

Events Library

Eco-Inclusivity: Ensuring Green Stormwater Practices Benefit All Communities

Date: October 19, 2023

00:00:00 --> 00:00:01: Thank you so much, Kevin and Rebecca.

00:00:02 --> 00:00:02: Hello all.

00:00:02 --> 00:00:05: I'm Sophia Lee, member, a board member of a.

00:00:05 --> 00:00:09: A Philadelphia chair of the Urban Design Committee and sustainability

00:00:09 --> 00:00:10: strategist at Jacobs.

00:00:10 --> 00:00:15: Many of us on the planning committee, an incredible collaboration

00:00:15 --> 00:00:19: between AI and ULI for today's event, have have a

00:00:19 --> 00:00:22: moment when urban when climate change becomes real.

00:00:23 --> 00:00:24: For me, it was Hurricane Ida.

00:00:24 --> 00:00:29: The colossal scale of water raging down the Schuylkill Basin still haunts me.

00:00:29 --> 00:00:30:

00:00:31 --> 00:00:33: Or it might be Halloween around the corner, I don't

00:00:33 --> 00:00:33: know.

00:00:34 --> 00:00:37: Fueled by this urgency, we have been working since January

00:00:37 --> 00:00:39: of 2023 to assemble this forum.

00:00:40 --> 00:00:44: Quick shout out to Kevin Moran, Rebecca Johnson, Christina Chavez,

00:00:44 --> 00:00:48: Julie Foley, Ashley Zimmerman, John Hawk, David McHenry, Kyle McGeorge,

00:00:48 --> 00:00:53: Danielle Fleischman for your enthusiasm and dedication on this collaboration.

00:00:53 --> 00:00:57: And now it is my great honor to introduce Allison

00:00:57 --> 00:01:01: Sant, our moderator for our first panel, Eco Inclusivity, Ensuring

00:01:01 --> 00:01:05: green Stormwater practices benefit all communities.

00:01:05 --> 00:01:08: Allison Sant is a partner and Co founder of the

00:01:08 --> 00:01:12: Studio for Urban Projects, an interdisciplinary design collaborative based in

00:01:12 --> 00:01:16: SF that works at the intersection of architecture, urbanism,

art,
00:01:16 --> 00:01:17: and social activism.
00:01:18 --> 00:01:20: Sant is the author of From the Ground Up, local
00:01:20 --> 00:01:22: efforts to Create resilient cities.
00:01:23 --> 00:01:25: She's also going to hang around right at the end
00:01:25 --> 00:01:28: of the third panel to sign copies of your book
00:01:28 --> 00:01:29: that you might purchase.
00:01:31 --> 00:01:35: And Chapter 6 of this book actually inspired the panel
00:01:35 --> 00:01:37: that we are about to hear.
00:01:37 --> 00:01:40: She has taught at Harvard, the College of Environmental
Design,
00:01:40 --> 00:01:43: Berkeley, and the California College of the Arts.
00:01:43 --> 00:01:45: Everyone Allison Sant.
00:01:53 --> 00:01:54: This is Jelani.
00:01:54 --> 00:01:56: He's making all of this work.
00:02:10 --> 00:02:11: Thank you, Sophia.
00:02:11 --> 00:02:12: Sophia is very humble.
00:02:12 --> 00:02:15: She she actually instigated so much of this from me
00:02:15 --> 00:02:18: in our initial conversations, and I'm grateful to her for
00:02:18 --> 00:02:20: this invitation and and to all of you for being
00:02:20 --> 00:02:20: here.
00:02:21 --> 00:02:24: So many of us here today share the dream of
00:02:24 --> 00:02:26: remaking cities.
00:02:26 --> 00:02:29: We know that cities are responsible for 75% of global
00:02:29 --> 00:02:30: carbon emissions.
00:02:31 --> 00:02:34: There are also the places where the majority of us
00:02:34 --> 00:02:37: live and the places that we experience the effects of
00:02:37 --> 00:02:39: climate change from flooding to heat.
00:02:40 --> 00:02:42: I wrote from the ground up because I was interested
00:02:42 --> 00:02:46: in understanding the best practices of people working at
throughout
00:02:46 --> 00:02:48: the entire country to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
00:02:49 --> 00:02:52: I interviewed more than 90 people, people that include our
00:02:53 --> 00:02:53: panelists today.
00:02:54 --> 00:02:58: Mommy Hara, who once worked here in Philadelphia's water
department.
00:02:58 --> 00:03:01: And today, as CEO of the US Water Alliance, builds
00:03:01 --> 00:03:05: national networks of green stormwater leaders focused on
creating solutions
00:03:05 --> 00:03:08: to our nation's most pressing water challenges.
00:03:08 --> 00:03:12: Mark Comorata, a visionary in city government who has
worked
00:03:12 --> 00:03:15: in Philadelphia in the Philadelphia Water Department to

make good

00:03:15 --> 00:03:18: on the city's promise to green the city and clean

00:03:18 --> 00:03:19: its waters.

00:03:19 --> 00:03:23: Owen Franklin, who as Pennsylvania State director for the Trust

00:03:23 --> 00:03:26: for Public Land partners with communities in Philadelphia to make

00:03:26 --> 00:03:30: green infrastructure investments in neighborhoods that need them most, and

00:03:30 --> 00:03:33: Kenneth Jessup, who is principal of the John M Patterson

00:03:33 --> 00:03:37: School in South Philadelphia, has championed a model green schoolyard.

00:03:39 --> 00:03:42: In talking with our panelists today and other civic leaders,

00:03:42 --> 00:03:44: what I found was very hopeful.

00:03:45 --> 00:03:46: Cities are the place to act.

00:03:47 --> 00:03:50: Throughout our nation, people are using the urgency that we

00:03:50 --> 00:03:54: face as an opportunity not only to address climate change,

00:03:54 --> 00:03:57: but to make cities equitable and livable at the same

00:03:57 --> 00:03:57: time.

00:03:58 --> 00:04:02: From Portland, San Francisco, Minneapolis, and New Orleans to New

00:04:02 --> 00:04:07: York, Baltimore, Washington, DC, and here in Philadelphia, people are

00:04:07 --> 00:04:10: building solutions from the ground up.

00:04:11 --> 00:04:15: They're reclaiming our streets from cars to create better places

00:04:15 --> 00:04:18: for walking, biking, and transit while mitigating carbon emissions.

00:04:18 --> 00:04:22: They're turning streets, which are some of our largest public

00:04:22 --> 00:04:25: places and cities, into generous places for people.

00:04:26 --> 00:04:29: They're freeing up the space of streets to do other

00:04:29 --> 00:04:29: things.

00:04:30 --> 00:04:32: Parking spots are becoming parks.

00:04:32 --> 00:04:34: The public right of way is being turned into lush

00:04:34 --> 00:04:37: gardens in which green infrastructure can mitigate flooding.

00:04:38 --> 00:04:41: They are expanding the urban tree canopy on city streets

00:04:41 --> 00:04:44: and in our natural areas to sequester carbon, reduce air

00:04:44 --> 00:04:46: pollution, and cool our streets.

00:04:47 --> 00:04:50: They are restoring our shorelines with nature based adaptation solutions

00:04:50 --> 00:04:52: like oyster reefs and wetlands.

00:04:52 --> 00:04:57: These efforts are creating jobs, offering greater access to the

00:04:57 --> 00:04:59: city and and its resources to everyone.

00:05:00 --> 00:05:03: They're bringing people who are often left out of the

00:05:03 --> 00:05:06: planning process, to the table to ensure that these efforts
00:05:06 --> 00:05:07: are LED locally.
00:05:08 --> 00:05:11: Interestingly, much of what we hope for the future of
00:05:11 --> 00:05:14: cities parallels how they were envisioned in the past.
00:05:14 --> 00:05:18: Here, William Penn imagined Philadelphia is a green city that
00:05:18 --> 00:05:22: preserved its riverbanks, featured a public park system that
intertwined
00:05:22 --> 00:05:25: nature in the city, and provided a dose of nature
00:05:25 --> 00:05:26: to Philadelphians.
00:05:27 --> 00:05:30: Penn created a planning legacy in Philadelphia, where parks
remain
00:05:30 --> 00:05:32: A valued part of urban life.
00:05:33 --> 00:05:37: But as the city's population grew, Philadelphians became
increasingly separated
00:05:37 --> 00:05:39: from their natural environment.
00:05:39 --> 00:05:43: By 2009, almost half of Philadelphia's landscape had been
converted
00:05:43 --> 00:05:44: to concrete.
00:05:44 --> 00:05:48: Its historic waterways were culverted, sewers were placed in
Creek
00:05:48 --> 00:05:51: beds, and river valleys were flattened to make way for
00:05:51 --> 00:05:52: subdivisions.
00:05:53 --> 00:05:56: As Mark said in our interview, we've modified the urban
00:05:56 --> 00:05:59: landscape to a point where people don't really know what
00:05:59 --> 00:06:02: water resources the regulatory community is trying to protect.
00:06:03 --> 00:06:07: In 2011, Philadelphia entered into a consent order and
agreement
00:06:07 --> 00:06:10: to address combined sewer overflow events.
00:06:10 --> 00:06:14: The Water department proposed to meet its EPA
requirements by
00:06:14 --> 00:06:17: being the first in the nation to focus almost exclusively
00:06:17 --> 00:06:19: on green infrastructure.
00:06:19 --> 00:06:22: The city created a 25 year plan called Green City
00:06:22 --> 00:06:26: Clean Waters to reduce pollution going into the Delaware
and
00:06:26 --> 00:06:30: Schuylkill Rivers every year by managing water where it falls.
00:06:31 --> 00:06:34: The city gauged its progress with the measure of a
00:06:34 --> 00:06:34: greened acre.
00:06:35 --> 00:06:38: Each greened acre keeps as much as 90% of stormwater
00:06:38 --> 00:06:40: from entering the Philadelphia sewer system each year.
00:06:42 --> 00:06:45: This measurement has been a tool in setting an ambitious
00:06:45 --> 00:06:49: goal to green 1/3 of the existing impervious landscapes
within
00:06:49 --> 00:06:52: the city, including in school yards, vacant lots, and parks.

00:06:53 --> 00:06:53: Phil.
00:06:53 --> 00:06:56: Philadelphia is known as the poorest of the largest U.S.
00:06:56 --> 00:07:00: cities, and these investments have brought improvements to public facilities
00:07:00 --> 00:07:04: in neighborhoods that have been historically under resourced.
00:07:05 --> 00:07:08: 26% of Philadelphians live below the poverty line and in
00:07:08 --> 00:07:10: the city's majority black population.
00:07:11 --> 00:07:13: The city's majority black population is twice as likely to
00:07:14 --> 00:07:16: be considered working poor as their white neighbors.
00:07:17 --> 00:07:20: Philadelphia is among among the most segregated cities in the
00:07:20 --> 00:07:20: United States.
00:07:21 --> 00:07:25: Its racist history has created predominantly black neighborhoods marked by
00:07:25 --> 00:07:28: generations of public disinvestment, including in its parks.
00:07:28 --> 00:07:32: Like many Philadelphians, one in three Americans does not have
00:07:32 --> 00:07:34: a park or green space within walking distance of their
00:07:34 --> 00:07:35: home.
00:07:36 --> 00:07:39: This disparity has concerned national advocacy groups like the Trust
00:07:39 --> 00:07:42: of Public Land, which launched a national campaign to ensure
00:07:42 --> 00:07:45: that all urban residents have access to nature.
00:07:46 --> 00:07:50: Today, TPL has helped to transform trade 12 Gray schoolyards
00:07:50 --> 00:07:53: in Philadelphia to green, and three more are underway.
00:07:54 --> 00:07:59: Green schoolyards feature trees, plants, and rain gardens alongside playgrounds,
00:07:59 --> 00:08:03: basketball courts, running tracks, and sports fields after school hours.
00:08:03 --> 00:08:07: They create great public parks in neighborhoods that have none.
00:08:08 --> 00:08:10: The John M Patterson School in the Penrose neighborhood is
00:08:10 --> 00:08:12: one of the school yards that's been greened.
00:08:12 --> 00:08:14: As part of the TPL initiative, the 4th grade class
00:08:14 --> 00:08:17: participated in designing the green school yard.
00:08:17 --> 00:08:20: They met with representatives from the water department and studied
00:08:20 --> 00:08:23: how stormwater flowed through the site and how green infrastructure
00:08:23 --> 00:08:24: could reduce runoff.
00:08:25 --> 00:08:28: As one student reflected, we examined the yard and realized

00:08:28 --> 00:08:31: that it had more problems than just having a concrete surface at the side.

