

FY 2020 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant

City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County

Project Narrative

Description of the Issues

The City of Hattiesburg is applying on behalf of the City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program FY 2020 Local Solicitation. The title of the project is “City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County Byrne JAG Program FY 2020.” The City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County are seeking to use funds for the purchase of equipment to improve the existing capabilities of the Hattiesburg Police Department and Forrest County Sheriff’s Department.

The City of Hattiesburg will purchase a Watch Guard 4RE/VISTA server, motorcycle helmets, and desktop computers. Acquisition of the server will include the server hardware, software, installation, and technical services. The Watch Guard server will improve the evidence data storage and retrieval capabilities of the existing 4RE in-car video system and integrated VISTA body-worn cameras. Eight (8) motorcycle police helmets are being requested to increase the level of protection for eight officers by replacing older worn and damaged helmets. Finally, three (3) desktop computers are being requested to replace older desktops that are outdated and no longer meet agency needs due to incompatibility with newer software programs and hardware. The balance of the items not covered by grant funds will come from the city’s general fund.

The Forrest County Sheriff’s Department is currently seeking to update its existing capabilities by equipping six (6) officers with tactical rifles and rifle scopes. With violent offenders increasingly using high-powered rifles, officers are at a disadvantage when not adequately armed going into high-risk situations. This disadvantage could mean the difference between life and death for both the officers and innocent bystanders. The acquisition of the rifles and scopes will improve the efficiency and accuracy with which officers are able to neutralize threats and protect the public in high-risk situations. The balance of the cost of the items not covered by grant funds will come from the county’s general fund.

The following project identifiers are associated with the proposed project activities: Computer Software/Hardware, Conflict Resolution, Equipment – Tactical, Firearms, Officer Safety, Protective Helmets, Policing, Violence Violent Crime.

Project Design and Implementation

The Hattiesburg Police Department guides its priorities and funding strategy through an evaluation of the needs of the department. The need that is most pressing is the one that is addressed first, while under the direction of the City of Hattiesburg Mayor and City Council. Forrest County Sheriff’s Department under the direction of the Forrest County Board of Supervisors and Planning Department coordinate priorities during the budget review process and outline long range plans.

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Capabilities and Competencies

The Hattiesburg Police Department works with other local and state agencies on criminal justice and juvenile justice efforts. Forrest County Sheriff's Department has collaborative partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions within the county (City of Hattiesburg and City of Petal) along with agencies such as the 12 Net Narcotics Team, DEA and other law enforcement entities.

Plan for Collecting the Data Required

The City of Hattiesburg Grant Coordinator will gather, track and document the data required for performance measures. This individual will also enter all the data into BJA's Performance Measurement Tool. The City of Hattiesburg Accounting Division will gather the financial information for reporting purposes.