



**Committee: GO & PS**

**Staff:** Susan J. Farag, Legislative Analyst

**Purpose:** To receive testimony – no vote expected

**Keywords:** #Dickerson; #PublicSafetyRadioTower; #GenOn

AGENDA ITEM #10

February 8, 2022

**Public Hearing**

## **SUBJECT**

Amendment to the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program #22-58  
Montgomery County Government  
County Offices and Other Improvements  
Dickerson Radio Tower (No. 342302)

## **EXPECTED ATTENDEES**

None.

## **COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

This is a public hearing. The Joint Public Safety and Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee is tentatively scheduled to review the item on February 17, 2022.

## **DESCRIPTION/ISSUE**

The Council will receive testimony on an amendment to the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) #22-58 that establishes the new Dickerson Radio Tower Project (no. 342302). The Executive is requesting this amendment to provide funding to build a 450-foot communications tower near the Public Safety Radio System equipment shelter in the Dickerson area of the County.

This amendment is needed because the Public Safety Radio System communication equipment is located on the GenOn power plant's smokestack, which is in the process of being shut down. The exact date for removal of the 700-foot smokestack is unknown. The County has four antennas and two microwave dishes located at the 420-foot mark that provide the coverage needed in this portion of the County including the Potomac River. The recommended amendment is consistent with the criteria for amending the CIP to address the public safety concern that would arise without a new tower. This amendment will create an unfunded new project. Subsequently an Executive transfer of \$1,900,000 in General Obligation bonds and \$100,000 in Current Revenue: General from the Public Safety System Modernization project (No. 340901) will provide the needed project funding.

The Technology Business and Enterprise Solutions (TEBS) department desires to install a 450-foot communications tower near the PSRS equipment shelter to replace the GenOn smokestack. The tower will support the antennas and microwave dishes for the Public Safety Radio System. Once the RideOn project (installing Clever system into the buses) is completed, the RideOn vehicles will also utilize the same radio system, which will greatly increase radio coverage for RideOn (currently on an 8-site UHF system) as they expand their rider coverage area.

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OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*

MEMORANDUM

January 18, 2022

TO: Gabe Albornoz, President, County Council

FROM: Marc Elrich, County Executive 

SUBJECT: Amendment to the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program #22-58  
Montgomery County Government  
County Offices and Other Improvements  
Dickerson Radio Tower (No. 342302)

I am recommending an amendment to the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program to create a new Dickerson Radio Tower (No. 342302) project. This project will provide funding to build a 450-foot communications tower near the Public Safety Radio System equipment shelter in the Dickerson area of the County.

This amendment is needed because the Public Safety Radio System communication equipment is located on the GenOn power plant's smokestack, which is in the process of being shut down. The exact date for removal of the 700-foot smokestack is unknown. The County has four antennas and two microwave dishes located at the 420-foot mark that provide the coverage needed in this portion of the County including the Potomac River. The recommended amendment is consistent with the criteria for amending the CIP to address the public safety concern that would arise without a new tower. This amendment will create an unfunded new project. Subsequently an Executive transfer of \$1,900,000 in General Obligation bonds and \$100,000 in Current Revenue: General from the Public Safety System Modernization project (No. 340901) will provide the needed project funding.

I recommend that the County Council approve this amendment to the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program.

I appreciate your prompt consideration of this action.

ME: jk

Enclosure: Amendment to the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program #22-58

cc: Gail Roper, CIO/Director, Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions  
Jennifer Bryant, Director, Office of Management and Budget

Resolution No: \_\_\_\_\_  
Introduced: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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By: Council President at the Request of the County Executive

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SUBJECT: Amendment to the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program #22-58  
Montgomery County Government  
County Offices and Other Improvements  
Dickerson Radio Tower (No. 342302)

Background

1. Section 302 of the Montgomery County Charter provides that the Council may amend an approved capital improvements program at any time by an affirmative vote of no fewer than six members of the Council.
2. The County Executive recommends this amendment to the FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program as shown on the attached project description form.
3. This amendment is needed because the Public Safety Radio System communication equipment is located on the GenOn power plant's smokestack, which is in the process of being shut down. The exact date for removal of the 700-foot smokestack is unknown. The County has four antennas and two microwave dishes located at the 420-foot mark that provide the coverage needed in this portion of the County including the Potomac River. The recommended amendment is consistent with the criteria for amending the CIP to address the public safety concern that would arise without a new tower. This amendment will create an unfunded new project. Subsequently an Executive transfer of \$1,900,000 in General Obligation bonds and \$100,000 in Current Revenue: General from the Public Safety System Modernization project (No. 340901) will provide the needed project funding.
4. The County Executive recommends an amendment to Dickerson Radio Tower (No. 342302).

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following action:

The FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program of the Montgomery County Government is amended as described above and as reflected on the attached project description form.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

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Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.  
Clerk of the Council



# Dickerson Radio Tower

(P342302)

Category	General Government	Date Last Modified	01/15/22
SubCategory	County Offices and Other Improvements	Administering Agency	Technology Services
Planning Area	Poolesville and Vicinity	Status	Planning Stage

Total	Thru FY21	Est FY22	Total 6 Years	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 28	Beyond 6 Years
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### EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000s)

Other	2,000	-	2,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000s)

Current Revenue: General	100	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
G.O. Bonds	1,900	-	1,900	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA (\$000s)

Appropriation FY 23 Request	-	Year First Appropriation	
Appropriation FY 24 Request	-	Last FY's Cost Estimate	-
Cumulative Appropriation	2,000		
Expenditure / Encumbrances	-		
Unencumbered Balance	2,000		

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

TEBS/PSSM desires to install a 450-foot communications tower near the PSRS equipment shelter to replace the GenOn smokestack. The tower will support the antennas and microwave dishes for the PSRS. Once the RideOn project (installing Clever system into the buses) is completed, the RideOn vehicles will also utilize the same radio system, which will greatly increase radio coverage for RideOn (currently on an 8-site UHF system) as they expand their rider coverage area.

### ESTIMATED SCHEDULE

FY22

### PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The Public Safety Radio System (PSRS) has 22 antenna sites located around the County to optimize coverage for all Public Safety workers. One of the sites covers the Dickerson area of the County. The PSRS communication site is located on the GenOn property, which is in the process of shutting down. The exact date of the smoke stake removal is not currently available. At the time of planning and construction (years 2016 - 2018), information was not available about the GenOn location closing. The PSRS antennas (4) and microwave dishes (2) are located at the 420-foot mark on the 700-foot-tall smoke stack. For over 20 years, the County has operated at the Dickerson power plant's smoke tower on Martinsburg Road because it was an optimum site for mounting antennas and providing the coverage needed in this portion of the County including the Potomac River. Additionally, the new communications equipment shelter is located at that site as part of the recent activation of the P25 radio system.

### FISCAL NOTE

In FY22, \$100,000 in Current Revenue: General and \$1,900,000 in G.O. Bonds was transferred from the Public Safety System Modernization (PSSM) project to this project.

### COORDINATION

Department of Technology and Business Enterprise Solutions, Department of General Services