

# Webinar

## ULI Toronto: Past Meets Future: How Black History is Energizing the Future of City Building in Toronto

Date: January 31, 2024

00:00:06 --> 00:00:07: Hello everyone.

00:00:07 --> 00:00:10: Good afternoon and welcome to today's program.

00:00:10 --> 00:00:13: As persons start to trickle in, we're going to play

00:00:13 --> 00:00:14: our membership video.

00:00:30 --> 00:00:34: Having the ability to exchange stories, exchange ideas and

00:00:34 --> 00:00:38: really sort of find mentors in the industry via ULI

00:00:38 --> 00:00:40: was a huge plus for me.

00:00:40 --> 00:00:42: So one of the things that I first started doing

00:00:42 --> 00:00:44: with ULI in terms of active engagement was with their

00:00:44 --> 00:00:45: urban plan program.

00:00:46 --> 00:00:49: And for me, that's they basically go into schools and

00:00:49 --> 00:00:51: work with young people in junior high and high school.

00:00:51 --> 00:00:54: One of the great things about ULI is that it

00:00:54 --> 00:00:57: provides a great platform for public sector and private sector

00:00:57 --> 00:00:58: interests to meet.

00:00:58 --> 00:01:01: But it's an opportunity to connect with a variety of

00:01:01 --> 00:01:03: people from a variety of different disciplines.

00:01:03 --> 00:01:05: So I work in real estate development, but it's useful

00:01:06 --> 00:01:08: and important to get to know people in other aspects

00:01:08 --> 00:01:09: of city building.

00:01:09 --> 00:01:10: Opportunity.

00:01:10 --> 00:01:11: Get recognition.

00:01:11 --> 00:01:14: The opportunity to participate in my community and give back

00:01:15 --> 00:01:17: in a way all of those things have enhanced my

00:01:18 --> 00:01:21: career and I think enhance what I'm able to offer

00:01:21 --> 00:01:22: the industry and.

00:01:22 --> 00:01:25: I'm really excited to be part of ULI Toronto and

00:01:25 --> 00:01:30: really advancing my leadership skills and fostering my connections and

00:01:30 --> 00:01:34: really just advancing my mission for city building.

00:01:34 --> 00:01:37: As a young professional new to the province and I

00:01:37 --> 00:01:41: found ULI and other kind of similar organizations really helpful

00:01:41 --> 00:01:44: in terms of no bridging connections and networking.

00:01:44 --> 00:01:45: It's an opportunity.

00:01:45 --> 00:01:49: To to connect with people who have questions, who are,

00:01:49 --> 00:01:53: who have not quite figured out how to do things.

00:01:53 --> 00:01:55: And I liked how hands on you could be as

00:01:55 --> 00:01:55: a member.

00:01:55 --> 00:01:57: You could get involved immediately.

00:01:57 --> 00:01:58: You can volunteer.

00:01:58 --> 00:02:02: For me, ULI is one of the greatest organizations in

00:02:02 --> 00:02:05: the world and certainly in Toronto, to connect, to learn

00:02:05 --> 00:02:09: and to become a part of an organization that really

00:02:09 --> 00:02:11: values its people and its members.

00:02:14 --> 00:02:18: ULI Toronto's membership video is your invitation to get more

00:02:18 --> 00:02:22: involved with one of the world's largest and most active

00:02:22 --> 00:02:23: ULI Chapter.

00:02:23 --> 00:02:25: A few notes to our ULI members or those who

00:02:26 --> 00:02:27: are are not yet members.

00:02:27 --> 00:02:31: You can access Uli's network through the Global Membership Directory.

00:02:31 --> 00:02:35: There are exciting engagement opportunities on local ULI committees.

00:02:35 --> 00:02:39: Through Navigator and our annual window to join our committees.

00:02:39 --> 00:02:43: You can access upcoming and past event attendee list and

00:02:43 --> 00:02:47: you can access unbelievable wealth of local and global ULI

00:02:47 --> 00:02:51: resources, archives, case studies, past webinars and more through the

00:02:51 --> 00:02:52: Knowledge Finder.

00:02:52 --> 00:02:55: We will provide links on that in our chat and

00:02:55 --> 00:02:57: for you to learn more about the benefits.

00:02:58 --> 00:02:59: Once again.

00:02:59 --> 00:03:00: Good afternoon everyone.

00:03:00 --> 00:03:03: My name is Crystal Gones, Cibron Manager, ULI Toronto.

00:03:03 --> 00:03:07: I'm pleased to be hosting today's session in partnership with

00:03:07 --> 00:03:09: Beta Past Me's Future.

00:03:09 --> 00:03:12: How Black History is energizing the future of city building

00:03:12 --> 00:03:13: in Toronto.

00:03:13 --> 00:03:16: Before we get into this, as always we will begin

00:03:16 --> 00:03:17: with the land acknowledgement.

00:03:18 --> 00:03:22: As a Toronto region based organization, we acknowledge the land

00:03:22 --> 00:03:26: we are meeting on virtually is the traditional territory of

00:03:26 --> 00:03:31: many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Nashua,

00:03:31 --> 00:03:35: Nashuabit, the Chippewa, the Huttiness, Shoni and Wendad people and

00:03:35 --> 00:03:38: is now meant home to many diverse First Nation Inuit

00:03:39 --> 00:03:40: and Matty people.

00:03:40 --> 00:03:43: We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13

00:03:43 --> 00:03:45: with the Mississaugas of the credit.

00:03:46 --> 00:03:47: We are all treaty people.

00:03:47 --> 00:03:50: Many of us have come here as settlers, immigrants and

00:03:50 --> 00:03:51: newcomers.

00:03:51 --> 00:03:54: In this generation or generations past.

00:03:54 --> 00:03:59: Uli stands in solidarity with Indigenous communities, demanding action and

00:03:59 --> 00:04:03: accountability for the ongoing legacy of the residential school system.

00:04:04 --> 00:04:07: We'd like to also acknowledge and honour those who came

00:04:07 --> 00:04:11: here involuntarily, particularly descendants of those who were brought here

00:04:11 --> 00:04:12: through enslavement.

00:04:12 --> 00:04:16: To better understand the meaning behind this at Land Acknowledgement,

00:04:16 --> 00:04:19: ULI recommends 4 programs that you can find on our

00:04:19 --> 00:04:21: ULI Toronto website page.

00:04:21 --> 00:04:23: We have also included a link in the chat to

00:04:23 --> 00:04:25: some of our Black History resources.

00:04:25 --> 00:04:28: These resources provide a wealth of information.

00:04:28 --> 00:04:29: Please check it out.

00:04:30 --> 00:04:31: A couple of additional notes.

00:04:32 --> 00:04:35: In March, Ula Toronto will be convening a 2 1/2

00:04:35 --> 00:04:40: day technical advisory panel for the City of Toronto's Confronting

00:04:40 --> 00:04:46: Anti Black Black Racism CBACABR unit, generously supported financially by

00:04:46 --> 00:04:47: CP Planning.

00:04:47 --> 00:04:50: A public report will be made later this spring, and

00:04:50 --> 00:04:54: this spring our Truth and Reconciliation Industry cohort will wrap

00:04:55 --> 00:04:56: up our initial workshop series.

00:04:57 --> 00:04:59: And we'll be announcing next steps this spring.

00:04:59 --> 00:05:02: Stay tuned for opportunities to get involved.

00:05:03 --> 00:05:05: Today's event and all of the ULI programming would not

00:05:05 --> 00:05:08: be possible without the support of our annual sponsors.

00:05:09 --> 00:05:11: I would like to thank all our sponsors for their

00:05:11 --> 00:05:11: support.

00:05:12 --> 00:05:15: Now more than ever, ULI to Honor relies on the

00:05:15 --> 00:05:18: support of sponsors to put on high quality programs and

00:05:18 --> 00:05:21: to drive our mission to shape the future of the

00:05:21 --> 00:05:25: built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide.

00:05:26 --> 00:05:28: To all of our sponsors, we say thank you.

00:05:29 --> 00:05:33: We have today opened up the chat so participants can

00:05:33 --> 00:05:37: engage in the conversation and be actively involved in the

00:05:37 --> 00:05:38: chat.

00:05:38 --> 00:05:40: So feel free to put your comments or start a

00:05:40 --> 00:05:41: discussion in the chat.

00:05:42 --> 00:05:44: We're happy to have that as an add on today.

00:05:44 --> 00:05:48: It's now my pleasure to invite Camille Mitchell, Associate from

00:05:48 --> 00:05:51: SVN Architects and Planners and who is also the Chair

00:05:51 --> 00:05:53: of Beta who will be our moderator today.

00:05:53 --> 00:05:56: Welcome Camille, and please feel free to take it away

00:05:56 --> 00:05:56: all.

00:05:57 --> 00:05:57: Right.

00:05:57 --> 00:05:58: Thank you, Crystal.

00:05:59 --> 00:06:02: So again, my name is Camille Mitchell, an architect with

00:06:02 --> 00:06:05: SVN Architects and Planners and also the current chair of

00:06:05 --> 00:06:08: Black Architects and Interior Designers Association.

00:06:08 --> 00:06:10: So the current motto of beta is to build up

00:06:11 --> 00:06:12: black features and design.

00:06:12 --> 00:06:16: And our and our currently our organization stands on its

00:06:16 --> 00:06:20: pillars of advocacy, mentorship, networking and outreach.

00:06:20 --> 00:06:24: And this is done through a series of of innovations

00:06:25 --> 00:06:29: and innovations and programs that are Co led by design

00:06:29 --> 00:06:35: professionals, colleagues, colleges, universities and members of the community.

00:06:36 --> 00:06:39: And our current interest is to educate, inspire members of

00:06:39 --> 00:06:42: the black community to help build a pipeline for the

00:06:42 --> 00:06:45: next generation of Black professional designers.

00:06:45 --> 00:06:48: And again, thank you you all I for reaching out

00:06:48 --> 00:06:51: to beta to be to host this panel and discussion

00:06:51 --> 00:06:54: and collaboration between the two organizations.

00:06:56 --> 00:06:59: So today there's a flourishing flourishing of black history study

00:07:00 --> 00:07:04: and discovery in Ontario is revealing deep and systematic challenges

00:07:04 --> 00:07:08: that have impacted generations of black communities in Toronto and

00:07:08 --> 00:07:09: across Southern Ontario.

