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Fairport Launches WiFi Waterfront **Free wireless internet service a first on the Erie Canal** **Service began May 1, 2007. Popularity Growing**

Fairport, NY—The Village of Fairport, in conjunction with Fairport Municipal Commission and the Fairport Village Partnership has installed free wireless internet access at its Erie Canal harbor area.

Fairport was one of the first communities in New York State to embrace its Erie Canal heritage and readapt its commercial harbor, transforming it into a recreational destination for residents and tourists alike. As a result, Fairport enjoys an international reputation as a must-do destination on the Erie Canal.

“Fairport’s very popular destination during canal season. This service keeps us at the forefront of canal redevelopment.” said Scott Winner, Director of the Fairport Village Partnership.

Village officials see the addition of WiFi service as a logical extension of current amenities offered including water, electric, restrooms and showers. Visitors can now access websites for the Village of Fairport, Fairport Village Partnership, Fairport-Perinton Merchants Association, and Fairport Canal Days, while enjoying the beautiful canal side environment. So far the response has been very positive.

“Once again, Fairport is to provide the amenities that do so much to enhance the quality of life here,” according to Fairport Mayor Fritz May. “It’s another example of why we’re rated one of the best places to live in the United States.” (CNN/Money Magazine)

The idea to provide WiFi was first aired during a Fairport Joint Boards meeting late in 2006. Village Administrator Ken Moore and Partnership Director Scott Winner worked with Luke Wenschhof, Fairport Electric GIS/IT coordinator, and other company staff to develop the idea. They determined that for a relatively small capital investment they could piggyback on existing electric service infrastructure, and by using off-the-shelf technology, create a system that is easy to install, operate and maintain. Moore then took the idea to the FMC board of directors where it gained unanimous approval.

The development has been noticed by officials in Albany, too. Carmella R. Mantello, Director of the New York State Canal Corporation said, "Fairport's new Wi-Fi Waterfront initiative will help attract more visitors to the Canal System by providing a great amenity that boaters and other travelers need. Many travelers on the Canal system are visiting from long distances and free Wi-Fi will allow them to stay in touch and receive important news and information during their trip. We commend Fairport for their foresight and hope this will be the first of many communities offering this free service along the Canal."

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