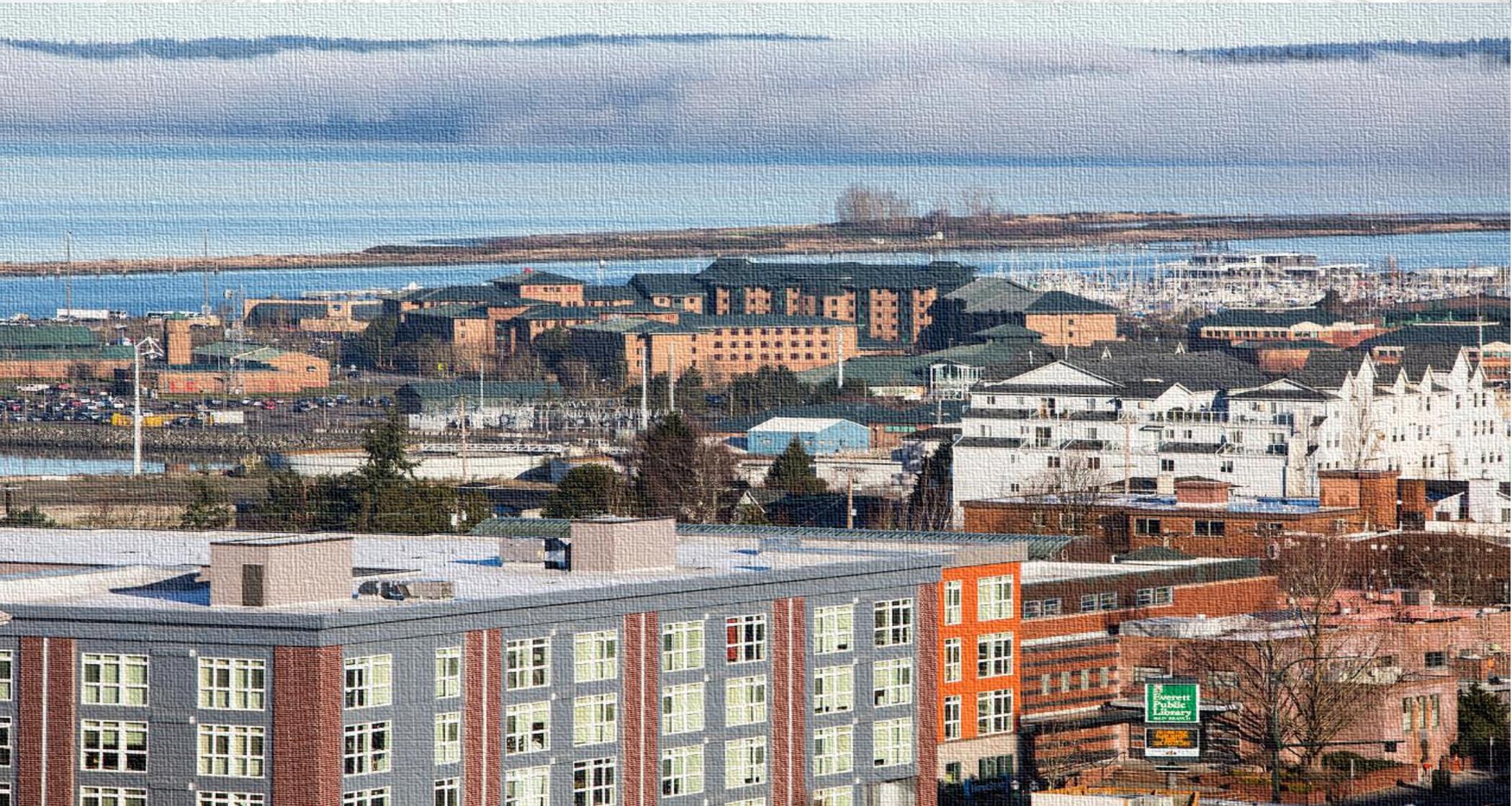


# Metro Everett

Action Strategy Report  
September 2016 Draft





## Introduction

Consistent with the Vision 2040 Regional Growth Strategy, the City made a commitment in 2015 to complete a subarea plan for the regionally designated Metropolitan Center (“Metro Everett”). The borders of Metro Everett were expanded beyond the previous center boundaries set in 1994 to include the Everett Station Area where the northern terminus light rail station is expected to occur, as well as surrounding multiple family and business commercial areas.

The scope of work called to establish a vision for the center, address growth needs for the City, integrate brownfield related property condition information, develop policy and zoning alterations, plan for multimodal transportation, address capital improvements to implement the center’s vision, and incorporate relevant Community Streets Initiative actions.

The Everett Planning Commission acts as the stakeholder work group for the Metro Everett planning process, and has been briefed at regular intervals since February 2016. Meetings with Riverside, Bayside and Port Gardner Neighborhood Associations took place in March and May to discuss the planning process and solicit feedback. On May 9, 2016, the first Metro Everett community meeting was held where information was presented on a number of issues, and feedback was received. An online survey provided additional opportunity for input.

