Video

Confronting the Land Use Challenges to Housing the Homeless

Date: March 04, 2020

00:00:00 --> 00:00:02: When I was 18 years old,
00:00:02 --> 00:00:04: I was homeless.
00:00:04 --> 00:00:06: How many people have ever been homeless?
00:00:11 --> 00:00:15: So I came from what I consider a typical American
00:00:15 --> 00:00:15: family.
00:00:15 --> 00:00:18: Somebody that came and just didn't get the dream right
00:00:18 --> 00:00:19: away.
00:00:19 --> 00:00:21: Didn't have passed down wealth.
00:00:21 --> 00:00:26: Didn't have opportunity. I had a brother that this month
00:00:26 --> 00:00:28: 13 years ago died an encampment.
00:00:28 --> 00:00:32: So when you're driving by the homeless in the streets
00:00:32 --> 00:00:33: of Los Angeles,
00:00:33 --> 00:00:36: that's somebody's son, somebody's daughter,
00:00:36 --> 00:00:40: somebody's mother, somebody's sister. What is going on in Los
00:00:40 --> 00:00:40: Angeles?
00:00:40 --> 00:00:42: What on earth is happening here?
00:00:42 --> 00:00:47: There's very few people. They actually have the ability to
00:00:47 --> 00:00:48: implement more change.
00:00:48 --> 00:00:51: The people that are actually sitting in this room.
00:00:51 --> 00:00:53: We've got to figure this out,
00:00:53 --> 00:00:55: not how to manage, but how to solve it.
00:00:55 --> 00:00:56: And if we can solve it.
00:00:56 --> 00:00:59: It's scalable, the rest of the world is looking at
00:00:59 --> 00:00:59: us.
00:01:04 --> 00:01:07: The goal of the Urban Land Institute is to provide
00:01:07 --> 00:01:11: leadership in the responsible use of land in creating and
00:01:11 --> 00:01:14: sustaining thriving communities worldwide.
00:01:14 --> 00:01:17: Our homeless crisis is our housing prices and our housing

00:01:17 --> 00:01:19: prices is one of affordability.
00:01:19 --> 00:01:22: It's extremely urgent and has been for decades.
00:01:22 --> 00:01:25: I think the land is part of the real estate
00:01:25 --> 00:01:27: part and those are really,
00:01:27 --> 00:01:30: I think, synonymous are kind of the physical manifestation of
00:01:30 --> 00:01:32: how we deal with the problem,
00:01:32 --> 00:01:35: right? So a land use issue is finding sites and
00:01:35 --> 00:01:37: where can we put it?
00:01:37 --> 00:01:40: A land use issue is creating innovative designs,
00:01:40 --> 00:01:41: Alanis and real estate issues.
00:01:41 --> 00:01:43: Lowering the cost per unit.
00:01:43 --> 00:01:45: How do we improve the.
00:01:45 --> 00:01:49: Approval entitlement process to get those built you include a
00:01:49 --> 00:01:53: diverse set up perspective so that you get everyone's opinions
00:01:53 --> 00:01:55: and thoughts to coalesce into an idea.
00:01:55 --> 00:02:00: Community leaders, nonprofit developers for profit developers,
00:02:00 --> 00:02:05: attorneys, architects, landscape architects. We understand how to create housing
00:02:05 --> 00:02:08: solutions that match with a particular demographic need.
00:02:08 --> 00:02:11: That's what we do. That's what we do is developers
00:02:11 --> 00:02:12: and financiers,
00:02:12 --> 00:02:15: so why can't we take that same discipline that we
00:02:15 --> 00:02:17: have and apply that to the desperate needs of the
00:02:17 --> 00:02:18: homeless community?
00:02:18 --> 00:02:21: That's our goal today.
00:02:21 --> 00:02:23: And to understand what we need to do to address
00:02:23 --> 00:02:27: homelessness across our city and for the various subgroups that
00:02:27 --> 00:02:29: make up the homeless population,
00:02:29 --> 00:02:32: we first must know how we got here.
00:02:32 --> 00:02:36: If you go downtown and you'll see those tall buildings
00:02:36 --> 00:02:39: and that's how they were building at the turn of
00:02:40 --> 00:02:40: the century,
00:02:40 --> 00:02:45: something happened in the mid 70s where there was something
00:02:45 --> 00:02:49: called the slow growth movement before the proposition was passed
00:02:50 --> 00:02:51: by LA City voters.
00:02:51 --> 00:02:55: Ellis City was zoned to have enough parcels to accommodate
00:02:55 --> 00:02:57: 10,000,000 households.
00:02:57 --> 00:02:59: Overnight, LS City was down,

