

Title of Recommendation		PCCEP Recommendation to Abandon Plans for a Gunshot Detection Technology Pilot Program.	
Approved by:	Celeste Carey, Ann Campbell, Leslie Martinez, Ashley Schofield, Gloria Canson, Byron Vaughn, Tia Palafox, Derek Thompson, Scott Latta	Date presented:	March 15, 2023
Summary of Recommendation: PCCEP recommends to Mayor Wheeler and Chief Lovell that the City terminate plans for a Gunshot Detection Technology pilot. This recommendation is based on input from a broad spectrum of community members who overwhelmingly rejected this technology and expressed profound concerns about fiscal responsibility, effectiveness, equity impacts, and surveillance.			

<p>Body of Recommendation:</p> <p>On March 1, 2023, PCCEP hosted a town hall to gather community input on Gunshot Detection Technology (GDT) in response to the City’s proposed pilot. PCCEP planned this event to respond to public complaints of a severe absence of community engagement around the decision to pilot a Gunshot Detection Technology program.</p> <p>At the town hall, the Mayor’s Office Director of Community Safety Stephanie Howard confirmed that the City’s plans to implement GDT are rooted in the July 2022 FITCOG recommendation. The FITCOG only had 8 members in July 2022 and did not perform any community engagement to inform their ShotSpotter recommendation. Moreover, the relationship between ShotSpotter and FITCOG members has become the subject of intense scrutiny; ShotSpotter is now under investigation by the City Auditor for lobbying violations.</p> <p>PCCEP is deeply concerned that the City’s interest in this technology originated with potentially illegal business practices, without impartial public safety input and research, <i>and</i> without meaningful public input. We demand that the Mayor and Chief of Police respond to the community input that PCCEP exercised due diligence to gather.</p> <p>Over 100 community members attended the PCCEP Town Hall on Gunshot Detection Technology. PCCEP heard 2.5 hours of verbal testimony and received nearly 100 individual public comments. The event was attended by a broad spectrum of the Portland community and included a large range of ages, identities, and backgrounds. We heard from people who live in neighborhoods most impacted by gun violence,</p>
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who are a part of the business community, who organize around racial justice, and who have expertise in public safety.

The feedback was resounding: the Portland community does not want Gunshot Detection Technology. The main categories of concern are outlined below.

Community Concerns about Gunshot Detection Technology

- 1) Gunshot Detection Technology is costly and ineffective. ShotSpotter, for instance, is estimated to cost -\$65,000 to \$90,000/square mile, with a \$10,000/square mile service initiation fee.

From an analysis of 40,000 reports, the MacArthur Justice Center and the Chicago Inspector General found that 89% of ShotSpotter dispatches in Chicago resulted in no gun-related crime, and 86% resulted in no crime at all. Due to concerns about cost and effectiveness, many other cities have terminated service with ShotSpotter, including San Antonio, Atlanta, and Dayton, OH.

- 2) Gunshot Detection Technology will impair an already overstrained police force. The Chicago Inspector General Report found that ShotSpotter sent officers into neighborhoods for false alarms up to 60x/day. At the PCCEP town hall, Captain Jake Jensen confirmed that PPB's current response time is 17 minutes. He was not able to clarify how PPB would be able to accommodate the increased call volume from GDT.
- 3) Gunshot Detection Technology will have negative implications for racial equity and will worsen PPB's relationship with communities of color. Community members questioned the City's lack of large-scale engagement with residents who live in neighborhoods where this pilot could take place, particularly members of the BIPOC community.

The ACLU argues that placing sensors in some neighborhoods versus others could lead to increased detection of incidents (real or false) in places where the sensors are located. This may distort gunfire statistics and create a circular statistical justification for over-policing in communities of color. Attendees noted that GDT relies on proprietary artificial intelligence algorithms, which are notorious for reinforcing racial stereotypes that are latent in decades of problematic data.

Town hall attendees also cited the tragic death of Adam Toledo, a 13-year-old Latino boy who was killed by police in Chicago after ShotSpotter alerted them to the area for an unrelated incident. An attorney at the MacArthur Justice Center spoke to the incident, saying "The system is telling police that every

time they go out in response to [an] alert they should assume that anybody in the vicinity is armed and they've just fired a weapon ... that anybody in the area is a mortal threat." Portland residents are deeply worried the same could happen here.

Overall, PCCEP heard that the community feels GDT would be yet another instance of "about us, not for us" public safety policymaking in communities of color. Implementing this technology will further degrade trust between communities of color, PPB and the City.

- 4) Gunshot Detection Technology will violate the community's right to privacy and increase distrust in PPB and the City. Many attendees noted the potential privacy infringement of placing live microphones in public spaces. ShotSpotter has captured voice recordings that have been submitted as evidence in court. (ACLU, Campaign Zero)
- 5) Gunshot Detection Technology will divert resources from real solutions to Portland's gun violence problem.
- 6) Community input is only "listened to" when it aligns with leadership's preconceived plans. The circumstances surrounding the FITCOG recommendation and potential lobbying violations are deeply concerning and cast doubt upon the technology as a whole.

PCCEP Recommendations to Address Community Concerns

1. PCCEP demands that Mayor Wheeler and Chief Lovell accept this community input and terminate the Gunshot Detection Technology pilot. We demand that the RFP selection process be abandoned.

