

# IRVINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

IRVINE POLICE DEPARTMENT • ONE CIVIC CENTER PLAZA  
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David Maggard Jr.  
CHIEF OF POLICE

May 30, 2008

Rob T. Guerette, Ph.D.  
School of Criminal Justice  
Florida International University  
University Park, PCA 366B  
11200 S.W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Miami, Florida 33199

Dear Dr. Guerette:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit an application for the prestigious "2008 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing."

This year, we believe the Irvine Police Department's recently established "Area Traffic Officer" program exemplifies how community oriented policing can be re-defined and shaped to address a very specific and important public safety issue.

Area Traffic Officers work closely with the community at-large to initiate problem-solving strategies with an emphasis on lasting solutions. The Area Traffic Officers focus on important issues such as parking, residential traffic flow, school safety and business/construction zone issues.

If you have any questions regarding the Irvine Police Department's award application, please feel free to contact Daniel Jung, Special Assistant to the Chief of Police at (949) 724-7209 or [djung@ci.irvine.ca.us](mailto:djung@ci.irvine.ca.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David L. Maggard, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style.

David L. Maggard, Jr.  
Chief of Police

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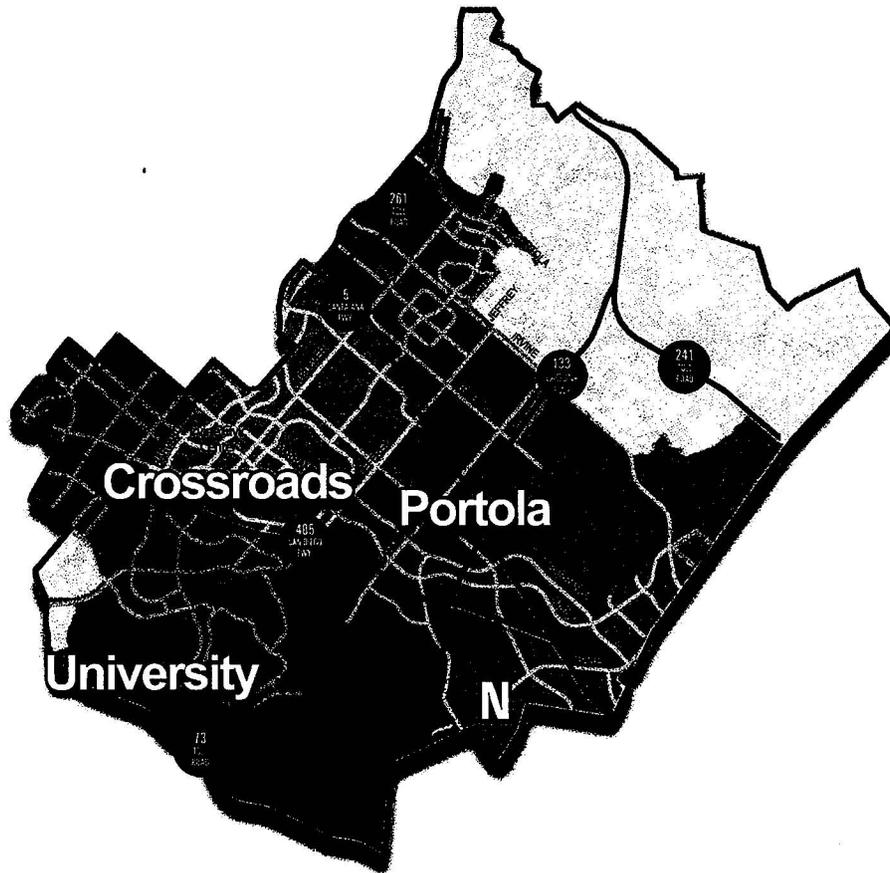


David Maggard Jr.  
CHIEF OF POLICE

## 2008 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing

### Project Summary:

Consistent with data released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the City of Irvine takes great pride in knowing that it continues to have the lowest crime rate per capita for violent crime in all of California for cities over 100,000 residents. Much of the Irvine Police Department's recent success can be attributed to its transition to *Geographic Policing* which occurred in 2003. Through Geographic Policing, the City is divided into three distinctive geographic areas (*Portola, University, and Crossroads*). Each of the areas are led by an Area Commander supported with a contingent of supervisors, patrol officers, investigators and civilian support staff, all of whom are tasked with working toward preventing community safety issues and quickly and effectively resolving issues as they evolve. This tremendous accomplishment reinforces the City's consistent investment in public safety resources and validates the success of community-based policing.