00:02:59 --> 00:03:02: zoned to only have enough parcels to accommodate.
00:03:02 --> 00:03:06: 4 million households the city was mostly developed after the
00:03:06 --> 00:03:08: war and we're different city now,
00:03:08 --> 00:03:11: with millions of more people and we just need to
00:03:11 --> 00:03:15: think differently about density and zoning and everything else.
00:03:15 --> 00:03:18: But that's, you know, it's a tough ho to get
00:03:18 --> 00:03:22: the single family homeowners to come on board with changing
00:03:22 --> 00:03:22: our city.
00:03:22 --> 00:03:25: But the reality is, it's not 1950 anymore.
00:03:25 --> 00:03:27: On top of that, in the 1980s you saw this
00:03:27 --> 00:03:31: federale retreat from providing services and housing.
00:03:31 --> 00:03:34: So why did you not see families with their children
00:03:34 --> 00:03:35: living in cars?
00:03:35 --> 00:03:40: Before the 80s, because the federal government provided much of
00:03:40 --> 00:03:42: that funding directly.
00:03:42 --> 00:03:47: And black people who have for decades been disproportionately impacted
00:03:47 --> 00:03:49: by homelessness on average,
00:03:49 --> 00:03:53: make up 40% of the homeless population across the country.
00:03:53 --> 00:03:55: So let that sit in that.
00:03:55 --> 00:03:59: That's every other person. You also have to think about
00:03:59 --> 00:04:01: mass incarceration.
00:04:01 --> 00:04:03: We can ignore that. And if we don't make it
00:04:03 --> 00:04:07: feasible for people to come back into housing and have
00:04:07 --> 00:04:08: access to housing,
00:04:08 --> 00:04:10: you're going to see them on our sidewalks.
00:04:10 --> 00:04:13: So there are a lot of things that have happened
00:04:13 --> 00:04:16: over the history of this country that are contributing to
00:04:16 --> 00:04:17: those things.
00:04:17 --> 00:04:21: How many people want to end homelessness?
00:04:21 --> 00:04:24: And the people experiencing homelessness do do too,
00:04:24 --> 00:04:25: so believe that.
00:04:28 --> 00:04:30: It's not that we don't know how to do it.
00:04:30 --> 00:04:31: We do know how to do it.
00:04:31 --> 00:04:33: The question then will be,
00:04:33 --> 00:04:35: do we have the will to do it?
00:04:35 --> 00:04:38: The community? Whether that's the local community,
00:04:38 --> 00:04:39: the state community, the feds,
00:04:39 --> 00:04:41: somebody has to pay for that,
00:04:41 --> 00:04:44: housing? We have a system now that makes that all

00:04:44 --> 00:04:47: very mysterious as to who pays for what and leads
00:04:47 --> 00:04:49: to a lot of the cost problems too,
00:04:49 --> 00:04:52: because nobody can really focus on costs because everybody is
00:04:52 --> 00:04:54: focusing on allocations.
00:04:54 --> 00:04:57: Everybody is focusing on just getting it done the system.
00:04:57 --> 00:05:00: Just makes it so hard.
00:05:00 --> 00:05:04: We need to change the system and if it were
00:05:04 --> 00:05:08: up to me we should blow up the whole allocating
00:05:08 --> 00:05:11: system T cached sedlack and start afresh.
00:05:11 --> 00:05:14: And I bet you there are lots of people out
00:05:14 --> 00:05:16: there in the room that agree with me.
00:05:16 --> 00:05:19: If we keep doing it the same old way,
00:05:19 --> 00:05:21: it's going to keep costing 500,
00:05:21 --> 00:05:24: seven, $100,000 a unit. It's going to keep not building
00:05:24 --> 00:05:28: for understanding who the demographics of homelessness are.
00:05:28 --> 00:05:32: So how are we beginning to look at really innovative
00:05:32 --> 00:05:33: solutions?
00:05:33 --> 00:05:35: One of the things we need to do,
00:05:35 --> 00:05:38: I think, is we need to be multi modal and
00:05:38 --> 00:05:41: to some of the earlier speakers points.
00:05:41 --> 00:05:46: Actually figure out what works for an individual.
00:05:46 --> 00:05:49: Two years ago we dedicated 65 interns at Gensler and
00:05:49 --> 00:05:50: it's Sebyan.
00:05:50 --> 00:05:52: We came up with the database.
00:05:52 --> 00:05:56: We've identified 58,000 sites that are owned by the federal
00:05:56 --> 00:05:56: government.
00:05:56 --> 00:05:59: The state government, the County government,
00:05:59 --> 00:06:02: and the city governments. 58,000 sites,
00:06:02 --> 00:06:05: excess properties that we can get for free.
00:06:05 --> 00:06:07: Measure H has helped quite a bit,
00:06:07 --> 00:06:08: but that's only for 10 years,
00:06:08 --> 00:06:12: right? And so we're constantly thinking ahead what's going to
00:06:12 --> 00:06:14: happen 8 years from now and where is the services
00:06:14 --> 00:06:15: funding coming from?
00:06:15 --> 00:06:18: Can we build it into our financial model so that
00:06:18 --> 00:06:20: we're sustainable and to be able to make sure that
00:06:20 --> 00:06:23: the tenants actually get the services that they need to
00:06:23 --> 00:06:26: stay stable? And also, how do we integrate within the
00:06:26 --> 00:06:27: neighborhood as well?
00:06:27 --> 00:06:30: Again, maintain that balance of integrating in the place where

