

From: [Mary Lou Steward](#)
To: [SAC](#)
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I have had no experience in dealing with the criminal justice system. However, as a Mayor, like Scott Korthuis, I have to deal all the time with balancing what the city needs versus what the citizens can or are willing to pay for. I fear that we are getting lost in the weeds of this. We need a new larger jail. This is our focus. The people- victims or potential victims- are telling us that they do not like catch and release with no accountability for crimes. The fact that the levy has been defeated twice indicates that they are not willing to spend a lot of money to accomplish this. We should build a horizontal jail in Ferndale that will be the least expensive with room to grow or add specific facilities if they are deemed necessary later. As for the person who spoke out about jail being a waste of time, I say, that unfortunately for many of the people committing crimes, this is probably true. However, some people must be kept off the streets and some will respond to rehabilitation and so we must do both. As for the cost- benefit question, I would think that someone has probably looked at this. Certainly jails are expensive to run and various diversion programs make sense. I do not know whether the fear of incarceration plays into the minds of someone thinking of doing a crime, but there has to be some deterrent, otherwise we lose the rule of law if there is no accountability. So, I ask the committee to not argue over definitions but design and plan for the cheapest facility that we can build and operate now so that the levy will pass. Otherwise it will be even more difficult and expensive to rethink this in years ahead. The enemy of good is perfect.

Mary Lou Steward, Mayor of Blaine

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