



City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 26, 2015 #15-36

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Temporary Shelter Will Open in Early October

Maple Ridge, BC: In October, 2015, a temporary shelter will open in the former 'Sleep Shop' building located just east of the intersection of 222 Street and Lougheed Highway. The low barrier shelter will have 40 beds and will operate until March, 2016.

"The temporary shelter is a critical component of ending the Cliff Avenue Camp," said Maple Ridge Mayor Nicole Read. "We are grateful for the support of BC Deputy Premier and Housing Minister Rich Coleman, our local MLAs Dr. Doug Bing and Marc Dalton and the staff at BC Housing for their leadership in working with us to deal with the backlog of unsheltered citizens in our community."

"We will be working closely with the temporary shelter provider to mitigate any impacts with the immediate neighbourhood," said the Mayor. "This is an important transition in our community. We recognize that some citizens have lost confidence in shelters based on the issues surrounding the Salvation Army Caring Place, however we are confident that a new approach will demonstrate that there are successful ways to deal with homelessness."

"As a result of direct conversations with the residents of Cliff Avenue the City has increased the private security presence at the Cliff Avenue site to provide onsite security later into the evenings on Friday and Saturday and increased weekend coverage. Once the decampment takes place off of Cliff Avenue, private security and enhanced RCMP presence will remain in place until the situation stabilizes," said Mayor Read "Those residents have been extraordinarily patient as we have moved to this short term solution. Council wants to acknowledge their

strength and ensure that the neighbourhood has a strong voice and confidence that this issue will be behind them.”

“The long term plan is to ensure that Maple Ridge has a service provision model that delivers results for the most vulnerable citizens and is accountable to the community at large,” said the Mayor. “With our provincial leaders at the table we will rebuild the service network and restore the confidence of the community that we can deal with the challenges of homelessness.”

For information about the temporary shelter location please contact Kelly Swift, General Manager: Community Development, Parks & Recreation Services at kswift@mapleridge.ca or by calling 604-463-5221.