

Tories hand over cash to put more cops on street

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
Staff Writer

York Regional Police Chief Robert Middaugh accepted the latest installment of a provincial funding program geared to community policing Friday.

York North MPP Julia Munro, presented Middaugh with a cheque worth \$608,653 at police headquarters in Newmarket.

The funding was originally announced by the province last spring. Friday's announcement represents the actual cash payment.

It's part of a \$35-million annual commitment by the Harris government to reinforce front-line policing.

In York, \$579,744 went toward the hiring of 77 new officers, all of which will be on the streets by the end of the year, Middaugh said.

Another \$28,909 went to support the region's RIDE program.

"This represents more front-line officers, a better profile in the region and a better quality of life on the region," Middaugh said. "Every time you see a front-line officer, this is



JULIA MUNRO

the program that supports that." "Front line policing is the most important thing for communities," said police services board chairperson Margaret Black during the presentation. "It's what people talk about most — traffic, frauds like credit card fraud, and extra patrols."

The province first introduced the Community Policing Partnerships program in the 1998-99 budget. It promised to match funds for up to 50 per cent of salary-related costs for newly hired officers, with the balance being paid by the municipality.

This year, the province made the program permanent with a funding cap of \$35 million.

Gun threat

A 27-year-old Toronto man was charged following a threat to "blow the head off" a man.

The fight started with a look that led to an argument at a cafe on Steeles Avenue in Vaughan Thursday about 10:30 p.m.

After a few punches were exchanged, the accused left in his sport utility vehicle. He returned about 20 minutes later, challenging the man to go outside.

Police said a man said "I'm going to blow your head off" after a shirt was lifted to reveal what appeared to be a gun.

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