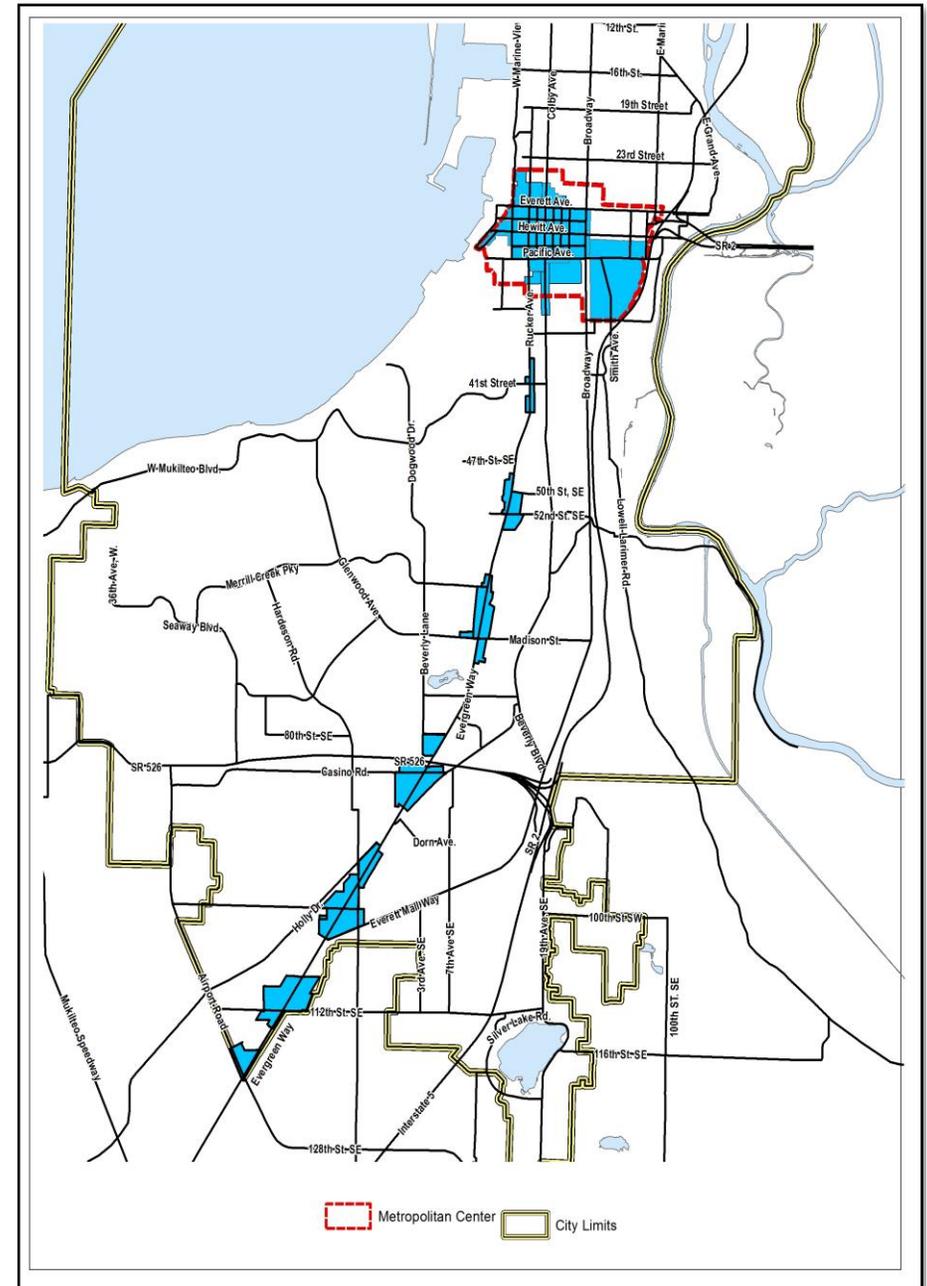
The first half of this report gives a brief background of relevant factors. The second half describes key proposed big idea projects along with catalyst projects to help spur investment in the Metro Everett area, and outlines proposed incentives to help encourage development.

## Background

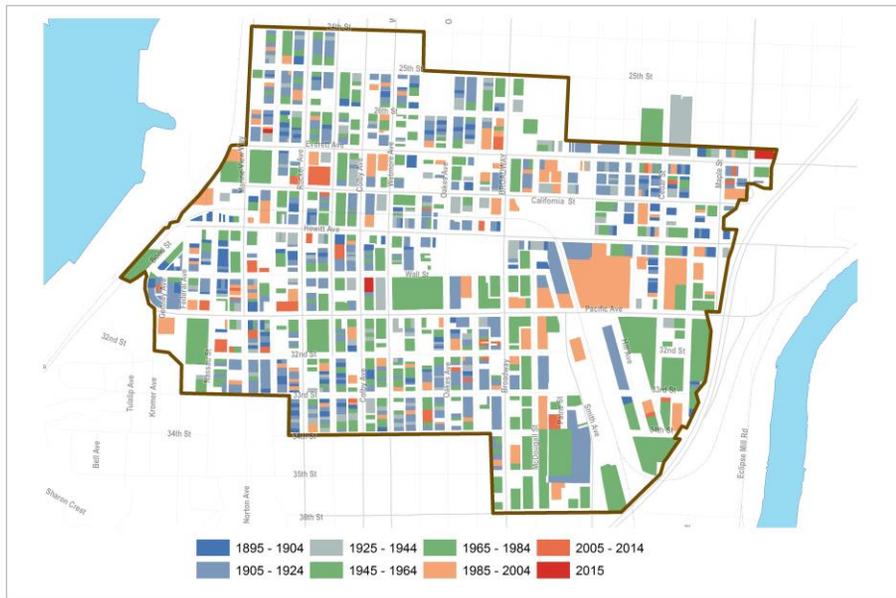
The Metro Everett subarea plan will address population, housing and employment targets, policies and potential land use regulations, and other items consistent with the Vision 2040 Regional Growth Strategy. The 2035 Comprehensive Plan also directs that the majority of the population growth will occur in key areas of the city where multiple family housing near bus rapid transit routes are located, and in the core residential areas of Metro Everett.

There are approximately 7,000 people that live in the Metro Everett area, and an estimated 108,000 city-wide. Within the next 20 years, the population of Everett could grow by an additional 60,000 people within the existing city limits. Since most of the land within the city has been previously developed, it will be necessary to find ways to carefully redevelop. The majority of the housing required to accommodate the population will also need to be multiple family construction.

Metro Everett added approximately 1,000 housing units in the past decade. An economic analysis indicates that an additional 1,000 units in the next 10 years are expected. The City's Plan requires zoning and infrastructure to accommodate 15,000 to 20,000 residents in Metro Everett within the next 20 years. While most zoning in the planning area have development regulations that allow unlimited housing, and theoretically can accommodate that level of population, the City will need to attract private development on a larger scale than previously seen in order to bend the historical growth trend, and realize an additional 7,000 to 12,000 people living in the area from 2025 to 2035.



Blue shaded areas are where the city expects substantial growth to occur in the next 20



Year Structures Built

- **Policy 2.4.2:** “Encourage preservation of historic buildings, along with development of new buildings and public open spaces, with an emphasis on pedestrian orientation and activity at the street level.”
- **Policy 4.5.2:** “Provide amenities and incentives to encourage the construction of high density housing in target areas including downtown, the Core Residential Area, the Broadway corridor, and the Everett Station area.”
- **Policy 7.2.3:** “Invest in public improvements and infrastructure to meet economic development, housing, land use, transportation, urban design, and historic element goals.”

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan includes several policies and objectives that direct future development of the Metro Everett area to make it a thriving, livable, walkable community:

- **Policy 2.1.7:** “Promote high-density residential use in well designed, mixed-use commercial developments in and around the downtown and near transportation facilities.”
- **Policy 2.4.1:** “Encourage redevelopment of Everett's center with an intensive mix of high density housing and retail and service businesses in a compact, pedestrian-and transit-oriented downtown setting.”



- **Policy 7.2.4:** “Improve the physical, aesthetic and visual connection between the Metropolitan Center, I-5, both waterfronts, and other redevelopment areas including wayfinding and overall city signage.”