00:07:10 --> 00:07:14: From this understanding is emerging a broad spectrum of approaches

00:07:14 --> 00:07:18: and innovations in city building driven by black professionals and

00:07:18 --> 00:07:22: the professional real estate and development community.

00:07:22 --> 00:07:24: So at this point, I'm going to turn to each

00:07:25 --> 00:07:28: of our panelists individually and give them a time to

00:07:28 --> 00:07:32: introduce themselves and just talk about how they're approaching their

00:07:32 --> 00:07:33: experience.

00:07:34 --> 00:07:39: So first I would like to bring Doctor Michael Ochi, Architect with ERE Architects.

00:07:39 --> 00:07:42: Hello Michael.

00:07:42 --> 00:07:42: Hello Michael.

00:07:45 --> 00:07:46: We can't hear you, Michael.

00:07:49 --> 00:07:50: Hi, Camille.

00:07:51 --> 00:07:53: It's a great privilege to be here today.

00:07:55 --> 00:08:00: So I'm an heritage architect at ERA Architects, and for those who perhaps aren't familiar with ERA, we're a multidisciplinary

00:08:00 --> 00:08:07: firm and we are very much involved with sort of making assessments of heritage value and understand what is significant

00:08:07 --> 00:08:11: and why.

00:08:11 --> 00:08:18: So we're not simply just tasked with preserving buildings, but understanding how they can be understood in the contemporary context.

00:08:18 --> 00:08:19: And so a lot of our work involves not just

00:08:19 --> 00:08:23: kind of like the the fixing and repair of buildings, but it's it's largely steeped in making them relevant for the for the communities of today.

00:08:23 --> 00:08:28: Can you tell us how briefly how ERA got involved with or the overview of interpreting Slavery, Trauma and Heritage

00:08:28 --> 00:08:32: Research initiative at ERA Architects?

00:08:32 --> 00:08:36: Yeah, absolutely.

00:08:36 --> 00:08:41: So it really stemmed from sort of a a research initiative that was having an elsewhere that was looking at

00:08:41 --> 00:08:43:

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00:09:03 --> 00:09:09:

00:09:09 --> 00:09:15: the connection between country the the creation of country homes

00:09:15 --> 00:09:16: and and slavery.

00:09:16 --> 00:09:21: So the wealth that was accumulated by slavery was was

00:09:22 --> 00:09:27: used to create these like elaborate homes which you know

00:09:27 --> 00:09:32: are very much seen as the embodiment of taste and

00:09:32 --> 00:09:37: the sort of values and principles of the day.

00:09:38 --> 00:09:41: But that connection back to the source of wealth isn't

00:09:41 --> 00:09:44: isn't necessarily known and in in the age that we

00:09:45 --> 00:09:48: live in now that that that those types of connections

00:09:48 --> 00:09:51: are are really looked at through a critical lens.

00:09:52 --> 00:09:56: And so we started to sort of explore and have

00:09:56 --> 00:10:01: conversations within our office how we can better understand those

00:10:01 --> 00:10:04: connections within the Canadian context.

00:10:04 --> 00:10:09: And we're very much interested in how this history can

00:10:09 --> 00:10:13: be become more of a shared heritage more broadly.

00:10:14 --> 00:10:17: And but at the same time we're we we're also

00:10:17 --> 00:10:22: very much aware of the the level of sensitivity around

00:10:22 --> 00:10:27: this this history and how it particularly impacts those who

00:10:27 --> 00:10:32: have experienced trauma in the past which sort of connects

00:10:32 --> 00:10:35: to the trauma of of slavery.

00:10:37 --> 00:10:41: So we're very much interested in in these connections between,

00:10:41 --> 00:10:44: you know, this is the specifics of of this thread

00:10:44 --> 00:10:48: of history and and its relevance to contemporary society.

00:10:49 --> 00:10:52: OK, so and why is it important to distinguish between

00:10:52 --> 00:10:56: focusing on successes versus just acknowledging how a nation failed

00:10:56 --> 00:10:59: to provide justice or marking experience trauma?

00:11:00 --> 00:11:00: Yeah.

00:11:00 --> 00:11:04: So it really gives us a fuller understanding of of

00:11:04 --> 00:11:08: history and allows us to really come to terms with

00:11:08 --> 00:11:11: it in, in a way that's relevant today.

00:11:12 --> 00:11:18: It gives us different perspectives that ultimately help to serve

00:11:18 --> 00:11:21: the the, the today's society.

00:11:21 --> 00:11:26: And it also allows us to explore these these parallel

00:11:26 --> 00:11:31: stories, let's say, you know, between what happened in in

00:11:32 --> 00:11:36: Canada and the United States of course, and then the

00:11:36 --> 00:11:41: the Caribbean and and the African and European context.

00:11:42 --> 00:11:46: So it really speaks to the diversity of of of

00:11:47 --> 00:11:48: of today's Toronto.

00:11:49 --> 00:11:49: Really.

00:11:50 --> 00:11:50: OK.

00:11:50 --> 00:11:51: Thank you, Michael.

00:11:51 --> 00:11:53: I'd like to turn now to Robert Walter Joseph, a

00:11:53 --> 00:11:56: senior planner with Gladly Planning and Associates.

00:11:56 --> 00:11:58: Robert, you want to tell us about yourself?

00:11:58 --> 00:11:59: Absolutely, yeah.

00:11:59 --> 00:12:03: So I am actually now a principal with Gladly Planning

00:12:03 --> 00:12:07: Associates and Gladly Planning Associates is a full service  
planning

00:12:07 --> 00:12:07: firm.

00:12:07 --> 00:12:11: We do large scale area plans as well as work

00:12:12 --> 00:12:17: for for profit, non profit housing as well as other

00:12:17 --> 00:12:18: developers.

00:12:19 --> 00:12:23: Yeah, this is, yeah, this is yeah the work that

00:12:23 --> 00:12:24: we do.

00:12:24 --> 00:12:24: Sorry.

00:12:26 --> 00:12:29: OK, Mount Dennis is a neighbourhood in Toronto that is

00:12:29 --> 00:12:32: poised for growth with the soon to be open Eglinton

00:12:32 --> 00:12:35: Crosstown Subway with which is sure to help revitalize this

00:12:35 --> 00:12:35: area.

00:12:36 --> 00:12:40: This area is a class example of Toronto's diversity and

00:12:40 --> 00:12:45: a large a large landing spot for immigrants, especially of

00:12:45 --> 00:12:48: Caribbean and African descent.

00:12:48 --> 00:12:50: How do you get involved with the Mount Dennis area?

00:12:51 --> 00:12:55: Yeah, the Mount Dennis neighbourhood is actually I think  
one

00:12:55 --> 00:12:58: that is representative of a lot of changes that are

00:12:58 --> 00:13:00: happening in Toronto.

00:13:00 --> 00:13:04: The Eglinton Crosstown on Mount Dennis station, you know  
our

00:13:04 --> 00:13:09: representative of the rapid transit expansion that we're  
seeing all

00:13:09 --> 00:13:10: over the city.

00:13:11 --> 00:13:15: My involvement and and the involvement of my firm in

00:13:15 --> 00:13:19: in Mount Dennis really began in about 2021 in our

00:13:19 --> 00:13:24: work with the Learning Enrichment Foundation and we began  
working

00:13:24 --> 00:13:29: with LEF in their mixed-use affordable housing development  
on Weston

00:13:29 --> 00:13:29: Rd.

00:13:30 --> 00:13:32: And as part of that project, it was, you know,

00:13:32 --> 00:13:35: very collaborative with the community.

00:13:35 --> 00:13:38: There was a lot of consultation that took place well

00:13:38 --> 00:13:41: before any any sort of vision for the development happened.

00:13:41 --> 00:13:44: And so as part of that, we began hearing from

00:13:44 --> 00:13:47: the community in terms of some of the concerns that

00:13:47 --> 00:13:48: the community had.

00:13:48 --> 00:13:50: What are their current concerns with the mountains community?

00:13:51 --> 00:13:51: Yeah.

00:13:51 --> 00:13:55: So some of the concerns that we're hearing through our

00:13:55 --> 00:13:58: own engagement, but then also through the secondary plan that

00:13:58 --> 00:14:02: was also taking place at the time was affordability and

00:14:02 --> 00:14:02: displacement.

00:14:03 --> 00:14:08: There's you know significant concern about displacement risk in the

00:14:08 --> 00:14:09: community.

00:14:09 --> 00:14:13: A lot of community members were receiving you know rent

00:14:13 --> 00:14:16: supplements and and other types of supports and and they

00:14:16 --> 00:14:20: were very concerned that they were precariously housed and that

00:14:20 --> 00:14:23: part of the changes that would take place in the

00:14:23 --> 00:14:26: community would would would see them leaving the community as

00:14:26 --> 00:14:26: well.

00:14:28 --> 00:14:31: So yeah that was something of of of concern that

00:14:31 --> 00:14:33: was coming up time and again every time we we

00:14:33 --> 00:14:35: spoke to the community.

00:14:36 --> 00:14:38: I'd say also just the community.

00:14:39 --> 00:14:43: Yeah, through each consultation that that we conducted and then

00:14:43 --> 00:14:47: every sort of city consultation that we listened into as

00:14:47 --> 00:14:51: well, the community wasn't opposed to change or or development.

00:14:52 --> 00:14:54: You know, the transit investment was something that everyone is

00:14:54 --> 00:14:55: really quite excited about.

00:14:56 --> 00:15:00: Having new construction in the neighbourhood was also something that

00:15:00 --> 00:15:02: was quite exciting, having new neighbours.

00:15:03 --> 00:15:07: This was, you know, a potential opportunity for revitalization in

00:15:07 --> 00:15:07: the community.

00:15:08 --> 00:15:12: But you know, there really is no point to reinvigorating

00:15:12 --> 00:15:15: the community if it also means that that you have

00:15:15 --> 00:15:17: to leave as as part of that.



