McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From:	Ana Soulriver <
Sent:	Sunday, November 8, 2026 9:22 AM
To:	PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Cc:	DerBoghossian, Megheti; Barrios, Lisa; Thyret, Pam; Chapman, Justin; De La Cuba, Vannia; Stewart, Jana; Mellem, Araceli; Sullivan, Noreen; Morales, Margo
Subject:	Agenda Items 16 and 17: a carbon ledger for Pasadena's buses
Attachments:	11.08.26 Electrons, Molecules, and the Loop Flyer (2).pdf

Some people who received this message don't often get email from arn why this is important

[!] **CAUTION:** This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you ***know*** the content is safe. Report phish using the Phish Alert Button (PAB). For more information about the PAB view article "KB0011474" on the DoIT portal.

Dear Mayor Gordo and Councilmembers,

These are my personal views, not a position of the Environmental Advisory Commission.

In January 2023, this Council adopted Resolution 9977, setting a goal to source 100% of Pasadena's electricity from carbon-free sources by the end of 2030. In December 2025, you approved the Optimized Strategic Plan to reach that goal hour by hour. Pasadena is building a clean grid. The question on Tuesday is whether our buses will run on that grid, or on a fuel we truck in.

"Zero emissions" describes the tailpipe, not the whole life of a fuel. **A carbon ledger** counts what happens before, during, and after we use it:

- Hydrogen made from natural gas releases about 12 kg of CO2-equivalent for every kilogram produced. For a bus, that is roughly 1.8 kg per mile, before the hydrogen is liquefied and trucked to Pasadena.
- Even hydrogen made with solar power needs three to four times as much clean electricity per mile as a battery-electric bus charged by that same solar.
- The City's own May 2025 analysis already shows higher upstream emissions for hydrogen buses than for battery-electric buses: 920 vs. 654 metric tons a year.

The money follows the same pattern. Staff estimated the fueling station at $16 million in May 2025; the project now exceeds $23 million, with $3 million drawn from transit operations. The staff report itself notes that the proposed $8 to $12 per kilogram hydrogen prices are not an executed price or a guaranteed supply. Real-world operating data from Europe shows hydrogen buses costing about 2.3 times more to run per kilometer than battery-electric buses.

A **circular economy** keeps value in the loop instead of paying to bring it in. Pasadena is already building that loop: **PWP's 25 MW battery at the Glenarm Power Plant, due online in 2027**, will store clean power for the evening peak, and the Optimized Strategic Plan adds local solar and storage. Every kilowatt-hour from that local system that charges a bus **directly stays in our city, on our grid, under our control.** Hydrogen sends that value out of town and returns a fraction of it.

Even with buses on order, Council can still avoid locking in long-term fuel and infrastructure costs. I ask you to pause Items 16 and 17 and direct staff to return with a side-by-side carbon ledger and cost comparison of battery-electric and hydrogen buses, including the hydrogen price per kilogram, the length of any supply commitment, and what future fuel contracts joining the Hydrogen Authority JPA would lead to.

I have attached a three-page summary with the full carbon ledger, the City's own cost figures, visuals, and sources.

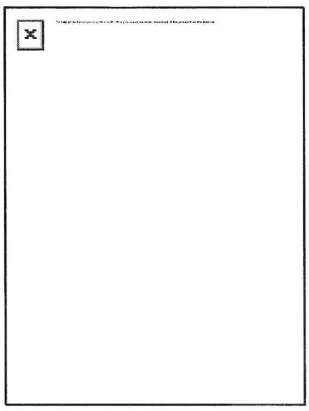
Thank you for your service to our city.

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

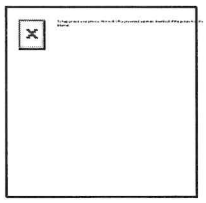
Ana Soulriver

Sources

- City of Pasadena, DOT Zero-Emission Rollout Plan Update to the Environmental Advisory Commission, May 13, 2025 (station estimate, fuel use, upstream emissions)
- City Council staff reports, November 10, 2026, Items 16 and 17 (hydrogen price proposals of $8 to $12 per kg, not an executed price or guaranteed supply)
- Councilmember Rick Cole, District 2 newsletter, November 2026 (station cost over $23 million, $3 million from transit operations)
- NREL, Life Cycle Assessment of Hydrogen Production via Natural Gas Steam Reforming (about 12 kg CO_2e per kg of hydrogen)
- Eurac Research, real-world data from 21 buses in South Tyrol, Italy (battery buses 2 to 2.45 times more energy efficient; hydrogen buses about 2.3 times more costly to run per km)
- Resolution 9977 (January 30, 2023), PWP Optimized Strategic Plan (December 15, 2025), and PWP Glenarm Battery Energy Storage System



Ana Soulriver



ANA SOULRIVER
Pasadena resident · Circular economy advocate

City Council · Items 16 and 17
Tuesday, November 10, 2026 · 6:00 p.m.

Zero tailpipe is not zero emissions.

Hydrogen and battery buses both run clean on the street. The difference is everything that happens before and after the ride.

1 · BEFORE

Making the fuel

Drilling, reforming, generating, chilling, trucking. For hydrogen, most emissions happen here.

2 · DURING

Driving

Battery and fuel cell buses both emit nothing here. A fuel cell releases only water vapor.

3 · AFTER

End of life

In a circular economy, retired batteries, panels and metals loop back into use instead of landfill.

Two roads from the sun to the wheels

Battery-electric bus · 4 steps · about 75 to 80% of the energy moves the bus

Sun to electricity → PWP grid → Bus battery → Electric motor

Green hydrogen bus · 6 steps · about 25 to 35% of the energy moves the bus

Sun to electricity → Split water → Chill to −423°F → Truck it in → Fuel cell → Electric motor

Both buses end with the same electric motor. Hydrogen adds a detour, and every step of it loses energy. Most hydrogen today is not even green: it is made from natural gas.

1.8 vs 0.1
kg CO2e per bus-mile: hydrogen from natural gas vs a battery bus on solar

3 to 4×
more solar power per mile for a green hydrogen bus than a battery bus

920 vs 654
metric tons of upstream emissions a year, hydrogen vs battery, in the City's own 2025 estimate

Figures are approximate. Sources and the full ledger are on the back.

Personal views, not a position of the Environmental Advisory Commission.

The carbon ledger

ANA SOULRIVER

Environmental ledger, per bus-mile (approximate)

Path	Before: making the fuel	After: end of life	kg CO2e per mile	Energy per mile
Gray hydrogen bus	About 12 kg CO2e per kg of hydrogen, from natural gas plus methane leaks	Fuel cell platinum recyclable; carbon-fiber tanks hard to recycle	**1.8**	7.6 kWh gas
Blue hydrogen bus	About 5.3 kg CO2e per kg, with 90% carbon capture	Same as gray	**0.8**	over 7.6 kWh gas
Green hydrogen bus (solar)	Panel manufacturing, about 45 g CO2e per kWh	Same as gray, plus panel recycling	**0.37**	8.3 kWh solar
Battery bus (solar or carbon-free grid)	Panel manufacturing, about 45 g CO2e per kWh	Second life as depot storage, then metals recovered	**0.10**	2.2 to 2.5 kWh
Gasoline car (reference)	Drilling and refining; 8.89 kg CO2 per gallon burned	Steel recycled; the oil is gone for good	**0.37**	1.1 kWh gasoline

Every bus has zero driving emissions. The gasoline car's 0.37 kg comes mostly from burning fuel, and is per car, not per bus full of riders. Building the vehicles is not included.

Financial ledger, from the City's own May 2025 estimates

Item	Battery-electric	Hydrogen fuel cell
Buses to replace 17 (staff assumption)	26 at $1.3M	17 at $1.6M
Chargers or fueling station	$8.0M	$16.0M then; now over $23M
Upfront total	**$41.1M**	**$43.2M then; now over $50M**
Fuel cost, routes studied	$268,900 to $336,400	$195,800 to $281,900
Energy price assumed	$0.79 to $0.98 per kWh	$8 to $12 per kg, not guaranteed
Running cost per km, real-world (Italy)	Baseline	About 2.3× higher

Staff priced electricity high, mostly demand charges. A PWP transit charging rate could change that comparison.

The circular answer: local sun, stored locally, used directly

Make it here
Solar canopies over the depot count toward Resolution 9977.

Store it here
Depot batteries hold midday sun for night charging and outages.

Give it a second life
Retired bus batteries become storage, then their metals are recovered.

Keep dollars local
Measure R funds pay for Pasadena service, not outside fuel.

The ask: pause Items 16 and 17

Direct staff to return with a side-by-side carbon ledger and cost comparison, including the hydrogen price per kg, the length of any supply commitment, and the future fuel contracts joining the Hydrogen Authority JPA would lead to.

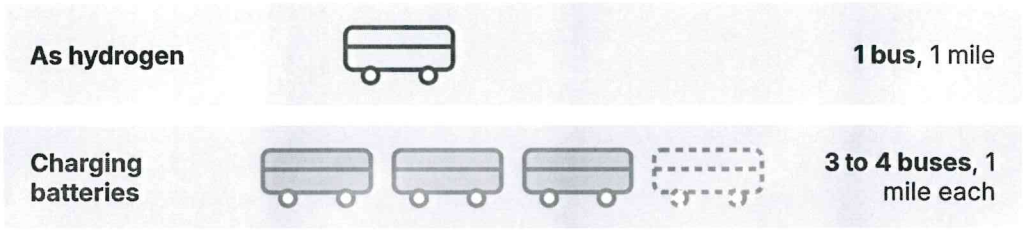
Picture the ledger

ANA SOULRIVER

1. The same solar panels, two very different results

8.3 kWh of solar

Enough to make about 0.15 kg of hydrogen: one bus-mile



Making 1 kg of hydrogen takes about 55 kWh, and a fuel cell bus uses about 0.15 kg per mile (8.3 kWh). A battery bus uses 2.2 to 2.5 kWh per mile, so 8.3 kWh moves 3.3 to 3.8 battery buses.

