



CITY OF EVERETT  
State of Everett 2021

Jan. 28, 2021

Mayor Cassie Franklin

Thank you, Rich, for that kind introduction. I know it's been a rough year for Boeing and that our aerospace industry has especially been hit hard. You've remained a pillar of support for our community and I am grateful for your and the Boeing Company's leadership and commitment to Everett. Thank you!

I also want to thank Economic Alliance of Snohomish County, Chris Mefford and team. I appreciate your hosting our annual State of the City.

And good morning everyone!

In preparing for this today, I found myself reflecting on what a crazy, strange year it's been. It was more than a year ago that the first case of COVID-19 in our nation was reported here in Snohomish County.

Our first responders and health care workers were the first to come into contact with this virus.

As the first leaders to face this, the rest of the country was looking to us, learning from us, as we came together to build a response to this unknown and deadly disease, doing our best to keep it from spreading too deeply into our community

I remember sitting in this office feeling so overwhelmed and afraid for the health and well-being of our community, also feeling unsure how best to guide our city through this crisis.

Those early days were scary, but I also remember the solidarity I felt with so many of you. We didn't always know what to do, when to do it, how best to do it, but we came together with such a strong desire to serve our community, protect our residents, do our best to keep everyone safe.

So I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge what a hellish year it has been and express my sincere gratitude to all of you. We couldn't have made it here without the courage, creativity, adaptability, resilience, dedication and leadership that we have in this community.

So some thank yous:

City council - you've been my sounding board and co-leaders during these strange times.

My fellow Snohomish County leaders - Executive Somers, members of our County Council and my fellow mayors – you've also been my support and Exec Somers, you had to step up in ways I know you never imagined, and you've done it exceptionally well and with a steady calm.

Snohomish Health District, Dr. Spitters, Sean Fredericks, all the health district staff - you've been working 24/7 dealing with this for more than a year now, and are a trusted source of information and guidance to help keep our residents safe.

Representative Larsen, Representative DelBene and our other colleagues at the federal level— thank you for working so hard to advocate for federal support on behalf of our residents.

All of our first responders - from Everett Fire, Everett Police, our emergency management teams - thank you for the care, professionalism and efforts you've taken to serve our community through uncertain times.

All of our health workers - Providence, Everett Clinic, Kaiser and throughout the community - you're the true heroes on the frontlines of this pandemic. I imagine you're exhausted! I can't thank you enough for your courage, commitment and care.

Everyone who's been staffing the Emergency Coordination Center, working around the clock to help us stay on top of the latest science, latest strategies, and help coordinate, educate, care for and now vaccinate the community.

Local business and community leaders who have worked to support our community when they have needed you most - I know many of you have had to switch gears time and time again and that this pandemic has really dealt you a hard blow. Thank you for hanging in there and finding new ways to provide goods and services.

Teachers, school administrators and parents - you've had to turn teaching models upside down and revise methods to teach remotely, and parents you had to become teachers, ensuring students everywhere had what they need to succeed.

Lastly to our teams at the City of Everett - you often have the thankless work as a public servants, yet I want you to know that your work has not gone unnoticed and I appreciate you! Our city appreciates you, and I know our community does, too.

Thank you. And a thank you to anyone I didn't mention!

It's been an honor and privilege to work with you all as we help our community through this crisis. Together, you all represent everything I love about Everett and our community.



## 2021 vision

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So now, I wanted to take a few minutes to talk about my vision for our city.

Everett has it all. Tucked between Puget Sound and the Cascade mountains, we are surrounded by gorgeous natural beauty.

Everett is the largest urban center north of Seattle, yet still has that small-town feel.

We host a robust advanced manufacturing center, including Boeing and other aerospace support and supply chain companies. We have a world-class commercial airport at Paine Field.

We have an amazing variety of food and entertainment options, as well as retail shops and other locally-owned businesses.

We have first-rate medical facilities.

We have Funko!

