

## The case for killing zoning



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# CHARLOTTE / URBAN INSTITUTE



### 'Arbitrary Lines' and the case for doing away with zoning

**By Aaron Houck**

You've surely seen them, but you might not have noticed them—roadside signs with a big "Z," indicating an upcoming public hearing on zoning at an interminable City Council meeting. Most of us know that zoning exists. Perhaps we even know it involves planning and land use. But for many of us, the specific details are a little vague. We just know that zoning is one of those things that's a necessary feature of modern cities.

Not so fast, cautions M. Nolan Gray, a planner-turned-scholar and author of the new book *Arbitrary Lines: How Zoning Broke the American City and How to Fix It*. Gray does not mince words: "abolishing zoning is a necessary—if not sufficient—change if we want to build a more affordable, prosperous, equitable, and sustainable American city."



### Building some 'there' there: Transforming University City

**Future Charlotte Podcast**

One of Charlotte's quintessential suburban communities has big plans to transform itself into a dense, walkable, mixed-use center. Greenways, sidewalks, protected

bike lanes and transit would replace the car-choked expressways and huge parking lots that dominate the auto-centric area now.

We're not talking about Ballantyne or SouthPark. Leaders in University City — Charlotte's second-largest employment district and youngest neighborhood — are betting they can take a part of the city that developed in the heyday of the car and turn it into a walkable neighborhood.



### Catch up with the Strategic Mobility Plan: Less driving, why people don't choose buses and a data potpourri

**By Ely Portillo**

A far-reaching new plan passed this week with hopes to shape Charlotte's transportation infrastructure for decades to come, reorienting a car-dependent, sprawling Southern city towards a denser, transit-oriented, bike- and pedestrian-friendly future.

But the Strategic Mobility Plan isn't just an outline of policies meant to guide future growth — it's also a rich trove of data and analysis on the state of Charlotte's transportation system. For people who like to nerd out on transit and transportation infrastructure, the 164 pages are full of nuggets to unpack.

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