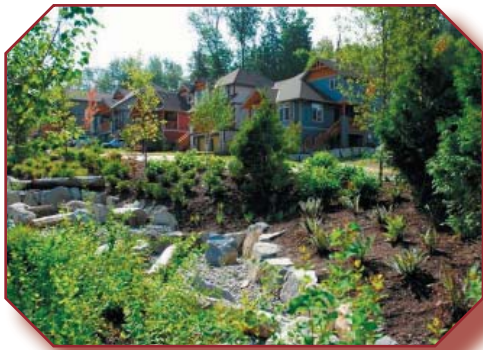


# Sustainability Action Plan

## Implementing Sustainability Principles



November 15, 2007



*Deep Roots  
Greater Heights*

Report prepared by



**The Sheltair Group**

# Overview of the Corporate Strategic Plan

## **MISSION: A safe, livable and sustainable community for our present and future citizens.**

The Corporate Strategic Plan was approved in June 2007 and sets the direction for the organization. While the District has undertaken many sustainability initiatives in the past, this plan firmly entrenches sustainability as an underlying principle in all municipal operations. Six value statements have been defined in the Plan. Together, these value statements articulate the District's underlying principles for doing business:

### **VALUE STATEMENTS**

**Leadership:** To encourage innovation, creativity, and initiative.

**Service:** To be fair, friendly, and helpful.

**Reputation:** To stress excellence, integrity, accountability, and honesty.

**Human Resources:** To recognize that our people are our most valuable resource.

**Community:** To respect and promote our community.

**Stewardship:** To consider the long-term consequences of actions, think broadly across issues, disciplines and boundaries and act accordingly.

With these values as a foundation, nine strategic focus areas, along with vision statements for each were identified by Council.

Key strategies for each of the strategic focus areas were also developed. The key strategies are actions intended to assist the District in achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan through their departmental business plans.

### **STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS**

- 1. Environment**
- 2. Transportation**
- 3. Smart Managed Growth**
- 4. Safe and Livable Community**
- 5. Financial Management**
- 6. Governance**
- 7. Community Relations**
- 8. Inter-government Relations / Networks**
- 9. Economic Development**

This document outlines a list of actions ("What's next?") developed by staff in a cross-departmental collaborative process. The actions build on the many pre-existing initiatives undertaken over the last several years (a sampling of which are highlighted in this document) and the new strategies identified in the Corporate Strategic Plan. The document also identifies future steps for each strategic focus area.

## **VISION 2025**

The District of Maple Ridge is among the most sustainable communities in the world. As a community committed to working toward achieving carbon neutrality, residents experience the value of a strong and vibrant local economy and the benefits of an ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship and creation of stable and special neighbourhoods. Maple Ridge is a world leading example of thoughtful development and a socially cohesive community, especially as it relates to the use of leading edge "environmental technologies," social networks and economic development. Other municipalities consistently reference the District of Maple Ridge for its innovative approaches to dealing with seemingly intractable challenges.

# Overview of Sustainability

The most quoted definition of sustainability is from the 1987 Brundtland Commission:

*“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”*

## CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABILITY

- population growth
- increased energy use
- urban sprawl
- increased water use
- unrecyclable refuse

There has been an increasing awareness of the limits of the planet to supply resources and absorb wastes and pollution. Out of this concern came the concept known as sustainable development, or sustainability. Achieving sustainability involves meeting human needs with socio-economic systems that have less impact on ecological systems.

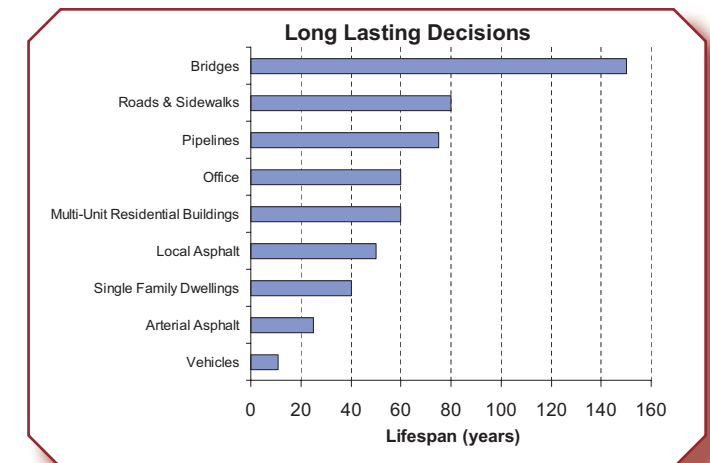
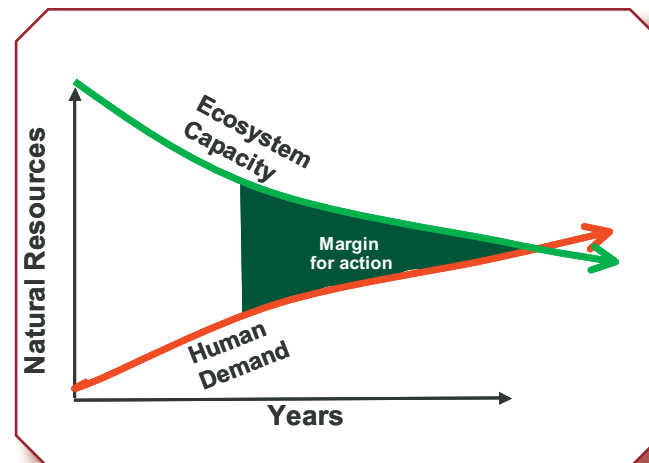
Maple Ridge has made a commitment to pursue policies and practices that encourage and promote sustainability in the community and in its corporate practices. This commitment is reflected in the 2007 Corporate Strategic Plan. The Corporate Strategic Plan lays the framework for finding ways to balance human needs with nature’s limited productivity.