00:08:31 --> 00:08:32: Closest to the school, there was a slope for rainwater collected.

00:08:32 --> 00:08:35: We decided the space would be best used as a garden.

00:08:35 --> 00:08:36: Today, this is no longer a concrete yard.

00:08:36 --> 00:08:38: This is a place where people can learn, play, and enjoy.

00:08:38 --> 00:08:38: Learning more about nature in their backyard has also helped

00:08:39 --> 00:08:41: improve the school's hands on science curriculum.

00:08:41 --> 00:08:44: Students connect on site lessons with trips to a nearby refuge, learning about habitats, wetlands and water quality.

00:08:44 --> 00:08:44: The rain garden can collect up to 1.5 inches of storm water, but it's doing much more.

00:08:46 --> 00:08:48: It is improved test scores and attendance in school.

00:08:48 --> 00:08:50: As Kenneth reported, suspensions went from 50 a year to 0 after the schoolyard was built.

00:08:51 --> 00:08:54: In addition, neighborhood children and their families now have access

00:08:54 --> 00:08:57: to a nearby park.

00:08:58 --> 00:09:01: Since 2010, the School District of Philadelphia has green more

00:09:01 --> 00:09:04: than 30 campuses.

00:09:04 --> 00:09:07: This underscores that often experiments start small and then scale

00:09:08 --> 00:09:11: their success.

00:09:11 --> 00:09:13: And this is not only applied to greening the city's schoolyards, but also its neighborhood parks.

00:09:14 --> 00:09:18: Linear Park in Grays Ferry in South Philadelphia is one of these projects.

00:09:18 --> 00:09:19: Like many parks in Philadelphia, this space was a a park in name only.

00:09:20 --> 00:09:23: It was closed and gated to the public for more than a decade.

00:09:23 --> 00:09:24: Derelict, the site had turned into a place of contention, marked by crime and neglect.

00:09:24 --> 00:09:28: Historically, Linear served as a racial dividing line.

00:09:28 --> 00:09:28: Grays Ferry has been at the center of conflict between black and white Philadelphians for generations, But it's also a crucial open space.

00:09:29 --> 00:09:32: This four acre park is within a 10 minute walk

00:09:32 --> 00:09:34:

00:09:35 --> 00:09:38:

00:09:38 --> 00:09:39:

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00:09:46 --> 00:09:47:

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00:10:02 --> 00:10:03:

00:10:03 --> 00:10:06:

00:10:06 --> 00:10:09: of more than 11,000 residents, offering enough space to create

00:10:09 --> 00:10:12: a sizable neighborhood park and manage the area's stormwater.

00:10:13 --> 00:10:15: Residents came together to plan the park.

00:10:15 --> 00:10:18: They met in a series of meetings held throughout the

00:10:18 --> 00:10:20: neighborhood to discuss how the park could fit the community's

00:10:20 --> 00:10:21: needs.

00:10:21 --> 00:10:24: As the Danielle Denk said, from TPL, folks came together

00:10:24 --> 00:10:25: for the first time.

00:10:26 --> 00:10:28: They got to see that although they thought there were

00:10:28 --> 00:10:31: big differences between them, there were actually many similarities.

00:10:31 --> 00:10:33: Everybody wanted safety.

00:10:33 --> 00:10:34: They wanted green space.

00:10:34 --> 00:10:36: They wanted something open and accessible for all.

00:10:38 --> 00:10:41: Ultimately, this process of engaging the community also strengthens its

00:10:41 --> 00:10:42: social fabric.

00:10:43 --> 00:10:46: Author Eric Klinenberg, who researched the 1995 Chicago Heat wave,

00:10:46 --> 00:10:50: argues these connections can mean the difference between living and

00:10:50 --> 00:10:52: dying in extreme weather at Lanier.

00:10:52 --> 00:10:55: The park and the process that created it helped to

00:10:55 --> 00:10:58: build the necessary social infrastructure to weather the storms ahead.

00:10:59 --> 00:11:01: Work to repair this neighborhood is still underway, but with

00:11:01 --> 00:11:05: a common public space to steward, there's substantial incentive to

00:11:05 --> 00:11:06: keep coming back to the table.

00:11:08 --> 00:11:11: After years of abandonment, the park is once again being

00:11:12 --> 00:11:15: used by people brought together at the playground, dog park,

00:11:15 --> 00:11:17: baseball field fitness, and public picnic areas.

00:11:18 --> 00:11:20: The park also manages water for the entire neighborhood.

00:11:22 --> 00:11:25: This example is similar to many others I research, and

00:11:25 --> 00:11:28: from the ground up, we often think the complicated problems

00:11:28 --> 00:11:31: like global climate change need to be solved by powerful

00:11:32 --> 00:11:34: governments, their plans, policies, and regulations.

00:11:35 --> 00:11:35: And they do.

00:11:36 --> 00:11:38: The Clean Water Act is a great example of a

00:11:38 --> 00:11:41: policy that regulates pollution and a supported green infrastructure in

00:11:41 --> 00:11:42: cities across the country.

00:11:43 --> 00:11:47: But for those policies to succeed, the opposite is also true.

00:11:47 --> 00:11:47: true.

00:11:48 --> 00:11:51: The most effective solutions are born out of the communities they serve.

00:11:51 --> 00:11:52: they serve.

00:11:52 --> 00:11:55: We need both communities must lead the solutions ahead and

00:11:55 --> 00:11:58: be supported by government policies and funding in doing so.

00:11:59 --> 00:12:02: Today we'll talk about the evolving work in Philadelphia to know that the book gives breath to the many projects

00:12:02 --> 00:12:04: happening throughout this country.

00:12:05 --> 00:12:06: I encourage you to learn about these hopeful examples, absorb

00:12:06 --> 00:12:09: them, and support them in scaling up.

00:12:09 --> 00:12:11: them, and support them in scaling up.

00:12:12 --> 00:12:14: As I wrote in the text of the book, cities

00:12:14 --> 00:12:16: remake themselves in pieces.

00:12:17 --> 00:12:18: There are opportunities with every Rd.

00:12:18 --> 00:12:22: that is redesigned, sidewalk that is planted, open space that

00:12:22 --> 00:12:25: is forested, and shoreline that is restored to interject a

00:12:25 --> 00:12:28: new idea about how people live in urban spaces and

00:12:29 --> 00:12:30: who benefits from them.

00:12:31 --> 00:12:33: With that, I would love to invite our panelists to

00:12:33 --> 00:12:34: come up.

00:12:35 --> 00:12:35: Thank you all.

00:12:50 --> 00:12:51: Can you all hear us?

00:12:52 --> 00:12:55: Yes, you can try ours as well.

00:12:56 --> 00:12:57: Can you hear me?

00:12:57 --> 00:12:57: You can.

00:12:59 --> 00:13:00: Yep, we're good.

00:13:01 --> 00:13:04: And we have Mommy Hara also joining us over Zoom

00:13:04 --> 00:13:05: from Seattle.

00:13:06 --> 00:13:06: Hi.

00:13:07 --> 00:13:08: Hi, Mommy.

00:13:08 --> 00:13:08: Hi.

00:13:10 --> 00:13:11: There she is.

00:13:12 --> 00:13:13: Welcome.

00:13:13 --> 00:13:14: Thank you for.

00:13:16 --> 00:13:17: So Kenneth, I want to start with you.

00:13:19 --> 00:13:23: What compelled you to create a green schoolyard at Patterson

00:13:23 --> 00:13:23: Elementary?

00:13:24 --> 00:13:26: And years on, what are you seeing?

00:13:26 --> 00:13:28: How has this improved the students lives and also the
00:13:28 --> 00:13:29: people in the neighborhood?
00:13:30 --> 00:13:32: Wow, I can talk about this for days.
00:13:32 --> 00:13:32: You know that, right?
00:13:33 --> 00:13:36: And I know I have a little bit of time,
00:13:36 --> 00:13:39: but it started out as we had.
00:13:39 --> 00:13:42: We collected data about what was going on within the
00:13:42 --> 00:13:44: school, especially when it comes to our client.
00:13:44 --> 00:13:48: We're collecting all the suspension data, different things that
00:13:48 --> 00:13:52: apply
00:13:48 --> 00:13:52: to where occurrences were happening and incidents were
00:13:52 --> 00:13:54: happening.
00:13:52 --> 00:13:54: And most of the incidents happened in our school yard.
00:13:55 --> 00:13:56: At that time.
00:13:56 --> 00:13:59: Our schoolyard was a concrete slab.
00:13:59 --> 00:13:59: That's it.
00:14:00 --> 00:14:03: We attempted to paint different things on the schoolyard
00:14:03 --> 00:14:06: floor,
00:14:03 --> 00:14:06: on the on the ground to play baseball or different
00:14:06 --> 00:14:09: things to try to encourage students to have to participate
00:14:09 --> 00:14:12: in something during schoolyard during recess time.
00:14:13 --> 00:14:14: Well, that didn't work.
00:14:14 --> 00:14:18: I mean, our suspensions initially started around 5055 and
00:14:18 --> 00:14:21: they
00:14:18 --> 00:14:21: started dwindling as we tried to get students engaged.
00:14:22 --> 00:14:26: However, in 2014, we were lucky enough to win the
00:14:26 --> 00:14:31: Limbach Award, which was an award for a great principal,
00:14:31 --> 00:14:35: which I would like to think that I was, and
00:14:35 --> 00:14:37: it came with a \$20,000 stipend.
00:14:38 --> 00:14:41: And with that, we wanted to spend that money, use
00:14:41 --> 00:14:45: that money to try to enhance the climate in our
00:14:45 --> 00:14:45: school.
00:14:45 --> 00:14:47: You know, everyone always wanted to buy more computers
00:14:47 --> 00:14:48: and
00:14:47 --> 00:14:48: different things like that.
00:14:48 --> 00:14:52: But I think what was impacting our instruction was the
00:14:52 --> 00:14:53: climate.
00:14:53 --> 00:14:56: So we kind of messed around and different things.
00:14:56 --> 00:15:00: And I went downtown to the board and asked them
00:15:00 --> 00:15:04: to actually use this \$20,000 to do some projects or
00:15:04 --> 00:15:06: something within the schoolyard.
00:15:07 --> 00:15:09: And I I went down there and my mind was
00:15:09 --> 00:15:13: thinking maybe some basketball courts or something, but I

