



Submitted by: Assembly Vice Chair Brawley
Assembly Member Perez-Verdia
Assembly Member Rivera
Prepared by: Assembly Legal Services Office
For reading: April 28, 2026

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AO No. 2026-62

AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY AMENDING ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 4.50 TO ENACT A NEW SECTION 4.50.120 AND ESTABLISH THE ANCHORAGE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION.

WHEREAS, public safety in the Municipality of Anchorage includes the coordinated work of the Anchorage Police Department, Anchorage Fire Department, Department of Law, emergency response services, and the Anchorage Health Department, and encompasses responses to crime, behavioral health needs, homelessness, substance use, and overall community wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Assembly established a Public Safety Advisory Commission in May 1995 to provide a forum for community input and advice on matters of public safety; and

WHEREAS, for many years the commission served the Municipality as a venue for community engagement, dialogue, and collaboration on public safety issues; and

WHEREAS, over time, concerns emerged that the commission was not consistently reflecting the diversity and broad perspectives of the Anchorage community or functioning in a way that fully met evolving needs of the Municipality and the public; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Assembly allowed the commission to sunset and terminate on January 31, 2024, in order to create space for thoughtful redesign and renewed community engagement; and

WHEREAS, Anchorage does not have a consistent, structured, and accessible forum within local government for community voices and dialogue on public safety issues; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality has multiple boards and commissions focused on public health, including the housing, homeless and neighborhood development commission, the municipal health and human services commission, and the emergency medical service board; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, Anchorage has experienced heightened public concern regarding public safety, including but not limited to Missing and Murdered Indigenous People, officer-involved shootings, substance use challenges such as fentanyl, other opioids, methamphetamines, and other drugs, domestic violence, sexual assault, child maltreatment, and other community safety issues, which have contributed to increased strain in relationships between the public and public safety systems; and

1
2 **WHEREAS**, community members have for several years expressed a need for
3 greater transparency, accountability, communication, and meaningful opportunities
4 to engage with public safety agencies, and have advocated to the Municipality for a
5 public process to create a community-focused public safety body that works to
6 achieve these goals; and
7

8 **WHEREAS**, in response, the Anchorage Assembly established a Public Safety Task
9 Force through AR 2025-111 to engage community members, municipal partners,
10 and stakeholders in reimagining a public safety commission, understand our current
11 public safety systems, consider various alternative models, and develop
12 recommendations to the Assembly and Administration; and
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14 **WHEREAS**, the Task Force conducted a six-month public process from June to
15 December 2025 that included meetings, workshops, panels, written feedback, and
16 direct engagement with community members, including individuals with lived
17 experience, to inform its recommendations; and
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19 **WHEREAS**, throughout the Task Force process, the Assembly received regular
20 updates via Assembly Information Memorandums (AIM 153-2025, AIM 166-2025,
21 AIM 213-2025), as well as a final report with the Task Force's recommendations
22 (AIM 249-2025(A)); and
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24 **WHEREAS**, the Task Force identified the importance of creating a commission that
25 is community-informed, independent in perspective, and capable of strengthening
26 transparency, accountability, and trust between the public and local public safety
27 systems; and
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29 **WHEREAS**, the Task Force recommendations included a range of potential
30 authorities for such a commission, reflecting a desire for a more robust oversight
31 and accountability role in policy development and review, alongside advisory and
32 community engagement functions, as well as diverse representation on the
33 commission that meaningfully reflects the whole community; and
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35 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Assembly has carefully considered these
36 recommendations alongside legal, operational, and sustainability considerations,
37 including the role of volunteer commissioners, the structure of existing municipal
38 systems, and the importance of maintaining clear boundaries with respect to
39 personnel matters and active investigations; and
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41 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Assembly finds that a balanced model—emphasizing
42 advisory functions, robust community engagement, system-level review, and the
43 ability to recommend independent evaluations—will provide meaningful
44 accountability while ensuring clarity of roles, maintaining public trust, and supporting
45 effective public safety operations; and
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47 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Assembly further finds that strengthening public safety
48 requires both accountability and collaboration, and that trust is built through
49 transparency, communication, and sustained community engagement; and
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51 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Assembly further finds that any new commission will

