



# NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 30, 2016

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## Everett's public safety innovations highlighted in new White House initiative Effort uses data to divert low-level offenders out of jail

EVERETT – The White House today launched the Data-Driven Justice Initiative in a bipartisan effort to use data-driven strategies to divert low-level and low-risk offenders from the criminal justice system. Mayor Ray Stephanson [committed to joining the initiative](#) in March because it aligns with the goals and strategies in his comprehensive [Safe Streets plan](#).

“We are already using data to identify chronically homeless individuals with mental illness, addiction and health problems who come in frequent contact with our police, firefighters, courts and health care systems,” said Stephanson. “This initiative allows us to build upon the work we have already begun.”

The City joins 67 city, county, and state governments that have committed to using data-driven strategies to safely reduce jail populations, stabilize individuals and families, better serve communities, and often save money in the process. Along with Snohomish County and Fire District 1, the City has been working with the White House for the past four months to learn best practices from around the country and to develop strategies that can be adopted here and in other communities.

“We have developed innovative strategies in our criminal justice system, including embedded social workers, the [Mental Health Alternatives Program](#), [work crew](#), and the [CHART program](#), and using data is critical to our ongoing ability to show the success of these efforts,” said Stephanson.

After the City was identified as an innovative community around these efforts, an Everett delegation of Municipal Court Judge Laura Van Slyck, Deputy Police Chief Mark St. Clair, and Director of Public Health and Safety Hil Kaman joined other government leaders, law enforcement, nonprofits, and private companies at the Data-Driven Justice Convening at the White House earlier this month.

“We use data at the police department to identify those individuals who are chronic utilizers of police services and rely on cross-systems data to measure the effectiveness of our outreach efforts and partnerships with social services,” explained St. Clair.

A [recent evaluation of the CHART program](#) by Dr. Robin Fenn with Snohomish County Human Services showed an 80 percent reduction in police contacts for individuals identified by the program.

“We found not only a reduction in arrests but also an 80 percent reduction in EMS contacts and a significant drop in visits to the Providence emergency room,” said Kaman. “Using data helps us to target the right response for each individual.”

The White House Data-Driven Initiative encourages jurisdictions to use data to safely reduce the number of individuals who are in jail. Everett spends more than \$3.5 million annually on contracted jail services, and there are approximately 90 individuals held on City misdemeanor charges in jail each day. The costs of incarceration continues to grow and can be up to \$214 per day for an inmate in mental health housing.

Nationally, 95 percent of individuals held in county jails are held pre-trial, including many who stay because they cannot afford a bond but who pose little public safety risk.

“The value of this initiative is that it recognizes the need for safety, accountability and the responsible use of data to make informed decisions about who can be diverted from jail and who should remain,” said Van Slyck. “At the White House, we had an opportunity to learn from other jurisdictions about safe alternatives to jail that also meet the needs of an effective court system.”

As the Data-Driven Initiative is launched across the country, the City will continue to work with the White House and other jurisdictions to identify ways to bring data-driven strategies to its ongoing efforts outlined in the Safe Streets plan.

Learn more about the Data-Driven Initiative and the City’s [Safe Street efforts](#).

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