

## **History of the Toledo Police Car**

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The POLICE CAR. The mystical police car. To Children, the police car is a cool car with flashing lights and sirens. To the teenager and the young adult, the police car is the un-cool car with lightning speed that is out to destroy fun. To the middle aged adult, the police car is the one car that races through the neighborhood but it is the one car that can never be found when one is needed. To the senior citizen, the police car is the car that drives slowly by the house and provides a sense of security. To the police officer, it is an office. It at times is a cool fast office and at other times it's a slow secure office that makes funny noises.

Toledo, Ohio and motor vehicles have been intertwined since the creation of the automobile. On September 21st, 1893, the Duryea brothers of Springfield, Massachusetts operated the first gas engine vehicle in the United States. Within a few years, fledgling car companies sprang up in virtually every city in the country. Some of the most famous car companies originated in Toledo. Companies with names like Pope, Toledo-steam, Willy's Overland, Kaiser, and Jeep played a major role in shaping Toledo. As the car shaped Toledo, it also shaped the Toledo Police Division....

### **1907-1920: Motorcycles, Patrol Wagons, & Service Cars**

In 1907, the Toledo Police Division made its first purchase of a motor vehicle to address the needs of a growing city. Toledo purchased six Indian Motorcycles to evaluate their usefulness. They were little more than motorized bicycles but the automobiles of 1907 were expensive play-things of the wealthy. The Ford Motor Company was but four years old. The Model T and mass production were still years away. Toledo like most cities, started small. In fact no other city in America appears to have purchased motorcycles or cars before 1907. Toledo and a few other cities were very progressive. In fact, the Toledo Police Division, soon developed a reputation as a progressive department in the early part of the twentieth century.

Within just a few years, the motor vehicle began to transform the Toledo Police Division. In 1911, the Motorcycle Squad was greatly expanded with the addition of more bikes and the assignment of twenty full time officers. Several new substations (about the size of a one car garage) were built throughout the city to base pairs of motorcycles. 1914 brought the most needed addition to the department at the time. A 1914 Peerless Patrol Wagon was purchased from the Peerless Motor Car Company of Cleveland. Almost immediately, two more wagons made by Willy's Overland of Toledo were added so that each of the three Precinct Stations had a wagon. These wagons were called "patrol wagons" but were dispatched by phone out of the stations and never really patrolled at all. About the same time, it appears that the department added a service car to each station to be used as needed. By 1920, the wagons were replaced by 7 Reo Speed-wagons. This permitted the deployment of the wagons at a total of six stations (3 precinct, 3 substations) while maintaining a single wagon in reserve.

### **1920-1929: Speed Cars & Scout Cars**

In 1921, the Toledo Police Division did something very progressive and innovative for the time. Toledo purchased six 1921 Marmon Model 34b Speedster's. Marmon was the manufacturer of Indianapolis 500 racecars. The Model 34 was very advanced and was made of light weight aluminum instead of heavy wood & steel of the day. It featured an overhead valve V-8 motor about thirty years before the major car companies developed similar technologies. The Marmon was capable of traveling at 82mph in a time when the common Ford Model T struggled to reach 45mph. The Speed cars, as they became known, were based out of the six stations with the wagons. To combat the new organized crime outfits, the cars were each manned by a uniform driver and three plain clothes officers armed with rifles & shotguns (later machine-guns). The speed cars were dispatched from the stations and all six could converge on any hotspot in reportedly two minutes time. This degree of response could out-gun and intimidate any would be law breaker. The Speed car concept continued in use until around 1937. One way receiving police radios were added in 1930. The Marmon's wore out and were replaced with Cadillac's and Willy's Knight touring cars as the decade progressed. In an era when police departments were struggling to afford the purchase of motor vehicles, Toledo was spending thousands of dollars to protect its citizens.

