



## EVERETT CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

### Candidate Information

Name: **Erica Weir**

Candidate for: Everett City Council, District 1

Campaign website: <https://www.eric4everett.com>

### Background

As part of our mission to support a vibrant downtown core, the Downtown Everett Association provides leadership and awareness to the issues impacting our downtown community. We've created this candidate questionnaire – which aligns with our [mission](#) – to help voters understand the 2025 Everett City Council candidates' vision and priorities for Downtown Everett. The Downtown Everett Association does not endorse candidates; we encourage the community to read the candidates' responses below to learn how they would support a thriving downtown.

All candidates were invited to respond. Candidate responses are posted in their entirety. Typos and grammatical errors are their own.

### Questions

#### Public Safety

***Do you believe current policies, such as the service provider buffer zone ordinance, help accomplish the City's goals of promoting public safety in the downtown core? What other policies do you believe would help meet this goal, and how?***

The service provider buffer zone is one strategy to promote a safe and welcoming downtown by reducing negative activity and encampments in public rights-of-way, parks, and business properties, especially in high-traffic areas frequented by youth and families. As the county seat, downtown Everett faces unique challenges compared to neighboring cities, with county and municipal courts, the Snohomish County Jail, and numerous social service agencies concentrated in the area. These vital services, while important, naturally draw large numbers of individuals experiencing homelessness, behavioral health challenges, or addiction. Without alternative places to go, many would remain in the area for extended periods, leading to predictable impacts: increased street-level crime, unsanitary conditions, and added strain on businesses, residents, and visitors.

Other strategies to improve public safety include:

- Expanding housing options such as additional shelter beds, supportive housing for those in recovery, and preventive programs for people at risk of homelessness.



- Creating safe gathering spaces where individuals can build positive community connections and purpose.
- Increasing outreach and trust-building between social workers and vulnerable individuals to help them access resources and change harmful patterns.
- Applying CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles to active and vacant properties to reduce unwanted behavior.

Expanding bike and foot patrols to deter crime and reassure the public.

***How do you believe the City can create a safe space for all members of the downtown community? How would you prioritize these measures?***

In addition to the ideas above, ensuring that downtown feels clean, active, and vibrant is essential. The Downtown Everett Association (DEA) plays a key role by keeping streets clean, removing graffiti, and supporting local businesses through storefront grants that enhance curb appeal. Features like attractive lighting, clear sidewalks, and activated storefronts encourage more foot traffic, an important factor in discouraging unwanted activity.

It's also critical to support opportunities for people on the margins to re-integrate, build positive connections, and find a sense of purpose and belonging. Human beings need connection, and when basic needs or resources are out of reach, desperation can lead to unsafe or socially unacceptable behaviors.

### **Economic Vitality**

***How do you believe the City can help make Downtown a more attractive location for new businesses?***

Showing new businesses that our City, existing businesses, property owners, and residents are invested in continuing to build a vibrant and active downtown goes a long way. Clean sidewalks and streets, public art, events and activities that draw visitors and encourage downtown activation, and working with property owners to reduce street level vacancies and curb appeal make for an inviting downtown for visitors AND business owners alike.

Additionally, streamlining the permitting processes and providing new businesses support through those steps would be valuable.

***How can the City support existing businesses – from small to large?***

Our City can support existing businesses by making sure those key stakeholders are included in the conversations about what happens downtown. Whether it is related to parking, street closures, festivals and large scale events, or safety concerns, our local business owners are literally on the ground dealing with what is happening and have valuable insight and creativity to share.

Other practical ways we can support our businesses are through a shared resource of events and business hours and offerings, and streamlined permitting and business support resources.



## Public Spaces

***What steps can the City take to improve Downtown Everett's public spaces, such as streets, sidewalks, parks, and places where people spend time and gather?***

The City can take several steps to improve Downtown Everett's public spaces so they feel safe, welcoming, and vibrant:

- **Cleanliness:** Increase street cleaning and sidewalk pressure washing, add more cigarette disposal sites, and install pet clean-up stations to keep downtown fresh and inviting.
- **Lighting:** Enhance lighting to improve both safety and aesthetics, such as year-round tree lighting or other creative lighting features that add warmth and visual appeal.
- **Activation:** Bring energy into public spaces with pop-up events like seasonal buskers and performers, themed gatherings such as *Bark in the Park*, art festivals, record swaps, circus troupes, free outdoor concerts (like EMI) especially aimed at youth and families, outdoor fitness or yoga classes, walking or Lime Scooter tours, and community contests like chalk art.
- **Art & Creativity:** Embrace Everett's creative spirit by showcasing more public art: rotating pieces from the City's collection, loaned or donated works, murals on blank walls, wrapped utility poles and boxes, and interactive art that engages people directly.