2. Making 1 kg of hydrogen from natural gas releases about 12 kg of CO2e

1 kg of hydrogen



Chemistry: splitting methane (CH4) leaves its carbon behind as CO2

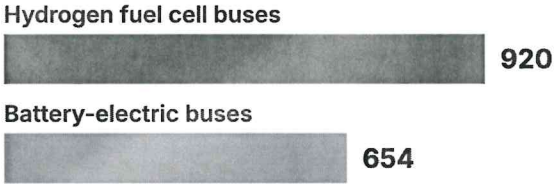
Heat: burning more gas to run the reformer

Upstream: producing and piping gas, including leaks

Total 11.9 kg CO2e per kg of hydrogen (NREL life cycle assessment). Chemistry share calculated from the reaction; heat and upstream shares from NREL's breakdown.

3. The City's own numbers

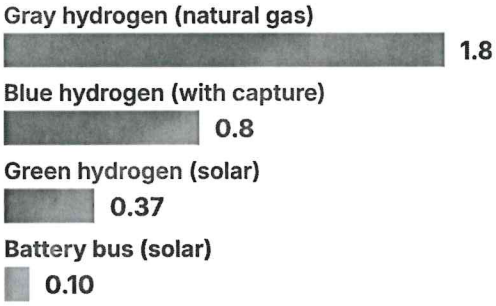
Upstream emissions per year, whole fleet, metric tons (May 2025 DOT presentation)



Both have zero tailpipe emissions. By the City's own estimate, hydrogen is about 40% worse upstream.

4. Emissions per bus-mile

kg CO2e per mile, from making the fuel (approximate)



Pasadena is already building the circular answer

PWP is installing a 25 MW, 100 MWh battery at the Glenarm Power Plant, due online by mid-2027, to store solar for the evening peak. The Optimized Strategic Plan adds 50 MW of local solar and 100 MW of local storage. That is the kind of clean, local power battery buses can charge from.

Sources: City of Pasadena DOT presentation to the EAC, May 13, 2025 · NREL hydrogen and solar life cycle assessments · Eurac Research bus data, South Tyrol, Italy · PWP Glenarm Battery Energy Storage System and Optimized Strategic Plan. Per-mile figures are Ana Soulriver's estimates. Personal views, not a position of the Environmental Advisory Commission.

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Therese Brummel
Sent: Sunday, November 8, 2026 11:22 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Subject: Agenda Items 16 and 17 - NO on dirty hydrogen

[!] **CAUTION:** This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you ***know*** the content is safe. Report phish using the Phish Alert Button (PAB). For more information about the PAB view article "KB0011474" on the DoIT portal.

Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members,
Time to change course on hydrogen busses!

From an economic and environmental standpoint, hydrogen buses are not a prudent investment for Pasadena. Time to face the data and change the plan.

The costs keep rising.
In May 2025, staff estimated the hydrogen fueling station at $16 million. Costs have since grown by more than $6 million, and $3 million is now proposed to come out of bus operations, money that should go toward running buses for riders.

There is currently no affordable green hydrogen supply. The City's own analysis shows hydrogen buses with higher upstream emissions than battery-electric buses. Battery-electric buses, by contrast, can run on increasingly clean electricity, including power from LOCAL SOLAR! What a concept!. Electric bus charging is simpler, more widely available, and easier to scale.

Hydrogen fueling infrastructure remains expensive, and complex, which increases project RISK.
Even with buses already on order, Council can avoid locking in long-term fuel and infrastructure costs. The staff report itself notes that the proposed $8 to $12 per kilogram hydrogen prices are not an executed price or guaranteed supply, so we would be committing to the station without knowing what the fuel will cost. Retail prices for 'grey' hydrogen are over $30 per kilogram and have doubled over the past several years.

Pause these items and direct staff to return with a current, side-by-side comparison with battery-electric buses, including the hydrogen price per kilogram the City would be committing to.

With the City facing financial headwinds, now is NOT the time to lock in increasing costs. Investing funding in better service frequency and bus infrastructure would do more to improve local air quality. Thank you,
Therese Brummel
D2x 47 years

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: p brown
Sent: Sunday, November 8, 2026 6:15 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Comment: 11/10 Council - Agenda Item #16 / 17 - Hydrogen Fueling Station
Attachments: BEV vs HFC.png

[⚠] **CAUTION:** This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you ***know*** the content is safe. Report phish using the Phish Alert Button (PAB). For more information about the PAB view article "KB0011474" on the DoIT portal.

Dear Hon Mayor Gordo and Council Members:

I am concerned that the city is proposing to spend $6.8 million for a technology that the market has already determined is inferior and expensive.

According to the BloombergNEF Zero Emission Commercial Vehicle 2026 Factbook for Investors, scale and cost advantages now overwhelmingly favor batteries, not hydrogen fuel cell commercial vehicles. Mature supply chains and falling battery costs have made batteries the default option.

Look at what has happened in the clean truck market:
- Fully electric vehicles (battery-electric vehicles, or BEVs) now account for virtually all clean truck sales. Sales of fuel cell trucks in the US and Europe were fewer than two dozen units in the first half of 2026.
- Manufacturing startups have largely exited the market.
- Hydrogen fuel remains scarce and expensive.

All-battery commercial vehicles can cover most urban and regional duty cycles and start to serve longer routes as well. At the same time, battery-powered bus technology has evolved and become suitable for an increasing number of use cases, and costs have dropped.

The chart I am providing - assembled with the help of Gemini AI from sources including CARB an and DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory - suggests the city should reverse course, cut losses and reorient to battery electric buses.

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

The general consensus across data pulled from NREL Transit Vehicle Status Reports and CARB Transit Fleet Cost Models highlights the following baseline differences:

Cost Component	Battery-Electric Bus (BEB)	Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus (FCEB)
Average Vehicle Purchase Price	**$750,000 – $950,000**	**$1.2 Million+**
Grid-to-Wheel Efficiency	**85% – 90%** (Highly cost-efficient energy capture)	**40% – 60%** (Significant upstream conversion loss)
Fueling / Infrastructure Costs	Low-to-moderate initial cost; exponentially higher if substation upgrades are required.	High initial station deployment (**$2.9M – $8.3M** per facility), but scales efficiently for massive fleets.
Operational Maintenance Cost	Lowest; ~30% fewer moving parts than traditional powertrains.	Highest; estimated at **2.3 times more expensive** per mile due to stack complexity.

Respectfully,

P.A. Brown
District 6

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: hans w rosenberger
Sent: Sunday, November 8, 2026 6:52 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Subject: Agenda Items 16/17 - Please hit the brakes on dirty hydrogen

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [redacted] arn why this is important

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to pause Items 16 and 17 before sinking more discretionary Measure R funding into the hydrogen bus program. From an economic and environmental standpoint, hydrogen buses are not a prudent investment for Pasadena.

The costs keep rising. In May 2025, staff estimated the hydrogen fueling station at $16 million. Costs have since grown by more than $6 million, and $3 million is now proposed to come out of bus operations, money that should go toward running buses for riders.

There is currently no affordable green hydrogen supply. This spring, state regulators refused to let SoCalGas charge ratepayers $266 million for the hydrogen pipeline meant to bring it to our region, finding no demonstrated benefit to them. Hydrogen available today is mostly made from fossil gas, and even the City's own analysis shows hydrogen buses with higher upstream emissions than battery-electric buses. Battery-electric buses, by contrast, can run on increasingly clean electricity, including power from local solar.

Electric bus charging is simpler, more widely available, and easier to scale. Hydrogen fueling infrastructure remains scarce, expensive, and technically complex, which increases project risk. Even with buses already on order, Council can avoid locking in long-term fuel and infrastructure costs. The staff report itself notes that the proposed $8 to $12 per kilogram hydrogen prices are not an executed price or guaranteed supply, so we would be committing to the station and the JPA without knowing what the fuel will cost. Retail prices for 'grey' hydrogen are over $30 per kilogram and have doubled over the past several years.

Please pause these items and direct staff to return with a current, side-by-side comparison with battery-electric buses, including the hydrogen price per kilogram the City would be committing to and what future fuel commitments joining the Hydrogen Authority JPA would lead to. With the City facing financial headwinds, now is not the time to lock in an increasingly costly technology when more reliable, and cheaper battery - electric options are available. Battery technology is quickly evolving. There are bus products that will meet the city's needs. Pasadena also has a city owned electricity utility; Play to your strengths! Investing unrestricted Measure R 710 Reallocation funding in better service frequency and bus infrastructure would do far more to reduce driving and improve local air quality.

Thank you,

Hans Rosenberger

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Cynthia Cannady
Sent: Monday, November 9, 2026 10:53 AM
To: Jones, Justin; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Rivas, Jessica; Hampton, Tyron; Lyon, Jason; Cole, Rick; PublicComment-AutoResponse; Hawkesworth, Matthew
Subject: No blank check for a stupid and risky technology project

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Dear Councilmembers,
The saying "don't put good money after bad" has never been more apposite.
Or, as my mother would have said, "just because your friend is going to jump off the bridge doesn't mean you have to."

