

Discussing Surveillance with Your Alder:

You should prepare for and tailor your conversation on surveillance with your alder based on where they currently stand on the issue. There are three sample question sets below that you can use to prepare for your meeting, each specific to a different stance on surveillance. There are also some talking points and campaign information as a resource for further preparing for alder conversations below the question sets.

QUESTION SET SAMPLES:

UNKNOWN STANCE:

- **Do you believe that “we need surveillance” as part of public safety?**

If they answer **yes**, ask one or more of the following:

- **Do you support adding surveillance in/around public transportation?**
- **Do you support adding surveillance in/around public housing?**
- **Do you support adding surveillance in/around businesses?**

If they answer **no**, ask one or more of the following:

- **Do you believe that surveillance exacerbates root causes of violence?**
- **Across the surveillance technologies that CPD currently uses, do you support getting rid of one piece of surveillance tech over others?**
- **What is your stance on increasing or expanding surveillance/surveillance technology? (ex: more cameras, more ShotSpotters, using facial recognition, automated license plate readers, etc...)**

Despite how the conversation is going, discuss the campaigns that are working to address the harms and ineffectiveness of surveillance, and record your alder’s responses:

- **Do you support abolishing Chicago’s Gang Database?**
- **Do you support canceling the ShotSpotter contract? Have you (or will you) sign on to the StopShotSpotter ordinance?**
- **Are you in support of implementing the Peace Book?**

(If they answer yes to any of the above, follow up with this question): **How will you be public and explicit about your support for these anti-surveillance campaigns?**

PRO-SURVEILLANCE STANCE / LEANING:

- **Do you believe that “we need surveillance” as part of public safety?**
- **How do you believe surveillance addresses the violence our communities face? Since years of increased surveillance and policing hasn’t led to a decrease in violence in Chicago, do you think we should try other solutions as well?**

If still pro-surveillance, use the following questions to gain more information about their stance:

- **Do you support adding surveillance in/around public transportation?**
- **Do you support adding surveillance in/around public housing?**
- **Do you support adding surveillance in/around businesses?**

- **What ordinances do you support that will positively impact Black and brown communities, as those most impacted by violence? How does your voting history demonstrate this?**

If receptive to anti-surveillance / other public safety solutions, use the following questions to gain more information about their stance:

- **What ordinances do you support that will positively impact Black and brown communities, as those most impacted by violence? How does your voting history demonstrate this?**
- **Across the surveillance technologies that CPD currently uses, do you support getting rid of one piece of surveillance tech over others?**

Discuss the campaigns that are working to address the harms and ineffectiveness of surveillance, and record your alder's responses:

- **Do you support abolishing Chicago's Gang Database?**
- **Do you support canceling the ShotSpotter contract? Have you (or will you) sign on to the StopShotSpotter ordinance?**
- **Are you in support of implementing the Peace Book?**

(If they answer yes to any of the above, follow up with this question): **How will you be public and explicit about your support for these anti-surveillance campaigns?**

ANTI-SURVEILLANCE STANCE / LEANING:

- **Are you against surveillance? Have you / will you be public and explicit about your anti-surveillance stance?**
- **Do you believe that surveillance exacerbates root causes of violence?**

If enthusiastically against surveillance, skip to campaign questions. If somewhat against surveillance, use the following questions to gain more information about their stance:

- **What is your stance on greater surveillance/surveillance technology? (ex: more cameras, more ShotSpotters, using facial recognition, automated license plate readers, etc...)**
- **Across the surveillance technologies that CPD currently uses, do you support getting rid of one piece of surveillance tech over others?**
- **What ordinances do you support that will positively impact Black and brown communities, as those most impacted by violence? How does your voting history demonstrate this?**

Discuss the campaigns that are working to address the harms and ineffectiveness of surveillance, and record your alder's responses:

- **Do you support abolishing Chicago's Gang Database?**
- **Do you support canceling the ShotSpotter contract? Have you (or will you) sign on to the StopShotSpotter ordinance?**
- **Are you in support of implementing the Peace Book?**

(If they answer yes to any of the above, follow up with this question): **How will you be public and explicit about your support for these anti-surveillance campaigns?**

