

Senator Murray Tours Final Connection of Sam Chastain Waterfront Trail

On Wednesday, August 23, U.S. Senator Patty Murray joined Renton Mayor Kathy Keolker on a tour of the future Sam Chastain Waterfront Trail. Senator Murray has worked to secure a federal investment of \$1.2 million in a transportation bill to complete the "missing link" of the trail, which will connect Gene Coulon Park to the Cedar River Trail. The project will improve fish habitat and access to Lake Washington.

"This link is our opportunity to create a regional treasure through a bike and pedestrian trail that will connect areas north and west to Bellevue and Seattle, and east to Maple Valley and Black Diamond. Completing the Chastain Trail is a legacy we can leave for our children, grandchildren, and many generations to come," said Renton Mayor Kathy Keolker.

Much of the trail is in place, except for a section of nearly half a mile that needs to be constructed on land and over water. The trail follows the south shoreline of Lake Washington and will be part of the federally recognized "Lakes-to-Locks Water Trail System."

Within Renton, the trail will connect people to eight parks, a golf course, Senior Activity Center, more than 250 acres of undeveloped greenway, Lake Washington, and the Cedar River.

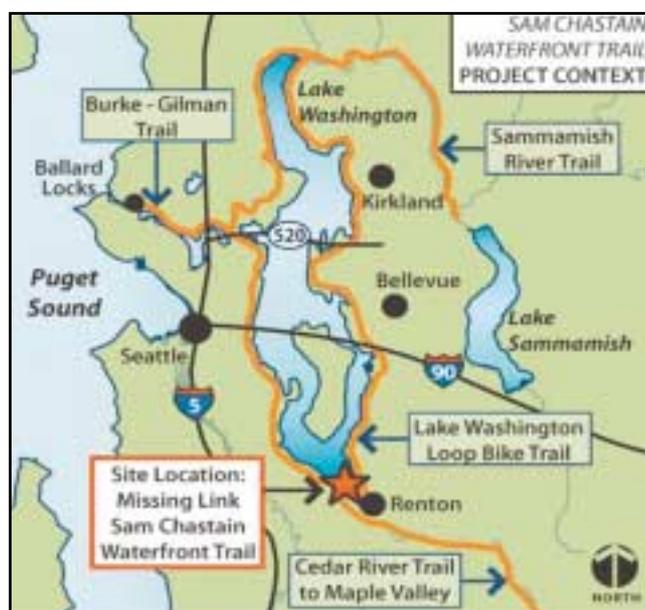
Construction is due to start in 2008 to complete the missing link. The link provides connections to more than 52 miles of trail, including the 40-mile loop trail system around Lake Washington used by pedestrians and bicyclists. The project makes recreational, environmental and historical education oppor-



Senator Murray and Mayor Keolker tour Sam Chastain Waterfront Trail.

tunities available for all trail users.

Funding is pledged from a variety of sources, including a competitive process through the Puget Sound Regional Council; local funding provided by the City of Renton; federal support through an appropriations bill; and funding from the state of Washington.



Renton's Fall Recreation Programs: Sign Up Now!

As the fall weather moves in and days become shorter, there are still many ways to stay active and celebrate the season. Walk the Cedar River Trail, enjoy the fall colors and participate in the Cedar River Salmon Journey. Check out the latest classes and activities offered in the new Community Services Department Fall Brochure at rentonnet.org/internetapps/files/ftp/brochure.pdf, or view the classes on-line via Cyber SignUP at rentonnet.org/cybersignup. Recreation and class registration opened to Renton residents on Tuesday, August 29.

Communities In Schools of Renton: Helping Kids Stay in School and Prepare for Life

Make a difference in just one hour a week! Become a mentor to a student in the Renton School District for Communities in Schools of Renton. Mentors provide elementary, middle and high school students with friendship, encouragement and guidance.

A mentor serves as a role model and friend for a child. Mentors meet one hour each week during school hours, on school grounds during the school year. Mentors and mentees play games, sports, work on projects or just talk.

To learn more, contact Erin Iverson at 425-430-6659 or e-mail emiverson@ci.renton.wa.us about mentoring. You can make a difference in a child's life.

City information
425-430-6400

Web site
www.ci.renton.wa.us

Mayor
Kathy Keolker

City Council
Randy Corman,
Council President
Dan Clawson
Terri Briere
Denis Law
Toni Nelson
Marcie Palmer
Don Persson

Questions about Annexation?

Renton has begun a dialogue with communities outside its immediate boundaries in potential annexation areas (PAAs) to consider whether annexation could help communities to get public services and maintain local control, with approximately the same level (or lower levels) of taxes and fees than unincorporated residents are paying today. Recent actions by the State Legislature give Renton's surrounding areas opportunities and funding if they decide to become part of the City through annexation.

The City of Renton sees annexation as a partnership that can only work if it makes sense for residents and the City of Renton. Areas including the East Renton Plateau, the communities of Benson Hill and Spring Glen, West Hill (Skyway, Bryn Mawr and Lakeridge) have interested community members and active groups who are requesting information from Renton about annexation. Listed below are some of the most common questions that City staff is answering about annexation.

Q: How does annexation affect current residents of Renton?

A: Renton is one of 39 cities in King County, and the region is growing. Renton stands to have more representation in the four-county region, a more diverse tax base, and more influence over the growth and development in South King County if it grows through annexation.

