

**Maryland Military Department
Testimony**

Fiscal Year 2019 Capital Budget

**Presented to
Senate Capital Budget Subcommittee
February 20, 2018**

**House Capital Budget Subcommittee
February 21, 2018**

Introduction:

The Maryland Military Department appreciates this opportunity to update the committee on the capital activities of the Department and to respond to the recommendations and requested updates contained in the Capital Budget analysis prepared by the Department of Legislative Services (DLS).

The Department's response to the recommendations and requested updates of the Department of Legislative Services:

GO Bond Recommended Actions (DLS Analysis page 12):

1. *Approve \$9,428,000 in general obligation bonds for the continued design and construction of the Freedom Readiness Center in Sykesville.*
2. *Approve the fiscal 2020 pre-authorization of \$3,015,000 in general obligation bonds for construction of the Freedom Readiness Center.*

Agency Response:

The Department concurs with the two (2) DLS GO Bond recommendations.

DLS REQUESTED UPDATE #1 (Freedom Readiness Center, page 6):

1. *The Military Department should comment on the progress of the design and construction of the Freedom Readiness Center, including the process for selecting the current facility site, alternative considerations, and why the extensive site work was not anticipated in the project cost when the Springfield Hospital property was acquired.*

Agency Response:

The design of the Freedom Readiness Center is approaching the 65% milestone. The layout of the site as well as the floor plan is complete. The Military Department along with the Department of General Services (DGS) continues to refine the design with the architect of record, looking for efficiencies, eliminating excess, and overall reducing the cost of project while maintaining the functionality of the building.

For nearly three years the Military Department, in conjunction with DGS real estate, pursued a suitable site in the northern Howard County near or easily accessible by Route 70. A site in this general vicinity

provides the assigned Maryland Army National Guard (MDARNG) units with access to major roads and transportation arteries that will maximize the Military Departments ability to support the community and perform our domestic mission. Since this project will consolidate two units currently located in dilapidated and cramped facilities located in Catonsville and Ellicott City; it was desirable to maintain a presence in the general area.

Despite the exhaustive search and nearly \$3M in requested site acquisition costs in the capital budget, the Military Department was unable to locate a parcel that met all of our operational needs. By expanding our search just north of Route 70, we were able to locate a parcel of State land that required no funds to acquire and satisfied critical requirements such as access to major roads, access to public sewer and water, as well as providing adequate space for current and potential future needs of the organization.

The amount of site-work could not be fully projected until design was initiated. While not extreme, the topography of the site and the shape of the parcel required a significant amount of work to accommodate the significant amount of paving. It was not until all of the components of the project (i.e., building, military parking, and civilian parking) were laid out on site effectively and in accordance with anti-terrorism/force protection requirements (e.g., set-back), that the amount of work required was determined. Lastly, obtaining an access permit to Route 32 from State Highway Administration (SHA) requires significant potential road improvements. The extent of these improvements were undefined when the site was acquired and will be further impacted with the future widening of Route 32.

Since this land parcel is State property (Springfield Hospital), building on this site eliminated the \$3M+ in land acquisitions costs. In addition, building on this site allows the State to achieve significant cost savings as a result of Springfield Hospital no longer needing to maintain excess property. Furthermore, using State property to build a readiness center results in significant cost savings for the State of Maryland; as the Federal Government provides for the majority of costs associated with the construction of a readiness center, but requires the State to provide the land.

Due to the long exhaustive search for land any additional project delays would put the \$19M+ in federal funds at risk since funds were initially appropriated for FY18. Any consideration for alternative sites at this time would negatively impact the federal government's financial commitment to the project given the timeline needed to execute funds. Lastly, any change to the site would require a complete redesign at a cost approaching \$2M.