

CORRESPONDENCE

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From: Andrew Good
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 5:33 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Jones, Justin
Subject: Re agenda items 6 and 14

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I'm a resident of district 3 writing about the city's recent spending on surveillance technology, including ShotSpotter and the Wescam MX-10 camera being considered for one of our police helicopters -- the second such camera in our fleet of five helicopters.

I'm asking the council and city staff to hit pause on these purchases. Please seek further community input before approving them.

I have concerns about ShotSpotter, which [Houston](#), [Atlanta](#) and [Dayton](#) have all decided was ineffective and not worth the cost. And while the MX-10 camera sounds like an impressive tool, half a million dollars is a lot to spend when I think the council should address a bigger topic for the community:

Why does a city our size need a fleet of five helicopters in the first place? A Pasadena Now story in May noted that helicopter insurance costs [have increased 42%](#). My question as a taxpayer is whether that money could be better spent on additional foot patrols in Pasadena's most underserved areas. Chief Gene Harris has said a major focus for him is getting officers out of cars to build relationships in the community. It's hard to square that vision with the recent slate of investment in surveillance tools.

Public safety matters, and I'm glad the council is looking at a variety of new tools. But half a million dollars could go a long way towards investing in other public safety needs -- principally, a Bad Weather Shelter, something which helps unhoused Pasadenans stay safe and off the street. Getting a Bad Weather Shelter back will require capital improvements that property owners may not have money for. Could Pasadena be spending half a million dollars on those kinds of improvements instead of these items?

I value our public safety spending. But I think the community has questions about the strategies the city is pursuing.

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14. Review of Shotspotter gunshot detection system

ShotSpotter (AKA SoundThinking¹) is ineffective and needs to be canceled outright. The only other acceptable option is to have the Community Police Oversight Commission (CPOC) conduct a review of Shotspotter with community input.

According to Pasadena Police FY 2024 Operating budget *"The Pasadena Police Department deployed the ShotSpotter gunshot detection system in February 2022. The technology is meant to combat the increasing problem of illegal firearm use and is designed to help law enforcement officials identify, locate and deter gun violence. The real-time alerts notify police precisely when and where gun incidents occur, resulting in a faster, more accurate response to the scene to provide medical attention to gunshot victims, recover evidence and interview witnesses. The overall goal is to reduce gun violence and improve the safety of the community. The City of Pasadena is committed to reducing illegal gun use and have partnered with ShotSpotter to protect the quality of life of those living in the impacted communities. The gunshot detection system creates an environment of enhanced public safety and security."*

"The system was installed in a portion of the city that is most impacted by gun violence. During the first year of use, incidents of gunfire or probable gunfire were detected more than 100 times of which evidence of a shooting was located for 49 of these shooting incidents; a 32% decrease in confirmed shootings that were investigated by PPD Detectives for the previous year."

- 100+ Shotspotter alerts in 2022
- 49 alerts led to evidence of gunshot(s)
- < 50% accuracy
- In February 2022, the first Shotspotter alert was reported to have been a false alarm with no evidence of a shooting.²
- In February 2022, the second Shotspotter alert sent officers after someone had already been shot, and the shooter(s) had already fled the scene.³
- In May 2022, a person died of gunshot wounds within Shotspotter coverage area.⁴
- In October 2022, a person died of gunshot wounds within Shotspotter coverage area but there was no Shotspotter alert.⁵

Shotspotter fails to serve as a deterrent against shootings in Pasadena.

Shotspotter fails to help apprehend most perpetrators of gun violence in Pasadena.

Shotspotter fails to keep people from getting shot and killed by guns in Pasadena.

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Pasadena City Council Meeting

October 16, 2023

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¹<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/bay-area-crime-tech-firm-shotspotter-rebrands-as-stock-tanks-with-new-chicago-mayor/ar-AA19JDbq>

²<https://www.pasadenanow.com/main/monday-morning-bullpen-shotspotters-first-time>

³<https://www.pasadenanow.com/main/police-arrive-at-sunday-shooting-scene-60-seconds-after-shotspotter-alerts-them-find-injured-woman>

⁴ <https://www.pasadenanow.com/main/man-fatally-shot-in-pasadena>

⁵ <https://www.pasadenanow.com/main/man-found-in-street-shot-to-death-investigation-underway>