

On 2022-12-27 12:20 pm, Lilliquist, Michael W. wrote:

Sure, post to comments page. Thanks.

Best regards,

Michael Lilliquist  
Bellingham City Council  
Representative, Ward 6  
[mlilliquist@cob.org](mailto:mlilliquist@cob.org)

Per state law RCW 42.56, my incoming and outgoing email messages are public records and are therefore subject to public disclosure requirements.

---

**From:** Mardi Solomon <[mardi@crossroads.pro](mailto:mardi@crossroads.pro)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2022 11:57:24 AM  
**To:** Lilliquist, Michael W. <[mlilliquist@cob.org](mailto:mlilliquist@cob.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: Revised Vision, Values, Goals, Needs & Recommendations

Hi Michael,

Thank you for sharing your thoughts here. I have made the change in Goal 4 from "corrected" to "addressed" (new version attached). I'll also pass your email along to report author Jennifer Moon, and Holly, Cathy, and I can review the text again to make sure the prevention message is coming through.

Do you want your email to be posted on the SAC website comments page?

Any other comments on the Vision, Values, Goals anyone?

Mardi

On 2022-12-27 11:39 am, Lilliquist, Michael W. wrote:

Good people,

I support the small change to the Accountability section. I think it will resonate with the folks who were in less-than-complete agreement with the version that was in the survey.

I agree with the new goal to call out racial disparities as an issue, but I wonder if we are over-promising. The proposed language says, "Racial

disparities in incarceration are assessed *and corrected*." I don't believe they can be corrected entirely within the criminal justice system, or within the service system. Much of the origins for such disparities comes from society and people more broadly. In many cases, "the damage is done" already, and the criminal justice system is on the downstream, receiving end. It can't fix the problem.

For example, youth crime is higher in poor neighborhoods that are neglected and have higher unemployment, and minority youth may be over-represented in such neighborhoods. So, more minority youth will get into trouble with the law. Consequently, the rate of jail bookings will be higher for minority youth, even when the legal system applies completely fair and unbiased practices and standards. It would be difficult to convey this important idea in a short System Goal statement relating to incarceration. Maybe change the word to "addressed" rather than corrected? I think this needs to be discussed and elaborated upon in the longer report. It's also a sore point and divisive to blame law enforcement for problems they can't fix – put the blame where it belongs. I'm not saying that bias does not exist in policing and the criminal legal system – it does, and it needs to be "addressed" openly.

Another way of looking at this is that addressing racial disparities in incarceration is probably best accomplished through prevention and re-entry support, rather than within the narrower range of possibilities permitted under bookings/bail rules. Don't look only at the jail. Look at the system.

Thank you for the new Facilities goal on community-based services.

Regarding concerns that community-based services are too expensive, this idea needs to be confronted and refuted up front and vigorously. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," and the best way to address a problem is to avoid it in the first place. These programs make the community safer, lower crime rates, and ultimately save money. Say so.

I would go even further: *we are going to be wasting our money on a new jail if we don't put equal investment into programs and services that reduce and prevent incarceration* – that is what the VERA Institute told us years ago, that is exactly the purpose of the IPRT, and that is the motivation behind so much work that has been done over the last several years. If this new effort by the SAC, and this needs assessment, does not make that crystal clear – then we will have failed again.

There was something fundamentally broken and wrong with the previous "jail" levies. And it was this. We cannot keep trying to build a better

bandage, while doing nothing to stop the wounds from occurring. We need to address causes, not just symptoms. Putting on a seat belt, enforcing speed limits, installing anti-lock brakes, airbags, and modern tires are better than trying to save lives of people pulled from a wreck and taken to the hospital – which is also terribly expensive, often too late, and full recovery may be impossible. Yes, airbags cost money, but who is against them now? Same here.

The more we talk about the jail, the more we are making the same mistake to talk about bigger emergency rooms – when we need to be talking about prevention and reducing recidivism. I know we need a better, safer jail – practically everyone knows this – but can we please talk about reducing crime rather than about incarcerating criminals? The difference may seem small, but it's actually huge and crucial to getting it right this time.

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

Best regards,

***Michael Lilliquist***

Bellingham City Council

Representative, Ward 6

[mlilliquist@cob.org](mailto:mlilliquist@cob.org)

Per state law RCW 42.56, my incoming and outgoing email messages are public records and are therefore subject to public disclosure requirements.



Check out [Engage Bellingham](#), the City's online venue for public feedback about key projects.

**From:** Mardi Solomon <[mardi@crossroads.pro](mailto:mardi@crossroads.pro)>

**Date:** Monday, December 26, 2022 at 2:35 PM

**Subject:** Re: Revised Vision, Values, Goals, Needs & Recommendations

Dear VVG Subcommittee,

Hope you all had lovely holidays and are feeling well-fed and well-rested.

The notes from our meeting last week are attached. The notes include changes that happened after the meeting as well.

We received feedback on the Vision, Values, & Goals statements from Harriet and from the SAC Planning Team and have made some revisions in response. For example, Harriet noticed that we didn't have a goal statement related to addressing the disproportionate incarceration of BIPOC individuals. Please see the attached new version of the Vision, Values & Goals for this addition and some other changes to the statements.

We are hoping for some quick feedback from you as these statements have to go through Planning Team and Legal review this week, and then to the full SAC next week. If you see any needed changes, **please send your comments by end of day tomorrow, Tues. Dec. 27.**

Thank you!

Holly & Mardi