

**CORRESPONDENCE
FROM
SEPTEMBER 27, 2021
CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

Iraheta, Alba

From: Rivas, Jessica
Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2021 10:59 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: FW: Raymond Avenue Surveillance follow up

Jessica C. Rivas
Councilmember, District 5
City of Pasadena
626-298-5120

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From: Lawrence Carroll <[lcarroll@cityofpasadena.net](#)>
Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2021 4:24 PM
To: Rivas, Jessica <jerivas@cityofpasadena.net>; Morales, Margo <mlmorales@cityofpasadena.net>; Mermell, Steve <smermell@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: Re: Raymond Avenue Surveillance follow up

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Hi Councilmember Rivas,

Just following up with my comment of support for the gun shot surveillance program that'll be on the agenda for the upcoming city council meeting. I haven't seen the agenda posted on the city's website and wanted to make sure you received my comment in time for the public safety meeting today at 4:30pm.

Safety of our neighborhood is top priority for our small community. With the recent gunshot incidents happening within weeks of each other, it's clear that the threat of gun violence on and near Raymond Avenue is becoming more frequent. I am happy to speak publicly to help push this program through to approval if need be.

Please let me know if I need to submit my comment of support through any additional channels.

Thank you!
Lawrence

On Thu, Sep 23, 2021 at 12:43 PM Lawrence Carroll

wrote:

Hi Councilmember Rivas,

Great seeing you yesterday! Just following up on the upcoming city council agenda and the surveillance item. I don't see the upcoming agenda posted yet so I'm not sure exactly what I'm supposed to comment on by 4:30pm today.

09/27/2021

Item 11

Mind assisting me with a link so I can share with the rest of the neighborhood?

Thank you!

Lawrence

--

Lawrence Carroll

Business Publicist

Instagram [\[link\]](#)

Twitter [\[link\]](#)

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Lawrence Carroll

Business Publicist

Instagram [\[link\]](#)

Twitter [\[link\]](#)

Iraheta, Alba

From: Leah Bartels
Sent: Sunday, September 26, 2021 6:57 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: 9/27 council meeting, item 11

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Per item 11 for the 9/27 meeting, I would like to make the following public comment:

I am horrified that Pasadena would even consider spending such an immense amount of money on such invasive surveillance technology. ShotSpotter does nothing to actually address the root causes of violent crime; all it will do is further police and punish an already traumatized community. Pasadena needs violence interruption programs that will actually transform the community for the better: jobs programs, investment, substance abuse treatment, and other interventions focused on creating opportunity rather than punitive measures or constant surveillance. I beg you not to purchase ShotSpotter, which is a nightmarish overstep.

Leah Bartels
Glendale, CA

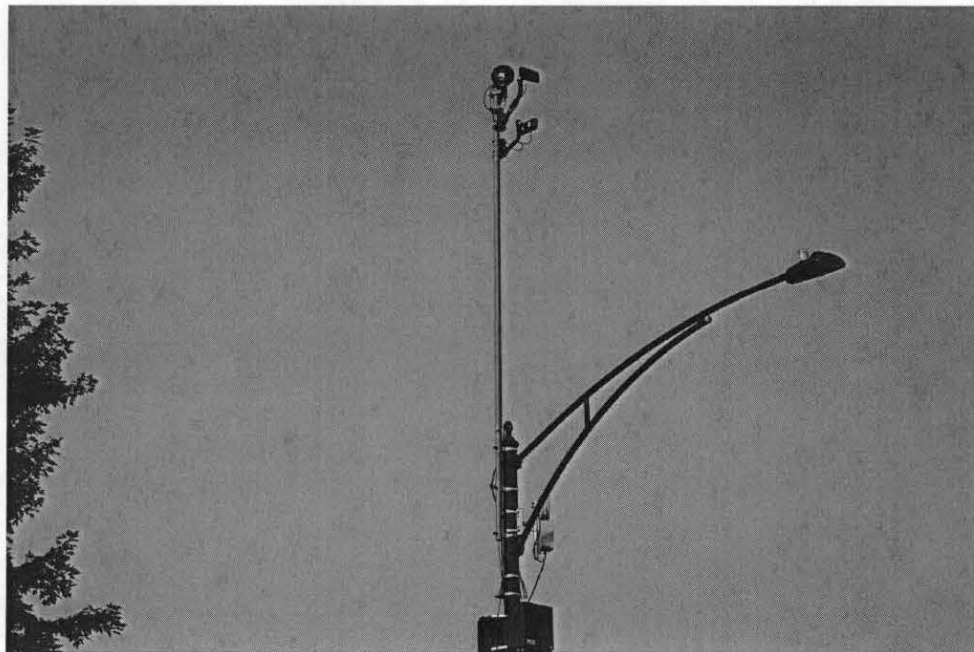
At the Virtual Table with Laura Washington & Lynn Sweet

CITY HALL NEWS CHICAGO

City's watchdog finds ShotSpotter rarely leads to evidence of gun crimes, investigatory stops

The MacArthur Justice Center said the report "reaffirms the truth" that ShotSpotter is "wholly unreliable and fundamentally dangerous to the communities of color on Chicago's South and West sides where it is employed."

