



City of Maple Ridge News Release

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For further information, contact:
Wendy McCormick at 604-467-7328
wmccormick@mapleridge.ca

Maple Ridge Leisure Centre Aquatics Area Upgrades Move Forward

Maple Ridge, BC: The Maple Ridge Leisure Centre opened in 1980 when the population of Maple Ridge was just over 30,000 citizens. It was the first integrated recreation facility of its type in Western Canada and boasted state-of-the-art amenities and mechanical systems. In 37 years the facility has served the community well. The population has more than doubled to 82,256 citizens according to the 2016 Census. At the February 28, 2017 Council meeting Council endorsed a project that will see the Maple Ridge Leisure Centre undergo a retrofit that will rejuvenate the aquatic facilities to serve the community long into the future.

The project is driven by the need to update the mechanical systems that are at the heart of the Leisure Centre. The water filtration and pool mechanical systems date back to the original construction and have not been upgraded; new technology will be more efficient and will ensure that the facility continues to offer a great user experience. Since the mechanical system work requires cutting into the pool decks, the City is taking the opportunity to upgrade the leisure pool and hot tub to bring them up to modern standards of accessibility and incorporate new elements to improve the user experience for citizens of all ages.

The leisure pool and hot tub will be made more accessible by incorporating level entry or “beach access” that allows youngsters, people using mobility devices and seniors to access the pool without stairs or ladders. The upgrades will include restoration of the popular waterfall feature, new spray elements for youth, new water therapy facilities and an expanded hot tub area. The overall design seeks to eliminate the levels and staircases that are impediments to accessibility. This project also takes advantage of the opportunity to reconfigure the change rooms and reception area to improve accessibility, comfort and safety for all users.

“The project timeline calls for the renovation work to start late in August of 2017 with the grand reopening in September of 2018,” said Wendy McCormick, Director of Recreation & Community Services for the City of Maple Ridge. “We looked at a number of scenarios to keep parts of the aquatic facility open during the retrofit, but in the end the 13 month closure offers the most efficient timeline and will get us back in operation faster and for less money. The Greg Moore Youth Centre, exercise areas, gym and other non-aquatic areas of the facility will all remain open during the renovations.”

“Council is in the middle of an extensive community facilities consultation relating to new parks, recreation and culture amenities so we are a number of months away from evaluating the community feedback and developing a long term plan. Even if Council decides to move forward with a new facility with an aquatic component it would take four to five years to go through the detailed design, public approval, tender and construction processes. When you look at the estimated costs of new facilities it’s clear that investing between six and eight million dollars to upgrade our current facility is a solid business decision,” said Mayor Nicole Read. “We all recognize that a closure of this magnitude will have a significant impact on our community, in particular our user groups. The decision has not come without thoughtful consideration of the impact of a 13 month closure. Our staff will be working on a plan to deal with the impact on users and our staff in the aquatics area as we move forward with this work.”

For more information on the Leisure Centre aquatics area upgrade please contact Wendy McCormick, Director of Recreation & Community Services, by email at wmcormick@mapleridge.ca or by phone at 604-467-7328.