

SFU SURREY CAMPUS



NOVEMBER 04, 2022

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2022 marks the 20th anniversary of the SFU Surrey campus. To both celebrate the last twenty years and look ahead to the next, leaders at SFU Surrey gathered with Indigenous, business, government and community leaders to revisit <u>THRIVE! Surrey in 2030.</u>

The first THRIVE! took place as a part of <u>We The City</u>, SFU Public Square's Community Summit on city building in 2015, with residents coming together through a series of imaginative and interactive events to build a vision for their city where everyone can thrive.

Since then, the population, infrastructure, and economic growth and development of Surrey has been exponential. With it has come some significant social, economic and environmental challenges, particularly in the areas of equity, diversity and inclusion. While these global challenges are not unique to Surrey, it is important to explore and discuss place-based practical solutions to these interrelated challenges.

The idea was to look back in order to look forward — to reflect on the recommendations of the original THRIVE! report and explore what it will take for Surrey to address its challenges and opportunities over the next 20 years.

In a session supported by SFU Public Square — also celebrating an anniversary of <u>ten years of community</u> <u>engagement</u> — we discussed:

- Surrey's growth and development: what are the issues, needs and challenges?
- How equity, diversity and inclusion can support and build strong communities
- Key priorities and opportunities to help advance Surrey's development

A WELCOME AND A GROUNDING

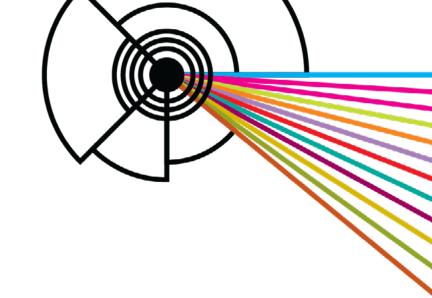
Kevin Kelly and his son **Michael Kelly Gabriel** from the Kwantlen First Nation welcomed the participants of THRIVE 2.0 with words and song, with help drumming from Stephen Dooley of SFU Surrey.

Michael Kelly asked us to leave our titles at the door and to come into the room as human beings planning for our future and our children's future. "I don't sit here for myself. We don't stand here for ourselves. You stand here for the next seven generations to come," he said.

Michael Kelly also urged us to slow down and truly listen to each other with our minds, our hearts and all our senses so that we could carry what we heard today and share it with others who need to hear it.

We are grateful to Kevin and Michael for their warmth, wisdom and for starting us off in such a good way. Their words set the tone of the productive, respectful, optimistic conversation that followed.





WHO WAS IN THE ROOM?

The 22 people in the room represented a diverse range of leaders across sectors and communities in Surrey with people joining from the City of Surrey, business improvement associations, the arts and culture sector, the Fraser Health Authority, the Board of Trade, Surrey Library and Surrey Schools as well as nonprofits focused on housing, mental health, immigrants and newcomers and issues of equity and justice.

When asked for a word to describe how they were feeling as we started the session, we heard words like joyful, uplifted, happy, positive, grateful, focused, centred and inspired.



THRIVE: LOOKING BACK TO GO FORWARD

A few people in the room for THRIVE 2.0 were among the 125 Surrey residents that took part in <u>THRIVE!</u> Surrey in 2030 in November, 2015. Fortunately for the rest of us, Nav Chima from SFU Surrey, was there to summarize that important conversation and the recommendations that came out of it.

The original THRIVE! brought together a broad cross-section of people that either live and/or work in the six townships of Surrey to discuss and envision the social, economic and environmental needs and challenges of a growing and demographically diverse city.

It was grounded in the **City of Surrey's Sustainability Charter 2.0**, a new document at the time that provided a 40-year sustainability-focused vision for Surrey to become a thriving, green and inclusive city. The conversation at THRIVE was organized around the eight themes identified in the charter.

INCLUSION

A caring community that encourages a sense of belonging and access to opportunity for all Surrey residents to realize their full potential.