Progressive thinking didn't stop with the Speed Cars. In 1926, the department implemented the Scout Car concept. Scout Cars were the forerunner of patrol cars and assigned to approximately 12 districts. The Toledo Police Division purchased 20 1926 Willy's Whippet Sedans to equip the Scout Cars and the department. The Whippet was well ahead of its time. It was a compact, four cylinder, car that was designed to be an in-expensive alternative to the large cars of the day. As the original Whippets wore out, they were replaced in 1928, 1929, & 1930 with a total of 33 additional Whippets. The Whippet was a cheap alternative to the expensive speed cars. The compact Whippet concept never really caught on in America. In fact, compact patrol cars would not be found again on the streets of Toledo until almost 1980.

### **1930-1939: The foundations of the future**

The 1930's are remembered as the decade of the depression. While the depression hit Toledo hard, the members of the Toledo Police Department remained focused on the job at hand and how to best meet the needs of the future. During the 1930's, TPD started acquiring large numbers of value priced automobiles from the chief suppliers of police vehicles; Ford, Chevy, Plymouth. Ford, Chevy, and Plymouth would remain the main suppliers of American police cars for the next sixty years. In Toledo, speed cars were scaled back and eliminated as the police radio came on line. A modern police district system was established in 1937.

In 1933, the city purchased 13 Ford sedans with V-8 motors and 12 Chevy Sedans six cylinder motors. The twelve Ford's and one Chevy were assigned to scout car service. In 1932 Ford had introduced the first V-8 motor in a low priced car. Police departments now had an affordable low priced performance car. As a result, Ford became the dominant police car in the United States through 1968.

In 1936, Toledo replaced the aging cars with 40 Fords. All police cars to this time had been black but one car of the '36 purchase was painted white and assigned to Accident Investigation.

In 1937, Toledo purchased 5 Ford Sedan Delivery trucks to replace a number of large wagons purchased in the later twenties and early thirties. The new smaller Fords were equipped with radios and actually assigned to districts. These 5 "Patrols" joined 12 "Scouts" and formed the basic district system that remained until modified in 1964.

In 1938 & 1939, the Fords remaining in service were augmented by 5 new 1938 GMC patrol wagons and 10 new 1939 Plymouths in Scout service.

### **1940-1949: The struggle to Replace Worn Equipment**

World War II came to America in 1941. Production of domestic automobiles ceased for five years. Budgets remained tight. Just as in the 1930's, The Toledo Police Department struggled throughout the decade to field adequate vehicles for the department.

In 1940, Toledo purchased 6 Hudson Pacemaker automobiles to replace some of the aging cars not replaced in 1939.

Just before the war, In 1941, the city purchased 20 Ford Deluxe automobiles and two Ford Sedan Delivery Patrol Wagons. These vehicles would be the last vehicles purchased in quantity for over five years.

After the war, it appears that a small number of 1946 Ford sedans were purchased. New cars were in demand. Cost, availability, and a small police budget were all factors in play immediately following the war.

In 1946, The Willy's Overland Corporation of Toledo loaned the city of Toledo four Jeeps to evaluate their potential as police vehicles

By 1947, the Citizens of Toledo had passed a 1% income tax. This tax permitted the department to replace its fleet of aging 1930's motorcycles with 21 new ones. At the same time, 26 new 1947 Ford Coupes and a few 1948 Ford Patrol Wagons were purchased.

### **1950-1959: Police Packages, Rotating Flashing Lights, and the Ford**

In 1950, Ford released its first true police package. This was the first grouping of commonly ordered items that would eventually set a police car apart from a retail car. Police packages usually include items such as oil coolers, transmission coolers, improved suspension components, improved brakes, and performance tires. These items are designed to improve the endurance of a police car but not the speed. Larger or more powerful motors historically have been available to improve performance. By the end of the decade, every major car company had a police package but Ford continued to dominate the market. It had been the first company to market a low priced V-8 powered vehicle to police departments in beginning in 1932 and was the first to offer a police package. Toledo

had started using the Ford in 1933. After trying Chevy's, Plymouth's, and Hudson's; the department returned to the Ford in 1941 and remained loyal to Ford with few exceptions until 1970. The Ford of 1952 may have appeared modern but it still had the same basic motor that the 1932 Ford possessed. The acceleration rate of either the Ford or the Chevy in the early fifties was about the same and would be considered extremely slow by standards in 2011. Both reached sixty miles per hour in about 20 seconds.

