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"Seattle must preserve single-family neighborhoods that are essential to its livability, character and economic success."

Why? Is there any evidence you can't have a livable, economically vibrant city without single family homes?



Don't upzone Seattle neighborhoods

Seattle must preserve single-family neighborhoods, one of its most precious assets. Mayor Jenny Durkan should suspend an ill-conceived proposal to triple density in neighborhoods, especially since a ...

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/editorials/dont-upzone-seattle-neighborhoods/>

Is there a counterproposition here? Or is this just opposition for its own sake, "Ni shagu nazad" on behalf of property owners who simultaneously carp about their 1% property taxes while crowing about their property value?

"[I]t would create tremendous uncertainty for 300,000 mostly middle-class residents supporting the city through homeownership, removing certainty about the neighborhood and city they bought into." and what of those who are priced out of *any* home?

Curious about that phrase "300,000 mostly middle-class residents supporting the city through homeownership" which I suspect is doing a lot of work. Do they mean 300,000 owner-occupied homes? Or 300,000 local people, both renters and owner-occupants?

We know Seattle is more than 50% renters and there are a lot of rented single-family homes (you can look all this stuff up). So this just sounds like a sop to the owners, occupants and renters alike, who value their windfall gains more than the people aren't their neighbors.

I don't know that this idea is any better than the head tax: I think taxing commercial land, especially vacant/abandoned land/brownfields, is a much better option. But the business community will squeal like scalded cats, even if they see lower rents and more options.

That's one of the big draws of a land value tax: it makes developers compete, makes land too valuable to keep idle as an asset. Developers complain that land costs too much to acquire: this is one way to resolve that and raise needed revenue for the city.

Who loses in this scenario? Speculators, but they won't lose much if they have been riding the gains of the past 20 years — or 100, in some cases. Who wins? Anyone with ambition and a plan. We could see new developments where now we see brownfields and graffiti galleries.

I'm sure City Hall will cave on this but maybe someone somewhere can push back — not too hard, mind — and ask for a counterproposal that addresses high rents/home prices and the side effects of homelessness and punishing commutes.

The idea that this is solved because a few apartment owners misjudged the market and are now offering one-time promos is ridiculous but there it is, in this editorial. How they must have laughed as they slipped that in there...

cc: [@MayorJenny](#) [@cmkshama](#) [@workingwa](#) [@civicskunkworks](#) [@BrettHamil](#)

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