



# Corporate Report

NO: R057

COUNCIL DATE: April 14, 2008

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: April 14, 2008  
FROM: City Manager FILE: SFU - Surrey  
SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding Between the City of Surrey and Simon Fraser University (Surrey Campus)

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## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Authorize the Mayor to sign, on behalf of the City of Surrey, the Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU") between the City of Surrey (the "City") and Simon Fraser University (SFU) that is attached as Appendix "A" to this report.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to inform Council about an MOU that has been drafted by City staff and senior officials of SFU and to seek Council authorization for the Mayor to sign the MOU on behalf of the City of Surrey.

## BACKGROUND

### *Capacity Limitations:*

The Surrey campus of SFU was established in temporary accommodations in 2002. In 2006, the permanent home of the Surrey campus was opened in 330,000 sq. ft. of space that SFU purchased in the Central City development in Surrey City Centre. The SFU Surrey campus currently has capacity for 2,500 full time equivalent students (FTEs) and has a population of over 3,000 students (full and part-time). The Surrey campus of SFU has effectively reached the limit of its capacity. To accommodate a larger student population and programs that require specialized teaching and research lab facilities such as Science, SFU will need to add additional buildings or floor area.

***Demand from South of the Fraser High School Graduates:***

Demand from high school students for admittance to SFU Surrey in programs such as Science is far outstripping the capacity of the campus. As a result, students entering SFU Surrey in Science must have higher average high school grades than SFU's Burnaby campus program. The percentage of first year students from Surrey has increased rapidly since 2002. In 2007, half of the first year student body are from Surrey and over 60% are from the South of the Fraser area.

***Enrolment in University by South of the Fraser High School Graduates:***

Currently, high school graduates in the South of the Fraser area progress on to university (post secondary) education at a lower rate than high school graduates in other Lower Mainland cities. A 2004 Statistics Canada study showed that decreased distance to university is associated with higher university attendance. On this basis, it is important that the Surrey campus of SFU have sufficient capacity to encourage Surrey high school graduates to proceed on to post secondary education and not be dissuaded by the need to travel long distances to the next nearest university that has available capacity.

***Building a Strong City Centre:***

The City of Surrey recognizes the high value to the City of having a research university within its boundaries, particularly with a reputation as outstanding as SFU's reputation. The City also recognizes the importance of SFU's presence in the on-going growth and development of the Surrey City Centre area. The profile of the university and the activity that SFU's Surrey campus, including the attraction of international students, generates act to encourage all types (i.e., business, residential, recreational, etc.) of investment in Surrey's City Centre. The University has been an important meeting space for the community and has provided free public lectures and summer camps for children to connect with residents. The City recognizes that the physical growth of the university (i.e., the buildings that will be built to accommodate an expanded student population) will add to the positive ambience of Surrey City Centre and will assist in making it a vibrant and attractive environment. SFU will continue to contribute positively to the civic pride that Surrey citizens hold with respect to the Surrey City Centre as it matures.

***Education and Research Important to Businesses:***

Business owners view proximity to a university as a positive attribute in determining the location for their businesses for a variety of reasons. A well-educated local workforce tends to make recruitment of employees less difficult. The research conducted by the university can often be leveraged by local businesses into improved or new products that can result in better returns on investment. In addition, employees often want to live near a university so that they can continue their education on a part time basis while they continue to work or so that their children can attend university while continuing to live at home.

***Potential For Joint Facilities:***

The City and SFU have some common facilities where joint development and operation would provide additional efficiencies and effectiveness for both parties. These facilities include such things as libraries and recreational facilities. It is recognized that some research around where and how such facilities could be constructed and operated to the mutual advantage of the City and SFU is appropriate.

## **DISCUSSION**

To formally recognize the mutual benefits of working together, City staff and senior officials of SFU have drafted the MOU that is attached as Appendix A to this report. The MOU articulates the common goals of the parties (Part 1.) and charts a course of work for the parties over the next 24 months to achieve the goals (Part 2.).

The draft MOU was considered at the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. The committee endorsed the wording of the MOU and recommended that it be forwarded to Council for favourable consideration. At its meeting on March 31, 2008, City Council agreed to hear a delegation from SFU regarding SFU's commitment to the goals, work program and communications documented in the MOU.

