



\$14 million facility more than just a police station

By Philip Wattley

THE CHICAGO Police Department will open its largest area police facility next month, when the new Grand-Central police district begins operations.

As well as being the station for the 25th police district, the \$14 million complex, at 5555 W. Grand Av., will house courtrooms and be the new headquarters of north-west-area detectives and youth division officers. It features such modern innovations as a specially decorated waiting room for crime victims with a \$64,500 stained glass window.

The new district, which formally begins operations Dec. 9, is bounded roughly by Belmont Avenue on the north, Central Park Avenue on the east, Division Street and North Avenue on the south, and Harlem Avenue and the city limits on the west.

THE DISTRICT will include parts of the existing West Side Austin District and Northwest Side Shakespeare District. The new district was created to relieve some of the workload in the Austin District, which has become one of the busier ones in recent years. Last year, police in the Austin District responded to more than 230,000 calls.

The facility, on a 7-acre site, includes two courtrooms, lockup facilities, a gymnasium, a practice shooting range for police, parking for nearly 500 vehicles, a motor maintenance garage, and an auditorium for community meetings.

The waiting room for crime victims has been decorated to resemble a living room, said Deputy Police Supt. Matt Rodriguez.

At older facilities, victims often have to wait in interrogation rooms, in the same sort of facilities in which crime suspects are questioned.