only
00:15:13 --> 00:15:13: had \$20,000.
00:15:15 --> 00:15:16: So I took it down.
00:15:16 --> 00:15:19: The person down there was Danielle Floyd and I gave
00:15:19 --> 00:15:21: her the I told her this is what I had,
00:15:21 --> 00:15:24: and maybe to entice her a little bit more, I
00:15:24 --> 00:15:27: gave her a coupon from McDonald's ahead.
00:15:27 --> 00:15:28: If you buy one Big Mac, you get another one
00:15:28 --> 00:15:29: free.
00:15:30 --> 00:15:33: And she laughed and fell on the floor laughing.
00:15:34 --> 00:15:35: But she knew it.
00:15:35 --> 00:15:37: I was serious and she was serious.
00:15:37 --> 00:15:38: She contacted.
00:15:38 --> 00:15:41: A little bit of time went by and she contacted
00:15:41 --> 00:15:42: Trust in Public Land.
00:15:42 --> 00:15:45: Trust in Public Land stepped in and gave us this
00:15:45 --> 00:15:47: beautiful idea of a green schoolyard.
00:15:47 --> 00:15:51: And I spoke with, was it Gretchen at the time,
00:15:51 --> 00:15:54: who was with Trust in Public Land?
00:15:54 --> 00:15:57: She introduced the idea and how she would get our
00:15:57 --> 00:16:01: students to get involved with the planning, the structure,
everything
00:16:01 --> 00:16:02: about this school yard.
00:16:02 --> 00:16:05: So we turned it over to our 4th grade class
00:16:05 --> 00:16:07: at that time as Miss Washington, and we thought that
00:16:07 --> 00:16:10: they were just going to say, OK, win some basketball
00:16:10 --> 00:16:11: courts and some football.
00:16:11 --> 00:16:13: And no, they didn't.
00:16:13 --> 00:16:17: They actually drew in and designed a green schoolyard and
00:16:17 --> 00:16:20: it was a fourth grade class that came through with
00:16:20 --> 00:16:22: that and everything.
00:16:22 --> 00:16:23: So we still didn't have the funding.
00:16:23 --> 00:16:24: So we had some projects together.
00:16:24 --> 00:16:26: We talked with trust in public line.
00:16:27 --> 00:16:28: They gave us some ideas.
00:16:28 --> 00:16:31: They sat with our class, we spoke on it, everyone
00:16:31 --> 00:16:35: spoke on it, what we could do for that schoolyard.
00:16:35 --> 00:16:37: We also had to speak to the community because since
00:16:38 --> 00:16:40: trust in public land is public and some funds were
00:16:40 --> 00:16:43: public, we had to make that schoolyard public.
00:16:43 --> 00:16:45: So we had to talk with the in the community,
00:16:45 --> 00:16:47: we had to speak with everyone involved that would be

00:16:48 --> 00:16:48: involved with it.

00:16:49 --> 00:16:50: We had to monitor, we have to get things to

00:16:50 --> 00:16:52: monitor that schoolyard.

00:16:52 --> 00:16:56: It was it was harder than what I expected, but

00:16:56 --> 00:16:58: the outcome was phenomenal.

00:16:59 --> 00:17:01: I mean extremely phenomenal.

00:17:01 --> 00:17:06: As you stated earlier, I actually believe that that structure,

00:17:06 --> 00:17:11: that school yard structure helped knock our incidents down
from

00:17:11 --> 00:17:12: 50 to 0.

00:17:12 --> 00:17:14: I mean there may have been some other factors, but

00:17:14 --> 00:17:16: now then we had an engaged school yard.

00:17:16 --> 00:17:19: We had students with set things to do within that

00:17:19 --> 00:17:19: school yard.

00:17:19 --> 00:17:22: We had instruction in that school yard and everything and

00:17:22 --> 00:17:25: we had parents involved coming in because we had to

00:17:25 --> 00:17:27: get them to monitor the school yard during the all

00:17:27 --> 00:17:28: school hours.

00:17:28 --> 00:17:31: Everything just turned out extremely well.

00:17:31 --> 00:17:33: It benefited everyone involved with everything.

00:17:34 --> 00:17:34: Amazing.

00:17:35 --> 00:17:37: Well, I mean, one of the things I loved about

00:17:37 --> 00:17:41: understanding this project better is that, you know, it's it's

00:17:41 --> 00:17:43: schoolyard by day and park, you know, to the public

00:17:43 --> 00:17:46: at at all other hours and especially in a neighborhood

00:17:46 --> 00:17:48: that that didn't have a park.

00:17:48 --> 00:17:50: So, oh, and I want to ask you because parks

00:17:50 --> 00:17:53: are such incredible institutions, you know, they're the the
places

00:17:53 --> 00:17:56: where we get to see one another, to connect with

00:17:56 --> 00:17:56: one another.

00:17:57 --> 00:18:00: They're they're democratic at their core and TPL has is

00:18:00 --> 00:18:04: its hallmark is community engagement in my mind and not

00:18:04 --> 00:18:09: just checking the box on community engagement but actually
putting

00:18:09 --> 00:18:13: communities in in in leadership positions to to determine
what

00:18:13 --> 00:18:17: their public parks will be especially in communities have been

00:18:17 --> 00:18:19: historically marginalized.

00:18:20 --> 00:18:22: So what's your secret sauce?

00:18:22 --> 00:18:26: How do you engage communities effectively and and
authentically and

00:18:26 --> 00:18:29: and also how does that process help to build the

00:18:29 --> 00:18:33: social infrastructure that's necessary further right ahead?

00:18:36 --> 00:18:37: OK, there we go.

00:18:38 --> 00:18:40: I mean, I wish there was a rubric and a

00:18:40 --> 00:18:44: a a perfect special sauce that the ingredient list I

00:18:44 --> 00:18:45: could could lay out.

00:18:45 --> 00:18:46: But there is not.

00:18:47 --> 00:18:49: In some ways it's far more complicated and some ways

00:18:49 --> 00:18:50: it's far more simple.

00:18:50 --> 00:18:53: I think from from the simplicity standpoint, it's it's about

00:18:53 --> 00:18:56: having the commitment to an authentic connection with people and

00:18:57 --> 00:19:00: understanding that there is real value and learning and genius

00:19:00 --> 00:19:02: that comes from authentic connections between people.

00:19:04 --> 00:19:07: And I think the more complicated side comes from the

00:19:07 --> 00:19:11: time that is required to be spent building those relationships,

00:19:11 --> 00:19:13: building that competence and trust.

00:19:15 --> 00:19:21: And the the need to have a shared learning experience.

00:19:21 --> 00:19:25: Where the the people who are not spending all their

00:19:25 --> 00:19:29: days thinking about tracing shadows or mapping where puddles form,

00:19:29 --> 00:19:30: but know very much like.

00:19:30 --> 00:19:32: Where kids are fighting and know very much.

00:19:32 --> 00:19:34: Where the trash collects and know very much where it

00:19:34 --> 00:19:36: gets too hot in a schoolyard.

00:19:36 --> 00:19:40: And to couple with the people who who can teach

00:19:40 --> 00:19:43: others about what it means to live in a watershed

00:19:43 --> 00:19:46: And what it means to be in a place that

00:19:46 --> 00:19:50: is is providing so many different critical benefits at the

00:19:51 --> 00:19:55: same time in cohesion and environmental resilience and in community

00:19:55 --> 00:19:56: health.

00:19:57 --> 00:20:00: And for us, our engagement occurs, of course, during site

00:20:01 --> 00:20:01: design.

00:20:01 --> 00:20:03: There's a very specific point in time where there's a

00:20:03 --> 00:20:03: very.

00:20:04 --> 00:20:07: Intentional means of engaging people with with I think that's

00:20:07 --> 00:20:09: where we get the most formulaic.

00:20:11 --> 00:20:14: But that engagement is both for us to learn from

00:20:14 --> 00:20:17: them but also for them to learn from each other

00:20:17 --> 00:20:21: and to form those relationships that then really provide value

00:20:21 --> 00:20:23: once the place is completed.

00:20:24 --> 00:20:27: We we know that, as you just said, that these

00:20:27 --> 00:20:30: spaces are where we meet each other and when we
00:20:30 --> 00:20:34: meet each other in public space, that we get demystified
00:20:34 --> 00:20:38: about one another, and we learn very quickly that we
00:20:38 --> 00:20:41: have far more in common than we might have otherwise
00:20:41 --> 00:20:42: assumed.
00:20:42 --> 00:20:46: And when we think about the factors that make a
00:20:46 --> 00:20:52: city resilient in the face of changing climate challenges,
connectivity
00:20:52 --> 00:20:55: is the most important thing that I can think of.
00:20:55 --> 00:20:58: Immediately that's available to everybody as far as what they
00:20:58 --> 00:21:01: can do to survive the challenges that might be coming
00:21:01 --> 00:21:01: our way.
00:21:02 --> 00:21:04: Like simply having somebody know that you exist, simply
having
00:21:04 --> 00:21:07: somebody think to maybe knock on your door and see
00:21:07 --> 00:21:08: how you're doing.
00:21:08 --> 00:21:11: Simply having somebody who's air conditioning might be
working on
00:21:11 --> 00:21:12: a day where yours isn't.
00:21:13 --> 00:21:16: Having somebody to to provide you that sense of connectivity
00:21:16 --> 00:21:20: and belonging when you are otherwise feeling some some
concerns
00:21:20 --> 00:21:23: and fear to spare like that is a very fundamental
00:21:23 --> 00:21:25: need that all humans have and it's a very real
00:21:26 --> 00:21:29: output of public spaces that perform in a very highway.
00:21:31 --> 00:21:33: Mark, I want to get to you too.
00:21:33 --> 00:21:38: But the, you know, historically stormwater has been wasted
in
00:21:39 --> 00:21:40: a lot of cities.
00:21:40 --> 00:21:43: That's conveyed as quickly as possible from our streets and
00:21:43 --> 00:21:47: parks and neighborhoods where where it might actually be
something
00:21:47 --> 00:21:49: that could nourish those places.
00:21:50 --> 00:21:52: And and Philadelphia's really changed that.
00:21:52 --> 00:21:53: You know, it's created.
00:21:54 --> 00:21:57: Making storm water really has become a resource not only
00:21:57 --> 00:22:00: for greening the city, but also for creating holistic solutions
00:22:00 --> 00:22:02: that improve people's lives.
00:22:02 --> 00:22:04: That gets to a little bit to what Owen's touching
00:22:04 --> 00:22:04: on.
00:22:05 --> 00:22:09: So 12 years into Green City, Clear, clean waters, you
00:22:09 --> 00:22:13: have hundreds of projects that are unfolding every year.
00:22:13 --> 00:22:16: What What has worked well and what do you do

00:22:16 --> 00:22:19: you need to improve upon going forward?
00:22:20 --> 00:22:20: Cool.
00:22:20 --> 00:22:20: Thank you, Ellie.
00:22:21 --> 00:22:24: I want to give a little context but the the
00:22:24 --> 00:22:27: end of that statement what has worked well is I'll,
00:22:27 --> 00:22:29: I'll give you the answer first or or is I
00:22:29 --> 00:22:33: think we've built some trust and we've shown that that
00:22:33 --> 00:22:36: we can value, we can re again value water right.
00:22:36 --> 00:22:38: We appreciate water and and what it means and how
00:22:38 --> 00:22:39: we manage it.
00:22:39 --> 00:22:41: So that that's the very short answer.
00:22:41 --> 00:22:44: But the water department is A1 water utility we we
00:22:44 --> 00:22:48: manage water, wastewater and stormwater services for 1.7
million people
00:22:48 --> 00:22:49: in this city.
00:22:49 --> 00:22:51: We spent a billion and a half dollars a year
00:22:51 --> 00:22:53: of capital and operating money to do it.
00:22:54 --> 00:22:56: And it takes everyone who lives in Philadelphia pays these
00:22:56 --> 00:22:57: bills, right.
00:22:57 --> 00:23:00: We manage your, your money to make these investments to
00:23:00 --> 00:23:01: keep the city thriving.
00:23:01 --> 00:23:04: And you know, we're subject to the regulatory environment,
which
00:23:04 --> 00:23:06: is, you know, fishable swimming, you know, Clean Water Act
00:23:06 --> 00:23:09: safe drinking Water Act fishable, swimmable, drinkable.
00:23:10 --> 00:23:12: But decades ago, we realized we need to do more
00:23:12 --> 00:23:15: than just being a core service provider, right?
00:23:15 --> 00:23:17: I mean, yeah, we have to provide those services.
00:23:17 --> 00:23:20: But we have a role in in in equity and
00:23:20 --> 00:23:23: environmental, you know, justice.
00:23:23 --> 00:23:26: We have a role in economic development, environmental
stewardship.
00:23:27 --> 00:23:29: And we really kind of embrace that when we had
00:23:29 --> 00:23:32: to meet the needs of what was this next regulatory
00:23:32 --> 00:23:34: obligation that came at us, which is how do you
00:23:34 --> 00:23:37: spend billions of dollars to deal with stormwater
management?
00:23:38 --> 00:23:41: And when we went into the communities to try to
00:23:41 --> 00:23:44: put together this early plan, we were talking to people
00:23:44 --> 00:23:47: about managing stormwater for the means of of of abating
00:23:47 --> 00:23:51: combined sewage overflows that were happening in creeks.
00:23:51 --> 00:23:55: And the community's first response back to us was, what's
00:23:56 --> 00:23:57: a combined sewer?