00:15:17 --> 00:15:20: So community members really just wanted to see their place  
 00:15:21 --> 00:15:24: in the future, changes that were happening in the community  
 00:15:24 --> 00:15:24: as well.  
 00:15:25 --> 00:15:25: All right.  
 00:15:26 --> 00:15:26: Thank you, Robert.  
 00:15:27 --> 00:15:30: There's a huge gap in the kinds of city services  
 00:15:30 --> 00:15:33: that are made accessible to racialized communities.  
 00:15:33 --> 00:15:37: In the city of Toronto right now, black communities face  
 00:15:37 --> 00:15:43: the most inequal inequality in and allocation of publicly  
 00:15:43 --> 00:15:44: available  
 00:15:44 --> 00:15:47: resources.  
 00:15:44 --> 00:15:47: And now I turn to Jamila Mohammad, a housing policy  
 00:15:47 --> 00:15:49: planner with the City of Toronto.  
 00:15:49 --> 00:15:50: I'm Jamila.  
 00:15:50 --> 00:15:51: Would you like to say anything about yourself?  
 00:15:53 --> 00:15:56: Thanks Camille and thanks Uli for hosting this really  
 00:15:56 --> 00:15:57: important  
 00:15:56 --> 00:15:57: discussion.  
 00:15:57 --> 00:15:58: Just a bit about myself.  
 00:15:58 --> 00:16:00: I'm a registered professional planner.  
 00:16:00 --> 00:16:02: I'm based in Toronto, Toronto.  
 00:16:03 --> 00:16:06: I'm currently working with the City of Toronto Strategic  
 00:16:07 --> 00:16:09: Initiatives  
 00:16:07 --> 00:16:09: Policy and Analysis team as a housing policy planner.  
 00:16:10 --> 00:16:12: I have a lot a few years of experience in  
 00:16:12 --> 00:16:16: the private sector doing some really interesting projects  
 00:16:16 --> 00:16:19: related to  
 00:16:16 --> 00:16:19: large scale redevelopments and campus planning, which I  
 00:16:20 --> 00:16:22: really enjoyed.  
 00:16:20 --> 00:16:22: The size that you'll be seeing in the background are  
 00:16:22 --> 00:16:25: part of an initiative that I'm hoping to talk about  
 00:16:25 --> 00:16:27: today, which is the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation  
 00:16:28 --> 00:16:28: Soccer.  
 00:16:29 --> 00:16:31: But yeah, this is a bit about me.  
 00:16:33 --> 00:16:36: And your interests as a planner are centered around histories  
 00:16:36 --> 00:16:39: of cities, particularly the ways in which urban planning  
 00:16:39 --> 00:16:42: policies  
 00:16:39 --> 00:16:42: and practices guide growth and development in cities.  
 00:16:43 --> 00:16:46: So what has that meant for black life across time  
 00:16:46 --> 00:16:47: and space?  
 00:16:49 --> 00:16:50: I think that's a really interesting question.  
 00:16:50 --> 00:16:53: I think the the part that interests me the most  
 00:16:53 --> 00:16:55: about planning history is as we think about what it

00:16:55 --> 00:16:58: has meant for black life, from the early days of  
00:16:58 --> 00:17:00: black settlement in this country to the present time is  
00:17:01 --> 00:17:02: that black life is really dynamic.  
00:17:03 --> 00:17:06: And the impacts of urban planning are often framed in  
00:17:06 --> 00:17:09: thinking through the challenges and the deficits that have  
been  
00:17:09 --> 00:17:11: created in our community.  
00:17:11 --> 00:17:15: So processes of urban renewal, racial covenants, formal and  
informal  
00:17:15 --> 00:17:19: processes of racialized segregation, which have continued  
impacts on our  
00:17:19 --> 00:17:20: communities today.  
00:17:21 --> 00:17:24: And I also think that part of what is interesting  
00:17:24 --> 00:17:27: and really hasn't been discussed enough is the histories of  
00:17:27 --> 00:17:31: like black resistance and innovation and and and  
collaboration that  
00:17:31 --> 00:17:35: have also brought forward really dynamic ways of  
understanding city  
00:17:35 --> 00:17:37: planning from a black perspective.  
00:17:37 --> 00:17:40: And ways of also thinking about how we can implement  
00:17:40 --> 00:17:43: some of these strategies and tools to not only support  
00:17:43 --> 00:17:46: black communities, but really create more just and equitable  
cities  
00:17:46 --> 00:17:49: for all Torontonians or all members of the community.  
00:17:50 --> 00:17:52: What is play space?  
00:17:52 --> 00:17:54: Racial inequity in the built environment.  
00:17:56 --> 00:18:00: So play space equity, inequity, really you can think about  
00:18:00 --> 00:18:04: it as thinking through the geographical or like the spatial  
00:18:04 --> 00:18:06: ish lens that applies to racial inequities.  
00:18:07 --> 00:18:09: So to give an example, in Toronto it's often described  
00:18:10 --> 00:18:13: as a city that is racially and an economically segregated.  
00:18:13 --> 00:18:16: And the reason being that there's a high concentration of  
00:18:16 --> 00:18:20: visible minorities in low income neighborhoods where white  
residents are,  
00:18:20 --> 00:18:23: you know, concentrated in more dominant high income areas  
in  
00:18:23 --> 00:18:26: numbers far higher than their shared share of the population.  
00:18:27 --> 00:18:30: Another example is that there's substantial gaps in public  
investments  
00:18:30 --> 00:18:34: and social infrastructure in predominantly black  
neighbourhoods and that leads  
00:18:34 --> 00:18:37: to a deficit of cultural and recreational centres.  
00:18:37 --> 00:18:39: And then another like example.  
00:18:39 --> 00:18:43: That's really important thinking through the current culture,

the current  
 crisis in the climate is that, you know, Toronto's racialized  
 neighborhoods also have a far higher, far, far lower number  
 of urban forests and urban trees.  
 And So what does that mean when we're thinking about  
 as summers get hotter in these communities and people are  
 seeking, you know, respite from the sun and the heat  
 and all the other climatic effects.  
 So these are examples of how space and race really  
 works together, and we can start to think around the  
 inequities, but also finding ways to respond through equitable  
 solutions.  
 Thank you, Jamila.  
 I'd like to bring Tura cousin Wilson into the discussion.  
 He's a Principal Architect with Studio of Contemporary  
 Architecture.  
 Hello, Tura.  
 You tell us about yourself.  
 You're on mute.  
 You're on mute.  
 Sorry about that.  
 As Camille said, my name is Tura Cousins Wilson.  
 I'm an architect, Co founder and principal of Silca Studio  
 Contemporary Architecture.  
 As the name suggests, I think twofold.  
 I'm interested, I think in the black community and particularly  
 often, you know, both myself and studio partner have roots  
 in in the Caribbean.  
 So an interest in, you know, the West Indies and  
 black populations within Canada and diaspora abroad and  
 then, you  
 know, thinking of there's a bit of a play I'm  
 worth, but also I think an interest from simply contemporary  
 condition.  
 Of what's affecting, you know, cities and architecture today  
 from  
 the politics around the built environment.  
 Silco was invited to the architects Against Housing Alienation  
 as  
 a contributing architect, representing Canada at the 18th  
 International Architecture  
 Exhibition at the Venice Biennale.  
 So what was the outcome of working with local activists

00:20:35 --> 00:20:37: and advocates to get to this point?

00:20:38 --> 00:20:41: So that exhibition was an extension of our work with

00:20:41 --> 00:20:46: various community groups, in particular CP Planning, Budo for Black

00:20:46 --> 00:20:51: Urbanism, Black Urbanism Toronto, and Keel Eggington, residents of ongoing

00:20:51 --> 00:20:54: work within the Little Jamaica community.

00:20:54 --> 00:20:55: Those aren't familiar.

00:20:56 --> 00:21:00: Speaking of Eggington W, just West of the Allen Rd.

00:21:00 --> 00:21:06: In Eggington, and it was looking at affordable housing solutions.

00:21:06 --> 00:21:09: The theme around the overall exhibition was 10 teams across

00:21:09 --> 00:21:14: Canada exploring affordable housing solutions in their community and our

00:21:14 --> 00:21:17: team in collaboration with CP Planning and Keel Edmonton residents

00:21:18 --> 00:21:20: focused in on the little Jamaica community.

00:21:21 --> 00:21:24: And one of the key things was the importance of

00:21:24 --> 00:21:25: affordable housing.

00:21:25 --> 00:21:29: But in association, especially in culturally distinct neighbourhoods like Will

00:21:29 --> 00:21:32: Jamaica, that the importance of a holistic approach.

00:21:32 --> 00:21:36: So not just affordable housing, but also affordable cultural spaces,

00:21:36 --> 00:21:39: retail spaces and employment opportunities.

00:21:41 --> 00:21:44: OK, because you also taught a course that you have

00:21:44 --> 00:21:48: at UFT Daniel School of Architecture about mixed-use in housing,

00:21:48 --> 00:21:51: as this applies to not just providing housing for like

00:21:51 --> 00:21:54: black communities, but other amenities as well.

00:21:54 --> 00:21:54: Right.

00:21:55 --> 00:21:56: So I think, yeah, it's a good point.

00:21:56 --> 00:21:59: So I think an interest of ours and it's similar

00:21:59 --> 00:22:01: to what to Miller was saying.

00:22:02 --> 00:22:05: I think sometimes a lot of our work is very

00:22:05 --> 00:22:10: culturally specific, but it's it's touching on broader issues

00:22:10 --> 00:22:14: of zoning planning beyond just the the black community.