## Transportation

***How can the City increase accessibility to Downtown and help people feel more connected to our neighboring communities? What are your priorities in regards to bicycle infrastructure, public transportation, pedestrian experience, parking, etc.?***

### **Bicycle Infrastructure & Pedestrian Experience:**

Clearly defined and safe bike paths throughout downtown would improve safety for both cyclists and pedestrians, while also supporting the growing use of electric scooters and assist bikes. Enhancing these connections makes downtown more accessible, active, and sustainable.

### **Public Transportation:**

I support expanding Everett Transit routes to make public transportation more practical and convenient. One idea I'd like to see is a dedicated, frequent loop connecting Everett Station, Downtown, and the Waterfront, similar to the special seasonal and event shuttles we've had in the past. Designing this service with a unique look and feel, such as trolley-style vehicles or distinctively decorated buses, could make it both functional and fun. This type of service would strengthen connections between key destinations in North Everett, encourage ridership, and add to the city's appeal for residents and visitors alike.

### **Parking:**

As downtown grows in popularity and population, parking challenges increase. While we must



encourage the use of public transit and other modes of travel, it's also important to recognize that driving will remain necessary for many. One solution is to **introduce paid on-street parking** with a free initial timeframe for short visits (similar to the Port of Everett's approach). This would ease parking congestion, encourage turnover, and better support downtown businesses.

### Historic Preservation

***In your view, how important are Downtown Everett's historic buildings to its social vibrancy and economic vitality, and why? What would be your approach be to incentivizing the preservation of these buildings?***

Our historic buildings tell Everett's story, set us apart from other communities, and give our downtown its distinctive character. Preserving them is essential to creating a vibrant city that attracts businesses, visitors, and residents alike.

Ways to incentivize preservation could include:

- **Historic walking tours:** Develop print or digital maps with self-guided routes and stories that highlight Everett's fascinating past.
- **Access to resources:** Provide support in securing grants for the protection, restoration, or repurposing of historic buildings.
- **Permitting assistance:** Offer clear guidance to property owners navigating restoration or adaptive reuse, such as converting a school into housing or an industrial site into retail.

### Additional

***With the Everett 2044 Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations going into effect, describe your related approach to zoning, density, allocation of city resources, and the priority for growth in the downtown core.***

***Is there any additional information you would like to share about your candidacy that would be helpful for downtown residents, workers, and visitors to know?***

I'm running because I care deeply about Everett — not just as a 3rd generation resident, EHS graduate, but as someone who has experienced the challenges and strengths of this city firsthand. Over the next four years, I want to focus on a few key goals:

- **Addressing Everett's structural budget deficit.** We've been facing a growing gap between our revenues and the costs of running a city of this size. I'll prioritize a detailed review of how we're spending including a deep look into the 2018 BERK study and subsequent community advisory committee recommendations, push for transparency in



the budget process, and look for smart ways to generate new revenue and cost savings, including partnerships that deliver better services without draining local dollars.

- **Ensuring that Everett's growth benefits the people who live here now.** We're projected to grow by 65,000 residents by 2044. That's going to require thoughtful planning, not just to accommodate that growth, but to protect the integrity of our neighborhoods, improve infrastructure, and ensure housing remains affordable and accessible.
- **Expanding affordable housing options, childcare access, and community health.** I want Everett to be a place where people can live, work, and stay long term, whether you're a young adult renting your first apartment, a family buying your first home, or a senior aging in place.
- **Bringing more people into the process.** Everett's decisions are stronger when they reflect a wide range of voices. I'll push for more inclusive community engagement, especially in budget and policy conversations that impact people's everyday lives.

I bring authentic, thoughtful, and collaborative leadership, grounded in deep roots in Everett and years of experience working across our community. From Everett, for Everett — WEIR better together, and I'd be honored to earn your support.