In June 2015 I formed the Mayor’s Inclusion Task Force to support the city’s mission and goal to serve everybody living and working in our very diverse community. Our task force, which is made up of community leaders representing African Americans, Chinese, East African, East Indian, Filipino, Islamic, Japanese, Latino, LGBTQ, Sikhs, Somali, Sudanese, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, and Renton’s senior population, have accomplished a great deal in the past two years. Communications between our residents and the city has been dramatically improved, and the task force has been engaging all of our community members to participate in local events and projects.

The latest project the task force is working on will be a multi-cultural festival that will be held downtown on September 30 and October 1, with dances and entertainment, food booths and other exciting activities for the entire community. You’ll soon begin to see a lot of promotion for this upcoming event.

Participants in the recent Renton River Days parade represented a number of diverse cultures. This photograph I took of a woman marching with performers from the Sikh community, carrying an American flag, made me feel proud of where we have come as a community, where people from all backgrounds and cultures come together to live, work and play together. We have made a lot of progress in meeting our goal of building an inclusive city with opportunities for all.