



# NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Mayor Stephanson delivers 2017 State of the City address

EVERETT – Mayor Ray Stephanson on Wednesday delivered his 2017 State of the City address at Economic Alliance Snohomish County’s annual event, held at Xfinity Arena. Stephanson provided an overview of major community initiatives and projects and shared the City’s priorities in the coming year.

“2016 was a great year for Everett in terms of economic growth, residential and business development, and our work around public safety and improving the lives of our most vulnerable residents,” said Stephanson.

In his remarks, the Mayor highlighted a number of significant developments and projects currently underway or coming soon to Everett, including:

- Toymaker Funko’s relocated headquarters and new retail space in downtown Everett
- The new home of Washington State University Everett and the Everett University Center, a four-story facility slated to open in August
- Seattle Children's Hospital’s new regional clinic, which will open on Providence’s Colby campus in 2018
- The Port of Everett’s Waterfront Place development, where construction will begin this year on up to 268 residential units in Fisherman’s Harbor
- The Riverfront Development on the Snohomish River, where Polygon has already sold 22 single-family homes and is beginning sales on town homes next week.

Stephanson noted that the city continues to grow, with many young professionals and families taking advantage of Everett’s new housing opportunities. “We’ve added 1,000 housing units downtown in the past decade, and we project another 1,000 units to be added in the next 10 years.”

Among City projects, construction is expected to begin on two major amenities this year: The Grand Avenue Park bridge will provide pedestrian access from the bluff to the waterfront, and will replace deteriorated underground stormwater pipelines. In south Everett, with Council’s approval the City will begin work in 2017 to add 5,000 square feet to the Evergreen library branch, creating space for meetings, studying, children’s activities, computers, and more.

Stephanson devoted much of his speech to the topic of public safety and what the City and its community partners are doing to address the complex challenges of homelessness, mental illness, and addiction on Everett's streets.

"We are committed to ensuring the health and safety of everyone in our community, from those vulnerable residents who live on the streets to our families and businesses that are often most affected by growing street populations," said Stephanson. "We have taken a comprehensive approach to solving these issues, and we are starting to see results."

In 2016, as part of the [Safe Streets](#) plan, the City:

- Launched a [work crew program](#) as an alternative to prosecution and jail time for low-level offenders and to clean up areas affected by street populations
- Established Everett Police's [Community Outreach and Enforcement Team](#), including two full-time [embedded social workers](#)
- Continued the work of the [Chronic Utilizers Alternative Response Team \(CHART\)](#), a collaborative approach to finding solutions for the most chronic utilizers of emergency and criminal justice systems
- Formalized Everett Police's involvement with [the Police Assisted Addiction Recovery Institute \(PAARI\)](#), which has helped facilitate sending 13 individuals from Everett to long-term treatment centers out of state, at no cost to the City
- Selected Catholic Housing Services to build a [permanent supportive apartment facility](#) with on-site services and case management for 70 chronically homeless individuals

Stephanson announced Wednesday that he will ask the City Council to authorize a lawsuit against Purdue Pharmaceuticals for the damage they have caused the Everett community by failing to stop OxyContin pills from being diverted into the black market, directly leading to the current heroin epidemic.

"The crisis caused by Purdue's drive for profit has overwhelmed our community's ability to respond," said Stephanson. "Our jails are overwhelmed, our treatment system lacks capacity to meet the growing needs, and our residents and businesses demand that we do more. Purdue must be held accountable."

The Mayor also announced that he and Snohomish County Sheriff Ty Trenary, along with County Executive Dave Somers and Everett Police Chief Dan Templeman, will convene a work group in February to review innovative incarceration and diversion approaches from other communities to determine what could be implemented at the Snohomish County Jail and throughout Everett.

"The Sheriff and I have committed to work together to create a first-class, innovative detention facility," said Stephanson. "Our community deserves a system where the right people are in jail, the right people are diverted into alternative programs, and those who need treatment for addiction or mental illness can get the services they need."

Stephanson reiterated his respect and gratitude for the community organizations, service providers, residents and businesses that have partnered with the City to address critical street-level social issues.

For the full text of the Mayor's remarks, video of the speech and a slideshow, visit [www.everettwa.gov/stateofthecity](http://www.everettwa.gov/stateofthecity).

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