This is a great city for raising kids with beautiful parks and fantastic education partners, such as our Everett and Mukilteo school districts, which have done remarkable work to provide new learning models to keep our students engaged and learning during these unpredictable times.

We also have stellar higher education options, with our Everett Community College, which was the first college in the state to return to in-person nursing labs, and is continuing to safely train the next generation of healthcare providers.

And, of course, there's Washington State University Everett - GO COUGS! While many colleges and universities have seen a decline due to the pandemic, WSU-Everett actually increased enrolment. And just a few weeks ago launched a new bachelor's degree program in business administration!

We are proud to host Naval Station Everett, which now is home port to five destroyers, with three more coming soon, and two coast guard vessels, along with their crews and families.

And we have an active seaport. Earlier this month, I joined the virtual ribbon-cutting to celebrate the completion of the modernization of the Port's South Terminal. This \$57 million maritime infrastructure project will support the next generation of larger vessels and heavier cargoes now arriving at Everett's international seaport.

And in addition to all this, Everett is relatively affordable to live and do business.

We're big enough to provide unlimited opportunities, but small and neighborly enough to create a wonderful quality of life.



Our community is what makes us special. Everett's compassion and work ethic make us an authentic city -- we don't shy away from dealing with our society's toughest problems, but we work together to tackle them and find solutions. We care about each other, and want the best for our city.

I feel like Everett is one of the Northwest's best kept secrets, and too often is overlooked and definitely underestimated.

So this year, I'd like to call it our year. Now is the time to rise up and highlight our strength as a community, showcase our amazing assets – and the opportunity we have to grow, expand, and achieve.

It's been tough and we're not out of the woods yet. But I also know that together we will get through this pandemic and whatever other issues come our way.

It's Everett's time to shine.

Traditionally my State of the City address has included highlights of the previous year, with updates on our initiatives and projects.

Last year was anything but traditional – so this year we're doing things a little differently.

Instead of a lengthy recap of what we've done, I'd like to share a short video our team put together, which highlights 2020 in review...

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[Watch the video here.](#)

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As the video showed, we've been through a lot, and hopefully you took note of the amazing strength, resilience and adaptability of our community and our City teams. I remain humbled and impressed and grateful for the way our community has come together and supported each other during the most dark and challenging year of our lifetime.

Building on these themes of strength and resilience, I'd like to now lay out my priorities for the year, and how I intend to keep us on a steady path toward healing and recovery.

They fall into the following categories:

- COVID recovery
- Good governance
- Housing for all
- Diversity, equity and inclusion



## COVID recovery

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Clearly recovering from the pandemic is our top priority which means, first and foremost, making sure our community is healthy. We've been working lockstep with partners at Snohomish County, the Snohomish Health District and others to advance best practices to keep our community safe.

The latest from the health district shows our rate of new infections is going down, which is encouraging news, but we still have a long way to go.

Right now, making the vaccine available to everyone in our community as soon as possible is our priority. We are supporting regional efforts for mass vaccination around the county, and also helping with plans to establish additional sites here in Everett, which we hope to open soon. Our greatest challenge right now is supply, but together with Executive Somers' leadership, we have been fiercely advocating for more state and federal supplies and we expect to see more doses coming our way soon.

In addition to helping our community get healthy, recovery also includes building our economic base and doing what we can to support our local businesses, which have been severely impacted by the pandemic.

I'm pleased we've been partnering with Greater Seattle Partners, Snohomish County, the Economic Alliance, and others, to focus on economic recovery for our region.

In fact, much of our focus this past year has been on launching new programs and initiatives to help, such as our EverettforEverett guide, our Getting to Safe toolkit, our Streateries program and Everett CARES grants. So far the City has awarded \$1.8 million in three rounds of CARES funding to support 140 local businesses and organizations. We'll continue to help them recover any way we can.

I want to once again see our beautiful downtown, waterfront and central and south Everett communities bustling with amazing restaurants, shops, businesses and arts, attracting not only our residents, but people from other cities and counties.