The District recognizes its important role in ensuring the sustainability of the community since it is respon-

sible for many decisions that influence the community’s impact on the planet including: managing land use, water, waste and other municipal services, as well as the infrastructure required to provide these services.

The District, therefore, has significant jurisdiction over making changes that can support sustainability through both infrastructure and policy changes.

Incorporating sustainability into the Corporate Strategic Plan requires a long range approach to planning since the legacy of the planning choices can last for hundreds of years. The figure below demonstrates this legacy. Having a long term vision creates a thoughtful process to consider the impact of the choices made today on the future.



## CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON NEUTRALITY

### BECOMING CARBON NEUTRAL

1. Reducing energy usage and emissions from transportation, buildings, equipment and processes.
2. Using renewable energy sources.
3. Offsetting the remaining emissions in a responsible carbon project, or by purchasing carbon credits.

One of the major contributing factors to achieving sustainability in Maple Ridge is addressing climate change.

Climate change is the result of greenhouse gases warming the atmosphere. This is largely due to marked rise of greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels. The rise in greenhouse gases has caused extra heat to be trapped in the atmosphere which has led to rising temperatures globally. The impacts of climate change are believed to be significant. They are outlined below.

To address climate change, Maple Ridge is finding ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions both in

corporate operations and in the community. These reductions are part of the District's commitment to becoming *carbon neutral* and reducing the District's *carbon footprint* (for definitions see the side panel).

Carbon neutrality involves measuring the greenhouse gas emissions that come from government operations such as buildings and fleet vehicles and then reducing those emissions to net zero. This can be achieved by reducing emissions where possible, by purchasing carbon offsets to compensate for its greenhouse gas emissions or by developing local projects to offset emissions. Such projects may include converting to energy efficient buildings and replacing old fleet vehicles and buses with hybrids.

### IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

- **Increased flooding**
- **Changes in water supplies to cities**
- **Increase in number and intensity of storms**
- **Longer, hotter summers**
- **Shorter, wetter winters**
- **Agricultural production changes**
- **Increase in new and tropical diseases and other health care issues**
- **Fluctuation in supply and price of hydro-electricity**
- **Land and aquatic species changes, and**
- **Widespread impacts on the economy.**

A *carbon footprint* is the total amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other greenhouse gases emitted over the full life cycle of a product or service.

Being *carbon neutral*, or *carbon neutrality*, refers to neutral (meaning zero) total carbon release, brought about by balancing the amount of carbon released with the amount captured.

A *carbon offset* is the act of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by capturing or storing the CO<sub>2</sub>, or reducing emissions in some way. Offset projects include renewable energy projects, energy conservation and capture, and tree planting.

# ENVIRONMENT

## Vision for 2025

Maple Ridge continues to lead the nation in preserving and enhancing its community's quality of life, air, water and land. The District, long a front-runner in the protection of environmentally sensitive areas, is one of the first municipalities to promote green-building and innovative technologies in residential and commercial construction and infrastructure. The District has won a number of awards for its practices relating to energy use in civic buildings and the municipal fleet and its support of community waste reduction activities.

## A sampling of accomplishments so far!

The District has taken many actions to protect and enhance the natural assets of the community. By-laws are in place to ban land-clearing fires and the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes, to protect trees and watercourses, to govern the removal and deposit of soil, and to control erosion and sediment flows. The community will benefit from almost 300,000 newly planted trees at no cost as part of a carbon offset program funded through corporate sponsorships. This venture earned the District the 2007 Environmental Stewardship Award from the British Columbia Landscape Nursery Association (BCLNA).

The District's partnership with the Ridge Meadows Recycling Society is helping divert tons of recycla-

bles from the landfill. The list of materials accepted at the depot continues to expand. Electronics Drop-Off Day was a huge success with 13 tons of used computers and televisions dropped off all in one day.

The operation of municipal business is also becoming greener. The vehicle fleet now includes 14 hybrid vehicles; the District is purchasing low sulphur fuel; used computers are gifted or donated to the school district where possible and recycled as a last resort; and scrap metal is recycled in a win-win arrangement that saves taxpayer dollars and supports the recycling society.

## Celebrating achievements!

Maple Ridge currently has the largest working municipal stream mapping and inventory information system in the Province, with over 550 kilometres of watercourse and 250 kilometres of greenway trail networks integrated into a municipal watershed management information system that includes ponds, wetlands, heritage features, wildlife sightings, trees and endangered or threatened species, a satellite image overlay, and hundreds of photographs identifying strategic locations.

Partnerships, education and employment opportunities have involved local stewardship groups, Katzie First Nation members, secondary, college and university students, fishermen, Boy Scouts, and community members, spreading an awareness of the District's environmental initiatives, and involving others in the management of natural resources.

The system is used by federal, provincial, and regional agencies, and has established new standards in several areas. It will be used in support of the 2010 Olympic Games as a model for the Resort Municipality of Whistler and to identify replanting areas for the Provincial Carbon Reduction Program.

As legislation evolves around riparian area management, the District has firmly established guidelines based upon this detailed management inventory that provide consistency and a streamlined process for development decisions in these sensitive areas.



## What's next?

**1. Develop an inventory of corporate greenhouse gas emissions.** An inventory will determine the carbon footprint of municipal operations, setting a baseline against which emission reduction efforts can be measured.

**2. Establish targets for achieving carbon neutrality.** A forecast of emissions and interim targets will be developed and integrated into a Community Energy Plan, to identify further actions for implementation.

**3. Create a policy that all new municipal buildings achieve minimum performance targets.** The District will research the most appropriate building rating system for integration into a municipal building policy.

