

Webinar

ULI Healthy Places Book Talks: Inclusive Transportation

Date: January 26, 2024

00:00:00 --> 00:00:02: Thank you so much for joining our very first Uli
 00:00:02 --> 00:00:04: Healthy Places book talk.
 00:00:04 --> 00:00:07: My name is Emily Jong and I'm a Senior associate
 00:00:07 --> 00:00:10: at Uli Building Healthy Places, which leverages the power of
 00:00:10 --> 00:00:13: Uli's global networks to help shape projects and places in
 00:00:13 --> 00:00:16: ways that improve the health of people and communities.
 00:00:17 --> 00:00:20: This new book talk series is an evolution of our
 00:00:20 --> 00:00:23: beloved BHP Book and Film Club, which began in 2020.
 00:00:24 --> 00:00:27: And with this series, we'll continue to explore critical themes
 00:00:27 --> 00:00:30: and books at the intersection of HealthEquity and the built
 00:00:30 --> 00:00:30: environment.
 00:00:31 --> 00:00:35: We're thrilled to begin our series with Veronica O Davis's
 00:00:35 --> 00:00:39: Inclusive Transportation, a manifesto for repairing divided
 00:00:39 --> 00:00:43: communities.
 00:00:39 --> 00:00:43: Today we're going to be learning about Veronica's personal
 00:00:43 --> 00:00:47: and
 00:00:43 --> 00:00:47: professional journey within transportation, how inclusive
 00:00:47 --> 00:00:51: practices can be embedded
 00:00:47 --> 00:00:51: into our planning processes, and reflect on what inclusive
 00:00:51 --> 00:00:52: transportation
 00:00:51 --> 00:00:52: looks like in practice.
 00:00:53 --> 00:00:55: So whether you've read the book or not, and if
 00:00:55 --> 00:00:58: you haven't, we highly recommend picking up a copy through
 00:00:58 --> 00:01:00: Island Press or your local Public Library.
 00:01:00 --> 00:01:03: We're very excited to kick things off after a quick
 00:01:03 --> 00:01:04: agenda and housekeeping overview.
 00:01:07 --> 00:01:09: So on today's agenda, we'll be looking at a new
 00:01:09 --> 00:01:15: ULI publication called Transportation Transformations, how
 00:01:09 --> 00:01:15: highway conversions can pave
 00:01:15 --> 00:01:17: the way for more inclusive and resilient places.

00:01:18 --> 00:01:22: Then we'll jump right into today's book talk featuring author
00:01:22 --> 00:01:25: Veronica O Davis and our facilitator Shonda Wong.
00:01:25 --> 00:01:28: And finally, we'll have some time for audience Q&A.
00:01:29 --> 00:01:31: So some quick housekeeping items for today's program.
00:01:32 --> 00:01:35: As you're tuning in, please submit your questions through the
00:01:35 --> 00:01:36: Zoom Q&A function.
00:01:36 --> 00:01:39: You can also use the Upvote feature to elevate questions
00:01:39 --> 00:01:41: that resonate with you in today's book.
00:01:41 --> 00:01:45: Talk will be recorded and posted to Uli's Knowledge Finder
00:01:45 --> 00:01:49: platform, and we'll be distributing the recording post event
now.
00:01:49 --> 00:01:51: I would like to turn it over to my colleague
00:01:51 --> 00:01:54: Matt Norris, Senior Director at ULI Building Healthy Places,
to
00:01:54 --> 00:01:57: share more about the new Transportation Transformations
report.
00:01:58 --> 00:01:58: Matt.
00:02:01 --> 00:02:02: Thank you, Emily.
00:02:03 --> 00:02:05: Good afternoon, everyone.
00:02:05 --> 00:02:09: I'm very excited to share just a little bit about
00:02:09 --> 00:02:14: Uli's new report, Transportation Transformations, which
highlights some themes that
00:02:14 --> 00:02:17: overlap with Veronica's fantastic book.
00:02:17 --> 00:02:20: So I'm just going to provide an overview of the
00:02:20 --> 00:02:24: report today of our report, which shares examples of efforts
00:02:24 --> 00:02:28: to reconnect places divided by highway infrastructure.
00:02:29 --> 00:02:30: So just a little bit of background.
00:02:31 --> 00:02:34: We know that urban highways in the United States have
00:02:34 --> 00:02:38: contributed to many of today's most pressing issues,
everything from
00:02:38 --> 00:02:44: structural inequities, racial economic segregation, increased
greenhouse gas emissions, elevated
00:02:45 --> 00:02:49: exposures, just shocks and stresses and also disparities in
health
00:02:49 --> 00:02:49: outcomes.
00:02:50 --> 00:02:53: But the good news is that there has been a
00:02:53 --> 00:02:56: push by many communities and really at multiple levels of
00:02:56 --> 00:03:01: government to advance efforts to convert highway
infrastructure to create
00:03:01 --> 00:03:06: more welcoming people centered environments that advance
equitable, sustainable and
00:03:06 --> 00:03:07: resilient outcomes.
00:03:08 --> 00:03:10: And I think it's important to note that there really
00:03:10 --> 00:03:11: is some momentum.

00:03:12 --> 00:03:14: So take a look at some of the many, many
00:03:14 --> 00:03:18: recent headlines about efforts to transform highways and to
reconnect
00:03:18 --> 00:03:19: communities.
00:03:19 --> 00:03:23: Even with the recent increased focus on repairing the harm
00:03:23 --> 00:03:28: created by highway routing decisions, though, the challenges
of advancing
00:03:28 --> 00:03:33: Community Center highway conversion projects really are
significant.
00:03:34 --> 00:03:37: And this is because they're usually quite expensive.
00:03:37 --> 00:03:40: They can present political challenges and they can be
complicated
00:03:40 --> 00:03:42: from an engineering perspective.
00:03:42 --> 00:03:45: So with this in mind, utilize new report aims to
00:03:45 --> 00:03:50: highlight some of the connections among transportation
infrastructure and health
00:03:50 --> 00:03:52: and resilience and real estate.
00:03:53 --> 00:03:57: Also to make the case for leveraging public and private
00:03:57 --> 00:04:01: funds to support efforts to reconnect communities divided by
automobile
00:04:01 --> 00:04:02: oriented infrastructure.
00:04:03 --> 00:04:06: And we also aim to again share some promising examples
00:04:06 --> 00:04:09: of efforts to reconnect communities.
00:04:10 --> 00:04:12: So a little bit of history.
00:04:13 --> 00:04:16: Planners of the Interstate highway system in the United
States,
00:04:16 --> 00:04:20: which gained momentum after the Federal Highway Act of
1956,
00:04:20 --> 00:04:24: routed many highways directly through black and brown
communities.
00:04:24 --> 00:04:26: And this was often quite deliberate.
00:04:27 --> 00:04:30: In many cases, the government took homes and businesses
by
00:04:30 --> 00:04:31: eminent domain.
00:04:32 --> 00:04:36: Some neighborhoods were targeted for new highway routes
when there
00:04:36 --> 00:04:38: were much more logical alternative routes available.
00:04:39 --> 00:04:42: And just one of the many, many examples of this
00:04:42 --> 00:04:45: was in Nashville, where Interstate 40 was built with a
00:04:45 --> 00:04:48: curve that routed it to divide the black community of
00:04:48 --> 00:04:52: North Nashville, which in the process destroyed hundreds of
homes
00:04:52 --> 00:04:53: and businesses.
00:04:53 --> 00:04:55: And the decision for the route was made at a
00:04:55 --> 00:04:58: non public meeting of all white business leaders and state

00:04:58 --> 00:04:59: highway officials.

00:05:00 --> 00:05:04: So the routing of highways in many cities really has

00:05:04 --> 00:05:09: created or worsened economic, health and climate disparities, especially for

00:05:09 --> 00:05:12: people that are living close to the highways themselves.

00:05:13 --> 00:05:17: Some of the harmful effects have included the fact that

00:05:17 --> 00:05:20: urban highways have directly displaced close to at least a

00:05:20 --> 00:05:24: half a million people, generally in communities of color.

00:05:26 --> 00:05:30: Sorry, that grade and elevated highways created barriers within and

00:05:30 --> 00:05:36: between communities which often disconnect people from economic opportunities and

00:05:36 --> 00:05:39: also access to important community amenities.

00:05:40 --> 00:05:42: And then we also know that living near a major

00:05:42 --> 00:05:45: highway has been shown to increase the risk of premature

00:05:45 --> 00:05:49: death and also increase the risk of numerous health conditions

00:05:49 --> 00:05:50: due to air pollution.

00:05:51 --> 00:05:54: And this can lead to asthma, pulmonary disease and also

00:05:54 --> 00:05:55: high risk of dementia.

00:05:57 --> 00:06:01: So what are the design approaches to mitigate the negative

00:06:01 --> 00:06:05: effects of highways and also to more importantly create new

00:06:05 --> 00:06:07: community centered places in their place.

00:06:08 --> 00:06:12: So the examples of the types of investments that are

00:06:12 --> 00:06:16: being made include stitches which are enhanced crossings over highway

00:06:16 --> 00:06:17: right subway.

00:06:18 --> 00:06:22: These types of crossings often include widened sidewalks, bike lanes,

00:06:22 --> 00:06:25: seating areas or installations and green spaces.

00:06:25 --> 00:06:29: Caps are full structural covers over highway rights of way

00:06:29 --> 00:06:33: and these can include features like green space, parks, crossing

00:06:33 --> 00:06:38: streets and buildings, and they also often strategically linked neighborhoods

00:06:38 --> 00:06:41: that a highway has separated or divided.

00:06:42 --> 00:06:46: Hybrid removals involve taking limited access roadways and turning them

00:06:46 --> 00:06:51: into lower capacity surface level boulevards, green spaces, and waterways.

00:06:51 --> 00:06:55: And removals can dramatically increase safety, reduce traffic, and also

00:06:55 --> 00:06:56: improve the built environment.

