



# NEWS FROM

# ULSTER COUNTY

County Executive Jen Metzger

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## **Ulster County Breaks Ground for New Resilient Emergency Communications Center in New Paltz**

**KINGSTON, NY** - Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger, alongside elected officials, emergency personnel, and community leaders, celebrated the groundbreaking of the Ulster County Emergency Communications Center (ECC) today, a state-of-the-art facility to strengthen coordinated emergency response capabilities and improve the climate resilience of the County's emergency management system.

The 16,350-square-foot Emergency Communications Center, located on Paradies Lane in New Paltz, will house the Department of Emergency Services, including the Emergency-911 Center, which operates 24/7, an Emergency Operations Center to provide a rapid, coordinated response to natural disasters and larger emergencies, and the Divisions of Fire Services and Emergency Medical Services. The new ECC will also include a dedicated quiet room for dispatchers to decompress after handling stressful or traumatic calls.

Earlier this year, Ulster County was awarded a \$2 million NYSERDA grant to support the facility's energy-conscious design, including super-insulated walls, geothermal heating and cooling, and rooftop solar with battery backup. A substantial portion of the property will also be dedicated to a ground-mounted solar array to power 100% of this facility and as well as other County buildings.

"The new Emergency Communications Center is an essential investment in resilient emergency management infrastructure that will greatly enhance our ability to coordinate emergency response and disaster relief. The ECC will replace older facilities that are outdated, undersized, and vulnerable to severe weather and power outages, and will greatly strengthen our capacity to respond under any conditions," **said Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger.** "I want to recognize the Legislature for its support of this important project and thank my team

who have invested so much of their time, energy, and expertise in careful planning for this project over the last several years, including Emergency Services Director Everett Erichsen, Planning Director Dennis Doyle, and Deputy County Executive Jamie Capuano. We're also grateful to NYSERDA for \$2 million in grant funding to make this facility a model in clean energy, as well as to Assembly Member Sarahana Shrestha for a \$40,000 capital grant through her office."

"Delivering for our first responders and keeping Hudson Valley families safe is one of my top priorities. That's why, going back to my time as County Executive and continuing in Congress, I've pushed relentlessly to build a new, state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center. I am incredibly proud and excited to see this crucial public safety initiative moving forward," **said Congressman Pat Ryan**. "I'll continue to use every tool at my disposal to get this project the federal support it needs, including the over \$1M House Republicans removed from the last government funding bill. We cannot afford to let public safety get bogged down in politics — when we invest in our first responders, our entire community is safer."

"Breaking ground on this facility marks a major operational leap forward for public safety in Ulster County," **said Everett Erichsen, Director of Ulster County Emergency Services**.

"Every day, our emergency services professionals work together to answer life-critical calls, coordinate complex incidents, and prepare for evolving threats, often simultaneously and under pressure. This facility brings those functions together under one roof for the first time, streamlining coordination, strengthening communication, and supporting faster, more effective response."

"This is definitely an exciting day in Ulster County," **said Gina Hansut, Ulster County Legislator and Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee Chair**. "After doing our due diligence, as we first introduced the resolution to initiate this project in November of 2022, much work has been done to get us here today. We have been steadfast that the Paradies Lane location will serve us well. Public safety, in my opinion, is the government's number one priority, and today as we officially launch the ECC, we thank all who have already put so much into this. Ulster County is committed to public safety, and this will only make us stronger."

"Projects like the new Emergency Communications Center, built under a cost-saving project labor agreement, support local contractors while providing workers with stable, well-paying jobs and valuable benefits, helping to strengthen the local economy and improve lives," **said Michael Ham, Representative for Operating Engineers Local 825 and Chair of the Ulster County Industrial Development Agency**. "We thank County Executive Metzger and the Ulster County Legislature for partnering with Hudson Valley Building Trade Unions."

The ECC is being developed by a project team, led by Urbahn Architects as the lead architect, The Palombo Group as construction manager, and Alfandre Architecture as consulting architect. Additional engineering and design partners include GPI, overseeing structural, civil, and MEP engineering, and Cerami Associates, responsible for telecommunications, IT, security, audio-visual, and data systems design. The construction team consists of Andron Construction as general contractor, Perreca Electric for electrical work, The YMI Group handling mechanical and plumbing, and Merritt Construction managing site work. The New York State Technology Enterprise Corporation (NYSTEC), a consulting firm, is also contributing to the project. A Project Labor Agreement is in place with the Hudson Valley Building and Construction Trades Council and the associated local unions.

“Ulster County’s leadership directed the designers to focus on resiliency, redundancy, efficiency, and longevity of the new facility,” **said Urbahn Architects Associate Principal Christopher Young.** “The facility will be constructed on a five-inch slab-on-grade concrete foundation and have a gray standing-seam metal roofing system. The perimeter walls will feature an insulated concrete form system of interlocking blocks of insulation that create the formwork for a concrete core. This system will provide continuous insulation for the entire building without thermal leaks, as well as good sound insulation. Additionally, Urbahn designed the building to be in line with Ulster County Executive Order 01-2023, so the facility will meet New York State’s NYStretch Energy Code 2020 standards for energy efficiency in public buildings.”

Site work will include constructing access roads and an asphalt parking surface with 71 spaces, as well as landscaping of trees, bushes and grasses.

## **BACKGROUND**

The County purchased the 57.3-acre property in May 2024 for \$2.8 million — \$200,000 less than the 2022 agreed price between the property owner and the County. County Executive Metzger negotiated the price reduction to more fully account for environmental remediation costs, as the site is in the NYS Brownfield Program, and site remediation will be consistent with what is required by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

The 2024 Executive Budget created an \$18 million capital reserve for the Emergency Communications Center. By dedicating these funds from the County’s excess fund balance in a reserve, taxpayers will save more than \$1 million annually in borrowing costs.

The New Paltz location provides access to reliable, uninterrupted power and redundant fiber optic infrastructure, and is also ideally located to provide quick access to major thoroughfares: the New York State Thruway, and Routes 32 and 9W.

Currently, the County's Emergency-911 call center answers more than 130,000 emergency and non-emergency calls per year.

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