

Maple Ridge Official Community Plan Policies that Support Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction

OCP Policy Section	OCP Policy Sub-Section	OCP Policies
<i>Transportation & Land-Use Sector – Reduce transportation related energy use through compact communities, alternative transportation, local jobs and food production</i>		
2.0 Growth Management	2.1.2 A Compact and Unique Community	2 - 2 Maple Ridge is a unique community and Maple Ridge is committed to maintaining and fostering this strong sense of community by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) supporting the Principles contained within the Official Community Plan; b) assessing all applications to amend the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw against the policies contained in the Official Community Plan; c) maintaining the integrity of the Urban Area Boundary and promoting residential development within the Urban Area Boundary; and d) the preparation of Area Plans.
		2 - 3 Within the Urban Area Boundary, growth will be directed to the Regional Town Centre, Community Commercial Nodes, areas with Area Plans, and to other locations where Official Community Plan policies are satisfied.
		2 - 4 Outside the Urban Area Boundary, commercial growth will be directed to rural commercial and historic commercial centres.
		2 - 5 Maple Ridge will limit urban scale development to areas where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the best use of existing physical, community and social infrastructure can be made; b) neighbourhood compatibility criteria are met; c) the infrastructure can be provided in a manner that is efficient and cost effective for the municipality; and d) the development is consistent with Regional policies and plans such as the GVRD Green Zone and Liquid Waste Management Plan.
		2 - 6 Maple Ridge supports and maintains the Urban Area Boundary recognizing the role that it has on limiting urban expansion, preserving community character, reducing land speculation within the Agricultural Land Reserve and protecting the agricultural land base, and in providing for the efficient delivery of services. Adjustments to the Urban Area Boundary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) will only be supported if the District has an adopted Agricultural Plan; b) will be considered in cooperation with the Agricultural Land Commission and the Greater Vancouver Regional District; and c) will only be conducted during a Comprehensive Official Community Plan review, or Council directed Comprehensive Urban Area Boundary review, and applications considered outside of either review are considered premature.
3.0 Neighbourhoods and Housing	3.1.1 Housing and Land Requirements	3 - 1 Maple Ridge will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) designate an adequate supply of residential land to accommodate future residents; b) accommodate growth through infill by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. promoting a mix of housing types and tenures to support diverse needs (e.g. income and abilities) lifestyles (e.g. age and values), and preferences. Examples include housing for older residents; housing for persons with disabilities; rental and ownership housing; new homeowners and empty nester housing; and ecologically sensitive design; and ii. developing other strategies as appropriate for meeting the future housing needs of residents.
	3.1.2 Community Character and Sense of Place	3 - 5 Maple Ridge will support Healthy Community Land Use Strategies and community wellness principles by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) recognizing the link between the provision of a range of housing options and social sustainability; b) promoting affordable housing developments that incorporate access to services through interconnecting roadways, bicycle paths, and pedestrian links; c) promoting activities that contribute to the needs, health, development, and well-being of individuals within the community, as well as the overall community; d) encouraging the provision of an appropriate scale of services at the neighbourhood level; e) promoting diverse, safe and secure neighbourhoods that facilitates neighbourly support, resulting in a healthier, more resilient community; f) encouraging public spaces that offer opportunities for community interaction; and g) promoting affordable housing developments that meet diverse housing needs.
	3.1.3 Residential Designations	3 - 6 Urban-level residential densities will not be supported in areas designated Rural Residential.
		3 - 10 Urban-level residential densities will not be supported in areas designated Suburban Residential.
		3 - 14 Urban-level residential densities will not be supported in areas designated Estate Suburban Residential.
		3 - 18 Maple Ridge will support a range of densities within the Urban Area Boundary.
	3.1.5 Urban Reserve	3 - 22 Maple Ridge will avoid non-contiguous expansion of the Urban Area Boundary.
3 - 23 Maple Ridge will not support urban level densities in the Urban Reserve until an Area Plan is adopted pursuant to policy 3 -25.		
3 - 24 Maple Ridge will retain the Thornhill area as a long term Urban Reserve area. Urban development will not be supported in the Thornhill Urban Reserve Area until the population threshold exceeds 100,000 people for the District and the residential capacity within the existing urban area is approaching build-out.		
