



# City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 22, 2018 18-23

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## **Community Invited to Karina LeBlanc Synthetic Field Opening & Public Art Unveiling**

**Maple Ridge, BC:** On May 26, 2018 the City of Maple Ridge will hold the official field opening and Public Art unveiling for Karina LeBlanc Field at Merkley Park. The event is open to the public and will run from 1:00 to 2:00 pm beside the new field at 22008 124 Avenue.

“A number of dignitaries representing our funding and project partners for the new field will participate in the celebration. In addition, citizens will have the chance to meet the team behind the public art project that was installed next to the field. The art piece is titled ‘Field of Dreams’ and captures the history of this site culminating in Karina’s close connection to this special place,” said Valoree Richmond, Manager of Parks Planning & Operations and emcee for the opening event. “We are very excited to have Karina and her family with us. She is an incredible ambassador for our City, Province and Nation,” she added.

Karina, as part of her new Karina LeBlanc Foundation, will be running a Leadership session for approximately 20 young women from Maple Ridge at Maple Ridge Secondary School, her old high school, in the morning prior to the official opening ceremony. After the opening, these young women will join Karina in hosting a free soccer clinic on the new Karina LeBlanc synthetic field. Karina has been working with Albion Football Club and West Coast Auto Group Football Club to register clinic participants.

“As a kid I had a dream to play for Team Canada and one day seeing our flag rise and singing along to the national anthem as we stood together on the medal podium. I could have never imagined having a field named after me; I think that is why I cried when I found out. This is beyond any of my crazy dreams and this community supported me to achieve my sports dreams. That is why this is special. I know this field will inspire and help others to reach their dreams too,” said Karina LeBlanc.” In the coming weeks I will formally launch my new foundation dedicated to ‘paying it forward’ for the support I received from so many people and businesses here in Maple Ridge that helped propel me on my journey in life. This community is very special

and the investments that are being made in youth sports facilities will help the next generation of young people have the same opportunities that I had and help youth live healthy lifestyles. A sport doesn't necessarily define you, however, it brings out who you are and I hope this new field does that for many people. I've learned so much through sport and I want to share those lessons with the next generation of youth in our community. Big dreams start here.”

For more information please contact Valoree Richmond, Manager of Parks Planning & Operations by email at [vrichmond@mapleridge.ca](mailto:vrichmond@mapleridge.ca) or by phone at 604-467-7338.