

## Jenna Kay

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**From:** Don Steinke <crvancouverusa@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 28, 2025 7:01 PM  
**To:** nick.massie@rotschyinc.com; Jenna Kay; Stedler, Anne  
**Subject:** Fwd: February Newsletter

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From Don Steinke, fyi  
Hi Nick, Jenna, and Anne  
Our State Senate has passed parking reform with strong bipartisan support. Now it goes to the House.  
Developers may have more parking spaces if they so choose, but jurisdictions can't require them beyond certain thresholds.

The reporter writing about this below did not explain whether or not this applied to counties, so I copied this from the legislature's website.  
Summary of Engrossed First Substitute Bill:

A city, code city, or county may not require more than 0.5 parking space per residential dwelling unit.

A city, code city, or county may not require more than one parking space per 1000 square feet of commercial space.

A city, code city, or county may not require any minimum parking requirements for:

- existing buildings undergoing change of use, including vacant buildings;
- residences under 1200 square feet;
- commercial spaces under 5000 square feet;
- affordable housing;
- senior housing;
- housing for people with disabilities;
- facilities that serve alcohol;
- child care facilities; and
- commercial spaces in mixed-use projects.

Exceptions. Parking restrictions do not apply to the following:

- accessible parking spaces in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act;

- portions of cities, code cities, and counties within a one-mile radius of a commercial airport in Washington with at least 9 million annual enplanements; or
- cities or code cities with a population of 20,000 or less.

The parking limitations do not apply if a city, code city, or county submits to the Department of Commerce (Commerce) an empirical study prepared by a credentialed transportation or land use planning expert that clearly demonstrates, and Commerce finds and certifies, that the application of the parking limitations will be significantly less safe for vehicle drivers or passengers, pedestrians, or bicyclists than the jurisdiction's current parking requirements.

Counties may require off-street parking if the county's roads are not developed to the standards for streets and roads adopted by the cities within that county.

Other Provisions. Current minimum residential parking requirements for cities planning under the GMA are repealed.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **The Urbanist** <[info@theurbanist.org](mailto:info@theurbanist.org)>

Date: Fri, Feb 28, 2025 at 4:01 PM

Subject: February Newsletter

To: <[crVancouverUSA@gmail.com](mailto:crVancouverUSA@gmail.com)>

[View this email in your browser](#)



## February Newsletter

As the depths of winter begin to make way for the warmer weather of spring, we look back at a month of snow, bickering about the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, Proposition 1A being approved by voters, and a legislative session in full swing. We had a busy February!

## Some of our most essential reads and headlines

One of the top stories out of Olympia was the Senate approving a major parking reform. [Senate Bill 5184](#) limits parking requirements in new development to 0.5 per unit. Though it was amended to exclude cities with less than 20,000 residents, Senate Bill 5184 still represents one of the most robust statewide parking reform packages to move forward in any state. It now must pass the House. [Read More](#)

In local news, several of Seattle's exclusive neighborhoods are rallying to fight Mayor Harrell's One Seattle Plan. The appeals, filed by residents in Madison Park, Mount Baker, and Hawthorne Hills, seek to require additional environmental review, pushing back the City's plan to allow more housing. [Read More](#)

Social housing won big in Seattle's special election earlier this month with a commanding lead even as the first ballots dropped. Proposition 1A grabbed nearly 58% of the election night vote tally, signaling social housing's victory. Ultimately, it ended up being a 26-point win as all ballots were counts. The measure will tax big businesses to raise about \$53 million annually to fund social housing. [Read More](#)



*Backers of Initiative 1A gathered at the Amazon Spheres to highlight the flood of cash from the region's large corporations, including Amazon, promoting alternative Proposition 1B. (Ryan Packer)*

In organizational news, The Urbanist has partnered with Eastside Urbanism to host monthly socials outside of Seattle. We also put out our annual reader survey and [wrote about some of the key takeaways](#) from your responses. Our events program is [expanding in March](#). As always, watch our [events calendar](#) for upcoming urbanist activities!

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Here's a selection of our other coverage this month in The Urbanist:

### Transportation and Transit

- **Lawmaker Seeks to Jumpstart New Passenger Ferry Routes Across Puget Sound** With an eye toward adding new passenger ferry service by 2026, HB 1923 would expand the number of transit agencies able to operate foot ferries, and also set up a new state grant to fund them. [Read More.](#)
- **Harrell Proposes Merging City's Sound Transit Work Into Office of Waterfront** Praised for delivering Seattle's massive waterfront revamp, the Office of the Waterfront has faced criticism for being shadowy and unaccountable. Now it will become a one-stop-shop for Sound Transit permitting. [Read More.](#)
- **State Lawmakers Chart Path to Double Amtrak Cascades Service** State lawmakers are signaling intent to improve Amtrak Cascades service with legislation setting a goal of cutting the trip time from Seattle to Portland to 2.5 hours and boosting service to 14 daily trips with 88% on-time performance by 2035. If lawmakers pass the bill, the goal for trip time service north to Vancouver would be 2.75 hours. [Read More.](#)
- **Bellevue Pushes to Open Up Bus-Only Lanes to Private Shuttles** Framed as a way to increase the efficiency of new transit lanes being eyed for the RapidRide K Line, the move could give transit agencies across the state less control over one of the biggest tools they have to increase speed and reliability. [Read More.](#)
- **Walkability Isn't Just Good Urban Planning: It's a Public Health Intervention** A recent peer-reviewed study of identical twins illustrated the value of living in a walkable neighborhood, showing a strong correlation between walkable neighborhoods, time spent walking, and positive health outcomes. Simply put, it

appears that people tend to lead healthier lives in walkable neighborhoods. [Read More](#).