4.0 Community Services	4.2 Institutional	4 - 33 Large Scale Institutional Facilities such as public hospitals, congregate care facilities, and private hospitals should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) be within the Urban Area Boundary; b) be conveniently located near public transit; c) have direct access to a collector, arterial, TransLink major road or Provincial Highway as identified in the Maple Ridge Transportation plan; d) where considered necessary, require the completion of a transportation impact study; and e) respect the neighbourhood context and natural features.
5.0 Natural Features	5.5 Air Quality	5 - 39 Maple Ridge will continue to participate in National, Provincial, and Regional programs aimed at reducing air and greenhouse gas emissions.
		5 - 40 Maple Ridge will promote energy efficiency to reduce air and greenhouse gas emissions by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) participating in emissions management programs such as the Greater Vancouver Regional District air quality management program; b) encouraging alternative transportation initiatives, promoting ‘clean’ transportation options, and encouraging the use of public transit; c) promoting green space and natural areas; d) exploring opportunities for non-fossil fuel energy efficient systems in municipal buildings and infrastructure; e) maintaining and enhancing the District’s forests and woodland areas; and f) encouraging tree retention and tree protection programs.
6.0 Employment	6.1 Employment Generating Opportunities	6 - 1 Maple Ridge will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) undertake an ongoing review of the Municipal economic development strategy; b) identify goals and objectives to enhance investment and business opportunities within the community; c) investigate alternative forms of incentives to stimulate local business initiatives; d) work cooperatively with the Economic Advisory Commission to foster employment generation within the community; and e) pursue clean, high pay, low environmental impact, manufacturing and high tech industries.
		6 - 2 Maple Ridge will support and facilitate opportunities for local job creation, and identify and promote local strengths to a global market.

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<i>Transportation Sector – Reduce transportation related energy use through compact communities, alternative transportation, local jobs and food production</i>			
6.0 Employment	6.2.1 Economic Development Strategy	6 - 5 Maple Ridge will collaborate with other agencies, such as the Agricultural Land Commission, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Greater Vancouver Regional District to promote and foster agriculture.	
		6 - 6 Maple Ridge will develop an Agricultural Plan that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) maintains an inventory of local agricultural products and agricultural land use; b) develops and maintains a database of farm businesses and operators; c) promotes leasing opportunities of agricultural land; d) promotes agricultural heritage initiatives; e) identifies appropriate land uses within agricultural areas and at the rural/urban interface; f) promotes urban agriculture; g) recognizes the positive role that agricultural lands have on the environment; h) will identify a variety of mechanisms to assist farm operators and to protect agricultural lands, including but not limited to the creation of trusts, endowments, and life-leases; i) includes an assessment of the agricultural land base; and j) develop Development Permit area guidelines to direct non-agricultural development at the urban-rural interface. 	
		6 - 7 Maple Ridge will promote sustainable agriculture and consider the inclusion of the following in its Economic Development Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) increasing public awareness of farming values and practices; b) emphasizing the local and Regional importance of agriculture; c) emphasizing the importance of preserving and supporting access to locally grown food; d) encouraging farmers to implement Environmental Farm Plans; e) emphasizing the importance of agricultural land on the District’s social economic and environmental values. 	
		6 - 8 Maple Ridge will work cooperatively with senior levels of government and other agencies to promote agricultural business opportunities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) aligning land use bylaws to permit supportive non-farm uses such as agro-tourism, bed and breakfasts, and on-farm sales; b) assisting agricultural landowners to identify and develop agricultural opportunities (e.g. value added, agri-tourism, bed and breakfast, recreation); c) identifying and encouraging access by agricultural landowners to agricultural programs; d) promoting the demand for, and sale of, local agricultural products within the community (e.g. farmer’s market, on-farm marketing, District food and plant material procurement policies); e) developing a small lot agricultural initiative tailored to Maple Ridge conditions. 	
		6.2.2 Sustainable Agriculture	6 - 9 Maple Ridge supports the policies and regulations of the Agricultural Land Commission Act and the Farm Practices Protection Act in its land uses and will review its bylaws affecting farmland and farm operations for consistency with these provincial acts, regulations, and guidelines.
