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MEDIA RELEASE

Urban planner Andy Yan Takes Reins of SFU City Program as Acting Director

City Program to provide data curation for upcoming Museum of Vancouver exhibition

January 19, 2016

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Andy Yan, senior urban planner at Bing Thom Architects, has been appointed acting director of Simon Fraser University's City Program.

Yan's appointment marks a return to his alma mater. He graduated from SFU with First Class Honours degrees in geography and political science before pursuing his Master's in urban planning at the University of California. He says he is excited about building on the legacy of the City Program's 23 year history and developing new initiatives.

"We're thrilled to have Andy Yan return to SFU and guide the evolution of the award-winning City Program," says Joanne Curry, Dean (pro-tem) Lifelong Learning. "His experience in projects worldwide and connection with Vancouver's planning community will be a huge asset for SFU."

Yan currently serves as a Vancouver City Planning Commissioner, an adjunct professor at UBC School of Community and Regional Planning and was recently a visiting scholar at New York University.

Yan was brought in while City Program Director Gordon Price, a former Vancouver City Councillor, is on leave. He has already hit the ground running. The program is currently busy providing data analysis and visualization for the Museum of Vancouver's upcoming Urbanarium exhibition on Wednesday, January 20.

In the longer term, it is expected that the City Program will incorporate more professional courses and expand its reach and scope into other municipalities in Metro Vancouver. Yan says he plans to meet with instructors, community partners and supporters of the program to determine particular new areas of focus while building on the existing design and transportation education strengths of the program. One area he's particularly excited about is the role of data and visualization in urban planning and decision making.

"Building on the City Program's reputation on teaching excellence in urban design, sustainability and transportation, the field of big data and its visualization are becoming important tools for planning and design practice," he says.

One idea Yan says he is considering is the implementation of a series of data cafés. Following the success of SFU Continuing Studies' Philosopher's cafes, the talks would connect the larger community and be a teaching exercise between the various practitioners and institutions that are working with data in the region.

"The cafés would be part of an outreach process to embark on a course that engages and expands the City Program's professional development programs" says Yan. "We want reach new audiences and connect them to emerging fields and new innovations for the design and operations of livable and sustainable cities".

LEARN MORE:

- [SFU Continuing Studies City Program](#)
- [BTA Works](#)
- [School of Community and Regional Planning](#)

ABOUT SFU CONTINUING STUDIES:

For over 40 years, Continuing Studies at Simon Fraser University has been offering flexible learning opportunities to adult students of all ages. In addition to public lectures and events, SFU Continuing Studies delivers hundreds of courses and a wide variety of professional certificate and diploma programs online and at SFU's campuses.

ABOUT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:

As Canada's engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded almost 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is a leader amongst Canada's comprehensive research universities and is ranked one of the top universities in the world under 50 years of age. With campuses in British Columbia's three largest cities—Vancouver, Surrey and Burnaby—SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 30,000 students, and boasts more than 135,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

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