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Easthampton police target frugal mode of transportation

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EASTHAMPTON - The Police Department has police cruisers with four wheels. It has bicycles that patrol on two wheels.

Now, the department is hoping to add a three-wheeled, energy-efficient mode of transportation, Police Chief Bruce W. McMahon said.

The Department is hoping to get a state Community Policing grant from the state Executive Office of Public Safety to purchase the \$9,000 T3 Motion Inc., a Segway-type vehicle that is ideal for patrolling downtown and saving on gasoline costs, McMahon said.

Last weekend, the Department tried out the T3 vehicle which runs on three wheels, including two back wheels like the Segway and a third, smaller wheel up front, McMahon said.

"It goes at speeds up to 25 mph. It's got lights and a siren, and it runs on two batteries which cost 8 to 25 cents a day to run," McMahon said.

The goal is to apply for a grant this fall and make the purchase in time for use of the vehicle in the better weather that comes with spring, he said.

"We plan on using it in downtown. It's a good way to conserve fuel and a good way to get an officer out on the street and to come into more contact with the community," the chief said.

The department has nine bicycles and an electric golf cart that is ideal for patrolling on the Manhan Rail Trail. But the T3 is more mobile and smaller, and an officer rides on it standing up, he said.

For example, if one officer spent half a shift on the T3 instead of a cruiser which could use a gallon of gas an hour, a least \$16 would be saved, he said.

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