



CITY OF MINNETRISTA

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION/DISCUSSION

Subject: Item #6a Addition of a Police Officer

Prepared By: Jasper Kruggel, City Administrator and
Craig Squires, Director of Public Safety

Meeting Date: October 6th 2025

Madam Mayor and Council Members,

I was asked to provide input on the proposed addition of a 16th officer to our Department. Much of the reasoning behind this request stems from preparing for the new 2026 Paid Family and Medical Leave legislation, which allows up to 20 weeks of leave for qualifying life events such as serious medical conditions or the birth of a child. Adding staff also helps with recent growth and potential future growth within the City.

Currently, we have one officer on extended leave and are already aware of another who will be taking leave in 2026. With this new law, the potential for multiple extended absences increases. Adding a 16th officer will help ensure continued road coverage during these absences—and when fully staffed, will also allow us to enhance our community presence and safety.

This matter was discussed and approved by the personnel committee.

Please see below for more detailed justification:

1. Increased Community and Officer Safety

With population growth, we must adapt to maintain our commitment to public safety. A 16th officer brings us closer to our goal of 24-hour double coverage, which offers:

Faster Response Times: More available officers means quicker responses to emergencies and calls for service.

Improved Officer Safety: Additional staff helps ensure officers are not responding to high-risk situations alone.

Mission Statement:

The City of Minnetrista will deliver quality services in a cost effective and innovative manner and provide opportunities for a high quality of life while protecting natural resources and maintaining a rural character.

Greater Community Visibility: Consistent presence deters crime and builds public trust.

Although vacation, sick leave, and training will still impact coverage, this staffing increase will significantly reduce those impacts.

2. Improved Morale and Retention

Officers currently work alone during certain shifts, which affects morale, wellness, and safety. Increased staffing:

- Improves team morale

- Reduces burnout

- Supports long-term retention of skilled officers

This is not just an operational benefit—it's a long-term investment in workforce stability.

3. Coverage for Leave and Overtime Reduction

With extended leave becoming more common due to new legislation, maintaining shift coverage without relying on costly overtime is essential.

- Lower Overtime Costs

- Less Officer Fatigue

- Better Work-Life Balance for Staff

4. Support for Community Events and Court Obligations

Our officers regularly cover events and court-related duties, such as:

- Town festivals

- School sporting events

- Court appearances and subpoenas

- Traffic saturation and safety campaigns

These obligations often pull officers from regular patrol. A larger staff helps ensure road coverage isn't compromised.

5. Enhanced Training Capacity

Several current officers serve as field trainers. With more staff, we can:

- Distribute training duties more evenly

- Expand in-house training such as MILO and drone operations

- Reduce disruptions to patrol during training periods

6. Support for Investigations and Follow-Up

Investigations are increasingly complex, requiring:

- Digital evidence collection

- Added subpoenas and warrants

Patrol officers are taking on more of these tasks. Additional staff enables us to manage this workload without delaying response to active calls.

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7. Proactive Planning for Growth

Given the time it takes to recruit, screen, and train an officer, we must plan ahead. Proactive staffing ensures we stay ahead of demand instead of playing catch-up.

8. Budget Considerations

The projected cost for a 16th officer is approximately \$140,000 (+/- 10%), depending on experience. If a good candidate is found, Fund Balance would be used.

In addition to wages, a new position will lead to increased costs associated with uniforms, training, and fuel. Other officers will also receive a small temporary increase in wages for the time spent as a field training officer (FTO) for the new officer.

Our current vehicle fleet can support the new officer, so no additional squad purchase is needed at this time. However, we may see faster mileage accumulation, potentially requiring earlier replacement of existing vehicles.

In Summary

Adding a 16th officer is a strategic step that aligns with both the operational needs of the department and the growing expectations of our community. It ensures continuity of service during extended leaves, improves morale and safety, and prepares us for future demands.

<u>Recommended City Council Action:</u> Motion to approve addition of a 16th Police Officer
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Does Recommended Action meet City Mission Statement? ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Does Recommended Action meet City Goals/Priorities?
Explain:

☒ Yes ☐ No

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