

Alternative Response Program

Update presentation to City Council, April 16, 2024

City Staff have been working toward an Alternative Response Program, evaluating existing services and researching other programs nearby and across the country. The research showed four aspects are commonly included in an alternative response program: crisis call diversion, co-response, a community response team, and care navigation or case management. These four areas form the basis of this fact sheet.

Action Taken

These recommendations will be included in the FY 2025 budget, to be presented May 21.

Recommendations Summary

Implement Crisis Call Diversion in the Emergency Communications Department

The Emergency Communications Center provides 911 service. This proposal adds three contracted licensed clinicians to take mental health related calls. Clinicians would de-escalate a situation and connect the caller to resources. The initial proposal puts a person in ECC from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week.

Create a Peer Support Team in the Housing and Neighborhoods Department

Three full-time positions are proposed to follow up with community members within 48 hours of their initial call. These peer support specialists would provide a direct connection to resources, ensuring people get the care they need and want.

Continue co-response via ACORNS in the Raleigh Police Department

This requires an \$800,000 be allocated to ACORNS to replace ARPA funding.

Establish a Community Response Team in Partnership with Wake County and Other Partners

This team of social workers, paramedics and/or mental health clinicians respond to non-violent calls for service. These are most often calls related to quality of life or behavioral health. As Wake County typically provides these services, Raleigh is working with them and other community partners to establish this team and provide service for the City.

Community Engagement Summary

The process included 22 public events and 1,400+ online survey responses.

- People aged 25-34 were the largest portion of respondents.
- Responses from White or American Indian population matched City demographics. Responses from Black or African American people was 86% of that target, and Hispanic participation was 70% of goal. Only 39% of respondents shared their race/ethnicity.
- Meetings were held in every district, with a concentration in vulnerable areas needing these services, according to Wake County. Zip codes 27610, 27606 and 27604 were most represented in the responses.

Themes emerging from the engagement process were:

- Community Centered Program

- Trained + Compassionate
- Transparent + Accountable
- Independent from RPD

Next Steps

- Staffing, contract and funding recommendations will be included in the FY 2025 budget, to be presented on May 21.
- The City will continue working with Wake County and other partners to establish the Community Response Team.
- Community engagement and stakeholder conversations will continue.

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