



CITY OF EVERETT
State of Everett 2022

March 31, 2022

Mayor Cassie Franklin

Good morning, everyone.

Thank you, Bill, for the thoughtful introduction.

And thank you, Mel, for the land acknowledgement.

Thank you, Garry, and the team at Economic Alliance for putting on this event, as well as Boeing and our other sponsors for helping bring us all together again.

A week ago, I had a very different speech planned. But the loss of Officer Dan Rocha, a beloved member of our Everett Police, has shaken our community to its core and our hearts are grieving with his family and loved ones, his wife and two young children, his fellow officers and his friends.

I'd like to honor his memory and ultimate sacrifice in service to our community by taking just a moment of silence together.

PAUSE – for moment of silence

I'm in a place of sorrow today, as I know many others are, and while I'm proud of all the good we have accomplished over the last four years, I'm admittedly not my usual positive self.

But I am grateful to be here today, surrounded by friends and our community, who I know are also feeling this loss. Thank you for your support today and for the outpouring of support we've seen this past week. It means so much to all of us.

This morning I'd like to start with some thank yous:

To our city councilmembers: Council President Brenda Stonecipher and Councilmember Judy Tuohy - thank you for your dedication, partnership and leadership. And to our five district councilmembers Mary Fosse, Paula Rhyne, Don Schwab, Liz Vogeli and Ben Zarlingo. It is an honor to work with each of you.

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank our council alums who here are with us today: Scott Bader, Scott Murphy, Jeff Moore and Paul Roberts. Each of you have made lasting contributions to our community and I'm grateful for your service to Everett.

Next, I'd like to recognize our City staff. Our city has a team of dedicated, resourceful, passionate public servants who continue to rise to the occasion, impressing me with their ability to adapt, while also providing excellent service to our community during the most uncertain of times. Thank you.

We also have many volunteers who serve on our boards and commissions or through other avenues. Thank you all as well.

And I'm honored to see so many of my fellow elected leaders here this morning. This has not been an easy time in our history to lead. Thank you for your service and partnership.

And finally, I'd like to thank my husband, David, not just for coming to support me today, but for supporting me each and every day these past years that I've been in office. Thank you for caring for me and our bright daughter, so that I can serve our community.

When I stood here four years ago to deliver my first State of the City, the world was a very different place. There was no way we could have imagined the years that followed.

From snowstorms to heat waves, to wildfire smoke, to urban flooding. To a huge catastrophic fire on the waterfront. And the murder of George Floyd and calls for racial justice and reform. Years of loss due to a global pandemic, an economic shutdown, growing political unrest, a war in Ukraine, and now, the death of a beloved colleague and hero, in service to his community.

The world does not seem ok. It's really not right now. And I worry about us. We've had big obstacles to overcome, looming challenges in our community, and there will be more to come. We have work to do.

And in the wake of so much adversity, it can be difficult to see beyond the things that are laying heavy on our heart.

But I do want to take a little time to highlight some really important accomplishments that we've made over the last few years that remind us all why we choose to call Everett home. We have a lot to be proud of and grateful for in this beautiful community.

I love this city. We all do and we are not alone. More and more people are coming here, choosing to call Everett home.

People choose Everett because it is both a city and small town, and we have a lot going for us.

Since 2018, builders have permitted over 2,400 homes in downtown, on the Riverfront, in South Everett and, for the first time in our history, on our waterfront.



We've got sports – and are proud to host the Silvertips, the AquaSox, the Everett Jets and the Everett Royals.

We've got Paine Field - one of the most beautiful, traveler-friendly boutique airports in the world, serving nine Alaska Airline destinations.

We've got food. Delicious options, from a variety of cultures as diverse as our population. And though it's been a rough few years for Everett's bars and restaurants, the industry has shown great resiliency. We've seen new spots open, and stay open, like Capers and Olives, Café UU, Five Rivers, Las Fridas, Grandma's in da Kitchen, Grape and Grain, the Flying Pig and many more.

