

4.1 Reinstatement of the San José Police Department Horse Mounted Unit

A proposal with the San José Police Foundation to restore a century-old tradition of excellence in community policing

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A Proud History of Mounted Policing

1

1911

San Jose's Horse Mounted Unit established, becoming one of the first mounted police units in California

2

1918-2017

Over a century of distinguished service to the community, building trust and enhancing public safety

3

2018

HMU disbanded due to fiscal and staffing constraints, with equipment and horses surplus

4

2025

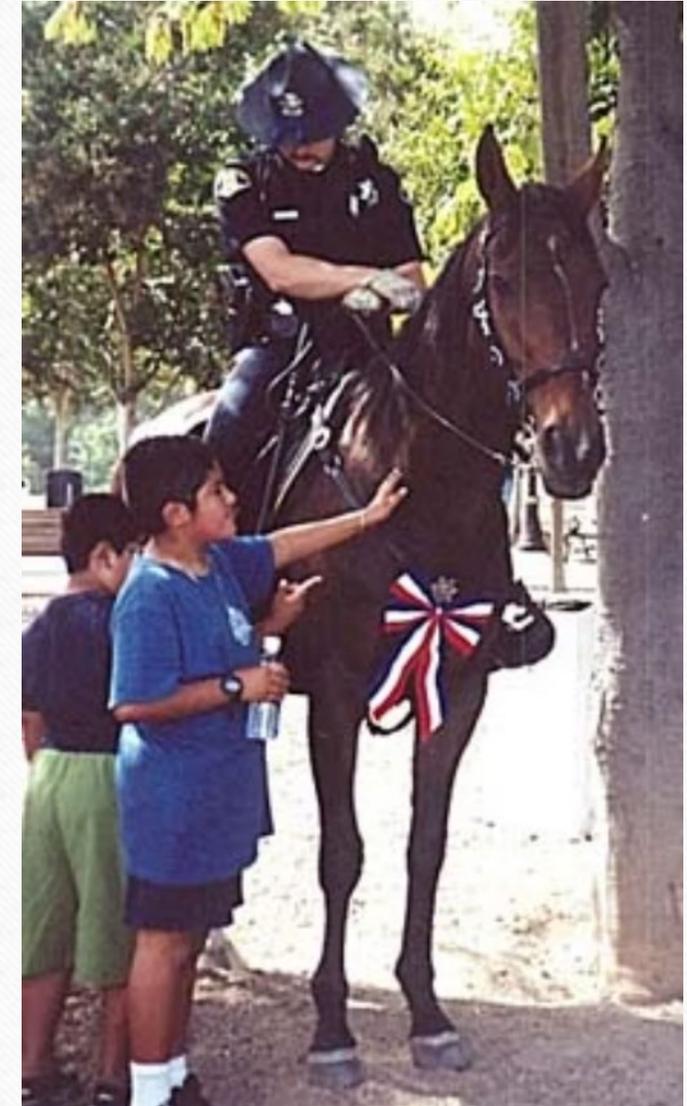
Proposed reinstatement as a collateral, part-time operation to enhance Downtown presence



The Opportunity: Restoring a Vital Resource

The Police Department seeks to reinstate the HMU as a part-time operation to:

- Increase uniformed police presence Downtown
- Enhance enforcement capabilities for nuisance and low-level crimes
- Strengthen community-police relationships
- Fill six additional walking beats per week through volunteer officers





Funding Request: One-Time Investment

\$390,000

Initial Equipment

6 horses, 2 trucks, 2 trailers, uniforms, and initial training

\$31,000

First-Year Care

Feed, veterinary services, farrier services, and stable maintenance

\$0

Personnel Costs

Covered by existing Police Department overtime budget for walking beats

The Foundation is being asked to fund initial costs only, with no request or expectation for ongoing expenditures as part of this specific request.