In 1948, the Federal corporation began marketing an overhead rotating light for emergency vehicles. By 1950, Toledo began installing the rotating lights on the roofs of police cars & wagons. A mechanical siren had been operational in police cars for a number of years.

Beginning in 1950, Toledo began to purchase police vehicles annually and rotate out the older high mileage cars after a few years to reduce maintenance costs. Toledo purchased Ford police vehicles in 1950, 1951, and 1952 before again looking at other makes. In 1952, Toledo purchased a few Chevys to augment the Ford. In 1953 & 1954, Toledo attempted to be loyal to local industry. In 1953, 10 Willy's Aero vehicles were purchased from the corporation that brought the Jeep to Toledo. In 1954, Toledo purchased the Kaiser Manhattan. Kaiser was an industrialist who made a name for himself during the war and decided to enter the car business following the war. The Kaiser car company was formed in Toledo.

It is unknown, how well received the various cars were by officers, but it was clear that Toledo returned to Ford in 1955, 1956, 1957, and 1959. This may have been in part because Ford began marketing an overhead head valve V-8 motor in 1954. The overhead valve motor swept the industry. It became (with many variations & improvements) the type of motor that powered virtually every American car until the 1990's. The overhead valve motor began a march to performance by the major car companies that directly benefitted law enforcement.

In 1953, the Toledo police department eliminated the dangerous motorcycle from its inventory. Many officers had been killed and injured on motorcycles. Six Three wheeled motorcycles were purchased for use in downtown traffic duties.

By June 1958, the Toledo police motor vehicle inventory consisted of:

15	Precinct Sedans
6	Precinct Wagons
21	Traffic Sedans
3	Traffic Station Wagons
11	Spare Sedans
4	Spare Wagons
45	Unmarked cars (including 6 for Mayor & staff)
6	Three Wheel motorcycles
3	Tow Trucks
1	34 Passenger bus
<u>1</u>	Civil Defense Wagon

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### **1960-1969: Black & White Cars, Performance, & more Fords**

Performance and muscle cars is what many people remember of the automotive scene in the sixties. As the sixties began, Toledo like most departments continued to field Ford Police Cars. The Ford was purchased in 1960, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, and 1968. 1967 appears to be the only year that Toledo purchased anything other than Ford police cars during the decade. The department purchased 1967 Plymouth Fury's. This may not be surprising as Chrysler's Dodge and Plymouth Divisions became major players in the muscle car era that began around 1964 and ended after 1972. Performance reached a peak in the 1960's. The 1969 Dodge Polara police car was the fastest police car of the era and would hold the title of fastest police car until the next century. It could be purchased with a big block V-8 (440 cu.) that propelled the huge car to 60mph in about 6.5 seconds. If the officer had the nerve he could watch the speedometer climb to 147mph. By 1969, Dodge's sister company Plymouth became the top sales leader for American police cars.

While most of Toledo's patrol cars were equipped with smaller lower performing motors, the traffic section began to receive small quantities of performance cars. Photos from the era display a traffic section 1965 Ford with a dual exhaust while other Toledo police cars had single exhaust. The dual exhaust would indicate that this vehicle had a big block high performance motor. Officers who served during the time reported that the best car of the era was the 1968 Ford with the 390 cubic inch engine. Officers also indicate that the traffic section had four white 1968 Fords with 428 cubic inch motors.

The sixties were a time of change throughout the country. The Toledo Police Department may not have embraced all of this change but it did change in its own way. As the decade began, TPD changed its badges, its uniforms, and its hats. In 1963, the cars began to change. Prior to that date, every police car had been black with the exception of the accident car which had been white with its own distinct markings. The new 1963 Ford police cars were painted black with white doors & roofs for greater visibility. A black block house city seal was painted on the white door for the first time. In 1968, the black & white police cars began to display the blue & gold uniform patch on the door. The return of the all white car to the traffic section occurred with the four 1968 Fords that were purchased.

In 1964, the police district system was redesigned with 21 patrol (wagons) & scout (cars) districts. The districts were numbered 1 to 21. This same system would remain in effect until 1985.