00:23:57 --> 00:24:00: There's a Creek near my, like, anywhere near my house.
00:24:00 --> 00:24:01: What are you even talking about?
00:24:01 --> 00:24:02: Like, I don't.
00:24:02 --> 00:24:06: I'm so disconnected with that water body that you're about
00:24:06 --> 00:24:09: to spend billions of dollars to try to bring, you
00:24:09 --> 00:24:13: know, to some water quality condition that I don't like.
00:24:13 --> 00:24:14: I just don't get it.
00:24:14 --> 00:24:14: It's not.
00:24:14 --> 00:24:16: It's just not computing.
00:24:16 --> 00:24:18: And it really started us to think about how do
00:24:18 --> 00:24:21: we now invest, you know, what is going to be
00:24:21 --> 00:24:24: billions of dollars over the next couple decades of ratepayer
00:24:24 --> 00:24:27: money in a city that's 26% below the federal poverty
00:24:27 --> 00:24:27: line?
00:24:28 --> 00:24:30: And how do we actually bring some value to them.
00:24:31 --> 00:24:33: And the simplest way to state it is that we
00:24:33 --> 00:24:37: we through their interaction, their their communication, we realized we

00:24:37 --> 00:24:40: needed to invest in their community to kind of leverage
00:24:40 --> 00:24:43: all the infrastructure that's under their community.
00:24:43 --> 00:24:45: And I know it's a little, you know maybe a
00:24:45 --> 00:24:47: little hokey to say that, but we we said that
00:24:47 --> 00:24:50: two decades ago and it and it's still resonating now.
00:24:51 --> 00:24:54: So you know for for 12 years we've been implementing
00:24:54 --> 00:24:55: projects, right.
00:24:55 --> 00:24:58: We've been trying to manage water where it falls bring
00:24:58 --> 00:25:01: value you know to it investing in the community.
00:25:01 --> 00:25:03: We've seen, you know, some of what we heard already,
00:25:03 --> 00:25:03: right?
00:25:03 --> 00:25:08: We've seen education improvements, narcotics reduction,
you know, statistics, job
00:25:08 --> 00:25:12: creation, ecological uplift, stormwater management.
00:25:13 --> 00:25:14: We've seen all those benefits.
00:25:14 --> 00:25:16: But I really think what it's done over the last
00:25:16 --> 00:25:19: couple decades by investing in communities is people saying
that
00:25:19 --> 00:25:22: when there's a water department truck now that drives down
00:25:22 --> 00:25:25: your street, hopefully you're not thinking they're there to shut
00:25:25 --> 00:25:27: off your water or to deal with a main break
00:25:27 --> 00:25:30: that you're actually bringing some kind of value into that
00:25:30 --> 00:25:30: community.
00:25:30 --> 00:25:32: So we have a long ways to go.
00:25:32 --> 00:25:34: But I I I think again, the very short answer

00:25:34 --> 00:25:38: is hopefully some value valuing water again valuing the entity
00:25:38 --> 00:25:41: that is trying to manage their water resource as well
00:25:41 --> 00:25:42: into the future.
00:25:43 --> 00:25:44: That's great, Mommy.
00:25:44 --> 00:25:46: I'd love to bring you into this too.
00:25:46 --> 00:25:49: That before you worked for the Philadelphia Water
Department, you
00:25:49 --> 00:25:53: led the Green Plan Philadelphia, which really laid the
groundwork
00:25:53 --> 00:25:56: for a lot of the green infrastructure solutions and the
00:25:56 --> 00:25:58: school yards that we're looking at today.
00:26:00 --> 00:26:03: And this work was really informed by the needs of
00:26:03 --> 00:26:07: communities and and and not necessarily communities that
are that
00:26:07 --> 00:26:10: had traditionally benefited from public investments.
00:26:11 --> 00:26:14: So Philadelphia has become such a clear and strong
example
00:26:14 --> 00:26:15: of putting equity first.
00:26:15 --> 00:26:20: This seems strange to be like looking at Sorry, but
00:26:20 --> 00:26:25: and it's also it's a city that's been really creative
00:26:26 --> 00:26:28: with its limited budgets.
00:26:28 --> 00:26:32: So what should other cities be learning from Philadelphia?
00:26:32 --> 00:26:35: And how should future investments in the US prioritize
communities
00:26:35 --> 00:26:38: that have been historically under resourced?
00:26:39 --> 00:26:40: Those are great questions, Ali.
00:26:40 --> 00:26:43: And you know, I have to give a lot of
00:26:43 --> 00:26:47: credit to the folks in the room, the panelists, you
00:26:47 --> 00:26:51: know, lots of people that aren't that aren't even in
00:26:51 --> 00:26:55: the room who put so much into developing Philadelphia's
vision
00:26:55 --> 00:26:56: and programs.
00:26:57 --> 00:27:01: Because it is amazing how much Philadelphia has been able
00:27:01 --> 00:27:05: to accomplish given how low income the city is overall.
00:27:05 --> 00:27:08: And if if Philadelphia can do it.
00:27:08 --> 00:27:11: I said that's a great template for other cities in
00:27:11 --> 00:27:12: the nation.
00:27:13 --> 00:27:17: I think that fundamental to making sure that community
members
00:27:18 --> 00:27:22: are served, that low income communities are best served.
00:27:22 --> 00:27:25: You know that you really have to focus on community
00:27:25 --> 00:27:27: engagement, empowerment and visioning.
00:27:28 --> 00:27:30: In addition to Green Plan Mark I don't know if

00:27:30 --> 00:27:33: you remember right we were also working at the same
00:27:33 --> 00:27:37: time on several neighborhood related environmental justice
plans that William
00:27:37 --> 00:27:41: Penn was funding in different neighborhoods and also in in
00:27:41 --> 00:27:42: Philadelphia and Camden.
00:27:43 --> 00:27:47: There were a lot of several concurrent watershed visions that
00:27:47 --> 00:27:50: that that I was working on in development for PWD
00:27:50 --> 00:27:53: but with community my firm was also and I would
00:27:53 --> 00:27:56: you know we're working on the civic vision for the
00:27:56 --> 00:27:57: central Delaware.
00:27:57 --> 00:27:59: And so and you know we were I was Co
00:27:59 --> 00:28:01: chair of the community design collaborative.
00:28:01 --> 00:28:04: There were a lot of people engaged with different
communities
00:28:04 --> 00:28:08: on developing different kinds of visions for how to improve
00:28:08 --> 00:28:11: their their, their neighbourhoods at a time when it was
00:28:11 --> 00:28:13: even worse than it is now, you know, in terms
00:28:13 --> 00:28:16: of the kind of investment that was available.
00:28:16 --> 00:28:19: And there was a lot of really cumulative vision building
00:28:19 --> 00:28:22: that added up and helped I think to provide some
00:28:22 --> 00:28:26: support for the overall vision of Green City clean waters.
00:28:26 --> 00:28:28: And so you know, one, you know, we really did
00:28:28 --> 00:28:30: have to learn that you're doing.
00:28:30 --> 00:28:33: They were that kind of work with people and not
00:28:33 --> 00:28:36: to them, but you know, I think the art of
00:28:36 --> 00:28:40: engagement has probably advanced quite a bit in in
Philadelphia
00:28:40 --> 00:28:41: since then.
00:28:42 --> 00:28:46: I think another lesson though, besides engagement is the
need
00:28:46 --> 00:28:51: to understand the correlations between the kinds of
opportunities and
00:28:51 --> 00:28:55: needs that and exist in underserved communities because
you know,
00:28:55 --> 00:28:59: vacant land, other things which are really can be very
00:28:59 --> 00:29:02: blighting can also be looked at as an opportunity.
00:29:02 --> 00:29:07: The hidden streams, you know, vacancy, neglected
environments, understanding the
00:29:07 --> 00:29:11: the environmental and social opportunity that they present.
00:29:11 --> 00:29:16: Another thing that I think that Philadelphia was really good
00:29:16 --> 00:29:19: at was an early focus on key issues focusing on
00:29:19 --> 00:29:24: green city, clean waters, you know, minority participation and
contracting
00:29:25 --> 00:29:29: certain other you know programs that could have significant

impact

00:29:29 --> 00:29:33: on a wider level than just the dollars being spent

00:29:33 --> 00:29:35: on them was I think very strategic.

00:29:37 --> 00:29:40: But the most, I think the most important thing though

00:29:40 --> 00:29:44: is the vision and leadership leverage and persistence that has

00:29:44 --> 00:29:47: happened across sectors in Philadelphia.

00:29:47 --> 00:29:49: This is really about the people.

00:29:50 --> 00:29:52: You know, there was a lot, there's been a lot

00:29:53 --> 00:29:56: of leadership from the William Penn Foundation and you know,

00:29:56 --> 00:29:58: some continuity of funding around greening.

00:29:59 --> 00:30:03: There's been, you know, a lot of vision and leadership

00:30:03 --> 00:30:07: around changing the city through investments in in in in

00:30:07 --> 00:30:10: greening and other outdoor enhancements.

00:30:10 --> 00:30:11: Leadership like marks.

00:30:12 --> 00:30:15: It has provided so much important continuity and and that's

00:30:15 --> 00:30:18: also happened in other city departments.

00:30:18 --> 00:30:22: There's also the whole NGO sector in Philadelphia that has,

00:30:22 --> 00:30:26: I mean Philadelphia has a community of volunteerism and you

00:30:26 --> 00:30:30: know, I think that other cities can really learn from

00:30:30 --> 00:30:34: that, you know, and volunteers and by both national and

00:30:34 --> 00:30:35: local NGOs.

00:30:35 --> 00:30:38: There's also the private sector in Philadelphia can be amazing.

00:30:38 --> 00:30:40: There's so much volunteerism.

00:30:41 --> 00:30:44: When I was at the Collaborative, there were, you know,

00:30:44 --> 00:30:47: just so many firms were dedicating their time and envisioning

00:30:47 --> 00:30:48: what could happen.

00:30:49 --> 00:30:52: And academia has also in Philadelphia been a great support.

00:30:52 --> 00:30:56: So that's, I think just trying to figure out ways

00:30:56 --> 00:31:00: to connect and leverage each other's efforts is always key.

00:31:00 --> 00:31:03: There are two more things I just want to mention

00:31:03 --> 00:31:06: is that I think that policy folks like Mark and

00:31:07 --> 00:31:10: others have done a really great job of finding strategic

00:31:10 --> 00:31:14: balance between sticks, carrots and funding and financing for both

00:31:14 --> 00:31:17: public and private investment, right.

00:31:17 --> 00:31:20: There's I think that there's always been an attempt to

00:31:20 --> 00:31:23: really triangulate and and and reinforce action in the public

00:31:23 --> 00:31:27: and private sector through a balance of regulations, fees, incentives

00:31:28 --> 00:31:29: and and financing.

00:31:29 --> 00:31:31: And I think that's been really key.

