

MARLA TAUSCHER
ATTORNEY AT LAW

RECEIVED
2021 OCT -1 PM 1:02

October 1, 2021

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CITY OF PASADENA

BY EMAIL

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Re: ShotSpotter Has No Coherent Defense to Its Criticisms

In an undated press release on its website (a copy of which is attached), ShotSpotter offers nothing more than more unsubstantiated claims in response to legitimate issues raised by *VICE* in an investigative report it published in July 2021. ShotSpotter's public relations personnel are plenty angry that the effectiveness of its product has been called into question, but they offer nothing to support the claims made in their rebuttal. This is the moment for ShotSpotter to really defend itself and its product, but it has failed miserably. Let's look at some of ShotSpotter's claims:

1. ShotSpotter forensic evidence is 100% reliable and based entirely on the facts and science.

Rather than provide any evidence that its product is actually reliable, ShotSpotter attacks the people at *VICE*, claiming that they got it wrong, that they're just trying to confuse their readers. If that's the case, wouldn't this be a golden opportunity for ShotSpotter to set the record straight? They didn't, because they can't. However, the company did claim that "This process is 97% accurate and based on customers reporting back to the company for the years 2019 and 2020." That's it. That's the sum total of ShotSpotter's "evidence" that its product is reliable.

That's absurd. What exactly did those "customers" report back to ShotSpotter? Surely, there is something in writing to substantiate this. Where are the fictitious customer reports? Why weren't any of those reports, or at least the results, included with the press release? It would have been easy enough to include appendixes with supporting documentation with the press release.

2. ShotSpotter has never altered the information in a *court-admissible detailed forensic report* based on fitting a police narrative.

- a. What is a *court-admissible detailed forensic report*?** For the sake of this letter, let's assume that ShotSpotter is referring to some type of written incident report that the company says will be admitted as evidence in court. Rules of evidence and issues of admissibility vary from state-to-state. More importantly, rulings on admissibility of evidence are made by individual judges, so ShotSpotter cannot legitimately make a blanket claim that its reports are admissible as evidence.

What recourse does the City of Pasadena have if ShotSpotter evidence is deemed *inadmissible* in a court or other legal proceeding?

- b. How much does ShotSpotter charge for its *court-admissible detailed forensic reports* and testimony from its expert witness?** ShotSpotter makes a big deal of its reports and expert witness testimony, but do they charge extra for those services? Surely, they aren't providing that for free. How much does ShotSpotter charge for each *court-admissible detailed forensic report*?

What does anyone know about ShotSpotter's self-proclaimed "expert witnesses"? Are they really qualified as experts? If so, by whom? Do they provide live testimony? Or just written reports? If they provide live testimony, what is the hourly rate? Do they offer a flat-rate per day for trial?

In its contract with the City and County of San Francisco, ShotSpotter includes the following disclaimer about its expert witnesses:

"Customer understands that SST [ShotSpotter] undertakes to provide individuals whose qualifications are sufficient for such services, but *does not warrant that any person or his or her opinion will be accepted by every court.*"¹

In other words, ShotSpotter apparently *does not* warrant that its experts are really experts for purposes of litigation.

- c. Why does ShotSpotter claim it never altered information in its *court-admissible reports*?**

ShotSpotter's claim about never altering *court-admissible reports* is technically correct, but carefully worded and intentionally very misleading. The allegation made by *VICE* was that after a ShotSpotter analyst initially classified a sound as a firework,

¹ Payment for expert witness services described shall be due and payable when services are rendered regardless of the outcome of the proceedings. *Source:* SFO Contract for Services.

a different analyst later manually overrode the algorithms to reclassify the sound as a gunshot (and later altered the location to fit the law enforcement narrative). In other words, *ICE* alleged, the *data* were altered before a report was generated based on those data.

In fact, the press release describes the process of creating those reports: "Our expert forensic analysts spend on average eight hours per incident to compile a court-admissible report *using specialized tools that differ from those used for alerts*² ...[T]he detailed forensic report is never altered because it is a completely separate process from the alerts."

The allegation was that analysts manipulated the data [that was presumably the basis of the "court-admissible detailed forensic report"], not that the report itself was altered.

ShotSpotter's claim that they didn't alter reports may be technically true, but it is just a verbal sleight of hand.

- 3. ShotSpotter evidence and expert witness testimony have been successfully admitted in 190 court cases in 20 states.**

READ THAT AGAIN. Is that a joke?

This company has been in operation for more than 20 years. They brag about the number of jurisdictions that use their product and that's all anyone has to show for it? **190 cases** in over 20 years. That means that, on average, ShotSpotter "evidence" has been used in 9 ½ cases per year, across 20 states. That's an incredibly bad result.

What good is ShotSpotter if not for evidence in a criminal trial? Why would a city pay for a product that produces so little actual evidence?

- 4. ShotSpotter has prevailed in ten successful *Frye* challenges and one successful *Daubert* challenge in courts throughout the United States.**

As with the claim above, that's a dismal showing. *Frye* and *Daubert* are references to seminal cases that established the common standard(s) for determining the admissibility of scientific evidence. Those cases provide that expert opinion based on a scientific technique is admissible only when the technique is generally accepted as reliable in the relevant scientific community.

Despite the awkward language in its press release, ShotSpotter appears to claim that the evidence it produces has been deemed reliable in 10 cases applying the *Frye* standard and 1 case applying the *Daubert* standard throughout the country. **That's 11 cases in total – in over 20**

² What are those "tools"? What do they do?

years. How many times was ShotSpotter evidence challenged in courts? How many times was the evidence deemed *inadmissible and unreliable*?

Why doesn't ShotSpotter include citations to its successful cases in an appendix to its press release so interested people can independently verify that claim? How does anyone know whether ShotSpotter's claim is true? Where is the proof?

5. No ShotSpotter evidence for this [Williams] case was altered at any time.

This is another carefully crafted statement in the press release. Note the use of the word "evidence". ShotSpotter claims that it didn't alter "evidence" in the *Williams* case. However, the allegation was that a ShotSpotter analyst altered *data*, which ShotSpotter has said is a completely separate process from the creation of its *court-admissible forensic record*, aka "evidence". Once again, ShotSpotter's claim is technically correct, but only because of very deceptive language and intentional misrepresentation of the allegations made in *VIC E's* investigative report.

The primary allegation in the *Williams* case was that prosecutors had to withdraw ShotSpotter evidence because they knew it would not withstand the scrutiny of an examination using the *Frye* standard. ShotSpotter did not deny that prosecutors withdrew the evidence. Instead, ShotSpotter's defense is that it doesn't guarantee detection of gunshots in cars or indoors.

6. The ShotSpotter system is highly accurate at detecting outdoor gunshots.

What? That seems like a significant limitation on the usefulness of this product. If this product does not work indoors, how well does it work in a yard with cinderblock walls? Wooden fencing? Courtyards? Between buildings? Alleys? What effect does a silencer have? What about simultaneous sounds like cars backfiring?

The company says that, "Our system has been tested to ensure that we correctly convey our system's efficacy to our customers." That's another throw away claim. Who tested the ShotSpotter system? Using what methodology? What were the parameters of the test(s)? Where are the results? Why didn't ShotSpotter include an appendix with test results in its press release?

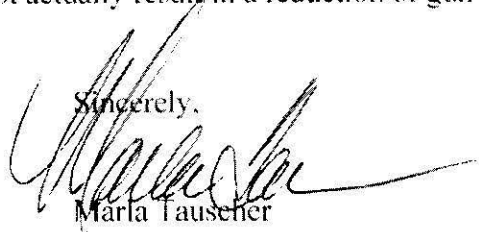
How accurate is this product? Has the company tested the accuracy over distances? 10 feet from a sensor? 50 feet from a sensor? What is the range of each sensor? Does anyone have any idea? No. Because the company won't tell you.

Conclusion: ShotSpotter's press release does nothing to address legitimate questions of the accuracy and usefulness of this product. This was the perfect opportunity to provide some evidence that its product actually works, but it failed. In the press release, ShotSpotter reiterates its bogus claims about its accuracy and reliability, but provides absolutely no evidence to support its claims.

As far as surveillance goes, this is not as invasive as some technologies, however, there is a potential for civil rights violations in targeting particular areas with ShotSpotter. My primary

objection to this product is that it is just an expensive toy that will give Pasadena Police Department and some city officials cover to claim that they are "doing something" to address the problem of gun violence, but will not actually result in a reduction of gun crimes or any other crime. It's just a placebo.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marla Tauscher", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Marla Tauscher

SHOTSPOTTER PRESS RELEASE

SHOTSPOTTER RESPONDS TO FALSE AND MISLEADING ALLEGATIONS BY VICE NEWS

Newark, Calif., — ShotSpotter, Inc., a leader in precision policing technology solutions that enable law enforcement to more effectively respond to, investigate, and deter crime, responds below to false and misleading allegations that VICE published on July 26, 2021.

To the Communities We Serve,

Recently, *VICE* published outrageous allegations that create a false narrative about our technology, review, and forensic process that undermine the important work ShotSpotter does every day to help combat the gun violence epidemic.

First, ShotSpotter forensic evidence is 100% reliable and based entirely on the facts and science. ShotSpotter has never altered the information in a court-admissible detailed forensic report based on fitting a police narrative.

It is important to understand that there are two separate and equally important forms of review of potential gunshot events, and these processes are optimized for different things. VICE conflated the two, causing confusion for readers.

The first type is ShotSpotter gunfire alerts which are real-time notifications that detect and alert police to a specific gunfire incident. The goal is to quickly determine when and where gunfire has occurred within a city's coverage area and to create a rapid and precise police response. They are created in less than 60 seconds using a combination of machine classification and a human reviewer's replay of the sounds and analysis of the waveforms to make a final determination as to whether the incident is a gunshot or a non-gunshot. This process is 97% accurate based on customers reporting back to the company for the years 2019 and 2020.

The second type is a detailed forensic report prepared as courtroom evidence and for expert witness testimony. It is a court-admissible analysis of a gunfire incident. Our expert forensic analysts spend on average eight hours per incident to compile a court-admissible report using specialized tools that differ from those used for alerts. These reports are 100% exact on rounds fired, timing, sequence, and location of shots fired — something they can testify to in court under oath.

ShotSpotter evidence and expert witness testimony have been successfully admitted in 190 court cases in 20 states. ShotSpotter evidence has prevailed in ten successful *Frye* challenges and one successful *Daubert* challenge in courts throughout the United States. Our data compiled with our expert analysis help both the prosecution and defense.

The detailed forensic report is never altered because it is a completely separate process from the alerts. Forensic analysis may uncover additional information relative to a real-time alert such as more rounds fired or an updated timing or location upon more thorough investigation by forensic analysis. We respond to requests to further investigate an incident for a forensic report only to provide the facts that we can determine and not to fit a predetermined narrative. This is about being diligent and providing the appropriate evidence and insights in the evidentiary chain of custody and

nothing more. **The idea that ShotSpotter “alters” or “fabricates” evidence in any way is an outrageous lie and would be a criminal offense. We follow the facts and data for our forensic analysis. Period.**

Second, ShotSpotter Will Not Tolerate False Characterizations of the Two Cases VICE Cited

VICE's article falsely alleged that in the *Williams* case in Chicago, Illinois, prosecutors withdrew ShotSpotter evidence because it would not meet scientific evidentiary standards due to having been altered. This is 100% false. In fact, no ShotSpotter evidence for this case was altered at any time. ShotSpotter forensic analysts evaluated the incident to create a court-admissible forensic report. Based on publicly available data and our understanding of this case, the prosecutor's theory was that the defendant shot the victim in a car. ShotSpotter detected a gunshot in the area, and we have always publicly stated that ShotSpotter does not guarantee detection of gunshots that are in cars or inside buildings.

The article also falsely and without any substantiation alleged that ShotSpotter fabricated evidence or altered audio files in the *Simmons* case in Rochester, New York. The audio files ShotSpotter recorded and used during the trial were secured and preserved using industry-standard forensic procedures. Audio files submitted as evidence were reviewed by our forensic analysts to create a court-admissible forensic report. They were never altered by ShotSpotter. We are currently engaged in a lawsuit and are vigorously defending our position.

Third, the ShotSpotter system is highly accurate at detecting outdoor gunshots and benefits communities battling gun violence.

The article falsely twisted the words of a ShotSpotter forensic expert to suggest our accuracy rates are the product of our marketing or sales departments. Nothing could be further from the truth. In 2019 and 2020, the ShotSpotter system had a 97% accuracy rate for real-time detections across all customers, a figure derived directly from police department reports. At the same time, ShotSpotter promises them a 90% accuracy rate in our service level agreements because our customers expect and deserve a *minimum* accuracy rate. Our system has been tested to ensure that we correctly convey our system's efficacy to our customers. In addition, ShotSpotter rigorously trains and tests every individual reviewing real-time gunfire incidents at the company to ensure they perform at a level consistent with the company's quality objectives.

VICE's attempted takedown is a sad distraction from the issue at hand: addressing gun violence to keep our communities safe. In recent weeks, shootings have surged in many parts of the country, robbing us of American lives. ShotSpotter is a tool for helping law enforcement put a stop to this senseless violence and break the cycle of the normalization of gun violence in our communities. We will not tolerate our company being maligned and will vigorously defend our work in making communities safer for all.

Media Contact:

Tndent DMG
Caroline Beckmann
202-440-1783

caroline.beckmann@shotspotter.com

Martinez, Ruben

From:
Sent: Friday, October 01, 2021 3:45 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Agenda Item 9 - Shotspotter is wasteful spending

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The shotspotter subscription should be halted. It is an example of the city providing the police with what they want versus what the community needs. With 8% unemployment, the city should provide under resourced sectors of Pasadena with clean energy infrastructure job training as opposed to dubious warning system that sends police into the community guns a blazin'.

This is the solution to shots being fired? People kill people. How is this going to stop murder or homicide? It is just a ridiculous waste of money and a distraction from focusing on the root causes of violence – mental illness, stress and lack of resources that bring someone to the brink. We should be focusing on alleviating some of those stressors rather than sending in the police to add more stress to an already overpoliced community.

It is time to be smarter with our money and how we provide social solutions. This is not a smart use of money to increase public safety.

John Doyle

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John Doyle
[Doyle for City Council 2024](#)
District 4 - Pasadena, CA

10/04/2021
Item 9

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2021 OCT -4 AM 8: 35

CITY CLERK
CITY OF PASADENA

Pasadena City Council
c/o Mark Jomsky
City Clerk
Pasadena City Hall
100 North Garfield Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91101

October 1, 2021

**RE: PASADENA POLICE DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF
SHOTSPOTTER TECHNOLOGY**

October 4, 2021 City Council Meeting Agenda Item #9

Dear Pasadena City Councilmembers,

We the undersigned urge you to vote against the proposed \$640,000 purchase of a subscription for ShotSpotter, a gunfire detection surveillance technology, and to instead commit to invest public funds in life-affirming social and public services for the residents of this community.¹ We are disappointed that the Public Safety Committee advanced this item to the full Council for consideration, and note that it did so without "recommending" the acquisition, as the Council's agenda misleadingly suggests.

Surveillance technology like ShotSpotter is harmful to overpoliced communities in the City, widely recognized as unreliable and inaccurate, and a gross misallocation of scarce public funds at a time of great need in our neighborhoods.

First, numerous analyses and investigations have cast serious doubt about the efficacy of ShotSpotter's technology and the Department's claims about its purported benefit to public safety. Just last month, a comprehensive analysis conducted by the City of Chicago's Inspector General concluded that the Chicago Police Department's extensive use of ShotSpotter "rarely produce[d] documented evidence of a gun-related crime, investigatory stop, or recovery of a firearm," and that it instead it causes officers to "rely[] on ShotSpotter results in the aggregate to provide an additional rationale to initiate stop or to conduct a pat down once a stop has been initiated."² Another analysis conducted in St. Louis found that the technology "has little deterrent impact on gun-related violent crime in St. Louis" and did "not provide consistent reductions in

¹ September 23, 2021 Agenda, Pasadena Public Safety Committee, <https://cityofpasadena.net/commissions/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2021-09-23-Special-Public-Safety-Committee-Meeting-Agenda-1.pdf>.

² City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, *The Chicago Police Department's Use of ShotSpotter Technology* (Aug. 24, 2021), <https://igchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Chicago-Police-Departments-Use-of-ShotSpotter-Technology.pdf>.

police response time, nor aid substantially in producing actionable results.”³ We have no reason to expect different results here in Pasadena.

Second, the deployment of this questionable technology has led to very real harms for communities across the country, harms which we are likely to face should the Department successfully acquire this technology. Instead of actually reducing crime in Chicago, for instance, ShotSpotter produced thousands of dead ends for officers, created a false justification for officers to conduct threatening and illegitimate detentions and arrests, and harmed—rather than improved—the safety of vulnerable people in the city. The company itself has also been found to alter the information it collects by “frequently modify[ng] alerts at the request of police departments—some of which appear to be grasping for evidence that supports their narrative of events.”⁴

We can expect the acquisition of this technology to harm, rather than help, the most vulnerable populations in this city who have been overpoliced, oversurveilled, and undervalued in recent years. The Department’s report to this Committee says that it intends to deploy ShotSpotter sensors in areas its own analysis show are “most impacted by gun related crimes.” Roughly translated, the Department intends to use this technology to further increase its presence and footprint in Black and brown communities in Pasadena, including in our City’s Northwest. The inevitable result will be further frisks, contacts, detentions, seizures, and arrests—none of which are likely to deter violence, and all of which are likely to make residents feel *less* safe and *less* welcome in their communities.⁵ Coming on the heels of the mass public uprisings against police violence and abuse in this country, and the urgency with which local residents within this City have demanded change, the acquisition of technologies like ShotSpotter will retard, rather than advance, the pursuit of safety, security, and justice in Pasadena.

It is little wonder, then, that cities across the country that previously used ShotSpotter—San Antonio, Charlotte, and Troy, to name a few—dumped it after constant false alarms and lack of perceptible impact on public safety. We therefore find it deeply concerning to see the Pasadena Police Department seek \$640,000 for a “trial” of this troubling technology.

³ Dennis Mares and Emily Blackburn, *Acoustic Gunshot Detection Systems: A quasi-experimental evaluation in St. Louis, MO*, *Journal of Experimental Criminology* (forthcoming) (June 2021), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337869476_Acoustic_Gunshot_Detection_Systems_A_quasi-experimental_evaluation_in_St_Louis_MO.

⁴ Todd Feather, *Police are Telling ShotSpotter to Alter Evidence From Gunshot-Detecting AI*, *VICE* (July 26, 2021), <https://www.vice.com/en/article/qj8xbq/police-are-telling-shotspotter-to-alter-evidence-from-gunshot-detecting-ai>.

⁵ For an example of research demonstrating the harms of increased, proactive police contact with youth of color, see, e.g., Juan Del Toro et al., *The criminogenic and psychological effects of police stops on adolescent black and Latino boys*, *PNAS Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 116(17), 8261–8268, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1808976116> (noting that “[p]olice stops predict decrements in adolescents’ psychological well-being and may unintentionally increase their engagement in criminal behavior”).

Third, the money the Department seeks for this wrongheaded acquisition will unquestionably be better spent on supportive services for Pasadena residents, rather than surveillance technology. How many counseling sessions for local high school students can \$640,000 pay for?⁶ How many stipends for young people to clean up their neighborhoods or volunteer at food banks could \$640,000 funds?⁷ How many \$20 meals to our local unhoused residents could \$640,000 pay for?⁸ The possibilities are limited only by the imagination and political will of this body.

We note that notwithstanding the fiscal impact of this large acquisition, the Department appears to have violated City rules for requesting a no-bid contract. In its staff report, the Department includes a one-sentence justification for why a competitive bid was not launched, saying that the technology is “proprietary” and that it is not aware of any other companies that provide this service. Yet a simple five-minute internet search would have revealed numerous companies purporting to provide gunshot detection technologies, none of which appear to have been solicited or investigated.⁹ Whatever the quality of these competitors is—we are suspicious of all of them—that the Department so callously flouted City requirements for competitive bidding should not go unnoticed by this body.

For the reasons set forth above, we ask that this Council reject this acquisition.

Signed,

ACLU of Southern California
ACLU Pasadena/Foothill Chapter
Coalition for Increased Civilian Oversight of Pasadena Police
Heavenly Hughes, Co-founder & E.D. of My TRIBE Rise
Indivisible Alta-Pasadena
Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Greater Pasadena
NAACP Pasadena Chapter
Pasadenans Organizing for Progress
Pasadena Privacy for All

CC:

John Perez
Steve Mermell

⁶ 12,800, if each hour-long session costs \$50.

⁷ 320, if each stipend is \$2,000.

⁸ 25,600, if each meal cost \$25.

⁹ Other than Shotspotter, firms such as ACOEM Group, Alliant Techsystems, Raytheon Technologies Corporation, Rheinmetall AG, and Thales Group all offer such systems.

Martinez, Ruben

From: cityclerk
Sent: Sunday, October 03, 2021 10:08 AM
To: Flores, Valerie; Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Martinez, Ruben; Novelo, Lilia; Reese, Latasha; Robles, Sandra
Subject: FW: ShotSpotter: your presentation to the Public Safety Committee

From: Larry D'Addario <
Sent: Sunday, October 3, 2021 10:08:09 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: Grisafe, William; cityclerk
Cc: Perez, John Eduardo; Gordo, Victor; jhampton@cityofpasadena.net; Kennedy, John J.; Madison, Steve; Williams, Felicia; Masuda, Gene; Rivas, Jessica; Wilson, Andy; Jomsky, Mark; Mermell, Steve; Flores, Valerie
Subject: ShotSpotter: your presentation to the Public Safety Committee

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[To the City Clerk: Please ensure that each member of the City Council receives a copy of this message, and that it is posted in the Correspondence file that is linked to the agenda for the City Council meeting of October 4.]

Dear Lt. Grisafe:

I saw with interest your presentation to the Public Safety Committee (PSC) on September 23 about the proposed acquisition of the ShotSpotter gunshot detection system, and I received a copy of your slides. The presentation raises many questions that ought to be answered publicly prior to consideration of the matter by the City Council. Some of those questions are listed below. I am sending copies of this message to the City Council members and to Chief Perez.

Sincerely,
Larry D'Addario
Pasadena resident and member of the steering committee of Pasadena Privacy For All

QUESTIONS FOR LT. GRISAFE ON HIS PRESENTATION TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE ON SEPTEMBER 23

1. On slide 7, you say "Accurate location of shooting scene = faster response". Why is the response to a ShotSpotter alert any faster than the response to a 911 call? What has been the distribution of response times to "shots fired" 911 calls, and how much faster do you expect the responses to ShotSpotter alerts to be?
2. On slide 7, you claim "30-65% decrease in gun violence for ShotSpotter customers". What is the source of these numbers? Was there a scientific study, and if so how was it done and in what cities? Is there a peer-reviewed publication? If the numbers come from ShotSpotter, to what extent have they been independently checked?

3. On slide 7, you claim that "Sound evidence can assist in criminal proceedings". In what criminal cases has ShotSpotter generated evidence that was accepted as admissible by a court?

4. On slide 5, you claim that "Sound triangulation determines shot location within an 82 ft radius". What is the source of this number?

Has it been independently verified?

5. Comparing ShotSpotter alerts with citizen "shots fired" 911 calls, a supposed advantage of ShotSpotter is that it gives a more precise location. But studies have shown [1] that when ShotSpotter is installed the number of citizen "shots fired" calls decreases, perhaps because citizens believe that ShotSpotter makes such calls unnecessary. Thus, a disadvantage of ShotSpotter is that you miss valuable witness information, such as a description of a suspect or suspect's car. Do you think that the balance of this advantage and disadvantage favors installing ShotSpotter? If so, why?

6. On slide 6, you show screenshots from the ShotSpotter app on a smart phone. In Pasadena, will all officers have the app on their phones? If not, who will have it? Will officers have department-issued smart phones for this purpose or are they expected to use their personal phones? If personal phones are used, what prevents officers from installing it on the phones of family members and friends? (An officer might reasonably think, "I want it on my kids' phones to keep them safe.

When alert occurs they will know to stay away from that part of town.")

7. When an alert occurs and is seen by many officers, how is it decided which units will respond? Is there a field commander who makes assignments, or does each officer decide on his own based on his location and the incident's location? If multiple units converge on an incident location, who is in charge?

8. Does PPD have the resources to respond to all ShotSpotter alerts?

If not, will resources be expanded and how much will that cost? If responding to all alerts will not be possible, how will you decide which ones to ignore?

Reference:

[1] E. Blackburn et al., "The Hidden Costs of Police Technology:

Evaluating Acoustic Gunshot Detection Systems". Police Chief Magazine:

[https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.policechiefmagazine.org%2Fthe-hidden-costs-of-police-](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.policechiefmagazine.org%2Fthe-hidden-costs-of-police-technology&data=04%7C01%7Crumartinez%40cityofpasadena.net%7C5599fd7845654612333208d98690653c%7C82d9fc002c664402a28fc6bcd32e491%7C1%7C0%7C637688777000473033%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C1000&reserved=0)

[technology&data=04%7C01%7Crumartinez%40cityofpasadena.net%7C5599fd7845654612333208d98690653c%7C82d9fc002c664402a28fc6bcd32e491%7C1%7C0%7C637688777000473033%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C1000&reserved=0](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.policechiefmagazine.org%2Fthe-hidden-costs-of-police-technology&data=04%7C01%7Crumartinez%40cityofpasadena.net%7C5599fd7845654612333208d98690653c%7C82d9fc002c664402a28fc6bcd32e491%7C1%7C0%7C637688777000473033%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C1000&reserved=0)

Martinez, Ruben

From: Vincent De Stefano <vincent@pasadena.net>
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 8:20 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Why is the Pasadena City Council moving so fast with so little research to purchase of Shot Spotter

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We are in the middle of a once in a lifetime health crisis and at the same time Pasadena is experiencing homelessness to a degree which has never been seen before. Why is it then that Pasadena is so eager to spend more than \$600,000.00 on a deeply flawed detection system called Shot Spotter in an effort to calm the public?