TALKING POINTS:

Abolishing Chicago's Gang Database:

- Chicago police maintain two massive gang databases, collectively labeling more than 280,000 people as "gang members", 95% of whom are people of color (especially Black and Latinx men).
- CPD does not require any evidence to support a gang designation, they do not have to make an arrest, or even inform you that you've been placed in a database. CPD has been unable to explain how the database makes communities "safe."
- Investigations by Chicago's Office of the Inspector General reported several faulty and inaccurate practices by CPD in its use of the database. OIG named a lack of accountability, transparency, and neglect to restructure the openly flawed, ineffective system as CPD tried to create a new "better" gang database.
- The data compiled in the database is shared with over 500 agencies, including Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the FBI.
- The gang database should be abolished: it relies on racial profiling + violates due process rights and harms people through greater surveillance, barriers to housing and employment, and more.

Canceling the ShotSpotter contract:

- ShotSpotter is an audio surveillance system meant to detect gunshots and send alerts of gunfire locations to CPD but it's often fooled by other loud sounds like fireworks and cars backfiring.
- Neither ShotSpotter nor the City have tested for false alerts: 89% of ShotSpotter deployments turned up no gun-related incident + 61 dead-end deployments on the average day. Additionally, there is no data demonstrating that the use of ShotSpotter has led to a decrease in gun violence.
- ShotSpotter is concentrated in Black and Brown communities, leading to the surveillance of 80% of Black Chicagoans and 63% of Latinx Chicagoans.
- Chicago has spent \$38 million on this technology since 2018, but can cancel the contract immediately without incurring any fees or fines!

StopShotSpotter ordinance:

- The Coalition to Cancel the ShotSpotter Contract introduced an ordinance (Budget ordinance # S02022-3609) in partnership with Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa that would remove funding for ShotSpotter's contract from the City of Chicago budget. This would effectively cancel the contract.

Implementing the Peace Book:

- The Peace Book Ordinance would establish the Peace Book, a public safety resource that informs communities about the Peace Book Commission. The Commission includes approved peacekeepers, violence interrupters, mediators, circle-keepers, and restorative justice practitioners. The Peace Book also provides a directory of services and programs for youth and families.
- The Peace Book includes city-wide + neighborhood-based commissions that will coordinate peacekeeping activities and a guide directing residents to healing, peacekeeping resources.
- The Peace Book is rooted in violence interruption and diversion, creating conditions and programs that reduce gun violence, rather than criminalization.

CPD's surveillance/surveillance technology:

- Chicago is one of the most surveilled cities in the world + one of the most policed cities. However, this has not created safety or led to decreases in violence.
- Almost 40% of the City budget goes to the Chicago Police Department, but policing and criminalization is clearly not a solution for reducing violence and creating safety. We should be investing in the material needs of people, like housing, jobs, healthcare, etc. to create safety.
- The surveillance tech that CPD currently uses includes: gunshot detection (ShotSpotter), video surveillance, automatic license plate readers, biometrics (fingerprinting + facial recognition), cell site simulators

Harms of surveillance:

- For surveillance to work, there must be individuals or communities who have been deemed "dangerous" and whose actions must be tracked.
- Surveillance is used as a way to control and manage behaviors of people, to criminalize before any crime is committed, and to also keep records of and monitor people over time. This logic assumes and projects criminality upon certain individuals or groups of people (can be based on their race, where they live, their religion, other factors but all of which are discriminatory)
- Like policing, surveillance isn't a deterrent and instead actively harms our communities everyday.
- Reliance on surveillance cuts community members out of the conversation around public safety. It elevates the companies and individuals who profit off these technologies and the violence in our communities as the experts instead of those who are actually directly impacted by violence.
- Investments in surveillance technologies and practices are investments in policing and controlling people, often at the cost of investing in people and their actual, immediate needs, including access to housing, food, quality education, clean air, healthcare, jobs, and the other things bring individuals and families security.

Interested In getting involved or staying up to date?

- Instagram & Twitter: @StopShotSpotter
- Interest form: <https://forms.gle/cyZbQippL1vCH6oK8>