Agenda items 16 and 17 ask you to make a final financial commitment, with an open ended financial engagement to a joint power authority that barely exists, to a technology that:
1. Is potentially hazardous to the residents because of leaks and flammability
2. Is almost certainly going to use methane generated hydrogen (grey or brown hydro) for the foreseeable future, which increases our carbon footprint dramatically
3. Requires lots of trucks coming into our streets (has anyone estimated the number)
4. Requires those trucks to travel from Pomona or Lancaster or further
5. Doesn't have a plan for supply other than, as the staff memo says, "actively looking" for a supplier
6. Validates the last gasp wish of political campaign donors Sempra, and So Cal Gas and the gas industry to perpetuate their gas pipeline infrastructure
7. Has been rejected by so many other cities worldwide and
8. Is unnecessary because we can use electric buses (have you ask staff to prepare alternative routes to accommodate the current charging capacity of EV buses?)

What are you thinking?

Pasadena's environmental community is committed to keeping track of these votes. As our city budget is already struggling to address the real needs of our city, it is inexcusable to put good money after bad. We NEED our budget to address safety, fire safety, heat, parks, our streets homelessness, libraries, affordable housing and so many other needs.

No good money after bad tech. Save our budget for what residents want and need not risky foolhardy projects.

Cynthia Cannady

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: gfoster
Sent: Monday, November 9, 2026 11:57 AM
To: Gordo, Victor; Jones, Justin; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Rivas, Jessica; Hampton, Tyron; Lyon, Jason; Cole, Rick
Cc: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Agenda Items 16 & 17 Hydrogen Fueling Station Project

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Dear Pasadena City Council Members,

I attended an early community meeting regarding the proposed Hydrogen Fueling Station. At that time, staff's preference for hydrogen cell buses over electric battery buses was the avoidance of a mid-day break to recharge electric batteries. Staff explained that until a proposed hydrogen pipeline was completed, hydrogen would be transported through residential neighborhoods by fuel trucks for the foreseeable future. That future has arrived; the Angeles Link hydrogen pipeline is no longer in development.

In the years since those early community meetings, the clean energy market has changed dramatically. Hydrogen fuel cell buses have proved to be far more expensive to operate than battery electric vehicles which now have a documented history of price and performance superiority. Further, there is no such thing as "green hydrogen" – it was a myth. Tail-pipe emissions are not a measure of zero-emission transportation. In their quest for grant funding, City Staff apparently fell in love with the proposed hydrogen project and now finds it too difficult to admit that there are better alternatives for the City of Pasadena. The gas industry's proposed repurposing of gas pipelines to transport hydrogen fuel was a discredited attempt to salvage new profits from old infrastructure.

First Public Hydrogen (FPH2) advertises its dedication to "creating a transparent, wholesale marketplace that producers and off-takers can trust." Unfortunately, the proposal for Pasadena to invest in FPH2 is as backward looking as investing in a coal mine. How can Pasadena seriously consider pouring scarce city funds into an open-ended investment for a disproven fuel source, especially after pleading with voters to pass yet another parcel tax to pay for fire stations and emergency services?

Earlier this year, the CPUC denied SoCalGas's request to charge ratepayers $266M for the Angeles Link hydrogen pipeline, finding no demonstrated benefit to ratepayers. If the CPUC found it inappropriate to make ratepayers carry speculative hydrogen costs, why should Pasadena Transit riders, City ratepayers and taxpayers be asked to pay for it?

PLEASE **VOTE NO** ON AGENDA **ITEMS 16 AND 17.**

Sincerely,
Genette Foster, CD2

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From:	Erika Foy <
Sent:	Monday, November 9, 2026 4:08 PM
To:	PublicComment-AutoResponse; City_Council; Thyret, Pam; Hawkesworth, Matthew; Siques, Joaquin
Subject:	November 10 City Council – Item 16 – What Happened to Our Transportation Priorities?

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Members of the City Council,

I am writing regarding Agenda Item 16 and the proposal to request additional Measure R funding for Pasadena's hydrogen fueling station.

I have lived in Pasadena for nearly 30 years, near the California Boulevard railroad crossing, and I can tell you firsthand how terrible the traffic congestion is in this area. I attended the meetings in 2022 when Pasadena decided to abandon the California Boulevard grade separation and redirect approximately $230 million toward other transportation projects. I understood the decision given the escalating costs, but the traffic problem we were trying to solve never went away.

Of that money, only $2.5 million was allocated to the Light Rail Tracking and Network Monitoring System, intended to improve traffic signal operations around the existing railroad crossings. I recently contacted the city to learn the status of this project and was surprised to discover that it is still in the pre-design phase. Staff expects to award a contract and begin design sometime in the first half of 2027.

What happened?

Metro approved the funding in February 2023. Nearly four years later, we are still waiting for design to begin. Why has it taken so long? What has prevented this project from moving forward, and when can residents realistically expect improvements? These are not minor inconveniences for those of us who live near these crossings. The congestion affects our daily lives and spills onto surrounding streets and residential neighborhoods.

Meanwhile, $75.1 million has been allocated to the Pasadena Avenue/St. John roadway project, where the city is considering significant changes, including additional bicycle infrastructure. Now the Council is considering using more of the original Measure R allocation toward a hydrogen fueling station whose costs have increased substantially.

My concern goes well beyond the fueling station. Pasadena is making multiple major transportation spending decisions without giving residents a clear picture of how these projects work together to improve traffic and mobility throughout our city.

Are we evaluating their cumulative impact? How will changes to Pasadena Avenue and St. John affect Orange Grove Boulevard, Fair Oaks Avenue, and surrounding neighborhoods?

How do these projects fit into the future development of the former 710 corridor? And what is our actual plan to address the congestion that prompted the original grade-separation project?

I support public transportation and bicycle improvements where they make sense. But I am having a difficult time understanding how we are prioritizing these enormous expenditures when one of the original problems we set out to solve remains unresolved.

Before authorizing another Measure R funding request, I ask the Council to provide a complete public accounting of the original $230.5 million allocation, including what has been spent, what has been committed, what remains available, and the anticipated completion dates for each project. I would also like to know exactly how much Measure R funding is being requested for the hydrogen station, why additional funding is needed, and how this expenditure fits into the city's overall transportation strategy.

We have an extraordinary amount of transportation funding available to Pasadena. Residents deserve to understand not only where that money is going, but whether these investments are working together to solve the traffic and mobility problems they were intended to address.

Thank you for your consideration.

Erika Foy
District 7

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Donna Sider
Sent: Monday, November 9, 2026 5:45 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Subject: Agenda Items 16/17 - Please hit the brakes on dirty hydrogen

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Council members,

I am writing to urge you to pause Items 16 and 17 before sinking more discretionary Measure R funding into the hydrogen bus program. From an economic and environmental standpoint, hydrogen buses are **NOT** a prudent investment for Pasadena.

The costs keep rising. In May 2025, staff estimated the hydrogen fueling station at $16 million. Costs have since grown by more than $6 million, and $3 million is now proposed to come out of bus operations, money that should go toward running buses for riders.

There is currently no affordable green hydrogen supply. This spring, state regulators refused to let SoCalGas charge ratepayers $266 million for the hydrogen pipeline meant to bring it to our region, finding no demonstrated benefit to them. Hydrogen available today is mostly made from fossil gas, and even the City's own analysis shows hydrogen buses with higher upstream emissions than battery-electric buses. Battery-electric buses, by contrast, can run on increasingly clean electricity, including power from local solar.

Electric bus charging is simpler, more widely available, and easier to scale. Hydrogen fueling infrastructure remains scarce, expensive, and technically complex, which increases project risk. Even with buses already on order, Council can still avoid locking in long-term fuel and infrastructure costs. The staff report itself notes that the proposed $8 to $12 per kilogram hydrogen prices are not an executed price or guaranteed supply, so we would be committing to the station and the JPA without knowing what the fuel will cost. Current prices for cheaper, 'grey' hydrogen are almost triple that price and very volatile as the historical chart below illustrates.

Please pause these items and direct staff to return with a current, side-by-side comparison with battery-electric buses, including the hydrogen price per kilogram the City would be committing to and what future fuel commitments joining the Hydrogen Authority JPA would lead to. With the City facing financial headwinds, now is not the time to lock in an increasingly costly technology. Investing unrestricted Measure R 710 Reallocation funding in better service frequency and bus infrastructure would do far more to reduce driving and improve local air quality.

Donna
D2

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Pilar Reynaldo
Sent: Monday, November 9, 2026 5:44 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Subject: Agenda Items 16/17 - Please hit the brakes on dirty hydrogen

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members,
I am writing to urge you to pause Items 16 and 17 before sinking more discretionary Measure R funding into the hydrogen bus program. From an economic and environmental standpoint, hydrogen buses are not a prudent investment for Pasadena.

The costs keep rising. In May 2025, staff estimated the hydrogen fueling station at $16 million. Costs have since grown by more than $6 million, and $3 million is now proposed to come out of bus operations, money that should go toward running buses for riders.

There is currently no affordable green hydrogen supply. This spring, state regulators refused to let SoCalGas charge ratepayers $266 million for the hydrogen pipeline meant to bring it to our region, finding no demonstrated benefit to them. Hydrogen available today is mostly made from fossil gas, and even the City's own analysis shows hydrogen buses with higher upstream emissions than battery-electric buses. Battery-electric buses, by contrast, can run on increasingly clean electricity, including power from local solar.

Electric bus charging is simpler, more widely available, and easier to scale. Hydrogen fueling infrastructure remains scarce, expensive, and technically complex, which increases project risk. Even with buses already on order, Council can avoid locking in long-term fuel and infrastructure costs. The staff report itself notes that the proposed $8 to $12 per kilogram hydrogen prices are not an executed price or guaranteed supply, so we would be committing to the station and the JPA without knowing what the fuel will cost. Retail prices for 'grey' hydrogen are over $30 per kilogram and have doubled over the past several years.

