

**MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

c/o Novato Fire Protection District  
95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945  
PHONE: (415) 878-2690 FAX: (415) 878-2660  
WWW.MERAONLINE.ORG

**DATE:** February 26, 2014  
**TO:** MERA Project Oversight Committee  
**FROM:** Dave Jeffries, Special Project Manager  
**SUBJECT:** AGENDA ITEM **D-1**: REPORT ON ROUND TWO PRESENTATIONS

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Recommended Action: Receive, discuss and file Report on Round Two Presentations.

Background:

During the latter half of 2013, MERA Member agencies received a MERA Round I presentation to provide background and information on MERA and its plans for a Gen II system. As 2014 begins, we have prepared a Round II presentation to provide MERA member agencies with a more detailed proposal for the Gen II system and to seek resolutions of support and endorsement of each MERA member agency as MERA prepares to ask the Marin County Board of Supervisors to place the MERA Parcel Tax on the November 2014 ballot.

Discussion:

The Round II presentation was developed by MERA Staff to build upon the Round I presentation and address some of the concerns and questions raised during the earlier presentations. Attached you will find copies of the following documents:

- 1) PowerPoint Slides
- 2) Sample Staff Report
- 3) Sample Resolution

For the Round II presentations, local Chiefs are being asked to assist with the opening two slides that introduce the presentation and the final slide that brings the conversation to the resolution the local council or board is being asked to approve. I will be giving the bulk of the presentation.

This presentation focuses much more on the financial aspects of the proposal, with details on the parcel tax, the impact of the Gen I, Gen II and the Operating and Maintenance costs if the Parcel Tax passes or fails to pass.

## REPORT ON ROUND TWO PRESENTATIONS

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The sample staff report and sample resolution will be provided to MERA Member Agencies approx. two weeks prior to their presentations with instructions to copy and paste the documents into their local formats.

Special Project Administrative Assistant Alex Anderson is already scheduling these 24 presentations with a goal of having them completed by 05/31/14. The 25th MERA Member Agency, the County of Marin, will be receiving a special presentation in July, 2014 when MERA formally requests the Board of Supervisors to place the Parcel Tax on the November 2014 ballot. The month of June will be available to accommodate any unexpected delays.

In addition, the MERA Facts and MERA FAQ documents used during the Round I presentations have been reviewed and updated. The revised versions of those documents are attached. While we do not plan to distribute them with council packets for a second time, we do anticipate these documents being posted to the website and being available to the public.

### Attachments:

- 1) PowerPoint Slides
- 2) Sample Staff Report
- 3) Sample Resolution
- 4) MERA Facts Document, revised 02/07/14 – To be provided at the POC meeting.
- 5) MERA FAQ Document, revised 02/07/14 – To be provided at the POC meeting.

# MERA: *WHEN SECONDS SAVE LIVES*

Funding the Next Generation Public Safety Communications System of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority

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**Introduce** self and MERA Staff present (Project Manager Dave Jeffries and Administrative Assistant Alex Anderson)

**Purpose** – To provide an overview of the proposed funding mechanism for the Next Generation MERA Public Safety Communications System and to Request a Resolution of support for the proposed MERA Parcel Tax.

**Recognize** – MERA Representatives from your agency: *(As applicable to this presentation)*

Executive Board:

Governing Board:

Finance Committee:

Project Oversight Cmte:

**Thank** the Council / Board for past support.

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*MERA Presenter's Packet – ROUND TWO - Notes Pages  
Version Date: 01/25/2014*

## What Is MERA Today?

The Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA) is a Joint Powers Authority in Marin County to plan, implement and manage a countywide public safety and emergency radio system for the use of all member agencies. MERA went live on January 24, 2004.

It includes:

- Seven 911 Dispatch Centers, with 28 dispatch consoles
- Nearly 2,900 radios deployed across the county
- Uniform radio communications shared by every major safety agency in the county

This is a follow up presentation to the one provided in 2013 that provided an overview of MERA, its current challenges and an overview of the proposal to move us to a replacement Generation II system.

If you recall, MERA is a JPA made up of 25 Member Agencies that provides Public Safety and Emergency Radio Communications for our First Responders.

It provides for interoperability that allows all of our radio users to work with any other radio users, in addition to many Mutual Aid capabilities.

I would like to introduce MERA Special Project Manager Dave Jeffries, who will be presenting an overview of the proposed MERA Generation II system.

## Why We Need to Replace the MERA Gen I System

- 1) The Gen I system is aging and will be 20 years past its design when replaced in 2018.
  - 1) Needed replacement equipment is no longer manufactured.
  - 2) The system already has more users than planned for.
- 2) The Gen I system cannot meet new FCC technical requirements that will be in place in 2017.
- 3) Currently enacted federal legislation will require that we give back our current UHF-T band frequencies in 2021.



The Gen I system is aging and will be 20 years past its design when replaced in 2018 and is already supporting more users than anticipated.

The Gen I system is not capable of meeting FCC technical requirements for narrow-banding that will be implemented in 2017. Even if we could update our current UHF-T band system, we will be required to return those frequencies to the FCC in 2021.

Essentially, this leaves us on a shaky three legged stool.

In addition, the Federal government is making investments in the 700 MHz band and driving public safety to this band. One example is the new 700 MHz mutual aid overlay that will cover the Bay Area with funding contributed by the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI).

It is these factors, when taken in combination, that has driven the

proposed solution.

## MERA's Proposed Gen II System

### MERA's Next Generation System will:

- Replace the current Gen I system and coverage footprint.
- Expand that coverage footprint with additional sites in Southern and West Marin.
- Move us to the 700 MHz band allowing use of the UASI mutual aid frequencies, existing 800 MHz frequencies and others.
- Include a 1 for 1 replacement of existing member radios.

