

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR No. 2025-271(S-1)

A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING AND COMMITTING TO THE "DEMOCRACY INNOVATIONS FOR BETTER PUBLIC MEETINGS" PROJECT IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE.

WHEREAS, the Mayor of Anchorage has declared that good governance is one of three priority pillars for her Administration; and

WHEREAS, the Assembly's 2025-26 work plan identifies the promotion of civic engagement as part of good governance, and prioritizes robust and representative public participation in local government; and

WHEREAS, the Assembly recognizes that some community groups and networks are consistently well-represented in public discourse while others are consistently underrepresented in civic engagement; and

WHEREAS, disparities in participation mean that certain neighborhoods and demographics are systematically underrepresented in community decision-making, leaving gaps in the voices heard by policymakers [THE OPPORTUNITY TO EVALUATE THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE ASSEMBLY'S PUBLIC PROCESSES AND EXPANDING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN ANCHORAGE BEYOND THE STATUS QUO HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED THROUGH A POTENTIAL "DEMOCRACY INNOVATIONS FOR BETTER PUBLIC MEETINGS" PROJECT THROUGH THE NATIONAL CIVIC LEAGUE'S DEMOCRACY INNOVATIONS INCUBATOR]; and

WHEREAS, the Federation of Community Councils (FCC) and the YWCA have committed to champion this effort as the local partners who will bring this opportunity to fruition in the Municipality; and

WHEREAS, the "Better Public Meetings" process is an iterative collaboration designed to involve diverse stakeholders across the community in researching, evaluating, reporting, and innovating for stronger democracy at the local level; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project schedule in Anchorage spans 12 months, including a Civic Infrastructure Scan, community-wide survey, Civic Engagement Scorecard implementation, public meetings, facilitator training, mapping processes, piloting of new strategies and tools, and the release and potential implementation of recommendations for improved public engagement with local government, all facilitated by the National Civic League Democracy Innovations incubator; and

WHEREAS, this project builds on successful "Better Public Meetings" pilot projects previously undertaken by the National Civic League in Boulder, CO, Mesa, AZ, and Fayetteville, NC; and

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2 **WHEREAS**, the National Civic League has acquired a grant from AAA-ICDR
3 Foundation to underwrite the cost of bringing the "Better Public Meetings" project to
4 select U.S. cities in 2025-26; and

5
6 **WHEREAS**, the National Civic League recognizes Anchorage's unique size and
7 demonstrable dedication to civic engagement via our community council model as
8 a key reason for collaboration on this project; and

9
10 **WHEREAS**, an important selection criterion for this project is the committed
11 participation and engagement from municipal representatives, particularly elected
12 officials, as project success depends on their willing involvement; and

13
14 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Municipal Charter § 8.01 acknowledges that community
15 councils are the principal means and mechanism of affording Anchorage citizens
16 "opportunity for maximum community involvement and self-determination"; and

17
18 **WHEREAS**, in 2022 the Municipality initiated a 10-year review of Community
19 Council district boundaries including collecting feedback regarding the Community
20 Council district boundaries from the public and Community Councils, and after a
21 hiatus through much of 2024, the project resumed in the fall of 2024, though as of
22 this date it is still not complete; and

23
24 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Assembly recognizes the "Better Public Meetings"
25 project as a valuable opportunity for the community to identify and explore
26 innovative models of civic engagement, setting the table for more robust and
27 representative resident participation in our community councils~~[local government]~~;

28
29 **NOW, THEREFORE, THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RESOLVES:**

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31 **Section 1.** That it supports the "Democracy Innovations for Better Public
32 Meetings" project in the Municipality and commits to:

- 33
34 1. ~~[Contribute funds to the project costs, not to exceed five thousand dollars.~~
- 35
36 2. ~~Identify at least two (2) Assembly Members to participate on a cross-~~
37 ~~sector team that will collaborate with the National Civic League on this~~
38 ~~project.~~
- 39
40 3. ~~Actively support~~ the deployment and utilization of a Civic Engagement
41 Scorecard across Anchorage's~~[AT MEETINGS OF THE ANCHORAGE~~
42 ~~ASSEMBLY AND]~~ community councils.
- 43
44 ~~2~~4. **Give consideration** to all recommendations and innovations that emerge
45 from the public through the project.
- 46
47 ~~3~~5. **Engage collaboratively** throughout the proposed project schedule~~[AS~~
48 ~~INDIVIDUAL MEMBER SCHEDULES PERMIT]:~~ ~~[participating in~~
49 ~~research, attending meetings with the public,]~~ piloting new meeting
50 strategies at the community council level, and considering implementation

1 of final recommendations to foster more representative and effective public
2 engagement within community councils across the Municipality of
3 Anchorage.
4

5 **Section 2.** This resolution shall be effective immediately upon passage and
6 approval by the Assembly.
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8 PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this 9th day of
9 September, 2025.
10

11 _____
12 Chair of the Assembly

13 ATTEST:
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15 _____
16 Municipal Clerk
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