



May 29, 2002

Memorandum

To: Planning and Budget Committee

From: Adel Sedra, Vice-President and Provost

Item Identification

Allocations from Academic Priorities Fund in support of academic activity at Joker's Hill

Sponsor

Adel Sedra, Vice-President and Provost

Jurisdictional Information

The Planning and Budget Committee is responsible for approving allocations from the Academic Priorities Fund.

Highlights and Resource Implications

Joker's Hill is a property that was donated to the University in 1995 by Murray and Marvelle Koffler. Located in King County, approximately a half-hour drive from the St. George campus, it is a working farm that currently provides research opportunities in a number of disciplines. At the request of the Vice-President and Provost, the Vice-President Government and Institutional Relations prepared a report (a copy of which is attached), outlining strategies for the development of the property to maximize its academic potential.

The report addressed three areas that are key to the optimal use of Joker's Hill:

- 1) Financial viability: The report recommended a base budget of \$300,000 to support research at Joker's Hill, with the Centre absorbing one-half the cost and participating Faculties the remainder, based on their utilization. It also recommended central funding of \$150,000 per year for three years to cover non-research related costs. The Joker's Hill strategy will identify means of generating revenue to offset non-research related costs in the longer term.
- 2) Utilization: With proper development, the property has the potential to be a premier research and teaching facility. As a sustainable research facility, Joker's Hill will be critical in faculty recruitment. Participation of other universities will be encouraged which will improve the funding success of research proposals.
- 3) Management structure: A structure was proposed to deal with management issues regarding the overall property, research, and operations. The report recommended that the major responsibility and accountability for the facility be assigned to the Dean of Arts and Science.

Discussions that flowed from the Strategies for Joker's Hill report identified the property's users as four faculties and the east and west campuses. The Faculties of Arts and Science, Applied Science and Engineering, Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Design, Forestry, UTM and UTSC have committed to contribute \$150,000 based on their utilization. The University flows 25 percent of the funding it receives from the Federal government for the indirect costs of research to the Divisions. Divisional use of these funds would be appropriate for their contributions to the Joker's Hill base budget in support of research.

Following on the recommendations contained in the Strategies for Joker's Hill, the Dean of Arts and Science has requested approval (a copy of which is attached) to strike three committees, with proposed membership reflecting the principal users. The responsibilities and composition of the committees, which are endorsed by the Office of the Vice-President and Provost, are as follows:

- 1) The House Committee will have six members, one of whom will act as Director of the Reserve. Four scientists will represent the Botany Department, the Zoology Department, the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, and the Faculty of Forestry. Facilities and Services will also be represented. The committee will be responsible for major operational issues.
- 2) The Scientific Oversight Committee will advise the Management Committee on Joker Hill's research policy, field research and teaching. Deans from the four faculties, the Principals of UTM and UTSC, the Chairs from the Departments of Botany, Geography and Zoology (Arts and Science), several members of the House Committee, the Vice-Dean, Research Infrastructure & Graduate Education (Arts and Science) and the Vice-Dean, Research and Graduate Studies (Applied Science and Engineering) will make up the 16 member committee. The Vice-Dean, Research Infrastructure & Graduate Education will act as chair.
- 3) The Management Committee of 13 will be made up of the Deans and Principals and three scientists on the Scientific Oversight Committee, the Vice-President, Business Affairs, the Vice-President and Chief Advancement Officer, the Vice-Provost, Space and Facilities Planning, and the Director of Reserve. The Committee will be chaired by the Dean of Arts and Science and will provide senior level management, concerned with such issues as land disposal and shifts in property use.

#### Recommendation

That the Planning and Budget Committee recommends to the Academic Board approval of a \$150,000 base allocation from the Academic Priorities Fund in support of research at Joker's Hill.

That the Planning and Budget Committee recommends to the Academic Board approval of a \$150,000 OTO allocation for each of three years from the Academic Priorities Fund in support of non-research related expenses at Joker's Hill.

**STRATEGIES FOR JOKER'S HILL**  
**A Summary Report for the Vice-President and Provost**

February 26, 2002

**Preamble**

The Joker's Hill property was donated to the university in 1995 by Murray and Marvella Koffler. The property constitutes an outstanding gift whose unique natural setting is already providing significant research opportunities in a number of disciplines.

The value of Joker's Hill as a scientific venue argues for the development of a longer term strategy to take most effective advantage of its academic potential. In particular, Joker's Hill is considered a significant asset in increasing the competitive ability of the university to attract and retain excellent research faculty and students.

There is general consensus that any strategy for the optimal use of Joker's Hill will require discussion and action on three primary issues: financial viability, utilization, and management structure. The following summary outlines some of the key elements to be considered in each category, and the recommendations at the conclusion of the Report offer a way forward.

