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Schenectady to Search Statewide for New Police Chief

*County Civil Service Commission Approves Request by Mayor and Public Safety
Commissioner to Expand Search for New Chief throughout New York State*

SCHENECTADY – Mayor Brian Stratton today announced that the City of Schenectady has been authorized by the Schenectady County Civil Service Commission to expand the search for its new Chief of Police throughout New York State.

“It is imperative that the City of Schenectady be afforded the widest latitude possible in selecting a new Chief of Police,” Mayor Stratton said. The Schenectady Police Department faces a number of challenges – both immediate and long-term – and it is critical that the selection process identify the widest range of qualified candidates in order to effectively meet those challenges and to best serve and protect the citizens of Schenectady,” the Mayor added.

Mayor Stratton said that a nationwide search was not a practical alternative due to state guidelines governing the selection process for the position of police chief. “The New York State Civil Service Law establishes as a minimum requirement that only individuals who have held a New York state civil service police officer position, or have served as a member of the New York State Police, are qualified to be considered for appointment to positions above the rank of police officer in New York State.

Public Safety Commissioner Wayne Bennett, who Mayor Stratton has directed to lead the search for a new Chief of Police, said, “The Civil Service Commission has accepted the Mayor’s and my request to extend our search statewide, and thus will enable us to conduct an extensive review of the most qualified candidates to serve as chief. Schenectady’s needs in the Police Department are considerable, but they are not insurmountable. I am confident that this search will enable me to provide Mayor Stratton with a suitable list of qualified candidates to fill the position.”

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Commissioner Bennett said two Civil Service examinations will be scheduled simultaneously in March 2008. A "Promotional" examination will be offered to the three existing Assistant Chiefs in the Schenectady Police Department consistent with Civil Service rules. An "Open Competitive" examination will also be scheduled for outside candidates expressing interest from throughout the state.

Commissioner Bennett said that he is working with the County Civil Service Commissioner to prepare a job announcement for dissemination throughout the state in advance of the examination to be held in March.