

From: [Nissa Armstrong - Poll](#)
To: [SAC](#)
Subject: Jail - Sefzik hearing
Date: Thursday, September 29, 2022 8:57:36 PM

To whom all this may concern:

I am curious why you all want a jail to help with homelessness, mental health and overdosing?

As I understand it, you can provide services for all these things now, just by taking these needy people to the hospital, and yet you don't. As for the homeless, with no mental health or overdosing issues, they don't need a jail, they need a home or apartment and help to get there some how. They don't need to go to jail because they are homeless.

To me, you are just grasping at straws, to get a new jail, that has not been kept up over the years due to mismanagement. You want a new jail with shiny new things, that will serve for what? A new triage center for the homeless that are jailed, for living where they can find? Because the municipalities have not spent money on low cost housing for the masses as the population has increased to service those living in the area?

Low cost housing is a HUGE problem in Whatcom county, causing a lot of families to be priced out of a rental or house that they can buy. This causes homelessness. They are not bad people, or undeserving, just not much in the way of options. Whatcom county has not kept pace with the rising needs of the community. That is not the resident's fault, but our leaders fault.

I do not feel like that a jail is going to solve the homeless issue. Nor is it going to change either the overdose issue or mental health issues. The jail is not the place to address most of these issues, unless it is necessary, because of true criminality. Homelessness, is not a criminal act or reason to get a new jail.

We do not need to criminalise homelessness, overdosing or mental health issues..... We need to compassionately adress each issue and make headway towards more low cost housing, mental health partnerships, community eduction and partnering for oversose.

Thank you for listening,

A community member
Homeless advocate
Mental health advocate
Formerly homeless