



City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 16, 2019 #19-01

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BC Supreme Court Injunction Reserves Decision on Injunction Application

Maple Ridge, BC: Over a two-day hearing which concluded on January 15 the City of Maple Ridge appeared before Mr. Justice Grauer of the BC Supreme Court seeking an injunction to address the fire and other life safety hazards at the camp located on 223 Street west of St. Anne Avenue. The Court has reserved its decision on the City's application, meaning that Justice Grauer will consider his decision and deliver it in writing to the parties at a future date. Justice Grauer did not give any indication as to when his decision will be issued, but evidence of the urgency of the fire hazard situation at the encampment was provided to the Court.

The application brought by the City of Maple Ridge seeks an Order of the Court to address life safety issues at the camp. City staff has been attending the site since May of 2017. Fire safety guidelines were mutually agreed on by the Maple Ridge Fire Department and camp occupants in the spring of 2017, and were later incorporated into a November 27, 2017 Consent Order issued by the BC Supreme Court. The City's expectation was that the occupants would abide by the guidelines and Consent Order, but this has not occurred and the level of hazards on the property has deteriorated. In October of 2018 a Fire Services Act Order was confirmed on the site by the Provincial Office of the Fire Commissioner, due to the conditions observed in the regular inspections. The City has provided advice to the occupants and has supported the delivery of resources to the camp occupants to address the life safety issues, however no significant long term improvements have been achieved. There have been six fires on the site with the latest being a significant fire on December 30 in which a camp occupant suffered injuries.

"We would urge citizens to be patient as the Court prepares its ruling. The focus of the injunction application is to address the life safety issues on site", said Mayor Mike Morden. "I want to make sure that all citizens understand that that this is a small piece of a much larger issue that Council is resolved to address and we shall do so through our Community Safety Plan."