1 need to take a broad interest in public safety, shifting its focus between the various
2 public safety agencies while still responding to the immediate needs of the
3 community; and
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5 **WHEREAS**, it is in the best interest of the Municipality of Anchorage to establish a
6 reimagined Anchorage Public Safety Commission that reflects these principles and
7 provides a durable, community-informed structure for engagement, review, and
8 advisory input on public safety systems; now, therefore,
9

10 **THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:**
11

12 **Section 1.** Anchorage Municipal Code chapter 4.50 is hereby amended to add a
13 new section 4.50.120 as follows (*requiring no legislative formatting*):
14

15 **4.50.120 Public safety commission.**
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17 A. The Anchorage Assembly hereby establishes an Anchorage Public
18 Safety Commission ("Commission") to serve as an independent,
19 community-led advisory and review body that strengthens public
20 safety, transparency, and trust between the Municipality and the
21 community. The Commission shall:
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- 23 1. Advise the Mayor and Assembly on public safety policy,
24 systems, and strategies;
25
- 26 2. Participate in system-level reviews of public safety policies and
27 practices;
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- 29 3. Serve as a structured forum for community input and
30 engagement, and sharing lived experiences; and
31
- 32 4. Promote transparency, accountability, and continuous
33 improvement across public safety systems.
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35 B. *Composition.* The commission shall be comprised of 14 seats
36 consisting of nine voting commissioners and five ex officio members.
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- 38 1. Nine commissioners with authority to vote shall be appointed
39 consistent with section 4.05.020.
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- 41 a. The total composition of the commission should
42 encompass a broad balance of perspectives and reflect
43 the full diversity of the Municipality, to include:
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- 45 i. Members of the community with lived experience
46 interacting with law enforcement relevant to the
47 purpose of the commission;
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- 49 ii. Subject matter experts in fields of study relevant
50 to the purpose of the commission; and
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iii. Behavioral or mental health care professionals.

b. The total composition of the commission shall be subject to the following restrictions:

i. No more than three members may have been previously employed by the police department, fire department, office of emergency operations management, or department of law in any jurisdiction, or be the immediate family member of anyone employed by these departments in any jurisdiction.

ii. No current employee or immediate family member of a current employee of the Municipality of Anchorage may serve as a voting commissioner.

2. *Ex officio members and staff.*

a. The following departments and agencies may designate a representative to act as an ex officio member of the commission:

i. The police department;

ii. The fire department;

iii. The office of emergency management; and

iv. The department of law.

v. The department of health.

b. *Support.* The commission shall receive administrative and staff support on a rotating basis from:

i. The police department;

ii. The fire department; and

iii. The office of emergency management.

This support shall rotate every six months, with each change in responsibility reported to the assembly in the form of a memorandum.

c. *Legal counsel.* The municipal attorney's office shall be counsel to the commission.

3. *Term.*

- a. Commissioners shall serve a term of three years, with appointments staggered so that not more than three member terms expire each year.
 - b. Commissioners are subject to a term limit of three consecutive full terms beginning when a board member has been appointed to a full three-year term. Time served by a commissioner during any initial partial term less than three years shall not be counted in connection with the term limit.
 - c. After serving three consecutive full terms, the same commissioner may continue to serve until either another commissioner can be appointed or 90 days have elapsed.
4. *Removal.* Commissioners may be removed from office in accordance with section 4.05.065. For the purposes of this section, "breach of public trust" shall include:
 - a. Disclosure of confidential information to a third party;
 - b. Non-compliance with MOA Code of Ethics per AMC 1.15; and
 - c. Non-disclosure of material conflict of interest.
- C. *Powers and duties.* The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:
 1. *Advisory Role.* Provide recommendations to and advise the Mayor and Assembly on public safety policy, systems, and strategies;
 2. *Review.*
 - a. Participate in system-level review of public safety policies, practices, and outcomes to identify trends, patterns, and systemic issues, and evaluate alignment with best practices and community needs.
 - b. This body does not have the ability to conduct independent investigations. The body may request an independent review of specific incidents after completion of investigations and conclusion of any personnel matters.
 3. *Community Engagement.* Serve as a structured forum for community input and engagement by holding public hearings on any subject within the scope of its purpose.

