

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION — AS ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE
ALL COST FIGURES ROUGH ORDER OF MAGNITUDE (ROM) ONLY

*Records relating to the acquisition of real property by the Town — terms, price, appraisal, and negotiating posture — are treated as exempt from disclosure pending action under Conn. Gen. Stat. §1-200(6)(D) and §1-210(b)(7) and are reserved for executive session. The **proposed** campus location — 217–221 Danbury Road — is identified throughout this report.*

TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD, CONNECTICUT
PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES COMMITTEE
REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Submitted to the Board of Selectpersons
For the Special Meeting of August 31, 2026

This report was adopted by the Committee on August 27, 2026, by a vote of 6 to 1. One member voted against adoption and has advised the Committee that a minority report will be submitted; it will be transmitted to the Board of Selectpersons together with this report.

1. Introduction and status of this report

This report is submitted by the Public Safety Facilities Committee (“PSFC” or “the Committee”) to the Board of Selectpersons pursuant to the Committee’s Charge, which directs the Committee to present the details of its final recommended site(s), building details, and cost estimates. It records the full scope of the Committee’s work since its organizational meeting on January 24, 2026; the process by which the field of options was assembled, screened, and compared; the seven distinct recommendations developed by the Committee’s Tiger Teams; and the recommendation — referred to throughout as Option D — that the Committee adopted on August 27, 2026, by a vote of 6 to 1.

Two disciplines govern everything in this report. First, every cost figure is a rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) estimate. No figure herein is bid pricing, and no figure should be relied upon until a formal feasibility study and cost-estimator work are complete. Where a fact is confirmed by the project record it is presented as such; where a figure rests on an assumption not yet professionally confirmed, the report says so and identifies the confirmation still required. Second, the report presents the alternatives the Committee considered in each sponsoring Tiger Team’s own terms. The Committee’s members did not all reach the same conclusion, and this report does not pretend otherwise; the process for a minority report is described below.

2. Executive summary

A majority of the Committee recommends Option D: a single, consolidated public-safety facility housing the Ridgefield Police Department (including consolidated 911 dispatch), the career Ridgefield Fire Department, and the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department, on a

centrally located campus of approximately 5.3 acres at 217–221 Danbury Road (the “Campus”), organized around a shared public core between two independently secured wings, with seven apparatus bays — five career and two volunteer — and an unconditioned police storage outbuilding. If desired, both or either of the legacy headquarters properties could be converted to commercial use upon completion of construction of the new facilities — by sale, lease, or other disposition. This recommendation does not, however, require disposition of those properties.

Option D screens at approximately \$52 million at its proposed 45,000 SF scope — approximately \$55 million equalized to the 48,000 SF common-comparison scope — on the Committee’s adopted cost basis: the professional construction cost estimates prepared through NASCO by Committee member David Brickley, a civil engineer (June 2026, Estimate No. 26-0082), as revised in August 2026. This basis is extended to every option thereby providing a single methodology. The methodology is deliberately apples-to-apples with the failed proposals across all options considered by the Committee — the unit costs derive from the 2025 referendum estimate itself, adjusted for one year of escalation and carrying the referendum’s own construction and project-adds structure.

On the same basis, the two-site alternative (Option B) prices at approximately \$56.25 million as proposed (\$62 million at its equalized scope) and the Quarry Ridge combination at approximately \$63.6 million equalized to Option D’s common scope (\$72.7 million as proposed). As a stress test, the Committee also carried Option D at the equalized scope with a further 10.3 percent inflation contingency stacked on top and a late 2027 or 2028 bid date; even that exercise tops out at approximately \$59.3 million with no offsets — confirming that on any defensible basis, Option D prices far below both failed referenda: the \$85.6 million proposal defeated on February 25, 2025, and the \$77.4 million proposal defeated on November 4, 2025.

NOTE: THE MOST EFFECTIVE COST-CONTROL DECISION AVAILABLE TO THE TOWN IS PACE -- A DISCIPLINED PATH TO THE THIRD REFERENDUM, AND AN EARLY BID DATE PROTECT MORE DOLLARS THAN ANY VALUE-ENGINEERING EXERCISE ON THE DRAWINGS.

On August 27, 2026, the Committee adopted this report and its recommendation of Option D by a vote of 6 to 1. Adoption followed, in order: the August 20 straw poll (five in favor, one opposed, one member absent); the estimator’s August 25, 2026 revision, which priced every option on a single methodology; and the Committee’s review of those revised figures — so the configuration was chosen first, the numbers were heard next, and the final vote was taken on the final figures. A two-site alternative at approximately \$62 million (Option B) and a combined facility at Quarry Ridge at approximately \$63.6 million, as presented on August 20, did not command majority support.

The Committee also voted — responsive to a request from residents — to authorize up to \$10,000 for additional professional analysis of rebuilding the police station at its current

East Ridge Road site, so that the record on that question is complete and publicly presented.

Option D is not a smaller version of what the voters rejected. It is a different method: (a) sized to what is reasonable for a town of approximately 25,000 residents — by facility condition, code compliance, operational adequacy, and what comparable towns have actually built; (b) consolidated the duplicated spaces a single building does not need twice, using a shared-core design method similar to the one the Town's own architect from the prior referenda employed for a Hingham, Massachusetts combined public safety facility; (c) preserved the volunteer fire department's program and identity intact; and (d) provided the Town with the opportunity to return both legacy properties to the tax rolls, if it so chooses. The architect's test-fit drawings of August 2026 confirm that the consolidated building, its apparatus bays, sally port, and parking fit on the Campus with room for future expansion — and the Town's own data places the campus where the demand is: at the geographic center of town and at the center of gravity of five years of emergency calls (Figures 1 and 2).

Delivering Option D requires an all-of-town effort. No single board, department, committee, or citizens group can deliver adequate public safety facilities alone. With the whole town working together, Ridgefield can build the facilities it needs, that our first responders deserve, and at a cost its voters can support.

3. The charge

The Board of Selectpersons established the Committee following the two failed public-safety referenda of 2025. The Charge directs the Committee to “evaluate and recommend the most effective, fiscally responsible, and community-supported path forward for meeting the long-term facility needs of the Ridgefield Fire, Police, EMS, Volunteer Fire and central dispatch Departments.” The Charge's scope of work expressly requires a comprehensive review of all viable options — including new buildings, renovation of existing facilities, two new or substantially renovated buildings, and a single combined public safety building if consolidation provides operational, financial, or community benefits — together with a needs assessment, site evaluation without prejudice, financial analysis with clear and transparent cost comparisons, and active community engagement. It directs the Committee to keep all options on the table, to approach the challenge with open minds and rigorous analysis, and to deliver a plan that serves Ridgefield's public safety needs while reflecting the will and values of the community. The recommendations are to include reasoning, comparative analyses, and any minority or alternative viewpoints the Committee deems important to highlight.

Active community engagement merits special consideration here. Among other things -- (a) the Committee held 24 public meetings; (b) those meetings were publicized in advance and the agendas were posted on the town's website; (c) all meetings were recorded posted on the town's website. Most of the meetings were live-streamed; (d) residents attended the meeting and many addressed the public and the Committee during Public Comment;

(e) particularly early in the process, the Committee invited questions from those attending the meeting; (f) a few members of the public submitted memoranda; (g) an active member of the public assisted the Committee in developing a financial impact tool; and, (h) the town was surveyed by a polling firm.

The Charge set three milestones: a progress update by March 31 (delivered); presentation of three to five actively considered sites with pros and cons by June 30, subsequently adjusted to July 15 (delivered); and presentation of the final recommended site(s), building details, and cost estimates by September 15, with the Board subsequently setting a special meeting for August 31, 2026. This report is the Committee's response to that final milestone. Fiscal responsibility and community support are not extraneous considerations layered onto the Committee's work; they are the mandate itself.

4. What the voters told us

Two referenda failed in 2025. A combined public-safety facility at \$85.6 million was narrowly defeated on February 25, 2025 (1,625 to 1,553). A re-scoped combined facility at \$77.4 million — reduced by more than \$8 million — was defeated again on November 4, 2025, by a much wider margin: 4,978 to 3,137, roughly 61 percent opposed.

The Committee did not guess at why. It commissioned a statistically valid post-referendum community survey (Surveys & Forecasts, LLC), which found that roughly 60 percent of respondents cited cost as the primary reason for opposition — rising to approximately 74 percent among those who voted no. The objection was not whether the departments deserve modern facilities. It was the price. The Committee also invited representatives of the group that organized against the referendum to meet with it and had a long and productive discussion.

Two further facts round out the voter record. First, Ridgefield voters were not categorically unwilling to fund capital needs: at the February 2025 referendum they approved approximately \$12.3 million for school roofs and the alternative-school project while rejecting the public-safety proposal. Thus it can be reasonably suggested that voters distinguished among capital proposals rather than voting against capital spending as such. Second, the Town's own October 2025 materials establish the benchmark for the last proposal: a 75,000-square-foot program at \$77.4 million all-in — approximately \$1,032 per square foot including construction, site work, furnishings, professional fees, and contingencies — with an estimated annual property-tax impact of approximately 3.4 percent. That is the evidentiary record every alternative in this report is measured against.

One reading of the November result deserves to be addressed directly, because it will be offered against any cost-driven plan: that if an \$8 million reduction did not save the second referendum, cost reduction is futile. The record does not support that reading. The November revision was roughly a ten percent trim of the same concept, on the same site, presented to the same voters. What is now before the Board is a reduction of approximately 25–30 percent, built on a different concept, a different design method, and a different site

— a difference in kind, not merely in degree. The lesson of November is that a modest trim of a rejected proposal is insufficient. Nothing the Committee has seen suggests that a majority of our residents will not support a categorically different proposal.

The lesson the majority draws from this evidentiary record is simple, and it runs through everything that follows: the town supports its first responders; it rejected the number. A successful plan must demonstrate fiscal discipline on its face.

5. The Committee’s process

5.1 Organization

At its organizational meeting on January 24, 2026, the Committee elected Wally Martinez as Chair, Adam Safir as Vice Chair, and Edward Tyrrell as Secretary. The remaining members are David Brickley, Pamela Dunaway, Denis Graves, and Stephen Scalzo. The Committee adopted a weekly Thursday meeting cadence and conducted its work in public session, with executive sessions limited to matters relating to the potential acquisition of privately-held real property. Agendas, minutes, and the Committee’s Charge are posted on the Town website and the Committee’s formal interviews of the police and fire chiefs are posted there as recorded video.

5.2 Meetings held

Between January 24 and August 20, 2026, the Committee met twenty-four times, as reflected on the Town website’s posted agendas and minutes. Seven additional regularly scheduled dates were cancelled and noticed as such. Members of the Committee did not, however, stop working on this project during the weeks that public meetings were cancelled. Rather, much of the two person Tiger Team research and field work was conducted during those weeks.

