

# Alton Police Department Receives More Than \$500,000 In Grant Funding

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October 20 2022 7:44 AM



**ALTON** - The Alton Police Department recently received notice that they have secured over a half million in grant funding.

Mayor Goins took office with the City of Alton in financial distress. The City had a deficit of approximately \$3.8 million. As part of Mayor Goins' focus on economic recovery, he asked all his department heads to seek grant opportunities. As such, Chief

Pulido, Deputy Chief Ford, and the Alton Police Department applied for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant, COPS Hiring Program Grant, Illinois Secretary of State Office Grant, and the Microgrant-Community Policing Development Solicitation Grant.

The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program is the primary provider of federal criminal justice funding to state and local jurisdictions. The JAG program is intended to support a range of activities to prevent and control crime and improve the criminal justice system. JAG funds may be used for state and local initiatives, technical assistance, training, personnel, equipment, supplies, contractual support, and information systems for criminal justice, as well as criminal justice-related research and evaluation activities.

Approximately \$18,000, was applied for with school safety in mind.

“One of the lessons we garnered from the Uvalde Texas school shooting is the immediate need for equipment sufficient to breach closed/locked doors. Therefore, we will be using this grant money to purchase breaching equipment that will be stored in all of our patrol vehicles so that it is immediately available when needed” said Deputy Chief Jarrett Ford.

Chief Pulido explained, “This equipment is vital in responding without delay to active shooter situations at schools and other locations. This grant will help us better respond to these types of situations by allowing us to end the threat as soon as possible and potentially save lives in the process. It is undoubtedly an investment in both public safety and the safety of our students and staff of all Alton area schools. It is also equipment we hope and pray we never have to use in a real-world scenario but that we will be training with in case the need arises.”

COPS Hiring Program (CHP) is a competitive grant program designed to provide funding directly to law enforcement agencies to hire and/or rehire additional career law enforcement officers in an effort to increase their community policing capacity and crime prevention efforts. The City of Alton was awarded \$250,000 to go towards the salaries of two police officers over the next three years. The City of Alton indicated two extra officers would help APD focus on violent crime, specifically gun-related crime, in the city. The proposal is that the extra officers will allow us to once again have a Street Crimes Division that will focus their efforts on proactive measures in removing firearms from the most dangerous of individuals and underserved neighborhoods in our community” Deputy Chief Ford said. “This prevention-based approach will help support our efforts in my new Mayor’s Violence Prevention Initiative we have discussed and that is planned to begin in 2023” said Mayor Goins.

The Alton Police Department also received funding from the Illinois Secretary of State Office. This grant is in the amount of \$250,000. This grant was pursued with a variety of measures in mind. The funding to achieve several of these measures would have been asked to come from city coffers but now otherwise will not. Grant money will be used to help purchase an additional patrol vehicle that will be needed for the above referenced efforts in violence/gun prevention through the re-established Street Crimes Division. The Alton Police Department training facility will be updated and made suitable for additional trainings. Equipment to help process crime scenes, enhance traffic safety in school zones and other areas, and enhance safety at large public gatherings will be purchased. Grant funds will also be utilized for officer wellness programs aimed at retention and recruitment efforts.

“The grants received by the Alton Police Department will help assist the department address a variety of goals such as community-oriented policing, violence prevention, providing quick responses to active shooter incidents and placing more officers on our streets. These grant funds will help greatly as we strive to make our city a safer place to live, work, and play” said Mayor Goins.

The Microgrant-Community Policing Development Solicitation grant is for \$175,000. This grant focuses on youth within our Alton area schools. The focus of this funding is to build trust and legitimacy with the community. Research will be conducted to help select the most appropriate evidence-based approach to reducing youth violence and improve community/police relationships. In addition, funds will be available to help assist in street outreach measures and programs being implemented in Alton. Community partners will be allowed to apply for the funding with more details on that process to follow. These investments are an investment in the safety of our community and the development of our youth. All of this also directly aligns with measures looking to be achieved by the Mayor’s Violence Prevention Initiative.