

Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

January 2025

Agenda

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- Introductions
- Project Description
- Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils
- Stakeholder Survey and Results
- Group Discussions within Survey Results
- Update on First 48 Initiative
- Q&A and Wrap-up

Introductions

Yolanda Lewis

Project Team

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Yolanda Lewis, MPA

*Executive Vice President for
Justice and Health and
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Tim Bray, JD

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Ron Stretcher

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Project Description

Yolanda Lewis

Project Description

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Fort Bend County has engaged Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (Meadows Institute) to support local stakeholders in establishing a Behavioral Health Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (BHCJCC).



Establishing a BHCJCC is a critical first step in Fort Bend County implementing the First 48 Initiative to extend crisis services to people who are incarcerated to increase diversion from jail and the justice system.



Meadows Institute conducted a survey of Fort Bend County stakeholders to identify the goals, leadership and administrative structure, meeting logistics, and strategic priorities for the proposed BHCJCC.



Leverage stakeholder survey feedback and national best practices to design and charter an official BHCJCC in Fort Bend County.

Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils

Ron Stretcher

Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils are a Best Practice

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- Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils (CJCC) are a best practice
- [Extensive guidance](#) from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC)
- NIC provides a roadmap for establishing and maintaining an effective CJCC
- NIC guidance allows for adjusting to meet local needs, such as the Fort Bend County focus on behavioral health
- Many effective examples in Texas: Dallas, Travis, Harris, El Paso have robust CJCCs

Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

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The goal of establishing a Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (BHCJCC) is to create an effective infrastructure to:

1. Improve collaboration among related stakeholders;
2. Address gaps in services and infrastructure;
3. Develop innovative solutions to improve outcomes for people with behavioral health needs who are justice-involved; and,
4. Ensure public safety while promoting effective policy and practice and maximizing access to care.



Stakeholder Survey and Results

Survey Methodology

Meadows
Institute designed a
qualative survey of
key stakeholders in
Fort Bend County.

10 questions were
asked.

53% response
rate.

Question One: Systemic Focus

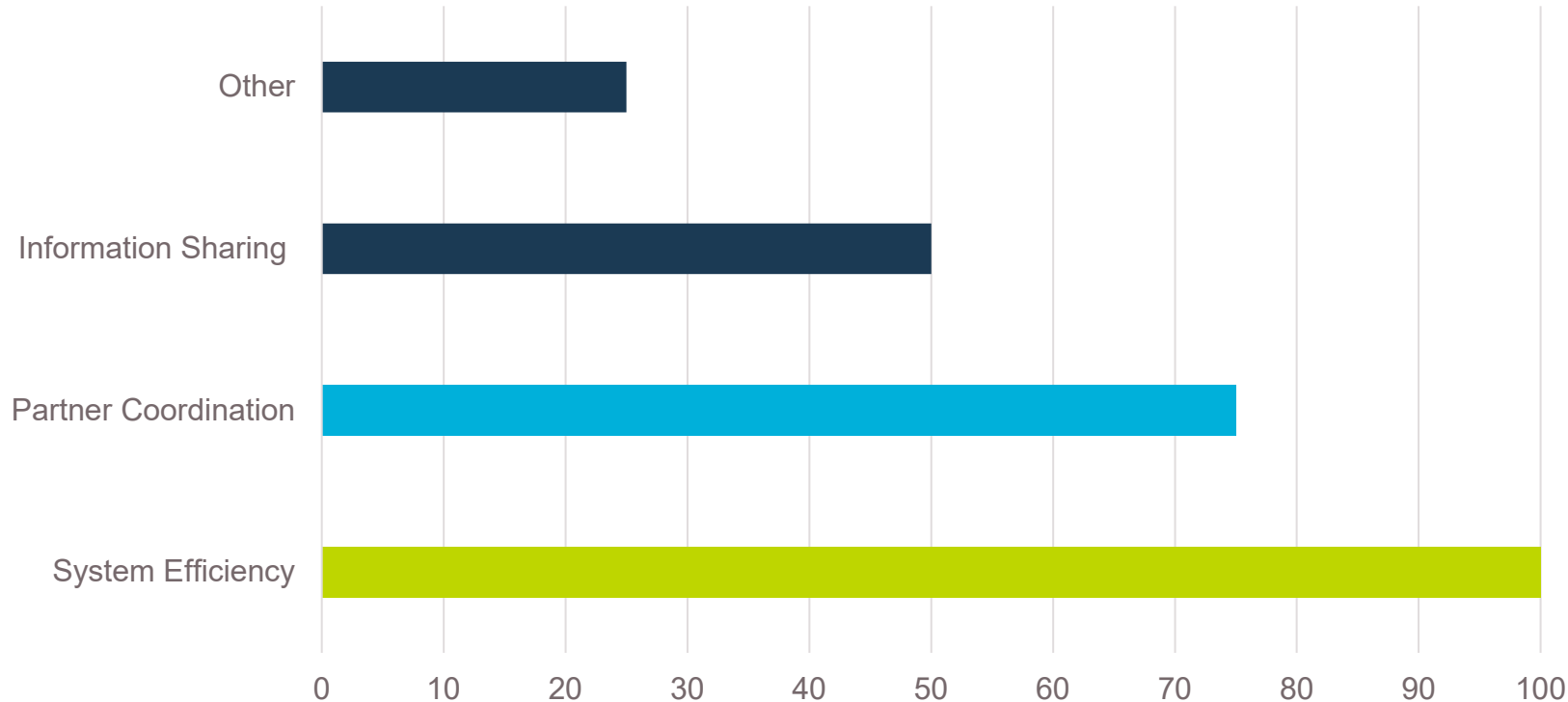
What would you like the Behavioral Health Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to accomplish for Fort Bend County?