The meetings held were:

Date (2026)	Meeting	Selected record highlights
January 24	Regular (organizational)	Charge presented by the Board of Selectpersons; election of officers; adoption of meeting schedule
January 29	Regular	Operating procedures; work planning; motions packet posted
February 5	Regular	KBA needs-assessment presentation; Town Engineer briefing on project budget
February 12	Regular	Review of prior referendum record and needs-assessment materials
February 19	Regular	Working-group progress; community-engagement planning

February 26	Special	Working-group progress; site-selection process
March 5	Regular	KBA; site-selection and commercial-broker discussion
March 12	Regular	Working-group reports; survey development
March 19	Regular	Needs-assessment presentation; Board of Finance presentation on the Town's financial position; survey status
March 26	Regular	March 31 status report to the Board of Selectpersons finalized
April 2	Regular	Site evaluation; survey
April 9	Regular	Site evaluation; community engagement
April 30	Regular	Survey results; site work
May 14	Regular	Site screening; Tiger Team assignments and work plans
June 11	Regular	Formal recorded interview of Fire Chief Rommie Duckworth
June 18	Regular	Formal recorded interview of Police Chief Jeff Kreitz
June 25	Regular	Tiger Team progress; site scoring framework; running site log
July 9	Regular	Tiger Team working-draft reports received and discussed (executive session on real property)
July 16	Regular	Tiger Team reports; July 15 milestone submission to the Board of Selectpersons
July 23	Regular	RVFD memorandum on Catoona Street requirements received; consolidation option developed
July 30	Regular	Options C and D working drafts; comparative analysis
August 6	Regular	Committee statement on cost methodology; fiscal-context materials
August 13	Regular	Straw-poll ballot prepared; straw poll deferred pending further analysis; East Ridge renovation screening memo
August 20	Regular	Formal interview of RVFD Chief Timothy Pambianchi; straw poll conducted; East Ridge professional study authorized (up to \$10,000); majority/minority report process agreed
August 27	Regular	Estimator's August 25 revision reviewed; final deliberations; this report and recommendation adopted (6–1); minority-report transmittal confirmed

Highlights are drawn from the posted agendas and minutes and from the Committee's project record; the posted minutes control in the event of any variance. Cancelled dates are April 16, April 23, May 7, May 21, May 28, June 4, and July 2.

5.3 Who appeared before the Committee

The Committee sought out, and is grateful for, the direct participation of the people who know these facilities and this town's finances best. As reflected in the posted minutes and the Committee's record, the Committee heard from, among others:

- **First Selectperson Rudy Marconi**, who presented the Charge at the Committee's organizational meeting;
- **Police Commission Chair Sharon Dornfeld and members John Frey and Ralph Money**;
- **Police Chief Jeff Kreitz**, including a formal recorded interview on June 18, 2026;
- **Fire Chief Rommie Duckworth**, including a formal recorded interview on June 11, 2026;
- **Assistant Fire Chief Tony Cerulli**;
- **Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department Chief Timothy Pambianchi**, including the RVFD's written memorandum of July 23, 2026 and a formal interview on August 20, 2026;
- **Kaestle Boos Associates (KBA)**, the Town's architect, led by Todd Costa, including the needs-assessment presentations and the buildability test-fit drawings of August 20, 2026;
- **Town Engineer Jake Muller**, on project budget, site conditions, and the prior projects' engineering record;
- **Board of Finance Chair Mike Rettger**, on the Town's financial position, debt service, and Grand List trends;
- **Planning & Zoning Commission Chair Rob Hendrick**;
- **Representatives of the residents' group that organized in opposition to the 2025 referenda**, at the Committee's invitation, in a candid discussion of what the voters would support;
- **Surveys & Forecasts, LLC**, in connection with the Committee's statistically valid post-referendum community survey; and
- **Members of the public** at every meeting, including the seven residents whose Community Input letter of August 17, 2026 (Hancock, Handshy, Katz, Manning, Pola, Ternullo, and Zemo) asked the Committee to publicly share a vetting the existing police site with a view toward a 2005 study the group discussed with the Committee, and Mr. Hancock's presentation of that request on August 20 — which the Committee has adopted and funded (Section 11.5).

Committee member David Brickley additionally prepared the June 2026 construction cost estimates (NASCO Estimate No. 26-0082) – subsequently refined in August 2026 -- on which the Committee’s comparative financial analysis rests.

5.4 The Tiger Team structure

To cover all options in parallel, fulsomely, and on an accelerated schedule, the Committee organized itself into three two-member “Tiger Teams,” each charged differently to mitigate the risk that a potentially viable configuration would go unexamined: the Scalzo/Martinez team (two separate new-build or conversion facilities on private or government-owned property); the Graves/Tyrrell team (Town-owned buildings and land, new build or renovation); and the Dunaway/Safir team (combination-building solutions, with the two members dividing standard and non-traditional approaches between them). Each team conducted extensive independent research, conducted field visits, worked with the chiefs, KBA, the Town Engineer, and the cost estimator’s analysis, and each reported in writing. Together the three teams produced six reports comprising seven distinct recommendations — the complete option space the Charge required. All seven are summarized in Section 8 and set out in full in the exhibits.

6. The framework: what is reasonable for a town our size

The Committee deliberately framed its sizing work around what is reasonable. Reasonableness rests on things external and verifiable — facility condition, code compliance, operational adequacy, and what comparable communities have actually built — and, ultimately, on what Ridgefield’s voters are willing to support. In fact, and by way of illustration, The International Fire Chiefs Association in its presentation titled NFPA 1710 & 1720: It’s A Local Decision: Overview and interpretation for local elected & appointed leaders, concludes: “The fire chief will make recommendations to improve service, but it will be up to you, the local leaders, to decide what level of service the community can afford.”

Let’s be very clear about one fact: there is no national square-footage standard for these facilities at any level of government; the International Association of Chiefs of Police describes its own sizing guidance as “design guidelines derived from completed projects,” not a standard. What governs these buildings is a body of functional requirements that dictate program, not square footage — and the honest method, the one the Committee’s July 8 Options A/B report adopted and this report carries forward, is to triangulate a reasonable size against real, recent, comparable buildings.

The national picture makes the point. The U.S. Fire Administration’s National Fire Department Registry records 52,309 fire stations nationwide (January 2024 summary); the Connecticut Commission on Fire Prevention and Control reports roughly 300 fire departments serving the state’s 169 municipalities; the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics counts 17,541 state and local law-enforcement agencies (2018 census; the unit is agencies, not buildings); and Connecticut alone fields 95 municipal police departments and 11 State Police troop barracks. Building a police or career-fire headquarters for a town of approximately 25,000 people can be considered among the most well-trodden projects in American local government. Thus, we are not operating on a blank slate and we do not need a novel theory of benefits. The question the Committee’s work answers is this: what is reasonable for a town of Ridgefield’s size and public safety needs — and what it costs.

The maturity of the building type runs deeper still. The U.S. government is one of the largest fire protection providers in the country (military bases, air fields, national parks, etc). The federal government’s own Unified Facilities Criteria — the public-domain design criteria under which the United States military builds and renovates fire stations across its installations — reduce fire-station programming to a published, fill-in worksheet: enter the station class, the companies housed, and the vehicle classes, and the program computes, with apparatus bays dimensioned to standardized truck classes, layouts driven by response-time adjacencies from a published diagram, and a stated design objective of lowest life-cycle cost over the facility’s service life. Two features of those criteria deserve notice. The federal size determinants are the apparatus and companies a station actually houses. And the location determinants begin with response time and a site adequate for turning radii and parking — not acreage. An institution that builds these facilities by the

hundreds treats the exercise as solved engineering. The Committee’s task was never to invent; it was to apply discipline at Ridgefield’s scale.

The Committee also wants the Board to hear clearly what this framing does not say: it does not say service is failing and it does not depend on claiming the town is growing. The departments are performing ahead of the statewide benchmark today — the 2024 Connecticut OEMS annual report shows Ridgefield Fire/EMS mean dispatch-to-arrival of 6.49 minutes against a statewide suburban average of 8.03 — and nothing in a right-sized program degrades that performance. Ridgefield is right-sizing from strength. The case for new facilities rests where it should: on facility condition, code compliance, and operational adequacy for the existing force.

The demographic record anchors the sizing. Ridgefield is a mature community: 23,643 residents at the 2000 census, 25,033 at 2020, an apparent peak near 25,181 around 2015, and flat-to-slightly-declining since, with a median age of approximately 45. School enrollment is down roughly 14 percent over the past decade. The Committee acknowledges a Planning and Zoning Commission presentation concerning the potential for an additional 2,500–3,000 residents in the Branchville area; that projection may one day come to fruition, but it is speculative at present. We note that the International Association of Chiefs of Police in its *Police Facilities Planning Guidelines* makes the comment that “[w]hile determining future needs is difficult, jurisdictions can sometimes use past history of change (typically the last 20 years) to estimate future growth.”

The Committee also recognizes that fire, EMS, and police call volumes do not precisely mirror population — service demand has grown even through two decades of flat population, because the public asks more of its first responders — which is a staffing-and-deployment question answered by station placement, not always by massing. The design consequence is direct: the Committee sizes to the force and the standards Ridgefield has now, and treats flexibility — a site with margin, a structure that can take an addition, utility stub-outs, and knock-out wall panels — as the preferred form of future-proofing, rather than paying today to build space a flat-growth town has no current need for.

Last, the Committee recognizes that the Ridgefield Police Department earned and maintains Connecticut POSTC Tier III accreditation in its existing, terribly deficient facility. That accreditation does not require an oversized program, or dictate the amount of space needed. Rather, it is the 130 year old facility’s condition – its operational inadequacies and inefficiencies -- that make the case for replacement.

6.1 The screening and scoring framework

The Committee adopted a two-stage model for evaluating sites and solutions, developed from members’ proposals and discussed at the Committee’s June meetings. Stage one is a set of four pass/fail threshold gates that eliminate non-viable sites quickly: (G1) attainable site control; (G2) net buildable upland adequate to hold the program at grade with apparatus circulation and parking; (G3) no fatal environmental, contamination, encumbrance, or legal-access flaw; and (G4) a realistic land-use approval path. Stage two

is a four-bucket scorecard — Location, Land, Standard, and Cost. The framework guided the screening summarized in Section 7. The Committee’s sequence as a whole — documenting the deficiencies of the current facilities, professional space-needs assessment, site evaluation without prejudice including renovation options, transparent preliminary budgeting, and sustained community engagement — is the sequence the International Association of Chiefs of Police prescribes in its *Police Facilities Planning Guidelines*, the profession’s own planning playbook. The Committee did not invent its method; it followed the profession’s published playbook for exactly this kind of project.

6.2 The controlling comparable: the Fairfield, Connecticut Police Headquarters

One benchmark deserves the Board’s particular attention, because it answers — with a built, operating, in-county facility — the two claims advanced in the Committee’s own record against the right-sized program: that Ridgefield’s police department needs a materially larger building and that the combined program needs five or more acres. Fairfield, Connecticut polices a town two and a half times Ridgefield’s size from a headquarters at 100 Reef Road — downtown, in a residential zone, four-tenths of a mile from the train station — on 1.50 acres¹:

	Fairfield	Ridgefield	Ratio / note
Population	~61,500	~25,000	~2.5×
Sworn officers	108–112	44	~2.5×
Sworn per 1,000 residents	~1.8	~1.8	1.0× — identical staffing intensity; the comparison scales cleanly
Headquarters size	~38,000–41,000 SF	~23,000 SF (this program); 34,753 SF (the Quarry Ridge combination’s police program)	Fairfield: ~340–380 SF per sworn officer. The Quarry Ridge police program: ~790 SF per officer — 2.1–2.3× Fairfield
Headquarters parcel	1.50 acres (Zone A residential; downtown)	2.50 acres (police alone, per the Quarry Ridge worksheets)	—
Current capital activity	Interior renovation of designated areas — bid June 2026. A renovation — not a replacement, not an expansion	—	—

¹ The Fairfield Police Departments also runs public safety vessels which are docked at a marine unit located on the waterfront.

Two likely questions are addressed here.

First, it is true that Fairfield's dispatch is not within the 38,000 square feet. Since March 2022, Fairfield's police and fire dispatch has operated from the Fairfield County Regional Dispatch Center at Sacred Heart University, Connecticut's first regional 911 facility, now also serving Westport and New Canaan, built for approximately \$4 million total with Fairfield's share at \$1.7 million. Dispatch is a 1,500-square-foot-class program element — the Quarry Ridge worksheets themselves place Ridgefield's at 1,565 SF — and adding it back to Fairfield's footprint moves the comparison by roughly four percent: about 39,600 SF for 108–112 sworn officers, against 34,753 SF proposed for 44. A 1,500-square-foot item cannot explain a 20,000-square-foot-class gap.

