The Shape of Our Community: Zoning and Land-Use for Walkability

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Form-Based Codes Institute at Smart Growth America
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Why Do We Care About Zoning?

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Source: DPZ CoDesign
Why Do We Care About Zoning?

Studies show that “smart growth” zoning correlates with…….
Why Do We Care About Zoning?

People 18+ years of age are more likely to engage in walking as a leisure-time activity.
Why Do We Care About Zoning?

More adults walk or bike to work.

Photo by Ivan Davydenko on Unsplash
**Why Do We Care About Zoning?**

Pedestrians fatality rates are reduced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metro Area</th>
<th>Pedestrian Fatality Rate per 100,000</th>
<th>Dangerous by Design Rank</th>
<th>Form Based Code?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orlando</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st}</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>18\textsuperscript{th}</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Rapids</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>61\textsuperscript{st}</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Smart Growth America’s Dangerous by Design report ranks the most dangerous metro areas for pedestrians by examining pedestrian fatality rates normalized by population.
- The examples on the left compare pedestrian fatality rates in two of the top 20 most dangerous metros with cities in the same states that have form-based codes.
- There is an opportunity for additional research into zoning and pedestrian safety outcomes.
Conventional Zoning

Focuses on separation of uses: commercial, residential, recreational
Conventional Zoning

Places priority on efficient movement and parking for single-occupancy vehicles instead of safe spaces for walking and biking.
Conventional Zoning

Auto-centric: absence of sidewalks and/or poor connectivity make use of non-motorized vehicles unsafe
Conventional Zoning

Provides limited public transit options: difficult to walk or use non-motorized vehicles

Photo by Louis Hansel on Unsplash

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Form-Based Codes

Focuses on the built form and character of place
Form-Based Codes

What happens outside the building -- streets, blocks, building form and scale, open space -- as opposed to what happens on the inside (residential, commercial, etc.)

Source: Steve Price, Urban Strategies
A regulatory framework and a set of standards for both public and private development to ensure that the approved community vision or plan for the area is realized and the character of that vision is maintained over time.
Form-Based Codes

Applied at different scales – city-wide, neighborhood, or corridor – and in different contexts – urban or suburban, greenfields, infill, or redevelopment areas – to create walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods

Source: Dover Kohl & Partners
Use-Based Codes vs FBCs

Conventional codes regulate density and use:
- square feet
- number of units
- type of office, retail, residential, recreation

FBCs focus on physical form and context:
- How are streets and blocks laid out?
- How are buildings placed, arranged and detailed?
- What is the building’s impact on the public realm?
- Is there a mix of building types?
- What is the character of the open spaces – are they useable?
- Is it walkable?

Source: DPZ CoDesign

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Use-Based Codes vs FBCs

A Matter of Emphasis
Use-Based Codes vs FBCs

Conventional Zoning Code:
- Heavy on text
- Difficult to interpret
- Frequent use of variances and waivers

Form-Based Code:
- Standards for public and private spaces
- Illustrated and transparent
- Less depend on variances and waivers

Source: DPZ CoDesign
Form-Based Codes

CONNECTED  Walkable | Bikeable | Transit-Ready | Permeable | Proximate
COMPACT As dense as the market will bear
COMPLETE Balance of Jobs | Housing | Retail | Programmed open space
COMPLEX Housing for a diversity of Age | Income | Character preference
CONVIVIAL Public spaces are Safe | Engaging | Accessible | Comfortable
CONSERVING Buildings are Resource-Efficient | Healthy | Durable | Flexible
COST-EFFECTIVE Structures are appropriate-tech | Resilient | Repairable

Source: DPZ CoDesign
Form-Based Codes

Miami, FL

Nashville, TN

Hercules, CA

Akanda, Gabon

Beaufort, SC

Different Settings
Form-Based Codes

Many Places

+584 Codes to date (344 adopted)
+105 million ha impacted
+45 million people impacted

Source: Hazel Borys & Emily Talen | 584 Codes plus 16 Guidelines Tracked as of January 2015 | Creative Commons NonCommercial ShareAlike License
Form-Based Codes

Examples from the Field
Columbia Pike, Arlington County, VA

Before

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Source: Chris Zimmerman
Columbia Pike, Arlington County, VA

After

Source: Chris Zimmerman
Columbia Pike, Arlington County, VA

Instead of this . . .

. . . they wanted this.

Source: Chris Zimmerman
Columbia Pike, Arlington County, VA

Instead of this . . .

. . . they wanted this.

Source: Chris Zimmerman
Instead of this . . . 

. . . they wanted this.

Source: Chris Zimmerman
Purpose and Intent
(excerpt)

The Community
a. That neighborhoods and urban areas should be compact, pedestrian-oriented and contain a mix of uses.
b. That neighborhoods and urban areas should be the preferred pattern of development and that Districts specializing in a single use should be the exception.
c. That ordinary activities of daily living should occur within walking distance of most dwellings, allowing independence to those who do not drive.
d. That interconnected networks of Thoroughfares should be designed to disperse traffic and reduce the length of automobile trips.
e. That within neighborhoods, a range of housing types and price levels should be provided to accommodate diverse ages and incomes.
Bradenton, Florida

Bay Area Mohs Surgery & Dermatology

New Construction

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Source: Dover Kohl and Partners
Bradenton, Florida

Zeko’s Restaurant

Redevelopment

Source: Dover Kohl and Partners
Bradenton, Florida

Source: Dover Kohl and Partners

Form-Based Codes Institute at Smart Growth America
Bradenton, Florida

“Pink Palace”/Hampton Inn & Suites

Historical Renovation

Source: Dover Kohl and Partners
Buena Vista, Colorado

Established Town Center
Buena Vista, Colorado

New Construction
Adjacent to Downtown

South Main – Buena Vista
Buena Vista, Colorado

South Main – Buena Vista

Form-Based Codes Institute at Smart Growth America

Source: Dover Kohl and Partners
Buena Vista, Colorado

South Main – Buena Vista
The Form-Based Codes Institute is a program of Smart Growth America dedicated to advancing the understanding and use of form-based codes. The Institute:

- Provides information, capacity-building, and technical assistance to the planning and development community;
- Recognizes and publicizes exemplary form-based codes; and
- Serves as a forum for discussion and advancement of form-based codes.
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Thank you !!!