			6 - 10 Maple Ridge will strive to maintain its agricultural land base in Maple Ridge through the following mechanisms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) supporting the Greater Vancouver Regional District’s Green Zone strategy which includes designated agricultural land; b) respecting the integrity of the urban area boundary by establishing a distinct separation between rural and urban designated areas; c) designating all lands outside of the Urban Area Boundary that are within the ALR as Agriculture in the Official Community Plan. Non-farm uses approved by the Agricultural Land Commission and the District will be permitted on all land designated Agricultural; d) the establishment of an Agricultural Advisory Committee; e) striving for a balance between farming activity and conservation lands.
			6 - 11 Maple Ridge will review policies and regulations to support and encourage small lot agriculture.
			6 - 12 Maple Ridge will protect the productivity of its agricultural land by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) adopting a guiding principle of “positive benefit to agriculture” when making land use decisions that could affect the agricultural land base, with favourable recognition of initiatives including but not limited to supportive non-farm uses, infrastructure improvements for farmland, or the inclusion of land elsewhere in the Agricultural Land Reserve; b) requiring agricultural impact assessments (AIAs) and Groundwater Impact Assessment of non-farm development and infrastructure projects and identifying measures to off-set impacts on agricultural capability; c) preserving larger farm units and areas by using appropriate buffers such as roads, topographic features, watercourses, ditching, fencing, or gradually reduced residential densities on properties adjacent to agricultural land; d) discouraging the subdivision of agricultural land into smaller parcels, except where positive benefits to agriculture can be demonstrated; e) reinforcing the concept that the Agricultural Land Reserve is intended for agricultural use by increasing the minimum lot size for ALR properties that are zoned Rural Residential; f) encouraging the amalgamation of smaller parcels of farmland into larger, more cohesive parcels.
	6 - 13 As part of the Agricultural Planning process, Development Permit Area Guidelines for the protection of farming will be developed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) reduce impacts on farmland and maintain compatibility between farm and non-farm uses; b) guide the form and character of future adjacent non-farm development; c) place conditions on title to inform non-farming rural residents of normal incidents encountered when living in an active agricultural area (e.g. noise, odours, crop spraying, traffic). 		
	6 - 16 Prior to Council giving consideration to a change in land use, an extension of municipal services, or an amendment to the Urban Area Boundary, Maple Ridge will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. develop and implement a Comprehensive Strategy as outlined in Section 11.1.3; and ii. collaborate with Regional and Provincial authorities to complete a comparative analysis to review land use, social, economic, and environmental goals. 		
	6.3 Commercial Opportunities		6 - 18 Maple Ridge will work with the business community, investors and the public to encourage more compact forms of commercial development and to explore mechanisms that improve the urban environment and “fit” with the surrounding neighbourhood.
	6 - 20 Commercial Centres and Nodes form part of an integrated system and development applications within such areas, and Area Plans will require suitable linkages to other commercial centres and nodes, and residential neighbourhoods. Linkages include an adequate transportation system which considers transit, trails, bikeways, pedestrian corridors and roadways.		
	6 - 21 Maple Ridge will update the economic development strategy to stimulate and enhance the emergence of the Town Centre as a vibrant and livable area. The District will explore mechanisms to encourage the continued development of the Town Centre and work with the Economic Development Office to achieve this goal.		

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<i>Transportation Sector – Reduce transportation related energy use through compact communities, alternative transportation, local jobs and food production</i>		
6.0 Employment	6.3 Commercial Opportunities	6 - 22 Outside of the existing Urban Area Boundary, commercial uses, other than Rural Commercial and Historic Commercial, are not supportable and will be considered premature prior to the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy as outlined in Section 11.1.3. In the long term, prior to considering large scale commercial development outside the existing Urban Area Boundary, the District will, at a time deemed appropriate by the District, determine specific success criteria for the Town Centre based on, but not limited to, the following suggested guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) number of housing units constructed; b) amount of commercial development; c) the vibrancy of the Town Centre as outlined by criteria.
	6.5.1 Tourism Additional Employment Generating Opportunities	6 - 56 Maple Ridge will promote agricultural tourism opportunities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) aligning land use bylaws to permit supportive non-farm uses such as agro-tourism, bed and breakfasts, and on-farm sales; b) assisting agricultural landowners to identify and develop agricultural opportunities (e.g. value added, agri-tourism, bed and breakfast, recreation).
