Empowering Zoning Reform
Through Location

One of the fastest-emerging trends among community planners is zoning reform. There are several reasons why this has quickly moved to the forefront of priorities for hundreds of cities and counties.
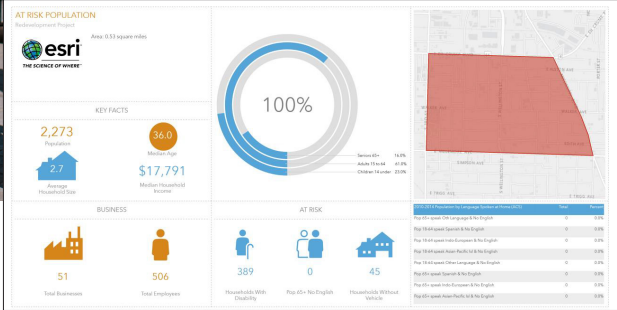
It all starts with the fact that many zoning codes are antiquated, in that they were initially developed several decades ago to meet the needs of residents. During that time, many cities may have made patchwork changes (e.g., changes to floor area ratio, increases in setbacks, modifications to developments' proximity to wetlands) to the zoning code to fit changing demands from residents, administrators, and developers. But these patches are only temporary fixes and don't address the need for reforming codes to meet modern expectations of its residents.

Consequently, this makes it difficult (at best) for a city to provide the kinds of housing options that its existing and prospective residents need. Single-family housing was in greater demand in the 1970s and '80s than it is today, as the size of the average household decreases. Many residents, particularly those who are young and single, either aren't looking for or cannot afford these types of homes and would prefer more walkable communities with denser concentrations of housing and access to stores, restaurants, transit, and so forth.

Also, having dated ordinances with restrictions on new types of housing directly impacts housing affordability, as we are already seeing in communities of all sizes across the nation. This severely limits housing options for low- and middle-income households. By extension, this also adversely affects economic mobility. People who cannot live close to their work or the services they need may be forced to move farther away in order to afford housing, which in turn increases commuter traffic and limits their economic growth opportunities.

A Geographic Approach to Zoning Reform

Changing the development parameters is likely to be a sensitive topic for residents and developers, so zoning reform requires a data-driven approach. It will be essential for planning professionals to embrace a geographic approach to zoning.