Wagons all began to change during the 1960's. As the decade began, officers were still driving modern versions of the sedan delivery/panel truck that first went into service in 1937. The wagons carried stretchers and could double as ambulances. A smaller Ford Econoline Van was fielded around 1965 before the department transitioned to wagons that used a removable box prisoner section. The box was bolted to a pick-up truck frame. The prisoner box section could be removed year after year and placed on a new chassis. Officers referred to these wagons as the "ice cream wagon" as they resembled an ice cream truck of the era. The concept of a removable box was great in theory but it didn't work out well according to officers who served. The stress of street duty tended to break the four bolts holding the box to the frame and created unsafe conditions.

In 1968 & 1969 Jeepster Commando's were added to the fleet.

### **1970-1979: White Patrol Cars, Vans , Light Bars, & Chrysler**

It was during the seventies that the Toledo Police Division began to resemble the department as we know it Today in 2011. Light Blue shirts were introduced. Officers transitioned from foot beats to vehicle patrol. Portable radios were now in wide spread use. The police car had become central to the deployment of police services as the city grew to over 88 square miles. The police vehicle fleet grew greatly during the decade to meet the new demands of a modern department.

In 1970, the Toledo police began a full scale transition to all white patrol cars. The all white car was evaluated when a hand full of 1968 Ford Customs were purchased with the white scheme rather than the traditional black & white. A large quantity of 1970 Plymouth Fury's were purchased in all white. This not only reflected a change in color but the beginning of a shift away from the Ford police car that had dominated TPD and the majority of America's police departments since 1932.

1972 brought some improvement and a return to tradition. The Ford Custom police car returned for a limited engagement. Toledo would not operate another Ford police car until 1989. Shields were installed in these vehicles for the protection of officers.

Television had quite an impact on departments around the country in the seventies. A television show known as "Adam 12" appeared on television beginning in 1968 and ran until 1975. The show followed two fictional LAPD officers on patrol. The show's creator Jack Webb demanded realism and went as far as to acquire actual police cars for the show. At the time, the Los Angeles Police were required by California Law to have fixed solid (non rotating) lights on police cars. Toledo, like departments across the country, quickly added non rotating flashing lights mounted adjacent to the rotating center red light on the '72 Ford. The lights resembled mouse ears or lolly-pop's. Unmarked Plymouth Satellites and AMC Matadors were purchased for use by the department and were similar to vehicles used on "Adam 12".

1973 introduced a light bar to replace the roof mounted rotating & flashing lights. The bar featured a center siren set between two large rotating red lights. The lights were latter up-dated when the passenger side red light was replaced with a blue rotating light.

The Chrysler corporation was the major supplier of police vehicles to Toledo during the seventies. Following the return to Ford in '72, TPD purchased 1973 Dodge Polara's and Plymouth Gran-Fury's in '74 and '75. The '77 Dodge Royal Monaco (twin of the Gran Fury) went into service late in 1976. Plymouth Fury's (mid-size) were purchased in 1977 and 1978. Late in 1979, the compact Plymouth Volare's were placed in service.

Chrysler also supplied Toledo with wagons throughout the decade. Following the shooting death of Officer William Miscannon in a patrol wagon in 1970, the department transitioned to Dodge Vans for use as patrol wagons. Large windows were placed behind the driver and passenger door to increase visibility for the officers. The passenger seat was moved several feet to the rear to ensure that at least one officer would survive an armed attack in the wagon. A bulkhead was placed between the driver compartment and the prisoner area.

After the blizzard of 1978, TPD purchased several four wheel drive Jeeps that resembled those used by the postal service at the time.

Officers reported that none of the seventies vehicles were great performers. Pollution controls & lower compression motors were forced on the auto industry in 1972 and resulted in lower performance as time marched on.

### **1980-1989: Modern Light-bars, Smaller Cars & Poor Performance**

The 1980's are remembered by police officers as the decade when police car performance hit the bottom and smaller patrol cars became common. Toledo had begun transitioning to slightly smaller cars in 1977. The long wheel base Plymouth Gran Fury and Dodge Royal Monaco ceased production by 1978. Toledo opted for the slightly smaller Plymouth Fury. The midsize Fury was almost as large as a full size car. It remained in production through 1978. Just before 1980, Toledo purchased the 1979 Plymouth Volare for patrol use. The Volare was much smaller and could be found on the streets of Toledo in the early eighties.