00:31:32 --> 00:31:35: But one thing that I think that you know given

00:31:35 --> 00:31:39: that I haven't been in Philadelphia for several years that

00:31:39 --> 00:31:41: I did discover in in Seattle too is you know

00:31:42 --> 00:31:45: the policy and data tools are always improving and it's

00:31:45 --> 00:31:49: important to always be looking as you make improvements to

00:31:49 --> 00:31:53: look at and implement the best anti displacement policies

and

00:31:53 --> 00:31:54: programs possible.

00:31:54 --> 00:31:58: You know, because there's always a kind of negative

unintended

00:31:58 --> 00:32:01: consequences of the investments that you can make and

also

00:32:02 --> 00:32:05: the use of predictive and data informed modelling at systems

00:32:05 --> 00:32:09: level to make sure that you aren't driving inequity by

00:32:09 --> 00:32:13: just looking at complaint drivens decision making or that you

00:32:13 --> 00:32:17: aren't prioritizing things that are based on incorrect

assumptions that

00:32:17 --> 00:32:19: continue to drive inequity.

00:32:20 --> 00:32:23: And so, you know, and I think that also a

00:32:23 --> 00:32:27: lot of the new approaches for climate resilience and the

00:32:27 --> 00:32:31: benefits of climate and and the more more recent research

00:32:31 --> 00:32:37: around climate resilience investments I think should be also

incorporated

00:32:37 --> 00:32:41: in order to ensure that, you know, investments are being

00:32:41 --> 00:32:43: made in an equitable manner.

00:32:44 --> 00:32:47: That was the long answer, but that's.

00:32:49 --> 00:32:49: Great, Mommy.

00:32:49 --> 00:32:49: Thank you.

00:32:49 --> 00:32:52: That's I want to follow up a little bit on

00:32:52 --> 00:32:54: the funding piece of what you mentioned.

00:32:56 --> 00:32:59: You know obviously we've talked about the benefits of green

00:32:59 --> 00:33:03: infrastructure you know to to community health and

education, recreation

00:33:03 --> 00:33:05: neighborhood resilience, all of these things.

00:33:06 --> 00:33:10: But but often budgets are siloed you know they're they're

00:33:10 --> 00:33:14: in in different departments in city government they're they're

public

00:33:14 --> 00:33:15: or private property.

00:33:15 --> 00:33:18: We break up the city in all of these ways

00:33:18 --> 00:33:22: that are actually doesn't watersheds don't match with that.

00:33:22 --> 00:33:26: So I'm wondering what the right constellation of partnerships

are

00:33:26 --> 00:33:31: in creating green infrastructure at scale and especially in

communities
00:33:31 --> 00:33:32: that need them.
00:33:32 --> 00:33:34: And also just to how do we make our cities
00:33:34 --> 00:33:36: more resilient in general?
00:33:38 --> 00:33:42: Well, I I do believe that in many instances what
00:33:42 --> 00:33:47: can help to bring together genius well intended but hyper
00:33:47 --> 00:33:52: focused agencies is somebody who's not within those
agencies and
00:33:52 --> 00:33:57: having an external actor like I'll say TPL can sometimes
00:33:57 --> 00:33:59: serve as that actor.
00:33:59 --> 00:34:01: And I'll tell you what we do in Philadelphia where
00:34:02 --> 00:34:04: we are helping to champion the multiple benefits of what
00:34:04 --> 00:34:05: we can all do together.
00:34:06 --> 00:34:09: So we're not only working within different, you know,
departments
00:34:09 --> 00:34:12: within one government, We're working really in two different
organizations
00:34:12 --> 00:34:14: between the School District of Philadelphia and the City of
00:34:14 --> 00:34:15: Philadelphia.
00:34:15 --> 00:34:19: And despite the fact that money goes in both directions,
00:34:19 --> 00:34:22: well, you know, quite a bit, it's actually very hard
00:34:22 --> 00:34:27: to get predictable interagency collaboration on paper
between the City
00:34:27 --> 00:34:31: of Philadelphia and School District of Philadelphia for no
want
00:34:31 --> 00:34:33: of intention, for no want of impact.
00:34:33 --> 00:34:37: But just because it's hard but to have an organization
00:34:37 --> 00:34:40: that can have a a big board view of the
00:34:40 --> 00:34:44: multiple impacts that we can obtain together and then echo
00:34:44 --> 00:34:45: that impact.
00:34:45 --> 00:34:46: Sometimes you're echoing different impact.
00:34:46 --> 00:34:49: When I'm talking the school district, I'm not necessarily
talking
00:34:49 --> 00:34:51: first and foremost about the stormwater capture.
00:34:52 --> 00:34:54: But I know that the water department is right at
00:34:54 --> 00:34:57: my side working with me to realize a green schoolyard
00:34:57 --> 00:35:01: that from anybody's enjoyment in anybody's, you know,
public health
00:35:01 --> 00:35:03: or climate resiliency is far better than it would be
00:35:04 --> 00:35:05: without their investment.
00:35:06 --> 00:35:08: You know, we are able to kind of keep those
00:35:08 --> 00:35:11: partners at the table, understanding how their mandates can
be
00:35:11 --> 00:35:15: advanced while mandates of another agency are also being

advanced.

00:35:15 --> 00:35:20: And you know, this kind of intervention is one that
00:35:20 --> 00:35:27: advances certainly are in environmental regulatory agencies,
but also education,
00:35:27 --> 00:35:29: health, safety, economy.
00:35:29 --> 00:35:32: There's multiple public agencies out there that could use this
00:35:33 --> 00:35:35: kind of tool to advance what they exist to do.
00:35:36 --> 00:35:40: Right, Marker.
00:35:40 --> 00:35:42: Kenneth or Mommy, do you want to weigh in on
00:35:42 --> 00:35:42: that?
00:35:44 --> 00:35:47: The the only thing that I would add because they
00:35:47 --> 00:35:51: think that all the panelists are so expert at bringing
00:35:51 --> 00:35:54: about good balance of of different members to the table
00:35:54 --> 00:35:57: is that you know there's a there's a limit to
00:35:57 --> 00:36:00: how much you can squeeze out through partnership.
00:36:01 --> 00:36:03: And we all we all have to keep our eye
00:36:03 --> 00:36:07: on the need for greater federal and state funding and
00:36:07 --> 00:36:11: support for the agendas that really matter right around water
00:36:11 --> 00:36:13: and parks and and that there has to be a
00:36:13 --> 00:36:18: continued scaling up of significant investment for climate
resilience and
00:36:18 --> 00:36:19: other key objectives.
00:36:20 --> 00:36:23: And so I think that part of our collaboration needs
00:36:23 --> 00:36:27: to be around continued advocacy on the value of water,
00:36:27 --> 00:36:30: on the value of of open space investments.
00:36:30 --> 00:36:34: And and you know, because as long as we work
00:36:34 --> 00:36:38: in an overly constrained environment there is at some point
00:36:38 --> 00:36:41: a limit of to what's possible and and you know
00:36:41 --> 00:36:44: and it will damage the resilience of our cities.
00:36:46 --> 00:36:47: Kenneth, did you?
00:36:47 --> 00:36:48: OK, All right.
00:36:49 --> 00:36:50: Mark, do you want to add a new?
00:36:50 --> 00:36:53: Account Well, when you when you have kind of the
00:36:53 --> 00:36:57: challenges that we have to to be a climate resilient
00:36:57 --> 00:37:02: city to deal with massive regulatory responsibilities, you need
every
00:37:02 --> 00:37:03: partner imaginable.
00:37:04 --> 00:37:05: It is really hard.
00:37:05 --> 00:37:06: We get up all the money in the world but
00:37:06 --> 00:37:09: you're not delivering it without willing partners, willing land
owners,
00:37:09 --> 00:37:10: right.
00:37:10 --> 00:37:14: Willing professional services to put it together, willing folks to

00:37:14 --> 00:37:15: maintain it right.

00:37:15 --> 00:37:17: I mean, it takes a massive village to do what

00:37:17 --> 00:37:18: we've done at scale.

00:37:18 --> 00:37:20: And and you know, as Mommy said, it's it's, you

00:37:21 --> 00:37:24: know, the money we've received is great, but it pales

00:37:24 --> 00:37:26: in comparison to what we need to really bring about

00:37:26 --> 00:37:30: the changes that that you're envisioning that, you know, documented

00:37:30 --> 00:37:32: to an extent in your book.

00:37:33 --> 00:37:35: And you know, we've seen a lot of change, a

00:37:35 --> 00:37:37: lot of transformation in the city.

00:37:37 --> 00:37:39: But there's a hell of a way to go and

00:37:39 --> 00:37:42: the city needs more resources or we need to magically

00:37:42 --> 00:37:44: figure out a way to melt our resources so much

00:37:44 --> 00:37:46: better than we've done to date.

00:37:47 --> 00:37:49: But, you know, we've seen some initial wins, right?

00:37:49 --> 00:37:51: I mean the the philanthropic money going to to the

00:37:51 --> 00:37:53: city for the rebuild initiative, right.

00:37:54 --> 00:37:56: We now can go to sites to think about adding

00:37:56 --> 00:38:00: stormwater to public facilities because there's an investment in that

00:38:00 --> 00:38:01: public facility, right?

00:38:01 --> 00:38:04: And we're not just tacking on stormwater to a building

00:38:04 --> 00:38:05: that's falling apart, right?

00:38:06 --> 00:38:09: Or sidewalks that are that are non existent and crumbling

00:38:09 --> 00:38:11: or you know, roofs that are leaking.

00:38:11 --> 00:38:12: It's a little bit weird for us to go and

00:38:12 --> 00:38:14: stormwater on the site when everything else is kind of

00:38:14 --> 00:38:15: decrepit.

00:38:15 --> 00:38:18: So things like rebuild and that influx of money helps.

00:38:18 --> 00:38:21: The money that just went for the Philly Tree plant,

00:38:21 --> 00:38:23: you know, we've been trying to plant more trees throughout

00:38:23 --> 00:38:25: the city and we we linked them to store more

00:38:25 --> 00:38:27: management practices or green infrastructure.

00:38:28 --> 00:38:29: We all know we need more of them And the

00:38:30 --> 00:38:32: entity to do that is Parks and Rec and Tree

00:38:32 --> 00:38:34: Tenders and Horticultural Society and all these other folks.

00:38:35 --> 00:38:37: But they didn't have the resources and now we've seen

00:38:37 --> 00:38:38: a chunk of money come in.

00:38:38 --> 00:38:40: So you know, there's some things that are happening that

00:38:40 --> 00:38:41: are augmenting.

00:38:41 --> 00:38:42: You know what?

00:38:42 --> 00:38:44: What we have scraped together as a city.
00:38:45 --> 00:38:47: And that's promising, but it is so much more.
00:38:51 --> 00:38:53: I I think, Mark, you reflected on this when we
00:38:53 --> 00:38:56: spoke before this panel that, you know, often when one
00:38:56 --> 00:38:59: green schoolyard goes in, in the neighborhood, it's easier to
00:38:59 --> 00:39:00: put the second one in, right.
00:39:01 --> 00:39:04: And so and and Kenneth, you probably had that experience
00:39:04 --> 00:39:06: of neighbors sort of saying, well, you did that at,
00:39:06 --> 00:39:08: you know, Patterson, what can I do?
00:39:09 --> 00:39:12: So I'm wondering with the momentum that's built from the
00:39:12 --> 00:39:16: enthusiasm for these projects, there's it seems to me that
00:39:16 --> 00:39:20: there's also an opportunity to build advocacy and leadership
alongside
00:39:20 --> 00:39:20: it.
00:39:21 --> 00:39:25: And as federal funding for climate solutions, it becomes, you
00:39:25 --> 00:39:29: know this this huge influx of money through the IJ
00:39:29 --> 00:39:30: and the IRA.
00:39:31 --> 00:39:34: You know, how can it help to to bolster communities
00:39:34 --> 00:39:38: and community based organizations so that they can become
local
00:39:38 --> 00:39:42: advocates for for this kind of work in Philadelphia?
00:39:45 --> 00:39:48: I guess one thing that I'd I'd add is that
00:39:48 --> 00:39:52: it can be very hard for community based organizations to
00:39:52 --> 00:39:57: to know that those federal funding opportunities exist to
navigate
00:39:57 --> 00:40:00: the very complicated application process.
00:40:00 --> 00:40:02: They might even be eligible applicants for some of these
00:40:02 --> 00:40:02: sources.
00:40:04 --> 00:40:07: And there is at the same time a very real
00:40:07 --> 00:40:11: need to have these community based organizations
resourced so that
00:40:11 --> 00:40:14: they're able to sit at the same table with the
00:40:14 --> 00:40:17: agencies that are eligible applicants to get this work done,
00:40:17 --> 00:40:21: so that the work is done with real community expertise,
00:40:21 --> 00:40:26: with real sustainability, with community ownership and
protection stewardship.
00:40:26 --> 00:40:29: So what what we all need to be more sensitive
00:40:29 --> 00:40:32: about is, is how do we make a line item
00:40:32 --> 00:40:35: in our budgets for this kind of collaboration?
00:40:35 --> 00:40:38: How do we actually provide financial resources to, excuse
me,
00:40:38 --> 00:40:42: the community based organizations given the unique
expertise that they
00:40:42 --> 00:40:43: are bringing to this work?

