



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

Assembly Information Memorandum

No. AIM 166-2025, As Corrected*

Municipal Clerk's Office

Accepted

Meeting Date: September 9, 2025

Date: **September 9, 2025**

Corrected

Date: **November 17, 2025**

From: ASSEMBLY VICE CHAIR ANNA BRAWLEY, ASSEMBLY MEMBER KAMERON PEREZ-VERDIA, AND ASSEMBLY MEMBER FELIX RIVERA

Subject: SEPTEMBER UPDATE ON TASK FORCE TO REIMAGINE THE PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMISSION

A task force to explore the reimagining of the former Public Safety Advisory Commission was established by the Assembly through AR No. 2025-111. Section 4 of the resolution directs monthly updates to be provided via an Assembly Information Memorandum (AIM).

For the Assembly's review and consideration, attached is a report prepared by task force facilitator Denali Daniels + Associates (DDA). The report includes notes from an August 5th Community Workshop, an overview document to inform the task force's work, and a plan for Phase 2 (September–November) of the process.

Prepared by: Legislative Services Office

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

Kameron Perez-Verdia, Assembly Member
District 3, West Anchorage

Felix Rivera, Assembly Member
District 4, Midtown Anchorage

*Scrivener's Error corrected on page 3 to remove erroneous information. Under "Attendance," the organization was incorrect next to "Jamie Lopez" and was removed.

**Facilitator Report**

On August 5, 2025, the Task Force to Reimagine the Public Safety Advisory Commission (Task Force) hosted a Community Workshop that brought together members of the public, Task Force members, and community stakeholders to discuss Anchorage's public safety needs and priorities. Participants engaged in small- and large-group discussions, and the themes from this session informed the Task Force's future meeting design.

Following the workshop, the Task Force strategic team, including Assembly members, the co-conveners and the facilitation team, developed a plan for future meetings and decision-making process. This plan outlines the next phase of engagement, including deliberation meetings and opportunities for continued public involvement. Details are included in the attached Overview Document.

The facilitation team will continue to support the Task Force in organizing and guiding these meetings, ensuring community perspectives are incorporated into discussions and future recommendations.

Attached:

Community Workshop Notes – August 5, 2025
Overview Document



Task Force to Reimagine the Public Safety Advisory Commission (Task Force)

Community Workshop

August 5, 2025

5:30-7:00 PM

Introduction

The Task Force hosted a Community Workshop that brought together 31 participants for a conversation about perceptions of the public safety system and community safety needs in Anchorage. The insights shared during the workshop will help shape the focus of future Task Force meetings and contribute to ongoing discussions about the potential structure and role of a new public safety advisory commission.

Attendance

Name	Organization Name (if applicable)
Mercedes Arciniega*	AK Public Interest Research Group & Alaska Coalition for Justice
Katie Baldwin*	Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
Arianna Belizzi	Federation of Community Councils
Anna Brawley*	Assembly Liaison
Matt Carlson	
Chief Sean Case*	Anchorage Police Department
Rich Curtner*	Alaska Black Caucus, Co-Convener
Cheryl Cox Williams*	National Association for Advancement of Colored People
Denise Elsenbast	
Darrell Evans*	Anchorage Police Department Employees Association
Brian Flynn	
Bruce Farusbath	
Mike Garney	American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska
Melissa Gould	
Catherine Jones	MeAnYou Ministry
Lisa Keller	Rep. Alyse Galvin's Office
Mara Kimmel	American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska
Emily Kloc	Anchorage Coalition for Justice
Jason Lessaro	
Jamie Lopez	
Teresa Obermeyer	
Kameron Perez-Verdia*	Assembly Liaison
Kimberly Rash*	Anchorage Health Department



Jim Rehman	
Felix Rivera*	Assembly, Co-Convenor
Christina Shadura	Anchorage Re-Entry Coalition
Sydney Scout	
Christy Terry	Alaska Railroad Corporation
John Thurber	
Dev Williams	
Leroy Williams	Anchorage Coalition for Justice

**Member of the Task Force to Reimagine the Public Safety Advisory Commission*

Workshop Question

The group was asked, "**What does the community need to ensure safety and wellbeing in Anchorage?**"

Answers to the workshop question were discussed in individual groups. Groups agreed on priority answers to send to the front of the room. The following priorities were identified.

