SFU Public Square was launched by Simon Fraser University to spark, nurture and restore community connections at a time when our City is more diverse than ever.

The inaugural community summit, Alone Together: Connecting in the City, was designed in response to the Vancouver Foundation’s research on connections and engagement, which revealed a “powerful yearning for stronger connections in and between communities.”

We pride ourselves on being a welcoming, multicultural place with a high standard of living but it is often hard to see that isolation and loneliness is still felt by many people in Vancouver. This can be especially true among seniors, youth and newcomers.

This gathering is just the beginning of an ongoing dialogue through SFU Public Square that explores how we can build a more inclusive city, starting in our homes and neighbourhoods, extending across communities and informing the decisions being made at City Hall.

Congratulations to Simon Fraser University, SFU Public Square, Vancouver Foundation and all those who are contributing to this important work.

I am confident that we can create a more vibrant city where we not only take better care of one another, but work collectively to achieve a greater sense of well-being in the shared place we call home.

Sincerely,

Gregor Robertson
Mayor of Vancouver
We’re so glad to welcome you today to the square: SFU Public Square, home to conversations that matter.

SFU Public Square is more than a single place or program: in SFU’s community of communities, it is every place, every open space, every exchange, debate or casual conversation—in person or online—that contributes to respectful, productive and, sometimes, inspiring dialogue on any and every topic of public concern.

In this, our inaugural Community Summit, Alone Together: Connecting in the City, we’re taking aim at urban isolation and disconnection, an issue we hope to illuminate and help to overcome with inclusive, practical and community-based solutions.

We owe a debt of gratitude to our lead partner in this Summit, the Vancouver Foundation, for enabling us to more deeply explore the questions raised by their recent research into community connectedness. We’re similarly indebted to our other community partners—the City of Vancouver, Vancity and the Vancouver Sun. All have been instrumental in supporting, advancing and promoting our programs.

As we hope you will see, there is a place for everyone in SFU’s Public Square—and not just as a passive observer. Your presence is appreciated, but your point of view is precious: because when you join the conversation, and when you carry the spirit and message of connectedness back to your own communities, you become a critical current in the tide of change.

So welcome again to SFU Public Square. We hope you will stay with us as we begin and continue to Connect in the City.

ANDREW PETTER
PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

CAROLE TAYLOR
CHANCELLOR
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Congratulations to Simon Fraser University on the launch of the SFU Public Square. We are delighted and honoured to be the marquee sponsor of the 2012 Community Summit, Alone Together: Connecting in the City.

We also congratulate SFU for choosing urban isolation as the theme for its inaugural Community Summit.

The issue of urban isolation was identified in a wide-ranging public consultation that Vancouver Foundation conducted last year. And it was validated by our Connections and Engagement Survey released in June 2012. Our survey of over 3800 people across Metro Vancouver showed that the majority of people are disconnected from their neighbours and neighbourhoods, and they are retreating from the kinds of activities that make our neighbourhoods and communities better places to live. This results in a corrosion of caring that people told us hurts them personally and hurts their community.

We congratulate SFU for taking this community-identified issue and working with partners to explore solutions. As a community foundation, we know that we cannot tackle complex issues like youth homelessness, poverty, climate change or sustainability if people are indifferent to one another and pessimistic about their ability to work together.

SFU Public Square’s 2012 Community Summit shows the power of partnerships and collaboration as we tackle one of the most pressing social issues of our time—how to connect and engage people for the greater good of the whole community. We look forward to the week-long discussions, presentations and events, and to the identification of solutions.

FAYE WIGHTMAN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
VANCOUVER FOUNDATION

GORDON MACDOUGALL
BOARD CHAIR
VANCOUVER FOUNDATION
The university that started on a mountain and expanded to downtown Vancouver and Surrey has always been rooted in community outreach. When we began the consultation process for SFU Public Square we heard countless examples of SFU students, faculty, staff and alumni acting as ambassadors for the university by reaching beyond its walls and into the larger community. Our inaugural summit, Alone Together: Connecting in the City, is an extension of that spirit. Academics, artists, community organizations, business leaders, young people, government officials, musicians, librarians, and poets each helped shape the vision for this summit. That vision has since been nurtured and organized by a team of gifted women and men—staff, students and volunteers—who have each brought their creative talents, energy and commitment to produce six days of community connection.

I want to thank each and every individual who has helped guide SFU in this vision and give a special nod to our amazing Program Manager Janet Webber, our colleagues at the Centre for Dialogue, and the staff of the Vancouver Foundation who have helped us shine the light on a critical issue in our community—Isolation and civic disconnectedness.

As we often say, the SFU Public Square is only as good as the people who get involved. So thank you for taking the first step and engaging with us. I hope you will go the next step and engage with others to help build a truly resilient and connected community.