In addition to articulating the goals and charting a course of work for the next 24 months for the City and SFU in relation to the future of the university as an important component of a vibrant City Centre, the MOU also documents an intended strategy for communications between the City and SFU (Part 3.) as the work contemplated by the MOU is undertaken. As a minimum, an annual report will be provided to City Council and SFU's senior executive and formal presentations will be made on a semi-annual basis to the City's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. The report and presentations will provide an opportunity to review priorities and issues, assess the success of joint strategies and discuss new partnership opportunities. Additional reports and communications will be provided on an "as needed" basis.

## **CONCLUSION**

There are significant benefits to both the City and SFU, in working together toward the achievement of certain goals related to the future of SFU and the future of the City (and particularly City Centre) as articulated in this report and the attached MOU. On this basis, it is recommended that City Council authorize the Mayor to sign, on behalf of the City of Surrey, the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Surrey and Simon Fraser University that is attached as Appendix "A" to this report.

Murray Dinwoodie  
City Manager

Attachment – Appendix "A"

## APPENDIX “A”

### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF SURREY AND SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

1. The City of Surrey (the "City") and Simon Fraser University ("SFU"), also referenced as “the partners”, have a number of mutual goals for the growth of Surrey City Centre and the development of the Surrey campus of SFU. These include the following:
  - 1.1 *The partners are both landowners and major tenants in the City Centre and are working to achieve the goal of a thriving, mixed-use City Centre in Surrey with office, retail, institutional, recreational and residential developments of an appropriate scale, density and quality. The partners agree that further expansion of the SFU Surrey campus in City Centre is clearly consistent with achieving this goal;*
  - 1.2 *The partners acknowledge that the expansion of SFU will assist in the City’s goal to retain and grow businesses in Surrey and attract new businesses to Surrey and Surrey’s City Centre. As a major research university SFU educates the highly skilled personnel essential for economic and social development and acts as an innovation accelerator through its research and commercialization activities.*
2. In support of the above goals, the partners will work together over the next 24 months to accomplish the following:
  - 2.1 *The next stage of expansion for the Surrey SFU campus will expand teaching, research, and community outreach in biotechnology, science and the health sciences as well as enable further growth of programs in business and the arts and social sciences.*
  - 2.2 *The partners will work together to expedite the further expansion of the Surrey SFU campus including the construction of a Science and Technology Building as soon as possible. In support of this objective, the City will assist SFU in communicating to the provincial and federal government the importance to Surrey and the South Fraser region of additional undergraduate and graduate programs in Science and Health Sciences as well as an enhanced research capacity for the South Fraser;*
  - 2.3 *With the City’s Development Corporation, the partners will explore opportunities to leverage the partners land holdings in City Centre and further expansion of SFU and the City of Surrey existing and future facilities to attract other quality tenants to the City Centre and where any opportunity demonstrates viability, to take appropriate actions to bring the opportunity to fruition;*
  - 2.4 *Through the City’s Economic Development Office, and through SFU’s University/Industry Liaison Office and Office of Continuing Studies, the partners will develop initiatives targeted at retaining and growing Surrey businesses and attracting new businesses to Surrey and the South Fraser; and*
  - 2.5 *The partners will explore joint opportunities for the development and use of recreation and library facilities and for the support of athletics.*

- 3 To assist in ensuring on-going communication and the sharing of plans and activities, the partners agree to the following liaison mechanisms:

*3.1 The City Manager and Executive Director of the Surrey Campus will provide an annual report of activities and accomplishments to each of City Council and SFU's senior executive;*

*3.2 SFU will make a formal presentation to the City's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee twice per annum. This will provide an opportunity to review priorities and issues, assess the success of joint strategies and projects, and discuss new partnership opportunities; and*

*3.3 The partners will provide other reports and communications to City Council, the City's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee and others where such reports and communications are considered necessary or expedient in relation to accomplishing the objectives of this MOU.*

*These liaison mechanisms are in addition to active existing collaboration between SFU's Surrey Campus administration, SFU's Chief Facilities Officer/SFU Architect, the City Manager's Office, the City's Economic Development Division, the City's Planning and Development Department and, the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture Department.*

Dated this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2008.

Signed on behalf of the City of Surrey by:

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Dianne L. Watts  
Mayor

Signed on behalf of Simon Fraser University by:

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Michael Stevenson  
President and Vice-Chancellor