



This Week from the Mayor



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Familiarity breeds respect

We've heard the expression, "familiarity breeds contempt."

In the case of the Renton Police Department and our Renton African-American Pastoral Group (RAAP), it's more appropriate to say "familiarity breeds respect."

The two have come together over the past three years to open lines of communication between our African-American community and the police.

The two groups have used face-to-face meetings and community events to provide "real solutions to real issues."

Last week was one of their signature events, our second annual Unity March and Rally in downtown. We gathered to listen to a variety of speakers whose impactful words relayed a message of hope and togetherness. I thought

Kernisha Johnson and Warsai Yohannes, the two high school students who spoke, were particularly meaningful. We were also treated to musical performances by the youth involved with [CryOut!](#)

No matter the age of the speaker or singer, all echoed our theme: in Renton, we are committed to being an inclusive community regardless of your background. We cannot be content to sit back, wait for something to happen, and then react. We need to lead the way and build strong relationships that will last through difficult times. The Unity March and Rally is an example of our commitment.

An event like this is not successful without the support of a wide area of the community. My thanks to our police officers, RAAP, CryOut!, and city staff for presenting such a powerful afternoon. And my thanks to those who spent part of your afternoon with us. We are well on our way to reaching our goals.



Downtown vision to be unveiled

After about a year's work by city staff, the community, and MIG, the project's consultant, we're ready to [unveil the recommended design approach](#) for the downtown area, including wayfinding signs.

We started the process in January with a series of input meetings, where members of the community shared their vision for the future of our downtown. We also met with downtown business and property owners. Input from all of the meetings was compiled by MIG, and we are now ready for you to see our ideas.

You're invited to be part of the unveiling on October 11 at the Renton Pavilion Event Center. Stop by starting at 4:30 p.m. to enjoy a snack and hot and cold beverages, and preview the design ideas during a free-flowing open house.

Bring the kids to explore an indoor playground. From 6 to 7:30 p.m., we'll have a presentation of proposed projects and actions, and attendees can participate in live voting for the best ideas.

The goal of the community and city is to make the downtown area a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly destination. Your ideas will help us reach that vision. I hope you can join us.



Feedback

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