Priority Community Needs to Ensure Safety and Wellbeing in Anchorage

A meaningful voice in how it's policed	Police + Fire Crisis Response
Accountability (police, government)	Responsive government, community input
Accreditation, clear and consistent standards	Secure energy + people-centered, physical infrastructure
After care	Shared power
Better collaboration and understanding	Shared public safety objectives
Communication	Stability in our police force
Community oversight + direct involvement	Staff more qualified manpower
Empower people to help create a safe community	Trust and Transparency
Expansion of non-LEO response teams (MCT, etc.)	Trust in response
Improve Outdoor Spaces	Trust-building, accountability, transparency of government
Information, communication, outreach, two-way commission + public	Try new ways to engage and connect

Infrastructure, choices, neighbors	We all have a sense of belonging
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Questions + Discussion

After priorities were displayed on the front wall, participants were invited to ask clarifying questions or add comments about the priorities.

There was a question about the intent of the workshop question, specifically whether it was regarding the intent of the task force or to broader issues of safety and well-being. The facilitator responded that this was an important question, and that the workshop question was intentionally open-ended because the purpose and direction of the task force was not yet defined, specifically the question of what is meant by “public safety”. Understanding what the community considers public safety is a hope for this discussion, then we will look to what entities are already meeting those needs, and what the gaps can be filled by a future commission.

The following recap reflects facilitator summaries of this discussion and are not verbatim.

Infrastructure/Choices/Neighbors - They want to better understand what makes neighbors feel safe, the ability to make choices, the neighbors that we live, having adequate lighting especially when you’re out at night time, well-maintained sidewalks, and other basic infrastructure improvements.

Accountability - From a community perspective, there must be accountability and clear communication, with information shared in a timely and transparent manner.

Qualified Staff and Manpower - It was clarified that this wasn’t about the qualifications of the staff, but rather about understaffing. There is a need for more qualified personnel in both the law enforcement and fire departments. Without sufficient staff, they are unable to perform their duties effectively.

Trust, Accountability, and Transparency - There was a discussion around the need for greater transparency, accountability, and qualified personnel within law enforcement. Participants emphasized that APD should be seen not just as a government agency, but as a family- and community-oriented organization. Rebuilding trust was emphasized as essential, with the understanding that trust is built through strong, ongoing relationships. To move forward, the community must help define clear roles: What do we expect the police to do? What should be the role of firefighters? What responsibilities can or should be taken on by citizens themselves? Just as we turn to doctors for medical needs—starting with care for families, seeking professionals when necessary—we must set clear expectations for public safety professionals and ensure they have the appropriate resources to meet those expectations.

There was a statement that community members and officers alike may have felt burned over time, and there was a call for clearer expectations: When someone accepts the role and salary of an officer, they also accept the responsibilities and standards the community expects. Others



acknowledged the real challenges officers face on the job, underscoring the need for a more collaborative and supportive environment moving forward.

The importance of accreditation and standards was emphasized, noting that while it requires funding to reach that level, the advisory commission must continue to synthesize and clarify its ultimate goals. Additionally, it was expressed that there must be a mechanism in place that is understandable and results in solutions that work for both parties, especially the community, not just outcomes that are rubber-stamped by the commission.

Police/Fire Crisis Response - There was discussion around the use of Mobile Crisis Teams and Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT), highlighting national best practices that reduce the need for police involvement in behavioral health and substance use emergencies. Instead, trained fire, EMS, and health clinicians should lead crisis response and de-escalation efforts. While both APD and AFD have crisis response teams, gaps remain—particularly in training and staffing. AFD is currently short about 130 firefighters, which limits the capacity to expand these teams. Addressing these shortages is critical to improving crisis response and reducing strain on law enforcement.

Meaningful voice in how it's policed - There was a discussion emphasizing that this process should focus on refining the definition of what a meaningful voice truly means. It's important to clarify that this is not a continuation of the old advisory commission, which no longer exists. It was noted that being meaningful means finding the right role that works for both the public safety systems and the community.

Communication - An operational definition involves clearly outlining what we expect from the commission. This raises the question of how to guide someone in building a relationship, which ultimately comes down to setting clear, standardized expectations so everyone is working from the same foundation.

After-Care - After the initial contact, a question was asked about what services are available. One parent who lost a child in a police-related incident shared that they were simply met in a parking lot and given a brochure, describing the aftercare and overall process as inadequate, and highlighting the need for dedicated support to guide and stand with families through the aftermath.

New ways to engage and connect - Neighbors want to connect, but it's often difficult to access information. Many people who should be part of the conversation are not present and need to be included.

Conclusion

This recap document reflects the community workshop session and will help inform the Task Force process.