00:06:57 --> 00:07:01: And then also creating public spaces beneath elevated

roadways can
00:07:01 --> 00:07:05: involve creating parks, enhanced public realms, and trails beneath active
00:07:05 --> 00:07:06: roadways.
00:07:07 --> 00:07:09: And there are many potential benefits of these types of
00:07:09 --> 00:07:10: Hwy.
00:07:10 --> 00:07:14: transformations and these include everything from improved air quality to
00:07:15 --> 00:07:19: increased access to gathering spaces to an opportunity to incorporate
00:07:19 --> 00:07:24: green infrastructure and nature based solutions to promote resilience.
00:07:26 --> 00:07:29: So with this increased focus on Hwy.
00:07:29 --> 00:07:33: conversions, there are some new related funding programs in the
00:07:33 --> 00:07:34: United States.
00:07:35 --> 00:07:37: One of the ones that's been talked about the most
00:07:37 --> 00:07:41: is the Reconnected Communities Program, which is a \$1 billion
00:07:41 --> 00:07:45: grant program through the bipartisan Infrastructure law to fund planning
00:07:45 --> 00:07:48: and capital construction grants to reconnect places that have been
00:07:48 --> 00:07:50: burdened by past infrastructure decisions.
00:07:51 --> 00:07:54: The Neighborhood Access and Equity Grants program.
00:07:54 --> 00:07:56: This is part of the Inflation Reduction Act.
00:07:56 --> 00:08:01: It's a \$3.2 billion program that supports projects to address
00:08:01 --> 00:08:05: environmental harm and also to support walkability and transit.
00:08:06 --> 00:08:09: But I also just wanted to note, you know, well,
00:08:09 --> 00:08:14: these are undoubtedly great opportunities for communities to attempt to
00:08:14 --> 00:08:18: reconnect communities that have been divided by highways.
00:08:20 --> 00:08:23: Even with this focus from the federal government, it's really
00:08:24 --> 00:08:27: important to note that still around 80%, sorry, 87% of
00:08:27 --> 00:08:32: federal funds that state departments of transportation receive come from
00:08:32 --> 00:08:33: formula funds.
00:08:34 --> 00:08:36: And these funds can be used for almost all types
00:08:36 --> 00:08:37: of transportation projects.
00:08:38 --> 00:08:41: So in twenty, 2143% of all Federal Highway funding went
00:08:41 --> 00:08:45: to repair and reconstruction of roadways, but close to 1/3
00:08:45 --> 00:08:48: went to build new roadway capacity.
00:08:49 --> 00:08:53: Up to about half of many Federal Highway funding programs

00:08:53 --> 00:08:56: can be moved into other programs and can fund improvements

00:08:57 --> 00:08:59: to support transit and walkability.

00:08:59 --> 00:09:02: But for context, only 4% of eligible Hwy.

00:09:02 --> 00:09:06: funds that can be spent on transit or eligible Hwy.

00:09:06 --> 00:09:07: funds are spent on transit.

00:09:08 --> 00:09:11: And only two point 1% of funds supported walking and

00:09:11 --> 00:09:13: biking projects between 2012 and 2016.

00:09:14 --> 00:09:18: So these figures show that the status quo really does

00:09:18 --> 00:09:23: still favor spending on roadways and projects that are really

00:09:23 --> 00:09:26: not working to reconnect communities.

00:09:26 --> 00:09:30: And efforts to convert highways to reconnect communities are still

00:09:30 --> 00:09:33: the exception rather the rule rather than the rule.

00:09:35 --> 00:09:39: So to quickly run through just two very quick examples

00:09:39 --> 00:09:43: of projects that are featured in the report, the 1st

00:09:43 --> 00:09:47: is the I7071 Long Street Bridge project in Columbus, OH.

00:09:48 --> 00:09:52: When I 71 was originally constructed in the early 1960s,

00:09:52 --> 00:09:56: the King Lincoln neighborhood of Columbus had been one of

00:09:56 --> 00:10:00: the most dynamic black communities in the United States with

00:10:00 --> 00:10:02: 100 local businesses and many residents.

00:10:03 --> 00:10:07: But after the highway construction in the 60s, the neighborhood

00:10:07 --> 00:10:12: suffered from disinvestment that led to population decline, also served

00:10:12 --> 00:10:14: to increase poverty and unemployment.

00:10:15 --> 00:10:18: And the highway also separated the community from downtown and

00:10:18 --> 00:10:21: the economic opportunities associated with downtown.

00:10:22 --> 00:10:25: So the Long Street Bridge Stitch project, which was completed

00:10:25 --> 00:10:29: in 2014, was a partnership among community leaders, the Ohio

00:10:29 --> 00:10:32: Department of Transportation, the City of Columbus and others.

00:10:33 --> 00:10:36: And the goals identified in community meetings for the project

00:10:36 --> 00:10:40: were to connect nearby communities to hide the highway, to

00:10:40 --> 00:10:44: improve multimodal connectivity and also, very importantly, to reflect the

00:10:44 --> 00:10:45: neighborhood's culture.

00:10:46 --> 00:10:50: So the bridge now includes park space and enhanced public

00:10:51 --> 00:10:55: realm and multi multi multi modal connections to downtown.

00:10:55 --> 00:10:59: Also notably it includes a 240 foot long cultural walled
00:10:59 --> 00:11:02: mural which was the first project of its kind for
00:11:02 --> 00:11:05: the Ohio Department of Transportation.
00:11:05 --> 00:11:08: So this public art piece also was actually designed by
00:11:08 --> 00:11:12: two local artists from the community and that celebrates the
00:11:12 --> 00:11:15: local neighborhoods, people, places, history, and future.
00:11:17 --> 00:11:20: So in the interest of time, I'm actually going to
00:11:20 --> 00:11:22: skip past the next project and just share a few
00:11:23 --> 00:11:26: overarching lessons learned that we gleaned from Hwy.
00:11:26 --> 00:11:28: conversion efforts that were explored in the report.
00:11:29 --> 00:11:31: So I just want to highlight a few of these.
00:11:31 --> 00:11:35: First, it's just essential to understand and acknowledge the
00:11:35 --> 00:11:38: current
00:11:38 --> 00:11:42: and historical context to build trust.
00:11:42 --> 00:11:45: Urban highways are often just truly infamous as markers of
00:11:46 --> 00:11:49: physical, racial, and economic divides, and they also shape the
00:11:49 --> 00:11:54: way that many people view and experience their cities.
00:11:54 --> 00:11:58: So efforts to convert highway infrastructure into spaces that's
00:11:58 --> 00:12:03: instead
00:12:03 --> 00:12:04: serve communities must first start with understanding the
00:12:05 --> 00:12:09: specific historical
00:12:09 --> 00:12:11: context and how consequences of previous transportation
00:12:11 --> 00:12:15: decisions affect communities
00:12:15 --> 00:12:17: today.
00:12:17 --> 00:12:22: It's also important to understand that highway
00:12:22 --> 00:12:25: transformations can serve
00:12:26 --> 00:12:30: to enhance environmental resilience.
00:12:30 --> 00:12:35: Through thoughtful design strategies that mitigate acute
00:12:35 --> 00:12:39: shocks such as
00:12:39 --> 00:12:40: extreme heat and flooding.
00:12:41 --> 00:12:45: Transformations can further address chronic stresses as well
00:12:45 --> 00:12:48: by supporting
00:12:48 --> 00:12:52: daily quality of life and improved resident health outcomes.
00:12:52 --> 00:12:52: And then the last point that I'll just highlight is
00:12:53 --> 00:12:57: that the fact that projects can integrate local storytelling and
00:12:57 --> 00:12:57: arts and this can be truly valuable for local community
00:12:57 --> 00:12:57: members.
00:12:57 --> 00:12:57: Highway transformation efforts provide significant
00:12:57 --> 00:12:57: opportunities to really just collect
00:12:57 --> 00:12:57: and also elevate stories of area residents and to share
00:12:57 --> 00:12:57: them through the incorporation of art as a significant project
00:12:57 --> 00:12:57: component.
00:12:57 --> 00:12:57: And by honoring the perspectives and the culture of

community,
00:12:57 --> 00:13:02: residents through Art highway Conversions can again
acknowledge the past,
00:13:02 --> 00:13:07: the current and also provide information about the goals for
00:13:07 --> 00:13:10: the future of the area for those with ties to
00:13:10 --> 00:13:11: the local area.
00:13:12 --> 00:13:13: So I'm going to leave it there.
00:13:13 --> 00:13:16: I know we have a packed agenda and but I
00:13:16 --> 00:13:20: will be on and excited to explore more of the
00:13:20 --> 00:13:21: discussion.
00:13:21 --> 00:13:24: If you want to reach out to me, my e-mail
00:13:24 --> 00:13:27: is there on the screen, but I am now going
00:13:28 --> 00:13:31: to pass it over to our host for today, Shonda
00:13:31 --> 00:13:31: Wong.
00:13:31 --> 00:13:34: She's the partner with SVN Architects and Planners, and I'm
00:13:34 --> 00:13:37: going to hand it right over to Shantit right now.
00:13:37 --> 00:13:38: Take it away.
00:13:42 --> 00:13:43: Thanks so much Matt.
00:13:43 --> 00:13:46: And first of all I just wanted to say how
00:13:46 --> 00:13:48: excited I am to be with you all today.
00:13:48 --> 00:13:52: It sounds like we've or seems like we've been able
00:13:52 --> 00:13:56: to gather really fantastic group and really thrilled to join
00:13:56 --> 00:13:59: you all as we get to know Veronica Davis and
00:13:59 --> 00:14:01: her book Inclusive Transportation.
00:14:02 --> 00:14:05: It's a book which we're going to learn a lot
00:14:05 --> 00:14:08: about today and really encourages us to be reflective about
00:14:08 --> 00:14:12: our own transportation story and then how we can then
00:14:12 --> 00:14:15: through our work center people in transportation decisions.
00:14:16 --> 00:14:20: Veronica Davis, just a few intro remarks about her is
00:14:20 --> 00:14:23: a self-described transportation nerd.
00:14:23 --> 00:14:26: She believes all people should have access to safe, reliable
00:14:27 --> 00:14:28: and affordable transportation.
00:14:29 --> 00:14:32: She has a really interesting background with over 20 years
00:14:32 --> 00:14:35: of experience in civil engineering and planning, and she's
currently
00:14:35 --> 00:14:39: the Director of Transportation and Drainage Operations for
the City
00:14:39 --> 00:14:40: of Houston.
00:14:41 --> 00:14:44: While Veronica has this role with the city, I will
00:14:44 --> 00:14:47: pause briefly to note that Veronica is here today to
00:14:47 --> 00:14:50: share her personal views, experience and thoughts.
00:14:51 --> 00:14:53: So just wanted to make a note of that.
00:14:54 --> 00:14:59: Prior to the City of Houston, Veronica was a managing

00:14:59 --> 00:15:04: partner at Inspire Green, which she Co founded in 2009.

00:15:05 --> 00:15:09: She oversaw all transportation and urban design program and had

00:15:09 --> 00:15:13: projects in cities such as the District of Columbia, Philadelphia,

00:15:13 --> 00:15:16: Pittsburgh, Grand Rapids, Charleston and Detroit.

00:15:17 --> 00:15:19: She has also worked with several counties along the East

00:15:20 --> 00:15:20: Coast.

00:15:20 --> 00:15:23: She is one of the Co founders of Black Women

00:15:23 --> 00:15:23: Bike.

00:15:23 --> 00:15:27: She's the vice president on the board for America Walks.

00:15:27 --> 00:15:31: And she earned her dual master's degree in both engineering

00:15:31 --> 00:15:35: management and regional planning from Cornell University.

