

4. Capital Improvement Projects FY 2026 – 8. Police Dispatch Radio & Encryption

If the City of Pasadena and the Pasadena Police Department advocate for transparent government and community trust, then **why is Pasadena implementing law enforcement information blackout through the encryption of police radios (at great expense of \$1.5 million)?**

With fully encrypted police radios, *only* Pasadena PD will have access to public safety issues as they happen.

The media and the public will now be prevented from accessing real-time information on police activity and updates on a variety of public safety issues from areas to avoid because of active police activity, local emergencies or evacuations.

Although not stated in the City Staff or PPD report, this is a result of a 2020 California Department of Justice bulletin directing law enforcement to protect people's sensitive information shared publicly over police radios.¹

The DOJ bulletin provided law enforcement agencies a variety of methods to protect personal information but did not direct the implementation of a complete informational blackout of police radios.

"...the privacy issues that were raised by the California Department of Justice could have been solved in all kinds of ways. Alternative radio channels, some encrypted, some not...It was not necessary to do basically a complete wipeout on the public radio system," said Tracy Rosenberg, Oakland Privacy.²

The City of Palo Alto reversed its radio encryption³ and Senator Becker has attempted law enforcement transparent communications legislation.⁴

How is the Pasadena government going to serve the public interest and work towards more transparency, accountability and community trust? Because fully encrypted police radios are not it.

Yadi

Pasadena City Council

September 8, 2025

4. Capital Improvement Projects FY 2026 Amendment: 8. Police Dispatch Radio & Encryption (71174)

1 https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/info_bulletins/20-09-cjis.pdf

2 <https://www.ktvu.com/news/critics-blast-decision-eve-east-bay-police-radios-going-silent-public>

3 <https://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2022/08/04/palo-alto-police-set-to-remove-radio-encryption/>

4 <https://sd13.senate.ca.gov/news/press-release/march-7-2023/re-opening-police-radio-communications-to-the-public>

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