

THE PRESS OF ATLANTIC CITY

Vineland officials celebrate new, \$20 million police station

[MOLLY BILINSKI Staff Writer](#) Oct 25, 2019



The City of Vineland's new state-of-the-art \$20 million Police Headquarters. The new 66,000 square-foot facility, including a 13,000 square-foot basement for storage, will also accommodate police staff parking and support vehicles. Two stories tall and fully ADA accessible, the building includes a main lobby, records room, forensics, patrol, and detective offices, prisoner processing, administrative offices, training rooms, locker rooms, a gym, and a 911 call center. Oct.24, 2019 Craig Matthews / Staff Photographer. Craig Matthews / Staff Photographer

VINELAND — Standing in front of the dark brick facade of the new, \$20 million police station Thursday afternoon, Chief Rudy Beu nodded toward the dilapidated station beside it.

“The facility across the street has been our home — it’s like a second home to all the officers — and it’s served the citizens of Vineland for the past 54 years,” Beu said. “This has been a dream of ours for so many years. To finally see it come to fruition, I keep pinching myself. It’s like you can’t really believe it’s happening.”

Law enforcement, county and city officials and residents gathered to cut the ribbon in front of the new building on Plum Street, echoing Beu’s sentiments that the project has been a long time coming and sorely needed for the department that deals with increasing calls for service and a lack of heat at the old facility. While the building is still getting the finishing touches, administrative staff are planning to start moving over next week, with the station fully operational in November.

The Cumberland County Improvement Authority owns the building and is leasing it to the city, said Gerard Velazquez III, president of the authority. Once the lease is through, the authority is going to transfer the building’s title to the city for \$1.

“You have basically that building across the street on steroids,” Velazquez said. “They didn’t get everything they wanted, but they got a lot. This was with a lot of care and attention and wanting to make sure, at the end of the day, they were going to have a place ... where they could actually be proud about, feel proud about and do their job better and more safely.”

The new building, more than twice the size of the old police station next door at 66,000 square feet, includes a main lobby, records room, forensics, patrol and detective offices, prisoner processing, administrative officers, training and locker rooms, a gym and a 911 call center.

During a tour of the building, Deputy Chief Pedro Casiano walked a crowd through office spaces, evidence collection rooms and the dispatch center, saying the department will have room to expand.

Currently, there are 153 officers in the department, Casiano said, but they need more. In 2000, there were about 54,000 calls for service. Last year, there were about 86,000.

County Freeholder Director Joe Derella said the station was “dearly needed” and spoke about how the officers who will use the building do a critical service for city residents.

“Congratulations on your new home, and hopefully this will be able to provide you with the tools to be able to do your job that much better,” Derella said.