Participants at the original THRIVE expressed pride in their diverse community and a commitment to welcoming the many newcomers it was attracting. There was a common idea that if the community had the resources, Surrey residents could build connections with people from diverse backgrounds.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

A beautiful, accessible and well-connected city of distinct and complete neighbourhoods that are walkable, engaging, resilient and restorative.

THRIVE participants expressed a need for a city centre, but not at the detriment of the six townships, which should all be easily accessible and affordable. They also supported more green spaces and recreation to bring communities together.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND LIVELIHOODS

Continued prosperity and thriving livelihoods fostered through a strong, equitable and diverse community.

To support a robust local economy, THRIVE participants supported an investment in education in the region, including vocational and entrepreneurial training as well as newcomer settlement and engagement initiatives.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

A city in which all people live, work, learn and play in a safe and engaged environment.

The conversation around community safety at THRIVE in 2015 focused on investing in community resources that address issues of mental health, food security and poverty.

ECOSYSTEMS

Healthy, protected and well-maintained ecosystems and biodiversity.

The participants at the first THRIVE sought a better understanding of the city's biodiversity and wanted opportunities and resources to be stewards of their local environment.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Access to diverse, high quality learning opportunities and vibrant arts, heritage and cultural experiences for all Surrey residents.

THRIVE participants envisioned a Surrey with a thriving and vibrant arts and culture sector that contributes to community connections, the local economy, community livability, and civic pride.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

A community in which all residents are healthy, active and connected.

THRIVE participants wanted accessible services in support of all types of wellbeing — physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional. From rec centres to houses of worship.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Effective infrastructure and services that meet the current and future needs of the city, while protecting the natural environment and supporting urban growth.

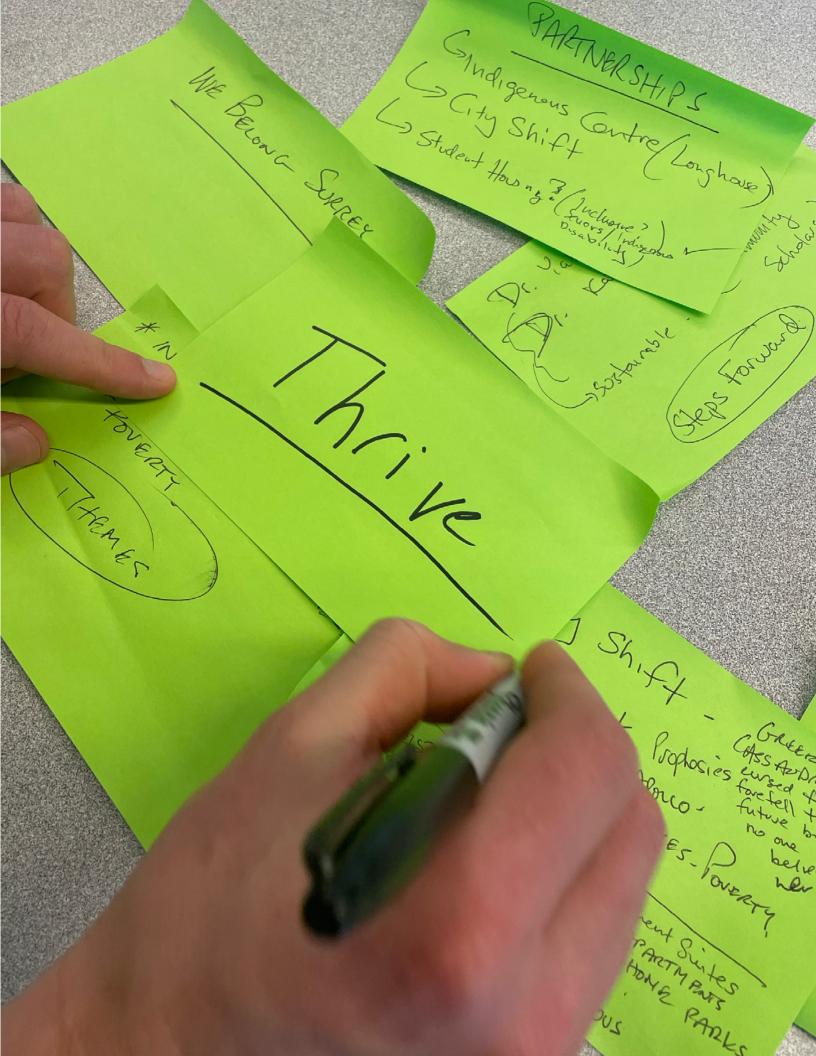
An investment in Surrey's infrastructure was seen as crucial, but it must be in line with the natural environment. THRIVE participants recommended advancing partnerships, education, dialogue and communications on land conservation and water protection.

