



# SAFESTREETS

Sept. 29, 2015

## **Mayor Stephanson proposes funding for new Safe Streets actions**

*Proposal includes \$1 million for enforcement, diversion and housing*

EVERETT - Everett Mayor Ray Stephanson today announced \$1 million in proposed new funding for targeted strategies to address street-level social issues and criminal behaviors in Everett. The comprehensive plan emphasizes enforcement, diversion and housing, and includes funding for new police officers and low-barrier housing.

“Over the next year we will provide additional tools for our police officers and prosecutors to use in dealing with criminal behavior, and we’ll continue to expand alternative policing and prosecution models that we know to be effective,” said Stephanson. “We will also begin work to create long-term, low-barrier housing for chronically homeless in our community.”

Stephanson will attend the City Council’s Public Safety Committee meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 30, to share his proposal. “I know that our councilmembers are eager to take action on these issues as well, and I look forward to discussing and refining this plan with them.”

Stephanson said the plan addresses “the immediate crisis on our streets” to ensure a safe, healthy community, and is an outgrowth of the Community Streets Initiative task force recommendations, and work done by city staff over the past several years. The proposal includes \$1 million in funding for 2016. The mayor has previously allocated \$1.2 million, including \$650,000 for low-income housing, for Streets Initiative efforts in 2016.

The plan prioritizes several effective and cost-efficient short-term actions under the subareas of enforcement, diversion and housing. Stephanson emphasized that the three prongs must be addressed through a single comprehensive approach in order to be effective.

Under enforcement, the plan addresses the ongoing challenges with booking individuals at the Snohomish County Jail and allocates additional resources to police:

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### **Learn more:**

For more information on the Community Streets Initiative, visit [www.everettwa.gov/streetsinitiative](http://www.everettwa.gov/streetsinitiative).

For more information on the Safe Streets Plan, visit [www.everettwa.gov/safestreets](http://www.everettwa.gov/safestreets).

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- 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

The mayor's proposal also builds upon the City's successful alternative policing and prosecution models, which have been proven to reduce recidivism and costs over traditional enforcement methods:

- 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

Finally, the proposal includes permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless frequent utilizers. "We know that the 'Housing First' model has been proven to reduce the impact on the community and city resources, and makes individuals more receptive to treatment," said Stephanson.

- Build long-term, low-barrier 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.

Stephanson acknowledged that street issues, including homelessness, mental illness and addiction, are complex and must be addressed by a coalition of community and government organizations.

"Today we are taking a significant step forward to address the immediate challenges on our city's streets," said Stephanson. "But we cannot do this alone. We will continue to work with service agencies to close the gaps in critical mental health and treatment programs, and we will work with neighboring towns and cities to help establish Housing First models in their communities."

For more information, visit [www.everettwa.gov/safestreets](http://www.everettwa.gov/safestreets).

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