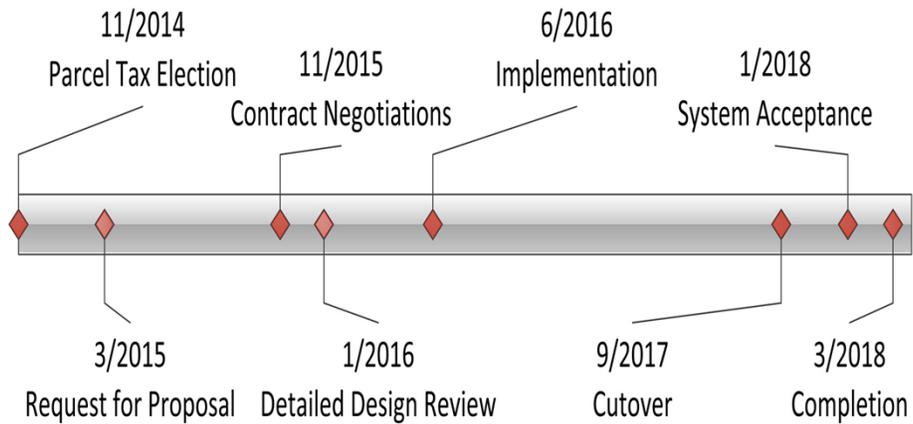
The MERA Gen II system will provide much of the same functionality we use today with a few enhancements:

The Gen II system will seek to provide additional coverage with the addition of four additional sites in Southern and West Marin.

The Gen II system will incorporate technology advancements that have been developed since 1998 when the Gen I System was originally designed.

The Gen II system, with its move to the 700 MHz frequency band will provide us access to the Bay Area Mutual Aid radio system as well as other mutual aid capabilities in the 700 & 800 MHz bands. In addition, the Gen II system will include a 1 for 1 swap of new radios for all existing MERA member radios.

## Tentative Gen II Project Timeline



Note: Assumes successful Parcel Tax passage.

Assuming that voters approve the Parcel Tax in November, 2014, the work just begins in moving us from a funding solution to a working Public Safety and Emergency radio system.

## Gen II Capital Budget

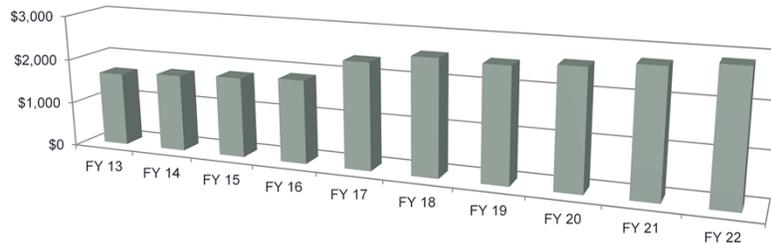
• Site development and upgrades, environmental compliance, licensing and leases	\$10.6 M
• Radio communication system, site equipment and dispatch consoles	\$13.9 M
• Microwave system	\$5.0 M
• Mobile and portable radios	\$10.5 M
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= SUBTOTAL CAPITAL COSTS*	\$40.0 M
<small>*(includes contingency)</small>	
+ Capitalized Interest	\$2.3 M
+ Reserve Fund	\$3.6 M
+ Issuance Costs	\$0.4 M
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= BOND ISSUE TOTAL	\$46.3 M

This represents our latest base budget for a baseline replacement of our system.

These are decisions that will ultimately be made by the MERA Executive and Governing Boards.

To proceed with the Parcel Tax, the County of Marin is the legal entity that must place the tax on the ballot as MERA itself does not have the authority to do so. Once enacted, the Parcel Tax proceeds will be collected by the County of Marin and furnished to MERA, which will manage the funds.

## Operating and Maintenance Budget (System-Wide Expenditures)



- O&M Budget for FY 2013 is based on the approved budget.
- All other FY's are estimates.
- FY 2013 to FY 2022 predicts an annual 7.4% increase.
- This increase impacted by Inflation and an Expanded System.
- A Service Upgrade Agreement (SUA) could increase O&M by \$450,000 annually for 10 years starting in FY19. (SUA is an Option)

All figures are in thousands.

In many of our earlier presentations, there were questions about the on-going Operating and Maintenance costs as we move into the GEN II system.

This graph represents our current estimates of System-Wide O&M costs for MERA (Both Gen I and Gen II) through FY 22. The graph depicts costs in thousands.

There are a couple of key factors impacting the increases shown: inflation AND the need to support an expanded system under the current proposal.

One option MERA is exploring is a Service Upgrade Agreement. In one system we have spoken with, this SUA provided for technology every two years for ten years, essentially providing us with a then current system in 2028. If MERA elects to include this type of agreement, it would be added as an O&M expense that would increase these figures by an estimated \$450,000 annually, but help

in mitigating against system obsolescence in the Gen II system.

## Funding Alternatives

Grants (to date): \$6,157,701

Plan A: Seek Parcel Tax to fund bonds

Plan B: Member contributions to fund bonds  
(Same as Gen I System funding)

Other Options Considered:

1/8 cent Sales Tax – Polled at 49% support

General Obligation Bonds – Polled at 28% support

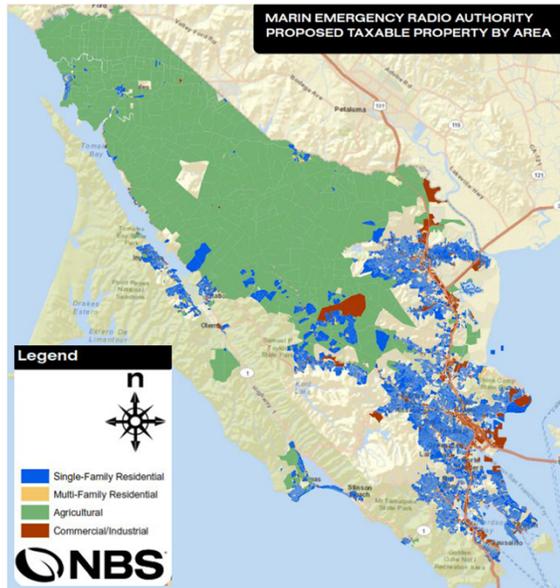
As reviewed in the earlier presentation, MERA looked at a variety of funding alternatives, including polling data, before deciding on the current Parcel tax proposal. Should the Parcel Tax fail to be passed, the current “Plan B” would be for MERA Member Agencies to fund the bonds as they did with the Gen I system.