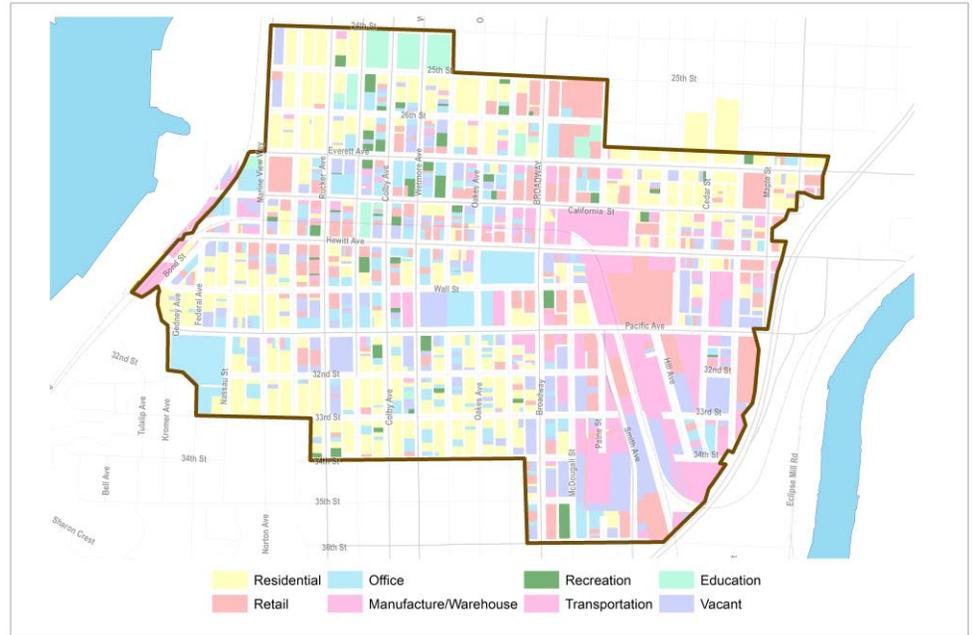
# Existing Conditions

## Actual Land Use

The actual land use within Metro Everett remains a wide mix of uses including single and multiple family residential units, government, institutions, educational, clinical, professional offices, spiritual, industrial, warehousing, storage and service uses, as well as a large amount of surface parking.

## Employment and Commerce

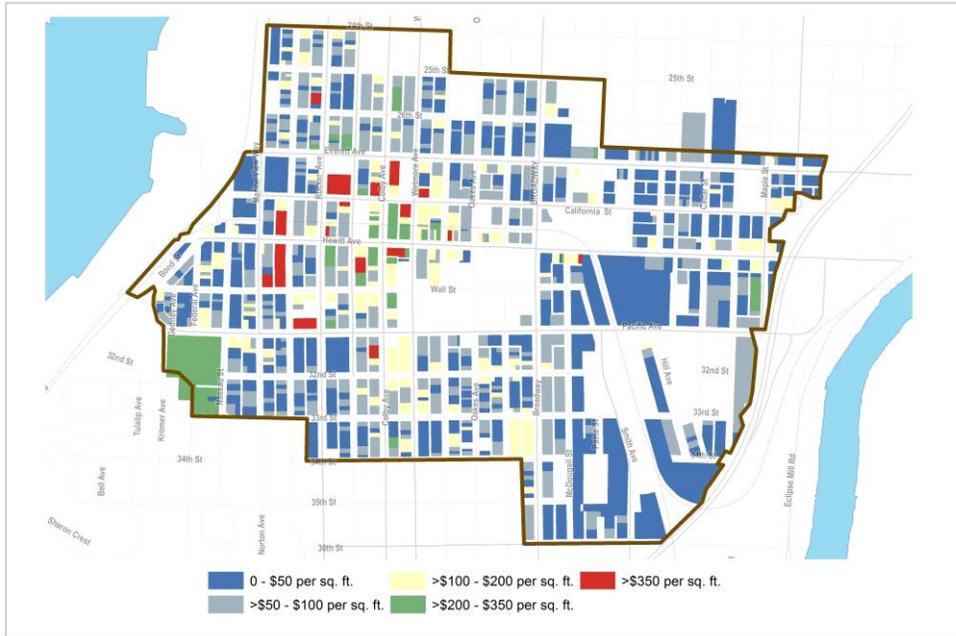
Government is the largest employment sector in the Metro Everett area, followed by publishers and manufacturers, restaurants, and professional and health care services.



Retail Type	Number of Businesses
Building Supplies/Home Improvement Stores	12
Electronic Stores	10
Used Merchandise Stores	8
Gas Stations	7
Supermarkets and Grocery	7
Convenience Stores	6
Furniture Stores	6
Clothing Stores	5
Sporting Goods Stores	5
Type of Professional Service Provider	Number of Businesses
Lawyers	176
Physicians (Excluding Mental Health)	127
Individual & Family Health Care Services	87
Insurance Agencies & Brokerages	32
Dentists	21
Commercial Banking	17
Mental Health Practitioners (Exc. Physicians)	10
Engineering Services	9
Architectural Services	8

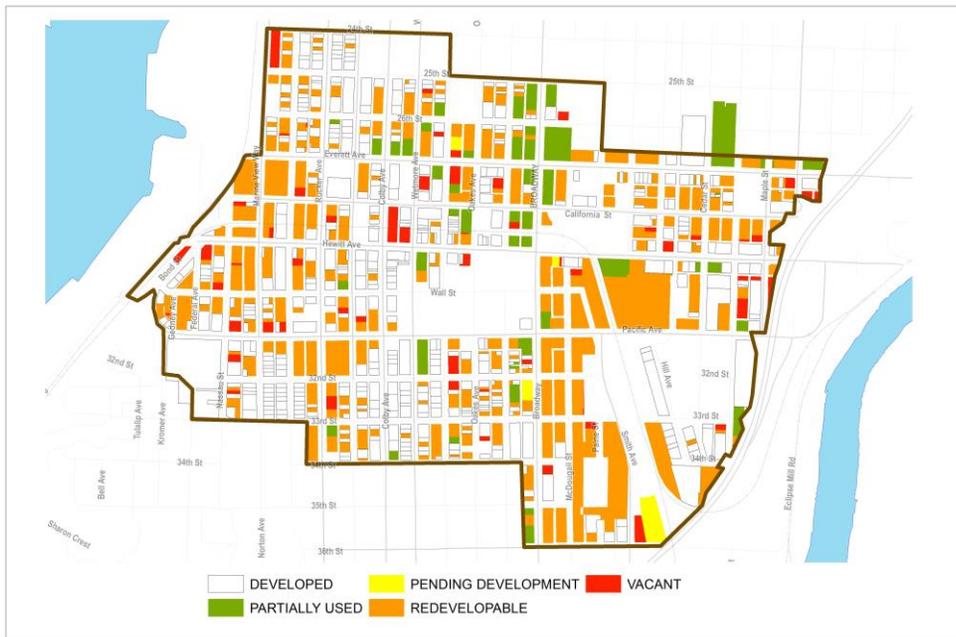
Acres in Actual Use		
USE	Acres	Percentage
Residential	238.22	40.58
Services	148.45	25.29
Retail	61.94	10.55
Parking	35.94	6.12
Manuf./Industrial	32.59	5.55
Vacant	21.41	3.65
Transit/Utilities	17.13	2.92
Recreation	12.89	2.20
Hotel/Motel	6.73	1.15
Railroad	6.15	1.05
Agricultural	5.55	0.95

