

City Council of Culver City,

806 people have signed a petition on Action Network telling you to #DefendBlackLives in Culver City.

Here is the petition they signed:

In this unprecedented time, how can we rise to the call to protect our Black residents and residents of color from a continued tradition of police brutality, the militarization of our police, and policies that promote the use of deadly force? How can we, here in Culver City, founded as a whites-only community, move decisively from being a Sundown Town to an inclusive, multi-racial community that protects all of our residents and meets the challenges of the racialized conditions that were sown and continue to unfold here? We are at that moment when we are compelled to step forward to honor and codify the experiences of our neighbors, our workers, our children, our spouses and partners, of living, working, and traveling while Black in Culver City. Culver City Action Network (CCAN) sees this call as a natural extension of our work to establish Culver City as a sanctuary from immigration enforcement, to keep renters secure in their homes, and to oppose police surveillance by drones and license-plate readers.

We call on the City Council to immediately begin taking the following actions as initial steps:

1) Cancel the planned purchase of a BearCat armored vehicle, a down payment toward a broader reordering of fiscal priorities.

We must demilitarize our law enforcement. Vehicles like this have been part of police escalation in response to recent protests, especially against Black protesters and those mobilizing in defense of Black lives. The CCPD has specifically anticipated using the vehicle and its water cannon system against protestors. We cannot rely on the CCPD's assurances that such use will be limited to those that it deems to be "illegal" or "out of hand." This would be a concrete first step toward divesting resources from over-policing and reinvesting them in human services and community support, much as the People's Budget has demanded in LA.

2) Adopt all of the "8 Can't Wait" policies proven to reduce police violence.

According to Campaign Zero's #8CantWait analysis, Culver City lacks SIX of the eight policies recommended for immediate adoption to reduce police violence. We appreciate the two already in place. The remaining six are:

- \* Bans Chokeholds and Strangleholds
- \* Requires De-escalation
- \* Requires Exhausting Other Means Before Shooting
- \* Bans Shooting at Moving Vehicles
- \* Has Use of Force Continuum
- \* Requires Comprehensive Reporting

We recognize that Culver City may have related policies or informal practices on some points, but these should be revisited and strengthened where necessary to meet the Campaign Zero standards.

### 3) Establish robust, independent, ongoing civilian oversight.

The City Council and City Manager are routinely too deferential to the Police Department and its own assessment of how to balance the many competing considerations implicated in policing. We need an independent civilian body that can not only review citizen complaints and investigations about individual incidents but also policing policies and practices, departmental procedures, and budgetary priorities. These critical questions demand robust, ongoing community participation, just like other areas of City government. Many of the positive steps taken in recent years have come only after community mobilization demanded them from the Council and the PD. There is no regular, dedicated vehicle for such public engagement, unlike so many other areas of City government. Transparency, accountability, and oversight must be fully integrated into how law enforcement and public safety policy is made and implemented. Oversight must include and empower the voices of those at most risk of police violence and profiling.

### 4) Center policing, including the risks it can pose to public safety, participation, and belonging, in the General Plan Update.

Policing has been, at most, marginal to the process and vision articulated for the City's General Plan Update, often characterized as our "constitution." This is an extension of the point about civilian control generally. Policing dominates our General Operating budget (38%, far larger than any other item) and it is fundamental to how residents and visitors experience their relationship to City government and to public space. We must recognize that more policing does not necessarily mean more public safety. For many, especially Black and other people of color, it often means threat, fear, exclusion, even death. We must grapple as a City with the full breadth of this complexity and chart our path toward improvement.

You can help Culver City rise to the occasion and make meaningful, lasting change. Together, we will continue to make the world we wish to see manifest here in our city. Together, we can show our community a better way. Join us. Black Lives Matter.