We have wonderful Everett libraries which have been especially creative and innovative these past few years to ensure access and education. Our library teams connected nearly 8,000 people through digital programs offered during COVID. And Everett Libraries serve as cooling centers during summer heat waves, and warming centers when it's bitterly cold.

We have amazing first responders. We all want to know someone is going to be there for us on our worst day. And our teams do this time and again. They were the first to deal with the global pandemic and health crisis. Everett Fire demonstrated their incredible ability in suppressing a massive fire that erupted on the waterfront. This team was and is there for us. I'm immensely proud of the work Everett Fire has done, and all our first responders.

An area of emphasis for our teams the past few years has been on recruiting, with the goal of building a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community we serve. And as a result, we're seeing more diversity in our first responder teams. Last year 50% of our police officer hires represented members of our BIPOC communities, 40% of police hires were women and in Everett Fire, one-third of new hires were women.

Everett also has a vibrant art scene:

- The Schack Art Center delights us with exhibits and hands-on classes,
- Village Theater, Everett Historic Theater and Tony V's are back with shows,
- Both Everett Improv and Black Lab gallery opened new locations,
- The new Lucky Dime recently opened,
- And Angel of the Winds arena is bringing a great lineup to us. And I want to thank the PFD (*Public Facilities District*) for hosting us today and also for stepping up to generously donate the arena to honor Officer Rocha on Monday. Thank you.

And we've got great radio stations, by the way, with KRKO, KXA and KSER



And we're investing more in public art. Soon we'll unveil a COVID-19 memorial piece at the South Everett library. And we put out a call for artists for a land acknowledgment piece at city hall. With the support of the Tulalip Tribes this public art is intended to honor the legacy of the Coast Salish people, the first to inhabit the lands we now call Everett.

And all these elements that make Everett a great place to live, also make us a destination for tourists. Though tourism has been hit especially hard, we're now seeing more visitors in town. Our hotels are fuller with room bookings on track to being the highest ever on record.

We're pleased that many of our special events are coming back, together with new ones I look forward to this year.

So as you shop local, eat local and attend these arts and cultural events, you are supporting small businesses, artists and our greater Everett community.

Thank you.

Our beautiful park system is one of our best assets. Our parks have played an important role in getting us through the last few years, providing a place to go when we needed to get out and a place to gather when we couldn't be indoors.

We've continued to invest in our parks, including:

- New playgrounds at Forest and Howarth parks
- Resurfacing of sport courts at Forest, Legion and Howarth
- A new dog park at Lowell Riverfront Trail
- A brand new Emma Yule Park – opening very soon
- And we've had renovations at both golf courses, improving their design and playability

Additionally, we've entered into some new partnerships that are providing enhanced recreational opportunities for our community while saving taxpayer dollars.

One is our new partnership with Volunteers of America to manage the Carl Gipson Center. Under VOA's leadership, the Center reopened in January and is once again providing our community a place to gather, share a meal, play bridge, and just be together.

Director Cory Armstrong-Hoss is here, along with the VOA team - Thank you for your partnership.



And we have other new partnerships as well – one I know my daughter is looking forward to is an elevated ropes course coming soon to an Everett park near you.

Everett is also a great place to do business. We are the center of aerospace innovation, and Boeing and the entire industry are a vital part of our community. Aerospace drives Everett's economy and I'm committed to ensuring Everett remains the leader in the aerospace sector.

We are a proud Navy town and I am honored we're recognized as a Great American Defense Community by the Association of Defense Communities. Last year, we gained two destroyers and in June, the Navy announced Everett would be the homeport for a new generation of frigates. The first of 12 total ships will start arriving in Everett in 2026.

We look forward to welcoming more ships, sailors and military families to the best homeport in the Navy. I understand that Commander Matt Loverink is here today. Commander: thank you and your crews, as well our service members past and present, for your service to our country.

Also on the waterfront, the Port of Everett is making significant investments in support of our critical trade, aerospace and defense industries to strengthen our economy.

The Port's forward thinking in trade and maritime continue to position Everett as a key player in the global supply chain. Just last year, our Port opened its modernized South Terminal which is playing a major role in addressing the supply backlog which is so important.

