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SONJA K. BERNDT  
Pasadena, CA

May 16, 2025

Mayor Victor Gordo  
Members of the Pasadena City Council  
Pasadena, CA  
(By Email)  
(By Email [correspondence@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:correspondence@cityofpasadena.net))

Re: City Council Meeting May 19, 2025, Agenda Item #15: The Recommended FY 2026 Police Department Operating Budget

Dear Mayor Gordo and Members of the City Council:

I am a long-time resident of Pasadena and a longtime advocate for the unsheltered residents of our city. This letter is to express my deep concern about the FY 2026 Recommended Police Department Operating Budget. Year after year, the Pasadena Police Department (PPD) receives a grossly disproportionate level of General Fund appropriations as compared to other vital departments in this city. Critical services for our unhoused and especially our unsheltered residents are vastly underfunded because PPD, with its escalating salaries and pension costs, continues to swallow up our General Fund, leaving insufficient crumbs for departments that serve our most vulnerable residents.

The Recommended FY 2026 Operating Budget shows the following appropriations from the General Fund:

- Police Department: \$111,285,954 (91.7% of its total proposed FY2026 appropriations)
- Housing Department: \$2,638,887 (2.4% of its total proposed FY2026 appropriations)

A look back at the adopted FY2022 Operating Budget reveals the huge escalation in General Fund appropriations to PPD over the last four years:

- Police Department: \$84,605,000
- Housing Department: \$1,475,000

While the Housing Department receives grant funding from county, state, and federal governments, city staff members recognize that federal grant funding is currently substantially at risk due to proposed cuts in the federal budget and the policies of the Trump administration. At the City Council meeting May 5, 2025, City Manager Marquez specifically referenced the draconian cuts currently in the proposed federal budget for services for our most vulnerable residents. YET, the proposed FY2026 Housing Department Operating Budget notes 76% of its \$48,814,656 Operating Budget as coming from the federal government! This shows a clear lack of planning and preparation for anticipated challenges.

The January 2024 homeless “point in time” count, noted over 500 unhoused persons, 321 of which had no shelter at all. Year after year our city fails to move the needle in the right direction because it fails to provide any meaningful interim and permanent housing to end homelessness in our city.

The very substantial increases in General Fund appropriations to PPD year after year are unsustainable. Personnel expenses are unsustainable. Pension costs are unsustainable. But cost savings can be achieved by decreasing the number of PPD officers while maintaining public safety in our city. In FY 2021, there were 5,766 PPD calls for service listed as “transient-related.” I once asked former Chief of Police John Perez how many calls for service PPD received from Centennial Place, a city housing site that houses formerly unhoused individuals. He said, “almost none.”

Instead of incurring the huge expense of responding to calls for service related to unhoused individuals, PROVIDE HOUSING FOR THEM. This would decrease PPD salary and pension costs and at the same time alleviate suffering and promote health and wellbeing.

Finally, the idea of a “Homeless Court,” which has been raised at previous Public Safety Committee meetings is not sensible. It would be costly in both staff and court time and money and, more importantly, it would require the “defendant/participant,” who may have simply been sleeping on public property, to go through a court process in order to obtain housing. Instead, simply provide the housing sorely needed by our unsheltered residents without the court process.

In conclusion, the enormous General Fund appropriations for PPD and the huge increases in those appropriations year after year leave other critical departments of our city chronically and severely underfunded. The City Council *as a whole* needs to undertake a serious examination of the proposed FY2026 PPD Operating Budget

to look for ways to decrease PPD's General Fund appropriations. Further, the City Council needs to direct PPD to seriously look for greater grant funding opportunities through its Grant Procurement Unit. I urge the City Council to decrease the amount of General Fund appropriations to PPD for FY2026 and to use those funds to provide housing for our unhoused residents. Thank you.

Sincerely,

/s/

Sonja K. Berndt, Esq. (retired)

## McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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**From:** Victor Caballero <v  
**Sent:** Monday, May 19, 2025 10:49 AM  
**To:** Reyes, David  
**Cc:** Hampton, Tyron; Márquez, Miguel; Avedian, Varoojan; Jones, Justin; Cole, Rick; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Lyon, Jason; PublicComment-AutoResponse; Masuda, Gene; Rivas, Jessica  
**Subject:** State of PWP EV DC Fast Charging in Pasadena May 2025

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Mr. Reyes,

Good morning.

As of this morning the state of PWP DC Fast charging is no better and actually worse.

For instance

Robinson Park, only 2 of 5 DC Fast chargers work. One of the 5 is on but does not work.

Victory Park , 1 out of 3 DC Fast chargers works.

Del Mar, 1 of 2 DC Fast chargers works.

Shopper's Lane as of last week it appeared less than half the ports worked. The ports that showed as working, the connector would not work, or the credit card machines did not register.

Obviously this is unsustainable and unacceptable.

Could you please provide an update on where we stand with DC Fast charging in Pasadena?

Also, I want to bring to your attention the inconsistencies in the parking signage at EV parking locations with Del Mar being the most confusing and other locations many not having any signage. But at least Del Mar has signage.

As a rule and common practice is to have a time limit of 30min, or charge 80%. There should be overstay fees implemented. and also CVC

22511 needs to be posted and enforced, if not posted it cannot be enforced.

And, the rates charged at PWP chargers are the lowest around, perhaps to help fund maintenance and abuse, the rates should be comparable

while still be competitive with other EV charging. Nobody charges 20

cents/kWh, let alone 15 cents/kWh unless it is free...For comparison Burbank BWP is .37 cents per kWh on DC Fast Charging and 22 cents/kWh on L2 charging. Tesla is 36 cents per kWh on the lower end and 54 cents/kWh or more.

PWP needs reliable charging if it is going to be in the game, and competitive pricing that is sustainable, but so far it has been a failure. I sure hope PWP can turn this around, otherwise it needs to partner with a provider who can deliver a reliable, consistent and competitive service.

The best analogy I can draw is that PWP is trying to operate gas stations and most of the gas pumps are broken or off. Imagine what people who rely on EV's feel like trying to use the PWP chargers?

I look forward to an update.

Regards,  
Victor