By Tom Schuba and Fran Spielman | Aug 24, 2021, 10:04am CDT



ShotSpotter equipment at Stony Island Avenue and East 63rd Street earlier this month. | Charles Rex Arbogast/AP

09/27/2021

Item 11

Submitted by Councilmember Kennedy

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The city's top watchdog issued a scathing report Tuesday that found ShotSpotter technology used by the Chicago Police Department rarely leads to investigatory stops or evidence of gun crimes and can change the way officers interact with areas they're charged with patrolling.

The report from the city's Office of the Inspector General analyzed 50,176 ShotSpotter notifications from last January through May. Just 9.1% indicated evidence of a gun-related offense was found. Only 2.1% of the alerts were linked directly to investigative stops, although other stops were detailed in reports that referenced the technology but didn't correlate with a specific ShotSpotter notification.

Deborah Witzburg, the city's deputy inspector general for public safety, said the report shows using ShotSpotter technology comes with "significant costs" far beyond the now-extended contract's multi-million-dollar price tag.

Community concerns about using ShotSpotter technology are just one added cost. So are the "really tragic outcomes" that can result when police officers are sent to respond to ShotSpotter alerts "without a lot of information about what they might find when they get there," Witzburg said.

RELATED

Activists slam city for extending ShotSpotter contract amid mounting criticism of the gunshot detection system

86% of alerts from city's gunshot detection system led to 'dead-end deployments,' researchers find

"The Adam Toledo shooting arose out of the response to a ShotSpotter alert. Back in 2018, when Chicago police officers Eduardo Marmolejo and Conrad Gary were killed, they also were responding to a ShotSpotter alert," Witzburg told the Sun-Times.

"There are lots of costs attended to the use of this technology. And those need to be weighed against demonstrable benefits. ... We found very little data to show a clear link

between ShotSpotter alerts and the recovery of evidence of a gun-related crime or even the ability to make an investigatory stop which might yield evidence of a gun-related crime or evidence of a gun. ... There is sort of an anecdotal sense that the use of this technology is beneficial. But we can't make public policy based on anecdotes."

Witzburg noted the ShotSpotter contract was set to expire last week, but the city quietly extended it last year, well in advance of the termination date. That shouldn't happen, she said, adding that there must be "transparency" before such major decisions are made.



A still frame from video recorded by a Chicago police officer's body-worn camera shows Adam Toledo just before he was shot by the officer in March. Officers had gone to the area in response to a ShotSpotter alert. | Civilian Office of Police Accountability

Cathy Kwiatkowski, a spokeswoman for the city's Department of Procurement Services, confirmed Thursday that the city's three-year, \$33 million contract with the Silicon Valley-based startup had been extended for two additional years at the request of CPD. While the city has paid the company just \$24.1 million under the contract, the inspector general's report notes police officials in March "requested approval for an annual 5% increase in the cost per square mile of the contract."

As the acoustic gunshot detection system has come under heavy fire amid recent studies and reports challenging its efficacy and accuracy, Mayor Lori Lightfoot and Supt. David Brown have continued to publicly support using the technology.

A detailed timeline of the Adam Toledo shooting

Death of officers who were family men leaves city heartbroken

In a statement, ShotSpotter denied the report is an indictment of the technology's accuracy, which it claimed "has been independently audited at 97% based on feedback from more than 120 customers. Nor does the OIG propose that ShotSpotter alerts are not indicative of actual gunfire whether or not physical evidence is recovered."

As far as the system's inherent "value" to law enforcement, the company deferred to the police department, which stood firmly behind the technology.

"In order to reduce gun violence, knowing where it occurs is crucial. ShotSpotter has detected hundreds of shootings that would have otherwise gone unreported," police spokesman Tom Ahern said in a statement that was originally issued last week.

"ShotSpotter is among a host of tools used by the Chicago Police Department to keep the public safe and ultimately save lives."

RELATED

EDITORIAL: If ShotSpotter constantly misfires, what's Chicago getting for its \$33 million?

The CPD's use of ShotSpotter came under increased scrutiny following the death of Toledo, a 13-year-old who was shot and killed in March by a Chicago police officer responding to an alert from the system. Toledo's hands were empty when the fatal shot was fired, though he was seen on the officer's body-worn camera holding a pistol a moment earlier.

