

City of Redmond



Agenda

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

4:30 PM

City Hall: 15670 NE 85th St; Remote: Comcast Ch. 21/321, Ziplify Ch. 34,
Facebook (@CityofRedmond), Redmond.gov/rctvlive, or 510-335-7371

Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

Committee Members

Osman Salahuddin, Presiding Officer

Jeralene Anderson

Steve Fields

Jessica Forsythe

Vanessa Kritzer

Angie Nuevacamina

Melissa Stuart

Meetings can be attended in person, viewed live on RCTV (redmond.gov/rctvlive), Comcast Channel 21/321, Ziplly Channel 34, Facebook/YouTube (@CityofRedmond), or listen live at 510-335-7371

AGENDA

ROLL CALL

A. Action Items - N/A

B. Feedback for Study Session - N/A

C. Informational

1. Alternative Crisis Response Update

[CM 25-365](#)

[Attachment A: Alternative Crisis Care Report](#)

[Attachment B Sound Behavioral Health MRRCT](#)

[Attachment C Alternative Crisis Care Flowchart](#)

Department: Police, 15 minutes

Requested Action: Informational

2. Regional Fire Authority (RFA) Study

[CM 25-372](#)

[Attachment A: RFA Overview](#)

Department: Fire, 15 minutes

Requested Action: Informational

D. Read Only - N/A

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting videos are usually posted by 12 p.m. the day following the meeting at redmond.legistar.com, and can be viewed anytime on Facebook/YouTube (@CityofRedmond) and OnDemand at redmond.gov/OnDemand



Memorandum

Date: 6/17/2025

Meeting of: Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

File No. CM 25-365

Type: Committee Memo

TO: Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

FROM: Mayor Angela Birney

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR CONTACT(S):

Police	Darrell Lowe, Police Chief	425-556-2529
Executive	Malisa Files, COO	425-556-2166

DEPARTMENT STAFF:

N/A	N/A	N/A
-----	-----	-----

TITLE:

Alternative Crisis Response Update

OVERVIEW STATEMENT:

The staff report in Attachment A provides a detailed overview of Redmond's evolving approach to non-law enforcement alternative response models. Since launching its Co-Responder Program in 2018, the City has steadily expanded its behavioral health service capacity. As an addition to the current program, staff recommends partnering with King County's Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team to provide Redmond with 24/7 mental health response.

☐ **Additional Background Information/Description of Proposal Attached**

REQUESTED ACTION:

☒ **Receive Information**

☐ **Provide Direction**

☐ **Approve**

REQUEST RATIONALE:

- **Relevant Plans/Policies:**
Through the budget process, Council allocated funds to alternative crisis response and requested staff keep them updated on organizational changes moving forward.
- **Required:**
N/A
- **Council Request:**
In 2018, the Police Department launched their co-response model, utilizing a mental health professional on police calls. In 2021, the City expanded to a tiered community health model called THRIVE including homeless outreach, mobile integrated health, and community care coordinators.
- **Other Key Facts:**
Through the budget process, the Council requested 24/7 non-uniformed services for those needing crisis care. In

2023, voters passed the King County Crisis Care Levy which established, among other things, mobile rapid response crisis teams designed to de-escalate mental health and substance use crises to provide immediate support and connect individuals to long-term care.

OUTCOMES:

To round out the City's THRIVE program, staff is recommending partnering with King County's Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team (MRRCT) to provide de-escalation services 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. MRRCT is equipped with two-person units, staffed by behavioral health professionals and peer counselors. The teams respond to incidents involving adults aged 18 and older experiencing mental health crises. The goal of the program is to provide the right response at the right time for individuals experiencing mental health or substance abuse crisis and need assistance. Please see description in Attachment B.

King County has placed a team in Redmond, stationed at the Together Center although there are other Crisis Teams countywide. All teams are a part of King County's Sound Behavioral Health Program, and the teams are dispatched through 911, 988, or their direct line.

Utilizing King County's services comes at no additional cost to Redmond as it is funded through the King County Crisis Care Levy. The diagram below illustrates the THRIVE 2.0 framework, integrating public safety, behavioral health, and outreach services under a centralized care coordination system to ensure warm hand-offs and continuity of care. Attachment C illustrates the continuity of care.