Governmental Ownership		
Owner	Acres	Percentage
City of Everett	34.35	5.85
Everett School	25.52	4.35
Snohomish County	14.05	2.39
Housing Authority	3.02	0.51
Private ownership		
Owner	Acres	Percentage
Providence Health	10.53	1.79
Lowes	10.13	1.73
Skotdal	6.12	1.04
Sea Real LLC	4.05	0.69
Everett Steel	3.89	0.66
Pine Street Hospitality LLC	3.57	0.61
Mikala 6 LLC	2.64	0.45



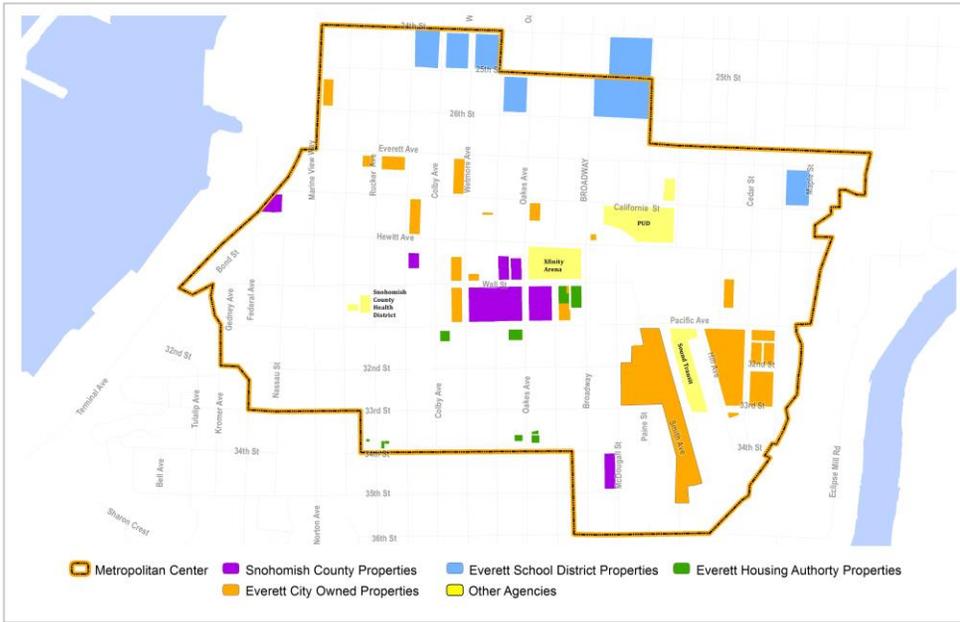
### Land Use Estimates

The assessed value of property varies throughout Metro Everett. Unlike other cities with high transit accessibility, there has been little indication of increased values around the bus and train route on Smith Avenue.



### Redevelopment Potential

Existing buildings vary in quality, extent of improvements and maintenance. Potential redevelopment sites can be identified by looking at the assessed value of improvements (e.g. buildings) in relationship to the assessed value of land. Where the value of the improvements is equal to or less than the value of the land, it indicates potential for redevelopment. For example, a property with an assessed land value of \$150,000 and assessed building improvements of \$75,000 would have an improvement to land ratio of 0.5, and would be considered a potential redevelopment site.

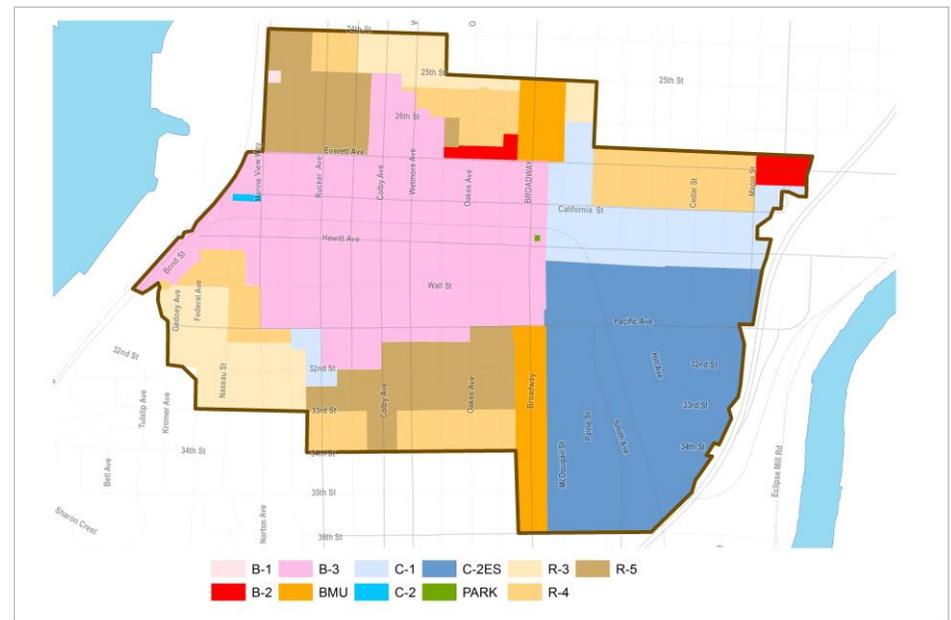


### Land Ownership & Development Opportunities

Small, unassembled parcels imply a normative, market based approach to infill development, while larger, publicly owned properties and land impacted by new infrastructure improvements can act as ‘controlled’ catalysts and partnership opportunities.

### Land Use and Development

There are 11 zoning districts within Metro Everett, along with several additional overlay zones that shape land use and development. The tables on the following page summarize zoning regulations and intent.



