



City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 26, 2016 #16-50

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Maple Ridge Expertise Showcased at UBCM

Maple Ridge, BC: Maple Ridge Mayor Nicole Read and City staff are sharing their experiences and expertise in dealing with the province-wide issue of homelessness as part of the annual Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Conference.

“I’m honoured to be asked to represent our community and share our experiences regarding the local impacts of homelessness with colleagues from around the province,” said Mayor Read. “I am especially proud that some of our City staff will be sharing their front line experiences in dealing with the Cliff Avenue camp. Maple Ridge was one of the only communities in BC to ever achieve a voluntary decampment without an injunction. It was the professionalism, compassion and dedication of the front line staff that changed the discussion locally. It reflects the importance of a strong collaborative partnership that is focused on surrounding vulnerable citizens with a team of people who can connect them with the resources they need to journey from living on the streets to housing.”

Maple Ridge Chief Administrative Officer, Ted Swabey will be part of a presentation that talks about the strategies used to manage the impacts of the Cliff Avenue camp and move to a successful decampment.

“I watched the situation unfold from my former position in Nanaimo, and since joining the organization in December I have seen, firsthand, how a team of professionals here at the City, working in partnership with housing, health and addiction agencies, have focused on trying to deal with the core issues that create homelessness rather than deal with the symptoms,” said Mr. Swabey. “Shawn Matthewson from our Social Planning team and Mark Smitton from the Maple Ridge Fire Department will join me in outlining how Maple Ridge was able to achieve the decampment without a court injunction. It’s a challenging and emotional issue across the

province and local governments need to come together so we can move from fighting fires day-to-day and shift towards solutions with our partners in senior government.”

Mayor Read is speaking as part of the Tent Cities and Homelessness session on Monday, September 26. The staff presentation is on Tuesday, September 27 as part of the Large Urban Communities Forum. Maple Ridge staff will be talking about the Maple Ridge Resilience Initiative as part of the ‘Helping the Hard to Reach’ panel.

For more information on the UBCM presentations please contact Mayor Nicole Read at nread@mapleridge.ca or CAO Ted Swabey at tswabey@mapleridge.ca . Both can be reached by phone at 604-463-5221.