“Ambassadors of Goodwill”

Increased Visibility

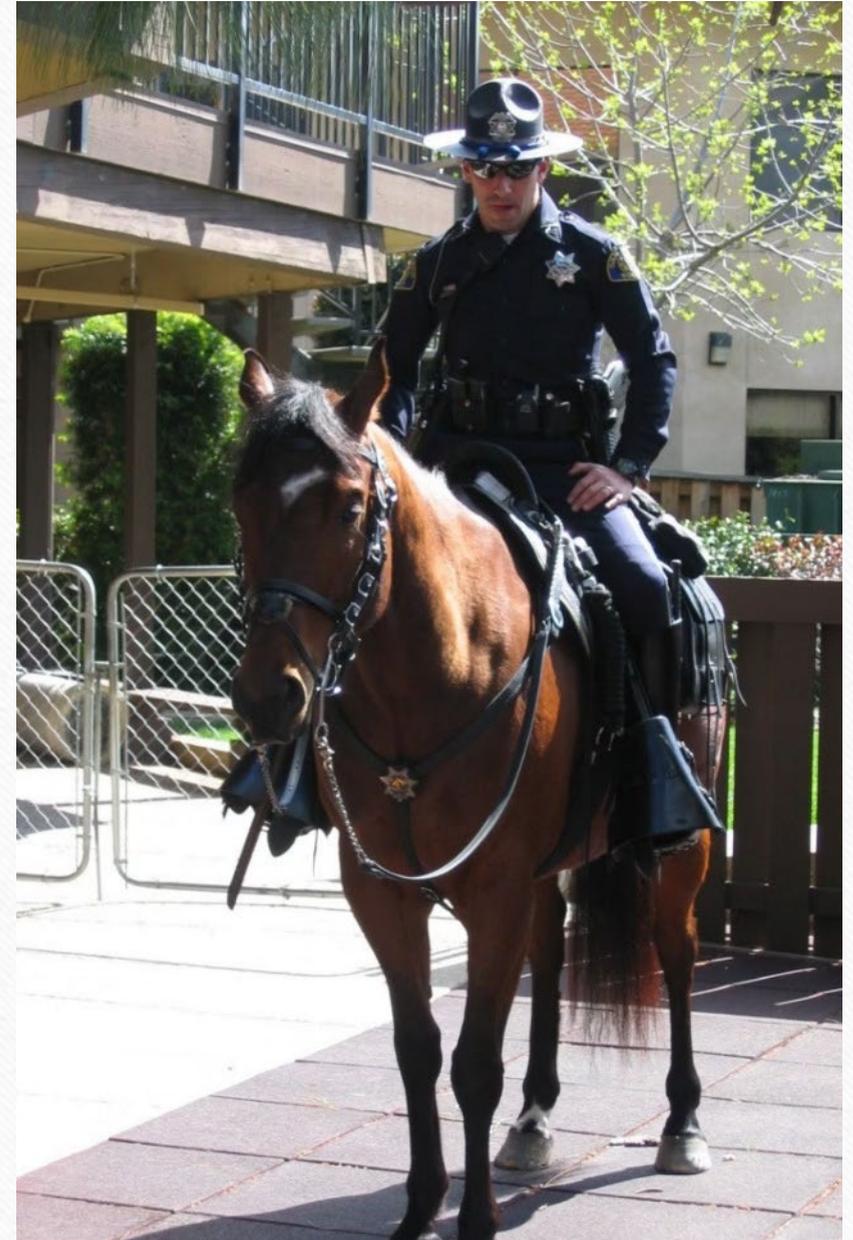
Officers on horseback have an elevated line of sight, allowing them to observe a broader area and serve as a visible deterrent

Enhanced Community Engagement

Horses naturally attract positive attention and facilitate conversations, making mounted officers uniquely effective at relationship-building

Greater Mobility and Reach

Mounted officers can traverse areas more quickly than officers on foot while remaining approachable at street level



Implementation Plan

Phase 1: Initial Launch

Fund smaller number of horses/officers/tack and a single truck and trailer (\$150,000-\$200,000) within first few months

Phase 2: Full Implementation

Complete the project to the ultimate fundraising goal over the rest of the year to August 2026



Phase 3: Operational Model

24 volunteer officers creating 6 mounted shifts per week
(2 officers × 3 days)

The existing stables have already been renovated/refurbished and are ready for horses.

Restoring a Legacy of Excellence

1

Unique Opportunity

Restore a century-old tradition with minimal impact to the General Fund

2

Dual Benefits

Enhanced enforcement and strengthened community relationships

3

Lasting Impact

Create a visible symbol of San Jose's commitment to innovative policing

Together, we can bring back the Horse Mounted Unit and write the next chapter in its storied history

Questions?