## Housing and Land Use

- **Housing Advocates Outnumber ‘One Seattle’ Opponents, Moore and Rivera Back Opponents**

Housing advocates outnumbered opponents by a margin of 89 to 75 during a five-hour public hearing Wednesday on the One Seattle housing growth plan.

Nevertheless, several councilmembers made it clear they sided with slow-growth advocates, rather than the majority demanding more housing options. [Read More](#).

- **Seattle Readies Land Use Code Overhaul in Preparation for Sound Transit 3**

Seattle's land use code is ill-equipped to handle the scale of permits that will be required to approve the city's next light rail lines. This proposed overhaul is intended to ensure transit remains on schedule. [Read More](#).

- **Mercer Island's Growth Plan Doesn't Meet State Standards, Appeal Alleges**

Futurewise is challenging the validity of Mercer Island's Comprehensive Plan, alleging it's out of alignment with a number of state housing policies, including a requirement to maximize the area around its forthcoming light rail station. [Read More](#).

- **Tacoma Aims for 325,000 Residents by 2040 with New Comprehensive Plan**

Tacoma is striving to pick up its pace of housing growth. The City hopes newly enacted multiplex zoning will help it hit 325,000 residents in a few decades time, a population gain of nearly 50%. [Read More](#).

- **Op-Ed: SoDo Is for Industry, Seattle Should Reject Rushed Housing Push**

Port Commissioner Ryan Calkins argues that the Seattle City Council should reject Council President Sara Nelson's rushed plan to add a housing district in SoDo and continue to reserve the area for industry and freight needs. [Read More](#).

- **Washington Senate Greenlights Elevator Reform Aimed at Boosting Midrise Homebuilding**

Senate Bill 5156, approved by the Washington Senate this week, could open the door to more accessible small apartment buildings built around smaller European-style elevators, reducing overall housing costs at the same time. [Read More](#).

## Public Safety

- **State Bill Would Circumvent SPOG, Clear Path for Seattle Civilian Responder Expansion**

Seattle is seeking a fix at the state legislature to grow its civilian crisis response program following resistance from the Seattle Police Officers Guild that has blocked expansion. To stay alive, Rep. Shaun Scott's HB 1816 will need to pass out of committee before a February 21 deadline. [Read More](#).

- **Kirkland's New Mental Health Crisis Center Top Contender for Levy Contract**

Kirkland Connections is a new 24/7 mental health crisis center that could prove a model for the five crisis centers a county levy approved and funded in 2023. Such services are rare in the region. [Read More.](#)

- **Op-Ed: Those Maimed by ‘Less Lethal’ Weapons Oppose Re-arming Police with Them**

The Seattle City Council is set to vote Tuesday to formally re-authorize use of "less lethal" crowd control weapons, like the blast balls that seriously injured folks like me in the summer of 2020. It sends exactly the wrong message around police accountability and reform. [Read More.](#)

## Politics & Elections

- **Dow Constantine Reveals Sound Transit CEO Bid**

After serving as a leader on the Sound Transit Board for 15 years, Dow Constantine revealed Friday he is seeking the job as the agency's CEO. Some transit advocates remain skeptical. [Read More.](#)

- **Harrell Calls Musk, Thiel ‘Smart Innovators,’ Tells Downtown Businesses He’s Fighting for Them**

On Tuesday, Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell praised conservative billionaires as "smart innovators," but pledged to push back on federal overreach and advance cybersecurity, telling business leaders: "I will fight for you." [Read More.](#)

- **Newcastle Mayor Pushed to Scrub Climate Change, Equity from City’s Growth Plan**

Newcastle Mayor Robert Clark pushed to remove references to promoting racial and social equity as "vague," "subjective," and "irrelevant," and called climate change "subjective." Many of his recommendations were adopted by the Newcastle Planning Commission. [Read More.](#)

- **Op-Ed: Prop 1A Is Seattle’s Opportunity to Lead on Climate Justice**

The rents and temps are too damn high. Seattle’s social housing developer can help -- with Prop 1A funding. [Read More.](#)

- **Rinck Urges Seattle Leaders to Defend Against Trump Attacks**

At a protest Monday, Seattle City Councilmember Alexis Mercedes Rinck urged Seattle leaders to take on Trump to defend against attacks on federal workers, civil liberties, and constitutional rights. After earlier talks of collaborating with Trump, Mayor Harrell struck a more defiant tone in "State of the City" speech today, but was light on specifics. [Read More.](#)

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