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In response to concerns regarding circulation issues in the City of Irvine, the Irvine Police Department established an “*Area Traffic Officer*” program consistent with the Department’s geographic policing strategy in 2007.

This new and innovative traffic solving program is aimed at implementing problem-solving strategies with an emphasis on long lasting pragmatic solutions. Consistent with dividing the City into three geo-policing areas, each Area Traffic Officer is responsible for investigating and resolving traffic-related issues in his or her assigned area. The Area Traffic Officers

are responsible for soliciting the support of area motor officers, patrol officers, traffic engineers, and planners from the City's Public Works Department and community members to address issues in a comprehensive and logical manner. The Area Traffic Officers are assigned long-term responsibility for a specific area in order to enhance the officers' understanding of the community, while allowing them to focus their attention on particular neighborhood issues. The Area Traffic Officers serve to complement and bolster Irvine's geographic policing strategy by opening a direct line of communication with residents, school administrators and business leaders to develop proactive and sustainable solutions to traffic issues and concerns.

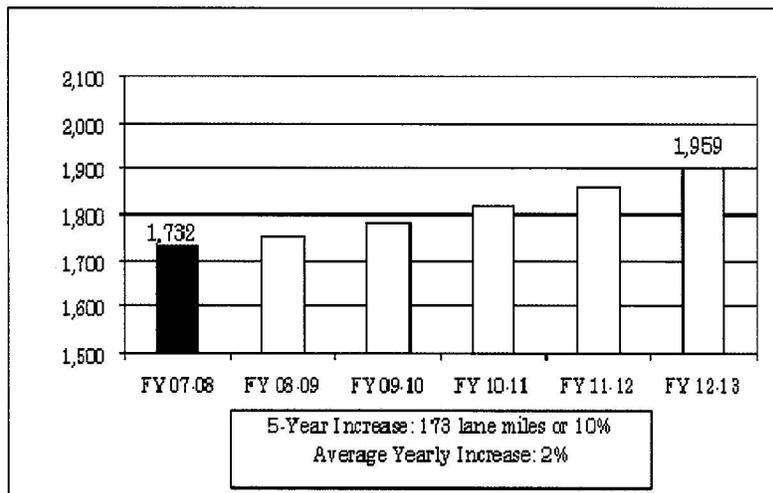
To date, the Area Traffic Officer program has made numerous improvements to safeguard children in schools by addressing dangerous drop off and pick-up areas as well as addressing vehicular speeding issues. Additionally, the Area Traffic Officers have assisted Irvine's robust business community by addressing appropriate signage, speeding, parking issues, construction zone improvements and improving egress and ingress movements.

**Scanning:**

Irvine's strength is its people and the success of today is due to the hard working, community-minded citizens and businesses that have shaped the City and who have chosen Irvine to be their home. Irvine has been ranked by *Money Magazine* as one of the "Hottest Towns" to live in on the West Coast for populations over 100,000. The Orange County Business Journal's 2008 Book of Lists also reports that Orange County's two fastest growing "*private*" businesses are located in Irvine. In addition, two of its top five fastest-growing "*public*" companies are also located in Irvine. However, Irvine's future prosperity and favorable business climate can only flourish if the City of Irvine is able to maintain an efficient and safe circulation system.

The City's most recent resident satisfaction survey placed the City of Irvine within the top five percent of municipalities for residents rating service performance. The subject poll also showed that virtually all residents (99%) indicated they felt safe while shopping in the City of Irvine, 92% felt safe visiting an Irvine park or recreation facility, and 89% felt safe walking alone in their neighborhood after dark. However, the same poll demonstrated that residents frequently mentioned mobility/vehicle circulation as a *top concern and priority*.

In assessing the need for the development of an Area Traffic Officer program it was important to assess and comprehend the scope of the City's transportation network. The City of Irvine has over 315 *signalized intersections* and 1,732 *road miles* which are expected to grow steadily over the next five years as the City continues to reach its build-out population. It should be noted that in the year 2012, the City of Irvine will have 1,959 *roadway miles* and the current population is anticipated to grow from 209,079 residents to 279,000 in calendar year 2035 (Build-out).



