



Request for Proposals: Professional Firm to Conduct Cost Benefit Analysis on Policing Alternatives in the City of Atlanta

BACKGROUND

Atlanta’s Policing Alternatives & Diversion (PAD) Initiative was established in 2017 to reduce arrest and incarceration of individuals experiencing needs related to mental health, substance use, and extreme poverty, and to increase the availability of supportive services in Atlanta and Fulton County. PAD provides on-scene response to address quality-of-life concerns within 30 minutes or less, with the goal of resolving the immediate concern and connecting individuals to resources and supports that address their underlying needs. Although initially only available to law enforcement, in 2021 PAD expanded citywide and began responding to public calls for service through the city’s 311 line. In 2023, City of Atlanta E911 began transferring a limited number of call types to 311 for PAD response.

If utilized, the alternative response that PAD provides can decrease calls to 911, prevent unnecessary police dispatch, and reduce costly and ineffective incarceration for people with behavioral health needs. Beyond the direct benefit to the City of Atlanta and Fulton County, PAD’s partnership with ATL311 serves as a model for communities across the country that are developing more holistic approaches to public safety and public health.

Today, PAD receives an average of 200 calls/month, with approximately 150 referrals through 311, 30 transferred from 911, and 20 direct requests from law enforcement. Yet the city’s E-911 call center is over-burdened, with recent analysis identifying as much as 60% of the one million calls made to 911 as non-emergency in nature.¹ It is estimated that 50% of arrests by the Atlanta Police Department are for low-level offenses,² with disorderly conduct, shoplifting and criminal trespass among the most common charges.³ These charges are highly correlated with behavioral health needs and often involve the same individuals. Fulton County’s 2020 *Familiar Faces* study identified 87 individuals who accounted for 3,603 arrests or field contacts with the Atlanta Police Department from 2009 to 2020. From 2017 to 2019, the financial impact of punishing “familiar faces” was estimated to be \$3.71 million—over \$1 million per year.⁴

EXISTING RESEARCH ON ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE

Since 2020, at least 19 jurisdictions out of the top 50 in the country have adopted first responder models that offer alternatives to the deployment of law enforcement, with many smaller cities doing the same.⁵ Evaluations of these programs using public health⁶, economic activity⁷, and public safety metrics have demonstrated improved outcomes for people served, benefits to traditional first responders, and substantial cost savings.

- An analysis of the Denver [STAR](#) program found that the program reduced reports of targeted, less serious crimes (e.g., trespassing, public disorder, and resisting arrest) by 34% and had no detectable effect on more serious crimes, while the cost of sending alternative responders was four times less than sending police.⁸
- In Eugene, the deployment of [CAHOOTS](#) teams saved the city an estimated \$14 million in emergency medical services in one year.⁹
- In Wisconsin, a cost-benefit analysis of the [Treatment Alternatives and Diversion Program](#) (TAD) found that every \$1 the state invested in diversion programs saved the state \$8.68.¹⁰
- San Diego found similar results with an estimated savings of \$2 million annually due to decreased incarcerations and reduced police contact, with a cost savings totaling as much as \$2,200 per contact.¹¹
- An evaluation of the [Community Assistance and Life Liaison \(CALL\)](#) program in St. Petersburg found that it substantially reduced unnecessary contact between residents and law enforcement and had a high degree of support from emergency communications staff and police officers.¹²

As more communities adopt alternative response models, leading national research institutions and policy think tanks have produced resources to support the effective planning, implementation, and evaluation of policing alternatives. These include [Expanding First Response: A toolkit for community responder programs](#) (Council of State Governments Justice Center), [Civilian Crisis Response: A toolkit for equitable alternatives to police](#), (Vera Institute of Justice) and [Essential Metrics for Alternative Emergency Response Programs](#) (Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab).