00:40:44 --> 00:40:47: And that's an unfortunate and temporary power dynamic that is

00:40:47 --> 00:40:49: is still like of a grant tour to a grantee.

00:40:49 --> 00:40:52: But at the same time, we we do need to

00:40:52 --> 00:40:55: figure out, you know, how we are truly acknowledging the

00:40:55 --> 00:40:59: the real expertise, the real effort, the real time that

00:40:59 --> 00:41:03: people living in neighborhoods are contributing to these big civic

00:41:03 --> 00:41:05: infrastructure projects.

00:41:05 --> 00:41:07: I'm not saying that every volunteer hour should be a

00:41:07 --> 00:41:08: paid hour.

00:41:08 --> 00:41:10: I think there's real value in having civic engagement for

00:41:10 --> 00:41:11: its own sake.

00:41:11 --> 00:41:14: But I do think that we need to have from

00:41:14 --> 00:41:17: jump an expectation that as we are looking to large

00:41:17 --> 00:41:21: federal funding sources, private sources, state sources, you know, how

00:41:21 --> 00:41:25: are we allocating resources for public involvement that's not just

00:41:25 --> 00:41:26: volunteer.

00:41:27 --> 00:41:27: Yeah.

00:41:28 --> 00:41:32: If we could jump in on that one issue that

00:41:32 --> 00:41:37: that Owen just brought up, you know that's a real

00:41:37 --> 00:41:37: issue.

00:41:37 --> 00:41:42: And so our Environmental Finance Centre does try to leverage

00:41:42 --> 00:41:49: philanthropic support for providing stipends and other kinds of compensation,

00:41:49 --> 00:41:54: logistics support for community groups and you know, folks from

00:41:54 --> 00:42:01: underserved communities to participate in our technical assistance efforts to

00:42:01 --> 00:42:03: help them access federal funding.

00:42:04 --> 00:42:08: I think that other and technical assistance providers are doing

00:42:09 --> 00:42:09: that as well.

00:42:10 --> 00:42:15: EPA just recently named a whole bunch of different regional

00:42:15 --> 00:42:20: recipients for what's called a Tic Tac grant from the

00:42:20 --> 00:42:25: EP as Environmental Justice Group and the National Wildlife Federation

00:42:25 --> 00:42:29: was the Mid-Atlantic or the Region 3 recipient.

00:42:30 --> 00:42:35: And locally there's some community groups in Philadelphia, I mean

00:42:35 --> 00:42:39: in Philadelphia that are part of that group, that are

00:42:39 --> 00:42:43: I think aimed at trying to help some some potential

00:42:43 --> 00:42:49: recipients or partners to better participate in the funding schema.

00:42:49 --> 00:42:53: And additionally, the University of Maryland has been named by

00:42:54 --> 00:42:58: EPA as the Regional Environmental Finance Centre and EPS also

00:42:58 --> 00:43:02: designated the US Water Alliance and a small handful of

00:43:02 --> 00:43:06: others to be the National Environmental Finance Centres.

00:43:06 --> 00:43:10: That can help with, you know, facilitating that kind of

00:43:10 --> 00:43:15: engagement to help create community LED visions and funding schema

00:43:15 --> 00:43:20: in coordination with it, you know, when it's necessary with

00:43:20 --> 00:43:24: agencies who would be the primary financer or the loan

00:43:24 --> 00:43:27: recipient or grant recipient.

00:43:30 --> 00:43:34: Well, my question is, I was fortunate enough to have

00:43:34 --> 00:43:37: Danielle and she was able to connect me with trust

00:43:38 --> 00:43:39: in public land.

00:43:39 --> 00:43:41: But other than that, I would not have a means

00:43:41 --> 00:43:43: to know exactly what funds were available.

00:43:44 --> 00:43:48: So how could it be where somehow funds available would

00:43:48 --> 00:43:53: be more transparent so I can understand where I could

00:43:53 --> 00:43:56: reach out to to if I needed that type of

00:43:56 --> 00:43:57: assistance?

00:43:58 --> 00:43:59: Yeah, absolutely.

00:44:00 --> 00:44:03: Mommy, do you have like, suggestions from your?

00:44:03 --> 00:44:04: Experience.

00:44:04 --> 00:44:04: Yeah.

00:44:04 --> 00:44:06: I'm sorry, maybe I put that so badly that it

00:44:06 --> 00:44:09: wasn't clear that those are the, those are some really

00:44:09 --> 00:44:11: nice early resources that can be used.

00:44:11 --> 00:44:14: And Kenneth, I'd be happy to follow up with you

00:44:14 --> 00:44:17: and help you connect with some of the folks who

00:44:17 --> 00:44:20: could potentially provide technical assistance.

00:44:20 --> 00:44:27: I think one nice thing about Philadelphia being in Pennsylvania

00:44:27 --> 00:44:33: is that the state revolving fund does allow for both

00:44:33 --> 00:44:41: both governmental and NGO recipients for state revolving fund grants

00:44:41 --> 00:44:42: and loans.

00:44:42 --> 00:44:44: And so that's a while right now while there's a

00:44:44 --> 00:44:47: lot of money that I think that that could be

00:44:47 --> 00:44:50: a good route as long as people are coordinated in

00:44:50 --> 00:44:53: their, in their approaches and that people aren't kind of

00:44:53 --> 00:44:56: blocking the good work of others, which Mark, we've seen
00:44:56 --> 00:44:59: before when there's a lack of coordination, right, Yep.
00:45:00 --> 00:45:00: Yep.
00:45:01 --> 00:45:01: Yeah.
00:45:02 --> 00:45:03: I mean I will just add it at a micro
00:45:03 --> 00:45:04: level to to your question.
00:45:04 --> 00:45:09: I mean we we've structured outreach specialists and district
planners
00:45:09 --> 00:45:11: at kind of a a very local level.
00:45:12 --> 00:45:16: So hopefully we're seeing the early returns of you know
00:45:16 --> 00:45:19: the water department being able to connect better at at
00:45:19 --> 00:45:22: the local level to tell you what's available when projects
00:45:22 --> 00:45:25: are happening, what money is out there.
00:45:25 --> 00:45:27: You know how you can you know drum up support.
00:45:28 --> 00:45:29: We work quite a bit with council.
00:45:29 --> 00:45:32: I mean council constituent services should be very helpful in
00:45:32 --> 00:45:35: kind of spreading our message right to all cities message
00:45:35 --> 00:45:37: not just the water department at that local level as
00:45:37 --> 00:45:37: well.
00:45:37 --> 00:45:39: But yeah, we could do a lot better as a
00:45:40 --> 00:45:42: city of of really kind of telling you you know
00:45:42 --> 00:45:44: what we're up to what we have what we need
00:45:44 --> 00:45:46: to do and and engagement better.
00:45:47 --> 00:45:50: So yeah, I just, I love the phrase community LED
00:45:50 --> 00:45:51: visions, right.
00:45:51 --> 00:45:53: I mean I think you know we say it but
00:45:53 --> 00:45:55: we don't do it as much and I think we
00:45:55 --> 00:45:58: are seeing a movement towards you know a movement away
00:45:58 --> 00:46:01: engineering 1st and selling the project to the community and
00:46:01 --> 00:46:05: getting them involved in the problem identification and then
the
00:46:05 --> 00:46:07: solution and then engineering right.
00:46:07 --> 00:46:09: So it's been a very slow turn at least from
00:46:09 --> 00:46:13: a water utility perspective of of changing that approach to
00:46:13 --> 00:46:15: how we resolve you know issues but it but it's
00:46:16 --> 00:46:19: happening, it's happening and it's going to continue to
happen.
00:46:19 --> 00:46:23: And as we get involved in bigger projects like tunnels
00:46:23 --> 00:46:27: or you know massive you know higher treatment facilities like
00:46:27 --> 00:46:32: we're really right when we're really impacting community they
need
00:46:32 --> 00:46:35: to be the one leading it not necessarily us.
00:46:35 --> 00:46:37: So we've cut our teeth quite a bit when we

00:46:37 --> 00:46:40: do these kind of ground based you know smaller projects
00:46:40 --> 00:46:43: and and have wrap around programming to not just right,
00:46:43 --> 00:46:45: not just get input because we need it right from
00:46:45 --> 00:46:48: a tactical standpoint but also to be able to celebrate
00:46:48 --> 00:46:51: it afterwards and and have some of the exciting programming
00:46:51 --> 00:46:54: at the parks that we come in and rent, renovate.
00:46:55 --> 00:46:56: So I think we've built a a bit of a
00:46:56 --> 00:47:00: a healthy engagement strategy at the distributed
infrastructure scale and
00:47:00 --> 00:47:02: now that just needs to translate to to some of
00:47:02 --> 00:47:05: these bigger things which clearly are going to be needed
00:47:05 --> 00:47:08: when we get into kind of climate the climate resilience
00:47:08 --> 00:47:08: scale.
00:47:09 --> 00:47:13: My experience also in looking from transportation to green
infrastructure
00:47:13 --> 00:47:18: to shoreline adaptation was that involving communities and
having them
00:47:18 --> 00:47:22: lead the process is actually the difference between creating
effective
00:47:22 --> 00:47:23: solutions and not.
00:47:24 --> 00:47:27: So it's it's I'm glad to hear you to say
00:47:27 --> 00:47:30: that and that that's your experience as well because I
00:47:30 --> 00:47:33: think it's I think so many in the same way
00:47:33 --> 00:47:37: that communities know where the waterfalls in the in the
00:47:37 --> 00:47:40: in their green school or their concrete schoolyard, right.
00:47:40 --> 00:47:42: They know how their neighborhoods work and they know
what
00:47:42 --> 00:47:42: they need.
00:47:43 --> 00:47:45: So I but I want to save some time for
00:47:45 --> 00:47:46: questions.
00:47:46 --> 00:47:50: So I maybe just ask a really big question, but
00:47:50 --> 00:47:54: brief responses if you could do that if not, but
00:47:54 --> 00:48:00: you know, we know that climate change disproportionately
effects low
00:48:00 --> 00:48:05: income people and and many people of color throughout this
00:48:05 --> 00:48:07: country especially.
00:48:07 --> 00:48:09: And we're also acutely aware that the impacts of climate
00:48:09 --> 00:48:11: change are getting worse.
00:48:11 --> 00:48:15: So today, how should we be thinking about directing
investments
00:48:16 --> 00:48:19: in our public infrastructure to handle, to handle what we
00:48:19 --> 00:48:23: imagine we will encounter in the future in terms of
00:48:23 --> 00:48:27: climate change and also to build the social resiliency that
00:48:27 --> 00:48:30: will help our communities withstand the future?