**4. Implement the E3 Program for the municipal fleet.** The Program assists municipalities to track their fuel energy use, identify targets, establish measures to reduce fuel use and switch to alternative fuels where relevant.

**5. Create green building programs for residential, commercial and industrial buildings.** The District will develop voluntary or incentive-based programs to

promote green buildings in the community.

**6. Identify and negotiate a partnership for a high profile demonstration project.** The Leisure Centre is a potential candidate for an energy efficiency retrofit. The selected project will be promoted in the community as a demonstration project and an example of government leadership.

**7. Create new Development Permit Area (DPA) Guidelines to protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).** Development Permit guidelines can ensure that ESAs are protected in new developments. This will protect and preserve natural features and assets.

**8. Initiate an Agricultural Plan.** An Agricultural Plan will protect the agricultural land base and promote related opportunities by recognizing this sector as a viable contributor to local employment and the regional economy.

**9. Set aggressive waste diversion targets and develop programs to implement them.** Set interim targets towards Metro Vancouver's zero waste target and develop programs to meet them.

## Future Steps: Financing Energy Efficiency

New provincial building codes are expected to improve the energy efficiency of new buildings in BC; however, these codes will not affect the many pre-existing buildings in the community. One of the barriers to retrofitting pre-existing buildings is the up-front cost. Some municipalities have addressed this barrier by providing loans for energy efficiency retrofits. The Toronto Atmospheric Fund is one example. In 1991, Toronto City Council established the Toronto Atmospheric Fund (TAF) to finance initiatives that combat climate change and improve air quality. All projects funded are Toronto-based. The TAF provides both grants and loans and also completes its own special projects. TAF leverages its resources by working with all sectors of the community, city departments, agencies and other levels of government to develop innovative local actions that lead to significant emission reduction results.

# TRANSPORTATION

## Vision for 2025

Maple Ridge has been able to accommodate tremendous population and economic growth by planning growth around multi-modal transportation routes. The District worked very closely with the regional transportation authority to ensure that employment centres as well as neighbourhoods accepting increased density or new medium density neighbourhoods would be well served by public transit and a rapid transit metro line. In addition, a third east-west route through the community was added to assist with commercial and private vehicle traffic and all-day, two-way commuter rail service is now a reality. The downtown area is an excellent example of creating a pedestrian friendly environment that enables citizens and visitors to easily explore the uptown shops and services before taking a casual stroll down to the riverfront promenade.

## A sampling of accomplishments so far!

The District has taken many steps to provide greater transportation choices to citizens. Rather than relying on the automobile to get from one place to the next, options available to citizens include taking public transit on expanded bus services or bicycling on over 21 kilometres of bicycle lanes.

In consultation with Translink and the public, an Area Transit Plan was developed to modify existing routes making them more efficient. The plan called for significant improvements to both local and regional transit services, while introducing a Community Shuttle Service and a new peak-period bus service between Haney Place and the Braid Sky Train Sta-

tion. As well, construction has just begun on the eagerly anticipated Town Centre Transit Hub to be completed in spring of 2008.

The partnership between the District, RCMP, School District No. 42, citizens and ICBC to form the Safer City Program has been successful in incorporating road safety into all District initiatives and aims to make road safety a priority in Maple Ridge. The program is focused on the three "E's": Engineering, Enforcement, and Education, and is aimed at achieving safer roads for all road users including motorists, cyclists, pedestrians and other non-conventional road users.

## Celebrating achievements!

Prepared in 1994, the Bikeways Plan includes a network of inter-connected bicycle routes, comprehensive design guidelines, supporting programs, a community involvement strategy and a staged implementation strategy.

The Bicycle Advisory Committee was formed to consider values such as partnerships, safety, quality of life, forward looking thinking, positive forces for change and an environmentally sustainable community. The Committee's Mission statement commits Maple Ridge to being recognized as a bicycle friendly community that promotes cycling as a sport, recreation and viable mode of transportation.

Since 1995, many aspects of the Bikeways Plan have been implemented. Opportunities through development and partnership funding have added numerous on and off street bikeways and trails. With the Committee's persistence many improvements have been made in the biking community, including access to bridges, bike loops, airport tunnel and accessibility to a whole network of bike lanes.



## What's next?

Transportation focus throughout BC is on providing safe alternate routes to the busy highways. In Maple Ridge, several parallel routes are available to those heavily traveled by vehicle. By closing several gaps the District will be able to provide routes for commuting, shopping and recreation. Information on mapping and events is readily available on-line through web sites and when combined with the broader transportation routes and bus bike rack system, the whole lower mainland is opening to safe and sustainable bicycle transportation.

Future plans include implementation of Dial-a-Bus service Friday and Saturday evenings in core areas of Maple Ridge; a trial recreational service to Golden Ears Provincial Park on weekends during the summer and an Albion West Coast Express Station with park-and-ride facilities to serve east Maple Ridge.

Future actions of the Bikeways Plan include increasing off-road routes, influencing development plans, promoting cycling, leveraging funding and designating routes that are safe/marked. In addition, there are plans to create commuter bike routes that parallel major transportation corridors such as Lougheed Highway and Haney Bypass. Specific actions include:

**10. Create an Active Transportation Plan.** The District will develop an Active Transportation Plan which will outline ways active transportation can be increased as a means of reducing vehicle travel.

**11. Create a Smart Commute Program.** This program will be designed and implemented to encourage municipal employees to make their way to and from work in a more sustainable way.