Definitions:

MIH - Mobile Integrated Health

CO-RES - Mental Health Co-Response

MRRCT - Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team

HS - Human Services

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT:

- **Timeline (previous or planned):**
Currently community outreach has not been conducted.
- **Outreach Methods and Results:**
N/A
- **Feedback Summary:**
N/A

BUDGET IMPACT:

Total Cost:

MRRCT Services are funded through the 2023 King County Crisis Care Levy

Approved in current biennial budget: ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Budget Offer Number:

N/A

Budget Priority:

Safe and Resilient

Other budget impacts or additional costs: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

If yes, explain:

N/A

Funding source(s):

King County Crisis Care Levy

Budget/Funding Constraints:

N/A

☐ Additional budget details attached

COUNCIL REVIEW:

Previous Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A	Item has not been presented to Council	N/A

Proposed Upcoming Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A	None proposed at this time	N/A

Date: 6/17/2025

Meeting of: Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

File No. CM 25-365

Type: Committee Memo

Time Constraints:

There are no time constraints in forming a partnership with King County, however once the partnership is established the City will have 24/7 crisis care response.

ANTICIPATED RESULT IF NOT APPROVED:

If not approved, the City will continue to build out our own crisis care unit, but will not be able to staff a unit 24/7 given the resources allocated.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Alternative Response Team Update

Attachment B: Sound Behavioral Health Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team

Attachment C: Alternative Crisis Care Workflow

Attachment A

MEMO TO: REDMOND CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Recap and Update on Non-Law Enforcement Alternative Response Team

FROM: Darrell Lowe, Police Chief

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This staff report provides a detailed overview of Redmond's evolving approach to non-law enforcement alternative response models. Since launching its Co-Responder Program in 2018, the City has steadily expanded its behavioral health service capacity. Given the emergence of a fully operational and County-funded Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team (MRRCT) now serving Redmond, City staff recommend deferring the hiring of budgeted Alternative Response positions until the MRRCT program can be fully evaluated. The report outlines historical actions, current challenges, and provides justification for the proposed course correction to ensure resource alignment and regional coordination.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the City Council with a comprehensive overview of the historical context, current landscape, and proposed solution regarding Redmond's approach to non-law enforcement alternative response. The goal is to ensure appropriate service delivery for individuals experiencing behavioral health crises or other non-criminal emergencies through a dedicated civilian-based response framework.

II. BACKGROUND & HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The question of whether police officers are the appropriate first responders for behavioral health and low-risk public distress calls has gained significant attention in recent years. Redmond has been at the

forefront of addressing this issue through several initiatives:

2018 Launch of Co-Responder Program

The Redmond Police Department implemented a Co-Responder Program embedding a licensed Mental Health Professional (MHP) within patrol operations.

2021–2024 Expansion to a Tiered Community Health Model

The City broadened its alternative response network through THRIVE and Human Services efforts, which include:

- Homeless Outreach Specialist
- Mobile Integrated Health (MIH)
- Community Care Coordinators (CCC)

III. CURRENT NEED

Redmond Police officers are routinely dispatched to calls involving welfare checks, public intoxication, non-imminent suicidal ideation, emotionally disturbed persons, and chronic 911 callers, calls that rarely require police intervention. These are situations that demand behavioral health expertise, time, and a trauma-informed approach capabilities outside traditional police training.

The embedded MHP position has remained unfilled for over two years. During the last biennial budget process, Council's Alternative Crisis Care Subcommittee agreed to fund non-law enforcement response positions within Planning and Human Services. However, since then, a robust external solution has emerged that warrants full Council consideration before any hiring occurs.

IV. IDENTIFIED SOLUTION: KING COUNTY MRRCT

The Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team (MRRCT) operated by Sound Behavioral Health and funded by the King County Mental Health

Levy offers a field-ready, 24/7 alternative. Based at the Together Center in Redmond, this team is dispatched via the 988 Crisis Connections line to respond to behavioral health crises without requiring police involvement.

