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*Albany Community Police Review Board
c/o Government Law Center*

Albany Community Police Review Board Relocation and Transition Plan Fiscal Years 2024–2025

The Albany Community Police Review Board (CPRB) seeks to transition from operating under a contracted administrative agency to operating as an entity within the City of Albany. The Board, its expert consultants, and the Government Law School (GLC) at Albany Law School (the current administrative agency) all agree that the City and the CPRB will be best served by having CPRB staff directly employed by the City and answerable to the Board instead of a contracted entity.

This Transition Plan seeks to:

- Identify tasks and propose a starting point for integration into the City by December 2024.
- Determine a timeline of goals and activities to support the uninterrupted operation of the CPRB.
- Establish a task force made up of city stakeholders to ensure clear communication and collaboration to implement this critical transition

Context

Since its founding in 2000, Albany's CPRB has been dedicated to providing impartial oversight of law enforcement, reviewing allegations of police misconduct, and fostering transparency in police procedures.

Originally mandated by Part 33 of the Albany City Code to operate independently, the Board has relied on external administrative support, primarily provided by the Government Law Center at Albany Law School. However, recent changes in the law (ratified Local Law J of 2020) have expanded the Board's responsibilities while complicating its operational structure. While these changes aim to enhance the Board's independence, they have also introduced challenges, including budget constraints, limited staffing, and difficulty finding administrative support.

With the impending termination of the Albany Law School's contract as the administrative agency in December 2024, the CPRB seeks to have its administrative staff become City employees. These concerns have been raised repeatedly during budget discussions and have emphasized the need for legislative revision and improved support infrastructure to effectively fulfill the Board's evolving role.

Considerations

Independence — The current contract model raises concerns about the actual and perceived risk that an outside entity could inappropriately influence CPRB staff, potentially undermining community members' confidence in the CPRB's ability to independently and objectively investigate complaints alleging police misconduct. The CPRB's independence is critical, and both the Board and CPRB staff must be free from political influence. The Administrative Agency staff, currently comprised of Albany Law School personnel, and the investigative component, which is currently handled by external contractors, will transition to being a City agency. It is important to note, however, that the CPRB itself will not become a City agency. This restructuring aims to improve overall efficiency and transparency within the organization.

Budget – By integrating into the City system, the CPRB could use basic shared services and logistical infrastructure such as IT and HR support, accounting and audit services, and physical office space. Moving away from third-party contract administration would allow the CPRB to benefit from in-house employees and maximize its budget instead of relying exclusively on external investigators and monitors.

Staffing — As explained in its past two budget presentations, the Board within the City would be staffed with an executive director (for day-to-day management and operations), a senior and junior investigator,

and other necessary support staff, all of whom would be direct employees. In this way, the Board will have the authority to hire, impose discipline, and terminate employment as appropriate.

Training — Pursuant to § 42-339¹ of the City Code, the Board has developed — with support from Administrative Agency staff and contracted subject matter experts — a robust curriculum to enhance Board members’ knowledge of areas critical to the Board’s authority. The CPRB welcomes the opportunity to expand its training opportunities by utilizing appropriate City offerings that align with their work in civilian police oversight.

Suggested Approach

Form and Launch a Stakeholder Task Force — Convene stakeholders to work collaboratively on the integration process. Because this move calls for significant structural change, the CPRB needs robust input and support from other stakeholders to facilitate this transition and prevent disruptions to the Board’s ability to perform its statutory responsibilities.

Review and Develop the Suggested Timeline and Approach — The table below provides a tentative overview of tasks and activities requiring attention. This is a starting point that the Task Force can adjust and develop as needed.

Phase + Target Completion	Action Items
<p>Alignment + Kick-off</p> <p>April – May</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene and launch a Task Force, a committee comprising key stakeholders responsible for overseeing the transition process. • Plan and facilitate 2–3 internal meetings to level-set and align the group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting topics to include (not exhaustive) ○ Review/adjust this plan ○ Feasibility studies/research for locations, gap analysis, etc. • Develop and soft-launch public communication campaign for transparency and ensuring community sentiment, voice, and ideas are captured • Introduce and pass legislative revisions to Local Law that allow for this transition and less reliance on third parties
<p>Organize + Implement</p> <p>May – August</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a budget for relocation (including furniture, rent, etc.) • Initiate discussions with real estate agents, landlords, or property owners for leasing or purchasing the new office space. • Develop a detailed checklist outlining tasks, responsibilities, and deadlines. • Arrange and set up IT infrastructure, website, telecommunications, case management system, and other essential services for a new location.
<p>Transition</p> <p>August – November</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the progress of the relocation and address any issues or challenges as they arise. • Create job applications for staff positions, including support staff and investigators. • Introduced and passed resolutions for creating full-time positions for the executive director, senior investigator, investigator, and administrative support specialist. Request approval from the Board of Estimate and Apportionment.

¹ The Administrative Agency shall coordinate and conduct training and orientation of CPRB members and recommend for adoption by the Common Council written standards for orientation of appointees and continuing training of all CPRB members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalize selection of the new Board’s headquarters and secure necessary lease agreements.• Begin moving process: from packing and to transporting into the new location.
Post-Transition Integration December onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct training sessions or orientations for Board members and staff regarding City procedures.• Coordinate with City departments on office equipment, furniture, and supplies.• Update official documents and legal registrations with new contact information and notify community stakeholders of the new headquarters address.• Identify one person who is not a staff member with access to the CPRB's emails and case management system, HighQ, due to the confidential nature of the Board's work,• Complete the hiring and onboarding of CPRB staff.