Promoting Long-Lasting Policies

Zoning Reform with GIS

Understanding Your Community

Supporting Civic Inclusion

Collecting Intelligence from Business Systems

Incorporating Scenario Planning and Design

Understanding Neighborhood Characteristics

ArcGIS® Business Analyst℠ Web App provides access to about 2,000 demographic, socioeconomic, workforce, and business variables to deliver detailed insight into the characteristics, market trends, and needs of neighborhoods down to the block group level.
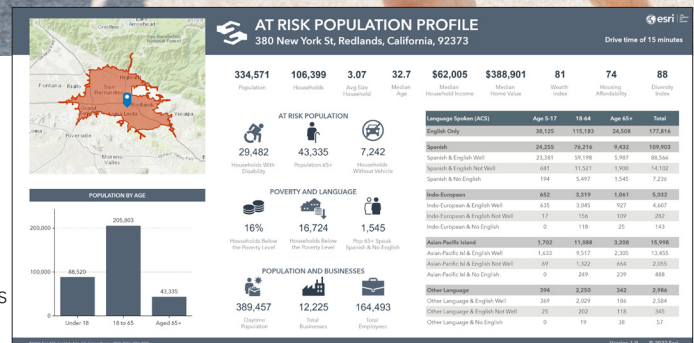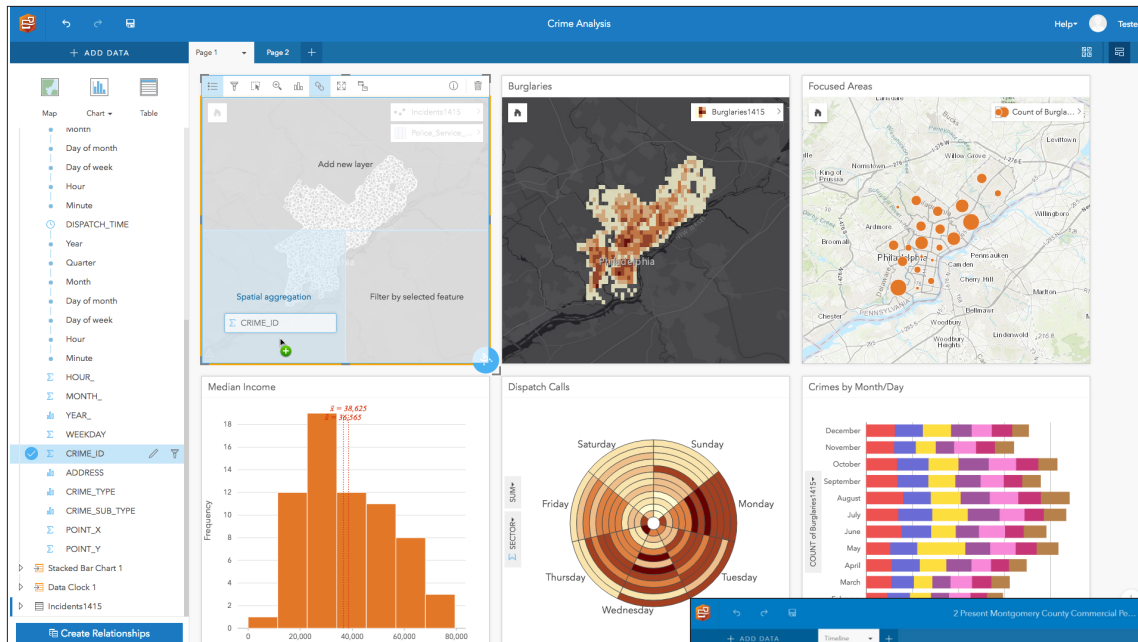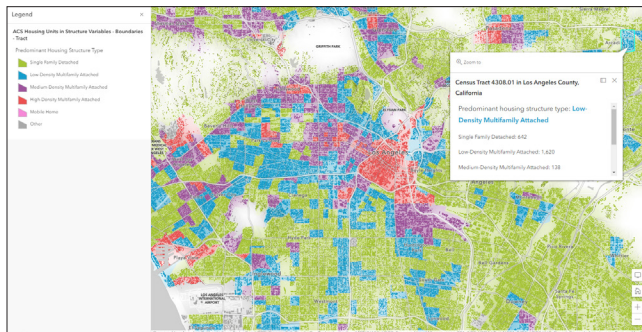
# Deriving Intelligence from Business Systems