The Port is also growing its waterfront amenities, adding Hotel Indigo and Jetty Bar & Grill, as well as our first waterfront apartments, and over the next five years, more restaurants and retail shops will come, together representing 1.5 million square feet of new mixed-use amenities and supporting more than 2,000 jobs.

I know we have Port Commissioner Stiger here today, along with other Port team members - Thank you for investing in our waterfront and helping drive our economy.

Everett is also fortunate to have the finest healthcare institutions, including Providence Regional Medical Center, the Everett Clinic, Kaiser-Permanente, Compass Health, Seattle Children's and more.

These organizations have been on the frontlines caring for us through the pandemic. All while continuing to expand and innovate, ensuring we are the leading edge in medicine and patient care.

Providence, for example, opened a new 24/7 program for acute stroke patients.



Kaiser-Permanente is expanding its Everett Medical Center, with a one-stop shop of services to include primary and specialty care, surgery, urgent care, diagnostic services and more.

And Compass Health is also doing an impressive expansion. I recently had the opportunity to tour the site and learn about their plans to create a state-of-the-art facility for high-intensity behavioral health services, including an inpatient evaluation and treatment unit. When complete, Compass will be able to serve 1,500 adults annually at this location.

I know many of these partners are here today – thank you for caring for our community

We are also establishing Everett as a hub for clean energy and green technology and attracting companies that are truly changing the world.

In clean energy, Helion Energy and Zap Energy are working to unlock commercial fusion, while TerraPower is perfecting a fourth-generation fission reactor. And in clean aerospace, MagniX and ZeroAvia are exploring electric and hydrogen air travel.

One of Everett's largest employers is Fortive, a fortune 500 company. Fortive and their subsidiary Fluke are investing in growth locally, including a multi-million dollar headquarter renovation and expanded manufacturing facilities here in Everett, which produce global technologies that keep the world up and running.

I'm grateful to these businesses as well as our many new businesses – both large and small – who are locating and growing in our city and look forward to welcoming more in the years ahead.

Overall, more than \$180 million in commercial projects have been permitted in the last two years, with over one million square feet of commercial property built and permitted.

As a city, we can't do this work to drive our economy alone. We work in partnership regionally with the Port, the County, the Economic Alliance and the Greater Seattle Partners, and locally with the Downtown Everett Association, collaborating on ways to elevate our region and Everett in an already competitive global market.

Everett is also a great place for students.

We have exceptional academic institutions here, starting with our K-12 system. As the mother of a beautiful, smart, curious seventh grader, I have especially appreciated our schools and teachers in how they've navigated our young learners through this pandemic.

At Everett Public Schools, I can confidently say we're in good hands with Dr. Ian Saltzman. Anyone who knows Dr. Saltzman knows he cares passionately about our education and puts his students first. Just



this month Everett Schools opened their first Family Resource Center as part of their strategic initiatives to strengthen student wellness, engagement and safety.

I have to give Everett Schools a special thanks today for being such a supporter this week. With a moment's notice, they made one of the district's buildings available to our incident command team so we could take care of service planning for Officer Rocha's family. Thank you.

We also have an incredible leader and partner in Dr. Alison Brynelson and Mukilteo School District. Mukilteo Schools launched several new programs to promote social-emotional well-being, which is incredibly important now. Mukilteo is leading with equity and has increased and expanded their equity training with a staff-based equity team in each one of their schools.

The past few years have prompted innovation and change in how these districts teach and keep kids learning. Both districts have made Chromebooks available to every student so that access to technology is not a barrier for any child in our city. Again, thank you to our schools and district leadership.

And Everett is a great place for higher education.

Just last month, Everett Community College was named a "Leader College of Distinction", honoring efforts to advance student success and narrow equity gaps. EvCC also became the first community college in the nation to provide training for students who are learning how to protect against cyberattacks. I recently had the honor of meeting the college's new president, Dr. Darrell Cain, and know his experience and vision will serve our community well.