	6.5.2 Home Based Business	6 - 57 Maple Ridge will support home based businesses as important contributors to the local economy, and will facilitate the growth of this sector by reviewing the Zoning Bylaw to incorporate regulations that support and promote home-based businesses, and by adopting performance based criteria that minimizes the impacts of home based businesses on its surroundings.
	6.5.3 Large Format Retail	6 - 58 Maple Ridge will support large format retail outlets in the Regional Town CentreTown Centre or in the General Commercial areas along the Lougheed Highway.
7.0 Transportation	7.1 Transportation	7 - 4 Maple Ridge will place an emphasis on increasing choice for non-automobile transportation modes.
	7.2 Road Network Plan	7 - 10 Maple Ridge will define and plan for transportation improvements that keep pace with development and whenever feasible will accommodate automobile and alternative modes of travel, including bicycle lanes and in decisions on transportation improvements and when constructing or reconstructing roadways.
		7 - 11 Maple Ridge will support initiatives that reduce traffic demand and automobile trips such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) encouraging more compact development in the Town Centre and around village commercial centres and community commercial cores; b) supporting the Town Centre as the central node of the community linked to outlying areas; c) locating the industrial and commercial land base in appropriate areas; d) encouraging telecommuting and home-based business; e) emphasizing more employment opportunities adjacent to residential developments, or more housing adjacent to employment generating uses; f) encouraging transit use, bicycle use, and pedestrian travel; g) promoting community education programs.
	7.3 Transit	7 - 16 Maple Ridge will develop land use strategies that support and encourage the use of transit, such as compact communities, mixed use developments, and higher density developments in appropriate areas.
		7 - 17 Maple Ridge will support initiatives that reduce traffic demand and automobile trips such as : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) encouraging transit friendly design in higher density nodes; b) encouraging changes to local transit service to support commuter rail and other regional transit services; c) supporting and promoting design principles and guidelines that encourage transit-oriented developments; d) Encourage the protection of corridors that consider future light rail or similar transportation nodes.
		7 - 18 Maple Ridge supports priority treatments for inter-regional public transit movement, and improvements to local service and facilities.
		7 - 19 Maple Ridge will encourage the development of an efficient transit system to link historic community centres and community commercial cores with each other and the Town Centre, and to link major employment areas with residential areas. The system will include linkages with other modes of transportation, convenient routing, and provision of appropriate facilities, such as walkways, sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities.
		7 - 20 Maple Ridge will consult and work in cooperation with the appropriate government authorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) in planning for new urban areas to ensure provision of convenient routing and appropriate facilities; b) to promote efficient transit services; c) to provide safe pedestrian access to transit facilities; d) to support an increased range of bus services to meet the needs of Maple Ridge residents; e) to prioritize redevelopment of the Town Centre bus exchange.
		7 - 21 Maple Ridge will assist in the advancement of a public transit depot in the Town Centre and explore the possibility of a coordinated approach with other transit service providers.
		7 - 22 Maple Ridge will promote the expansion of the West Coast Express service as part of an overall strategy to improve transit services within the municipality, including the provision of off-peak and reverse-peak train or bus services to and from downtown Vancouver.
		7 - 23 Maple Ridge will promote where appropriate the protection of corridors and the inclusion of design features in Regional and provincial facilities that consider future light-rail or other similar transportation modes to Maple Ridge.
		7 - 24 Maple Ridge will work in cooperation with Regional and Provincial agencies and authorities, such as the West Coast Express and TransLink, to provide safe pedestrian access to stations, facilities and bus-stops.
		7.4 Cyclists
	7 - 26 Maple Ridge will encourage and promote a network of cycling routes with connections to surrounding municipalities through the Bicycle Network and the Maple Ridge Transportation Plan.	
	7 - 27 Maple Ridge will continue to support the Bicycle Advisory Committee and the development of a bicycle network to improve cycling facilities.	
	7 - 28 Maple Ridge will work with other municipalities to coordinate bicycle planning initiatives and to develop a consistent set of cycling standards for all designated bicycle routes.	
	7 - 29 Maple Ridge will support and implement the bikeways standards and guidelines in the Bicycle Network Plan.	
	7 - 30 Maple Ridge will encourage the development of cycling infrastructure and support programs, such as ‘end-of-trip’ facilities for cyclists at key destinations and new developments.	
