

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Yadi
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2026 10:48 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Public Comment - Pasadena City Council Meeting 07/13/26
Attachments: Public Comment - Pasadena City Council 07-13-26 PPOA MOU Mounted Unit.pdf

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Hi,

Please find attached my public comment for the July 13, 2026 Pasadena City Council Meeting, agenda item 7. PPOA MOU - Mounted Unit.

Thanks,

Yadi

7. Pasadena MOU with PPOA

Pasadena Police Department Mounted Enforcement Unit (MEU):

The Pasadena Police Department, The Pasadena City Manager and the Pasadena City Council found it ok to establish an entirely new program – the Mounted Enforcement Unit - *without advance public engagement or discussion*. Now, through PPOA salary negotiations in 2024 and again in 2026, the City Council behind closed doors baked in additional costs of a program that the public has scant information about and was never afforded the opportunity to weigh in on.

Because the City put the cart before the horse and committed funds - in a year where many many programs faced cuts or constraints nonetheless – did it even review PPD's Mounted Enforcement Unit program scope or policy?

Currently, PPD does have a policy: 457 Volunteer Mounted Unit¹

>Why then is the City picking up the tab for a volunteer unit?

The main responsibility according to PPDs current VMU policy: *"The Volunteer Mounted Unit (or mounted patrol) provides uniformed patrol and observation in the Arroyo Seco recreation area and foothills of Pasadena, providing high police visibility in an area largely secluded from public view.*

>Why then does the staff report (essentially citing PPD's PR points) state that the Mounted Unit can help with "**crowd control**"?² Is PPOA salary negotiations how Council weighs in on police matters?

Surely using anything – military equipment, other technologies, tools or animals – for crowd control warrants a serious conversation of the legalities, liabilities and ethics. Such as the impacts on the public's right to protest and freedom of speech. And especially since the first amendment is currently under attack.

The proposal states "Employees assigned as mounted officers will receive compensation of \$27.86 per hour." In 2024 it was \$22.50. A 23.8% increase in two years! *Who gets a 20% pay increase in this economy?!*

Let's be clear: the City Council thinks it fiscally responsible to expand PPD's budget with horses that are allowed to trample on people during times of budget cuts and challenges?

1 <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/police/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/Pasadena-Police-Policy-Manual.pdf>

2 https://docaccess.com/docviewer.html?url=https%3A%2F%2Fww2.cityofpasadena.net%2F2024%2520Agendas%2FOct_28_24%2FAR%25208.pdf&url_hash=1284150cd1874e01d8630f7f24355827&domain=ww2.cityofpasadena.net&found_on=https%3A%2F%2Fww2.cityofpasadena.net%2F2024%2520Agendas%2FOct_28_24%2FAgenda.asp

7. Pasadena MOU with PPOA

Facts about Mounted Units

Many many cities across America have disbanded their mounted units, predominantly due to budget constraints, personnel shortages, and lack of ability to justify costs for limited uses.

Some cities that have eliminated their mounted police units include:^{3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13}

- Sacramento PD (2026)
- Seattle PD (2025)
- Las Vegas Metro PD (2020)
- Baltimore PD (2020)
- Cincinnati PD (2013)
- San Diego PD (2010)
- Clarksville PD (2009)

Overwhelmingly, budget is the reason mounted units are eliminated, as this program is quite costly. The operating cost per officer can be quite staggering, and does not factor in the additional liability to the City.

Based on historical information about mounted unit budgets, this program can run a local city between \$500,000 - \$1.0 million annually for 4-6 horses. Once all costs are factored in, it can costs cities several million dollars annually.

During times of officer shortages, mounted units divert law enforcement resources away from their core mission and priorities (which are answering to emergencies).

Animal welfare is also an important issue. Mainly, that when horses are used for crowd control in particular, it puts them at risk of injury and facing heightened stress. The weather and heat can stress horses. The urban environment is not made for horses. The potential benefit of public safety should not override the harms and risks we are exposing horses to unnecessarily.

3 <https://www.police1.com/patrol-issues/articles/mounted-police-losing-in-budget-battle-across-the-nation-VRc57ua1Bl00BAS1/>

4 <https://www.wftv.com/news/local/difficult-decision-make-orlando-police-department-retires-horse-mounted-patrol-unit/XKA3AOXRDFEMFOY63Q5XFJCQK4/>

5 <https://bikeportland.org/2010/03/19/budget-office-cut-horse-cops-but-dont-transfer-them-to-bike-patrol-30855>

6 <https://thehorse.com/153957/mounted-police-unit-disbanded-in-san-diego/>

7 <https://spdblotter.seattle.gov/2024/09/30/seattle-police-department-discontinues-mounted-patrol-unit-2/>

8 <https://www.fox7austin.com/news/city-council-proposes-eliminating-mounted-patrol-from-apd>

9 <https://www.wbur.org/news/2009/06/24/horses>

10 <https://wjla.com/news/local/dc-police-disbanding-horse-mounted-unit>

11 <https://minnesotareformer.com/2021/09/20/minneapolis-city-council-defunded-mounted-patrol-last-year-the-unit-still-exists/>

12 <https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/san-jose-police-horses/3951571/>

13 <https://www.cityoflanasterpa.gov/mounted-unit-faq/>

7. Pasadena MOU with PPOA

Mounted units also creates a host of liability issues, such as public injuries, horse injuries, traffic accidents involving horses, crowd control incidents, and property damage, among others. Mounted units carry higher and more specialized liability risks due to the fact that they are large animals that interact with the public. Coupled with the fact that horses can be easily spooked and can behave erratically.