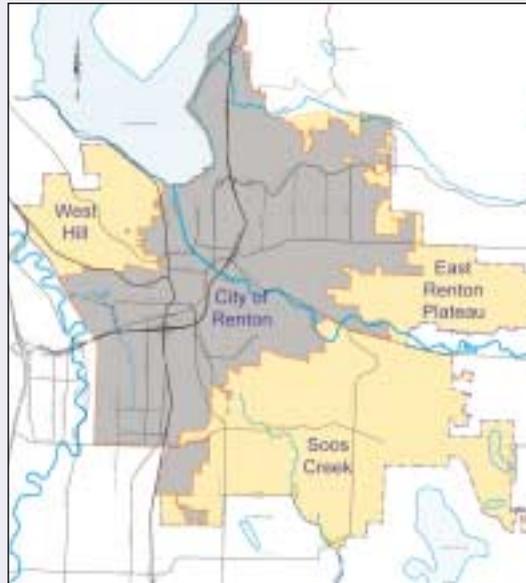
Q: When would our area annex, and who decides?

A: The Renton City Council's policy direction is that there would not be immediate action of any kind on the part of the City to annex an area without a show of support for annexation by residents (such as a petition to annex). Renton can provide some support for citizens, such as providing information and helping citizens understand options available to them. Ultimately, it is up to the residents of the area what their future will be.

Q: Is there more than one way for an area to annex to a City?

A: Yes. There are four methods of annexation.

- Residents can request consideration of annexation by the Council of the annexing city through a 10% petition among residents of the proposed area, and a subsequent public vote.
- The Council of the potential annexing city can pass a resolution requesting a vote among residents of the proposed area of annexation.



Renton's potential annexation areas

- Residents can request annexation without a public vote by gathering signatures of landowners in the proposed area, as long as the combined value of the property owned by the signatories' equals at least 60% of the total assessed value of the area.
- Residents can request consideration of the Council of the annexing city without a public vote by filing "an intention to commence annexation proceeding" signed by owners of the area. If the city council accepts the initial annexation proposal, the initiating parties must circulate a petition including signatures of the owners of a majority of the acreage of the area and a majority of the registered voters.

Q: What happens if an area chooses to stay unincorporated?

A: Nothing would change about who provides services. Each area would still rely on King County for the majority of local services including courts, sheriff, roads and land use planning. Some services would continue to be provided by special districts. Long-term, King County suggests that its budget difficulties will prevent the County from providing local services in unincorporated areas, so the quality of some services will decrease over time. Renton and King County have different zoning codes and design standards, so the patterns of development after annexation to Renton could look different than growth allowed by King County.

Q: Would annexation require a change of address?

A: No. Although Renton's historic policy has been to have a uniform address standard to provide consistent response for police and fire services, in August, the Renton City Council approved an ordinance stating that newly annexed areas will retain their current addresses, except those areas in the East Renton Plateau west of 160th Ave. SE, north of Maple Valley Highway, and south of May Valley Road.

Q: I have heard that the City of Renton has high bonded indebtedness. What does that mean?

A: Cities can work with bond markets to issue debt when approved by City Council, or by the voters. The City of Renton has \$25 million in general obligation debt and \$48 million in other fund debt. This is a reasonable debt burden, as evidenced by the recent improvement in the City's credit rating from A A - to A+. When considering city debt in 2005, Renton's debt per capita, at \$850 per person, is higher than some cities (such as Auburn and Federal Way), and is lower than other cities (such as Bellevue and Kent). Whether any city's bonded indebtedness is "too high" depends on what the debt is being used for. When debt is issued, the government or voters have made a choice that borrowing is an appropriate way to pay for investments that will benefit the community over a period of time.

Q: What annexation efforts are underway right now?

A: Renton is working with residents in East Renton (Preserve our Plateau Annexation) who have filed a petition with the city to annex. A citizens' advisory group is being formed to work on planning and zoning issues in that area this fall. Hearing dates about zoning will be set by Renton, and Renton will request an election date from King County for sometime in 2007. In the Soos Creek PAA, the Benson Hill Communities progress group (BHCpg) is exploring annexation to Renton. The group will meet every Tuesday in September at 6:30 p.m. at the Cross and Crown Lutheran Church, 10940 SE 168th Street. The purpose of the meetings is to generate interest in annexation to Renton. An open house about annexation will be held on September 28 at Cascade Elementary, 16022 116th Avenue SE, from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., with a panel presentation from 7 - 7:30 p.m.

Renton Welcomes Fire Chief I. David Daniels

On August 14, Renton welcomed Chief I. David Daniels as he was sworn in as Renton's new Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director. Chief Daniels is a 25-year fire service veteran who began his career with the Seattle Fire Department. Daniels holds a Masters Degree in Human Resources Management, a Bachelor of Science Degree in Fire Services Administration, and completed the Harvard University Senior Executives in State and Local Government pro-

gram. He chairs a committee for and represents the International Association of Fire Chiefs nationwide.

Daniels, his wife Angela (a Renton High School alumna), son Bryan (a junior at Hazen High) and dog Shakespeare (born on September 11th) are proud residents of the City of Renton. The Chief also enjoys spending time with family, computers and all manner of technology, traveling, and watching football.



David Daniels

Watch What you Heat: October 6 – 10 is Fire Prevention Week

Did you know that nearly one-quarter of residential fires in 2005 were attributable to cooking? The Renton Fire Department urges citizens to take caution when cooking or using appliances in the kitchen. Never leave food unattended on the stove, and always supervise children when they are in the kitchen.