	7 - 31 Maple Ridge will support initiatives that reduce traffic demand and automobile trips by ensuring adequate treatment of bicycles in the design of developments.	
	7.5 Pedestrians	7 - 33 Maple Ridge will make road safety a priority in the planning, operation and maintenance of the road network for cycling in the District.
7 - 34 Maple Ridge will promote the construction of sidewalks in higher density areas and key pedestrian areas and will encourage the implementation of a safe, accessible and hospitable pedestrian environment throughout the District.		
7 - 35 Maple Ridge will encourage pedestrian routes that link local destinations and neighbourhoods.		

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<i>Transportation Sector – Reduce transportation related energy use through compact communities, alternative transportation, local jobs and food production</i>		
7.0 Transportation	7.5 Pedestrians	7 - 36 Maple Ridge will develop urban design standards and encourage pedestrian facilities for the Town Centre to promote the identity and importance of the area.
		7 - 37 Maple Ridge will, over time, work towards the provision of sidewalks on all major streets and will develop safe and convenient pedestrian crossings at key locations along major east-west transportation routes, including the CP railway line.
		7 - 40 Maple Ridge will support initiatives that reduce traffic demand and automobile trips by ensuring adequate treatment of pedestrians in the design of developments.
		7 - 41 Maple Ridge will make road safety a priority in the planning, operation and maintenance of sidewalks and the pedestrian network.
9.0 Municipal Services	9.1 Municipal Services	9 - 1 Maple Ridge will maintain a contiguous Urban Area Boundary to help control the costs of infrastructure construction.
<i>Buildings Sector – Improve energy efficiency of new and existing buildings</i>		
5.0 Natural Features	5.5 Air Quality	5 - 41 Maple Ridge will encourage the use of energy efficient site design and building practices in all new developments when appropriate.
	5.6 Preparing for Climate Change	5 - 42 Maple Ridge will encourage the use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEEDS) standards as part of new development proposals where appropriate.
		5 - 43 The District of Maple Ridge will use an integrated approach to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change through the following: a) including climate change considerations and outlining proactive suggestions in community information publications; b) supporting ongoing federal, provincial and regional initiatives to reduce the production of greenhouse gas emissions; c) making low impact purchasing decisions in operations and facilities design; d) encouraging where possible water conservation and the reuse of storm water through a number of measures including the use of drought tolerant species, rain barrels, and efficient irrigation techniques; e) retaining natural vegetation and planting trees where appropriate; f) integrating risk mitigation measures in development permit areas, area planning, special area development policies (such as the Fraser River Escarpment) and environmental planning policies that address problems associated with forest fires, pest infestations, land slides, and flooding; g) encouraging low impact development measures where possible.
<i>Infrastructure Sector – Waste in landfills generates CO2 emissions. By reusing, recycling, composting, and reducing packaging, waste is diverted from landfills.</i>		
5.0 Natural Features	5.5 Air Quality	5 - 39 Maple Ridge will continue to participate in National, Provincial, and Regional programs aimed at reducing air and greenhouse gas emissions.
9.0 Municipal Services	9.1 Municipal Services	9 - 1 Maple Ridge will maintain a contiguous Urban Area Boundary to help control the costs of infrastructure construction.
		9 - 2 Maple Ridge will consider the use of life cycle fiscal impact analysis (capital cost, replacement, and annual operating and maintenance costs of municipal infrastructure, community service, and administration) as a tool for assessing the fiscal performance of major development proposals, area plans, and Urban Area Boundary adjustments.
		9 - 3 Maple Ridge will consider establishing a separate Municipal Infrastructure Replacement Reserve Fund to pay for the replacement of aging municipal infrastructure.
	9.1.3 Waste Reduction and Recycling	9 - 7 Maple Ridge will encourage the reduction of solid waste generation by promoting the goal of working toward zero waste which promotes source reduction, reuse, recycling and composting, and will continue to participate in Regional and Provincial programs aimed at reducing waste generation.
		9 - 8 Maple Ridge, in co-operation with Regional and Provincial authorities and agencies, will consider providing a comprehensive recycling depot that accepts a wide range of commodities.
		9 - 9 Maple Ridge will continue to promote waste reduction and to ensure responsible management of District waste in its corporate practices, including the selection of products that contain recycled materials in its purchasing practices.
