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NEW CORRECTIONS HQ SAID ON-TRACK

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Author: Evan Pinsonnault

A new correctional headquarters and training facility in Monroe County could give Georgia's prison system some more manpower and space.

A state corrections official, assistant commissioner Brian Owens says all construction and costs have remained on track and that he expects the State Government South Correctional and Training Facility at Tift College to open in late 2009 or early 2010.

According to a recent report by the state's Department of Corrections, Georgia has the nation's fifth-largest prison system based on population, with 60,000 inmates and 145,000 felony probationers.

There are 8,000 correctional officers monitoring everyone in Georgia's prison system.

Owens says the campus couldn't be a better fit because of it's size and location.

"It's only two miles from the Georgia Public Safety Training Center, where the majority of our correctional officers get trained now," said Owens. "Instead of squeezing them out as the prison system grows, we'll move them all into the new facility and be able to train as many as 200 at a time.

"And the second part [of the construction and renovation process] will be our central office headquarters," Owens added.

Since the roughly \$50 million project is supported through state funds, grants and taxpayer's dollars, Owens says it'll be great to add 400 to 425 state jobs to the Central Georgia community.

He also added that since the majority of Georgia's prisons are south of Forsyth, it made more sense to have "correctional headquarters" moved outside of Atlanta.

"That's one of the reasons whv we picked Monroe Countv and Forsvth." said Owens. "And with



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