

## Humber College looks to expand

By James Matthews -

Humber College will introduce two new programs this fall at its campus in Orangeville's Alder Street Recreation Centre.

Some of the college's future plans were outlined to town council Monday. And council agreed to strike a joint committee to consider the college's aspirations for possible facility expansion.

The new programs, Health and Fitness Promotion and Tourism Management, will be offered the next three years, starting this fall. There was also talk about a panel of more courses that may be brought on stream in 2015.

They've tried a number of programs over the years and currently offer early childhood education, social service worker, and police foundations programs.

Humber president Chris Whitaker said he expects the new programs will bring the campus to capacity rather quickly.

He said there has been much good dialogue between the school's staff and town officials since the college returned the parcel of Veterans' Way land that was hoped would be the site of a campus.

"I think we're at the point where we have reached an agreement on the return of the Veterans Way property," Mr. Whitaker said. "Council will be dealing with that."

Humber College will take a "measured and ... a scalable approach" to the foster the campus' growth in Orangeville, he said.

"We are committed to this community as the third campus ... and the only campus outside of Toronto," he said. "We feel there is opportunity here."

There's hope a joint committee of the college and town council will be established to work toward a memorandum of understanding regarding the Alder Street campus expansion

Joe Andrews, the campus director, said the college will focus on health care, human services and lifestyle management programming in the future.

"Humber is fully committed to the Orangeville campus and is exploring a number of ways to grow student enrollment, including re-energizing our continued education as well as the introduction of degree-level courses," said Mr. Andrews.

The college is looking at adding a 20,000-square foot building to be built adjacent to the existing Alder Street Recreation Centre. That would be possible if the college and the town can reach an agreement.

"We will quickly be exceeding our capacity if the next two years, bringing on two new programs, produces the numbers that we feel can be produced there," said Mr. Whitaker.

A proposed gymnasium building addition will benefit the college and can also be incorporated into the municipal recreation inventory, he said.

Mr. Whitaker said that kind of cooperation could be a win-win situation for all stakeholders.

A number of council members expressed concern about supporting the college's new construction plans, especially in light of plans for Veterans Way land being scuttled last year.

Councillor Jeremy Williams said council has already given the college a great deal of support over the years, and now they're asked to do it again.

?Frankly, we were burned once,? he said. ?I find that troubling.

?This cannot be just about what Humber wants. ... If we are to do anything with you, we have to be very guarded.?

Last year, in the face of criticism at its decision to abandon plans for the Veterans Way campus, Mr. Andrews said that did not mean the college was skipping town.

?We are here for the long term. We are not leaving. Humber is committed to working at the Alder Street facility,? he said. ?We're proud of the commitment that Humber has made and will continue to make. And, more importantly, we are so proud of our students who have gone on after graduation and are absolutely fabulous spokespeople as alumni of Humber Orangeville.?

At that point, the small campus had already graduated almost 500 students and had an enrolment of about 200 students.

Mr. Andrews said then that Humber had spent over \$2 million on launching the Orangeville Campus, in addition to \$1.3 million for the Veterans Way site. He attributed the decision to abandon the Veterans Way campus, which involved an expectation of 2,000 students being enrolled there, ?because if you don't have the student population, you cannot continue to run your programming.?