00:22:14 --> 00:22:17: I think it's in a way, you know speaking the

00:22:17 --> 00:22:21: work we're doing in Little Jamaica I think was you

00:22:21 --> 00:22:25: know questioning some of the zoning policies of say exclusive

00:22:25 --> 00:22:28: zoning where if you look on Edmonton West, a lot

00:22:28 --> 00:22:32: of the plan is to focus on development of Edmonton

00:22:32 --> 00:22:36: where that is really the cultural hub of many businesses  
 00:22:36 --> 00:22:39: in the West Indian and black community.  
 00:22:39 --> 00:22:43: And so as you know, questioning approaches to exclusionary  
 zoning,  
 00:22:43 --> 00:22:47: those who aren't familiar it's you know, limiting you know,  
 00:22:47 --> 00:22:49: types of housing to certain parts of the city or  
 00:22:49 --> 00:22:53: certain districts or limiting density to certain areas.  
 00:22:54 --> 00:22:58: So the little what we're doing in Little Jamaica was  
 00:22:58 --> 00:23:03: now questioning approaches to zoning that create a certain  
 type  
 00:23:03 --> 00:23:07: of built form in the city that in many cases  
 00:23:07 --> 00:23:12: put pressure on displacement for small fine grained retail and  
 00:23:12 --> 00:23:13: existing housing.  
 00:23:14 --> 00:23:15: So you know I think one of the questions we  
 00:23:15 --> 00:23:17: asked we posed and it was exhibition.  
 00:23:17 --> 00:23:20: So it was it was speculative in its nature was  
 00:23:20 --> 00:23:24: you know if we allow laneway housing, why not laneway  
 00:23:24 --> 00:23:28: Barber shops or retail cafes, auto mechanics etcetera.  
 00:23:28 --> 00:23:31: You know, thinking if a Barber, why does a Barber  
 00:23:31 --> 00:23:34: who say, works largely based on word of mouth and  
 00:23:34 --> 00:23:38: their clientele, Do they need to have the foot traffic  
 00:23:38 --> 00:23:41: of a a certain type of business or do they  
 00:23:41 --> 00:23:44: need to pay the Main Street, expensive Main St.  
 00:23:44 --> 00:23:47: leases that another business might need to face, You know,  
 00:23:47 --> 00:23:48: questions around that?  
 00:23:49 --> 00:23:49: OK.  
 00:23:49 --> 00:23:50: Thanks, Tara.  
 00:23:50 --> 00:23:52: I'd like to invite all our panelists back to the  
 00:23:52 --> 00:23:53: screen and mics off.  
 00:23:54 --> 00:23:56: Also I wanted to note all our panellists are involved  
 00:23:56 --> 00:23:59: in numerous things, so Alex has been dropping links to  
 00:23:59 --> 00:24:01: their BIOS and more information about them.  
 00:24:01 --> 00:24:04: So I encourage the audience to reach out to them  
 00:24:04 --> 00:24:09: individually if you have any additional questions or do Google  
 00:24:09 --> 00:24:13: search of information and projects that they've been involved  
 with  
 00:24:13 --> 00:24:14: so far.  
 00:24:14 --> 00:24:17: Our group discussion with the topic of re energizing city  
 00:24:18 --> 00:24:18: building.  
 00:24:18 --> 00:24:22: So our try to break the discussion into significant ways  
 00:24:22 --> 00:24:25: of how black history can energize the future of city  
 00:24:25 --> 00:24:26: building.  
 00:24:26 --> 00:24:31: So with regards to recognition of contributions, what are the

00:24:31 --> 00:24:32: key black history?

00:24:32 --> 00:24:35: What are key black history points that are relevant to

00:24:35 --> 00:24:37: your work today?

00:24:37 --> 00:24:37: And.

00:24:38 --> 00:24:39: It can be Canadian.

00:24:39 --> 00:24:41: Black history is not necessary, just points.

00:24:43 --> 00:24:44: I'll go to you, Robert.

00:24:45 --> 00:24:49: Yeah, I think something that's been quite interesting to me

00:24:49 --> 00:24:53: is, is I've been working, I've worked with the ULI

00:24:53 --> 00:24:59: as part of the understanding historical black settlement and displacement

00:24:59 --> 00:25:01: in Southwestern Ontario.

00:25:02 --> 00:25:06: And as part of that, we researched communities of historical

00:25:06 --> 00:25:11: settlement, past experiences of of of displacement and erasure.

00:25:13 --> 00:25:15: But really as part of that it was sort of

00:25:16 --> 00:25:20: uncovering this type of conversation that that used to take

00:25:20 --> 00:25:24: place where you know any discussion of a black community

00:25:24 --> 00:25:28: or potential risk of displacement to a black community in

00:25:28 --> 00:25:32: Canada sometimes shut down with well, you know we're not

00:25:32 --> 00:25:36: the United States or we don't have the same problems

00:25:36 --> 00:25:38: as as as they have South of the border.

00:25:39 --> 00:25:42: And as part of that project we sort of uncovered

00:25:42 --> 00:25:45: this where we're working with this idea of the North

00:25:45 --> 00:25:49: Star myth about understanding how Canadians see black history is

00:25:49 --> 00:25:53: really being that end point of the Underground Railroad as

00:25:53 --> 00:25:56: being the the the point of of of refuge for

00:25:56 --> 00:25:58: for previously enslaved people.

00:25:58 --> 00:26:03: And then not fully understanding the histories that have taken

00:26:03 --> 00:26:07: place after that of, you know, the displacement of some

00:26:08 --> 00:26:12: of those communities of previously enslaved people back to the

00:26:12 --> 00:26:16: US or or histories of, you know, regulations that were

00:26:17 --> 00:26:21: put in place to prevent new black arrivals after, you

00:26:21 --> 00:26:23: know, 1910 in in Canada.

00:26:23 --> 00:26:26: And so as part of that, you know we sort

00:26:26 --> 00:26:31: of look at the absence of predominantly black neighbourhoods as

00:26:31 --> 00:26:35: you know the signs that we actually don't have issues

00:26:35 --> 00:26:40: or or or problems without recognising you know our past

00:26:40 --> 00:26:45: histories that have contributed to to the those historical patterns

00:26:45 --> 00:26:47: of of displacement.

00:26:49 --> 00:26:51: Yeah, 'cause I often believe, as you were saying, the

00:26:51 --> 00:26:53: North the the myth of the.

00:26:53 --> 00:26:54: North Star myth.

00:26:54 --> 00:26:57: Yeah, because I often see like we are also, I

00:26:57 --> 00:27:01: think historically we're told that slaves escape to Canada, but

00:27:01 --> 00:27:02: then what?

00:27:03 --> 00:27:06: And then if you look at our history, there's displacement,

00:27:06 --> 00:27:09: but not there's a lack of education to even ourselves

00:27:09 --> 00:27:12: of what happened in this country and what's currently

00:27:12 --> 00:27:13: happening

00:27:13 --> 00:27:15: in this country.

00:27:15 --> 00:27:16: So I think I often say if we don't talk

00:27:17 --> 00:27:20: about it, there's no problem.

00:27:20 --> 00:27:23: And that's leads to the myth of like Canada being

00:27:23 --> 00:27:26: a better country or resolving issues.

00:27:26 --> 00:27:28: It's just that it's it's just not in our education,

00:27:28 --> 00:27:32: It's not even in our discussion or platforms.

00:27:32 --> 00:27:34: Sorry, I don't know if Michael, you were saying something.

00:27:34 --> 00:27:38: I wasn't saying anything.

00:27:38 --> 00:27:39: Oh, that's fine.

00:27:39 --> 00:27:44: But totally agree, like all of these, these stories of

00:27:44 --> 00:27:49: displacement and erasure are are definitely the starting point

00:27:49 --> 00:27:52: for

00:27:52 --> 00:27:56: well, like our ideas and conversations.

00:27:56 --> 00:28:00: You know, how how do you have that fuller story

00:28:00 --> 00:28:04: and understand kind of that that perspective, when the sort

00:28:04 --> 00:28:04: of counterpoint often is that we are not the United

00:28:04 --> 00:28:08: States?

00:28:08 --> 00:28:11: I can just add to that point.

00:28:11 --> 00:28:14: I think that part of the work that has to

00:28:14 --> 00:28:17: happen is really for us as you know Canadian based

00:28:17 --> 00:28:20: planners to really start to think about how we can

00:28:20 --> 00:28:21: start to re examine this history of planning or architecture

00:28:21 --> 00:28:24: or design.

00:28:24 --> 00:28:28: And really trying to make sure that when we're doing

00:28:28 --> 00:28:32: this examination that we're actually engaging in like a

00:28:32 --> 00:28:35: process

00:28:35 --> 00:28:37: of actually actively remembering with the intent of taking the

00:28:37 --> 00:28:40: lessons that we've learned and applying that to feature city

00:28:40 --> 00:28:44: building and initiatives.

00:28:44 --> 00:28:48: A lot of the stories that, you know, Robert, Robert

00:28:48 --> 00:28:52: is pointing to these black settlements that have existed have

00:28:44 --> 00:28:46: a lot of story, have a lot of history in  
00:28:46 --> 00:28:49: terms of how buildings were actually built, like the materials,  
00:28:49 --> 00:28:52: how the land was like, you know, plowed and how,  
00:28:52 --> 00:28:55: how communities were sighting these buildings in relation to  
each  
00:28:55 --> 00:28:55: other.  
00:28:56 --> 00:28:58: Where were the places where people were convening?  
00:28:59 --> 00:29:01: How do you create these communities that have also been  
00:29:02 --> 00:29:05: providing these specific types of amenities to support  
communities, where  
00:29:05 --> 00:29:09: parents can support each other, relatives can support each  
other?  
00:29:09 --> 00:29:11: But also, I think that for a very long time,  
00:29:11 --> 00:29:15: the burden of uncovering this amazing history and grappling  
with  
00:29:15 --> 00:29:18: the complexities of the, the difficult part of, you know,  
00:29:18 --> 00:29:21: realizing enslavement and the horrors that it has led to  
00:29:21 --> 00:29:23: and its legacy has been put on black planners and  
00:29:23 --> 00:29:25: architects and designers.  
00:29:25 --> 00:29:28: And I think that having these conversations on a platform  
00:29:28 --> 00:29:30: like you and I really brings everybody else into the  
00:29:30 --> 00:29:33: fold and puts forward the challenge that this is not  
00:29:33 --> 00:29:33: just on us.  
00:29:33 --> 00:29:36: We're all together if we really want to achieve this,  
00:29:36 --> 00:29:39: you know, city that is caring or these communities that  
00:29:39 --> 00:29:41: are going to be more just and equitable.  
00:29:45 --> 00:29:49: So in a means to address inequities, how can municipal  
00:29:49 --> 00:29:53: governments ensure that developments can prioritize the  
needs and aspirations  
00:29:53 --> 00:29:54: of black communities?  
00:29:56 --> 00:29:58: I know Jamil, you're working with the city, so I'm  
00:29:58 --> 00:29:59: not sure if it's on you.  
00:30:00 --> 00:30:03: Yeah, no, definitely not a spokesperson for the city today.  
00:30:03 --> 00:30:06: You know, it's just, I just only started a couple  
00:30:06 --> 00:30:09: weeks ago, but I think it would be well positioned  
00:30:09 --> 00:30:09: to do that.  
00:30:10 --> 00:30:11: But I think that even we can broaden that.  
00:30:11 --> 00:30:12: Scope, yeah.  
00:30:12 --> 00:30:13: It's not just unique to municipal.  
00:30:14 --> 00:30:15: Exactly.  
00:30:16 --> 00:30:18: So you know, one of the things that I'm very  
00:30:18 --> 00:30:21: interested about and then just going back to the Somali  
00:30:21 --> 00:30:23: Center project is this is a project that you know,