## Good governance

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My next priority is good governance. A core responsibility for every mayor is the everyday business of running a city, and running the city responsibly. This includes ensuring Everett remains a safe and welcoming city with a wonderful quality of life for our residents. I'll continue to support the public safety programs we have with our fire, emergency management and police. These teams will not only continue to lead our City's response to the pandemic, but will also continue the routine, yet essential, work to protect and care for our community – fighting fires, solving crimes and being there for us when we need them most.



The business of running a city includes keeping our infrastructure in good shape. That means transportation networks - roads, bridges, sidewalks, our transit system - and our utility. We've worked hard during the pandemic to ensure continuity of service and will continue to do so.

And good governance also requires us as a city, to operate within our means. As many of you already know, our City has struggled with a structural deficit for a long time. This year I will continue to prioritize putting Everett on a path toward long-term fiscal sustainability.

Last year I formed a stakeholder committee to explore our fiscal options and advise me and city leadership on ways we can address the City's revenue challenges far into the future. They found that the City is in a financial crisis and that "dramatic action" is required if we are to work our way out of this challenge.

This year is the time for us to take a hard look at the options before us – options that won't be easy – but now is the time for us to take decisive action.

## **Housing for all**

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Another priority is housing, and this need has been intensified by the pandemic and its economic toll. I recently issued a housing directive geared at "housing for all", which seeks to add more housing at all price points so everyone who lives and works in Everett can afford a home and access the great amenities our City has to offer. We also have a growing need for shelter and are moving forward with new initiatives to expand shelter capacity.

## **Diversity, equity and inclusion**

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And the last priority I'll mention is having a diverse and inclusive city. This past year - this past month - has brought into sharp focus the need we have as a city, and as a country, to do more and to do it now to address inequities.

Since taking office I've issued two mayoral directives on diversity and equity and also hired our City's first equity manager. Much work lies ahead, but we are committed to bringing about the changes needed to make our city more inclusive and a place where everyone has opportunities to succeed. Together we are working toward a vision of Everett that celebrates, honors and respects our diversity of cultures, experiences and faiths.

So that's a broad overview of my vision and priorities for the year.



## Q&A with Chris Mefford and Mayor Cassie Franklin

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### Question from Chris Mefford:

What projects or initiatives are in the works that really excite you underway right now?

### Answer from Mayor Franklin:

We have some great things in the works. It's a big, open-ended question, so let me apologize in advance for my rather long-winded answer!

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, I really want to help raise Everett's profile as an attractive place to do business. So with that in mind, there are three areas that I'm excited about, which are:

- The maker's mindset of Everett
- The green economy, and
- Parks, arts and placemaking

We like to refer to Everett as the City of Makers, with the idea that you can make it in Everett. That means not only making goods and services, but also being able to make a great life for yourself here for all the reasons I mentioned earlier.

Our economic development team is working on an initiative to help tell our story to the world: that Everett is a place where you can make it; that if you have an idea or a passion, we'll help you follow your dreams, grow your business and succeed.

I want to share a couple examples that illustrate how companies have made it here in Everett, creating some of the world's best products.

We know about Boeing, aerospace and Funko pops, but folks may not know we're also home to Pocock Racing Shells. They make the finest racing rowboats in the world and have been building boats locally since 1911. UW's crew team took gold in one of their shells during the 1936 Olympics in Berlin!

And down at the waterfront, Ocean Gate makes state-of-the-art submarines that researchers take to explore the deepest parts of our oceans. They're currently building a submarine that will take a crew of researchers to the Titanic.

And we're honored to be home to Acrowood - one of the oldest companies in Everett. They make incredible machines for the forest products industry, and they've been at it since 1892! Today, they're selling Everett-made machines on all seven continents, including Antarctica!



All kinds of good things happening here.

And Chris, you mentioned our partner, the Port of Everett, and so I wanted to highlight again the great work they are doing. They are a fantastic economic driver for the region and are nearing completion on a project I'm really excited about, which is the cleanup and restoration of the Bay Wood site which used to be a sawmill. They're removing the contaminated soil and creating new, protected habitat for salmon and other native wildlife. This not only protects the environment, but also makes way for the site to become a job center. A new light industrial development is expected to break ground this summer, bringing jobs to our waterfront and creating outdoor opportunities for our residents with a new nature trail along the shoreline.