Five-Year Street Lane Miles Forecast

Prior to the implementation of Area Traffic Officers, circulation related complaints would be received in myriad ways (through the City Manager's Office, calls to the Watch Commander, complaints in the field, letters, etc.). The Irvine Police Department had an underlying challenge of ensuring complaints were addressed in a timely manner and were given adequate

resources to properly resolve the issues at hand. The City of Irvine is known for providing the community with a high level of service as it maintains high standards for its municipal performance and for the maintenance of the community, including law enforcement.

**Analysis:**

The ease with which people can move about in a “safe” manner is an important attribute of any prosperous and livable community. An effective and workable circulation network, along with a variety of transportation choices, encourages the efficient movement of goods and services, and people. Maximizing traffic flow in Irvine is a top priority for the City of Irvine and its residents.

In 2001, the City of Irvine adopted a comprehensive plan for reducing traffic delays and improving traffic flow by upgrading the City’s hardware and software traffic-control systems. However, upgrading the City’s traffic control systems cannot alone address all of the City’s traffic related issues as continually expressed by citizens, business owners and school administrators.

As noted, Irvine employed its Geographic Policing plan in 2003, after 14 months of careful research and planning. Rather than randomly patrolling the City, officers are now assigned to one of three geographic regions with a Commander and support staff also assigned to each area. These areas were determined through the use of a sophisticated software program that analyzed officer workloads, as well as the type and volume of calls responded to by officers. Other major considerations included the need to maintain natural borders and the recognition of established and proposed residential villages.

In considering the implementation of Area Traffic Officers, the Irvine Police Department took into consideration many factors, including, but not limited to the following:

- ◆ Identification and resolution of traffic problems through a single point of contact.
- ◆ Increased monitoring of areas of concern.
- ◆ Building close knit relationships with citizens, business owners and school administrators.
- ◆ Pro-active, long-term problem solving solutions.
- ◆ Exploration of innovative traffic solving methods to more quickly move vehicles through the City in a safe and efficient manner.

- ◆ Commitment to increasing “reliable” two-way communication which the community expects from its city government.

Much of the credit for Irvine’s great success is attributable to the strength and adaptability of the City’s business community. Currently, almost 14,000 businesses are licensed to operate in the City of Irvine. This includes major world-class companies which have made the City of Irvine their home, establishing leading research & development laboratories and manufacturing plants. Each work day, nearly 168,000 employees enter the City of Irvine, most of whom utilize personal vehicles. The inevitable task of the Area Traffic Officers is to work with the business community at-large in order to address the influx of traffic and circulation issues. Making this task even more challenging is the bisecting of Irvine by two major north/south interstate freeways (I-405 and I-5) and hundreds of passengers who arrive and depart on a daily basis utilizing the Irvine Amtrak Station and Tustin Amtrak Station.

In addition to the traffic impacts associated with the business community, the City of Irvine is served by two major school districts, the Irvine Unified School District and the Tustin Unified School District.

Approximately 28,500 elementary, middle, and high school students live in the City of Irvine. Of this total, 2,800 students attend schools within the

Tustin Unified School District, located within the City of Irvine. The Irvine Unified School District is comprised of a community of learners committed to the highest quality educational experience. The Irvine Unified School District operates 22 elementary schools, five middle schools, four comprehensive high schools and one continuation high school. The Tustin Unified School District provides education to students living in Irvine at one elementary school and one high school.

With literally thousands of K-12 students arriving and departing from schools each day, the Area Traffic Officers are challenged to resolve a host of unique circulation and safety issues.

The City of Irvine is also home to two major universities – Concordia University and the University California, Irvine (UCI), and a Junior College – Irvine Valley Junior College. UCI was founded in 1965 and acts as a major research university. With more than 27,000 students, nearly 2,000 faculty members and 8,900 staff members, UCI is among the fastest-growing campuses in the University of California system. Irvine’s Concordia University was founded in 1976 and maintains approximately 2,300 students while Irvine Valley Junior College has an undergraduate population of nearly 11,000 students. In addition, California State University, Fullerton operates a South Orange County Campus at the

former Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro with a student population of 3,000. In total, the City of Irvine is home to approximately 43,300 college students, many of whom utilize personal vehicles to attend classes – a fact that poses its own set of unique traffic challenges.

The Area Traffic Officers also tend to traffic-related concerns from the City's 209,079 residents. The City of Irvine has approximately 64,500 dwelling units within its incorporated boundary. The Area Traffic Officers work to address myriad traffic flow and parking issues for Irvine's residents.