Please pause these items and direct staff to return with a current, side-by-side comparison with battery-electric buses, including the hydrogen price per kilogram the City would be committing to and what future fuel commitments joining the Hydrogen Authority JPA would lead to. With the City facing financial headwinds, now is not the time to lock in an increasingly costly technology. Investing unrestricted Measure R 710 Reallocation funding in better service frequency and bus infrastructure would do far more to reduce driving and improve local air quality.

I'm including an article which will further explain why it is a BAD idea to invest in Hydrogen. https://cleantechnica.com/2025/02/04/hydrogen-buses-hurt-the-people-they-are-meant-to-help/

Thank you,

Pilar Reynaldo

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Dale Z.
Sent: Monday, November 9, 2026 6:37 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: DerBoghossian, Megheti
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda Items 16 and 17 - Hydrogen - November 10, 2026

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Dear Mayor Gordo and members of the City Council,

My name is Dale Zapata, and I live in Bungalow Heaven in District 2. I urge you to vote no on Items 16 and 17 and to hold off on more hydrogen spending until the city updates its Zero-Emission Bus Rollout Plan.

I support a zero-emission bus fleet for Pasadena. I am not asking the city to give up the 17 hydrogen buses already on the way. My concern is the size and timing of this next commitment. Item 16 would build a fueling station for up to 45 hydrogen buses, and staff plans to update the Rollout Plan within 18 months. Building for 45 buses before that update is done makes it harder to change course. It also risks making a bad decision worse.

The full contract could reach $25.3 million, and the price to design and build the station is already about 27% over the original $16 million estimate. Item 16 also puts $13.9 million in Measure R transportation funds toward the station. On top of that, the city still doesn't know what the hydrogen fuel will cost. Those fuel costs would come out of the transit operating budget for years. That money should go to frequent, reliable service for the seniors, students, and workers who depend on Pasadena Transit.

Pasadena is working toward carbon-free electricity by 2030. Battery-electric buses can run on that clean power from our own grid. Please vote no on Items 16 and 17, finish the Rollout Plan update first, and put battery-electric buses at its center.

Thank you for your time and your work for Pasadena.

Sincerely,
Dale Zapata
Bungalow Heaven, District 2

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Lissette Rodriguez
Sent: Monday, November 9, 2026 6:55 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda Items 16 and 17 - Hydrogen

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Hi,

I'm a resident of Madison Heights (zip code: 91106) and I urge the council to vote no on both items 16 and 17.

First of all, the council has yet to finish the updated bus plan. The updated bus plan should be finished before committing to hydrogen.

Secondly, the cost of fuel for these hydrogen buses is unknown, and whatever the cost ends up being it will come out of the transit budget.

And lastly, if we were to adopt battery electric buses instead, those buses could run on Pasadena's own clean power grid.

Thanks for taking the time to read my email.

Lissette Rodriguez

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Wesley Reutimann
Sent: Monday, November 9, 2026 9:51 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Subject: Agenda Items 16-17 - Hydrogen bus technology is stagnant, financially risky, and environmentally dubious

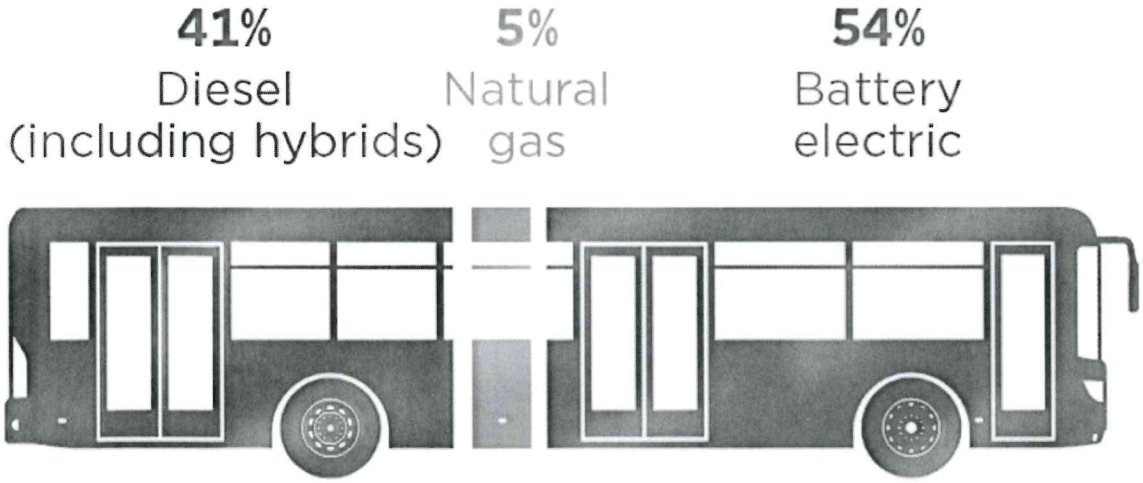
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Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to pause Items 16 and 17 before sinking more discretionary Measure R funding into the hydrogen bus program. From an economic and environmental standpoint, hydrogen buses are not a prudent investment for Pasadena, or any City at this time.

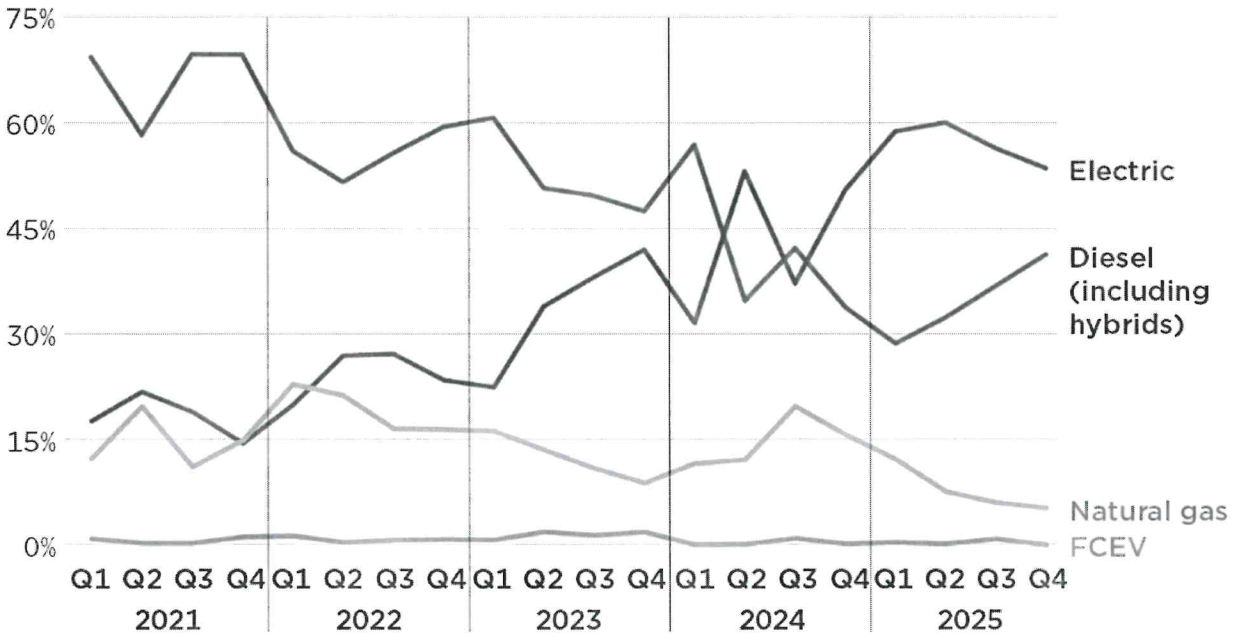
Hydrogen buses are the betamax of the transportation world. For the past two decades hydrogen has been touted as a panacea, the fuel of the future. Yet the goalposts keep being moved backwards. At the same time the cost and performance of battery-electric technology has advanced tremendously around the world. As the chart below highlights, fuel-cell buses constituted 1% or less of sales across the European Union for the past five years, with little to no growth in five years. In the same period, battery-electric city bus sales more than tripled, rising from 16% to 54% of fleet sales (Source: International Council on Clean Transportation). These trends have been mirrored in countries around the world, especially in Asia and Africa.

Figure 4.1
Sales of city buses (top), interurban buses and coaches (middle), and minibuses (bottom) by powertrain in Q4 2025



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Item 16 & 17

Figure 4.3
Sales of city buses by powertrain



THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON CLEAN TRANSPORTATION **THEICCT.ORG**

The cost of hydrogen is volatile and has more than doubled in the past five years. Local procurement of hydrogen is also difficult, with very few options and heavy reliance on fossil fuels to produce the "clean fuel". In contrast, electric rates are relatively stable, can be procured from the City's own municipal utility, and are increasingly generated from renewables.

I understand that deviating from a lengthy city process towards hydrogen may be difficult. There are undoubtedly sunk costs at this point. However, tying the City's public transit future to a fuel type that is volatile and hard to procure is incredibly risky. At best, higher-than-expected hydrogen costs would just impact service levels. At worst, they will place further strain on the City's general fund at a time when the community is faced with so many pressing needs. Please reconsider the staff recommendation. Much of the funding currently at stake is discretionary Measure R 710 North Reallocation funding which can be repurposed or reallocated upon request to the Metro Board of Directors. Metro is largely deferential to 710 corridor agencies insofar as how they use their allocated funding. The Pasadena City Council already changed course once insofar as City plans for the once-in-a-generation 710 N funding -- originally awarded for a single grade separation project. The precedent and process to do so again is at staff's discretion.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Wes Reutimann
Pasadena 91103

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Rob
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 12:17 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Subject: Agenda Items 16/17 - hydrogen buses v. battery-electric buses

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members,

I live in Altadena so I can't urge the council to vote one way or another. However I can offer a comment on the efficacy of using hydrogen as fuel for the City bus fleet, *vis-a-vis* battery-electric buses (BEBs).