Second, it may be said that Fairfield's building is dated and under renovation; correct — and the renovation is the point. A department two and a half times Ridgefield's size, at the identical 1.8 sworn officers per thousand residents, judged its 1.50-acre downtown site and its existing envelope worth renovating in 2026 rather than replacing.

The Committee also notes that the facility-planning literature it reviewed contains no published industry standard for square feet per officer; the widest rule of thumb in circulation among police-facility architects — 400 to 800 square feet per officer, a guideline rather than a promulgated standard — would place a ~790-square-foot-per-officer program at its extreme outer edge, and in one well-documented facility debate (Salem, Oregon, 2016) citizen reviewers flagged a program at precisely that ratio (791 SF per officer) as the hallmark of an oversized proposal headed for referendum trouble. The claim that Ridgefield's 44-officer department requires a program approaching Fairfield's square footage — or that public safety requires five-plus acres — does not survive this comparison, and it is corroborated by Hingham (a combined police-and-fire facility of 48,920 SF on a constrained municipal site) and Key Biscayne, Florida (a nationally accredited career fire department and a state-accredited police headquarters, each operating on roughly one acre).²

6.3 How other communities have met the same challenge

Ridgefield is not the first community to face a project like this one and it is not the first to face it after a referendum defeat. The fair question the evidentiary record poses is the one Ridgefield's voters will ask first: if our neighbors can do this, why can't we? The Committee therefore looked first at its own neighborhood — the towns Ridgefield actually measures itself against — and then across the country. The published record of completed municipal police and public-safety facilities — including the case-study volume the International Association of Chiefs of Police publishes alongside its planning guidelines — shows how

²Confirmation gate: the Fairfield building size is bounded at 38,000–41,000 SF pending the assessor field card; either figure sustains every conclusion above.

communities of every size have delivered right-sized facilities, frequently on modest and residentially embedded sites. A sample from that record:

Community	What was built (or is underway)	Note
Wilton, CT (~18,500 residents; 41 sworn)	New police headquarters, ~18,500–19,000 SF, ~\$19 million, opened early 2026 at 240 Danbury Road	Replaced a 51-year-old station; roughly 450–465 SF per officer
Bethel, CT (~20,000 residents; 37 sworn)	New police headquarters, ~26,000 SF, ~\$13.5 million project, occupied October 2018, built on town-owned land	Includes consolidated dispatch, as Ridgefield proposes; replaced an 8,200 SF 1974 station
Newtown, CT (~27,200 residents)	Police headquarters, 25,000 SF — designed by KBA, the Town’s own architect	A larger town; a comparable building
New Canaan, CT	~24,500 SF headquarters proposed	Active peer project
Brookfield, CT (~17,000 residents; 39 sworn)	New ~25,000 SF police facility in active development; ad-hoc building committee recommendation summer 2026	That committee’s own public benchmark is Wilton’s new headquarters; town leadership has publicly discussed keeping the project in the \$20–25 million range
Fairfield, CT	See Section 6.2	See Section 6.2
Hingham, MA	Combined police/fire facility, 48,920 SF, ~\$50.6 million all-in, completed 2025 — KBA architect of record ³	A design precedent for Option D (Section 9.2)
Westford, MA (population ≈ Ridgefield’s)	Career fire headquarters, 20,345 SF, five bays, completed 2018	
Waltham, MA (~65,000 residents)	New police headquarters in final design (concept approved July 2026) on the city’s existing shared public-safety campus	Fire administration and the 911 center housed in a wing of the police building

Dollar figures are as reported in each project’s own time and market and are not 2026 Connecticut bid pricing; they are presented for scale, for method, and for the plain fact that Ridgefield’s neighbors are doing this work now. ROM throughout.

³ The Hingham Facility is not a Fire HQ. Rather it is a five bay station.

The national record says the same thing at every scale. Glen Ellyn, Illinois — a village of about 28,000 and Ridgefield's closest population peer in the International Chiefs of Police case-study volume — built a 30,000 SF standalone station in 2017 after a multi-year renovate-versus-build study of its historic downtown civic center; Tolleson, Arizona combined its police headquarters with the municipal court in 22,400 SF (2011); Marshall, Michigan put three sworn agencies — city police, county sheriff, and state police — under one 35,000 SF roof (2015), with better inter-agency coordination the reported result; and Georgetown, Texas consolidated police and fire in a 106,353 SF public-safety and training complex (2015) for a substantially larger city. Cape Coral, Florida — treated in the narrative below — delivered its headquarters under a hard city council cap after voter rejection.

The Committee's own July 8 Options A/B report triangulated the same way against the nearest peers and the resulting table remains the cleanest sizing evidence in the record.

On the police side: Wilton (population ~18,500; 41 sworn) opened its ~19,000 SF headquarters in 2026 at roughly 463 SF per officer; Newtown — designed by KBA, the Town's own architect — built 25,000 SF for a town of ~27,200; New Canaan has proposed 24,500 SF; and Darien's 37,000 SF (roughly 712 SF per officer) includes an indoor firing range and a four-bay vehicle-maintenance garage, both of which Ridgefield excludes because it fuels and maintains centrally and has access to an existing range in town. Ridgefield's ~23,000 SF program sits at roughly 523 SF per officer — about 473 once the ~2,200 SF consolidated 911 center serving three services is netted out — and at roughly 0.92 SF per resident, tied with Newtown on the peer set.

The Cape Coral precedent deserves special attention because it is the fullest documented parallel to Ridgefield's situation that we have uncovered in our research.

Cape Coral's voters — squeezed by a controversial utility assessment — soundly rejected a ~\$100 million bond package built around a 213,150 SF public-safety facility, despite months of assertive public outreach; the polling found residents supported their first responders "100 percent" but felt that they could not afford the proposal. The city council did not re-run the failed plan. It established an eight-person citizens advisory committee; the architect re-evaluated every room with the police department at the table; the program was value-engineered from 215,000 square feet to 102,500; the council approved it under a hard \$23 million cap; competitive bidding produced a \$19.1 million guaranteed maximum price; and the department occupied its new headquarters — secure, sustainable, survivable, and a source of civic pride — under budget and ahead of schedule.

The lesson of Cape Coral is Ridgefield's mandate in miniature: after a cost-driven referendum defeat, the documented path from defeat to delivery is a citizen-led, right-sized program for police — not a re-run of what failed. Two features of the Cape Coral method transfer directly. The council fixed the dollar cap before design began — the same envelope discipline the Committee's July 8 report proposed for Ridgefield: hand public-safety leadership a location, a reasonably sized box, and a dollar figure, and trust them to design within it. And the city moved quickly after the defeat, catching a favorable bid market;

Ridgefield's equivalent of that good fortune is speed itself — every year between recommendation and bid costs the Town on the order of \$2.5–3 million (Section 10.2). This Committee was not asked to repeat what failed twice; it was asked to find what can succeed. That is what Option D is.

6.4 Accreditation and the facility: what CALEA actually requires

Members have raised, in good faith, the Ridgefield Police Department's interest in pursuing national accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The majority wants to be unambiguous about the aspiration itself: CALEA accreditation would honor the department and the town, the majority supports the department pursuing it, and nothing in this report should be read otherwise. Because the question has been raised in connection with facility sizing, however, the Committee examined what CALEA's published standards actually require of a building — and the answer matters.

CALEA describes its program as “a management improvement model through accreditation”: several hundred standards addressing an agency's policies, procedures, operations, training, and management, assessed on a voluntary, recurring cycle. The Committee reviewed the CALEA law-enforcement standards manual in full. It contains no minimum square footage — for the facility, for any room, or per officer; the phrase does not appear in the manual. The standards that touch the physical plant — temporary detention, holding facilities, communications, court security, and property and evidence — are written-directive and performance standards: they require, for example, a directive establishing minimum physical conditions in a temporary-detention room with timely access to water and restrooms; constant supervision, weapons control, and duress alarms in processing and testing areas; and documented chain of custody in evidence handling. The commentary expressly contemplates agencies meeting these standards using “a room, space, or area” within an existing law-enforcement facility. Accreditation asks whether functions are performed to standard — not how many square feet surround them.

The Connecticut record proves the point in practice. Nineteen Connecticut law-enforcement agencies are CALEA-accredited, including municipal departments in towns comparable to — and smaller than — Ridgefield: Simsbury, a town of Ridgefield's size, along with Guilford, Avon, and Coventry, a town of roughly half Ridgefield's population whose department holds CALEA advanced accreditation. None of them qualified by building an oversized headquarters. Closer to home still: Connecticut's own POSTC accreditation program is expressly modeled on CALEA, its standards manual carries the same facility-touching chapters — evidence and property, holding facility — and likewise contains no square-footage requirement anywhere; and the Ridgefield Police Department earned and maintains POSTC Tier III accreditation in the current 1890 building. If accreditation were a function of square footage, that achievement would have been impossible.

What accreditation does ask of a building, Option D provides: a secure drive-through sally port; designated processing with supervision, weapons control, and duress alarms;

compliant temporary detention; a chain-of-custody property and evidence suite; and hardened communications. The majority's conclusion is offered respectfully and is compelled by the published standards: CALEA accreditation is earned through policies, training, and practice; Option D gives the department a facility that supports every facility-touching standard in the manual; and nothing in the accreditation literature supports using CALEA as a driver of program size. Treating it as one would set Ridgefield apart from every accredited small-town department in Connecticut.

7. The site search

The Committee worked the site question methodically and without prejudice, exactly as the Charge directs. It inventoried twenty-eight Town- and State-owned parcels and screened the realistic commercial and privately owned candidates, applying the four threshold gates to each parcel.

The result is the single most important fact about this project: the overwhelming majority of public parcels are not developable for a public-safety facility — they are wetlands, State DEEP holdings, conservation land, active parks and athletic fields, cemeteries, and school grounds. Of the twenty-eight, exactly one sizable, genuinely developable Town-owned parcel emerges in the central district: Quarry Ridge, the former Schlumberger land, approximately 30 acres, zoned B-2 — well-suited in size, but carrying heavy site-preparation cost and, of course, the site of two failed referenda.

Off the Town rolls, the field was equally narrow. A running screening log was maintained throughout so that recurring suggestions could be checked against prior analysis rather than re-screened from scratch; its results are summarized below. Acquisition-specific detail for the Campus — terms, price, appraisal, negotiating posture — is reserved for executive session.

Site	Disposition	Basis
217 Danbury Road (Town-owned; ~2.42 acres)	ACTIVE	Core campus parcel; central; level; principal arterial frontage; wetland along one edge, field-delineated by a licensed soil scientist (May 2025); low development cost
221 Danbury Road (privately owned; ~2.89 acres)	ACTIVE — acquisition pending	Completes the ~5.3-acre campus; independent field delineation completed July 20, 2026, matching the adjoining parcel; combined buildable upland approximately 3.2–3.6 acres
Quarry Ridge (former Schlumberger; Town-owned; ~30 ac, B-2)	BACKUP	Ample Town-owned land; removed from town center; heavy site preparation (ledge); site of both failed referenda; anchors Option B's police side

63 Copps Hill Road	Declined	Modern ~33,000 SF building, central, good egress and parking — but too small for the combined program; tenant buy-out plus ~\$1M communications relocation costly
143 Danbury Road (auto dealership)	Declined	Too small for a combined building; owner not interested in selling
650 Danbury Road	Declined	~18,000 SF, tight configuration; removed from town center; high traffic-control burden
664 Danbury Road	Declined	Sub-half-acre; viable only as an expansion pad for 650 Danbury Road
76 East Ridge Road (existing Police HQ)	Constrained; further study authorized	1890 wood-frame historic building; site already exceeds RA-zone coverage; topography-limited; subject of the additional professional analysis authorized August 20 (see §11.5)
62 East Ridge Road (adjoining parcel)	Declined	Abuts the police site, but prior development was denied by P&Z; owner reluctance; acquisition raises neighborhood sensitivities
Catoonah Street parcels (10, 22, 26, 28)	Declined	Sub-acre parcels; purchase required; value as parking only; adjoin the existing fire headquarters
Post Office parcel	Declined	Federally owned (USPS); not acquirable
125 Danbury Road (former pharmacy box, Copps Hill Plaza)	Declined	Vacant tenant space within a REIT-owned operating shopping center; no fee-simple path; roughly one quarter of the program; shared retail circulation incompatible with 24/7 emergency operations
Danbury Road × Farmingville Road corner	Declined — low priority	Two-owner assembly of occupied, unmarketed parcels; rear hard-capped by a State wetland; materially harder to assemble than the Campus
Veterans Park School	Declined (Dunaway/Safir screen)	Dependent on unresolved Board of Education consolidation discussions; timing incompatible with the need for a near-term solution

Venus building	Declined (Graves/Tyrrell screen)	Loss of ~\$707,000 annual tenant revenue (~\$7.9M present value); Board of Education relocation; Playhouse parking impacts
Governor Field	Declined (Graves/Tyrrell screen)	Community and Playhouse opposition; ~\$3M and two-plus years to replace the ball field

Acreage and net-buildable figures are ROM; owner identities and availability reflect best current information. Catoonah Street remains in the picture for a different reason under Options A and B — as the volunteer fire department’s continuing home — and under Options C and D as a possible disposition.

