



## **Cassie Franklin Urbanist Questionnaire 2025**

Everett Mayor

### **What are your top three priorities to achieve in your term?**

My top priorities are creating a safer, more connected community, supporting vibrant and inclusive growth, and ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability. Public safety must be rooted in accountability and compassion. I'm focused on strengthening partnerships between first responders, behavioral health providers, and the communities they serve. To support growth, I'll continue championing transit-oriented development, revitalizing downtown, and investing in housing, arts, and small businesses as we position Everett as a regional hub for innovation and culture. And to keep our city strong, I'll pursue progressive, diversified revenue strategies while managing resources wisely. These goals are grounded in a belief that cities thrive when they grow equitably and invest in the well-being of every resident.

### **How will you boost housing options, particularly for families of all incomes to live where they work? How will you engage the public for new shelters, transitional housing, emergency housing, permanent supportive housing? How do you weigh community objections with the housing goals for your jurisdiction, while encouraging engagement from neighbors?**

To boost housing options for families of all incomes, I support zoning reforms that allow greater density, especially near transit, and I'm committed to streamlining permitting to accelerate housing production. I've led efforts to revitalize downtown and commercial corridors with mixed-use development and affordable units, and I'm focused on expanding housing options beyond just market-rate units. Public engagement is essential to the success of new shelters and supportive housing. I've led community listening sessions, supported neighborhood outreach, and brought stakeholders together early in the process to address concerns and build support. I take community feedback seriously, but I also lead with a clear commitment to housing as a human right, and I work to engage neighbors on the long-term value of inclusive, compassionate housing solutions. In Everett, we are building a more equitable city; one that



welcomes people at every income level and supports them with housing and services they need to thrive.

**Do you support adding progressive revenue sources? Which ones would you support to fund your priorities? Or what cuts would you make to balance budgets facing increasing strain under Trump?**

Yes, I support adding progressive revenue sources to fund critical priorities while reducing our reliance on outdated models. I've consistently supported efforts to advocate for state-level tax reform and greater local flexibility to raise revenue in ways that reflect Everett's unique needs. I also believe we must grow our tax base through strategic economic development—by attracting new businesses, supporting housing development, and investing in our creative economy and tourism. At the same time, I'll continue exploring regional partnerships and grant opportunities to fund essential services and infrastructure. Balancing our budget sustainably requires innovation, collaboration, and a commitment to protecting the programs our community depends on.

**What do you think is the most important strategy your jurisdiction can pursue to limit cost increases and make the region affordable to live in? How would you go about implementing that strategy?**

The most important strategy Everett can pursue is to increase housing supply, especially affordable and workforce housing, through zoning reform and thoughtful urban infill. We're focused on building more housing in existing neighborhoods, especially near jobs and transit, where infrastructure is already in place. We must modernize land use policies to allow for more density, particularly near transit, and reduce barriers that slow or prevent housing development. I've led efforts like Rethink Zoning and Rethink Housing to do just that, and I'll continue championing policies that make it easier to build diverse housing types in every neighborhood. Implementing this strategy requires strong community engagement, regional collaboration, and clear alignment between housing, transportation, and climate goals. This is how we build a more affordable, equitable city for everyone.



**Traffic deaths are rising across Washington state, with pedestrians composing an increasing share statewide. What is your approach to making our streets safer for all users?**

Everyone deserves to feel safe moving through their community, whether they're walking, biking, taking transit, or driving. My approach prioritizes redesigning streets to slow traffic, improve visibility, and protect vulnerable users, especially in school zones and high-foot-traffic areas. We're implementing safer crosswalks, reducing speeds on neighborhood streets, and investing in bike and pedestrian infrastructure through Everett's Bicycle Master Plan and Complete Streets policies. I'm also proud to have been selected as one of just 12 mayors nationwide to participate in the Mayor's Innovation Project pedestrian safety cohort, bringing Everett's Vision Zero planning work into national conversations with fellow mayors and experts to create an even stronger strategy for our city. I also support deeper coordination with regional transit and public safety agencies to make safety systemic, not piecemeal. Street safety is a matter of equity, and I'm committed to making Everett safer and more accessible for everyone, no matter how they get around.

**What is your approach to improving public safety over the next five years? How will you actualize it?**

My approach to public safety centers on prevention, accountability, and community trust. Over the next five years, I'll continue investing in innovative strategies like alternative response teams, expanded behavioral health partnerships, and youth violence prevention programs—tools that address root causes while relieving pressure on traditional law enforcement. I've worked to implement reforms that strengthen transparency and equity within our police department, and I'll keep building on that progress. At the same time, I'll ensure our first responders have the training, resources, and support they need to keep every neighborhood safe. Public safety isn't just about enforcement, it's about fostering a community where everyone feels secure, respected, and supported.

