

# RIDGE BUSINESS BUZZ

Department of Economic Development



**Fall Edition - October**

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

### Where did everything go?

First, it was a shortage of toilet paper and hand sanitizer. Flour and eggs followed, briefly disappearing from store shelves, and then lumber prices soared throughout the summer. More recently, we've been hearing about the ongoing shortage of everything from computer chips and automobiles to children's toys and shipping containers.

The New York Times has dubbed this phenomenon "The Great Supply Chain Disruption" and it's impacting everything from manufacturing and retail to construction and agriculture. Retailers are already warning about the availability of toys for Christmas, automakers are curtailing production due to a shortage of computer chips, and soybean producers are having trouble finding enough shipping containers to get their products to market. At the same time, many industries are reporting difficulties finding enough employees to meet the demand for products and services. Whether it's local restaurants that can't find wait staff or transportation firms in the UK that can't find enough truck drivers, it seems like every industry is reporting labour shortages.

These widespread production delays and labour shortages are beginning to lead to higher inflation as demand outpaces supply. The Bank of Canada is reporting that the Consumer Price Index rose by 4.1% on an annualized basis in August. The central bank believes this situation is temporary, though, as inflation compares today's prices with those of a year ago when much of the economy was still locked down. But while this situation may be temporary, it will take time for market forces to re-balance themselves. If inflation continues to be above the central bank's target range, we may start to see higher interest rates on the horizon.

Many of these same issues are impacting the local economy in Maple Ridge. The Economic Development Department is launching a series of initiatives this fall that will help local businesses meet these challenges head-on:

- A new **economic development strategy** that will focus on attracting and supporting manufacturing and technology-related businesses to strengthen domestic supply chains and create local high value employment opportunities
- **WebTech Recruit**, a new GIS-based online site selector tool that will allow businesses and investors to locate the best properties for their business operations and to identify growth opportunities in the local market
- A **global café** event to connect businesses with faculty and students from KPU's Melville School of Business to help identify skills gaps and post-secondary training needs in the community

Throughout the pandemic, businesses have shown incredible resilience, determination, and a willingness to embrace innovative new strategies to succeed. The new economic development strategy, coupled with the new tools and events the City is implementing, is focused on encouraging collaboration and communication to find the right solutions for businesses to succeed in a challenging post-pandemic environment.

Finally, I'd like to thank all of the businesses and organizations that entered the first-ever Innovation Challenge Maple Ridge. This competition highlighted the incredible creativity of local businesses and organizations as they adapted to the challenges of successfully operating during a pandemic. Congratulations and thank you for your inspiration.

Please feel free to reach out to myself or my team if you have any questions or need any assistance.

Sincerely,

Wendy



## Congratulations to the winners of the inaugural Innovation Challenge Maple Ridge

- *First place: Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie, Seniors Network*
- *Second place: Big Feast Bistro & Retail*
- *Third place: The Salvation Army Ridge Meadows Ministries*

## BUSINESS



[Click here to RSVP](#)

### Save the Date: KPU Global Café January 26, 2022

This world café style event will bring Maple Ridge business professionals face-to-face with KPU Melville School of Business faculty and students to discuss how businesses and KPU can best work together in the future. What are the most pressing issues your business is facing and how can KPU students and faculty help? Are there specific skills you're looking for, or projects you need help with? What is the best way to offer post-secondary education in Maple Ridge—online, in-person, or hybrid? This is a great opportunity for your voice to be heard and to shape the future of education in our community.

Your feedback is greatly appreciated and is the driving force to the success of this event. Please click here to fill out a short form and let us know who from KPU could help foster these conversations. We look forward to seeing you there!

**When**  
January 26, 2022  
5:00pm – 7:00pm  
The ACT



### New Economic Development Strategy

On October 26, the Economic Development Department and Rynic Strategic Solutions will be presenting the new Economic Development Strategy at Council Workshop.

The goal of this strategy is to provide long-term guidance for the economic development of the community. Major elements of the strategy will focus on labour force development, talent attraction, creating local high-value employment opportunities, and the attraction of advanced manufacturing and technology businesses to Maple Ridge. The strategy is grounded in the results of an in-depth analysis of the local economy coupled with extensive consultations with local businesses, residents, and external agencies. The presentation is available for public viewing via the *livestream* option on the City's website.