**Financial Viability**

- It is proposed that the annual cost of supporting Joker's Hill research (currently estimated at approximately \$300K) should be shared 50-50 between the centre and the Faculties who use the facility (Arts & Science, School of Graduate Studies, Architecture, Engineering, Forestry) with shares to be determined by utilization.
- In view of the fact that Joker's Hill is used as a research facility, it is suggested that the Vice-President Research and International Relations be consulted about making it possible for both the centre and the Faculties to use research overheads for this purpose.
- If more resources are required to implement new plans or strategies at Joker's Hill, for example if it were decided to raise the budget next year to \$400K to serve a particular research vision or goal, it would have to be understood that this discussion would take place at the Faculty level, and this planning would rank with all other budget priorities rather than constituting a special order priority, i.e. Joker's Hill initiatives would compete with other things to which the Faculties would want to assign their budgets.
- In the short term, an estimated additional \$150K per year is required for the next three years to cover non-research related costs. It is intended that the Joker's Hill strategy develop methods of revenue generation associated with utilization of the facility to offset these costs in the longer term.
- A discussion should be initiated with Murray Koffler about consolidating and optimizing the Joker's Hill budget, including the possibility of moving funds from the support of farmland to the support of research.

## Utilization

- Joker's Hill has the potential to make a significant contribution to the University's ability to attract outstanding faculty, but this will only prove possible with a comprehensive strategy in place. With the stability assured by a long-term financial commitment (i.e. 10-15 years), it is estimated that the capacity of Joker's Hill for hosting research could move to a much higher level of activity in a reasonably short period of time. In this way, Joker's Hill would become a powerful asset in faculty recruitment, enabling the Deans of Faculties using the facility to demonstrate that the University supports sustainability for its premier research venues.
- In the longer term, it will be necessary to develop a framework for making the best use of the Joker's Hill mansion, to capitalize on the remarkable facility and the investment being made in its maintenance and upkeep. For example, the university may wish to consider introducing something like a booking system to use the facility most effectively for university purposes. It is fully anticipated that eventually the facility would generate revenue at the level needed to balance at least non-research related expenses.
- Other uses of Joker's Hill could include working with school boards to make the property available to high schools and possibly connecting these occasions to student recruitment; as well as exploring the potential for engaging other universities in Joker's Hill activities.

## Proposed Management Structure

Management issues at Joker's Hill essentially fall into three categories: major decisions regarding the property overall and attendant resource questions; issues related specifically to research arrangements; and the responsibilities associated with operations and upkeep of the property.

The following structure corresponds to these levels of responsibility, and is proposed for discussion. It is important to add that the intention of these arrangements is to promote and support the academic viability of Joker's Hill. Other than the Management Committee, which includes a "university" role, all other functions define Joker's Hill as a research and teaching facility.

### a) Management Committee:

- most senior level of management in respect of issues such as potential for severing land for sale, consolidation of resources, possible shifts in property use from farmland to research, etc.;
- proposals regarding major land issues, such as the sale and/or severing of land or any change from the fundamental uses noted above, will be brought by the Chair of the Management Committee to the Provost for discussion with the President and the Vice-President Business Affairs;
- membership would include 2-3 member(s) of the Scientific Oversight Committee, Dean(s), the Vice-President Business Affairs, and one other Vice-President;
- while the university owns the property, major activities at Joker's Hill are currently primarily the responsibility of the Dean of Arts and Science (although it is recognized that this could shift to the Dean of Applied Science and Engineering); the Dean of Arts and Science should therefore serve as Chair of the Management Committee and function in the manner of Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

b) Scientific Oversight Committee (S.O.C.):

- would serve as an advisory committee to the Management Committee on such matters as Joker's Hill research policy, field research and teaching;
- membership would number 12-15 people, and include Deans of involved Faculties, Department Chairs, and representation from scientists.

c) House Committee

- responsibilities would include major operational issues such as budget allocation, use of space, and arrangements with other potential users, as well as day-to-day decisions on maintenance and upkeep;
- membership would include Facilities & Services, and representation from scientists;
- committee would likely have an on-site presence to handle issues as they arise;
- Chair of the House Committee would be a faculty member who would be given teaching release time (i.e. recognized as different from the usual "volunteer" committee participation), and would function as Director of the Joker's Hill Scientific Reserve (with the responsibilities of Chief Operating Officer), reporting to the Management Committee in an ex officio capacity;
- it is likely that over time, as activity increases, a business officer will be needed.

**Recommendations**

The objective of the following recommendations is to develop a framework for the longer-term promotion and sustainability of Joker's Hill as a premier University of Toronto research site. This is believed to be consistent with the spirit and intent of the donation, and it is incumbent upon the university to make every effort to use the gift well to provide leading research and teaching opportunities.

*Recommendation 1:*

That Joker's Hill costs supporting research activity (currently estimated at \$300K per year) be shared 50-50 by the centre and the Faculties involved in the facility, and that full consideration be given to providing the funding through permitting the use of overheads.

