as well as metrics that will be used to gauge impact and success, will be delivered to me twice per year.

Dated this 17 day of November 2020



Cassie Franklin
Mayor, City of Everett

