

# NEWS RELEASE

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## County officials and mayors celebrate opening of new 9-1-1 dispatch center

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—Summit County officials and mayors of several cities gathered this morning to cut the ribbon and officially open the Summit Emergency Communications Center (SECC), a new, state-of-the-art 9-1-1 dispatching facility located in Tallmadge. The facility hosts the combined dispatch operations of the Summit County Sheriff and several communities, including Cuyahoga Falls, Fairlawn, Stow and Tallmadge. The City of Akron’s dispatch operation, which will continue to function independently of the SECC, will be co-located in the building. The facility is now active, with each’s community’s dispatch operations being phased in over the next few weeks to ensure a smooth transition. Approximately 300,000 of the County’s 540,000 residents will receive dispatch services from the SECC.

The completion of SECC fulfills a longstanding vision of a truly technologically and geographically consolidated dispatch center. The County owns the building while a Council of Government manages the dispatch operation. This partnership supports ten police agencies and six fire departments across several communities in Summit County and is an outstanding example of how collaboration produces tangible and meaningful benefits. The SECC will save valuable time by eliminating the transfer of 9-1-1 calls between jurisdictions and the need to initiate separate mutual aid requests. It also allows the County and participating communities to leverage their collective purchasing power to provide training, quality assurance, and supervision. It will also facilitate the transition to NextGen 9-1-1, which will enable the sending of video and texts of callers to dispatchers.

“A consolidated dispatch facility has been discussed over many years. As soon as I became County Executive it became a priority for me and my team. I am so excited we finally made it a reality,” said Executive Shapiro. “It took the right people and the right timing to get us here. It also took collaboration, communication, and commitment. I am grateful for the partnerships that got us here.

The renovation of the building, a former Summit DD property, began in February 2022. In addition to upgraded dispatching technology and equipment, the building also includes specific features like quiet rooms, a mother’s room and a fitness area to prioritize the physical and mental wellness of the dispatch team. Other critical public safety operations including the County’s public safety radio administration and the County’s Emergency Operations Center are also in this building.

An early goal of the County and mayors was to employ as many existing dispatchers as possible. To date, 45 of 49 dispatchers have accepted positions. And in keeping with the County's commitment to work with all 31 communities, the SECC was designed to welcome additional dispatching operations from other communities in the future.

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