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CAT moving into new facility

BY GREG OLIVER
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CLEMSON — Moving day for Clemson Area Transit finally arrived Friday as officials, with assistance from Public Works, relocated from their longtime headquarters in the basement of the old police station to the state-of-the-art facility on West Lane.

"We will have about four times as much square footage here as we did in our old facility," CAT Executive Director Al Babinicz said. "We will have a total of 27,000 square feet, including 20,000 square feet for a covered bus shelter."

Babinicz said the new facility is completely wireless, allowing officials to use laptops. There will also be 13 security cameras on the interior and exterior of the building.

The new facility will provide additional office space, four giant flat screen panel televisions to display driver schedules, weather, routes, special messages and notices; two panels, one with a Greyhound Dog and the other an Amtrak logo, with bus and train information; and a display case featuring art and the many awards CAT has received.

The aquarium area features two screen panels, a kitchen area, a storage area and can hold as many as 70 people in the room for special meetings.

Babinicz said the environmental "green" emphasis of the new facility makes it the only one of its kind in the state and one of only a handful in the Southeast. Overhead lighting is solar powered, with motion sensors, rather than switches, in each room. There will also be a giant bus washing station with wide brushes on both sides, and bus operators will use the keypad to match the operator number with the bus number.

"We should receive the bus washer in about two weeks," Babinicz said. "The buses will look better and brighter than ever before, powered and operated by sunshine with reclaimed water. The washer will be brought in by trucks and



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IT specialists Rick Roe, left, and Lowell Atwood set up computers and wireless networks at the new Clemson Area Transit headquarters on West Lane.

assembled with huge brushes."

Clemson Assistant City Administrator Andy Blondeau said the new facility "turned out to be a really good project" as it was completed on time and under budget.

"It's something that CAT and the city should be really proud of," Blondeau said.

Dean Oang, an architect for Ellis 3P Neal Prince Architects, said it feels good to see the fulfillment of a project the firm has worked on with the city and CAT for more than two years.

"It's a pleasure for us to come together for the city of Clemson and CAT," Oang said.

Babinicz said the final cost of the new facility was \$3 million, under the original estimate of \$3.5 million. The project was paid for through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds and the South Carolina Department of Transportation.

An official open house, during which the public will have an opportunity to tour the new facility, will be announced in the coming weeks.