### Future Steps: Community Wide Smart Commute Program

The District will be developing and implementing a Smart Commute Program for municipal staff in the upcoming year. The learnings from the staff program can be shared with other major employers in the District and support provided for expanding the program throughout the community. A Smart Commute Program can consist of:

- Carpool / Ride-matching Service
- Preferential carpool parking
- Emergency Ride Home Program
- Improved transit service or shuttles
- Sale of transit tickets / passes
- Bike lockers

An important aspect of a Smart Commute Program is providing information and education and promoting the program through fun events such as Commuter Challenges, or as in Ontario; the 'Ontario World Record Walk' in which Smart Commute partners broke the world record for the most number of people walking 1 km simultaneously - 197,284 simultaneous walkers participated.

# SMART MANAGED GROWTH

## Vision for 2025

Maple Ridge has risen to the challenge of accepting growth while at the same time protecting the quality of life and diversity of residential options that is so important to citizens. By densifying many neighbourhoods, the District has maintained the rural character and small-town feel of the community. Specific neighbourhood plans supported by design guidelines and attention to the natural landscape were key to retaining the character of neighbourhoods that experienced in-fill. A vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, accessible downtown is the heart and gathering place for the community. Shopping, educational facilities and utility infrastructure were developed concurrent with the new or densified neighbourhoods.

## A sampling of accomplishments so far!

Maintaining the delicate balance between the needs and wants of a rapidly growing community can be a challenge. Citizens demand greater access to more services while wanting to preserve the small town look and feel. The District's Official Community Plan regulates growth, ensuring the District moves forward with smart, well thought out developments while preserving the precious quality of life.

Maple Ridge was the first community in BC to engage in the Smart Growth on the Ground program in partnership with the Design Centre for Sustainability at UBC, the Real Estate Institute of BC, and Smart Growth BC. The program has led to substantial policy and regulatory changes in support of a sustainable downtown area in Maple Ridge. This policy won the District a 2007 Smarty Award from Smart Growth BC.

On encouragement from the District, local area developers have undertaken innovative stormwater management solutions in the Silver Valley area. These approaches use a mix of conventional stormwater systems and natural based approaches involving site source controls such as infiltration and exfiltration to help capture, treat, and maximize infiltration to the ground and the integration of numer-

ous other best management practices including rain gardens, eco swales, exfiltration, and biofiltration. Natural drainage systems provide multiple ecological, economic, and social benefits as well as natural scenic values. These stormwater and rainwater management standards are now a requirement of the District's Watercourse Protection Bylaw for all new developments.

The District offers tax exemptions for high density residential developments (over four stories) and as an additional incentive the exemption can be larger if contractors build a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certified Building. In addition to offering incentives, the District has set an example in the community in that the Randy Herman Centre for Community Safety has been renovated and certified in accordance with LEED Silver standards.

Education is a large part of Smart Managed Growth and the District holds semi-annual Builders Forums and Workshops designed to educate and share information with local contractors and developers. These meetings are also beneficial towards the networking and linking of local area contractors.

## Celebrating achievements!

As municipal assets such as roads and sewers age, they need to be replaced. If they are aging faster than they are replaced, this is said to be an "infrastructure deficit". Canadian municipalities are facing an infrastructure deficit of over \$60 billion by some estimates. The District is addressing the problem of its infrastructure deficit by contributing an incrementing 1% of taxation each year toward sustaining existing infrastructure, beginning in 2008. If the District continues on this path for 25 years, the infrastructure deficit will be cut in half. In addition to directing District funds to deal with the deficit, staff continually look for ways to extend lifecycles and minimize maintenance requirements. While a gap will still remain, the District will be well on the road to addressing a problem that today seems insurmountable.

## What's next?

**12. Create a Financing Reserve for Sustainability-related Projects.** The District will establish a funding reserve to finance environmental projects with strong business cases. Repayments to the reserve will be made through savings in operating budgets.

**13. Develop and implement a TBL decision analysis process for evaluating new infrastructure investments.** A process incorporating Triple Bottom Line (TBL) accounting principles will be developed and implemented to ensure a balanced perspective and consideration of life cycle costs.



## Future Steps: Triple Bottom Line Decisions

Triple Bottom Line or TBL is a way to measure economic, social and environmental success. TBL broadens the consideration of success beyond the conventional economic analysis. While the concept has been around for some time, implementation can be very challenging. With the ratification of the United Nations and International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) TBL standard for urban and community accounting in early 2007, there is a more consistent approach to public sector full cost accounting.

The City of Hamilton developed a TBL approach for the GRIDS (Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy) initiative. The objective was to develop a TBL toolkit to evaluate the sustainability of long-term growth management options. This toolkit included:

- a TBL Evaluation Framework,
- a TBL Evaluation Toolkit covering sustainability appraisal and scoring, flowcharting, glossary of terms, considerations, and a bibliography, and
- communication materials.

The TBL process is also supported by an Annual Sustainability Indicators Report, that serves as a foundation upon which benchmarks are established and data is updated and monitored to track progress.

# SAFE & LIVABLE COMMUNITY

## Vision for 2025

A community development model is at the heart of the District's success in meeting the safety, security and social needs of the citizenry. By networking with other levels of government, the RCMP, the School Board, community agencies and business groups and by capacity building with not-for-profits and neighbourhood groups all Maple Ridge residents have their basic health, safety, shelter, food and income needs met; have access to community services to assist them in achieving their full potential; are able to actively participate in civic processes; and can contribute to establishing an exceptionally strong community.

## A sampling of accomplishments so far!

A safe and livable community speaks to both personal safety and quality of life. This quality of life extends to businesses and institutions and less for fortunate citizens. A top priority to the District is that citizens feel safe and can be safe while having access to a variety of services in the community.

In 2007 the District created and produced a "Walk Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows" book. This glossy, soft covered book is a comprehensive collection of local trails and maps in the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows areas. The abundance of trails, paths, dykes and parklands that are available to the "walker" is truly an asset that contributes to the quality of life in Maple Ridge and must be explored to be fully appreciated.

