

AN ORDINANCE

BY COUNCILMEMBERS ANTONIO BROWN, ANDRE DICKENS, AND MICHAEL JULIAN BOND

AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING THE ATLANTA POLICE DEPARTMENT FROM USING MILITARY-STYLE VEHICLES AND BAN THE USE OF RUBBER BULLETS AND STUN GRENADES TO DISPERSE PROTESTERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, millions of people across the nation have flooded the streets to march in protest to the killing of George Floyd, a black man who died after a Minneapolis police officer held his knee on Floyd's neck; and

WHEREAS, the protests have served as a platform to further highlight the issue of racial inequality in and police brutality against black people; and

WHEREAS, the issues of racial discrimination, racial profiling and unequal treatment of black people under the justice system has long been percolating around the country; and

WHEREAS, citizens have a vested right to protest to air grievances without fear of retribution; and

WHEREAS, during the protests, law enforcement police personnel were perceived to have responded to protesting against police brutality with brutality, by descending on the crowds in military style vehicles and using tear gas, rubber bullets and stun grenades; and

WHEREAS, rubber bullets and stun grenades are classified as weapons of war, tackling the issues related to police reform must include an examination of alternative uses of force with a tool box of non-lethal methods to address civil unrest; and

WHEREAS, police departments are being outfitted as if they are going to war, and it does not work in terms of maintaining peace; and

WHEREAS, there is ample evidence that rubber bullets can cause severe injuries when propelled at a fast velocity, and, in close proximity, can be terminal; and

WHEREAS, a stun grenade, also known as a flash grenade or sound bomb can be defined as an "explosive device", used as an instrument of war to "temporarily disorient an enemy's senses"; which research indicates was first used by the British Army's Special Air Service in the late 1970s; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms issued an Executive Order on June 4, 2020 to convene an Advisory Council to examine the City's law enforcement use of force policies and procedures, in order to make recommendations for any operational or legislative changes within 45 days of the issuance of the Order; and

WHEREAS, the City Council's ban on the use of military styled vehicles, rubber bullets and stun grenades should be supported and incorporated in any recommendations from the Mayor's Advisory Council.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA HEREBY ORDAINS, as follows:

SECTION 1: That the Atlanta Police Department is prohibited from using military styled vehicles and banned from using rubber bullets and stun grenades to disperse protesters.

SECTION 2: That the Atlanta Police Department shall limit its use of tear gas to incidents where all other methods of crowd control has been exhausted.

SECTION 3: That it is recommended the Mayor's Advisory Council support the ban on use of military styled vehicles and the use of rubber bullets and stun grenades to disperse protesters and incorporate procedures for the limited use of tear gas, along with other recommendations for alternative uses of force and non-lethal methods for crowd control.

SECTION 4: Any ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby waived to the extent of the conflict.