ArcGIS Insights^{SM} generates business intelligence from existing community development systems, such as permitting, to identify trends and patterns in development over time and show where the greatest need for reform exists.
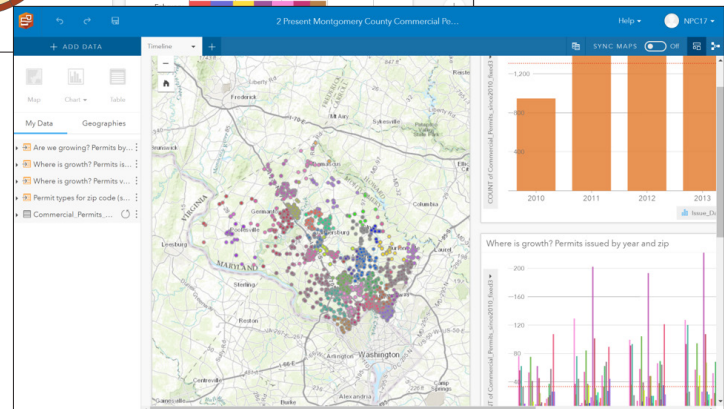
This ArcGIS Online map layer contains the most current release of data from the American Community Survey (ACS) about housing units categorized by structure type. esrigov.maps.arcgis.com/home.
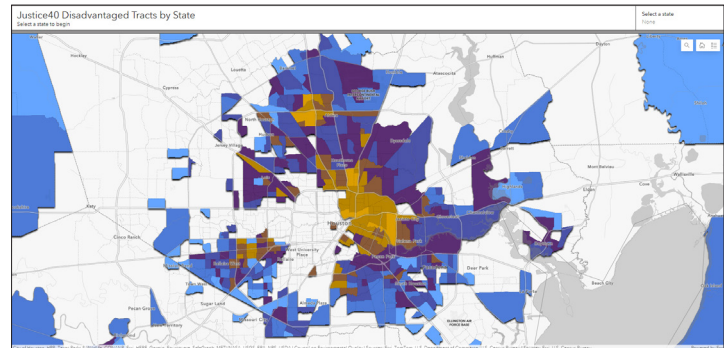
The ArcGIS data layer Justice40 Disadvantaged Tracts by State—which includes census tracts in the US and its territories—depicts disadvantaged communities, based on Justice40 Initiative criteria. Census tracks that meet at least one criterion are shaded in blue, with color increasing to yellow where more criteria are met. esrigov.maps.arcgis.com/home.
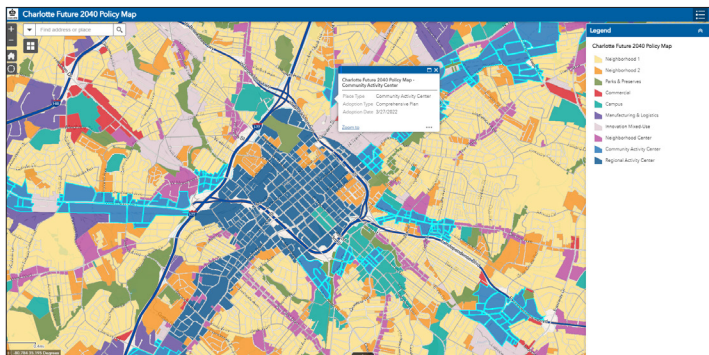

The Charlotte Future 2040 Policy Map is part of the city's long-range plan that will guide the development and investments made in the community over the next two decades. charlotte.maps.arcgis.com/apps.
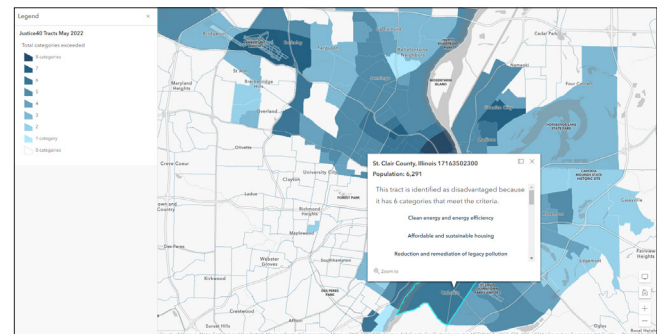
This ArcGIS Online map layer assesses and identifies communities that are disadvantaged according to Justice40 Initiative criteria in the US and its territories. esrigov.maps.arcgis.com/home.

