



THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAYOR DOMENIC J. SARNO

HOME OF THE BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Sarno and Commissioner Barbieri to Announce New Major Police Academy Class and Expanded Metro and Neighborhood Policing Initiatives

Springfield, MA- Mayor Domenic J. Sarno and Springfield Police Commissioner John Barbieri will formally announce plans to implement new metro and neighborhood policing initiatives as well as a new Springfield Police Academy class on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. at the Springfield Department of Public Works. The new academy of 59 new officers is slated to begin this May and conclude November of 2016.

As one of the Springfield Police Department (SPD) initiatives at this time, the metro area policing plan will be implemented in the area encompassing the Main Street corridor from Mill Street to Union Station, and the surrounding blocks. There will be an intensive police presence in this area stationed at new fixed and lighted police booths along Main Street from Union Station to Union Street. Included will be walking and roving police patrols, providing a focused attention on this particular downtown area. The addition of officers in the downtown area will allow for increased police presence in other neighborhoods and more cooperation working with these neighborhoods.

Regarding the new initiatives, Mayor Sarno stated, "Done through continued sound fiscal management and growing our tax base, this academy of 59 will be trained in C-3 policing with de-escalation tactics. The academy will be the largest since President Clinton's federal Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program of the mid/late 1990's – "20 years ago," which will allow us to get ahead of the attrition rates."

Mayor Sarno continued, “Commissioner Barbieri has shifted away from the old policing standards of the 49% bureau / 51% street officers’ ratio, to new modern-day policing standards of 25% bureau / 75% street officers. This will continue to put more police officers on the streets and in our neighborhoods. My administration will continue to make these marked investments, not only to enhance public safety, but also economic development – “jobs” and quality of life, activities in our downtown and neighborhood areas. Also, important to note, many of the arrests made by our brave and dedicated “men and women in blue,” are repeat violent offenders. Besides their lack of personal and family responsibilities, it is also imperative that our court and jail systems hold these negative individuals and keep them off of our streets and out of our neighborhoods– “there is plenty of room in “the Inn.”

Commissioner Barbieri added, “The Springfield Police Department, as part of Mayor Sarno’s public safety team, is continuing to address the complex issue of crime through efforts to: increase community awareness/involvement; support economic development; improve departmental efficiency/community communication through the use of modern technology; and increase officer presence in the neighborhoods and the business areas that show promise of significant growth.”

The additional SPD officers in the Main Street corridor will be implemented to spur economic development in the metro area and to enhance other police services, with special consideration given in regards to servicing Springfield neighborhoods. Effective public safety is a key driving factor in successful economic development, as safety in the downtown and neighborhood areas encourage further investment and growth.

About the economic benefits of the metro policing initiatives, Chief Development Officer Kevin Kennedy added, “Successful economic development is dependent on a high level of confidence in the fundamental security of our city. The viability of our neighborhoods, the strength of our downtown, the maintenance of our housing stock, the quality of our cultural institutions and the stability and growth of our employment and tax bases are all contingent on the effective administration of public safety. This investment in our collective security is an investment in Springfield’s future. This public safety announcement is an economic development initiative.”

Chief Administrative and Financial Officer Timothy Plante stated, “Having been through some lean budgets in recent years, it is nice to see our fiscal strategy starting to pay off and allow us to strategically invest in our police department. Not only are these investments in additional officers sustainable, this will position Springfield to continue its economic growth both downtown and in neighborhoods throughout the city.”

City Councilor Tom Ashe, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, concluded, “This is a tremendous, much needed infusion of officers in the downtown area, particularly in the entertainment district. It also addresses the need to keep a significant amount of officers in our residential neighborhoods to ensure the safety of the public. Mayor Sarno, the City Council, and Commissioner Barbieri stand united in our efforts to increase public safety across the board and this initiative is a clear representation of that goal.”

For the entire metro policing PowerPoint presentation, please visit: www.tinyurl.com/spdpolicing

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