



CITY OF INDIO
INCORPORATED 1930

February 23, 2004

Margaret Malone, Foreperson
2003-04 Riverside County Grand Jury
PO Box 829
Riverside, CA 92502

RE: Unauthorized Traffic Sign Located at Johnson Elementary School, Indio, CA

Dear Ms. Malone:

Upon receiving your Grand Jury Report concerning the unauthorized sign, I assigned John Corella, Director of Public Works and Brad Ramos, Chief of Police, to respond to each issue you raised in your report.


After reviewing your report and the responses from Mr. Corella and Chief Ramos, I am satisfied we have addressed each concern you outlined. Attached you will find a memo authored by Mr. Corella listing each concern and our response on correcting the individual issues.

Also, enclosed is the updated policy (Traffic Policy 7.1) from Public Works and two updated policies (General Orders 7.20 and 7.21) from the Police Department. These updated policies clearly outline our process, so there is no confusion or misunderstanding as to how the process works.

I want to personally thank you for professional and courteous handling of this matter by the members of the Grand Jury that investigated this complaint.

If you have any further questions regarding this matter, please call me at (760) 342-6580.

Sincerely,


Tom Ramirez
City Manager

TR/mls

CITY OF INDIO • 100 CIVIC CENTER MALL • P.O. DRAWER 1788 • INDIO, CA 92202

DEPARTMENT TELEPHONE NUMBERS, ALL IN 760 AREA CODE

City Clerk 865-5437 • City Manager 342-6580 • Economic Development/Redevelopment 342-6541
Finance 342-6560 • Fire 347-0756 • Human Resources 342-6540 • City Hall Fax 342-6556
Police 347-8522 Fax 347-4317 • Engineering 342-6530 • City Yard 347-1058 • Senior Center 347-5111



MEMORANDUM

PUBLIC WORKS/ ENGINEERING SERVICES

Tom Ramirez, City Manager *TR*

From: John Corella, Director of Public Works/City Engineer *JC 2/12/04*

February 12, 2004

Subject: Grand Jury Report on unauthorized traffic signs in the City of Indio

We have investigated the information submitted by the Riverside County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) on January 13, 2004. There were seven specific items in the Grand Jury investigation that were specifically identified and four recommendations submitted. As a result of the items identified, staff has complied with all of the four recommendations as follows:

Recommendation No. 1: *The City Traffic Engineer should remove or formally approve the unauthorized traffic control markings, signs or signals at Johnson Elementary School in accordance with state law.*

Result for No. 1: The Director of Public Works/City Engineer's designated Traffic Engineer has requested the City of Indio's Public Services Department to remove the unauthorized traffic control signs at the Johnson Elementary School. The City's Traffic Engineer completed the required traffic study and has conferred with the City's Traffic Safety Committee on the matter. As a result, the City's Traffic Engineer has authorized approved traffic control signs to be installed.

Recommendation No. 2: *The City Traffic Engineer must develop procedures and policies regarding the request for the placement or removal of traffic control markings, signs and signals.*

Result for No. 2: The City's Traffic Engineer has completed Traffic Policy 7.1, which outlines and details the process for the placement and/or removal of traffic control markings, signs and signals. A copy of the policy is attached.

Recommendation No. 3: *Procedures and policies for placement or removal of traffic control markings, signs and signals are made available to the general public and law enforcement.*

Result for No. 3: The Traffic Policy 7.1 has been forwarded to the Indio Police Department's Chief of Police for distribution. Traffic Policy 7.1 is available at the Public Works Engineering Department located at 100 Civic Center Mall, Indio, California 92201 and is available to the general public upon request during normal business hours.

Recommendation No. 4: *City of Indio Police Department develop procedures and policies to ensure that all City of Indio Police Officers follow proper procedures for placement of enforceable traffic control signs.*

Result for No. 4: The City of Indio Police Department has developed procedures and policies to ensure that all City of Indio Police Officers follow proper procedures for placement of enforceable traffic control signs. A copy of Indio Police Departments General Orders 7.20 and 7.21 are attached.

