



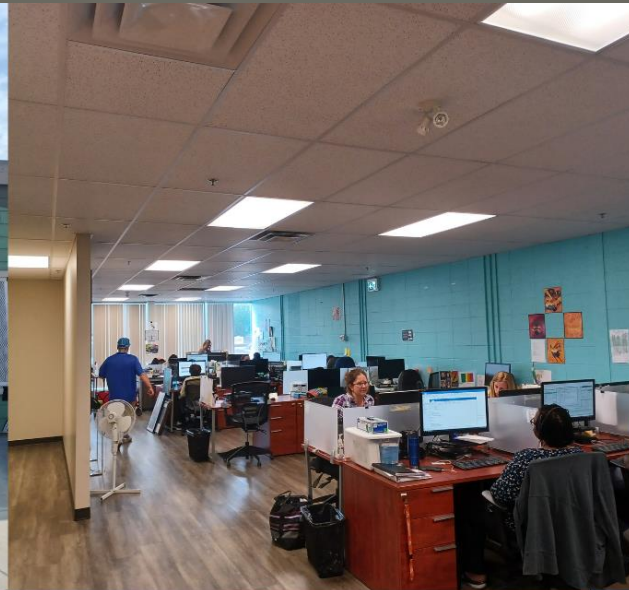
# Changing Law Enforcement Response to Homelessness

Collaborating to achieve the right response at  
the right time

# About Alpha House

- ▶ Established 1981 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada as an alternative to city cells or hospitals for men and women who were struggling with addiction and living on the streets of Calgary
- ▶ Alpha House's Mission:  
*to provide safe and caring environments for individuals whose lives have been impacted by alcohol and other drug dependencies*
- ▶ Programs make up a continuum of care to meet individuals where they are at and support them towards improved circumstances
- ▶ Shelter. Detox. Housing. Outreach

# Alpha House Programs



# Alpha House Outreach

- ▶ 24/7 mobile response teams with a goal of connecting street-involved individuals to appropriate services
- ▶ Reduces the impact of public intoxication on the broader community
- ▶ Community members, police, hospitals, paramedics, and businesses call the teams to provide support when they see a vulnerable individual in need of non-emergent assistance
- ▶ Teams average 58,000 client interactions a year (trending upwards for several yrs)
- ▶ Teams average 30,000 transports a year