Shauna Sylvester
Executive Director, SFU Public Square, Fellow, SFU Centre for Dialogue
be a catalyst for change.

Welcome to Opening Night at the Orpheum, the launch of the SFU Public Square 2012 Community Summit.

We have gathered together some of Canada’s innovative minds, civic influencers who will guide a discussion about overcoming isolation and disconnection in the urban environment:

International award-winning urban planner LARRY BEASLEY
Vancouver Foundation’s Vice President of Public Engagement & Communications CATHERINE CLEMENT
SFU Chancellor CAROLE TAYLOR
Toronto artist-activist DAVE MESLIN
Author & CBC Radio host NORA YOUNG

Special Appearances by Vancouver-based band BEND SINISTER, spoken word artist SHANE KOYCZAN, and the world premiere of the SFU Public Square ONE VOICE Video Project.
Our Voices
Youth Building a Connected City

Designed for youth by youth, this all-day conference will explore issues related to isolation and disconnection in Metro Vancouver, and offer you the chance to help come up with solutions. Share your stories, discuss strategies for change, and help craft recommendations for Metro Vancouver’s decision makers.

Lunch Poems@SFU
George Bowering & Cecily Nicolson

SFU Public Square is proud to feature Canada’s first ever Canadian Parliamentary Poet Laureate George Bowering with guest poet Cecily Nicholson. Join us for this vibrant exchange of poetic ideas and cadence. You are invited to enjoy poetry in a relaxed atmosphere, ask questions and discuss the art and magic of poetry.

Oh The Places We’ll Know
Big Ideas for Libraries in Communities

What is a contemporary library? What is its role in the life of the city? Join us to hear ten amazing new ideas submitted by community members. And help us choose the top three. Our goal is for all who attend to leave with bigger and braver ideas, to connect with like-minded people and explore possibilities for collaboration and conversation.

Creating a Connected City
The Role of Business

Hosted by Simon Fraser University’s Chancellor Carole Taylor, President, Vice-Chancellor Andrew Petter, Vancouver Foundation’s Board Chair Gordon McDougall, and President and CEO, Faye Wightman. The Vancouver Foundation will present their findings followed by a dialogue on the role of business in building community connections.

City Conversations
Lonely in Vancouver

Join in the interactive dialogue on the Vancouver Foundation report on isolation in the region, featuring Catherine Clement, Vice President, Public Engagement and Communications and Daphne Bramham, Vancouver Sun columnist. This session will look at drivers of change and pathways that may lead residents to be more active in their neighbourhoods and communities.

Urban Conspiracy Cabaret
An Evening of Arts for Civic Revolution

Help! We’re unfriendly, disengaged and addicted to social media. CBC Debaters’ Charlie Demers and Richard Side use comedic angst and political abandon to explore and combat these notions with what Vancouver does best—entertainment! Using comedy, music and poetry, The Urban Conspiracy Cabaret will leave you uplifted and enlightened.
MAYORS’ ROUNDTABLE
The SFU Public Square and the Vancouver Foundation will host a luncheon and facilitated mayors’ roundtable dialogue from noon to 3 pm in Burnaby. Mayors will discuss municipal strategies for strengthening community bonds, increasing residents’ sense of belonging, and building more vibrant and resilient communities.

RAIN CITY CHRONICLES: EXTRA ORDINARY
We all know extraordinary people. Some are public heroes, some are community leaders, others are ordinary people. We’re going to shine a spotlight on the Extra Ordinary people who have brought their neighborhoods and communities together. And then, share your own tales of community building with old friends and new at our post-show reception.

ALONE TOGETHER FILM FEST
SFU SURREY THEATRE
The 2012 Alone Together Film Festival presents a dynamic selection of films examining issues of isolation in the urban environment. The festival offers a mix of shorts, documentary and feature films from around the world. Join us for a single screening or for the full weekend as we show you some of the cinematic gems capturing the struggles and triumphs of urban communities.

OPEN SPACE
WORKING TO CONNECT?
NEED SPACE? WE’VE GOT IT.
We understand that a public square is not only a place for SFU to engage with the community, but is also a space where individuals and community groups may self-organize. SFU Public Square has provided free open space at our campuses in Burnaby, Surrey and Vancouver during our community summit for individuals and groups to hold meetings and events free of charge.

THANK YOU
Thank you to the myriad SFU staff, faculty, and students who stepped in to lend a hand. A special thanks to our community partners, our youth advisory committee, city officials throughout Metro Vancouver, our speakers, musicians and artists, and local media, and summit partners. And last but especially not least—a big thank you to all of our volunteers. You have all shown us what together really means. We couldn’t have done it without you!

www.sfu.ca/publicsquare
Hi neighbour! If you ever need:

_____________________________________

_____________________________________

_____________________________________

Let me know!
Your neighbour,

_____________________________________

Knock between _______ and _______
Call/text ____________________________
Email ______________________________