

# NEWS RELEASE



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**Winners of Maple Ridge Innovation Awards and City's New Branding Strategy  
Announced at Economic Development Summit**

**Maple Ridge, BC:** How Maple Ridge is developing itself as a significant business and economic hub at the centre of a growing Lower Mainland was at the core of today's discussions at the City of Maple Ridge's first Economic Development Summit.

The event was also marked by the unveiling of new City branding highlighting Maple Ridge's strong connection to nature, broad economic potential, and deep community bonds, as the City moves towards its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations next year. The City's annual Innovation Challenge Awards were also presented at the close of the summit.

Both the Summit and new City branding are reflective of Council's vision and strategic priorities to deliver a bright future for the City. The City's new branding story is based on resident and business input collected through an online survey on the City's Engage Maple Ridge platform and focus groups.

The City of Maple Ridge has committed to a multi-pronged strategy to identify economic opportunities and ensure growth and retention of business investment as Maple Ridge's population expands. Delegates at the Summit heard from key business, economic, government and community leaders from around the region who brought years of experience and insight into how Maple Ridge can tap into, and realize, its economic potential and play a regional role.

The event, with panels led by Laura Jones, President and CEO of the Business Council of British Columbia, was the third of three City-led Leadership Summits under the leadership of Mayor Dan Ruimy and City Councillors this year.

The Economic Development Summit followed Council's unanimous endorsement and launch of the City's *Maple Ridge Moves* plan and campaign in September aimed at securing provincial and federal funding for a series of smart, sustainable transportation projects to keep people and goods moving within Maple Ridge and throughout the Lower Mainland.

Highlights in the [Maple Ridge Moves](#) plan include the introduction of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), a new technology proposed in TransLink's new Access for Everyone 10-year Plan, to Langley and the Tri-Cities. The plan also includes road infrastructure projects including expansion of Golden Ears Way

leading into Maple Ridge from the Golden Ears Bridge, widening of Abernethy Way, plus a 240th Street bridge providing new access to Silver Valley and Golden Ears Provincial Park.

The plan, the Summit, and the new branding all dovetail with the Mayor and Council's vision to open industrial lands, build key transportation and infrastructure projects, and new areas for residential development to support the growth of housing, jobs, and economic development in a sustainable way. Last week Council also unanimously passed a resolution in support of three recommendations to secure BRT for Maple Ridge and calling on support from the Mayor's Council to prioritize the Langley-Haney Place corridor.

"This Summit was important for us to demonstrate how we reach beyond our City and get the discussion going on how Maple Ridge plays into economic development regionally," said Mayor Dan Ruimy. "With the growth that's forecast for our City and surrounding region in coming years, now is the time to ensure Maple Ridge realizes its potential as a prime, competitive location for business opportunities and new investment. Housing, transportation, jobs, growing our local business community, a more diversified tax base and maintaining our quality of life are key goals here, and all must be reached in alignment as we grow. What we heard today is also that it's important to increase awareness to a broader audience that we are acting as regional leaders, as we have aimed to do with all our Leadership Summits. Climate, Housing and Economic Development are all related and part of an integrated vision not only for our City but the region, province, and nation."

### **INNOVATION CHALLENGE 2023**

Celebrating outstanding achievements in our local business community, the City's [Innovation Challenge Awards](#) for 2023 were presented at today's Summit. Maple Ridge businesses which successfully introduced a new product, process or service were eligible to submit them for recognition in this annual competition. Cash prizes totalling \$7,000 were given to three local businesses courtesy of our supporters including key sponsor, Ridge Meadows College.

### **2023 WINNERS**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$4,000 - Brookfield Farm** - implemented a robotic milking system.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$2,000 - Hyperstealth Biotechnology Corp** - developed a material that renders a target invisible by bending light waves around it.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place - \$1,000 - Once Upon a Tea Leaf** - launched a Wholesale Division to complement their Retail outlet on 224 Street.