

**Corporation of the District of Maple Ridge
ECONOMIC ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Economic Advisory Commission, held in the Blaney Room at Maple Ridge Municipal Hall, 11995 Haney Place, Maple Ridge, British Columbia, on Thursday, May 26, 2007 at 7:30 a.m.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Ernie Daykin	Councillor, District of Maple Ridge
Guy Flavelle	Community at Large
Ken Galpin	Community at Large
Peter Janis	Community at Large
Terry Wilding	Tourism Representative
Glen Watson	Ridge Meadows Bus. Assoc. Representative

STAFF PRESENT

Jim Rule	Chief Administrative Officer
Rick Laferriere	Business Retention & Expansion Officer
Frank Quinn	General Manager Public Works
John Bastaja	Chief Information Officer
Christine Carter	Manager Community Planning
Jayne Aster	Administrative Assistant

REGRETS

Kathy Morse	Mayor, District of Maple Ridge
Steve Pelton	Community at Large
Racine Barbour	Community at Large
Dennis Kinsey	Community at Large

1. Call to Order & Introductions

There being a quorum present the Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Jim Rule welcomed everyone and invited the attendees to introduce themselves. Jim Rule chaired today's meeting with a chairperson to be picked at a later date.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

MOVED BY: Peter Janis
SECONDED BY: Guy Flavelle

That the Agenda for May 26, 2005 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. *Adoption of the Economic Advisory Commission Minutes of Regular Meeting*

MOVED BY: Peter Janis
SECONDED BY: Ken Galpin

That the Minutes of the Economic Advisory Commission April 13, 2005 Regular Meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

4. *Delegations or Presentations*

4.1 *Frank Quinn – Golden Ears Bridge and Road Infrastructure*

Frank Quinn gave a Power Point presentation and reviewed the new bridge development, its history, and the benefits to Maple Ridge. Translink is in charge of the bridge and its development. A map displayed by Frank showed the proposed route into Maple Ridge, exits, and major interchanges. Frank reviewed the costs and the public consultation process that included presentations to Council, the Chamber of Commerce, real estate, Rotary, and cycling associations. The RFP is out right now to be submitted by fall, with the contract awarded by the end of this year. Construction to begin in 2006 with the bridge open by 2007, or early 2008.

Frank reviewed the Provincial infrastructure improvement project called the Gateway Program which includes the Pitt River bridge replacement.

The group discussed working on improvements east of Maple Ridge from where the bridge ends and out to Mission and alternate routes such as Abernathy. Frank reported three different government jurisdictions for roads; Provincial is highways (Lougheed), and Pitt River Bridge; Translink is regional roads (Dewdney), and from 232nd up to provincial park; Municipality is everything else.

The group discussed concerns over train crossings, backups in rush hour, safety for kids. There is only one train crossing in the plan (west of Maple Meadows Way). The one at 113B will remain unchanged. The main emphasis is to provide access to the business park. Railways are an agency unto themselves – Frank noted the Railway Act is a very strong piece of legislation and they are a tough body to negotiate with. It was noted Abernathy will remain at two lanes – then upgrade to 4 after 10 years or so.

4.2 Soft Infrastructure – John Bastija

John Bastija gave a Power Point presentation on fibre infrastructure noting this is the proposal stage only and represented the kind of things we are working on for the future. John reported we need decent, low cost broadband throughout the community and this is a public policy issue. For any additional services we provide we need greater access. This fosters economic development and allows all to have greater competitive access. Shaw and Telus use a capital cost recovery model and are not interested in facilitating community issues. We are open to other smaller providers focused on the local community. Canada has the highest number of internet users per 1000 people in 2000. Our internal access at the city is 100 mps and it's slow as the broadband pipe gets filled. John reported we will have a gigabyte network here in June which beat his prediction by 3-4 years.

John reviewed the different characteristics between wireless and fibre optics. Fibre has a higher capacity with 64 colour lasers which are like 64 lanes down the glass fibre. Now 144 colour lasers are being developed. Fibre offers higher security as you can't tap into it. Overall it offers faster transmission, and freedom of interference.

John believes we need to think of fibre as a utility along with roads, water, gas, and electricity. It will connect outlying areas like the fire hall, and operations centre, and provide other benefits to community: professional, entertainment, consumer activities. No limitations of high traffic use.

From an economic development perspective some opportunities would be call centres, e-commerce, e-government, IP telephony, medical services, telework, etc.

John displayed a map of the fibre network principal showing three phases of potential fibre network, noting that every time we open road we lay down empty conduits. A third party provider can pull through that service. Council agreed to take a look at the concept.

The group discussed if Maple Ridge could leverage this type of potential and how the strategy would look. Peter Janis noted cost is dropping, more affordable and more stable.

4.3 Official Community Plan – Christine Carter

Christine Carter gave a Power Point presentation on the OCP industrial and commercial policy, reviewing our demographics, growth, age, and housing projections. Maple Ridge is a young community with our largest demographic group being under 19. Our population is projected to hit 108,000 by 2031, and then it will decline. Overall we have a consistent population growth and a fairly young community. In 2031 the aging population numbers triple over age of 65 when all baby-boomer will be 65 or older. Christine's three messages of demographics point to Maple Ridge as rapidly growing, aging, but still young.

Christine went over the Industrial and Commercial policy review completed by Paul Rollo an economist retained by the district. Christine reviewed the amount of current industrial land and our industrial reserve, and reported on the recommendations noting it is difficult to get land in the west that can be used as an industrial area. We already have a downtown so we don't need to create one and we will not look at large scale commercial development out of the downtown area until we redevelop and densify the downtown area and get it stable. Christine noted huge amounts of traffic go through our community for people going to Golden Ears Park – the busiest park in the system. About 100,000 people drive there in the summer on a daily basis and there is a wonderful potential to service them. We don't want to polarize community between west and east ends. Christine noted the west end is the highest populated and people shop on their way to and from work.

Jim Rule spoke about the importance of a vital downtown noting we can have the best of both worlds if we are patient and strategic. Other communities don't even have a downtown (i.e. Coquitlam, Surrey).

The group briefly discussed the Smart Growth project which may be further reviewed at a later meeting. Ernie Daykin noted only 8500 people live in the designated Smart Growth area of the downtown. The question is how we grow; balanced and managed – not first thing that comes along.

5. *Current Projects*

5.1 Review of Request For Proposals – Rick Laferriere

Rick Laferriere spoke of the RFP which is currently in draft form. The attendees were asked to review the draft and send comments back to Rick by next week.

9. *Next Meeting*

The next meeting is scheduled for June 30, 2005 in the Blaney Room at Maple Ridge Municipal Hall at 7:30 a.m.

10. *Adjournment*

MOVED BY: Jim Rule
SECONDED BY: Glen Watson

That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Chairperson

/ja