Zone	Intent	Uses	Building Height	Density	Parking Requirements
R-3	The primary purpose is multi-family residential use, secondary purpose is for clinics, medical uses and mixed use with clinic.	Multiple Family, clinic	28 - 45 feet	1 du unit per 1,500SF	1-1.5 spaces per unit
R-4	The primary purpose is multi-family residential use, secondary purpose is for clinics, offices and mixed use with office.	Multiple Family, clinic, office	45 - 80 feet	No maximum density	1-1.5 spaces per unit
R-5	The primary purpose is multi-family residential use, secondary purpose is for clinics, offices, and mixed use with office and neighborhood services.	Multiple Family, clinic, office, some business	45 - 80 feet	No maximum density	1-1.5 spaces per unit

#### Residential Zoning Comparison

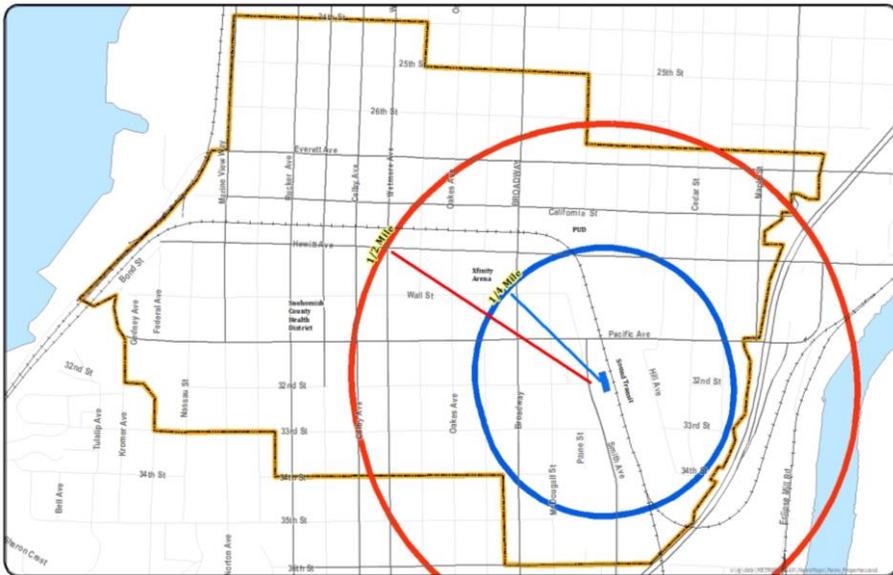
Zone	Intent	Uses	Building Height	Density	Parking Requirements
B-1	To provide for the day-to-day retail, personal service and convenience consumer needs of the immediately adjacent residential neighborhoods.	Residential, Business/Commercial, Eating and Beverage, Entertainment, Lodging, Medical, Recreational, Special Property uses, Schools, Utilities, Transportation and Vehicle Related uses.	28 - 35 feet	No maximum density	1 space per dwelling unit. Commercial requirements range from: 1 space per 100sf - 1 per 1000sf
B-2	To provide for retail businesses and services designed to serve the needs of several neighborhoods, allow for the development of multiple-family housing and mixed-use commercial and multiple-family residential use, and allow for businesses which are oriented to arterial streets.	Residential, Business/Commercial, Eating and Beverage, Entertainment, lodging, Medical, Industrial, Recreational, Special Property uses, Schools, Utilities, Transportation and Vehicle Related uses.	45 - 120 feet	No maximum density	1-1.5 spaces per dwelling unit. Commercial requirements range from: 1 space per 100sf - 1 per 1000sf
B-3	To provide a strong central urban focus and identity for the city; provide a multi-use character of retail, service, financial, office, governmental, residential, human service and cultural activities.	Residential, Business/Commercial, Eating and Beverage, Entertainment, lodging, Medical, Recreational, Special Property uses, Schools, Utilities, Transportation.	45 - 200+ feet	No maximum density Minimum FAR: 0.75 Maximum FAR range: 1.5-12	1 space per dwelling unit. No requirements for commercial parking.
BMU	To create a lively business district, with a mixture of uses, including retail, services, restaurants, institutions, and higher density residential. It is expected that auto-oriented uses would gradually diminish.	Residential, Business/Commercial, Eating and Beverage, Entertainment, lodging, Medical, Industrial, Recreational, Special Property uses, Schools, Utilities, Transportation and Vehicle Related uses.	45 - 80 feet	No maximum density	1-1.5 spaces per dwelling unit. Commercial requirements range from: 1 space per 100sf - 1 per 1000sf
C-1	To provide for a wide range of retail businesses, consumer and commercial services for the greater Everett area, and allow for the development of multiple-family housing and mixed-use commercial and multiple-family residential use.	Residential, Business/Commercial, Eating and Beverage, Entertainment, lodging, Medical, Industrial, Recreational, Special Property uses, Schools, Utilities, Transportation and Vehicle Related uses.	65 - 97 feet	No maximum density	1-1.5 spaces per dwelling unit. Commercial requirements range from: 1 space per 100sf - 1 per 1000sf
C-2	To provide area for heavy commercial services and manufacturing activities and to promote an upgrading of the quality of development of properties located along arterial streets.	Residential, Business/Commercial, Eating and Beverage, Entertainment, lodging, Medical, Industrial, Recreational, Special Property uses, Schools, Utilities, Transportation and Vehicle Related uses.	80 - 120 feet	No maximum density	1 space per dwelling unit. Commercial requirements range from: 1 space per 100sf - 1 per 1000sf
C-2ES	To provide area for commercial services and light industrial activities and compatible residential use; to provide clear connections between Everett Station and the downtown.	Residential, Business/Commercial, Eating and Beverage, Entertainment, lodging, Medical, Industrial, Recreational, Special Property uses, Schools, Utilities, Transportation and Vehicle Related uses.	80 feet	No maximum density	1 space per dwelling unit. Commercial requirements range from: 1 space per 100sf - 1 per 1000sf Maximum parking ratio 4 per 1000gsf

#### Business/Commercial Zoning Comparison

## Transportation

Everett has adopted a “Complete Streets” program, which a balanced transportation plan is taking into account multiple modes of travel including personal vehicles, transit, ridesharing, bicycles and pedestrians. Together, this balanced system promotes policies intended to accommodate and enable safe access for all users.

Metro Everett is the most transit rich area in the city with over 9,000 trips connecting through Everett Station daily. A majority of the Metro Everett blocks lie within a ¼ to ½ mile walking radius from the Everett Station.



Improvements associated with Sound Transit 3 (ST3), if approved by voters, will include an extension of the existing LINK light rail, additional express bus service, and additional parking and access improvements throughout the system.

### 1. LINK Light Rail

Link light rail currently travels 18.75 miles between Seattle's University of Washington Station and Sea-Tac Airport, making 13

stops along the way. If ST3 is approved, the plan would complete major mass transit extensions every few years over a 25-year period, with a station located near the Everett Transit Station.

