



October 19, 2022  
City Council meeting  
General Public Comment

Dear Councilmembers:

**Please agendize a presentation and discussion regarding Professors Harris and Rodnyansky's [report](#) about arrest and dispatch trends in South Pasadena at the next Public Safety Commission meeting.**

In August, 2022, Professors Jorgen Harris and Seva Rodnyansky, from the Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College, released a report regarding arrests and dispatch activity in South Pasadena. The report was based on five years of dispatch records and ten years of arrest reports the City provided Care First South Pasadena pursuant to the California Public Records Act.

The report found, among other things, that Black and Latinx people are overrepresented among arrestees relative to their population in South Pasadena. Since the report's release, we understand there have been some questions about the report's methodology, and some theories offered to explain the racial disparities in arrest patterns identified in the report.

**The report warrants a presentation by its authors, with an opportunity for questions and discussion involving city staff and PSC commissioners.** There, the community can hear from the Chief and other city leaders directly; they can provide context about the complete picture surrounding the data and findings.

As recent events surrounding Los Angeles City Councilmembers make clear, **conversations behind closed doors about matters of public interest undermine the community's trust in the integrity of its governing bodies.** Here, **the report shows SPPD disproportionately arrests Black and Latinx people.** To date, **City staff and electeds have opted to dismiss the report outside of the public eye,** rather than provide a public forum to discuss the data, methodology, and findings. But, it's not too late to remedy this by inviting the professors to present their report with time for questions and answers, and response by City staff.

We appreciate that the City is undertaking an operational assessment of the police department. The Public Safety Commission gaining a better understanding of the report's data sources, methodology, findings, and limitations will advance—not interfere with—the goals of the assessment, *i.e.*, increased transparency about the Department's operations and any areas of improvement, through a lens of social and racial justice.