We have been successful and will continue to seek grant opportunities, but recognize that we need to have a solid funding base to move forward with this project.

As we continue to look for grants, it may be possible to provide additional coverage improvements or lower future Parcel Tax rates depending on the details and restrictions of those grants.

## Parcel Tax Proposal Overview

- Requires 2/3 vote of Registered Voters.
- Anticipated for November 2014 Election.
- Includes an Exemption for Income Qualified Senior Homeowners.
- Tries to share the tax burden throughout the county.



The Proposed MERA Parcel Tax will require a 2/3 vote to pass in the November 2014 election.

MERA is including an exemption for Income Qualified Senior Homeowners and has tried to establish a Parcel Tax that shares the tax burden throughout the county.

The two slides that follow provide additional details on the Parcel Tax.

## Parcel Tax Overview: Residential and Agricultural Details

Property Description	Method	Maximum Rate
Single Family Residential	Per Parcel	\$29.00
Multi-Family Residential	Per Unit	\$26.10
Agricultural – Up to 5 Acres	Per Parcel	\$29.00
Agricultural – Over 5 Acres	Per Parcel	\$58.00

Parcel Tax Categories	# of Parcels	Tax Units	Total Parcel Tax	Average per Parcel	Median
Single Family	81,107	81,107	\$2,352,103	\$29	\$29
Multi-Family	4,986	24,551	\$640,781	\$129	\$52
Agricultural	715	1,361	\$39,469	\$55	\$58

This is an overview of the Parcel Tax as applied to Residential and Agricultural parcels.

The Single Family Residential rate is fixed at \$29/per parcel annually.

The Multi-Family Residential rate is \$26.10 per unit annually for an average of \$129 per parcel.

Agricultural parcel rates vary by size, as shown, with an average of \$55 per parcel.

## Parcel Tax Overview: Commercial, Industrial and Utility Details

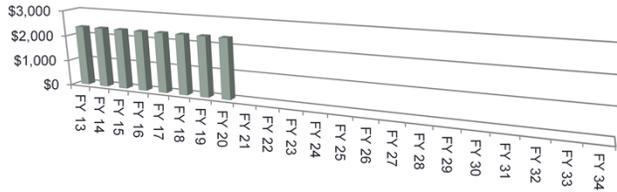
Property Description	Method	Maximum Rate
Up to ½ acre	Per Parcel	\$87.00
Greater than ½ acre and up to 1 acre	Per Parcel	\$174.00
Greater than 1 acre	\$174 Per Parcel AND \$29 for each acre over 1 acre	Up to \$2,500.00

# of Parcels	Tax Units	Total Parcel Tax	Average per Parcel	Median
4,015	10,360	\$585,193	\$145	\$87

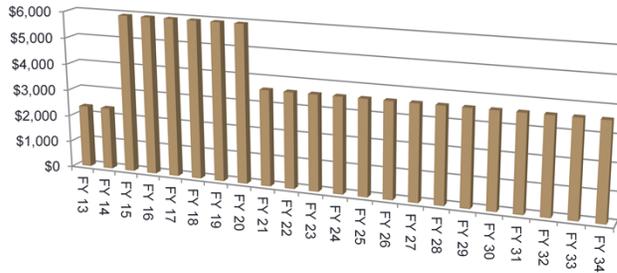
This is an overview of the Parcel Tax as applied to Commercial, Industrial and Utility parcels. The average Parcel Tax rate is \$145 per parcel. There is a cap of \$2,500 per parcel for larger parcels.

## Two Possibilities for Members' Future Capital Expenses

**Parcel Tax Wins Approval**  
Assumes the Parcel Tax passes and MERA Member Agencies pay off Gen I Bonds as scheduled.



**Parcel Tax Fails**  
Gen I & II Capital – Assumes MERA Member funding of Gen II Capital in addition to paying off of Gen I Bonds.



All figures are in thousands.

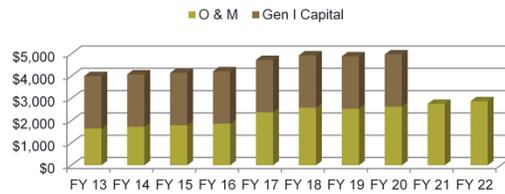
Focusing for a moment on MERA's capital costs, the first graph shows the MERA Member Agency capital costs moving forward if the Parcel Tax IS approved. These costs are the remaining Gen I bond costs.

The second graph shows the capital cost to MERA Member Agencies if the Parcel Tax fails to pass. This is the combined capital costs of both the Gen I and Gen II bonds and reflects six years in which payments need to be made for both sets of bonds.

## Comparing Total Costs Thru FY 22

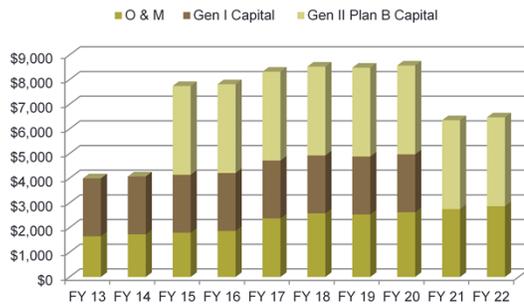
### Parcel Tax Wins Approval

Graph depicts total MERA Member costs for gen I Bonds and estimated O&M costs thru FY 22 if the Parcel Tax is approved November 2014.



