

CADDO PARISH COMMISSION

Cost-Benefit Analysis: Proposed \$2.8 Million Public Safety Allocation

Prepared for Commission Discussion | April 2026

Background

The Caddo Parish Commission is considering a \$2.8 million cooperative endeavor agreement to support Shreveport Police Department (SPD) public safety needs. The original proposal — introduced by Commissioner John-Paul Young at the request of the Shreveport Police Officers Association (SPOA) — calls for the purchase of 40 marked take-home patrol vehicles. Caddo Parish would own the vehicles; SPD officers residing within Shreveport city limits would use them on assignment; and the vehicles would return to Parish custody for auction at the end of their useful life.

After the SPOA's resolution was introduced, Mayor Tom Arceneaux submitted a counter-proposal requesting the same dollar amount for a different mix of equipment, anchored by a \$721,300 armored tactical vehicle (the "Rook"). The SPOA formally objected to the counter-proposal in writing on April 16, 2026, calling it an attempt to substitute a wish list for a documented operational need.

This analysis evaluates both proposals on the merits: cost, utilization, asset ownership, citizen impact, and the degree to which each addresses SPD's documented needs.

The Documented Need: A Police Vehicle Crisis

The vehicle shortage at SPD is not disputed. Both the SPOA and the Mayor's own counter-proposal acknowledge it:

- SPD currently needs 200 marked patrol cars. The City Council recently approved purchase of 60. That leaves a gap of at least 140 units.
- SPD is 174 officers below authorized strength. Patrol car availability directly affects whether deployed officers can even perform their duties.
- Commissioner Young's Councilman Gary Brooks confirmed the need for at least 110 additional marked cars beyond the 60 recently ordered.
- The SPOA, a 60-year-old professional union of working officers, states the current fleet is aging, high-mileage, and frequently taken out of service for maintenance.

The most critical public safety gap SPD faces today is patrol capacity — not specialized tactical equipment.

Side-by-Side Comparison

Category	Proposal A — 40 Take-Home Patrol Cars	Mayor's Counter — Equipment Mix
Total Cost	\$2,800,000 (40 units × ~\$70,000)	\$2,821,300 (sum of 5 line items)
Ownership	Caddo Parish; vehicles return to Parish at end of useful life and are sold at auction	City of Shreveport owns all equipment; no return provision
Addresses Vehicle Shortage	Yes — directly. SPOA says 200 cars needed; City Council recently	Only partially. Includes 23 marked units (\$1.61M) — but bundles them

Category	Proposal A — 40 Take-Home Patrol Cars	Mayor's Counter — Equipment Mix
	ordered 60; still 100+ short. These 40 close ~40% of remaining gap.	with rarely-used equipment, capturing less than the requested 40 cars.
Recruitment & Retention Impact	High. Take-home vehicles are a proven recruitment tool — officers save wear on personal vehicles and respond faster from home. SPD is 174 officers below authorized strength.	Low. Specialized tactical equipment does not affect day-to-day officer quality of life or influence a recruit's decision to choose SPD over competing departments.
Visible Citizen Benefit	High. More patrol cars on the road and in neighborhoods means more visible police presence — the #1 complaint from Shreveport residents.	Low. Citizens will never see the Rook, rescue boat, or ballistic shields in normal circumstances. These are back-of-house items.
Frequency of Use	Daily. Every patrol car is in service every shift, 365 days a year.	Rare. The Rook (\$721,300) — the single largest line item — was borrowed from Bossier City only 8 total times across 2024–2026. The rescue boat and shields see similarly infrequent deployment.
Existing Asset Coverage	No redundancy exists — the patrol car fleet is critically depleted. High-mileage vehicles are breaking down and being taken out of service.	SPD already possesses a Lenco BearCat — a fully armored, high-tech tactical vehicle operated by the SWAT team and acquired within the last 2–3 years. The Rook addresses a narrow niche (tight-space entry) already covered in most scenarios by the BearCat.
Asset Life & Parish ROI	~8–10 year useful life per vehicle; Parish recoups residual value at auction. Continuous daily use = high utilization rate on Parish capital.	Individual items vary. The Rook has a 20+ year life but single-digit annual deployments — extremely low utilization on a \$721K Parish-funded asset transferred permanently to the City.
What Remains After Approval	City still needs ~60 more marked cars to reach the SPOA's stated need of 200 total. This proposal makes the largest single dent achievable with available funds.	Even if fully approved, SPD still needs ~117 more marked patrol cars immediately. The vehicle crisis is unresolved; only 23 of 140 requested cars would be funded.
Origin of Request	Requested directly by the Shreveport Police Officers Association (SPOA) — the largest police union in north Louisiana — in writing, endorsed by Councilman Gary Brooks.	Originated from the Mayor's Office after the SPOA's resolution was introduced. SPOA publicly objected, calling the counter-proposal a substitution of a 'wish list' for their documented operational need.

