



# City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For further information, contact:  
Robin MacNair at 604-463-5221  
[rmacnair@mapleridge.ca](mailto:rmacnair@mapleridge.ca)

## **City of Maple Ridge Updates Park Regulations Bylaw to Restrict Camping in Parks & Public Spaces**

**Maple Ridge, BC:** On Tuesday, June 14, 2016 Maple Ridge Council gave final reading to an amendment to the Parks Regulations – Bylaw No. 7085-2014. The amendment prohibits temporary structures from being placed in a number of City parks, in particular those with play equipment amenities that are geared to children and families. The amendment brings the City's Parks Regulations Bylaw in line with recent rulings by the BC Supreme Court relating to injunctions sought by the Cities of Abbotsford and Victoria relating to homeless camps.

“Doing nothing is not an option for local governments anymore. BC Supreme Court rulings are clear that unsheltered citizens have a right to camp in public spaces in BC where there are no shelters available for them to sleep or seek shelter in poor weather conditions. During the discussion on the amendment each member of Council expressed regrets at having to pass this amendment. We need to use the tools at our disposal to protect the park spaces that our children and families use on a regular basis,” said Mayor Nicole Read. “We will do what we need to do locally to find the balance between the security and safety of ALL citizens as we advocate for the Federal and Provincial government to implement solutions to deal with the issues of homelessness, mental health and addiction issues.”

The new paragraph of the bylaw amendment reads;

...no person shall place, secure, erect, use or maintain a temporary shelter at any time in the Civic Centre/Memorial Peace Park, Nokai Park or Raymond Park or in, on or within: playgrounds, spray parks or pools; horticultural display areas or ornamental gardens; skateboard bowls, tennis courts or other sports courts; sports fields, stadiums or dugouts; stages or bleachers; washroom facilities, picnic shelters, or gazebos; areas of a park that have otherwise been issued

a permit pursuant to this bylaw; recreation facilities; cemeteries; golf courses; or pathways, bridges, docks or wharves within the City.

The bylaw amendment outlines specific parks and public spaces where camping is strictly prohibited. In other areas not included in the camping regulation the bylaw amendment requires that any temporary structures must be removed between the hours of 9:00 am and 7:00 pm.

For more information about the proposed amendment to the Parks Regulations Bylaw please contact Robin MacNair, Manager of Bylaws and Licences at [rmacnair@mapleridge.ca](mailto:rmacnair@mapleridge.ca) or 604-463-5221.