### Parcel Tax Fails

Graph depicts total MERA Member costs for Gen I & Gen II with estimated O&M costs thru FY 22 if the Parcel Tax fails to pass in November 2014.



All figures are in thousands.

In these graphs, we include the combined impacts of both capital costs and O&M costs, based on our O&M cost estimates through FY 22.

The first graph depicts the combined costs of O&M and Gen I Bonds for all MERA Member agencies should the Parcel Tax be approved by voters.

The second graph depicts the combined costs of O&M, Gen I Bonds AND Gen II Bonds for all MERA Member agencies should the Parcel Tax fail to pass.

## With Your Help, We Will:

- Continue and improve 911 and safety communications reliability for years to come
- Cost \$40 million, or about \$29 for a single family residence, **or 7.9 cents per day**, to be offset as much as possible by State and Federal grants
- Build on already strong public support to win 2/3rds passage
- Support MERA's effort to educate the public on its mission and future challenges.

To summarize,

We want to continue and improve our 911 and safety communications into the future

At a reasonable cost that taxpayers can support

That is based on careful analysis, and input from MERA members and the public

To pass a parcel tax that will be on the countywide November 2014 ballot

MERA is now asking each of its MERA Member Agencies to pass Resolutions of Support and Endorsement in anticipation of this measure being placed before voters in the fall.

With that, I would like to turn this back over to Chief \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss the Resolution of Support.

## Resolution of Support

Resolution to Support and Endorse MERA's Parcel Tax Measure that will be on the November 2014 ballot.

- That is based on a \$29 annual parcel tax for a single family residence.
- With the establishment of a Citizen's Oversight Committee.
- And provides for exemption for income qualified senior homeowners.

You each received a copy of our Proposed Resolution of Support and Endorsement for the MERA Gen II Parcel Tax.

Passage of this Resolution will indicate our support for this process. It does not commit our organization to any expenditures.

Mr. Jeffries and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have and I would like to ask that the Council/Board pass this Resolution to support this important project.

**STAFF REPORT ((MERA REVIEW DRAFT))**

MEETING

DATE: February \_\_, 2014

TO: (( City Council/District Board))

FROM: ((Police or Fire Chief))

SUBJECT: **MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY  
(MERA) – NEXT GENERATION: REQUEST TO  
SUPPORT AND ENDORSE A PARCEL TAX TO  
FUND THE NEXT GENERATION PUBLIC SAFETY  
COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM**

**REQUEST:**

Receive a presentation on the proposed funding mechanism for the second generation Marin Emergency Radio Authority public safety communications system and approve a Resolution supporting and endorsing the proposed parcel tax as the funding mechanism for capital costs of that project.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the Resolution of Support for the Marin Emergency Radio Authority Parcel Tax.

**DISCUSSION:**

Introduction:

Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA) is a collection of public agencies formed in 1998 to plan, implement and manage a countywide public safety and emergency radio system for the use of all member agencies. All Marin County public safety agencies can communicate through MERA, including police departments, fire departments, public works departments, animal control, transportation agencies and parks departments. MERA provides crucial public safety communications to 25 member agencies, both day-to-day and during and after a major emergency or natural disaster.

In addition to the Marin County agencies there are a number of partner agencies that include the California Highway Patrol dispatch, Golden Gate Transit dispatch, US Coast Guard, Petaluma Police dispatch, Sonoma County Sheriff dispatch, State Emergency Management and Mutual Aid, to name a few.

MERA radio communications is the backbone of the 911 emergency response system. It provides the communications link between 911 public safety dispatch centers to the field units that respond to emergencies.

MERA and local Police and Fire Chiefs provided a presentation in the fall of 2013 to all MERA member agencies describing the status of the Gen I system and plans for the Gen II system.

### System Challenges:

The “history” of MERA can be traced back to 1995 when the County of Marin initiated a “needs assessment” for a countywide radio system. Over the course of the next few years, outreach and feasibility studies were conducted and an Oversight Committee was created. In 1998 “MERA” was officially formed. In February 1999, the MERA Board authorized the sale of bonds in the amount of \$26,940,000 to finance the first MERA radio system. The system was designed to accommodate 1,580 mobile and portable radios with expansion capacity to 2,500 radios. Today it serves 2,897 radios, which is significantly above the projected total originally anticipated over the projected 20-year life of the system.

The current radio system, which was designed in 1998, has critical system control equipment that is no longer available and replacement parts are becoming very difficult to locate. The current MERA radio system is not capable of meeting Federal FCC regulations that will become effective in 2017 and there are existing Federal regulations that will require MERA to “move” from the current radio frequencies no later than 2021. It is the combination of these three issues that has driven the need and design for the Generation II replacement system.

### The Generation II System:

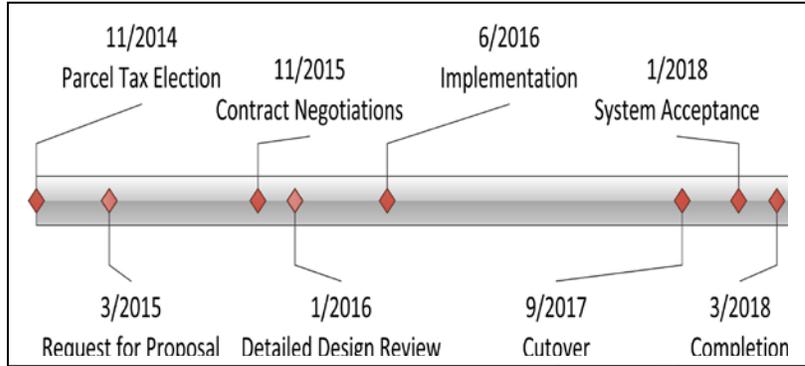
The current system is not only used more extensively than expected, it is getting older and we must plan for a replacement system to ensure we can maintain our reliable public safety and emergency communications. Therefore MERA is planning for a Next Generation communications system that will:

- Sustain reliability during 911 emergencies and major disasters
- Reduce emergency response times for some areas of the county with poor coverage, by improving coverage and response
- Provide upgraded radios, radio network, and dispatch consoles with the latest software, with streamlined user interfaces for maximum efficiency
- Comply with new federal regulations in force over the next few years
- Reduce MERA radio user wait times, by adding more capacity and reducing busy signals during major events
- Offer regional interoperability throughout the Bay Area with a move to a 700 MHz system

Due to the complexity of these systems it takes years to move from RFP, through vendor selection, detailed design review, permitting, construction, training, testing and implementation. A strategic plan, which was adopted in December 2010, was based on technical studies as well as extensive review by the MERA Governing Board, MERA Executive Board, and other MERA committees and sub-committees. These boards and committees were comprised of local elected officials, city managers and public safety chiefs from throughout Marin County. As a result of the efforts to date, it is estimated that the Next Generation System, which is capable of all of the above, will have capital costs of \$40 million. Ultimately, the final project costs will be determined by the MERA Governing Board.

Tentative Project Timeline:

11/2014: Parcel Tax Election  
03/2015: Request for Proposal  
11/2015: Contract Negotiations  
01/2016: Detailed Design Review  
06/2016: Begin Implementation  
09/2017: System Cutover  
01/2018: System Acceptance  
03/2018: Project Completion



Generation II Funding:

The current MERA system was purchased using bonds that have obligations to the member agencies until year 2020. To minimize the impacts to local government budgets for the Next Generation system, several funding alternatives have been explored. The potential funding alternatives include grants and low-interest loans, and a parcel tax. MERA has selected a parcel tax as the best and most viable option available to raise the necessary funds to successfully complete the project.

This does not mean that the County and MERA have not been seeking grant funds. In fact, Marin County has been successful in securing over \$6,000,000 in grants for the Next Generation system. Grants have supported system design studies, and the installation of backbone radio elements, dispatch consoles and microwave components. However, we do not believe that grant funding will cover all of the costs of the Next Generation system, nor do we believe it prudent to presume any particular level of grant funding into the future. We will continue to look for grant opportunities that could potentially reduce the level of parcel tax in the future as well as opportunities to minimize operating and maintenance costs.

At the same time, we are very concerned about the impact of the Parcel Tax failing to pass. If that should occur, MERA and its member agencies would need to either quickly find another funding mechanism, such as the Plan B funding alternative mentioned later, or having each MERA member possibly licensing and funding their own communications systems, while trying to cooperate in some means of creating interoperability across multiple systems with limited coverage.

As mentioned in the Round I presentation, MERA did look at different funding mechanisms, such as a sales tax or general obligation bond, but found much less community support for those options.

The County of Marin is the legal entity that must place the parcel tax on the ballot as MERA itself does not have the legal authority to do so. Bonds in the amount of \$46 million need to be issued to provide adequate funding for the new system.

**MERA Generation II Budget:**

Site Development and Upgrades, Environmental Compliance, Licensing & Leases	\$10.6M
Radio Communication System, Site Equipment and Dispatch Consoles	\$13.9M
Microwave System	\$5.0M
Mobile and Portable Radios	\$10.5M
<b>SUBTOTAL CAPITAL COSTS ( Includes Contingency)</b>	<b>\$40.0M</b>
Bond Capitalized Interest	\$2.3M
Bond Reserve Fund	\$3.6M
Bond Issuance Costs	\$0.4M
<b>TOTAL BOND ISSUANCE</b>	<b>\$46.3M</b>

(All figures are in millions)

Latest Polling Data:

MERA has recently conducted a second public opinion survey. This survey focused on the details of the Parcel Tax as described in this staff report. As mentioned in the Round I presentations, the 2013 survey was broad based and helped to develop the funding proposal. The results of the January 2014 survey will be provided to you at the MERA Round II presentation.

By the time that the second round of presentations is complete, MERA will have delivered 48 presentations throughout Marin County on the future of the MERA system and the need for the Generation II system, with public, council and board feedback.

Parcel Tax Details:

The Parcel Tax has been developed by the MERA Finance Committee and is based on a study by NBS. The Parcel Tax details for different property types are shown below.

**Proposed Parcel Tax Rates:**

<b>Property Description</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Maximum Rate</b>
Single-Family Residential	Per Parcel	\$29.00
Multi-Family Residential	Per Unit	\$26.10
Agricultural		
Up to 5 Acres – Small	Per Parcel	\$29.00
Greater than 5 acres – Large	Per Parcel	\$58.00
Commercial, Industrial and Utility		
Up to ½ acre	Per Parcel	\$87.00
Greater than ½ acre \$ up to 1 acre	Per Parcel	\$174.00
Greater than 1 acre	\$174 per parcel + \$29/acre	Up to cap of \$2,500.00

**Parcel Tax Revenues by Category:**

<b>Parcel Tax Categories</b>	<b># of Parcels</b>	<b>Tax Units</b>	<b>Total Parcel Tax</b>	<b>Average per Parcel</b>	<b>Median</b>
Single Family	81,107	81,107	\$2,352,103	\$29	\$29
Multi-Family	4,986	24,551	\$640,791	\$129	\$52
Agricultural	715	1,361	\$39,469	\$55	\$58
Commercial, Industrial & Utility	4,015	10,360	\$585,193	\$145	\$87

The proposed parcel tax will include exemptions for income qualified senior homeowners. The parcel tax proposal also includes the formation of an Independent Citizen Oversight Committee that shall review the collection and expenditure of tax revenues collected under the authority of the parcel tax measure.

