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MAYOR REDD HOSTED PUBLIC SAFETY FORUM

Vows To Hold Additional Public Safety Forums Throughout The Neighborhoods Of Camden

CAMDEN – Yesterday evening, Mayor Dana Redd hosted a forum attended by community and faith-based leaders, residents, elected officials and representatives of corporations and non-profits located in Camden to discuss the importance of a comprehensive public safety plan for the City.

“It is imperative that this group of diverse leaders who have a stake in the success of Camden, both from a standpoint of safety and economic viability, come together to talk and help plot the course for tackling the difficult safety issues facing our city,” said Mayor Redd. “We need to hear solutions that can actually improve and enhance the quality of life in our City and the Camden Metro Division of the Camden County Police Department can be that solution that will shift the public safety paradigm in our favor.”

Mayor Redd was joined by Senator Donald Norcross; Assemblymen Gilbert “Whip” Wilson and Angel Fuentes; Camden County Freeholder Director Louis Cappelli, Jr.; Camden County Freeholders Edward T. McDonnell, Ian K. Leonard, Scot N. McCray, and Jeffrey L. Nash; Camden City Council President Frank Moran; Camden City Council members Curtis Jenkins, Luis Lopez, Dana Burley, Marilyn Torres, and Brian Coleman; Camden City Police Chief John S. Thomson; George E. Norcross, III, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Cooper Health System; and Respond, Inc. Executive Director Wilbert Mitchell.

The goal of a Metro Division force is to enhance public safety in the City of Camden. Camden County officials have previously mentioned that a Camden Metro Division would allow for more police officers to patrol Camden neighborhoods and its business corridors. The county, which conceived the police-reorganization plan in an attempt to make the region safer and local crime-fighting efforts more cost-effective, will run the newly-created Camden Metro Division.

Under the proposed plan that is still being finalized by the City of Camden, Camden County, and the New Jersey Division of Local Government Services, current Camden City police officers, as well as those previously laid off by the city, will be given consideration for the new positions. Qualified officers living in the city will be given the highest priority. Those officers who are not chosen, but who have substantial vested years of service, will likely be offered an early retirement package.

(more)

In addition to her interest in forming a regionalized police force, Mayor Redd has also tackled a number of safety initiatives including:

- Acquiring 81 cameras to be our “Eye in the Sky” policing system with the goal of adding 40 more cameras;
- Securing a mobile command unit to serve as a 24/7 command center that is deployed throughout the City;
- Expanding the Shot Spotter system to cover an additional Camden neighborhood;
- Passing a resolution setting hours of operation for City businesses; and
- Building a successful partnership with PSE&G to re-light streetlights beginning with State Street in North Camden and Park Boulevard in Parkside, while working with other corporations to re-light more neighborhoods.

“We must work together – as one community – to make Camden a safer place to live, work, visit or go to school,” said George E. Norcross, III, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Cooper Health System. “Camden is poised to, once again, become a significant regional destination. In order for this revitalization to be successful and sustained, we must act firmly and swiftly to make this city safer for all.”

“To ensure that the Camden Metro Division can truly be a success, we need our residents, businesses, and faith-based community to be part of the solution,” Mayor Redd said. “Public safety is not solely a government issue. It is a matter that needs everyone’s involvement and participation. It is time to bring our community together and to stand united.”

Yesterday’s forum was the first of a few meetings that Mayor Redd will be having throughout the City.

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