

**CITY OF RENTON  
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**City of Renton Press Contact**

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**City of Renton presents Key to the City; declares February 6, 2023 as “Ted Rodriguez Day”**

*City to honor Rodriguez with Key; Proclamation for four decades of community service*

**RENTON, WA (FEBRUARY 6, 2023)** – The **City of Renton** proudly recognizes today, **Monday, February 6**, as **Ted Rodriguez Day**, in celebration his decades of community service.

Rodriguez has been a constant fixture in the community, operating Torero’s Mexican Restaurant in Renton starting in 1971. Stepping down from ownership of the restaurant this year, the city wanted to extend gratitude for what he has given back over the past four decades.

Rodriguez has volunteered regularly at senior centers, provided free church meals to low-income families, and donates abundantly to service clubs in the city. He has served as a long-standing member of the Mayor’s Inclusion Task Force for the past eight years, and as a Deacon at Renton’s St. Anthony’s Catholic Church. He regularly travels to many other Puget Sound congregations on Sundays to facilitate mass in Spanish.

“Ted has been a pillar of our community in Renton, and over the years, I’ve come to know him as a businessman in the Renton restaurant industry, as well as in his role on the Mayor’s Inclusion Task Force. He is warm, welcoming, and quick to offer perspective and support. His story here in Renton serves as reminder that creating community is a task we must all contribute to – it is an action that requires daily care... and feeding,” said Mayor Armondo Pavone.

He served as a founding member of the Renton Sister Cities Association and was instrumental in facilitating the Sister City relationship between Renton and his hometown of Cuautla, Mexico, and later, Nishiwaki, Japan. He also helped form Washington's sister-state relationship with Jalisco, Mexico alongside former Washington Secretary of State Ralph Munro, while working behind the scenes on many projects to improve trade relations between the U.S. and Mexico.

Rodriguez and Torero’s Restaurants sponsored Renton River Days over several decades, helping to keep activities for children and families free of charge. In 2018, Rodriguez was named the Renton River Days Parade Grand Marshal.

He also helped create a school program to teach Renton Public School students about Mexican culture. Starting in 1993, Rodriguez started Mexican Heritage Day in Renton, when approximately 800 second graders would make a trek each spring to Torero’s Mexican Restaurant on Rainier Avenue South, to learn about Mexican culture, eat traditional after-school snacks while a live band played traditional Mexican folk music.



In 1997, Rodriguez received the “Citizen of the Year Award” from the City of Renton, acknowledging his monumental community service efforts. In the years since, Rodriguez has served as an initial member of the Mayor’s Inclusion Task Force, focused on providing a direct voice to City leadership from Renton’s diverse communities.

Rodriguez is the second oldest in a family of 11 children, raised by two working parents in Cuautla, a village of 2,000 residents 40 miles south of Mexico City, where at the time, poverty was prevalent. His father Andres emigrated to California in the 1950s, working on farms and in restaurants. Ted followed in 1967 and dreamed of opening his own business. In 1979, an opportunity became available to open a restaurant in Renton, where he readily became involved in the community.

The City of Renton Key to the City is a rare honor bestowed on those who make a deep and lasting impact on the community. Rodriguez is one of just five recipients in the past ten years. Past recipients include: Bjorn Bayley and Anders Berglund, IKEA owners; the EriAm Sisters, America’s Got Talent contestants; Kirby Unti, community member; Judge Gerard M. Shellan, who served 27 years as Renton Municipal Court judge; Larry Warren, who served 40+ years as City Attorney, and Jay Covington, who served for 29+ years as Chief Administrative Officer.

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### **About the City of Renton**

*The City of Renton, Washington, with a population of 107,500 (2022), is located on the southeast shore of Lake Washington, just south of Seattle. Renton's strong economic base, diverse marketplace, and favorable business climate have attracted nationally recognized companies wishing to provide employees and their families with an outstanding quality of life. Renton is the home of Boeing, PACCAR, IKEA, Super Bowl Champion (2014) Seattle Seahawks, two-time (2016 & 2019) MLS champion and CONCACAF Champion (2022) Seattle Sounders FC (in 2024), and the eternal resting place of rock icon Jimi Hendrix. You can find more information on our [website](#), [news releases](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Nextdoor](#) pages.*