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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**  
May 20, 2013

**For More Information**  
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### **TECHNOLOGY HELPS FRANKLIN PARK POLICE ENHANCE SAFETY** **High Speed Municipal Network Enhances Connectivity Between Public Sites**

The safety of Franklin Park residents is first and foremost on the priority list of Police Chief Michael Witz and village leaders.

Implementation of the latest high-speed fiber optic and microwave technology is enabling the village to enhance and expand safety programs.

Thanks in part to a \$1 million Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Technology Federal Grant received in 2008, the village and police department began working with Northern Illinois University's Broadband Development Group to install equipment upgrades to the technology support system between all village facilities.

Engineers from the NIU Broadband Development Group worked with Chief Witz and Dennis Wagner, Franklin Park's Director of Information Technology, to analyze the village's technology needs.

"The Broadband Development Group helped us look at the systems in place and advised us on ways to make the most of the technology grant, in addition to providing technical assistance and key implementation functions," said Wagner.

The Broadband Development Group assisted the village in the creation of a high speed municipal network, enhancing connectivity between village public sites. Roger Swenson, Director of Technology for the Broadband Group, was the main IT consultant working with Franklin Park. Services included fiber optic and microwave wireless network design, Request for Proposals (RFPs) creation and proposal assessment. The Group also assisted the village in the deployment of camera technology to high-risk areas, including network design, RFP creation and vendor selection support.

Chief Witz said the police department also received about \$150,000 from the state's Illinois Preparedness Grant for the purchase of a mobile surveillance trailer and supporting equipment to

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store and transfer data. The grant was managed with the cooperation of Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS).

As a result of the ILEAS grant, the village was able to install a mobile surveillance system with multiple cameras that record 24-hours-per-day to monitor the Intermodal Train Yard. Surveillance cameras also are in place in a variety of areas throughout the village.

“We not only have about 26 fixed cameras throughout the community, we have added a mobile trailer unit. It is something we can deploy quickly in a high crime area or for special circumstances, like our summer Railroad Days festival, which brings in an additional 10,000 people from all over the world,” said Chief Witz.

“One of the things we first did was upgrade and enhance our police officers’ connectivity in their vehicles,” said Witz. “The FCC has mandated all police have narrow-band radio communication now, so we upgraded the radios. We also replaced the old computers with the latest technology in laptops. We have 46 full-time and 26 part-time officers, so obtaining the grant was crucial to making that happen,” said Chief Witz.

“We also added rear and front cameras in all of the police cars, with video and audio capabilities,” he added.

Wagner said the village not only upgraded to HD surveillance cameras, but also enhanced systems to support dispatch and records. “We put in new hardware including servers and routing/switching equipment. All of the back-end was upgraded,” Wagner said.

Chief Witz prepared a priority list for areas where community surveillance cameras were desired, adding about 20 cameras to the six already existing since 2005 in the James Park area.

“Video can use a lot of bandwidth and by including the upgrade to high speed infrastructure, we now have the ability to get video back to the 911 dispatch center and know it’s responsive to the operators. The high speed broadband links between various places in the village allow the network to spider web out and provides the village the ability to support what we have in place now and to expand later,” Wagner said.

Franklin Park Mayor Barrett Pedersen recently received the 2013 Municipal Leader of the Year Award from the Illinois State Crime Commission. The award is the highest form of recognition in Illinois for crime prevention efforts. The Illinois Crime Commission recognized Mayor Pedersen for unwavering dedication to locating new funding sources to provide important technological advances in crime prevention.

“Our police officers work hard to serve and protect our community. They put their lives on the line every day to safeguard our families and we owe them access to the very best tools and technology to aid in their efforts to prevent and detect crime,” Pedersen said in a press release announcing the award.

## **MEDIA RELEASE (continued)**

Chief Witz said future plans include pursuing partnerships with other village entities like the school district, park districts and library to further enhance safety by use of the expanded high speed network.

### **About the NIU Broadband Development Group**

The NIU Broadband Development Group provides access to and planning and implementation of large and small scale broadband connectivity solutions and focuses on bringing broadband solutions to businesses, government and other organizations in Illinois.

Connectivity via a shared high bandwidth infrastructure has become essential for the efficiency of nearly all of today's business, non-profit, government and healthcare initiatives. Broadband development and the success of economic development initiatives are increasingly entwined. For more information, visit [www.niu.edu/rdi/broadbanddevelopment](http://www.niu.edu/rdi/broadbanddevelopment) or call Roger Swenson at (815) 753-8943.

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