The screening exercise forces the conclusion the Committee kept arriving at: two realistic platforms exist — the central 217–221 assembly and the Town-owned Quarry Ridge parcel — and only the 217–221 assembly clears every threshold for a central, deliverable, buildable, and affordable campus. That is not a failure of effort. It is the ground truth of a built-out town with very little central, developable land.

7.1 The Campus: 217–221 Danbury Road

The Campus is an assembly of 217 Danbury Road (Town-owned) and the adjoining 221 Danbury Road — approximately 5.3 acres at the approximate geographic center of town, on the principal arterial spine, directly alongside an existing corridor of public assets including the Recreation Center and Founders Hall.

One parcel is already Town-owned; the acquisition of the adjoining parcel is pending and is addressed with the Board in executive session. The wetlands picture is stated plainly: a licensed soil scientist field-delineated both parcels (May 2025 and July 20, 2026), finding deep, well-drained upland soils across the central and eastern core and regulated wetland soils along the watercourse at the rear. After the 100-foot upland review area, approximately 3.2–3.6 acres of buildable upland remain — and the governing depth stack (35-foot regulated-activity setback, 70-foot apparatus apron, 100-foot building) fits comfortably within the available upland depth. The Inland Wetlands Board has repeatedly approved comparable buffer work on this same corridor, including the Recreation Center project two parcels away (approved 6–0 in January 2026) and the 2018 residential project beyond it. There is no on-site fuel island in any version of this campus: Ridgefield fuels its municipal fleet centrally and the plan keeps it that way.

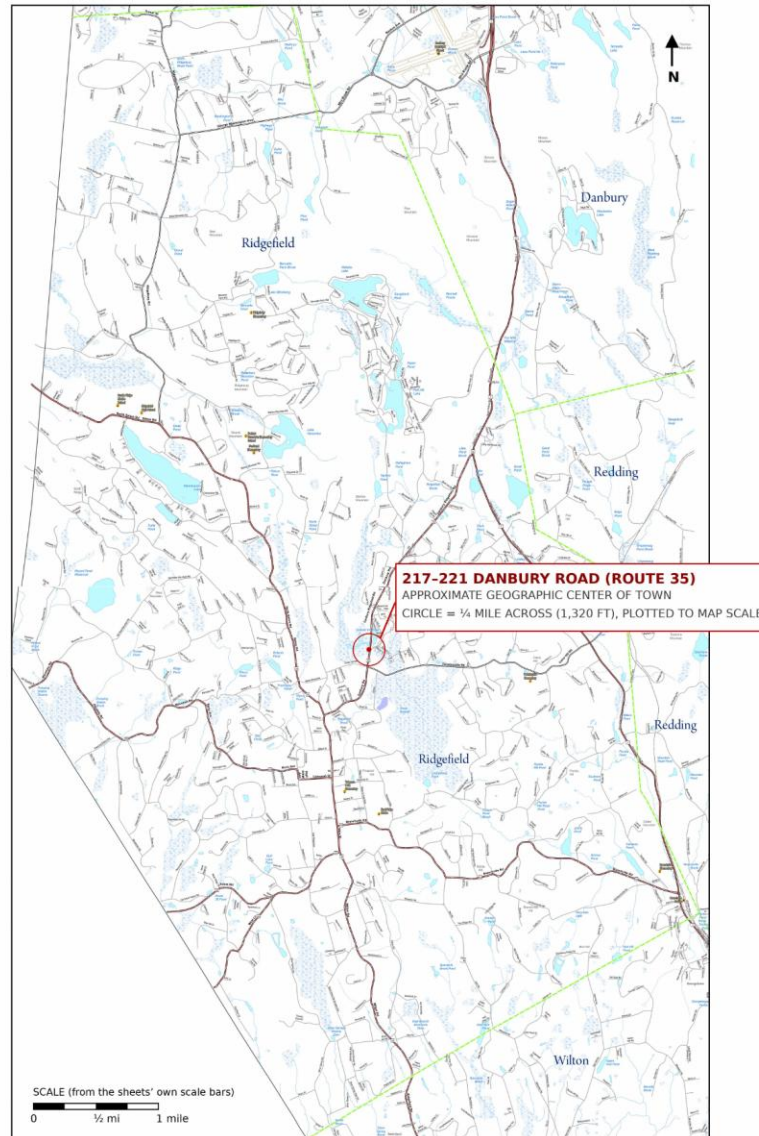
One fact about the Campus deserves to be seen rather than described. Figure 1 places the entire town — every road, Ridgebury to Branchville, derived from the State’s own published street maps of Ridgefield — on a single sheet, with a quarter-mile circle plotted to map scale and centered on the campus. The circle sits at the approximate geographic center of

the town's shape, on the arterial spine, with the community arrayed around it in every direction. No site identified in seven months of screening occupies comparable ground.⁴

TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Every Road in Town — and the Geographic Center

Public Safety Facilities Committee - Public Display Copy



Base map: Connecticut DEP / CT ECO "Street Map — Ridgefield, CT" (North and South sheets, August 2010; 1:24,000 base data; street data © TeleAtlas). The two published sheets tile the town and were joined at a common scale using their printed scale bars and the positions of Routes 116 and 35 and US 7 at the shared edge; road geometry is unaltered and a sliver of roughly 270 feet between the published sheet edges is not depicted. The quarter-mile circle is plotted at map scale and centered on the 217-221 Danbury Road campus; "approximate geographic center" per the Public Safety Facilities Committee record — location approximate. Base map data are neither current nor complete (per CT DEP). Prepared for public display, August 2026. Not a survey; not a legal document; all figures ROM.

Figure 1. Town of Ridgefield — all roads (CT DEP/CT ECO published street maps, North and South sheets, joined at common scale at their shared edge using the sheets' scale bars and the positions of Routes 116, 35, and US 7), with a quarter-mile circle plotted to

⁴Confirmation gate: the Committee recommends the Town Engineer confirm the exact town-center by GIS; the figure states the location as approximate.

map scale at the 217–221 Danbury Road campus. Location approximate; not a survey; the published sheets control.

8. The full scope of the Committee’s work: seven recommendations

The Charge directed a comprehensive review of all viable options. Six documents, comprising seven distinct recommendations, were developed by the Tiger Teams. They are summarized here; **the full reports control**. The recommendations are not like-for-like alternatives on a single axis — each team was charged differently, and the documents differ in scope, site, program basis, cost basis, and stated conditions — and side-by-side figures should not be mistaken for like-for-like figures.

The August 25, 2026 cost estimation revision prices every configuration on a single methodology, at each option’s proposed scope and at an equalized comparison scope (each option’s equalized square footage is shown; see Section 10.1); ROM throughout:

Team / recommendation	Configuration and site	Figure as presented (ROM)
Dunaway — combination building (§8.1)	Single combined building, 61,489 SF, at 36 Quarry Ridge	~\$72.7M at proposed 61,489 SF; ~\$63.6M equalized at 46,500 SF (as presented August 20: ~\$61M)
Safir — three-station fire solution with a police station at 217/221 Danbury Road (§8.2)	Coverage framework: Route 7 satellite station; road improvements; deployment standards	Framework — no single capital figure (estimator: TBD)
Graves/Tyrrell — police on Town land (§8.3)	New police headquarters on Town-owned land; no recommendation for fire	\$50 million ceiling (a ceiling, not an estimate)
Scalzo/Martinez — Option A (§8.4)	Police and career fire as two buildings on the Campus; no volunteer program	~\$51.7M at proposed scope; ~\$58.1M equalized at 46,500 SF
Scalzo/Martinez — Option B (§8.4)	Career fire and volunteers on the Campus; police at Quarry Ridge	~\$55.9M at proposed scope; ~\$61.5M equalized at 49,500 SF
Scalzo/Martinez — Option C (§8.5)	Full consolidation on the Campus, additive program, no shared core	~\$53.7M at proposed 46,500 SF; ~\$57.1M equalized at 49,500 SF
Scalzo/Martinez — Option D (§8.6)	Consolidation designed as one building with shared core on the Campus; both legacy properties returned to productive use	~\$52.2M at proposed 45,000 SF; ~\$53.9M equalized at 46,500 SF — recommended; adopted 6–1

8.1 Dunaway — standard combination building (preferred site: 36 Quarry Ridge)

Beginning from the KBA space-needs assessments and working in group meetings with KBA, the Town Engineer, Ms. Dunaway, Mr. Brickley, Mr. Safir, and each chief separately, Ms. Dunaway reduced the program to current operational needs (with the volunteers operating as they are for the time being), producing a combined building of approximately 61,489 SF after an estimated 10,500 SF of combination savings, on a preferred site of 36 Quarry Ridge. Cost as stated: \$67.6 million ROM (\$60.9 million at a 10 percent space reduction; \$57.5 million at 15 percent), with headquarters sales, tax revenue, and grants identified as unquantified potential offsets, and with a stated mission-critical note that acreage above the estimate is needed for future expansion.

8.2 Safir — three-station fire-service solution

A fire-service coverage recommendation rather than a headquarters siting recommendation: add a third fire station along Route 7, pursue road improvements with the Highway Department to raise safe emergency driving speeds, reduce turnout times at Station 1, analyze the ISO and NFPA response-time effects of a third station, and apply modern station standards (exhaust extraction, hot/warm/cold zoning, decontamination) across all stations. No cost figures are stated; nearly all elements are designated TBD by the fire department in consultation with professionals.

8.3 Graves/Tyrrell Tiger Team — police headquarters on Town-owned land; \$50 million ceiling

Reviewing Town-owned buildings and land only, the team recorded pass/fail determinations — fail for the Venus building, renovation of the existing police headquarters, renovation of the existing fire headquarters, and Governor Field — and one pass: a police headquarters only, at the top of the Town-owned Quarry Ridge parcel, avoiding the ski slope and the Skydome structure, with 2021 borings showing the site buildable. The team's cost analysis, grounded in the referendum margin, the survey, and the organized opposition's stated ceiling, concludes that a \$50 million referendum total can succeed and that a total beginning with a six will fail. The team stated it has no fire plan, having reviewed Town-owned property only.

8.4 Scalzo/Martinez Tiger Team — Options A and B (two-building configurations)

Option A places a police headquarters (~23,000 SF including consolidated 911 dispatch) and a career fire headquarters (~19,000 SF, six drive-through bays) as two buildings on the shared Campus, with the volunteer fire department assuming the Catoonah Street station: approximately \$51.2 million as proposed gross / \$57.59 million equalized. Option B places the fire headquarters on the Campus and the police headquarters at Quarry Ridge: approximately \$56.25 million as proposed/\$61.79 million equalized.

What the Options A/B report established — and what carried forward into Option D.