Everett is also Cougar Country and we are fortunate to have WSU-Everett here under the leadership of Dr. Paul Pitre. WSU continues to invest in Everett by adding new programs, such as Business Administration and a new Bachelor of Science degree in Cybersecurity Operations. WSU-Everett, together with EvCC's cyberattack program, is making Everett an education leader in cybersecurity.

In addition to higher learning, we have exceptional early-learning options, like Imagine Children's Museum. The Children's Museum is completing their capital expansion project which will serve hundreds of thousands of children. And it is the first major construction project to take advantage of Cross-Laminated Timber, an environmental innovation made locally in Darrington.

Early learning is essential. And I want to thank our council and staff team for our partnership with the Bezos Academy to open a tuition-free, Montessori-inspired preschool at Everett Station. We have a real shortage of preschool and early learning options in Everett, especially for low-income families. This new program will help bridge that gap and make a difference to so many children in need and is expected to open this fall.

Speaking of innovation, our City team in Public Works has completed some very impressive projects.



Something everyone's talking about is the beautiful Grand Avenue Park Bridge. Although its primary purpose was to upgrade deteriorated storm and sewer pipes, I think we can all agree that the benefit we love most is its beautiful design and the connection it provides between the waterfront and Grand Avenue Park.

Another pivotal project is our Rucker Renewal, which transformed seven blocks of Everett's downtown from a high-traffic commercial and commuter route to an appealing part of the downtown core, with visual character to make it a great place for pedestrians and residents alike.

For our transit-goers and commuters, our Everett Transit remains a reliable connection to employment centers and other regional services like Sound Transit and Community Transit.

And we're moving forward with our Climate Action Plan, electrifying our fleet and motor pool. Everett Transit is becoming a regional leader in electrification. We operate nine all-electric buses and have nine more on the way. And we're adding new inductive charging stations, which allow an electric bus to charge up simply by driving over it. Representative Larsen has been a huge supporter and we're pleased to partner with Snohomish PUD and WSDOT on this innovative project.

The PUD is also collaborating with us on a community solar project in south Everett, which will generate funds to help income-qualified households keep their lights on. And I'd like to congratulate the PUD for recently being named a Reliable Public Power Provider, which is a very big deal in the public power world – congratulations.

Everett has also made great progress implementing our Bicycle Master Plan. Since 2011, we've added more than 24 miles of bikeways and I am pleased to announce that Everett has been awarded bronze-level status as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. This recognizes Everett's strong efforts to encourage and make cycling more accessible. We still have a ways to go, but we are well on our way to being a more bicycle-friendly city.

We have a lot to be proud of.

That said, we're not without our challenges.

I'll start with our financial challenges.

It's no secret we've faced a structural deficit for many years. The Council and I have had to reduce millions from our annual budget, cutting everything there is to cut. And we've been an excellent steward of public funds and creative in finding partnerships, grants and other ways to supplement our resources. The City is committed to transparency in all its transactions, financial and otherwise, to ensure responsible use of public funds and preserve public trust.

I'm proud of what we've done to become an efficient, lean City that provides high quality services to our community.



But as more people and businesses choose to locate here and Everett grows, we need to add capacity so the City can continue to provide necessary services and the best quality of life for our residents.

Everett is such a wonderful place to live, work, learn and do business in, and we need to grow to maintain that. We need to support continued investment in our city so that future generations may also enjoy these amenities.

Our community must weigh in and be a part of this decision. Together we will determine the type of city we want to be.

Another significant challenge I know we are struggling with is homelessness, and the increased number of individuals we have living unsheltered in our community.

This is something every city, every urban center across our country, is experiencing.

And although I know we are doing far better than the majority of our peer cities, and although I know our balanced approach of outreach and enforcement is effective, the need for housing, services and treatment far exceeds the resources we and our surrounding organizations have available.

People living outside - in tents, on sidewalks or in doorways - is not safe, sanitary or humane. And we cannot accept this as the new norm. It is not compassionate. And I know that the increase in people living outside, many who are struggling with behavioral health issues, is impacting our local businesses, with rising reports of property damage, trespassing and criminal activity.

