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[ychui@mapleridge.ca](mailto:ychui@mapleridge.ca)**Maple Ridge Wins National Cultural Planning Award of Excellence**

**Maple Ridge, BC:** The 'Maple Ridge Culture Plan: Walking Together – Growing Connections through Culture' has received The Creative City Network of Canada's 'Cultural Planning Award of Excellence'. The award was presented at the annual Creative City Summit hosted in Saskatoon at the beginning of the month and Mayor Morden accepted the award on behalf of the City at the October 15 Council meeting.

"This award reflects the expertise, passion and spirit of volunteerism in our community. The community consultation process has resulted in a plan that reflects our incredible creative assets and potential growth and we are grateful to the many citizens who participated in the development of this plan. The arts are an important part of our local economy and it will be exciting to see this sector expand in the coming years," said Mayor Morden.

The Creative Network of Canada's adjudication committee noted that Maple Ridge's Plan stood apart because of the wide diversity of participation through the extensive engagement process which included over 5,000 touchpoints with the community. This ultimately led to a cultural plan focused on youth and family arts while recognizing continued dialogue, listening and relationship-building with Kwantlen and Katzie First Nations and other indigenous groups including Métis.

The newly formed Community Culture Collective, a larger network of community and cultural partners, will be a resource to implement the Culture Plan through collaboration, information sharing and coordination of activities which will result in a higher visibility for arts, culture and heritage.