

# City Page

NEWS & INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE

## Sisters of Mercy grant to fund neighborhood services

The Sisters of Mercy of North Carolina Foundation has awarded a three-year \$987,389 grant to the City of Charlotte's Neighborhood Development Department to implement an innovative model of neighborhood based services in the Wingate community slated to begin this August.

The model known as Vision: Charlotte Initiative will deliver neighborhood-based, integrated services, including case management to the neighborhood in the western corridor of Charlotte. A school drop-out rate nearly three times the city average, high rates of teen pregnancy, unemployment and other conditions plague the community and contribute to its fragile status as reported in the City's 2004 Quality of Life Study.

"The City of Charlotte is excited about this wonderful partnership opportunity with the Sisters of Mercy of North Carolina Foundation," said Stanley Watkins, Key Business Executive, Neighborhood Development. "The grant will allow us to enhance the City's revitalization efforts in the Wingate neighborhood and West Boulevard Corridor."

The effort is a collaboration among Neighborhood Development, Central Piedmont Community College, Charlotte Enterprise Community, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, H.O. Graham Presbyterian Church Resource Center, Mecklenburg County Council of Boy Scouts, Urban League and the YMCA. Each of the collaborating partners will provide on-site services and resources.



Vision: Charlotte infrastructure will deliver neighborhood services to the Wingate Community.

## Neighborhood Matching Grants

Your neighborhood may be eligible for funding through the City's Neighborhood Matching Grants Program. Grants up to \$25,000 are awarded to eligible neighborhood organizations and business associations for projects that will improve neighborhood appearance and public safety, increase organizational capacity, and support neighborhood educational, recreational and cultural initiatives. Funds may be matched with cash, volunteer labor, or in-kind donations. Selected projects are well-designed, cost-effective, show broad neighborhood participation and collaboration, a documented need and lasting impact.

The next application deadline is September 15, 2005. Representation at one of the following pre-application workshops is required of all organizations applying in September:

Tuesdays, August 2, 9, & 16 6:15 - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 13 9:15 - 11:30 a.m.

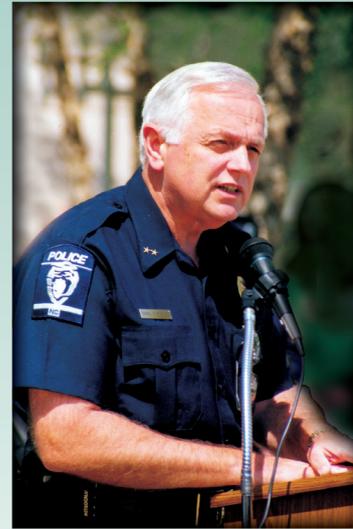
All workshops will be held at Neighborhood Development, Old City Hall building, 600 East Trade Street. Program details are available at <http://neighborhoods.charmeck.org>. Call 704.336.2349 to find out if your organization is eligible, or to sign up for a workshop.

## Managing costs of policing

By Chief Darrel Stephens, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

Police overtime has been the subject of considerable debate over the past few weeks. First, homicide and robbery detectives have expressed concern that year-end budget restrictions and continuing efforts to manage overtime are affecting their ability to investigate cases. Second, some people are trying to connect this issue with the overtime budgeted for external security and traffic control for arena events included in the Fiscal Year 2006 Budget. The two issues are not related.

Because of slow revenue growth for the past three years, operating budgets for police and other City departments have not increased except for inflationary expenses such as fuel. Overtime budgets have remained at the same level as well. Expenditures for the homicide and robbery sections, however, have continued to increase-in the past two fiscal years they exceeded budget by more than twice the amount allocated.



Chief Darrel Stephens, CMPD

We recognize we must do a better job managing these costs and are carefully reviewing overtime needs; but our efforts have not interfered with investigating crimes that require immediate attention. In fact, we have experienced a 125 percent increase in arrests in homicide cases during the first five months of 2005 and an 8.95 percent increase in burglary arrests. Arrests for rape have remained even with the previous year.

The police department sought and received additional funding to provide traffic control and external security for the estimated 120 events that will be held at the arena in the coming year. These funds have been added to the department's regular overtime budget and not taken away from other functions. It makes little sense to argue that investigations are suffering because of policing requirements at the new arena. The City has responsibility for both.

## Roll out garbage service changes to take effect

On August 15, Solid Waste Services (SWS) will implement a new policy that will allow residents of a single-family household to place a maximum of two rollout carts at the curb for garbage collection. If a resident places more than two carts at the curb, only two of the carts would receive service. Limiting the number of carts placed curbside and removing unauthorized carts will improve efficiency and reduce costs. Residents impacted by the new cart restriction policy will receive notification by direct mail. For questions or information on the new policy call 311.



The new policy allows two rollout carts for a single-family household.

## Web trip planning puts transit at your fingertips

Filling up at the pump has become a very painful experience for all commuters as gas prices continue to rise. With more than 3,000 trips a day and more than 70 local and express routes, Charlotte Area Transit System's (CATS) convenient and cost-efficient services offer commuters an escape from rising gas prices. But with so many routes to choose from, which one will get commuters where they're going fastest?



Trip Planner makes it simple and convenient to plan your next trip or work-time commute.

CATS' new web-based trip planner can help them with that. Trip Planner makes it simple and convenient to plan your next trip or work-time commute. Visit CATS at [www.ridetransit.org](http://www.ridetransit.org) and choose "Trip Planning." Then enter where you are coming from and where you want to go, what day you want to travel and at what time. Trip Planner then provides you with customized trip plans indicating which route(s) to take, where to catch the next CATS service, and even how far to walk from your bus stop to your front door. Planning your trip also can be done in Spanish.