And I'm excited about what Everett's doing for the green economy. Everett is proving we're a great environment for companies to design and develop new green technologies. So, to highlight just a few companies and initiatives happening right here in Everett:

- TerraPower are developing new carbon-free energy systems and cancer treatments in their Everett lab.
- Helion Energy just announced it will be building a lab in southwest Everett. Helion believes it can radically transform the fusion energy industry.
- Soundview Innovation Campus has secured a 40-acre campus in southwest Everett and it hopes to bring together innovators in cleantech, aerospace and life sciences that allow them to develop solutions that will feed the green economy.
- Infarm, a German start-up expanding around the globe, produces herbs and greens hydroponically and close to grocery stores, saving much of the transportation cost and environmental impact. Their hub in Everett is now fully operational and is one of the largest vertical farming centers in the region.
- And just last week, magniX, a company that builds electric motors to power aircraft, made Everett its new headquarters, consolidating its Redmond headquarters and a research facility in Australia under one roof near Paine Field.
- And, of course, Boeing continues to champion advances in sustainability. Boeing's planes have set and then exceeded new standards in fuel efficiency for air travel.

And I'll wrap up this question by sharing some of the things we're doing to support parks, arts and placemaking.

Parks have a soft spot in my heart. I love exploring them with my family and our dog, and I am proud of the opportunities we have here to get outdoors and enjoy nature. So, we are working to maintain and expand our beautiful parks.

The new Emma Yule Park, which will be adjacent to the YMCA, is expected to begin construction this Spring.





And we are working on a recreational trail around Silver Lake. Silver Lake is one of Everett's best kept secrets, and I would love for more of our residents to be able to enjoy this wonderful amenity.

The arts are another part of what makes our city special. Our economic development and cultural arts teams have joined forces and are doing everything they can to support arts and placemaking.

We are currently working to be certified as a Creative District through the State of Washington. Earning this certification opens up opportunities for new funding and gives us tools we can use to grow and support the creative economy in Everett.

We also continue to partner with the Downtown Everett Association, which recently gained Main Street Community status and has done so much to help revitalize our downtown and make it a welcoming place. When the City cut our annual flower program due to lost revenue, I was grateful the association stepped up, and for all they do for our downtown.

Our city is an amazing place for artists and creatives and I want to help ensure they continue to choose Everett as their home and place of business. We're affordable, we have a creative culture and there are tons of ways to get involved and collaborate here.

We recently reached out to a few artists and asked them why they chose Everett. I'll share what we heard from local artist, Alex Vincini. He and his wife Amber are full-time artists and dream of owning a gallery downtown. Alex shared that his love of art led him into a career as an artist and that the relationships he formed in Everett led to opportunities to focus on his craft and become established within a supportive arts community.

From art and economic opportunity to the green economy, we have quite a lot underway in Everett that I'm excited about!

**Question from Chris Mefford:**

As the major urban center north of Seattle, Everett often faces challenges at a more urban scale than elsewhere in Snohomish County. Homeless and housing crises require so much leadership and effort. How are you and your colleagues taking on these very challenging issues?

**Answer from Mayor Franklin:**

Like communities everywhere, Everett has housing challenges. We don't have enough housing, we don't have enough housing at all price points, and we have too many people without housing.

I'd like to address that last one first: we need more options for those experiencing homelessness.

This is a challenging and complicated issue, that often divides our community. I hear from people who think we're not doing enough, I also hear from those who think we are doing more than our share and



that this isn't the job of government. It's a difficult issue and one that's not easy to solve. As a city, we simply do not have the resources or expertise to build and manage shelters or establish and run all the necessary social support programs.