Team Composition:

- Licensed Mental Health Professional (MHP)
- Social Worker or Crisis Responder
- Certified Peer Counselor

Key Program Details:

- Staffing: 40 personnel (projected to 8 per shift)
- Response Time: Within 15 minutes
- Call Volume: 450 calls since December 2, 2024
- Dispatch: Through 988/Crisis Connections; accepts transfers from 911 and non-emergency dispatch
- Coverage: Full East King County service, based locally in Redmond
- Transport Capabilities:
 - Equipped vans with partitions, Starlink internet, GPS, hygiene supplies, and digital dispatching
 - Able to transport individuals to services or next-day appointments

Funding & Oversight:

- Funded through a 7-year King County levy
- Staff regularly engage with local governments to provide updates and ensure alignment with community needs.

V. NEXT STEPS & INTEGRATION PLAN

Staff will monitor and evaluate the MRRCT's effectiveness in addressing non-criminal emergency calls, including how it complements the City's existing Co-Responder, MIH, and CCC programs. Performance indicators and community outcomes will be shared in quarterly Committee of the Whole (COW) updates.

VI. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff strongly recommends pausing the hiring of the budgeted Alternative Response positions approved for 2025–2026 until the MRRCT program can be fully assessed. Premature hiring may result in duplicative services, unnecessary expenditures, and organizational misalignment.

The MRRCT is already operational, fully funded, and actively serving Redmond residents with a proven, scalable model. The prudent course of action is to allow this program to continue while City staff collect data and evaluate long-term integration potential.



Hope. Healing. Recovery.

MOBILE RAPID RESPONSE CRISIS TEAMS

The SOUND Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Teams are specially equipped two-person units, traveling in vans, staffed by behavioral health professionals and certified peer counselors. They are designed to de-escalate mental health and substance use crises, provide immediate support, and connect individuals to long-term care.

WHO THESE SERVICES ARE FOR

These teams are for adults aged 18 and older experiencing mental health crises such as, but not limited to: self-harm, suicidal ideation, or signs of psychosis. The teams will respond to situations that don't require law enforcement or emergency medical intervention and are dispatched through King County's 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. This care is available to all who seek it, regardless of insurance or financial status.

WWW.SOUND.HEALTH

APPROACH TO CARE

The teams take a compassionate, barrier-free approach by bringing care directly to individuals in crisis. Their customized vans provide a safe, dry, comfortable space for triage and immediate support, with tools and resources to quickly connect individuals to ongoing services. Vans can even accommodate clients' pets.

GOALS

The program aims to provide the right response at the right time for individuals experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis. It seeks to de-escalate crises, connect individuals to immediate care, reduce reliance on law enforcement and emergency medical services for non-emergency situations, and streamline access to behavioral health support with fewer barriers.

LOCATIONS

The Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Teams operate countywide across King County. SOUND Behavioral Health specifically provides coverage in the North, East and South parts of King County. The Central and Western King County mobile teams are managed by a different agency.