00:30:23 --> 00:30:26: I think that all levels of government can get behind  
00:30:26 --> 00:30:29: because it is speaking to like a 40 year history  
00:30:29 --> 00:30:32: of the Somali community advocating for a space where  
people  
00:30:32 --> 00:30:34: can have access to cultural recreational services.  
00:30:35 --> 00:30:38: The community is, you know, Toronto has the largest Somali  
00:30:38 --> 00:30:42: community, one of the largest black communities in Canada  
contributed  
00:30:42 --> 00:30:44: many ways to the dynamic culture of this place.  
00:30:44 --> 00:30:48: How can governments understand that there is gaps in the  
00:30:48 --> 00:30:52: actual number of black LED social infrastructure in this in  
00:30:52 --> 00:30:56: this country across all parts of it and you have  
00:30:56 --> 00:30:59: a project here led by the community willing to take  
00:30:59 --> 00:30:59: it on.  
00:31:00 --> 00:31:03: I think that this isn't a great opportunity for government  
00:31:03 --> 00:31:05: and private sector also to get behind such an idea,  
00:31:05 --> 00:31:08: support these young people volunteering to address address  
a major  
00:31:08 --> 00:31:09: city building gap.  
00:31:10 --> 00:31:14: And with the with the Somali Center, you said it's  
00:31:14 --> 00:31:18: 40 years of of building that relationship with the city.  
00:31:19 --> 00:31:22: Is there like like there's so many other because the  
00:31:22 --> 00:31:25: diaspora and the diversity of it, there's so many other  
00:31:25 --> 00:31:28: communities that don't have 40 years to work with the  
00:31:28 --> 00:31:31: city and work with different municipal lenses.  
00:31:32 --> 00:31:34: Is there a different approach?  
00:31:34 --> 00:31:38: And it's not like like tomorrow, but is it about  
00:31:38 --> 00:31:39: getting on board?  
00:31:39 --> 00:31:43: Is there tips on how to make more centers quicker  
00:31:43 --> 00:31:44: in this?  
00:31:44 --> 00:31:46: Yes, I think that's a great question.  
00:31:46 --> 00:31:49: I think even just, you know, talking also about provincial  
00:31:49 --> 00:31:52: and federal governments as well, the community, you know,  
the  
00:31:52 --> 00:31:54: Somalis through time of sorts of living.  
00:31:54 --> 00:31:57: Canada in the 70s, eighties as immigrants and then the  
00:31:57 --> 00:32:01: 90s had a large refugee population that that came here  
00:32:01 --> 00:32:02: due to the civil war.  
00:32:02 --> 00:32:05: And in that time, members of the community have been  
00:32:05 --> 00:32:09: advocating for a center in different ways through different  
coalitions  
00:32:09 --> 00:32:10: and collaborations.  
00:32:10 --> 00:32:13: What I think is unique about this opportunity right now

00:32:13 --> 00:32:16: is that you have that intergenerational connection from the folks

00:32:16 --> 00:32:18: early on to the younger people who are really seeing

00:32:18 --> 00:32:21: the deficits in their communities today and seeing the correlation

00:32:21 --> 00:32:24: between the benefits of having a Community Center, a library

00:32:24 --> 00:32:27: or other social infrastructure in their neighborhoods and not having

00:32:27 --> 00:32:28: to commute far away.

00:32:29 --> 00:32:31: So I think that there is that connection.

00:32:31 --> 00:32:33: So making sure, I think you know, a very common

00:32:34 --> 00:32:37: practice in black planning and urbanism is having intergenerational dialogue

00:32:37 --> 00:32:40: and making sure that we're connecting the past to the

00:32:40 --> 00:32:40: future.

00:32:41 --> 00:32:44: I think that you know the the community is also

00:32:44 --> 00:32:48: doing a lot of activism, sorry, not advocacy and engagement,

00:32:48 --> 00:32:50: community engagement.

00:32:50 --> 00:32:54: They're doing a series of citywide public engagements with the

00:32:54 --> 00:32:55: community members.

00:32:55 --> 00:32:57: They're engaging key stakeholders, business owners.

00:32:58 --> 00:33:00: So there's like this very multi prong approach to this

00:33:01 --> 00:33:04: work and it's it's something that I think it's continuously

00:33:04 --> 00:33:04: happening.

00:33:04 --> 00:33:06: We're learning also from or the Somali center is also

00:33:06 --> 00:33:09: learning from other cultural centers who've existed.

00:33:09 --> 00:33:11: We have the Japanese center, we have the amazing work

00:33:11 --> 00:33:12: the Tamil community is doing.

00:33:13 --> 00:33:15: And so it's always a a matter of like building

00:33:15 --> 00:33:17: coalitions also outside of your community.

00:33:17 --> 00:33:19: But there's lots of lessons I think that the the

00:33:19 --> 00:33:21: team members can share and you can always connect with

00:33:21 --> 00:33:22: them through their website.

00:33:23 --> 00:33:25: And Tura, you worked on the the Wild Seed Center

00:33:25 --> 00:33:26: for Art and Activism.

00:33:27 --> 00:33:31: How was that working with the community and getting like

00:33:31 --> 00:33:36: through design, getting their visions and understandings like designed as

00:33:36 --> 00:33:37: a centre.

00:33:37 --> 00:33:37: Does that make sense?

00:33:39 --> 00:33:41: Yeah, it's a good question.

00:33:41 --> 00:33:42: So and I think it kind of relates to I

00:33:42 --> 00:33:44: think some of the stuff what I want to mention  
 00:33:44 --> 00:33:45: with the last question.  
 00:33:45 --> 00:33:50: So a lot of our projects are community organizations and  
 00:33:50 --> 00:33:54: in case you mentioned Wild Seed, an organization named  
 after  
 00:33:54 --> 00:33:56: Octavia Butler novel.  
 00:33:57 --> 00:34:01: And I think questions on black futurism, what is black  
 00:34:01 --> 00:34:05: in design or representation in kind of built form or  
 00:34:05 --> 00:34:06: or visuals.  
 00:34:07 --> 00:34:10: A lot of and sort of I think heritage becomes  
 00:34:10 --> 00:34:13: kind of this, this question of you know what do  
 00:34:13 --> 00:34:14: we prioritize.  
 00:34:14 --> 00:34:17: So you know, a few of our projects have been  
 00:34:17 --> 00:34:23: in Victorian era buildings in the black community is  
 repurposing  
 00:34:23 --> 00:34:26: an an older house and it sort of comes to  
 00:34:26 --> 00:34:31: questions of what what do organizations prioritize from a  
 general  
 00:34:31 --> 00:34:33: policy collective.  
 00:34:33 --> 00:34:34: You know, people sort of say, you know restore the  
 00:34:34 --> 00:34:35: house.  
 00:34:35 --> 00:34:39: Sometimes we're finding or restore say a brick facade or  
 00:34:40 --> 00:34:41: mandated to restore.  
 00:34:41 --> 00:34:44: So I'm not speaking specifically of of what I'll see  
 00:34:44 --> 00:34:44: here.  
 00:34:44 --> 00:34:48: So the question sometimes that ultimately means you know  
 funds  
 00:34:48 --> 00:34:53: coming out from whether a community organizations  
 programming or reduction  
 00:34:53 --> 00:34:57: space to restore facade which I think might be questionable  
 00:34:57 --> 00:34:59: of what we deem worth restoring.  
 00:34:59 --> 00:35:03: So I think we're often find questioning that in part  
 00:35:03 --> 00:35:04: of our process.  
 00:35:06 --> 00:35:09: One thing I think that I'm getting a bit to  
 00:35:09 --> 00:35:12: the last question because I want to jump in, I  
 00:35:12 --> 00:35:16: think we've been actively encouraging for sorry is architects,  
 planners  
 00:35:16 --> 00:35:18: coming to the table sooner.  
 00:35:18 --> 00:35:21: But also some like the work in little Jamaica that  
 00:35:21 --> 00:35:24: was really started not from a top down approach.  
 00:35:24 --> 00:35:29: It was community groups like Pluto sort of saying hey  
 00:35:29 --> 00:35:33: Metrolinks, we're we're being excluded here.  
 00:35:33 --> 00:35:36: We feel that, you know, our needs aren't listened to

00:35:36 --> 00:35:40: and it's a conversation with the black community, in particular  
00:35:40 --> 00:35:40: business owners.  
00:35:41 --> 00:35:45: But I understand, you know what troubles that they've been  
00:35:45 --> 00:35:49: facing with broader displacement from the Edlington  
00:35:50 --> 00:35:53: Connects, the new  
00:35:53 --> 00:35:53: transit line, a new LRT line in addition to then  
00:35:53 --> 00:35:56: COVID.  
00:35:56 --> 00:36:01: And, you know, a role that I see Architects of  
00:36:01 --> 00:36:03: Planets placing is sometimes distilling that information where  
00:36:04 --> 00:36:09: we have  
00:36:09 --> 00:36:13: a lot of community groups approach us.  
00:36:13 --> 00:36:18: They know their community really well, but not necessarily  
00:36:18 --> 00:36:22: know  
00:36:22 --> 00:36:25: architectural and planning like lingo of you know what these  
00:36:25 --> 00:36:29: terms mean, what are setbacks, what are these zoning  
00:36:29 --> 00:36:33: policies,  
00:36:33 --> 00:36:38: GFA Heights, what's sort of limiting their community That's  
00:36:38 --> 00:36:42: we  
00:36:43 --> 00:36:44: can then help speak to, which is a lot of  
00:36:46 --> 00:36:47: what we've been doing at both the urban scale but  
00:36:47 --> 00:36:50: in particular projects whether if it's wild seed or ban  
00:36:50 --> 00:36:54: understanding, you know what isn't community needs, what  
00:36:54 --> 00:36:57: does that  
00:36:58 --> 00:37:01: mean from the perspective to actually policy like code or  
00:37:01 --> 00:37:05: rezoning, et cetera, OK.  
00:37:05 --> 00:37:08: With regards.  
00:37:09 --> 00:37:12: I want to actually just just get back to to  
00:37:12 --> 00:37:13: Mount Dennis briefly as well because you mentioned, you  
00:37:14 --> 00:37:17: know,  
00:37:18 --> 00:37:22: what can cities do or what can municipalities do.  
00:37:22 --> 00:37:26: And part of you know in hearing from the community  
00:37:26 --> 00:37:30: part of what the Learning Enrichment Foundation did was  
00:37:30 --> 00:37:31: advocating  
00:37:31 --> 00:37:34: for a Community for All action plan which was endorsed  
00:37:34 --> 00:37:38: by the local councillor and and is something that is  
00:37:38 --> 00:37:42: now under development.  
00:37:42 --> 00:37:46: But through that process there are a bunch of things  
00:37:46 --> 00:37:50: that weren't really properly addressed through you know your  
00:37:50 --> 00:37:54: standard  
00:37:54 --> 00:37:58: secondary plan process and talking to the community about  
00:37:58 --> 00:38:02: built  
00:38:02 --> 00:38:06: form, heights, densities, you know FSI and setbacks and and  
00:38:06 --> 00:38:10: and those things.  
00:38:10 --> 00:38:14: This community was not one that was opposed to change.

