

### Note from the President

It is with great honor that I assume the leadership of URISA BC from our last president Karen Stewart. In 2003-2004 under Karen's leadership, URISA BC made significant advances to the benefit of our members. Thank you on behalf of our members and the Executive Team.

I would like to express my appreciation to our members for their continued support in making URISA BC the primary spatial information association in British Columbia. I want you to know how exciting it is to see so many of you at our seminars. URISA BC is all about sharing information, ideas, approaches, values and experience about spatial and IT technologies for building stronger communities.

We will continue to offer quality educational seminars to professionals from different disciplines. These seminars are successful because of the interest of our membership to share their wealth of information. This year we will offer two seminars to our members. The Fall seminar will focus on **GIS in Planning and Transportation**. We will be hosting another seminar in spring 2005. Further information on topic and date will be available on our website early next year. [www.urisabc.org](http://www.urisabc.org)

Our website and newsletter have been excellent means of communication with our membership. We will continue to promote new initiatives and job opportunities through our website.

We have recently launched GIS application sharing initiative for local governments in British Columbia. Find out more about the initiative and available GIS applications on our website:

[www.urisabc.org/application\\_sharing.htm](http://www.urisabc.org/application_sharing.htm). The success of this initiative will depend on the users and their willingness to be part of this initiative. We look forward to your active participation.

This year we plan to inform our membership about the GIS certification program offered by the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI). Two members of the URISA BC Executive are going through the certification process and they share their experience in this newsletter. Further information about GIS Professional certification is available on the website: [www.gisci.org](http://www.gisci.org)

URISA BC Chapter was honored at the annual URISA International conference in Reno, Nevada in November 2004. The Honorable Mention award was received by Gurdeep Singh and Karen Stewart. Congratulations to the Executive Team for the wonderful job over the past year. Highlights from the conference are available in

this newsletter.

<http://www.urisa.org/2004AnnualConference/Program/BCchapter.jpg>

I invite you to be part of URISA BC Chapter, share your experience with fellow professionals, and build a stronger network. Please contact myself or other board members to find out how you could share our success. I look forward to see you at one of our educational seminars.

Gurdeep Singh  
President, URISABC

### URISA BC Seminar

#### *GIS in Planning and Transportation. Dec. 13, 2004*

The purpose of the one-day seminar is to showcase how GIS and other technologies are being used by planning and transportation professionals. The seminar is made up of two tracks: Planning and Transportation. The keynote presentation will focus on technical trends in use of GIS in Planning and Transportation.

**Planning Track:** The presentations in this track will illustrate how GIS is used by the Planners to anticipate future land development, develop population projections, prepare land use scenarios and urban growth models. The underlying data and technology used for modelling and analysis will be highlighted. A presentation on

3D Visualisation will illustrate the technology used to preserve views and its role in development review process. The Vancouver Port Authority will discuss the process of evolution from CAD to GIS for real estate planning and management including GIS tools and applications.

**Transportation Track:** The transportation track will focus on GIS applications in municipal transportation operations, travel survey, demand modelling and development of transportation plans. The presentation will discuss the role of GIS/GPS based regional travel time survey in development of regional EMME/2 transportation model. Some of the issues and challenges to plan and manage municipal transportation infrastructure will be highlighted. This track will also include case studies on role of GIS in development of transportation plans. The seminar will conclude with a presentation on emerging remote sensing technology InSAR and its use for Planning and Transportation.

### Seminar Sponsors



## URISA International Conference November, 2004

Each year URISA International holds an annual conference. Gurdeep Singh and Karen Stewart represented URISA BC Chapter at the annual conference in Reno. The conference theme was "The Place for Spatial Information Professionals". About 650 people attended the conference. Majority of the participants were from North America with about 50 participants from Canada.

Jim Geringer, former governor of Wyoming spoke to the gathered attendees on

the topic of "How to Get Elected Officials More Engaged with Technology". The keynote emphasized on how to talk to people who make decisions. Some of the specific suggestions included: put a face to the issues and relate to people, paint a picture of the reality, use short sentences and non-technical language, know the person you are talking to (background, advocacy and priorities).

URISA conference attendees had 3 days of sharing knowledge and experiences, networking, and visits with vendors in the exhibit hall. The conference was an excellent educational experience. There were 50 sessions organized into several program tracks including E-Government, Enterprise Operations, Public Works and Asset Management, Public Health and Safety, Data Integration: Data standards, policy issues and software considerations, Federal-local partnerships and Transportation Systems. Some of the common elements in the education sessions included: Application and Systems Integration, Interoperability, Data Access and Privacy and Data Pricing.

Each year URISA recognizes organizations and individual for their contributions to the profession. The Horwood Distinguished Service Award is an occasional award given for long-term service to URISA and the profession.

This year it is awarded to Don Cooke. Other note worthy awards includes ESIG awards. ESIG awards recognize exceptional achievements in the application of information technology that have improved the delivery and quality of government services. There are two categories for these awards: Single Process category and Enterprise Systems category.

