



St. Petersburg Police Department News Release



For Immediate Release

July 28, 2009

Media Relations Office

727-893-7550 / Fax 727-893-7773

Media Relations Office

Bill Proffitt

George Kajtsa

ST. PETERSBURG RECEIVES FUNDING FOR 10 NEW POLICE POSITIONS THROUGH STIMULUS GRANT

Today the St. Petersburg Police Department received notification that the city will receive a federal COPS Hiring Recovery Program grant for 10 police officers. The hiring process will begin immediately, said Police Chief Charles "Chuck" Harmon.

The federal stimulus grant program, administered through the U.S. Department of Justice, will enhance the city's ongoing police efforts by creating a full-time Community and Police Engagement (CAPE) unit, a program tested last year in Childs Park, Harbordale and Palmetto Park. After house-by-house visits and other community policing activities over a four month period, violent crimes dropped 26.7 percent and gun-related crimes decreased 17.1 percent. The program has since been expanded in Bartlett Park, Grand Central and Historic Kenwood.

"With these funds, we are able to enhance the gains we have seen through CAPE phases 1 and 2 into a permanent program and continue to address crime in our neighborhoods," Chief Harmon said.

Mayor Rick Baker and members of City Council strongly supported the city's application process for these highly competitive COPS funds.

"This is an important day in our city as we continue to focus on public safety in our community," said Mayor Rick Baker. "Of all the vital functions city government provides its residents, public safety is our highest priority. This will increase our authorized sworn strength to 545 positions - the highest in our city's history."

The U.S. Department of Justice received more than \$8 billion in requests to fund 39,000 positions, and awarded \$1 billion for 4,699 new law enforcement officers in the United States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

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