



City of Tacoma  
WASHINGTON

## A Statement From At-Large Council Member Olgy Diaz on ShotSpotter

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### A Statement From At-Large Council Member Olgy Diaz on ShotSpotter

I spoke in April, on the announcement of ShotSpotter technology coming to Tacoma, about the concerns I had regarding its implementation ([View the video here](#), my comments start at the 2:15 mark). Like community, I had many questions about how this technology would work and how the Tacoma Police Department could implement it. Some of my top concerns were the budgetary and staffing impacts this technology may create or exacerbate, as well as any unintended consequences of over-policing in certain neighborhoods and data security. Since then, I've met with City and Tacoma Police Department leaders to learn more about the program, and the Tacoma Police Department created a ShotSpotter [FAQ webpage](#) to answer questions my peers and I, as well as community, have raised. I am reassured by some of the facts we can now know. There is a focus on data integrity. The Tacoma Police Department will not share our data with SoundThinking, and ICE is not a party to this grant and does not receive information from the Tacoma Police Department. We have been assured, if the Tacoma Police Department becomes aware of a tool that is not consistent with the values of the agency, it will immediately cease the use of the technology.

There is information we simply cannot provide until we put a new technology into action, so the City cannot say for sure whether increasing data for one area will impact response times to other areas of Tacoma, or whether we'll find other unanticipated consequences that impact how we staff public safety priorities. We do know that other cities have tried this program and, given the lessons they learned, it did not work for them. There is no commitment from Council to continue funding ShotSpotter beyond the end of the grant-funded pilot. As a City, we must be open to reviewing this pilot thoroughly and determining that the resources it provides may not meet Tacoma's needs and the needs that exist as we continue to move forward with our Violent Crime Reduction Plan.

While it hasn't been the focus of community feedback, the ShotSpotter technology pilot is coming to Tacoma as part of a broader Department of Justice grant that includes needed technologies for the

Tacoma Police Department and requires the Tacoma Police Department to provide education to the community about the technology. In addition to a three-year ShotSpotter pilot, the Tacoma Police Department will be gaining needed technology currently utilized to do crime scene imaging and new fingerprinting tools. Both tools will help the Tacoma Police Department solve crime and keep us safer, and are ours to keep regardless of the outcomes of the ShotSpotter pilot. Further, this grant will ensure there will be more chances for all of us to ask questions and continue building belief and trust across our unique experiences with law enforcement. Tacomans can expect there will be more opportunities for dialogue about police technologies in their neighborhood groups like Neighborhood Council meetings, Safe Streets meetings, and Neighborhood Business District meetings, particularly before the deployment of ShotSpotter.

Thank you to every community member who attended one of the Tacoma Police Department's outreach opportunities to learn more about this program and the Department of Justice grant. It is especially important that the voices of those who live and work in the Hosmer area where this pilot is being implemented are heard loud and clear as implementation decisions on this pilot move forward. I encourage each of you to stay involved in this conversation. There is still much to learn about the technology, and from the pilot program, and I am grateful for our community's continued focus on accountability and safety.



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