

MAPLE RIDGE COUNCIL QUARTERLY UPDATE



COMMUNITY SAFETY

Community safety remains Council's top priority and advancement of Council's Community Social Safety Initiative continues at a brisk pace.

In the first quarter of 2021, Council and the community were introduced to the Community Social Safety Dashboard which provides real-time performance measures and statistics at the click of a button. Here are some examples of stats that were presented on the dashboard: over the past 7 months, Community Safety Officers (CSOs) cleaned up 174 truckloads of garbage and 204 abandoned shopping carts off of city streets. Our CSOs have also successfully connected 36 individuals with social services. These are outstanding results and we thank the entire CSO team for the amazing work they are doing on the front lines of our community every day. You can find a link to this dashboard, and all of the performance dashboards, at mapleridge.ca/2369.

Funding was also approved in the first quarter to expand Community Safety Officers foot patrol services. The new funding means that CSOs will be on patrol 16 hours a day, 7 days a week. This investment is about making our community safe and supporting a vibrant and growing downtown.

In addition, CSOs recently participated in mental health training to assist them in their work and continue to conduct joint patrols with the Ridge Meadows RCMP. The City of Maple Ridge received authorization letters from Haney Place and Valley Fair Mall's to enforce City bylaws on their properties. In addition, 7 LOCTED assessments, which is a review of the business environment and risk analysis, were completed at local businesses. This program provides merchants in the Town Centre with grants to conduct a security audit and install the necessary safety infrastructure.

The success of the CSSI program has resulted in enquiries from seven municipalities who are looking to emulate our progress in tackling difficult problems in their own communities. We are humbled by the success we've seen thus far with our CSSI; however, we recognize we still have a lot more to do.

Council is committed to continue tackling these challenges that our community is facing, in partnership with senior government. We cannot do this alone and a community-led solution is required to ensure the best outcomes for everyone.



COMMUNITY PRIDE & SPIRIT

In the first quarter, we welcomed Scott Hartman as the new General Manager Parks, Recreation & Culture. Scott comes to Maple Ridge from Esquimalt, where he served in the same capacity. We are very excited to have him join our team. We would like to thank David Boag for his many years of dedicated service to the City and wish him all the best in his retirement.

Work continues on the new Albion Community Centre. Construction on this state-of-the-art facility has now entered phase 2 and the project remains on budget and will be complete by the end of the year. Regular updates are being posted on the City's social media channels with construction updates.

At this point, it appears highly likely that COVID protocols will remain in place into the summer. Our Parks, Recreation & Culture team are planning the summer programming with an eye to ensuring that all COVID guidelines are being followed.

Council recently approved more than \$70,000 in festival grants to support these activities including the Caribbean Festival, Bard on the Bandstand, Multiculturalism Day, Country Fest, Farmers Market and a handful of City-produced events such as Canada Day, Remembrance Day, Celebrate the Night and Indigenous Peoples Day. Another opportunity for summer fun is at our Hammond Outdoor Pool, which opened for the season on May 3. We're very excited to see how these groups will deliver innovative community events in the coming months.

Other highlights for Community Pride and Spirit include a \$200,000 provincial grant for the new Silver Valley Gathering Place. In the first quarter we saw the launch of the Dog Friendly Maple Ridge pilot project – the feedback and interest have been gratifying. Work has continued on renovations and accessibility improvements to the entryway at our cemetery.

We saw huge interest with the reintroduction of swimming lessons at the Leisure Centre. In addition, playground replacements were completed for Country Lane North and South Parks, Westview Park and Creeks Crossing Park.

Having great park spaces in a neighbourhood is an important part of complete communities.



GROWTH

Council has a strong vision and action plan around Growth in Maple Ridge.

A review of the permit and development application process has begun. This work will look at the entire system from application to occupancy, identifying ways to make it faster and easier for residents and developers to get their projects built. Council looks forward to receiving the final report and implementing recommended changes.

Major growth-related reports presented to Council in Q1 included an update about the vision for the future of our Town Centre and a Housing Needs Assessment. This provincially-mandated report found that our city is in urgent need of more affordable housing for our families and seniors. Council is continuing to advocate senior government for more of this housing in Maple Ridge.

Work on the update of Maple Ridge's Strategic Transportation Plan and Economic Development Strategy is underway. Council is interested in hearing the public's views as part of the community engagement on both of these projects.

The ShopHERE program launched in partnership with Shopify and Google's Digital Main Street to support our business community. The program paired local small businesses with e-commerce experts, who helped them launch online storefronts free of charge. In total, 11 business websites were completed in Q1 with more coming in Q2.

Council voted to remove the owner occupancy requirement for secondary suites and detached garden suites. This decision expands the local housing continuum in a responsible way by enabling the creation of more rental suites, along with the introduction of accountability measures for property owners to ensure neighbourhoods are kept safe.

Finally, TransLink is leading a coordinated review of transportation needs for Golden Ears Way, Airport Way and 113B Avenue with Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie First Nation and the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure at the table. We hope this collaboration will lead to much-needed improvements that reduce congestion on our local roads and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our community.



CITY SERVICES

Our IT Department has continued to support the City's remote work resources, ensuring staff and citizens remain connected and are able to access services. While many City staff are working remotely and Council meetings continue to take place virtually, the City continues to conduct its business uninterrupted.

Over the course of the pandemic, the City has embraced technology enhancements to provide service to our citizens.

In February, Maple Ridge co-hosted the ICF Smart 21 Virtual Conference with the Township of Langley where the City received worldwide recognition and was named a Smart 21 Community.

As part of that event, the City hosted a virtual Hackathon to cultivate new, innovative solutions to keep citizens and businesses connected to their community. Submissions included a garbage and vandalism reporting platform, an app to link seniors to social activities during the pandemic and beyond, a Maple Ridge-focused interactive trail map, and an online farmers market. Staff are now working with the creators of these applications to make them available to the public.

The City's website and social media engagement continues to grow, and citizens are encouraged to follow or like the City's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram channels for the latest updates on construction projects, fun posts on Maple Ridge's history and connections to community engagement opportunities as important policy development work continues on Council's Strategic Priorities.

LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE COUNCIL Q1 UPDATE

On behalf of Council, Mayor Morden, recorded a video that highlights the work accomplished from January through to the end of March, 2021. That video can be found at mapleridge.ca/2369 along with the staff presentation that was provided to Council. Council looks forward to hearing your feedback on this update and the ongoing work towards their Strategic Priorities for Maple Ridge. You can email your feedback to mayorcouncilandcaol@mapleridge.ca. Council would like to remind citizens to register for your COVID-19 vaccine and book your appointment as soon as you are able. Go to getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca to sign up. Let's all come together to put this pandemic behind us.