00:37:34 --> 00:37:38: And so largely, you know, different heights, different densities were

00:37:38 --> 00:37:40: were were welcomed.

00:37:40 --> 00:37:43: But a lot of what the conversation could have been

00:37:43 --> 00:37:48: around was about, you know, anti displacement strategies about ensuring

00:37:49 --> 00:37:52: new affordable housing would be would be developed.

00:37:52 --> 00:37:56: And that wasn't something that was really possible through only

00:37:56 --> 00:37:59: dealing with one division of the city, through only dealing

00:37:59 --> 00:38:01: with community planning.

00:38:01 --> 00:38:04: And so part of this process will be or or

00:38:04 --> 00:38:09: should be about bringing the entire city to the community.

00:38:10 --> 00:38:12: And so you know, where the community has an interest

00:38:12 --> 00:38:16: in a conversation, the correct stakeholders should be there in

00:38:16 --> 00:38:19: order to have that conversation as opposed to telling the

00:38:19 --> 00:38:22: community that, well, this isn't really what what we're talking

00:38:23 --> 00:38:26: about right now because there really is no other opportunity

00:38:26 --> 00:38:29: to talk about future change in a community except during

00:38:29 --> 00:38:30: times like this.

00:38:30 --> 00:38:33: So, so that's something that the Learning Enrichment Foundation is

00:38:33 --> 00:38:34: going through.

00:38:34 --> 00:38:35: They're going through that now.

00:38:35 --> 00:38:39: I think a, a subsequent report will be brought forward

00:38:39 --> 00:38:39: in in March.

00:38:39 --> 00:38:40: It'll be something to watch.

00:38:40 --> 00:38:43: And I I think it is honestly one of the

00:38:43 --> 00:38:47: most interesting parts of one of the most interesting innovations

00:38:47 --> 00:38:50: in planning currently in in Toronto.

00:38:51 --> 00:38:52: Thank you, Robert.

00:38:52 --> 00:38:56: With regards to stakeholders at the table, because we're here

00:38:56 --> 00:39:00: on this panel, but the reality is, is that there's

00:39:00 --> 00:39:04: a lack of representation in planning and architecture as black

00:39:04 --> 00:39:05: professionals.

00:39:05 --> 00:39:09: So this UL, this ULI session is being monitored by

00:39:09 --> 00:39:12: designers across the country, province.

00:39:13 --> 00:39:16: So with regards to architecture, I'm going to put this

00:39:16 --> 00:39:17: to you Michael.

00:39:18 --> 00:39:22: What considerations should architects or interior designers keep in mind

00:39:22 --> 00:39:25: when designing spaces for diverse black populations with

00:39:25 --> 00:39:27: varying cultural  
00:39:29 --> 00:39:29: backgrounds and experiences?  
00:39:29 --> 00:39:33: Yeah.  
00:39:33 --> 00:39:36: So I'm also picking up on the chat as well.  
00:39:36 --> 00:39:40: And one of the things that you know is very  
00:39:41 --> 00:39:44: interesting like we've we've talked a lot about affordability  
00:39:44 --> 00:39:45: and  
00:39:45 --> 00:39:49: you know architecture is this kind of like emergence of  
00:39:49 --> 00:39:53: the new.  
00:39:53 --> 00:39:57: But we also need to have have our value system  
00:40:01 --> 00:40:03: aligned with preserving affordability.  
00:40:03 --> 00:40:06: And you know architecture very much is about the  
00:40:06 --> 00:40:11: management  
00:40:11 --> 00:40:13: of you know the assets that we have that you  
00:40:14 --> 00:40:17: know that currently exists.  
00:40:17 --> 00:40:20: So, you know, I think a lot of the dialogue  
00:40:20 --> 00:40:22: is about understanding and helping people through  
00:40:23 --> 00:40:26: understanding what they  
00:40:26 --> 00:40:30: already have, I think.  
00:40:30 --> 00:40:32: I think it's very easy to be captivated by the  
00:40:32 --> 00:40:35: image of the new tower, you know, the new park,  
00:40:35 --> 00:40:40: the new, the new community centre.  
00:40:40 --> 00:40:42: And it's it's perhaps more difficult to kind of work  
00:40:42 --> 00:40:44: with people to to to fully understand and appreciate what  
00:40:44 --> 00:40:45: they, what they already have.  
00:40:45 --> 00:40:48: And that that's, you know, that's a big part of  
00:40:48 --> 00:40:50: preserving, you know, affordable assets and you know, the  
00:40:50 --> 00:40:53: overlap  
00:40:53 --> 00:40:56: with decarbonisation.  
00:40:56 --> 00:40:58: Yes, I understand that.  
00:40:58 --> 00:41:01: But if But whose responsibility is it to talk to  
00:41:01 --> 00:41:04: help them understand that?  
00:41:04 --> 00:41:07: Like to understand the history and understand the context.  
00:41:07 --> 00:41:09: Like as perfect if if if there's like for instance  
00:41:09 --> 00:41:10: if there's not a seat at the table or like  
00:41:10 --> 00:41:11: a black planner or black architect.  
00:41:11 --> 00:41:14: How do we help our colleagues design spaces and other  
00:41:14 --> 00:41:15: parts or just for different projects for?  
00:41:15 --> 00:41:16: Sure, yeah.  
00:41:16 --> 00:41:17: I mean, it can't be there.  
00:41:17 --> 00:41:18: Yeah, I, I.  
00:41:18 --> 00:41:19: And I think that's that's at the heart of representation  
00:41:19 --> 00:41:20: in professions, right.

00:41:16 --> 00:41:22: Like I I think it's great to have community voices.

00:41:22 --> 00:41:25: But then, you know I'm a huge advocate for you

00:41:25 --> 00:41:29: know the type of work that ULI does where professionals

00:41:30 --> 00:41:33: come together and we're able to kind of fill in

00:41:33 --> 00:41:37: the knowledge gaps that others others have and and work

00:41:37 --> 00:41:40: together and lift each other up to to kind of

00:41:40 --> 00:41:42: get to an approach.

00:41:42 --> 00:41:45: So you know having professionals that are are able to

00:41:45 --> 00:41:49: represent communities I think I think is essential and it

00:41:49 --> 00:41:52: you know, really speaks to the work that groups like

00:41:52 --> 00:41:52: beta.

00:41:54 --> 00:41:57: It really speaks to the to the work of of

00:41:57 --> 00:41:58: groups like Beta.

00:41:59 --> 00:42:02: Mila, if I can just jump in from a perspective

00:42:02 --> 00:42:05: on how we kind of address the gaps in the

00:42:05 --> 00:42:08: planning community, the, you know, one group that I'm

00:42:08 --> 00:42:12: involved

00:42:12 --> 00:42:13: with as a volunteer is the Black Planners and Urbanist

00:42:13 --> 00:42:16: Association.

00:42:16 --> 00:42:20: It's a it's a nationwide organization that works in bringing

00:42:20 --> 00:42:22: black planners together, creating opportunities and doing

00:42:22 --> 00:42:25: advocacy.

00:42:25 --> 00:42:29: Some of the some of the work that we've been

00:42:29 --> 00:42:31: doing is also with our professional body which is the

00:42:31 --> 00:42:35: Ontario Professional Planning Institute and the Canadian

00:42:35 --> 00:42:38: Institute of Planners

00:42:38 --> 00:42:41: who have been receptive to under to thinking through and

00:42:41 --> 00:42:43: addressing issues of anti black racism in the profession

00:42:43 --> 00:42:45: through

00:42:45 --> 00:42:47: the curriculums of the universities and also in the workforce.

00:42:47 --> 00:42:52: So there's different opportunities and avenues.

00:42:52 --> 00:42:55: I think that these webinars are very important in bringing

00:42:55 --> 00:42:57: people who are not familiar with it or people don't

00:42:57 --> 00:42:59: have the space to talk about these issues together.

00:42:59 --> 00:43:02: I think the professional associations also have a

00:43:02 --> 00:43:04: responsibility to

00:43:04 --> 00:43:07: update their standards and ethics, the curriculum

00:43:07 --> 00:43:10: requirements to become

00:43:10 --> 00:43:13: a professional in this field.

00:43:13 --> 00:43:16: If you're if you're a part of that to address

00:43:16 --> 00:43:19: anti black racism and also black you know black successes

00:43:19 --> 00:43:22: and stories of of planning right.