### 2. Sound Transit Sounder Commuter Rail

Currently, the route has eight trains servicing commuters from Everett to Seattle, four in the morning and four in the evening, along with four Amtrak trains. Weekday ridership was roughly 1,100 in 2010, and was similar in 2013. The line has been prone to frequent cancellation due to mudslides throughout its history, though WSDOT has begun construction to remedy the problem.

### 3. Amtrak, Greyhound, NW Trailways

Amtrak offers six trains per day out of Everett, while Greyhound and NW Trailways offer eight buses out of Everett every day.

### 4. Local and Regional Bus Transit

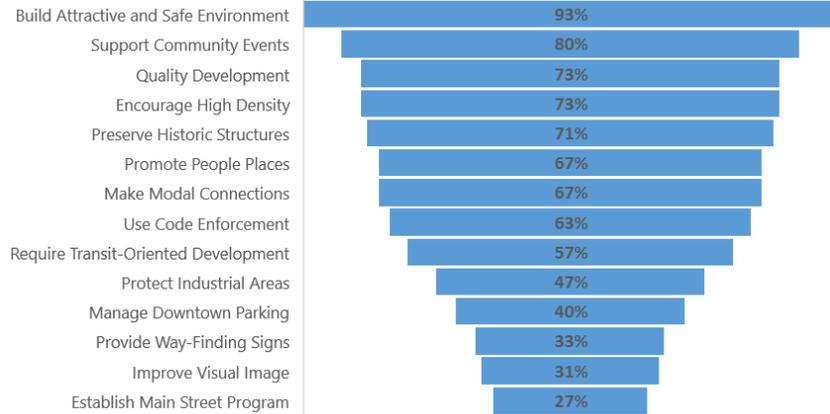
Over 9,000 trips connect through Everett Station daily. Everett Transit provides local bus routes and para-transit services within Metro Everett limits. In addition to local bus service, Community Transit and Sound Transit provide county-wide connections, including several express bus runs during morning and evening commutes to Seattle. Community Transit's Swift Bus Rapid Transit route primarily along SR 99 is the most frequent and busiest of all routes in the area with over 4,000 daily boardings on 156 daily trips. In addition, Island Transit and Skagit Transit provide limited bus service to downtown Everett during standard commute times.

### 5. Freight Movement

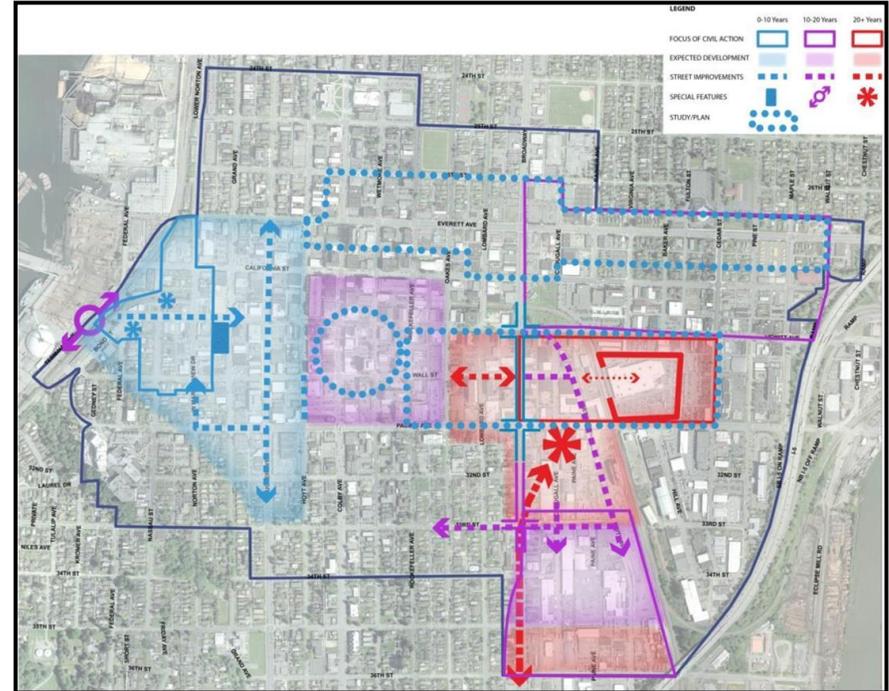
Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) operates the primary rail lines for freight movement within Metro Everett. The north-south line connects all major West Coast cities while the east-west line connects to the mainline that travels to Chicago and the East Coast. Major truck routes for surface road freight movement through downtown Everett occur on Broadway Ave. and Everett Ave. west to Marine View Drive.

# Area Priorities and Redevelopment Strategies

The first public open house held on May 9<sup>th</sup> provided an opportunity for participants to identify areas within Metro Everett that should be prioritized for development, along with strategies for redevelopment. The framework for this discussion was focused on living, working and getting around Metro Everett.



Seven study areas for redevelopment were identified based on redevelopment potential. An initial vision based on existing plans



## Light Rail Station Planning

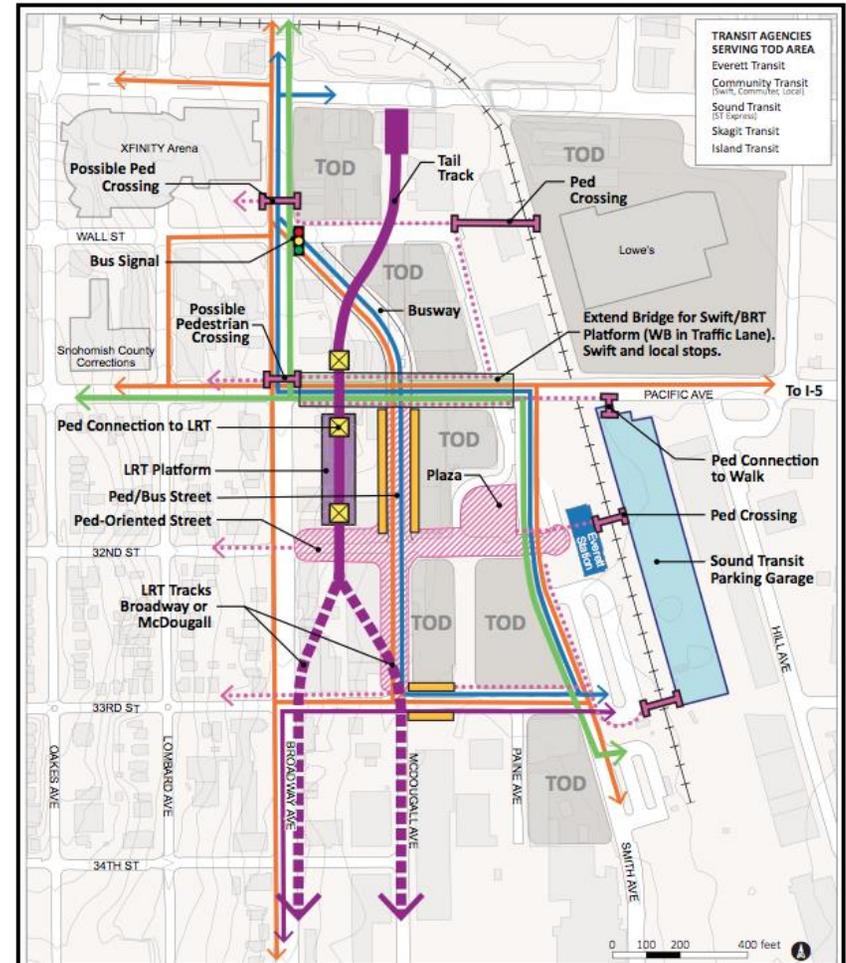
The addition of light rail in the city, connecting Everett to Lynnwood, and to the greater Puget Sound area, will be transformative for Everett. The prospective location of the light rail station would also connect the western and eastern halves of Metro Everett by its centralized location and enhanced pedestrian and streetscape improvements in the local area. The following are principals that should drive station planning.



