

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****January 6, 2026**

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SUBJECT: LEASE AMENDMENT FOR 350 WEST BELKNAP STREET JAIL FACILITY**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Informal Report is to provide information regarding a proposed lease amendment to City Secretary Contract 49057 ("Amendment") which is a lease between the City of Fort Worth ("City") and Tarrant County for the City's use of certain space at Tarrant County's building located at 350 West Belknap Street, Fort Worth, Texas as a temporary holding facility ("Leased Premises"). The purpose of the Amendment is to add additional space to the City's leased premises to allow for a dedicated video magistration room ("Extended Space") and to layout the obligations of the parties related to the build-out of the Extended Space. The buildout will increase magistration capacity, improve operational efficiency and assist with jail population management.

BACKGROUND

The Facility currently utilizes video magistration on a limited basis. At present, video magistration is conducted in a shared space also used by the Municipal Court, which also serves other judicial functions.

The current schedule allows for three county video magistration sessions per day, with up to 30 arrestees per day. Actual utilization averages approximately 70% of capacity, largely due to space limitations and competing court operations, rather than a lack of demand.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The County and the City have agreed to a lease modification for a one-time, additional lease payment of \$40,000 by City for Tarrant County to build-out a dedicated video magistration room adjacent to the existing Facility in the Extended Space ("Improvements"). This proposed Amendment is subject to County Commission and City Council approval. The County Commission took action on the Amendment on December 9th, 2025. The Improvements in the Extended Space would include:

- Fixed video magistration equipment (televisions, cameras, audio)
- Dedicated phone lines for judicial proceedings and financial interviews
- Seating and benches for arrestees
- Workstations for jail staff conducting magistration-related processing
- Infrastructure to allow simultaneous processing functions

Outside of exigent circumstances, this Extended Space would be used exclusively for video magistration and related Central Magistration activities.

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The Extended Space and associated Improvements would allow an increase in the number of daily video magistration sessions and the number of individuals seen by a judge daily. Ultimately the City and Tarrant County have a goal of 100% video magistration if possible. Approximately 40% of individuals who complete video magistration are released from custody, either through personal recognizance bonds or cash bonds, reducing the strain on County Jail population and capacity. It is also the understanding of the parties that Tarrant County will use best faith efforts to receive up to fifteen (15) inmates from the Facility twice per day.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff will be recommending Council approval of the lease amendment between Tarrant County and the City of Fort Worth for the proposed build-out of a dedicated video magistration room adjacent to the Fort Worth Temporary Holding Facility to enhance magistration capacity, improve efficiency, support legal compliance, and assist with jail population management. We anticipate that an M&C will be coming for Council consideration on the January 13th Agenda.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding video magistration build out, please contact Deputy Chief Mahaffey at Guerin.Mahaffey@fortworthtexas.gov or 817-392-4121

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City Manager