



# News Release

## CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

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### ***Highland Village Implements Public Safety Enhancements***

Highland Village public safety enhancements are nearing completion, providing increased protection and service to public safety staff and residents. In October 2015 the City began a major public safety project to upgrade all aspects of the Dispatch Operations Facility, the public emergency radio system and implementation of the emergency care attendant (ECA) program. After a little over a year of work between several departments within the City, the enhancements are substantially complete.

The catalyst to make the improvements came from a 2015 analysis of Highland Village's public safety systems and protocols by Mission Critical Partners. Recommendations from the assessment included moving to a new Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) and Records Management System (RMS), connecting to the Denton County Radio Communication System and upgrading all radios to a new digital radio system, upgrading the 911 Dispatch Center with new consoles to accommodate the new CAD/RMS and implementing the ECA program. The City made a major investment to enhance the safety of our community and our first responders. In the 2015-2016 budget year City Council approved the issuance of a \$1.5M tax note for this public safety project and targeted public works projects, with the public safety capital improvements coming in at \$1.1M.

"Police, Fire and our Information Services department have all worked diligently over the last year and a half to install, train and implement these public safety enhancements. Now Highland Village residents and public safety personnel have state of the art systems in place for improved communication and response time," stated City Manager Michael Leavitt.

This upgrade was implemented in a phased approach involving several departments within the City. Our Dispatch Operations Facility underwent a near complete makeover to install this upgraded technology. The City now uses Computer Assisted Dispatch and Records Management System by Integrated Computer Systems. This CAD/RMS system allows Highland Village to integrate with Denton County. The move to this technology was needed to implement the transition to the Denton County digital radio system. Highland Village is now in compliance with the new P25 standards for radio communication systems.

"The move to the digital radio system involved working with Denton County Commissioners Court and the Denton County Sheriff's Office and is a prime example of our successful regional partnership to provide enhanced safety for area first responders," stated Mayor Charlotte Wilcox.

The Emergency Care Attendant (ECA) program was the final component to complete the public safety project. Highland Village police officers are now certified as Emergency Care Attendants to provide Basic Life Support (BLS) on scene until the arrival of Emergency Medical personnel who can provide Advanced Life Support (ALS).

“Our Police Officers are in our neighborhoods so when a medical emergency call comes in, our officers can often arrive first on the scene. Having them trained to provide basic life support may be the extra minute or two needed to save a patient’s life,” stated Police Chief Doug Reim.

The ECA training was conducted through MedStar, Fort Worth, TX, and internally from our own Fire Department, and designed as such to improve communications between the departments. With the endorsement and support of our Medical Director, police officers now have the confidence and competency to check vital signs, control bleeding, patient stabilization, and provide specialized Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

“The joint training and implementation of the ECA program has greatly strengthened the partnership between police and fire. We have always had a great working relationship with the police department, but this has elevated us to a new level. I am excited about the improved level of service we will be able to offer the citizens and visitors to Highland Village through this program,” stated Fire Chief Brad Goudie.

The ECA program will include a very progressive continued education process with the fire department. ECA’s will receive both ongoing online and hands on continuing education. All actions and emergency contacts undergo a Continued Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance process to ensure we are delivering the best possible service. The ECA program is held to the same high level of standards and expectations which are placed on all firefighter/paramedics. We are confident that those police officers recently trained to ECA’s will not only meet but exceed those expectations.

“Our Police, Fire and Information Services departments have worked together to bring this project to fruition. The end result means improved operations, data collection and analysis, regional operability, enhanced safety for our first responders and better protection and emergency medical services for our residents,” stated Mayor Charlotte Wilcox.