This publication of walking routes was developed by Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Parks and Leisure Services in partnership with the Fraser Health Authority to support the BC Healthy Living Alliance target, designed to increase the physical activity of BC citizens by 20% by 2010. Additionally, this colourful, well laid out book will increase the users knowledge of

local walking venues and encourages active exploration of the natural beauty that surrounds us while building or maintaining an active lifestyle through walking.

The District supported the 2007 launch of the Business Improvement Association (BIA). The BIA plays an important role in the downtown core and acts on behalf of all businesses and property owners in matters such as promotion, festivals, crime prevention, security, cleanliness, transportation, parking and advocacy. It encourages and promotes business through various cooperative projects, including festivals, events, safety, security, banners, street design and furniture, garbage receptacles, cleanup, graffiti prevention, street and walkway lighting, holiday decorations and other operations which aim to improve the downtown core in general.

The formation of the Holistic Homeless Support Group, a collaborative effort between the District, the Salvation Army, Outreach and other community groups has been successful aiding the District's lesser fortunate individuals.

## Celebrating achievements!

Through consultation with the RCMP and citizens, the Police Master Plan was developed. This plan provides a blue print designed to identify ways in which the District will continue to work toward a safe and livable environment. The plan also outlines the direction for policing in the community for the foreseeable future. Public safety in the downtown core is a main concern for District and RCMP, and as a result an increased police presence is felt by the implementation of foot patrols and a 2-member RCMP unit assigned specifically to the downtown core which has dramatically raised their visibility. The RCMP have also put into action the Integrated Bar Watch program in an effort to deter gang activity from infiltrating Maple Ridge establishments. The District has also taken the lead in integrating those police units for which it makes sense: Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) and Emergency Response Team (ERT). Public safety will also be enhanced through a community safety officers program which the District has been selected to pilot.

## What's next?

**14. Create a parks acquisition and development funding strategy.** As part of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Master Plan update, a long-term strategy to fund the acquisition and development of parkland will be developed.

**15. Develop a Housing Action Plan.** A Housing Action Plan will be developed to set out specific strategies and objectives for meeting established targets (pending the outcome of Draft Regional Affordable Housing Strategy).

### Future Steps: Affordable Housing

The District has committed to developing a Housing Action Plan. This Plan will be consistent with the new Draft Regional Affordable Housing Strategy (July 2007) released by Metro Vancouver in which three key goals are to:

- Increase the supply and diversity of modest cost housing
- Eliminate homelessness across the region
- Meet the needs of low income renters

The draft strategy includes objectives for each of these goals and action items for the greater Vancouver region. Proposed municipal actions are described for each goal, which essentially require municipalities to demonstrate the actions taken through Official Community Plans, Regional Context Statements and Housing Action Plans that specifically address these goals.

A number of housing planning tools are available to maintain existing or create new affordable housing, including:

- Density bonusing
- Housing agreements
- Comprehensive development zoning
- Support for resident initiatives to increase density in single family areas
- Building Code equivalencies for secondary suites
- Lease of municipal land at market or at below-market values
- Housing reserve funds
- Rental housing conversion protection: standards of maintenance bylaws, demolition control bylaws, unit replacement policies, assistance for displaced renters policies

Actions a municipality can take include provision of grants and subsidies, direct provision of housing, partnerships, and research (see sidebar).

#### **Grants and Subsidies:**

Provision of grants to non-profit housing providers, write-down of sale of municipal lands, and the costs of managing partnerships.

#### **Direct Provision of Housing:**

Some municipalities act as developers and builders of affordable housing, financed through capital funding. Currently the only social housing being built in the region is municipally driven (e.g. Woodwards Building).

#### **Partnerships:**

Municipalities partner with senior governments and with non-profit societies in the provision of housing.

#### **Research:**

Municipalities carry out residential capacity studies, research models for dealing with NIMBY, maintain inventories of housing stock, and provide analysis of residential building permits.



# FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

## Vision for 2025

The District's award-winning financial, investment, purchasing and human resources policies and practices are tightly aligned with and contribute to the District's continued vision of sustainability.

## A sampling of accomplishments so far!

The District is accountable to the citizens it serves and must provide high quality municipal services in a cost effective and efficient manner. Finding ways to provide quality services while reducing the property tax burden for taxpayers is a top priority for Council.

The District's Financial Sustainability Plan lays the groundwork for the continuance of high quality services and the provision of a legacy for future generations. This will position the Municipality to

meet financial obligations and take advantage of opportunities that arise and it also means that residents can look forward to equitable and affordable taxation.

The District is developing facility life-cycle plans as an ongoing project and on an as needed and applicable basis. Additionally, the District has developed comprehensive equipment replacement policies and an equipment replacement fund.

## Celebrating achievements!

Council directed a review of the existing fire service delivery model and asked for advice on what the Fire Department will need to look like in order to serve a growing community. A master planning committee collaboratively developed a list of core services the department should deliver; identified the training requirements to deliver these core services; researched and developed recommended emergency response standards; prepared a recommended frequency of fire inspections; proposed a list of proactive public education initiatives; quantified the statutory requirements for fire hall and equipment maintenance; and identified specific initiatives aimed at reducing property damage and personal injury as a result of fires.

Many positive changes have evolved as a result of the Maple Ridge Fire Department Master Plan, the most significant being the composite model of Fire Department staffing which included the hiring of full-time fire fighters and a significant component of paid on call firefighters. In addition, a residential sprinkler bylaw has been created and implemented, a community smoke alarm program has been developed and alarm monitoring of newly constructed apartment buildings is ongoing.



# GOVERNANCE

## A sampling of accomplishments so far!

Council is committed to having an open relationship with citizens. This is accomplished through public forums where citizens can address Council on any issue at Committee of the Whole meetings and other public forums held on a variety of topics. All District business and financial planning sessions are held in meetings that the public are invited to attend.

