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Police to patrol business districts on Segways

Oak Park police officers who patrol the downtown and Lake Street/Oak Park Avenue business districts have new wheels – Segway Personal Transporters.

Officer's Mike Mangaser and Jim Vonesh will share a Segway downtown and Officers Ed Hadac and Andy Alvarez will share one in the Avenue Business District during separate shifts.

All four officers were trained and certified at the Segway dealership in LaGrange where the two transporters were purchased for about \$18,000, using funds from accounts seized in drug cases.

Police say they will evaluate the effectiveness of the two Segway's as patrol vehicles before deciding if additional units should be purchased.

In the meantime, the electric-powered Segways won't be hard to miss – even if they are virtually noiseless. The Oak Park units are clearly marked with police logos, special lights and a siren to alert pedestrians. The helmeted, uniformed officers also ride a clear head above the crowd, a configuration specifically designed for moving among pedestrians and traffic. The Segways have a top speed of 12.5 mph and a range of 24 miles.

For more information call 386.3800 or e-mail police@oak-park.us

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