The midsize police car concept continued with the purchase of the Chevy Malibu from 1981 until 1983. The Malibu was a very popular car among officers. The '81 version featured a 350 cubic inch motor with a four barrel carburetor while the '82 and '83 had a 305 cu. in. motor. Both gave similar performance and were considered to be quick for the time period. The cars lacked high end speed but were found to be perfect according to officers for city duties. The later Malibu's also featured a new modern red & blue modular light bar. This light bar was more aerodynamic than some tested in the seventies and incorporated both take-down lights and alley lights.

When the Malibu ceased production after 1983, Toledo went searching for a new patrol car. The 1984 Plymouth Gran Fury was selected for '84. It was very similar to the Volare but had pitiful performance. The city purchased four compact front wheel drive cars for evaluation late in 1984. Two Plymouth and/or Dodge "K cars" as well as two Chevy Celebrity patrol cars were placed in service. The K-Cars had the worst performance of any modern police car and was disliked by officers. The Celebrity fared only slightly better.

Starting in 1985, TPD returned to Chevy and purchased the full size 1985 Impala. This was followed by the identical 1987 Caprice. The Caprice actually entered service late in '86. Both were well liked and performed about as well if not better than the loved Malibu.

The city returned to the midsize sedan late in '87 as the 1988 Plymouth Gran Fury was again purchased. It was followed by the 1989 Plymouth Gran Fury late in 1988. These Fury's were not any better than the 1984 version. Officers were known to park a new Gran Fury and drive an old Chevy when possible. The Plymouth accelerated to sixty mph in nearly 14 seconds. The Chevy could arrive at sixty mph in about 10 seconds.

Toledo finally returned to Ford late in 1989 with the purchase of the 1989 Ford Crown Victoria. The Ford performed better than the Plymouth but not as well as a Chevy.

As fewer cars were purchased in the late eighties & early nineties, a full annual replacement of primary patrol vehicles was not permitted for several years. This forced the '89 Fords and '89 Plymouth's to operate 24 hours a day for several years. These cars spent much time in the shop and were commonly found to be in bad shape by patrol officers.

In 1985, the department redesigned the patrol districts and the unit numbers in a system known as the "flexi-beat". The units were now designated with an alpha numeric number such as 2-B-30 (or verbally "two baker thirty"). The first number was the sector assignment. The letter indicated type of unit and roll call assignment. The last numbers indicated districts assigned to that unit. This new system allowed districts to be altered daily. The system was phased out in 1989.

### **1990 - 1999: Stripes, Up-grades, Fleet Replacement, & the return of Performance**

During the eighties, it became clear that the Chevy was the preferred vehicle of choice by Toledo officers. Toledo returned to the Chevy in first half of the nineties. Chevy Caprice police cars were selected in 1991, 1992, and 1994. In '91, the Caprice had been restyled and the car received antilock brakes. Standard on the vehicle was fuel injection. These two items were a first for Toledo. Many improvements were made with the 1992 model and performance started to return to the police vehicle market. But the big news in police vehicles came in 1994 when the Caprice was restyled again and upgraded. The new Caprice received the famed LT-1 engine that had been designed for the Corvette. The LT-1 was the same size as the previous motor (350 cu. in.) but had 55 more horsepower. The Caprice could accelerate to sixty mph in 7.5 seconds and had a top speed of 141 mph. This speed combined with excellent handling and braking created the best police car to date according to critics across the nation. The Caprice police car would be turned into the Civilian Chevy Impala SS which is a highly prized collector car to this day. The Caprice had one weakness. The newly revised automatic transmission made in Toledo had teething problems. Many transmissions failed and were returned to the factory to locate the problems.