00:43:22 --> 00:43:25: And I think the universities also have a big role

00:43:07 --> 00:43:09: to play in terms of how they're getting accredited, making  
00:43:09 --> 00:43:10: sure that they're working.  
00:43:10 --> 00:43:13: And I know many of them are to address issues  
00:43:13 --> 00:43:16: of anti black racism, but also speaking to the positive  
00:43:16 --> 00:43:17: aspects of black life.  
00:43:18 --> 00:43:20: And then as a planner looking in on the architectural  
00:43:20 --> 00:43:23: world, if you guys don't mind me stepping in a  
00:43:23 --> 00:43:25: little bit, I think that one of the key things  
00:43:25 --> 00:43:28: we can do is really start to think beyond the  
00:43:28 --> 00:43:30: very narrow Eurocentric examples of precedence.  
00:43:30 --> 00:43:33: And I know the great work that Soca's been doing  
00:43:33 --> 00:43:37: is really trying to expand how we think about architectural  
00:43:37 --> 00:43:41: forms, practices from a black and Afrocentric perspective.  
00:43:42 --> 00:43:45: And so how do we think about, you know, sustainability  
00:43:45 --> 00:43:47: and looking at examples in the Caribbean and in the  
00:43:47 --> 00:43:50: the African continent or in black communities in the West.  
00:43:50 --> 00:43:52: So I think that there's a lot of learning we  
00:43:52 --> 00:43:53: can all do collectively.  
00:43:54 --> 00:43:56: And then those are just kind of some tips of  
00:43:56 --> 00:43:57: things that are already in the works that can be  
00:43:57 --> 00:43:58: built on.  
00:44:04 --> 00:44:05: Just thank you, Jamila.  
00:44:06 --> 00:44:10: So that's so some of your projects that you've worked  
00:44:10 --> 00:44:14: on, sorry if I hesitate on this question, but also  
00:44:14 --> 00:44:18: it was like so much what Gmail was saying, how,  
00:44:18 --> 00:44:21: how, how is your experience?  
00:44:21 --> 00:44:24: And I think this is just an architectural question of  
00:44:24 --> 00:44:28: just like representing a client but not necessarily being part  
00:44:28 --> 00:44:29: of the client group.  
00:44:29 --> 00:44:29: Does that make sense?  
00:44:29 --> 00:44:31: Like just to echo that again?  
00:44:33 --> 00:44:35: Yeah, I think I get what you're saying.  
00:44:35 --> 00:44:37: I'll respond and tell me if I got it.  
00:44:38 --> 00:44:40: I think it, I think it's to a certain degree  
00:44:40 --> 00:44:44: it's challenging you know as you know running a professional  
00:44:44 --> 00:44:47: practice and you know there's limits to what you can  
00:44:47 --> 00:44:47: do.  
00:44:48 --> 00:44:50: So and to say that I think a lot of  
00:44:50 --> 00:44:53: our work at Soca has both been built work but  
00:44:53 --> 00:44:57: also speculative work that might you know question systems  
00:44:57 --> 00:45:01: and approaches that we might not necessarily be able to do



00:45:01 --> 00:45:04: if we're just sort of engaged by a client or  
00:45:04 --> 00:45:04: community.

00:45:04 --> 00:45:09: So some of the work in Little Jamaica, you mentioned  
00:45:09 --> 00:45:10: Venice B&L.

00:45:10 --> 00:45:14: If that wasn't, you know, that was an exhibition separate  
00:45:14 --> 00:45:19: from a client group reaching out one project in particular  
00:45:19 --> 00:45:23: was in a way a counter proposal for Alexander Park  
00:45:23 --> 00:45:25: and not specifically.

00:45:25 --> 00:45:28: And I think these are interesting things, you know, so  
00:45:28 --> 00:45:32: it's not it wasn't specifically about the black community, but  
00:45:32 --> 00:45:36: you know, as Jamil was mentioning, mentioning earlier the kind  
00:45:36 --> 00:45:40: of the intersection between racialized communities and  
00:45:40 --> 00:45:44: poverty or lower  
00:45:44 --> 00:45:44: income communities or even simple things like lack of a  
00:45:44 --> 00:45:44: tree canopy.

00:45:45 --> 00:45:49: And that project in particular and I I see this,  
00:45:49 --> 00:45:54: you know, a comment about decarbonization was  
00:45:54 --> 00:45:58: questioning do we  
00:45:58 --> 00:46:03: need to completely demolish an entire 18 acre social housing  
00:46:03 --> 00:46:04: site to revitalize it including both the built form and  
00:46:04 --> 00:46:07: also the natural areas.

00:46:07 --> 00:46:11: So you know there were trees that were you know  
00:46:11 --> 00:46:13: 2 generations old, which will take another two generations to  
00:46:13 --> 00:46:16: reach the same maturity.

00:46:16 --> 00:46:20: But you know or really what what happens when we  
00:46:20 --> 00:46:24: landfill all that embodied energy, where where is it going?  
00:46:24 --> 00:46:27: So questions like that and I think this become challenging.  
00:46:27 --> 00:46:30: I think also get to where I think outside groups  
00:46:30 --> 00:46:35: can connect because I think what we like to say  
00:46:35 --> 00:46:39: is you know issues affecting the black community are also  
00:46:39 --> 00:46:43: by the very nature that we're all Canadian or Canadian  
00:46:43 --> 00:46:47: issues and the sort of fundamental design issues or planning  
00:46:47 --> 00:46:49: issues that broader practice should be interested in.  
00:46:49 --> 00:46:52: I think we take that approach too.

00:46:52 --> 00:46:56: So we know we're not just black architects.  
00:46:56 --> 00:47:01: We're saying you know we're we're interested in community  
00:47:01 --> 00:47:04: culture  
00:47:04 --> 00:47:04: and these questions of sustainability and architecture in  
00:47:04 --> 00:47:08: various communities.

00:47:08 --> 00:47:08: And you know this conversation is is a lens into  
00:47:08 --> 00:47:08: that.

00:47:08 --> 00:47:08: And I think where people can learn is just having

00:47:08 --> 00:47:13: a critical eye to existing approaches and how they may  
00:47:13 --> 00:47:15: intercept with other communities.  
00:47:15 --> 00:47:18: But I think each other it's not always this call  
00:47:18 --> 00:47:22: call it a black or white scenarios when you're dealing  
00:47:22 --> 00:47:27: with public communities, there's so many different types of  
intersections  
00:47:27 --> 00:47:29: and and issues that you're dealing with.  
00:47:29 --> 00:47:33: So I think that's an approach that we really try  
00:47:33 --> 00:47:38: to emphasize that we're doing work that can inform broader  
00:47:38 --> 00:47:40: community and the spec.  
00:47:40 --> 00:47:43: Back to your question, I think the back to your  
00:47:43 --> 00:47:44: work conversations like this.  
00:47:45 --> 00:47:48: You know, being one of the Co founders of Beta  
00:47:48 --> 00:47:53: Black Architects and Interior Designs Association to push  
conversations where  
00:47:53 --> 00:47:56: you know private practice doesn't allow.  
00:47:57 --> 00:47:58: Thanks Sam.  
00:47:58 --> 00:47:59: Thank you, Tara.  
00:47:59 --> 00:48:03: Robert what would how can planning give empowerment to  
the  
00:48:03 --> 00:48:05: black community?  
00:48:05 --> 00:48:08: Like what planning strategies can you think of that like  
00:48:08 --> 00:48:11: that at the end result help feel people feel empowered  
00:48:11 --> 00:48:13: and and and invited to the table?  
00:48:14 --> 00:48:14: Yeah.  
00:48:14 --> 00:48:18: I mean one of the biggest things I think beyond  
00:48:18 --> 00:48:23: just engagement is when and how you engage with with  
00:48:23 --> 00:48:29: with communities and particularly black communities And  
when we talk  
00:48:29 --> 00:48:35: about intersection, intersectionality, low income, black  
communities at risk of  
00:48:36 --> 00:48:40: displacement, the planning process is one that I think is  
00:48:40 --> 00:48:43: often quite prescriptive.  
00:48:43 --> 00:48:46: There's a lot of policies that have to be adhered  
00:48:46 --> 00:48:46: to.  
00:48:46 --> 00:48:48: There's a lot of things that just have to be  
00:48:48 --> 00:48:51: put in place in communities in order to ensure that  
00:48:51 --> 00:48:54: sort of future development can can take place.  
00:48:54 --> 00:48:59: But I think one of the more meaningful responses is  
00:48:59 --> 00:49:03: really to engage, identify what is at issue and then  
00:49:03 --> 00:49:05: build a process around that.  
00:49:06 --> 00:49:10: So you know if there are concerns about or not  
00:49:10 --> 00:49:14: even just concerns, but if if there's maybe opportunities to

00:49:14 --> 00:49:20: enhance Main Street retail with local locally owned black businesses,

00:49:20 --> 00:49:24: You know what other resources would need to be there

00:49:24 --> 00:49:28: to ensure that those businesses may continue to exist and

00:49:28 --> 00:49:32: continue to thrive after the sort of redevelopment that is

00:49:33 --> 00:49:36: envisioned as as part of any plan takes place.

00:49:37 --> 00:49:41: So really the sort of planning process I think can

00:49:41 --> 00:49:45: achieve a lot of the same outcomes, but really needs

00:49:45 --> 00:49:49: to be redefined in terms of how and when different

00:49:49 --> 00:49:50: things take place.

00:49:52 --> 00:49:52: Thank you.

00:49:53 --> 00:49:56: We're going to wrap up our conversation with the recent

00:49:56 --> 00:49:59: development in the City of Toronto, the renaming of Dundas

00:49:59 --> 00:50:00: Square to Sankofa Square.

00:50:01 --> 00:50:03: Jamila, can you share the definition and the history of

00:50:03 --> 00:50:04: the words Sankofa?

00:50:06 --> 00:50:08: I can do my best as a non Guinean person,

00:50:08 --> 00:50:11: but I've I've come across the term sankofa in my

00:50:11 --> 00:50:15: and I can make the connection toward planning for this

00:50:15 --> 00:50:15: in this way.

00:50:16 --> 00:50:20: When I was doing my master's research, there's this amazing

00:50:20 --> 00:50:24: Guinean political social political theorist named Atu Sankiatu based at

00:50:24 --> 00:50:26: York University, and he wrote a book.

00:50:27 --> 00:50:29: In the opening paragraph of that book he talks about

00:50:29 --> 00:50:30: the idea of Sankofa.

00:50:30 --> 00:50:34: So the idea of retrieving an idea or a concept

00:50:34 --> 00:50:38: or a practice that's been lost from before and bringing

00:50:38 --> 00:50:41: it in to the present moment and using that as

00:50:41 --> 00:50:44: a way to create change and paraphrasing.

00:50:44 --> 00:50:46: But I think that you know the term, the, the,

00:50:46 --> 00:50:48: the, the idea is really important for me as a

00:50:48 --> 00:50:51: planner when I think about Sankofa, because we learned from

00:50:51 --> 00:50:53: black history and I kind of touched on this in

00:50:53 --> 00:50:54: the beginning.

00:50:54 --> 00:50:56: We learn about black history not to just sit with

00:50:57 --> 00:50:59: it and I learned a fact and that's it.

00:50:59 --> 00:51:01: You take it and you make an active effort to

00:51:01 --> 00:51:02: respond to that.

00:51:02 --> 00:51:05: If we know that, you know the history of enslavement

00:51:05 --> 00:51:09: has impact on housing affordability, home ownership for black communities,

00:51:09 --> 00:51:12: how do we then respond to that and address that

00:51:12 --> 00:51:14: through policies and practices?

00:51:14 --> 00:51:16: If we know that access to community spaces and social

00:51:16 --> 00:51:20: amenities are impacted because of the concentration where people have

00:51:20 --> 00:51:22: been concentrated over time, how do we respond to that?

