



Winter Newsletter 2007

Editor: Jerry Maedel

Web Site: <http://www.urisabc.org>

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Note from the President

James Andrusiw
URISA BC President 2007-2008

The BC Chapter of the Urban and Regional Information Systems Associations (URISA BC) is excited to bring you this newsletter as a kick-off to the 2007-08 year. The URISA BC Executive Committee is made up of GIS professionals from local government and vendors who volunteer their time to promote education and information sharing throughout the BC GIS community.

We are opening this year with an exciting seminar on **GIS Applications and Data Integration** scheduled for December 13th. As Geographic Information Systems become more mainstream within organizations, the integration of spatial information and decision making into everyday processes has become a necessity. With the adoption of new technology advancements such as web services, service oriented architecture (SOA) and open application programming interfaces (APIs), such integration has become easier to implement and manage.

This seminar will have speakers from government and private organizations who

will discuss a wide-variety of real-life examples of both spatial and non-spatial application integration as well as combining data from multiple disparate sources. Presentations from the Township of Langley, City of Surrey, City of Vancouver, Metro Vancouver, City of Nanaimo, Translink, and E-Comm will highlight how they have successfully implemented such complex systems to improve processes and communication within their organizations and out to the public.

URISA BC ended last season with an excellent seminar on April 18th on Asset Management and Asset Accounting. The seminar was focused on asset management related to the recent PSAB 3150 legislation and was attended by over 175 people. All attendees who filled out the seminar evaluation felt that the day was useful to them. This is great news for the all of the Executive team that worked hard to put together a comprehensive program for the day. We really appreciate the feedback that you give on the seminar evaluations because it allows us to adjust and tailor our future seminars to exactly what you would like to see.

Starting in early 2008, we will be planning a second seminar for the springtime. The seminar evaluation forms have given us a wide range of topics to consider, including

Mobile GIS, Emergency Response, and even more on Asset Management. If you have any ideas for seminar topics or have a presentation in mind for these or a different topic altogether, please see a member of the URISA BC Executive committee or email us at info@urisabc.org.

Finally, we would like to thank Phil Bates, last year's URISA BC President, for his hard work and leadership in making the 2006-07 year a success. Hopefully 2007-08 will be as successful.

We wish you all a Happy Holidays and a healthy and prosperous 2008.

GIS Applications and Data Integration

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Hiring a GIS Pro

The job market for GIS professionals this year has certainly been active. I can think of 6 local municipalities off the top of my head that had GIS openings at some point during the year. At the City of Surrey, we had 6 vacancies alone that we were scrambling to fill. This market may be good news for job seekers, but for employers these days, it can be quite daunting to find good, qualified people to fill GIS vacancies. I think the main reason for this is that the GIS role has become very complex, and it will continue to do so as GIS continues to mature, evolve and integrate with other enterprise applications and databases. Another reason is that GIS in

general is moving more and more from the desktop towards the server environment.

Here at the City of Surrey our GIS environment is comprised of 8 production servers that host ArcSDE, ArcIMS, IMF, Tomcat, Spatial Direct, and more! When tasked with hiring a GIS professional to support this environment, we quickly realized that the number of qualified applicants were few, even though we received over 100 applicants for two GIS Analyst positions. The majority of the applicants considered themselves GIS analysts. However, we found they often lacked experience designing, implementing, and supporting the backend component of GIS.

Applicants having the technical proficiency in programming, integrating, and troubleshooting were hard to find. The role of the GIS professional has changed so quickly over the last decade, that we found ourselves having to reclassify a number of our Map Technician positions to GIS Analyst. With the change in classification, we were able to target candidates with more experience and formal training. With the support of our management, union and human resources department, we were able to reclassify two of our Map Tech positions to GIS Analyst, and ultimately hire two highly qualified and experienced candidates to fill those positions.

This year was a challenging one at the City of Surrey, with a lot of time spent on HR issues! Shortly we will have our full complement of staff and will focus our efforts on integrating GIS with other enterprise applications and databases. As always, our goal is to provide greater access to information for both our internal staff and the public. For more information contact Sean at STSimpson@city.surrey.bc.ca

Orthophotos 2009 anyone?

Some discussion has begun regarding a coordinated acquisition of high resolution (10 cm) orthophotos in 2009. These would be in support of both the 2010 Olympic initiatives and of course any ongoing requirements by municipal governments and other agencies. For many, this may fit into a normal acquisition process. At this point, we are trying to determine the interest by potential participants and do not yet know pricing or exact timing. For more information contact Jonathan at jonathan.mark@vancouver.ca

Calling All Data for 2010 Security!

Everyone knows the Olympics are rapidly approaching and security planning is well under way. As it turns out, GIS data plays a big role in the planning and



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execution of security for an event this large. The RCMP Integrated Security Unit is the lead for security and the Canadian Forces will also be involved. These agencies will need GIS data for those municipalities with Olympic venues as well as the corridor from the Lower Mainland to Pemberton, although there is also a likelihood that data will be assembled for a much larger area to support contingency planning. While the precise data requirements have not yet been finalized, the process of identifying key contacts and determining what is available has started in earnest. For more info. contact Jonathan at jonathan.mark@vancouver.ca

Featured Web Site

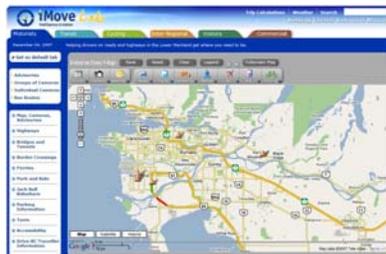
Although we usually choose a municipality for our featured web site, TransLink's new [iMove](http://www.i-move.ca) is just so exciting we had to make an exception. As transportation is becoming such an important part of all our lives, especially in Metro Vancouver, any source of up-to-date information about how to get from A to B is very valuable. This new transportation portal/website for the Metro Vancouver Region is up and running at www.i-move.ca.

"Time is money." Many believe that adage is true in most areas of life today, but when time is spent caught in traffic, it's expensive not just financially, but ecologically, as well, with engines idling in stop-and-go traffic adding

needlessly to the production of greenhouse gases.

Now, motorists have a high-tech tool for spotting where the problem areas are, and planning their trips to avoid or minimize delays. [iMove](http://www.i-move.ca) introduced in October as a "lab" website, is now in full operation on the Internet. iMove consolidates information on construction zones, motor vehicle crash sites, ferry and public transit schedules, cycling networks and conditions at airports and the Port of Vancouver on a single, real-time web site.

The system has been developed over the past five years by TransLink's Intelligent Transportation Systems division, with generous financial support from Transport Canada, the British Columbia Ministry of Transportation, Western Economic Diversification Canada and the Vancouver Port Authority.



GIS Job Opportunities

We accept job posting on our site that meet the following criteria: Non-profit associations based in B.C. PDF format only. There are no more posting fees

effective Sept. 2007. Please e-mail the postings to Gurdeep Singh at gurdeep.singh@gov.bc.ca

2007 -2008 Executive

Many thanks to the executive members who worked so hard to help us organize past events and now move on to other challenges:

Perry Holmes
Matthias Uhlenbruck
Christopher Majewski

We would like to welcome Steve Dean and Steve Scheepmaker to the URISA BC executive. Our current executive committee consists of:

President – **James Andrusiw**
jandrusiw@coquitlam.ca
Vice-President - **Sean Simpson**
STSimpson@city.surrey.bc.ca
Treasurer - **Kathleen Kewley**
Secretary – **Derik Woo**
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