<i>Natural Resource Protection Sector – Trees within natural and urban areas improve air quality by capturing CO2 and in-turn producing oxygen</i>		
4.0 Community Services	4.1.2 Community Wellness & Cultural Services	4 - 8 Maple Ridge will ensure that parks, leisure and cultural facilities and services are provided for in the changing and growing community in accordance with the Maple Ridge Parks, Recreation and Cultural Master Plan taking into account the joint delivery of services in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.
		4 - 9 Maple Ridge will partner with Regional and Provincial agencies, and neighbouring municipalities to advance the implementation of the Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows Sector Plan for the Regional Greenways System, 2005.
		4 - 10 Maple Ridge recognizes that access to parks and green spaces greatly enhances community health and individual quality of life, and will continue to maintain and enhance the large network of trails and green space.
5.0 Natural Features	5.2 Environmental Management Model	5 - 1 Maple Ridge will build upon existing information and practices in the development of an environmental management model that will inform the land use planning process to enable the assessment, monitoring and management of ecosystems and natural features within the municipality.
		5 - 2 Maple Ridge will assess the scope of studies necessary to implement the environmental management model and will identify components as part of the annual business planning process.
		5 - 3 Maple Ridge will continue to participate in Regional, Provincial, and Federal programs that contribute to the overall health of the District's ecosystems and protection of its natural features, watercourses and open space.
		5 - 6 Maple Ridge will work toward achieving the goal of a positive benefit for the District's natural features by designating Conservation areas and by mitigating the potential for habitat impacts with enhancement, restoration, environmental monitoring and other alternatives that are acceptable to the municipality.
		5 - 7 Maple Ridge will work in co-operation with Regional, Provincial, and Federal authorities and plans that contribute to the management and protection of the District's natural features, and may include but are not limited to the Fraser River Estuary Management Plan, Blue Mountain Provincial Forest Recreation Management Strategy, Blaney Bog Regional Park, the Kanaka Creek Regional Park Management Plan, and the policies and regulations of the Agricultural Land Commission.
	5 - 8 Maple Ridge will continue to protect watercourses by requiring landowners who are either subdividing or rezoning properties within or adjacent to lands or watercourses identified on the Natural Features Schedule C or designated as Conservation on Schedule "B" of the Official Community Plan, to provide a portion of lands as park land through the development process. At the discretion of Council the following options can be provided: a) the area can be dedicated as park land and be designated as "Conservation"; b) land can be protected through a conservation covenant and payment is made to the Municipality in an amount that equals the market value of up to 5% of the land that may be required for park land; or c) combination of parkland dedication and conservation covenant.	
	5.3 Land Resources	5 - 9 Maple Ridge will identify significant ecosystems and natural features throughout the municipality as <i>Conservation</i> on the Natural Features Schedule "C", Schedule "B" of the Official Community Plan, or adopted area plans. The Natural Features Schedule will also identify environmentally sensitive areas, open space, floodplains, hazard lands, the Fraser Escarpment Area, watercourses, and other natural features, to enable their protection and to minimize the risk of injury or damage to residents and to property.

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<i>Natural Resource Protection Sector – Trees within natural and urban areas improve air quality by capturing CO2 and in-turn producing oxygen</i>		
5.0 Natural Features	5.3 Land Resources	5 - 10 Maple Ridge residents have consistently emphasized the importance of preservation of natural features. A Natural Features Development Permit Area is established for the preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of natural features within the community. Development Permit guidelines will also be prepared for hazard lands and environmentally sensitive areas identified on the Natural Features Schedule “C” or adopted area plans, in order to minimize disturbances and negative impacts that may occur as the result of development activities.
		5 - 11 Maple Ridge will require environmental impact assessments to be completed where rezoning or subdivision is proposed within or adjacent to natural features or significant lands identified on the Natural Features Schedule “C” or adopted area plans. The environmental impact assessment must be prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional.
		5 - 12 Maple Ridge will encourage soil retention and will limit activities that contribute to soil erosion, instability and sedimentation by requiring mitigation techniques to be identified as part of the development review process and implemented and monitored during the construction process.
		5 - 13 Maple Ridge will promote the retention of urban and mature trees and of natural forests and woodland areas, and ensure that additional trees and plant material are provided as part of all development proposals. To enhance the ecological integrity of the District, the use of native trees, plants and nature-scape principles will also be encouraged.