BEBs are about 80% efficient battery-to-wheel, roughly 2X the efficiency possible with hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. BEBs emit far less GHG pollution too. Assuming Pasadena's current grid carbon intensity (about 35 grams of CO2e per kWh of electricity) and about 33 kWh of energy in a kilogram of hydrogen, the motive power in a battery that's equivalent to 1 gallon of diesel would emit about 1.2 kilograms of CO2, an eighth of the emissions of gray & blue hydrogen buses*. Note: if PWP can produce *green* hydrogen locally then that could be a viable fuel source. But it isn't available here now.

So if Pasadena is sincere about mitigating its carbon emissions, locally-sourced green-hydrogen-powered buses might be acceptable. Except …

1. *Even* green hydrogen requires a costly process of energy *destruction* (because of the thermodynamics of fabricating a fuel). This loss doesn't happen with renewable energy => batteries (i.e. that's where the 80% efficiency comes from).
2. Hydrogen (any color) is a fuel which is difficult to move and store. Its energy density per unit volume under all conditions is extremely poor. Moreover hydrogen isn't just inefficient, *i.e.* wasteful in energy, **it is also ineffective because it is expensive to move and store.** That isn't the situation with renewable energy & batteries because PWP's electric infrastructure is already in place and battery prices are falling rapidly.
3. Hydrogen leaked to the atmosphere contributes to global warming. This is a new problem we don't need to introduce!

Refer to the Hydrogen Ladder (see graphic at bottom of page). It shows industrial & commercial applications for which hydrogen is vital, as well as those applications better-suited to electric power. Buses are near the bottom rung, suggesting hydrogen-powered buses are uncompetitive with BEBs. (https://liebreich.com/hydrogen-ladder-version-5-0/)

In summary, BEBs are simpler, more widely available, and easier to scale. Fuel cost for BEBs is not volatile and in just a few years will be wholly under the control of PWP.

Sincerely,
Robert Haw
Altadena CA 91001

*Hydrogen is not a natural resource — it cannot be "dug up" like a fossil fuel nor collected for free like sun-beams. It must be manufactured, either via 1) steam reformation or 2) electrolysis.

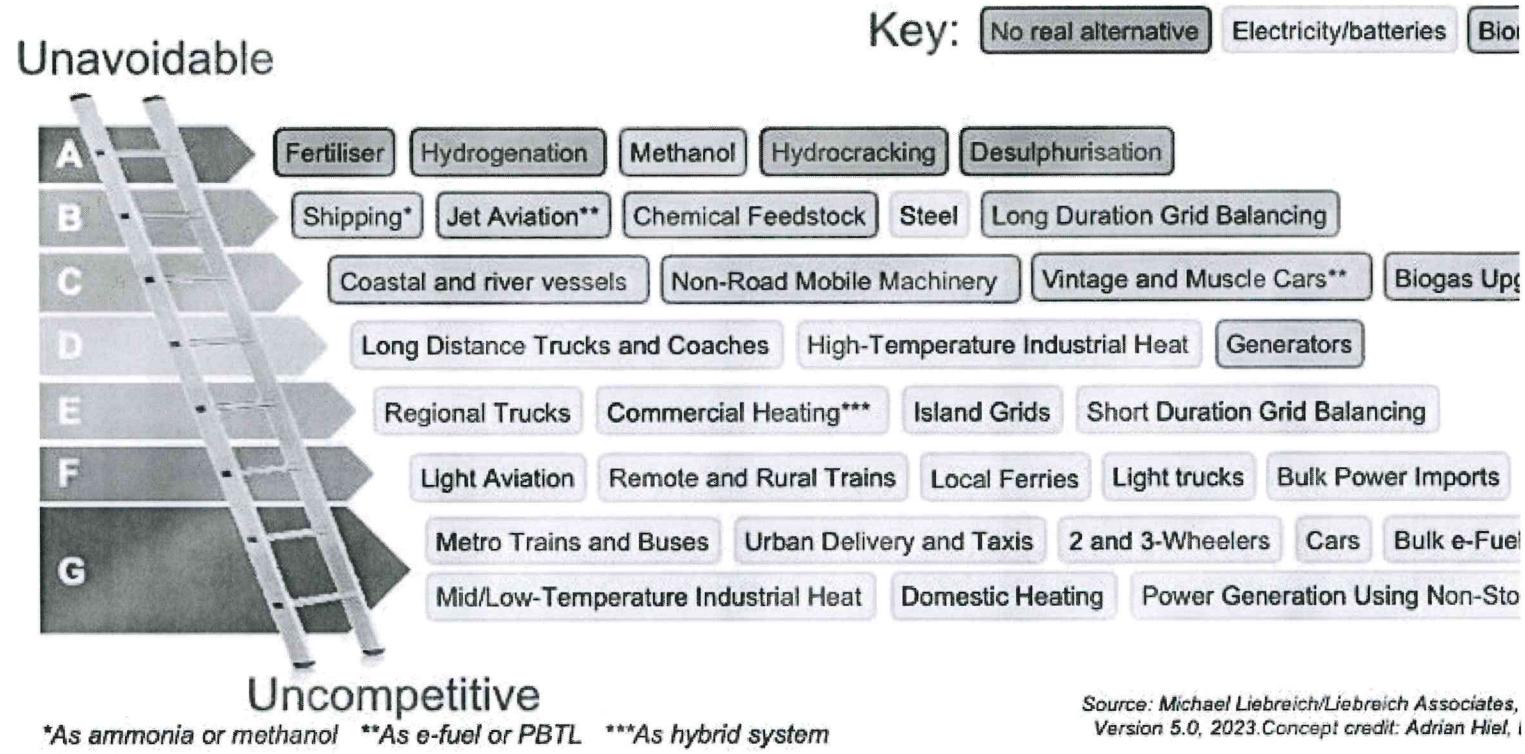
1. *Gray hydrogen* comes from steam-reformation of methane. Hydrogen is created by reacting methane with steam at high temperatures. This method produces copious levels of GHG pollution — 10-12 kg CO2 per kg of hydrogen. A kilogram of hydrogen is roughly equivalent in energy to a gallon of diesel. Site fabrication cost is about $1.50-$3.00 / kg of hydrogen (cost of transportation to user **not** included). This is by far the dominant method of fabricating hydrogen gas today.
2. Electrolysis —electricity is used to separate hydrogen from water. Subdivided into two distinct products, depending on the energy source.

a) *Blue hydrogen*: the electricity is generated by burning fossil fuels (usually natural gas)
- yields 10 kg CO2 per kg of hydrogen, costs approximately $2-3 / kg to produce (cost of transportation to user **not** included).

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b) *Green hydrogen*: the electricity is generated via renewable sources (wind, sun, hydro)
- yields 0 kg CO_2 per kg of hydrogen, production cost approximately $2 / kg (cost of transportation to user **not** included).

Hydrogen Ladder 5.0



*As ammonia or methanol **As e-fuel or PBTL ***As hybrid system

Source: Michael Liebreich/Liebreich Associates, Version 5.0, 2023.Concept credit: Adrian Hiel,

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: William M. Paparian
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 6:57 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Re: Agenda Items 16 and 17 – Hydrogen Fueling Station Phase I Contract and First Public Hydrogen Authority Membership

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Honorable Mayor Gordo and Members of the City Council:

I am writing urge the Council to reject Items 16 and 17. The 17 fuel-cell buses already ordered and the associated grant constraints are real, but they do not justify authorizing a Phase I contract and a $13.9 million Measure R request that advance a station whose costs have already risen 27 percent and whose permanent operation is not expected until 2029. Affordable green hydrogen remains unavailable; the $8–12/kg figures are non-binding, and most hydrogen continues to be produced from fossil fuels. Independent analyses consistently show higher lifecycle costs and substantially greater energy requirements for hydrogen buses compared with battery-electric alternatives. Committing additional capital now also undercuts the value of the Rollout Plan update the City itself has scheduled within 18 months.

Pasadena should minimize further spending on this path, preserve maximum flexibility, and require a current side-by-side comparison before any additional capital is committed. Transit riders and taxpayers will live with the operating costs and service consequences of this decision for decades.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

William Paparian
Former Mayor of Pasadena

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Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Rev. Dr. Tera Landers
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 9:13 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Subject: Agenda Items 16/17 - Please hit the brakes on dirty hydrogen
Attachments: PastedGraphic-2.tiff

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to **pause Items 16 and 17 before sinking more discretionary Measure R funding into the hydrogen bus program.** From an economic and environmental standpoint, hydrogen buses are not a prudent investment for Pasadena.

The costs keep rising. In May 2025, staff estimated the hydrogen fueling station at $16 million. Costs have since grown by more than $6 million, and $3 million is now proposed to come out of bus operations, money that should go toward running buses for riders.

There is currently no affordable green hydrogen supply. This spring, state regulators refused to let SoCalGas charge ratepayers $266 million for the hydrogen pipeline meant to bring it to our region, finding no demonstrated benefit to them. Hydrogen available today is mostly made from fossil gas, and even the City's own analysis shows hydrogen buses with higher upstream emissions than battery-electric buses. Battery-electric buses, by contrast, can run on increasingly clean electricity, including power from local solar.

