



# City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **BC Housing Presents Interim Housing Solution**

**Maple Ridge, BC:** Maple Ridge Council will hear a number of homelessness and housing updates as part of a Special Council Meeting today Monday, May 30, 2016 at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers. This meeting is open to the public and will be livestreamed on the City website at *mapleridge.ca*.

On Friday, May 26, 2016 BC Housing provided a letter outlining an interim housing solution to address the current needs while the community consultation for a long term solution is conducted.

The proposal presented by BC Housing is that;

- a) A modular housing facility be constructed to bridge the current immediate needs while a community education and consultation process takes place to work towards a permanent solution for the long term. This modular housing project would be in place for approximately three years.
- b) The interim housing project would have a mix of housing types including transitional supportive housing.
- c) In order to complete construction of the interim modular housing facility the temporary shelter facility will remain open until the interim facility is available for occupancy.
- d) Whether an agreement to construct an interim facility is approved or the temporary shelter is extended, BC Housing has committed to keeping the three full time outreach workers and the 40 new rent supplements that were assigned to Alouette Additions in 2015 in place.

The purpose of the meeting is to hear updates on the current situation relating to homelessness and housing and receive more details of the proposal that BC Housing has brought forward to deal with the imminent closure of the temporary shelter. The framework for a separate community education and consultation process for the longer term solutions is just emerging. It is early days in that process. Last week Council passed a motion to have the Social Policy Advisory Committee strike a Task Force that will call on community experts to assist in the development of a community consultation process that will engage the public in developing a long term solution to address the needs of housing and homelessness in our community.

“The reports are being presented in an open meeting and livestreamed to the community. All citizens will be able to hear directly what the current situation is from the organizations who are delivering services to deal with addiction, mental health, shelter and housing in Maple Ridge. We will also hear from the RCMP on community impacts. As we look around the region we see that homelessness is everywhere, it touches every community, whether they choose to acknowledge it,” said Mayor Read “No decisions have been made by Council on this issue. Tonight we will listen to the experts respectfully and intently. We invite the community to listen, along with us, with the same respect and not prejudge the issue until all the facts are presented and the questions asked.”

The presentation order from the agenda is;

- a) **BC Housing:** Dominic Flanagan, Executive Director Supportive Housing and Programs
- b) **RainCity Housing and Support:** Sean Speer, Associate Director
- c) **Alouette Addictions:** Annika Polegato, Executive Director
- d) **Fraser Health:** Andy Libbiter, Executive Director Mental Health and Substance Use, Denyse Houde, Director Mental Health and Substance Use, Dr. Helena Swinkels, Medical Health Officer
- e) **Ridge Meadows RCMP:** Superintendent David Fleugel, Officer in Charge
- f) **Discussion on Next Steps:** Review of the BC Housing interim housing solution.