

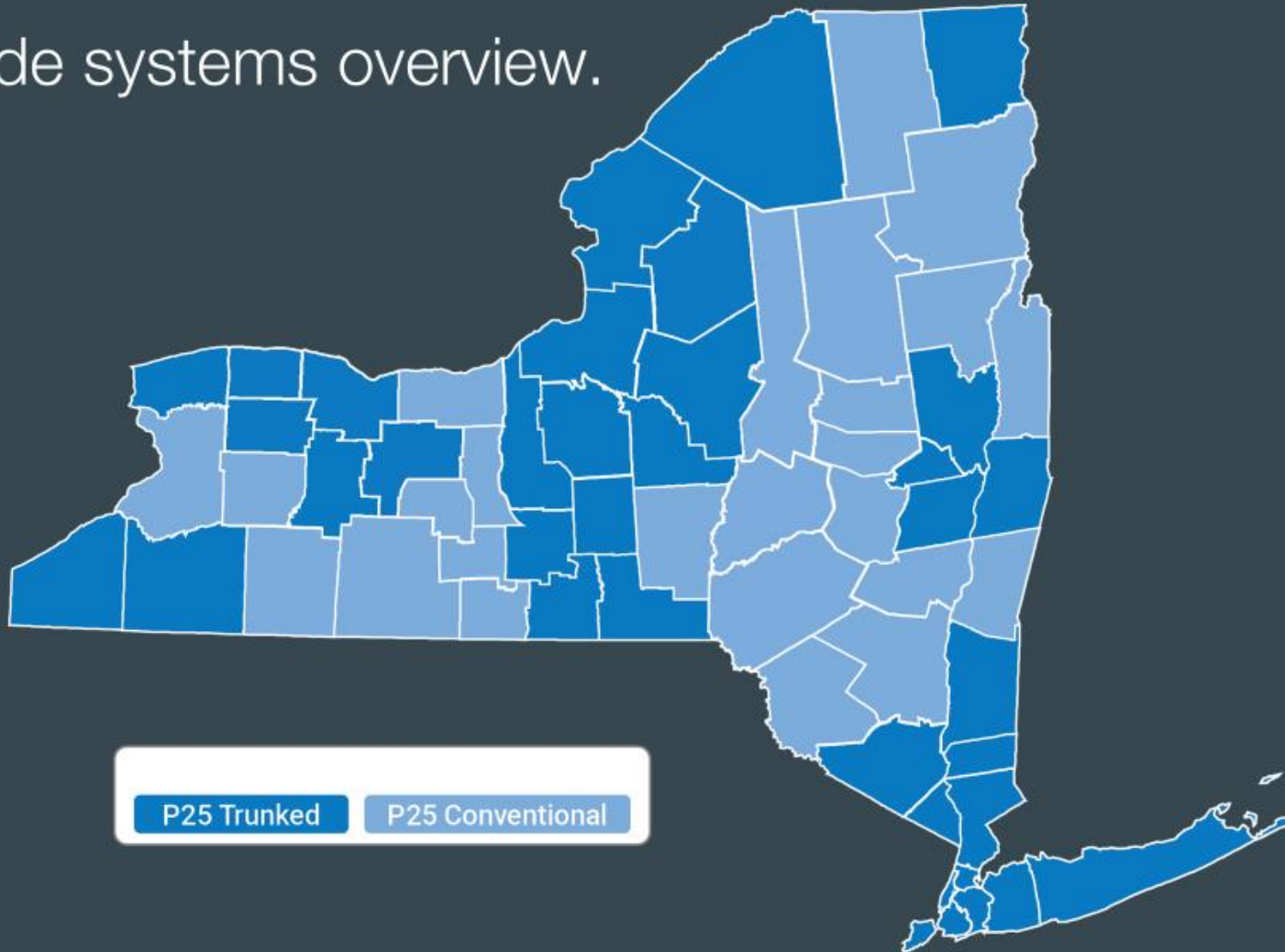


Dept. of Homeland Security & Emergency Services

2026 Capital Projects Proposal

Erie County Trunked Radio System

Statewide systems overview.





Today there are **14 Primary and 6 Secondary Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP's)**. They are responsible for **dispatching 97 Fire Departments, 29 Police Agencies, 7 EMS Agencies**. Many also dispatch **local government & critical public works agencies**

Fire Departments alone are dispatched by 16 individual PSAPs all on different radio systems

Law Enforcement operates in a similar manner but faces additional challenges due to disparate radio systems, i.e. Analog, Digital (P25, NXDN, TRBO), Public Safety Standard Trunked Systems, as well as non-compatible commercial systems, all on a variety of frequency bands, i.e. UHF, VHF & 700/800 MHz.

Erie County radios are not compatible with the surrounding counties radio systems to which they provide mutual aid services on a daily basis. Six of the eight WNY Counties already operate on Trunked Radio Systems. Erie & Wyoming are the last ones to operate on such disparate radio systems which truly compromises interoperable communications for all first responders



Current System

Today the Erie County Emergency Services Communications Unit built and maintains 19 Simulcast Radio Systems across 32 tower sites to provide primary dispatch and interoperable communications across the county. There are currently 161 radio repeaters and 78 radio receivers that make up the entire radio network at those sites.