In May, the MacArthur Justice Center released a study that most notably found nearly 86% of police deployments to ShotSpotter alerts in Chicago prompted no formal reports of any crime. ShotSpotter later commissioned a report that showed "severe flaws" in the study, but the inspector general's office broadly backed that specific conclusion, saying "a large percentage of ShotSpotter alerts cannot be connected to any verifiable shooting incident."

The inspector general's report also took a look at investigative stop reports not specifically linked to a ShotSpotter alert in which the technology was simply mentioned in the narrative of an incident report.

“There’s no specific ShotSpotter information. But a CPD member’s impression of the frequency of alerts in an area changes their policing behavior. ... The police department members cited frequency of ShotSpotter alerts in an area as part of their justification to stop someone or pat them down or to otherwise develop suspicions,” Witzburg said.

“If this is a technology which has a very low return rate in producing evidence of gun-related crime, it’s appropriate to think about whether we’re comfortable with its presence at all, if its presence is also shaping behavior when there isn’t even an indication of a specific alert.”

RELATED

In 2016, Chicago police expanded use of ShotSpotter gunshot sensors

Though ShotSpotter cited the “independent audit” commissioned by the company that found the technology is overwhelmingly accurate, the company’s system remains a closely-guarded trade secret.

Meanwhile, recent news reports have raised serious alarms about the technology. Last week, the Associated Press published an investigation that found the system could miss gunshots or wrongly detect other sounds as gunfire. It concluded there were serious issues with using the technology as evidence.

As with another report published in July by Vice, the AP investigation noted that ShotSpotter employees have altered both the location of an alert and the number of gunshots detected. The AP also reported that dispatchers and police officials have previously been able to make some of those alterations.

Amid the mounting criticism, activists have rallied to end to the city’s deal with ShotSpotter. In a statement Tuesday, the Coalition to Cancel the ShotSpotter Contract claimed the inspector general’s report confirms the gunshot detection system “is a fundamentally flawed and unsalvageable technology.”

“Despite consistent demands from communities impacted by gun violence that the City of Chicago invest in proven public safety programs, our elected officials continue to choose to spend our tax dollars on surveillance technologies that only serve to further criminalize Black and brown communities,” the coalition wrote. “We once again call on the city to

cancel its existing ShotSpotter contract, pass the Community Restoration Ordinance and invest in community-led violence interruption and prevention programs.”

Nevertheless, some officials defended ShotSpotter as an important tool in the city’s crime-fighting arsenal.

Ald. Chris Taliaferro (29th), chairman of the City Council’s Committee on Public Safety, said he agrees with “some of the points made” by the inspector general, which justify looking at how CPD uses ShotSpotter “with a more critical eye.”

But Taliaferro said it would be a grave mistake to get rid of the gunshot detection technology — because, he said, it saves lives.

“It’s worth the price for the lives that we are saving because ShotSpotter can be attributed to officers responding much more quickly to the scene to save lives. It’s not just about ISR’s [investigative stop reports] or arresting or reducing crime. We’re also saving lives. You cannot discount the lives being saved as a result of ShotSpotter,” said Taliaferro, a former Chicago police sergeant.

“I’m convinced because I’ve heard parents whose children have been saved that somehow attribute that to the quick response of officers in getting that particular person to the hospital. That officer got on the scene simply because ShotSpotter alerted them. ... If ShotSpotter goes off and we can get officers on the scene to prevent further harm, then it saves lives. And that’s what’s important to me.”

Taliaferro noted big-city police departments, including Los Angeles and New York, are “moving toward more technology-based policing.” CPD cannot afford to be “left behind,” he said.

“We have to bring technology into policing these days. We’re not just in the business of arresting and reducing crime. We’re in the business of saving lives.”

Ald. Anthony Beale (9th), former longtime chairman of the Council’s Police Committee, argued the problem is not ShotSpotter technology. It’s overhauled policies on foot pursuits and vehicular chases.

“The ShotSpotter is extremely valuable. However, in order for the technology to work, you have to have the police be able to pursue and go after the bad guys when they see or hear

that the technology has pointed in a certain direction,” Beale said.

“The problem is when the police are no longer able to chase suspects ... they’re gonna speed off in the cars and the police are told not to engage. If they’re in a car and running on foot and they’re told not to pursue, the technology would not be useful.”

Instead of getting rid of ShotSpotter, Beale advised Lightfoot and Brown to “take the handcuffs off” officers, “let them do their job in an aggressive manner” and embark on a major hiring blitz to fill an alarming number of officer vacancies caused by a tidal wave of retirements.

“I’m hearing we’re gonna be down 1,500 by the end of the year,” Beale said.