We need to get people the treatment, support, shelter and permanent housing they need to find stability. And we as cities must increase density to address the growing affordable housing crisis.

To help solve this:

- Everett is piloting innovative solutions like Pallet shelter. We opened 20 units last summer in partnership with the Everett Gospel Mission. This program is working for folks who previously were very anti-shelter and unwilling to engage. We're adding 20 more units for this location, as well as working with partners to add two more sites in our city.
- We're expanding our capacity to help those living unsheltered. We have staffed up our co-responder team of police and social work professionals, who continue to help individuals find pathways out of homelessness, and we've added a full-time homelessness response coordinator.
- We're taking action on student homelessness. The majority of adults who experience homelessness were first unsheltered as children. Keeping youth stable and housed is an



essential prevention strategy. With partners, we will add 28 Pallet shelters for families with children. I want to thank both Snohomish County and Representative Larsen for funding for this project, as well as Pallet Shelter for their incredible, socially responsible business model.

We continue to partner with the County, my fellow electeds, nonprofit organizations, the faith-based community and others to address this challenge. We can solve this. We must treat and house those that need support in our cities. If we care about keeping our streets safe and clean, we must add housing at all price points. We cannot block housing projects. I'm asking all of us be open to growth, to support responsible development, and be fiercely pro-housing.

This is the way to solve homelessness, and the affordable housing crisis.

Another challenge I want to speak to today is public safety.

As I said earlier, the world does not feel ok. Society is not well. Crime is up and our streets do not feel safe, especially today, when one of our own protectors was killed just six days ago protecting us.

I was on a call earlier this week with my fellow mayors, who by the way have been a rock of support these past years as our communities have faced unprecedented challenges. Our cities are seeing a very troubling, very real rise in crime – especially violent crime – across our region.

This is unacceptable.

Some in our city may not understand the urgency that I see on this issue. You may not have personally experienced gun violence or a violent crime and I'm very grateful for that.

But this issue is touching far too many in our community – often our families living in poverty, or our BIPOC communities and immigrant families where criminals have preyed upon them, or our children who cower under their desks when there's a threat to their school, or our seniors afraid when they hear shots fired in their neighborhood. Violence impacts everyone.

And we need to do more. We all need to care about gun violence as much as we care about trash or litter, as much as we care about graffiti, or about tents on our sidewalks.

When I started just over four years ago, addressing gun violence was my top priority. We initiated some very successful programs and were making progress – significant progress – toward reducing crime in our city.

Honestly, we have the best police officers in the country led by Chief Dan Templeman. I cannot say enough about the respect and appreciation I have for the chief, especially now. Leadership is important and there is no way we would have gotten through these past years without his strength, intelligence



and compassion; his compassion is needed now more than ever as he cares for our team. Chief Templeman is a true public servant committed to ensuring we're working in partnership with our community to serve our community and doing everything we can to protect public safety.

As a result, Everett PD continues to exemplify best practices in community policing.

Community policing is not a tagline for our team, it is truly the philosophy and vision of our department.

The goal is to create inroads with our community, break down barriers and build trusting relationships with the people we serve – especially with our young people and communities of color. And our officers meet regularly with our neighborhood groups, schools and community organizations, who are an important part of the fabric of our public safety net.

The outpouring of kindness, sympathy and support from the community we've seen this week indicates the incredibly positive impact our officers are having. Our officers know and are deeply connected to our community. It's been both humbling and heartwarming to see the love and appreciation for our team while they grieve this terrible loss.

What also sets Everett's Police Department apart from others is the high priority we place on providing and requiring training above and beyond what is required by the state or taught at the academy.

Every one of our officers receives 40 hours of crisis intervention/de-escalation training. They are trained in delivering first aid and trauma-informed interviewing. And last year, all of our police officers began participating in intensive bystandership training for law enforcement. This program prepares officers to intervene successfully to prevent peer officer misconduct, avoid mistakes and promote health and wellness.

