



October 7, 2024

King County Department of Community and Human Services  
401 5th Avenue, Suite 500  
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Tiffany Ngo and Crisis Care Centers Request for Proposals Review Team:

The City of Kirkland is writing to express strong support for Connections Health Solutions (Connections) to be selected as the operator for the North Crisis Response Zone as part of King County's Crisis Care Center's initiative.

The Kirkland City Council has long been a leader in supporting behavioral health services for our community members. Since 2019, the City of Kirkland has worked with our neighboring cities of Bothell, Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, and Shoreline to launch and expand innovative programs like the Kirkland Community Responder Program and the North King County RADAR Program. These efforts culminated in the creation of the Regional Crisis Response (RCR) Agency in January 2023, which now provides integrated mental health crisis response services across these five cities. During this convergence, we identified the critical need for a dedicated facility where individuals in behavioral health crises can be stabilized and receive appropriate care, rather than being routed to local emergency rooms or jails. After researching best practices, engaging national crisis care experts, and visiting successful crisis care models over the last two years, the five north end cities partnered with Connections Health Solutions (Connections) to site and operate a crisis clinic in Kirkland to serve North King County.

Connections is a national leader in crisis care, having pioneered the 23-hour observation model that has become the foundation for crisis response systems nationwide. Their facilities in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona, are the largest crisis receiving centers in the country, treating over 30,000 individuals annually and successfully stabilizing 65-70% of individuals within 24 hours. Their dedication to data-driven outcomes and best practices has made them a model for crisis systems nationally, and their work is recognized by SAMHSA and the National Council for Behavioral Health.

The five RCR cities invited Connections to explore clinic locations throughout the north end and Connections was able to find a suitable site in Kirkland. Attached is a letter from the Kirkland Planning and Building Department from October of 2022 confirming that the site conforms with Kirkland's zoning requirements. Connections also worked with the City of Kirkland's Communications Team and Deputy City Manager of External Affairs to notify neighbors of the proposed development and engaged the community through their dedicated website and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).



The crisis clinic opened in August of 2024 and is in close proximity to Interstate I-405, State Route SR-522, EvergreenHealth Hospital, and other healthcare facilities, making it easily accessible to North and Northeast King County cities. The facility can accommodate up to 14,000 individuals of all acuities per year with 24/7 walk-in services. It includes a 23-hour observation unit and two 16-bed units for extended stabilization and treatment. In just a few months, the clinic has already served over 250 individuals, demonstrating its immediate and profound impact.

An operator like Connections is paramount to the regional network of Crisis Care Centers, as proposed in the RFP and the City is committed to continuing to support Connections' success as key departments and divisions (Police, Fire, RCR, Human Services) are partnering with Connections to ensure broad community access to this critical program. Our region deserves crisis centers lead by operators who understand the needs of our diverse communities. By establishing four geographically distributed Crisis Care Centers and a dedicated Youth Crisis Care Center, this network will provide residents across King County a much needed "no wrong door" approach to behavioral health services. These centers will reduce the strain on emergency responders and offer an alternative to incarceration for individuals experiencing mental health or substance use crises.

We are grateful for King County's commitment to enhancing behavioral health services and for the opportunity to offer our strongest support for Connections to be selected as a launch ready site to serve as the North Crisis Response Zone Crisis Care Center. The creation of these Crisis Care Centers will have a profound and lasting impact on the health and safety of our community.

Sincerely,

Kelli Curtis, Mayor  
City of Kirkland

Kurt Triplett, City Manager  
City of Kirkland  
President, RCR Executive Board



October 6, 2022

TO: ConnectionsWA, LLC (via email)

Re. Permitted land uses at 11410 NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Way

Dear ConnectionsWA,

The City of Kirkland is aware that you are contemplating leasing an office building located at 11410 NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Way for use as a crisis clinic with ancillary land uses. This property is located in the Totem Lake (TL) 10A zoning district, in which a variety of land uses, ranging from wholesale trade, to retail uses, to institutional uses, are permitted outright. Based on the City's current understanding of the types of activities and use patterns that would comprise the crisis clinic, we would classify your proposed use as a "Community Facility," a land use that is permitted outright in the TL 10A district (i.e., no special land use approvals would be needed). Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Adam Weinstein". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Adam Weinstein  
Planning & Building Director

cc: Beth Goldberg, Deputy City Manager of Operations