



# Lithonia News

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6920 Main Street, Lithonia GA    770-482-8136  
<http://www.cityoflithoniaga.org>



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



Merry  
Christmas  
and  
Happy  
New Year



STR8-N-NATURAL | VON'S BARBEQUE | CITY OF LITHONIA

## 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TOY drive

LAST DROP OFF DAY  
**DEC 19**

AGES  
**NEWBORN TO 14 YRS OLD**

**DROP OFF LOCATIONS:**  
LITHONIA CITY HALL | STR8-N-NATURAL SALON  
6920 MAIN STREET    6964 MAIN STREET

# The OuT PosT

*(Formerly The Boy Scout Hut)*

The City of Lithonia, The Lithonia Business Association, and Eagle Rock Educational & Community Development Corp. has partnered to renovate the Old Boy Scout Hut located in the Lithonia Park. The 2500 square foot "Hut" was initially used as a meeting and activities place for the local Boy Scout Troop but has been abandoned for years and has fallen into disrepair. Although structurally sound, the facility needs a total renovation.

The clean-up phase of the renovation effort began in October and has been completed. Quotes from various contractors for Phase Two and beyond have been submitted and will include upgrades to the electrical, air-conditioning, and plumbing systems. The renovated facility will house The Lithonia Studios, the temporary headquarters of The Downtown Development Authority (LDDA), and can be rented out to various production companies for film and entertainment endeavors.

If you want to get involved, contact Fred Reynolds by email at [reynoldsfred1@gmail.com](mailto:reynoldsfred1@gmail.com) or Council Member Darold Honore at City Hall.



the historic  
**BRUCE STREET  
SCHOOL**  
needs your help!

Please join the upcoming (**Dec. 11**) community engagement session to shape the future of DeKalb's first Black public school building. More information at [arabaalliance.org/brucestreet](http://arabaalliance.org/brucestreet).

The second community engagement session to determine the future of the Bruce Street School Site will take place on Sunday, December 11, from 1-4 pm at the Bruce Street School site (2449 Bruce St.). The event will be set up so that people can come and go as needed within the 1-4pm time. The community engagement session will feature a series of activities to organize community feedback about what shape the Bruce Street School's preservation should take. Learn more at: [arabiaalliance.org/brucestreet](http://arabiaalliance.org/brucestreet).

Pictured below are some of the participants at the first session held in November. On the left is Revonda Cosby, Executive Director of the Arabia Alliance which is coordinating this community effort.



JOY  
to the world

# Grant allows metro Atlanta city to double number of police officers

## 8 full time cops will be hired thanks to \$827K federal grant.



(Reprinted from the November 26, 2021 edition of the Atlanta Journal Constitution)  
Written by Zachary Hansen

Residents of one of metro Atlanta's oldest and smallest cities will see more blue soon: The local police department is effectively doubling in size.

Lithonia was awarded an \$827,258 federal grant, allowing the city's police department to hire another eight full-time cops. Police Chief Nathan E. Pollard said the grant award is a "blessing" and eight officers doubles the manpower of one of metro Atlanta's smallest police departments.

"Without it, we would've continued to struggle," Pollard told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. "... Now is this going to stop all crime? Hell no. But we've noticed the visibility (of officers) is going to help us and the extra interaction with the community is going to help us."

Lithonia is the only city in north Georgia to receive a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Community Oriented Police Services Hiring Program. In total, the program awarded \$139 million to 183 law enforcement agencies across the country.

Located in southeast DeKalb County, Lithonia only spans roughly 600 acres and has fewer than 2,700 residents. The grant award is nearly double the city's annual police department budget — \$442,000.

Pollard said the money is invaluable for a small department. "Just like everybody had coming out of COVID and going through COVID, we had some issues dealing with (employment) numbers. I currently have a shortage of officers as far as patrolling," Pollard said. "This will allow me to increase those numbers when it comes to patrolling the city and putting more feet on the ground, helping me with response times."

He currently has five officers patrol the streets, two cops perform administrative duties and one officer work with the Georgia Crime Information Center. Pollard said the new hires increase the number of patrolling officers to 11, adds a supervisor and allows the department to have an in-house criminal investigation officer for more serious cases, such as aggravated assault and shootings. Lithonia police currently rely on DeKalb County police for such investigations.

Pollard said residents will soon notice more frequent patrols, and the new hires will help improve officer safety, since backup will be more readily available.

The grant awards can only be used for personal costs, and it lasts for three years. Once the funds are depleted, it's up to the city to foot the bill in order to keep its larger department staffed. Pollard said the city will need extra income if that's going to happen.

Lithonia attempted to annex 300 acres via a referendum, but a handful of voters rejected the idea this past election cycle. With only 25 votes cast, the referendum barely failed, but Pollard said the city needs the extra land and residents to bolster the city's budget.

"The city is looking to once again go after annexation," he said. "So in three years time, we would pray that the scenario has shifted to where those officers would become a part of the situation that is not a burden on the budget and that they are just a regular piece of the operation."



## LITHONIA HALLOWEEN 2021



# CITY OFFICIALS AND STAFF

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

DECEMBER 6<sup>th</sup> AND 20<sup>th</sup>

MEETINGS WILL BE HELD  
BY CONFERENCE CALL  
DUE TO THE PANDEMIC

Call 770-482-8136 for  
dial-in information.

City Hall  
Council Chambers  
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## Mayor

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# LITHONIA!

**A City With  
PURPOSE!**