



TO: Mayor & Council
FROM: Greg Canally, Deputy Chief Financial Officer *gdc*
DATE: April 9th, 2009
SUBJECT: ARRA (Stimulus) Funding Opportunities for Austin Police Department

As part of the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 the US Department of Justice has several programs that could provide funding opportunities for the Austin Police Department:

- COPS Hiring Recovery Program (*Competitive Grant*)
- Byrne Justice Assistant Grant (*Formula Allocation of \$1.4 million*)
- Southern Border States Narcotics Program (*Competitive Grant*)
- Byrne Competitive Justice Assistant Grant (*Competitive Grant*)

COPS Hiring Grant & Byrne Justice Assistant Grant

The COPS Hiring Recovery Grant is designed to create law enforcement positions that increase community policing capacity and crime fighting efforts. While APD continues to use proactive policing to keep our City one of the safest in the nation, our city is experiencing some upward crime trends. Through our CompStat process, APD is carefully tracking our violent and property crime and have identified crime hotspots that are in need of increased resources. APD is also monitoring the impact of the economic downturn on crime in Austin, and so far this year aggravated assaults are up 6% and property crime is up 10%. In addition, APD continues to receive specific crime enforcement requests from neighborhoods that have been more difficult to address given the recent reductions in overtime funding.

The City of Austin will be submitting an application for 50 new sworn positions to enhance our community policing efforts. We just received final guidance from DOJ this past week about this program: the City is only able to apply for funding for new positions; we can not apply to fund existing vacancies. *The application deadline is April 14th*, but because of the overload the DOJ system is experiencing, we will be submitting this application tomorrow. If the grant is awarded, the new sworn positions will allow APD to assign experienced officers to a Crime Strike Team in each of the 3 Bureaus of the City to address crime hotspots. The Strike Team approach has been used under a grant funded initiative in the North East Area Command, and is very effective in reducing crime. A comparison of violent crime from the last 6 months of 2008 when the

operation was in effect to the same period in 2007 shows an 11% reduction in violent crime, and most impressively, a 30% reduction in robbery.

The COPS Hiring Recovery Program will support 100 percent of the approved entry-level salary and benefits (escalated each year) of newly-hired full-time sworn career law enforcement officers over a three year grant period. After the three year grant period expires, the City must retain the grant funded positions for at least one full budget cycle, at a cost of approximately \$5.4 million for that year. Notification of grant award would occur in September, at which time staff would bring forward an item for Council approval.

If the grant is awarded, APD will hold a four-month modified or lateral academy, starting in January 2010 to train the 50 new positions. The one-time costs associated with this cadet class, as well as equipment and vehicles, are estimated to be \$2.1 million. These costs would be covered by leveraging the \$1.4 million in Byrne Justice Assistant Grant funds the City has already received, with the remainder coming from the allocation of seized funds in FY10. While the City has received the allocation of Byrne Justice Assistant Grants, we still must apply for intended use of the funds by May 18th. Additionally, a required public hearing on use of these Byrne Justice Assistant Grants will occur on April 23rd.

Southern Border States Narcotics Program

The Southern Border States Narcotics Program has been created to provide funding to address narcotics-related activity stemming from the Mexican border, including drug related crime and violence. The City will be applying for a \$1.6 million grant. If awarded, \$800,000 of this amount would be used for targeted overtime to combat criminal narcotics activity, \$100,000 for a narcotics crime analyst for 2 years, and \$650,000 for equipment such as protective safety gear, a drug dog (K-9), and an operations vehicle. *The deadline for this grant application is April 17th.* If awarded, the project period of each grant will be two years (October 1, 2009 – September 30, 2011) and there is no requirement to continue the funding after the grant expiration.

Byrne Competitive Justice Assistant Grant

This Justice Assistance Program competitive grant, allows states and local governments to support a broad range of activities to prevent and control crime and improve the criminal justice system. The City will be submitting 3 separate grant applications:

- o \$3.9 million for Communication Division Call Takers (25), Dispatchers (4), and Trainers (3) to increase 9-1-1 emergency services capabilities. These positions are needed to address steadily increasing 9-1-1 call volume. The request will include equipment and supplies directly related to the job duties of the new FTEs. The role the Call Taker is particularly important as their report-writing duties allow officers to continue responding to 9-1-1 calls for service. One financial consultant is also included in this grant application. This FTE would be responsible for all stimulus-related grant awards.

- \$1.2 million to target and reduce violent crime. The application will request \$750,000 for officer overtime and would allow the department to hire 3 crime analysts. The request will also allow the city to continue the grant-funded salary of the East Austin Gang Prevention Coordinator through FY11.
- \$1.9 million to develop and enhance the capacity of the Forensic Sciences Division to handle the day-to-day demand for case turnaround, which is greater than current staffing allows. The request would fund a chemist, a case coordinator, a firearms examiner, a latent print examiner, three crime scene specialists, and six property crime technicians. Equipment and supplies necessary for to perform the primary responsibilities of each position is included.

The grant application deadline is April 27th. Notification of grant award may be as early as August 1, 2009. If awarded, the project period of each grant will be two years (October 1, 2009 – September 30, 2011) and there is no requirement to continue the funding after the grant expiration.

Given the current economic climate and City budget constraints, each of these ARRA funding opportunities would significantly enhance APD crime prevention efforts. We will keep you apprised of each of the grant processes as they move forward. If you have any questions, please contact Chief Acevedo or myself.

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