Electric bus charging is simpler, more widely available, and easier to scale. Hydrogen fueling infrastructure remains scarce, expensive, and technically complex, which increases project risk. Even with buses already on order, Council can avoid locking in long-term fuel and infrastructure costs. The staff report itself notes that the proposed $8 to $12 per kilogram hydrogen prices are not an executed price or guaranteed supply, so we would be committing to the station and the JPA without knowing what the fuel will cost. Retail prices for 'grey' hydrogen are over $30 per kilogram and have doubled over the past several years.

Please pause these items and direct staff to return with a current, side-by-side comparison with battery-electric buses, including the hydrogen price per kilogram the City would be committing to and what future fuel commitments joining the Hydrogen Authority JPA would lead to. With the City facing financial headwinds, now is not the time to lock in an increasingly costly technology. Investing unrestricted Measure R 710 Reallocation funding in better service frequency and bus infrastructure would do far more to reduce driving and improve local air quality.

Thank you,

May your day be filled with faith, love, and purpose,
Rev. Dr. Tera Landers (she/hers)
Senior Pastor, Throop Unitarian Universalist
Research Scholar, Starr King School for the Ministry

Join us at Throop Sundays at 10:30 a.m., loving the world from the heart of Pasadena.

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Item 16 & 17



McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Ken Kules
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 9:34 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: City Council Agenda Items 16 & 17: Hydrogen Buses

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Using hydrogen to power vehicles sits alongside carbon capture as unsustainable approaches to reducing carbon emissions. I urge the City Council to avoid going down the pathway of relying on hydrogen for fueling buses.

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: J L
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 9:52 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Subject: Agenda Items 16/17 - Please don't proceed with hydrogen

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members,
I am writing to urge you to pause Items 16 and 17 before sinking more discretionary Measure R funding into the hydrogen bus program. From an economic and environmental standpoint, hydrogen buses are not a prudent investment for Pasadena.

The costs keep rising. In May 2025, staff estimated the hydrogen fueling station at $16 million. Costs have since grown by more than $6 million, and $3 million is now proposed to come out of bus operations, money that should go toward running buses for riders.

There is currently no affordable green hydrogen supply. This spring, state regulators refused to let SoCalGas charge ratepayers $266 million for the hydrogen pipeline meant to bring it to our region, finding no demonstrated benefit to them. Hydrogen available today is mostly made from fossil gas, and even the City's own analysis shows hydrogen buses with higher upstream emissions than battery-electric buses. Battery-electric buses, by contrast, can run on increasingly clean electricity, including power from local solar.

Electric bus charging is simpler, more widely available, and easier to scale. Hydrogen fueling infrastructure remains scarce, expensive, and technically complex, which increases project risk. Even with buses already on order, Council can avoid locking in long-term fuel and infrastructure costs. The staff report itself notes that the proposed $8 to $12 per kilogram hydrogen prices are not an executed price or guaranteed supply, so we would be committing to the station and the JPA without knowing what the fuel will cost. Retail prices for 'grey' hydrogen are over $30 per kilogram and have doubled over the past several years.

Please pause these items and direct staff to return with a current, side-by-side comparison with battery-electric buses, including the hydrogen price per kilogram the City would be committing to and what future fuel commitments joining the Hydrogen Authority JPA would lead to. With the City facing financial headwinds, now is not the time to lock in an increasingly costly technology. Investing unrestricted Measure R 710 Reallocation funding in better service frequency and bus infrastructure would do far more to reduce driving and improve local air quality.

Thank you,
Jeff Leon

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Noel McCarthy
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 10:40 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason
Subject: Agenda Items 16/17 - Please hit the brakes on dirty hydrogen

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to pause Items 16 and 17 before sinking more discretionary Measure R funding into the hydrogen bus program. From an economic and environmental standpoint, hydrogen buses are not a prudent investment for Pasadena. The costs keep rising. In May 2025, staff estimated the hydrogen fueling station at $16 million. Costs have since grown by more than $6 million, and $3 million is now proposed to come out of bus operations, money that should go toward running buses for riders. There is currently no affordable green hydrogen supply. This spring, state regulators refused to let SoCalGas charge ratepayers $266 million for the hydrogen pipeline meant to bring it to our region, finding no demonstrated benefit to them. Hydrogen available today is mostly made from fossil gas, and even the City's own analysis shows hydrogen buses with higher upstream emissions than battery-electric buses. Battery-electric buses, by contrast, can run on increasingly clean electricity, including power from local solar. Electric bus charging is simpler, more widely available, and easier to scale. Hydrogen fueling infrastructure remains scarce, expensive, and technically complex, which increases project risk. Even with buses already on order, Council can avoid locking in long-term fuel and infrastructure costs. The staff report itself notes that the proposed $8 to $12 per kilogram hydrogen prices are not an executed price or guaranteed supply, so we would be committing to the station and the JPA without knowing what the fuel will cost. Retail prices for 'grey' hydrogen are over $30 per kilogram and have doubled over the past several years. Please pause these items and direct staff to return with a current, side-by-side comparison with battery-electric buses, including the hydrogen price per kilogram the City would be committing to and what future fuel commitments joining the Hydrogen Authority JPA would lead to. With the City facing financial headwinds, now is not the time to lock in an increasingly costly technology. Investing unrestricted Measure R 710 Reallocation funding in better service frequency and bus infrastructure would do far more to reduce driving and improve local air quality. Thank you,

Noel McCarthy

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From:	Sam Berndt
Sent:	Tuesday, November 10, 2026 10:46 AM
To:	PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc:	Hampton, Tyron; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Masuda, Gene; Rivas, Jessica; Madison, Steve; Lyon, Jason; Gordo, Victor
Subject:	Public Comment - Agenda Items #16 and #17 - Reject Hydrogen Buses - Expensive, Inefficient, Unsafe

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Mayor and City Councilmembers,

Hydrogen fuel is a failed technology. Significant investment was made into developing it as a green technology and that investment has dried up. The only pipeline intended to move green hydrogen from the central valley to Southern California, Angeles Link, was cancelled by Southern California Gas who recognized this fact.

For good reason -- governments across the world have turned the page on Hydrogen citing high costs, environmental hazards, and safety risks. From hydrogen's affinity to damage and leak in pipes which leads to modified ozone levels and prolonged exposure to atmospheric methane, and the fact 95% of all hydrogen is produced using methane (a greenhouse gas) -- **there is no environmental argument to make this transition**.

While Agenda Item #17 cites hydrogen costs at $8 - $12 per kilogram (kg; gallon equivalent), which is already up to 2x the cost of gasoline, the reality of the cost of hydrogen is much more stark. The cost of hydrogen continues to rise, and in 2025, hydrogen in California rose to approximately $33 per kg! As investments across the world continue to wane, the increasing cost of hydrogen will be borne by those who double down on decisions made with outdated information and decide to throw good money after bad.

According to Bus CMMS, hydrogen is the most capital intensive powertrain choice for fleet operators, and is approximately $85,500 compared to the annual cost of $57,850 for a battery electric bus -- factoring in only purchase price and maintenance. Battery electric buses consume approximately 1 kWh / mile; using PWP medium commercial electrical rates that is approximately $0.14 per mile. Recent research shows that hydrogen buses can travel approximately 15.38 miles per kg in cities; using recent hydrogen rates this is equivalent to $2.14 per mile -- a 15 fold increase per mile compared to electric vehicles. **Assuming 100-mile-days, each hydrogen bus will cost $78,110 in fuel compared to $5,110 for battery electric buses. This brings the annual cost for hydrogen buses to $163,110 compared to battery electric buses at $62,960.**

Even assuming the inaccurate quoted cost for hydrogen of $8-$12 per kg, this results in an average hydrogen fuel cost of $23,732 per year -- a nearly 5 fold increase in fuel costs compared to electric buses, resulting in a grand total of $109,232 per year for hydrogen buses versus $62,960 for battery electric buses.

I urge you to reject this feckless investment into hydrogen infrastructure, sell off existing hydrogen bus assets, and move toward battery electric buses and infrastructure.

Sam Berndt

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Andrew Cobb
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 11:02 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Public comment items 16 + 17 on the agenda

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Hello I am writing in strong agreement with councilmember Cole on the Hydrogen bus issue. I wrote a blog post with similar concerns earlier this year
https://www.pasadenacsc.org/blog/im-worried-about-pasadenas-hydrogen-bus-plan
And I think this is a big investment into an unproven and not very green technology.
As a Pasadena Educator I know how critical Pasadena Transit is for my students being in class every day and betting that service on a risky technology can have really bad outcomes for my students and PUSD as a whole.

Andrew Cobb

11/10/2026
Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From:
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 11:10 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Items 16 1n 17

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Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council:

I am writing to not to adopt Items 16 and 17 and tourge caution regarding Pasadena's investment in hydrogen-powered buses and related fueling infrastructure. While hydrogen buses are often described as "zero-emission" vehicles, that characterization applies only to tailpipe emissions and does not account for the full environmental and financial costs of producing, transporting, and fueling hydrogen.

In January 2023, the Council adopted Resolution 9977, committing Pasadena to sourcing 100 percent of its electricity from carbon-free resources by 2030. In December 2025, the Council approved the Optimized Strategic Plan to achieve that goal on an hourly basis. Pasadena is making significant investments in a clean electric grid. The question before the Council is whether our transit fleet should run on that increasingly clean local grid or on a fuel that must be produced elsewhere and delivered to Pasadena.

A true assessment of environmental impact requires examining the entire carbon footprint of a fuel, not simply what comes out of a vehicle's tailpipe.