# Our Outreach teams



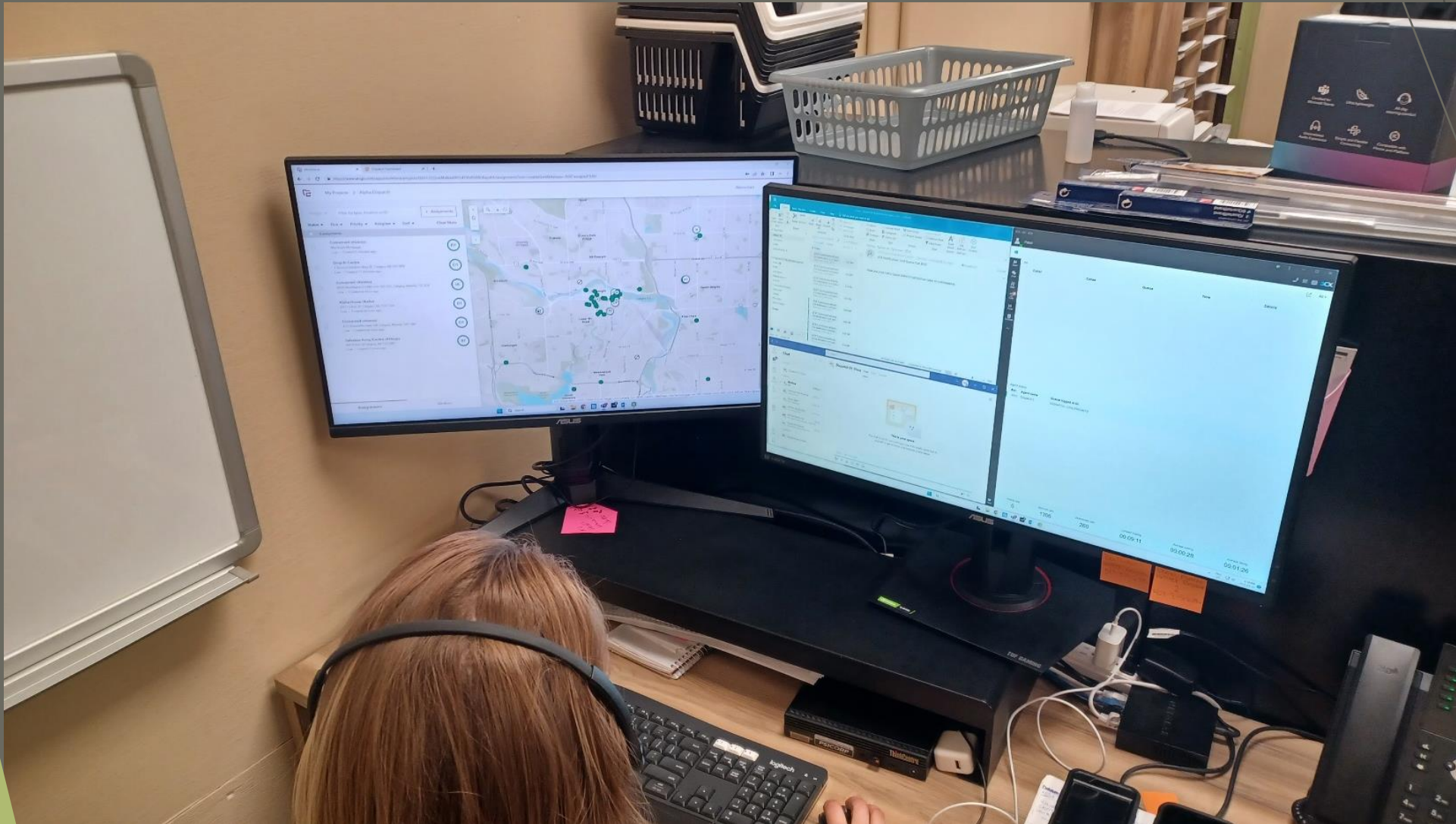
# Pre-Project

- ▶ Outreach team began in 2005; informal partnership with police, EMS, hospitals quickly developed
- ▶ For many years, teams prioritized police calls to reduce instances of unnecessary police or EMS intervention / resources
- ▶ Dedicated phone number for police to request Alpha House Outreach teams
- ▶ Police respond; call AH if police response unnecessary

# Project: Pilot

- ▶ Formal partnership with police established through 211 in April 2021
- ▶ 211 is a provincial public number and dispatch system for requesting public/community services
- ▶ Calls received through 211 for Alpha House's Outreach teams are
  - redirected non-emergency calls for emergency services
  - direct requests for our services
- ▶ Began with existing Alpha House infrastructure

# Project: Pilot





# Project: Development

▶ Development goals sought to address the following:

- CPS attending each call they receive - “No call too small”
- Unnecessary resource use from emergency services
- Wait times
- Misuse of 911 and stigmatization

▶ Using:

- Right resource for the right call mentality
- Direct line to Alpha House Outreach
- Triage system
- Education

# Project: In practice

- ▶ Information Sharing
  - Caller > 911 > 211 > Alpha House Outreach
  - Caller > 211 > Alpha House Outreach
- ▶ Call Priority and Triage
  - High priority response to calls within CPS District 1 w/ 20 min response time
  - Triage based on crisis / situation
  - Option to request any emergency services at any point as needed
- ▶ Meeting stigma and fear with education
  - Dispatchers at 911 and 211 supporting public to make right call / trust right response mentality
  - Follow ups

