



Written by [James Murphy](#) on July 26, 2018

## A Streetcar Named Incompetence: Anti-Trump Seattle Mayor Botches Public-works Project

Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan is in a pickle. In a plan to connect a new streetcar line with two existing lines, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) ordered 10 new streetcars last fall at a cost to taxpayers of 52 million dollars. The problem? The cars are heavier and longer than the streetcars currently in use and may not work on the existing track. The cars are so big that they likely [won't even fit in the city's maintenance barn](#).



Oops!

“It appears the error will require either a change order for the design of the streetcars or incur new costs for construction of new or retrofitted maintenance barns,” City Councilmember Lisa Herbold declared in a blog post last week.

This is the latest setback for the progressive hero Durkan. In March she was forced to halt work on the streetcar project when the Seattle Times reported that the estimated costs to run the new system could be up to 50% higher than the SDOT publicly stated. Initially set for 150 million, the cost of the project has already risen to 200 million, with 52 million of that seemingly wasted on streetcars that won't work on the existing track.

An independent audit to review the costs of the project was scheduled to be done earlier this month, but the results of that audit are either not ready or have not been released yet. The mayor's office has received a draft report by the management consulting firm KPMG but now says the full report won't come out until August. The mayor's office hints that the draft report reveals an “additional capital shortfall.” Who knows what further financial blunders may have occurred?

Durkan has earned some national attention from leftists by going toe-to-toe with the Trump administration. In April, after the Justice Department sent letters to many so-called sanctuary cities including Seattle, urging them to follow federal immigration law, Durkan responded with the leftist vitriol we have all come to know so well.

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“Our city complies with federal immigration law and asks that the Department of Justice and ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] do the same,” Durkan wrote. “The federal government does not get to run our cities or convert our local law enforcement officials into immigration cops. I implore this administration to focus on real public safety threats, like the opioid crisis, instead of unnecessarily threatening our residents and mayors across the country.”

Mayor Durkan has also leveled criticism at the Trump administration via Twitter on several occasions. Early in July she opined, “As woman mayors, we are doing our part to protect our citizens against the all-out war that the Trump administration has waged against safe, inclusive communities, clean energy



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and bold climate action.”

Durkan has also criticized the administration’s decision to end Temporary Protected Status for illegal immigrants from El Salvador. “Further evidence that the Trump administration is founded on cruelty and callous disregard for immigrant lives. Seattle stands with Salvadorans against this unjust decision,” she wrote in another tweet.

But it seems Seattle’s mayor is tweeting as Seattle burns. Besides the streetcar fiasco, Seattle is swimming in homeless people. Despite spending more than 68 million dollars on homelessness last year, Seattle reportedly has the third-highest homeless population in the nation. Per capita, the city may have the [worst homelessness problem in the nation](#).

And in June, Seattle was forced to [repeal a so-called head tax](#) on companies that made more than 20 million dollars in gross revenue. A tax of approximately \$275 was to be paid for each worker these companies employed. But because of pressure from Seattle-based companies Amazon and Starbucks, among others, the city council was forced to repeal the tax. The funds received from this tax would have gone to alleviate the homeless problem.

Mayor Durkan can’t be blamed for all of Seattle’s issues, since she only took office last November after Ed Murray, the city’s first gay mayor, was forced out due to child sexual-abuse allegations. Durkan, the city’s first lesbian mayor, inherited a lot of the problems she now faces. But although Seattle mayoral elections are officially non-partisan, the city suffers the same problem that many American cities do: For decades, it has been run by leftists.

But Mayor Durkan can definitely be blamed for attacking the current presidential administration while her own city is foundering amid scandal and mismanagement. Whether you’re a Christian or not, the words of Jesus from Matthew 7:5 apply here: “Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother’s eye.”



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