



**OFFICE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL**

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

401 N Morton St, Suite 110

Bloomington IN 47404

p 812.349.3409

f 812.349.3570

**To:** Members of the Common Council

**From:** Council Office

**Date:** September 15, 2023

**Re:** Review of Community Advisory on Public Safety Commission pursuant to Ordinance 20-20

---

In November 2020, [Ordinance 20-20](#) was adopted, which established the Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS) Commission. That ordinance provided that the Council would review the need for and efficacy of the commission two years after the commission's first meeting. The September 20, 2023 Regular Session includes an opportunity for the Council to proceed with such a review.

The goal of the CAPS Commission, as described in [Ordinance 20-20](#), is to increase the safety of all Bloomington community members, especially those often marginalized due to race, disability, gender, sexual identity, or sexual orientation. Its purposes include the following duties:

- (1) Perform research and gather data on the perceptions and preferences about public safety from community members, with specific focus on perceptions and preference data gathered from minority community members, individuals who are disabled, and other often marginalized community members; and
- (2) Research evidence-based alternatives to traditional policing; and
- (3) Identify best practices in public safety globally and evaluate the efficacy of such practices for implementation in Bloomington; and
- (4) Make recommendations to the common council, the board of public safety, and/or the mayor or the mayor's designee on policies and programs that enhance public safety for all community members.

The CAPS Commission first met on May 18, 2021 and has since met roughly on a monthly basis, for a total of approximately twenty-three regular session meetings. Local code requires at least four meetings be held each year, with regular monthly meetings unless canceled by the commission.

There are eleven seats on the commission, with five currently vacant. The commission has rarely had all eleven seats filled at one time. There have been twenty-four members on the CAPS Commission across its existence.

The CAPS Commission has passed various resolutions to condemn anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim violence and to advocate for access to reproductive rights. It has produced three reports, including two annual reports to the Common Council and one Alternative Public Safety Report, which was made after conducting research and holding a town hall event in April of 2023. The Commission has made recommendations based on its research that are contained in its Alternative Public Safety Report and in its annual report to the Council given on August 2, 2023. These materials, along with a list of current commission members, can be found on the Commission's [webpage](#).

Ordinance 20-20 calls for the Council to conduct a review of the need for and efficacy of the commission but does not specify any required action beyond that. The commission's establishment and its functioning are provided for in local code, at [BMC § 2.12.120](#). Any action to amend these provisions or to dissolve the Commission should occur through adoption of an ordinance. Absent any such ordinance, the commission will continue to function as called for in local code.