CONTACT:**JOE VELA, M.Ed**

Director of Crisis Services

6400 Southcenter Blvd., Tukwila, WA 98188

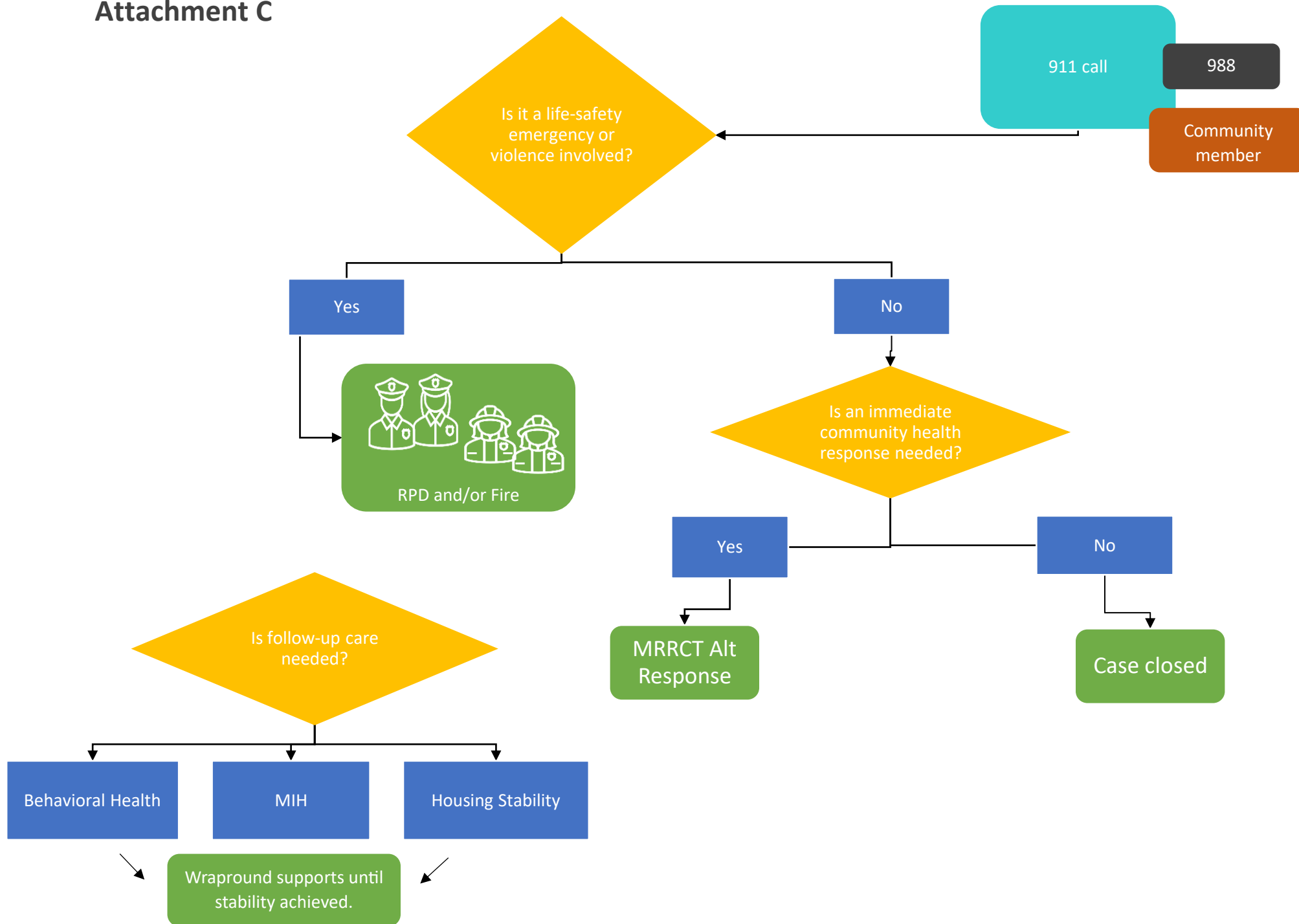
D 206.302.2772 **E** Joe.Vela@Sound.Health

WWW.SOUND.HEALTH

**TOGETHER
WE CAN
CHANGE
LIVES**



Attachment C





Memorandum

Date: 6/17/2025

Meeting of: Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

File No. CM 25-372

Type: Committee Memo

TO: Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

FROM: Mayor Angela Birney

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR CONTACT(S):

Fire	Adrian Sheppard, Fire Chief	425-556-2200
------	-----------------------------	--------------

DEPARTMENT STAFF:

Fire	Micheal Despain	Interim Deputy Chief
------	-----------------	----------------------

TITLE:

Regional Fire Authority (RFA) Study

OVERVIEW STATEMENT:

The City of Redmond Fire Department is evaluating the formation of a Regional Fire Authority (RFA) in collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions as a proactive solution to ensure high-quality, sustainable emergency services in a rapidly growing and complex service environment. An RFA is a public governance model that allows multiple agencies to consolidate fire and emergency medical services under a single, unified authority, providing streamlined operations, improved service delivery, and long-term financial resilience.

This initiative reflects a broader commitment to regional collaboration and operational efficiency. As the demands on fire and EMS services increase, due to population growth, urban density, and expanded risk profiles, so too does the need for modernized funding, governance, and deployment strategies that are not constrained by a single municipality's general fund. The RFA model offers a path to stabilize funding, improve regional equity in service levels, and position participating jurisdictions to better meet both current and future public safety needs.

By initiating this study, Redmond affirms its commitment to exploring data-driven, community-focused solutions that enhance emergency response capabilities, reduce fiscal vulnerability, and support the health and safety of residents across the Eastside communities.