We can, however, work closely with partner organizations who are the experts in providing the services that can best help those experiencing homelessness. I know I will miss some, but I'd like to thank our partners at Everett Gospel Mission, Catholic Community Services, Cocoon House, Housing Hope, YWCA, DVS, Salvation Army, InnerFaith, and many other faith-based and non-profit organizations. Thank you for the work you do.

Last year I announced I'd be forming a Homeless Student Task Force. Under the co-leadership of Joe Alonzo (Cocoon House) and Dr. Joyce Stewart (former educator with Everett Public Schools), the task force is underway and I look forward to their recommendations on how we can achieve better outcomes for homeless students in our city.

We are also working on a pilot project for a temporary shelter, using "pallet" shelters. We hope to work with the Everett-based company called "Pallet" (recently highlighted in the Herald) to procure low-cost, easy-to-assemble, portable pallets. Something I especially appreciate about this company is that they hire and invest in people who themselves have experienced homelessness, addiction or incarceration. We look forward to working with them directly to help Everett residents gain stability and dignity.

To help those struggling this past year in the pandemic, we have also administered \$800,000 dollars in CARES Act funding for rental assistance and housing stability.

And we are currently in the process of adding capacity to our community outreach team to bring more social workers on board working embedded in our police team. These teams reach out and respond to those in our community who are struggling and help connect them with services.

So addressing homelessness is big, but I'd also like to share some of the work we're doing to support growth in available housing at all price points.

The shortage we have affects people of all income levels and has only become more acute this past year. People haven't been able to make their rent or mortgage payments. Incomes have not kept pace with rising housing costs. Many in our community cannot afford to buy a home.

I work closely with mayors across the county on this issue and am part of the Mayors and CEOs for U.S. Housing Investment, which advocates for housing resources at a federal level.

And last month I issued a new housing directive, which focuses on affordable housing for all. I want everyone who works or goes to school in Everett to also be able to live in Everett.

Here are some ways we're working toward more housing.



Through our Rethink Housing initiative, we have begun outreach and engagement with the community to hear about their housing needs, concerns, and priorities.

We've launched a series of virtual community forum and chat sessions. Our first one featured former Governor Gregoire, who led an excellent conversation. She spoke of the loss of options for middle-income residents and how this is forcing people like our teachers, our grocery store clerks, our health care workers, our first responders, out of our community.

These workers are the heart and soul of our community, and when they get priced out of the community they work in, it affects us all. So, an important part of our housing plan will be prioritizing strategies that make more options available for middle income workers.

Additional forums and community conversations are scheduled and altogether this outreach process will help inform the development of a citywide housing action plan, which will include actions and strategies the City should undertake to address housing for all.

We are also working to ensure Everett is an attractive place for investors to develop housing, and offering a mix of incentives, development-friendly housing policies and placemaking efforts that enhances that return on investment!

We are a job center and we are growing, so developing the housing needed to meet are expanding needs is vital.

**Question from Chris Mefford:**

Equally important for neighborhoods and cities is for people - all people - to feel welcomed and safe and a sense of community. 2020 was a tough year for those basic needs. And somehow public safety has become politicized and more challenging for political discourse. We are in a phase that requires rethinking policing and how local police forces can show up for good in their community. Tell us more about Everett's initiatives.

**Answer from Mayor Franklin:**

This is a tough one. Our country is in a difficult place. What we experienced earlier this month with the insurrection against our nation's Capitol only heightened the extreme division we feel as a nation and the inequities embedded in our society.

Inequities and injustice in our country and our community were especially apparent this past year with the series of police-related shootings and violence occurring across the country, sparking Black Lives Matter demonstrations and calls for police reform.

Though we began work on equity and inclusion when I first took office, this past year demonstrated how urgently we need to do more.



A lot of the unrest in our community and across the nation has focused on police, so I'd like to start there.

First, our police chief and I are committed to continuous improvement. The reforms we make are not to check boxes, but to truly bring about positive change and be an example for best practices in community policing. I'm grateful for Chief Templeman's leadership and am proud of the caliber of officers we recruit to Everett. As a city that is committed to progressive police policies, we, like all of you, were devastated as we watched violent acts happening in other parts of our country. That is why our commitment towards continuous improvement is so important. We continue to take action and work to stay ahead of the curve in terms of the policies, practices and performance.

