

West Valley VIEW

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Public safety building opens in Avondale

Frank Morris
staff writer

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Avondale's much anticipated Northwest Public Safety Facility will open Friday.

The \$3.8 million facility, built in partnership with Estrella Mountain Community College, has been a long time in the making, Avondale Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers said.

"For years, we always wanted to have a station to cover the northern area. We do a good job, but we'd like to cut down on the response time for police and fire over in that area," she said.

The facility, at 3200 N. Dysart Road on the north portion of the EMCC campus, will serve as an Avondale police substation, house two classrooms for college instruction, and will be the new site of the college's public safety office.

The 19,000-square-foot building was designed by Dick & Fritsche Design Group and constructed by FCI Construction Inc.

In time, Avondale hopes to use the site as its fourth firehouse as well. The shell for the fire station has already been built.

"It would meet the needs of residents in that area," Lopez Rogers said. "It would be a benefit for them if they could have a station down the street and a quicker response time."

Avondale's three fire stations are dispersed throughout the city: one at 107th Avenue and McDowell Road, one on Fifth Street and Western Avenue and one near Avondale Boulevard and Durango Street.

Its police stations are at the Civic Center complex, Old Town, and in the Cashion community.

Avondale had initially been in talks with Litchfield Park to partner on its new Northwest Public Safety Facility. "It became an issue of funding when the economy turned around, so they decided to look at other options," Lopez Rogers said.

Litchfield Park, which once received fire service from Rural/Metro Corp., now is served by the city of Goodyear.

"It's been a good partnership between Avondale and Estrella; it's nice to see how that all worked out," Lopez Rogers said.

In a press release, EMCC President Ernie Lara made the following statement:

"It is the mission of Estrella Mountain Community College to respond to the needs of the community and support learning opportunities for our students. This partnership allows us to fulfill both parts of that mission and is truly a model of community partnerships at their best."

The public is invited to attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 a.m. Friday, as well as tour the building and meet and greet public safety personnel, and take part in a free VIN-Etch event to run from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The VIN-Etch event allows participants to get their vehicle windows etched at no cost as a means to deter theft. Drivers will need to show proof of ownership, driver's license, current registration, and complete a consent form provided by the Avondale Police Department.

Contact Avondale's Crime Prevention Unit at 623-333-7217 for information.

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