Mayor's Counter-Proposal: Cost & Utilization Breakdown

Mayor's Counter-Proposal Line Items	Cost	Annual Est. Deployments (SPD)
1. Rook & Support Equipment (armored skid-steer)	\$721,300	~1–2 (narrow-space SWAT only; BearCat used otherwise)
2. 23 Marked Patrol Units (take-home, city-limits only)	\$1,610,000	Daily (but only 23 of 140 needed)
3. Rescue Boat (Cross Lake Patrol)	\$190,000	Occasional / seasonal
4. Rifle-Rated Body Armor (upgrade from handgun-rated)	\$264,000	N/A (worn, not deployed)
5. Rifle-Rated Ballistic Shields	\$36,000	Rare high-risk incidents only
TOTAL	\$2,821,300	
Proposal A — 40 Take-Home Patrol Cars	\$2,800,000	Daily, every shift

Key observation: The single largest line item in the counter-proposal — the \$721,300 Rook — is a specialized armored skid-steer designed for SWAT deployment in confined spaces. SPD already owns and recently acquired a Lenco BearCat, a fully armored tactical vehicle capable of handling the overwhelming majority of barricade and active-threat situations. The Rook fills a narrow niche (scenarios where the BearCat's footprint is too large) that arises, by the Mayor's own accounting, fewer than twice per year. At \$721,300 for an asset deployed perhaps once annually by SPD, the cost-per-use math is unfavorable.

Also notable: The counter-proposal itself includes 23 take-home patrol cars — an implicit acknowledgment that the vehicle need is real. But those 23 units represent only 16% of the SPOA's stated need of 140 additional cars, and they come bundled with items that have no bearing on daily patrol capacity.

Parish Asset Ownership: Proposal A's Structural Advantage

Under Proposal A, Caddo Parish retains title to all 40 vehicles throughout their useful life. At end of service — typically 8 to 10 years for fleet patrol vehicles — the vehicles return to Parish custody and are sold at public auction, recovering a portion of the original investment for Parish taxpayers.

Under the Mayor's counter-proposal, all five equipment categories transfer to City ownership with no reversion. Parish taxpayers fund assets that become City of Shreveport property permanently, including a \$721,300 tactical vehicle the City could not fund through its own bond process.

Recruitment Impact

SPD's staffing crisis — 174 vacancies — cannot be solved by equipment alone, but take-home vehicles are one of the most frequently cited officer perks in law enforcement recruitment. Officers assigned take-home cars save thousands of dollars annually in personal vehicle wear, respond faster from home during emergencies, and report higher job satisfaction.

Competing departments in the region — including Texarkana PD, which has achieved near-full staffing while Shreveport struggles — offer take-home vehicles as a standard benefit. Closing that gap matters to recruits.

The Rook, rifle-rated shields, and a rescue boat do not influence a recruit's choice between SPD and a neighboring department.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Both proposals address legitimate public safety needs. The question before the Commission is which allocation produces the greatest benefit per dollar for Caddo Parish constituents, given a fixed pool of funds.

Proposal A — 40 take-home patrol cars — scores superior on every metric that affects daily public safety: patrol capacity, officer visibility, recruitment competitiveness, and asset utilization. It addresses a crisis that both the officers' union and the Mayor's own staff have acknowledged in writing. It preserves Parish asset ownership and delivers measurable return at auction.

The Mayor's counter-proposal funds legitimate but lower-urgency equipment — much of it rarely deployed and some of it partially redundant with assets SPD already owns. It would still leave the vehicle shortage substantially unresolved.

The Commission should approve the original resolution as written: 40 take-home marked patrol cars, owned by Caddo Parish, assigned to SPD officers residing within Shreveport city limits, reversionary to Parish custody at end of useful life.

Sources: SPOA letter to Commission President Greg Young, April 16, 2026; Mayor Arceneaux letter to Commission President Greg Young, April 14, 2026; SPD equipment list attached to Mayor's letter; SPOA public statement on counter-proposal.