



City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Construction Contracts Awarded for Karina LeBlanc All Weather Field

Maple Ridge, BC: On Tuesday, July 25, Maple Ridge Council awarded the contracts for the installation of the new Karina LeBlanc Field at Merkley Park. The naming of the new field was revealed as part of the BC Summer Games announcement on March 10, 2017.

“This is another milestone as Council implements a strong vision around ensuring our community has the facilities we need for our youth to be able to achieve their goals in their chosen sports, live healthy active lifestyles and build the kind of relationships and connections that will launch them into adulthood with confidence and purpose,” said Mayor Nicole Read. “This new field is named for Olympic Bronze Medalist, Karina LeBlanc, who began her journey to represent Canada at the highest levels of women’s soccer playing on the gravel field this new facility will replace. Her story will now be intertwined with this field and be a beacon for her message about ‘dreaming big,’ working hard, making choices and taking action to make your dreams a reality.”

On March 10, Karina, told the story of how she and her brother would go out to that gravel field at Merkley Park and play every day. Her moving story was recorded as part of the BC Summer Games announcement which can be found on the City of Maple Ridge’s YouTube channel at youtu.be/6pnbEP1fReU (her story starts at 5:30 into the video). Karina told the crowd, “For all the young boys and girls who step on that field – I want them to have fun. But I want them to dream big, dream crazy big dreams and know that just because the field exists, anything is possible.”

In addition to the all-weather synthetic field, the development will include the creation of a new parking lot, lighting enhancements and landscaping improvements for the overall site. Work on the \$2.5 million project is expected to commence in August with a scheduled completion in

November of 2017. The immediate neighbourhood expressed their pleasure around the new parking and noted that this would alleviate issues around on-street parking on 124 Avenue.

“I am pleased that Canadian Heritage Minister Joly helped ensure that the \$500,000 Canada 150 Grant was able to be transferred to this project from the original Albion site. This new synthetic all weather field, named in honour of Maple Ridge Olympian Karina LeBlanc, will be a tremendous legacy of the Canada 150 celebration and serve as an inspiration and launching ground for the next generation of athletes. I look forward to working with Mayor and Council to secure Federal grants for other projects in our community. These investments in youth pay huge dividends. Just look at what Karina achieved by dreaming big,” said Maple Ridge Member of Parliament, Dan Ruimy.

For more information on this release or the Karina LeBlanc Field please contact Valoree Richmond, Manager of Parks Planning & Operations at 604-467-7338 or by email at vrichmond@mapleridge.ca.