

**City of Irvine 2015 Program Synopsis**

# **Community Overview**





## City of Irvine

### Program Synopsis: Community Overview

The City of Irvine, one of the nation’s largest master-planned communities, is a culturally diverse and fully integrated city of 242,651 residents encompassing approximately 66 square miles in the heart of Orange County, California. Irvine was ranked best place to live in California on Money Magazine’s 2014 list of *Best Places to Live in America* for cities with 50,000-300,000 population based on strong job opportunities, great schools, low crime, quality health care and options for recreation.

Incorporated in 1971, Irvine has strategically grown into one of the safest cities in the country, promoting environmental stewardship, state-of-the-art transportation programs and systems, an enterprising business environment, stellar educational institutions and a high quality of life. Irvine features more than 16,000 acres of parks, sports fields and dedicated open space, and is home to the Orange County Great Park – America’s first great metropolitan park of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### Community Profile

	<u>Irvine</u>	<u>National</u>
Median Household Income	\$85,615	\$50,740
Median age of residents	34	37
Voter turnout (2008 general election)	68%	57%
College Graduates	66%	28%
Foreign born residents	35%	13%
Residents: non-English language at home	42%	20%
Households having young children	35%	31%

The Irvine City Council is committed to promoting a sustainable and civically-engaged community through the implementation of socially responsible, forward-thinking policies and programs. Special attention is focused on ensuring that Irvine’s high quality of life is not only enjoyed by today’s residents, but is guaranteed for future generations to come.

Priority programs of the City include public safety, environmental sustainability and green building, open space preservation, energy conservation and recycling, multi-modal transportation, voter registration and participation, educational partnerships, infrastructure rehabilitation, affordable housing, a healthy community, geographic policing, and youth, family and senior services.

Irvine’s pursuit of excellence is reflected in the City’s mission to create and maintain a community where people can live, work and play in an environment that is safe, vibrant and aesthetically pleasing. In pursuit of these goals, Irvine has received recognition as one of the smartest, safest and greenest cities in America — fairest representing a thoroughly integrated city.

## **Among the Smartest**

Irvine schools K-12 consistently rank among the finest in the country. Student performance is well above state and national comparisons, with more than 90 percent of high school graduates in Irvine attending college. The Accountability Progress Report (APR), which provides important data about student progress in California schools, ranks IUSD schools among the best in the State.

Newsweek's lineup of "America's Best High Schools" in 2013 placed all of IUSD's comprehensive sites within the top 600. University High School led the way at No. 102, followed by Northwood High at No. 156, Woodbridge High at No. 231 and Irvine High at No. 585. The list is based on a formula that factors in graduation rates, college acceptance rates, advance placement tests and college-entrance exams. The City supplements much-needed academic programs through its Educational Partnership Fund and Challenge Match Grant.

The University of California, Irvine is consistently rated among the nation's best universities. Achievements in the sciences, arts, humanities, medicine, and management have earned top 50 national rankings for more than 40 academic programs. Three UC Irvine researchers have won Nobel Prizes, most recently Irwin A. Rose, in chemistry, in 2004. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks UC Irvine among the top 50 universities nationally, and 14<sup>th</sup> among all public universities.

Job opportunities for these students are a short drive away. Irvine is home to Fortune 500 companies Allergan and Broadcom, and to heavyweight firms such as Blizzard Entertainment and Edwards Lifesciences. Kia Motors America opened its U.S. corporate headquarters in Irvine in 2007; Western Digital, founded in Irvine, moved its corporate headquarters by to the City in September 2010; and Millennial Generation-driven companies are emerging as tomorrow's leaders. The local economy is fueled by more than 21,000 businesses and 200,000 jobs. Two major business centers – the Irvine Business Complex and the Irvine Spectrum – account for about 170,000 jobs and draw industries that include gaming companies, automotive design, broadband, computer hardware and software, biotech and medical devices.

## **Among the Greenest**

The City of Irvine is committed to sustainability, energy conservation and green building, with a long history of environmental stewardship including open space preservation, protecting the environment and conserving natural resources. In 2008, the City Council adopted a 20-year Energy plan to align the City with the goals of California's 2006 Global Warming Solutions Act to reduce carbon emissions and increase the use of renewable energy sources.