Toledo purchased but 20 of the famed cars after council and Mayor Finkebiner argued publically about who had the power to purchase police cars. Finkebiner wanted no cars ordered but the media had focused attention on the deteriorating condition of Toledo's patrol cars caused by years of limited purchases. Council passed a resolution and ordered 40 cars. The mayor refused to pay the bill. More ordinances were passed and the standoff continued until the closing days of 1993 when twenty were purchased. Dave White Chevy was stuck holding twenty unpaid cars.

Gerald Galvin came to Town in 1995 and became the Chief of Police. Galvin noted the poor condition of Toledo's feet. In order to fulfill his Community Policing plan, Galvin began purchasing large numbers of police vehicles to replace the worn out cars. Much of the fleet had been on the road since the late eighties. The Galvin administration turned away from the hot Chevy and purchased large quantities of the Ford Crown Victoria in 1995, 1996, and 1997 ('96 models). The Ford handled better than the Chevy but was slower. The Crown Victoria of era reached sixty in about 9.5 seconds and topped out at about 130mph. This was better than the Toledo police cars of the seventies and eighties but not the best of the nineties. Other strengths of the Ford were traction control and four wheel disc brakes.

Mike Navarre became Chief in 1998 and began limiting the purchases of new cars due to budget constrictions. Only ten Ford Crown Victoria's were purchased in 1998 and none in 1999. The '98 Crown Victoria was restyled and renamed Police Interceptor. The motor was tweaked and the brakes greatly improved to address issues of overheating (and high speed failure).

Many improvements and up-grades occurred to the Toledo police fleet in the 1990's. The all white car was replaced with a striking blue striped version beginning in 1992. Shields returned in 1995. The shield had been taken out of patrol cars in the seventies when the patrol car size became too small for the existing shields. Push bars were added beginning in 1995. The siren was moved to the front of the car in 1995. The light bars were replaced with progressively new models (of similar design) starting in 1991 and continuing throughout the decade. New shotgun racks appeared in 1995. Cup holders and AM/FM radios became standard on patrol cars during the decade.

In 1989, The Toledo Police Department adapted a new district and unit organization to function with the new computer aided dispatch system. The units were now designated with a three digit number (like 318). The first number indicated sector assignment while the middle number indicated the district assignment and the last number indicated roll call assignment. This system remained in effect until 2010.

### **2000-2009: The decade of Decline**

The first decade of the new century would be correctly identified as a decade of decline. The department began a steady decline in manpower and equipment. New police vehicles that had once been an annual necessity became a rare occasion. Only 23 vehicles had been purchased in 1997 and only 10 in 1998. No cars were purchased by Chief Navarre in 1999. The primary patrol fleet had not been rotated for nearly four years as the new century kicked off.

Historically, the department required at least 40 new cars per year to rotate the primary patrol vehicles that ran & still run 24 hours per day. Police cars averaged then as today 52,000 miles or more in Toledo. A car run 24 hours a day every day would begin to wear out at 100,000 miles. Maintenance costs would increase greatly when the car logged over 100,000 miles.

Another year passed without complete rotation when only 14 Ford Police Interceptors & 5 Chevy Impala's (for evaluation purposes) were purchased in 2000. 2001 was the first year since 1996 that the fleet had any real replacement. 34 Ford Police Interceptors and 5 more Chevy Impala's (for further evaluation) were purchased in 2001. Again no cars were purchased in 2002 and only 26 Ford Police Interceptors in 2003. No new cars were fielded until 2006 when 29 new Ford Police Interceptors were purchased. By 2007, the fleet was in very poor shape. In fact the police fleet was in the worst shape of the department's history. Vehicles that were 13 years old were still on patrol. Many cars had mileage over 200,000. The cost of repair had skyrocketed. The media noted the poor condition and the large maintenance costs. Much negative attention was focused on the department, Chief Navarre, and the city administration.

The department remained loyal to the Ford through much of the decade. Toledo had no choice, Chrysler and Chevy had departed the police car market by the mid nineties. Dodge attempted to push its front drive Intrepid into police service but found few takers. Chevy finally produced a police car again in 2000 but it was a front wheel drive Impala. Toledo purchased a few Impalas in 2000 & 2001 for evaluation but most officers didn't think much of the down-sized patroller. The Ford was much improved in 2003. Suspension, brake, and motor upgrades improved the car greatly. The Ford could now accelerate to sixty miles per hour in the low eight second range. It was surprise that the Ford was chosen when the department finally purchased new vehicles in 2003 & 2006.