TYING THE THRIVE THEMES TOGETHER

Two common themes that underpinned all of the above came up again and again at the first THRIVE and THRIVE 2.0.

- Building and strengthening community connections and partnerships across the city will be crucial to act on the eight themes above.
- Engaging, empowering and creating opportunities for Surrey's diverse and growing youth and newcomer population is essential. And these populations are growing larger and faster than they were in 2015.

To read the full report from THRIVE! Surrey in 2030, go here.





Once Nav Chima established the key themes and recommendations from the first THRIVE!, Stephen Dooley, Executive Director of SFU Surrey campus, asked the group to reflect on what still resonates these seven years later and what's missing: what new issues and challenges should be prioritized?

Participants were asked to write down their responses on post-it notes and share them with the SFU Public Square team, who grouped them thematically on sheets of paper. Then, each participant placed up to three dots alongside themes and comments they thought were the most pressing. In the following section, we rank the themes based on how many dots and individual notes they received.

Overall, the Sustainability Charter themes tackled at the first THRIVE still resonated, but a few issues not stressed in 2015 rose to the top of the list including housing and affordability; transparent processes and consultation, and Truth and Reconciliation.

As at the first THRIVE, the group emphasized that these issues are interconnected, advocating for a holistic approach to Surrey's challenges.

HOUSING AND AFFORDABILITY

12 dots, 11 comments

Housing and affordability was identified as one of the most important issues that has evolved since THRIVE! in 2015, enough to isolate it as a new theme outside of "economic prosperity and livelihood."

THRIVE 2.0 participants identified issues of gentrification, rising rental and housing costs, inflation, lack of employment opportunities and the need for affordable, inclusive and accessible housing and transportation for all Surrey residents – with special support needed for vulnerable populations such as single mothers and refugees.

INCLUSION

11 dots, 15 comments

THRIVE 2.0 participants identified inclusion as a vital issue, with new areas of emphasis and definition since the 2015 conversation, such as more focus on economic inclusion, protecting and supporting sex workers, providing justice and inclusion for migrant workers, and recognizing international students as a vulnerable group.

The intersectionality of themes and issues was underlined with one comment in particular saying "inclusion and access doesn't exist without affordability."

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

6 dots, 12 comments

The desire for more connection and collaboration between communities was still seen as important at THRIVE 2.0, particularly following the social isolation experienced during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Solutions offered ranged from developing community spaces without entry costs to programming engagement opportunities like THRIVE 2.0. A representative from the Fleetwood Business Improvement Association who has been working to engage with stakeholders to encourage development in the township said that events like this helps validate their work.

A nonprofit leader recognized the others in the room working to make Surrey a place where all people feel they belong, and underlined that this work must be done together. A need was identified to bring coalitions and groups together that work on similar issues – a "table of tables."

TRANSPARENT PROCESSES AND CONSULTATION

4 dots, 5 comments

New to the list of issues since 2015 was the demand for transparency in processes, bureaucracy and consultation, largely at Surrey City Hall. One particular comment attracted three dots from participants (including a City Councillor):

"Reduced bureaucracy at City Hall for small businesses and non-profits/ community organizations"

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

3 dots, 4 comments

Truth and Reconciliation came forward as an important theme to focus on beyond the category of inclusion, with a recommendation to improve community understanding and awareness.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

4 dots, 19 comments

This theme clearly still resonates as many participants submitted post-it notes full of thoughts on issues around the build environment and neighbourhoods with a focus on walkable neighbourhoods, better public transit and more community gathering spaces.