Sustainability is a substantial issue that is at the forefront of everyone's thoughts. With that in mind, in April 2007, Council decided to revise the Strategic Plan so that it is more aligned to address not only environmental sustainability, but also social and economic sustainability in the District. By applying sustainable best practices to municipal operations and services, the District is demonstrating commitment and action that can be adopted by citizens, developers, business operators and others that will broaden the positive impact throughout the community.

In an effort to provide further access to the public, the District is now posting Council meeting agendas and minutes on the District's website. This is also a step forward in the reduction of paper usage by not printing out unnecessary copies.



## Vision for 2025

Maple Ridge is a leader in voter turnout for Municipal Elections as more than half of those eligible to vote, exercise that right. Elected officials and District staff continue to confidently lead the community on its journey to achieving its vision. Meaningful engagement of staff, stakeholders and citizens ensures quality decision making. Politicians and staff model the District's values and consistently deliver on the commitments, goals and objectives stated in the Strategic Plan and Business Plans.

## Celebrating achievements!

The District's Corporate Strategic Plan was revised in April 2007 to give clear direction for the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the community and its resources. The mission statement for the Strategic Plan reads "A safe, livable and sustainable community for our present and future citizens".

A pleasant, forward thinking adjunct to the revised Strategic Plan are the Vision 2025 Statements in which the District transports itself into the future where the vision has become reality. There is a Vision 2025 Statement for the overall direction of the Strategic Plan and statements for each strategic area. Vision statements are meant to inspire citizens and stakeholders to become involved and take part in realizing the vision. Key strategies noted below vision statements outline how the District will achieve those goals.

# COMMUNITY RELATIONS

## Vision for 2025

Maple Ridge residents and business owners report very high levels of satisfaction with the District's efforts to keep citizens informed of municipal plans and projects and to ensure citizens are aware of when and how they can participate in civic processes.

## A sampling of accomplishments so far!

The District is focused on strengthening relationships with its citizens and business people. The enhancement of citizen access to District resources is important to building and maintaining that strength.

The District successfully launched a redesigned website in 2007. The new website offers the user access to enhanced mapping resources, homeowner grant application, subscription to a monthly community newsletter and a great array of well organized information previously not available to the public on the internet.

The District was awarded a Community Excellence Award in the category of Best Practices, Website by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). The Best Practices category recognizes a local government in BC that has improved or revised upon an existing program or service. Municipalities and regional districts that win these prestigious awards have shown they have what it takes to innovate,

establish new partnerships, challenge conventional ways of doing business and pioneer new customer-focused practices.



## Celebrating achievements!

The District of Maple Ridge is a fast growing area with ever changing community needs. To keep in touch with the visions, perceptions and attitudes of its citizens, the District has consulted with the public in various ways, including in recent years random surveys across a representative cross section of the adult population by hiring an independent company to survey citizens on the District's behalf for the Citizens Satisfaction Survey through customer exit surveys. Surveys are a valuable tool that enable Council and municipal staff to better understand citizens' vision for the future of their community, their views on issues that need to be addressed and their priorities and satisfaction with specific municipal services.

The findings from surveys have provided valuable input to the District for the Strategic Plan, and specific municipal services planning.

## What's next?

The District currently tracks performance on key criteria and publishes this information quarterly as well as in the Annual Report. On a six-month basis, Council will assess the community's or organization's performance in relation to the Strategic Plan.

In early 2008, the District will host a round table of citizens and committee members to examine performance reports and indicators. Attendees will be asked for their views on what success means to them in each of the strategic areas as well as what they think appropriate indicators would look like.

The input received will be incorporated into performance reports that will better meet the needs of the public.



## Future Steps:

The District already has performance indicators that are published on a regular basis. As a next step, the District will consider developing a suite of sustainability indicators that broadens consideration of performance – and also look at developing both neighbourhood scale and District wide sustainability indicators.

Seattle developed sustainability indicators initially in 1998, and is currently expanding its capability to develop indicators at the neighbourhood scale along with the regional scale. Since 2003, Sustainable Seattle has been involved in the collection of data and the development of indicators at the neighbourhood level. At a neighbourhood level, Maple Ridge may consider developing sustainability indicators for the Town Centre.

There are two general approaches to developing indicators for communities; one relies on experts to determine the appropriate indicator for measuring a trend and the other relies on citizen involvement and is linked to participants' values. In the Sustainable Seattle Model, citizen values and needs drive the process but scientific data and methods provide the foundation for indicator selection to ensure that the metrics are measurable and valid.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Vision for 2025

Maple Ridge made the transition from dormitory suburb to employment magnet by carefully targeting businesses that fit within the context of the District's many neighbourhoods.

Commercial ventures were encouraged in the accessible, pedestrian-friendly downtown and at nodes along major roads; agricultural activities were enabled in District's famed rural areas; home-based businesses were encouraged and clean industry was attracted to existing and new business parks created near key transportation junctions and neighbourhoods. The District enjoys the many benefits of having the majority of its residents work in the community in which they live.

## A sampling of accomplishments so far!

The District is supportive of business location, retention and expansion efforts within the community. The Economic Development Department at the District operates at "the speed of business" with a pro-active, professional approach to attracting new investment and removing obstacles to the continued growth of local businesses. 2007 saw the successful launch of the Economic Development Department's website "investmapleridge.ca", providing a streamlined information source for doing business in Maple Ridge.

Currently, 37% of the labour force both live and work in the District of Maple Ridge - high for a suburban community. As part of the District's Official

Community Plan, an Employment Policy has been established to work in partnership with regional and provincial agencies to advance local employment opportunities. Local employment has positive impacts on traffic, the environment and citizens' quality of life. It is a priority to meet the needs of a growing community, to improve the balance of jobs-to-housing and to encourage local investment. Diversification of the tax assessment and employment base into a balanced residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural strategy is a priority for the District. Economic development is a very complex issue that requires a comprehensive approach to ensure that activities "fit" within the community context.

