



City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Special Council Meeting Draws Overflow Crowd

Maple Ridge, BC: On Friday, May 26 the City of Maple Ridge received a proposal from BC Housing to address the immediate needs for housing solutions while the community conversation happens around a long term solution. Council invited BC Housing, their partner agencies Fraser Health and Alouette Addictions and the Ridge Meadows RCMP to a Special Council meeting held on Monday, May 30 to present their proposal and answer questions from Council and the public.

“Council heard the details of the proposal at the same time as the public. I commend citizens for their patience as the presenters fielded questions from Council and clarified various aspects of the work that is being done in the community around homelessness, health care and policing,” said Mayor Read. “We appreciate the candor of all of the presenters and it was clear that Council and the public had many of the same questions relating to the challenges of homelessness, mental health, addiction and housing availability and affordability in the region.”

The Special Council meeting ran from 6:00 pm until approximately 10:30 pm. The gallery in Council Chambers was filled and the overflow crowd was accommodated in the Blaney Room. The recording of the meeting has been placed online at mapleridge.ca and can be accessed via the video link on the home page.

The closure of the temporary shelter is scheduled for June 30, 2016. There are 26 clients who have yet to be connected with housing. BC Housing proposes;

- a) The temporary shelter lease be extended by a minimum of nine months to allow for a site to be identified for an interim housing solution. BC Housing has also offered to assume the lease on the shelter.
- b) BC Housing has offered to construct an interim housing facility using modular buildings (such as those used to create construction camps) on a suitable piece of property that has City utility services. The interim facility would have 24/7 staffing and use an integrated case management program to work with all clients. The interim modular housing would be in place for approximately 36 months to bridge the time required to develop a permanent housing solution.
- c) BC Housing has renewed its offer to work with the City on a public engagement program that identifies a site for the construction of a permanent housing facility to address the long term needs of the community.

Council will have a follow-up discussion on the proposal in the coming weeks. Advance notice of the meeting(s) will be provided to allow citizens to remain fully engaged on this issue.

For more information please contact Mayor Nicole Read at nread@mapleridge.ca or 604-463-5221.