Promoting Sustainable Policy

Esri® Maps for Public Policy is a free resource within ArcGIS Living Atlas of the World that includes curated content focused on policy initiatives—housing, economic mobility, disadvantaged neighborhoods, and more.
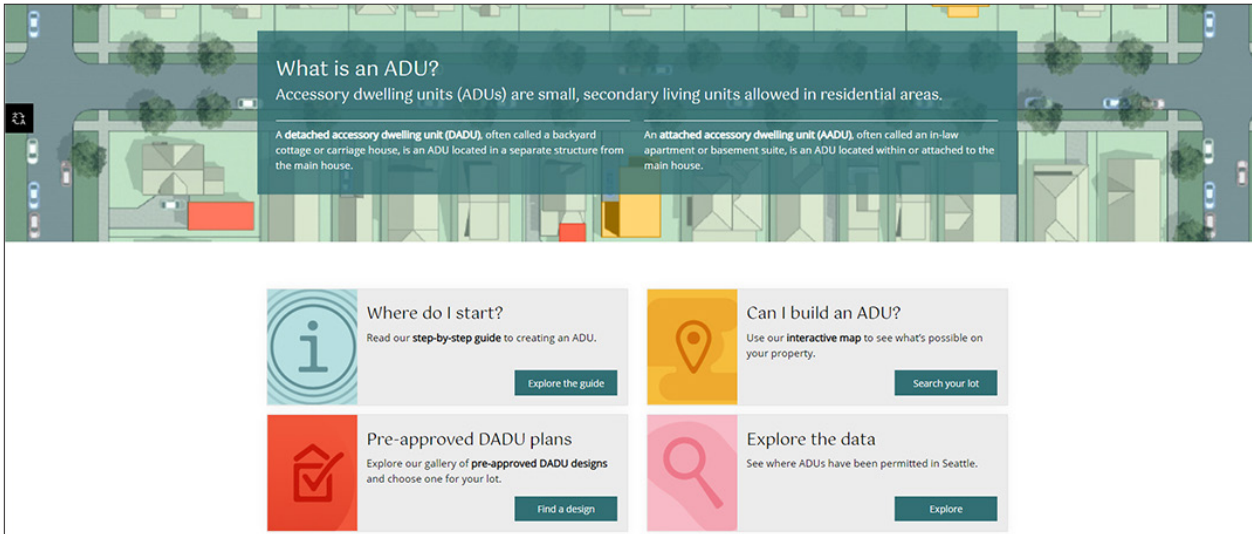
The City of Seattle used ArcGIS Hub to create, ADUniverse, a resident's central resource to learning about and planning an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) journey.
aduniverseseattlecitygis.hub.arcgis.com

Seattle's ADUniverse dashboard tracks progress creating ADUs to expand housing options in residential neighborhoods. Data shown on the dashboard comes from Seattle's Open Data Portal.
aduniverse-seattlecitygis.hub.arcgis.com
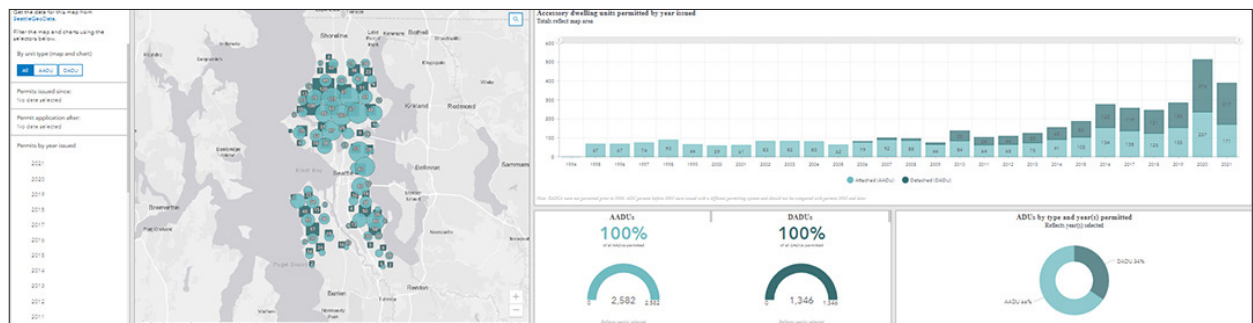
Supporting Civic Inclusion

ArcGIS Hub℠ opens the door to all residents and stakeholders to not only better inform them about specific initiatives, but also provide a mechanism for direct feedback about these plans using maps, surveys, videos, and more.

