

NEWS RELEASE

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Strickland outlines increased public safety measures in State of the City speech

Feb. 9, 2017 | Delivering his first State of the City speech today, Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland outlined steps that are being taken to strengthen public safety.

Strickland committed to doubling city support for the street-level gang intervention program 901 BLOC Squad, which has delivered results in initial launch areas. Strickland also heralded the arrival of some 31 graduates of the police academy this week and outlined the creation of a new Violent Crimes Bureau at the Memphis Police Department.

“No question about it, the most important role for city government is providing for public safety,” Mayor Strickland said at the weekly meeting of the Frayser Exchange Club. “The steps that we’re describing today will further strengthen the city’s commitment.”

Benefiting from a large police applicant group last year, Strickland said the next police recruit class, which begins in March, should have at least 100 officers. Another recruit class is planned for later this year.

Strickland also said public libraries will be open longer hours this summer, community centers will hold spring break camps next month, and the national My Brother’s Keeper Alliance will hold a job fair in Memphis on April 20.

Also today, Strickland said:

- The city’s new down payment assistance program through the Division of Housing & Community Development has assisted 65 families in buying homes in targeted areas.
- The Work Local program, a partnership with the Hospitality HUB to offer work to homeless individuals, has assisted some 70 people since launching in November -- including three who received permanent job placements.
- Answer times for 911 calls have improved to an average of under 14 seconds, down from about one minute a year ago.
- City contracting with minority and women-owned businesses has improved by 30 percent in a year.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Mayor Strickland’s speech notes will be available today at <http://www.memphistn.gov/Communications.aspx>.

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Mayor Jim Strickland

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