

RIDGE BUSINESS BUZZ

Department of Economic Development



Special Edition - June 18, 2020

Message from Wendy Dupley, Director, Economic Development, City of Maple Ridge

Although we still have a long way to go, signs of optimism are beginning to appear. By now many of you will have started to resume some of the "normal" activities we once took for granted: getting a proper hair cut, going on a shopping trip, or maybe having a meal in a restaurant. These seemingly small acts are critical to re-starting the economy and re-energizing our community.

Many of us have also returned to once-familiar work places that have been transformed with Plexiglas barriers, physical distancing signage, face masks, and occupancy limits. These changes can be unsettling for our staff, our customers and ourselves.

One of the things I've been most impressed with is the spirit of collaboration that is evident on so many levels. The City, the Chamber of Commerce and the Maple Ridge BIA have regular conversations on how we can work together to help businesses overcome the challenges they are facing. The recent online town hall meeting organized by the Chamber and the BIA was a great example of this spirit of collaboration. I'm also seeing similar levels cooperation occurring in regional meetings with communities in Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley.

What really bodes well for future of investment into our economy is that our province is currently being viewed in an extremely positive way across the world for our actions during this global pandemic. On June 5th, The New York Times published a great story on Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry entitled "The Top Doctor Who Aced the Coronavirus Test". The story emphasizes Dr. Henry's combination of perseverance, empathy, communications skills, and willingness to collaborate with others that has allowed her to succeed in navigating the province through the coronavirus pandemic. These are also the skills that we'll all need to channel as we move forward in re-opening our businesses and reigniting our economy.

In the uncertain journey ahead, we'll all need ensure we continue to communicate regularly with customers and staff about our plans to keep them safe. Continuing to build the confidence of our consumers is paramount. We'll need empathy to understand the concerns of staff and customers and to be able to respond appropriately. We'll need to continue to collaborate with other businesses, industry associations and all level of governments on solutions. And most of all, on this journey, we'll all need the courage and perseverance to keep doing the right things to succeed. Your economic development department team is here to help and support you. **#ForwardTogether.**

Sincerely,

Wendy



Re-Opening of Golden Ears Provincial Park

Golden Ears Provincial Park, one of the largest parks in the province, re-opened June 1 for day-use recreation (hiking, horseback riding, swimming, windsurfing, water-skiing, canoeing, boating and fishing) and camping. The highly popular Alouette campground, with 206 sites, offers campsite and group site reservations made through **Discover Camping**.

As an indication of pent-up demand for camping, a record-breaking 50,000 people simultaneously logged into the BC Parks campsite reservation system on June 1 at 7 am. Environment Minister George Heyman said, "It was the largest number of camping reservations ever made in B.C. and double Parks Canada's biggest day." Currently, some

sites are available within a two-month rolling window and BC residents may be able to book campsites the last week of July and all of August, if they don't delay.

New Covid-19 protocols and safety information is available [here](#).



City helps local high school students celebrate graduation

This year, graduating high school students will miss out on some of the traditional ceremonies and rites of passage that typically recognize high school graduation. Formal graduation ceremonies, proms, grad trips, and gatherings with friends and family are just some of the events that have been cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

In order to help recognize the achievement of our graduates, the City has worked with the lighting supplier from the GLOW Maple Ridge Christmas displays on a special 'Grad 2020' display in Memorial Peace Park. "As a City we are proud to recognize our graduates and I encourage citizens to support the movement towards a community cheer, like the one we do for front line workers, on Saturday, June 20 at 8:20 pm," says Mayor Mike Morden.

"I want to thank MK Illumination for their incredible generosity in donating the lights and installation to help our community celebrate the graduating class of 2020," said Wendy Duplex, Director, Economic Development.

"The number and variety of lights will allow graduates and their families to take photos to mark the occasion while respecting physical distancing guidelines."

Decorations include popular elements from the winter 2019 display including the art tree, light tunnel and enhanced lighting on the Bandstand. The light display will be available from June 5 until June 30, 2020. Even if you don't have a 2020 Graduate in your family, please feel free to enjoy the lights.

On behalf of the City of Maple Ridge we wish all 2020 Graduates, our community's future leaders, success in their next adventures.



New Partner Joins 2020 Epic GLOW Maple Ridge Experience

The Glow Maple Ridge committee is pleased to welcome a new partner **Epic Care/Epic Homes** to the December 2020 destination marketing project in Memorial Peace Park. The month long seasonal event attracts visitors and citizens to the town centre of Maple Ridge to experience light displays, outdoor entertainment, a sound-activated Christmas tree and an opportunity to experience shopping and food and drink hospitality in a festively decorated downtown centre.

Other partners include the City of Maple Ridge, the Downtown Business Improvement Association, the Chamber of Commerce, Warrington PCI Management, SmartREIT – Maple Ridge, Falcon Homes and Chances Maple Ridge. New partners are welcome.

Reach out to us to have a conversation. For more details, view the [GLOW Sponsorship Package](#)

TOURISM

Destination BC's Tourism Business Portal

Destination BC has partnered with TripAdvisor to support tourism operators with promoting their businesses to future travelers. To take advantage of this opportunity, claim a listing in TripAdvisor and the information will automatically appear on HelloBC the next day.

