

## City of Doral closer to getting new police headquarters

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The Doral Police Department is making plans to move out.

When the city unveiled its own police department in June 2008, city officials promised Doral Police Chief Ricardo ``Ricky" Gomez they would put building a police headquarters on the ``front burner."

At the heart of the debate: Administrative staff workers from City Hall and officers were split among several offices, including the county's Mid-West District Office, 9101 NW 25th St., and a converted former BellSouth office building on Northwest 79th Avenue.

But if all goes as planned, Doral may soon oversee the construction of a 43,000-square-foot facility at 3719 NW 97th Ave., a parcel the city received from the state.

``We've been waiting for this," Gomez told the council recently.

The Doral City Council recently agreed to a \$370,000 contract with Corzo Castella Carballo Thompson Salman to draft the design criteria for the police headquarters, training facility and emergency operations center. Aside from offices and parking for the fleet, preliminary plans for the facility include a helipad, firing range and dispatch center.

The road to forming the city's department was a rough one as Doral officials argued they were not getting their money's worth from Miami-Dade County, which received \$16 million per year from the city in exchange for policing services.

So the city voted in 2007 to form its own police department. The first officers -- 92 of them -- were sworn in May 23 and reported for their first day of duty on June 1.

Since then, the department has looked forward to the day they can work out of their own headquarters.

Earlier this year, the city hired the Corzo firm to produce a needs assessment study to determine a suitable size and cost for the facility. The firm will now create the design criteria with the goal of putting the project out to bid for design and construction before the end of the year.