



## 2013 CONCORD ANNUAL TOWN REPORT

- [Town Manager](#)
- [Information Technology](#)
- [Town Governance Study](#)

### Information Technology

Mark Howell, Chief Information Officer  
 Leslie Koplow, Information Systems Assistant

The Information Technology (IT) function became an independent department reporting to the Town Manager in 2011. It is managed by the Chief Information Officer (CIO), Mark Howell. The Department provides information systems and technology to support all Town departments and enterprises. 2013 was the first year since before 2010 that both positions in this Department were staffed for the full year.

- [Cover](#)
- [Town Officials](#)
- [Board of Selectmen](#)
- [Town Manager](#)
- [2013 Town Meetings](#)
- [General Government](#)
- [Public Safety](#)
- [Municipal Light](#)
- [Public Works](#)
- [Community Development](#)
- [Schools](#)
- [Human Services](#)
- [Finance](#)

The CIO is responsible for IT strategy, information asset security, business system availability and broadband deployment. The CIO makes capital investments in information technology such as: servers, workstations, telephone systems, data networks and information storage. The CIO also guides all major application systems investments made by departments. This strategic focus emphasizes collaboration and coordination to address common needs in applications systems and business process across departments.

The Information Systems (IS) Assistant manages all aspects of end user computing for Town employees. The Town has an inventory of over 300 workstations and laptops. The IS Assistant replaced 69 workstations and laptops which had become obsolete, failed or required an upgrade. She manages the IT helpdesk, which is staffed by a vendor, and also provides direct support to employees and departments. The IS Assistant sets up system access for new employees and ensures access is removed when employees depart. She works with individuals and vendors to install job-specific workstation software and deploys applications to departments. The Assistant also supports Town Meeting by receiving, testing and displaying all the electronic presentations. In addition, the IS Assistant provides technical support for the Town's web site.

During 2013, the Town's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) function moved from Public Works to the IT Department. The GIS Coordinator provides support to many departments by creating custom maps, updating parcel information and coordinating the use of common map layers. A strategic study of the Town's GIS performed in 2012 recommended that GIS program coordination could improve if it was transferred from Public Works to the IT Department. Since the IT Department mission is to support other departments, GIS support is a natural fit. The realignment will also help streamline integrating geographic data into more application systems. The Public Works GIS Coordinator resigned in 2013, so the IT Department added a contractor to fill the GIS Coordinator role on an interim basis.

A new position, the GIS and Application Integration Program Manager, was proposed and included in the IT Department budget for FY2014. The role replaces the previous GIS Coordinator position with more emphasis on sharing data between multiple systems and integrating major application systems in support of processes such as permitting and licensing.

Maps and aerial images, a part of GIS data, are critical resources for most Town departments. The last time Concord acquired new imagery was 2007. In 2013, Concord joined a regional effort known as Massachusetts Orthoimagery Consortium (MassOrtho) to sponsor a flyover of the Town. The flyover will be conducted in early 2014. The new images will have three inch resolution which allows for mapping of hydrants, manholes, and single trees, and one foot horizontal accuracy which will allow for the development of two foot contour mapping. This increase in detail will greatly improve the usefulness of the maps departments and the public use today.

Major IT infrastructure investments in 2013 included the installation of a new server cluster at the Public Safety Building (Police/Fire). This project more than doubled the Town's server and storage capacity. More importantly, it improves resilience by creating a second site for IT operations. The IT Department now has the ability to move all critical processing to a second site when needed with minimal disruption. Both sites are always processing work and each site provides backup for the other. The new servers also add much needed capacity to upgrade applications and support the new Internet service from the Light Plant.

Data and voice communications are critical to municipal operations, and network requirements continue to grow rapidly. For about a year up to 2013, the Town's IT staff had been directly supporting all telecommunications needs for the Town and the Light Plant. In 2013, the CIO filled the open positions at the Light Plant and started to manage the telecommunications staff. By managing both IT and telecommunications, the CIO ensures close coordination between these critical highly interdependent areas. With the telecommunications positions filled, progress was made on network improvements to support departmental operations and to prepare to provide

Internet services as described in the CMLP Telecommunication Operations section.

Effective information technology depends on a mix of hardware and software, personnel and business process. In 2013, important work was completed on the network, server and workstation hardware and software. The IT staff expanded in size and experience, laying the groundwork for significant improvements in applications systems and business process in 2014 and beyond.