00:15:37 --> 00:15:39: She is a registered professional engineer.

00:15:40 --> 00:15:40: Welcome, Veronica.

00:15:40 --> 00:15:43: It's great to be with you here today.

00:15:43 --> 00:15:43: Yeah.

00:15:44 --> 00:15:45: Thank you for having me.

00:15:48 --> 00:15:51: You know, I wanted to just start by first of

00:15:51 --> 00:15:55: all saying this is for me personally, so fantastic that

00:15:55 --> 00:15:58: we get a chance to to connect here for this

00:15:58 --> 00:16:02: next hour with the group of participants we have.

00:16:02 --> 00:16:05: I know we're all so busy in our day-to-day lives

00:16:05 --> 00:16:08: buried in our work that it's nice to kind of

00:16:08 --> 00:16:12: step away from that for a moment and reflect on

00:16:12 --> 00:16:14: how we can do things better really.

00:16:14 --> 00:16:19: And so before we dive into that, I just thought

00:16:19 --> 00:16:24: we could start by thinking about this concept of our

00:16:24 --> 00:16:26: own transportation stories.

00:16:27 --> 00:16:29: And in your book, you urge readers to think about

00:16:29 --> 00:16:32: their formative experiences with transportation.

00:16:33 --> 00:16:36: Can you start by sharing with us What's your transportation

00:16:36 --> 00:16:36: story?

00:16:37 --> 00:16:38: Absolutely.

00:16:38 --> 00:16:41: So first of all, thank you all for having me

00:16:41 --> 00:16:42: excited to be here.

00:16:43 --> 00:16:46: So my transportation story, so I do share it in

00:16:46 --> 00:16:48: the book and there's two pieces of it.

00:16:48 --> 00:16:52: So is Matt just eloquently laid out the way communities

00:16:52 --> 00:16:56: were separated and divided by roadway infrastructure?

00:16:56 --> 00:16:59: That is part of my story, not my necessarily lived

00:16:59 --> 00:17:02: experience, but the lived experience of my mom.

00:17:03 --> 00:17:06: And so I do share that my mother's house, which
00:17:06 --> 00:17:09: is also my grandparents house, who I should pay for
00:17:09 --> 00:17:09: it.
00:17:10 --> 00:17:13: And my great grandmother's house was taken in order to
00:17:13 --> 00:17:16: construct I-10 through East Baton Rouge.
00:17:17 --> 00:17:20: And the impact of that, you know, even our family
00:17:20 --> 00:17:20: church, St.
00:17:20 --> 00:17:23: Francis Xavier Catholic Church is right there.
00:17:23 --> 00:17:25: And so where my family was able to walk to
00:17:25 --> 00:17:28: church, now they're in a place where they have to
00:17:28 --> 00:17:31: drive to church because they live further out away from
00:17:31 --> 00:17:32: that community.
00:17:33 --> 00:17:34: And so I do share that story.
00:17:34 --> 00:17:37: And you know, it's just a reminder, as even as
00:17:37 --> 00:17:40: you know, Matt so eloquently kind of laid out, it's
00:17:40 --> 00:17:43: very easy for those of us that are younger to
00:17:43 --> 00:17:45: look at these images and it can feel like it
00:17:45 --> 00:17:47: was something that's far away.
00:17:48 --> 00:17:50: But it is a reminder that many of the communities
00:17:51 --> 00:17:54: that were working, working in, they remember what it was
00:17:54 --> 00:17:56: before the highway was there, before Rd.
00:17:56 --> 00:17:57: got expanded.
00:17:58 --> 00:18:02: So making sure that we're honoring kind of that history
00:18:02 --> 00:18:04: from a personal perspective.
00:18:04 --> 00:18:06: And it's funny, someone asked me how I got in
00:18:06 --> 00:18:08: transportation and I was like I was born in it.
00:18:09 --> 00:18:12: My dad used to work for UMPTA, which is Urban
00:18:12 --> 00:18:18: Mass Transportation Administration, the predecessor to the
Federal Transit Administration
00:18:18 --> 00:18:18: today.
00:18:19 --> 00:18:21: And my mom went in the labor outside of the
00:18:21 --> 00:18:22: building.
00:18:22 --> 00:18:24: So she made it.
00:18:24 --> 00:18:25: We made it across the Potomac.
00:18:25 --> 00:18:27: And I was born in Virginia.
00:18:27 --> 00:18:29: But yes, that's where I went in the labor.
00:18:29 --> 00:18:32: And so both of my parents were in the transportation
00:18:32 --> 00:18:32: industry.
00:18:33 --> 00:18:37: And so it formed a lot of my childhood toys.
00:18:37 --> 00:18:40: I had a Lionel train set.
00:18:40 --> 00:18:43: I had all of the Tonka trucks.
00:18:43 --> 00:18:44: I had a bus.

00:18:44 --> 00:18:46: I had an airport with an airplane.

00:18:46 --> 00:18:51: So with both parents and transportation industry informed a lot

00:18:51 --> 00:18:54: of my toys or even just on days off from

00:18:54 --> 00:18:59: school spending that time at my parents office place.

00:18:59 --> 00:19:00: So it was just one of those things.

00:19:00 --> 00:19:01: It was destined to happen.

00:19:01 --> 00:19:04: And then I I do share about a lot of

00:19:04 --> 00:19:07: what I open up the book is how most of

00:19:07 --> 00:19:12: our children today couldn't navigate confidently any community.

00:19:12 --> 00:19:15: And I'm not talking you know, young young child, but

00:19:15 --> 00:19:16: just let's take a 10 year old.

00:19:17 --> 00:19:18: Most of us wouldn't let our 10 year old walk

00:19:18 --> 00:19:19: to the grocery store.

00:19:20 --> 00:19:21: And why?

00:19:21 --> 00:19:22: Because it's unsafe.

00:19:22 --> 00:19:25: They have to cross this street or they have to

00:19:25 --> 00:19:27: navigate this parking lot.

00:19:28 --> 00:19:32: But you know, I grew up in Maplewood, NJ and

00:19:32 --> 00:19:33: I share that.

00:19:33 --> 00:19:37: You know, I actually had a really great childhood because

00:19:37 --> 00:19:40: it is an older suburb, it's a bedroom community of

00:19:40 --> 00:19:43: New York, but an older suburb largely built before cars.

00:19:44 --> 00:19:47: And so I remember at 10, you know, getting on

00:19:47 --> 00:19:50: my bike and biking across town and meeting my friends

00:19:50 --> 00:19:52: to hang out at the park and then going to

00:19:52 --> 00:19:53: get ice cream after.

00:19:54 --> 00:19:57: But four people drove very slow.

00:19:57 --> 00:20:01: People were very mindful of kids just being around.

00:20:01 --> 00:20:03: And so that was the environment that I grew, I

00:20:03 --> 00:20:04: grew up in.

00:20:04 --> 00:20:07: And so to me it forms my a lot of,

00:20:07 --> 00:20:08: a lot of how.

00:20:08 --> 00:20:10: I think because I know we can do it because

00:20:10 --> 00:20:14: there are many communities like that where kids can actually

00:20:14 --> 00:20:17: confidently get themselves to the park and home.

00:20:19 --> 00:20:21: But there's the majority of us live in communities.

00:20:21 --> 00:20:22: That is not the case.

00:20:22 --> 00:20:24: We can barely get to the park with an adult.

00:20:25 --> 00:20:28: And so it's it's really just thinking of what is

00:20:28 --> 00:20:31: the type of a community and future that we want.

00:20:33 --> 00:20:36: I love that it's it's helping me better understand for

00:20:36 --> 00:20:38: sure and maybe I'm I'm guessing a little bit and
00:20:38 --> 00:20:42: filling the dots obviously in your not just your transportation
00:20:42 --> 00:20:43: but your life story.
00:20:43 --> 00:20:45: But you know, you did write this book, and so
00:20:45 --> 00:20:48: I wonder if you could just elaborate for just a
00:20:48 --> 00:20:51: little bit more about who you wrote this book for.
00:20:53 --> 00:20:53: Yes.
00:20:53 --> 00:20:57: So the genesis of the book was 2018.
00:20:57 --> 00:21:00: I was speaking at a conference about justice in public
00:21:00 --> 00:21:03: spaces and it was really kind of tackling this idea
00:21:03 --> 00:21:06: of equity and we just the equity gives everyone what
00:21:06 --> 00:21:07: they need.
00:21:07 --> 00:21:11: But everyone knows, and I know many of us particularly
00:21:11 --> 00:21:15: that work in government, whether local or county or state
00:21:15 --> 00:21:16: resources are finite.
00:21:17 --> 00:21:18: You have a finite amount of staff, you have a
00:21:18 --> 00:21:21: finite amount of money, You have a finite amount of
00:21:21 --> 00:21:21: time.
00:21:21 --> 00:21:24: So we can't give everyone what they need.
00:21:24 --> 00:21:27: That's why we had these trillion dollar and billion dollar,
00:21:27 --> 00:21:30: you know, funding coming from the federal government.
00:21:30 --> 00:21:32: And even then we know that that does not address
00:21:32 --> 00:21:33: the need.
00:21:33 --> 00:21:35: And so I was presenting on just spaces and it
00:21:36 --> 00:21:38: was really grappling with what the idea of justice looks
00:21:38 --> 00:21:39: like.
00:21:39 --> 00:21:40: And so that's when the the, the genesis of the
00:21:40 --> 00:21:41: book came about.
00:21:42 --> 00:21:47: But really my target audience, it's written for planners and
00:21:47 --> 00:21:48: engineers.
00:21:48 --> 00:21:50: It's kind of the primary audience.
00:21:50 --> 00:21:53: But I also wrote it in a language and a
00:21:53 --> 00:21:58: tone that is accessible to people in that journalism space,
00:21:58 --> 00:22:04: you know, the journalists that are covering these
transportation conversations,
00:22:04 --> 00:22:07: because language becomes very important.
00:22:07 --> 00:22:10: It is targeting the advocacy community.
00:22:10 --> 00:22:12: And I pick on them a little bit.
00:22:12 --> 00:22:15: They're they're sometimes the Champions as I talk about
different
00:22:15 --> 00:22:19: stakeholders, but you know, targeting that advocacy
community, giving them