Results Summary: Systemic Focus

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The CJCC takes a systemic approach to coordinating the criminal justice system and is guided by a collective vision of all stakeholders.

BHCJCC Focus Areas



Response Summary

100% want to improve **system efficiency** and the use of limited resources.

75% seek to improve partner **collaboration**.

50% listed improving **information sharing**

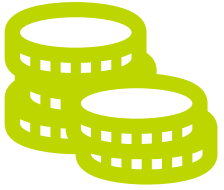
2 listed in the "other" category include:

- Data-driven systems
- Improving “**problem-solving**” matters, such as client transport, warrant transfers, etc.

Question Two: Operations and Support

Do you believe that the BHCJCC will encounter any of the following challenges?

Question Two: Do you believe that the BHCJCC will encounter any of the following challenges?



**Dedicated funding
to support a
management
position**

86% response rate



**Getting buy-in by
executive leadership**

63% response rate



**Identifying system
priorities**

38% response rate



**Data systems &
technology**

13% response rate

Are there additional significant challenges?

What are strategies to address these challenges?

Question Three: Leadership Model

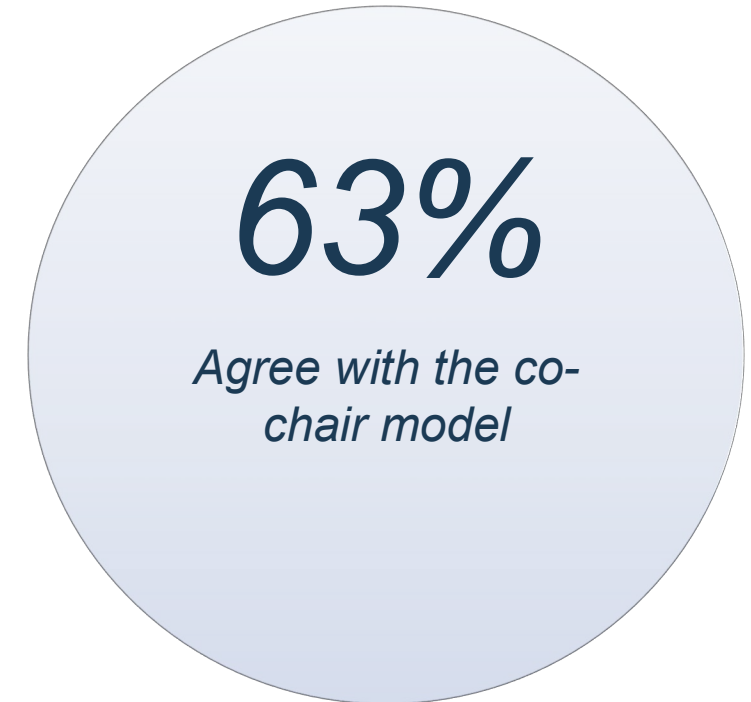
The Meadows Institute recommends a co-chair model as the most effective and collaborative leadership for Fort Bend County. We proposed the initial co-chairs be an elected County Commissioner and the Chief Administrative District Judge. Do you agree with the model?