Some comments:

"We are great at building roads and condo towers, but where is the concentration of walkable spaces where people gather and meet and learn about different experiences?"

"Embrace the wet and cold: other cities in Canada transform outdoor spaces to be unable, engaging and accessible year-round."

"More diverse density: between towers and single-family homes"

"What and where is public space being planned beyond park and recreation-oriented spaces?"

"Loss of at-grade trains a loss. Improved transit and bus system = better overall traffic."

We also heard concerns that industrial lands are shrinking and the need to balance agricultural lands and development. Several comments called Surrey a "divided city" between its town centres and across its vast geography.

One comment that threaded the themes of the built environment, education and ecosystems together said that "urban sprawl is at the detriment of education and green spaces and species at risk."

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

2 dots, 3 comments

Adding on to the theme of health and wellness from the first THRIVE, was the importance of addressing health inequities and underserved communities, including aging populations.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

2 dots, 3 comments

The conversation around community safety has shifted with 2015, reflected in a comment asking for more discussion about defunding police and keeping police out of schools, and another asking for approaches to public safety beyond policing.

URGENT CLIMATE ACTION

2 dots, 5 comments

The Ecosystem theme from the first THRIVE still resonated, but several participants emphasized the need for immediate climate action for the health and wellbeing of the current population and future generations in Surrey.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

0 dots. 8 comments

The theme of education and culture resonated across both THRIVE events. We heard the demand for more support for artists and grassroots organizations, such as grant programs, studio spaces, operational funding and cultural spaces throughout Surrey's communities. We also heard the desire to make connections between arts, cultural and educational institutions.

Adding on to the conversation at the first THRIVE, was the encouragement to increase financial grants and cultural events for LGBTQ2S+ community and people with disabilities.

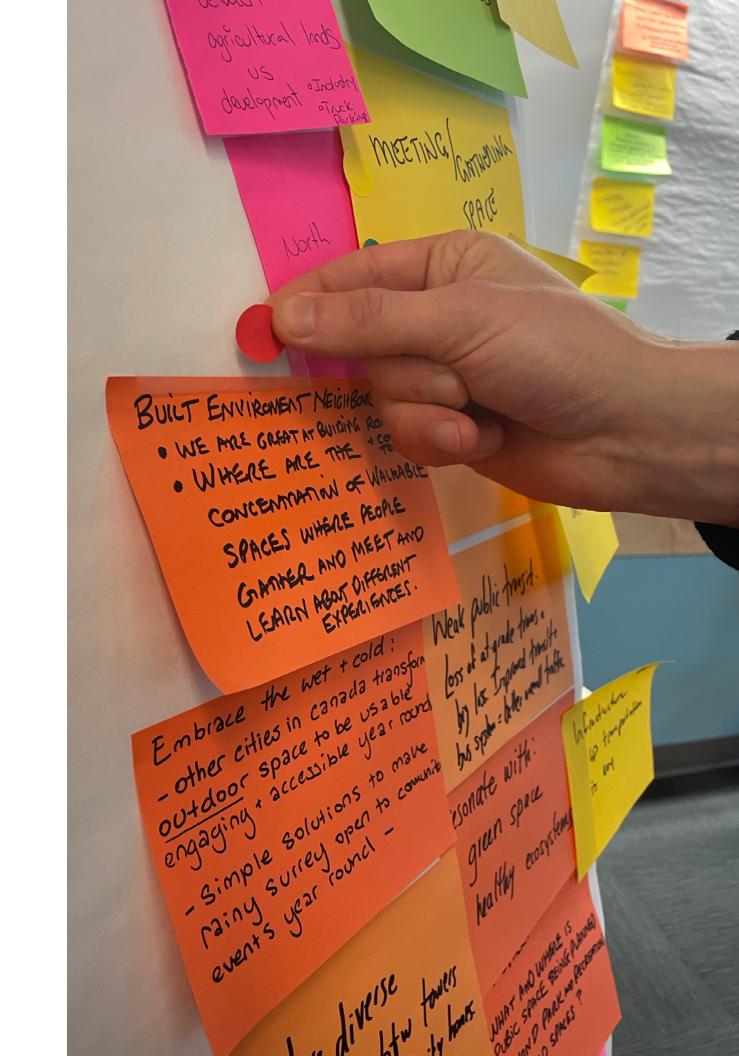
One participant urged Surrey to put on more diverse cultural events like the Surrey Fusion Festival, ensuring they are inclusive and supported, and that we must fight against the false assumption that the newcomer population is a monolith. Another suggested SFU Galleries could open a branch in Surrey to support festivals and a cultural scene that supports artists.

