



The Illinois Homes For All Coalition endorses SB 2111 and HB 3438, legislation that would reform transit in Illinois. The bill would establish a new Northern Illinois Transit Authority (NITA) and implement the reforms necessary for the CTA, Metra, and Pace to be better stewards of additional revenue. The bill addresses many of the frustrations that passengers of multiple agencies experienced daily, including service coordination and fare integration, by devising a new governance structure.

The legislation includes an important provision, the People Over Parking Act, which would eliminate costly parking mandates around transit hubs. This legislation does not ban existing or new parking around transit, but instead offers each property owner the flexibility to decide how much parking is right for their business or residents. This was a key recommendation from the Governor's Report of the Ad-Hoc Missing Middle Housing Solutions Advisory Committee, which found that "Mandatory minimum parking requirements add to the cost of construction, making new housing expensive to build, while taking up limited space for additional housing units on the development site."¹

Building more homes is essential to fixing Illinois's housing shortage and bringing housing costs down. Eliminating parking mandates alone have been shown to have the greatest effect on housing construction, increasing homebuilding by 40% to 70%². By building more housing around transit stations, we ensure long term ridership and fiscal sustainability of transit.

This policy's success has been seen elsewhere in the Midwest. In Minneapolis, upzoning to allow for duplexes and triplexes stole headlines, but it was parking reform that had the greatest impact. Most new homes were built as apartments and each builder could decide on the appropriate amount of parking resulting in a building boom and falling rents.³ Median market rent in Minneapolis is now affordable to households earning 60% of the area's median income (AMI).⁴ The Illinois Affordable Housing Planning and Appeal Act (AHPAA) requires that 10% of housing units in a municipality be affordable to households earning 60% of AMI, Minneapolis was able to create that level of affordability for a median household!

It's not just Minneapolis; many cities have eliminated costly parking mandates, including Dallas, Texas, which is less dense and has less transit than many Chicagoland suburban municipalities. States are eliminating parking mandates as well, in the past few years California, Colorado, Montana, Oregon, and Washington and Montana have passed parking reforms similar to SB 2111, many of them with bipartisan support.

¹ <https://gov.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/gov/documents/ad-hoc-committee-report.pdf>

² <https://www.sightline.org/2024/12/10/parking-reform-alone-can-boost-homebuilding-by-40-to-70-percent/>

³ <https://reason.com/2022/05/11/eliminating-single-family-zoning-isnt-the-reason-minneapolis-is-a-yimby-success-story/>

⁴ <https://streets.mn/2025/02/14/minneapolis-housing-market-suffers-from-success/>



Other parking and land use-related expected benefits of SB 2111 include:

- The ability to build more homes and businesses more expediently near transit also means additional property tax revenue for municipalities by expanding the tax base.
- NITA will be able to develop and operate transit-supportive real estate, in accordance with local zoning, that can generate new revenue for the transit authority. A rail company in Japan lost money operating its rail network in 2023, but made an overall profit of about \$1 billion entirely through its real estate holdings.⁵
- Less parking being built means homes will be closer to transit stops, increasing walkability and transit ridership and reducing carbon emissions..

The combination of the People Over Parking Act and authorization to develop real estate is an investment in NITA's long-term ridership and fiscal sustainability.

Opportunities to pass legislation that address so many issues at once don't come around often. We urge you to pass this bill that addresses transit structure, the long-term financial health of Chicagoland transit, climate change, and Illinois's housing shortage.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned Members of the Illinois Homes For All Coalition

Abundant Housing Illinois (AH-IL)
Housing Action Illinois (HAI)
Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance (CAFHA)
Sierra Club Illinois
Impact for Equity
Strong Towns Chicago
Strong Towns Batavia
Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) Chicago
YIMBY Action
CUrbanism Club
Rockford Area YIMBY
Chicago Growth Project
Center for New Liberalism Chicago
Parking Reform Network (PRN)
Shared Use Mobility Center (SUMC)
Strong Towns Blono
Joining Forces For Affordable Housing
Habitat for Humanity Chicago
UChicago Students Against Exclusionary Zoning

⁵ <https://youtu.be/6dKiEY0UOtA?si=p9mkXoCvaI432z2b&t=964>