00:22:19 --> 00:22:22: Chapter 6 is my love letter to the advocates.
00:22:22 --> 00:22:24: That is my charge, my call to action to the
00:22:25 --> 00:22:28: advocates in every, in every sense of the word.
00:22:28 --> 00:22:32: And then, you know, really also making it accessible for
00:22:33 --> 00:22:36: the lay people who are, you know, they know that
00:22:36 --> 00:22:41: they want something different and may not have the
language
00:22:41 --> 00:22:42: to express that.
00:22:42 --> 00:22:45: So being able to write it in a way that
00:22:45 --> 00:22:48: is accessible so that as they're going to a community
00:22:48 --> 00:22:51: meeting, they have the language that they need to express
00:22:51 --> 00:22:53: what it is that they desire.
00:22:55 --> 00:22:55: Yeah.
00:22:55 --> 00:22:57: And I'd love to speak a little bit more about
00:22:57 --> 00:23:00: that, how we work in the context of the various
00:23:00 --> 00:23:04: conversations we're in, whether we're in these one-on-one
conversations or
00:23:04 --> 00:23:06: facilitating a group conversation.
00:23:07 --> 00:23:08: And I'll do that in a minute.
00:23:09 --> 00:23:12: There is something really interesting that you just sit there
00:23:12 --> 00:23:15: and this is concept of just spaces and how that
00:23:15 --> 00:23:17: was part of the genesis of writing this book.
00:23:17 --> 00:23:21: And I think that's so fascinating because and I, I
00:23:21 --> 00:23:24: will say I, I actually have a personal background as
00:23:24 --> 00:23:27: a social worker before I went into community development
and
00:23:28 --> 00:23:29: now urban design, city design.
00:23:31 --> 00:23:35: And you know, this is, I'm going to put it
00:23:35 --> 00:23:37: in such a simple way.
00:23:37 --> 00:23:41: But you know, creating just spaces really requires us to
00:23:41 --> 00:23:44: be able to think and approach our work, thinking of
00:23:44 --> 00:23:46: the city as a whole system, right.
00:23:47 --> 00:23:50: And we're not experts in that whole system necessarily.
00:23:51 --> 00:23:55: But it's interesting, Veronica, to me because you have such
00:23:55 --> 00:24:00: an interesting background in bringing both planning and
engineering together.
00:24:01 --> 00:24:03: You've worked, you were sharing with me and I I
00:24:03 --> 00:24:04: thought this was so interesting.
00:24:04 --> 00:24:08: You've worked in long range planning and waterfront
development and
00:24:09 --> 00:24:13: helping to form what developer contributions would be for
neighbourhood
00:24:13 --> 00:24:15: amenities etcetera.

00:24:15 --> 00:24:20: And that crossover, disciplines, crossover of disciplines is so necessary.

00:24:20 --> 00:24:23: I know that we experience in that in my work

00:24:23 --> 00:24:26: at SVN, what we're planners, designers and architects.

00:24:27 --> 00:24:30: And what I find in our experience is that really

00:24:30 --> 00:24:34: helps us to, you know, really develop a unique expertise

00:24:35 --> 00:24:39: in bringing, in our case, transit planning and real estate

00:24:39 --> 00:24:41: and housing development together.

00:24:42 --> 00:24:45: And when you're able to bring more than just one

00:24:45 --> 00:24:48: part together and stitch it together as a whole system,

00:24:49 --> 00:24:53: that's where you can really see solutions that become catalysts

00:24:53 --> 00:24:54: for broader transformation.

00:24:55 --> 00:24:56: Does that make sense?

00:24:56 --> 00:24:57: Yeah, it does.

00:24:57 --> 00:25:00: And I'll and I'll say that one of the things

00:25:00 --> 00:25:05: that I think, particularly the transportation and the housing industries

00:25:05 --> 00:25:09: are gonna have to grapple with is we're gonna have

00:25:09 --> 00:25:11: to be experts outside of our expertise.

00:25:11 --> 00:25:14: And what I mean by that is for so long

00:25:14 --> 00:25:17: transportation, we go, Nope, Nope, Nope.

00:25:17 --> 00:25:18: We're just the roads.

00:25:18 --> 00:25:19: We're just the roads.

00:25:19 --> 00:25:21: And housing says Nope, we're just the buildings.

00:25:22 --> 00:25:26: But they're, to your point, there's so many social issues

00:25:26 --> 00:25:32: that the people working on those issues don't necessarily have

00:25:32 --> 00:25:33: the funding.

00:25:33 --> 00:25:36: So right, when it comes down to money, there's always

00:25:36 --> 00:25:39: there's money for housing, there's money for transportation, but it's

00:25:39 --> 00:25:42: all that squishy stuff that becomes hard to fund.

00:25:42 --> 00:25:44: Social work is, I'm sure, I don't know if there's

00:25:44 --> 00:25:47: any social workers on here, but as you know, it's

00:25:47 --> 00:25:50: probably one of the most underfunded, you know, professions we

00:25:50 --> 00:25:50: talked about.

00:25:51 --> 00:25:52: I think Matt mentioned art.

00:25:52 --> 00:25:55: Art is an unfunded, you know, profession.

00:25:56 --> 00:25:59: And more and more our industries are going to have

00:26:00 --> 00:26:03: to grapple with the bigger social challenges.

00:26:03 --> 00:26:06: And I'll give a very tangible example.

00:26:07 --> 00:26:10: Let's talk about the unhoused population for so long.
00:26:10 --> 00:26:14: The transportation industry just said that's not us.
00:26:14 --> 00:26:15: We just build the sidewalks.
00:26:15 --> 00:26:16: We just build the road.
00:26:16 --> 00:26:18: We just put benches where you tell us to put
00:26:18 --> 00:26:18: benches.
00:26:18 --> 00:26:20: And we threw our hands up.
00:26:20 --> 00:26:25: And even at Transportation Research Board, the annual
meeting we
00:26:25 --> 00:26:28: just had in DC, I at least appreciate this grappling
00:26:28 --> 00:26:31: with what does it mean for our industry.
00:26:31 --> 00:26:34: We can't just say not our problem when you have
00:26:34 --> 00:26:37: people sleeping on our sidewalks, when you have people
sleeping
00:26:37 --> 00:26:42: underneath our bridges, when you have people that our
infrastructure
00:26:42 --> 00:26:43: has become their home.
00:26:43 --> 00:26:46: How do we now begin to grapple with this and
00:26:46 --> 00:26:49: not just say not a transportation issue?
00:26:49 --> 00:26:52: And so I think more and more we're going to
00:26:52 --> 00:26:54: see us grappling with that.
00:26:54 --> 00:26:55: And same with housing.
00:26:55 --> 00:26:57: It's very easy to say, well, we just built the
00:26:57 --> 00:26:59: housing, but it all has to fit together.
00:27:00 --> 00:27:03: And the housing needs to be where people can get
00:27:03 --> 00:27:05: to school or people can get access to jobs and
00:27:05 --> 00:27:07: transit and all those things.
00:27:07 --> 00:27:10: And it's not to say that we have to completely
00:27:10 --> 00:27:14: step outside of our expertise, but I think it's going
00:27:14 --> 00:27:17: to be the recognition that our industries are going to
00:27:17 --> 00:27:20: have to truly begin to grapple with some of these
00:27:21 --> 00:27:21: things.
00:27:21 --> 00:27:24: And that's really kind of the bigger system of justice.
00:27:31 --> 00:27:34: Yeah, I feel like I'm having a little tech difficulty.
00:27:34 --> 00:27:35: Hear you can still hear me, Veronica.
00:27:36 --> 00:27:36: I can hear you.
00:27:37 --> 00:27:37: OK.
00:27:40 --> 00:27:41: And you can maybe see me now too.
00:27:41 --> 00:27:42: OK.
00:27:42 --> 00:27:43: Yeah.
00:27:43 --> 00:27:46: No, that's I, I, I certainly have noticed a shift
00:27:46 --> 00:27:49: in the way a shift, it's slow, but a bit
00:27:49 --> 00:27:52: of a shift even in the last five years I'd

00:27:52 --> 00:27:56: say where it's one thing for us to acknowledge how
00:27:56 --> 00:27:58: we work and want to work.
00:27:59 --> 00:28:02: But having said that, I have noticed where we've seen
00:28:02 --> 00:28:06: the most transformative outcomes have been really with
clients that
00:28:07 --> 00:28:09: are willing to step outside of their lane.
00:28:11 --> 00:28:14: And it's one thing to participate with a stakeholder, it's
00:28:14 --> 00:28:17: another to bring that stakeholder right in early enough in
00:28:17 --> 00:28:17: the process.
00:28:17 --> 00:28:18: Right.
00:28:18 --> 00:28:23: And this traditionally how transit, residential space, public
space, all
00:28:23 --> 00:28:26: of these things being thought of in silos and then
00:28:26 --> 00:28:31: unintentionally creating these back of house spaces that just
don't
00:28:31 --> 00:28:35: work, these conditions don't conflict with each other.
00:28:35 --> 00:28:38: But but it's clear that we need to be able
00:28:38 --> 00:28:41: to take the time and invest the time to bring
00:28:41 --> 00:28:45: them together to open the doorbell to actually do some
00:28:45 --> 00:28:47: meaningful community planning.
00:28:47 --> 00:28:47: Absolutely.
00:28:49 --> 00:28:53: I wondered if we could speak a little bit about
00:28:53 --> 00:28:58: in your experience, Veronica, how you work with agencies or
00:28:58 --> 00:29:03: cities or communities to in the conversations you're having.
00:29:04 --> 00:29:07: You know I'll use streetscape design as one example, but
00:29:07 --> 00:29:09: it could be really any type of project brief.
00:29:10 --> 00:29:13: How do you determine the priorities that you need to
00:29:13 --> 00:29:15: focus on in those projects?
00:29:15 --> 00:29:18: I know that's a big question, but I raise it
00:29:18 --> 00:29:22: because you do in your book talk about this concept
00:29:22 --> 00:29:26: of an emergency room and these triage questions that you
00:29:26 --> 00:29:27: ask.
00:29:28 --> 00:29:31: So I think you know from priorities at a big
00:29:31 --> 00:29:35: picture level there's going to be the priorities of whatever
00:29:35 --> 00:29:38: the jurisdiction, city, county, whatever it is.
00:29:38 --> 00:29:42: There's the bigger picture priorities and theoretically you
know equity
00:29:42 --> 00:29:45: and all those things should be baked into that And
00:29:45 --> 00:29:48: and a lot of times the priorities are going to
00:29:48 --> 00:29:51: be very obvious and I'll, I'll I'll you know tackle
00:29:51 --> 00:29:52: something like Vision zero.
00:29:53 --> 00:29:56: We talk about Vision zero and zero traffic related deaths
00:29:56 --> 00:29:57: and fatalities.

