

Municipality of Anchorage



*P.O. Box 390
Girdwood, Alaska 99587
<http://www.muni.org/gbos>
Dave Bronson, Mayor*

*GIRDWOOD VALLEY SERVICE AREA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Mike Edgington & Briana Sullivan, Co-Chairs
Jennifer Wingard, Amanda Sassi, Guy Wade*

Resolution 2023-10 Of the Girdwood Board of Supervisors

Resolution of Support for AO No. 2023- ____

Establishing the provision of municipal cemeteries as a power exercised on an areawide basis

Whereas, a cemetery is a sign of an established community, and prior to incorporation with the Municipality, Girdwood had a cemetery located in the area now transected by the Alyeska Highway near the railroad crossing; and

Whereas, the concept of building a cemetery in Girdwood received widespread approval from the people in Girdwood, who formed a Cemetery Committee, followed a process to identify and secure suitable land in a process with the Heritage Land Bank, and voted to fund a schematic study for a cemetery to be built; and

Whereas, upon receiving "Cemetery Power" to pay for design and engineering of a cemetery, the schematic design study for the Girdwood Cemetery was completed in 2019; and

Whereas, recently, community councils in Chugiak and Eagle River have engaged in a similar process of establishing a cemetery in the northern part of the MOA and have been pursuing that goal; and

Whereas, the Anchorage Memorial Park is in need of facility renovations and is likely to run out of space for burials in the next 5 years; and

Whereas, providing a public space to honor and recognize life's end is necessary and the remains of many are ensured an equitable opportunity to laid to rest in perpetuity; and

Whereas, finding synergy in their causes and need, in 2022 the Girdwood Board of Supervisors, Chugiak Community Council and Eagle River Community Council resolved their support for an areawide bond to include a Chugiak-Eagle River area public cemetery, Girdwood Cemetery, and Anchorage Memorial Park improvements and renovation, however the bonding effort was halted when Assembly legal counsel determined that Cemeteries are not an established areawide service of the MOA; and

Whereas, according to Article X, section 11 of the Alaska Constitution and AS 29.35 the Municipality may exercise any power on an areawide basis;

THEREFORE, the GBOS supports the Assembly's ordinance (AO 2023- ____) to permit the municipality to levy an areawide tax to fund the operations and maintenance of existing and future municipal cemeteries in the near future.

Passed by a vote of x in favor, xx opposed, on this ____ day of May, 2023.

LAI-ON-THE-TABLE

Submitted by: Assembly Chair LaFrance
Assembly Member Cross
Prepared by: Assembly Counsel's Office
For reading: April 25, 2023

**ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AO No. 2023-___**

1 **AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY AMENDING**
2 **ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 27.40.010 TO ESTABLISH THE**
3 **PROVISION OF MUNICIPAL CEMETERIES AS A POWER EXERCISED ON AN**
4 **AREAWIDE BASIS.**
5

6
7 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Memorial Park Cemetery is currently the only municipal
8 cemetery in the Municipality of Anchorage, located in the City Service Area (the
9 boundaries of what was formerly the City of Anchorage) created during the municipal
10 unification process in 1975-1977; and

11
12 **WHEREAS**, cemetery services are currently expressly provided for in the Girdwood
13 Valley Service Area (GVSA), codified in Anchorage Municipal Code section
14 27.30.020; and

15
16 **WHEREAS**, Anchorage area cemeteries are running out of room: the Anchorage
17 Memorial Park Cemetery is anticipated to be at maximum capacity within five years;
18 and

19
20 **WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan update of December 2006 identifies the
21 development of community cemeteries as a public facilities priority; and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, the Girdwood Board of Supervisors and its Girdwood Cemetery
24 Committee have invested significant time and effort to plan and advocate for the
25 establishment of a cemetery in the Girdwood Valley area, including selection of land
26 from Heritage Land Bank offerings, conducting an environmental study, and
27 development of a multi-phase development plan with design and construction cost
28 estimates; and

29
30 **WHEREAS**, the Chugiak Community Council, Eagle River Community Council,
31 Eklutna Valley Community Council, and many residents of the Eagle River-Chugiak
32 Park and Recreational Service Area (ERCPRSA) have expressed support for
33 development of a municipal cemetery in the area; and

34
35 **WHEREAS**, the Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board, pursuant to AMC section
36 21.10.030, reviewed a site selection study and acknowledged the importance and
37 need for a local cemetery at its May 19, 2021 meeting; and

38
39 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Article X, section 11 of the Alaska Constitution and AS 29.35
40 the Municipality may exercise any power on an areawide basis not otherwise
41 prohibited by law; and
42

1 **WHEREAS**, this ordinance would permit the municipality to submit to voters the
2 question of whether to bond for the expense of constructing any new municipal
3 cemetery; and
4

5 **WHEREAS**, this ordinance would permit the municipality to levy an areawide tax to
6 fund the operations and maintenance of existing and future municipal cemeteries; and
7

8 **WHEREAS**, the Assembly desires to support the construction and maintenance of
9 municipal cemeteries in the Girdwood and Eagle River areas in the near future, and
10 provide for future cemetery needs in the Anchorage Bowl, by establishing cemetery
11 services as an areawide power; now, therefore,
12

13 **THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:**
14

15 **Section 1.** The following powers may be exercised on an areawide basis:
16

17 **27.40.010 Areawide powers, generally.**
18

19 The following powers may be exercised on an areawide basis:
20

21 * * * * *
22

23 **R. Municipal cemeteries.**
24

25 (AO No. 78-148; AO No. 78-158(S); AO No. 81-96; AO No. 2013-64, § 2, 5-7-
26 13; AO No. 2018-16 , § 1, 2-27-18; AO No. 2019-136 , § 1, 11-19-19)
27

28 **Section 2.** This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and
29 approval by the Assembly.
30

31
32 PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this _____ day of
33 _____, 2023.
34

35
36 _____
37 Chair
38

39 ATTEST:
40

41
42 _____
43 Municipal Clerk

Hi South Anchorage District Community Council Leadership and GBOS leadership (Chair/President, Vice Chair/Vice President, Secretary),

As you may know, the Assembly approved AR 2023-97, As Amended, a resolution adopting the “Clean Slate Strategy” on March 21, 2023.

A draft timeline for this work has been developed and can be found here, along with other helpful documents: <https://www.muni.org/Departments/Assembly/Pages/Clean-Slate-Approach.aspx>

The timeline proposes the following community-engagement approach to this work:

“The following representatives will be invited to be a part of this conversation with the Housing and Homelessness Committee:

- A representative from community councils in each Assembly district [NOTE: I made a slight edit from what is currently posted online to better mirror my intent with this language]
- A representative from the Anchorage Board of Realtors
- A representative from the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness
- A representative from the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce”

I ask leadership from all South Anchorage District Community Councils and GBOS to please coordinate and choose one representative to be a part of this work with the Housing and Homelessness Committee.

I leave the selection process for this representative up to you. The process should be collaborative and not seen as exclusionary. Each Assembly district will have one community council representative. Each community council representative should be a conduit for the opinions of the respective community councils within their Assembly district.

Please send me a name for a representative, email, and phone number no later than May 26. I realize this may be a short window to make this decision, but I want to give plenty of time to onboard these representatives.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

Felix Rivera
Midtown Assembly Member
felix.rivera@anchorageak.gov
(907)-764-0841

He/Him/His

Dena'inaq ełnen'aq' gheshtnu ch'q'u yeshdu. (Dena'ina)
I live and work on Dena'ina land. (English)