RECOVERY FROM COVID-19

0 dots, 3 comments

Recovering from COVID-19 is an obvious new issue since the first THRIVE, with a worry about entrenched social isolation for some people who are reluctant to be involved in community life.





EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT SFU — AN OVERVIEW

Next, Yabome Gilpin-Jackson, SFU's new VP of People, Equity and Inclusion gave a brief presentation on the work she and her team have been doing to develop SFU's **equity compass** — a vision and actionable plan to advance the equity, diversity and inclusion work that many at SFU have been involved in for many years.

Her intent was to draw connections between the emerging principles and themes under-development in the **Equity Compass**, with those identified by the THRIVE 2.0 participants to set up a conversation about the potential for partnerships between SFU and Surrey to address these issues.

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMITMENT

SFU is committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive community where all feel welcome, safe, accepted and appreciated in learning, teaching, research and work.

We are privileged to do this work on the unceded, traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəÿəm (Musqueam), Sḳwx̣wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), səlilwəta સ (Tsleil-Waututh), qı́cəÿ (Katzie), k^wik^wəẍəm (Kwikwetlem), Qayqayt, Kwantlen, Semiahmoo and Tsawwassen peoples.

EQUITY COMPASS PRINCIPLES (EMERGING)

- 1. Truth, reconciliation, and reciprocity
- 2. Decolonization
- 3. Belonging for all
- 4. Trauma and violence-informed
- 5. Intersectional and systemic
- 6. Antiracist and anti-oppressive
- 7. Process and outcome focused
- 8. Community engagement and dialogue
- 9. Critical and developmental
- 10. Restorative and transformative

Dr. Gilpin-Jackson highlighted the last three principles as the most relevant for the conversation at THRIVE $2.0\,$

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DIALOGUE

SFU is Canada's engaged university, in dialogue with the communities it serves, which is why we are asking Surrey's leaders to join this conversation about equity, diversity and inclusion at SFU and beyond at this time.

CRITICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL

We must be critical and take a look at the data to dismantle whatever systems require it. But at the same time, we must also be developing new systems, in conversation and in partnership with others.

RESTORATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE

As we critically diagnose problems and develop new systems, we must think transformatively, not beholden to previous systems and ways of thinking.



GROUNDED IN THE PRINCIPLE OF TRUTH, RECONCILIATION AND RECIPROCITY AND DECOLONIZATION

Each of the ten emerging principles at the heart of SFU's equity compass is equally important, although Dr. Gilpin-Jackson noted that the principles of **truth, reconciliation, and reciprocity** and **decolonization** must be foundational in equity work for it not to be hypocritical. Therefore, SFU's equity work progresses alongside and in support of Indigenous strategic plans, follows the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and honours the right to self determination held by Indigenous communities at SFU.

EQUITY ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION THEMES

Six key themes have emerged from SFU's Office of the Vice-President, People, Equity and Inclusion (VPPEI) review of SFU's equity reports and commitments, and in alignment with SFU's commitment to Truth, Reconciliation and Reciprocity. Dr. Gilpin-Jackson highlighted the overlap between them and the themes emerging at THRIVE 2.0.

