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State, City Partnership to Improve Public Safety in Grand Rapids

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — A partnership between the Michigan Public Safety Communications System (MPSCS) and the city of Grand Rapids is improving critical public safety communications for agencies and first responders in the Grand Rapids region.

“This is the perfect example of how the state and local units of government can work together to better serve residents of the great state of Michigan,” said MPSCS Director Brad Stoddard. “This development increases coverage and interoperability for public safety first responders and resolves officer safety concerns.”

MPSCS and the city are co-locating equipment and sharing tower space, improving emergency communications near the US-131 S-curve and in downtown Grand Rapids near the Van Andel Arena.

“The collocation of the MPSCS antenna on the City of Grand Rapids’ Belknap Tower is a great example of state and local agencies working together to support public safety communication in a fiscally responsible manner,” said MSP Rockford Post Commander F/Lt. Christopher McIntire. “This project will significantly enhance the communication capabilities for our troopers working within the city. We greatly appreciate the cooperative efforts of the MPSCS and city of Grand Rapids on this accomplishment.”

MPSCS moved their existing shelter to the city of Grand Rapids’ Belknap tower site from the Rockford Michigan State Police post and the tower became part of the MPSCS backbone by connecting to the MPSCS site.

Funds for the project were identified through Homeland Security and Interoperable Emergency Communications Grants for some of the microwave and 800 MHz equipment.

Grand Rapids Police Chief Kevin Belk said the coverage in downtown Grand Rapids has improved significantly since the Belknap tower went live.

MPSCS is the largest public safety communications system in North America. Its state-of-the-art technology provides interoperable voice and data communications to more than 1,400 federal, state, local, tribal and private public safety agencies across Michigan and integrates with bordering states and Canada.