



City of Maple Ridge News Release

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City of Maple Ridge Issues Building Permit for Expansion of Tantalus Labs Cannabis Facility

Maple Ridge, BC: Having sought legal advice, the City of Maple Ridge will be proceeding with the issuance of a building permit to Tantalus Labs for a 50,000 square foot expansion of their cannabis greenhouse growing facility in east Maple Ridge.

“City Council, like the neighbourhood, is frustrated by the implications of an expansion of this facility, but we are bound by the existing legislative framework and decisions of senior government. Unfortunately, we have no legal authority to stop the expansion or implement conditions to mitigate impacts on residents because the operation is a permitted farm use and sits within the Agricultural Land Reserve. Our hope is that as part of the expansion work, Tantalus Labs will be a responsible neighbour and take action to fully address residents’ concerns,” said Mayor Morden.

Mayor Morden continued, “The growth of the cannabis industry is still in its infancy and it will take a number of years to fully assess and address the community impacts around growing, harvesting, processing and the sale of cannabis and related products. In the meantime, this experience has demonstrated that communities need to have additional tools to address concerns that may be registered by residents, regardless of whether a development exists on or off the Agricultural Land Reserve. Council is looking for opportunities to work with the BC Farm Industry Review Board, the Agricultural Land Commission and Metro Vancouver to address residents concerns.”

The legal advice the City received makes clear that a legal challenge by the City to the expansion of the facility would not be successful. The City recommends that citizens being impacted by odour, light and other concerns file a complaint with the BC Farm Industry Review Board,” said Mayor Morden.

The BC Farm Industry Review Board (BCFIRB) is an independent tribunal of the BC Government responsible for hearing complaints from persons ‘aggrieved by odour, noise, dust or other disturbances arising from agriculture and certain aquaculture operations.’ Citizens can file a complaint at the BCFIRB website:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/boards-commissions-tribunals/bc-farm-industry-review-board/farm-practices/steps-in-complaints-process>

Tantalus Labs is operated on land in the Agricultural Land Reserve and, as such, falls under the regulatory framework of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), a Provincial government agency. Given recent changes to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and Regulations by the Province, the production of cannabis is allowable as a farm use of agricultural lands. The City is also working on zoning bylaw updates to ensure that the City’s legislative authority is protected within the framework of provincial and federal laws related to use of agricultural lands for the production of cannabis.

“Local governments are accountable to the people that live in the community yet the decision making about how to handle the impacts around growing, harvesting, processing and the sale of cannabis and related products rest with another governing body. We will continue to work with the Union of BC Municipalities and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to advocate for more local authority to address the impacts of this new industry,” said Mayor Morden.