Iraheta, Alba

From: Daniel James <> Monday, September
Sent: 27, 2021 10:54 AM PublicComment-
To: AutoResponse Opposed to ShotSpotter
Subject:

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To whom it may concern,

Regarding today's city council meeting on Monday, September 27, 2021, agenda item 11 regarding a contract with ShotSpotter:

I am very opposed to our city working with ShotSpotter; the company has had some egregious information come to light within the last year, which has been widely published. It is concerning to me that members of the public safety committee appeared to be unaware of ShotSpotter's reputation at this point in time.

Just a couple months ago, [Vice broke a story regarding ShotSpotter analysts manually reclassifying data](#)^[1] to aid Chicago police in altering evidence regarding Adam Toledo's shooting death. This kind of activity is reported as a pattern within the company.

Both the [ACLU](#) and [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#) have published strong opinions against ShotSpotter for a wide range of reasons from impropriety in their relationships with police departments to serious concerns of increased surveillance in Black and Latinx communities.

[1]: <https://www.vice.com/en/article/qj8xbq/police-are-telling-shotspotter-to-alter-evidence-from-gunshot-detecting-ai>

[2]: <https://www.aclu.org/news/privacy-technology/four-problems-with-the-shotspotter-gunshot-detection-system/>

[3]: <https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2021/07/its-time-police-stop-using-shotspotter>

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Daniel James ([he/him](#))

Iraheta, Alba

From: Ben Vargas < > Monday, September 27,
Sent: 2021 11:24 AM PublicComment-
To: AutoResponse
Subject: RE: Agenda item 11 - ShotSpotter

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As a Pasadena resident, I am disappointed and embarrassed that Pasadena would even consider spending such an immense amount of money on invasive surveillance technology such as ShotSpotter. These systems are sensitive enough that they can record many conversations between 30 and 300 feet from an installation. To add insult to injury, the Pasadena Police Department, which has a budget of \$92.8 million, has the audacity to request the taxpayers to foot the \$640,000 bill of this atrocious invasion of privacy.

LASD and LAPD both have used gunshot detection systems in the past but have started and stopped as effectiveness keeps being called into question. ShotSpotter is nothing more than a band-aid for a police department that already hemorrhages money on an annual basis.

ShotSpotter will do nothing to address the root causes of violent crime. Instead of investing nearly \$700K on superfluous police-state technology, Pasadena should invest in violence interruption programs that will effectively transform the community for the better: jobs programs, affordable housing, substance abuse treatment, and other interventions focused on creating opportunity rather than punitive measures or constant surveillance. I implore you not to purchase ShotSpotter, which is a nightmarish disregard for Pasadena privacy.

Respectfully,

Ben Vargas

Iraheta, Alba

From: Yadi < >
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 2:44 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Flores, Valerie
Subject: Public Comment - Pasadena City Council meeting 9/27/2021

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RE: Shotspotter (Gunshot Detection Technology) Pilot for Pasadena

Please find below recommendations for conducting a pilot of new technology (Shotspotter) by the Pasadena Police department:

Conduct a feasibility study before the acquisition of new technology: Typically, when assessing the feasibility of the acquisition of new technology, four areas should be addressed: 1. Technical assessment; 2. Cultural assessment; 3. Political assessment; 4. Financial assessment.

Cross-check Pasadena's requirements with Shotspotter's system requirements. The effectiveness of an acoustic gunshot detection system like Shotpostter will be affected by topography, wireless connectivity, location of sensors (such as the possible need to place sensors on private residents' homes), and integration with other equipment like the Police Department electronic dispatch system.

There should also be an outline of acceptable thresholds and metrics that include: false alarms, missed gunshots, and certainty radius.

Assess the hidden costs of implementation such as training, monitoring, analysis, and extra personnel.

Identify metrics that will be incorporated into crime analysis, tactical deployment decisions, and evaluation of the effectiveness of this technology.

Potential vendors should be considered and evaluated based on how they match up against Pasadena's listed requirements.

Limit the scope of pilot: A pilot of 3-6 months with another 6-month extension should provide ample data to test the effectiveness of this technology.

Data governance: Ensure the City and PPD owns the data and can retain it even in the event of contract termination. Ensure integrity of data which includes prohibiting tampering. In particular where such data aids in criminal investigations and prosecution, the preservation of evidence - whether physical or electronic - should abide by relevant laws and regulations.

Develop training, reporting and accountability mechanisms: Ensure that the Police department and other relevant stakeholders receive training on how to use the technology, reporting requirements, and provide methods of accountability.

Communicate with relevant stakeholders: Particularly about how to help make the system effective, and ensure there is not an over-reliance on the system (such as residents no longer reporting gunshots to 911).

This will help Pasadena City and the Police Department in making data-driven decisions and evaluating the effectiveness of this pilot.

Name: Yadi Younse

City: Pasadena

ZIP: District 4

Meeting Date: September 27, 2021

Agenda Item: 11. Shotspotter Contract

To be read aloud: No