

MEDIA ALERT

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Community Invited to Oct. 19 Grand Opening of New Countryside Municipal Complex

First Net Zero government building in Illinois will produce as much energy annually as it uses

COUNTRYSIDE, Ill. – Oct. 1, 2019 – [Countryside](#) Mayor Sean McDermott and city officials will host a community-wide grand opening of the new [Countryside Municipal Complex](#), to be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Oct. 19, at the Countryside Municipal Complex, 803 S. Joliet Road, Countryside, Ill. All Countryside residents are invited to attend, with city staff providing tours of the facility during this time.

“We all have a responsibility to protect our environment and to mitigate the impact of climate change,” McDermott stated. “Because of this priority, our city council gave its full support to building a Net Zero municipal complex that will meet the needs of our city now and well into the future.” The [Net Zero](#) building will produce as much energy annually as it uses and has met [LEED Gold](#) certification requirements, which also include reducing light pollution, water consumption, storm water run-off, and materials waste.

Housing Countryside’s city hall and police department, the 34,700-square-foot, tri-level complex was built as a sustainable and environmentally responsible solution to replace the current 16,945-square-foot city hall and police department, which opened in 1967. [Dewberry](#) served as the complex’s architect and [Frederick Quinn Corporation \(FQC\)](#) as the construction manager.

635 solar panels and 198-foot monopole tower among the complex’s features

The complex includes 635 solar panels with an estimated annual output of 273,000 kilowatt hours. The panels will produce 100 percent of the building electricity, and the city will have no electric bill to pay while reducing carbon emissions. Other building features include a “green” roof with native plants that reduces storm-water run-off, energy-efficient mechanical systems incorporating geothermal heating and cooling, water-efficient plumbing fixtures, LED lighting, insulated low-emissivity glass allowing natural light that saves energy costs, automatic light shut-off, air-tight building design, and air quality control.

A 198-foot monopole tower on the 2.9-acre property will generate revenue for the city by serving as a Verizon cell tower while enabling the complex to share the city’s intranet information among the city’s water and public works departments and golf course. Electric vehicle charging stations will be available for public and facility use.

Many of the solar panels are located on top of car ports that will have the additional benefit of protecting police patrol cars, which have a significant amount of technology and equipment

located within them. Sheltering patrol cars will help to increase their life cycles, maintain the technology, and makes it easier and faster for officers to respond to the community during inclement weather.

City projections show ability to pay for building without a property tax levy

The Countryside Municipal Complex was financed through the issuance of a long-term \$20 million bond, a \$1 million grant from the [Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation](#), and the \$1.5 million sale of the current city hall property. The city's long-term projections show the ability to pay debt service without the use of a property tax levy. "The city can finance this project without a property tax levy due to our strong financial position, sales tax, and economic base of tax-paying commercial enterprises we have attracted to the city," McDermott said.

Meeting all American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements, the complex includes city council chambers; the city's administrator, clerk, community development and finance department offices; police headquarters and secure detainment areas; and multi-purpose spaces for police training, community meetings and shelter during weather emergencies. "The community room can be divided into two rooms accommodating different-sized groups from the senior citizens club to condominium associations. This is a great feature for our residents," stated City Administrator Gail Paul.

Countryside Chief of Police Joseph Ford said the police department will have space to do training onsite. "There's a greater emphasis now on preventing volatile situations from becoming violent, and police training now includes social/emotional training, hand-to-hand defensive tactics and weapons training," he explained.

Police HQ provides much-needed space for victims' privacy, security, and police work

The police headquarters includes a reception desk with video monitoring and other technological advances, private spaces for citizens to report incidents, and much-needed space for the city's 24 officers to perform their duties. A fitness center and women's and men's locker rooms inside of the department will encourage officers to stay physically fit for the demands of police work.

The new building will have designated areas for evidence processing and storage, roll call, recordkeeping, equipment storage, and firearms cleaning. Ford said the lack of space in the current police department forces officers to perform evidence processing and gun maintenance in spaces such as officer work stations, meeting rooms or kitchen.

As evidence processing, retention and security rules have changed and best practices have evolved, "having a new, modern evidence processing and storage areas are extremely important," Ford explained. "Evidence must be handled with increased security while meeting strict protocols. Additional storage space is necessary because the statutory duration which evidence must be kept has been increasing."

Secured detention and investigation space meets IDOC standards

Meeting Illinois Department of Corrections (DOC) standards, the secured space within the headquarters includes detention cells, a line-up viewing room, booking area, and interview rooms. A dedicated bond out/prisoner release area away from the public areas provides for the secure release of prisoners.

The complex is built on the site of the former site of The Flame restaurant. During the demolition of the building, 87 percent of the Flame's building materials were recycled, with 100 percent of the gravel base that sat beneath the Flame's asphalt parking lot used as the base for the complex's new parking area.

Editors' note: Media is welcome to attend the grand opening and to arrange interviews with city officials, including Mayor Sean McDermott, City Administrator Gail Paul and Chief of Police Joseph Ford, before or after the grand opening. Educational displays at the building tell more of the story about the building.

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