

# Inaugural Address by Mayor Ernie Daykin

December 05, 2011

Good Evening,

Honoured Guests, Council Colleagues, Family and Friends,

I count it both an honour and privilege to address you this evening as your Mayor of Maple Ridge. It is humbling that I am able to address you at the outset of a second term as Mayor. I thank the citizens of Maple Ridge for the confidence they have shown in me.

Maple Ridge has great neighbours and I want to extend a warm Maple Ridge welcome to Mayor-Elect Deb Walters and her Council members from Pitt Meadows as well as Mayor Ted Adlem of Mission.

I also want to acknowledge Chief Bailey of Katzie and Chief Gabriel of Kwantlen First Nations. Maple Ridge is incorporated on portions of their traditional territories and we appreciate them sharing this beautiful corner of creation with us. Each one of our communities has our own unique challenges and possibilities.... And yet we have many things in common.....Not the least is our common love and appreciation for this place we share and we call home.

I often say how proud I am of my home town and it is such an honour to be able to serve Maple Ridge in this role....and there are days when I pinch myself to make sure I am not dreaming.

It is a rare privilege to grow up, attend school, work, raise a family, watch my grandkids grow and now be able to serve the community I care so deeply for.

There is an old saying behind every successful man is a proud wife. I would not be sitting in this chair this evening without the unfailing support of my bride Judy. Thank you Dear!!

My kids and their spouses as well have been a constant source of support as well. Joshua, Caleb and Katie in their own special way are Papa's cheerleaders.

Mom and the whole clan .....Thank you!!

I am missing one cheerleader tonight .....my Dad...I wish he was here.....miss ya Pops!!

I am sure that my colleagues around the table can all share similar sentiments and stories. We are all here tonight in these chairs because we are blessed with families and friends that believe in us and support and encourage us. We would not be here this evening without you.....Thank you!!

We appreciate you for sharing your loved ones with Maple Ridge for the next three years....to Councillors Bell and Masse..... there will be missed meals, late evening or early morning meetings or phone calls in the evening or shopping trips that used take 30 minutes will now take 90 minutes.

To our families....The commitment is just as big on your part as it is for those as us sitting at this table.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and patience.

Before I speak about the next three years... To Linda King and Craig Speirs.....who gave 21 and 12 years of public service respectively....Thank you for your passion and dedication to the service of the citizens of Maple Ridge. I wish you all the very best in the next chapters life. Whether it's sharing adventures with a grandchild or discovering a new Boudreaux....much pleasure and satisfaction is our wish for both of you.

Last term those of us around this table had the pleasure and shared the excitement of the completion of significant projects. The three new bridges, Fire Hall #1, the SPCA building, the intersection improvements at 224<sup>th</sup> & Abernethy and the final phases of the downtown enhancement project are a few of these projects....

Henry David Thoreau stated:

**“Do not worry if you have built your castles in the air.**

**They are where they should be.**

**Now put the foundations under them”**

Some of these successes were dreams or “Castles in the Sky’ a few years ago..... today they are realities.....Because of the hard work done and foundations laid.....ribbons were cut and projects realized. Mayor, Council, and staff past and present can all take pride in these accomplishments.

I want to share with you this evening my thoughts and priorities for Council over the next three years and, as importantly how we will achieve these goals. As I have said many times over the past year or so it is “Maple Ridge’s Time to Shine”

There are three points I would like to chat about as we look forward to the next three years.

## **Relationships, Vision, and Action**

These three are intertwined..... any one of these points in isolation achieves very little.

## **Relationships:**

I stated 3 years ago that the Trademark of that Council would be Results through Relationships. By developing positive Henry David Thoreau the foundation was laid for some great work moving forward.

This Council will continue that approach of strong relationships and partnerships to move Maple Ridge forward.

## **Vision:**

George Eliot ....English novelist.

**“Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together”**

and Jonathon Swift, Irish author and satirist pointed out.....

**“We are limited not by our abilities but by our vision”**

One of the most important things Council can do is keep our focus on the long term--Focus on what it is we are trying to achieve for our community. We must make our decisions based on the long term.....not the Tyranny of the Urgent. Charles Hummel said, “It is not so much a shortage of time as a problem of priorities. I had a reminder card on my desk for many years in

Windsor days.....to remind me not to get caught up in that cycle ...the key is to focus on the vision....to focus on the longer term goal.

## **So What is Maple Ridge's Vision?**

Over the past years.....I have heard and I know my colleagues have clearly heard from our citizens about their priorities and vision for Maple Ridge.

Our citizens want to see more of:

- Shopping options
- Strong financial management.
- Better Transit
- Local employment
- A Safe Community
- A vibrant town center... a heart for our community
- Protection of our natural surroundings.

This vision is entirely consistent with the vision articulated by Council following the tremendous levels of public input during our last Official Community Plan process.

## **So how do we make this Vision a Reality .....How do we take Action?**

At Business Planning last year our CAO used this quote and it rung true then and has stayed with me.....Joel Barker, author and futurist states.....

**“Vision without action is merely a dream.**

**Action without vision just passes time.**

**Vision with action can change the world”**

### **Action ...this is where the rubber hits the road!**

I will share with you for a few minutes how we will move forward on these priorities as we move towards our Vision

### **Shopping Options:**

We have some positive news on the shopping front that is literally “hot off the press”

Over the noon hour today the District received the Agricultural Land Commission’s comments on the draft concept plan submitted by the District in September.