☒ **Additional Background Information/Description of Proposal Attached**

REQUESTED ACTION:

☒ **Receive Information**

☐ **Provide Direction**

☐ **Approve**

REQUEST RATIONALE:

- **Relevant Plans/Policies:**
N/A

- **Required:**
N/A
- **Council Request:**
N/A
- **Other Key Facts:**
N/A

OUTCOMES:

The City of Redmond faces increasing challenges in maintaining the high standard of fire and emergency services that residents expect, due in part to constrained general fund capacity and sustained community growth. Continuing to deliver effective, equitable, and modern public safety services within the current funding model will become increasingly difficult without structural changes.

Forming a Regional Fire Authority (RFA) offers a long-term solution that protects service levels, supports regional collaboration, and introduces greater operational and financial efficiency. By transitioning fire services to an RFA, Redmond can help create a dedicated and stable funding stream for emergency services, reduce fiscal pressure on the General Fund, and participate in a model designed for adaptability, scale, and sustainability.

In doing so, the City ensures continuity of service for its residents, enables strategic reinvestment in other critical municipal priorities, and reinforces its leadership role in shaping a resilient and integrated regional emergency response system.

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT:

- **Timeline (previous or planned):**
N/A
- **Outreach Methods and Results:**
N/A
- **Feedback Summary:**
N/A

BUDGET IMPACT:**Total Cost:**

The estimated cost to initiate and support the formation of a Regional Fire Authority (RFA) is approximately \$190,000 over the 2025-2026 fiscal period. This investment would be shared among participating agencies and may be significantly reduced depending on the number of jurisdictions involved and the cost allocation methodology adopted.

Approved in current biennial budget:☐ Yes☒ No☐ N/A**Budget Offer Number:**

N/A

Budget Priority:

Safe and Resilient

Other budget impacts or additional costs: ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A

If yes, explain:

N/A

Funding source(s):

N/A

Budget/Funding Constraints:

N/A

☒ **Additional budget details attached**

COUNCIL REVIEW:

Previous Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A	Item has not been presented to Council	N/A

Proposed Upcoming Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A	None proposed at this time	N/A

Time Constraints:

Timing is only impacted by meeting ballot initiative deadlines.

ANTICIPATED RESULT IF NOT APPROVED:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: RFA Overview for the City of Redmond (PowerPoint)



Regional Fire Authority

June 17, 2025

Adrian Sheppard – Fire Chief





Regional Fire Authority Overview

What is an RFA?

- Separate unit of local government, just like a school district or a fire district.
- There are 18 RFAs in the State, 4 in King County (Puget Sound, Renton, Shoreline, Valley Regional). At least two more are in progress (Clark County, Pierce County)
- RFAs are established through the consolidation of two or more fire agencies. Once formed, additional agencies may join under conditions outlined in the RFA Service Plan.
- RFAs have their own taxing authority and their own governing board



Regional Fire Authority Overview

Why form an RFA?

- Just like a school, hospital or fire district, it provides a more effective level of service.
 - Stations are placed and staffed in a more efficient manner.
 - Removes barriers that slow down effectiveness in the field (such as differing staffing configurations and different uses of incident command systems).
- Fewer administrative redundancies, such as multiple fire chiefs, operations and training chiefs, and support roles allow for streamlined governance and lower overhead.
 - Governance board only deals with fire and EMS related items, so funding does not compete with the conflicting priorities typical with city-based governance.

Regional Fire Authority Overview



Impact to Redmond Employees

- All current fire department employees would receive job offers with the RFA.
- Numbers and types of FTEs in other city departments (TIS, Finance, HR, etc.) would need to be re-evaluated to right-size due to the reduction in workload.
 - Workforce adjustments are typically managed through natural attrition, minimizing the need for formal reduction-in-force procedures, especially with sufficient transition planning time.



Regional Fire Authority Overview

Impacts to City of Redmond Budget

- Upon transition, all fire department expenditures, currently totaling approximately \$51 million, would be removed from the City's budget.
- Corresponding reductions in fire-related revenues—estimated between 88% and 100%—would occur, resulting in a potential increase of approximately \$20 million in discretionary General Fund capacity.
 - City will determine its new levy rate after the transition
- Some fees would still be charged by the City and passed through to the RFA based on services such as new development and operational permits



Regional Fire Authority Overview

What are the key steps in forming an RFA?