And our officers are good at what they do. Compared to the top ten most populous cities in Washington State, Everett Police once again received the number one clearance rate as reported in the Crime in Washington Annual Report. High clearance rates mean arrests are being made and crimes are being solved.

But we've long known we cannot arrest our way out of this problem. And arrests don't always result in accountability or safety. Parts of the system have major gaps and parts are broken.

Our police, municipal courts, social workers, municipal prosecutors, and our City leadership are doing all we can.

Our Everett Municipal judges are addressing behavioral health challenges with compassion while also holding offenders accountable, as are our City prosecutors. Our police officers are balancing outreach and services with strong enforcement.



But that is not enough when it comes to many crimes, especially violent crimes, which are handled at higher levels of the judicial system:

- The laws created at the state-level need to work in our communities and do more to address the safety challenges we are all seeing.
- People who need behavioral health treatment should have a direct and immediate pathway to care and support.
- Open drug use is not safe, it should not be acceptable, and these laws need to allow us to address drugs and consistent property and nuisance crimes.
- And those who commit violent crimes must be held accountable.
- Lastly, guns need to be kept out of the hands of people who have no legal right to own a firearm.

My job as mayor, as the CEO of our city, is to do everything in my power to ensure I never get a call like I did last Friday from my police chief.

And I know my fellow mayors and leaders are with me in saying we need the support, courageous action and leadership of higher levels and other branches of government to solve this tide of rising crime in our communities.

Please join with us as we advocate for support and safety for our cities.

CONCLUSION

Everett has accomplished great things these past four years and we've weathered unprecedented storms, loss and hardships. You've entrusted me to lead our community through some of the most difficult years in all of our lifetimes.

And now we must work together to continue to move our city forward. We will.

Everett is going to grow.

We'll continue to drive economic prosperity for core industries - aerospace and advanced manufacturing and healthcare – while also recruiting new sectors to invest here, especially in south Everett.

We'll also continue greening our economy and attract more clean energy and green tech companies to establish Everett as a world-leader in fusion, fission, electric aviation and robotics.



We'll grow to meet our housing needs.

We will see a housing boom in Everett. The successful update of the City's comprehensive plan will help set the road map for our growth into 2044. We will provide the housing necessary for the thousands more season-ticket holders, library card holders, restaurant regulars, pet parents and tireless school volunteers who now and into our future will call Everett home.

And we are going to alleviate homelessness.

We can solve this. We know the names of the individuals on our streets; we should be able to help each person outside get housing and services. We'll call on the state and we'll partner with the County and neighboring jurisdictions to ensure treatment is available on demand and that we have adequate bridge and permanent housing.

Additionally, I've asked my City teams to develop an alternative response program for residents experiencing homelessness and behavioral health challenges to create a better way to help.

We ARE going to keep our community safe.

We will continue investing in our Everett Police and ensuring they remain the best trained officers in the country.

I also want to create a full-time unit dedicated to officer and employee wellness. Policing is a stressful profession and officers face extremely dangerous, life-threatening situations every day. Burnout and post-traumatic stress are real. I'd like to develop new training and services on officer mental health, peer mentoring, suicide prevention and police officer family services to protect and support the team that protects and supports us.

And we must reduce violence, keep guns out of the hands of felons and hold violent offenders accountable. I'm going to double down on my commitment to work with my chief, my fellow mayors, and our electeds across this state to fix what's broken in our systems and make this community safe.

We are going to rise to meet our challenges, and together we will ensure a bright, sustainable future.

Our city is resilient, resourceful and committed to overcoming adversity. Earlier I described our greatest challenges and I believe whole heartedly that we can and will prevail.

This has been an unimaginably sad week, but what's giving me hope and support is this community. We have proven that whatever comes our way, this community comes together, works together, rises together and takes care of each other. Our future together is bright.



So I want to thank you. Thank you for the love and compassion you show each other. And for the love, pride and care you have for the City of Everett and this beautiful community.

Thank you!

Before our Q&A, I wanted share a brief video to help us end on a hopeful, happy note. Our team interviewed people throughout our community, asking them what they love most about our city and why they chose Everett. So please turn your attention to the screens.