00:29:57 --> 00:30:00: When when you turn on a high injury network of
00:30:00 --> 00:30:03: any community, it's going to be very obvious where people
00:30:03 --> 00:30:06: are dying on your roadways, they're going to be roads
00:30:06 --> 00:30:09: that light up and then if you throw on, you
00:30:09 --> 00:30:13: know, ethnicity and race and income, it's super obvious
where
00:30:13 --> 00:30:15: you have to invest your funding.
00:30:15 --> 00:30:18: So that's like kind of a big picture macro level
00:30:18 --> 00:30:20: of here the priorities.
00:30:20 --> 00:30:22: As you look at the micro level, it's going to
00:30:22 --> 00:30:25: be a balance, going to be a dance because there
00:30:25 --> 00:30:26: is a why are you doing this project to begin
00:30:27 --> 00:30:27: with.
00:30:28 --> 00:30:29: So let's say it is a safety project.
00:30:29 --> 00:30:32: We're looking at this corridor because it's unsafe.
00:30:32 --> 00:30:33: And so then all things come on the table.
00:30:33 --> 00:30:37: It's the urban design, It's the sidewalk with it's the
00:30:37 --> 00:30:39: context of that particular street.
00:30:39 --> 00:30:41: Is it a residential street?
00:30:41 --> 00:30:42: Is it a commercial street?
00:30:42 --> 00:30:45: Is it a mix like what is going on?
00:30:45 --> 00:30:49: And I think that's where you've identified that, hey, we
00:30:49 --> 00:30:51: have to address this street For these reasons.
00:30:52 --> 00:30:55: But the priorities come down to working with the community
00:30:55 --> 00:30:57: because we can't be a road can only do.
00:30:57 --> 00:30:59: But so much I know that we'd love to make
00:30:59 --> 00:30:59: a road.
00:30:59 --> 00:31:00: We want a road to do everything.
00:31:00 --> 00:31:03: We want to road to have unimpeded traffic.
00:31:03 --> 00:31:05: If I'm driving in a car, but the bus can
00:31:05 --> 00:31:07: go and then there's a bike lane and wide enough
00:31:07 --> 00:31:08: sidewalk.
00:31:08 --> 00:31:10: And then we want green infrastructure and we want trees
00:31:10 --> 00:31:12: and we want a bench and we want a sidewalk
00:31:12 --> 00:31:12: Cafe.
00:31:12 --> 00:31:14: Space is finite.
00:31:14 --> 00:31:17: And so therefore it really comes down to working with
00:31:17 --> 00:31:20: the community to say this is how much space you
00:31:20 --> 00:31:21: have available.
00:31:21 --> 00:31:25: And more importantly, what I have found in my experience
00:31:25 --> 00:31:28: is you have to get the community outside.
00:31:28 --> 00:31:30: I don't care how you do your math.

00:31:30 --> 00:31:33: I don't care how many little tool games that you
00:31:33 --> 00:31:35: come up with and the, you know, the online stuff
00:31:35 --> 00:31:37: where people can build there right away.
00:31:38 --> 00:31:39: It doesn't matter.
00:31:39 --> 00:31:43: People cannot understand the context of distance, and I don't
00:31:43 --> 00:31:47: care if they're engineer, I don't care if they're a
00:31:47 --> 00:31:47: nurse.
00:31:48 --> 00:31:50: I don't care if they're stay at home parent.
00:31:50 --> 00:31:52: It doesn't matter.
00:31:52 --> 00:31:54: People don't understand the concept of different distance.
00:31:55 --> 00:31:57: So it is also equally important to have meetings at
00:31:58 --> 00:32:01: the block that you're discussing so that everyone can
physically
00:32:01 --> 00:32:03: see, oh, you know what, this isn't as wide as
00:32:03 --> 00:32:06: I thought it was, or this isn't as whatever as
00:32:06 --> 00:32:07: I thought it was.
00:32:08 --> 00:32:10: And so those are ways to really begin to start
00:32:10 --> 00:32:13: tackling, OK, what are we going to do this?
00:32:13 --> 00:32:15: How much space we have, how we're going to prioritize
00:32:16 --> 00:32:17: the use of this space.
00:32:19 --> 00:32:23: Can you can you share with us you you speak
00:32:23 --> 00:32:27: in the book about the power of narratives and storytelling,
00:32:28 --> 00:32:30: which I totally agree with.
00:32:30 --> 00:32:33: I know that there are a handful of stories that
00:32:33 --> 00:32:35: I've heard from 20 years ago when I've been in
00:32:36 --> 00:32:39: public meetings that stick with me today and in fact
00:32:39 --> 00:32:42: have been really helpful for me to be able to
00:32:42 --> 00:32:45: share on those examples in other contexts to help people
00:32:45 --> 00:32:48: kind of understand a point I'm trying to make.
00:32:48 --> 00:32:51: But I wondered, is there a compelling story that stuck
00:32:51 --> 00:32:54: with you and can you share that with us?
00:32:54 --> 00:32:54: Absolutely.
00:32:56 --> 00:32:58: And I'd love to hear also tied to that story
00:32:58 --> 00:33:02: like any outcomes that resulted or something that you might
00:33:02 --> 00:33:04: have done to pivot the way that you were the
00:33:04 --> 00:33:07: team or the context of folks were working or how
00:33:07 --> 00:33:09: they were working based on hearing?
00:33:09 --> 00:33:12: That I have a really great story.
00:33:12 --> 00:33:15: So we were working on the Vision Zero plan for
00:33:15 --> 00:33:19: the District of Columbia and at that time, so for
00:33:19 --> 00:33:23: in case listeners don't have no idea what I'm talking
00:33:23 --> 00:33:23: about.

00:33:23 --> 00:33:27: So as I mentioned, Vision Zero is 0 traffic related
00:33:27 --> 00:33:28: deaths and fatalities.
00:33:29 --> 00:33:30: It's not crashes.
00:33:30 --> 00:33:33: It's understanding crashes are going to happen, but no one
00:33:33 --> 00:33:35: should die or be seriously injured from that.
00:33:35 --> 00:33:38: And it's a concept from Sweden that was brought to
00:33:38 --> 00:33:40: the US I believe New Yorker.
00:33:40 --> 00:33:43: One of them was the first kind of city to
00:33:43 --> 00:33:46: be a, you know, US based Vision Zero city and
00:33:46 --> 00:33:49: at the time we were doing the DC Vision Zero
00:33:49 --> 00:33:50: plan.
00:33:50 --> 00:33:52: It's only been about eight other plans at that point.
00:33:52 --> 00:33:54: But DC was the first that actually had community
00:33:55 --> 00:33:55: engagement.
00:33:56 --> 00:33:59: We did a summit with a bunch of summer youth
00:33:59 --> 00:34:03: employment program because one, it was great because
00:34:03 --> 00:34:04: they were
00:34:04 --> 00:34:06: a captivated audience.
00:34:06 --> 00:34:07: They had to be there to get their, you know,
00:34:07 --> 00:34:09: funding for the day.
00:34:09 --> 00:34:12: And so it was about 203 hundred young people that
00:34:12 --> 00:34:16: we had in A room and went through several different
00:34:16 --> 00:34:18: things to get to Vision 0.
00:34:18 --> 00:34:21: So we had a station where they did a redesign,
00:34:21 --> 00:34:23: we had a survey, we had all these things, but
00:34:23 --> 00:34:25: specifically the redesign.
00:34:25 --> 00:34:28: So I was at the redesign table and I specifically
00:34:28 --> 00:34:32: remember this, this young, young, young child because he
00:34:32 --> 00:34:35: was
00:34:35 --> 00:34:37: on a, he was a younger teen and we were
00:34:37 --> 00:34:40: going through the design.
00:34:40 --> 00:34:43: And so one of the things that he had talked
00:34:43 --> 00:34:44: about was it was we were talking about the concept
00:34:45 --> 00:34:48: of walking against traffic.
00:34:48 --> 00:34:52: And so he made the point of, hey, I am
00:34:52 --> 00:34:55: a young black child, you know, or young black teen,
00:34:55 --> 00:34:58: you know, walking through the neighborhood.
00:34:59 --> 00:35:03: And so if I go visit my grandmother, if I'm
00:35:03 --> 00:35:07: jaywalking, I'm trying to avoid getting, you know, getting
00:35:07 --> 00:35:09: jumped
00:35:10 --> 00:35:13: or I'm trying to avoid confrontation with a group of
00:35:10 --> 00:35:13: guys or, you know, a group of people.
00:35:10 --> 00:35:13: And I have done my calculated risk that walking against

00:35:13 --> 00:35:16: traffic at this point is safer for me than going
00:35:16 --> 00:35:20: to the corner and having to interact with this other
00:35:20 --> 00:35:21: group of people.
00:35:21 --> 00:35:25: And so with that, I think it really was this
00:35:25 --> 00:35:30: person sharing their lived experience, sharing what they go
to,
00:35:30 --> 00:35:34: sharing their concept of what safety looks like.
00:35:35 --> 00:35:37: And it really caused us.
00:35:37 --> 00:35:42: We actually went back through Vision Zero and basically
removed
00:35:42 --> 00:35:45: anything enforcement related to pedestrian.
00:35:45 --> 00:35:46: We removed all of it.
00:35:47 --> 00:35:50: And it was for that reason of, you know, a
00:35:50 --> 00:35:55: person telling their story and the impact of the action.
00:35:55 --> 00:35:55: And they're not.
00:35:55 --> 00:35:57: They're like I'm look, I'm not trying to be intentionally
00:35:58 --> 00:35:59: disrespectful, I am just trying to survive.
00:36:00 --> 00:36:00: And so that is a.
00:36:01 --> 00:36:02: That's the example that I have.
00:36:03 --> 00:36:03: Mm hmm.
00:36:03 --> 00:36:06: You have some great tools in your book.
00:36:07 --> 00:36:10: I know that since reading the book and finishing the
00:36:10 --> 00:36:13: book, I've shared specific excerpts of that book with my
00:36:13 --> 00:36:16: own team here at the studio that are very much
00:36:16 --> 00:36:20: involved in community engagement and consultation tied to
transportation work.
00:36:21 --> 00:36:24: And what I appreciate is that you're trying to set
00:36:24 --> 00:36:29: out a framework for really where different people and
different
00:36:29 --> 00:36:33: stakeholders including those that are the clients or the
owners
00:36:33 --> 00:36:36: in the process, you know really helping to map out
00:36:36 --> 00:36:40: and articulate where are you coming from, what are people's
00:36:40 --> 00:36:44: fears, not just the general public, but even your own
00:36:44 --> 00:36:48: fears in the work, your needs, your requirements and others
00:36:48 --> 00:36:49: as well.
00:36:49 --> 00:36:51: And and bringing that together.
00:36:52 --> 00:36:54: You even had this really helpful graph.
00:36:54 --> 00:36:56: I can't remember what page it was on, but it
00:36:56 --> 00:36:59: was towards the end of the book and I remember
00:36:59 --> 00:37:01: a series of questions that you can kind of ask
00:37:02 --> 00:37:03: and I I love that section.
00:37:03 --> 00:37:06: I just wanted to to share that with you, but

00:37:06 --> 00:37:07: I also just.

00:37:08 --> 00:37:10: Want to say on the community engagement and then the

00:37:10 --> 00:37:12: book and and I I know I've gotten some feedback.