- Update the RFA financial analysis to confirm 7-year funding forecast
- Representatives from each agency (usually elected officials) meet to develop the RFA Service Plan
 - RFA Service Plan is the business plan/operating agreement
 - Establishes levy rate (up to \$1.00 on AV)
 - Establishes governance structure, including board composition, term lengths, and agency representation
 - Establishes rules for acceptance of additional agencies (more agencies usually = lower levy)

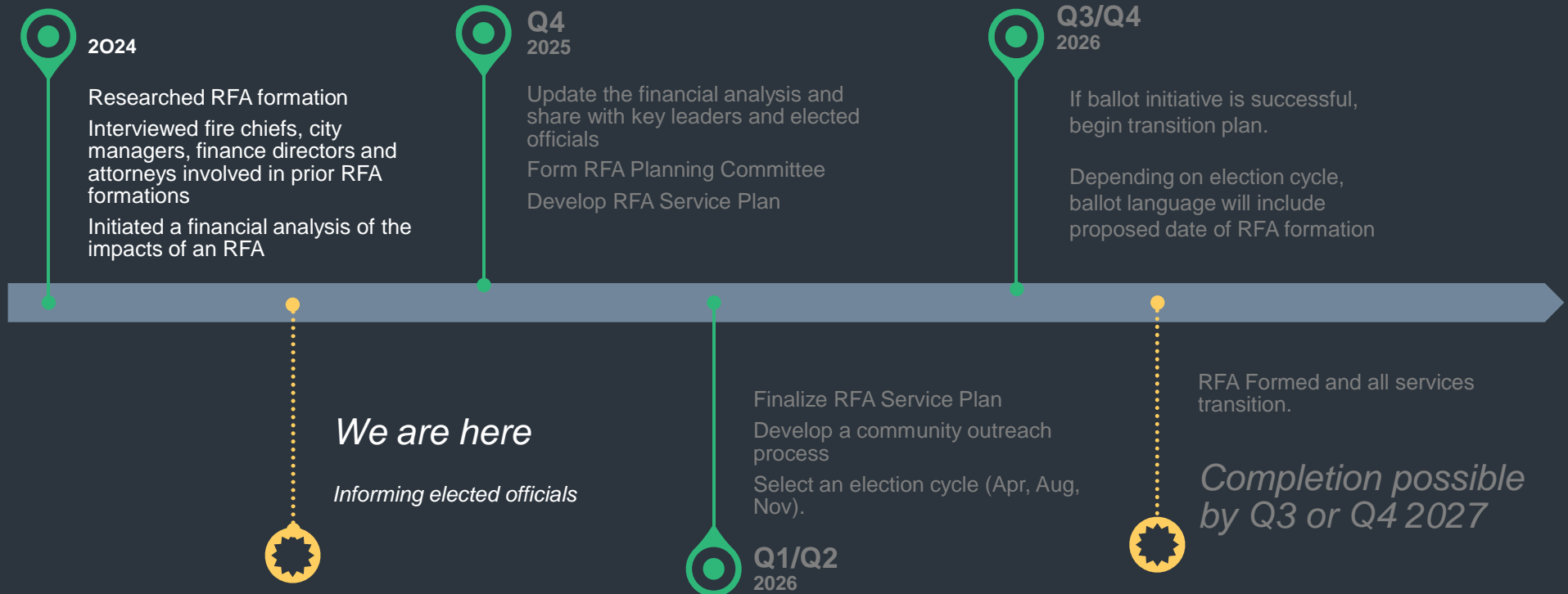


Regional Fire Authority Overview

What are the key steps in forming an RFA?

- Final proposed RFA Service Plan is presented to the governing bodies of each respective agency for approval.
- If approved, each agency places RFA proposal on a ballot. Passage requires simple majority of the votes within the boundaries of the proposed combined jurisdiction.
- If the ballot proposal is approved by a majority of voters, each agency follows the transition plan outlined with the RFA Service Plan.

RFA Formation Timeline





Thank You



Any Questions?