Steps:

1. Claim a free TripAdvisor listing [here](#).
2. HelloBC.com listings are populated by TripAdvisor data. If your business has a claimed TripAdvisor listing, [register here](#) to enhance your HelloBC.com listing with your social media accounts and other information.
3. Enhance your TripAdvisor listing with these valuable [Tips for Optimizing Your TripAdvisor Presence](#)



FILM



Film industry given green light to return

It looks like Maple Ridge can expect an early Christmas present with the return of the film industry. *"This is traditionally the time of year when a lot of Christmas movies are filmed in Maple Ridge,"* says Marg Johnson, the City's Film Liaison. "The film industry is a major employer and economic driver for Maple Ridge businesses so it's great have it back." Creative BC estimates that over 1,200 people in Maple Ridge work in the industry, and each day of filming contributes over \$10,000 to the local economy.

On June 5, WorkSafeBC announced its health and safety protocols for a safe return to work for the motion picture industry. "Productions will need to have safety plans in place to ensure physical distancing and enhanced hygiene measures on the set," say Johnson. "The plan needs to cover everything from make-up and costumes to catering and transportation."

Despite the new regulations, Johnson expects to be very busy. *"There was a lot of location scouting and pre-production work that was able to continue."* She notes that many people in the industry are aware of the success BC has had battling the pandemic. "I've heard that a lot of people in Hollywood know that BC has managed the coronavirus pandemic better than many other places, and they feel more confident working here than in other locations in Canada and the USA."

BUSINESS



Expedited Patio Permitting Program

On June 9, Council voted to approve an expedited permitting process for sidewalk cafes, patios and parklets. The goal of the program is to help the restaurants and cafes offset the indoor seating they have lost to comply with COVID-19 health and safety requirements.

The City program is meant to complement the province's new policy directive that allows for expanded liquor service on patios and outdoor seating areas.

According to the recent update from Bonnie Henry, each establishment can now identify a specific number for their maximum capacity of patrons and staff on the premises, including patio seating, that will still allow for physical distance requirements. This order has been updated from the original one where there was a maximum of 50% of capacity.

"The hospitality industry has been particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 restrictions, especially the loss of indoor seating capacity," says Bruce Livingstone, Business Retention and Expansion Officer for the City. "The primary goal of this program is to help offset those losses by allowing restaurants, café and craft breweries to create or expand patio seating areas. Patios also help create a sense of animation and vibrancy in the community that supports other businesses as well."

Livingstone notes that Maple Meadows Brewing was one of the first businesses in Maple Ridge to take advantage of this program by adding a small "picnic" area in the parking area in front of their brewery. "They sent their request in to the City the day after the program was approved by Council and received their municipal approvals the same day."



The New Normal at Brewery Tasting Rooms

Many breweries will be re-opening their tasting rooms as early as this weekend. The Provincial government has relaxed some public interactions restrictions provided social distancing rules can be followed. For more information, visit BC Ale Trail [website](#). The latest blog "The New Normal at Brewery Tasting Room" is available [here](#).



Industrial properties retain value despite effects of pandemic

According to recent reports from Avison Young and CBRE, the local industrial property market seems to be been relatively insulated from the impact that COVID-19 compared to other property classes.

Avison Young's "Spring 2020 Metro Vancouver, BC Industrial Overview" noted that "benchmark data from the first quarter of 2020 highlight a regional industrial market that posted near-record-low vacancy and achieved record-high rental rates". This report stated **the vacancy rate for industrial property in Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows was 0.2% in Q1, lower than the Metro Vancouver average vacancy rate of 1.2%.** CBRE's "Canada Real Estate Market Outlook 2020" also noted the continuing strength of the industrial market in Metro Vancouver.

Phil Cooper, a local industrial property developer, says that he is seeing strong interest in his newly constructed strata industrial units in Kanaka Business Park. "These units are especially attractive for small business owners who want to own their property," says Cooper. "Most of my buyers are in the trades and are consider to be essential services, so sales have continued to be strong for this development."

With such limited industrial units available across the community we are happy to have the Blue Mountain Business Park with units ready to go.



Looking to start or build your career in the skilled trades?

Are you looking to get back to work? Do you want to start your career or advance it further in one of the skilled trades?

British Columbia Infrastructure Benefits (BCIB) is hiring local skilled tradespeople and apprentices to work on select public infrastructure projects in the province, including the Pattullo Bridge Replacement Project connecting New Westminster and Surrey, and the Broadway Subway Project.

BCIB is the Crown Corporation developed to implement the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) on BC infrastructure projects. As the employer of the skilled trades workers on CBA projects, BCIB's goal is to bring the

benefits of infrastructure projects to the communities in which they're located. This includes priority hiring for locals (within 100 Km of job sites) and priority re-hiring to transfer to another project in the BCIB network when one finishes or a season finishes.

As a BCIB employee, you will work in a safe, respectful, and diversified work environment brimming with opportunities for career development. Apply online **here** using their easy to use the online application, and someone will be in contact to discuss career and upskilling opportunities for you.

Stay connected and up to date

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