00:37:12 --> 00:37:15: Some people are like, I feel like you're missing some

00:37:15 --> 00:37:17: steps and it's like, it's not to be prescriptive.

00:37:18 --> 00:37:19: It's a framework.

00:37:19 --> 00:37:22: And a framework is something that can be modified based

00:37:22 --> 00:37:25: on the context of whatever you're doing, 'cause I'm very

00:37:25 --> 00:37:29: clear about public engagement, I just want to make this

00:37:29 --> 00:37:29: point.

00:37:30 --> 00:37:33: I'm very clear that public engagement can be AI, am

00:37:34 --> 00:37:35: telling you what I'm doing.

00:37:36 --> 00:37:37: That is perfectly fine.

00:37:38 --> 00:37:41: It's being honest about it 'cause I think sometimes we

00:37:41 --> 00:37:43: already know what we want to do and we pretend

00:37:43 --> 00:37:46: we come up with this whole pretend public engagement to

00:37:46 --> 00:37:48: end up back at the same result.

00:37:49 --> 00:37:50: And it's not going to be for every project.

00:37:50 --> 00:37:52: But you know, and I'll I'll take an example, I

00:37:53 --> 00:37:53: don't.

00:37:53 --> 00:37:57: At every place that I've ever worked, sidewalks are the

00:37:58 --> 00:38:00: single hardest project to do.

00:38:01 --> 00:38:02: Every community, it doesn't matter.

00:38:02 --> 00:38:08: Rich, poor, black, white, Latino, Asian, it doesn't matter.

00:38:09 --> 00:38:11: Sidewalks are the single hardest project.

00:38:12 --> 00:38:16: And so and that's a case where depending on what

00:38:16 --> 00:38:21: the law is for that jurisdiction, it's not a conversation.

00:38:21 --> 00:38:24: There are going to be times when, hey, should we,

00:38:24 --> 00:38:26: should we not but a sidewalk, if the law is

00:38:26 --> 00:38:28: there's a sidewalk on one side of the street, that's

00:38:29 --> 00:38:29: the law.

00:38:29 --> 00:38:30: So we are here to tell you we're going to

00:38:30 --> 00:38:31: install a sidewalk.

00:38:31 --> 00:38:34: Now what is up for debate is we put on

00:38:34 --> 00:38:37: this side or this side how we connect, you know,

00:38:37 --> 00:38:38: those type of things.

00:38:39 --> 00:38:41: And in some cases that isn't even up for debate.

00:38:41 --> 00:38:43: You know, like I know that some jurisdictions now have

00:38:43 --> 00:38:45: changed the law so you have to have a sidewalk

00:38:45 --> 00:38:46: on both sides of the street.

00:38:46 --> 00:38:49: So we're not really here to have an engagement of

00:38:49 --> 00:38:51: should we do a sidewalk or not.

00:38:51 --> 00:38:52: That's not the question.

00:38:52 --> 00:38:54: And I think it's about being honest of we are

00:38:54 --> 00:38:56: here because we're going to install this sidewalk.

00:38:58 --> 00:38:59: Yeah, I hear you.

00:38:59 --> 00:39:01: We we we think a lot about that too and

00:39:01 --> 00:39:05: encourage our like just even when we're walking into conversations

00:39:05 --> 00:39:07: to be as transparent as possible.

00:39:08 --> 00:39:11: And that includes like you know and I'm an urban

00:39:11 --> 00:39:14: designer but that doesn't mean every project allows me to

00:39:14 --> 00:39:15: blue sky everything.

00:39:15 --> 00:39:18: There are very clear constraints and parameters and all this

00:39:18 --> 00:39:21: to say is trying to be as open and transparent

00:39:21 --> 00:39:24: about these are the open doors today and these are

00:39:24 --> 00:39:25: the closed doors.

00:39:25 --> 00:39:26: But For these reasons, no.

00:39:26 --> 00:39:27: Yep, absolutely.

00:39:28 --> 00:39:30: We have a few minutes before we turn to the

00:39:30 --> 00:39:33: group and take some questions, but I would love to

00:39:33 --> 00:39:36: be able to spend a few moments to talk about

00:39:36 --> 00:39:36: climate.

00:39:37 --> 00:39:39: So top of mind and should be for all of

00:39:40 --> 00:39:42: us and certainly I just think about the group of

00:39:42 --> 00:39:46: participants here today and land development and city design and

00:39:46 --> 00:39:49: how we and our professions really have a great influence

00:39:49 --> 00:39:53: and how we're going to ultimately decarbonize our cities and

00:39:53 --> 00:39:53: our planet.

00:39:55 --> 00:39:58: You know, we we know that the largest emitters of

00:39:59 --> 00:40:03: carbon are both well buildings, big emitter both in terms

00:40:03 --> 00:40:08: of embodied carbon new construction but also gas emitting vehicles.

00:40:08 --> 00:40:10: And so I bring this back.

00:40:10 --> 00:40:14: To our conversation today about inclusive transportation.

00:40:14 --> 00:40:17: And I wonder, does this topic come up in your

00:40:17 --> 00:40:18: practice, in your conversations?

00:40:19 --> 00:40:20: Absolutely.

00:40:21 --> 00:40:24: So my title is transportation and drainage operations.

00:40:25 --> 00:40:26: It you know, absolutely.

00:40:26 --> 00:40:29: I think that what we see now it's I think

00:40:29 --> 00:40:32: there's climate is a lot of things.

00:40:32 --> 00:40:34: So there is the emission side of it.

00:40:34 --> 00:40:37: And so we say, oh, EVs will, they're going to

00:40:37 --> 00:40:39: come and everything will be fine and we can move
00:40:39 --> 00:40:42: forward and it's like as long as electric vehicles.
00:40:42 --> 00:40:46: So but even with EVs, the energy has to come
00:40:46 --> 00:40:48: from somewhere.
00:40:48 --> 00:40:53: It's just moving it away from the city to somewhere
00:40:53 --> 00:40:53: else.
00:40:53 --> 00:40:56: And so that's still a part of a conversation we
00:40:56 --> 00:40:59: need to have and even the disposable of the batteries,
00:40:59 --> 00:41:02: right that becomes a challenge or you know now we
00:41:02 --> 00:41:06: recognize as they catch on fire the firefighters don't even
00:41:06 --> 00:41:08: have the tools to put them out.
00:41:08 --> 00:41:12: So conversation if you had, but you know there is
00:41:12 --> 00:41:16: the overall emission side of it and while cars are
00:41:16 --> 00:41:22: getting cleaner, there's still, there's still emissions from you
know
00:41:22 --> 00:41:24: gas powered vehicles.
00:41:24 --> 00:41:29: And then when you think about our roadways, our weather
00:41:29 --> 00:41:31: is becoming more intense.
00:41:31 --> 00:41:35: Whether you believe in global warming or not, there is
00:41:35 --> 00:41:39: no denying that we are experiencing extremely intense
weather.
00:41:40 --> 00:41:43: You know in Houston we now have three winters back-to-
back
00:41:44 --> 00:41:47: that we have been well below freezing, you know and
00:41:47 --> 00:41:51: even including below 0 Houston, you know you have San
00:41:51 --> 00:41:54: Diego that they just this week we're underwater.
00:41:54 --> 00:41:57: San Francisco was underwater.
00:41:57 --> 00:42:00: You have an intensity that is happening more and more
00:42:01 --> 00:42:04: that you have to recognize that you know it's, it's
00:42:04 --> 00:42:07: impacting our right of ways because that's largely where
we're
00:42:08 --> 00:42:09: going to hold the water, right.
00:42:09 --> 00:42:11: The pipes that are either underneath.
00:42:11 --> 00:42:14: You have places like you know Texas and Florida and
00:42:14 --> 00:42:17: some of the Midwest that have open drainage systems as
00:42:17 --> 00:42:17: well.
00:42:18 --> 00:42:21: And so we absolutely think about it and have to
00:42:21 --> 00:42:22: think about it.
00:42:22 --> 00:42:25: And it's why I'm not saying we should do it,
00:42:25 --> 00:42:29: but we should consider a bolder future that says, well,
00:42:29 --> 00:42:32: what if we got rid of half of the pavement
00:42:32 --> 00:42:33: on our roads up?
00:42:34 --> 00:42:37: You know, what if we took that space and we

00:42:37 --> 00:42:40: turned it back to trees or greenage?
00:42:40 --> 00:42:44: And I know it's not going to be perfect everywhere,
00:42:44 --> 00:42:47: but we just have to begin thinking about are we
00:42:47 --> 00:42:50: using our right of way that's most effective as the
00:42:50 --> 00:42:52: future keeps marching forward?
00:42:52 --> 00:42:54: Because as long as we have all this pavement, we're
00:42:54 --> 00:42:57: just going to continue to see flooding as these storms
00:42:57 --> 00:42:58: become more intense.
00:42:59 --> 00:43:00: Well, completely.
00:43:00 --> 00:43:03: And I just think about this is, you know, it
00:43:03 --> 00:43:05: was one thing for us to have our conversations and
00:43:05 --> 00:43:08: it's even hard enough for some people to keep up
00:43:08 --> 00:43:09: with this concept.
00:43:10 --> 00:43:10: Of.
00:43:10 --> 00:43:14: Streets being what you're you know their public rights of
00:43:14 --> 00:43:18: way meaning they're increasingly important civic spaces.
00:43:19 --> 00:43:19: There's that.
00:43:20 --> 00:43:23: But there's also from an environmental and and time
00:43:23 --> 00:43:26: perspective we have associated with that.
00:43:27 --> 00:43:30: We need to work at a clip to really rethink
00:43:30 --> 00:43:34: like dramatically rethink the standards that we're upholding
00:43:34 --> 00:43:39: and create
00:43:39 --> 00:43:40: new standards, new standards for streetscape design, for
00:43:40 --> 00:43:42: stormwater management
00:43:42 --> 00:43:46: for all of that.
00:43:46 --> 00:43:47: Yeah, I I totally hear you there.
00:43:47 --> 00:43:52: And just I wondered if we could wrap with one
00:43:52 --> 00:43:57: final question.
00:43:57 --> 00:44:00: And I wondered if you could share one story, Veronica,
00:44:00 --> 00:44:04: in or one example really about great leadership.
00:44:04 --> 00:44:06: Because in your book you talk about your experience, being
00:44:06 --> 00:44:09: a woman, being black, being a planner, engineer, all of
00:44:09 --> 00:44:12: these components of what makes you who you are.
00:44:13 --> 00:44:14: And you say something to the effect of I realize
00:44:15 --> 00:44:17: that the largest barrier to equity is leadership.
00:44:17 --> 00:44:18: Absolutely.
00:44:19 --> 00:44:19: I would love to know a time that you have
00:44:20 --> 00:44:20: leadership or were.
00:44:21 --> 00:44:24: You know you.
00:44:24 --> 00:44:27: Know.
00:44:27 --> 00:44:27: I I was on an interview panel for an executive
00:44:28 --> 00:44:28: and one of the things they asked me was, you

00:44:27 --> 00:44:30: know, what does it take to be a good leader?