- **LINK Station:** The light rail station in Metro Everett is optimally situated to best serve both downtown and the Everett Station areas. Proposed between Broadway and McDougall, this location will be visually and physically accessible to downtown and Everett Station.
- **Transit access:** Local and regional transit routes will serve the light rail platform and continue to use Everett Station for bus-to-bus transfers.
- **Bus-to-Bus Transfers:** Everett Station continues to serve as the bus-to-bus transfer facility, as well as layover for drivers and equipment.
- **Bus-to-Light Rail Transfers:** Bus to light rail connections happen at the new light rail station, focusing on the inbound bus routes. This will take place through new bus-only routes down McDougall and improved stops on Pacific.
- **Pacific Avenue Bridge and McDougall Undercrossing:** The bridge on Pacific Avenue over the railroad will be extended to Broadway. This will allow an undercrossing at McDougall to serve as a transit route for the new light rail station platform.



- **Broadway Crossing:** A pedestrian overpass across Broadway is envisioned for safety and convenience. This overpass could extend from the light rail tail track.
- **Streetscape Improvements for Walkability:** Access from the light rail station and Everett Station to downtown is improved by enhanced pedestrian routes and frequent,



direct bus service, enabling people to safely make connections to the stations.

- **Regional Commuters:** For regional commuters, the light rail station should be served primarily through enhanced transit service feeding from outlying regions. Additional parking supply is limited. To reduce traffic congestion and to encourage transit-oriented development, parking for the light rail station and Everett station is located east of the railroad and south of Pacific Avenue on Sound Transit property.

## Lowe's Site Redevelopment

The 10-acre parcel that Lowe's is located on is rare in Metro Everett, especially so near the transit station. The potential redevelopment of the site north of Pacific Avenue, from a low density building supply warehouse use, to potential office park, mixed use residential with entertainment, retail, would be a significant catalyst for the eastern half of Metro Everett. With visibility from I-5, a quality urban development at this site could be a highlight for Metro Everett.



## Catalyst Projects

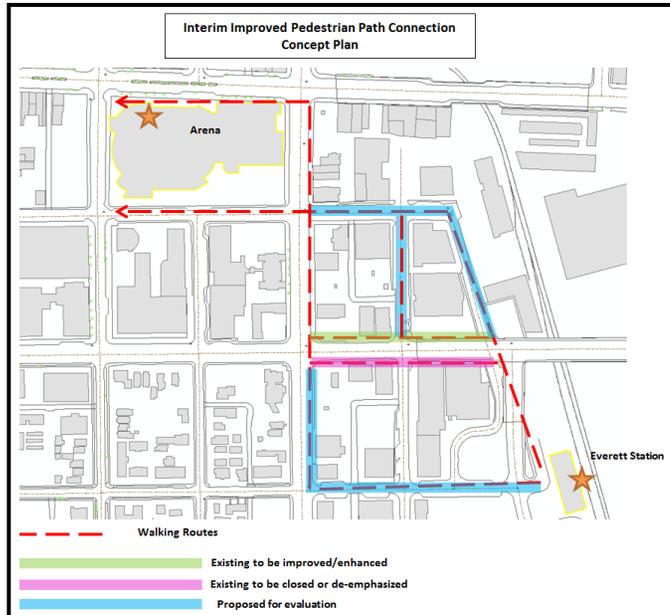
The following catalyst projects are action items considered to be viable in the immediate future as a means of creating place making spaces, improve accessible connections, and incentive for future additional growth and development.

- Adopt programs, incentives and funding for place making by establishing active work places in Metro Everett
- Revise code to ease restrictions on mobile vendors
- Identify deteriorating properties in areas of high visibility and pedestrian activity and take action to address blight

- Install interpretive signage including kiosks relating to general history, and individual building plaques



- Construct a dedicated pedestrian and bike corridor from Everett Station to Xfinity Arena that is attractive and well lit, with numerous way-finding signs directing people to key destinations and landmarks



- Design, fabricate and install pole banners for Metro Everett



- Create significant public art pieces or other structural elements that signal entry into and around Metro Everett
- Create a memorial and/or prominent interpretive element at the Everett Massacre site at the West end of Hewitt



Existing conditions on Smith Avenue north of the station



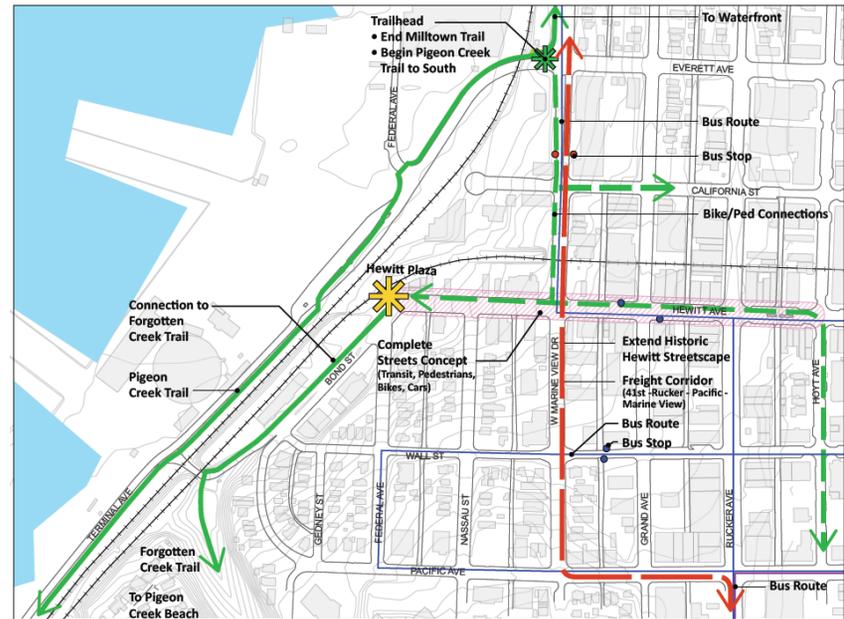
Potential enhanced walkway concept

The west end of Hewitt Avenue was identified as a key target redevelopment area due to its proximity with downtown and the Hewitt Historic District, its connection to the waterfront, and its site of the historic Everett Massacre 100 years ago.