SFU'S EQUITY ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION THEMES	EXAMPLES	OVERLAP WITH THRIVE 2.0 THEMES
Data and Reporting	Data taskforceWorkplace and campus experience surveyReporting and communication	Transparent processes and consultation
Respect and Belonging Structures	 Respect and safety principles Bullying and Harassment Hub Human Rights Office EDI suggestion intake form 	Inclusion Community safety
Education and Capacity-Building	 Education for Reconciliation (RESPECT) Equity learning pathways Support units with strategic planning for EDI Community of practice for equity leads EDI Center of Excellence 	Education and culture
Employment Equity	Special programs for preferential and cluster hiring Employment life cycle equity review for staff and faculty Pay-equity reviews Living-wage	Affordability
Inclusion and Belonging Culture	Circles of inclusion (e.g., Indigenous, Black, People of Colour and equity group supports, affinity groups, topic- based equity groups, etc.) Scarborough Charter Accessibility Act Events and engagement	Inclusion Education and culture
Equity, Governance, Policy and Leadership	 Definitions Mission and vision statements Principles and values Shared responsibility, accountability, and collaboration on EDI across SFU Academic mission consultation and alignment with Provost/student services supports 	Transparent processes and consultation

DISCUSSION

Dr. Gilpin-Jackson highlighted the work that SFU's **data task force** is doing to develop a consistent method to support self-identification for equity, with BC's <u>Anti-Racism Data Act</u> as an impetus. Once launched, SFU will be sharing the data and the methods behind it with communities.

Dr. Gilpin-Jackson said that this type of data collection and reporting removes the last excuse to not do this important work. In fact, we have 400 years of data to demonstrate systemic disadvantages in society, proving that certain groups of people have consistently had lower outcomes socially, economically and politically no matter how things have been structured

Accurate data is an important tool to support equity work. But true change will depend on our collective will, Dr. Gilpin-Jackson notes.

Other THRIVE themes may not seem to overlap with the ones in the Equity Compass on the surface, but Dr. Gilpin-Jackson pointed out ways that her portfolio touches on some of these issues such as:

Health and wellness

Dr. Gilpin-Jackson's portfolio is *people*, equity and inclusion, so health and wellness are at the top of her team's mind in their work.

Housing and affordability

While these issues sit more with the Provost's Office, housing and affordability for students is something the SFU Executive, which Dr. Gilpin-Jackson is part of, is continually discussing and looking for solutions towards.

Climate and sustainability

Any climate action must have equity and justice at its core. The Equity office team is working to support SFU's climate and sustainability plan.



POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SFU AND SURREY COMMUNITIES

With the basics of SFU's work-in-progress Equity Compass established, Dr. Gilpin-Jackson invited the THRIVE 2.0 attendees to work in groups to identify ways that SFU can partner with Surrey communities to support action on the themes identified above.

GROUP 1: DATA

Group 1 focused on data, with representatives of community organizations requesting access to SFU's data to help them develop funding proposals and direct their services. They also asked if there are capacity-building or learning opportunities they could tap into from the work of SFU's data task force. This group also encouraged the measurement of qualitative human elements and, as a part of that, to invite students into communities and to invite community groups to SFU to reciprocally share their knowledge and shape each other's learning and programming.



GROUP 2: SFU STUDENT AND ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY PROJECTS

This group said that having SFU students and faculty bring their expertise and perspectives to community meetings, events and other projects would be incredibly beneficial. A representative of the Fleetwood BIA said they would like to see more student housing with the upcoming development of a new skytrain station.

GROUP 3: STUDENT HOUSING AND A LIVING WAGE

Group 3 began their conversation around student housing, wanting to see it at below market rates to be equitable and inclusive. They also want to avoid what happened in Toronto with a downtown university campus, but without student housing.

The conversation around student housing led to a discussion around a living wage. This group wanted to see more conversation within the community about how to define a living wage. Is it a band? A moveable target?