00:44:30 --> 00:44:32: I'm going to say this and this is going to

00:44:32 --> 00:44:34: be something you probably none of you have probably ever

00:44:34 --> 00:44:34: heard.

00:44:35 --> 00:44:36: As a leader.

00:44:37 --> 00:44:41: You need to one at all times make sure your

00:44:41 --> 00:44:43: financial house is in order.

00:44:44 --> 00:44:46: And what I mean is you need to live below

00:44:46 --> 00:44:47: your means.

00:44:47 --> 00:44:49: No matter as you go in leadership, you get more

00:44:49 --> 00:44:49: money.

00:44:50 --> 00:44:51: Live below your means.

00:44:51 --> 00:44:55: You always need to have a cushion of money that

00:44:55 --> 00:44:57: you don't need this job to live.

00:44:58 --> 00:45:02: And it's important because the minute you need any of

00:45:02 --> 00:45:05: these jobs for your survival, for just living.

00:45:05 --> 00:45:08: And I know this, it's a very privileged statement to

00:45:08 --> 00:45:11: make, but the minute you need this job to live,

00:45:11 --> 00:45:13: you cannot make the decisions that you sometimes need to

00:45:13 --> 00:45:14: make.

00:45:14 --> 00:45:18: You cannot fight the battles that sometimes you need to

00:45:18 --> 00:45:18: fight.

00:45:18 --> 00:45:19: And I'm not.

00:45:19 --> 00:45:21: And I don't mean in a adversarial way, right?

00:45:21 --> 00:45:23: You know, you got to, you know, be able to

00:45:24 --> 00:45:25: adjust to who you're talking to.

00:45:25 --> 00:45:26: And I talked about that in the book.

00:45:27 --> 00:45:30: But that's what I really mean by that, especially should

00:45:30 --> 00:45:33: you ever want to be in a seat like I

00:45:33 --> 00:45:33: have.

00:45:33 --> 00:45:37: If you want to be over Department of Transportation, transit

00:45:38 --> 00:45:42: agency, whatever, you really need to keep your financial

00:45:42 --> 00:45:45: house

00:45:42 --> 00:45:45: in order so that you can show up every day

00:45:45 --> 00:45:48: and not need this job to survive.

00:45:48 --> 00:45:50: I need this job for my lifestyle.

00:45:50 --> 00:45:53: My lifestyle is I got to leave the country every

00:45:53 --> 00:45:54: so often.

00:45:54 --> 00:45:57: But my life is taken care of because of the

00:45:57 --> 00:46:01: financial decisions that I've made, even as I've moved

00:46:01 --> 00:46:01: through

00:46:01 --> 00:46:01: my career.

00:46:02 --> 00:46:04: And that is how you can get to the point
00:46:04 --> 00:46:05: of being a bold leader.
00:46:08 --> 00:46:11: I know that's not what anybody expected, but that's to
00:46:11 --> 00:46:15: me a very important leadership lesson, especially for the
young
00:46:15 --> 00:46:19: planners, Engineers, you know, designers on here, just grow
your
00:46:19 --> 00:46:22: career and always make sure you have a cushion available
00:46:22 --> 00:46:25: to you because this is, this work isn't easy.
00:46:26 --> 00:46:30: You know, I've had to go to the powers that
00:46:30 --> 00:46:34: be and state my case and and and hold my
00:46:34 --> 00:46:36: position sometimes.
00:46:36 --> 00:46:39: And with that and I was, I've fortunately been in
00:46:39 --> 00:46:42: a position of support from leadership.
00:46:42 --> 00:46:45: But I also recognize there's many of my colleagues around
00:46:45 --> 00:46:48: the country that aren't in that position and they get
00:46:48 --> 00:46:50: thanked for their service.
00:46:50 --> 00:46:52: So that is, to me, the the biggest way to
00:46:52 --> 00:46:53: get to bold leadership.
00:46:54 --> 00:46:56: Thank you so much, Veronica.
00:46:56 --> 00:47:00: We've got questions to get to.
00:47:00 --> 00:47:02: And so I would love to open up the floor
00:47:02 --> 00:47:04: to some of the questions.
00:47:04 --> 00:47:06: And I'm seeing them come in right now.
00:47:07 --> 00:47:11: I see one from somebody that I know.
00:47:11 --> 00:47:13: Actually, I'm not gonna say her name to put her
00:47:13 --> 00:47:15: on the spot, but it's a great question.
00:47:15 --> 00:47:16: I'm gonna read it out.
00:47:16 --> 00:47:16: OK.
00:47:16 --> 00:47:21: Veronica, it says transportation's become a highly politicized
issue, influencing
00:47:21 --> 00:47:25: local elections, posing challenges for professionals in the
field as
00:47:25 --> 00:47:26: we navigate our work.
00:47:27 --> 00:47:30: Can you, Veronica, provide an example of how of how
00:47:30 --> 00:47:33: you have confronted this issue in pursuit of a safer
00:47:33 --> 00:47:36: and more equitable transportation system?
00:47:37 --> 00:47:40: I'm laughing because as you know what I'm hand dealing
00:47:40 --> 00:47:42: with, but I don't want to bring that up.
00:47:43 --> 00:47:47: I will say this, I think that as an industry
00:47:47 --> 00:47:51: we are going to have to learn to be extremely
00:47:51 --> 00:47:54: nimble and very quick with our language.
00:47:55 --> 00:47:57: And I'll give a very specific example.

00:47:58 --> 00:48:02: You know, as we we live in our world and
00:48:02 --> 00:48:06: we have, you know, our vision Zeros and and all
00:48:06 --> 00:48:07: of these things.
00:48:07 --> 00:48:11: But that's not sometimes we can be, I won't say
00:48:12 --> 00:48:16: dogmatic in our language, but we live in our language
00:48:16 --> 00:48:20: and it's not in a way that the public can
00:48:20 --> 00:48:21: understand.
00:48:21 --> 00:48:25: And sometimes we have to use language to present
something
00:48:25 --> 00:48:26: different.
00:48:27 --> 00:48:28: And so like I'll just pick on bike lanes.
00:48:28 --> 00:48:31: Bike lanes get people like really emotional, right?
00:48:31 --> 00:48:32: And it's the bike lane.
00:48:33 --> 00:48:36: And we have to remove the focus from the bike
00:48:36 --> 00:48:39: lane and say this is a safety project and here's
00:48:39 --> 00:48:42: how people are going to be able to get across
00:48:42 --> 00:48:43: the street.
00:48:43 --> 00:48:46: And for people walking, this is a great benefit because
00:48:46 --> 00:48:50: you now have a separation between you, more separation
between
00:48:50 --> 00:48:51: you and the cars.
00:48:51 --> 00:48:55: And for people driving from a traffic perspective, it's actually
00:48:55 --> 00:48:58: going to be a lot easier to navigate because you'll
00:48:58 --> 00:49:01: have you know, a curb there and you know maybe
00:49:01 --> 00:49:01: one lane.
00:49:02 --> 00:49:05: So it's it's I have found more and more I
00:49:05 --> 00:49:10: have to evolve my language quickly because especially what
I
00:49:10 --> 00:49:13: find is people will Co opt your language and use
00:49:13 --> 00:49:15: it against you.
00:49:15 --> 00:49:17: And I talk about a little bit in the book
00:49:17 --> 00:49:20: like you know, woke and equity is critical race theory.
00:49:20 --> 00:49:21: So, OK, great.
00:49:21 --> 00:49:22: So now we're going to change the language.
00:49:22 --> 00:49:25: We're going to keep changing, and we have to learn
00:49:25 --> 00:49:25: to be nimble.
00:49:26 --> 00:49:29: You know, as these things, these things and systems
continue
00:49:29 --> 00:49:30: to get attacked.
00:49:31 --> 00:49:31: Mm hmm.
00:49:34 --> 00:49:36: Next question, Veronica.
00:49:37 --> 00:49:41: So this person asks, I'm a community engagement
professional, not

00:49:41 --> 00:49:44: yet a planner, and in your book you give how
00:49:44 --> 00:49:47: to do community engagement as a planner and engineer.
00:49:47 --> 00:49:50: In my job, this person's job, we often end up
00:49:50 --> 00:49:54: having to do box checking because engagement or box
checking
00:49:54 --> 00:49:58: engagement because the planners and engineers have
immovable deliverables.
00:49:59 --> 00:50:02: How do you, as a planner and engineer, make room
00:50:02 --> 00:50:06: for true Co creation with the community when you have
00:50:06 --> 00:50:08: immovable deliverables?
00:50:09 --> 00:50:11: It's not about the deliverable, right.
00:50:11 --> 00:50:13: And so a lot of what I talk about in
00:50:13 --> 00:50:17: Chapter 5, it's how you bring these things together.
00:50:18 --> 00:50:21: It is whatever the deliverable is, you got to just
00:50:21 --> 00:50:24: back off to say, all right, so if the deliverable,
00:50:24 --> 00:50:27: if it's due April 1st, then on March 1st we're
00:50:27 --> 00:50:31: going to have the community meeting and here's specifically
what
00:50:31 --> 00:50:34: we are going to ask the community in order to
00:50:34 --> 00:50:35: feed into that deliverable.
00:50:36 --> 00:50:39: I think what tends to happen and I talk about
00:50:39 --> 00:50:42: this, but what tends to happen is we have to
00:50:42 --> 00:50:45: hit these these goals, these milestones and we may do
00:50:45 --> 00:50:49: check the back and get engagement, but it's not informing
00:50:49 --> 00:50:50: anything.
00:50:50 --> 00:50:53: And so it's about creating a process where the engagement
00:50:53 --> 00:50:56: is actually informing what you needed to inform.
00:50:57 --> 00:50:59: But it's going to come down to how, What questions
00:50:59 --> 00:51:01: are you asking the public?
00:51:02 --> 00:51:05: I personally hate meetings where it is.
00:51:05 --> 00:51:07: Tell me all your problems.
00:51:07 --> 00:51:08: You know their problems, right?
00:51:08 --> 00:51:11: And so I even share the framework of like go
00:51:11 --> 00:51:14: pull every 311 for the last 2-3 years.
00:51:14 --> 00:51:16: You know every every city has some type of a
00:51:16 --> 00:51:17: complaint system.
00:51:17 --> 00:51:20: Go pull the information for that neighborhood for a certain
00:51:20 --> 00:51:22: amount of time and see what they're saying.
00:51:23 --> 00:51:25: You poll your colleagues to see what they're saying and
00:51:25 --> 00:51:28: so therefore you can go to with your first deliverable,
00:51:28 --> 00:51:29: which is usually existing conditions.
00:51:30 --> 00:51:33: So you can go to your first meeting with your
00:51:33 --> 00:51:36: existing conditions and saying hey community.