# Data Collection



ArcGIS



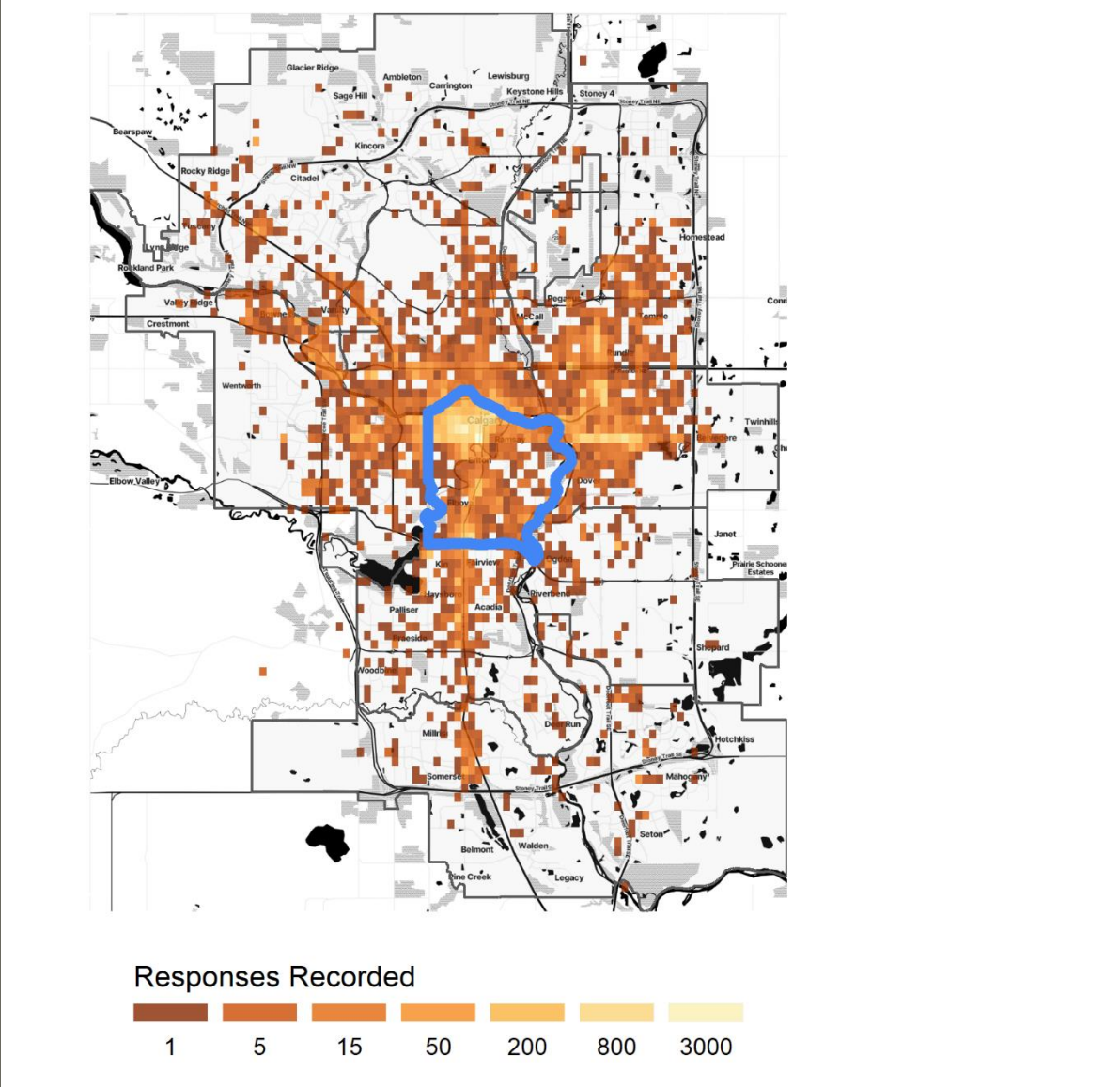
Workforce



Survey123

- ▶ ArcGIS mobile apps
  - Highly configurable (no coding)
- ▶ Survey123
  - Field data collection
  - Geocoded responses
- ▶ Workforce
  - Dispatching calls
- ▶ Non-profit pricing offered

