Affordable Housing Week in Renton

I PROCLAIMED THIS WEEK Affordable Housing Week in Renton to focus on the need for more affordable housing options in our community. The actions taken in the recently concluded legislative session have given me hope that we will soon see more such units in Renton.

During the session, our staff and lobbyist played a key role working to secure funding for critical affordable housing in our community and throughout the Puget Sound region. A big win came when the Legislature passed Substitute House Bill 1520, giving a state sales tax credit to cities and counties for construction of affordable housing units. This is a substantial commitment of more than $500 million over the next 20 years. We will use this funding along with the contributions we have made to the South King Housing and Homelessness Partnership to help Renton Housing Authority make meaningful progress on the construction of quality affordable housing.

The Legislature also allocated $175 million toward the Housing Trust Fund, which will allow non-profit organizations and housing providers in the state to add even more units locally, regionally and state-wide. We worked with the Low Income Housing Institute to open June Leonard Place in downtown Renton last month and look forward to similar projects.

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South deck at Coulon Park reopens

The new south deck at Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park was reopened earlier this week, marking the end of a park rehabilitation project that started last October. The new phase of the project includes new walkways, a new trellis deck with seating and restrooms, and a new Trestle Bridge, north and south waterwalks and the sailing center. Coulon is one of the most visited parks in the state of Washington and is a true Renton treasure. These improvements will ensure the park serves the needs of our residents for years to come. We appreciate everyone’s patience and cooperation during the project and my congratulations to our community services staff on a fantastic job.

Mitsubishi Aircraft opens U.S. HQ in Renton

Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation opened their new U.S. headquarters in Renton.

LAST WEEK WE WELCOMED another national-known company to our city as Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation opened their new U.S. headquarters in Renton. Councilmembers RandyComputed and Ruth Pérez took part in the ribbon-cutting. The new Renton headquarters will coordinate all aspects of the company’s regional jet program, including engineering, sales, marketing and customer support. Mitsubishi Aircraft also maintains a Flight Test Center at the Grant County International Airport in Moses Lake.

Amended shopping cart ordinance passed

Amended shopping cart ordinance passed at the May 6 City Council meeting, the council unanimously passed an amended ordinance to deal with abandoned shopping carts in Renton.

The new ordinance includes a fine but also allows for fine deferrals if the cart owner has met certain criteria.

Abandoned carts pose a health and safety hazard and are a blight on our city. They block sidewalks, crosswalks and streets, posing a risk to pedestrians and possibly affecting emergency services. They can clog gutters and cause flooding. Since store owners are financially liable for their return, costs may be passed on to consumers through higher prices.

This amended ordinance does not penalize the stores who have developed good return policies. On the other hand, it does increase the fine on those stores that have not been as cooperative or attentive to this problem.

Finally, it is your turn to do your part. Only use the carts for their intended purpose and then return them to the corral. Let’s work together to eliminate shopping carts from our streets.