

MEMORANDUM

March 5, 2025

TO: Public Safety Committee

FROM: Susan J. Farag, Senior Budget and Policy Analyst
 Logan Anbinder, Legislative Analyst

SUBJECT: Worksession: FY26 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY25-30 CIP
 • Judicial Security Improvements

PURPOSE: Vote on recommended amendments to the FY25-30 CIP.

Expected attendees:

The Circuit Court

Hon. James A. Bonifant, Administrative Judge, Montgomery County Circuit Court
 Hon. Debra L. Dwyer, Associate Judge
 Tim Sheridan, Court Administrator

Department of General Services

David Dise, Director
 Greg Ossont, Deputy Director

The Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Maxwell Uy

Judicial Security Improvements ([P362401](#))

CE Amended versus Approved FY25-30 Expenditures (in 000's)

	Total Project Cost	Through FY24	Six-Year Total	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	Beyond 6-Years
FY25-30 Approved	500	204	90,562	296	296	-	-	-	-	
Amended FY25-30 CE Rec	1,792	204	1,588	296	1,292	-	-	-	-	
change from approved (\$,%)	1,292	-	(88,974)	-	996	-	-	-	-	-

Background: Threats and actual violence against judicial staff are a growing concern.¹ Tragically, a Maryland Circuit Court Judge was murdered two years ago after issuing a divorce and custody ruling in Washington County.² This prompted the General Assembly to pass SB575 of 2024, the *Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson Judicial Security Act*.³ One of the bill's provisions created a State Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities, and the Committee is expected to be briefed today on the task force's recent findings and recommendations.⁴

The County's Judicial Center Annex opened in April 2014. Currently, all 17 Circuit Court Judge chambers, four Appellate Judge chambers, 10 Senior Judges are located in hallways that are not secure. The Judges, Register of Wills, Clerk of Court, Chief Deputy Clerk, Court Administrator, and Deputy Court Administrator must travel through the public hallway and use one of the public elevators or use the public stairwell to access their vehicle which is parked in a secured garage. The lack of secured spaces puts these individuals at risk.

This capital project was new last year and funds the Judicial Center Annex North Tower improvements to increase security and protection for Circuit Court judges. Phase 1 of the project is expected to install new security doors at each level of the North Tower Courthouse to restrict access to two elevators on each floor for judicial use, leaving four elevators on each floor for public access. Work includes the installation of card readers, an intercom, and a fire alarm pull station on each floor.

Recommended Changes: Total project costs increase by \$1.292 million, of which, \$1.177 is G.O. Bond funded, and \$115,000 is State Aid. The Executive advises the additional funding is needed to implement Phase 2 of the security improvements, which includes installing security walls, doors, and devices, along with architectural and engineering fees, permits, and supervision. Installation will begin in April on the third floor near the Appellate Judges, followed by the Terrace Floor near the Judges' Garage, then the second-floor hallway to the Senior Judge Chambers, and finally the 6th through 9th floors in a TBD order.

Council staff recommendation: Council staff recommends approval as submitted by the Executive.

This staff report contains:

Rec. Amended FY25-30 Judicial Security Improvements

Circle #

1-2

¹ [Defusing the violence against judges, as courts under attack](#), American Bar Association (August 2024)

² [Maryland judge killed in his driveway, authorities search for suspect who 'targeted' him over divorce case ruling](#), NBC News (October 2023)

³ [SB575 of 2024](#)

⁴ [Briefing - Safety and Security of Judicial Facilities](#), Logan Anbinder (March 10, 2025)



Judicial Security Improvements (P362401)

Category	Public Safety	Date Last Modified	01/08/25
SubCategory	Other Public Safety	Administering Agency	General Services
Planning Area	Rockville	Status	Under Construction

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000s)

Cost Elements	Total	Thru FY24	Rem FY24	Total 6 Years	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 28	FY 29	FY 30	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design and Supervision	184	-	88	96	25	71	-	-	-	-	-
Construction	1,295	-	116	1,179	271	908	-	-	-	-	-
Other	313	-	-	313	-	313	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,792	-	204	1,588	296	1,292	-	-	-	-	-

FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000s)

Funding Source	Total	Thru FY24	Rem FY24	Total 6 Years	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 28	FY 29	FY 30	Beyond 6 Years
G.O. Bonds	1,677	-	204	1,473	296	1,177	-	-	-	-	-
State Aid	115	-	-	115	-	115	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES	1,792	-	204	1,588	296	1,292	-	-	-	-	-

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA (\$000s)

Appropriation FY 26 Request	1,292	Year First Appropriation	FY24
Cumulative Appropriation	500	Last FY's Cost Estimate	500
Expenditure / Encumbrances	-		
Unencumbered Balance	500		

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project provides for the installation of new security doors at each level of the North Tower Courthouse to restrict access to two elevators on each floor for judicial use, leaving four elevators on each floor for public access. Work includes installation of card readers, intercom, and a fire alarm pull station on each floor.

LOCATION

50 Maryland Ave, Rockville, MD 20850

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE

The project is 2 phases. Phase 1 reconfigures the elevators and installs security doors on Terrace Level and 3rd Floor. Phase 2 installs security doors on the remaining floors. Phase 1 will be complete in FY25. Phase 2 will be complete in FY26.

COST CHANGE

Phase 2 costs added.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The Judicial Center Annex opened in April 2014. Currently, all seventeen Circuit Court Judge chambers, four Appellate Judge chambers, ten Senior Judges are located in hallways that are not secure. The Judges, Register of Wills, Clerk of Court, Chief Deputy Clerk, Court Administrator, and Deputy Court Administrator must travel through the public hallway and use one of the public elevators or use the public stairwell to access their vehicle which is parked in a secured garage. The lack of secured spaces puts these individuals at risk.

FISCAL NOTE

FY24 supplemental appropriation in GO Bonds for the amount of \$500,000. Circuit Court is requesting additional grant funding from the State.

DISCLOSURES

The County Executive asserts that this project conforms to the requirement of relevant local plans, as required by the Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act.

COORDINATION

Circuit Court, Sheriff's Office, State Attorney's Office, Register of Wills, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Department of General Services, Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions, County Council, Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission