



8TH DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Public Comment on the Future of ShotSpotter

September 12, 2024

Dear Mayor Johnson and City Council,

We, the 8th District Police Council, are reaching out and asking that you extend the contract of ShotSpotter, which is ending soon. Chicago, like many other cities, are losing officers for various reasons from retirement to lateral transfers. As replacing these officers with new and qualified officers becomes harder and harder, we need all tools and technologies ready for use for our officers to do the best job possible.

ShotSpotter like any technology is not perfect, but with the company consistently working to improve the technology and the multi-year challenge of replacing it with a new acoustic detection technology, we believe it is the best tool to quickly notify officers of possible gunshots and summon a response to the area of detection. According to CPD's ShotSpotter Events Dashboard¹, over 75 percent of police responses based on ShotSpotter did not include an accompanying call from a civilian. Officers arrive to a crime scene an average of 2.5 minutes faster when alerted by ShotSpotter compared to when alerted only by a call. That time could be the difference of saving a life of one of our over 250,000 residents in the 8th District alone. While some say this technology is useless, we have seen plenty of reports in the news that ShotSpotter was the reason officers were alerted to a bona fide crime scene and were able to secure vital evidence.

In a district with the largest population in Chicago and larger than any other city in Illinois, residents of a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and communities support keeping this technology. With a shortage of officers in the district and police response times increasing, we need and demand that the City keep this technology. With our district petition of nearly 2000 signatures in support of ShotSpotter, we believe many Chicagoans including those we serve in the 8th District want our city to keep this technology. As a District Council, we were elected to support the best public safety interests and policies that affect the residents of those in the 8th District. We as a Council FULLY SUPPORT keeping this technology to assist our officers and help keep residents safe. We support the 34 Alderpersons who voted to override Mayor Johnson, the expertise of our current 8th District Commander, and the expertise of former superintendent Eddie Johnson. Mayor Johnson, now is not the time to play with the safety of the residents of Chicago!

Thank you,

Councilors Jason Huff, Al Cacciottolo, and Mark Hamberlin
8th District Police Council
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¹ Chicago Police Dept. (2024, Sept 1). *ShotSpotter Events*. <https://home.chicagopolice.org/statistics-data/data-dashboards/shotspotter-events/>.