00:48:32 --> 00:48:35: I'm going to very quickly summarize it to your initiative
00:48:35 --> 00:48:38: that we did, which was an artistic intervention in several
00:48:38 --> 00:48:42: neighbors across Philadelphia where we had artists LED
conversations with
00:48:42 --> 00:48:46: neighbors about heat to understand how they experienced
heat.
00:48:46 --> 00:48:47: They lived experience of the heat because it's very different
00:48:47 --> 00:48:49: from neighbourhood to neighbourhood to neighbourhood.
00:48:49 --> 00:48:51: So the intervention that's going to be effective is going
00:48:51 --> 00:48:53: to differ from neighbourhood to neighbourhood to
neighbourhood.
00:48:54 --> 00:48:57: That's difficult to do it scale, but it's also important
00:48:57 --> 00:48:59: in in as a fundamental principle.
00:49:00 --> 00:49:03: What we learned, for example, is that these conversations
help
00:49:03 --> 00:49:07: people understand that they had that issue together and that
00:49:07 --> 00:49:10: it was a priority issue for them together and that
00:49:10 --> 00:49:13: they should then speak louder together about it than they
00:49:13 --> 00:49:14: might have alone.
00:49:14 --> 00:49:17: But we also had some really cool interventions come out
00:49:17 --> 00:49:17: of this.
00:49:17 --> 00:49:21: We developed, well, we didn't develop, but our artists
developed
00:49:21 --> 00:49:24: a portico that sits out in front of someone's house
00:49:24 --> 00:49:27: in South Philly, has shade and spray, you know, misters
00:49:27 --> 00:49:30: and a place for planting, you know, vegetables and there's
00:49:30 --> 00:49:32: just no yard space.
00:49:32 --> 00:49:35: So this is a very like context sensitive solution to
00:49:35 --> 00:49:38: this problem that we learned about through engagement.
00:49:38 --> 00:49:40: So again, engagement, engagement.
00:49:41 --> 00:49:41: And organize.
00:49:42 --> 00:49:43: Yes, very much so.
00:49:46 --> 00:49:47: Mommy, do you want to go next?
00:49:49 --> 00:49:49: Sure.
00:49:50 --> 00:49:53: I I have a a few thoughts about this.
00:49:53 --> 00:49:56: You know, one thing that I noticed a lot in
00:49:56 --> 00:50:01: Philadelphia is that during every kind of administration
turnover, there
00:50:01 --> 00:50:04: would be so much waste because of this perpetual desire
00:50:04 --> 00:50:08: to start over and to kind of throw some things
00:50:08 --> 00:50:11: away and and have just kind of the perpetual new.
00:50:11 --> 00:50:15: And I think that there's so much great groundwork already
00:50:16 --> 00:50:18: happening in communities socially.

00:50:18 --> 00:50:22: There's so much that that continued promise in Green City
00:50:22 --> 00:50:25: Clean Waters, you know that that like I think at
00:50:26 --> 00:50:29: first trying to figure out how to leverage what's there
00:50:29 --> 00:50:31: right is so critical.
00:50:32 --> 00:50:36: I do also believe though that to best direct investments
00:50:36 --> 00:50:40: in communities for resiliency, you know you have to look
00:50:40 --> 00:50:42: at it at multiple scales.
00:50:42 --> 00:50:46: Our our water equity network work from the US Water
00:50:46 --> 00:50:47: Alliance.
00:50:47 --> 00:50:51: We're working across the region you know with different
utilities
00:50:51 --> 00:50:54: and and community groups to try to figure out how
00:50:54 --> 00:50:58: to build that kind of social cohesion and shared vision
00:50:58 --> 00:51:02: around what's necessary around climate impacts and client
and and
00:51:02 --> 00:51:05: addressing you know climate mitigation needs.
00:51:06 --> 00:51:09: And you know that that that regional level is
00:51:09 --> 00:51:12: as important and I think as the you know, as
00:51:12 --> 00:51:16: as all the scales down to the street level, you
00:51:16 --> 00:51:19: know and just having a good sense of how that
00:51:19 --> 00:51:23: nesting can happen and how the different scales of activity
00:51:23 --> 00:51:27: can support one another is will be very important over
00:51:27 --> 00:51:27: time.
00:51:30 --> 00:51:33: Well, I'm biased, so I think school yards are a
00:51:33 --> 00:51:35: great place to start.
00:51:36 --> 00:51:39: I've seen the impact on what it has done for
00:51:39 --> 00:51:43: the community in that area and Southwest Philadelphia and I
00:51:43 --> 00:51:47: am a great advocate for starting and continuing with what
00:51:47 --> 00:51:50: trust in public land has done with schools.
00:51:51 --> 00:51:57: It's particularly elementary schools and those areas and the
the
00:51:57 --> 00:51:59: needed neighborhoods.
00:51:59 --> 00:52:03: I would definitely think that that would be the best,
00:52:03 --> 00:52:06: one of the best cases to start.
00:52:08 --> 00:52:11: The last few years we've heard DIJ right is the
00:52:12 --> 00:52:16: is is the important acronym that we've heard there's a
00:52:16 --> 00:52:21: greater attention on, you know, environmental injustices and
and inequities.
00:52:23 --> 00:52:26: Maybe this is provocative to say but I think we
00:52:27 --> 00:52:30: really need to see where where we're failing.
00:52:30 --> 00:52:33: People their their voice needs to be shared.
00:52:33 --> 00:52:34: People need to be noisy.
00:52:34 --> 00:52:37: I think we have the ability to talk about injustices

00:52:37 --> 00:52:40: once they're identified and out there and and and pronounced

00:52:40 --> 00:52:43: and owned and understood in a way, you know, we

00:52:43 --> 00:52:45: can do something about.

00:52:45 --> 00:52:46: I mean I'm a public servant, right?

00:52:46 --> 00:52:48: We we're supposed to serve you right.

00:52:48 --> 00:52:50: If you have a problem we need to work with

00:52:50 --> 00:52:51: you to solve that problem.

00:52:52 --> 00:52:54: So I I just you know I I I don't

00:52:55 --> 00:52:58: know what equitable outcomes look like yet right.

00:52:58 --> 00:53:02: I don't know what environmental justice you know what what

00:53:02 --> 00:53:04: the resolution to those is.

00:53:05 --> 00:53:07: But I think we need to keep on hearing from

00:53:07 --> 00:53:11: people where they're not being served where they're being impacted

00:53:11 --> 00:53:13: and then work with them to to to bring about

00:53:13 --> 00:53:14: you know some some change.

00:53:15 --> 00:53:17: I use this phrase all the time that I I

00:53:17 --> 00:53:19: stole from there was an author on on The Daily

00:53:19 --> 00:53:22: Show with Trevor Noah years ago and he used this

00:53:22 --> 00:53:24: phrase and he and he said this is you know

00:53:24 --> 00:53:27: what I think about equity right it's it's doing more

00:53:27 --> 00:53:29: for people with people that have had too much done

00:53:30 --> 00:53:32: to them or not enough done for them and I

00:53:32 --> 00:53:34: think it's the best I added the with them phrase

00:53:34 --> 00:53:37: to that to dig a little liberty there but totally

00:53:37 --> 00:53:39: stole that quote and I I just that is just

00:53:39 --> 00:53:42: so it's resonated with me because we need to hear

00:53:42 --> 00:53:45: where have you not been served where's too much been

00:53:45 --> 00:53:47: done to you and be noisy be loud and then

00:53:47 --> 00:53:49: hopefully your city comes together right.

00:53:50 --> 00:53:51: You know the services you pay for.

00:53:52 --> 00:53:53: You know your hard earned money.

00:53:53 --> 00:53:54: Hopefully we we we put it to use and we

00:53:54 --> 00:53:56: try to undo some of the things that have happened

00:53:56 --> 00:53:58: to you or the things that haven't been done for

00:53:58 --> 00:53:59: you.

00:54:01 --> 00:54:02: I want to throw it open to the audience.

00:54:02 --> 00:54:05: If you all have questions, you can put your hand

00:54:05 --> 00:54:09: up and there's folks with microphones, what we'll do is

00:54:09 --> 00:54:12: I'll, I'll, I'll pick the first person and then I'll

00:54:12 --> 00:54:14: have you pick the next person.

00:54:15 --> 00:54:15: So.

00:54:31 --> 00:54:31: On Hi.

00:54:31 --> 00:54:34: Yeah, hi everyone.

00:54:34 --> 00:54:36: Thank you very much for your time.

00:54:36 --> 00:54:38: Silva Garcia, principal, Connect the dots.

00:54:38 --> 00:54:42: We do community engagement, so we are all about connecting

00:54:42 --> 00:54:44: voices to decision making processes.

00:54:44 --> 00:54:46: OK, so I heard from mommy.

00:54:46 --> 00:54:51: I hear from everyone the relevance of bringing public input.

00:54:52 --> 00:54:56: Create access, have an equitable approach.

00:54:57 --> 00:55:00: But that takes money, right?

00:55:00 --> 00:55:04: OK, well, we can talk about money later.

00:55:04 --> 00:55:06: OK, so assume that we have money.

00:55:06 --> 00:55:10: That requires openness in the process, that requires flexibility in

00:55:11 --> 00:55:14: the processes, and most importantly, it requires time.

00:55:15 --> 00:55:19: OK, because we need to understand that some people, it's

00:55:19 --> 00:55:22: the first time that they have been asked about their

00:55:22 --> 00:55:23: input.

00:55:23 --> 00:55:25: They need to be informed.

00:55:26 --> 00:55:30: OK, We need to start with educational outrage, explaining why

00:55:30 --> 00:55:31: their voices matter.

00:55:32 --> 00:55:36: Most of them have traumatic experiences from before because someone

00:55:36 --> 00:55:38: asked them and they were came back and so on

00:55:38 --> 00:55:40: and so on and so on.

00:55:40 --> 00:55:40: OK.

00:55:40 --> 00:55:43: So how can we incorporate?

00:55:43 --> 00:55:46: And again, let's not think about money for a moment.

00:55:46 --> 00:55:49: I know it's important because we cannot rely, as you

00:55:49 --> 00:55:51: all said, in volunteer work, right.

00:55:51 --> 00:55:53: But let's not think about money.

00:55:53 --> 00:55:58: Let's talk about the flexibility of the processes and let's

00:55:58 --> 00:56:02: think about the time that is required to create trust.

00:56:03 --> 00:56:06: How can we address and incorporate that into what you

00:56:07 --> 00:56:12: just described and make it real, having accessible, equitable, inclusive

00:56:12 --> 00:56:14: processes in all this discussion?

00:56:15 --> 00:56:15: OK.

00:56:16 --> 00:56:17: Thank you.

00:56:21 --> 00:56:24: I I think that the only answer to it is

00:56:24 --> 00:56:28: to take more time and and to to understand that

00:56:28 --> 00:56:30: that that is necessary.

00:56:31 --> 00:56:36: And to that also it does require like the let's

00:56:36 --> 00:56:39: say the project implementer.

00:56:39 --> 00:56:40: To understand it will take time.

00:56:41 --> 00:56:43: But there is also a need to have a frank

00:56:44 --> 00:56:48: conversation to help relay true expectations about the pace
at

00:56:48 --> 00:56:50: which this can go.

00:56:50 --> 00:56:53: Because in some instances these things go slowly on their

00:56:53 --> 00:56:53: own.

00:56:54 --> 00:56:57: And I don't expect people to understand the pace of

00:56:57 --> 00:56:59: of public infrastructure projects.

00:56:59 --> 00:57:01: And there's no reason that people should know that off

00:57:01 --> 00:57:02: the top of their head.

00:57:03 --> 00:57:06: But there needs to be the investment in time so

00:57:06 --> 00:57:09: that we have that, that real authentic ability to talk

00:57:09 --> 00:57:11: to people frankly and plainly.

