



City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For further information, contact:
Tony Cotroneo at 604-467-7392
tcotroneo@mapleridge.ca

Maple Ridge Designated as Age-Friendly BC Community

Maple Ridge, BC: In January, 2015 the City of Maple Ridge established an Age-friendly community committee to begin the work necessary to achieve recognition as an “Age-friendly community” as identified in a program developed by the Union of BC Municipalities in 2004. During the 2016 Seniors Week, the province of BC announced that Maple Ridge has earned Age-friendly BC recognition.

Maple Ridge will receive a letter of congratulations, Age-friendly BC recognition poster and \$1,000 to create a legacy project or celebration.

“Maple Ridge is proud to invest in the continued health, safety and quality of life of our seniors with a wide array of programs developed in conjunction with community leaders from this highly engaged demographic. Their energy, enthusiasm and leadership in this project and amazing volunteerism on a myriad of community events contributes to the overall health of our community,” said Maple Ridge Mayor Nicole Read.

“When a community’s focus is on making age-friendly improvements, it makes a big difference in helping seniors stay healthy and independent,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “Maple Ridge is a perfect example of the work that is ongoing across the province to make communities safer, more accessible and inclusive for older residents.”

The Age-friendly BC recognition program acknowledges local governments that have taken four steps to become age-friendly, including establishing an age-friendly advisory or steering committee; passing a local Council or District Board resolution to support age-friendly activities; conducting an age-friendly assessment; and, developing and publishing an age-friendly action plan.

In Maple Ridge the development of the Age-friendly community initiatives was driven by the Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Katzie Seniors Network with the final report involving a wide range of voices and organizations including;

- The Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Katzie Seniors Network
- The Age-Friendly Steering Committee
- The Ridge Meadows Seniors Society
- Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Parks & Leisure Services
- City of Maple Ridge

There was an extensive community consultation and key meetings and workshops culminating in the publication of the Age-Friendly Community Initiative Report and the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan, available on the City of Maple Ridge website www.mapleridge.ca/DocumentCenter/View/6630.

The report outlines a number of initiatives that have been undertaken in the community to meet the goals of ensuring that Maple Ridge's seniors 'can enjoy good health, support and feel a sense of security as they engage and participate in the community' as outlined in the introduction of the report.

In Maple Ridge, a senior-specific emergency preparedness protocol is being developed, which includes mapping vulnerable seniors' residences and developing evacuation procedures and shelter plans. The community will also increase bench seating with arm rests along specific seniors' walking routes within the core community area, including urban park and downtown core areas.

"It's important to recognize planning efforts made by communities that take seniors into consideration," said Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors Darryl Plecas. "Whether it's making a building easier to access, or something as simple as growing a garden, taking steps to support seniors helps them stay connected to their communities and remain active."

Maple Ridge is one of 39 communities that have received this recognition. Mayor Read will be thanking all of the organizations who worked towards this designation as part of the June 28, 2016 Council Meeting. The Age-friendly BC recognition program is a partnership between the BC Healthy Communities Society and the Ministry of Health.

For more information on Age-friendly BC recognition, visit www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/about-seniorsbc/seniors-related-initiatives/age-friendly-bc/age-friendly-communities/getting-recognized.

For more information about the Age-friendly initiative in Maple Ridge please contact Tony Cotroneo at tcotroneo@mapleridge.ca or by calling 604-467-7392