The Options A/B report of July 8, 2026 records the activities behind these configurations, and the Board should see the list, because it is the foundation Option D stands on:

- site investigation including visits to numerous sites and review of ArcGIS and DEEP data;

- benchmarking against similarly situated communities — assisted by AI tools whose outputs were cross-checked against one another for directional accuracy, at the members' personal expense and with no town funds used, as the report disclosed on its face;

- independent research on police, fire, EMS, and dispatch services; numerous meetings with the service chiefs;

- information sessions with relevant town boards and commissions (Planning & Zoning, Police, Finance, Insurance, Inland Wetlands) and with town officials (zoning, environmental, finance, tax);

- an information session with the chair of Wilton's police-headquarters building committee;

- sessions with KBA;

- review of the NASCO cost-analysis framework;

- regular listening sessions with the public at Thursday meetings and one on one;

- a listening session with the membership of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department at a special RVFD meeting convened for that purpose;

- a far-afield meeting and facility tour with the deputy chief of a fire department that recently built a headquarters on a geographically constrained site; consideration of other members' facility investigations (including Hingham, Massachusetts and Newtown, Connecticut); and

- the work of the Needs Assessment and Finance due-diligence groups.

That report — presented, in its own words, as directionally correct rather than conclusive — is not a superseded alternative; it is the analytical foundation on which this recommendation stands. It established: the two-platform conclusion and the full site-screening record; the wetlands disclosure and the no-fuel-island exclusion; the reasonableness frame — including the candid finding that no published square-footage standard exists and that sizing must be triangulated from real, comparable buildings; the flat-growth demographic analysis and the Branchville acknowledgment; the two reasonably sized, room-by-room programs — a ~23,000 SF police headquarters and a ~19,000 SF career fire headquarters — with their requirements list (reproduced, updated for consolidation, as Annex A) and the express deference that how much, how little, or what more is for public-safety leadership to decide within the cost, space, and location

parameters; the four sizing choices that separate this program from the one the voters declined — sizing to today rather than to growth, resolving the volunteer program deliberately, transferring outbuilding functions to existing municipal facilities, and applying a different net-to-gross factor — with the express statement that the difference is not the result of thinning any requirement; the peer-community benchmarking; the cost methodology corroborated by three independent sources; the civic-district zoning path; the envelope method — a location, a reasonably sized box, and a dollar figure, with the design entrusted to public-safety leadership; the confirmation-gate practice; and the all-of-town sequence.

Two items of lineage deserve particular emphasis. First, the Options A/B report itself, in its Section 8, recommended that a combined building on the shared campus be priced — observing that combining might recapture building-level duplication. Dated July 8, 2026. Option D is that recommendation carried out: the same site, the same programs, the same discipline, completed as a single consolidated design. Second, the volunteer question evolved exactly as the report's gate system was designed to make it evolve. The July 8 report kept the RVFD at Catoonah Street on the economics then available — a rough order-of-magnitude premium for folding the volunteer program into a new headquarters, weighed against a modest reported operating cost for the existing station — and expressly gated the question on a Catoonah condition assessment and the estimator's incremental figure.

The RVFD's July 23 memorandum supplied the missing facts: the true scope of making Catoonah acceptable to the RVFD is a multi-million-dollar renovation, while the consolidated increment is a fraction of the figure originally assumed. The gate closed with different facts than the working assumption, the economics reversed, and the path to Option D opened.

8.5 Scalzo/Martinez Tiger Team — Option C (full consolidation, additive program)

One combined facility housing police, career fire, and volunteer fire on the Campus, priced by carrying each standalone program whole: base scope approximately 45,000–46,500 GSF, seven bays (five career, two volunteer), the RVFD housed in the new headquarters with dedicated bays, gear and storage space, 24-hour access, and identity protections as program requirements, and both legacy properties sold. Approximately \$53.19 million at its proposed 46,500 SF on the estimator's August 25, 2026 revision (\$56.55 million at its 49,500 SF equalized scope).

8.6 Scalzo/Martinez Tiger Team — Option D (the recommendation)

Option C completed as a design exercise rather than an arithmetic one — the consolidation designed from the outset for both departments around a shared public core plus a small police storage outbuilding. Option D is set out in full in Section 9.

The Committee notes what this catalogue represents: within seven months, a volunteer citizen committee examined renovation, two-building, combined-building, police-only, fire-system, Town-land, and private-land solutions; screened more than two dozen public

parcels and every realistic commercial candidate; interviewed its chiefs on the record; surveyed its voters; sat down with the referendum opposition; and produced written, costed analyses of each path. Whatever the Board concludes about any single option, the option space is, we suggest, complete.

9. The recommendation: Option D

9.1 What Option D is

Option D is a single consolidated public-safety facility on the Campus housing the entire public-safety family — the Ridgefield Police Department, the career Ridgefield Fire Department, and the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department — under one roof, organized around a shared public core sitting as a neutral zone between two independently secured wings. The program, as presented to the Committee on August 20: a building of approximately 48,000 SF, with approximately 23,000–25,000 SF for the police wing including consolidated 911 dispatch and a secure drive-through sally port; a fire wing with seven apparatus bays with contamination control laid out on the hot/warm/cold progression — the zoned layout current station-design practice uses to keep contaminated gear and air out of living and administrative spaces; one public lobby and reception; one public-facing community and training room; one fitness room; one mechanical plant; and a detached, unconditioned police storage outbuilding. Consolidated dispatch serving police, fire, and EMS remains within the police program. There is no on-site fuel island.

The bay count — the single largest driver of fire-station size — also cross-checks against the federal criteria described in Section 6. The Unified Facilities Criteria class apparatus into standardized categories: aerials and large tankers are Large-class vehicles with a standardized bay footprint; pumpers and heavy rescues are Medium-class; and ambulances and command units are Small-class, for which the criteria provide no dedicated bay at all — they share or tandem-park. Applying those classes to Ridgefield’s own fleet as documented in the Town’s response-time study — an aerial, three engines, a heavy rescue, tankers, and medic and command units — produces five primary career bays with the tanker allocation carried in the two volunteer bays and the small units tandem-parked. Three of the criteria’s requirements are already program requirements verbatim: drive-through capability, no back-to-back bay arrangements, and standard apparatus-door geometry.

9.2 A design precedent: the Hingham method

There is a built precedent for designing the duplication out by combining police and fire facilities on a shared campus. KBA is the architect of record for the Hingham, Massachusetts Public Safety Facility. While not a Fire Headquarters, it is illustrative of the combined concept we propose. A combined building of approximately 48,920 SF housing the entire Hingham Police Department and a full-service – five bay -- fire station, completed in 2025 at approximately \$43.6 million hard cost and \$50.55 million all-in (about \$1,033 per square foot). KBA’s published project description states that the design was developed to

include each department's requirements in one combined facility, and that conceptual-phase collaboration reduced the building's size by 13 percent without compromising department operations. The defining feature is the method: the Hingham facility is not two programs joined at a wall — public-facing and support functions serve both departments, while each department retains an independently secured wing. That is the method Option D applies, modified for Ridgefield's headquarters operations and the RVFD.

9.3 The Committee did its homework on combined versus separate

The Committee did not assume its way to consolidation. A structured combined-versus-separate analysis in June initially favored two separate buildings, on three grounds: contamination control across shared walls, opposed security regimes (a hardened CALEA/POSTC envelope beside a fast-egress fire building), and single-point-of-failure resilience. Option D answers each. The shared public core sits as a neutral zone between two independently secured wings, with the community and training room accessible to the public without transiting either department's controlled space; the hot/warm/cold progression, bunks over cold zone only, and positive-pressure separation are carried as program requirements; and the Hingham facility demonstrates the configuration built and operating.

9.4 The volunteers

The volunteer fire department's program is a set of requirements: two dedicated volunteer bays; dedicated gear room and storage; 24-hour access per protocol; identity and heritage protections; a working allowance of 10–15 volunteer parking spaces; and RVFD-specific space. Chief Pambianchi's July 23, 2026 memorandum priced the alternative of having the RVFD assume the Catoonah Station at a substantial multi-million-dollar renovation scope (screened by the Committee at a \$10.3–17.2 million ROM planning range) and his August 20 testimony described the current station's parking, apparatus-stacking, gear-storage, decontamination, and shower deficiencies in detail. Option D houses the combination department — career and volunteer — on one campus, physically unifying the system Chief Duckworth described to the Committee as operationally and culturally valuable while relieving the Town of the Catoonah renovation scope entirely. Chief Pambianchi confirmed on August 20 that volunteers respond to wherever their assigned apparatus is housed and that a consolidated configuration would work operationally.

9.5 The architect's test fit

On August 20, 2026, KBA delivered buildability test-fit drawings for the Campus (Exhibit C): a full set of concept layouts drawn on the assembled campus — Option A (separate career-only stations at 14,400 SF and 17,750 SF footprints, 143 total spaces), Option B1 (career fire station at a 17,000 SF footprint with 110-foot bays, and a separate police sheet), Option B2 (combined career-and-volunteer fire at 19,600 SF), Option B3 (combined fire at 14,000 SF), Option C (separate stations), Option D, and Option E (police station at 17,500 SF with a 2,500 SF outbuilding) — each with parking counts, circulation, setbacks, security

gates, generator and transformer locations, and the 100-foot wetland review area shown, all respecting the flagged wetland boundary.

The Option D sheet — “Combined Police & Fire” — shows the consolidated building at a 36,500 SF footprint with apparatus bays at 100-foot length, a sally port, entrance plazas, and 140 parking spaces (135 standard plus 5 ADA), with room remaining on the campus for future expansion. The drawings confirm, with the architect’s own pen, the three facts on which this recommendation rests: the consolidated program physically fits on the campus; the site treatment — parking and circulation within the upland review area with the wetland boundary respected — matches what the Inland Wetlands Board has repeatedly approved on this same corridor; and the footprint exceeds the residential coverage schedule, confirming the need for a rezoning path the Committee has anticipated from the outset.

The Committee is transparent about what the test fit does not yet state: a floor-by-floor gross-square-footage tabulation, confirmation that the 100-foot bay length in Option D (versus 110 feet on the fire-only sheets) clears the apparatus inventory, and completion of the Option D parking-table subcategories are among the confirm-or-correct items pending with KBA (Section 12). The Committee also notes that 140 drawn spaces likely exceeds actual demand given counter-cyclical shared use with the adjoining Recreation Center; a reduced-parking variant is a value-engineering opportunity, since every space removed shrinks paving, drainage, retaining-wall run, and review-area disturbance.

9.6 Response times and the location: what the data show

The location logic of the campus is the location logic of the Committee’s scoring framework: fire service follows the call-volume center of gravity, police service follows the town center, and the recommended campus — at the approximate geographic center of town, fronting directly on the principal arterial — satisfies both at once. That logic is not merely asserted; it is tested by the most rigorous response-time analysis in the Town’s possession.

In April 2025, JB Consulting Group modeled the Town’s actual emergency demand — all 16,672 fire and EMS calls from January 2020 through December 2024, imported into Levrum Code 3 Strategist simulation software — to test whether relocating fire headquarters from Catoonah Street to a new public-safety building at Quarry Ridge would degrade response, including under the worst realistic conditions: weekday rush hour, 2:30 to 5:00 p.m., in the southwestern and southeastern regions of town most exposed to congestion. The study’s conclusions were unambiguous: the relocation is strategically sound; rush-hour traffic adds an average of twenty seconds; the worst-case alternate routing adds fourteen more; and response times remain within NFPA guidelines throughout — even on the rush-hour-only call subset in the affected regions. The study’s single operational caution concerned congestion at the Grove Street and Prospect Street intersection, for which it recommended consideration of traffic-signal preemption.

