



This Week from the Mayor



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2016 was a very good year for the City of Renton

As we move into a new year, it's worth looking back at some of the positive things that occurred in our community in 2016.

The Boeing Company celebrated its 100th anniversary, 75 of those years in our city. As the state's largest employer, Boeing has played a significant role in our community for the past seven-plus decades, providing quality careers for thousands of people. There was a time when nearly every family had members, or at least close friends, employed by Boeing. And while the local workplace has significantly diversified in recent years, aerospace continues to be the foundation of the state's economy.

Production of the Next-Generation 737 and the new 737 MAX will reach 47 airplanes a month in Renton in 2017, with plans to reach an astonishing 52 airplanes per month in 2018. It's great to be able to brag that every 737 flying around the world was built in our community and took its maiden flight from the Renton Municipal Airport.

The biggest news for Renton in 2016 has been new development and jobs. There are billions of private investment dollars being spent on a number of projects currently underway, including three new hotels and several major office complexes. A spring opening is planned for the Hyatt Regency at Southport on Lake Washington which will be one of the nicest hotels and conferencing centers in the entire region.



The Lofts at Second and Main will feature market-rate housing and first floor retail stores. It opens this spring.

Group Health is completing a large office campus and pharmaceutical distribution center in the valley, which will result in about 1,500 new local jobs, and IKEA will soon be opening its new 420,000 square foot retail store. Valley Medical Center is beginning a major redevelopment that will provide Renton with a new, state-of-the-art cancer treatment center.

We opened our second new library, this one in the Highlands as part of the Sunset redevelopment project that will provide long overdue public and private investment in this community. The project includes quality new housing for all income levels anchored by a beautiful, 4-acre community park.

Revitalization of Renton's downtown community has been a city priority for decades, dating back to when major retailers fled city centers to create shopping malls. There has been significant progress towards this vision. A beautiful mixed-use development will soon open at South Second Street and Main Street, with market-rate housing above retail stores. Work will begin soon to transform South Main Street from Third Avenue north to Mill Street from one-way into two-way traffic. Part of creating a pedestrian friendly downtown that is vibrant day and night, seven days a week, requires diverting commuter traffic away from downtown streets.



The Cartona Building (former Renton Western Wear) has completed a beautiful renovation and new tenants are already in the building. Other buildings in downtown have been sold, or are in the process of being sold, with exciting plans for future development. The former city hall property at 200 Mill St. may be sold for a quality development project and the Transit Center will be moved this year to Grady Way, opening up new opportunities in the core of the downtown.

A very positive partnership between Renton Police and the Renton African-American Pastoral Group continued to strengthen this past year with a commitment to continue to build and nurture these relationships. And we made major strides in our goals to be a more inclusive community, working closely with the Mayor's Inclusion Task Force on a host of important issues. The most visible success story for the year was the first Renton Multicultural Festival that was a huge success.

We also made progress in addressing our most vulnerable members of the community, working with local churches to help provide food for the homeless and temporary space to maintain the operation of the Renton Clothes Bank, which has served our community since 1965 and was facing closure last month.

We ended the year with the annual Clam Lights at Gene Coulon Park and a successful tree lighting and holiday event in the downtown that was enjoyed by thousands of local residents.

2017 promises to be another exciting year as many projects will celebrate with ribbon cuttings, and additional projects, currently on the drawing board, will move forward. As a city, we will continue to find ways to improve our service to our residents and business community, maintaining our commitment to provide a safe and healthy community for everybody.

Feedback

Comments, questions or suggestions, or just want to share all the great things that are happening in the city, please [e-mail](#) me. Thanks for reading.