CITY OF INDIO, CALIFORNIA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

TRAFFIC POLICY 7.1

Effective Date: Immediately

Subject: Traffic Control Devices

PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose of this General Order is to establish the procedures for placement or removal of traffic control markings, signs and signal.

POLICY

The Indio Public Work Engineering Department fully recognizes its responsibility to improve traffic engineering and safety in the community. The Director of Public Works/City Engineer's designated Traffic Engineer will coordinate the installation or removal traffic device(s) including markings, signs and signals based upon traffic and safety needs. The Traffic Engineer will take the following steps to justify the need to remove or install traffic control device(s):

1. Identify the location of needed traffic improvements;
2. Analyze accident, speed, roadway geometric design and/or traffic volume data;
3. Analyze and conduct traffic signal warrants, stop sign warrants, speed limit sign, and any other traffic device and signs studies;
4. Make recommendations concerning efficient use of traffic control device(s);
5. Follow City ordinances regarding traffic control device(s); and
6. Non-urgent and non-emergency items will be presented to the Traffic Safety Committee for their review and comments. The Traffic Safety Committee meets once a month to review traffic safety concerns. The Traffic Safety Committee will be notified of any emergency changes to traffic control devices that have occurred.
7. The Traffic Engineer will prepare a work order directive to street supervisor to install, modify or remove the traffic control device(s).

The City of Indio Public Services Department installs, modifies and maintains the city's traffic control device(s) under the authority of the Director of Public Works/City Engineer and his/her designated Traffic Engineer. These devices are under the supervision of the Director of Public Works/City Engineer's and his/her designated Traffic Engineer.

A copy of the policy has been sent to the Indio Police Department's Chief of Police.

This policy is also maintained with the City of Indio's Public Works Department located at 100 Civic Center Mall, Indio, California 92201 and is available to the public upon request during normal business hours.

INDIO POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER 7.20

Effective Date: July 30, 2004

Amended:

Index as: Qualifications of Traffic Engineer
Traffic Engineering Activities

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING

PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish the general philosophy of the department's activities in support of traffic engineering.

POLICY

The Indio Police Department fully recognizes its unique opportunity and responsibility to contribute to improving traffic engineering and safety in the community. To this end, the police department will continue to work in concert with the Traffic Engineering Department, Traffic Committee and City Council to devote adequate personnel and other resources to:

1. Collect and compile traffic-related data relevant to identifying specific engineering problems and solutions
2. Conduct special traffic surveys and studies, as appropriate, to investigate potential problems further
3. Analyze accident and enforcement data to discern trends and relationships symptomatic of engineering problems
4. Prepare special reports and make recommendations concerning efficient use of traffic control devices, new or revised laws or ordinances, or other engineering solutions/improvements
5. Participate actively in the community's transportation system management planning
6. The Field Services Commander or his designee shall attend Traffic Committee meetings, and any additional Traffic Engineering Department or city meetings relating to traffic engineering that would impact the police department as required.

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING ACTIVITIES

The purpose of the Indio Police Department, in conjunction with the city Traffic Engineering Department and the city Traffic Committee, is to provide a safe and efficient traffic flow throughout the city's transportation system. This is accomplished by assisting in the development and maintenance of traffic control devices, street design and street markings within the city.

The City of Indio Traffic Engineering Department maintains the city's traffic control system in compliance with the existing federal and state guidelines via the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. This manual is maintained by the Traffic Engineering Department.

The police department provides information concerning needed improvements such as street signs, traffic control devices, pavement markings and general street design to the Traffic Engineer and to the Traffic Committee. The Traffic Engineer conducts a study to supplement the department's recommendations and propose any corrections or improvements which may be needed.

A few of the Traffic Engineer functions can be listed into six general categories. These areas are primarily handled by the Traffic Engineer with input received from the police department.