Although the overall Pasadena crime rate has declined there has been a recent spike in gun violence that is very alarming. Citizen's especially in the communities most affected are asking for something to be done now. Unfortunately, the overwhelming data from counties across the country have shown that Shot Spotter will not be the something they are looking for. To quote the City of Chicago Inspector General this system at a cost of \$33 million to Chicago provided "No significant reduction of firearm related homicide or arrest outcomes".

In fact, a 2021 study by the respected Journal of Urban Health* found the same outcome in 68 of the largest counties in the US. Shot Spotter failed to provide any significant reduction in homicides or improve arrest outcomes. It did however find that it increases unwarranted pretextual stops and provided another chance to single out people of color for stops. More work, poor outcomes across the spectrum is what Shot Spotter does deliver.

A last week's Public Safety Committee we all heard an excellent sales pitch by Officer Grisafe on behalf of this for profit company that was almost entirely devoid of any data showing the efficacy of this system. The only mention of its effectiveness was the statement that Shot Spotter led to a 30% to 65% reduction in gun violence. There was no backup data for that claim such as which cities, who did this study, was it peer reviewed and by who? Noting other than a baseless claim. When questioned about this Grisafe could offer nothing further.

The horror of gun violence affects us all. Pasadena citizens, especially in the areas where the gun violence are highest, are looking to their elected officials for answers. Unfortunately, at last week's meeting two thing were very clear. First, Mayor Gordo and City Manager Mermel showed that they are in a headlong rush to acquire Shot Spotter. They urged that it be agendized for an up or down vote at the next City Council meeting. Second, with the sole exception of Councilperson John Kennedy no one has done any research beyond the sales pitch from this company to see if Shot Spotter does what it promises. Bravo to Councilperson Kennedy because he did an excellent job of highlighting the flaws, failures and the unintended consequences this system will inflict on communities of color yet again.

At one point Councilperson Hampton asked Kris Ockershauser, speaking on behalf of Pasadena Privacy for All, a very reasonable, but nonetheless, a flawed question. "What technology would you use if not this system to resolve this issue?". With all due respect to Councilperson Hampton that question is based on a false

assumption; that there IS a technology that can “solve gun violence”. Essentially Hampton is saying we use this system or we do nothing at all. Again Councilperson Kennedy suggested that the funds for the purchase of the subscription be used instead for efforts to foster stronger relationships between the community and the police more in line with our current community based policing. It is a quite common notion these days that there is a technical fix for all of our problems. Unfortunately, that is not always the case and it certainly is not the case with Shot Spotter.

Vinnie De Stefano
President ACLU
Pasadena/Foothill Chapter

Pasadena, CA. 91107

Martinez, Ruben

From: Jonathan Lee <[redacted]>
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 1:05 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Gordo, Victor
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda Item #9

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Good afternoon,

I am a resident of Pasadena writing to express that I am against the adoption of the ShotSpotter system in our city. Among other concerning things, the system has demonstrated the following elsewhere:

- It has been proven inaccurate and ineffective at reducing gun violence.
- The police have manipulated the system to alter evidence.
- The system sends police to predominantly black and brown neighborhoods for "unnecessary and hostile" encounters with residents.

The approximate \$640k should not be spent towards violating our civil rights by eavesdropping on Pasadena residents. This is not the change we want to see.

Thank you,

Jon

10/04/2021
Item 9

Martinez, Ruben

From: David Kalbeitzer <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 2:01 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Mermell, Steve; Pili; Perez, John Eduardo
Subject: Shotspotter Endorsement

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Dear City Council Members and related Officials,

Regarding today's topic #9 below:

Public Safety Committee

9. AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A PURCHASE ORDER WITH SHOTSPOTTER TO PURCHASE A SHOTSPOTTER SUBSCRIPTION IN AN AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED \$640,000 OVER A THREE YEAR PERIOD

My wife and I are homeowners in District 5 at 436 N Raymond Ave, Pasadena. We have two young children.

On our street, we have recently had two shootings in the street happen within a two-week time span. We have previously never had an issue with this before on our street in our area.

If Shotspotter can more quickly triangulate when the shots were fired and allow our police department to improve their response times and apprehend suspects, I support this need.

We cannot have the safety of our neighborhood threatened. If this technology can be implemented immediately - this will at least help.

