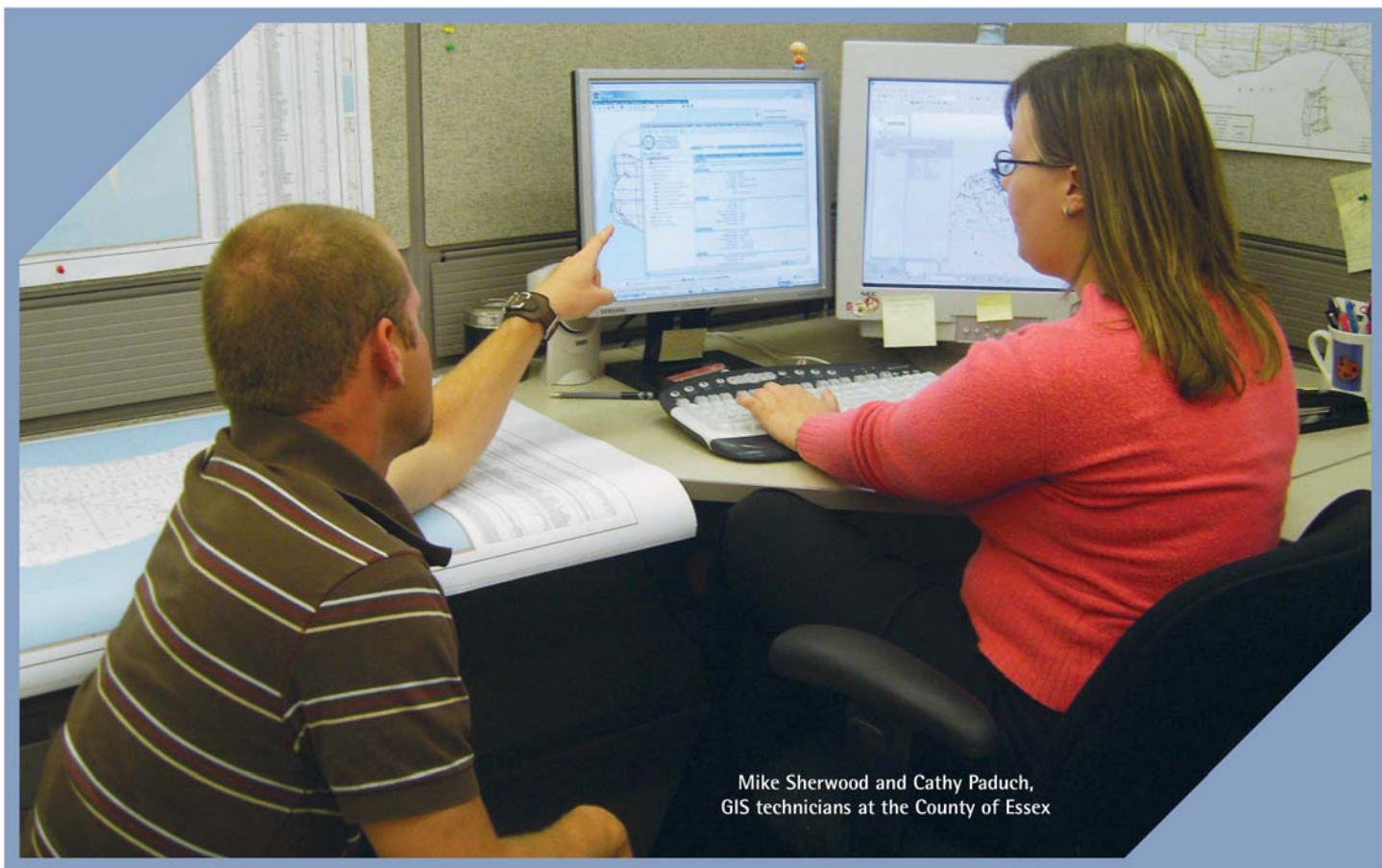




## LINKING TO GIS



Mike Sherwood and Cathy Paduch,  
GIS technicians at the County of Essex

*For the first time, Municipal DataWorks has been linked to a GIS system. It is, says Wendy St. Amour, a good example of how a picture is worth a thousand words.*

For the last couple of years, the County of Essex has been taking full advantage of the latest technological developments to track its assets.

The county started using Municipal DataWorks to track its assets in early 2006 and was the first municipality to use MDW's web services module to view its asset data in a web base format. About a year and a half ago, the county implemented its own Geocortex site and with the MDW web services module was able to view the MDW assets on a map.

"Municipal DataWorks tells us what we have. Geocortex shows us where it is," says Wendy St. Amour, the county's IT manager. "It made sense to bring the two together so that with a push of a button you can get an immediate apprecia-

tion both visually and numerically of how the different infrastructure elements relate to each other and to the urban environment."

With Mike Sherwood and Cathy Paduch, the county's GIS technicians, taking the lead the county started to integrate the two systems early in February.

"It was actually a much easier process than we anticipated," recalls Cathy. "All we had to do was create a link between the MDW asset base and the ID number of the asset in the GIS system. Updating the MDW databases and making sure that we had all the assets in the system was probably the most time-consuming aspect of the project."

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In less than a month, the systems were linked and staff were able to access asset information through the web based GIS mapping system.

“Most people prefer to think visually so there are some real benefits to presenting information this way,” explains Mike Sherwood. “Now when you click on a section of a road or a bridge on the GIS map, you can see all the related information from the MDW system about its condition, age, and physical attributes. We even have photographs of some of the assets to give the user an even better appreciation of what the information is all about.”

The engineering, finance, and GIS departments are already using the linked systems and reviews have been favourable, especially when it comes to making presentations to council.

“Considering all the different issues that council has to deal with, it’s not always easy for the councillors to get up to speed quickly on which particularly assets are under discussion,” says Wendy St. Amour. “Being able to see what assets are involved and how they interrelate both visually and spatially is a real advantage.” **M**

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### MDW UPDATES

- The asset valuation module for PSAB compliance for financial accounting that was unveiled at the February conference is now operational. The spring MDW training program has been modified to include asset valuation module training.
- 136 municipalities have signed data provision agreements and there are 30 service agreements with service providers. For a complete list of municipalities that have signed up for MDW, go to [www.ogra.org](http://www.ogra.org) and follow the MDW link to “Municipal Data Provision”.
- ASI Technologies Inc. has won this year’s Brampton Board of Trade Information and Communication Technology Award, largely due to its development of Municipal DataWorks. The Brampton Outstanding Business Achievement Awards celebrate business excellence in Brampton.