



THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
OF THE CARIBOO

KAMLOOPS, BRITISH COLUMBIA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WILLIAMS LAKE—On September 22, 2001 the Board of Governors of the University College of the Cariboo met with members of the City Council of Williams Lake to discuss issues connected with the establishment of a new location for the Williams Lake Campus.

The City Council wants UCC to relocate to a parcel of land on the Westside. The Board of Governors pointed out that UCC has two areas of concern with respect to that location.

First, the Board is concerned about road and/or bridge access to the parcel and would have to be assured that appropriate infrastructure was guaranteed before it would approach government for the purchase of the land. Moreover, since many of our students lack personal transport, the Board would have to be assured that frequent public transport service to the site would be provided.

The second issue relates to concerns the Board has about the geotechnical stability of the site. There is evidence to suggest the parcel in question lies within a large ancient landslide. In its letter of June 8, 2000 to the residents of the area, the Cariboo Regional District declared that an extensive geotechnical study would need to be carried out to determine the actual risks of ground movement in the area (copy attached). This would be expensive and would have to be spread out over a number of years with no guarantee of the outcome. It is the Board's position that such a study would have to be paid for and carried out by the City or some other agency. Moreover, the Board would have to have assurances that the Westside site was stable before it would approach government regarding land acquisition.

The Board recognizes that the financing and construction of roads and/or bridges and the conduct of a longitudinal geotechnical study of the Westside site would take a number of years. In practical terms, this means that the opening of a new campus on the Westside site – even if government funding could be secured for construction – would not likely occur for another five to ten years.

UCC understands and appreciates the long-term vision for a new campus on the Westside that has been proposed by the Williams Lake City Council and by many members of the community. Nevertheless, UCC is now into its fifth year of being dispersed among nine sites in the community. The Board is acutely aware that this is not in the best interests of its students or of the Williams Lake community as a whole. From UCC's perspective, there is no certainty that a lengthy and expensive geotechnical study would provide the necessary clean bill of health to the Westside site. Moreover, in today's difficult economic climate securing funding for the necessary roads and/or bridge may be problematic. On both these counts a new campus on the Westside is probably many years away. Accordingly, the Board of UCC feels that the institution must move now to find an alternate solution.

For more information, please contact Adrian Kershaw, UCC Vice-President, Community and Distributed Learning Services, at 250-828-5163.