During the latter half of 2013, all MERA member agencies were provided with an overview of the system, the current challenges and the proposed solution and funding mechanism. As a result of that process and the feedback received, MERA reviewed and updated the proposal, with the MERA Governing Board approving the updated plan on 12/11/2013. The current action plan for the project is that beginning in February, 2014 through May, 2014 each MERA member agency will be asked to formally endorse the project plan for the Next Generation MERA system. In August, 2014, a request will be made to the County of Marin Board of Supervisors to put a countywide parcel tax measure on the ballot in November, 2014.

Operating and Maintenance Estimates:

During the MERA Round I presentations, there were a number of requests for information on Operating and Maintenance costs as we move forward. Looking at our current costs and those of other similar systems, MERA staff has developed estimates through FY 2022. These costs, impacted by both inflation and the need to operate and maintain an expanded system, show an average annualized increase of 7.4%.

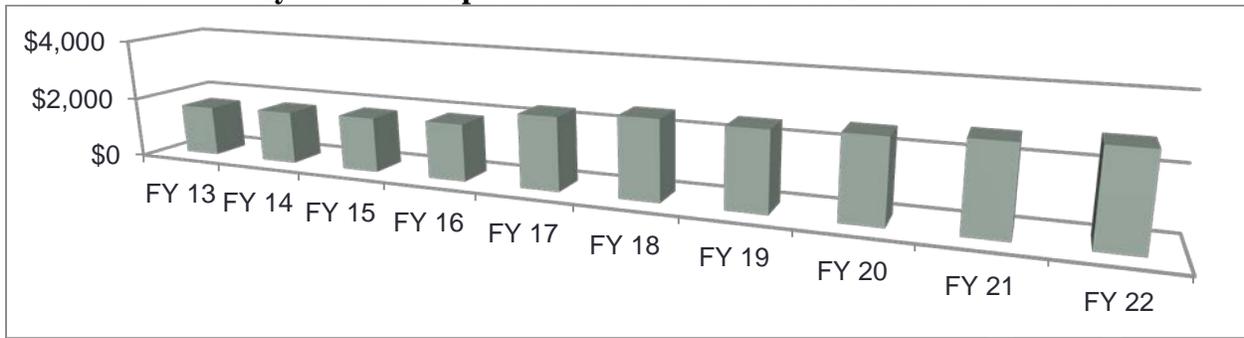
As you review these figures, please keep two caveats in mind: first, that the future Operating and Maintenance costs are educated estimates; second, that the individual figures for local jurisdictions (later in this staff report) assume that there will be no additional MERA members or changes to the cost-sharing mechanism.

**Estimated MERA System-wide Operations and Maintenance Costs thru FY 2022:**

FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
\$1,650	\$1,728	\$1,795	\$1,866	\$2,374	\$2,580	\$2,536	\$2,624	\$2,753	\$2,870

(All figures are in thousands)

**Estimated MERA System-wide Operations and Maintenance Costs thru FY 2022:**



(All figures are in thousands)

Alternative Funding Option (Plan B):

Should the parcel tax fail, the current plan is to request all MERA member agencies to fund the next generation public safety communication system in the same manner as the first generation system. In this scenario, MERA member agencies will be assessed (across all MERA member agencies) an additional \$3.6 million dollars annually from 2015 until 2035. For the first six years, this would be in addition to the current assessment for the first generation system.

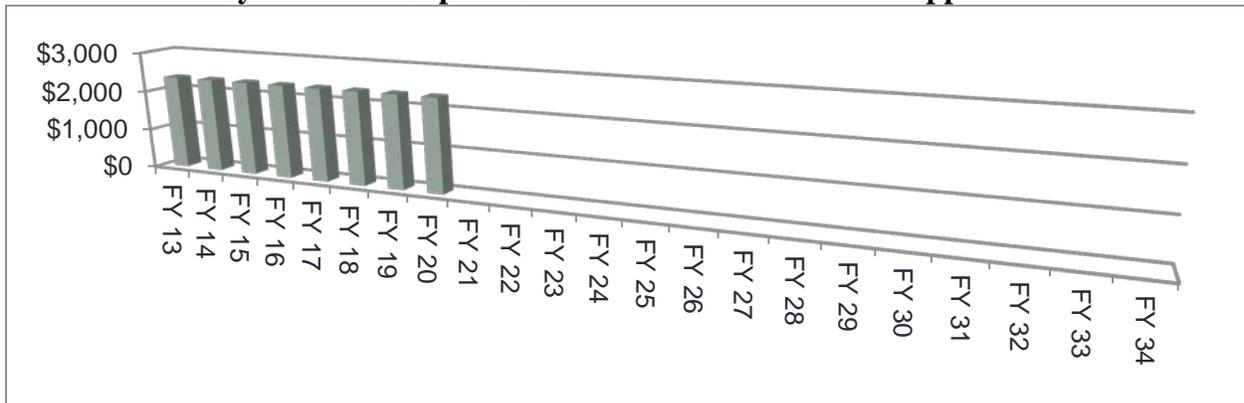
For example, if we fund the second generation in the same manner as the first generation system, for every \$1,000 our agency spends on MERA capital costs today, we will need to pay \$2,540 for six years from 2015 thru 2020. Then, beginning in 2021 when the first generation bonds are retired and our capital payments are expected to end, we will still be paying \$1,540 (per every \$1,000 currently being spent) from 2021 thru 2035. However, if the Parcel Tax is approved, our Capital Bond payments end in 2020 and we are only looking at Operations and Maintenance costs during the life of the next generation system.