# Calgary and District 1



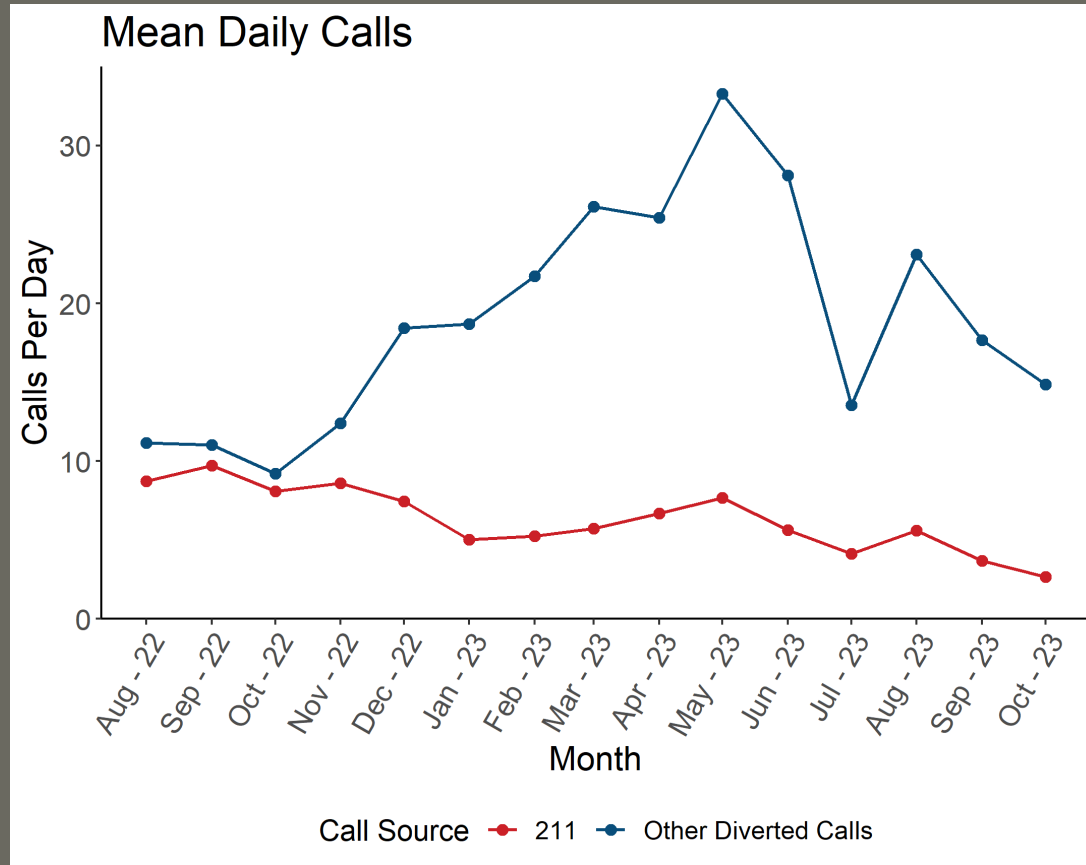
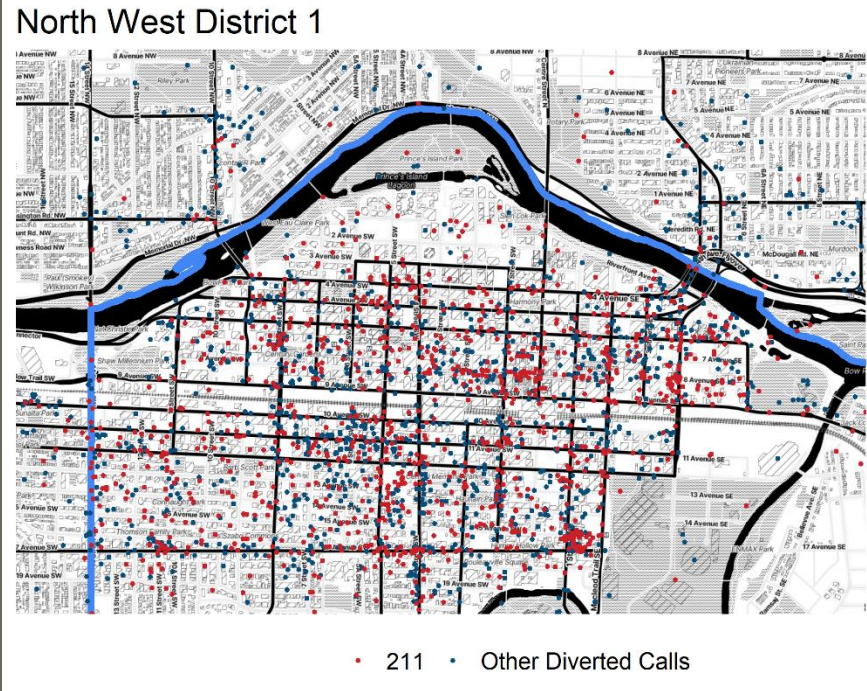
- ▶ 211 Calls from Police District 1 (81%)
- ▶ NW District 1 Encompasses the downtown commercial core