### Free GIS WebTech Recruit Training Session October 20

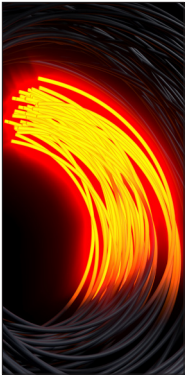
On October 20, the City of Maple Ridge and GIS WebTech will be hosting a free webinar for local businesses, real estate professionals, and developers to learn how they can use **GIS WebTech's Recruit** to start or grow their businesses in Maple Ridge.

GIS WebTech's Recruit is a free online tool that uses advanced mapping technology combined with detailed demographic and real estate information about Maple Ridge to help investors locate properties ideally suited for their business operation. This information includes a wealth of information about Maple Ridge including market size and characteristics, availability of skilled labour, and proximity to infrastructure and transportation. Users can fine-tune search criteria by commercial real estate type, including office, industrial, warehouse, retail, vacant land, and flexible space, and can conduct in-depth analysis around that location to compare and match their needs to any community nationwide.

**GIS WebTech Recruit Webinar: October 20 at 9:00 am.** Please RSVP to [blivingstone@mapleridge.ca](mailto:blivingstone@mapleridge.ca) for a link to join this free webinar.

### TELUS announces \$60 million investment in fibre optic network in Maple Ridge

TELUS has recently announced they are investing \$60 million to connect homes and businesses in Maple Ridge directly to their gigabit-enabled TELUS PureFibre network. This new level of connectivity will provide residents and businesses with dramatically faster upload and download Internet speeds for applications like video conferencing,



working or learning remotely, gaming, and smart home security.

Work on the PureFibre network in Maple Ridge is already underway, and TELUS anticipates the majority of homes and businesses will be connected by the end of 2023. "Council is pleased that citizens and business owners will have access to improved broadband service that will fulfill their needs today and into the future," said Mike Morden, Mayor of Maple Ridge. "This investment complements our Connected Community Strategy, which is under development, as we aim to offer world-class technological infrastructure to create jobs and diversify our tax base."

A direct connection to the TELUS PureFibre network comes at no cost to taxpayers or residents, and residents can expect to see TELUS trucks throughout the community as construction begins. Please visit [Telus PureFibre](#) for more information.

## TOURISM



### Glow Maple Ridge is back

Glow Maple Ridge, one of Maple Ridge's most popular seasonal events, is returning to the Town Centre this fall. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, we're looking forward to the return of our favourite festive light displays in Memorial Peace Park from November 26, 2021 to January 6, 2022. Depending on the Public Health Orders in place at the time, event organizers are planning to include music and dance performances, a Christmas market, and a Santa Claus parade to kick off the event. We're sure you'll find the perfect backdrop for your holiday photos—whether it's the twinkling light tunnel, brilliant art tree, glowing bandstand, or interactive illuminated sequoia tree. Glow Maple Ridge is the perfect holiday backdrop for a selfie with a loved one on a winter walkabout this season. Please see [Glow Maple Ridge](#) for more information.

## FILM



### Filming Flourishes Through Fall

September is proving to be another busy month for the film industry in Maple Ridge according to Film Liaison Draeven McGowan. "The City issued 40 film permits in September alone," says McGowan. "I'm currently working with 11 productions that are shooting in a variety of locations throughout Maple Ridge."

McGowan notes that a number of these are larger budget feature films and series that have an even bigger economic impact on Maple Ridge. "We're seeing a lot of bigger productions filming here," says McGowan, "Recent productions have included three feature films, two Netflix series, a CBC Gem production as well as three Christmas movies-of-the-week. One of the larger productions is scheduled to film exclusively in Maple Ridge for 23 straight days."

Stay connected and up to date

[invest@mapleridge.ca](mailto:invest@mapleridge.ca)

[@yourmapleridge](#)



[www.mapleridge.ca](http://www.mapleridge.ca)