**Annual MERA System-wide Capital Costs if Parcel Tax Fails to Pass:**

	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23
Gen I	\$2,347	\$2,347	\$2,347	\$2,347	\$2,347	\$2,347	\$2,347	\$2,347			
Gen II			\$3,600	\$3,600	\$3,600	\$3,600	\$3,600	\$3,600	\$3,600	\$3,600	\$3,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,347</b>	<b>\$2,347</b>	<b>\$5,947</b>	<b>\$5,947</b>	<b>\$5,947</b>	<b>\$5,947</b>	<b>\$5,947</b>	<b>\$5,947</b>	<b>\$3,600</b>	<b>\$3,600</b>	<b>\$3,600</b>

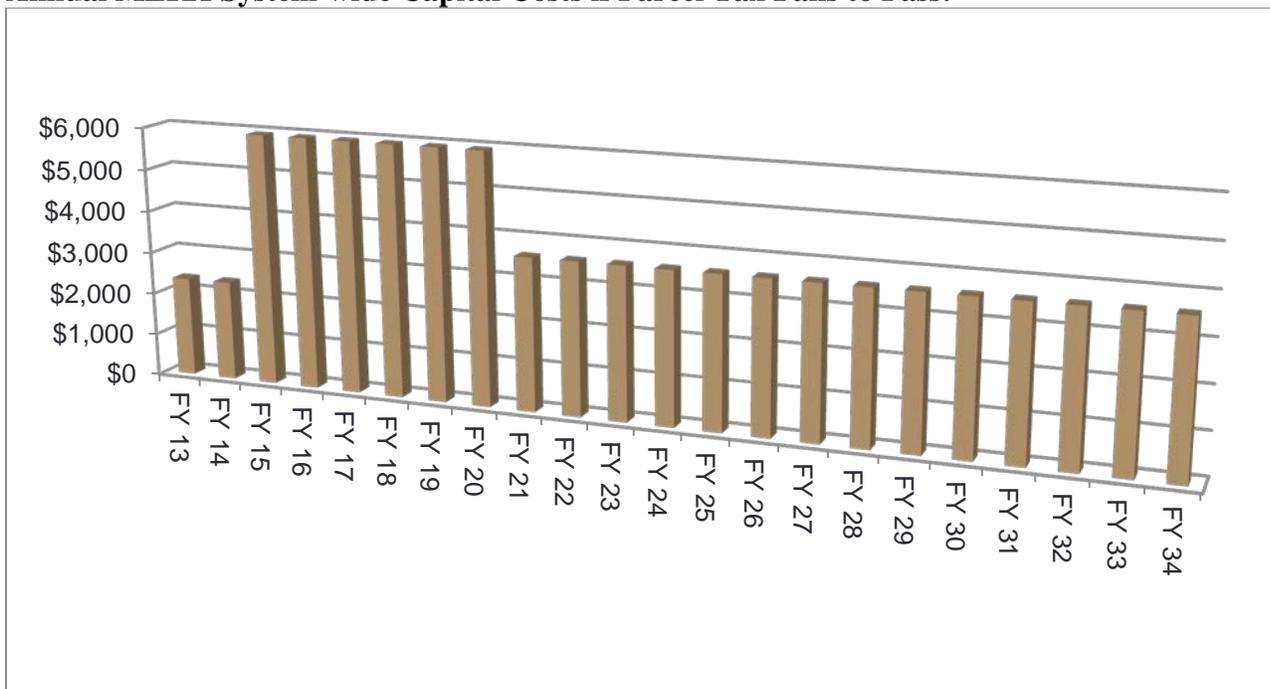
(All figures are in thousands)

**Annual MERA System-wide Capital Costs if the Parcel Tax Wins Approval:**



(All figures are in thousands)

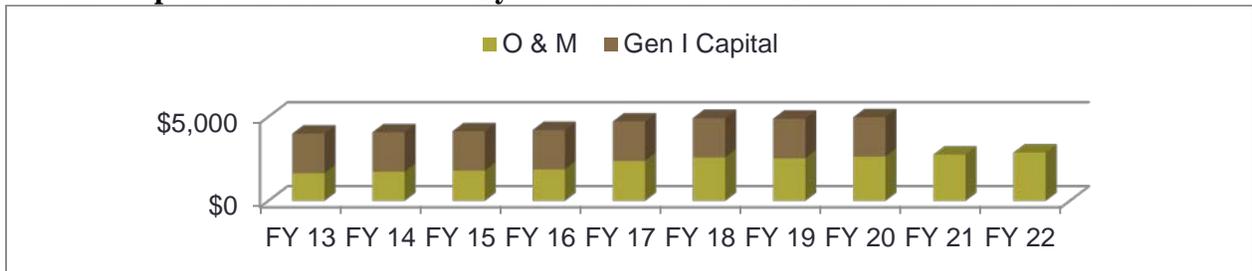
**Annual MERA System-wide Capital Costs if Parcel Tax Fails to Pass:**



(All figures are in thousands)

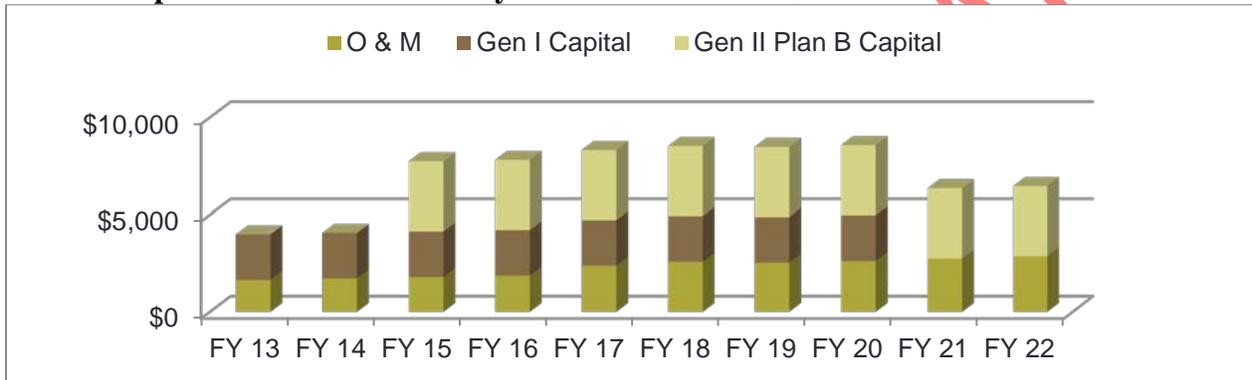
An additional question that was raised during the Round I presentations was the total impact of Capital Costs as well as Operating and Maintenance Costs. The following charts show the total of the Gen I Bonds with Operating and Maintenance, should the Parcel Tax pass, and then the combined costs of Gen I and Gen II with Operating and Maintenance costs should the Parcel Tax fail. As the Operating and Maintenance estimates go thru FY 2022, these graphs show the impact through that fiscal year.