00:51:36 --> 00:51:37: So here's how we've heard from you.

00:51:37 --> 00:51:39: So here's everything that you've said in the past.

00:51:39 --> 00:51:42: We've mapped it in here and it's informed our existing

00:51:42 --> 00:51:42: conditions.

00:51:42 --> 00:51:43: Did we miss anything?

00:51:44 --> 00:51:47: So it's still not a it gets you still beyond

00:51:47 --> 00:51:49: the check the box, but it is pulling what the

00:51:49 --> 00:51:53: community has already told you into that specific deliverable.

00:51:53 --> 00:51:55: So it can be done, you just have to budget

00:51:55 --> 00:51:56: the time for it.

00:51:58 --> 00:51:59: More engagement.

00:52:02 --> 00:52:05: So next question, do you see a lot of these

00:52:05 --> 00:52:08: same issues showing up in the same way for older

00:52:08 --> 00:52:09: adult populations?

00:52:10 --> 00:52:14: Are there ways that this conversation changes when we shift

00:52:14 --> 00:52:17: the demographic focus to an aging in place theme?

00:52:19 --> 00:52:21: Yes and but no.

00:52:21 --> 00:52:24: And so I'll say this, I think that there's a

00:52:24 --> 00:52:28: very, very interesting thing happening to older adults.

00:52:29 --> 00:52:33: You are having some that are realizing, huh I'm getting

00:52:33 --> 00:52:37: older and I need to be active in a different

00:52:37 --> 00:52:37: way.

00:52:38 --> 00:52:38: I will.

00:52:39 --> 00:52:43: You know here there's an electric bicycle company here that

00:52:43 --> 00:52:46: has like a huge, they're like they it's right by

00:52:46 --> 00:52:49: my house and it's like a little older person like

00:52:49 --> 00:52:50: biking gang.

00:52:50 --> 00:52:53: And so they all meet up at this bike shop

00:52:53 --> 00:52:56: and they all have these electric bicycles.

00:52:56 --> 00:52:59: And so it's been great in that electric bicycles allow

00:52:59 --> 00:53:02: older adults to be active, but to be able to

00:53:02 --> 00:53:05: bike further than if they were on just a regular,

00:53:05 --> 00:53:06: you know, analog bike.

00:53:06 --> 00:53:08: I guess it was what you call it a pedal

00:53:08 --> 00:53:11: bike, you know, if you were just on a regular

00:53:11 --> 00:53:11: bike.

00:53:12 --> 00:53:14: And so that is where people are like, hey, I

00:53:14 --> 00:53:15: could be active in a different way.

00:53:16 --> 00:53:18: I think that as the boomers start to get a

00:53:18 --> 00:53:21: little bit older, because a lot of them are, because

00:53:21 --> 00:53:25: they are probably in better health than the previous

generations,

00:53:25 --> 00:53:28: you know they're still driving and I think they're still
00:53:28 --> 00:53:29: holding on to that.
00:53:30 --> 00:53:32: I think it'll be interesting to see what happens as
00:53:32 --> 00:53:35: they start getting a little older, the site gets a
00:53:35 --> 00:53:38: little bit harder and and and all of those things.
00:53:38 --> 00:53:41: But we also see in some, in some cities the
00:53:41 --> 00:53:45: trend that older adults, empty nesters, they're actually
tending to
00:53:45 --> 00:53:48: navigate to some of the denser areas so that they
00:53:48 --> 00:53:51: can have a better experience where they can walk to
00:53:51 --> 00:53:55: the grocery store and library and all of those things.
00:53:56 --> 00:53:57: So I think it's different.
00:53:57 --> 00:53:59: I think it's just that group in the middle, that's
00:53:59 --> 00:54:03: just, I don't know, they're holding on where they're they.
00:54:03 --> 00:54:05: They are older adults, but I don't know that they've
00:54:05 --> 00:54:06: acknowledged that they're older adults yet.
00:54:07 --> 00:54:08: Sounds like me.
00:54:10 --> 00:54:13: One final question here, Veronica, and I think this is
00:54:13 --> 00:54:13: a good one.
00:54:13 --> 00:54:16: It seems very popular with those that are listening here
00:54:16 --> 00:54:17: with us today.
00:54:17 --> 00:54:20: And that's if you could talk a little bit about
00:54:21 --> 00:54:24: the tensions between moving at the speed of trust and
00:54:24 --> 00:54:28: the urgency, the urgency of work on climate saving lives
00:54:28 --> 00:54:30: through safer Rd.
00:54:30 --> 00:54:32: design and all these things that we're talking about today
00:54:32 --> 00:54:33: that are so important.
00:54:34 --> 00:54:37: This person asking is saying this feels like a tension
00:54:37 --> 00:54:41: that exists in progressive transportation circles, but it's really
hard
00:54:41 --> 00:54:42: to discuss bluntly.
00:54:44 --> 00:54:47: Yes, there is definitely a tension and part of it
00:54:47 --> 00:54:50: is, I think it goes back to you think for
00:54:51 --> 00:54:53: a lot of so think about our world.
00:54:53 --> 00:54:56: So we sit on this webinar, right, and we're getting
00:54:56 --> 00:54:59: all this data and information and then we're going to
00:54:59 --> 00:55:02: continue education classes to get the latest in urban design.
00:55:02 --> 00:55:03: We live in it every day.
00:55:04 --> 00:55:07: So things that are very clear to us, you know,
00:55:07 --> 00:55:11: the use of chicanes, you know the green infrastructure, all
00:55:11 --> 00:55:13: of these things that are an aid to us.
00:55:13 --> 00:55:16: You have we have to understand we're dealing with the

00:55:16 --> 00:55:16: public.
00:55:16 --> 00:55:18: They cannot see what we're taught.
00:55:18 --> 00:55:19: They have no idea what we're talking about.
00:55:20 --> 00:55:23: I'll never forget I was in a community in Grand
00:55:23 --> 00:55:26: Rapids and we had mentioned apartments on top of a
00:55:26 --> 00:55:29: grocery store and it was like mind blowing.
00:55:29 --> 00:55:31: And for those, for the rest of us, we're like,
00:55:31 --> 00:55:33: yeah, of course you could put a grocery store on
00:55:33 --> 00:55:34: top of a Walmart.
00:55:34 --> 00:55:34: Why not?
00:55:35 --> 00:55:37: But for them, it was mind blowing.
00:55:37 --> 00:55:38: They'd never seen it.
00:55:38 --> 00:55:41: So part of it is helping the community see what's
00:55:42 --> 00:55:45: possible and that can help move a little faster.
00:55:45 --> 00:55:47: A good pilot project.
00:55:47 --> 00:55:49: It is a great way to move things faster.
00:55:49 --> 00:55:52: I know that we've we've, I've done that you know
00:55:52 --> 00:55:56: throughout different neighborhoods throughout my career of
just using a
00:55:56 --> 00:55:59: little paint pylons to just show what a ball bat
00:55:59 --> 00:55:59: looks like.
00:55:59 --> 00:56:01: Because if I say we should do curb ball bat,
00:56:01 --> 00:56:03: the community members will be like, what are you talking
00:56:03 --> 00:56:04: about That means I can't park.
00:56:04 --> 00:56:05: No, you can still park.
00:56:06 --> 00:56:08: So it really is taking that time to do, you
00:56:09 --> 00:56:12: know, even with just chalk so that people can see,
00:56:12 --> 00:56:13: OK, this is what you mean.
00:56:14 --> 00:56:16: And so some of that helps to build the trust
00:56:16 --> 00:56:18: and allows you to move a little bit quicker.
00:56:19 --> 00:56:20: Yeah, I I love that.
00:56:20 --> 00:56:21: I think there's a lot to it.
00:56:21 --> 00:56:26: There's definitely the room for the conversation, but it needs
00:56:26 --> 00:56:29: to not only start early, but then be ongoing in
00:56:29 --> 00:56:29: that.
00:56:29 --> 00:56:32: You know, our cities are constantly evolving as are all
00:56:33 --> 00:56:34: the component parts of it.
00:56:35 --> 00:56:38: So there's a point in time where you need to
00:56:38 --> 00:56:41: not just think and talk but also jump, you know,
00:56:41 --> 00:56:44: like do it, try it, but also be willing to
00:56:44 --> 00:56:48: be open to pivot through continued, you know, how's this
00:56:48 --> 00:56:49: going and evaluation?

00:56:52 --> 00:56:54: I have had just like the most wonderful time in
00:56:54 --> 00:56:56: this conversation with you, Veronica.
00:56:56 --> 00:56:57: Thank you.
00:56:57 --> 00:56:58: Thank you so much.
00:56:58 --> 00:56:58: Thank you.
00:56:59 --> 00:57:01: Thank you for everyone listening.
00:57:01 --> 00:57:03: Lots of great participants here.
00:57:03 --> 00:57:04: Yes, thank you to everybody.
00:57:04 --> 00:57:07: I'm just going to pass the mic back to Emily.
00:57:14 --> 00:57:15: Great.
00:57:15 --> 00:57:16: Thank you, Shonda.
00:57:16 --> 00:57:17: Thank you, Veronica.
00:57:18 --> 00:57:21: Let's give them a virtual round of applause.
00:57:22 --> 00:57:25: I know I really enjoyed listening to them, Chad, and
00:57:25 --> 00:57:27: if it were up to me, we could listen to
00:57:27 --> 00:57:28: them chat all day long.
00:57:29 --> 00:57:32: But as we wrap up, I would really appreciate if
00:57:32 --> 00:57:36: you could take a moment to open up this survey
00:57:36 --> 00:57:39: link to tell us what you thought about today's program.
00:57:40 --> 00:57:43: Your feedback is really important to us as we use
00:57:43 --> 00:57:46: it to shape our future Uli Healthy Places events and
00:57:46 --> 00:57:46: offerings.
00:57:49 --> 00:57:51: And then a final word of thanks to all our
00:57:51 --> 00:57:54: participants and for engaging in the audience Q&A.
00:57:54 --> 00:57:56: Thank you so much for joining today.
00:57:56 --> 00:57:58: We hope you enjoyed today's program.
00:57:58 --> 00:58:01: We also hope that you'll join us for the next
00:58:01 --> 00:58:04: Uli Healthy Places book talk, which will be held this
00:58:04 --> 00:58:05: summer in July.
00:58:05 --> 00:58:07: So stay tuned For more information on that.
00:58:07 --> 00:58:09: We hope you enjoy the rest of your day.
00:58:10 --> 00:58:10: Thank you.

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