



# City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Maple Ridge Council Votes to Keep Pool Open and Begin Planning For New Facility**

**Maple Ridge, BC:** On Thursday, December 10, as part of a special meeting to review the Leisure Centre aquatic area upgrade project Council voted to move forward with a more detailed examination of a site, concept plan, public engagement and approval process for a new aquatic facility. As part of that meeting the decision was also made to abandon the tender process around the proposed \$5.3 million renovation of the existing facility to ensure that it remains fully available to the community.

As part of the discussion Council was provided with an alternative proposal whereby the work could be phased in such a way that there would be access to the competition pool during parts of the construction process. However, the most heavily used part of the facility, the leisure pool and hot tub area, would still remain unavailable to the public for one year. In addition to a review of the upgrade proposals, Council received information on the costs associated with the construction of new aquatic facilities in neighbouring cities.

“I thank staff for their work to bring us an alternative timeline to the project that was before us and some broad information on the costs associated with building new facilities in the region. After a lot of discussion Council has decided that the best course of action is to begin the work that would see a new facility built in the community,” said Mayor Read. “The current facility will continue to operate safely and at full capacity while Council examines a concept for a new facility, the funding model and the public engagement process to move this project forward. This approach allows us to look at the best long term plan to deal with our existing Leisure Centre aquatic facility without any artificial deadlines and minimal impact to the community.”

Staff has also been directed to begin work on developing the public process and approvals required to bring the \$110 million Community Investment Fund from concept to reality. That plan, presented as part of the 2016-2020 Financial Plan, has been developed to position the City of Maple Ridge to make significant capital investments in sport, recreation and community facilities and ensure our capacity to take advantage of potential Federal, Provincial and other funding partnerships that may be available.