

Federal Grants

Orange receives \$750,000 in federal grants to assist rebuilding of Chestnut Street Water Treatment Facility/Pump Station and to expand police use of technology.

The federal appropriation bill signed into law by President Obama on Wednesday, December 16th, contained funding for two projects important to Orange. Orange will receive \$450,000 to help upgrade technology in the Police Department and \$300,000 to underwrite some of the expense of rebuilding the Chestnut Street Water Pumping Station.

The police department had applied for funds for a new computer-aided dispatch system, a new police records management database, and other communications upgrades. The department's current computer system has not been upgraded in more than a decade, operating with low memory, slow speed, and frequent crashes.

Without the police grant, Orange would have been faced with a choice between spending local tax dollars for upgrading police technology or continuing to live with an antiquated police computer system.

Orange had pushed strongly for these grants. On March 20th,

the City held a tour of the projects, led by Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, Jr., and organized by Chief of Staff Tai Cooper to provide detailed first hand information to Congressman Donald Payne and representatives of Senators Frank Lautenberg and Robert Menendez. At each stop, participants received a briefing by the department director regarding the need for the funding and other specifics regarding the project. Over the next 10 months, the Mayor's staff lobbied vigorously to move the projects through the legislative process.

Statement by Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, Jr

"I am very excited and pleased that Orange is receiving this needed federal funding. I want to thank Senators Frank Lautenberg and Bob Menendez and Congressman Donald Payne for being so responsive to our request for help and for pushing so hard to make this possible. Both projects are key to the future of Orange. Construction of the Water Treatment Plant makes possible future development to hold down taxes, and the police technology upgrade will make it possible for our already extremely effective Police Department to do its job even better."