There are too many documented examples of mounted police units controversial overly aggressive crowd control tactics.

- In 2025, LAPD drew significant criticism for its use of horses for crowd control at demonstrations
- In 2022, the Del Rio border patrol agents drew criticism for their tactics on horseback
- In 2020, Houston mounted officers used aggressive crowd control tactics
- In 2020, New York officers were using horses for aggressive crowd control

I get it: Horses are feel good PR for police. A mounted unit is a fantastic way to get a city to help fund individual officers' (expensive) personal hobby under the guise of public safety.

"An officer on horseback is very easy to approach, I mean, people from all walks of life, all the visitors, they're instantly drawn to the horse... There are certain segments of society that probably would rather not talk to a police officer, except for one on a horse." – Sacramento PD officer.¹⁴

"As a small business owner in downtown this is a ridiculous proposal that offers no value to downtown businesses and is purely a PR stunt that does nothing to reduce crime... We need people trained in care, deescalation and dignity. We need the city to allocate funds toward helping people -- not harming, disappearing and scaring them." – San Jose resident and small business owner.¹⁵

Lets not forget the tradition of police on horseback dating back to the 1800's.

Yadi

Pasadena City Council Meeting

July 13, 2026

7. PPOA MOU 2026 - 2029

¹⁴ <https://www.police1.com/mounted-police/budget-cuts-end-calif-pds-mounted-unit-after-nearly-30-years>

¹⁵ <https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/san-jose-police-horses/3951571/>

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: humaira afzal
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2026 2:16 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Items 7 & 8 - MOUs with PPD - City Council July 13 2026

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Here we go again with another item on the consent agenda – this time for increased pay for PPD officers -- that will substantially add to the City's budget not just for 2027, but for EVERY SINGLE YEAR after that. I ask that items 7 and 8 be pulled from the consent agenda and discussed separately. It'd be incredibly irresponsible to vote to add over \$10 million in annual costs to the budget via the consent agenda MOUs with PPD officers (items 7 & 8) on the very same evening that there's also an agenda item (16) to discuss new revenue streams to balance the City's budget.

Here's what items 7 and 8 would add to the City's budget:

Item 7 – MOU with Pasadena Police Officers Association

\$17.6 million for 2027, 2028 and 2029 (an average of \$5,866,666/yr) and then it increases to \$9.6 million/year for subsequent years

Item 8 – MOU with Pasadena Police Lieutenants Association

\$466,000 for 2027, then \$809,000 for subsequent years

Combined, this is an additional \$6,561,333 cost for 2027 – 2029 and an even higher additional cost of \$10,409,000 for future years!!!!!!

(and none of this includes costs for all the new equipment and surveillance technology in the pipeline)

Meanwhile, from the Staff Report for Item 16 on the agenda:

"Balancing the budget has become increasingly challenging as the City continues to operate in an environment marked by economic uncertainty, persistent inflationary pressures, and concerns about a potential economic slowdown. The City has relied upon one-time revenues and reserves for the past three fiscal years. The widening structural deficit—driven by expenditure growth that consistently outpaces revenue growth—underscores the need for proactive fiscal management. Without adjustments to service levels, staffing, or long-term financial strategies, the gap between revenues and expenditures will continue to expand."

Increasing PPD officer pay to the proposed levels will significantly drain general funds while Council is simultaneously considering new taxes to help balance the budget, losing funding for other important programs (like Public Health Dept), are way behind on maintenance of infrastructure, and have no dedicated funding source for affordable housing besides in lieu funds.

Here's what's not included in the Staff Reports for Items 7 & 8

- Data, analysis or comparisons of the pay structures/scales for police departments in other cities
- Documentation of a causal relationship between pay and the recruitment and retention of police officers. Is pay the primary factor, or are there other factors?
- For police officers who have left PPD since January 2025, how many have left due to
 - Retirement
 - Took a comparable position with another law enforcement due to higher pay
 - Put on administrative leave due to things like engaging in horseplay with guns or getting arrested for felony vandalism of an ex-girlfriend's property
 - Took a higher paying position in the private sector
 - Other reasons such as injury, illness, etc

**07/13/2026
Item 7 & 8**

Don't approve the MOUs at the requested levels. These increases are not justified on the unsubstantiated claim that they're needed to "support both the recruitment of Police Officers and the retention of trained and experienced personnel". Simply saying something is true doesn't make it true.

Sincerely,
Humaira
Pasadena District 7 resident

Sent with Proton Mail secure email.