The study’s two demand figures are reproduced at display scale in Figure 2: every one of the 16,672 calls plotted as a point, beside the study’s own heat map of call concentration. The pattern requires no interpretation. Calls occur everywhere in town — and they

concentrate at the center, where the study's two greatest concentrations are health-care-related occupancies near the town core. The center of gravity of Ridgefield's emergency demand is the center of town; Figure 1 shows the recommended campus occupying precisely that ground.

The recommended campus occupies essentially the same central corridor, serving the same call geography — with one material improvement: the campus fronts directly on the Route 35 arterial, with the apparatus apron and egress discharging onto the arterial itself, upstream of the very intersection that was the study's only flagged concern. The Committee is precise about what is verified and what remains to be confirmed: the study's conclusions attach to the location it modeled; because the simulation model and the five-year call dataset already exist, refreshing the run from the campus's exact position is an inexpensive confirmatory task, and the Committee recommends it be included in the feasibility scope along with strong consideration of traffic pre-emption tools. Nothing in the geometry suggests the refreshed result will differ in kind.

The same data discipline answers a question members have rightly pressed: whether eastern Ridgefield — the Route 7 and Branchville side of town — requires a rethinking of the Town's EMS response strategy. It is the right question to keep asking, and the record contains two datasets against which it must be measured.

The first is the State's own: the 2024 Connecticut OEMS CEMSTARS reporting shows Ridgefield fire/EMS at a mean dispatch-to-arrival of 6.49 minutes, against a statewide suburban average of 8.03 — performance to standard, town-wide, achieved from today's suboptimal headquarters location.

The second is the JB simulation, whose rush-hour worst-case regions — including southeastern Ridgefield toward Branchville — remain within NFPA guidelines.

Neither dataset documents an eastern-Ridgefield compliance gap. The majority's position is therefore methodological rather than dismissive: any claim of an east-side response deficit should be stated with a defined geography and measured against the NFPA and CEMSTARS benchmarks, so that the chiefs and the Committee can respond with analysis — and if a documented gap ever emerges, from Branchville growth or otherwise, the remedy the record itself prescribes (including the three-station framework summarized in Section 8.2) is a satellite station located at the demand. Option D's right-sized headquarters is what preserves the Town's fiscal capacity to build that station if the day comes. The headquarters question and the coverage question are different questions; this recommendation answers the first and forecloses nothing on the second.

WHERE RIDGEFIELD'S EMERGENCIES HAPPEN

All 16,672 Fire & EMS Calls — January 1, 2020 through December 27, 2024

Town of Ridgefield · Public Safety Facilities Committee · Public Display Copy

Figure 6.1.1.1. Call Locations — every call, 2020-2024

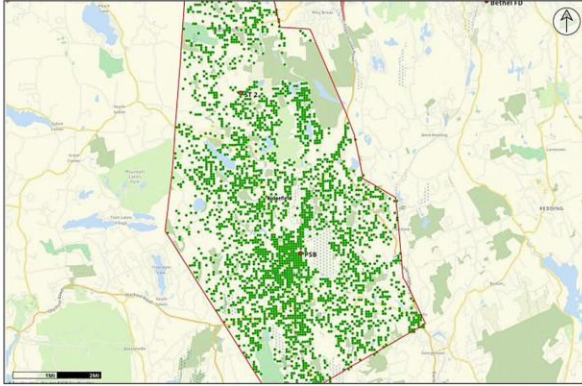
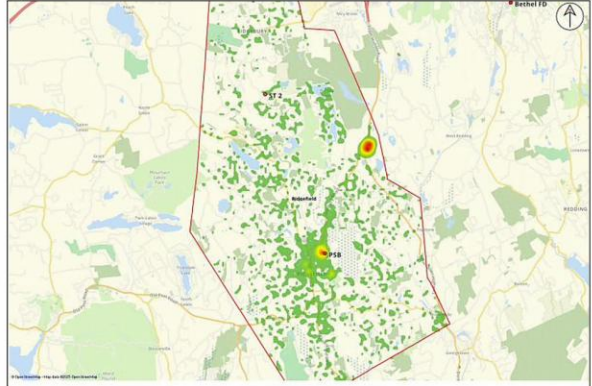


Figure 6.1.1.2. Heat Map — call concentration, 2020-2024



WHAT THE TOWN'S OWN DATA SHOW

The center of gravity is the center of town.

"The downtown area creates the greatest call volume." (JB Consulting, §6.1.) The recommended 217-221 Danbury Road campus sits in this same central corridor.

Demand follows people, not acreage.

The heat map's two greatest concentrations are health-care-related occupancies near the town center — high EMS demand where residents live and receive care.

Response performs to standard — even at rush hour.

Simulated in Levrum Code 3 Strategist, response from the central corridor stays within NFPA guidelines; weekday rush hour adds an average of 20 seconds; only 2.4% of calls occur in the affected regions at rush hour.

Source: JB Consulting Group LLC, "Rush Hour Traffic and Its Effect on Arrival Times from the Proposed Public Safety Building," April 9, 2025, commissioned by the Town of Ridgefield. Figures 6.1.1.1 and 6.1.1.2 reproduced at enlarged scale from the report; the report controls. The "PSB" marker denotes the location modeled in the study; the recommended 217-221 Danbury Road campus sits in the same central corridor a short distance north. Base map © OpenStreetMap contributors. Call locations plotted by the study to the nearest 100 block to protect privacy. Prepared for public display, August 2026 — illustrative reproduction; all figures ROM.

Figure 2. Ridgefield's emergency demand, 2020–2024: all 16,672 fire/EMS calls (left) and the call-concentration heat map (right), reproduced at enlarged scale from JB Consulting Group's April 9, 2025 study (Exhibit H), which controls. Base map © OpenStreetMap contributors; call locations plotted by the study to the nearest 100 block.

9.7 Future capacity

Members asked, fairly, whether Option D leaves room for the Ridgefield that might come. The answer is yes — by design, by the drawings, and by three distinct expansion mechanisms the campus preserves. It has also been suggested that no site smaller than roughly five and a half acres can be adequately future-proofed and that the recommended campus therefore fails before it starts. The majority examined that proposition the way it has examined every other: against the published standards, the built record, and the facts on the ground in Ridgefield.

First, no standard supports the figure. The facility-planning literature the Committee reviewed — including the International Chiefs of Police's (IACP) published guidelines — contains no minimum-acreage standard for a police or combined public-safety facility; the IACP's guidance runs the causation in the opposite direction, with the space-needs program determining the site requirement. The evidentiary record runs against the figure: Fairfield polices two and a half times Ridgefield's population from 1.50 acres; Key Biscayne operates an accredited police headquarters and an accredited career fire station on roughly one acre each; Hingham delivered the model combined facility on a constrained municipal site; Glen Ellyn built its station on a park edge scaled to the houses around it.

Second, the site does not exist. The Committee's twenty-eight-parcel public inventory and its commercial screen identify no centrally located parcel in Ridgefield offering five and a half acres of buildable upland; the only candidate that approaches the figure in gross terms is Quarry Ridge, whose practically buildable envelope — after the ledge, the ski slope, and the Skydome are avoided — is itself somewhat smaller and whose location the voters have twice declined to fund.

Third, and most important, the campus already contains its own expansion capacity — in three forms. The first is vertical, and it is hiding in plain sight: approximately 140 surface parking spaces are, functionally, a land bank — acreage already cleared, graded, drained, and paved, held in the least permanent use on the site. If the police wing ever needs more space, the proven path is to deck a portion of that parking and build above it, converting parking area into program area without consuming one new square foot of the site. Police facilities stack program with parking routinely — San Francisco's headquarters sits above a 240-car garage and Arlington Heights, Illinois placed its firing range directly beneath its parking structure. And stations have both executed vertical expansion outright (Concord, New Hampshire added a full third floor to its 1974 station in 1985, and is only now, forty years later, planning its replacement) and pre-engineered it deliberately: the recent Leesburg, Virginia police expansion was built with its roof as an elevated structural slab designed to serve as a future second floor, with elevator pits cast into the foundation and capped for later use.

Option D suggests the Town carry the same discipline into design: expansion walls detailed as non-load-bearing knock-out panels, utility risers sized with headroom, and — at the Committee's recommendation — foundations and columns over the expandable wing specified to accept one additional future floor. That specification is a design line-item, not a land purchase; it is the cheapest future-proofing ever invented.

The second form is horizontal. The 100-foot upland review area along the rear of the campus is not a no-build zone; it is a regulated review area, and the recent record of this exact corridor shows the Inland Wetlands Board approving parking, courts, and site improvements within it — the Recreation Center pickleball project two parcels away was approved 6–0 in early 2026 with full drainage engineering inside the review area, consistent with the Board's 2018 approval at the residential project beyond it. Future expansion within the review area — with the flagged wetland line itself untouched, exactly as the KBA test fit already treats it — would follow the same application path the Board has repeatedly granted, twice, on this same stretch of road.

The third form is the one the drawings show today: the test fit confirms room remaining on the campus after the full Option D program, bays, sally port, and parking are placed.

Fire-service growth, if it ever comes, is best served by an additional satellite station located where demand actually materializes — a point on which multiple Tiger Team reports independently agree. The demographic record (Section 6) is what disciplines the whole

judgment: a town flat since roughly 2015 should buy option value, which is cheap, rather than pre-purchase space, which is expensive and — in Ridgefield — unavailable.

Future-proofing is real, and Option D buys it in its modern, engineered form: a structure detailed to take another floor, a parking field that doubles as a land bank, a review-area path with an established approval precedent, and reserved room on the campus — rather than in its oldest and least attainable form, surplus acreage in a built-out town.

9.8 The zoning path: a civic district, and an all-of-town undertaking

The Campus parcels are zoned residential, and the residential coverage schedule cannot hold this program; a governmental special permit grants the use but reverts to the same coverage. The defensible route — and the one the Committee recommends developing with the Planning & Zoning Commission — is a Civic / Community Services & Recreation District drawn around the existing public-asset cluster on this corridor: the Recreation Center, Founders Hall, and the campus parcels. That recognizes land use already on the ground rather than singling out one parcel for special treatment — the legal opposite of spot zoning — it is anchored in the Town’s own comprehensive plan (POCD Community Facilities Strategy #16); fire and police facilities are already named as permitted public-safety uses by special permit in the regulations; and it follows decades of Town practice in purpose-built rezonings (the Schlumberger MFDD, the Neighborhood Business Zone, the Main Street Design District, and the Danbury Road and Copps Hill corridor changes). The Committee wants to be candid that the district is a legislative process, with a public hearing, months of work, and every abutter noticed. It is also, in the majority’s view, the point: the zoning change, the site assembly, the movement of three public-safety teams, the construction, and the dispositions are one civic undertaking. This takes all of Ridgefield — and it is an invitation to the town to come out of the gallery and into the arena.

