

Everett Safe Streets Plan

"Everett's economic vitality, our public spaces and services, and the growth of creative and recreational opportunity all depend on keeping our community desirable and inviting for individuals, families, businesses, and visitors. Our city and surrounding communities are facing a crisis on our streets stemming from the current heroin epidemic, as well as serious gaps in mental health treatment, affordable housing and other social services. In many cases, our traditional approaches to these challenges are no longer available or sufficiently effective. For example, the Snohomish County Jail has imposed booking restrictions that limit our ability to use jail for misdemeanor offenses, particularly for individuals using drugs. These ongoing challenges and lack of resources contribute to what we see on our streets – an increased presence of individuals with untreated addiction and mental illness, and a perception among citizens that our public spaces are no longer safe.

These problems are not unique to Everett, and many groups are working to develop community-wide solutions, including the [Community Streets Initiative](#), which I convened in summer 2014. We remain steadfastly supportive of the Streets Initiative, and will continue working in partnership with other agencies to support the implementation of the task force's recommendations.

However, while good work is being done to develop long-term solutions, there are urgent issues that require the City's immediate attention. I am committing to a strategic and comprehensive public safety plan that addresses these immediate needs through proven and cost-efficient strategies. The plan, which includes actions recommended by the Streets Initiative task force, has three primary prongs that must be addressed together in order to be effective: enforcement, diversion, and housing. I am proposing \$1 million in additional funding for these initiatives in the 2016 budget. My proposed 2016 budget already includes \$1.2 million for Streets Initiative efforts, including \$650,000 for low-income housing."

ENFORCEMENT

We will expand and enhance our use of effective traditional policing and prosecution models to reduce street crime and hold individuals accountable.

Principles:

- Address immediate public safety issues with arrest and jail
- Provide an effective backbone to diversion programs by having swift and certain punishment for non-compliance
- Allocate police, prosecution and court resources to crimes that have the greatest impact on public safety.

Actions:

- Create a dedicated unit in the police department, including four new officers, a sergeant, and two full-time social workers, plus an additional prosecutor
- Make effective use of jail, including out-of-county alternatives such as the Yakima

County Jail, to enforce against criminal behavior

- Amend the City's panhandling ordinance to encompass specific location types throughout the city, such as ATMs, retail stores, and parking lots

DIVERSION

We will implement and expand alternative policing and prosecution models proven to reduce recidivism.

Principles:

- Develop and use valid risk assessment tools to allow law enforcement and prosecutors to quickly evaluate an individual and determine appropriate intervention, social service, treatment and educational options
- Work with the community to build sufficient capacity in these systems
- Allocate public safety resources to those programs that reduce recidivism and show cost savings over traditional enforcement

Actions:

- Establish a work crew program that uses clean-up crew in lieu of prosecution for appropriate individuals; crews would clean affected areas throughout the city

HOUSING

We will implement a "Housing First" model to reduce the impact of chronically homeless individuals on the community by providing low-barrier housing.

Principles:

- Use the proven Housing First model to provide housing for chronically homeless frequent utilizers to reduce their impact on the community and improve their response to treatment
- For this model to work, it is imperative that other jurisdictions provide low-barrier housing in their communities in conjunction with Everett's efforts

Actions:

- Build long-term, low-barrier supportive housing, with a goal to create 10 units in 2016 and an additional 10 units in 2017.
- Partner with other affected agencies to provide supportive services for housing.