

MEMORANDUM

To: Ridgefield Public Safety Facilities Committee

From: Kirk Carr

Date: April 20, 2025

Subject: Completing the Analysis: Community Risk, Standards of Cover, and Full Options Evaluation

Dear Members of the Committee,

The Committee has made meaningful progress in understanding the condition of Ridgefield's public safety facilities and in gathering input from the community. The recent survey and the response time modeling both contribute valuable information to that effort.

At this stage, it may be helpful to ensure that the analytical foundation is complete before further advancing facility concepts or site evaluations.

1. Scope of the Current Response Time Study

The response time study prepared by JB Consulting provides useful insight into how a **specific proposed location** performs under modeled conditions. It uses real call data and simulation tools to estimate travel times and operational impacts.

That said, the study is **narrow in scope**:

- It evaluates a **single site scenario**
- It assumes an underlying **two-station deployment model**
- It tests whether that configuration performs within acceptable ranges

It does not:

- Evaluate alternative deployment models
- Assess coverage gaps across the town independent of a proposed site
- Determine the optimal number or placement of stations
- Compare centralized versus distributed approaches

In that sense, the study answers:

“Can this site work?”

but not:

“What configuration of resources best serves the town?”

2. Distinction Between Site Analysis and Service Analysis

In fire service planning, those are distinct questions.

A **Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover (CRA/SOC)** is the framework commonly used to:

- Analyze community risk and call demand
- Define response time objectives
- Identify coverage gaps
- Determine the most effective deployment model

Only after those questions are addressed does it become possible to determine:

- How many stations are needed
- What facilities are required to support that model
- Where they should be located

The current body of work appears to have progressed in the opposite direction—moving from facility concepts and site evaluation toward operational validation.

3. Opportunity to Use Existing Capabilities More Fully

JB Consulting’s materials indicate that they have the capability to:

- Model multiple deployment scenarios
- Evaluate coverage and response impacts across alternatives
- Compare different station configurations

The data already assembled—multi-year call history, geographic distribution, and response modeling—appears sufficient to support a broader analysis.

To date, that capability appears to have been used to evaluate a **specific site within an assumed model**, rather than to compare the full range of possible models.

4. Completing the Options Analysis

The original RFP contemplated multiple structural approaches, including:

- Renovation of existing facilities
- **Renovation plus a satellite station (Option 2)**
- A combined facility
- Hybrid approaches

At present, these alternatives do not appear to have been evaluated on a consistent, side-by-side basis.

In addition, a **baseline option**—minimal renovation and targeted expansion of the existing facilities—would provide a useful point of comparison.

A structured evaluation could compare each option across a common set of criteria, such as:

- Capital cost (order of magnitude and phasing)
- Response time and coverage performance
- Operational efficiency and staffing implications
- Flexibility and scalability over time
- Implementation risk

This type of analysis would provide a clearer understanding of tradeoffs and align closely with what the survey indicates voters are seeking: **value, not simply a project.**

5. Recommended Next Step

To strengthen the Committee's work and ensure a complete analytical foundation, it may be helpful to:

Request that JB Consulting expand its scope to include:

1. A Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover analysis
 2. A comparative evaluation of the full set of structural options, including:
 - the four options identified in the original RFP
 - and a minimal renovation and targeted expansion baseline
 3. Using a consistent, balanced evaluation framework.
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6. Closing Thought

The work completed to date helps establish that improvement is needed and that response performance can be maintained under certain scenarios.

The remaining question is not whether a particular site can work, but:

Which approach best meets the town's needs in terms of cost, coverage, response, and long-term flexibility?

Ensuring that all viable options are evaluated on a consistent basis before further advancing site-specific decisions will strengthen both the analysis and the Committee's eventual recommendation.

Respectfully,

Kirk Carr