



The Project for Code Reform

Coding solutions that enable great places

Why aren't more cities implementing placemaking strategies, which are proven to expand economic activity, increase mobility, protect the environment, and create more equitable places?

In many cases, it's because a municipality's zoning codes and ordinances make it illegal to create the type of vibrant communities that support jobs, foster economic development, and are attractive places for people to live, work, and play that residents and local leaders are seeking.

CODE REFORM

The challenge before the placemaking movement now is how to bring coding innovations and changes to the 42,000 units of local government with zoning authority. To date, a limited number of cities have updated their codes, creating inequities between cities and towns with—and without—resources to update their zoning codes to create the foundation for diverse, vibrant places.

CNU's [Project for Code Reform](#) seeks to streamline the code reform process by providing local governments place-specific incremental coding changes that address the most problematic barriers first, build political will, and ultimately create more walkable, prosperous, and equitable places. And to do it in a way that meets planners, mayors, and planning commissioners where they are: politically, financially, and administratively. The Project's incremental approach allows jurisdictions to set their own pace for code changes, allowing them to prioritize their coding efforts, respond to the community's vision and needs, and allows for greater community learning and understanding.

PROJECT GOALS

Over the next five years, CNU's team of national and local experts and local stakeholders will identify the relevant barriers, solutions, and resources through a series of state-specific roundtables, national convenings, and ongoing discussions. Working together, we will develop a flexible package of strategies, tools, and information usable by all 42,000 units of local government. This expert team will:

- Focus on outcomes: implementing walkable urbanism, building stronger budgets, and creating more great places.
- Identify the contexts in which various existing code solutions are appropriate.
- Consider incremental approaches, rather than all-or-nothing or all-at-once solutions.
- Expand the coding conversation to better address local officials' concerns and priorities.
- Engage developers from the start so that the solutions generated are business-friendly and stimulate investment in creating and sustaining great places.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Coding Matrix

Designed to be implemented immediately, the [Coding Matrix](#) provides cities and towns with the place-based coding language needed to address their most pressing issues.

Main Street Corridor Code

The [Main Street Corridor Code](#) is an innovative five-page code that addresses the needs of a city's main street and is ready for implementation immediately. This code is a building block for municipalities—as municipalities build political will and capacity they can update their code in full using the principles developed by the Project for Code Reform.