

**City of Ridgeland
Community Affairs**

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Press Release

**For more information, contact
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**Funds Awarded to the Cities of Ridgeland and Madison for Mobile
Communications Equipment**

In February of 2005, the City of Ridgeland's Police Department composed and mailed letters to Thad Cochran, Trent Lott and Chip Pickering requesting \$1,500,000 in funding for a project which will place mobile data terminals in the City of Ridgeland and Madison's vehicles and the necessary hardware and software for the laptops to communicate and interface with existing systems. These terminals will allow officers to be dispatched, run tag and driver's license checks, submit reports, check criminal histories, and disseminate critical information quickly, without leaving the field.

In March of this year, Ridgeland Police Department was advised by the COPS office of the US Department of Justice that they were awarded \$1,480,842 under the 2006 COPS Technology Initiative grant for this project. Ridgeland has started the paperwork process, and right now it looks like they may begin accessing these funds in the Fall of this year.

The mobile data terminals will enhance crime prevention by allowing for a more rapid pace of information exchange between headquarters and field officers as well as between the two cities. Response times are critical in crime prevention, and gaining necessary information as quickly as possible will help officers better protect their communities. Vital data will be readily available to the Ridgeland and Madison Police Officers and for exchange with each other. The new technology also allows officers to spend more time in the field, thus maintaining a greater presence and enhancing community relations.

Ridgeland Police Chief Jimmy Houston says, "It is a pleasure to have the law enforcement relationship we have with our sister city, Madison, and the working relationship I enjoy with Chief Waldrop. This technology gives us an opportunity to work together more than ever, for the protection of our cities."

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