By 2008, the department needed some type of new vehicle. The city opted to lease (with the option to buy for \$1.00 each) Dodge Chargers for three years. The Dodge Charger was considered by critics to be an excellent if not the best police car ever when equipped with the 5.7 liter hemi motor. The hemi Charger could accelerate to sixty in about 6.5 seconds and could reach speeds as high as 150mph. Due to rising fuel costs, the city ordered Chargers with the 3.5 liter V-6. The V-6 Charger accelerated to sixty in just under nine seconds and topped out at 135mph. It had a transmission delay that infuriated officers. It was considered to be the worst performing car in the snow in many years. Officers tolerated the Charger because it was new and required little maintenance. It was not considered to be an improvement over the Ford Police Interceptor.

By the summer of 2010, the Chargers had been running around the clock for nearly three years without a replacement in sight. The city offered little relief when three used high mileage 2006 Ford Police Interceptors were acquired from Sylvania, repainted, and put in service. This was not the first time in the decade that Toledo had taken such a desperate act to field cars. Just a couple years before in 2005, the department put two used cars in marked service. Both were 2003 Ford Crown Victoria's but one (219) was not even equipped with a police package. It had no suspension upgrades to allow it operate in the environment necessary of police vehicles. In 2006, seven used Chevy Impala's were acquired from Sylvania to provide the Directed Patrol and Gang Units with unmarked police package cars. Throughout the decade, confiscated civilian vehicles were placed in service for unmarked cars as the unmarked fleet was in worse shape than the marked fleet. The majority of the unmarked cars dated to 1996.

The decade of 2000's brought new technology to patrol vehicles. In 2001, Video Camera were installed in the cars. The camera's were improved in 2006 and 2008. Mobile data terminals were added beginning in 2003. New low profile LED light-bars became standard on Toledo patrol vehicles starting in 2003. The stripe on the side of the car was changed and improved in 2008.

Wagons purchased in the decade also received improvements. A prisoner box was inserted to Ford Vans beginning in 2004. This lockable portable cell required that no officer had to sit in the back with a prisoner. The passenger seat was moved back forward beginning with the 2004 wagons. The addition of improved side view mirrors no longer necessitated an officer setting back to observe anyone approaching.

A dedicated Watch Commander vehicle made its return in 2000. Three Jeep Cherokees were purchased and assigned to the Watch Commander of each station.

### **2010 - Present: What's Next**

The new decade started off with the same complaint. The police fleet was still in extremely poor shape. No new cars were purchased in 2009 or 2010. The same 40 Chargers were racking up the miles without replacement. Officers were still driving sixteen year old patrol cars! The bodies of many cars looked terrible. Dents, scrapes, cracked bumpers, and large areas of peeling paint could be observed on many cars. The mechanical condition of the majority of the fleet was indeed low. The detective's unmarked vehicles were literally rusting away. At the same time manpower had dropped to levels not seen since the early sixties. As if that was not enough, then came the lay-off of 75 officers. Morale was at the lowest ever. The deplorable condition of the patrol officers rolling office only made the situation that much worse. It was an embarrassing time to be in a Toledo police car.

Early in 2011, there appears to be a little hope; a small bright spot. A new academy class hit the street and the city is planning a large class for later in the year. The city purchased 60 new patrol cars, 7 limited marked cars, 35 unmarked cars, and 4 Chevy Tahoe's (2 marked for Watch Commanders) for service in 2011. The city didn't buy the unloved Charger but purchased 60 new Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptors in their last year of production.

Maybe things will get start getting better. Chevy has just introduced a rear wheel drive Caprice police car that accelerates to sixty in about six seconds. Ford has begun marketing the next Police Interceptor. The new Interceptor will be based on the all wheel drive Taurus and can accelerate to sixty in a little over five seconds, stop on a dime, and still average 21 miles per gallon in the city! No police car has ever achieved the kind of performance that is coming.

The end of this story has yet to written.....