4. *Reporting.* Publish an annual report to the mayor and assembly, and make interim or specific recommendations to address immediate concerns.
5. *Authority.* To accomplish its duties, the commission, upon establishing a quorum, shall have authority to:
 - a. Request and receive briefings from departments;
 - b. Convene public hearings and receive testimony on subjects within the scope of its purpose; and
 - c. Access any file releasable as a public record under subsection 3.90.040C. Requests for records shall be in the form of a resolution approved by a majority of the commissioners.
6. *Limitations.* All powers and duties of the commission are conveyed to the body as a whole, and not to the individual commissioners. Nothing in this section shall be construed to provide the following authority to the commission:
 - a. Interfere with or in any way participate in active law enforcement investigations;
 - b. Conduct independent investigations;
 - c. Make disciplinary decisions or recommendations;
 - d. Engage or interject in collective bargaining negotiations; or
 - e. Access personnel records not otherwise permitted by law.

D. *Commissioner training.*

1. Each commissioner shall receive training in the following matters within six months of their appointment:
 - a. Fundamentals of the criminal justice system, to be provided by the department of law.
 - b. Procedures and operations of the police department and fire department.
2. The commission shall receive annual training from the board of ethics and the department of law on issues relevant to its mission.

E. *Commission operation and communication.*

1. The commission shall meet no less than quarterly, and all meetings shall be publicly noticed pursuant to AMC chapter 1.25 and 4.05 except as follows.
2. The commission chair shall be selected by an affirmative majority vote of seated commissioners.
3. Within its first six months, the commission shall adopt bylaws and procedures governing its operations and the conduct of meetings. These bylaws and procedures shall be submitted for approval by the assembly as a regulation pursuant to section 3.40.040.

Section 2. This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and approval by the Assembly.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Chair

ATTEST:

Municipal Clerk



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

ASSEMBLY MEMORANDUM

No. AM 287-2026

Meeting Date: April 28, 2026

From: Assembly Vice Chair Brawley, Assembly Member Perez-Verdia, and Assembly Member Rivera

Subject: AO 2026-XXX – AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY AMENDING ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 4.50 TO ENACT A NEW SECTION 4.50.120 AND ESTABLISH THE ANCHORAGE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION.

The effort to reimagine the Public Safety Advisory Commission (PSAC) has been underway for over a year and is part of a larger community conversation about how to strengthen trust with our public safety systems, create a consistent forum for these discussions, and continuing to strengthen relationships between local government leaders, agencies, and the community we all serve.

Part of this year-long effort was the establishment of a Task Force (AR 2025-111), funded with a budget amendment in spring 2025 to support a facilitation contract, which met over the course of five months (June-November 2025) to explore the community's role in public safety, considered strategies for community engagement, and develop recommendations for the Assembly to consider in reimaging the PSAC. Its final report was published December 2025 (AIM 249-2025(A)). The Assembly and the public were briefed with regular updates (AIM 153-2025, AIM 166-2025, and AIM 213-2025), which provide more detailed context. Recommendations and regular reports can be found online at the Assembly's focus on Public Safety webpage (<https://www.muni.org/Departments/Assembly/Pages/focus-on-public-safety.aspx>), including documentation of who served on the Task Force, the meeting schedule and recordings, and other context.

In developing this proposed ordinance, the sponsors carefully considered not only the Task Force's recommendations, but also the months of deliberation on this topic; engagement with a variety of stakeholders; interviews with some former PSAC members; discussions with Municipal department staff including the Ombudsman; a review of models from other communities; and a comparison of the structure, duties, and requirements of existing boards and commissions in Municipal Code.

Ultimately, the new Public Safety Commission is proposed to remain advisory, but with an expanded role in policy review, public engagement, and opportunities to make policy recommendations. The sponsors also placed a strong focus on representation on the commission, with the goal of establishing guardrails for true community representation over time and preserving its role as a community-led body. The sponsors recognize that this proposal does not adopt every recommendation put forward by the Task Force but reflects a balanced approach that incorporates those

priorities alongside the perspectives of the whole community. This proposal represents a shift from the previous PSAC by adopting a systems-level approach to public safety, strengthening the commission's role in policy review and recommendations, and establishing a structure that prioritizes community-led representation while ensuring access to subject-matter expertise.