00:06:31 --> 00:06:33: the child may already exists and the people may already
00:06:33 --> 00:06:34: live currently,
00:06:34 --> 00:06:38: and also finding other locations where we can scale up.
00:06:38 --> 00:06:41: There's a structure called a strong structure.
00:06:41 --> 00:06:44: It's a huge industrial. 10th are used around the world
00:06:44 --> 00:06:46: in all kinds of different settings,
00:06:46 --> 00:06:49: and in those we can house anywhere from 150 to
00:06:49 --> 00:06:49: 300.
00:06:49 --> 00:06:51: Three 150 people at a time,
00:06:51 --> 00:06:55: and we said housing purse isn't coming for 10 or
00:06:55 --> 00:06:59: 20 years and there's people on the street right now.
00:06:59 --> 00:07:00: We had an idea anaplan,
00:07:00 --> 00:07:03: but until hep a hit San Diego they weren't going
00:07:03 --> 00:07:04: to do anything.
00:07:04 --> 00:07:07: This was a situation that with 18 living in an
00:07:07 --> 00:07:09: encampment through human feces,
00:07:09 --> 00:07:13: put a human virus out there happy that actually shot
00:07:13 --> 00:07:15: through the state of California,
00:07:15 --> 00:07:18: hospitalising over 500 people and killing 22 and look at
00:07:18 --> 00:07:21: the reaction rate and out of the world on Corona.
00:07:21 --> 00:07:24: And I look at what happened in San Diego with
00:07:24 --> 00:07:27: an outside encampment of 18 people.
00:07:27 --> 00:07:30: We cannot confine this issue to Skid Row.
00:07:30 --> 00:07:33: The County Department of Health Services and again,
00:07:33 --> 00:07:35: this is a County of 10 1/2 million people.
00:07:35 --> 00:07:38: So we're not talking were bigger than some states.
00:07:38 --> 00:07:41: We're not talking about small measures here.
00:07:41 --> 00:07:44: Used healthcare dollars to help people get into housing.
00:07:44 --> 00:07:48: Recognizing that the County was spending inordinate amounts of money
00:07:48 --> 00:07:51: to treat and retreat folks exposed to the elements.
00:07:51 --> 00:07:54: And maybe people have different concepts of what that means
00:07:54 --> 00:07:55: to do something about it.
00:07:55 --> 00:07:58: But the bottom line is that homelessness is so high
00:07:58 --> 00:08:02: in people's consciousness right now that there is an opportunity.
00:08:02 --> 00:08:05: Everybody in this room can make a difference,
00:08:05 --> 00:08:09: and the fact that you're here today is fabulous because
00:08:09 --> 00:08:11: you've taken the first step,
00:08:11 --> 00:08:13: you're arming yourself with facts,
00:08:13 --> 00:08:17: figures, and the reality. And I think just looking around
00:08:17 --> 00:08:17: the room,

00:08:17 --> 00:08:20: the connections people are making who's talking to who.
00:08:20 --> 00:08:22: How do we kind of gather the knowledge and the
00:08:22 --> 00:08:24: content that was created?
00:08:24 --> 00:08:26: They begin to share that.
00:08:26 --> 00:08:28: So I think when you get people like you lyc
00:08:28 --> 00:08:30: and like hey we are the people who have the
00:08:30 --> 00:08:30: power.
00:08:30 --> 00:08:33: We are the people have the access now how do
00:08:33 --> 00:08:34: we actually have applied this?
00:08:34 --> 00:08:38: This power we have in a way that yields results.
00:08:38 --> 00:08:40: Surely you get results.

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