

## Home, Sweet Home: MTAPD Opens New Nassau County Facility Thanks to MTACC Security Program and MTA/CDO Real Estate

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(L to R): Lynbrook Police Chief Joseph Neve, NCPD Police Commissioner Patrick J. Ryder, Malverne Police Chief John Aresta, Malverne Mayor Patricia A. Norris-McDonald, MTAPD Chief of Police/MTA Chief Security Officer Owen J. Monaghan, Captain/Commander Michael A. Pizzo, MTA Chairman Joseph J. Lhota, MTAPD Chief of Administration Joseph McGrann, MTA Chief Development Officer Janno Lieber, Father Bob Whelan, MTAPD Chief of Patrol Kathleen Finneran, MTAPD Assistant Chief Sean Montgomery, MTAPD Chief of Field Services Al Stiehler, and Police Officer Paul Martino.

On October 15 the MTA Police Department held a ribbon cutting to mark the opening of its new Nassau County Operations and Eastern Region Training Center in Bethpage, Long Island. The new police facility is located at 15 Grumman Road West – the very site used by NASA to build the Apollo Lunar Module that took men to the moon in response to a challenge from President John F. Kennedy in 1961.

The MTACC Security Program worked closely with the Chief Development Office's Real Estate Department and the MTAPD to complete the 16,000-square foot state-of-the-art facility, which now houses the MTAPD's police patrol forces and detectives, the Emergency Service Unit, Highway Patrol, K-9 and Right-of-Way Task Force and training personnel.

The MTA signed a lease for a complete buildout of the new facility and on July 23, 2018 the MTAPD moved into the building, which from 1936 to 1994 was part of the Grumman plant where some of its 23,000 employees worked on military aircraft such as the F4F Wildcat, F6F Hellcat, A-6 Intruder and F-14 Tomcat.

"The MTA is collaborating across our various agencies to deliver major transportation infrastructure projects to the public around the metro area to improve and protect lives, and support economic growth for future generations," said Janno Lieber, MTA Chief Development Officer.

Added Stephen Manziak, MTACC Security Program Manager, "We were able to deliver a new District 2 Police facility in Bethpage located in Nassau County. That's perfect timing for the MTACC/CDO's Double Track and Third Track LIRR Expansion projects."

According to Michael Pizzo, Captain and Commanding Officer of MTAPD District 2, "We're happy to make this our new home to protect the people who use the LIRR in Nassau County."

MTAPD District 2 encompasses all 453 square miles of Nassau County including 10 LIRR train lines, eight rail yards, 52 commuter stations and 82 rail crossings that are both highway and

pedestrian, public and private.



*The MTAPD bagpipe and drum brigade creates a dramatic buildup to the ribbon cutting.*

### **Finding a better home**

The MTAPD, whose District 2 personnel respond to an average of 16,000 calls for police service per year, occupied various temporary facilities ever since it was formed in 1998. To accommodate their expanding needs, the department needed a larger, permanent facility.

The MTA mobilized a multi-agency team including Andrew Greenberg, Associate Director – MTA Real Estate, Izak Cozagni, Deputy Chief Procurement Officer, Damon Chan, Director of Procurement, Leonard Viviano, Director of Police Support – MTA IT Security along with Maxine Small, MTAPD Budget Manager, Dinesh Jaggi, MTAPD Procurement Manager and Matthew McDonnell, MTAPD Inventory Control.

### **About the MTACC Security Program**

Formed in the wake of 9/11 to ensure the safety of the MTA's transportation infrastructure, the MTACC Security Program protects our customers, employees and assets by providing structural and electronic security mitigation measures at strategic locations within the system. Working with the MTA agencies, Amtrak, NJT, FEMA, DHS, DOT and other outside agencies, the program implements security measures to detect, deter and eliminate threats and vulnerabilities for critical assets.

The team – formerly led by Thomas Reed – and now headed by Stephen Manziak, includes Ainsley Allen, Construction Manager, Ernst Francois, Program Administrator, Surren Sirkisoon, Project Manager, Nicole Francois, Sr. Executive Tech/Admin, and Mike Schoeffling, Resident Engineer.

The group is currently working to build two additional facilities for the MTAPD and is managing the design and construction of several other security mitigation projects. In all its work, the team's goal is to help the MTA build the safest possible systems for our customers.



