



COUNCILMEMBER JESS RIVAS

D I S T R I C T 5 N E W S L E T T E R

Dear Neighbor,

I hope you were able to have a restful holiday season. Unfortunately, we have continued to see a number of shootings in and close to our district – on Sunday January 16th, on Villa Street near the Villa Parke Community Center and on Tuesday, January 18th on Los Robles Avenue near Eldora Road. The later resulted in the death of a 15-year-old boy, yet another tragic and senseless loss of life in our neighborhoods. A suspect was arrested and charged with murder on January 21st.

On Thursday, January 20th, I held a virtual Community Meeting about the shootings so that residents could hear directly from the Police Department with the latest details. It appears that there is a connection between the two shootings. We also got an update on the status of the installation of Shotspotter and security cameras at Villa Parke and also heard about the Neighborhood Watch program.

If you missed the meeting, you can watch a recording [here](#). Additionally, we weren't able to get to all of the questions asked during the meeting, so the relevant city departments have responded to them below.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly at jerivas@cityofpasadena.net. I truly value your opinion and look forward to hearing from you.

-Jess

Questions & Responses

ShotSpotter

Can the technology being deployed differentiate between fireworks and gunfire? Does the ShotSpotter distinguish between gun shots and sounds similar to gun shots?

- Yes, once the system detects a loud percussive sound, the recording immediately goes through 2 layers of review at the ShotSpotter's Incident Review Center (IRC). The first review is conducted by Artificial Intelligence (AI) software which filters out non-gunshot sounds. Once this review is completed, then a live person listens and conducts a human review. It is at this point that the human confirms if it is a gunshot, is likely a gunshot or is not a gunshot. The trained reviewer can also determine if there are multiple shooters or fully automatic weapons involved. The IRC expert will then send out the notification to the police agency via an alert on several different digital platforms. This entire process occurs within less than 60 seconds. You can watch a video on how the system works [here](#).

Can you confirm whether the shootings would have been within the planned ShotSpotter deployment area?

- Yes, both incidents happened within the ShotSpotter deployment area.

What is the source of funding for the ShotSpotter technology, maintenance and support?

- The funding will come from the Police Department operating budget.

Is there any indication that ShotSpotter would have changed the response time to the shootings?

- This is difficult to determine, but it is likely the PD's response to both shootings would have significantly decreased the response time since officers are being alerted within 60 seconds rather than the average 4-6 minutes it takes for a witness to call 9-1-1 and have an officer dispatched. Sadly though, it probably would not have changed the outcome, but it would have alerted officers much quicker and in trauma care, time of care is the most impactful aspect of saving lives.

Is ShotSpotter an added program to our City or funds being redirected for the program?

- Funds will be redirected from the Police Department's operating budget.

Shootings & Gangs

Is the police department doing anything to reduce the amount of guns in the community?

- Yes, PPD actively confiscates illegal guns. Last year alone, they collected 345 guns. That is almost a gun a day.

Is there communication with folks doing gang intervention work in Pasadena?

- Gang intervention employees are vetted by and work for the City Manager's Office. There is no communication between them and members of the Criminal Investigations Division.

Have there been any arrests made for the string of shootings that occurred near Raymond 1-2 months ago? Has there been any developments or information regarding the shots fired incident on December 18, 2021? Also on Los Robles, 1800 block.

- The Robbery/Homicide Unit has made several arrests over the last several months related to shootings and murders. Please email kgomez@cityofpasadena.net with the address and date of the incident for specifics.

Can someone educate us about the gangs in the area? Is it worth knowing the names of the active gangs in our community of District 5? If so, could you share these?

- Yes. Contact Lt. Keith Gomez, (626) 744-4517 or kgomez@cityofpasadena.net, for more information.

Looks like gang violence is a major problem. What is being done, besides from the ShotSpotter installation?