Single Process award winners are South Florida Water Management District - The Lake Okeechobee Stage-Area-Capacity Lookup Application, Maryland Department of the Environment - Maryland Online Tier II Reporting System. The enterprise system winners are: Victoria, Australia - Vicmap Topographic 1:30 000, City of Charlotte - GIS Street Centerline Enhancement Project and Sacramento County WebGIS. Additional details:

[http://www.urisa.org/ESIG\\_Awards/ESIG\\_press.htm](http://www.urisa.org/ESIG_Awards/ESIG_press.htm)

This year Florida and Southern California chapters received the Chapter of the Year Award for their accomplishments. BC Chapter received Honorable mention for its achievements.

The chapter leader forum provided the opportunity to discuss success and challenges of the chapters. Some of the challenges faced by the chapters include: how

to retain the membership base, how to host a successful event, URISA Certified workshops and technical and operational support to maintain membership database and website.

One of the new initiatives of URISA International includes **GIS Corps**. It is a volunteer organization with the goal to provide short-term GIS expertise to less developed countries and communities around the world. The organization offers excellent opportunity to do a short-term GIS assignment to share experience and build international partnerships.  
<http://www.giscorps.org/>

The conference concluded with an annual meeting where URISA leadership discusses current state of the association and plans for the coming year. The president for this year is Dianne Haley, GISP, Alberta Energy and Utilities Board, Calgary, Alberta.

Some of the highlights from the conference are on the URISA International website:

[http://www.urisa.org/2004AnnualConference/Program/reno\\_program.htm](http://www.urisa.org/2004AnnualConference/Program/reno_program.htm)

## BCIT Bursary

Starting in 1990, URISA BC has supported students taking the BCIT Advanced Diploma in GIS with an annual endowment. The

student with the highest marks receives the award. The recipient for 2004-05 is Stacy Meech. Congratulations Stacy!



## GIS Certification

We have received a number of inquiries about how to obtain GIS Certification from URISA International. Two of the members of our executive are going through that process and have kindly submitted brief descriptions of their experiences.

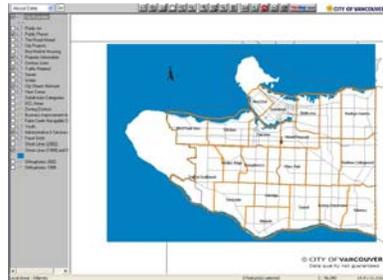
Karen Stewart writes: "The GIS Certification Institute (GISCi) has put a lot of time and effort into creating forms and processes that were easy to follow and understand as I did not have any problems navigating though the process. Scott Grams and the staff at GISi were more than willing to answer questions and assist through the certification process. You can find out more information and download the appropriate forms from the GISi website at <http://www.gisci.org/>. The hardest part about the certification process is obtaining your original educational transcripts and gathering the appropriate information. GIS certification is \$250.00 USD and lasts 5 years so once you have finished the process you don't have to worry about it again for the next 5 years. I can't comment on the effect of

becoming a GISP; however I am positive it will be worthwhile. I will send in an update in a few months regarding the effects of becoming a GISP and one's career."

Perry Homes writes: "I found the experience of completing my application for URISA Certification, simple, easy to do, and required relatively little time on my part (approximately 4 hours in total). The Application form is easy to read, and straightforward to complete. The on-line documents and the application form explain any questions a potential applicant may have. The most time consuming part of the application process was acquiring all my official transcripts. In short, I found the URISA Certification Application Process very professionally administered."

## Featured Website: VANMAP

One of a municipal government's primary objectives is to provide service to its citizens. Services typically include provision and maintenance of streets, parks, water and sewers, garbage collection, police and fire protection, fiscal management, and a host of other services. This variety of services makes the municipal government one of the more complex organizations in existence.



The City's approach to implementing VanMap to solve the data dissemination problem had several key elements, some in place at the start of the project, and some of which have been added since then:

- \* The City needed a good back-end GIS (originally this was Autodesk VISION\*, now it is Oracle Spatial and Autodesk Map)
- \* The City had a clear vision of what was desired
- \* The City had a good web-based GIS technology platform (Autodesk MapGuide)
- \* The City had a strong technical team from the Information Technology Department
- \* The City had a strong multi-departmental user-based team
- \* The City provided significant support for users including Help Centre staff on the Team
- \* The Team had the commitment and support of senior management
- \* The Team involved users and super-users through formal and informal workshops
- \* The Team employed standards for application development
- \* The Team developed a release methodology to guide

how new versions are brought to production

\* The Team twice employed an external usability consultant to guide the VanMap design process (once for staff VanMap, once for public VanMap). For more details, contact Jonathan Mark. [jonathan.mark@vancouver.ca](mailto:jonathan.mark@vancouver.ca)  
VanMap URL: [www.vancouver.ca/vanmap](http://www.vancouver.ca/vanmap)

## 2004-05 Executive

Our new executive committee consists of:

President – **Gurdeep Singh**  
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Vice-President – **Johathan Mark**  
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Treasurer - **Dave Newman**  
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Karen is Canada's Representative on the Chapter Relations Committee (CRC) for URISA National  
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