Leadership Framework Comments

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In **36%** of responses, the following concerns were noted:

- **Commitment and Support:** The “model makes sense,” but respondents were concerned about the commitment of a commissioner.
- **Expanded Engagement:** Respondents noted that county commissioners have not previously participated in criminal justice system activities.
- **Election Shifts:** Respondents raised concerns about the appointment of a new district judge and new chief administrative judge.
- **Leadership Roles:** Respondents suggested the co-chair role should not be limited to the chief administrative district judge



Discussion – Leadership Framework

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Merits of the co-chair model
compared to other models



How to engage key leaders,
including Commissioners
and Judges

Question Four: Executive Committee

The executive committee collaborates to provide a governance structure for effective operation of the CJCC. The executive committee members have:

- Voting and decision-making authority
- Collaborative governing authority related to policy, program and resource allocation
- Standing designation based on role

Question Four: Executive Committee

Are there any other county offices with direct impact that should be designated on the executive committee (other than those listed)?

Executive Committee

Judiciary
(all classes of court)

Sheriff

Commissioners
Court
Representative

District Attorney

Public Defender

Director of
Behavioral Health

Constable

Clerk of Court
(all classes of court)

County Attorney

Chief Probation
Officer

Texana

Auditor

Question Five: Advisory Committee

Advisory Committee members provide valuable input and community engagement to support the work of the BHCJCC. Advisory members can recommend and voice support on issues without entering a final vote on financial matters that impact Fort Bend County.



Provide up to 5 organizations

Advisory Committee

Community
Supervision

Corrections
Department

Regional Advocacy
Organizations
NAMI, MHA, HHS

Regional Hospitals

Crisis Intervention
Team

Fort Bend Regional
Council on
Substance Abuse

Regional Police
Departments

Faith Based
Organizations

ACT Team

Civic Leaders

Discussion – Executive and Advisory Committee

25



Merits of the Executive and Advisory Committee model compared to other models



Discussion of key stakeholder and constituencies



How to ensure broad participation

Question Six: Meeting Frequency

Meadows Institute recommends monthly meetings. Do you agree with this frequency?

Meeting Frequency

1

Time per month

Respondents agree to meeting **monthly**, with the potential to meet quarterly in the future.

*Request for hybrid options
(virtual and in-person)*



Question Seven: Program and Project Management

Please describe what you believe to be the most important functions of a professional staff person. Meadows Institute recommends neutral management support for the BHCJCC to:

- Manage daily operations and BHCJCC meetings
- Execute policy directives of the BHCJCC.
- Move specific initiatives forward.

Question Seven: Program and Project Management

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Comments:

- Manage operations, including meetings
- Ensure everyone has a voice
- Neutrality is a key
- Understand the different needs within the community
- Organize information from various sources
- Implement BHCJCC priorities and initiatives

Question Eight: Leadership Characteristics

Please describe the leadership characteristics and experience best suited to lead the BHCJCC

Key Functions

- Management/operations
- Strategic planning
- Project management
- Execute priorities
- Relationship management
- Budget support
- Data management
- Program management
- Grant development

Intergovernmental Relations

- Attuned to the voice of all stakeholders
- Builds relationships with the executive branch
- Seeks consensus among stakeholders
- Operate with a sense of fairness and integrity
- Understand county government
- Independent and non-biased support to members

Experience

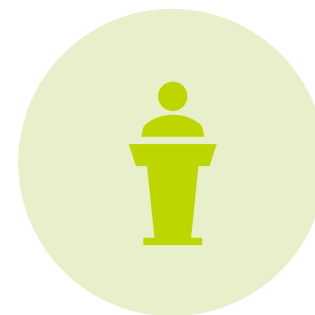
- Results oriented and solution focused
- Organized
- Excellent communicator
- Resourceful
- Influential
- Knowledgeable (communities and county)
- Management experience
- Innovative

Discussion – Leadership Characteristics and Managing the BHCJCC

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Neutral support for the BHCJCC



Review of leadership characteristics



Review of key functions



Review of experience and skills for BHCJCC support

Question Nine: Committee Structure

Proposed four standing committees and requested input on additional committee needs.

