



City of Maple Ridge News Release

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City of Maple Ridge Supports First ‘Business Walk’ with Chamber of Commerce

Maple Ridge, BC: On Wednesday, July 28 Mayor Nicole Read, Councilors Corisa Bell and Bob Masse along with Maple Ridge’s Member of Parliament Dan Ruimy joined Lindsay Bisschop from the BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Skills Training and twenty members of the local Chamber of Commerce for the first ever ‘Maple Ridge Business Walk.’

After a briefing the participants broke into nine groups and visited over 70 businesses in the Maple Ridge Industrial Park where each business took part in a short conversational survey to allow them to talk about their needs, issues and plans for growth and expansion.

“I was really struck by how welcoming and open business owners were to these visits,” said Mayor Read. “What we heard from most of the business we spoke to is that they are thriving and planning for growth. Their greatest constraints are the need for additional space and finding skilled workers. This is a strong message that Council is on the right track with the identification and zoning of new employment lands in the community to allow for these businesses to relocate locally and continue to contribute to the Maple Ridge economy.”

The City’s Economic Development staff were keen participants in the walk and will be visiting some of the businesses that the group was unable to see in the coming weeks.

“Based on what we heard last Thursday we will be connecting with businesses that are looking to grow and see where we can expedite the expansion on their existing properties or work with them to find new locations in the community to support the evolution of their business,” said Maple Ridge Economic Development Manager, Lino Siracusa. He continued, “The City will work with the BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training to identify programs that companies can

access to provide training to employees and support recruitment of skilled employees. Maple Ridge is a great place to live and work and we look forward to working with local businesses to recruit new employees and citizens.

MP Dan Ruimy noted, “I was really glad to have the opportunity to be a part of the first Business Walk hosted by the City of Maple Ridge and the Chamber of Commerce. In Ottawa, I often work with my colleagues to discuss the challenges businesses in various regions are facing today and how we can address these issues. It was great to meet with local businesses and chat about the experiences of businesses in our community. Some of the biggest takeaways were that Federal and Provincial governments have to keep a strong focus on education and training programs. We heard that many businesses are facing a shortage of skilled workers and while businesses are wanting to grow, they are unsure of where or how.”

The City’s Economic Development Department will focus on visits to some of the businesses locations that the Business Walk participants were unable to get to on July 28 to capture the needs and comments of this important economic engine of our community.

For more information about the Business Walk program please contact Lino Siracusa, Economic Development Manager for the City of Maple Ridge at lsiracusa@mapleridge.ca or by phone at 604-467-7319.