1. Collection and Compilation of Traffic Data
2. Traffic Surveys and Studies
3. Analysis of Accident and Enforcement Data
4. Reports and Recommendations for Efficient Use of Traffic Control Devices
5. Reports for Engineering Improvements
6. Participation in Local and Regional Transportation System Management Planning

REFERRAL OF COMPLAINTS OR SUGGESTIONS

Complaints and suggestions are routinely received by phone, mail and in person by the police department, Traffic Committee and Traffic Engineering Department.

Complaints or suggestions received by the police department are forwarded by the police department, along with any officer initiated items, to the Traffic Engineering Department.

Officers will be assigned to attempt to isolate the exact location and nature of the request, and when possible go to the area of the complaint or suggestion to check on the validity of the action requested. The officer may add any additional or concurring opinions and forward the memorandum to Traffic Engineering.

The Traffic Engineering Department shall receive the service request from citizens and conduct any necessary study of the situation. The police department may assist in conducting surveys or studies.

The study findings, if done by the police department, and the department findings will be forwarded to Traffic Engineering via the individual Division Commander or Community Policing Supervisor. Any member of the police department may be assigned the responsibility for obtaining any needed information on an assigned study.

Upon completion of the study of the complaint or suggestion by the Traffic Engineer, it may be forwarded to the Traffic Committee for action. The Traffic Engineer will notify a citizen or concerned party of the findings and as to what action(s) may or may not be taken in response to the request.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING GROUPS

The Traffic Engineering Department participates and is a member of the following local and regional planning groups:

1. American Public Works Association
2. Institute of Transportation Engineers
3. City Traffic Engineers Associations
4. Orange County Traffic Engineers Council
5. American Planning Association

QUALIFICATIONS OF TRAFFIC ENGINEER

Qualified engineers are needed to exercise the engineering judgment inherent in the selection of traffic control devices as well as to locate and design the roads and streets which the devices complement. With the needs for safe and efficient transportation systems within the City of Indio in mind, a position description was developed by the City of Indio for Traffic Engineer.

The Traffic Engineer job description, qualifications and example of duties can be obtained from the City of Indio Personnel Department. This job description will explain in detail the duties and responsibilities of the Traffic Engineer.

INDIO POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER 7.21

Effective Date: July 30, 2004

Amended:

Index as: Accident Data Reported to Traffic Engineer
Studies of High Accident Locations

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING PROGRAMS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to develop policy and procedures for the study and collection of high accident locations and the accident data which is given to the Traffic Engineering Department.

STUDIES OF HIGH ACCIDENT LOCATIONS

The Field Service Commander, the Records Division, Crime Analysis Unit and the motor officers shall identify high accident locations by use of accident reports and statistical data from accident reports.

The Crime Analysis Unit and motor officers will analyze the data from high accident areas to determine if the cause may be enforcement or engineering design related. Input and expert analysis may be handled by a Traffic Engineer.

Should the study indicate that the high accident rate is violation induced, a priority patrol effort and assignment will be initiated to address specific accident causing violations in the area targeted for priority patrol.

Should the study indicate an engineering problem as the reason for the increase in the accident rate, the police findings and recommendations shall be forwarded to the Traffic Engineering Department for their review and action.

The Traffic Engineer, upon request from the police or citizens, will conduct a study of the high accident location for any possible engineering improvements. The Traffic Engineer receives data on traffic collisions in Indio from the Statewide Integrated Traffic Reporting System and from the police department. The Traffic Engineer conducts independent studies of high accident locations as identified from the accident data received and makes recommendations and improvements based on the study.

The studies and improvement implementations as performed by the Traffic Engineer are conducted within the rules and procedures as developed by the Traffic Engineering Department, city Traffic Committee and City Council. These studies are in compliance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

ACCIDENT DATA REPORTED TO TRAFFIC ENGINEER

The Records Section will forward copies of all traffic collision reports to the Traffic Engineering Department.

The California Statewide Integrated Traffic Reporting System forwards to the police department, via the California Highway Patrol, a statistical summary of accident data and locations. A copy is also sent to the Traffic Engineering Department.

The police department and the Traffic Engineer utilize the available accident data to identify high accident locations. Appropriate studies and action are taken by both departments based on identified high accident or hazardous locations.