SUMMARY OF POLICY CHOICES

Purpose and Scope

- The commission is established as a Technical Advisory Board instead of a Program Advisory Board. While it remains advisory in nature, this distinction reflects the complexity of public safety systems and recognizes that commissioners will develop greater expertise over time and engage in review and recommendations of a more technical nature than many advisory boards.
- The Commission's purpose includes serving as a forum for community engagement and public input; providing a consistent space to hear community concerns; reviewing public safety policies at a systems level; and developing recommendations. As part of this role, the Commission may also review individual cases after the fact as part of broader role in making recommendations for systems improvements.
- This body is not granted the authority or responsibility for conducting investigations or receiving confidential information that is not publicly available, although the commission has the authority to request a third-party investigation, which is not standard practice but is a tool which has been used recently in some cases. Any review of individual cases is limited to publicly available information and is conducted solely for the purpose of identifying system-level improvements. The commission is not authorized to conduct investigations or make determinations of fault.

Composition

- The Commission is structured to ensure that community members serve as voting members, reinforcing its role as a community-led body.
- Five ex officio, non-voting seats are included to ensure consistent participation from key departments. These members serve as resources and provide subject-matter input, while maintaining a clear separation from voting on recommendations. The inclusion of non-voting ex officio members is intended to ensure consistent access to subject-matter expertise and improve coordination across departments, while preserving the commission's role as an independent, community-led body.

- Voting membership is intended to consist of individuals from but not employed by the Municipality to preserve independence and a community-centered perspective.
- The structure is designed to promote broad and balanced representation over time to reduce the risk that the Commission becomes less representative and independent as commission appointments change. Limits on individuals currently working in the public safety field, as well as their immediate family members, are intended to maintain this balance, reflecting lessons learned from prior iterations of the Commission.
- Unlike subject-matter advisory bodies (e.g., the Geotechnical Advisory Commission), this Commission is not designed to require specific technical expertise, but rather to elevate community-based perspectives.
- Term limits are included to balance continuity with a schedule of regular turnover, ensuring both institutional knowledge and opportunities for new voices over time.

Powers and Duties

- The Commission's role in policy review is intended to be broad and flexible. Policy review is not required in all instances, nor is it limited to circumstances in which a department formally requests input. The Commission may proactively identify and review policies at its discretion.
- The annual reporting requirement is intended to be concise and accessible. This may take the form of a brief letter summarizing key activities, such as the number of meetings held, resolutions or recommendations issued, and other notable highlights. It is not intended to be a comprehensive staff report or require extensive data analysis, though additional information may be included where appropriate.
- The Commission is authorized to make records requests at no cost, consistent with applicable laws, and to hold public hearings in furtherance of its duties.

Meetings and Procedures

- The Commission may enter into executive session when legally appropriate, consistent with existing authority under AMC Title 4. This tool is expected to be used sparingly and only when clearly warranted and still retains the expectation that the information the Commission receives is public information, but may require discussion of sensitive legal matters.
- All actions must be taken by the Commission as a body. Individual commissioners are not authorized to make records requests, conduct hearings, or otherwise act on behalf of the Commission independently.

1 Actions, including records requests and formal recommendations, must be
2 approved by a majority vote.

- 3 • Ongoing training is emphasized to support commissioners in carrying out their
4 roles effectively and with a strong understanding of relevant subject matter.
5 Training opportunities may include support from the Municipal Attorney's
6 Office, the Board of Ethics, and departments such as Anchorage Police
7 Department, Anchorage Fire Department, and Anchorage Office of Emergency
8 Management, as well as the Ombudsman and other subject-matter experts.
9 The Commission may also request third-party training on specific topics as
10 needed.
- 11 • Commissioners serve on a volunteer basis, consistent with the structure of
12 most Municipal boards and commissions.

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14 This proposal reflects a balanced and thoughtful approach that strengthens public
15 trust, improves coordination across public safety systems, and creates a durable
16 structure for meaningful community engagement in public safety policy.

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19 Respectfully submitted: Assembly Vice Chair Anna Brawley,
20 District 3 – West Anchorage

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22 Assembly Member Kameron Perez-Verdia,
23 District 3 – West Anchorage

24
25 Assembly Member Felix Rivera,
26 District 4 – Midtown Anchorage