Most hydrogen used today is produced from natural gas. The production process releases significant greenhouse gas emissions, estimated at roughly 12 kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent for every kilogram of hydrogen produced. For a transit bus, that translates into substantial upstream emissions before the fuel is even liquefied, transported, and dispensed.

Even when hydrogen is produced using renewable electricity, it remains a far less energy-efficient pathway than direct electrification. Studies consistently show that hydrogen-powered buses require approximately three to four times more clean electricity per mile traveled than battery-electric buses operating on the same renewable power.

The City's own May 2025 analysis reflects this reality. According to that report, hydrogen buses would generate higher upstream emissions than battery-electric buses, estimated at 920 metric tons annually compared with 654 metric tons for battery-electric alternatives.

The economic challenges are equally concerning. Staff estimated the cost of the hydrogen fueling station at approximately $16 million in May 2025. The current project cost now exceeds $23 million, including approximately $3 million drawn from transit operating funds. In addition, the staff report notes that projected hydrogen fuel prices of $8 to $12 per kilogram are not based on an executed contract or guaranteed long-term supply agreement.

Operating costs also deserve scrutiny. Real-world transit experience in Europe indicates that hydrogen buses can cost more than twice as much to operate per kilometer as battery-electric buses. Before Pasadena commits to decades of fueling and infrastructure costs, the Council should have a complete understanding of the long-term financial implications.

Pasadena has already begun building the foundation for a local clean-energy economy. Pasadena Water and Power's planned 25-megawatt battery storage project at the Glenarm Power Plant, expected to come online in 2027, will help store renewable energy for use during peak demand periods. The Optimized Strategic Plan also calls for additional local solar generation and energy storage. Every kilowatt-hour generated and used locally strengthens our energy independence, keeps economic value within the community, and supports the City's climate goals.

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Battery-electric buses align directly with that vision. Hydrogen, by contrast, requires Pasadena to purchase and import fuel produced elsewhere, adding costs and inefficiencies while reducing the benefits of investments in our local clean-energy infrastructure.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Council to pause Items 16 and 17 and direct staff to return with a comprehensive side-by-side comparison of hydrogen and battery-electric buses. This analysis should include:

- Full lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions for both technologies;
- Capital and operating costs over the expected life of the fleet;
- The projected and contracted price of hydrogen fuel;
- The length and terms of any fuel supply commitments;
- The potential obligations associated with participation in the Hydrogen Authority JPA; and
- A comparison of how each technology supports Pasadena's adopted climate and clean-energy goals.

Thank you for your service to Pasadena and for your commitment to making informed decisions that advance both fiscal responsibility and environmental sustainability.

Sincerely,

Anthony Manousos
District 1

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: cityclerk
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 11:23 AM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Soo, Christine
Subject: FW: Agenda Items 16 and 17 — Reject the hydrogen fueling station on Tuesday: PDOT's case does not hold up

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From: Victor Caballero
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 11:21:35 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk
Subject: Agenda Items 16 and 17 — Reject the hydrogen fueling station on Tuesday: PDOT's case does not hold up

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Please distribute the letter below to Mayor Gordo and all Councilmembers and include it in the public record for the Tuesday, November 10, 2026 meeting, Items 16 and 17. The letter is also published at https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Faltapasa.com%2Fopen-letter-to-the-mayor-and-council-reject-the-hydrogen-fueling-station-on-tuesday%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cnmcmillan%40cityofpasadena.net%7Cb6f7d72dd45e47ce873408df3f6014e6%7C82d9fc002c664402a28fc6bcdc32e491%7C1%7C0%7C639299354064049936%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ynEgGbJH7UpdF%2Boe5oYnSXui8NQ6x8WT7v0QAD3wJ%2Bs%3D&reserved=0

Dear Mayor Gordo and Members of the City Council,

I write as a Pasadena resident ahead of Tuesday's meeting to urge you to reject Item 16, the first-phase contract for the hydrogen fueling station for Pasadena Transit buses, and Item 17, the resolution to join the First Public Hydrogen Authority — and to support the position Councilmember Rick Cole has laid out for his constituents. I add my voice to the residents who have already written you on these items, including former Mayor William Paparian. The Department of Transportation will present this as the routine completion of decisions already made. It is not. It is the moment the Council locks in the most expensive possible version of a transition the state does require — but does not require us to do this way.

The state mandate does not require hydrogen. CARB's Innovative Clean Transit rule requires zero-emission buses. It does not require fuel cells. The 2023 rollout plan that chose hydrogen for Pasadena Transit was the Department's own recommendation, sold to this Council on cost and fuel assumptions that have already failed: Item 16 asks you to award $6,884,770 to Clean Energy Fuels Corp. for Phase 1 design-build services alone, on a station project now priced above $23 million — $6 million above the estimate presented earlier this year — before a single gallon of hydrogen has been priced. The only fuel figures anywhere in the record, $8 to $12 per kilogram, are by the staff report's own terms not an executed price or a guaranteed supply.
Battery-electric satisfies the mandate — the Department knows it, because it chose battery-electric for Dial-A-Ride, and its one battery-electric bus has been in service since May 2025. Hydrogen was a staff choice, not a state requirement, and it should be re-examined like one.

Nor is hydrogen the cleaner choice on the City's own numbers. Pasadena has committed itself to 100% carbon-free electricity by the end of

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2030 (Resolution 9977), and Pasadena Water and Power is building local solar and storage — including the 25 MW Glenarm battery, due online in
2027 — to get there. Battery-electric buses plug directly into that future, on our own grid. The Department's own May 2025 analysis shows hydrogen buses with higher upstream emissions than battery-electric
buses: 920 versus 654 metric tons a year. Hydrogen made from natural gas carries a heavy carbon ledger before it is ever liquefied and trucked to Pasadena; hydrogen made from clean electricity takes three to four times as much of that electricity per mile as charging a bus with it directly. "Zero emission" describes the tailpipe, not the fuel.

The timing is backwards even on staff's own schedule. Staff plan to update the Zero-Emission Bus Rollout Plan within 18 months — yet Item
16 would commit the city now to a station sized for as many as 45 hydrogen buses, before that update is done. Building the infrastructure first and finishing the plan afterward is how a city locks itself into a course it can no longer afford to reconsider.

The buses already in production are an argument against PDOT's judgment, not for its plan. Yes, 17 fuel-cell buses are on order. That is what happens when a department commits to vehicles before it has secured the fuel, the fuel's price, or the station to dispense it: the city ends up holding assets it cannot use unless it approves the next, larger check. A mistake in the tens of millions does not justify compounding it into a roughly $70 million five-year commitment — buses, station, and fuel — with decades of the most expensive fuel in transit on the other side. The question on Tuesday is not whether the first mistake was made. It is whether the Council will keep paying for it.

"Green hydrogen is available locally" is not an answer; it is a slogan. Available at what price, under what contract, for how long? Staff has never placed a contracted, affordable green hydrogen price before this Council — and Item 16's own recommendation concedes it:
the forecasted hydrogen-supply costs will not be presented until staff returns for Phase II, after the design money is spent and the city's leverage is gone. You are being asked to build the station first and discover the fuel cost afterward — and every dollar of that fuel cost comes out of the transit budget, on top of the $3 million already being taken from transit operating funds to cover the station's overrun. In a city facing Pasadena's budget challenges, with great needs competing for every dollar, spending this kind of money — and this much staff time and consultant money chasing it — is a fool's errand.

The grant money does not make this free, and the project is already behind on its own terms. The station's funding is principally a state TIRCP grant matched with more than $10 million in local Prop A and Prop C transit funds — real local money that could run buses — and Item 16 also advances a $13.9 million Measure R request. Grants pay for construction; they do not pay for decades of fuel, operations, and maintenance, which land on Pasadena. The overall program is priced at
$150.7 million against the $100 million-plus in grants the Department cites, leaving tens of millions in local exposure, and the future of the federal funding behind later phases is genuinely in question.

And this Department's estimates have a track record the Council should weigh. The Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility — the other half of this same zero-emission program — was priced at about $30 million in the FY 2022 capital program, $62.4 million in the 2022 Measure R project list, and $100 million in the current capital program; staff's own presentation this September put the forecast near
$91 million, with roughly $18 million still unfunded and another request to Metro planned for more money. The fuel-cell buses themselves, approved at $32 million barely a year ago, already needed a $2.4 million "cost adjustment" grant this past July. A station promised for 2027 is now contemplated to finish construction at the end of 2029, after this Department went to the California Transportation Commission for a 12-month extension because it could not award its contract on time — so the buses will arrive with nowhere to fuel, and the Council is told the only answer is to approve the next phase faster. Every number this Department has given this Council on this program has grown, and every date has slipped.

Meanwhile, look at what goes begging. This same week, Pasadena is learning that Measure PFD — the measure that would fund its fire protection needs — will likely fall a few hundred votes short of the two-thirds it requires, even with nearly two-thirds of voters saying yes. Fire Stations 33 and 37 still have to be dealt with; as Councilmember Hampton put it this week, doing nothing is simply not an option — and the city will now have to find the money from reserves, grants, and financing it has not identified. That is Pasadena's real queue of needs. A city that cannot fund its fire stations should think very hard before committing tens of millions in local funds — and $3 million out of transit operations — to the most expensive fuel experiment in its history.

And a word about this Council's own responsibility. The rollout plan, the bus purchase, and every step since were approved by this Council, on the Department's representations. Verifying those representations was never the staff's job — it was yours. A

council that accepts the assumptions behind a $150.7 million program without independent scrutiny has not simply been misled; it has declined to look. One member of this Council did the reading, asked the hard questions, and has stood largely alone for more than a year while the rest went along with the Director. Tuesday is this Council's chance to do the job it was elected to do — before the next, larger check is written, not after.