*Recommendation 2:*

That \$150K per year for three years be provided to cover non-research related operating costs. It is understood that in the longer term the facility offers potential revenue-generating possibilities which will offset these costs on an ongoing basis.

*Recommendation 3:*

That a management structure be adopted in support of promoting and sustaining Joker's Hill as a research station, with three levels of responsibility reflected in the duties of the Management Committee, Scientific Oversight Committee, and House Committee, as described in this report.

*Recommendation 4:*

That the primacy of research and teaching activity at Joker's Hill be recognized in assigning the major responsibility and accountability for the facility to the Dean of Arts and Science, including serving as Chair of the Management Committee and functioning in the manner of Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

*Recommendation 5:*

That the Management Committee consider its first priority tasks to be the following:

- developing a long term vision for the Joker's Hill property, with an ensuing strategic plan;
- optimizing the best strategies for Joker's Hill as a demonstrably sustainable research facility, including consolidating funding, severing/selling land in the longer term, moving activities from farm to science, and other potential opportunities;
- discussing potential uses to support and complement Joker's Hill activities and possibly help with costs, e.g. offering opportunities to students, other institutions, in the longer term using the mansion for appropriate activities such as meetings or seminars, etc.
- reviewing the optimal organizational strategy to handle the ancillary operations of Joker's Hill, including consideration of models such as an ancillaries budget similar to the Colleges vs a separate corporation similar to the University of Toronto Press.

*Recommendation 6:*

That a discussion involving the Provost, Vice-President Business Affairs, and the Deans be scheduled very early in the development of the Joker's Hill strategy, to reach a shared understanding of financial issues and to provide a solid basis for future development and planning.

**Consultation process**

At the request of Vice-President and Provost Adel Sedra, Vice-President Government and Institutional Relations Sheldon Levy sought input and advice from the following people regarding the general framework under which the University might move forward on working with our benefactors to make the best use of Joker's Hill:

Carl Amrhein, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science  
 Anastasios Venetsanopoulos, Dean, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering  
 Felix Chee, Vice-President, Business Affairs  
 Jon Dellandrea, Vice-President and Chief Advancement Officer  
 Ron Venter, Vice-Provost, Space and Facilities Planning  
 Don Beaton, Director, Real Estate

This report reflects the benefit of those discussions and contacts, and offers a set of recommendations that would encourage positive next steps in the continuing development of Joker's Hill as a premier research and teaching facility.

(20310)

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** 23 May 2002

**TO:** Adel Sedra, Provost

**FROM:** Carl G. Amrhein, Dean

**cc:** Rorke Bryan, Dean, Faculty of Forestry  
Larry Richards, Dean, Architecture and Landscape Design  
Tas Venetsanopoulos, Dean, Applied Science and Engineering  
Robert McNutt, Principal, University of Toronto at Mississauga  
Paul Thompson, Principal, University of Toronto at Scarborough  
Sheldon Levy, Vice-President, Government & Institutional Relations  
Felix Chee, Vice-President, Business Affairs

**Re:** **Committee Structure for Joker's Hill**

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As you requested, and following on the recommendations contained in the report on Strategies for Joker's Hill, we request your approval (with any changes that you would like to make) to strike the following three committees with the membership below:

***Management Committee (13 members)***

- § Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) (Chair)
- § Dean, Faculty of Forestry
- § Dean, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering (APSE)
- § Dean, Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Design (FALD)
- § Principal, University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM)
- § Principal, University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC)
- § Vice-President, Business Affairs
- § Vice-President and Chief Advancement Officer
- § Vice-Provost, Space and Facilities Planning
- § Three scientists from the Scientific Oversight Committee (SOC)
- § Director of Reserve, ex officio

This committee will provide the "most senior level of management" with regard to the disposal of the lands and possible shifts in property use.

*Scientific Oversight Committee (16 members)*

- § Vice-Dean, Research Infrastructure & Graduate Education, FAS (Chair)
- § Vice-Dean, Research and Graduate Studies (APSE)
- § Deans (or designates) from FAS, APSE, Forestry, FALD, UTM and UTSC
- § Chairs (or designates) from FAS Depts. of Botany, Geography and Zoology
- § Assistant Vice-President, Facilities and Services
- § Director of Reserve (TBA)
- § Three scientists from APSE, and the Departments of Botany and Zoology

This committee will serve as an "advisory committee to the Management Committee on such matters as Joker's Hill research policy, field research and teaching".

*House Committee (6 members)*

- § Director of Reserve (TBA)
- § Two scientists from the Departments of Botany and Zoology
- § Two scientists from APSE and the Faculty of Forestry
- § Assistant Vice-President, Facilities and Services (or designate)

This committee will be responsible for "major operational issues such as budget allocation, use of space, and arrangements with other potential users, as well as day-to-day decisions on maintenance and upkeep".

Would you please sign back your approval?