Proposed Standing Committees

Track

Data Sharing and Outcomes

Care

Evidence-based/Informed Decision Treatment - Clinical and Services

Divert

Justice Alternatives and Diversion

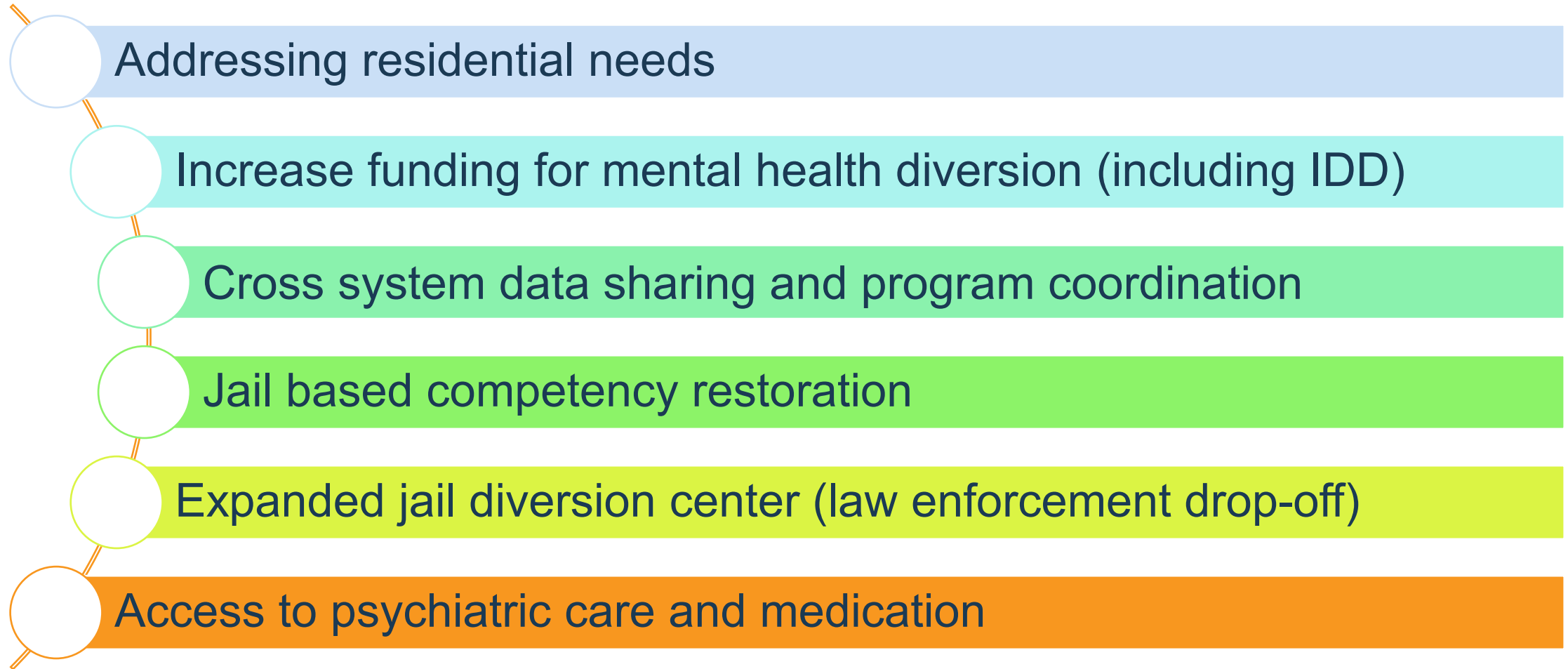
Train

Training and Education

Question Ten: Strategic Priorities

Asked for the top three priorities for the BHCJCC most vital to improving access to care over the next three to five years.

Top Strategic Priorities



Discussion – Strategic Priorities

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Review of key priorities



Coordination with other community planning efforts



Look for "quick wins"

First 48 Initiative Next Steps

Tim Bray

Questions

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Thank You!

For more information visit mmhpi.org

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AND HEALTH

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SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

