



This Week from the Mayor



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Festival celebrates Renton's diversity



The Renton Multicultural Festival celebrates Renton's diverse cultures. The fourth annual event is September 13 and 14.

WHEN WE FORMALIZED THE CITY'S WORK on inclusion and equity by creating the [Mayor's Inclusion Task Force](#) years ago, our goal was to create a group representative of Renton's ethnic and religious groups, as well as our LGBTQ and senior populations. I asked them to help us identify and remove barriers and develop strategies that would promote my desire to help create a culture of inclusion in Renton.

Over the years they have made tremendous progress as Renton has taken the lead in our region on these issues. More than 51 percent of our population is represented by people of color, and the task force has helped us establish meaningful relationships with leaders from all ethnic and religious backgrounds.

For most of the year their work goes on outside of the public eye. But when September rolls around members of the task force take center stage as they present our annual [Renton Multicultural Festival](#) on September 13 and 14. This two-day event showcases Renton's proud diversity through music, dance and interactive booths. If you've never experienced the Multicultural Festival first-hand it's a powerful presentation of the diverse culture that is Renton. I hope you'll join us for our fourth annual festival.



Annual Public Works picnic honors staff

Yesterday was the annual [public works](#) staff picnic and it was bittersweet for me.

Sweet because it was a chance to salute and thank the 162 members of the department, the city's largest, who look after our utility systems (including water, sewer, storm water and surface water); maintain, repair and plow our streets; and take care of the day-to-day operations at our municipal airport. Their commitment to our residents has helped make Renton a great place to live, work, play and learn.



Mayor Law and Gregg Zimmerman

It was bitter because it was my last picnic as mayor with a great group of employees, and also the final one for department administrator Gregg Zimmerman, who plans to retire early next year after 29 years with the city.

Gregg has the distinction of being the only remaining administrator from my first year as mayor 12 years ago. His dedication to staff and city pushed the division to implement many of the changes that we've seen since 2008:

- » Converting all street lights to LED, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in electrical costs.
- » Automating over 18,000 water meters, which led to the detection of over 4,500 leaks, preventing the loss of 126 million gallons of water and saving property owners hundreds of thousands of dollars annually.
- » Implementing a comprehensive recycling and composting program, which has diverted nearly 230,000 tons of recyclables and compostable materials from the landfills, saved tax dollars and improved the environment.

All this while being committed to our residents, exemplified by their extensive pre-planning and quick response to last February's snowstorm. That's why it was fun and memorable to spend lunchtime with the department to salute them for the great work they do every day and pay tribute to the administrator who leads by example each day.

STREAM Team picks up steam

IN MARCH WE RECOGNIZED OUR STREAM Team after school program. I was enthused about the program not just because it was great for the children, but because it was a prime example of city staff listening to our residents and working with them to develop meaningful solutions.

Back then the program was just getting its footing. Today I'm back to report that the program is flourishing.



King County Executive Dow Constantine recently visited the STREAM Team after school program. STREAM is funded in part by the county's Best Starts for Kids Out-of-School-Time program.

For the 2018-2019 school year, [STREAM Team](#) served 162 youth, aged five to 14, including 128 elementary students. They were exposed to high-quality, culturally appropriate programming in science, technology, reading, recreation, environment, arts and math. They also had fun, learning to play ping pong and sew. STREAM's innovative programming was presented an Excellence Award by the Washington Recreation and Parks Association.

The program was developed by our Community Services Recreation Division and is a partnership with Renton School District, King County Best Starts for Kids, Environmental Science Center, Seattle Advocates for Education, Centru Rendu and TechBridge Girl. STREAM Team is funded through a grant from King County's Best Starts for Kids Out-of-School-Time program and Community Services funds.

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. [Translate](#) | [Archive](#)