PCCEP agrees with community members who expressed confusion about the City's plan to have another town hall on which GDT vendor is preferable. The community resoundingly stated that it does not want this technology *at all*. Of the 94 individual public comments received, only 3 were in favor of GDT. A vendor selection town hall will only reinforce the public's assertion that the City is inauthentic when it comes to valuing community input.

2. PCCEP recommends that the resources and funding for a Gunshot Detection pilot be reallocated to alternative solutions for gun violence reduction. PCCEP is interested in hosting future events to gather input about community-centered gun violence reduction efforts. We would be happy to partner with the Mayor's Office on this initiative.

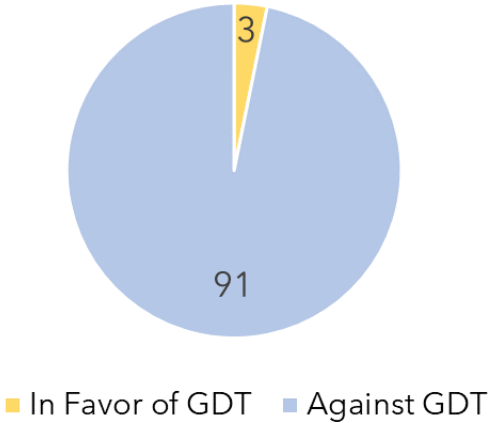
The PCCEP town hall on GDT was a successful display of a respectful, informed community dialogue around policing and public safety. By acting on the recommendation PCCEP has laid out here, City leadership has an opportunity to build

genuine trust with the community. We submit this recommendation in the ninth year of the City's Settlement Agreement with the Department of Justice which concerns PPB's history of using excessive force on our community's most vulnerable. We hope our leaders remain committed to fulfilling the Settlement Agreement and support our community-engaged policy recommendation in order to help PPB rebuild trust with the public.

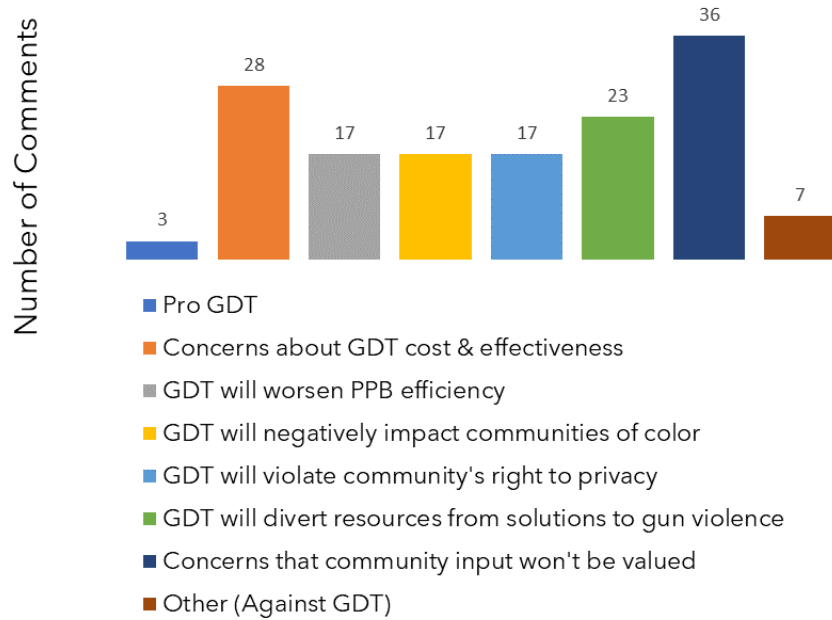
<p>How does this recommendation redress barriers to racial equity?</p>	<p>Moving forward with a Gunshot Detection Technology pilot program would lead to more distrust by the community because it would lead to over policing in already uninvested areas of the city.</p>
<p>How does this recommendation improve outcomes for persons with mental illness?</p>	<p>The goal of the Settlement Agreement is to reduce PPB's unconstitutional use of force against people with perceived or actual mental illness, and those experiencing a mental health crisis. Historically, when law enforcement has lacked context when approaching people in mental health crisis in Portland, there have been fatal results. Gunshot Detection Technology is likely to result in misapplication and bias with vulnerable populations.</p>
<p>How were marginalized and underrepresented communities, including those who will be affected by this recommendation, engaged to shape, write and otherwise develop this recommendation?</p>	<p>PCCEP held a widely publicized 3-hour virtual town hall, attended by over 100 community members, complete with educational presentations from the Mayor's Office, PPB, and community organizations to help inform the public. We solicited, received and compiled written and verbal testimony, concerns and statements that were emphatically and overwhelmingly <i>against</i> the entire effort of employing any version of GDT. This recommendation arising from those efforts will be presented for a final public review prior to submission to the Mayor, City Council and PPB Chief of Police.</p>

Data from PCCEP Town Hall

Town Hall Public Comments



Gunshot Detection Technology: Public Comments



[pcccp-town-hall-public-comment-categorized.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

Resources

[The Chicago Police Department's Use of ShotSpotter Technology | Oversight.gov](#)

[Portland city officials avoid competitive process for gunshot detection pilot - OPB](#)

[Four Problems with the ShotSpotter Gunshot Detection System | ACLU](#)

[Campaigns – Campaign Zero](#)