

# New jail plans advance

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San Mateo County supervisors voted 4-1 yesterday to proceed with planning for a new jail, with one supervisor saying the facility is needed to keep communities safe while another warned that its ongoing cost will force the county to make "draconian cuts" in other areas.

"I hope I'm wrong," Supervisor Dave Pine, the only vote yesterday against the jail plan, said of reductions in social services he believes loom in 2014 or 2015.

Supervisor Carole Groom said, "We would all wish that we were not here planning a new jail."

A new facility in Redwood City is being sought because of overcrowding at the existing jail.

"We are faced with people in our community who do bad things," Groom said.

The board vote for a new jail of

## Official warns it may force deep cuts elsewhere

up to 552 beds, estimated to cost between \$145 million to \$160 million, came after speakers including ex-San Mateo County supervisor Mike Nevin, who spent 27 years in the San Francisco Police Department, spoke in support of it.

"It's smart. It's logical," Nevin said. "It leaves many options for the future."

### A dangerous situation

Deputy Dave Weidner, representing the San Mateo County Deputy Sheriffs Association, said he has witnessed the impact of jail overcrowding and said five officers are not at work because of injuries after altercations with inmates.

Palo Alto resident Aram James,

a retired public defender, opposed the planned facility.

"We can do better than designing a new prison," James said. "We can't afford to have this jail."

Burlingame City Councilman Michael Brownrigg said he is concerned about yearly costs to operate the facility.

"Too often we build things without thinking about the long-run operating expenses," Brownrigg said.

### Promoting safety

County Supervisor Adrienne Tissier, who voted to proceed with jail planning, cited the area's history.

"San Mateo County has always been considered a safe county and this really doesn't happen by luck," Tissier said. "If we did nothing it would be a dereliction of duty."

Sheriff Greg Munks said that the design phase for the project is expected to take 12 to 14 months.