**Annual Capital and O&M MERA System-wide Member Costs if the Parcel Tax Passes:**



(All figures are in thousands)

**Annual Capital and O&M MERA System-wide Member Costs if the Parcel Tax Fails:**



(All figures are in thousands)

**Local Agency Expenses: (JURISDICTION NAME)**

1. Generation I Bond Costs: \$XXX,000 annually thru 2020.
2. Generation II Bond Costs: \$XXX,000 annually from 2015 thru 2035 (Assumes Parcel Tax Fails).
3. Operating and Maintenance Costs: (Estimated)

FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
\$XXX									

(All O&M figures in thousands)

As a reminder, the Generation I bond cost is based on the current costs and adopted funding mechanism. The Generation II cost above assumes the Parcel Tax fails AND that there are no changes in the current MERA funding mechanisms for distribution of costs across member agencies. Lastly, the Operating and Maintenance cost is based on existing current costs and an educated estimate for future years that also assumes that MERA member costs will be distributed as are Generation I bond costs.

**Action Item:**

With the support of all of the MERA member agencies, we will be able to continue and improve our countywide public safety communications system for years to come with a Parcel Tax based on a single-family residence assessment of just \$29 per year. With your support, we can build on

the already strong public support identified in our polling and help inform our community of the importance of this Parcel Tax on the November 2014 ballot.

To that end, MERA is requesting that each MERA member agency pass a resolution to support and endorse the proposed MERA Parcel Tax. The attached resolution is being provided to each MERA member agency with the intent that all of the resolutions will be provided to the Marin County Board of Supervisors as MERA seeks to have the Parcel Tax placed on the November 2014 ballot.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

None at this time, but significant potential costs should the Parcel Tax fail.

**ALTERNATIVES**

Do not approve the Resolution of Support for the MERA Parcel Tax.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Draft Resolution

MERA REVIEW DRAFT

**SAMPLE RESOLUTION**  
**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY/TOWN/DISTRICT COUNCIL/BOARD**  
**OF \_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORTING AND ENDORSING**  
**THE LEVY OF PARCEL TAX TO FINANCE A NEW COUNTYWIDE PUBLIC**  
**SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM**

**SECTION 1. FINDINGS**

Whereas the City/Town Council / District Board of \_\_\_\_\_ does hereby find and declare the following:

- I. Public safety and emergency radio communications are vital to our first responders and the communities they serve. Public safety and emergency radio communications in our jurisdiction are currently provided by our membership in the Marin Emergency Radio Authority.
- II. The Marin Emergency Radio Authority is a joint exercise of powers agency comprised of the City of Belvedere, Bolinas Fire Protection District, Town of Corte Madera, Town of Fairfax, Inverness Public Utility District, Kentfield Fire Protection District, City of Larkspur, County of Marin, Marin Community College District, Marinwood Community Services District, City of Mill Valley, Novato Fire Protection District, City of Novato, Town of Ross, Ross Valley Fire Department, Town of San Anselmo, City of San Rafael, City of Sausalito, Southern Marin Fire District, Town of Tiburon, Tiburon Fire Protection district, Central Marin Police Authority, Marin County Transit District, Marin Municipal Water District, and Stinson Beach Fire District, existing as an entity separate from its member agencies and organized under California Government Code Sections 6500, et seq., for the purpose of constructing and operating a countywide public safety and emergency radio system in the County of Marin.
- III. The Marin Emergency Radio Authority has determined the need to replace the existing countywide public safety and emergency radio system as a result of several factors that include the age and obsolescence of the current system, user demand exceeds the current system's capacity, the current system cannot meet new FCC standards that are effective in 2017, and federal law that requires that the current public safety and emergency radio frequencies be turned back to the federal government in 2021. The Marin Emergency Radio Authority plans to have a new replacement system operational in 2018 to ensure reliable public safety and emergency radio communications.
- IV. On December 11, 2013, the Governing Board of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority approved a project financing plan that includes the levy of a parcel tax (the "Parcel Tax") to finance the capital costs of the new system to offset such costs to its member agencies. The proposed Parcel Tax is \$29.00 annually per parcel for a single family residence, and varies based on land use, such as multi-family housing, commercial, industrial and agricultural uses, and includes an exemption for income-qualified senior homeowners. The Parcel Tax is scheduled to be submitted to Marin County voters at the November 4, 2014 election.
- V. On December 11, 2013, the Governing Board of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority further approved the establishment of an Independent Citizen Oversight Committee to review the collection and expenditure of the Parcel Tax revenues. The Committee would consist of at least five members, who would be residents of Marin County.

**SECTION 2. RESOLUTION**

Now, therefore, based on the findings contained in Section 1 above, the City Council /Town Council / District Board of \_\_\_\_\_ does hereby resolve to support and endorse the Parcel Tax as approved by the Governing Board of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority Governing Board.

**SECTION 3. VOTE**

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City/Town Council/District Board of \_\_\_\_\_  
, State of California, held on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2014 by the following vote to-wit:

AYES:

NAYES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

CITY/TOWN MAYOR/DISTRICT CHAIR CITY/TOWN COUNCIL/DISTRICT BOARD

ATTEST:

City/Town/District Clerk

MEMO REVIEW DRAFT