# 211 Calls

► 9 calls daily, decreasing trend over time

► Increased calls directly to Alpha House

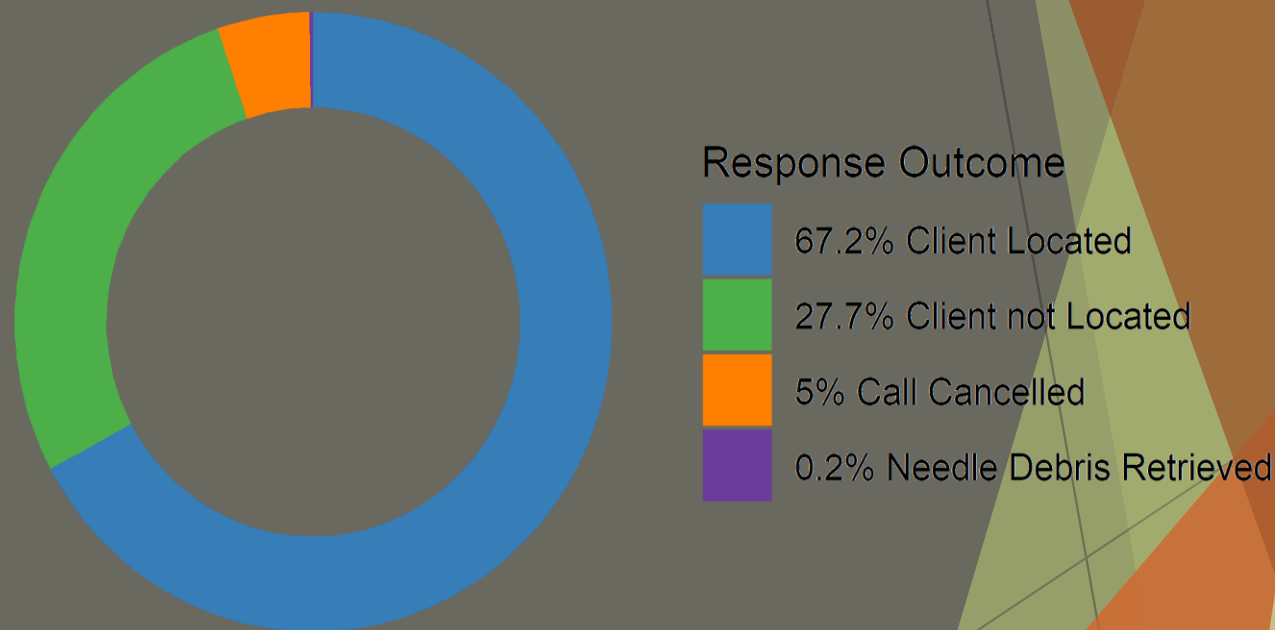
- Increased capacity to respond to and triage calls



