

## **Talking Points:**

### **Why object to a city jail at the West Seattle sites?**

The city of Seattle is considering four sites for a 7-acre Municipal Jail facility. TWO of the four sites are in our area. Many residents of Highland Park/Riverview/White Center have serious concerns about a City Jail on either West Marginal Way or Myers Way:

1. I believe that proposed Highland Park Jail site is considered to be in a possible Liquefaction Zone. In the event of the next major earthquake, how is the city prepared to evacuate close to 450 prisoners and jail staff when the traffic would be chaotic and the First Ave S. Bridge and the Viaduct may be damaged and or closed for damage inspection?
2. Highway 509, which becomes Highway 99 at the First Ave S. Bridge, is the main North and South corridor for many of us in the South End. We are very concerned about how the additional density of prisoners, police, visitors and employees of a 445-bed jail will impact the traffic, especially during peak commute hours.
3. What happens to the flow of criminals and police from North Seattle and downtown to the proposed South End sites when the Viaduct is either knocked down or falls down? Wouldn't a more central location such as Interbay or the old Pacific Salvage property on 4th be more readily accessible to all, especially as we know the viaduct/seawall project will block southend access for years just at the time this new jail needs to become operational?
4. We have heard from the City that 30% of the Jail's inmates are homeless people that have typically been arrested for drugs and alcohol, trespassing and other property crimes. When they are released from a jail facility they tend to stay in the neighborhood and find a new place to flop. Our worry is that when they are released from the South End facility they will wander into the immediate neighborhood of industrial buildings, vacant lots and the huge green belt that adjoins many of our back yards where our children play. This greenbelt already houses many "campers" and adjacent homeowners consistently are plagued by breakins and property theft. Are we expected to put up with people living in our greenbelt and finding needles and bottles on our recently restored trails?
5. The first people of the Seattle area were the Duwamish Indians. They were known to have settlements all along the Duwamish Valley. The Tribe is currently building the Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center (DLCC) overlooking the Duwamish River Valley, near an ancient village called hah-AH-poos, a major archeological site known as Duwamish Site No. 1. All of this is on the same street and less than 1 mile away from the proposed Highland Park Way & East Marginal Way site. Does the city or state plan to perform a complete archeological inspection of the Marginal way site before they break ground?
6. For those of us living in Highland Park there are basically 3 ways to get here through White center, through West Seattle or via the First Ave S. Bridge. Most people who commute north or south come and go via the First Ave. South Bridge and this makes the Myers Way and Highland Park site The Gateway to our community. This is exactly where the city plans to build a jail. What kind of message do you feel this sends to our community?

*continued*

7. For those crying NIMBY at us, Highland Park and South Park area already has two smelly Transfer Station and Recycling Plants as well as a very toxic Superfund site along the Duwamish River and smokestack exhaust from a large industrial cement factory. We also host a large industrial Pioneer Human Services re-entry training facility which helps folks released from correctional facilities receive training to find productive jobs. Instead of balancing out our neighborhood with something positive such as a new swimming pool facility which the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition has suggested on the Highland Park Way site, why is the city adding to our burdens with the stigma of a new Jail?
8. Almost everyone who commutes to and from the Highland Park neighborhood uses the First Ave. S. Bridge and passes by the Highland Park Way site daily. I see the ducks and geese that use these Wet Lands on a seasonal basis and it makes me wonder why the city is considering such an ecologically sensitive area to build a facility with such an environmental impact?
9. Many of us feel that the south end sites have been selected because of our lower economic status and greater immigrant population than the whiter neighborhoods in other parts of the city with higher property values, louder voices and more political clout. How do you respond to that?
10. We have heard that there is a new, large senior facility being built next to the proposed Jail site on Myers Ways. This would place our community's most vulnerable population directly next door to domestic abusers, vandals, prostitutes, and other criminals. My simple question is, "Who in City Hall thinks this is a good idea?"
11. It seems the Mayor has determined that Urban Density is good fiscal policy and the environmental benefits of a shorter commute are a positive effect. So why would the city decide to build a sprawling 7 acre Jail so far away from downtown and the other municipal buildings and court facilities and place it in an area so close to neighborhood schools, parks and homes? How does this make for a greener Seattle?
12. Why will the Neighborhood Plans and other existing planning documents only be consulted AFTER as final site is selected, shouldn't this background information be considered in the site selection process?
13. Neither of the south end sites have any nearby facilities to house bail bondsmen, and other commercial prisoner services-are we to expect an influx of these businesses into our residential and industrial areas? If not your FAQ's say these persons would be called from downtown and then have to come to the site, thus increasing traffic on the bridges over the Duwamish.
14. One of the criteria used to select the finalist sites was listed as easy transportation access. However the Highland Park Way site is served by a single bus line, and both sites depend on the smooth functioning of the 1st Ave. South drawbridges, how does this provide easy access for families and officers getting to the jail, and for released inmates attempting to return to their homes, or for the 30% of the inmates who are homeless?

The Highland Park community is working with neighboring communities and with city, county, and district officials who also oppose this project. Learn more and sign the No Jail Petition on our website, [highlandpk.net](http://highlandpk.net). Contact the Chair: [hpac-chair@highlandpk.net](mailto:hpac-chair@highlandpk.net)