10. Cost basis and fiscal context

10.1 The Committee’s cost basis

The Committee’s cost basis is the professional estimating work of Brickley/NASCO (June 2026, Estimate No. 26-0082) — prepared by Committee member Mr. Brickley, and adopted by the Committee as the single methodology on which every option is compared — extended in the estimator’s workbook as revised August 2026 (the “Options 8.25” worksheet), which prices every configuration — the Quarry Ridge combination, the two-site alternative, Options A through D, and the split alternative retaining the East Ridge police site — on one methodology, at each option’s proposed scope and at an equalized comparison scope. The Committee cross-checks that basis two ways — with a deliberately punitive headroom stress test, and against built comparables — so that no single assumption drives the answer. All figures are ROM:

Basis	Method	Indicated result (ROM)
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ADOPTED BASIS — Brickley/NASCO (June 2026, Est. No. 26-0082), as revised August 2026 (“Options 8.25”)	Fully loaded unit costs — construction, general conditions, site preparation and development, project adds (design fees, FF&E, communications, CM/owner’s representative), and escalation — derived from the 2025 referendum estimate itself, broken into separate fire and police rates, and applied to the right-sized programs with property cost and outbuilding carried separately. Low rates apply to the lighter Campus site conditions; high rates to Quarry Ridge ledge conditions. Deliberately apples-to-apples with the \$77.4M proposal. Bond and mill impact modeled on the MBIS AAA curve.	Option D (consolidated, including the volunteer program, property, and itemized campus site scope): approximately \$51.63 million at the proposed 45,000 SF; approximately \$54.9 million equalized at 48,00 SF. (The \$49–50 million screen presented August 20 predates the August 25 revision, which adds the itemized campus scope — underground drainage, traffic signalization, — and the property allowance.) On the same basis: Option A (no volunteers) ~\$51.21M proposed / ~\$57.59M equalized; Option B ~\$56.23M / ~\$61.79M; Option C ~\$53.19M / ~\$56.55; the split alternative retaining East Ridge ~\$66.3M equalized; the Quarry Ridge combination ~\$63.6M equalized at 46,500 SF / ~\$72.7M as proposed. Median-average household impact approximately
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		\$25.83 a month at proposed pricing (Section 10.4; assessed values remain fixed at the October 2022 revaluation until the Town's next revaluation in October 2027).
Cross-check 1 — headroom stress test (Option D note, July 28, 2026)	A deliberately conservative exercise, not the Committee's estimate: the adopted basis itself runs approximately \$1,236/SF all-in at the proposed scope; the stress case carries the equalized 48,000 SF figure with a further 10.3 percent inflation contingency stacked on top (a late 2027/2028 bid). The rate environment is bracketed by three independent sources set out in the July 8 report: KBA's own comparative table escalated to 2026 (recent stations at \$913–\$1,220/SF; Ridgefield pegged at \$1,032), the Mitchell Associates regional dataset adjusted to Fairfield County (~\$750–950/SF), and Hingham as built (~\$1,033/SF all-in).	~\$59.35M with the stacked contingency; with no offsets and no disposition proceeds, still below the \$63.6M equalized Quarry combination and far below both failed referenda. The stress test's purpose is exactly that finding: on even punitive assumptions, the recommendation holds.
Cross-check 2 — built benchmarks	Hingham, MA combined public-safety facility (48,920 SF; \$50.55M all-in; ~\$1,033/SF; completed 2025; KBA architect of record); Wilton, CT police headquarters (~18,500 SF; ~\$1,000/SF class; opened early 2026).	A combined facility of the Hingham class, at Hingham's own all-in rate, prices in the low-\$50M range at Ridgefield's smaller program — independently corroborating the adopted basis. The acreage benchmarks refute any claim that the program requires five-plus acres.

On the adopted basis as revised, Option D prices approximately \$22 million below the November 2025 referendum at the equalized scope and approximately \$30 million below

the February 2025 referendum — before a single value-engineering decision is made, and before any legacy-property proceeds are counted. Legacy dispositions (76 East Ridge Road and, subject to Section 10.3, Catoonah Street) are carried strictly as potential offsets; the Committee’s recommendation does not depend on them.

10.2 The fiscal environment

The Committee’s cost discipline is not an aesthetic preference; it reflects the Town’s own financial record.

The Board of Finance has referenced a \$55 million figure for a public safety building in its capital planning discussions, and a tri-board discussion of debt policy and preservation of the Town’s AAA bond rating is anticipated this fall; the majority’s recommendation is consistent with, and should be sequenced alongside, that work.

Delay itself carries a cost. It is the single largest variable between the screening figure and bid day: at the Turner Building Cost Index’s recent trajectory (Q2 2026 up 5.15 percent year over year), each year between this recommendation and groundbreaking adds on the order of \$2.5–3 million to a project of this scale. A project bid in late 2027 or 2028 rather prices materially higher on every estimating basis in the record — while remaining, even then, below the stress-test ceiling and far below both failed referenda. The most effective cost-control decision available to the Town is pace: a disciplined path to the third referendum and an early bid date protect more dollars than any value-engineering exercise on the drawings.

10.3 Legacy dispositions — including the Catoonah Street question

The disposition of the two legacy properties is a potential offset, not a foundation: as shown above, the recommendation prices below both failed referenda with no disposition value counted at all. The decision around any potential disposition — including whether a long-term lease rather than a sale better serves the Town — are expressly reserved for appraisal and Town Counsel review under Conn. Gen. Stat. §7-163e, together with the 1907 “for fire purposes” language in the Catoonah chain of title, which may itself counsel toward a lease structure. Sale, lease, or retention is a decision for the Board and, ultimately, the town — not a premise of this recommendation.

10.4 Financing and taxpayer impact: the Committee’s financial analysis

Committee member Steve Scalzo prepared a comprehensive financial analysis of the project — option analysis, capital cost and financing, taxpayer impact, operating costs, and the true cost of doing nothing — which is summarized here and attached in full as Exhibit J. The analysis prices every option under three scenarios: a referendum-baseline scenario applying the failed 2025 referendum’s own \$1,121-per-square-foot all-in rate; the estimator’s pricing at each option’s proposed scope; and the equalized comparison scope. It models financing on the Town’s own practice — a twenty-year level-principal general-obligation structure with 5 percent coupons in years one through nine and 4 percent thereafter, consistent with Ridgefield’s November 2025 issue — priced on the MBIS AAA

municipal benchmark yield curve of July 20, 2026, against the FY2026 grand list of \$5,835,616,000 and the current mill rate of 28.36.

The financing results hold no surprises. At the equalized scope, Option D requires an approximately \$55 million bond carrying roughly \$24.6 million of total interest — about \$79.61 million of total debt service over twenty years, an average of approximately \$3.98 million a year, and a peak mill-rate increase of +0.895, taking the mill rate from today's 28.36 to a peak of about 29.25. Under every scenario, Option D carries the lowest financing burden of any consolidation option; only Option A — which includes no volunteer program — prices marginally lower and that is no longer a viable option as discussed above.

For the taxpayer, the analysis translates mill arithmetic into tax bills across the full range of Ridgefield properties, on assessed values — the number that actually appears on a tax bill, fixed at the October 2022 revaluation until the Town's next revaluation in October 2027. For the median household, assessed at \$454,405, Option D's peak impact is approximately \$34 a month at the equalized scope. The full tier tables — from starter homes through the Town's anchor commercial properties, and by current tax bill from \$8,000 to \$40,000 a year — appear in Exhibit J.

The operating analysis is deliberately candid. The new building would be 60 to 100 percent larger than the two structures it replaces, and the energy savings therefore depend on execution: at the low end of the architect's all-electric estimate (\$2 per square foot per year), every option shows real savings; at the high end (\$3), savings shrink toward zero. In the analysis's own words, the energy-savings case depends on landing near the low end through design discipline, not on new construction alone. Non-energy operating savings — building maintenance, OSHA compliance, communications, and service agreements — are modeled at approximately \$103,000 to \$130,000 a year against roughly \$200,000 today.

Finally, the analysis prices the one option that is often mistaken for free. Doing nothing carries an estimated \$10.8 to \$12.6 million of capital repairs over ten years — including a \$1.6 million federally mandated ADA elevator obligation and a \$990,000 communications relocation that a new building avoids entirely — and, with escalating operating costs, a ten-year total cost of ownership of roughly \$12.8 to \$15.1 million. At the end of that spending, the Town would own the same two hundred-year-old buildings, with no improvement in operational capability and every major system due again within twenty-five years.

11. The alternatives, and why the majority did not recommend them

The majority's reasons are stated respectfully and factually; each alternative reflects serious work by serious colleagues, the full reports are exhibits to this report, and members remain free to present these views in a minority report.

11.1 Option B — two sites (~\$56.23 million proposed / ~\$61.79 million equalized — August 25 revision)

Operationally sound, and the strongest of the two-building configurations on Town-land use. But it costs approximately \$10 million more than Option D as presented, carries the heavier Quarry Ridge site preparation, forfeits the shared-campus and shared-core savings, and leaves the volunteer question to a separate multi-million-dollar Catoonah renovation scope. On the central lesson of the voter record — the price — the majority could not recommend a path that prices almost \$7 million above Option D. Option B remains fully documented in the record should the Board wish to weigh it.

11.2 A combined facility at Quarry Ridge (~\$61 million as presented; ~\$67.6 million per the underlying worksheets)

The Committee compared this proposal line by line against the failed referendum program. The underlying worksheets are the KBA needs-assessment tabs; the room-by-room review with the chiefs removed approximately 4 percent from a program that is, for practical purposes, the 75,000 SF plan voters rejected in November 2025, with the balance of the reduction resting on an unallocated combination-savings estimate that no chief reviewed room by room and no designer has tested. Its stated cost is square footage times a single rate. On the Committee's adopted cost basis (Section 10.1), the program prices at approximately \$63.6 million equalized to a common 46,500 SF scope and approximately \$72.7 million at its proposed 61,489 SF; carried further onto the accounting basis the referendum itself used — adding site development at a ledge site, soft costs, FF&E, contingency, and escalation — it screens at roughly \$78–88 million ROM, at or above both failed referenda. The bases are stated so the Board can see that the conclusion does not depend on the choice among them. The site also carries the history of two defeats. The majority concluded that this path, however carefully assembled, returns the Town to the cost territory its voters have twice rejected. The empirical record on acreage points the same way: Fairfield's police headquarters houses roughly two and a half times Ridgefield's sworn complement on 1.50 acres; Hingham delivered its combined facility on a constrained municipal site; and Glen Ellyn — a village of Ridgefield's size — built its entire 30,000 SF station on a park edge surrounded by residential neighborhoods, deliberately scaled to its surroundings. The professional planning literature runs the causation in one direction: under the IACP's published guidelines, the space-needs program determines the site requirement, and the site must meet the program — the program is not enlarged to justify the land. The architect's August 20 test fit demonstrates that the right-sized program meets its site requirement on the recommended campus.

11.3 A police headquarters only (Graves/Tyrrell; \$50 million ceiling)

The majority regards the Graves/Tyrrell cost analysis as among the most important documents in the record. It has three salient data points — the referendum margin, the survey, and the organized opposition's stated ceiling. But a police-only project answers half the Charge; it leaves the fire headquarters — the older and in some respects more deficient facility — without a plan, and a second project and second referendum behind it. Option D delivers both departments inside a similar fiscal envelope the Graves/Tyrrell analysis identifies.

11.4 The three-station fire-service solution (Safir)

A thoughtful operational framework whose station-standards content — exhaust extraction, zoning, decontamination — is largely incorporated into the Option D program. The Committee notes for the record what the governing standards themselves say about growth: NFPA 1710 and 1720 — the deployment standards for career and volunteer fire service respectively, both relevant to Ridgefield’s combination department — are standards about staffing, response coverage, and time, whose adoption and implementation are expressly local decisions. They are met by where stations sit and how they are staffed, not by how large a headquarters is. That is why every fire-service growth path in the record runs through a possible future satellite station — and none through headquarters massing. As its author acknowledged, its strategic elements are chief-driven and lie beyond this Committee’s facilities charge; nothing in Option D forecloses them, and a future third station remains the natural form of fire-service growth if demand materializes.

11.5 Do nothing

The existing buildings require an estimated \$10.8–12.6 million of capital repairs over ten years merely to remain occupied — spending that buys no code compliance, no essential-facility resilience, no sally port, no modern contamination control, and no dispatch hardening. The State Police left the East Ridge building half a century ago; turnout gear sits on the apparatus floor; apparatus parks three deep. A working public-safety system is the return and the buildings are what keep it working. Doing nothing is a cost, not a savings.

11.6 The existing police site (76 East Ridge Road) — the complete answer

A group of residents has asked, in a thoughtful Community Input letter dated August 17, 2026 (Hancock et al., Exhibit F), that the Committee fully vet the existing Police Headquarters parcel — 1.98 Town-owned acres at 76 East Ridge Road — for demolition of the 1890 building and ground-up construction of a new police headquarters, citing the 2005 feasibility plan in the Committee’s binders. The Committee takes the request seriously, has answered it on the same claims-discipline basis applied to every other site in the record — the screening analysis is restated in full below — and on August 20 voted to fund up to \$10,000 of independent professional analysis so that the question is answered by professionals, in public, using the Police Department’s current space requirements. The screening record to date is summarized here so the Board can see exactly where the concept stands.