I believe Everett has one of the best-trained police teams in the state. Every one of our officers receives implicit bias training as well as 40 hours of crisis intervention/de-escalation training. And starting last month, officers are receiving 24 hours of training in patrol tactics, which includes lessons on de-escalation, active intervention, emergency first aid and more. And starting this year we are one of just two agencies in the state selected to participate in a program for active bystandership, preparing officers to intervene to prevent misconduct and mistakes, while promoting officer wellness and creating a culture of peer intervention.

Also this year, the Police Chief's Community Advisory Board is reviewing community complaints and internal investigations involving allegations of bias-based policing, excessive force and unlawful search/seizure. And the board will review changes to policies associated with bias or use of force.

Also In 2021, we'll be expanding the body-worn camera program we piloted. Once implemented, Everett Police will be the only law enforcement agency in Snohomish County with a full deployment of body-worn camera program for its patrol officers.

Statewide, there is a lot of interest in creating positive police reforms, and a number of bills are being introduced in Olympia that we should pay attention to. Some could be good with some amendments, others could have pretty negative impacts. As a business community, it's important for us to weigh in on what's being proposed, use our voices and help shape the outcomes we all want to better protect our communities.

So those are just some of the ways we're working to advance reform and address bias and inequities in in our police department.

But it is important that we work citywide to promote equity and inclusion in Everett. As I mentioned earlier, we have two directives guiding this work.

The directives have led to a lot of internal work, including changes to our recruitment & hiring processes, and the creation of a new youth advisory board in addition to our diversity board. Our goals



are for both our workforce and our City boards and commissions to better reflect and represent the diverse community we serve.

We are working to foster engagement with Black, indigenous and other communities of color and marginalized groups, and create a culture of anti-racism. This includes expanding training and addressing inequities and bias in City systems, policies and data.

I'll wrap up by saying this is important work. Undoing decades of racism and bias in government systems is a big task, so we as a City will focus on what is within our control and influence. I'm looking forward to coming together as a community to identify challenges and barriers, build relationships and trust, and achieve equitable outcomes and opportunities for all.

**Question from Chris Mefford:**

A couple of months ago we had the opportunity, you and I and Executive Somers, to go meet with Boeing Commercial Airlines CEO Stan Deal. It struck me how grateful he was that you and Dave were there to show support and empathy for the challenges the company faces. Can you say more why that was so important?

**Answer from Mayor Franklin:**

Of course. Boeing is an incredible partner and a very important part of our city. I often share that there isn't a resident or family in our city that isn't somehow connected to Boeing and aerospace. And Boeing has had to face a lot of challenges this past year. It is easy to praise our friends and allies when times are good, but demonstrating support and a commitment to companies like Boeing when times are not so good is critical. Boeing employs thousands of our residents and contributes tens of thousands of dollars to important community programs.

Larger companies like Boeing provide a backbone for all the small- to mid-size companies to grow in our community. When they thrive, our region thrives. And when they struggle, it affects us all.

And while some of Boeing's challenges persist I have so much optimism for our future together. Everett is the aerospace capital of the world. We have experienced challenges in the past, and we will certainly have obstacles to overcome in the future. But I know that as we move forward, we are going to do what we've always done. We will persist, we will innovate, we will support one another, and together we will continue to achieve the extraordinary.

It is that shared hope and confidence in each other that make us such a strong, resilient community and one that I am truly proud to be a part of.



## CONCLUSION

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So I'll just close by saying I know we're still in a difficult place, still facing the most devastating public health crisis of our lifetime, political strife and uncertainty. But I believe in us. I believe in this city and our community.

And I truly believe that now more than ever is the time for us to lift each other up with a new sense of kindness, compassion and tolerance. We are stronger and at our best when we work together, and as I said at the beginning, it is Everett's time to shine.

Thank you!

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