00:51:22 --> 00:51:23: Transportation.

00:51:24 --> 00:51:25: There's many things around that.

00:51:25 --> 00:51:28: So I think we learned from those histories not just

00:51:28 --> 00:51:31: to know a fact, but to actually think, how does

00:51:31 --> 00:51:34: this apply to me and my day-to-day work, you know,

00:51:34 --> 00:51:36: and it's an interesting concept.

00:51:36 --> 00:51:38: I think it's applicable to everyone.

00:51:38 --> 00:51:40: You don't have to be African or black to be

00:51:40 --> 00:51:43: able to understand and embody the the idea of Sankofa

00:51:43 --> 00:51:45: you can put into your daily practice as architect and

00:51:46 --> 00:51:46: as a planner.

00:51:46 --> 00:51:49: But it's about being an active person who responds to

00:51:49 --> 00:51:52: something that has, you know, there's no shame in going

00:51:52 --> 00:51:55: back and saying, oh, we didn't know about this, Let's

00:51:55 --> 00:51:56: implement it today.

00:51:57 --> 00:52:00: Now, Michael, I know, I think what you said earlier

00:52:00 --> 00:52:04: in our previous discussions was the interest for the city

00:52:04 --> 00:52:07: to focus on values versus referring to a place or

00:52:07 --> 00:52:09: as a form of symbolism.

00:52:12 --> 00:52:12: Yeah.

00:52:12 --> 00:52:16: So I mean the the, the Sankofa name in, I

00:52:16 --> 00:52:20: mean it, it's it says a lot and it says

00:52:20 --> 00:52:26: a lot about sort of language as this intangible heritage

00:52:26 --> 00:52:27: that we pass on.

00:52:27 --> 00:52:29: So a lot of the work that we do we

00:52:29 --> 00:52:33: kind of look at tangible heritage being buildings and artifacts

00:52:33 --> 00:52:37: and whatnot and it's and the relationship to intangible heritage

00:52:37 --> 00:52:40: which is more about living histories like how do you

00:52:40 --> 00:52:42: perpetuate ideas and culture.

00:52:43 --> 00:52:47: And I mean what what's really fascinating with Sankofa is

00:52:47 --> 00:52:51: it it it isn't a definition like so so often

00:52:51 --> 00:52:56: our name places are connected to say, people and that

00:52:56 --> 00:53:01: that person name, person relationship is very much about, you

00:53:01 --> 00:53:06: know, a definition that you know can change over time.

00:53:06 --> 00:53:09: And what what's really interesting with with Sankofa is about

00:53:09 --> 00:53:12: it's kind of like an action like doing the the,

00:53:13 --> 00:53:16: the process of retrieving history and this whole idea of

00:53:16 --> 00:53:20: retrieving histories is something, yeah, it is explored in heritage

00:53:20 --> 00:53:23: and it's you know really interesting.

00:53:23 --> 00:53:28: It's like how how do you kind of interpret what

00:53:28 --> 00:53:32: happened in in a present and relevant way.

00:53:33 --> 00:53:37: And I I think it's just really interesting this idea

00:53:37 --> 00:53:42: of you know call it African language, Ghanaian language, I

00:53:42 --> 00:53:46: can language but it become in shared heritage like and

00:53:47 --> 00:53:50: it says a lot about language and how it it

00:53:50 --> 00:53:56: transcends like at least ethnic, national, continental boundaries and it

00:53:56 --> 00:54:00: takes on new meaning to tell the human story.

00:54:00 --> 00:54:03: And I think it's just really interesting to see this

00:54:03 --> 00:54:06: being part of the Canadian identity now like we are

00:54:06 --> 00:54:09: we are taking this language and it's for all of

00:54:09 --> 00:54:12: us to use and you know how what happens and

00:54:12 --> 00:54:15: how how this story unfolds, we don't know.

00:54:15 --> 00:54:18: But at this point it's it's just very interesting to

00:54:18 --> 00:54:19: me.

00:54:19 --> 00:54:21: Thank you, Robert.

00:54:21 --> 00:54:21: Or tour?

00:54:21 --> 00:54:22: Would you like to add anything?

00:54:23 --> 00:54:23: Sure.

00:54:23 --> 00:54:25: Yeah, I'll jump in.

00:54:25 --> 00:54:26: So, yeah, it's, it's interesting.

00:54:26 --> 00:54:31: I think it's when we're talking about the tangible language

00:54:31 --> 00:54:35: my I take and I I think there's a beauty

00:54:35 --> 00:54:36: to think of.

00:54:36 --> 00:54:41: You know, thinking it's right next to TMU, which was

00:54:41 --> 00:54:46: formerly Ryerson and where they, you know, tore down the

00:54:46 --> 00:54:50: the statue at the foot of what was it right

00:54:50 --> 00:54:54: at Gould and yeah, Bond Street, I'm thinking.

00:54:54 --> 00:54:56: So I think this idea that things can change.

00:54:56 --> 00:54:58: And I think at the same time I feel there's

00:54:58 --> 00:55:00: a missed opportunity with these things.

00:55:00 --> 00:55:04: So you know, we have, say, streets in Toronto that

00:55:04 --> 00:55:08: are still named after slave owners.

00:55:08 --> 00:55:13: So Russell Street or Peter St., for example, named after,

00:55:13 --> 00:55:18: you know, Peter Russell, there's, you know, Indian Rd.

00:55:18 --> 00:55:19: for example.

00:55:19 --> 00:55:21: So I think what I would really like to say,

00:55:21 --> 00:55:24: I know this doesn't necessarily happen in politics.

00:55:24 --> 00:55:27: Sometimes you kind of gravitate to one thing is the

00:55:27 --> 00:55:32: opportunity to really, if we're going to rethink names, statues,

00:55:32 --> 00:55:36: streets, holistically, what does that mean as a city?

00:55:37 --> 00:55:40: And then I think too when we're talking about intangible

00:55:40 --> 00:55:43: things like like a name, but what about some of

00:55:43 --> 00:55:45: the tangible things?

00:55:45 --> 00:55:46: You know, if we're going to, you know, the IT

00:55:46 --> 00:55:47: was for a point there.

00:55:47 --> 00:55:50: It wasn't just Dundas Square that was going to be

00:55:50 --> 00:55:53: renamed the San Coppa Square, It was the entire, the

00:55:53 --> 00:55:53: entire St.

00:55:53 --> 00:55:57: And you know, the politicization of then businesses are

00:55:57 --> 00:56:00: changing

00:56:00 --> 00:56:03: the names of the street, the subway stations.

00:56:03 --> 00:56:07: And I think an interesting question which, you know, as

00:56:07 --> 00:56:10: a designer, an architect, you know, makes you think from

00:56:10 --> 00:56:11: an intangible perspective of say, a name and how we

00:56:11 --> 00:56:14: think of a name.

00:56:14 --> 00:56:15: What about then, you know, rethinking the actual tangible

00:56:15 --> 00:56:17: things

00:56:17 --> 00:56:18: with the streets?

00:56:18 --> 00:56:21: So are we just changing the name?

00:56:21 --> 00:56:22: And that's it.

00:56:22 --> 00:56:25: In many ways, Dundas Square is not a great square

00:56:25 --> 00:56:28: and it and it has a lot of shortcomings, physical

00:56:28 --> 00:56:29: shortcomings for many reasons that could be changed.

00:56:29 --> 00:56:30: Dundas St.

00:56:30 --> 00:56:33: you know, thinking of like complete streets and safe streets.

00:56:33 --> 00:56:35: If we're going to say use St.

00:56:35 --> 00:56:39: Koppa, which is aspirational, what does that aspiration come

00:56:39 --> 00:56:40: to

00:56:40 --> 00:56:43: meaning?

00:56:43 --> 00:56:46: Ideally it would come to be, you know, changing our

00:56:46 --> 00:56:48: the built realm and urban design in built form of

00:56:48 --> 00:56:49: the square and the broader St.

00:56:49 --> 00:56:50: Thank you, Robert.

00:56:50 --> 00:56:54: I don't really have much to add, but it is

00:56:54 --> 00:56:58: a really exciting and interesting time to engage with with

00:56:58 --> 00:57:03: with Black History in Toronto, sort of understanding where

00:57:03 --> 00:57:04: where

00:57:04 --> 00:57:04: we've come from.

00:57:04 --> 00:57:08: And I think what what, Michael, you were saying about  
00:57:08 --> 00:57:12: developing that shared heritage, I mean that is an absolutely  
00:57:12 --> 00:57:14: sort of thrilling possibility.  
00:57:15 --> 00:57:18: And so, you know, I'm just excited that conversations like  
00:57:18 --> 00:57:22: this are happening and that they'll hopefully be many more  
00:57:22 --> 00:57:24: conversations to come.  
00:57:24 --> 00:57:25: And that is it.  
00:57:26 --> 00:57:28: There are hopefully there are many more conversations to  
come  
00:57:28 --> 00:57:30: and this is where I'm going to turn it back  
00:57:30 --> 00:57:31: and I'd like to thank all our panelists.  
00:57:32 --> 00:57:34: So this is a conversation that we're just starting and  
00:57:34 --> 00:57:35: by no means in the month of February are we  
00:57:35 --> 00:57:37: limited to having this conversation.  
00:57:37 --> 00:57:40: So I will turn it to Crystal for some closing  
00:57:40 --> 00:57:42: remarks from ULI Toronto.  
00:57:42 --> 00:57:43: Thank you everyone.  
00:57:44 --> 00:57:45: Thank you, Camille.  
00:57:45 --> 00:57:48: And on behalf of you Like Toronto, I want to  
00:57:48 --> 00:57:51: thank all of our speakers for joining us today and  
00:57:51 --> 00:57:55: for highlighting the powerful historic forces that are  
confronting legacy  
00:57:55 --> 00:57:58: challenges and fuelling the modern frontiers of city building.  
00:57:59 --> 00:58:01: With that, we say thank you for pushing this conversation  
00:58:01 --> 00:58:02: forward.  
00:58:02 --> 00:58:05: On the eve of Black History Month, we have our  
00:58:06 --> 00:58:08: upcoming events slide on screen.  
00:58:08 --> 00:58:11: Please be sure to check them out and visit the  
00:58:11 --> 00:58:12: events page that's posted in the chat.  
00:58:13 --> 00:58:15: Thank you all for joining us today and have a  
00:58:15 --> 00:58:17: great rest of the afternoon.

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