**What have you done/will you do to increase collaboration at city hall and ensure all residents are included?**

As Mayor, I've prioritized collaboration by building strong partnerships across city departments, with our City Council, and with community stakeholders. I've issued mayoral directives that center equity and inclusion in city operations, and launched initiatives like Rethink Housing and Rethink Zoning to engage residents directly in shaping policy. We've actively sought input from all 19 neighborhoods, dozens of boards and commissions, and have worked intentionally to elevate the voices of communities of color, bilingual residents, young people, and others who haven't always been included in civic processes—especially in our diverse South Everett neighborhoods. I'm committed to meeting people where they are, through language access,



digital tools, and trusted community relationships. Moving forward, I'll continue creating space for every resident to help shape Everett's future and ensure City Hall reflects the full diversity of our city.

### **What actions should the city take to address the climate crisis?**

The city must lead by example in reducing emissions and building a more climate-resilient future. That means investing in clean transportation—like expanding our electric vehicle fleet, improving transit access, and building safe infrastructure for walking and biking. Everett is proud to be one of the regional leaders in electrifying our bus fleet, and we already have multiple electric vehicles in use. We also need to support energy-efficient building practices, protect and expand green spaces, and prepare for climate impacts like extreme heat and flooding. I've championed plans like the Climate Action Strategy and the Bicycle Master Plan, and I'll continue pushing for regional partnerships and funding to accelerate this work. Addressing the climate crisis requires bold action and sustained commitment—and I'm ready to lead Everett toward a cleaner, healthier future.

### **What is your financial sustainability plan for the city?**

My financial sustainability plan focuses on growing our tax base through strategic economic development, advocating for more flexible and equitable revenue tools, and ensuring smart, efficient budgeting. I've worked to attract new industries, support small businesses, and expand housing because a thriving local economy strengthens our budget over time. I also continue to push for state-level tax reform and diversified revenue sources that better reflect modern needs and reduce our reliance on outdated models. At the same time, I lead with discipline, carefully prioritizing essential services and infrastructure that deliver the greatest long-term benefit to our residents. Sustainability means balancing immediate needs with smart investments in our future.

### **What are your top transportation goals for the city, and how will you get them done? What is your plan to improve walkability, bike safety, and accessibility in your community?**

My top transportation goals are to expand multimodal options, prepare for light rail, and ensure our streets are safe and accessible for everyone. I'm committed to improving walkability and bike safety through investments in infrastructure, like better sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and safer crossings, guided by Everett's Bicycle Master Plan and Complete Streets policy. I'll continue prioritizing transit-oriented development and working with Sound Transit to deliver the Everett Link extension in a way that supports equity and smart growth. Accessibility is central to this vision. We must ensure people of all ages and abilities can move through our city safely and affordably. These goals will be achieved through strategic planning, community engagement, and partnerships at the regional, state, and federal level.



**In what ways could your city's comprehensive plan go further, and what would you push for to improve it during your tenure?**

Everett's comprehensive plan must go further in addressing housing affordability, climate resilience, and equitable access to opportunity. I'll push for more ambitious zoning changes to allow diverse housing types in every neighborhood, especially near transit and job centers. We also need stronger integration of climate strategies, like green building standards, tree canopy protections, and support for low-carbon transportation. I'll work to ensure the plan reflects the lived experiences of all residents by centering community voices, especially from historically underserved areas. A truly future-ready comprehensive plan must be bold, inclusive, and aligned with our shared values of sustainability and growth.

**What is your approach to finding common ground between slow growth advocates opposing change in their neighborhoods and pro-housing advocates pressing to meet broader community needs?**

My approach is to lead with empathy, transparency, and a focus on shared values. I believe most residents want Everett to be a safe, welcoming, and affordable place, and it's my job to show how smart housing policy helps achieve that. I work to build common ground by engaging early and often, listening to concerns, and emphasizing how thoughtful growth can protect neighborhood character while expanding opportunity. We need to be honest about the cost of inaction: without more housing, especially near transit and jobs, affordability and equity suffer. Change can be hard, but with strong community engagement and clear goals, we can grow in a way that works for everyone.

**Planned upcoming expansions to Sound Transit services will reshape the transportation and connectivity of the region. How would you, as mayor, support this regional effort to expand multi-modal transit? How will you foster a positive relationship between Sound Transit, local businesses, and residents?**

The expansion of Sound Transit is a transformative opportunity for Everett and the entire region, and I'm fully committed to ensuring it's successful, equitable, and community-driven. As Mayor, I'll advocate for transit-oriented development that brings housing, jobs, and services closer to stations—while protecting existing communities from displacement. I'll continue building strong partnerships with Sound Transit, local businesses, and residents by maintaining open communication, addressing concerns early, and ensuring the project reflects Everett's needs and priorities. This includes thoughtful station planning, smart land use, and investment in first- and last-mile connections like biking, walking, and local transit. A thriving multi-modal network will connect more people to opportunity. I'll work to make sure Everett is ready to meet the moment.