*Front Row (L to R): Officers Juan Corredor, David Zimmerman and Katherine Nicosia; Captain/Commander Michael A. Pizzo; Officer Christopher Kerr; Sergeant Theodore Ho; and Officers John Cappiello and Emad Ismail. Back Row (L to R): Officers David Steibel and Edward Ehrhard; Sergeant Travis Dietz; Officers Lawrence Vetter and Gustavo Urena; Lieutenants Eric Riker and Joseph Cona.*

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## **MTAPD Commanding Officer Ribbon-Cutting Speech**

Good morning! I'd like to welcome everyone to the new home of the MTA Police Department's Nassau County Operations and Eastern Region Training Center. My name is Mike Pizzo, Captain and Commanding Officer of MTAPD District 2.

First, on behalf of the police officers and professionals of MTAPD District 2, I'd like to thank a number of people for being here and helping make this day possible. [Insert names/titles].

Across the metro area the MTA is delivering major transportation infrastructure projects to the public to improve lives and support economic growth for future generations. The MTAPD officers of District 2 are here to protect the people and transportation system and improve the quality of life for everyone.

A little background on MTAPD District 2.

The District encompasses the entire 453 square miles of Nassau County and its 10 LIRR train lines, eight rail yards, 52 commuter stations and 82 rail crossings – both highway and pedestrian, public and private. Our personnel respond to an average of 16,773 calls for police service per year.

To illustrate why we're so happy to celebrate the opening of our new facility, let's take a short walk down memory lane.

Before the formation of the MTAPD in 1998, our predecessor, the LIRR Police Department, housed its headquarters in the Hillside Support Facility in Hollis, Queens. The police officers protecting LIRR commuters, stations and yards in Nassau County had no centralized facility of their own. By the late 1980s District 2 occupied a 650-square foot trailer in a Hicksville rail yard with no lockers, public reception desk

or arrest processing facility, requiring officers to conduct business at outside police agencies.

The MTAPD later obtained a 1,300-square foot trailer that included a locker room but still lacked reception desk and arrest-processing facility. And in 2005 we moved to a 4,000-square foot trailer facility in Garden City with a reception desk, arrest processing facility and a training unit.

But to accommodate our expanding needs, we needed a larger, permanent facility. The search began to secure our own space.

The MTA identified and provided capital funding for a new facility and on February 21, 2017 signed a lease for a complete buildout of our new facility here at 15 Grumman Road West. And on July 23 we moved in.

Comprised of approximately 16,000 square feet, the state-of-the-art MTAPD Nassau County Operations and the Eastern Region Training Center houses police patrol forces and Detectives; the Emergency Service, Highway, K-9 and T.R.A.C.K.S. Units; the Right-of-Way Task Force and training personnel including:

- 5 locker rooms containing 92 lockers
- ADA compliant holding cells
- ADA compliant restroom facilities
- an industry standard juvenile holding area with both voice and audio recording capability
- a line-up room with one-way mirrored glass to protect a victim's identity
- an innovative sally port for the safe transfer of prisoners to and from police vehicles
- energy efficient electronic devices such as room occupancy and vacancy sensors and LED lighting

- some police K-9 grooming and wash facility
- a surveillance system which incorporates LIRR system wide camera feeds with real time train movement information
- a 65-space dedicated parking lot
- a dedicated training annex responsible for maintaining Departmental & Accreditation standards through Annual Certification in Firearms, CPR, First Aid, and various other training topics including Active Shooter and Law Enforcement Casualty Care (LECC)

In closing, I'd be remiss if I didn't provide a factoid about the building's history.

From 1936 to 1994 this building was part of the Grumman plant where some of the 23,000 Grumman employees worked on military aircraft such as the F4F Wildcat, F6F Hellcat, A-6 Intruder and F-14 Tomcat. Here in this building the intergalactic Apollo Lunar Module – also known as the “LEM – was built for NASA's US Apollo Program for human space flight.

We find this history appropriate. Because in making this building the new home for MTAPD District 2, we're taking not only one giant step for the MTAPD, but also one giant step to secure a thriving future for Long Island.

On behalf of the MTAPD officers of District 2, thank you for being here to help us celebrate this big day.