

## Information Item

**Date:** August 9, 2021

**To:** Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

**From:** Ben Rowe, Assistant City Manager  
Patrice Toney, Assistant City Manager  
Catrina A. Thompson, Chief of Police  
Meridith J. Martin, Strategic Initiatives Administrator  
Scott Tesh, Performance and Accountability Director

**Subject:**  
911 Calls for Service Update

**Strategic Focus Area:** Safe and Secure Community  
**Strategic Objective:** Improve Public Safety Service Quality  
**Strategic Plan Action Item:** No  
**Key Work Item:** No



The City of Winston-Salem is participating in an on-going seven-city partnership to analyze 911 call data. The project is conducting an analysis to evaluate if community resources align with community needs based on the types of calls for service coming to 911 centers. The City will develop recommendations for improving responses by law enforcement and other first responder agencies based on this analysis.

To help understand and improve the responses to calls for service (CFS), the City of Durham invited RTI International, a non-profit research institute, to partner with cities in North and South Carolina to analyze their 911 CFS data and help develop recommendations for improving the responses of law enforcement to these calls as well as other first responder agencies. The other participating cities include Durham, Raleigh, Cary, Burlington, Greensboro, and Rock Hill, SC.

This work, supported by Arnold Ventures, identifies the types of CFS where the law enforcement role could be modified to help ensure each community's resources are appropriately aligned with their specific needs based on their call data.

The systematic analysis of 911 CFS data will be used to assess the nature of demand for law enforcement and other first responder resources, how law enforcement resources are deployed to respond to this demand, and whether the responses are appropriately aligned with community needs.

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Goals of the 18-month project are threefold: (1) help Winston-Salem understand community needs through an analysis of CFS data; (2) identify alternative response interventions that fit community needs and align with available city resources; and (3) support the implementation and rapid evaluation of alternative response interventions.

Once completed, the results of this study and its standardized approach in analyzing 911 CFS data could then be used by other cities throughout the United States and abroad to help determine if resource allocations match what is needed in specific communities.

City staff from the Police Department, the Office of Performance and Accountability and Strategic Initiatives worked collaboratively since Fall 2020 to review alternative response strategies to incidents related to mental and behavioral health. In August 2020, the City of Winston-Salem joined this project. In early October, staff began researching other communities, nationwide, regarding alternative response strategies for law enforcement. RTI presented data as well as an overview of the project in May 2021.

A presentation of the data will be provided by RTI.

#### *About RTI International*

RTI International is an independent, nonprofit research institute dedicated to improving the human condition. Clients rely on us to answer questions that demand an objective and multidisciplinary approach — one that integrates expertise across the social and laboratory sciences, engineering and international development. We believe in the promise of science, and we are inspired every day to deliver on that promise for the good of people, communities and businesses around the world. For more information, visit <https://www.rti.org>.

#### *About Arnold Ventures*

Arnold Ventures is a philanthropy dedicated to tackling some of the most pressing problems in the United States. Founded in 2010, Arnold Ventures' core mission is to improve lives by investing in evidence-based solutions that maximize opportunity and minimize injustice. For more information, visit <https://www.arnoldventures.org>.