**Response:**

Recognizing the expectations of residents, members of the business community and school district administrators, the Irvine Police Department assessed the viability of establishing Area Traffic Officers dedicated solely to solving traffic related concerns. Based on the tremendous success of the City's geo-policing strategy, it was decided to initiate the Area Traffic Officer program using the same geographic districts. Additionally, in order for the program to penetrate the community, it was decided that the Area Traffic Officers would be assigned to the program for a period of four years in order to allow officers to more fully build relationships with the community at-large. The four year deployment period also affords Area

Traffic Officers the ability to survey the community, identify circulation issues, develop and implement practical solutions and monitor results.

**Results:**

To date, Area Traffic Officers working in partnership with school administrators and parents have greatly improved the safety of many schools in the community by determining the need for additional crosswalks, employing no parking areas, and improving drop off and pick-up areas. Area Traffic Officers have also determined the need for additional vehicle signage, including speed and directional advisory signs. Collectively, these measures have greatly improved the overall safety for students and achieved optimal traffic flow.

Since the implementation of the Area Traffic Officer program several new school campuses have opened. Area Traffic Officers have worked with school administrators, planners and traffic engineers to help develop “*Traffic Management Plans*” to optimize student “drop off” and “pick up” areas ensuring the safety of students, parents and teachers. Identifying intelligent traffic solutions as part of the planning process ensures a safer environment.

Area Traffic Officers have also addressed the issue of abandoned vehicles which occur from time to time in some areas of the community. In many of these instances, the Area Traffic Officer is able to rely on the vehicle code in order for the City to tow away abandoned vehicles in a timely manner. Once a subject vehicle is removed, the Area Traffic Officer reports back to the party making the original complaint. To date, the reaction from the public has been very positive as these complaints are handled expeditiously.

Area Traffic Officers are also very active with neighborhood homeowner associations and residential communities in dealing with safety issues, particularly complaints regarding speeding vehicles and cut-through traffic.

One strategy in which Area Traffic Officers address residential complaints is through the use of radar speed boards, which are mobile trailers that post the speed limit and inform drivers of the speed at which they are traveling. Each Geographic Area has its own speed trailer which is in constant use and evaluated by the Area Traffic Officer. They generally have a positive impact and, to date, they have been well received and appreciated by the public. They are used hand-in-hand with additional enforcement mechanisms including the issuance of speeding citations.

Area Traffic Officers have also worked with major retail shopping centers and businesses to improve internal circulation issues, speeding vehicles, and egress/ingress movements. Area Traffic Officers often work closely with the City Engineer to address safety issues through enhanced directional signage and increased parking enforcement.

As the City of Irvine continues to grow, residential, commercial and industrial construction is an inevitable part of Irvine's landscape. The traffic impacts associated with construction often leads to commuter delays, frustration, and negative impacts on a City's circulation system. However, Area Traffic Officers work in collaboration with construction superintendents to develop plans to address issues such as the delivery of building supplies, truck routes, roadway closures, detour barriers, roadway excavation and the use of appropriate construction signage.

As a result of the work carried out by the Area Traffic Officers, the three Area Commanders, who in the past dealt with "chronic" traffic issues now have time to deal with more relevant issues and tasks. Area Traffic Officers are now solely responsible for handling traffic related inquires and complaints.

To date, Area Traffic Officers have received numerous accolades for their work with the community, school superintendents, business leaders, developers and the Irvine City Council. In fact, this year Area Traffic Officers have been invited to be "*Principal for the Day*" at area elementary schools.

Lastly, it is important to point out that since the inception of the Area Traffic Program, the City of Irvine realized a six percent reduction in total traffic accidents.

**Agency and Officer Information:**

The Area Traffic Program was initiated by Chief Dave Maggard as a way to enhance communications with the community to pro-actively identify and resolve traffic related concerns and issues.

By means of a competitive selection process, the three Area Traffic Officers were chosen for their strong community relations, problem solving skills and knowledge of circulation issues.

They are responsible for working in partnership with the community, motor officers, traffic collision investigators, patrol officers, parking enforcement officers, as well as partners from other City departments such as

Community Development, Community Services and Public Works. Their overall goal is to develop and implement long-term strategies that aim to permanently address a wide-range of traffic related issues.

Training for the Area Traffic Program has occurred informally as the officers have relied on their vast experience in dealing with members of the community and traffic/circulation issues during their tenure with the Irvine Police Department. The Area Traffic Officers receive no additional pay or employment incentives during their four year deployment. The Area Traffic Officer team consists of Senior Officer Dave Gibbs, and Officers Fanny Hom and Tim Schilling.

Project Contact Person:

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