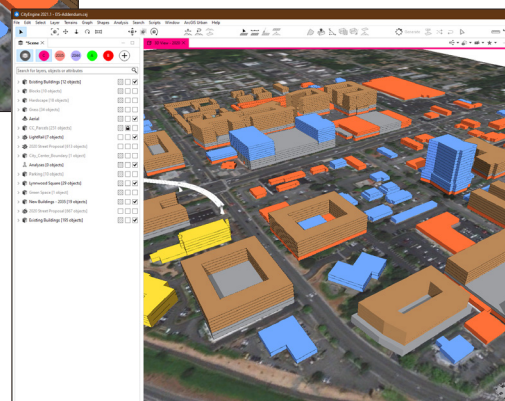ArcGIS Urban site suitability analysis is shown below.
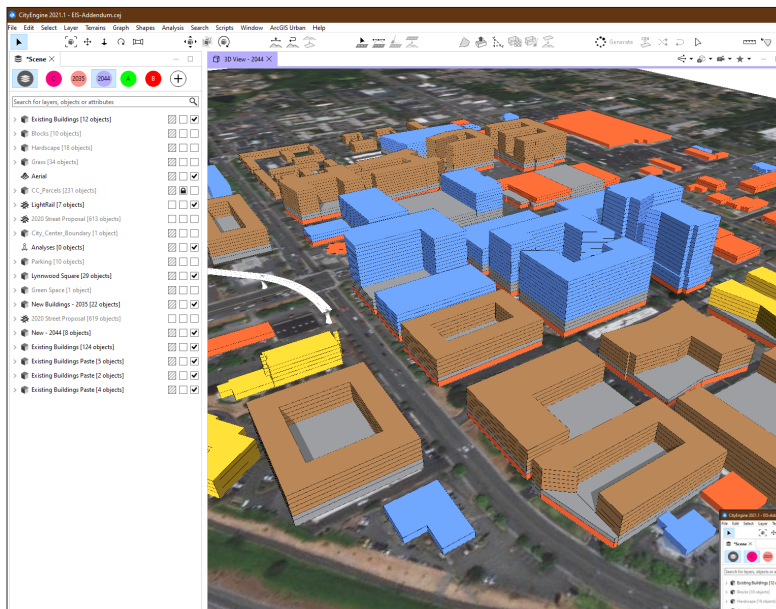
Above is Esri partner Houseal Lavigne Associates' ArcGIS CityEngine® model of a proposed development project and mid-rise residential sites in the city of Lynnwood.

Empowering Scenario Planning and Design

ArcGIS Urban is a web-based tool that enables planners to play out different scenarios for proposed zoning changes. Planners can instantly see the potential impact of a zoning change, including changes in population; increases in jobs; and the effects on traffic, utilities, and finances. These plans can be compared to others to identify the path forward that best meets the needs of the community.

Reforming a zoning ordinance can be a daunting, time-consuming task. ArcGIS provides the tools that planners, administrators, and residents need to take a data-driven approach to zoning to create a more sustainable, equitable, and thriving community.

Zoning Reform Offer

To assist with their zoning reform initiative, Esri is providing an offer tailored for planners and consultants that provides the software and services needed to visualize and analyze the impacts of these changes.

Services

Esri Professional Services will design, configure, and enable a suite of geospatial solutions to support a jurisdiction's zoning reform project based on in-house resources, timeline, and scope of work.

This effort consists of the following activities:

- Project kickoff and needs assessment
- Existing zoning and demographic evaluation (Business Analyst and ArcGIS Pro)
- Public outreach hub site deployment (ArcGIS Hub)
- Zoning reform model deployment (ArcGIS Urban)
- Realistic 3D form-based code visualization (ArcGIS CityEngine)
- Knowledge transfer workshops

Software

- ArcGIS Online account with 5 Creator and 20 Viewer named users
- ArcGIS Business Analyst—5 subscriptions
- ArcGIS Urban Suite—5 subscriptions
- ArcGIS Insights—2 subscriptions
- ArcGIS Hub Premium

To personalize this offer for your organization, please reach out directly to your Esri account team or email us at *planningteam@esri.com*.

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