



**Content Warning:** This statement discusses fatal violence by the LAPD.

To our fellow Neighbors,

The North Hollywood Northeast Neighborhood Council (NHNENC) is appalled by the horrific acts of fatal violence that have come to light in the last couple of months in our neighborhood, and we demand accountability and action from the City and State to hold those responsible for these acts accountable.

On December 23, 2021, Valentina Orellana Peralta, age 14, was unintentionally shot and killed by an LAPD officer at a Burlington store in North Hollywood, California. Valentina was in a dressing room with her mother when a bullet aimed at the suspect passed through the wall, fatally striking Valentina, and killing her by a gunshot wound to the chest, coroner records show. Since then, stakeholders throughout Los Angeles and the nation have been demanding a thorough investigation into the incidents.

The shooting drew so much national attention, insofar as the Orellana Peralta family is now being represented by Attorney Benjamin Crump who has represented the families of George Floyd, Ahmad Arbery, and Breonna Taylor. At Valentina's funeral, Reverend Al Sharpton delivered the eulogy and recalled how he came to Los Angeles and led marches calling for police reform following the beating of Rodney King 31 years ago. He said:

“Through those 31 years, we keep seeing LAPD get it wrong. And here we are again. How long will it take for you to get it right? There is no rationale for opening fire. If this was a department store in an upscale area, would you have been shooting like that?”

In the days following the tragedy, members of our community-at-large have come together to show their support for the victims of this violence, and for substantial change within LAPD culture. We support those speaking out and standing in solidarity with Valentina Orella Peralta. In these conversations, we urge stakeholders to be skeptical and thoughtful in their discussions. We do not tolerate victim-blaming. Violence of any magnitude is a deeply serious issue and we must practice sensitivity in our discourse. It is a personal and sensitive topic for many members of our community. We recognize that stakeholders who have spoken out hold a variety of opinions about how best to proceed. The North Hollywood Northeast Neighborhood Council hears you. It is our duty as your representatives to amplify a common goal: protecting survivors, commemorating victims, and preventing these incidents from ever happening in our community again.

The City's actions thus far have been woefully inadequate in protecting those affected by these crimes. This is a clear reflection of the City Government's failure to address police brutality and negligence in the past and present. Mayor Eric Garcetti backed LAPD Chief Michel Moore's decision to conduct their own investigation and said "LAPD is perhaps the best of the best in the country in doing these investigations." The NHNENC believes that the LAPD department is incapable of conducting an impartial investigation. This is unacceptable. Therefore, standing in solidarity with those affected by this violence, we make the following demands:

## **I. Accountability for LAPD Officer William Jones**

This issue is not resolved with William Jones being placed on administrative leave. The LAPD has perpetuated a dangerous environment in our neighborhood community which enables incidents like these to occur, time and time again. The relationship between LAPD, and our City government is a part of a larger, necessary conversation about our city culture and questions of equity, access, and justice. We stand with all survivors of these crimes, both in and outside of North Hollywood. However, if the LAPD desires to continue its stated mission, the City must implement oversight for the institution and hold their members accountable.

- We demand the expulsion of William Jones, responsible for these alleged crimes. Anything short of such will leave our community vulnerable and belittle the trauma endured by their victims.
- We support an overhaul of the training processes required of LAPD officers to include a more in-depth and mandatory, frequent violence prevention training with reasonable accountability measures.
- We demand a thorough and impartial investigation of the fatal shooting of Valentina—and if William is found guilty, he be charged with involuntary manslaughter.

## **II. Institutional Reform and Local Policies**

A jarring component of our institution's handling of this violence was the casual statement and support by the Mayor's Office and the silence of our City Council. Further compliance was exemplified by the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Police Protective League in which they said:

"We certainly empathize with the pain that Valentina Orellana-Peralta's family is experiencing following this accident, but to see the usual anti-police activists attempt to politicize this incident is truly disappointing. These misguided activists forget the deadly lessons learned from massacres such as the Columbine High

School tragedy; delay in responding to a potential active shooter could result in a mass casualty event. Officer Jones was responding to several 911 calls reporting an active shooter, he followed his training and a horrible accident occurred.”

This statement along with Mayor Eric Garcetti’s statement was riddled with victim-blaming advice and insensitive language. Additionally, in handling this issue, City government systems have proven disjointed and disorganized in how crises like these are resolved. There are too many disorganized channels through which stakeholders are unable to demand justice. The City must make the inner operations of its administrative structure transparent and accessible to the public.

