

November 25, 2025

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Dear Minister Osborne and Minister Krieger,

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me on December 1 to discuss key issues and concerns related to mental health and public safety in the City of Maple Ridge. I'm writing to provide some background ahead of the meeting, and share the topics I would like to address in the discussion.

As a City Council, one of our top priorities is to ensure our neighbourhoods are safe, welcoming, and vibrant. That is why the City has invested significantly in efforts to reduce crime and social disorder, while engaging with partners including BC Housing, Salvation Army, and Coast Mental Health to improve shelter capacity and wrap-around services for unhoused individuals. We also introduced Community Safety Officers to address public disorder and refer individuals in crisis to community and health resources.

In our discussion during the UBCM Convention in September, I shared with you our Council's priorities for securing provincial support and partnership, and look forward to addressing these items in our upcoming meeting:

- Improved resources from **Fraser Health Authority**, including:
 - A **Mobile Integrated Crisis Response (MICR) team** so mental health calls are handled safely by health professionals paired with police. Maple Ridge has invested more than our neighbouring municipalities in supports for people who are unhoused and/or facing mental health and substance use crises, yet our request for a MICR team has been repeatedly denied.



- Hiring a **nurse practitioner in the Ridge-Meadows Hospital** emergency room to avoid tying up police resources. Our RCMP have spent over 1,600 hours so far this year waiting for individuals to be seen by a doctor in the ER, because a NP is not on staff. The Mental Health Act was recently changed to allow police to turn over someone apprehended to a nurse practitioner.
- Implementing the **Health IM app**, which allows first responders the ability to assess an individual based on their history, in order to reduce the number of police apprehensions and enable referrals to appropriate services and supports. While the app has been rolled out in the North and soon Vancouver Island, we understand its implementation has been delayed in the Metro Vancouver area due to limited capacity at Fraser Health.
- More mental health supports for people in crisis – including **expansion of involuntary care, and stabilization and treatment pathways**. A new involuntary care facility has opened in Maple Ridge but these 18 beds are currently serving the entire Metro Vancouver and Fraser Valley regions, leaving almost no opportunity for local residents who are eligible.
- Resources for **inmates released from correctional facilities** to successfully transition back into the community – an issue of particular importance as Maple Ridge is home to two such facilities.
- Addressing challenges in **filling newly funded RCMP positions** in Maple Ridge, owing to resources being limited due to the Surrey Police Service transition.

I have invited Superintendent Adam Gander, the Officer in Charge for Ridge-Meadows RCMP, to participate in our December 1 meeting and provide more information on these requests and the public safety issues we are experiencing in our community. I should also note that we have scheduled a meeting with the new CEO of Fraser Health to address our requests.

By way of background, I can share some examples of the actions and investments our City has made in the past few years:

Strengthened frontline presence

- Funding for 22 new RCMP officers
- 22 new full-time firefighters
- Additional Community Safety Officers (CSO) and Bylaw officers
- RCMP and CSOs walking the beat downtown



Integrated Partnerships

The City's Bylaw Department, CSOs, RCMP, the Business Improvement Association and Chamber of Commerce are working together daily to address issues quickly and in a coordinated way.

Project Dovetail is an example of a pilot project that aligned multiple partners to manage challenging situations and public order; results saw shoplifting decrease by 50%.

Social Planning Working Group

Staff from across City departments examine social challenges proactively such as homelessness, addiction impacts, youth supports, and neighbourhood pressures. The Working Group ensures coordinated internal response and tracks progress.

Services and shelter for unhoused individuals

The Salvation Army Ridge Meadows Ministries operates a 55-bed emergency shelter in Maple Ridge at 22188 Lougheed Highway and added 30 additional winter beds at the Ridge Church at 22155 Lougheed Highway. Both shelters are already at capacity on a daily basis, and outreach teams are sharing that people from this community are being turned away.

The City is currently in discussion with BC Housing and looking at options for a site to replace the current Salvation Army building, which is nearing its end of life, with the goal of having one purpose-built facility for a shelter, emergency winter weather beds and supports related to mental health, substance use treatment and community connections.

Operated by Coast Mental Health, the HUB provides food, clothing, showers and outreach workers who refer people to housing supports, healthcare, detox and recovery programs and income assistance. Demand for these services continues to increase. In October 2025 – the first month of the winter shelter season – the HUB saw 94 visits per day, compared to 60 visits during the same period in 2024.

Aside from shelter beds, these other crucial social and health support services receive no provincial funding. The HUB is funded by City taxpayers and through a one-time federal grant that expires in the Spring of 2026. The City has stepped up to ensure wrap-around supports exist alongside shelter beds, but these supports will be at risk if the Province and Fraser Health fail to fill the funding gap starting next year.



RISE Program — A Success Story

Two years ago, thanks to federal funding, the City of Maple Ridge launched the RISE program in partnership with the RCMP, that benefits School District 42 and other community organizations. RISE works with youth before they are drawn into criminal activity. Results have been remarkable:

- Students who were at high risk are now engaging in school again
- Families report improvements in stability
- Officers say it's reducing the number of young people entering the justice system

Community Safety Initiatives

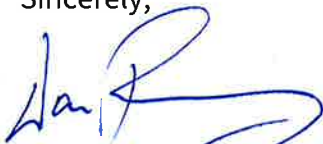
Our "Be Downtown" initiative connected with 588 residents across nine pop-up activations, bringing safety information for all ages, and boosting community connections. With support from the City, RCMP, and Downtown Maple Ridge Business Improvement Association (DMRBIA), the initiative focuses on:

- Public safety & crime prevention
- Emergency response readiness
- Support services for vulnerable populations

Maple Ridge faces complex challenges, and no single agency can solve them alone. Across enforcement, prevention, and social supports, the City has stepped up and is doing its share. When it comes to shelters and supports like The Hub, we are truly punching above our weight compared to other municipalities of our size.

Our City is leading, innovating, and investing in meaningful solutions for our most vulnerable residents. But we know that real progress on health and public safety comes from collaboration across all levels of government and with community partners. I look forward to our meeting and discussing how we can work together to make Maple Ridge safer, healthier, and more vibrant.

Sincerely,



Mayor Dan Ruimy