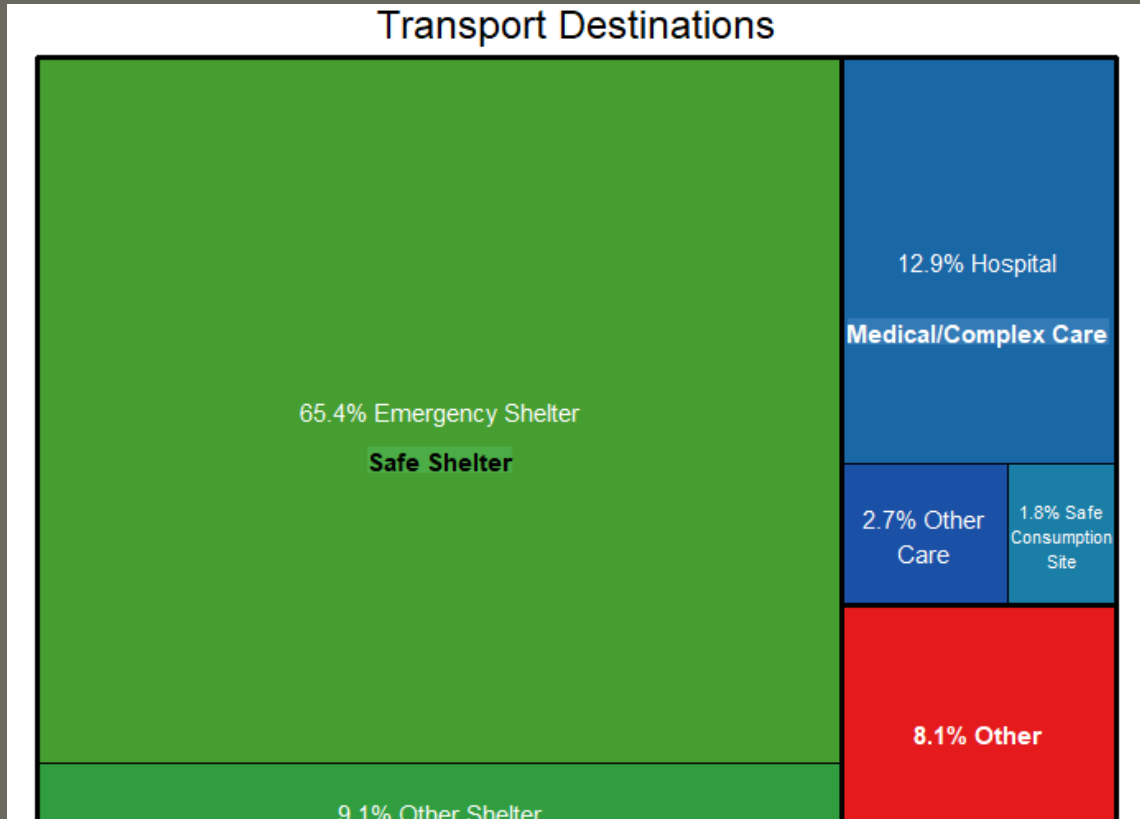
# 211 Call Response Outcomes

- ▶ Mean response time 22.7 min
- ▶ Clients were located 2/3 times
- ▶ 2% of called required further police interventions
- ▶ Remaining calls were resolved successfully

Outcome of Response



# Transports



- ▶ 53% of client interactions end with transportation
- ▶ Majority of transports were to safe shelter (75%)
  - ▶ Emergency Shelter
  - ▶ Supportive Housing and private residences
- ▶ Hospitals and Complex Care (17.4%)

# Questions?

