

Be Spatial 2006 Program Will Demonstrate The Transformative Power of GIS in Organizations

Be Spatial 2006 will offer members of URISA-Ontario Chapter many views of GIS technologies, from the strategic to the practical, with a focus on how the technologies are being used to transform organizations.

Details of the day-long program at the Toronto Congress Centre on Dixon Road in Toronto will be published at www.urisaoc.ca as they become available. Following are synopses of some of the program highlights.

City of Burlington

Wireless technology is transforming the work of staff in the Information Technology Services department, as well as building inspectors and other out-of-office staff. The wireless technology gives them the access to permit data, GIS maps, e-mail and other data in real time.

City of Hamilton

The Emergency Management team of the City of Hamilton has been a proponent of the use of GIS for emergency preparedness and emergency operations for many years. This paper will present an overview on how geospatial technologies have been incorporated into the City's emergency plan, municipal emergency exercises, and the Emergency Operations Centre.

Case studies (real and exercise

scenarios) will be used to explore and demonstrate examples of how GIS can contribute in emergency events such as chemical spills, train derailments, plane crashes, drinking water contamination, major fires, terrorist acts, a tornado and a potential flu pandemic.

City of Kitchener

The City of Kitchener has developed several mobile GIS applications that extend the benefits of the technology to the Park Planning, Development and Operations departments. They include:

- An application that enables the capture of information related to the City's tree inventory, which is then published to the enterprise GIS;
- A community-trails application, which makes it possible to sketch the trail segments in wooded areas, where trails cannot be captured by orthophotos;
- A rare-vegetation-species application, which permits field staff to identify, capture and edit data on rare and uncommon flowers and plants.

Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC)

The presentation will describe how ORC, one of Canada's largest public-sector real estate organizations, transformed itself into a digital enterprise, and how the corporate GIS, called "GeoPortal," has been instrumental

in the transformation and success of the organization.

ORC will also discuss how its GIS implementation has created an opportunity for the corporation to become a GIS application service provider to the whole Ontario government. This new initiative is called "GeoPortal for Ontario" and will enable other ministries and agencies to make use of the investment that ORC has made in GIS without duplicating the effort and costs.

York Region

York Region Geomatics Branch will describe the transformation of the Region's geospatial infrastructure, including the development of an enterprise geodatabase, a new server infrastructure and data modelling. A second presentation will look at environmental indicators and how to present them to the public using GIS technologies.

City of Welland

One GIS initiative can often bring benefits to multiple departments. The City of Welland is performing detailed sidewalk inspections every two years, using tricycle-mounted tablet computers, GIS and digital photography, all integrated with other GIS resources, to serve the needs of the Public Works and Parks departments, as well as bylaw enforcers.