



Williams Lake
FIRST NATION

**PRESS
RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10/07/2022

GROUND-DISTURBING EARTHWORKS TO BEGIN AT BOITANIO MALL SITE

Williams Lake First Nation (WLFN) today announced that it will work with Janda Group to ensure that personnel are present to oversee excavation work taking place this Fall at the Boitanio Mall site.

Janda Group, owner of the Boitanio Mall, has been working on renovating the Boitanio Mall to provide for 82 new rental units and 164 parking spaces. Construction of the new rental spaces began in the Spring of 2022. To date, the 2022 construction program has not included any earth-disturbing works.

During the initial construction of the mall in 1974, it was discovered that the building and associated infrastructure were located on an archaeological site containing pit houses (kikwillies), cache pits and a large number of human burials. Approximately 13 disarticulated human skeletons were unearthed and transported via truck to the site of what is now the A&W in Williams Lake. There, those human remains were discarded and pushed over the embankment without the involvement of Williams Lake First Nation or other First Nation communities.

Ground-disturbing excavation for the Boitanio Mall renovation is scheduled to start on Tuesday, October 11, 2022. Representatives from WLFN, Sugar Cane Archaeology (WLFN's wholly owned professional archaeological services corporation) and Archer Cultural Resource Management Group will be collaborating with the general contractor to ensure that the ground-works are conducted in compliance with British Columbia law and in a considerate and culturally appropriate manner.

Immediately prior to the commencement of the ground-works, WLFN will be holding a ceremony to honour the ancestors that were disturbed as part of the original Boitanio Mall construction. The ceremony will be held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022, at 10:00 AM in the Staples Parking Lot at the Boitanio Mall.

For more information on this medial release please contact:

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