



March 13, 2026

The Honorable Girmay Zahilay  
King County Executive  
King County Chinook Building  
401 5th Ave. Suite 800  
Seattle, WA 98104

## **Kirkland Letter of Support – King County Purchase of Connections Kirkland Crisis Care Clinic**

Dear Executive Zahilay,

I am writing to express Kirkland's support for King County's intended purchase of the Connections Kirkland crisis care clinic ("Connections Kirkland") as requested in Community and Human Services Director McLaughlin's letter to Kirkland on January 16, 2026.

Kirkland and our partner cities have been leaders in building out the region's behavioral health crisis continuum. The opening of Connections Kirkland completed a fully connected regional behavioral health crisis system that provides residents with someone to call, someone to respond, and somewhere to go. The five north King County cities of Bothell, Kenmore, Lake Forest Park and Shoreline now have 988 (and 911) to call, the Regional Crisis Response Agency to respond, and Connections Kirkland as a place to go. These accomplishments reflect years of City Council-directed investments and partnerships with north King County cities and King County. The sections below summarize important milestones in that history.

### **Formation of the Regional Crisis Response (RCR) Agency**

In April 2022, the City Council adopted Resolution R-5530 authorizing the City Manager to negotiate an interlocal agreement with the north King County cities of Bothell, Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, and Shoreline to merge the North Sound RADAR Navigator Program with Kirkland's Community Responder Program into a new, unified regional agency formally establishing the Regional Crisis Response (RCR) Agency.

The RCR Agency has successfully provided service for the past three years as a separate legal entity funded through member city contributions and grants and governed by an Executive Board of City Managers and Administrators from each of the five member cities. The agency deploys highly trained Crisis Responder Mental Health Professionals to behavioral health-related calls across the five-city region. The RCR Agency is explicitly designed as the "someone to respond" component of a fully integrated regional behavioral health crisis system continuum of care.

### **Homelessness Assistance Response Team (HART)**

Kirkland also established a Homelessness Assistance Response Team (HART) in 2023 as a cross-departmental team of City staff established to provide compassionate outreach and assistance to residents experiencing homelessness, and to serve as a point of contact for community members seeking a response to homelessness-related concerns. Kirkland's HART team operates on the foundational understanding that people become unhoused for a wide range of reasons and that lasting solutions require building genuine rapport and trust with each individual over time. RCR crisis responders are also key participants in Kirkland's HART.

HART's primary strategy is to transition individuals back into stable housing through outreach and case management, coordinating with local nonprofits and regional partners to meet each person's unique needs. The team is anchored by the City's Homelessness Response Coordinator and Housing

Navigation Coordinator, who both draw on the now established network of services in Kirkland and surrounding communities to provide a compassionate, relationship-based approach to help move individuals and families into housing.

### **Bringing Connections to Kirkland: Completing the Continuum**

Even as the RCR Agency was being formed, Kirkland and its north King County partners were working in parallel to bring a crisis care center to the region to address the missing "somewhere to go" element in the behavioral health continuum. That effort culminated in the opening of Connections Kirkland in 2024; King County's first 24/7 walk-in behavioral health crisis care center. Operated by Connections Health Solutions, the crisis clinic is near I-405 and located centrally between Kirkland's Justice Center, EvergreenHealth Hospital, and Kirkland's flagship Fire Station, Station 27.

### **Sheila Stanton Place: Permanent Supportive Housing in Partnership with King County**

Kirkland's partnership with King County on behavioral health extends beyond crisis response, and into the permanent supportive housing facility now known as Sheila Stanton Place. This facility welcomed its first residents in 2026 while overall construction is nearing completion. Sheila Stanton Place provides permanent supportive housing with 24/7 wraparound services, including case management, behavioral health support, employment counseling, and basic needs assistance for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. Sheila Stanton Place is a critical and complementary component of Kirkland's continuum of care, where HART and the RCR Agency help connect people to services and stabilize crises, permanent supportive housing provides the long-term foundation that makes lasting recovery possible.

Together, 988, the RCR Agency, Connections Kirkland, and Sheila Stanton Place constitute a fully connected local behavioral health crisis system in north King County. The City of Kirkland is proud to have served as a cornerstone and catalyst for these regional achievements.

### **Looking Forward**

For the reasons outlined in Director McLaughlin's letter of saving money, providing certainty, and creating future long-term flexibility, the City of Kirkland supports King County's intended acquisition of the Connections Kirkland crisis care clinic. We are confident that this critical facility will continue to serve as a model for the countywide network of crisis care centers envisioned under the Crisis Care Centers Levy.

We look forward to our continued partnership with King County on this and the broader behavioral health work ahead. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Kurt Triplett  
City Manager  
City of Kirkland

cc: Kelli Curtis, Mayor, City of Kirkland

Neal Black, Deputy Mayor, City of Kirkland

Jay Arnold, Councilmember, City of Kirkland

Amy Falcone, Councilmember, City of Kirkland

Jon Pascal, Councilmember, City of Kirkland

Shilpa Prem, Councilmember, City of Kirkland

John Tymczyszyn, Councilmember, City of Kirkland

Susan McLaughlin, Director, King County Department of Community and Human Services