I therefore ask the Council to:

1. Vote no — or at minimum defer — Item 16 on Tuesday, and decline Item 17's Hydrogen Authority membership until the Zero-Emission Bus Rollout Plan update is complete and the fuel economics are public; 2. Order an independent review, not conducted by the Department of Transportation, presenting a side-by-side carbon ledger and total cost of ownership comparison of the hydrogen path against a battery-electric path over the same horizon; 3. Require staff to present a contracted green hydrogen fuel price — the price per kilogram and the length of any supply commitment — plus a costed plan for the 17 buses already on order, and an accounting of what future fuel commitments Item 17's JPA membership would lead to, before any station award returns to the Council; and 4. Protect transit operating funds for service, not for subsidizing an unproven fuel.

Councilmember Cole has raised these concerns for more than a year, largely on his own. He is right on the facts and right on the finances, and he deserves the Council's support — and its votes — on Tuesday.

Respectfully,
Victor Caballero
Pasadena, California

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Denise
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 12:41 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Hampton, Tyron; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Jones, Justin; Lyon, Jason; Thyret, Pam
Subject: Agenda Items 16/17 - Please hit the brakes on dirty hydrogen

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Dear Mayor Gordo and City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to pause Items 16 and 17 before sinking more discretionary Measure R funding into the hydrogen bus program. From an economic and environmental standpoint, hydrogen buses are not a prudent investment for Pasadena.

The costs keep rising. In May 2025, staff estimated the hydrogen fueling station at $16 million. Costs have since grown by more than $6 million, and $3 million is now proposed to come out of bus operations, money that should go toward running buses for riders.

There is currently no affordable green hydrogen supply. This spring, state regulators refused to let SoCalGas charge ratepayers $266 million for the hydrogen pipeline meant to bring it to our region, finding no demonstrated benefit to them. Hydrogen available today is mostly made from fossil gas, and even the City's own analysis shows hydrogen buses with higher upstream emissions than battery-electric buses. Battery-electric buses, by contrast, can run on increasingly clean electricity, including power from local solar.

Electric bus charging is simpler, more widely available, and easier to scale. Hydrogen fueling infrastructure remains scarce, expensive, and technically complex, which increases project risk. Even with buses already on order, Council can avoid locking in long-term fuel and infrastructure costs. The staff report itself notes that the proposed $8 to $12 per kilogram hydrogen prices are not an executed price or guaranteed supply, so we would be committing to the station and the JPA without knowing what the fuel will cost. Retail prices for 'grey' hydrogen are over $30 per kilogram and have doubled over the past several years.

Please pause these items and direct staff to return with a current, side-by-side comparison with battery-electric buses, including the hydrogen price per kilogram the City would be committing to and what future fuel commitments joining the Hydrogen Authority JPA would lead to. With the City facing financial headwinds, now is not the time to lock in an increasingly costly technology. Investing unrestricted Measure R 710 Reallocation funding in better service frequency and bus infrastructure would do far more to reduce driving and improve local air quality.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Denise Munro Robb, Ph.D.

Pasadena, CA 91106

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"Those Who Can Make You Believe Absurdities Can MakeYou Commit Atrocities" (Possibly Voltaire)

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Claudia Funke
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 12:49 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Lyon, Jason; Rivas, Jessica; Cole, Rick; Hampton, Tyron; Jones, Justin; Masuda, Gene; Madison, Steve
Subject: No on Items 16 and 17

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members,

I write as a voting resident of District 7 to ask that Items 16 and 17 be paused and discretionary funding for the hydrogen bus program be denied at this time.

In the 2010s, hydrogen fuel cells seemed like a promising technology. However other cities that implemented hydrogen buses before us have walked away from their investments. Eventually, the costs and supply issues for hydrogen fueling argued against continuation. BEVs (Battery Electric Vehicles) are the vehicles of choice for public bus fleets that are on course to be carbon-free. This is a market-driven decision. See especially the recent uptick in the European Union under Buses in this link: https://alternative-fuels-observatory.ec.europa.eu/transport-mode/road/european-union-eu27/vehicles-and-fleet

Really, there is only one reason why hydrogen is still on the table in California, and that is the strength of the fossil fuel industry here and their influence and interest in the continued use of their infrastructure and products. The green hydrogen pipeline won't be built; any hydrogen in the near future will be grey dirty hydrogen at a high cost. As the *LA Times* reported on August 17, 2026, "Some 95% of hydrogen used today is made from natural gas." https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2026-08-17/hydrogen-failed-as-car-fuel-now-californias-bet-on-it-for-green-energy-is-fading-too

And really, there is only one reason why Pasadena's DOT is proceeding and asking for this funding; because they don't want to admit a mistake made, induced by subsidies they jumped at. Subsidies have driven the adoption of hydrogen fuel cell buses, and actual market costs are now driving their abandonment.

The objections to electric buses given by one council member citing DOT - insufficient charge to cover routes and reduced operational efficiency on inclines - are all issues that other cities have solved. My goodness, Oslo, Norway, a city with some pretty steep inclines, has a fleet of over 400 electric buses. Instead of justifying why it must stay with hydrogen, the DOT should be looking at how Pasadena could make the long-range, less expensive electric choice work for the city, and not just throw good money after bad.

I have attended many City Council and Municipal Services Committee meetings over the last few years and, regrettably, I have come to the conclusion that the city is not careful in how it spends its money. All the consultant fees, the presentations of ridiculous advertising campaigns paid for on "discretionary" funds, a library rebuild that should have been funded by private donations and not a bond issue: it's disheartening in these times when so many people are hurting. I sadly conclude that the city doesn't run a tight ship, because it feels it doesn't have to, because there is an affluent constituency who will suffer the ridiculous taxes - sales, property, parcel, you name it (well, you do).

You will receive many letters from others who are against the hydrogen bus transition. I urge you not to fund it any further. Please pause and ask for City staff to rethink.

Respectfully,
Claudia Funke

District 7

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Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Denise Jones
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 2:29 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: November 10 City Council Meeting - Hydrogen Buses Comment

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Dear Paadena City Council:

I do not think hydrogen fueled buses in Pasadena make sense and would oppose hydrogen transit. As I understand it, there is currently no "green" hydrogen available at an affordable price. I support moving forward with electric powered buses.

With only “grey” hydrogen available, the goal for clean and renewable energy in Pasadena would not be met. The high cost of hydrogen plus the added cost of fuel stations and mechanism for import of hydrogen seems cost prohibitive, a burden on the City budget, and would result in more burden for residents already facing the challenges of rising prices.

Please vote “no” on this agenda item.

Thank you.

Denise Jones, Resident
District One

11/10/2026
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McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Colin Bogart
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 2:30 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Hampton, Tyron; Bernard, Nicole (Dist1); Bell, Cushon
Subject: City Council Meeting 11-10-26 Public Comment - Agenda Items 16 and 17 - Hydrogen buses

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Councilmembers,

Please vote NO on agenda Items 16 and 17. Hydrogen buses are a bad investment and we need to change course to battery electric buses. I understand that we'll lose money by switching, but we'll lose even more money if we continue to invest in a technology that is not anticipated to become viable. Hydrogen buses may have been a good choice in the past, but we should change course now and not throw good money after bad. I'm sure it's a hard decision to make, but I believe we must.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Colin Bogart

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Item 16 & 17

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Nancy Verdin
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 3:39 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Public Comment: Agenda Items 16 and 17

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Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

My name is Nancy Verdin and I live in District 1. I'm writing to ask you to vote no on items 16 and 17 and pause further spending until the city completes its updated bus plan.

I support moving toward a cleaner transportation plan, but I'm concerned about our city committing to a fueling station for 45 buses before we know whether that's what Pasadena needs. I would also like the City to have a clearer understanding of long-term hydrogen fuel costs and how those expenses could affect funding reliable, frequent bus service.

Please take the time to evaluate the options, including battery-electric buses, before making additional commitments. Residents who depend on public transit deserve a plan that is both environmentally responsible and financially sustainable.

Thank you for considering my comments!

Nancy Verdin

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McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: humaira
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2026 4:47 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Say No to Hydrogen Buses - agenda items 16 & 17

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As a regular rider of Pasadena Transit buses, I'm going to emphasize that relying on a large fleet of hydrogen buses will ultimately hurt the people that they are meant to help – transit riders. I am fortunate in that I also have access to a car and also live near the Metro A Line. But many people who ride Pasadena buses rely on them almost exclusively for access to work, school, shopping, and everything else in daily live. A disproportionate number of bus riders are lower income or have a physical condition that prevents them from driving. Significant numbers of younger residents (who do not have a drivers license and/or access to a car) also rely on our buses to get to school, go to work, etc.

When buses break down (a far bigger issue with hydrogen buses than electric) or skyrocketing costs lead to cutting routes and/or decreasing frequency it will have a significant negative impact on the people who rely on our public transit.

I'm a big fan of Pasadena Transit because it provides an important public good, the buses are clean and comfortable, and the drivers are professional and courteous. We need to be doing more to promote the use of public transit, not investing in a technology with a very very high likelihood of increasing costs and negatively impacting service and failing to provide meaningful benefits to the environment.

I urge you to hit the PAUSE button and vote no on Item 16 and 17. Do not risk the future of our Pasadena Transit buses by continuing to pursue a technology that so many other cities around the world are avoiding – for good reasons.

Humaira Afzal
District 7

Sent with Proton Mail secure email.

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