		5 - 14 Maple Ridge will continue to pursue initiatives and to co-operate with authorities, agencies and stakeholders in the planning and management of forested areas within the municipality.
		5 - 15 Maple Ridge will continue to encourage public access and controlled use of dykes, shorelines, ravines, watercourses and forests and woodland areas on public lands where such activity will not impact the health or functioning of ecosystems or natural areas.
		5 - 16 Maple Ridge will identify and promote the enhancement of greenway corridors to improve connectivity throughout the municipality, as wildlife migration corridors, alternative transportation and recreation trail networks, and eco-tourism opportunities.
		5 - 20 Development should be directed in such a manner to preserve large areas of open space, significant features, and environmentally sensitive lands.
		5 - 21 Patterns of density should be encouraged to achieve a mosaic of development sensitive to the natural contours of the land, with retention of mid-slope forested areas and density increases towards upland flat or valley bottom areas. The natural crest of a hill should be respected and development should be set back sufficiently to maintain the slope of the crest and the vegetation along it. Denser forms of horizontal development should be permitted along hillsides only where they can be off-set by sufficiently large open areas and where building modules can be broken into smaller units and carefully sited.
		5 - 22 Landscape disturbance should be minimized by retaining trees and natural vegetation as much as possible and requiring replanting or enhanced planting as a condition of development; providing a minimum of cuts and fills and limiting their depths, minimizing terracing and earth grading; blending graded areas with natural slope; and minimizing the amount of exposed raw earth by phased development and on-site controls.
	5.4 Water Resources	5 - 28 Maple Ridge will consider the preparation of watershed management plans that integrate watercourse protection, stormwater management, and sediment or erosion controls on an ecosystem basis.
		5 - 29 Maple Ridge will identify the watersheds of the District and will protect significant municipal watercourses such as the Alouette River, Kanaka Creek and Whonnock Creek systems, by identifying each on the Natural Features Schedule of the Official Community Plan.
		5 - 30 Maple Ridge regards the preservation of creeks and wetlands as important and will identify them on the Natural Features Schedule C of the Official Community Plan. A Natural Features Development Permit Area has been established for the preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment. The Development Permit Area includes all lands designated Conservation on Schedule B or an Area Plan of the Official Community Plan for all lands within 50 metres of the top of bank of watercourses or wetlands as identified on Schedule C.
5 - 31 Maple Ridge will continue to apply adaptive protection measures and the guidelines established through the Streamside Setback Assessment Map, to protect the District’s watercourses, ponds and connected wetlands, and will require enhancement and rehabilitation of lands within and adjacent to identified natural features and environmentally sensitive areas as part of the development process.		
5 - 32 Maple Ridge will work in partnership with agencies, authorities and stakeholders to consider the identification and protection for stream headwaters, well water supply streams, and wetland areas throughout the municipality and those located on Provincial Crown Lands.		
5.5 Air Quality	5 - 40 Maple Ridge will promote energy efficiency to reduce air and greenhouse gas emissions by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) participating in emissions management programs such as the Greater Vancouver Regional District air quality management program; d) encouraging alternative transportation initiatives, promoting ‘clean’ transportation options, and encouraging the use of public transit; c) promoting green space and natural areas; d) exploring opportunities for non-fossil fuel energy efficient systems in municipal buildings and infrastructure; e) maintaining and enhancing the District’s forests and woodland areas; and f) encouraging tree retention and tree protection programs. 	
	5.5 Preparing for Climate Change	5 - 40 Maple Ridge will promote energy efficiency to reduce air and greenhouse gas emissions by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) participating in emissions management programs such as the Greater Vancouver Regional District air quality management program; f) encouraging alternative transportation initiatives, promoting ‘clean’ transportation options, and encouraging the use of public transit; c) promoting green space and natural areas; d) exploring opportunities for non-fossil fuel energy efficient systems in municipal buildings and infrastructure; e) maintaining and enhancing the District’s forests and woodland areas; and f) encouraging tree retention and tree protection programs.

Note: *These Official Community Plan policies are further supported by the policies in the Silver Valley Area Plan, the Town Centre Area Plan, and the Development Permits Area Guidelines, particularly those for Watercourse Protection, Natural Features, and the Town Centre.*