REQUESTED ANALYSIS

The Carter Center is seeking a firm or individual to conduct a comparison of direct and indirect costs associated with on-scene dispatch of relevant response agencies, identification of any cost savings, and recommendations regarding the utilization of policing alternatives in Atlanta. The analysis should include a review of the relevant literature and agency-specific and publicly available data; a determination of total direct and marginal costs; an appropriate sensitivity analysis; and tests of assumptions. The literature review should compare program structure, budget sources, and factors that impact costs and benefits in other jurisdictions. Within this context, the analysis should review Atlanta's program structure, budget sources, and factors that influence cost, sustainability, and impact. Finally, the analysis should include recommendations related to utilization of alternative response in Atlanta that maximize benefits to public safety, public health, and economic activity.

Minimum data sets should include:

- ATL311 calls for service, including time of call, time spent on call, costs associated with time spent on calls, and agency to which call was referred (e.g. PAD, police, warmlines);
- Atlanta Police Department E-911 calls for service including time of call, assigned priority level, response time, call outcome (disposition), time spent on call, costs associated with time spent on calls, requested assistance if any (e.g. mobile crisis, PAD diversion) and costs associated with requested assistance if any;
- PAD response including assigned priority level, response time, call outcome, time spent on call, costs associated with time spent on calls, requested assistance if any (e.g. mobile crisis or police) and costs associated with requested assistance if any; and,
- Customer satisfaction surveys or other relevant surveys or polling related to evaluating the degree of satisfaction with response services.

REQUESTED DELIVERABLES

The minimum expected deliverables include an internal written report of findings with summary metrics and a full documentation of analysis; a public-facing Cost Benefit Analysis report; a presentation of the Cost Benefit Analysis report to The Carter Center and other stakeholders as identified; the preparation of the deliverables for potential submission to peer-reviewed journals and/or to a professional conference with the final determination about submission to be determined in consultation between the provider and The Carter Center at the appropriate time.

TIMELINE

The proposed timeline for data collection, analysis, and the production of deliverables is January 2025 to April 2025. The final Cost Benefit Analysis report must be completed by April 15, 2025. Cost proposals should include the cost of all personnel, travel, supplies, production of digital and printed reports, and indirect costs required to produce all requested deliverables.

How to Apply:

Proposals are due no later than 5:00 pm EST on January 10, 2025. Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted. All proposals will be e-mailed to policingalternatives@cartercenter.org before the deadline. The subject line of the email shall read, "Proposal: CBA." The Carter Center will not be liable for any expenses incurred by vendors responding to this solicitation.

Proposal Format:

Proposals should include the following:

- Written proposal of no more than 8 pages that includes:
 - Vendor Background
 - Vendor Qualifications, Expertise, and Experience

- Technical Approach and Workplan/Timeline
- The following annexes (not included in the page limit):
 - Cost Proposal
 - Resumes of Key Personnel
 - Examples of Past Cost Benefit Analysis Experience

Shortlisted vendors may be required to submit additional documentation, respond to further questions, or take part in a virtual interview at the Carter Center’s discretion.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked according to the following evaluation criteria by an evaluation committee composed of Carter Center staff.

Phase 1 Proposal Responsiveness Review	Score
Responsiveness: Does the proposal meet the minimum requirements to be responsive?	Pass/Fail
Responsibility: Does the documentation provided show that the proposing vendor is capable of performing the work?	Pass/Fail

Phase 2 Proposal Evaluation	Criteria	Score
Vendor Qualifications, Expertise, and Experience	Vendor qualifications, expertise, and experience of proposed personnel reflect an understanding of the scope of work that inspires confidence in their ability to execute this RFP	20%
Technical Approach	Technical approach, including timeline, is clear, manageable, and expected to achieve results/deliverables outlined in RFP	40%
Cost Proposal	Proposal reflects a competitively priced, clear, and comprehensive budget that will fully deliver on the RFP	25%
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Proposal reflects Do No Harm and DEI principles	15%
		100%