

ORDINANCE NO. 26-1153

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DENTON AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT AND THE EXPENDITURE OF GENERAL FUNDS TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC PLAN BY THE MEADOWS MENTAL HEALTH POLICY INSTITUTE FOR THE 90TH TEXAS STATE LEGISLATURE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A DENTON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH & JAIL DIVERSION CENTER PILOT; AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000.00; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team and Denton County Housing & Homelessness Leadership Team jointly approved a recommendation for implementation of a Denton County Mental Health & Jail Diversion Center Pilot; and

WHEREAS, the focus of this mental health crisis response system expansion would be to create an alternative for law enforcement to incarceration of low-level non-violent offenses (such as criminal trespassing for example) and jail diversion services; and

WHEREAS, Jail Diversion Centers across the state have demonstrated economic benefits to municipal law enforcement, county jails, county district attorney departments, and county courts systems while simultaneously diverting people away from the criminal justice system and towards mental health services and solutions; and

WHEREAS, the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute submitted to Denton County a proposal to develop a strategic plan for a behavioral health crisis services facility (the “Strategic Plan”), attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit “A”; and

WHEREAS, Denton County and United Way submitted a letter, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit “B”, to the City of Denton and other Denton County municipalities to join as funding partners to assist in the cost of the Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Denton supports the development of the Strategic Plan by the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute pursuant to a contract executed by the City Manager or their designee and any one or more of the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, the United Way of Denton County, or Denton County in a form approved by the City Attorney or their designee (the “Strategic Plan Agreement”); and

WHEREAS, the City of Denton will contribute \$10,000 in FY2025-26 General Funds for the Strategic Plan pursuant to a Strategic Plan Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the development of the Strategic Plan will benefit the public by establishing a plan for the operation and funding of a behavioral health facility to serve the residents of the City of Denton; NOW, THEREFORE,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DENTON HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. The findings and recitations in the preamble of this ordinance are incorporated herein by reference as true and as if fully set forth in the body of this ordinance.

SECTION 2. The City Manager, or designee, is hereby authorized to enter into a Strategic Plan Agreement in a form approved by the City Attorney or their designee and to expend funds in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00, in the manner specified in the Ordinance and in accordance with the Strategic Plan Agreement, and to take any other actions that may be necessary or convenient, in the reasonable opinion of either the City Manager or the City Attorney, to carry out the City's rights and obligations under this Ordinance.

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage and approval.

The motion to approve this ordinance was made by _____ and seconded by _____. The ordinance was passed and approved by the following vote [___ - ___]:

	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Mayor Chris Watts:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Jordan Villarreal, District 1:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Nick Stevens, District 2:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Suzi Rumohr, District 3:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Joe Holland, District 4:	_____	_____	_____	_____
George Ferrie, At Large Place 5:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Jill Jester, At Large Place 6:	_____	_____	_____	_____

PASSED AND APPROVED this the _____ day of _____, 2026.

CHRIS WATTS, MAYOR

ATTEST:
KRISTI FOGLE, INTERIM CITY SECRETARY

BY: _____

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:
MACK REINWAND, CITY ATTORNEY

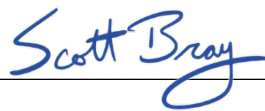
BY:  Scott Bray
Deputy City Attorney

EXHIBIT A

Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Proposal to Support Denton County in Developing a Strategic Plan for a Behavioral Health Crisis Services Facility

May 2026

Background

The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (Meadows Institute) is pleased to submit this proposal to assist Denton County stakeholders and leadership in developing a strategic plan for a behavioral health crisis services facility (Crisis Facility). Denton County has organized around the need for a Crisis Facility that can increase options for persons to be deflected pre-arrest or diverted post-arrest from the criminal justice system, emergency departments and other higher levels of care into community-based treatment and support services. Across Texas, Crisis Facilities have become an important component of the behavioral health continuum of care, with successful models operating in several communities including Austin, Fort Worth, Dallas, Houston, Galveston, Uvalde, Midland, and Amarillo, among others.

Communities that have successfully secured state and federal funding for a Crisis Facility have done so by presenting lawmakers and other funders with a clear plan for the facility's scope, operations, and budget, along with documented support from key stakeholders, including law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, providers, elected officials, and individuals with lived experience. A formal written strategic plan can help Denton County leadership navigate the steps needed to develop, fund, and implement a Crisis Facility.

Meadows Institute Experience

Independent and nonpartisan, the Meadows Institute works at the intersection of policy and programs to create equitable systemic changes so all people in Texas, the nation, and the world can obtain the health care they need. The Meadows Institute provides state and national leaders with data-driven, trusted policy and program guidance, and works to shift the focus of new investments toward early intervention for children and families, address the mental health crisis in our jails and emergency rooms, and help all people with mental health needs recover and be well. Learn more at <https://mmhpi.org>.

Meadows Institute has significant experience supporting Texas communities in strategic planning to expand crisis services, including crisis facilities. Examples of this work include the following collaborations.

- Galveston County – Meadows Institute has supported Galveston County through its Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and Gulf Coast Center, the local mental health authority, in expanding crisis services. Gulf Coast Center opened a Welcome Center in October 2025 that accepts walk-ins and law enforcement drop-offs for persons in behavioral health crisis.

