



Armondo Pavone, Mayor

# This Week from the Mayor



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My weekly newsletter covers all that is happening in Renton. If you have an idea, would like to share news, or want to comment, I'd like to [hear from YOU](#).

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Renton School Board President Pam Teal is retiring this month after 12 years on the board and 25 years as a volunteer for Renton Schools.

## City leadership meets with school district leadership

Monday's [Committee of the Whole](#) meeting was devoted entirely to a discussion between the city council, me, and leadership from the Renton School District, including Superintendent Dr. Damien Pattenau and school board members Dr. Avanti Bergquist, Gloria Hodge Alisa Louie, Dr. Stefanie McIrvin, and Pam Teal.



### School Board



Dr. Avanti Bergquist



Gloria Hodge



Alisa Louie



Dr. Stefanie McIrvin



Pam Teal

We touched on a wide range of topics, including COVID-19 response, homelessness, addiction, census, equity, and access to technology. While there has been increased collaboration between respective staffs in 2020, there is still much work remaining. We concluded with a renewed commitment to continue our conversations in Renton and in Olympia with our legislators in 2021.

The meeting was also our opportunity to formally thank retiring school board president Pam Teal for her many years of service to Renton's students. In 25 years as a volunteer in Renton schools, including 12 on the school board, and her work on the Renton Schools Foundation Board and the Citizens for Renton Schools committee, Pam leaves a legacy of strong commitment, not just to students but to our entire community.



Sunset Court Apartments is a Renton Housing Authority project with 50 apartments and townhomes.

## Housing Action Plan studies housing needs

Providing affordable housing options is one of my top priorities. Over the last 20 years, housing costs have risen much faster than incomes. We hear from families who are increasingly challenged to meet their housing needs at a reasonable cost in our community. This is especially true now with the significant financial impacts on many Renton families.

Renton requires innovative strategies and strong public support to create enough housing options to meet community need. The old policy tools to encourage building and maintaining housing are no longer enough, and without an active response, the housing affordability crisis will increasingly burden our residents.

When state grant funding came available to create a [Housing Action Plan](#), we jumped at the opportunity. The plan helps us recognize Renton's housing needs and create solutions.

The plan builds on the city's existing work. It focuses on increasing the availability and affordability of homes in Renton. It is guided by a twelve-person Advisory Committee composed of key community and housing stakeholders and targeted community members.

The first phase of the Housing Action Plan looks at housing and household data and trends to better understand needs in the Renton community. The Housing Needs Assessment's detailed results have been condensed into five summary findings for easier reading and understanding.

Members of the Mayor's Inclusion Task Force saw a presentation of the plan at our December meeting. The resulting discussion was very frank and wide-ranging. I invite you to [review the plan](#) and send your input to [Hannah Bahnmler](#).

I am proud of the many accomplishments we have achieved with our housing partners and look forward to what the future holds. We have a lot of work ahead of us. Prioritizing affordable housing aligns directly with our efforts to build an inclusive city with equitable outcomes for all in support of social, economic, and racial justice.





"Shop with a Cop" in 2019.

## "Shop with a Cop" is Friday

Renton Police Department will host their annual "Shop with a Cop" this Friday at 6 p.m. in the parking lot of Highlands Community Church.

This year will be a socially-distanced drive-through event and will feature 14 families selected by Communities In Schools of Renton-Tukwila. Families will receive a combination of gifts and food gift cards. The purchases were coordinated through the department's community programs coordinator. In previous years officers and staff teamed up with the children on a personally-guided shopping trip.

New this year is a Patrol Vehicle Holiday Decorating Competition. Department staff will choose a holiday theme and decorate their police cruisers with personal holiday lights and decorations. When the families arrive, they will drive through the display and then vote for their favorite.

"Shop with a Cop" would not be possible without donations from Safeway/Albertsons, Target, Starbucks, and many members of our community.



## New parking/shopping options downtown

We have designated several parking spots in the downtown area specifically for curbside pickup. Patrons can park in these zones for up to 15 minutes to pick up their purchases. Look for these signs the next time you're downtown. And there are still plenty of two-hour free parking spots downtown.

We have also extended free parking at the downtown parking garage (S. Second St. & Logan Ave S) from 2 hours to 10 hours.



## Amazon donates PPE

Our thanks to Amazon, who recently donated over three pallets of masks, gloves, and sanitizer for use by the police department and other groups in the city. The city has always enjoyed a strong working relationship with Amazon. We very much appreciate their commitment to the safety of our community.

## Mental Health Awareness Month

December is [Mental Health Awareness Month](#) in Renton. As the past few months have demonstrated, it's very important that we keep a close watch on family and friends as we all cope with the pandemic.

There are several things you can do to support yourself and your loved ones:

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths and stretch, eat healthy meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid excessive alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

If you find yourself struggling and need to talk to a professional, here are some resources to help.

- Centers for Disease Control: [Managing Anxiety and Stress during COVID-19](#)
- Centers for Disease Control: [Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event](#)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admin: [Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health](#)
- King County: [Crisis Connections](#)
- Wash Dept. of Health: [Social Distancing and Mental Health](#)
- Seattle Times: [Community Support Resources](#)

## Enter to win a Renton “Winter Staycation”

Holiday shoppers in Renton can enter to win a Winter Staycation that includes a one-night stay for two at a Renton hotel, a \$300 dining credit and a \$200 shopping credit. It’s all part of our [Make Yourself at Home for the Holidays](#) promotion.

Simply patronize a store or restaurant in Renton that’s new to you. Post photos on your Facebook or Instagram account and tag them with #RentonHolidays. Each post gets you one entry, so the more you post, the more chances to win. The winner will build their own dream staycation.

Shopping downtown? Use this [downtown parking map](#) to find where you can park for free for up to two hours. Also look for our new 15 minute zone for picks ups.



## Supporting Renton small businesses through Chip-In

We are [excited to work with](#) Renton Chamber of Commerce, One Eastside, and Chip-In to raise funds for Renton small businesses through [tax-deductible contributions](#). Think of it like GoFundMe, but Chip-In does not take a cut. Each dollar donated will support local Renton businesses meet payroll, keep their lights on and doors open.