## Celebrating achievements!

The District has done a tremendous job of building relationships with film industry. Comprehensive Film Guidelines, which are available on the Economic Development's new website, contain all the information a production company needs to get underway to start filming in Maple Ridge. Included is information on the first steps a production firm would need to take, film permit application forms, and other pertinent information. In addition to the practical information available on the website, a dedicated Film Production Liaison is available to assist any and all productions in Maple Ridge.

Film, commercial and television production is a billion dollar industry and provides tremendous financial benefits to communities across the province, including employment of local citizens in the form of extra roles, catering companies supplying food to the film crew and the rental of citizens' properties to be included in actual films. The District is committed to ensuring Maple Ridge continues to be a destination for these production companies.

## What's next?

**16. Establish a Business Network to promote sharing of resources.** Business networking involves developing new local and regional business relationships between the private sector, government and educational institutions. These networks can facilitate more efficient use of new and existing energy, material, water, human and infrastructure resources to improve production efficiency, investment competitiveness, community and improve ecosystem health.

**17. Promote the TransLink/BCIT development as a partnership example.** This project represents a successful partnership between the District and other organizations resulting in the siting of a new facility in Maple Ridge. The partnership will be promoted as a model for further development.

**18. Establish "green" principles for the 256 Street Industrial Park.** This area is slated for development in the next few years. Rather than developing a conventional industrial park, best practices in sustainable development will be considered. Each development application will be required to submit a "green" development plan.

**19. Develop an Employee Sustainability Program.** Currently there are many initiatives to promote economic, social and environmental sustainability. Further emphasis is needed on the sustainability of employees. An Employee Sustainability Program will include training, health and wellness and succession planning to assist in dealing with the challenges of a changing work environment.

### Future Steps: Green Industrial Park

The concept of greening industrial parks has been around for about 30 years. Greening can occur with site design, infrastructure, proactively attracting certain types of business and creating networks amongst businesses for support. Many of these ideas have been tested as eco-industrial parks or networks. An eco-industrial approach can contribute to a diverse and stable local economy; increase the competitiveness and eco-efficiency of existing businesses and attract progressive, new businesses to fill identified niches. The combined result is a healthier community and surrounding ecosystem, and a more robust local economy.

- **Delta Tilbury Project:** As a result of the identification of Eco-Industrial Networking Opportunities in Greater Vancouver study, a partnership of businesses, governments and communities was formed in 2003 to foster EIN in the Tilbury industrial area. This project extends from Highways 99 to 91 and between Burns Bog and the Fraser River, and will be the second largest eco-industrial retrofit in North America with 650 businesses. DRS Earthwise, the Tilbury Eco-Industrial Partnership (TEIP) co-ordinator, is in the process of setting up a resource centre to help local businesses improve their economic and environmental performance.



# INTER-GOV'T RELATIONS/NETWORKS

## Vision for 2025

The District receives outstanding levels of support and cooperation from senior levels of government, crown agencies, the regional district, the school district, municipal neighbours,

First Nations, community groups and corporate Canada because of the strong, positive working relationships, at both the political and staff level, that have been established and nourished over the years.

## A sampling of accomplishments so far!

Intergovernmental relations and networks are imperative for the successful representation of citizens. The District prides itself on its long lasting relationships with neighbouring municipalities, including Pitt Meadows and Mission and other organizations, such as Fraser Health, ICBC, and community groups, which includes ongoing support of the Alouette Rivers Management Society (ARMS), the Ridge Meadows Recycling Society, the Kanaka Education and Environmental Partnership Society (KEEPS), and the newly formed relationship with the Business Improvement Association, among others.

Partnerships with a vast array of social service groups have helped develop a strong network that provides social assistance to citizens in need that has become the envy of other municipalities.



## Celebrating achievements!

The District of Maple Ridge has been in partnership with the Ridge Meadows Recycling Society (RMRS), a charitable non-profit organization, since 1990. As well as supplying a full range of recycling services to all residents of Maple Ridge, the recycling society is a local employer providing entry-level employment and training opportunities to 67 full and part time employees, as well as supporting work for adults with developmental disabilities at its recycling depot located in Maple Ridge.

The District's partnership with the recycling society extends itself to promotion of community participation in waste reduction activities; improving participation in recycling through collection programs, education and outreach; and promoting and increasing public awareness on recycling and related environmental issues.

RMRS is committed to progressing towards a zero waste program and to being involved with all of the new product stewardship initiatives around white goods, mercury and packaging, as well as continuing to expand partnerships with other social service agencies to provide opportunities for work experience for adults with developmental disabilities.



# Concluding Remarks

The District has been recognized for its multiple initiatives related to sustainability over the last several years. This document represents the next steps in the path towards sustainability by identifying specific actions for 2008 and future steps related to the implementation of the Corporate Strategic Plan. By taking action on implementing sustainability plans, the District is again taking a leadership role. This leadership will position the District well in terms of the Province's interest in climate change and sustainable communities and the potential programs, incentives and regulations that may arise. The performance indicators being developed by the District will ensure that progress towards sustainability is real and measurable.





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## Sustainability Initiatives Inventory (Complete/Ongoing)

This is a listing of sustainability initiatives undertaken by the District. Some items have already been completed and are now entrenched in municipal operations, while other items are slated to be completed in the near future. This list will continue to expand as we learn of new opportunities to implement sustainable practices within the District's mandate.