- The Robbery / Homicide Unit has a clearance percentage (cases solved) that is higher than most law enforcement agencies in the nation. This results in key arrests and also removing firearms from the community.
- The Criminal Intelligence Unit gathers gang-related intelligence and also provides extra patrol (visible) to areas that are active based upon their intelligence.

Is there still a feud between Blacks and Hispanics (also gangs near Villa Park, Jackie Robinson Park, etc.) and does this have an impact on the increase in shootings?

- Yes, the feud has existed for many years and it continues today. The intensity goes up and down. The feud does have an effect on the number of shootings. After the murders at and around Villa Parke, the Robbery / Homicide Unit made several arrests and seized many guns in late 2020 / early 2021. This dramatically reduced the intensity and number of shootings, but at some point, it can go back up.

Can the PD park a police car in front of Villa Park Community Center? I'm very sure that will help until finish of install cameras.

- Yes, along with patrols and directed enforcement.

If Villa Park is a known hangout for the local gangs, is there a plan by the PD to address this issue of the hangout?

- PD will provide extra service.

Why had Villa Park cut out many many programs if they want more activity? It's seems that the reason why gangs are more comfortable is because the park is empty.

- There are several reasons why Villa Parke is not functioning at capacity. In the beginning of COVID the community center was closed and organized recreation was canceled. Although the center is now open, there are still safety concerns so some programming came back but it is limited. Last year the center started a much needed remodel. Construction meant that some rooms had to close. Lastly, the playground has been fenced and gated due to the replacement water well project located in the park. Activities will resume as soon as it's safe to do so.

Does the PPD or any other city department work with the gang-plagued communities to find community mentors to try to de-escalate/curb potential gang-related retaliation activity, as part of the Violence Reduction Effort program?

- The Gang Intervention Team (G.I.T.) was established by the former City Manager and is a part of that office.
- GIT members work in gang impacted neighborhoods and serve as peer mentors to those that are at the center of the violence, impacted by the violence, or looking to leave the gang lifestyle.
- GIT also works with faith-based organizations to serve as mentors.

Cameras

Would you support individuals or groups determine what kind of cameras to get?

- Cameras for Villa Parke have already been selected and a contract is in place.

Mr. Leclair is there any assistance that your department can provide to help us correctly install our cameras? I feel if someone was available to tell me how I can better aim mine it would help the police?

- The Department of Technology does not have staff who can perform this function. Community Service Officer, Hilda Jurado can help when you request a Security Check for your home. She can be reached at hjurado@cityofpasadena.net or 626 744-7659.

Will we deploy cameras on traffic lights?

- Although we do have cameras on some signals, they are used for traffic management and do not record. City Council would need to discuss the idea of security cameras on traffic lights before this question can be answered.

Neighborhood Watch & Meetings

When does the city plan to organize a meetup between all of the disparate community watch groups in and

around Villa Parke?

- A meeting for Villa Parke Block Captains is planned for February 24th. This meeting will be small due to COVID restrictions.

How do we join one if we can't start one?

- Contact Hilda Jurado for information on finding the best option, hjurado@cityofpasadena.net or (626) 744-7659.

Will you facilitate neighborhood watches in neutral meeting locations for the areas that need it the most? In these areas, neighbors are often afraid to get together to speak to PPD and need leadership.

- The Block Captain is responsible for securing the meeting location. Hilda Jurado, hjurado@cityofpasadena.net or (626) 744-7659, can assist in securing a location if needed. The meeting location is always at the block captain's discretion.

Will PPD be willing to host an ongoing monthly District 3 & 5 community input meeting to build and continue community engagement?

- Due to staffing, the Police department has not historically held specific monthly District meetings. We are available upon request and conduct numerous meetings throughout the city to cover different needs in different districts. Also, we attend various community meetings throughout the year to grow our community engagement and we also host various events published on our website calendar and on social media. While additional community engagement is always our goal throughout the city, crime trends and current staffing levels limit our availability and ability.

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