

COMMUNITY OF WILLIAMS LAKE PROFILE



Cariboo Bethel Church is located in the City of Williams Lake which has a population of 11,000. Williams Lake serves another 14,000 people in the immediate market area as the regional “hub” in terms of shopping, education, health, recreational opportunities, and more. Williams Lake is situated on the shores of Williams Lake itself. The city itself is partially named after Chief William of the local Secwepemc People who form the Williams Lake First Nation. Chief William was a visionary leader who oversaw the “first contact” era of 160 years ago that led to the WLFN’s “Sugar Cane” community mostly located at the south end of Williams Lake. The city itself is located on the traditional unceded lands of the WLFN people and currently enjoys a “good neighbor” relationship.

Williams Lake is geographically located in the “Central Cariboo,” a beautiful and large geographic area in the centre of British Columbia. We enjoy the full benefits of four seasons! Outdoor activities and opportunities of all sorts abound. Examples include hiking, boating, kayaking, trekking, fishing, mountain and road biking, camping, hunting, photography, both downhill and cross-country skiing, gold panning, exploring country roads and historic sites, and much more. There are many active community events and activities to enjoy over the course of the year. Many sporting and club groups offer recreational activities for people of all ages. Thompson Rivers University has a regional campus situated within the city for those interested in pursuing post-secondary education opportunities.

Williams Lake is located on the main north/south highway connecting most of the BC interior to the lower mainland and greater Vancouver. Prince George and Kamloops are each a 2.75-hour drive away, while greater Vancouver is a 5.5-hour drive south. The local airport offers daily flights to Vancouver. The only highway to the Central BC coast area connects Williams Lake to the BC Mid-Coast by going through the large and rugged area known as the Chilcotin region. Many locals enjoy saltwater fishing on the Central Coast!

Williams Lake also serves as a “hub” or “meeting place” for the area’s Indigenous Peoples. These include the Secwepemc people

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(the Northern Shuswap), the Tsilhqot'in people (From the Chilcotin area west of Williams Lake), the Carrier-Dakelh people (mostly from the north and west of Williams Lake), and even the Nuxálk people (from the Bella Coola, Coastal area of mid BC).

The main employers of the people of Williams Lake and the Central Cariboo region are the Wood Products and Mining industries, Education services, Health services, Indigenous Organizations and owned businesses, and various professional services and Government of all levels. There are many farms and ranches in our Cariboo area.

Williams Lake and area is home to a range of church & faith groups, from various Evangelical Christian churches, the Salvation Army, Catholic, Sikh, Seventh Day Adventist, Jehovah Witness, and others. There are three local Christian schools (Evangelical Christian, Catholic, and Seventh day Adventist based).

The people of Williams Lake are varied and diverse with regards to backgrounds, ages, and demographic profiles. We see the good and not so good of any group of people that form any community. We see ourselves as generous, friendly, and welcoming, but we also do see the effects of substance abuse, homelessness, and broken lives in our community, more so perhaps because of being a "regional centre."

Check the City of Williams Lake, the Cariboo Regional District, or area tourism web sites for more information and visuals of the region and activities. We worship, live and work in a beautiful part of BC!