Irvine is an award-winning, sustainable community receiving national recognition for its LEED-certified buildings, its distribution of 60,000 CFL energy-saving light bulbs to its residents, its recycling efforts through businesses and schools, and its greenhouse gas emissions inventory and reduction strategies to better plan for more sustainable living.

In April 2007, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger designated Irvine's Bommer Canyon, along with 50,000 acres of Irvine Ranch conservancy land, as a California National Landmark. The designation was the first under a state program that officially recognizes and promotes both public and private stewardship of natural resources for public benefit in the state. Much of that land has been donated through master planner and developer Irvine Company and Chairman Donald Bren. In 2009, Bren was recognized by the *Times* of London "Eco Baron" list as ninth among 100 professionals and philanthropists worldwide for investing in green projects.

In 2009, the Natural Resources Defense Council awarded Irvine multiple "Smarter City" national rankings for Recycling (#4), Standard of Living (#5), Green Building (#6), and Transportation (#7), and ranked Irvine 13<sup>th</sup> overall for environmental stewardship for cities with populations of 100,000 to 250,000.

### **Among the Safest**

As one of the largest 100 cities in America, Irvine has had for ten consecutive years the lowest violent crime rate in the nation based upon FBI statistics for cities of more than 100,000. Sustaining a safe and secure environment is one of the City's top priorities. Through the City Council's leadership, Irvine continually focuses resources on sustaining a safe environment for residents, businesses and visitors. The City's strategies are based on the assumption that prevention is one of the most important and, in the long run, most cost-effective means of sustaining a safe and secure community.

Irvine received a 2009 Excellence in Victim Services Award from the International Association of Chiefs of Police. The award recognized the Family Violence Prevention Focus Group, a collaboration comprised of members of the Irvine Police Department, Community Services Department and other community partners. This group works to reduce the occurrence of family violence, to educate victims about available resources and to increase reporting of these crimes which tend to be underreported. The message to the Irvine community: There are individuals, police officers and agencies that are ready and willing to help victims in need.

The City was awarded the 2010 U.S. Secretary of Defense Employer Support ***Freedom Award***, recognizing the Irvine Police Department for support of City employees in armed forces reserve and National Guard units. The City of Irvine is one of 15 recipients nationwide receiving this honor, the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.

## Among the Fairest

Both ethnically diverse and thoroughly integrated, Irvine has become known as a true international crossroads city. By civically engaging people for all ethnic backgrounds, the City promotes an atmosphere of fairness and goodwill between residents of all cultures. This is reflected in the City Council's makeup, the business environment, and through integrated neighborhoods and schools.

Recognizing the importance of Irvine's diverse citizenry, the City supports a number of multicultural organizations and a wide variety of educational programs and social activities dedicated to promoting understanding, harmony and respect between all people.

The U.S. Census Bureau identifies 39% of Irvine's population as Asian. An indication of Irvine's rich cultural diversity is evident in the ethnic profile of the Irvine Unified School District.

### IUSD Student Ethnic Profile

White	38.0%	Japanese	4.2%
Chinese	12.1%	Other Asian	3.1%
Korean	11.6%	Filipino	2.8%
Hispanic/Latino	8.2%	African American	2.3%
Asian Indian	5.5%	All Others	1.6%
Vietnamese	4.8%		

Through the City-sponsored Irvine Democracy Project to encourage greater civic and voter participation, Irvine is annually increasing its voter registration. Voter turnout for the 2012 presidential election in Irvine was 68%, compared to a 57% turnout nationwide.

Whether it is in the City's commitment to excellence in education, our legacy of environmental stewardship and green building, maintaining a safe and secure community, or celebrating our rich cultural diversity, Irvine is truly one of the smartest, greenest, safest and fairest cities in the nation...a proud American community that reflects to the highest aspirations of all people.

For more information on the City of Irvine and its programs, contact:

Craig Reem  
Director of Public Affairs and Communications  
City of Irvine  
[creem@cityofirvine.org](mailto:creem@cityofirvine.org)  
(949) 724-6077