00:57:12 --> 00:57:15: But there also needs to be honesty from both sides

00:57:15 --> 00:57:17: and to to to trust that the other person is

00:57:17 --> 00:57:20: going to be able to handle honesty and to not

00:57:20 --> 00:57:21: walk away.

00:57:21 --> 00:57:23: I think that when we talk about the secret sauce

00:57:23 --> 00:57:26: for engagement, I think often times it's just doggedness and

00:57:26 --> 00:57:27: not leaving the table.

00:57:28 --> 00:57:30: And and I think that that that I don't know

00:57:30 --> 00:57:33: how you resource that from a budget perspective.

00:57:33 --> 00:57:36: But I couldn't agree with you more that the the

00:57:36 --> 00:57:39: clunkiness of some of these funding sources make it very

00:57:39 --> 00:57:42: hard to have flexible, authentic engagement with residents.

00:57:43 --> 00:57:45: Some of them do not have documentation.

00:57:45 --> 00:57:47: How do you resource somebody who's not a documentation?

00:57:47 --> 00:57:49: How do you provide funding when you can't buy a

00:57:49 --> 00:57:51: gift card because the agency won't allow you to do

00:57:51 --> 00:57:52: that?

00:57:52 --> 00:57:54: There's a lot of steps in the way that that

00:57:54 --> 00:57:56: are very hard to step over.

00:57:58 --> 00:57:59: You want.

00:58:01 --> 00:58:03: To pick someone else and is it anyone else want

00:58:03 --> 00:58:04: to go first?

00:58:04 --> 00:58:04: OK.

00:58:04 --> 00:58:04: It's OK.

00:58:07 --> 00:58:07: To.

00:58:08 --> 00:58:09: Continue.

00:58:13 --> 00:58:14: To address, sorry, am I answering?

00:58:14 --> 00:58:17: Does somebody else just ask another question or should I

00:58:17 --> 00:58:18: go ahead and weigh in on the the?

00:58:18 --> 00:58:19: Question.

00:58:19 --> 00:58:20: We were going to pass to another question, but if

00:58:20 --> 00:58:22: you have a contribution, please jump in.

00:58:22 --> 00:58:24: I would love to hear, you know, I I think.

00:58:24 --> 00:58:27: I think it's impossible to answer that question by putting

00:58:28 --> 00:58:28: money aside.

00:58:29 --> 00:58:33: You know, it's it's just inequitable that some people get

00:58:33 --> 00:58:36: paid to be in a conversation and others don't and

00:58:36 --> 00:58:39: you know, that's so that is, AI think a very

00:58:39 --> 00:58:43: essential part of that of of constructing the conversations.

00:58:44 --> 00:58:48: You know, I also think that there's another component

besides

00:58:48 --> 00:58:53: holding the conversations themselves is that, you know,

there are

00:58:53 --> 00:58:56: sometimes in some situations a history of harm.

00:58:56 --> 00:59:00: And you know it's hard to build trust without addressing

00:59:00 --> 00:59:01: those harms.

00:59:01 --> 00:59:06: And you know, to really make sure that that

acknowledgement

00:59:06 --> 00:59:09: is part of, you know, the the the groundwork for

00:59:09 --> 00:59:10: building trust.

00:59:11 --> 00:59:14: And with our water equity network work, you know that's

00:59:14 --> 00:59:17: we try to make sure that everybody is, is a

00:59:17 --> 00:59:21: kind of on equal footing and has the support that

00:59:21 --> 00:59:24: they need to be in the conversations and that they're

00:59:24 --> 00:59:29: working on tangible things that will actually have investment

or

00:59:29 --> 00:59:31: make progress in the future.

00:59:31 --> 00:59:34: Because you know, another way of honouring people's time

is

00:59:34 --> 00:59:36: to make make a real is, is to to have

00:59:37 --> 00:59:39: impact, you know, and to make sure that their time

00:59:40 --> 00:59:41: is not in any way tokenized.

00:59:41 --> 00:59:44: And so you know, I, I, I really, I think

00:59:44 --> 00:59:47: that Owen had on a lot of great points.

00:59:47 --> 00:59:49: But you know, I think that for us those are

00:59:49 --> 00:59:53: some additional additional components of of building and

maintaining trust

00:59:53 --> 00:59:54: with community.

00:59:57 --> 00:59:58: Hi Susan Crosby.

00:59:59 --> 01:00:01: I work for the city, but my question is from

01:00:01 --> 01:00:04: my position as a mother and a parent of a

01:00:04 --> 01:00:07: child who goes to a school that benefited from one

01:00:07 --> 01:00:09: of these one of these projects.

01:00:10 --> 01:00:15: We're at Alexander Adair Elementary and it's in Fishtown,

01:00:15 --> 01:00:15: heavily

01:00:17 --> 01:00:20: gentrified.

01:00:20 --> 01:00:22: More, less people of color live there now, less low

01:00:22 --> 01:00:26: income people live there now.

01:00:26 --> 01:00:29: And the intervention that was put in place, we have

01:00:29 --> 01:00:34: a very strong and active friends of group.

01:00:34 --> 01:00:37: And so we've been able to add investment continually to

01:00:37 --> 01:00:42: maintain and improve the project.

01:00:42 --> 01:00:47: We've been able to start an aquaponics lab to repopulate

01:00:47 --> 01:00:51: the plants in the stormwater management system.

01:00:51 --> 01:00:52: We've been able to use grants to deploy tactical urbanism.

01:00:52 --> 01:00:55: We've bought.

01:00:55 --> 01:00:56: Very large planters to put on the sidewalk to stop

01:00:56 --> 01:00:58: people from parking.

01:01:00 --> 01:01:00: There we start the aquaponics.

01:01:00 --> 01:01:03: We.

01:01:03 --> 01:01:07: Use we use the dead fish from the Aquaponics lab

01:01:07 --> 01:01:08: to fertilize those to grow the plants that go into

01:01:08 --> 01:01:12: the Swale.

01:01:12 --> 01:01:16: And so my question is it's kind of two-part.

01:01:16 --> 01:01:19: First for principal Jessup how how did you keep it

01:01:19 --> 01:01:23: up how did how did you keep getting the payment

01:01:23 --> 01:01:25: And then for Owen or mommy how do you plan

01:01:25 --> 01:01:28: for something like that.

01:01:28 --> 01:01:29: So getting the funding for the project is is really

01:01:29 --> 01:01:31: only the first step.

01:01:31 --> 01:01:32: How do you keep it funded so it doesn't run

01:01:32 --> 01:01:34: fallow that?

01:01:33 --> 01:01:34: That's an excellent question.

01:01:36 --> 01:01:40: When we first started and the the the playground was

01:01:40 --> 01:01:45: erected, we first we relied on trusted public land to

01:01:45 --> 01:01:46: help us out.

01:01:46 --> 01:01:49: Then we start relying on the school district itself.

01:01:49 --> 01:01:53: We also tried to use our maintenance department within our

01:01:53 --> 01:01:56: school to start maintaining and keeping up.

01:01:57 --> 01:02:00: We also had meetings with the block captains in the

01:02:00 --> 01:02:04: neighborhood and we formed a group there to make sure
 01:02:04 --> 01:02:09: that they would monitor and take care of the schoolyard
 01:02:09 --> 01:02:09: itself.
 01:02:10 --> 01:02:13: Our science teacher actually did exactly what you guys did
 01:02:14 --> 01:02:17: and planted some, did some planning in our green space
 01:02:17 --> 01:02:21: and most of our most of our maintenance comes from
 01:02:21 --> 01:02:26: the school district of Philadelphia and the maintenance
 department within
 01:02:26 --> 01:02:27: our school.
 01:02:31 --> 01:02:33: Just to add, I think that when it comes to
 01:02:33 --> 01:02:37: maintaining these spaces, part of it's in the design.
 01:02:37 --> 01:02:40: Design them to to endure and design them for the
 01:02:40 --> 01:02:43: the reality in which they live every day.
 01:02:43 --> 01:02:47: But when it comes to maintenance, there's a whole multi
 01:02:47 --> 01:02:51: headed beast that needs to be tamed to get maintenance
 01:02:51 --> 01:02:53: working better.
 01:02:53 --> 01:02:55: It has to do with, you know, linking communication gaps
 01:02:55 --> 01:02:57: between people who see problems and people can fix them
 01:02:57 --> 01:02:59: and understanding the shortest path between those people.
 01:02:59 --> 01:03:02: We don't have those paths in many instances.
 01:03:02 --> 01:03:05: I think that fundamentally though, what we need to do
 01:03:05 --> 01:03:07: as a society is to have a greater pride for
 01:03:08 --> 01:03:11: maintenance and start moving the priority for maintenance
 higher and
 01:03:11 --> 01:03:12: higher up the agenda.
 01:03:12 --> 01:03:14: Because we take, as we all know, we take a
 01:03:14 --> 01:03:16: lot of pride in cutting a ribbon.
 01:03:16 --> 01:03:19: We take less pride in celebrating the well maintained
 schoolyard
 01:03:19 --> 01:03:21: or the well maintained park.
 01:03:21 --> 01:03:22: We just don't do that.
 01:03:22 --> 01:03:24: But we need to celebrate maintenance.
 01:03:24 --> 01:03:26: We need to make the people responsible for that feel
 01:03:26 --> 01:03:29: like they serve a very important role and that the
 01:03:29 --> 01:03:31: work they do is critical to the performance of these
 01:03:31 --> 01:03:31: faces.
 01:03:36 --> 01:03:39: I I think I would just add that maintenance at
 01:03:39 --> 01:03:44: least when you're thinking about you know, creating any kind
 01:03:44 --> 01:03:47: of investment has to be part of the design and
 01:03:47 --> 01:03:51: also you know the financial planning for the project.
 01:03:51 --> 01:03:54: And you know, I really admire what Principal Jessup has
 01:03:54 --> 01:03:57: been able to do by piecing together, you know all
 01:03:57 --> 01:04:01: of the different funding strategies which is often what you

01:04:01 --> 01:04:02: need to rely on.
01:04:02 --> 01:04:05: And it's good to be as appreciated as possible because
01:04:05 --> 01:04:08: sometimes there are lots of, you know, changes in the
01:04:08 --> 01:04:08: funding mix.
01:04:09 --> 01:04:12: But I do also think that, you know, we need
01:04:12 --> 01:04:17: to as as Owen said, elevate the importance and and
01:04:17 --> 01:04:21: beauty of maintenance and what it does for, you know
01:04:21 --> 01:04:26: us as communities by really also elevating workforce, right.
01:04:26 --> 01:04:31: The workforce that works on water and open space needs.
01:04:31 --> 01:04:34: You know that that there there's so many gaps right
01:04:34 --> 01:04:37: now both in you know, quantity and quality of folks
01:04:37 --> 01:04:40: who are willing and able to work in those areas.
01:04:40 --> 01:04:43: And so, you know, I think that moving those two
01:04:43 --> 01:04:46: agendas hand hand in hand, it will be really important
01:04:46 --> 01:04:48: for us to be able to, you know, maintain and
01:04:48 --> 01:04:51: also get the funding for the kinds of spaces that
01:04:51 --> 01:04:52: we want to create.
01:04:54 --> 01:04:56: Unfortunately we have a packed day, so we need to
01:04:56 --> 01:04:57: stop there.
01:04:57 --> 01:05:00: But we'll all be around in the in you know,
01:05:00 --> 01:05:01: for the rest of the day.
01:05:01 --> 01:05:04: If you have other questions, I want to thank all
01:05:04 --> 01:05:07: of you for coming today and for your participation and
01:05:08 --> 01:05:11: great questions, to Uli and AIA for hosting this amazing
01:05:11 --> 01:05:14: forum and to all of you for your remarkable work
01:05:14 --> 01:05:16: and for taking the time to be here today.
01:05:16 --> 01:05:17: Thank you so much.

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