### **III. Impartial Investigation by the CA Attorney General and LA County District Attorney**

The idea of the LAPD conducting an investigation to hold *themselves* accountable is ridiculous and ineffective. The NHNENC demands that an impartial investigation by the Attorney General, Rob Bonta, and Los Angeles County District Attorney, George Gascon be conducted.

The NHNENC believes that DA Gascon is doing an efficient job and reforming the criminal justice system in a way that is fair. However, this is an aberration because it is very likely that the violent suspect had mental health issues, and situations like these need to be handled through restorative lenses, by bringing in mental health experts to help de-escalate and resolve the situation.

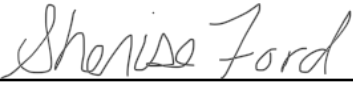
Our Neighborhood Council stands in solidarity with the Orellana Peralta family and calls for full transparency in the various investigations ongoing.

These steps are not meant to be all-encompassing. The City and LAPD should use these demands as methods to begin earning back the trust of those they have placed in harm's way.

Until more information is released and more action can be taken, we must rally behind those who have been hurt. We must pressure our representatives and authorities to be better. In the meantime, we would like to share the available resources listed below this statement and encourage all stakeholders to use our Neighborhood Council as a method in which they may channel their concerns.

We commend the individuals who are standing up for change. To all survivors and victims: we hear you, and we support you.

With you now and always,  
**North Hollywood Northeast Neighborhood Council**

x 

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**SheRise Ford**

*Council President*

*North Hollywood Northeast Neighborhood Council*

**E:** [Board@nhnenc.org](mailto:Board@nhnenc.org)

**W:** [www.NHNENC.org](http://www.NHNENC.org)

**Maria Sosyan**, President of the NoHo Neighborhood Council

## Resources for those impacted by police brutality and negligence:

- **Los Angeles Community Action Network:**
  - [The Los Angeles Community Action Network](#) (LA CAN) is a grassroots organization working to promote human rights in Downtown and South Los Angeles. We engage in community organizing, leadership development, community education, grassroots media, policy advocacy, legal partnerships/litigation, and other strategies and tactics that strengthen and protect housing rights, civil rights, food justice, and gender justice. Since 2005, we have engaged in police monitoring and other tactics to hold LAPD accountable, with a particular focus on the intense “broken windows” policing used in the Skid Row community as a tool of gentrification, segregation, and mass criminalization.
- **Youth Justice Coalition:**
  - [The Youth Justice Coalition](#) (YJC) is working to build a youth, family, and prisoner-led movement to challenge race, gender, and class inequality in Los Angeles County’s and California’s juvenile injustice systems. Our goal is to dismantle policies and institutions that have ensured the massive lock-up of people of color; widespread police violence, corruption, and distrust between police and communities; disregard of youth and communities’ Constitutional and human rights; the construction of a vicious school-to-jail track; and the build-up of the world’s largest network of juvenile halls, jails, and prisons. The YJC uses direct action organizing, advocacy, political education, transformative justice, and activist arts to mobilize system-involved youth, families, and our allies—both in the community and within lock-ups—to bring about change.
- **American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California**
  - For legal assistance, please contact your local affiliate. You can locate the nearest office by visiting [aclu.org/affiliates](http://aclu.org/affiliates)
  - If you have general inquiries, suggestions, or concerns, please consult their Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) or reach out to them in one of the following ways: Write to them: 125 Broad Street, 18th Floor, New York NY 10004 or Call them: 212-549-2500
- **Milwaukee Freedom Fund**
  - [The Milwaukee Freedom Fund](#) provides support for protesters in the Milwaukee area, including Kenosha, Wisconsin, where, on August 23, Jacob Blake was shot in the back several times by Wisconsin police, reportedly in front of his three children. The Fund raises money for bail and court costs, and helps connect protestors with legal support.

- **Know Your Rights Camp**
  - [The Know Your Rights Camp](#) was Co-founded by Colin Kaepernick in 2016, this organization aims to advance Black and Brown youth education and self-empowerment through events and campaigns. KYRC recently started a legal defense initiative to assist protestors arrested in Minneapolis after the killing of George Floyd.
  
- **Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100)**
  - [The Black Youth Project 100](#) was founded in 2013 in response to George Zimmerman's acquittal, this chapter-based organization is dedicated to advancing the Black community's economic, social, political, and educational freedoms, through a Black queer feminist lens.