

For Immediate Release



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Renton's Economic Future Looks Bright

RENTON— The recent Economic Forecast Report for the City of Renton, prepared by Douglas Pedersen and Associates, indicates that Renton's vibrant economy is expected to continue to expand. Renton's expected increase in total taxable retail sales, currently at 9.5 percent, will outstrip King County's over the next few years. In 2005, Renton's taxable retail sales rose 5.3 percent and are projected to increase 9.4 percent this year, 7.5 percent in 2007, and 5.5 percent in 2008.

According to the report, one of the remarkable characteristics of the Renton economy in recent years is the sustained and relatively strong growth in population. Over the seven-year period from 1999 to 2005, the city's population growth averaged 2.8 percent per year. Renton housing permits, between 1999 and 2005, were 55 percent greater than in the previous seven-year period. In King County, the comparable increase in housing supply was only 12 percent.

"We are on a path to becoming the most exciting, welcoming and dynamic epicenter in the Puget Sound region," said Mayor Kathy Keolker. "The future looks bright and we couldn't stop progress if we tried."

Rapid growth at Boeing is expected to lift total Renton employment. Job gains are expected to continue in 2007 and 2008. Puget Sound should see an estimated 14,700 new aerospace jobs, an 8.4 percent annual growth rate. This should sustain population growth at close to 3 percent and maintain Renton's rising share of county-wide taxable retail sales. National statistics indicate a steady rate of overall job growth.

There are 1,449 unfilled 737 orders amounting to four and a half years of production at current delivery rates. Delivery rates will match the output of the Renton plant in the late 1990s. Boeing employment in Renton is expected to jump by more than 20 percent this year, following a 4 percent gain last year. 2007 should see a 3.1 percent increase, and employment will remain steady in 2008.

Outside of Boeing, employment is expected to grow 3.3 percent this year and about 2.5 percent per year in 2007 and 2008. Total employment indicates an 8.6 percent growth rate this year and additional growth of 2.7 percent in 2007 and 1.5 percent in 2008.

The 4.2 percent overall employment growth rate predicted for Renton between 2005 and 2008 is 1.5 times the expected rate for King County. The city's population growth rate will average more than twice that of the county. Home sales are also expected to regain upward momentum in 2008.

Looking forward, the forecast calls for a return to more robust growth across the board, as faster job creation lifts both population and taxable retail trade sales.

To view or read the complete report and for more information go to <http://rentonwa.gov/business/> click on Information for Business, then go to Economic Forecast.

