

First new public safety facility in more than 50 years opens in New Bedford's South End

Continued investment in public safety with first fire station built since 1956, and first police station built since 1965.

New Bedford, Massachusetts— Mayor Jon Mitchell, members of the City Council, neighborhood and civic leaders, and City officials officially opened New Bedford's newest public safety facility, the South Public Safety Center, the first new police and fire station to be built in New Bedford in more than 50 years. Beginning this week, Fire Department, Police Department, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) units will begin operating from the facility.

In coming weeks, Emergency Management, Fire Prevention, and Animal Control will also begin to operate from the facility. (Additional announcements will be made regarding these department relocations.) The new facility allows the City to close, repurpose or redevelop five deteriorating City buildings.

The South Public Safety Center now contains the City's South End police substation, and consolidates the operation of two fire stations, Station 6 constructed in 1882 and the former Station 11 constructed in 1911. It is the first fire station built in New Bedford since Fire Station 5 in the far North End was constructed in 1956, and the first police station built in New Bedford since Station 3 on Ashley Boulevard in 1965. A 2015 study by FACETS Consulting on the Fire and EMS services in New Bedford recommended consolidation of Stations 6 and 11.

The operations of Emergency Management and Animal Control,

located in the former Fire Station 3, and Fire Prevention services, located at 1204 Purchase Street, are also to be located in the new consolidated complex. To construct four separate stations with the equivalent operations of the buildings being replaced has been estimated to cost upwards of \$30 million; the total cost of the South Public Safety Center was \$19.5 million, saving the City more than \$10 million in replacement costs.

The new Public Safety Center is a modern, 25,000-square-foot facility, including a four-bay fire station and South End police substation, at the site of the former St. Anne's Church in New Bedford, a late-1940s era building closed as a parish by the Diocese of Fall River in 2004.

Ground was broken in September 2019 for the new facility, located at the prominent intersection of Brock Avenue and Ruth Street which was occupied by the vacant church since 2004.

"As the first public safety center built in more than fifty years, the new South Public Safety Center is a testament to New Bedford's continued commitment to modernize government on behalf of our residents so we can effectively carry out our most important responsibility – keeping people safe," said Mayor Jon Mitchell.