The Town owns the site; water and sewer serve it today; the 2005 plan demonstrates that a two-story police station physically fits; the parcel’s realistic surface-parking ceiling (~48–52 spaces) is plausibly adequate for the right-sized ~23,000 SF program. Screening analysis prices ground-up replacement at approximately \$33–43 million all-in ROM — the highest single-site, police-only alternative yet priced. Renovating the 1890 building (screened at approximately \$37–62 million ROM depending on program, at an effective

\$1,400–2,100 per delivered square foot) is even more expensive. The avoided-greenfield-site-preparation point is accepted and credited in the build-up.

Three reasons why the Committee does not recommend this path.

First, it is a police-only half-solution: add any credible fire headquarters (~\$21–25 million ROM) and the combined path runs approximately \$54–68 million across two projects, two sites, two approval tracks, and in all likelihood two referenda — priced by the estimator’s August 25, 2026 revision at approximately \$66.3 million equalized — including \$3.0 million of temporary quarters, historic-district construction and site allowances, and demolition of the existing 16,000 SF building — approximately \$12.4 million above Option D at the same equalized scope, while delivering less: no consolidation, no shared core, no volunteer solution, and no disposition value from the East Ridge parcel (the campus math carries a \$1.0–1.5 million potential credit for it that this concept forfeits).

Second, the effective cost is high: even the ground-up concept delivers police space at roughly \$1,450–1,870 per square foot all-in — well above the new-construction benchmarks — because a small parcel, demolition, temporary quarters (screened at \$1.5–3.0 million; the prior Tiger Team screen carried at least \$3 million), and a small-building premium all load onto 23,000 square feet.

Third, the concept sits behind threshold gates that no exhibit in the record has cleared — beginning with the historic-review gate described next.

Two distinct layers of historic protection apply, and they operate differently.

The first has been in the record since 2020: KBA’s own site data sheet records the 1890 building as listed on the Historic Register within a federal historic district. National Register listing does not by itself prohibit demolition, but it exposes a demolition to review-and-delay procedures, to an action under the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act (Conn. Gen. Stat. §22a-19a) to prevent the unreasonable destruction of a listed structure, and to full Section 106 review if any federal funds or permits touch the project.

The second layer is new, and it is dispositive of the “just tear it down” framing: on January 21, 2026, a Special Town Meeting overwhelmingly approved the East Ridge Historic District — Ridgefield’s first new local historic district in roughly sixty years — running along East Ridge Road from Route 102 north to Prospect Street and encompassing the police headquarters parcel. Under the local-historic-district statutes, no demolition permit for any building within the district may be issued by the Town or any of its departments until the Historic District Commission has granted a certificate of appropriateness (Conn. Gen. Stat. §7-147d(b)); the certificate requires a noticed public hearing and a discretionary Commission vote, a denial must state its reasons, and the remedy for a denial is an appeal to Superior Court (§§7-147e, 7-147i).

We note that the Commission’s own published inventory classifies the 1890 police headquarters building as non-contributing to the district. That classification bears on how the Commission may weigh proposed changes — but it does not remove the building from

the district’s jurisdiction, because the certificate-of-appropriateness requirement of §7-147d applies to every structure within the district’s boundaries, contributing or not.

The record also contains the Commission’s written statement of January 7, 2026, made during the district’s consideration: “Should the building committee being formed to develop a plan for the Fire / Police Departments decide to use the police department in its current location, the Historic District Commission would support changes, including height or width with views from East Ridge, so long as they are architecturally in keeping with the current historic look of the structure and appropriate to the historic character of the neighborhood.” The majority takes that statement at face value and with appreciation. It is supportive — and it is precise. By its terms it contemplates the existing structure remaining, modified “in keeping with the current historic look”; it is support for appropriate renovation, not a grant of freedom from the district’s rules, and it is not support for demolition — an application that, on this record, would likely not be welcomed. Nor is a statement of support a certificate: §7-147e still requires an application, a noticed public hearing, and a concurring majority vote before any certificate may issue, on a timeline the applicant does not control. Renovation within the district is therefore a lawful, reviewable path — carrying added layers of regulation, time, and discretionary uncertainty; demolition-and-rebuild is a materially harder one. Neither burden attaches to the Danbury Road campus.

A two-story ~23,000 SF building implies a ~11,500–12,000 SF footprint; with the retained brick garage, total coverage runs roughly 19–20 percent against the RA zone’s 10 percent maximum on a parcel that is already legally nonconforming at 12 percent — so zoning relief is a threshold matter here exactly as a rezone is on Danbury Road, but with no companion land to dilute the ratio and no existing civic-cluster rationale to anchor it.

Temporary quarters during demolition and construction must be planned and priced — the letter’s constructive suggestion of modular facilities using the existing brick garage is carried in the record as an unpriced mitigation, with the caveat that dispatch, detention, and evidence cannot occupy that structure without hardening it.

The burden of rebuilding on an occupied site is not hypothetical: Waltham, Massachusetts — which is doing exactly this on its existing public-safety campus — approved its police-station concept in July 2026 after eight years of planning, describes the sequencing of moves and construction as a “scheduling ballet,” and does not expect to break ground for eighteen months to two-plus years more, because an occupying department must be kept fully operational while its replacement rises around it.

12. What remains to be confirmed

The majority presents its recommendation with the confirmation work stated openly, because a recommendation that hides its assumptions is not fiscally responsible — it is merely optimistic. The open items, each already identified in the project record:

- KBA confirm-or-correct items. The six-item scope transmitted to KBA with a requested return of August 21, 2026, including a floor-by-floor gross-square-footage tabulation

against the program, completion of the parking table (and a reduced-parking variant reflecting shared use with the adjoining Recreation Center), bay-depth confirmation, a naming crosswalk between KBA's scheme labels and the Committee's options, and quantification of the retaining-wall work along the north edge.

- Site. Completion of the second-parcel acquisition (executive session); boundary survey and lot consolidation; geotechnical work; Phase I environmental; Inland Wetlands application; CTDOT access and traffic study; Town Engineer GIS confirmation of the town-polygon centroid relative to the campus (Figure 1); refresh of the Exhibit H response-time model from the campus origin.
- Zoning. Informal Planning & Zoning consultation, followed by the Civic / Community Services & Recreation District application and public hearing.
- Dispositions (if desired). Appraisals of both legacy properties; Town Counsel review of disposition mechanics under Conn. Gen. Stat. §7-163e, including the 1907 “for fire purposes” language in the Catoonah Street chain of title.

None of these is a reason to wait as time truly is money in this economic environment.

13. The path forward: an all-of-town effort

Success is a coordinated, multi-step civic undertaking, and each step depends on the next:

- The Town completes the site assembly — acquiring the second parcel and combining it with the parcel it already owns.
- The Planning & Zoning Commission establishes the Civic / Community Services & Recreation District, recognizing the public-asset corridor that already exists on the ground.
- The teams move — police, career fire, and volunteer fire to one consolidated campus, in a sequence planned with the chiefs.
- The Town builds reasonably, at a cost its voters can defend.
- The Town returns value (if desired) — selling both legacy properties and restoring them to the tax rolls.

No single board, department, committee, or citizens group can deliver this alone — and that is not a reason to shrink from it. It is the reason to ask Ridgefield to come together and get it done: to step out of the gallery and into the arena.

14. Minority and alternative viewpoints

The Charge provides that the Committee's recommendations include any minority or alternative viewpoints the Committee deems important to highlight. One member voted against adoption and has advised the Committee that a minority report will be submitted. The majority welcomes it. This recommendation is the product of the whole Committee's seven months of work, regardless of whether the member voted for or against this recommendation. Every Tiger Team's analysis, every interview, every screening, and

every debate contributed to it. The record upon which it rests on belongs to – and is the product of the hard work of -- all seven members.

15. Acknowledgments

This work has been, from its first meeting, an all-of-town effort, and the Committee closes by thanking some of the people who made it one, recognizing that it is impossible to thank every person who contributed to this effort.

To the Board of Selectpersons: thank you for the trust reflected in the Charge and for the clarity of the mandate.

To the Ridgefield Police Commission and Chair Sharon Dornfeld for their invaluable input, support, and tenacity.

To Police Chief Jeff Kreitz, Fire Chief Rommie Duckworth, Assistant Fire Chief Tony Cerulli, Police Executive Officer Major Nick Fowler and RVFD Chief Timothy Pambianchi — and to the sworn officers, career firefighters, volunteer firefighters, dispatchers, and EMS providers they lead: thank you for your candor, your patience with our questions, your hours of interviews and reviews, and above all for the work you do every day in buildings that have not kept faith with your service. This entire effort exists to correct that.

To the Town's professional staff — Town Engineer Jake Muller, Controller Kevin Redmond, Assessor Alfred Garzi, Zoning Enforcement Officer Aarti Paranjape, and Wetlands Agent Caleb Johnson — thank you for briefings, records, and judgment freely given. To the Board of Finance and Chair Mike Rettger and P&Z Chair Rob Hendrick, thank you for the candor on which our discipline rests.

To the team at Kaestle Boos Associates;

To soil scientist Mary Jaehnig, thank you for field work done carefully and documented plainly;

To Surveys & Forecasts, LLC, thank you for giving the Committee something rarer than opinions — data.

To the residents who came to our meetings, wrote to us, answered our survey, and pressed us with hard questions — including those who organized against the prior referenda and then accepted our invitation to sit down and tell us plainly what the town would support, and the East Ridge Road neighbors whose request for further professional analysis this Committee has adopted. The Committee in particular wishes to thank Town resident Rob Camarra for his contributions to financial modeling and his perfect attendance record! Our residents are the reason this process has been different. Democracy is not a spectator sport in Ridgefield, and this report is better because you refused to treat it as one.

And finally, to the members of this Committee — all seven — and to the families who lent us to this work for seven months of Thursday nights: thank you. We have not always

agreed. But we have always shown up and done the work. That is what the town asked of us.

Respectfully submitted,

David Brickley

Denis Graves

Wally Martinez

Adam Safir

Steve Scalzo

Edward Tyrrell

16. Exhibits

The exhibits to this report are limited to documents of record — materials presented to, received by, or prepared for the Committee in its proceedings:

- **Exhibit A.** Charge of the Public Safety Facilities Committee.
- **Exhibit B.** Meeting log with links to the posted agendas, minutes, and recorded chief interviews (Town website).
- **Exhibit C.** KBA buildability test-fit drawings, 217–221 Danbury Road concept layouts (August 20, 2026), together with the Committee’s six-item confirm-or-correct scope.
- **Exhibit D.** Brickley/NASCO cost-estimating materials: the Five-Option Capital, Operating & Tax Impact Comparison (June 2026, Est. No. 26-0082; MBIS AAA curve 7/20/2026) and the cost worksheets underlying the figures presented to the Committee on August 20, 2026.
- **Exhibit E.** Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department memorandum, Chief Timothy Pambianchi (July 23, 2026).
- **Exhibit F.** Community Input letter, August 17, 2026 (Hancock et al.), with the 2005 feasibility site plan attached thereto.
- **Exhibit G.** Post-referendum community survey (Surveys & Forecasts, LLC) — summary of results.
- **Exhibit H.** JB Consulting Group LLC, Rush Hour Traffic and Its Effect on Arrival Times from the Proposed Public Safety Building (April 9, 2025) — Levrum Code 3 Strategist simulation of 16,672 fire/EMS calls, 2020–2024.
- **Exhibit I.** Public Safety Facility — Financial Analysis (prepared by Committee member S. Scalzo, August 2026): option analysis, capital cost and financing, taxpayer impact by property tier, operating-cost analysis, and the ten-year cost of doing nothing.