Legislation Text

File #: 1218-2020, **Version:** 1

BACKGROUND: This legislation authorizes the Public Safety Director to modify the current contract with SST, Inc. dba ShotSpotter to continue a gunfire detection, alert, and analysis program for six months. The department has deployed technology commonly known as ShotSpotter, a subscription based service that involves the installation of a gunfire sensor network in areas identified by the City. These sensors connect to a cloud-based data center infrastructure, providing a 24/7/365 gunfire monitoring service within a three (3) square-mile radius of the installed sensor infrastructure.

In addition to gunfire detection, the ShotSpotter service will notify law enforcement agencies of gunfire incidents and direct them to the precise location of illegal gunfire. The service also offers the capability to instantly notify officers of shootings in progress with real-time data delivered to dispatch officers, patrol cars, and smart phones. The alerts are intended to improve police response to incidents of gunfire, enhance officer safety, speed aid to victims, assist in investigations and the collection of evidence, and ultimately, the apprehension of dangerous offenders.

This initial contract was established as a one (1) year pilot program to assess the effectiveness of the technology, and to measure how the system may aid law enforcement and improve response to incidents of gunfire. Due to current economic circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, both parties desire to modify the City's 2019 original contract for a period of 6 months.

Emergency: Emergency action is requested so that this gunfire detection system can continue providing the City with this crucial service.

Fiscal Impact: This legislation authorizes an expenditure of $265,333.56 from the General Fund with SST, Inc. for a gunfire location, alert, and analysis system. These funds are available within the 2020 General Fund budget. $685,000.00 was encumbered in 2018 and spent in 2019.

To authorize the Public Safety Director to modify the contract with SST, Inc., dba ShotSpotter, to continue a gunfire detection, alert, and analysis pilot program; to authorize the expenditure of $265,333.56 from the General Fund; and to declare an emergency. ($265,333.56)

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety has determined to continue the use of the gunfire detection, alert, and analysis service to assist law enforcement responding to incidents of gunfire in Columbus neighborhoods; and,

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety needs to modify the current contract in order to continue the below services with the system; and,

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter can deliver instant, accurate tactical awareness to the Division of Police including precise location anywhere within the coverage area including latitude/longitude and street address, exact time and number of rounds fired, and shooter position, speed and direction of travel; and,

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter will provide incident data and forensic data to the Columbus Division of Police including:

sequence of rounds fired with time and position data, type or types of weapons used and number of weapons or shooters; and,

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter features built-in interoperability using standards-based communications protocols to share data across systems, roles, and other agencies for a streamlined and coordinated response to all critical events; and,

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter can interface with video surveillance systems that require guidance to train individual cameras and capture video intelligence at the scene of an incident; and,

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter may improve police response to incidents of gunfire, enhance officer safety, speed aid to victims, assist in investigations and the collection of evidence, and ultimately, the apprehension of dangerous offenders; and,

WHEREAS, agencies that have adopted ShotSpotter as part of a comprehensive crime-reduction strategy have reported reductions in urban gunfire by up to 80 percent and related violent crime by as much as 40 percent; and,

WHEREAS, SST, Inc. has the necessary skills, experience, and technology platform to ensure that this modification is quickly and successfully implemented; and,

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operations of the Department of Public Safety in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Public Safety Director to modify a contract with SST, Inc. for the continuation of a gunfire location, alert, and analysis system, to ensure that this gunfire detection service can continue without interruption thereby preserving the public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare; **NOW, THEREFORE:**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That the Public Safety Director is hereby authorized to modify the contract with SST, Inc., dba ShotSpotter, for a period of six months for the continuation of a gunfire detection, alert, and analysis system.

SECTION 2. That the expenditure of $265,333.56, or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized within Fund 1000 General Fund, from Dept-Div 30-3003 Public Safety Division of Police, Object Class 03 - Contractual Services per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. The City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

SECTION 4. That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all contracts or contract modifications associated with this ordinance.

SECTION 5. That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.