Dr. Gilpin-Jackson noted that <u>SFU has committed to</u> becoming a living wage employer.

A representative of the Surrey Board of Trade noted that their research shows that most businesses in Surrey are paying a living wage, and that it is becoming increasingly important to do so for businesses to remain competitive.



GROUP 4: CO-CREATING SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, THE NEED FOR STUDENT AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A representative of YWCA City Shift spoke about the critical need for an Indigenous gathering space in Surrey and the collaboration required from stakeholders including the Semiahmoo, Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations and the City of Surrey.

On the topic of how cities can become more equitable places, the group recognized that social and physical infrastructure projects must be co-created with the uniqueness of the community in mind to be inclusive. Such collaborative efforts will also build capacity within the community.

A representative from UNITi echoed the call for student housing that is mixed-use and for a mixed community, including seniors and others. They criticized the City of Surrey's neighbourhood and town plans for having no mention of affordable, below-market housing. One representative of the City responded saying they must do more to prepare for Surrey's future. Another said the City must leverage its position to ask more from developers and require them to go through BIAs and community groups to get support for a project.

Bringing in a developer's perspective, another THRIVE 2.0 participant said that if roadblocks are put in place that could harm a developer's return on investment, they may build somewhere else in the province. They asked: how do we encourage the right kind of development, rather than put blocks in place?

GROUP 5: INFORMATION SHARING, ALTERNATE FORMS OF COMMUNITY SAFETY, FUNDING FOR EDI

There needs to be more systems in place for SFU to send information about the work of community groups to staff, students and faculty, and vice versa, this group said. They asked how the City of Surrey and SFU could support events to discuss alternative forms of community safety, such as transformative justice and defunding the police.

This group also advocated for more funding for equity, diversity and inclusion work so that it doesn't fall on students, and for more affordable housing for students.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Stephen Dooley closed the event with two final thoughts. One, he advocated for inviting people of diverse opinions to conversations about community matters to broaden understanding and affect real change. And two, because Surrey often has fewer resources than communities north of the Fraser River, people form creative partnerships to get things done.

We hope THRIVE can become an annual gathering in pursuit of these aims. Please stay in touch.

SFU SURREY - CELEBRATING ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

In 2002, Simon Fraser University (SFU) occupied a beta space within the Central City mall complex and celebrated the grand opening of its first campus building in 2006.

The award-winning building designed by the late Bing Thom placed the university on top of the mall, making the boundaries between the campus and community porous.

Today, SFU Surrey's footprint, now over 600,000 square feet of campus space, continues to expand within and beyond Surrey's downtown core, transforming the city's landscape and contributing to the region's development.

The Surrey campus offers more than 30 undergraduate and graduate degree programs and continuing education courses, serving over 8,000 full and part-time students and is a world-class leader in health, sustainable energy, creative technologies, research and innovation.

SFU Surrey acknowledges the unceded traditional territories on which our campus locations reside, including the Kwantlen, Katzie, Semiahmoo, Kwikwetlem, Qayqayt and Tsawwassen First Nations.

sfu.ca/surrey

SFU PUBLIC SQUARE - CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SFU Public Square holds space for SFU and its communities to learn together and work towards equitable and sustainable solutions to our world's complex challenges.

Working across SFU's campuses, we engage with faculty, students, staff, alumni and diverse communities to convene accessible, innovative and inclusive programming that brings people together to find ways to meaningfully contribute to the issues that affect our lives.

Every year, we collaboratively program dozens of workshops, debates, public conversations, discussion panels and other gatherings. These spaces encourage different perspectives and ways of knowing to collide and influence each other. The experience is transformative, inspiring deeper conversations, igniting networks, building capacity and catalyzing curiosity and concern into advocacy and action.

sfu.ca/publicsquare

BURNABY

8888 University Drive Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6

SURREY

250 - 13450 102 Avenue Surrey, BC V3T 0A3

VANCOUVER

515 West Hastings Street Vancouver, BC V6B 5K3