Thank you,

David Kalbeitzer and Pilar Flynn

Pasadena, CA 91103

10/04/2021
Item 9

Martinez, Ruben

From: Yadi <[\[redacted\]](#)>
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 2:24 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Flores, Valerie
Subject: Public Comment - Pasadena City Council meeting 10/4/2021
Attachments: Public Comment - Pasadena City Council meeting 1042021.pdf

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RE: Agenda item 9. Shotspotter Contract

Please find attached an addendum to my public comment.

Name: Yadi Younse
City: Pasadena
ZIP: District 4

Meeting Date: October 4, 2021
Agenda Item: 9. Shotspotter Contract
To be read aloud: No

10/04/2021
Item 9

Law Enforcement Who Have Abandoned or Declined The Use of ShotSpotter

Troy, NY (2012)¹

"It's not working in the way it's suppose to"

"It wasn't reliable"

Fall River, MA (2018)²

"Shot-putter had reported too many false alarms of gunfire while missing actual shot-fired incidents in Fall River."

"the city was told that the system was capable of doing things it just couldn't do."

Charlotte, NC (2016)³

"gunshot detection system didn't help them make arrests or identify crime victims."

"unable to find evidence of a gun being fired"

San Antonio, TX (2017)⁴

"police could not find evidence of a shooting at the scene about 80% of the time" and after identifying five shooting victims in ShotSpotter area which SST failed to detect.

Canton, OH (2019)⁵

"We've never really had a lot of arrests right after the ShotSpotter came in,"

St. Paul, MN (2019)⁶

"In the absence of independent empirical evidence to validate promotional claims, and particularly because the significant and long term financial commitment would limit available resources for provable interventions, I am unlikely to advance securing an AGDS system (acoustic gunfire detection system) to the city council,"

¹ Times union "Troy Will Turn Off ShotSpotter" 2012

² The Herald News, "After Too Many Shots Missed, Fall River, Mass, Ends Deal with ShotSpotter," 2018

³ The Charlotte Observer, "Charlotte Ends Contract With ShotSpotter GunShot Detection System," 2016

⁴ The San Antonio Express-News, "San Antonio Police Cut Pricey Gunshot Detection System, 2017

⁵ The Columbus Dispatch, "Canton Replacing ShotSpotter With New System"

⁶ MPR News, "Gunshot sensor technology likely won't be part of St. Paul's crime response" 2019

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Miami, FL (2013)⁷

"There were instances in which the ***ShotSpotter did not identify gunfire when it should have,***"

"During 2012, the ShotSpotter system identified more than 1,000 gunfire incidents within the boundaries of Northside District; however, ***there were less than 50 confirmed shootings*** within the area."

"its success in directly leading to the apprehension of individuals involved in shooting incidents [was] minimal."

Miami police Chief Manuel Orosa said ***ShotSpotter wasn't "going to stop people from shooting each other."***

Broward County, FL (2011)^{*8}

"wasting too much manpower sending deputies to false alarms"

"Based on some benefit analysis, we decided it just wasn't cost-effective,"

Oak Cliff, Dallas, TX (2009)⁹

San Antonio, TX (2017)¹⁰

Long Beach, CA (2011)¹¹

Holyoke, MA (2012)¹²

Evansville, IN (2018)¹³

Durham, NC (2019)¹⁴

Pasadena, CA (various)¹⁵

⁷ Miami New Times, "Miami Politicians Push ShotSpotter Even Though Some Local Cops Say It Doesn't Work", 2014

⁸ Broward County Sun-Sentinel, "Broward Sheriff Dropping Gunshot Detection System," 2011.

*reacquired system at a later time.

⁹ Advocate Oak Cliff, "City should revisit gunshot detection system" 2009

¹⁰ San Antonio-Express News, "San Antonio Police Cut Pricey Gunshot detection system" 2017

¹¹ "LBPD Data Say 2017 Shootings Were Down 9% From 2016, And We Note..." 2018

¹² Masslive, "Holyoke public safety officials, councilors discuss gunshot detectors, ambulance service, costs" 2019

¹³ Courierpress, "Webb: ShotSpotter may not be the answer for Evansville's gun violence" 2018

¹⁴ Indyweek "Durham City Council Debates Gunshot Detection Technology" 2019

¹⁵ Pasadena City Public Safety Committee Meeting, Sep. 23, 2021

Martinez, Ruben

From: Katie Rotolo
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 4:29 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: No to Spotshotter

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Hi there,

I'd like to express my concern for utilizing Spotshotter in Pasadena. It unjustly targets black and brown populations and has not shown any real evidence to even help solve crime.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Katie Rotolo
she/her/hers

10/04/2021
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