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Williams Lake Band

NEWS RELEASE: SUGAR CANE SIGNS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

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Williams Lake Indian Band (a.k.a. Sugar Cane) and the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Highways have signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) regarding historical trespasses on Sugar Cane Reserve Land. "It has been very time-consuming and a long-time in coming," Chief Willie Alphonse said on behalf of the Sugar Cane Band. The agreement settled issues of historical trespasses going back to 1919.

The compensation package will include the following benefits to the Williams Lake Band:

1. An additional land allocation to Sugar Cane of equal or greater value to the land the is being acquired by the Province.
2. 8 kilometres of fencing along the existing highway right of way.
3. full construction of a "right in right out" intersection that will allow for easy access for the future Sugar Cane golf course.
4. 2.5 kilometres of recycled asphalt for the paving of the reserve subdivision plus a \$90,000 allowance for placement.
5. Upgrading of Mission road to 100% year round to accommodate trucking requirements of the Sugar Cane Wood Products mill.
6. Sewer connection under highway 97 near Pioneer Log Homes and the Chief Will-yum Gas Bar.
7. Reimbursement for all negotiation costs.
8. Contract opportunities during the implementation of the "works."

In return, Sugar Cane Band has agreed to transfer lands to the jurisdiction of the Province under certain conditions with a right of reversion that allows the land to revert to Williams Lake Band control if they are no longer used for highway purposes. The lands in question are:

1. Mission Road
2. Likely Road
3. Approximately 1 additional hectare for the Golf Course Intersection.

“We’re very excited to see the improvements that will happen in Sugar Cane,” Nick May said, who acts as the Senior Manager of Properties and First Nation Policy for the Ministry of Highways. “I see a change happening in the way the Ministry of Transportation is dealing with communities.”

Sugar Cane Economic Development Officer Jason Gordon explained that Phase 1 of negotiations were nearing completion. Phase 1 brought about the initial task of settling historical trespasses. Phase 2 of negotiations will deal with future acquisitions, specifically the additional right of way required along Highway 97 for the Province to fulfill its 4-laning project from Cache Creek to Prince George known as the “Cariboo Connector.”