- Amarillo (Potter and Randall Counties) – Meadows Institute is currently supporting the Texas Panhandle Center, the local mental health authority, in renovating a facility to house comprehensive crisis services, including a drop-off center for law enforcement and crisis residential beds. Meadows Institute supported the launch of their diversion center pilot, which has been operating for over a year.
- Brazoria County – Meadows Institute is currently working with elected and community leadership and Gulf Coast Center to implement a crisis facility in Brazoria County and to establish a criminal justice coordinating council. Gulf Coast Center received \$5M in additional funding from the Legislature towards this facility.
- Permian Basin – Meadows Institute supported the Midland and Ector County communities in planning and developing the Permian Basin Behavioral Health Center, a comprehensive behavioral health facility with 200 treatment beds.
- Uvalde- Meadows Institute partnered with Hill Country MHDD and county and city officials to assess community needs following the tragedy at Robb Elementary and to develop a plan for a fully integrated crisis receiving center serving both children and adults. Through this process, the community secured full funding for both capital and operating expenses from the Governor’s Office, along with additional appropriations through the legislative session.

Proposed Scope of Work

Strategic Plan

The Meadows Institute proposes to assist Denton County stakeholders and leadership in rapidly developing a strategic plan for a behavioral health facility. This strategic plan will include the following components:

- Facility Scope – Define the scope of the proposed facility, including the number and type of observation and treatment beds, how the facility will complement and coordinate with existing crisis services, and opportunities to co-locate community-based services on-site.
- Facility Operations – Identify options for the location and operations of the proposed facility and develop a projected budget for acquisition and ongoing operations.
- Funding Strategy - Develop a funding strategy to support implementation of the facility plan, including preparation for the 2027 Texas legislative session and identification of other potential funding sources, such as federal grants and philanthropic support.

Legislative Engagement

The Meadows Institute proposes to support Denton County leadership in developing a legislative engagement strategy for the 2027 Texas legislative session that reflects the current behavioral health funding landscape and identifies opportunities aligned with legislative priorities. The Meadows Institute will also support outreach to members of the Legislature, as well as ongoing monitoring of and engagement around funding opportunities in advance of and throughout the 2027 legislative session.

Key Project Staff

The Meadows Institute team assembled for this project includes professionals with the diverse and relevant backgrounds necessary to successfully accomplish this scope of work, including experts in justice systems, health care for the homeless and permanent supportive housing, health care financing, data analysis, county mental health systems, the intersection of the justice system and behavioral health, health reform, and state-of-the-art health system and service innovations. Our experience is tailored to Texas – to each county and community within which we work. We will leverage our knowledge of best practices and successes in other communities, working with key stakeholders to adapt them to best fit Denton County’s needs and goals.

Our team for this project shares significant expertise in planning, developing and implementing crisis services, including crisis facilities that support deflection and diversion. The table below provides the names and roles of our core team members. Additional staff and subcontractors are available to complete this project on the required timeline, as needed.

Team Member	Title	Role
Nelson Jarrin, JD Bio Link	Executive Vice President of State Policy	Project Advisor, Expert in Legislative Policy and Coordination
Darilynn Cardona Beiler Bio Link	Senior Vice President for Health Systems Transformation	Project Advisor, Expert in Large Systems Transformation and Strategic Planning, Finance, and Community Assessment
Michelle Durham, MD Bio Link	Deputy Chief Medical Officer	Psychiatry Clinical Subject Matter Expert
Ron Stretcher Bio Link	Vice President of Systems Integration	Project Lead, Justice System Subject Matter Expert
Laura Slocum Bio Link	Vice President of Crisis Systems Transformation	Crisis Care and Community Care Subject Matter Expert
Gary Bramlett Bio Link	Director of Community Engagement	Community Care and Collaboration Subject Matter Expert

Team Member	Title	Role
Karl Santos Bio Link	Senior Project Manager	Project Management and Justice System Subject Matter Expert
Kate Ryan, MLS Bio Link	Project Coordinator	Logistical Support
Rebecca Marcolina, MPH Bio Link	Director of Population Health Analytics	Data Analysis and Evaluation

Proposed Budget

The cost to support Denton County leadership and stakeholders in developing a strategic plan for a Crisis Facility is: \$75,000 inclusive of travel and all project related expenses. Meadows Institute proposes that payment be made in full upon contract execution.

EXHIBIT B



Andy Eads
Denton County Judge

July 15, 2025

Earlier this year the Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team and Denton County Housing & Homelessness Leadership Team jointly approved a recommendation for implementation of a Denton County Mental Health & Jail Diversion Center Pilot, which we can provide as requested. The focus of this mental health crisis response system expansion would be to create an alternative for law enforcement when incarceration of low-level non-violent offenses (such as criminal trespassing for example) jail diversion services. Jail Diversion Centers across the state have demonstrated both economic benefits to municipal law enforcement, county jails, county district attorney departments, and county courts systems while simultaneously diverting people away from the criminal justice system and towards mental health services and solutions. Given the overall need and benefit across the county, the Denton County Mental Health & Jail Diversion Center Pilot is our leading advocacy policy agenda priority in 2026-27.

The Denton County Commissioners Court and United Way of Denton County (UWDC) requested the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) to provide the attached proposal to assist in developing strategic plans leading into the upcoming Texas State Legislature in January 2027. Successful implementation of a Denton County Mental Health & Jail Diversion Center Pilot requires state funding support. MMHPI is highly regarded for their expertise in this area across Texas and was instrumental in the original formation of our Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team over 10 years ago.

The total cost of the MMHPI engagement is \$75,000. Denton County is committing up to \$45,000 and UWDC is committing up to \$10,000. We are inviting Denton County municipalities to join us as a funding partner for the remaining cost. All funding partners will be acknowledged in the final report for their financial contribution and commitment to expanding mental health services in Denton County. UWDC as backbone support to the Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team will serve as the fiscal agent for this proposal.

Thank you again for your consideration. We understand this is short notice, our desire is to secure the remaining funding commitments to kick-off the MMHPI project in August in preparation for the 90th Texas State Legislature.

Sincerely,

Andy Eads
Denton County Judge