### Strategic Focus Area

#### Environment

Support of Rivers Day, Earth Day  
 Integrated Stormwater Management Plan (future)  
 Electronic payment of accounts payable  
 Online distribution of monthly management statements  
 Online Home Owner Grant Application  
 Burning Banned for land clearing  
 Employee bike lockers / showers  
 Employee Ride-Share Program / Carpooling Incentives  
 Enabling "work from home"  
 IS packaging materials & electronics  
 Reduced power consumption  
 Used computers to the school district  
 Low-flush toilets for all new construction  
 Fleet conversion to hybrid vehicles (2007-14)  
 Purchase of low sulphur fuel  
 Tree Chipping Collection Program  
 Works yard metals to recycling depot  
 Cemetery Master Plan under development  
 Community Ecosystem Restoration Initiative – tree planting  
 Employee Energy Awareness Program  
 Lighting (buildings, sports fields & traffic control)  
 Pesticide Bylaw to ban use of cosmetic pesticides

#### Lead Department

Administration  
 Engineering  
 Finance  
 Finance  
 Finance  
 Fire  
 Human Resources  
 Human Resources  
 Human Resources  
 Information Services  
 Information Services  
 Information Services  
 Licences, Permits and Bylaws  
 Operations  
 Operations  
 Operations  
 Operations  
 Parks & Facilities  
 Parks & Facilities  
 Parks & Facilities  
 Parks & Facilities  
 Parks & Facilities



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## Sustainability Initiatives Inventory (Complete/Ongoing)

Whonnock Pier construction & habitat restoration	Parks & Facilities
Dedication of Conservation Lands on rezoning	Planning
Downtown Parking Strategy - green initiatives	Planning
Environmentally sensitive areas Map(s)	Planning
Erosion and sediment control	Planning
OCP Policies - Environment	Planning
SilverRidge storm drainage (innovative approaches)	Planning
Soil Deposit Regulation Bylaw / Soil Removal Bylaw	Planning
Stream mapping	Planning
Tree Protection Bylaw	Planning
Watercourse Protection Bylaw	Planning
90% fewer recreation brochures produced (Web)	Recreation

### Strategic Focus Area

#### Environment

Leisure Centre expanded recycling	Recreation
Replacement boiler in Leisure Centre	Recreation
Use of “rack cards” rather than pamphlets	Recreation
Expanded list of accepted products at recycling depot	Recycling
Green waste collection at Transfer Station	Recycling

#### Transportation

Bus service direct to Braid Skytrain Station	Administration
Expanded community shuttle service	Administration
Transit Hub	Administration
Bike lanes increased to over 21 km in length	Engineering
Road standards (alternative approaches)	Engineering

#### Smart Managed Growth

Tax incentives for high density residential	Finance
Tax incentives for LEED high density residential	Finance
Workshops for builders (Builders Forum)	Licences, Permits and Bylaws

#### Lead Department



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## Sustainability Initiatives Inventory (Complete/Ongoing)

LEED silver+ certification for Randy Herman Centre	Parks & Facilities
Agricultural Plan (future)	Planning
Detached garden suites (increased residential density/affordable housing)	Planning
Green Building Checklist for development in the regional town centre	Planning
Town Centre Area Plan	Planning
<b><u>Safe &amp; Livable Community</u></b>	
Safer City Program & Initiatives	Engineering
Transportation Plan	Engineering
Community fireworks display	Fire
Sprinkler Bylaw	Fire
Holistic Homeless Support Group	Licences, Permits and Bylaws
Water Distribution Team	Operations
Community Gardens	Parks & Facilities
Expansion of trails network	Parks & Facilities
Memorial Peace Park/224th (Spirit Square)	Parks & Facilities
Park site/development consultation	Parks & Facilities
Parks acquisition - conservation lands	Parks & Facilities
Mobile home park tenant protection	Planning
OCP Policies - social sustainability	Planning
Crime free multi-family housing program	Police
Implementation of Police Master Plan	Police
Youth Resource Program	Police
Active living initiatives	Recreation
<b><u>Strategic Focus Area</u></b>	
<b><u>Safe &amp; Livable Community</u></b>	
Implementation of Public Art Policy	Recreation
Increased multi-cultural outreach	Recreation
Leadership training extended to RMSS board of directors	Recreation
Online Volunteer Registration Package	Recreation
	<b><u>Lead Department</u></b>



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## Sustainability Initiatives Inventory (Complete/Ongoing)

Playground accessibility study	Recreation
Building Community Solutions Project	Social Planning
Community Connections Project	Social Planning
Social Sustainability Strategic Plan (future)	Social Planning
Supportive Housing Project (future)	Social Planning

### **Financial Management**

Developing a Silver Valley Lands Plan	Administration
1% infrastructure allocation	Finance
Equipment Replacement Policies and ERFund	Finance
Financial Sustainability Policies	Finance
Fixed assets reporting-PSAB 3150	Finance
Long term financial planning	Finance
Produced Annual Budget Handbook for all management staff	Finance
Utility Rates Modelling	Finance
Electronic document management	Information Services
Wireless Project (city staff services)	Information Services
Facility Life-Cycle Plans under development	Parks & Facilities

### **Governance**

Revised Strategic Plan to address sustainability	Administration
Council Agenda's & Minutes (Web)	Clerks

### **Community Relations**

Corporate Wellness Programs	Human Resources
Flexibility in schedules to enable family obligations	Human Resources
New District web site to enhance citizen access	Information Services
Web Based Services (registration, mapping, subscriptions, HOG, RSS)	Information Services

### **Economic Development**

New Economic Development web site	Economic Development
OCP Policies - Employment	Planning



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## Sustainability Initiatives Inventory (Complete/Ongoing)

### Inter-Government Relations/Networks

Forest Management Plan under development

Support of ARMS & KEEPS

Business Improvement Area

Network Development

Administration

Administration

Economic Development

Social Planning