All tower sites are connected via microwave radio links back to our primary and redundant backup communications server rooms. ErieNet will be utilized in the future for additional communications links.



- Just from a county department communications overview: Today there are separate systems for B&G, Emergency Services, Highways, Parks, Probation, Protective Services, Senior Services, Sewers, Sheriff's and Youth Services.
- Each department maintains their radios today whereas a countywide trunked radio system would combine these disparate systems into one network improving coverage, functionality and redundancy. This would also standardize equipment and consolidate maintenance costs under one umbrella.



CURRENT SYSTEM



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Advantages of Transitioning to Trunking

Efficient use of frequencies

Talkgroup usage allows for system partitioning

Improved interoperability

Encryption is more easily implemented

Automatic roaming

User alerted when outside of coverage area

Additional features – location information, user authentication (link layer) radio enable/disable, etc.



Risks of Disconnected Systems

- **Lack of interoperability and compatibility amongst disparate communication systems in EC LE Community**
- **Incompatibility hinders response**
- **5g/LTE/Cellular are not sufficiently reliable for mission critical communications:**
 - Commercial Cellular can be overwhelmed or otherwise taken out of service.
 - Network coverage is based on the business needs of the communications companies, not that of first responders.
 - These Technologies can, however, serve as a backup or as an alternate data path for LMR traffic, but should not be the primary public safety network.
- **Examples:**
 - Stadium Game Days regarding the lack of interoperability amongst Law Enforcement agencies
 - AT&T's public safety and public networks were taken down by a bombing in Nashville in 2020. Verizon has had a rough year with several partial outages and one large one in September of 2024.



A Trunked Radio System would require less tower sites. Today, to get critical radio coverage, we lease space on ten towers across the county at a cost of about \$275,000/yr (Grant Funded). Some could be eliminated with the savings going toward ongoing maintenance and equipment fees.

Cost Savings & Share

Regional Network Infrastructure:

- County purchases and maintains the regional network infrastructure
- Regional partners join the network paying a network access fee to contribute to the maintenance of the network

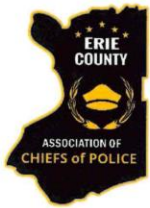
Regional Network User Equipment:

- Regional partners/network users could buy their own user radios and dispatch consoles (from a network administrators approved model list)
- The regional partners could be responsible to maintain and upgrade/replace their agency radios and consoles

Regional Partner Access Fees:

- The regional partners may pay monthly access fees per radio/per radio user to cover annual maintenance costs to operate the regional network





Erie County Association of Chiefs of Police

C/O Police Headquarters

8787 Erie Rd.

Angola, NY 14006

*President – Richard Schara; Chief – Village of Hamburg PD
1st Vice President – William Gummo; Chief – Town of Lancaster PD
2nd Vice President – Patrick Fitzgerald; Chief – Town of Orchard Park PD
Secretary/Treasurer – Greg Szarowicz; Chief – Town of Evans PD
Sergeant at Arms – Peter Dienes; Chief – Town of Hamburg PD*

To the Erie County Capital Projects Committee,

On behalf of the Erie County Association of Chiefs of Police, I am writing to express our full support for the creation of a countywide trunked radio system in Erie County. Interoperable communications are not a luxury—they are a necessity for effective public safety operations. As law enforcement leaders, we know firsthand that in moments of crisis—whether a major incident, multi-agency response, or routine patrol—our ability to communicate clearly and immediately can mean the difference between life and death.

Currently, radio communications across the county are fragmented. Many agencies operate on different platforms, making coordination difficult and response times slower in emergencies. A unified, countywide trunked radio system would address these issues by enabling secure, reliable, and seamless communication among all public safety agencies—police, fire, EMS, and emergency management—regardless of jurisdiction or discipline.

The benefits of such a system include:

- ☐ Interoperability between local, county, state, and federal responders
- ☐ Improved officer safety through dependable and encrypted communication
- ☐ Efficient resource coordination during large-scale emergencies or mutual aid events
- ☐ Cost-effectiveness through centralized infrastructure and long-term sustainability

We commend the efforts underway to explore and pursue this critical infrastructure investment and are committed to working in partnership with Erie County, the Department of Central Police Services, and all relevant stakeholders to ensure its success.

The Erie County Chiefs of Police Association strongly urges all supporting agencies, elected officials, and funding bodies to prioritize the development and implementation of this countywide trunked radio system. It is a necessary and overdue step toward building a safer, more responsive, and better-connected emergency communications network for all who live and work in Erie County.

Sincerely,

Richard A Schara

President

Erie County Association of Chiefs of Police

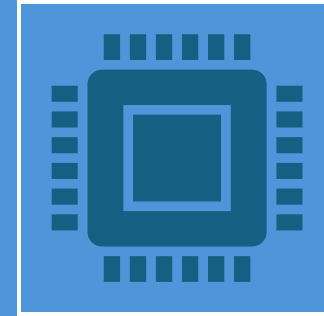
Local Support from Erie County Association of Chiefs of Police



Funding Requested



**The Capital Projects 2025 requested
funds total \$30,000,000 in 2026**



This project includes:

Converting existing conventional radio
equipment to a modernized trunked radio
system;

Coverage testing;

System integration;

Parts and labor.