The concept plan focuses on achieving the following objectives:

- Extension of Hewitt Avenue streetscape (west of Rucker)
- Creation of Hewitt Plaza at railroad to commemorate historic event (massacre), provide view of Port Gardner Bay and to create a plaza extension for adjacent businesses
- Improvement/creation of pedestrian and bicycle paths to access waterfront to address, at least temporarily, the at-grade crossing closures by BNSF



The illustrative development concepts provide the City and Metro Everett stakeholders with a shared vision for the future development of Metro Everett.

While only a few options of many, the concepts provide an indication of the direction for Metro Everett, including an expanded residential component near a growing transit hub. These concepts include maximized building heights, green street design, and enhanced pedestrian connections throughout the ½ mile walking radius.

The following set of goals, incentives and action recommendations have been developed to help the city and the Metro Everett stakeholders build the district into a high quality living environment.

## Goals for “Bending the Trends”

Private development will occur without additional intervention or incentives from the City. For example, development on the west side of downtown has been strong because of its location and views towards the water and mountains. Other development, however, might require additional incentives from the City, particularly if quicker results are desired.

In order to ensure that any incentives achieve the results the public wants, a list of key goals to “bend the trends” have been identified. These goals would require either financial or development incentives.

### **1,000 units of market rate housing**

Metro Everett has not grown nearly as quickly as some centers in Puget Sound. Additional market rate housing, provided at a quicker pace, will have a significant benefit to the business community and cultural arts that will grow to enhance the residential development. The cost of construction has risen dramatically in the greater Puget Sound market, including Everett, but market rate rents in Everett are not high enough for new, high density residential construction to be financially viable for developers.



### **Increased inventory of low income housing**

A housing market analysis done in February 2016 showed that market rents in Metro Everett are not affordable for very low-income households. A person earning minimum wage can afford less than \$500 per month in rent, while market rents are approximately \$1,000 for a studio unit. In 2016, over 1,000 people were counted as homeless. Low-income housing projects must find ways to subsidize construction and/or operating costs in order to make rents affordable.



### **Increased employment in Metro Everett**

A vibrant, sustainable Metro Everett requires a mix of housing, attractions, and jobs. The City can capitalize on its identity as a manufacturing center to attract a new generation of “makers” to Metro Everett. The City can also capitalize on lower housing costs and quality of life to attract office and other employment opportunities in the area.

### Increased TOD and reduce SOV

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) helps to optimize public investment in transportation infrastructure by placing residential density near transit stations. This has been shown to significantly increase ridership and these added trips reduce the amount of public subsidy over the long term for new systems.

Within the Metro Everett area, land-use regulations are already transit-friendly. The City has also worked to complete pedestrian amenities on key streets.

However, significant development capacity remains within the ¼ to ½ mile radius from Everett Station.



### An active, safe, and clean Metro Everett

An active, safe and clean city is the key to a renewed Metro Everett. There is a critical connection between planning and building high quality, walkable, urban environments, attracting a talented workforce, and long term sustainable economic development. Community input indicates that the City is on the right track, but yet many buildings in Metro Everett remain underutilized and potentially considered blight.





## New Jobs Tax Credit

The City provides a business and occupation tax incentive for employers that create 50 or more full time jobs. To encourage more employment in Metro Everett, including small business, this incentive is proposed for businesses that create 10 or more new full time jobs.

## Utility Connection Fees

Sewer and water connection charges are one of the largest costs charged by the City for new development. These charges are necessary to pay for needed capital improvements. If these connection charges are reduced for market-rate housing, a source for repayment of these charges needs to be identified.

## 1% Public Art Funding

Public art in Everett contributes to an attractive environment. Finding ways to increase 1% for public art contributions, potentially eliminating certain project exemptions outlined in the Everett Municipal Code, will help to expand the creation of place making in Metro Everett, attract talented professionals, engage citizens, and make for a more vibrant urban area.



## Low Interest Loans

Creating low interest loans specifically for business façade improvements and historic preservation will create a cleaner, safer urban environment.

## Community Renewal Area

Washington law allows cities to establish a Community Renewal Area for areas that need renewal. There are key blighted areas and properties in Metro Everett, and this tool could help transform a neighborhood with systemized neglect into an urban environment that is more clean and safe, and will be engaging to citizens and visitors alike.

## Other Funding Sources

Transportation improvements and low-income housing have opportunities for a variety of funding, including grants, real estate excise taxes, and other funds. Several projects already are in the planning and/or design phase, such as streetscape improvements on Hoyt and Rucker, and bike route designs on California. Pursuing additional grant funding, and allocating city capital funds towards the improvement of pedestrian paths linking Everett Station to downtown will help create place making opportunities, improve transportation, and facilitate a healthier community. Researching grants and new funding sources such as a low-income housing levy, will help create opportunities to create additional low income housing in Metro Everett.

## Development Incentives

### Parking Reductions

Currently the City requires one to one-and-a-half parking stalls for each residential unit in Metro Everett, and incentivizes businesses in the Central Business District with no parking requirements. Reducing parking requirements for new development throughout Metro Everett in exchange for measurable reduction in vehicle trips would help add 1,000 units of market rate housing in the next seven years, increase the inventory of low income housing, increase transit oriented development, and create a more active, safe and clean urban environment.

### Heights & Floor Area Ratios

Height and floor area ratio requirements in Metro Everett could be increased in exchange for public amenities provided by development.

### On-site Open Space

The City currently requires new multi-family residential developments to provide landscaped areas and open recreational space on-site. Allowing for greater flexibility and alternatives to create, for example, a privately funded and maintained neighborhood public park, would help add 1,000 units of market rate housing in the next seven years, increase the inventory of low income housing, increase transit oriented development, and create a more active, safe and clean urban environment.