Our understanding of the ALC's comments are:

- That the commission supports the draft concept plan, in part
- That the commission is prepared to cooperate towards future commercial or industrial development on the lands south of 105 in exchange for restoration of the lands north of 105 for an agricultural future
- That the commission invites the District to make an application for exclusion of the lands south of 105 Ave consistent with these terms

There are approximately 100 acres of land south of 105 Avenue, enough space to build close to 500,000 square feet of commercial space. 350,000 square feet is roughly the size of Meadowtown Plaza in Pitt Meadows

The ALC has not placed any restrictions on the type of development they would consider for the south lands. In previous comments from the Commission, they would restrict the use of these lands to agricultural industry type uses.

Early in the New Year the District will be reviewing the Commission's comments in detail and determining how best to move forward.

Obviously one of those steps will be to meet with the land owners on the Albion Flats who are impacted by the ALC's comments.

I do want to re-enforce that whatever the development is in the Albion area it will be to the highest standards that Maple Ridge expects.

- Continue to explore options in down town. Target is the next Target retailer for the down town. They have expressed a great deal of interest in the renovation and expansion of the west end of Haney Place Mall.

### **Strong Financial Management.**

During the past election I heard and I know others on Council did as well.....that citizens are concerned with the rising cost of municipal taxes. Council has heard this and we understand this.

I also heard from many of these citizens as well that there are additional services or projects that they would like to see delivered.

That is the great challenge facing any fast growing community ...this is not unique to Maple Ridge.

- With growth Maple Ridge inherits about \$25 million dollars worth of roads, utility pipes, and street lights each year.....paid for by

development.....and then handed over to the District to be maintained.

- With growth comes the demand for more services in neighbourhoods....more parks, shopping, school's sidewalks, street lights and fire halls.
- Growth also results in increased demand for fire and police response, bylaw enforcement, and social services support.
- With that growth there are more vehicles and with those cars comes issues like "rat running" And neighbourhoods looking for traffic studies and installation of traffic calming measures.

Growth also provides great opportunity and well managed growth will ensure Maple Ridge will realize its full potential

To attempt to balance those seemingly competing needs (containing costs while providing appropriate levels of service) Council relies on a strong policy framework. We have leading edge financial sustainability policies and a rigorous Business Planning process. On December 12 and 13, Council will be reviewing the work plans of each department and the associated budgets.

These sessions are all public meetings and I strongly encourage you to attend and watch our deliberations.

There is a schedule posted on our website..... [www.mapleridge.ca](http://www.mapleridge.ca)

## **Better Transit**

- Complete the Area Transportation Plan...part will be to further investigate east west route options.
- Work with TransLink on enhanced West coast service when the rider ship survey is complete in Spring 2012

## **Local Employment**

One of the challenges in attracting jobs to Maple Ridge is the availability of land for such purposes. A key work item for 2012 is an inventory and assessment of our commercial and industrial lands. This will tell us how much land we need for the anticipated job growth.

What land inventory actually is....how much of that land base is vacant or underutilized and which areas are suitable for employment uses. In short what is the highest and best use of Maple Ridge's land inventory?

## **A Safe Community**

There are number of bylaws that are under review, that work started in the past few months and they will be completed over the early months of 2012. One bylaw that a lot of folks are interested in is the RV Parking Bylaw and this will come to Council in the first quarter and then to Public Hearing and final adoption bringing clarity to a challenging situation.

The design and planning for Fire Hall #4 will begin in 2012

Superintendent Walsh and the RCMP detachment have been very responsive to the priorities of Mayor and Council. There is a very good working relationship between the Detachment and the District.

### **Protection of our Natural Surroundings**

Council and the community are really very proud of the approach the District takes in the protection and enhancement of water courses and environmentally sensitive areas during development. Each year many acres of these areas are protected. When I listen to youth of our community .....This is what our youth expect from us as leaders....they desire some of the growth the adults want.....they also place high value on the Great Outdoors.

In addition in 2012 we will see long awaited parks developed in our down town, Silver Valley and Cottonwood.

### **A Vibrant Town Center... A Heart for Our Community**

Late in 2010 the District of Maple Ridge purchased a strategic and key piece of property in the downtown. It is the 3 acres between the two malls and has been under utilized for years. Acquiring those 14 consolidated lots now gives the District control of the timing of any

redevelopment of this key part of downtown. I see a high quality commercial/residential development that will add housing stock and more importantly more commercial opportunities.

An exciting application for the lands North West of DTR and 224<sup>th</sup> came to Council early in November. While this is a longer term project there is exciting potential in the project. This project will be a game changer for Maple Ridge and continue to positively change the face of down town.

There has been \$22 million in building permit value in the down own since January 2011....further evidence that this Maple Ridge's Time to Shine.

I know that I speak for all of Council when I say .....we will continue to be an open and approachable Mayor and Council and look for ways to be even more so.

My door has been open and will always be open.

**John Kennedy said:**

**All of this will not be finished in the first 100 days, nor will it be finished in the first 1000 days, nor in the life of this administration, nor perhaps in our lifetime, But let us begin. The good news we have begun**

I am full of optimism for Maple Ridge and the future of our community.

It is Maple Ridge's "Time to Shine" Believe in Maple Ridge!!

Thank you.